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Teaching of French-An Overview

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Abstract:

Though there are various factors such as culture, civilization behind maintenance of human relation, it is Language that contributes, as an effective role, to the development of the same. It is said that ignorance of language is ignorance of human relations. Keeping this in mind, linguists, over centuries, have been experimenting approaches and methodologies to developing the linguistic abilities of learners. French, of course, is not an exception to escape approaches and methods. Teaching of French has lured the attention of the academics in India and abroad owing to the fact that proficiency in French helps learners have rosy future in their academic and professional careers. Thus, this paper makes a sincere attempt to have an overall analysis on the teaching of French in the present arena.

Keywords: Vocabulary, reading and writing, French language, society and culture

1. Introduction

French teachers educate a new generation of students in the French language and culture. Effective communicators of any language need to be familiar with the structural, functional and interactional use of language. Teaching more about a language in lieu of teaching a language, involving actively learners in various communicative activities is of no use. In many of the language classes, teachers are the active speakers and learners are the passive listeners and it is, indeed, a matter of concern that needs to be appropriately rectified. French, being one of the foreign languages opted for by many of the students of professional disciplines these days, has to be taught, keeping in mind the academic and professional requirements of learners. Thus, this paper makes a sincere overview on teaching of French.

2. French Language Teacher Education

By learning a language, one gets the opportunity to learn the culture and civilization of people using that language. Language learning broadens one's mind and widens one's thinking. Among languages of rapid growth and global demand, French has started gaining currency. In developing countries like India, learning of French is desirably insisted on in companies, industries and academic institutes for various personal, professional and academic purposes. There is a demand for French language teachers even for translation purposes. Coursework for aspiring French teachers often includes French grammar, French history, classroom management, lesson planning and educational psychology. Students themselves are aware of the fact that learning of French is a stark necessity and hence opt for courses in French and spend considerable time on learning French, amidst their tight academic schedule. French culture can be well-learned through study of French literature. Learners in French classes practice communicating effectively in French, read French literature and become more familiar with French culture. There are individual French courses available, besides those included in full degree programs.

3. Essential Information

Students of engineering courses are quite aware of the importance of learning foreign languages, especially French and German in order to have a world wide exposure in future. They put forth strenuous efforts to acquire knowledge of French. Students pursuing other majors can often take some French courses to meet general education or elective requirements.

Students in a dedicated French program study French literature, study advanced grammar and conversation and learn about French culture, civilization and traditions. Such courses may be offered mostly or entirely in French. French graduate programs typically require proficiency in French to enroll. Graduate coursework might cover French linguistics, literary theory, French teaching and French civilization. Students might get plenty of opportunities to study abroad in France or Quebec.

Here are some common concepts taught in French classes:

- Vocabulary

- Reading and writing
- Listening and speaking
- History of the French language
- Society and culture
- Business environment
- These components, in order to make French teaching-learning more effective could be very well offered as follows.
- Basic Level
- Advanced Level
- More Advanced Level
- Most Advanced Level

Categorization of learners, in accordance with the linguistic capabilities of learners, might seem to create some sort of complex among learners, but it, as a matter of fact, help them either directly or indirectly acquire knowledge of French, of course, taking its own time. Remedial measures are essential in French teaching, especially when level wise performance is monitored.

4. List of Classes

4.1. Business French

Business French classes provide spoken language and comprehension skills for those using French in the workplace or who want to have the opportunity to create a business collaboration with French companies. Business French classes provide insight into the economy, banking and business practices in France. It introduces students to the basics of French, particularly the words, phrases and concepts for conducting a successful business relationship in French.

4.2. French Literature

Medium of instruction in literature classes is French. Learners read poetry, short fiction, novels and fairy tales from different time periods, including the Middle Ages, the Renaissance and modern literature. Authors may include La Fontaine, Voltaire, Montesquieu, Moliere, Camus and Flaubert. Usually, students discuss the work in class to gain perspective of the historical era and what's going on in the story.

4.3. French Grammar

Romance languages like French have a more different structure than Germanic, Baltic, Celtic, Slavic, Asian and African languages. This French course goes beyond the basics and covers the nuances of French as a language. Students hold discussions with each other and professors, as effective facilitators of teaching-learning process, read and discuss newspaper articles and engage in other forms of communication. French grammar and communication classes are advanced classes, typically taken in the last two or three years of a French degree program.

4.4. French Civilization

This course is more than a French history course, students examine the French economy, vacations, leisure time, food, meals and even films. Students learn about cultural topics like French clothing and events in French history that still affect the people of France and the French-speaking world. Schools may offer this advanced French course in French or English.

4.5. French Study Abroad

Study abroad courses are an immersive language study experience allowing students to become familiar with the language and how it is used every day in a francophone country and culture. Classes are offered completely in French through an affiliated college or university located internationally.

Learners across the world meet and interact and get the opportunity to study French in a classroom setting with native-speaking professors, studying topics that include history, literature, art, music, grammar, writing and pronunciation. They further develop their abilities by sharing with others their experiences and expertise and even stay with or other individuals in a dorm, thus creating a healthy, happy and congenial atmosphere to learn French and communicate in a language that is not their native tongue.

5. Conclusion

In language learning, acquiring proficiency is the ultimate objective. Learning and acquisition are different. Stephen D. Krashen distinguishes between acquisition and learning. Acquisition refers to the natural assimilation of language rules through using language for communication. Learning refers to the formal study of language rules and is a conscious process. Approach refers to theories about the nature of language and language learning that serve as the source of practices and principles in language teaching. We are teaching any language, of course, in ignorance of a vast amount of basic or essential facts about it and it might possibly inhibit the absorption of new material. Therefore, approach and method must suitable planned, experimented and implemented, with necessary situation-based modifications for the benefit of learners. In teaching of any language, 'how' is more important than 'what'.

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