



# Implementation of Communicative and Action-Oriented Approaches in Teaching French for Tourism for the Indonesian Public Level A1/A2

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## ABSTRACT

Teaching French as foreign language (FLE) in tourism polytechnic is unique. The NHI Bandung Polytechnic of Tourism aims to train young professionals in the three sectors of tourism: hotels, travel management and tourism management. The aim of teaching French at school is to provide basic knowledge of French and to train students to be able to use French in a professional environment. French lessons at NHI Bandung Polytechnic of Tourism are taught in a classic way and focus on the grammatical aspect rather than on the communicative function. The problem of the lack of interactivity between the students and the teacher is considered as a hypothesis of the research. It is necessary to carry out an active pedagogy to invite the students to react during the lesson, to push them to participate. Based on this reflection, the author therefore decided to set up active pedagogy by using the communicative and action-oriented approach in the teaching of professional French for tourism

**Keywords:** action oriented teaching, communicative language teaching, French for tourism, foreign language

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

French lessons at Bandung Tourism Polytechnic are taught in a traditional way and focus on the grammatical aspect rather than on the communicative function. The fact that learning is limited to the grammatical aspect also prevents students from communicating in French because they are afraid to make mistakes, therefore comprehension and oral production are lacking.

The main problem the author found while observing the lessons gave me the idea of doing a French course focusing on written skills. This idea arose because I saw that the students were passive during French class: they listened to the teacher

with little interactivity, which was limited to greeting at the start of class and a few grammatical exercises on the board.

The problem of the lack of interactivity between the students and the teacher is considered as a hypothesis of the research. It is necessary to carry out an active pedagogy to invite the pupils to react during the lesson, to push them to participate. To do this, the French course must be better linked to their main field of study, namely tourism. Based on this reflection, the author therefore decided to set up active pedagogy by using the communicative and action-oriented approach in the teaching of professional French for tourism.

A number of studies on communicative and action oriented approach have been an area of interest for teachers and academicians. Ngigi & Kiviu (2018) compared communicative language approach and action oriented approach in teaching French in Kenya. The study looked at how well communicative language and action-oriented learning strategies helped Kenyan secondary school students become proficient in French. The study's conclusions support the efficacy of the Communicative Language and Action Oriented teaching philosophies for helping students acquire French language proficiency. The effectiveness of Communicative Language teaching has been reported by a number of studies (Savignon, 2005; Offorma, 2000; Canale & Swain, 1980). In addition, studies on action oriented approach in teaching language has be done by a number of researchers (Aydınbeğ & Aydınalp, 2021; Mittler & Sonina, 2018). However, the implementation of those approaches in teaching French for tourism has not been done and studied.

Therefore, the strategic objective of the present research is to implement an active pedagogy that can invite students to communicate and react actively in French within the professional context of tourism by carrying out final projects based on the subjects they learned during the course. This study also is also aimed at providing professional French training in the tourism sector. This research is done during a semester of French course in a class of French for tourism in Tourism Business Management study program. The class has an objective to train the tourism students who are capable of working in a French-speaking environment, whether they are French-speaking tourists or French-speaking professionals in the future.

In order to achieve this goal, the quality of French teaching must be improved, which can generate active communication among students. For this, the operational objective of my training project is to provide professional French tourism courses to beginner A1 / A2 level students including the four language skills: oral comprehension, written comprehension, production written and oral production.

Linking to the strategic objective of the project, in order to achieve the operational objective, the author proposed to use the teaching methodology through the communicative and action-oriented approach to achieve active teaching-learning of the language. With this, the students would have self-confidence to communicate in French, in writing and orally.

## 2. METHOD

The learners, the target audience for the French course training on professional tourism objectives, are students of the *Politeknik Pariwisata NHI Bandung* (NHI Bandung Tourism Polytechnic). They are third year students in a course that lasts four years (D4), their major training is travel business

management. French is one of the compulsory foreign language courses to choose from (between French, Japanese and Chinese-Mandarin) in the first year.

The profile of the eight learners is homogeneous according to their mother tongue and their age, with ages varying between 20 and 23 years. They are of Indonesian nationality and all have Indonesian as their mother tongue and English as their first foreign language. For the level of education, they have obtained the high school diploma. They have been learning French since the first year of study training at the faculty. They have level A1+ if not A2 even if a student has level A1.1. No student has the DELF / DALF as the proof of French language proficiency. Two students are also taking an additional French course at the French Institute of Indonesia in Bandung (IFI Bandung) on a voluntary basis.

They take this French course because it is one of the subjects that they have to learn during the study training. Before taking this course, they completed a compulsory 6-month full-time internship in various tourism companies, including travel agencies. So they spent their fifth semester without attending classes at school.

In the beginning of the research, the author tried to open communication with the students by asking for their profile, their experiences during the internship, their motivation and their needs in the French class to find out their objective needs. Then, the author distributed a questionnaire to them containing questions about the profile, motivations and subjective needs of each student.

Since the start of the research, the author had the idea of implementing the action-oriented approach for teaching professional French in tourism. The author had a semester plan with the final assignments for each class. In addition, although Indonesian and having Indonesian as a mother tongue, the author tried to speak only French throughout the training.

However, when the author met the students in the first session, they had difficulty understanding what the author had explained in French. The author tried to use gestures, to rephrase sentences in French, but we spent too much time explaining things. Then, the author decided to teach bilingually: French-Indonesian. The author always spoke in French and encouraged the students to express themselves in French but when we were stuck the author gave the explanation again in Indonesian.

The author also noted that the action-oriented approach was suitable for the course program but as you have to invite students to communicate a lot during the course, the author decided to apply the communicative approach for a few sessions so that they can communicate more in French. By proposing the action-oriented approach to carrying out these courses, it corresponded to the planned semester program. Some students had to carry out final projects at the end of the training such as creating a tourist leaflet and simulating the tourist guide. The author added these two final projects as the final task of the course.

The methodology of the action perspective allows to realize a real situation as in the professional environment. This meets the needs of the students whether they will be working in a French company or have contact with French-speaking clients or colleagues. "The action-oriented approach considers learners as social actors having to accomplish tasks in a given environment, and in a particular field of action" (Abry, 2007: 21). Students will therefore be used to accomplish projects.

In order to be able to achieve a real business situation, the students must know how to communicate actively in French. "The communicative approach is a designation that applies to the device (s) of methodological choices aimed at developing in the learner the competence to communicate" (Cuq, 2003: 24). To learn to communicate in a professional context, the use of simulations, role plays and speech acts are useful activities during the training. These activities are initiated first by the communicative approach. The author therefore used two didactic approaches to carry out the research project: the communicative approach and the action perspective. The type of assessments the author used during the course are formative and summative assessment. The course assessment was carried out in the form of continuous assessment and the summative assessment was the mid-term exam after the completion of two major global topics and the final exam took place at the end of the training.

In this course, there was no diagnostic assessment because the author did not recruit the students to take the course. This research project was part of their French course, a compulsory subject for semester 6. The students continued the French course they have taken since the first semester. The author first checked the students before starting the course what they had learned in the previous semesters. The author then found that they had never had any professional French tourism training and had only learned general French from the start of semester until semester 4. By relating to the objective of the project, the author wanted to train students to become more communicative in French. So the author created assessments containing the four language skills: listening comprehension, reading comprehension, speaking and writing. For the mid-term exam, the author devoted two sessions to the assessment: oral proficiency, reading comprehension and written production for the first session. Then the next session, assessment of the speaking skills. For the final exam, the same type of assessment. For continuous monitoring, the author assessed the participation of each student according to the tasks they completed each week of class and their presence during the course.

### **3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

The data for the evaluation of learner satisfaction during the course was collected by distributing the questionnaire containing 10 questions at the end of the course. The result showed that the students thought that the training was very interesting. They affirmed that the training was not monotonous and targets the professional objective in particular the tourist guide. They liked the socio-cultural aspect that I told in the course like life in Paris.

Seven out of eight students assessed that the course program was very well organized. A student gave his assessment that the course was well organized. Regarding the hourly volume of the training session, they commented that it was not sufficient. They wanted the French course to be given at least twice a week. The reason they thought like that because there were a lot of interesting topics in the training that would be better covered if the time allotted was much longer. Then, the students gave a very good remark for the explanation of the trainer during the training because they understood the course thanks to the detailed explanation for

certain subjects. They also noted that the experience of life in France was a point of support for a good understanding of certain subjects of the course.

According to the modality of work during the training, they thought that working in groups to carry out a task or a project was very effective instead of working individually. In addition, they noted that the task was very effective in training skills, that is to say that the methodology of the action-oriented perspective was an effective methodology for teaching French as a foreign language with a professional objective, or even specialized French.

The simulation, role-playing and discussion during the training were very well perceived as reasons giving interest to use and communicate more actively in French. It can be said that the communicative approach was also effective for the didactic approach of the training. Regarding the initial expectations, the students found that this French course with action-oriented perspective and communicative approach met their needs very well because the contents and the program of the course are well connected to their major training in the Travel Business Management study program. For this, they said that this training was very useful for their future work after their studies at the school.

Finally, since the students were very satisfied with the course, it gave them a great desire to continue learning French. One student wanted to watch French films to practice his proficiency, the other wanted to try to communicate in French when he meets a native speaker, and the rest wanted to take the French course at school and at the French Institute of Indonesia to continue French training

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

By implementing the communicative and action-oriented approach in teaching French, learners are required to complete a task at the end of certain courses, counting as continuous control. There is also a task that is prepared for exams. Then, the mid-semester exam evaluates all the language skills of the learners including the competence of oral comprehension, written comprehension, written production and oral production. The contents of the exam are those they have learned from session 1 to session 8 with the global themes of: professional contact and advising and informing clients. To assess the oral production, the trainer asks the learners to carry out a simulation of the reservation of tickets in the travel agency to achieve the objective of two global themes: Professional contact and advise, inform customers. In the end, the end-of-semester exam also happens like the mid-semester one by evaluating all the language skills with the contents of the course exam from session 9 until the end of the session with the global themes of: a tourist package and a tourist guide. As the oral production assessment, learners must pass the tour guide simulation.

All assessments relate to the final objectives of the French course at school: to apply knowledge and knowledge of French to the professional environment in the tourism sector. Having a specific audience with its own objective was more interesting because it made it possible to carry out the approach of the course. New knowledge about the tourism sector through discussions and the exchange of information with learners who know the real situation could develop the content of the course.

The implementation of the recent methodology for teaching French has encouraged the author to never stop looking for new things that can be applied in the field of French as a foreign language because language teaching is dynamic. Nowadays, we could access several useful and innovative resources for teaching French as a foreign language.

This research project was a very valuable experience in order to develop and enrich the teaching approach of French as a Foreign Language, in particular the field of specialized French in tourism.

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