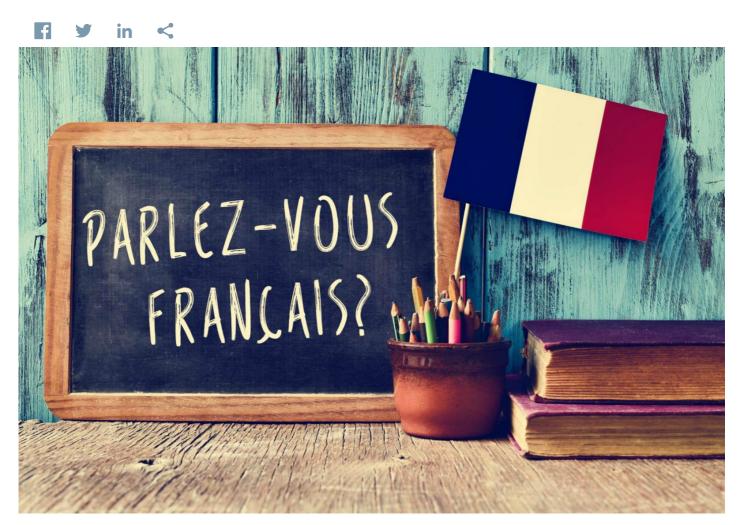# A Unique Video-Based Approach Makes French Easier

Yale University

In an effort to break away from traditional "classroom French," Yale University language professor and researcher Pierre Capretz created "French in Action," a video-based curriculum that teaches French syntax, vocabulary and culture. Students are not required to memorize grammatical rules and vocabulary lists; instead they are led to learn French from the situations presented in the videos.

This series of programs was developed at Yale University between 1960 and 1983, in cooperation with Wellesley College. Funding was provided by the National Endowment for the Humanities, Annenberg/Corporation for Public Broadcasting, Mellon Foundation, Gould Foundation, Cox Foundation, French Ministry of Culture and French Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

> *Students are not required to memorize grammatical rules and vocabulary lists; instead they are led to learn French from the situations presented in the videos.*
> Pierre Catrez

French in Action is an integrated system based on 26 hours of video, 60 hours of audio recordings and related text. It's organized to let learners discover lexical meanings and structures on their own through the presentation of a continuous story, accompanied by hundreds of examples taken from French films, television programs, advertisements, interviews and cartoons.

The entire program is based on a video story filmed in France, with French actors and a French crew. The movie keeps learners interested, which accelerates their pace of comprehension, learning and retention. Today more than 2,000 educational institutions in the United States have used "French in Action," which is also broadcast on television stations around the world. Students who complete both levels (52 lessons) can go to any French-speaking country and communicate fluently with the native population.

This story was originally published in 2007.

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