



LINGUISTIC LANDSCAPE OF FRENCH LANGUAGE IN TOURISM EDUCATION

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ABSTRACT

A significant amount of momentum has been gained in French as a Foreign Language in recent times, and it continues to flourish as a language that is highly sought after by young people everywhere. The French language is considered to be an inescapable language in hotel schools, which is why it is interesting to note that the tourism business in India receives the highest number of tourists from France. Additionally, the French food has effectively established itself as an antique cuisine. During the time that Tourism and Hotel Management courses were being developed, the French language was more prevalent in the sense that it gained the most popularity and was believed to be required to be learned as part of the requirements for the course. Under the circumstances that currently exist, is the French language still a preferred choice? The purpose of this paper is to provide a response to this question and to take into consideration the various facets of the French language. This piece of writing is one of a kind since it employs the qualitative research method to portray the purpose in a manner that is both moving and compelling. This engaging narrative article is an interesting one to read and treasure because it is interwoven with primary and secondary sources and contains rich theoretical insights.

KEYWORDS: French, Language, Tourism, Education

THE PROLIFIC PREAMBLE

One of the most important components of education in the field of tourism and hotel management is the ability to communicate effectively. In order to communicate effectively, it is necessary to articulate one's thoughts, ideas, words, and voice. Therefore, languages play a crucial part in strengthening the mental process of a speaker, which is necessary in order to fulfil this.

In the study of languages lies the key for the solution of evolution, psychology and many other ologies about mankind which have beset the scientists for ages... [1]

Liveliness can be found in every language. It creates a network, brings people together, and provides entertainment. There are a great number of languages spoken in India, and they are dispersed across different regions of the country. On the other hand, not everyone is proficient in languages other than their mother tongue and the language that is officially recognized. Despite the fact that every state in India makes every effort to promote its own language, English continues to be the dominant language in the workplace and in other areas of life. In order to compete with more alluring career opportunities in other countries, the French language has emerged as a catalyst for the minds of the general population in India. This is a continuation of the fact that people have accepted, enjoyed, and are continuing to cultivate French to the best extent possible. In the tourism industry, this is especially true. There is no question that the French cuisine is the factor that should be attributed. Here, it is said that the movement of French people as group

tours and the antiquity of the French language have made it imperative to compromise in choosing French as the foreign language of study for tourism professionals. This is because French is an ancient language. In order to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the situation at hand, the paper will now proceed to provide an explanation of the history of French cuisine.

METICULOUS METHODOLOGY

To investigate the reason for teaching French language to students studying Tourism and Hotel Management, and to gain a comprehensive understanding of the results of teaching and learning French language in this field, a qualitative research method is considered the most suitable approach. This method involves using qualitative research tools such as interviews, observation, participation techniques, and content analysis to uncover interesting findings. In addition to these primary sources, several secondary sources such as reputable books, journals, and relevant publications are carefully employed to create this reliable research paper.

THE CONTINUUM HYPOTHESIS

The purpose of this study is to investigate the prospects of teaching and learning French in the tourism and hotel industry in India. It does so by maximizing and exemplifying the relevance of teaching and learning French.



FORAY INTO FRENCH CUISINE AND LANGUAGE

Creating dishes that are brimming with richness and variety is the hallmark of French cuisine, which is a singular form of culinary art that combines flavorful and nourishing ingredients with dexterity. Given that the very word "cuisine" comes from the French language, it is not surprising that French cuisine continues to be regarded as one of the most popular food types all over the other countries. The preparation of true French cuisine is regarded as both an art and a craft. French cuisine is not equal to the food itself; rather, it encompasses more than just the food itself. Over the course of its history, French cuisine has undergone a process of self-reinvention, resulting in its transformation into a product that is well recognized and highly sought after all over the world. The nomenclature of French cuisine as one of the World's Intangible Cultural Heritage was bestowed upon it by the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) in March of 2010 [2]. This particular cuisine has been there for a long time, particularly in Puducherry, and even now, it is highly sought after by tourists who come to this hamlet. The reasons behind the honor bestowed on French cuisine, that of finding itself a place in the UNESCO list, are that – French food is the perfect choice of cuisine for any social, political and cultural gathering, French food brings people together with great bonhomie thereby stimulating social synchronization and solidity, French food pairs wonderfully well with wines and French food is categorically served course by course, beginning with hors d'oeuvres, flamboyantly served with an aperitif (hard beverages served while commencing the meal) and grandly concluding with dessert and liqueurs in a manner which is solely unique to French cuisine [3]. UNESCO experts commend French gastronomy as a,

Social custom aimed at celebrating the most important moments in the lives of individuals and groups [4]

It is interesting to note that French cuisine is considered to be one of the most influential cuisines in the world, and it has established itself as a component of the curriculum of hotel management all over the world. French is used to describe each and every component. French is used to read out the hierarchy of the kitchen. As a result, they are able to successfully occupy a crucial role in the education of hospitality professionals. The foundation of the French East India Company by King Louis XIV on September 7, 1664, deepened the roots of the French as they colonized various parts of India [5]. This occurred in accordance with the French colonization of India. As they expanded, their food also spread at a rapid pace, and the French boast that they were the first to say that

...the French invented the cuisine of culinary professionals...
[6]

TOURISM AND FRENCH LANGUAGE

It is amazing that India has a track record of attracting an increasing number of tourists from other countries year after year [7]. India's wide variety of tourist destinations and its rich cultural legacy are the two most important factors contributing to the country's success in attracting more visitors from other countries. Due to the fact that France is one of the top 10 foreign countries that create the most visitors' footfalls in India, France is particularly significant as a source of tourists. The French nationals have a strong connection to India because they regard it to be their colonized territory. They are more eager to travel to the places that were once their colonies. As a result, the inclusion of French as a foreign language of study for the degree programs in Tourism has been beautifully improved as a result of the broad presence of the French. The flood of visitors from France to India is displayed in Table.1, which illustrates the predominant desire of the French to explore the diverse and different characteristics of India.

Table.1 French Tourists' arrivals to India

S.No	Year	No.of Tourists in lakhs
1	2000	100022
2	2001	102434
3	2002	78194
4	2003	97654
5	2004	131824
6	2005	152258
7	2006	175345
8	2007	204827
9	2008	207802
10	2009	196462
11	2010	225232
12	2011	231423
13	2012	240674
14	2013	248379
15	2014	246101
16	2015	230854

(Source: India Tourism Statics, 2015)

It is very evident that the movement of French visitors is across the length and width of India, which is a very intriguing aspect

that draws attention to itself. The disembarkation of French tourists in many locations of the country is a feature that draws



attention to itself. Forty-four percent of French tourists disembarked at the airport in New Delhi in the year 2015, whereas twenty-six percent in Mumbai, nineteen percent in Chennai, ten percent in Bengaluru, and one point three percent in Kolkata [8]. A striking fact that eloquently depicts the pulsing participation of French tourists in declaring their presence at various sites throughout the country is presented here.

Although the aforementioned facts cannot be considered the sole motivators for the French language to be an essential component of tourism, the French colonies that are portrayed as the "window of French Culture" such as Puducherry require students of tourism to acquire French language skills in order to facilitate an open and honest conversation with French visitors who are not hindered by any language barrier.

RATIONAL

The incorporation of the French language as a subject in the curriculum of hotel management can provide students who are interested in pursuing professions in the hospitality sector with a number of benefits, including the following:

Global Relevance

French is spoken widely across the world, especially in the hospitality industry. Many luxury hotel chains, gourmet restaurants, and international organizations use French as a primary or secondary language.

Enhanced Communication Skills

Learning French equips students with the ability to communicate effectively with French-speaking guests, colleagues, and suppliers, thereby improving customer service and interpersonal skills.

Cultural Understanding

Studying French allows students to gain insights into French culture, customs, and traditions. This cultural competence is essential for providing personalized and culturally sensitive services to French-speaking clientele.

Career Opportunities

Proficiency in French opens up a wide range of career opportunities in the global hospitality industry. It can lead to employment in French-speaking countries, multinational hotel chains, international event management companies, and tourism boards.

Competitive Advantage

In a competitive job market, candidates with language skills often have a competitive edge. Employers value multilingual employees who can cater to diverse clientele and contribute to the internationalization of their businesses.

Networking Opportunities

Speaking French enables students to network with French-speaking professionals in the hospitality sector, attend industry events, and participate in international internships or exchange programs.

Preparation for Advanced Studies

For students interested in pursuing further education or research in hospitality management, proficiency in French may be a prerequisite for admission to certain programs or institutions, especially those in French-speaking countries.

TEACHING FRENCH

The Institute of Hotel Management, which is currently regarded as one of the best universities in India for hotel management, was founded in the 1960s by the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India in key cities around the nation, including Delhi and Chennai. A French language class was added in response to the desire for more exposure to French cuisine. The addition of French as a second foreign language was solely justified since students majoring in Hotel Management were heavily involved in continental cuisine. Words like "bon appétit," "gastronomy," "gourmet," etc., are still used often in both academia and the business world.

The fact that the subject also featured a written exam for one hundred marks was the most difficult obstacle. Due to the fact that the pupils had never been exposed to the French language in the course of their schooling, this was considered to be a difficult task. For the most part, it was English and the corresponding mother tongues. Despite the fact that the National Council was presented with a number of requests to reduce the amount of content, no compromise was reached. Up until the 1990s, this was the norm. Following that, the 100 points were reduced to fifty points for the theoretical paper [9]. What happened? The theory component was eliminated beginning in the year 2000, and moving forward, the subject was presented in the form of an oral practical paper. As of right now, there is no longer any practical paper available in French. Within the context of the Front office subject, it is listed as a unit. The non-adaptability of the language among the pupils is brought to light by this slow decrease or declining phenomenon, which also has a significant impact on the usage of the language.

FACTUAL FINDINGS

The personal interviews conducted with the users of the French language offered valuable insights on certain aspects of the language. A few student respondents assayed that they learned French. The personal interviews that were carried out with people who actually use the French language provided extremely helpful insights about some features of the language. A couple of the students who responded to the survey stated that the only reason they learnt French was because it was required of them based on the course curriculum. They were forced to study it, rather than learning it because they were interested in it [10]. There are a few respondents who hold key positions in the tourism and hotel industry who have expressed their opinion that they do not use the French language in their day-to-day routine because they have forgotten what they had learnt and also because there is a lack of necessity to speak French [11].



CANDID CONCLUSION

Perfect practice is necessary for achieving mastery of a language. The findings of this study make it abundantly clear that the sole purpose of teaching French to students of Tourism and Hotel Management is to get a degree, and not for the purpose of a lifelong application. This conclusion is confirmed by the number of hours that are given for instruction in the language concerned. The answer to this shortcut approach to express learning is to enroll in a full-fledged language programme that was designed specifically for French. It is possible to incorporate French language classes into the curriculum for hotel management by taking dedicated language classes, participating in language immersion programmes, completing internships in places where French is spoken, and incorporating French language materials into coursework that is connected to hospitality. Language competency should be combined with practical skills that are applicable to the hospitality sector, such as customer service, cultural awareness, and business communication. It is necessary that the curriculum be designed in such a way that brings these two aspects together. Within the context of the present day, the French language has not established a major position.

However, as the saying goes...

The fetishizing of the French language has its parallel in the adoration of French Cuisine, both presumed simply not excellence but also superiority and order.
[12]

As the proverb goes, the French language is a good language that was once swaying with prosperity. This is true. In the present day, it is surrounded by a multitude of competitors, such as German, Japanese, Spanish, and so on, which are making their way into the academic world and the business world. It is standing tall and inviting everyone to seek a profession that is both promising and lucrative in another country.

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