

## ACTION-ORIENTED APPROACH IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING

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**Abstract** Today, increasing communication among people from various countries of the world increase not only the need of foreign language learning but also the methods, approaches and techniques. In parallel with these needs, Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (C.E.F.R.) suggests Action-Oriented Approach where the learners are “social agents”<sup>1</sup>. Learners/users are responsible for their own learning in this approach where the social dimension is first mentioned in language teaching. The need to use the language that emerged while fulfilling the tasks makes learning process effective and the learner active. Action oriented approach considers the learner as a social agent in classroom where learning is a social learning environment and develops linguistic and pragmatic skills besides communicative skills

**Keywords:** action oriented approach, acquisition, foreign language teaching

### Introduction

Foreign language teaching / learning on the basis of which there is people’s need of communication with each other has constantly changed in parallel with the development of technology and people's needs. In foreign language teaching/learning there isn’t any approach which failed until today. Thus, if we take into account the approach used in language teaching, learners accomplish to learn a new language in a limited way to some extent whatever approach they use in language learning. Language teaching is also an area that is difficult to evaluate the success. Looking at the structure and language usage formats that they use, we might classify learners as adequate or inadequate language user. Indeed, language has the cultural, social, and linguistic features in addition to reception and producing skills. In the old language teaching

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<sup>1</sup> C.E.F.R., 2000,9

program in which used the approach based on only the skills of reception, later in the production skills-based approach the results were quite successful, but today this approach does not meet the current needs. The needs of people on earth have constantly making the profile of language user change. When considered the time between from the translation of religious books to the usage of language for military purposes and from communicative approach to action oriented approach, the most important thing to be considered is to find the answer of what kind of a language learner needed. At this point it is observed that a number of partnerships in which people can travel in a relaxed way across countries, make trade and benefit from educational services in the framework of cooperation are needed. Thus, language speaking individuals are expected to have social, pragmatic and linguistic skills in addition to their communication skills. It is thought that cultural differences can be tolerated, differences in language teaching can create wealth and they can be considered as common universal values. In this context, action-oriented approach adopted by the European Union should be adopted first by language tutorial and necessary programs should be prepared to raise language users with these acquisitions.

Foreign language teaching is based on skills intrinsically. However when the action oriented approach carefully examined, it is observed that the language of instruction focused on both in skills and knowledge. Therefore, action-oriented approach creating a common point in the phase of acquisition of skills and learning the knowledge calls the learners as “social actors”<sup>2</sup>. “Actor means a person performing and animating some duties. Since foreign language is learned through some duties and actions as well, it handles the learners as (social) people who should perform tasks”<sup>3</sup>. Learning and acquisition are the modification implicit or deliberate in subconscious and conscious mind occurred with the help of the skills and knowledge in the process of fulfilment of this task. That a large part of our brains are subconscious and that the lack of forgetting in this part makes it appropriate for language acquisition. “Since 90

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<sup>2</sup> C.E.F.R., 2000, p. 9

<sup>3</sup> Delibaş, 2013, p. 1

percent of the brain is devoted to the subconscious mind, only 10 percent is involved with conscious thoughts”<sup>4</sup>. And also while our subconscious mind is sensitive to the image and action, conscious mind focuses on vocabulary and writings in learning process. When these facts are taken into account, Subconscious mind must to be active in this action oriented approach. And this is possible if given much more attention to the acquisition of skills than learning of knowledge. Therefore actions in action-oriented approach facilitate the language acquisition process. In this process language users are likely to be unwittingly exposed to the linguistic skills they will need when performing these actions, both as a sender and as a receiver. This makes language learning to be learnt in a subconsciously way. Krashen explains this feature of acquisition a language by saying “Language acquisition is a subconscious process; language acquirers are not usually aware of the fact that they are acquiring language, but are only aware of the fact that they are using the language for communication. He also makes clear the difference between learning and using a language. In this process of acquisition and learning “language is not only a means of communication but a tool of social action at the same time”<sup>5</sup>. Bourguignon is also emphasize the same characteristic by saying “In action oriented approach communication is at the service for action” (2006, p. 64). It shouldn’t forget “the action came before the language in the process of the evolution of humanity and it constitutes the first stage of the interaction between the people, first the action is revealed then the language develops” (Moreno; Dökme; as cited in Sayınsoy, 2003, p. 116). This phrase shows the learner and the teacher how important the action is.

Learner- Teacher, Learning and Acquisition in Action Oriented Approach In this approach in which knowledge and skill blended, the learner can no longer be called only the constructor of knowledge, but can also be called as the one who can put together new information with existing and can carry acquired knowledge to future learning process. Teachers are the facilitators and guides that guide the learning

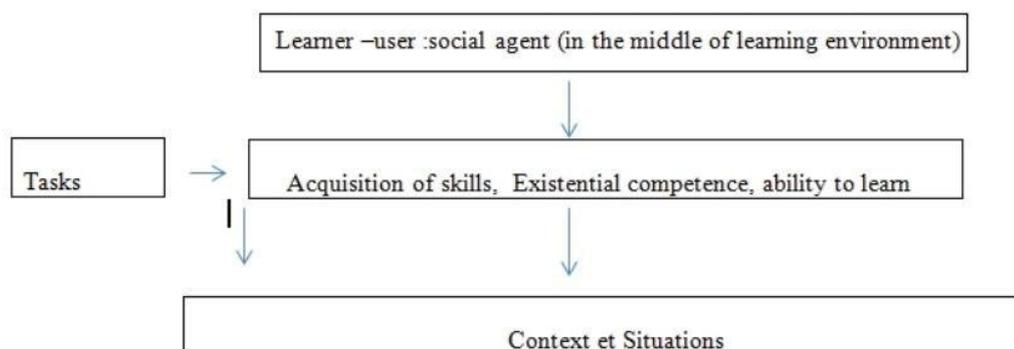
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<sup>4</sup> Elliot, 2012, p. 22

<sup>5</sup> Alrabadi, 2012, p. 1

process, form the need, take an active role with the learners in the learning process and their task is to facilitate the acquisition of real or near-real learning environments for the acquisition of language skills. While acquisition word emphasizes the acquisition of the language in a natural way, the learning word emphasizes the dominance of the knowledge dimension. Beside those who think that foreign language can be acquired like Krashen, there are also the ones who argue that this is not possible. “Some second language theorists have assumed that children acquire, while adults can only learn. The acquisition-learning hypothesis claims, however, that adults also acquire, that the ability to "pick-up" languages does not disappear at puberty. This does not mean that adults will always be able to achieve native-like levels in a second language. It does mean that adults can access the same natural "language acquisition device" that children use” (Krashen, 2009, p. 10). But it is possible for adults to acquire a second language, though not as fast as children. For them it is only need to establish either natural language environments or the environments which are closed to natural language environments. These language environments are also built in terms of both tasks and needs in action oriented method.

**Components of Action-Oriented Approach** The action-oriented approach has cultural, factional, linguistic, pragmatics and sociolinguistic components. With these components there is also the social actors who perform the tasks together, and the social environment (class) in which these social actors are performed their tasks. In 2010, Pecheur showed the Action-oriented approach as follows.



This triple relationship of the scheme is as follows 1. Pass from man as an actor reacting to an acting actor 2. The interaction between the user and the environment is thought of as a task to be accomplished. Grammar is considered secondary to the task at hand; 3. This scheme applies to both the user and the learner. Indeed, the learner is a user who performs tasks using the language and the language class is considered the first social environment or the first situational context in which the learner will have tasks to perform, such as tasks between learner-teachers and, between learners themselves.

### Conclusion

Action-oriented approaches which handle language without ignoring its social context give priority usage of language and action rather than grammar. It eases the load of purely linguistic knowledge by means of actions. The difference between usage and learning words closely related with pragmatic components of language. It emphasized the importance of daily usage of language by learners. Because this new language being learnt perhaps the only common point that individual who is different in terms of culture and mother tongue. This common point should be controlled and oriented by teacher meticulously. It shouldn't be forgotten that this approach is based on the tasks.

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