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**Attainment of Course Learning Outcome Using Awakening to Languages
Approach among Hotel Management Students in Malaysia**

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Abstract

The Awakening to Languages (ATL) approach has seen positive outcomes in foreign language classes. However, research on the approach in the Malaysian context is scarce, especially among university students. Hence, this study analyses the approach's effectiveness after it has been implemented, through descriptive analysis, specifically regarding the attainment of one of the course learning outcomes (CLO), simulation, for a third language course in a Malaysian university. The result indicates that the marks achieved by all classes for their CLO 1 were highly satisfactory. This suggests a positive correlation between this approach and oral language skills.

Keywords: Awakening to Languages; Course Learning Outcome; Outcome-Based Education

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1.0 Introduction

Outcome-based education (OBE) is an educational philosophy that focuses on the desired outcomes or learning goals rather than just the content or process of instruction. It emphasises the measurable results students should achieve at the end of their educational journey. Since OBE is a framework which outlines the desired outcomes, it allows teachers the freedom to construct their teaching delivery style to achieve those outcomes. One of the approaches in teaching delivery that has gained significant attention in the sphere of multilingual awareness curriculum is the Awakening to Languages (ATL) approach. ATL is a holistic language learning approach that recognises the importance of language skills in today's interconnected world and aims to awaken students' potential to become multilingual and culturally aware individuals (Candelier, 2004). By integrating language learning across different subjects and fostering a learner-centred environment, the ATL approach provides students with a meaningful and immersive language learning experience beyond traditional language instruction. While traditional language classroom focuses solely on the target language, the ATL approach

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allows learners to be exposed to different languages, similar and different from their first language and the target language. Among the objectives of the ATL approach are to incite language awareness and also the ability to comprehend the various linguistic elements that function similarly or differently from one language to another either in terms of vocabulary, morphology or orthography.

In OBE, foreign language learning involves communication and oral interaction as its outcomes, however, excelling in this area can be challenging for learners. Indeed, many learners experience anxiety and nervousness when speaking in a foreign language, which can hinder their ability to excel in oral interactions. A study conducted by Horwitz et al. (1986) found that anxiety was a significant predictor of foreign language performance, especially in speaking. Furthermore, learners who are not motivated to improve their oral proficiency may struggle to excel in oral interactions. A study by Gardner (1985) found that motivation was a key predictor of foreign language proficiency, particularly in speaking. Cultural differences can also pose a challenge for learners in oral interactions. Learners who are unfamiliar with the cultural norms and expectations of the target language may face challenges in effective communication. On the other hand, the ATL approach, both motivation and cultural difference are key products of it. A study from Ben Maad (2022) shows that early exposure to the approach would give a significant boost to motivation to learn foreign languages. Another study by Silva and Lourenço (2023) highlights that the ATL approach would be effective in, amongst other, improving participants' communication skills. The authors suggest that the approach is one of the best tools to develop intercultural, plurilingual awareness and global citizenship values apart from its benefits of improving collaborative and communicative skills. The approach could also be one of the answers to the problem Guigue put forward in his research's conclusion: teachers encounter difficulty in formulating and measuring affective learning outcomes, such as attitudes, values, and beliefs (2020). By having a concrete approach that was designed to encompass these elements, the formulation of learning outcomes as viewed in OBE would be facilitated.

However, these studies have been conducted in a context where the foreign language learned has relative similarity with the language(s) spoken by the learners. As such, this study aims to explore another context where the foreign language learned has very little similarity with the language(s) spoken by the learners. Furthermore, there are no studies that have been conducted to relate OBE, specifically for French foreign language classrooms in Malaysian public universities, and the ATL approach as one of the instruments in teaching delivery. From this knowledge gap, this study is done to investigate the attainment of a specific course learning outcome (CLO) regarding oral interactions whilst adopting the ATL approach in teaching delivery. Specifically, this study is done to answer the following questions:

What is the percentage range for achieving the CLO 1 using the ATL approach, and what are the highest and lowest values?

How can the ATL approach aid in achieving the CLO 1 among Hotel Management students learning French in Malaysian public universities?

Before the implementation of the approach, several hypotheses were made in response to the research questions, and they are as follows:

All students would achieve the CLO 1 with no apparent difference between the lowest and the highest values

Students would be more motivated to learn French as a foreign language while maintaining a consistent level of interest in it.

The results of these research questions would contribute to the overall practices of foreign language acquisition implemented by teachers in Malaysia with in mind that the ATL approach could be one of the instruments that they can use in their teaching delivery. With the ATL approach, teachers could be one of the instruments that they can use in their teaching delivery. With the ATL approach, teachers could diversify their teaching practices without hampering the achievement of the CLOs. In addition, the results from this study would shed light on the intricacy of the ATL approach's implementation in a non-European context where results may lead in parallel or in opposition to what has been concluded, thus, enriching the current corpus.

2.0 Literature Review

OBE is based on the principles of defining the desired learning outcomes, planning the learning experiences that lead to these outcomes, and assessing whether the desired outcomes have been achieved. It has been widely adopted by educational institutions as a means of improving the quality of education. As such, universities in Malaysia have been implementing it since early 2000 and especially during the peak of COVID-19 spread to ensure the quality of education (Chan Paul Leong, 2022). It has also shown improvement in students' learning experiences by providing clear learning outcomes that are meaningful and relevant to students (Tang, 2021). However, Yu (2020) critiqued that OBE has a downside where it would not foster learners' subjectivity due to focus on the more predictable outcomes. As such, the ATL approach would be a perfect resource for teachers to resolve this problem. Indeed, in foreign language classrooms, the approach promotes not only the target language but also languages that the learners have encountered or internalised. This would mean there would be a shift of paradigm onto a learner-centred learning experience rather than mere unconditional outcomes.

Concerning the approach, ATL is an approach to language education that emphasises the importance of developing an awareness of languages and cultures. The language awareness approach was first founded by E. Hawkins (1984) who posits that language learning is not just about acquiring vocabulary and grammar, but also about developing an understanding of the cultural and social contexts in which languages are used. In later years, the approach was introduced by the Council of Europe (Candelier, 2004) and was designed to help learners develop a deeper appreciation for the languages and cultures they are studying, which can improve their language proficiency and intercultural competence. Recent studies highlight the implementation of the ATL approach as part of language awareness curriculum both in primary and secondary schools for which the approach was primarily designed (Coelho & Ortega, 2020; Bratož et al., 2021; Carbonara, 2023). These studies concluded that the ATL approach helps learners not only to recognise and comprehend the various functions of languages in general but also to instil positive attitudes towards foreign languages and global citizenship values such as respect for otherness. As such, the participants of this paper could benefit from the ATL approach as it would

enhance their professionalism in their field where they would need to cater to the needs of clients from different backgrounds. Such values are important, if not compulsory to execute their job with the utmost professionalism. Since the majority of these studies were conducted in European educational institutions' context, the use of the OBE framework per se is non-existent. Hence, no studies have been done to investigate the achievement of CLO as presented in the OBE framework whilst adopting the ATL approach as one of the instruments in teaching delivery. Several studies have investigated the effectiveness of the ATL approach for foreign language acquisition. For example, a study by Woll and Paquet (2021) which uses the ATL approach as the basis of their innovative plurilingual consciousness-raising tasks, highlights the premise of improvement in learners' language metalinguistic competency through reflections of one's language and other languages. The study found that the ATL approach improved indirectly learners' ability to notice and use language features, such as grammar and vocabulary, and helped them develop a more sophisticated understanding of the language they were studying. The majority of these studies focused on primary and secondary learners whose results may not coincide with our present participants. As such, a study by Oyama and Yamamoto (2020) investigated the effects of ATL on learners' metalinguistic competency in a university context. The study emphasises that the ATL approach would help learners, even for a short duration, develop a more positive attitude towards language learning and increase their metalinguistic competence which in turn would facilitate foreign language acquisition.

3.0 Methodology

This study is a quantitative study using descriptive analysis as its approach. Descriptive analysis in quantitative research involves summarising and presenting data in a meaningful and informative manner. This method aims to describe the characteristics of a dataset, such as central tendency (mean, median, mode), dispersion (range, variance, standard deviation), and distribution (histograms, frequency tables). It provides a comprehensive overview of the data without making inferences or generalisations beyond what is observed. This understanding is crucial for interpreting the data accurately and making informed decisions. Researchers can use descriptive statistics to compare different groups or conditions within their data, helping to highlight similarities or differences. Descriptive analysis often serves as the foundation for more advanced statistical analyses and hypothesis testing. By understanding the basic characteristics of the data, researchers can determine the most appropriate methods for further analysis.

For this study, descriptive analysis is done to analyse the attainment of the first course learning outcome (CLO 1) of the French course for hotel management second-year students during October 2022-February 2023 semester. They are all students from Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM), Cawangan Pulau Pinang studying diploma in hotel management. A purposive sample of 59 students from three different classes was analysed. The students in each class were further split into two groups for administrative reasons. Table 1 shows the number of students in each group and each class.

Class	Group	Number of students
PHM1103A	PHM1103A1	11
	PHM1103A2	11
PHM1103B	PHM1103B1	10
	PHM1103B2	8
PHM1103C	PHM1103C1	10
	PHM1103C2	9

Before the CLO 1 assessment, participants were exposed to the activities and exercises adopting the ATL approach from the first week until the fourth week of their study. During the first week, the exercise from Annex 1 was used as lessons were focused on expressions of greetings and taking leaves. During the second and third weeks, the exercise from Annex 2 was used as lessons were focused on conjugation and groups of verbs in French.

Then, their assessments' marks mapped to their CLOs and specifically the CLO 1 assessment related to the affective domain are analysed. The assessment (simulation) was done on the fourth week out of 14 weeks for a semester, as a graded formative assessment. The reason for focusing solely on simulation is that the ATL approach was emphasised more during those weeks, while more conventional methodologies were adopted in other weeks. The assessment of the simulation was conducted in two parts. The first part involved correcting the students' dialogue script. The second part involved evaluating their performance of the written dialogue. Their survey forms, which the university sends to students after each semester, are also analysed to relate the effectiveness of the ATL approach in teaching delivery with students' satisfaction and expectation of the course as satisfaction and expectation are key indicators of their degree of motivation in foreign language learning. Adopting descriptive analysis of both the CLO 1 assessment mark and the survey answers would shed light to the effectiveness of the ATL approach and allow comparisons with results from other European-context studies. Thus, it would prevent from making hasty generalisations.

4.0 Findings and Discussions

4.1 ATL exercises

There were exercises (cf. Annex 1) adopting the ATL approach that were utilized punctually throughout the first few weeks of classes where students learned principally about day-to-day expressions such as greetings and polite phrases. Since the ATL approach pertains to the awareness of the student's linguistic contacts, the exercises were focused on similar Neo-Latin languages vis-à-vis French language and languages commonly present in the students' language community such as Malay, English and Arabic. The exercises also raise awareness of the similarity between different countries in one's language practices and trigger an intercultural discussion as well as global-issues debates between students thus breaking their stereotypical representations of France as a "country that speaks French only". In this sense, it is noteworthy to mention the importance of the lecturer's role as mediator and facilitator of the discussions entailing the activity.

One of the exercises (cf. Annex 2), in parallel with autonomous learning, is an exercise to introduce verbs in French and notably the concept of conjugation which is not apparent in the languages that the students master. Indeed, the students are all local Malaysians who can speak Malay proficiently and English albeit to various degrees. The exercises entail mainly an observation of different forms of regular verbs whilst having recourse to their first social languages i.e., Malay and English. Again, the lecturer's role is to be the mediator of oral statements from the students at the end of which a conclusion needs to be agreed upon, summarised and aligned closely to the textbook definition or grammar rules.

The outcome of these exercises aided the students in discovering new vocabulary and grammar part using observation and critical thinking. Moreover, the exercises incite discussions and sharing of thoughts incorporating students' previous linguistic, cultural and general knowledge. This created an open and safe space for the students to express themselves in class thus making oral expression exercises easier throughout the whole semester.

4.2 CLO

In overview, for the course, there are 3 CLOs plotted to 4 different assessments as shown in Table 2. The mapping of assessments to its CLO is decided beforehand by the academic division of the university. As shown in Table 2, two assessments evaluate the oral communication of the students in the target foreign language. However, only CLO 1 is the subject of this research as it is the most relevant, chronologically speaking, vis-à-vis the ATL approach implemented. The approach served as an introduction to both the target foreign language and the language itself, and it was implemented over a few weeks of the semester.

Table 2. Map of CLOs and its assessment

Course Learning Outcome	Description	Assessment	Taxonomy Level
CLO 1	Demonstrate social skills while interacting using the French language in the field of Hotel Management.	Simulation	A3
CLO 2	Demonstrate good values and attitudes while interacting using the French language in the field of Hotel Management.	Listening Test	A3
CLO 3	Demonstrate the basic ability to write, read, listen, and speak the French language in various discourses in the field of Hotel Management.	Role Play	A3
		Written Test	A3

Figure 1 indicates the result of the simulation assessment held during the fourth week of the semester. According to the result, it is stated that out of a maximum of 20 marks, the lowest mean among all the groups is 14.2; whereas the highest mean is 15.4. To answer the first research question, the range of percentage for achieving the CLO 1 using the ATL approach is 71%-77% where the lowest is 71% and the highest is 77%. This signifies that the first hypothesis is true.

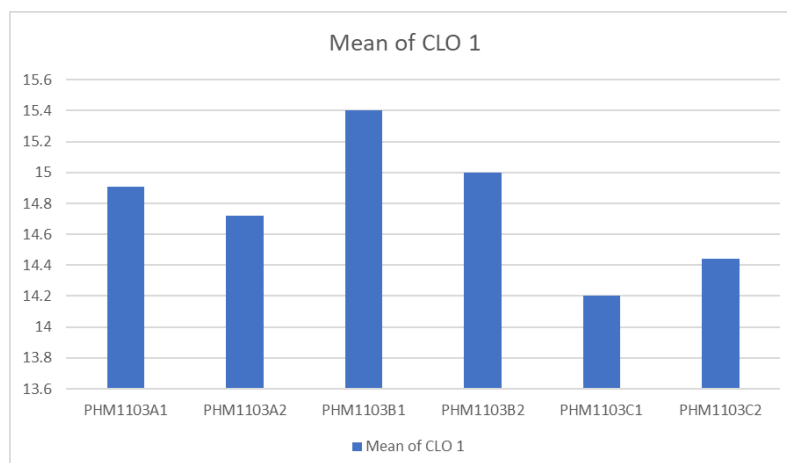


Fig. 1: Mean of CLO 1 for each group

The university conducts, at the end of every semester, an online survey for students to evaluate the lecturer and the course on the university's online platform. Following the scale: below 60 as weak, 60-69 as average, 70-79 as good, 80-89 as very good, and 90-100 as excellent, as shown in Table 3, all class groups (PHM1103A1, A2, B1, B2, C1 and C2) agreed that the teaching and learning activities were on the scale of excellent. Of course, the result would depend on the overall activities conducted during the whole semester. However, and to answer the second research question, adopting the ATL approach at the beginning of the semester would have contributed greatly to the percentages as it could be one of the students' motivation boosters in learning French as a foreign language. This signifies that the second hypothesis is true. In addition, UiTM, as a public university that was built solely to aid the Bumiputera population in Malaysia with the lowest tuition fees, one might argue its quality for higher education. Adopting the ATL approach and how it was experienced by students prove that the quality of education is sufficient, thus, ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education for all as promoted in one of the Sustainable Development Goals of the United Nations. This study would provide excellent evidence of how the ATL approach would help in achieving a high-quality education experience. This practice would be considered a novel practice among foreign language teachers and could guarantee the achievement of CLO without disturbing the curriculum. Furthermore, no studies are being conducted on the ATL approach among Malaysian students, thus, this present study will allow a comparison of results and enrich the current corpus on the ATL approach. Another observation worth mentioning is that the survey is not directly proportionate to the mean result of CLO 1 obtained but ensures a place in the percentage range of the mean result.

Description	A1	A2	B1	B2	C1	C2
Item 1 – The lecturer explains the course content	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 2 – The lecturer explains the outcomes of the course	95	95.45	97.5	90.62	95	100
Item 3 – The lecturer explains the methods of assessment for the course	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 4 – The lecturer teaches according to plan	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 5 – The lecturer actively involves students in the learning process	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 6 – The lecturer creates an environment for students to ask questions and offer opinions	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 7 – The lecturer delivers the content interestingly	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 8 – The lecturer's delivery style challenges the mind	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	90	100
Item 9 – The lecturer provides feedback for each assessment/assignment/project	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 10 – The lecturer helps students master the learning content	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
Item 11 – Overall, I enjoyed the teaching style of this lecturer	95	95.45	97.5	93.75	95	100
TOTAL	95	95.45	97.5	93.47	94.55	100

5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations

The ATL approach is, in its application, exercises that need to be preconceived according to the student's linguistic and cultural background and the syllabus content. As such, implementing these exercises could be seen as beneficial for the students in achieving the CLO as proven in the mean marks of their simulation assessment. While the lowest mark may arguably be classified as high, the highest, however, was not exceedingly satisfactory. Indeed, the difference between the highest and lowest mean marks is not significant. Nevertheless, the CLO can still be considered as achieved since it is more than the average mark. From the data, one could observe a positive relationship between the ATL approach in teaching delivery and oral language skills as one of the learning outcomes. This is partly because there was no abrupt language transfer, especially regarding an important linguistic concept such as conjugation. A study from Garcia (2009) which proves that multiple multilingual education eases the transferability between the knowledge and student, consolidates this finding. It should be noted as well that these exercises instil an open-minded attitude and a safe atmosphere for the students to express their thoughts and practice French. This could also be one of the factors in the achievement of the CLO.

In light of the result of CLO 1 and the online survey, it has been proven that the ATL approach is effective in foreign language classes as it helps the students not only to overcome their shyness and afraid of having to detach themselves from their mother language but also facilitates their journey on discovering the universality of the language itself. However, the survey was conducted at the end of the semester which does not particularly summarise the effectiveness of the approach post-implementation. Indeed, other factors would affect the survey as 10 weeks have passed since the implementation. To address the flaw, it is recommended to conduct a questionnaire immediately after implementing the ATL approach to gauge its effectiveness. Also, an experimental design would shed light on the concrete effectiveness of the ATL approach as it would highlight the difference between the two samples. It is also noteworthy to mention that the results from this study are limited to comparison with other studies with the ATL approach as its focus. As such, a proper in-depth quantitative analysis is recommended for future research.

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Paper Contribution to Related Field of Study

This paper proves a positive relationship between the ATL approach and oral language skills in the context of foreign language learning.

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Annex 1

Activité d'éveil aux langues

A. Place the different expressions according to the moment of the day according to the different languages.



Bonjour
Good Morning

Buon Giorno

صباح الخير



FRANÇAIS
ANGLAIS
MALAIS
ITALIEN
ESPAGNOL
ARABE

Selamat Petang

Buenas Tardes

Good Evening

Selamat Pagi

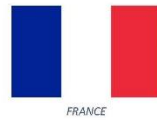
مساء الخير

Buenos Dias

Bonsoir

Buona Sera

B. Observe the informal greetings used in each country.



FRANCE



ROYAUMES UNIS



MALAISIE

Salut

Hello

Hi/Hai

Hola

Ciao

Salam

1. Imagine and match other greetings used in France.

2. According to you, why do we use the same greetings although from different countries ?

[] Everyone speaks the same language.

[] People travel a lot.

[] We are exposed to different languages and cultures via media (television, radio, Internet...)

[] Others (please specify below)

Annex 2

Question

A Répondez aux questions.

1. What is a verb or "kata kerja"?
2. Can you give 3 examples of verbs?
3. How do we say "saya makan kek" in English?
4. How do we say "dia makan kek" in English?
5. From your answer in 3 and 4, does the verb have the same spelling?
6. If yes, why? If no, why?
7. Type in Google Translate Malay-French, "saya makan".
8. Type in Google Translate Malay-French, "mereka makan".
9. From your answer in 7 and 8, does the verb have the same spelling?
10. If yes, why? If no, why?
11. Do verbs in Malay are identical to verbs in English and French? Why?

B Répondez aux questions.

Je parle à Victor.

Attends, elle parle très vite !

Je pense donc je suis.

Elles parlent de la professeure.

Nous donnons un cours de soutien aux élèves en réinsertion scolaire.

Vous parlez de moi ?

Elle présente un grand malheur pour la société.

Il pense à son avenir.

Tu parles à qui ?

Vous pensez que ça soit une meilleure solution ?

Il présente le plat aux gourmands.

Ils pensent quoi ?

Ils présentent des arguments faibles.

Oui, nous parlons tous la même langue.

Elle pense mourir.

Elles pensent suffisamment bien.

Vous donnez votre âme au diable !

Il rêve d'aller au musée du Louvre.

Tu donnes un cadeau ?

Ils rêvent tous de la même chose : un bon métier.

Est-ce qu'ils donnent un pourboire ?

Souvent, il donne la clé à la concierge.

Nous rêvons de vieillir ensemble.

Ils parlent sans fin !

Nous pensons que la ville va être urbanisée bientôt.

Elles donnent sur un trottoir.

Tu rêves !

Nous présentons sincèrement nos peu d'offres.

Je donne mon cœur à ma femme.

Elles rêvent de Paris ?

Elles présentent l'histoire succinctement.

Elle donne sûrement le meilleur.

Je rêve d'un cadeau.

Vous rêvez d'une voiture ou d'un avion ?

Il parle de sa vie morose.

Tu présentes un fait scandaleux.

Vous présentez le sujet, s'il vous plaît.

Aujourd'hui, je présente ma thèse aux professeurs.

Elle rêve jusqu'à l'infini.