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Digital literacy and teaching and learning of french as a foreign language

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Abstract

This article examines the impact of digital literacy on the teaching and learning of French as a Foreign Language (FLE). By integrating digital technologies such as online platforms (Moodle), multimedia resources (TV5Monde), and mobile apps (Duolingo), teachers can diversify their teaching methods and create interactive learning environments. This transformation increases student engagement and improves language skills. However, unequal access to technology and the need for continuous teacher training pose significant challenges.

Case studies show positive results, such as at the University of Montreal where the use of Moodle improved students' language skills by 20%. My personal experience with fun games such as Kahoot! and Quizlet confirms these observations, increasing student motivation and participation. In conclusion, digital literacy enriches the teaching of French as a foreign language, but requires efforts to ensure equitable access and teacher training to maximize benefits for all learners.

Keywords: Digital Literacy; Teaching French as a Foreign Language; Digital Technologies; Online Platforms; Multimedia Resources; Mobile Applications; Blended Learning; Collaborative Learning; Virtual Immersion; Educational Games; Interactive Environments

1. Introduction

Digital literacy refers to the ability to understand and use digital technologies effectively. According to Paul Gilster, who popularized the term in the 1990s, digital literacy is more than just technical skill; It also encompasses the ability to access, analyze, evaluate, and create information using digital tools. In an increasingly connected world, this skill has become essential not only for navigating the digital world but also for academic and professional success.

In the context of teaching and learning French as a Foreign Language (FLE), digital literacy is of particular importance. On the one hand, it allows learners to access a multitude of educational resources and interact with native speakers through online platforms. On the other hand, it offers teachers new methods to engage students and diversify their pedagogical approaches. As Lucie Tanguy points out in her book "Digital technology at school: challenges and perspectives", the integration of digital technologies in foreign language teaching can significantly improve students' motivation and overall language competence.

The integration of digital literacy into French as a foreign language has profoundly transformed pedagogical practices. Traditional methods that are teacher-centred and based mainly on textbooks and written exercises have evolved to include interactive and multimedia activities. For example, educational platforms such as Moodle allow you to create online courses that combine texts, videos, and interactive quizzes. According to a study conducted by the International

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Organization of La Francophonie, these digital tools facilitate a more dynamic and interactive approach to learning, increasing students' engagement and understanding of language concepts.

However, integrating digital literacy into FLE teaching also poses challenges, particularly in terms of access and equity. Not all learners have the same access to digital technologies, which can create disparities in learning. As Michel Serres notes in "Petite Poucette", unequal access to technology can exacerbate existing inequalities and deprive some students of the educational advantages offered by digital tools. It is therefore crucial to put in place strategies to ensure that all learners can benefit from digital resources, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Finally, for digital literacy to be fully effective in the teaching of French as a foreign language, it is essential that teachers are trained in new technologies and the innovative teaching methods they enable. In-service teacher training is therefore a priority for educational institutions. As UNESCO's report on ICT in education states, "*teachers need to be supported to develop their digital skills and integrate technologies meaningfully into their teaching practices*". This includes not only mastery of technical tools, but also the ability to integrate these tools into a coherent and effective pedagogical strategy.

In conclusion, digital literacy represents a major opportunity to enrich the teaching and learning of French as a foreign language. However, its successful integration depends on the ability to overcome the challenges related to equitable access to technology and teacher training. By taking an inclusive and proactive approach, educators can maximize the benefits of digital literacy for their students, preparing FLE learners to successfully navigate an increasingly digitalized world.

2. The challenges of digital literacy in the teaching of French as a foreign language

2.1. Evolution of pedagogical practices

2.1.1. Transforming traditional methods

The arrival of digital literacy has considerably changed traditional teaching methods in the teaching of French as a Foreign Language (FLE). Historically, language teaching has relied mainly on textbooks and written exercises, which are often perceived as monotonous and disconnected from modern linguistic realities. Today, the integration of digital technologies makes it possible to diversify educational materials and introduce interactive activities that further stimulate learners. For example, tools such as interactive quizzes, educational videos, and mobile apps allow students to learn in a fun and engaging way. According to a study by the International Organisation of La Francophonie, the use of digital resources in language teaching increases pupils' motivation and facilitates better knowledge retention.

2.1.2. Use of educational platforms

Online educational platforms, such as Moodle, have revolutionized the pedagogical approach by offering flexible and interactive learning spaces. Moodle, for example, allows teachers to create comprehensive online courses that include texts, videos, discussion forums, and automated assessments. These platforms promote a more personalized approach to learning, where each student can progress at their own pace and according to their own needs. As highlighted in UNESCO's report on information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education, digital education platforms help expand access to education and reduce geographical and temporal barriers that can hinder traditional learning.

2.1.3. Impact on learner engagement

One of the most significant contributions of digital literacy is increased learner engagement. Digital technologies make learning more interactive and immersive, which can captivate students' attention and encourage them to actively participate. Studies show that students who use digital tools in their language learning are more motivated and show a better attitude towards learning. For example, research conducted by the University of Montreal found that FLE students who used interactive language apps were more likely to practice the language outside of school hours and to actively participate in online discussions. This increased motivation leads to improved language skills and greater self-confidence in the use of the target language.

2.1.4. Diversification of teaching materials

Digital literacy also allows for a diversification of the teaching materials used in the teaching of French as a foreign language. Teachers can integrate a variety of media, such as podcasts, videos, educational games, and interactive simulations, to cater to students' different learning styles. According to a study published in the journal "Educational

Technology Research and Development", the use of multimedia supports enriches the learning experience and promotes a deeper understanding of language concepts. In addition, these materials help to contextualize learning, offering concrete examples and real-life situations where the language is used.

2.1.5. Collaborative and participatory approach

Finally, digital literacy promotes a more collaborative and participatory approach to teaching and learning. Digital tools allow students to work together on projects, share resources, and communicate easily with their teachers and peers. Discussion forums, wikis, and online co-authoring tools, such as Google Docs, encourage interaction and collaboration, which strengthens collective learning and the development of social and intercultural skills. As Vygotsky mentions in his theory of social learning, social interaction plays a crucial role in cognitive development, and digital technologies offer new possibilities to facilitate these interactions in an educational context.

In short, the evolution of pedagogical practices thanks to digital literacy has a profound and positive impact on the teaching of French as a foreign language. By transforming traditional methods, diversifying teaching materials and fostering a collaborative approach, digital technologies enrich the learning experience and prepare learners to use the language more effectively and contextually.

2.2. Access and equity

One of the main challenges in integrating digital literacy into the teaching of French as a foreign language is the unequal access to technology. Not all learners have the same resources in terms of computer equipment, internet connection or digital skills. This disparity creates a digital divide that can prevent some students from taking full advantage of the learning opportunities offered by digital technologies. Michel Serres, in his book "Petite Poucette", warns that inequalities in access to technology can reinforce existing disparities and deprive some learners of the benefits of digital literacy. This situation requires special attention to ensure that educational technologies are accessible to all, regardless of their socio-economic background.

Unequal access to technology can exacerbate educational and social disparities. Students from disadvantaged backgrounds often have the least access to digital tools and a reliable internet connection, which can put them at a disadvantage compared to their peers. As highlighted in UNESCO's report on education and ICT, "*digital technologies can, if not integrated in an inclusive way, widen performance gaps among students*". It is therefore essential to develop policies and initiatives to ensure equitable access to educational technologies and to provide additional support to the most vulnerable students.

To overcome these challenges, digital inclusion policies need to be put in place. This includes providing computer equipment to students who need it, improving network infrastructure to ensure a reliable internet connection, and setting up training programs to develop the digital skills of teachers and students. Initiatives like the European Union's Connected Schools programme aim to bridge the digital divide by providing equitable access to digital resources and promoting the inclusion of all students in digital learning. The programme has provided thousands of schools with computer equipment and Internet connections, reducing disparities in access to technology.

Let's not forget the teachers; They play a crucial role in the implementation of digital literacy. It is therefore important to support them in the development of their digital skills. UNESCO's report on ICT in education recommends in-service training programmes for teachers to help them effectively integrate technology into their teaching practices. These programmes should include modules on the use of digital tools, the creation of interactive content, and the management of virtual classrooms. By equipping teachers with the necessary skills and resources, they will be better prepared to help their students navigate the digital world and take advantage of the learning opportunities it offers.

In conclusion, disparities in access to technology represent a major challenge for the integration of digital literacy in the teaching of French as a foreign language. Digital inclusion policies, support for teachers, and foster public-private partnerships are crucial to ensure that all students can benefit from the benefits of digital technologies. By proactively addressing these challenges, educators and policymakers can help reduce inequalities and promote more equitable and inclusive education for all.

2.3. Teacher Competencies

To effectively integrate digital literacy into the teaching of French as a Foreign Language (FLE), it is essential that teachers receive continuous training on new technologies. Digital skills are not limited to the simple use of technological tools, but also include understanding how these tools can be used to enhance learning. According to UNESCO's report

on information and communication technologies (ICTs) in education, "teachers need to be continuously trained to adapt to technological developments and to be able to integrate them meaningfully into their teaching practices". This training should cover various aspects, ranging from mastery of educational software to the design of interactive digital content.

Teacher training must also focus on the pedagogical integration of digital tools. It's not just about learning how to use technology, but about understanding how it can transform teaching and learning. As highlighted in the OECD report on digital education and skills, "the successful integration of technologies into the classroom relies on teachers' ability to rethink their pedagogy to take advantage of digital tools". This includes creating interactive lessons, using learning management platforms, and incorporating multimedia resources to enrich educational content. For example, teachers can use augmented reality apps to make grammar lessons more engaging, or video conferencing tools to organize language exchanges with native speakers.

Teachers' digital skills enable them to create interactive and engaging learning environments. By using technologies such as interactive whiteboards, online collaboration platforms, and instant feedback tools, teachers can make lessons more dynamic and participatory. A study by the University of Cambridge on the impact of ICT in education found that "interactive learning environments, supported by digital technologies, promote greater student participation and understanding of concepts". These tools also help differentiate instruction based on individual student needs, providing personalized support and learning opportunities tailored to each learner.

The ability to develop and use digital content is an essential skill for teachers in the digital age. Teachers must be able to create educational videos, interactive presentations, and e-learning modules that captivate students' interest and facilitate their learning. According to a study published in the *Journal of Educational Technology & Society*, "*the creation of digital content by teachers improves the quality of teaching and provides students with rich and varied resources to deepen their knowledge.*" By developing their own content, teachers can also ensure that teaching materials are tailored to the specific level and needs of their students.

Finally, it is crucial to encourage teachers to engage in continuous self-study and collaborate with colleagues to share good practices and resources. Online communities of practice, webinars, and educational forums provide platforms where teachers can exchange ideas, ask questions, and find solutions to pedagogical challenges related to the use of technology. As highlighted in the UNESCO report, "collaboration among teachers is a key factor for the successful integration of ICT in education". By participating in professional networks and collaborating with other educators, teachers can improve their digital skills and discover new and innovative pedagogical approaches.

In conclusion, the development of teachers' digital skills is a fundamental element for the successful integration of digital literacy into the teaching of French as a foreign language. Continuous training, thoughtful pedagogical integration, the creation of interactive environments, the development of digital content, and the encouragement of collaboration are all factors that contribute to strengthening teachers' skills and improving the quality of language teaching. By investing in teacher training, educational institutions can ensure that their students take full advantage of the opportunities offered by digital technologies.

3. Digital tools and resources for teaching French as a foreign language

3.1. Online platforms

Online platforms play a crucial role in teaching French as a foreign language by providing flexible and interactive learning environments. Moodle, for example, is a widely used learning management platform that allows teachers to create comprehensive courses that include texts, videos, quizzes and discussion forums. According to a UNESCO study, "online platforms like Moodle allow for a more personalized approach to learning, where students can progress at their own pace and according to their specific needs." A concrete example is the use of Moodle by the University of Montreal, where FLE teachers have created interactive modules that combine grammar exercises, listening comprehension activities and online discussions to strengthen students' language skills.

3.2. Multimedia resources

The use of multimedia resources enriches the teaching of French as a foreign language by offering varied and engaging content. Educational videos, for example, allow students to see and hear the language in context, which can improve their comprehension and pronunciation. A study published in the journal *Language Learning & Technology* showed that "the use of videos in foreign language learning can increase student motivation and facilitate information retention." Sites like YouTube and TED-Ed offer a wealth of educational videos tailored to different levels of language proficiency.

For example, a French as a foreign language teacher can use TED-Ed videos to introduce topics from French culture, followed by discussions and vocabulary exercises in class.

3.3. Mobile Apps

Mobile applications are valuable tools for independent learning of FLE. Apps like Duolingo, Babbel, and Busuu offer interactive, gamified language lessons that can be used as a complement to traditional classes. According to a study by the University of South Carolina, "mobile apps can help students practice the language regularly and independently, thereby strengthening their language skills." A concrete example is the use of Duolingo by FLE learners to practice vocabulary and grammar outside of school hours. Teachers can also recommend these apps for additional assignments or exercises.

3.4. Social media and online communities

Social networks and online communities provide platforms for interaction and exchange between FLE learners. Facebook groups dedicated to learning French, forums like Reddit, and language exchange platforms like Tandem allow students to practice the language with native speakers and other learners. According to a study by the University of Warwick, "online interactions with native speakers can improve the language proficiency and confidence of foreign language learners." A concrete example is the use of Tandem, where FLE learners can find language partners for conversational exchanges, alternating between French and their mother tongue.

3.5. Video conferencing tools

Video conferencing tools like Zoom and Microsoft Teams have become essential for remote teaching of FLE, especially since the COVID-19 pandemic. These tools allow teachers to teach lessons in real-time, organize group discussions, and provide immediate feedback to students. According to a Harvard University study, "online language classes via videoconferencing can be as effective as face-to-face classes, provided that teachers use interactive and engaging methods." A real-life example is the use of Zoom to host small group discussions, where students can practice conversation in French under the supervision of the teacher.

3.6. Online Educational Resources

Many online educational resources are available for teachers of French as a foreign language. Sites such as Le Point du FLE, TV5Monde, and Bonjour de France offer free exercises, activities, and educational sheets. These resources cover a variety of language skills and levels, and can be integrated into courses to diversify activities and provide additional materials. According to a study by the University of Geneva, "the use of online educational resources can enrich the content of courses and provide additional learning opportunities for students". A concrete example is the use of TV5Monde's listening comprehension exercises, which offer authentic videos accompanied by questions and follow-up activities.

In conclusion, digital tools and online resources play a crucial role in teaching and learning French as a foreign language. They offer innovative and interactive ways to engage students, diversify teaching methods, and improve language skills. By using these tools in a thoughtful and integrated way, teachers can create dynamic and engaging learning environments that meet the needs of modern learners.

4. Pedagogical approaches that integrate digital literacy

4.1. Blended learning

Blended learning combines online and face-to-face teaching to provide a more flexible and personalized learning experience. In the context of FLE, this allows students to benefit from the advantages of both approaches. For example, face-to-face lessons can focus on face-to-face interactions and speaking practice, while online modules can provide grammar exercises, educational videos, and interactive quizzes. A study by Stanford University showed that "blended learning can improve academic performance and student satisfaction by providing increased flexibility and diverse learning opportunities." A concrete example is the use of Moodle to supplement face-to-face courses with online resources and activities, allowing students to review material at their own pace and receive immediate feedback.

4.2. Online collaborative learning

Online collaborative learning encourages students to work together on projects, share resources, and participate in discussions. Tools like Google Docs, Padlet, and discussion forums built into learning management platforms make it easy for students to collaborate, even remotely. According to a study by the University of Cambridge, "online collaborative learning can improve students' understanding and their ability to work in teams." For example, FLE teachers can organize group projects where students create presentations together on Francophone cultural aspects, use Google Docs to write collaborative essays, or participate in discussion forums to discuss current topics in French.

4.3. Digital assessment and feedback

Digital tools offer new possibilities for evaluation and feedback, allowing for a more dynamic and interactive approach. Platforms like Kahoot! and Quizlet allow for the creation of interactive quizzes that can be used to assess students' language skills in a fun and engaging way. According to a study by the University of Melbourne, "the use of interactive online quizzes can increase student engagement and provide immediate feedback, which is essential for language learning." A concrete example is the use of Kahoot! for in-class revisions, where students answer grammar and vocabulary questions in real-time, with instant results and teacher-provided explanations.

4.4. Use of social networks

Social networks can also be integrated into pedagogical approaches to facilitate the learning of FLE. Platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram can be used to create learning communities, share resources, and encourage interactions in French. A study by the University of Illinois showed that "the use of social networks in language teaching can improve students' motivation and exposure to the target language." For example, teachers can create Facebook groups for the classroom, where students share articles, ask questions, and discuss topics in French. In addition, projects such as the creation of Instagram accounts dedicated to Francophone cultural themes can encourage students to produce content in French and interact with native speakers.

4.5. Virtual immersion

Virtual reality (VR) and augmented reality (AR) technologies offer unique opportunities for language immersion. Apps like Google Expeditions and Mondly VR allow students to immerse themselves in virtual environments where they can practice French in realistic contexts. According to a study by the University of California, "the use of VR in language learning can improve students' oral proficiency and confidence." A real-life example is the use of Mondly VR, where students can have simulated conversations with avatars in a variety of situations, such as ordering at a restaurant or asking for directions, strengthening their communication skills.

4.6. Adaptive Training Modules

Adaptive training modules use algorithms to customize learning based on each student's needs and performance. Platforms like Knewton and Smart Sparrow tailor content and activities based on student responses, providing an individualized learning journey. According to a study by the University of Arizona, "adaptive training modules can improve academic success by providing personalized support and adjusting the pace of learning." A real-life example is the use of Knewton in a FLE class, where grammar and vocabulary exercises are adjusted in real-time according to each student's strengths and weaknesses, providing appropriate challenges and additional supports if needed.

4.7. Authentic tasks and projects

Authentic tasks and projects based on real-life situations allow students to apply their language skills in practical contexts. Projects like writing blogs, creating videos, or conducting interviews in French can make learning more relevant and motivating. According to a study by the University of Washington, "authentic tasks and projects promote deeper learning and better knowledge retention." A concrete example is the creation of blogs by students, where they share their learning experiences, write about topics of personal interest in French, and interact with readers, thus strengthening their writing and communication skills.

In conclusion, pedagogical approaches that integrate digital literacy offer many opportunities to enrich the teaching and learning of French as a foreign language. By combining online and in-person learning, encouraging collaboration, using interactive assessment tools, integrating social media, leveraging immersive technologies, and adopting adaptive modules and authentic projects, educators can create dynamic and personalized learning environments that meet the diverse needs of modern learners.

5. Case Studies

5.1. Examples from various educational institutions around the world

The integration of digital literacy into the teaching of French as a foreign language has produced positive results in various educational institutions around the world.

Université de Montréal: At the Université de Montréal, FLE teachers have adopted a hybrid approach by using Moodle to complement face-to-face teaching. Online modules include interactive grammar exercises, listening comprehension videos, and discussion forums where students can practice French outside of class hours. According to an internal study, "students who participated in the hybrid courses showed a 20% improvement in their language skills compared to those who took traditional courses." Teachers also noted an increase in student engagement and participation through the use of digital technologies.

Lycée Français de New York: At the Lycée Français de New York, the use of multimedia resources has been integrated into the FLE curriculum. Teachers use TV5Monde videos to illustrate cultural and linguistic aspects of French. These videos are accompanied by comprehension questions and follow-up activities that encourage students to think and discuss in French. A teacher at the high school said, "the videos allow students to see and hear French in authentic contexts, making learning more concrete and interesting." The results showed a notable improvement in listening comprehension and students' ability to use French contextually.

5.2. Real-World Examples of Mediated Task Design

As a teacher of French as a foreign language, I have seen the positive impact of integrating fun games and digital technologies into my lessons. Using these tools has allowed me to create a more engaging and interactive learning environment, promoting motivation and active participation in my students. I have experimented with several educational apps and games that have transformed my teaching approaches and improved my students' language skills.

The integration of educational games into the teaching of French as a foreign language has been particularly effective in strengthening the language skills of my students in a fun way. Here are some apps I've used successfully:

Kahoot!: This interactive quiz platform is great for revising vocabulary and grammar in a fun way. Students participate in real-time quizzes, answering questions on their personal devices. I noticed that Kahoot! Stimulates healthy competitiveness and student engagement. For example, during a grammar review session, students participated in a Kahoot! where they had to choose the right verb conjugation, which made the exercise more dynamic and attractive.

Active inspires: Software created by Promethean. It allows teachers to create online courses to allow students to consult them and thus learn and revise in an educational and fun way. In addition, in the classroom, he gives the learners a hand which makes the course interactive and interesting.



Figure 1 Screenshot of the ActiveInspire app

Kotobee : The manual will be installed in the tablets. (Use of the manual requires access to the Internet). It allows you to create and edit Epub books, adding interactive content. The selection of materials is obviously conditioned by the skills and objectives targeted by the teacher.

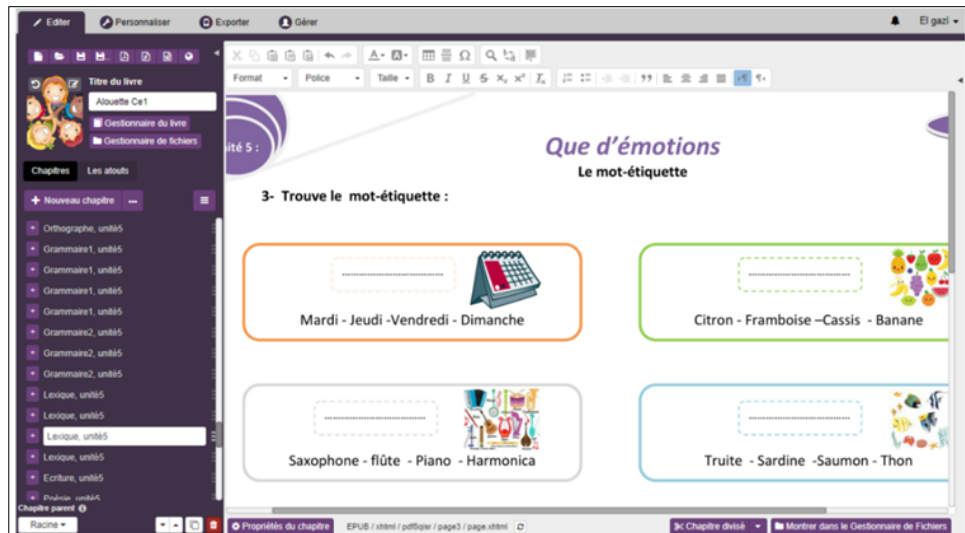


Figure 2 Screenshot of the Kotobee app

Articulate storyline: is an authoring tool that allows you to create interactive courses and E-Learning modules without necessarily using programming languages.

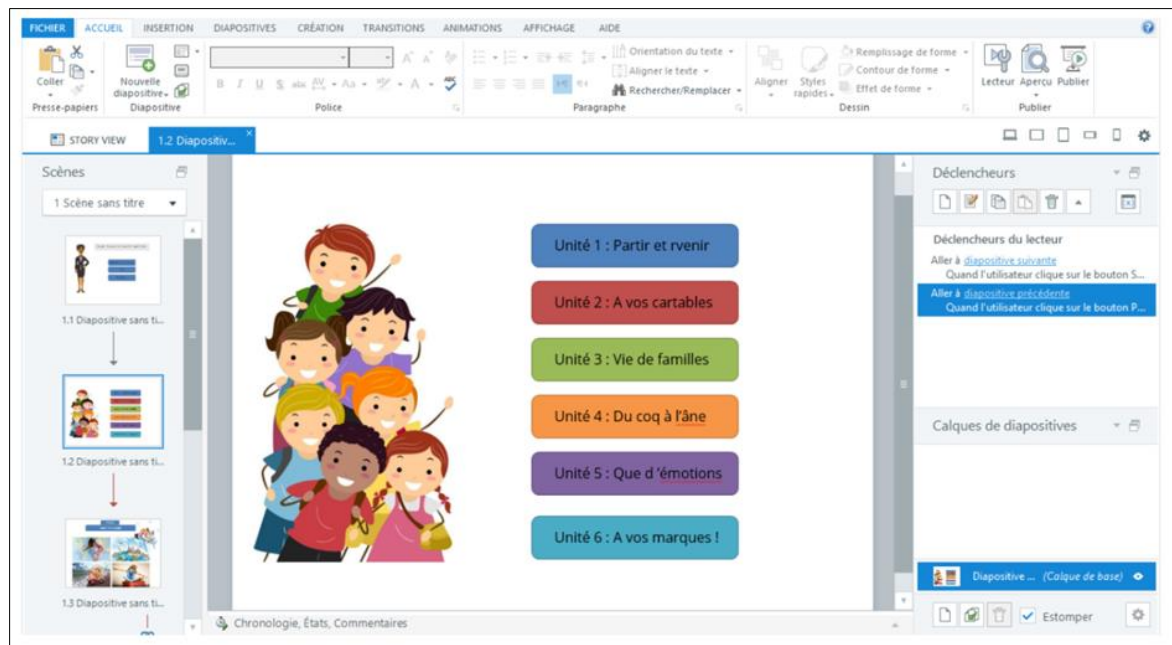


Figure 3 Screenshot of the Articulate storyline app

5.3. The media used to carry out the mediatized tasks

iSpring Suite: is a PowerPoint authoring toolkit produced by iSpring Solutions that allows users to create courses, quizzes, dialogue simulations, screencasts, video lectures, and other interactive slide-based learning materials.

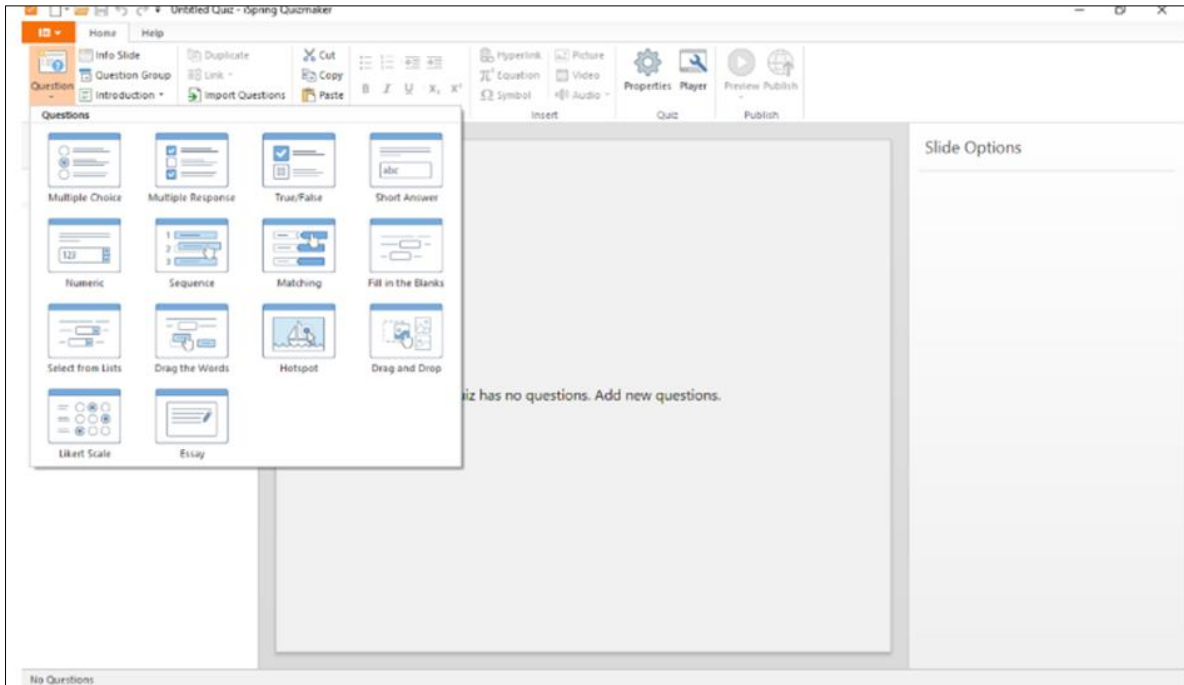


Figure 4 Screenshot of the Ispring suite application

Learningapps : is a Swiss online site that offers to use or create exercises called "apps" online.



Figure 5 Screenshot of the Learning apps app

Powerpoint: a presentation software published by Microsoft, helps in the production of videos, interactive games and presentations.

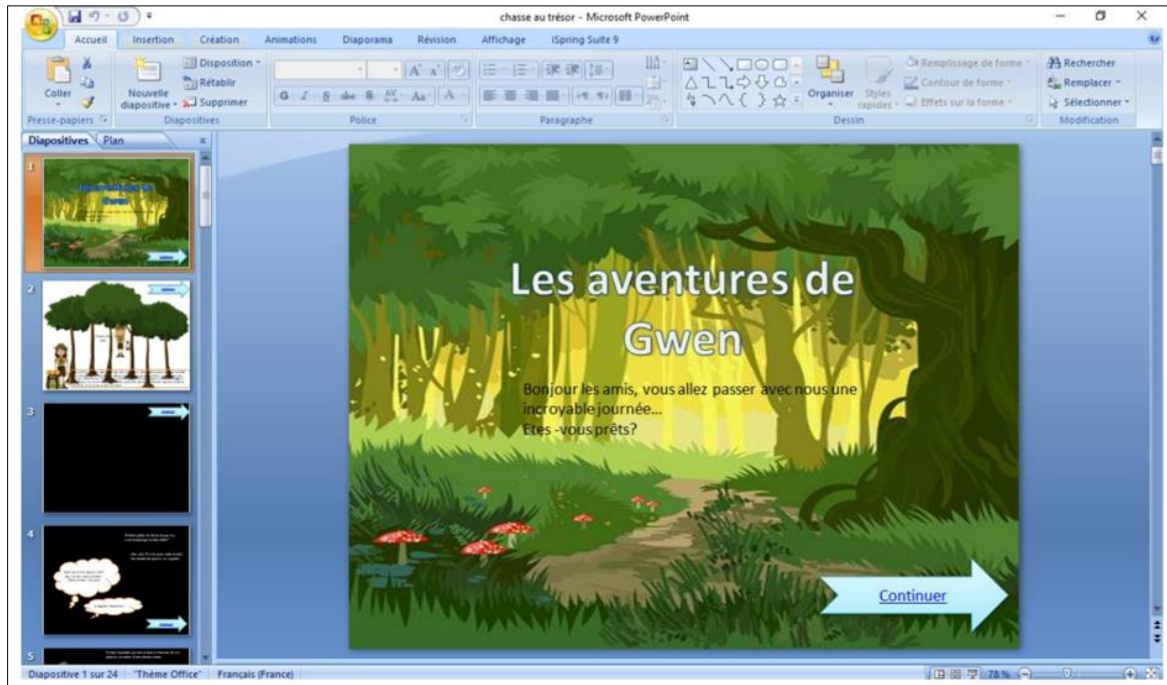


Figure 6 Screenshot of the Powerpoint app

Toonastic: allows children and young people to create a scenario, stage it, enrich it with sound and share it with others.

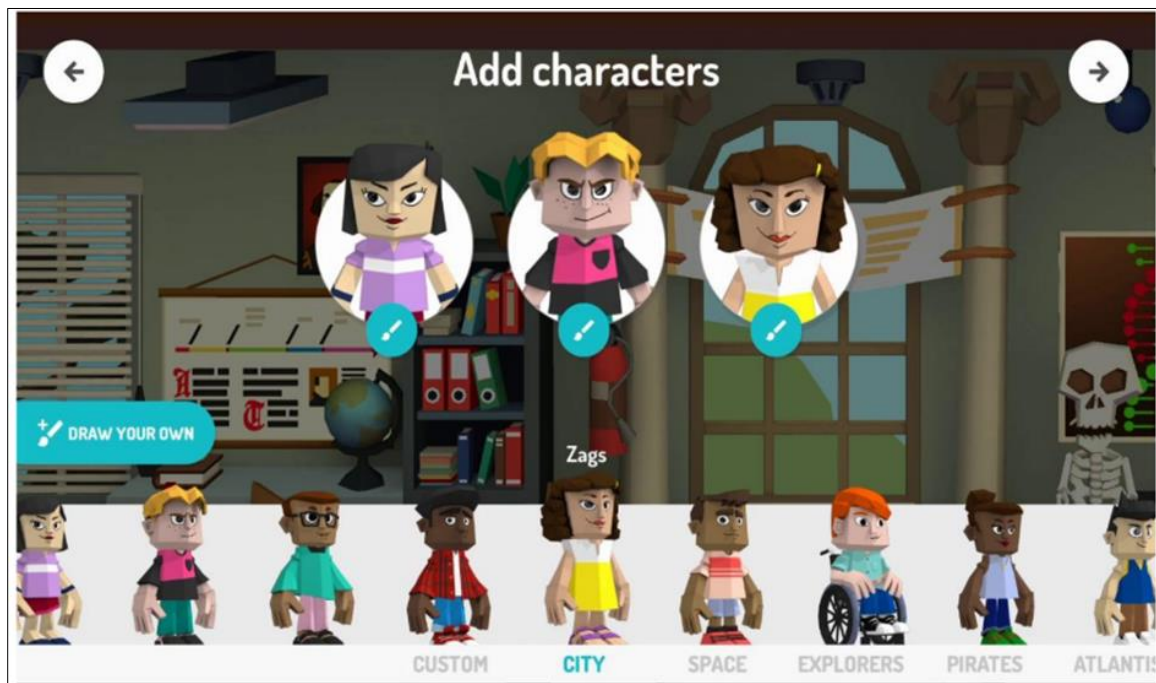


Figure 7 Screenshot of the Toontastic app

The integration of digital apps and games into FLE learning has demonstrated significant results in terms of engagement and improvement of students' language skills. The screenshots shown here are concrete examples of how tools such as Kahoot! have been used to make learning more interactive and fun. These visual examples show not only the intuitive interface of these apps, but also the enthusiasm and active participation of the students during the training sessions. By leveraging these technologies, we have succeeded in creating a dynamic and stimulating learning environment, promoting better knowledge retention and greater motivation among learners. This confirms that digital tools are essential to modernise the teaching of French as a foreign language and meet the needs of modern learners.

This work was carried out as part of my Master's degree, where I explored various strategies for integrating digital technologies into the teaching of French as a foreign language. Now, as a PhD researcher, I plan to continue developing and testing new innovative applications and pedagogical approaches. My future research will aim to deepen our understanding of the impact of educational technologies and to design even more effective tools to improve language learning. This transition to a research role will allow me to contribute significantly to the evolution of pedagogical practices in the field of French as a foreign language.

6. Conclusion

Digital literacy represents a revolution in the teaching and learning of French as a Foreign Language (FLE). By integrating digital technologies, teachers can transform their teaching practices, enrich their resources, and create interactive and engaging learning environments. Online platforms, multimedia resources, mobile apps, social networks and videoconferencing tools offer new opportunities to personalise learning and increase student motivation.

However, this digital transformation is not without its challenges. Disparities in access to technology and the need for in-service training for teachers are significant obstacles to overcome. It is crucial to put in place digital inclusion policies and support teachers in developing their technological skills to ensure that all students can enjoy the benefits of digital literacy.

The integration of fun games and digital applications in the teaching of French as a foreign language has shown promising results. Success stories and testimonials illustrate how these tools can improve language skills, increase engagement, and make learning more enjoyable. My personal experience confirms these observations, demonstrating the positive impact of these innovative approaches on student motivation and participation.

In conclusion, the future of FLE teaching is inseparable from digital literacy. By taking an inclusive and proactive approach, educators can leverage digital technologies to create rich and diverse learning experiences. Thus, they prepare learners not only to master a new language, but also to successfully navigate an increasingly digitalized world.

Compliance with ethical standards

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Disclosure of Conflict of Interest

We hereby confirm that there are no conflicts of interest related to this research. The study was conducted independently, without any external influence or bias affecting the outcomes presented.

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