

## In This Issue...

### Culture Shock in Your Own Backyard: Initiating Multicultural, Global, and Peace Education

Moskowitz urges us to discover a fascinating way to focus on diversity in second-language instruction and methods classes.

Gertrude Moskowitz. . . . . 1

### Teaching Culture in a North American Context: Reading Authentic Texts in Spanish

Shook proposes the use of authentic Spanish texts in order to introduce cultural authenticity in the language classroom.

David J. Shook. . . . . 9

### SALT for Language Acquisition

Bancroft describes yet another approach to second-language teaching. Schuster's SALT (Suggestive-Accelerative Learning Techniques) combines suggestions from Lozanov's *Suggestopedia*, Asher's *Total Physical Response* and Galyean's *Confluent Education*.

W. Jane Bancroft. . . . . 16

### French in Disguise

Howlett and Péchon provide a myriad of suggestions of how students of French as a second language can expand their vocabulary using English as a point of departure.

Fred Howlett and Alain Péchon. . . . . 18

### Forthcoming Conferences . . . . . 2

#### Items of Interest

Canadian Languages Network Launched. . . . . 23  
*Si&na, a journal for Italianists.* . . . . 23

## Culture Shock in Your Own Backyard: Initiating Multicultural, Global, and Peace Education

Gertrude Moskowitz

*Searching for ways to help promote a better world for tomorrow? Then here's an easy-to-do activity, supported by educators, that brings inspiring results.*

Multicultural education, global education, peace education, international education, citizen education, character education – these are all admirable terms we hear about, read about, but do we *do* anything about them in our classes? Well, why should we? They don't have anything to do with learning a second language, do they? Or do they?

These are burning questions we need to address in all areas of the curriculum – and interestingly, second language teachers may rank high on the list of teachers best able to include these newer forms of education in their classes. You're not really sure about what some of these terms imply? Well, let's turn to some educators who are advocates of these fields to see what they have in mind.

### Educators cry out for new missions in teaching

In their text *Teaching with a Multicultural Perspective* (1994), Davidman and Davidman tell us we should create units in *all* subject matter areas that relate the content to environmental, global, citizenship, and multicultural education. They see environmental education as aiming to

teach people to live more harmoniously with the earth and each other (p.185).

Citizenship education, they tell us, is

instruction that successfully prepares students to be active, productive citizens of their national and world societies (p. 183).

Adamant about its importance, they proclaim that

the formation of a positive attitude toward citizenship is the quintessential function of schools (p. 184).

Turning to global education, Tye and Kniep (1991) suggest that it encompasses

learning about those problems and issues that cut across national boundaries

and

learning to understand and appreciate our neighbors with different cultural backgrounds from ours; to see the world through the eyes and minds of others; and to realize that all peoples of the world need and want much the same things (p. 47).

It's hard to disagree with such goals, isn't it?

Have you noticed that multicultural education has been addressed in numerous articles in recent years, with textbooks in teacher education continually appearing? It follows that many definitions have been written, but one which draws on the works of multicultural experts was

*continued on page 3*



# Mosaic

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The language graduate who never reads a professional journal and participates only minimally, if at all, in professional meetings, will stagnate. There is an onus on the profession in all areas to upgrade and keep abreast of current developments in the field.

- Peter Heffernan

## FORTHCOMING CONFERENCES

### October 4-5, 1996

Southern Alberta Heritage Language Association in conjunction with the Modern Language Council. Chateau Airport, Calgary, Alberta. *Theme: "Think Globally, Share Locally."* *Contact:* Michael Gretton, Administrative Coordinator, SAHLA, #303, 229 - 11 Avenue., S.E., Calgary, AB T2G 0Y1. Tel. [403] 233-7998, Fax: [403] 232-8760.

### October 4-6, 1996

New York State Association of Foreign Language Teachers. Kiamesha Lake, NY. *Contact:* Robert Ludwig, Administrative Assistant, NYSAFLT, 1102 Ardsley Road, Schenectady, NY 12308.

### October 11-12, 1996

Kansas Foreign Language Association. Holiday Inn, Hays, KS. *Contact:* Carol Swinney, 215 West 11th, Hugoton, KS 67951. Tel. [316] 544-2372.

### November 21-23, 1996

Teachers of English as a Second Language (TESL) Association of Ontario. Colony Hotel, 89 Chestnut St., Toronto, Ontario. *Contact:* Karen Crawford, TESL '96, Conference Chair, 6549 Durham Road 30, R.R. #3, Stouffville, Ontario L4A 7X4. Tel.: [905] 473-1477. Fax: [905] 473-2289.

### November 22-24

American Council on the Teaching of Foreign Languages (ACTFL). Philadelphia, PA. *Contact:* ACTFL, 6 Executive Plaza, Yonkers, NY 10701-6801. Tel. [914] 963-8830, Fax: [914] 963-1275.

### November 22-24

American Association of Teachers of Italian (AATI). Philadelphia, PA (in conjunction with ACTFL.) See above. *Contact:* Christopher Kleinhenz, Department of French and Italian, University of Wisconsin, 1220 Linden Drive, Madison, WI 53706. Fax: [608]257-6731 or Anthony Mollica, Tel./Fax: [905] 788-2674. E-mail: [tmollica@dewey.ed.brocku.ca](mailto:tmollica@dewey.ed.brocku.ca)

### November 24-26, 1996

The Foreign Language Association of North Carolina, Greensboro, NC. *Contact:* Mary Lynn Redmond, 6 Sun Oak Court, Greensboro, NC. 27410. Fax: [910] 759-4591. E-mail: [redmond@wfu.edu](mailto:redmond@wfu.edu)

### March 6-8, 1997

Southern Conference on Language Teaching and the South Carolina Foreign Language Teachers' Association. Myrtle Beach, SC. *Contact:* Lee Bradley, SCOLT, Executive Director, Valdosta State University, Valdosta, GA 31698. Tel. [912] 333-7358. Fax: [912] 333-7389. E-mail: [lbradley@grits.valdosta.peachnet.edu](mailto:lbradley@grits.valdosta.peachnet.edu)



## Culture Shock

*continued from page 1*

agreed on by a committee responsible for an action plan to implement multicultural education throughout the New York City Public Schools. This team concurred that a multicultural focus includes:

[...] an understanding and respect of ethnic differences and extends to the areas of language, gender, race, socio-economic class, religion, sexual orientation, age, and to people with disabilities. It seeks to provide students with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required to become fully participating citizens in society, to promote harmonious relationships, and to encourage students to take positive action to effectuate needed change (Agard-Jones, 1993, p. 14).

As for international education, Baker (1983) asserts that it

has as its focus teaching about other countries.

She sees it as

a viable approach to helping students understand diversity from a global perspective (p. 13).

García (1994) emphasizes that

schools must [...] involve [students] in learning activities that enhance human relationships, critical thinking, and civic responsibility (p. 69).

And Ferencz and Keyes (1991) stress that

the problems of war and peace and global community touch every field of study (p. 134).

Along practical lines, they suggest specific themes that different subject matter areas can include, and as follow-up, they encourage checking on what the schools and colleges are *actually doing* to carry out such goals.

### Second-language educators stress promoting diversity

That gives you an idea of the sentiments educators in different fields are expressing. But can *second-language* teachers really include such areas in their classes? Absolutely, according to professionals in our field. Follow their thinking on this.

To be involved in second-language teacher education in the 1990s means being tuned into such

major dimensions of education as international education, intercultural communication, and a multicultural gender-fair curriculum (p. 46).

point out Tedick *et al.* in the ACTFL Series Volume *Developing Language Teachers for a Changing World* (1993).

They see language education within "a social, political context" and believe that our field can provide successful ways to develop communication across cultures. They take a strong stand on these issues, stating:

We submit that a multicultural education approach to the teaching of second languages and cultures is an imperative... If schools are to prepare our youth adequately for adult life in a multicultural society, they must promote new communication and interaction skills, second-language and culture skills, more positive attitudes toward those who are culturally different, and significantly more knowledgeable of the cultural communities that make up the United States... Our students must become *multiculturally literate*, a term we use to refer to the skills, patterns of behavior, attitudes, and values that characterize a citizenry knowledgeable about and supportive of its diversity (p. 69).

*Each field trip is a personal story unfolding with human interest and emotions involved.*

These educators concur that an ongoing problem is that foreign languages have been seen as something to be scrutinized and endlessly analyzed and that teaching culture has also been too factual and superficial. They advocate focusing on relevant issues that encourage interaction and from this, language instruction should follow. They point out that foreign language educators themselves complain that their curriculum is too limited and confining.

Hudelson and Faltis (1993) are strong advocates of having second-language teachers gain a background in multicultural education through college courses and field experiences. They maintain that multicultural topics should run through *all* education courses, including foreign language courses and foreign-language methods courses. In other words, second-language teachers of the present and future should be fo-

cusing on multicultural issues and be equipped with strategies which they can use. This means that teacher education faculty would include multicultural topics throughout their course work and practicum experiences. In practice, this means preparing teachers for teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse settings.

*The classic reasons for studying a language have lost their weight with Americans and it is now time to provide new justifications for language study.*

These educators also propose that teachers be given ways to find out about any cultural group they may encounter in teaching. Future teachers are also to heighten their cultural awareness of themselves, reflecting on their own backgrounds and experiences with other cultures.

If you're still hesitant about this approach, listen to what Avots (1991) proposes is the responsibility we have for preparing second-language students for the world of tomorrow:

Our mission extends beyond simply teaching a language. We must also help our students meet the challenge of change by developing their sensitivity to other cultures and to other points of view. As we become more and more conscious of the role our students will play outside the classroom, we must consciously integrate our classroom activities into that world. The classroom is no longer an isolated ivory tower of learning, but a link to the social, economic, and political realities our students will one day encounter (p. 122).

In this same mode, the 1992 theme of the Northeast Conference on the Teaching of Foreign Languages was "Languages for a Multicultural World in Transition." In the Conference Reports, Grandin *et al.* (1992) declare that it is "painfully clear" that the classic reasons for studying a language have lost their weight with Americans and that it is now time to provide new justifications for language study. They note that after two decades of diminished enrollments,



Foreign language professionals have begun to reevaluate their roles as educators and to seize opportunities to fulfill their mission in new and different ways. Indeed, the contexts and purposes of teaching have been undergoing a quiet revolution over the past decade (p. 123).

And wouldn't it be uplifting if we knew we could contribute to understanding and harmony on a much grander scale? Well, in her work on peace education, Wenden (1992) has found that many professionals involved in English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) favor the idea that

foreign and second language educators have a role to play in educating toward the achievement of a peaceful world (p. 1).

They see this as not necessarily being a separate subject but being integrated into

all forms of learning and used by educators as an added perspective from which to plan and evaluate their endeavors (p. 1).

Wenden affirms that one aspect of peace education is to strive

to develop attitudes such as self-respect, respect for others, [...] open-mindedness, vision, and commitment to justice (p. 6).

She points out that while an expected outcome of the study of another language is developing understanding of the *target* culture, language study today must also include the understanding of *global* culture. She calls on foreign language educators to be aware that their humanistic goals are congruent with peace education, which should therefore be included in both their teacher education and foreign language courses.

### An intriguing way to start

All of these proclamations and recommendations may be well and good, but you may be wondering how in the world you can get started with such lofty goals in your second-language or methods classes – goals that promote diversity and multicultural, global, and peace education. Where do you begin? Well, a purpose of this article is to share a rather encompassing experience I provide in a methods course I teach for second-language teachers that offers numerous learning experiences for

everyone and has been well-received every time I've assigned it, yet it's not complex to carry out. The idea can also be replicated in high school and college second-language classes and with added guidance, in junior high school, too. The activity capitalizes on a number of the goals proposed by the above-stated educators. And the attractiveness of it is that if the idea appeals to you, you can carry it out after reading this article! Let me tell you in advance that the results of this assignment have often been heart-warming, rewarding, and inspirational.

Customarily, second-language teachers introduce their students to the target culture of the language being studied, familiarizing them with various cultural aspects in a variety of ways. The experience I'm presenting here is also a cultural one, and is not intended to replace such contacts, but to be *in addition to* them. It goes, however, *beyond* the target culture and reaches out into the community, which consists of *many cultures*. I use the term "culture" here in its broadest sense, to include the multiple types of groups all around us which we may or may not be familiar with.

*Multicultural topics should run through all education courses, including foreign language courses and foreign-language methods courses.*

The students in my methods classes are a mixture of preservice and inservice teachers of various languages including ESL and EFL, so I have both undergraduates and graduates together. Along with students from the United States, there are students from other countries who are either teaching their native language here or will return to their own country and teach English. The assignment I give is to take a cultural field trip of their own choosing to spend time in an unfamiliar culture, one they would like to know more about. I give them a detailed hand-out with suggested types of places to go and include a number of addresses and telephone numbers of specific locations. They are free to

select other sites and a culture not on the list, but are to check with me to see whether it is appropriate for the intentions of this assignment.

We discuss the purposes of this field trip by having the students think of reasons for having such an assignment. They are usually intrigued by the unexpected nature of the assignment and see it as meaningful. The effect, however, is greatly intensified once the field trip is carried out and the results are shared in class.

Here are some of the suggestions for trips that they receive with a few examples of each noted. (They receive a longer, embellished list with more examples.) Attend or visit:

1. A cultural fair, festival, celebration, program, exhibit, museum, or event (a Native American Indian Pow-Wow, an African-American or Polish museum or exhibit).
2. A holiday observance (the Chinese New Year, a Passover Seder).
3. A school for a specialized population (the hearing impaired).
4. A shelter for the homeless.
5. An athletic event for the physically-challenged (wheelchair basketball).
6. A nursing home.
7. A foreign restaurant operated by people of that culture.
8. An ethnic neighborhood, area, or market place (Chinatown, Amish country, the Italian Market).
9. A house of worship of another faith (a Quaker meeting, a Bar Mitzvah service).

The cultural field trip is to be carried out for this course and is not to be something they were invited to or were attending anyway. I suggest that they may wish to contact a culture they feel they may have false impressions of or stereotypes about. Appropriate forthcoming events are publicized in the class.

The students are told that they can go with a partner from our class or with someone else they know, though many choose to go alone. We look for resources for trips in our class, such as students who belong to a house of worship someone wants to visit, or who observe a holiday or rites of passage others are not acquainted with. One time two students asked permission to attend the wedding of a student in our class



from Pakistan, who announced she was getting married in a few weeks (her family had just arranged the marriage). What a festive field trip that was! (It's three years later and they still keep in touch!)

Because there are cultural museums in our area, I include these on the list since they are not frequented as much as is desirable and these are potential places where teachers can take their students. I want to point out their existence and have the class hear reports about them. On the other hand, I would not want many people to select a museum as their choice since their contact at the site is usually limited to one or two people from that culture serving as guides when called upon. If I found too many students selecting museums, I would establish a maximum for that choice so the class gets to hear about a greater variety of experiences.

Relevant to going to a restaurant serving foreign food which students are not familiar with, I tell them to find out some things about the culture while at the restaurant. I prefer to have students go with only one or perhaps two partners so the main focus doesn't become the social rather than the cultural aspects of the dining experience.

Periodically, I inquire about the progress of their plans, where they intend to go, who would like a partner interested in the same trip, etc. I give the assignment a month in advance and announce the due date then so they can fit it into their schedules.

The students are asked to bring back a memento from their trip to share with the class. In addition to the interest class members have in these "authentic materials," this makes the students even more observant on their trips as they seek to bring back something significant. On the due date, the students turn in a paper about their trips, stating

1. where they went,
2. what they saw and/or did,
3. what they learned, and
4. how they felt about the experience.

The students are each given time to talk about their trips, share their mementos, and answer questions. The written report helps prepare them for the oral part, which is to be

informal and not a paper that is read. Our class meets for 2 1/2 hours, so there's time for the reports. Most courses would have to spread out the reports, which can be done in the target language.

You can have the students turn in the information in advance as to where they will go on their field trips to see that plans are underway and the choices are appropriate. In this way, you'll know in advance the types of groups that will be reported on and can decide on a plan for their discussion. What I often do is have all those who visited a type of setting report in a block of time so that each theme is treated at one time, e.g., visiting a house of worship. This is a popular theme among my students and is one with a number of emotions expressed, usually of discomfort at first. Since these trips are taken and reported on by peers, it seems that the students can identify with what happened and come away with a sense of having been on the trips themselves.

*Coming from students, [the sharing] is a slice of life in which their discoveries, insights, stories, adventures, feelings, and sensitivity are revealed.*

The students choose diverse places to go, which pique the interest of their peers. The classmates are usually fascinated upon hearing the oral sharing. Each field trip is a personal story unfolding with human interest and emotions involved. Students often become advocates of the group they visit, with others becoming curious themselves to find out about each group and even planning a future trip themselves.

During the sharing of the field trips, a potpourri of cultures is discussed from the standpoint of the students and what they learned and experienced emotionally. Furthermore, what is said is more credible coming from their mouths, rather than the teacher's. Coming from the teacher, these things might sound esoteric, "preachy," or like a pep talk or lecture. However, coming from students, it is a slice of life in which their discoveries, insights, stories,

adventures, feelings, and sensitivity are revealed.

Generally, I have the entire class hear about all of the trips. On two occasions, however, I divided the class into two groups, with similar trips represented in both groups. The feedback I received was that the students wanted to hear about all of the field trips. Time is a determining factor of how to handle the reporting. I designate an approximate amount of time each has, otherwise some will take far more, leaving less time for others. Some of the topics of the trips are so absorbing that the class has many questions to ask, in which case I'm flexible with the time. As the teacher, you have to determine the time you can give to this worthy part of the assignment.

In the second-language class, follow-up activities in the form of discussions, readings, and compositions can be easily gleaned from the great amount of real-life material that surfaces during the sharing of the cultural field trips. For example, students can work with a partner and read each other's report and ask each other questions, readings on related topics can be assigned, the students can write their reactions to the field trips of their classmates or to one they were especially interested in or would like to take themselves. The field trips provide food for thought and meaningful discussions and written work.

## Rewarding Results

And now I'd like to take you on some of these trips so you can get an actual glimpse of the kinds of experiences students have had. These excerpts are from their written reports. I think you'll see why I value this assignment so much:

- "I took my sons on my trip to Chinatown to explore this fascinating culture with me. The store owners were very gracious and liked the idea that I wanted to learn about their culture. We learned some history through the pottery, and found beauty, peace, and tranquility in other forms of art. Our dinner at a Chinese restaurant transported us into another world."
- "This year I am the 'host counselor' to a graduate student from



India, but our contacts have been brief and superficial. Our field trip assignment inspired me to ask her help to host an Indian dinner at my home for 40 members of the Rotary Club sponsoring her. We designed an invitation, planned the menu, spent several hours at an Indian grocery store shopping, cooked the meal, arranged the trays artistically, and dressed Indian style for the occasion. Throughout this time, we discussed our cultures, and I gained many insights into and appreciation of the traditions and rituals so important in Indian life."

- "Because I don't feel comfortable with the idea of elderly people and nursing homes, I decided that this would be the perfect place for my field trip. I spoke with people who work there, mingled with patients, and joined in activities which were provided for them. As a result, I received smiles and praise from the patients and came away feeling I had made a difference for one day in some people's lives. I learned that my discomfort was unfounded."
- "I attended the joint exhibits held at the Afro-American Historical Museum and the National Museum of American Jewish History, which dealt with the relationship between these two groups in our country during the 20th century. I was intrigued by the exhibitions and found them to be wonderful for teaching and learning. While viewing the art, I was frequently overcome with deep emotion and empathy. The exhibit that startled me the most was an actual Ku Klux Klan robe displayed so it appeared as though a real person were wearing it. Adjacent to this was a 15-foot cross with a can of gasoline next to it. I felt angry and horrified that such hatred exists. This field trip was an important educational and culturally enlightening experience for me."
- "As the three of us approached a shelter for the homeless, I was feeling anxious and wondered whether the men there would be unfriendly or hostile. It turned out that they were just the opposite. We interacted with them and they shared their stories with us.

They were so moved that we were university students becoming teachers and cared enough to come see what their life was like. This was definitely a different culture, which consists of different cultures. It was an incredible experience!"

- "I attended an in-home celebration of the Iranian Year, Norooz, which corresponds with the arrival of spring. It was a joyful, festive occasion, and my hosts were very gracious and informative. Sharing this event made me want to learn even more about this culture."
- "I visited the Holocaust Awareness Museum at a local college because this is something I have spent a lot of time trying to learn about. Never has a feeling of such horror possessed me as when I looked at the many pictures and explanations for what occurred only 50 years ago. I was moved to tears by what I saw. Walking through this museum gave me a feeling of responsibility. I know now that the Holocaust must be included in any curriculum that I teach. I would recommend this visit to everyone."

*While an expected outcome of the study of another language is developing understanding of the target culture, language study today must also include the understanding of global culture.*

- "I learned a lot from attending a wheelchair basketball game. I didn't know what to expect or how well the teams would be able to play. I learned very quickly that you don't need two legs to play basketball well. While watching the game, I had chills up and down my spine. I spoke to some of the players after the game and found them to be extremely cordial. They taught me some lessons about life."
- "The first thing I noticed about the Quaker Meeting House was that it was different from any church I had ever been in before. There was no priest, rabbi or rev-

erend. In fact, there was no altar. I felt nervous, especially when people stopped talking and there was complete silence, but this slowly dissipated as the Meeting continued. I began to list all the things that needed to be done at home and school. But after a while, I relaxed and was able to sit quietly and be thankful for the good things in my life and to do it in a very personal way. By the end of the Meeting, from the way I was greeted and treated, I left feeling as if I were a life-long member of the Quaker faith."

- "I found it interesting to be immersed in another culture and still be in my own country. I felt like I really stuck out from the crowd, and I became the center of attention. I think many people were surprised that an American would be interested in coming to a Chinese New Year celebration at a Vietnamese church."
  - "I attended an Irish Festival where I experienced a program of poetry with harp music, singing, banjo playing, Irish step dancing, and folk music (some with humor and audience sing-alongs). Serious messages were introduced through slides, which accompanied songs by two artists who referred to political issues. The three hours of this worthwhile afternoon went by so quickly."
  - "I traveled three hours to see what a Pow-Wow is like. I learned so much I can't begin to do justice to the experience. I found the Native Americans to be extremely spiritual and overwhelmingly humble. They were very personable and proud of their heritage and friendly towards everyone. I felt elated and excited. I was impressed by their simplicity and how they welcomed everyone. They are beautiful people with a wonderful outlook on life. This culture has won my total respect and admiration. This was one of most enlightening experiences of my life."
- After the course I recently finished teaching, I sent a questionnaire to the students related to how they felt about the cultural field trip of their choice that they had taken. The following are the questions



asked and representative excerpts from their anonymous responses.

### 1. How did you feel about taking a cultural field trip that was not related to your target language?

The responses to this question were overwhelmingly favorable. The students found the field trip to an unfamiliar culture was unquestionably of value to them:

- “The trip was an extremely worthwhile and valuable assignment. The sensitivity gained by learning about other groups helps in becoming more well-rounded, accepting, and respectful of all people’s differences and customs.”
- “At first I was afraid about going into another culture, but now I really can appreciate the experience. I enjoyed finding out about the Vietnamese culture, which is so different from my own.”
- “This assignment was a very enriching experience. The more you know about other cultures, the better the quality of your teaching. My goal is to prepare students for the world outside their neighborhoods. What better way to do this than to bring the world into the classroom?”
- “This assignment made me aware of various cultural opportunities, forced us to experience ‘culture shock,’ and expanded our horizons.”
- “This assignment was enjoyable, very beneficial, and relevant. I gained insights which are valuable to me as a teacher.”
- “When I took my field trip, I experienced how my students could feel being in a foreign culture.”

### 2. To what extent do you feel this assignment is or is not of value for second-language teachers?

In no case did the students think this assignment was of no value nor did they fail to see the relationship of it to their own background as a second-language teacher:

- “We must explore other cultures to appreciate our own and that of our target culture. It allows us to see how and where our target culture fits into the world community.”
- “It is valuable because second language teachers may encounter

students and colleagues from a variety of cultures. As a language teacher, I’m often expected to know about diverse cultures.”

- “Second language teachers have to examine their own prejudices and ethnocentrism and work to change these. Taking a field trip to be in such a culture can help work through such feelings.”
- “I feel it was very important because there are many cultures that under ordinary circumstances, I would never have contacted nor found out about, as I did from the reports of my classmates.”
- “This assignment was definitely of value. Many of us don’t understand what it is like to be ‘plunked’ into a different culture. This can help us appreciate what foreign students experience in our culture.”
- “It really showed us the availability of cultural and language enrichment in the local area.”
- “When I told one of my classes about my field trip, I think I gained added respect by showing an interest in learning about the ethnicity of some of the students in that class.”
- “This assignment is a ‘must’ for second language teachers who might otherwise limit themselves exclusively to their subject matter rather than seeing their responsibility at the community and global levels as well.”

### 3. Would you give such an assignment to your students?

The responses were very favorable to this question. Those who qualified their response stated that they would give the assignment if it would be feasible for their students to carry it out. These responses seemed to be from those not presently teaching so they would be unaware of what their situations will be in the future:

- “I can and I will give such an assignment to my students.”
- “I would certainly give this assignment to my students. I would also encourage my students to pair off as some of us did with others in the class.”
- “Yes, I believe we should expose students to other cultures to develop their curiosity and interest

in other groups and to help eliminate ethnocentrism.”

- “Yes! I feel this was a wonderful assignment! On my field trip I saw parents with their children at the cultural museum I attended – clearly a great place to learn!”
- “I plan to do this with my students. I feel it is important for teachers to promote understanding people to help solve some of the problems in the world.”

### 4. What were your reactions to hearing about the cultural field trips of others in the class?

The students listened to the field trip reports with great interest. They enjoyed hearing about the trips of others, learned from them, and gained insights about other cultures. Some said they are going to make it a point to take further field trips on their own:

- “I was fascinated not only with their stories, but especially with their reactions and discoveries. The world needs more such experiences!”
- “I became interested and excited about visiting the places and events myself. I think this activity made us braver about seeking cultural information first-hand. We went into the unknown and really learned from it.”
- “I found their trips were vivid, full of interesting details, and fascinating. I could have gone on and on listening.”
- “This was one of the most interesting parts of this assignment. I learned a lot from what was said and how the cultural experiences were interpreted. I also discovered that some elements of my heritage are of interest to others.”
- “Everyone I spoke to agreed that the cultural field trip was enriching and fulfilling and they learned from it. They felt we should make a point of discovering other cultures.”
- “I enjoyed hearing everyone’s story. This was almost as much fun as actually taking the trip!”

This assignment of taking a cultural field trip seems to be a good starting place for implementing the recommendations of the educators quoted earlier in this article. In keep-



ing with what they urge, these are but some of the benefits of this assignment. The cultural field trip:

1. Links the subject matter, the foreign language or the methods course, with multicultural, global, and peace education and other newer forms of education.
2. Helps form positive attitudes towards others of different cultural backgrounds.
3. Helps to see the world as others see it.
4. Serves to enhance human relationships.
5. Uses language to focus on relevant issues conducive to interaction.
6. Emphasizes second languages as a vehicle for learning about diverse cultures.
7. Encourages reflection on others of diverse cultures, and attempts to develop sensitivity towards them.
8. Brings students into the community, integrating classroom activities and the realities of the world.
9. Helps to promote the language class being an agent for change.
10. Develops greater knowledge of various cultures in the community and how to communicate more effectively with them.
11. Helps to break through cultural barriers and stereotypes in our daily lives.
12. Promotes a new context and purpose for second-language learning.
13. Helps to educate for a peaceful world.

The remarkable thing I have found is that so much mileage is gained from this one assignment as it encompasses so many cultural groups and their backgrounds, stories, and issues. At the same time it is not taxing for the teacher whose role is to: come up with an appealing selection of potential field trips, see that partners are arranged, if needed, and that the trips are being planned, remind students of the due dates for the written and oral sharing, organize an effective way to discuss the trips, and plan relevant follow-up activities, if desired.

For the students, the field trip provides a meaningful, often enjoyable, first-hand experience with another culture, as well as vicarious

experiences of a variety of cultures through the trips reported on by their peers. Furthermore, it gives students a choice of a cultural field trip they are interested in taking, building in motivation for the trip with results which can be that much more rewarding. By exploring the information, issues, and feelings generated by these field trips, students can easily understand their significance and reasons to continue including topics from multicultural, global, and peace education in their second language classes. This assignment is demonstrated in the methods class for the benefit of the teachers themselves and to illustrate a specific strategy they can implement in their own foreign language classes for the same purposes.

*Students become the vehicle  
for the learning by their  
classmates of highly pertinent  
lessons of life.*

As students go into the community for their cultural field trips, the "facts of life" of the world come up and into the second-language class. And through the very lives and words of students, a range of multifaceted themes arise in a natural, authentic way – a way that particularly appeals to students since it is generated by them and their peers. In effect, the students become the vehicle for the learning by their classmates of highly pertinent lessons of life. Indeed, everyone becomes the teacher of this class.

This self-designed field trip is a natural opener for discovering the importance, interest-value, and significance of becoming informed about and understanding the many cultures that surround us. From there on the second-language teacher can continue to carry out the recommendations of educators today to acquaint students with relevant issues from multicultural, global, and peace education and other such newer forms in education. In effect, the cultural field trips help to promote understanding the world *outside* the foreign language class *through* the foreign language class. And the beauty of it is that we needn't go too far to experience culture shock in our own backyard!

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## Teaching Culture in a North American Context: Reading Authentic Texts in Spanish

David J. Shook

*The article presents information regarding how North American teachers of Spanish can use effectively and strategically authentic texts in Spanish in order to introduce some measure of cultural authenticity to their students.*

### Introduction

Cultural authenticity, as described by Howard Nostrand (1989),

[...] consists not only of customs and proprieties; it involves above all the culture's 'ground of meaning': its system of major values, habitual patterns of thought, and certain prevalent assumptions about human nature and society which the foreigner should be prepared to encounter (51).

Experiencing "cultural authenticity" should be a primary goal for foreign-language (FL) students; however, gaining access to cultural authenticity in the FL classroom is by nature one of the FL teacher's primary obstacles: oftentimes, the FL classroom lies at great distance from any FL native culture region, and many FL instructors are not native to the FL culture. However, one possible way to expose FL students to examples of the FL's cultural authenticity is through interacting with authentic texts in the classroom.

### FL Reading and FL Cultural Authenticity

Authentic texts, that is, texts originally written in Spanish for native Spanish speakers/readers, have been gaining support from foreign language teachers and researchers as one of the best ways for FL learners to access a tremendous amount of language and cultural input that could not be achieved by any other means (Nostrand, 1989; Galloway, 1992; Galloway and Medley, 1995). However, the very advantages of

new and unique linguistic and cultural information found in authentic readings can overwhelm FL learner-readers when the instructor does not anticipate and plan for the possible mismatches that may occur in the interaction between FL learner and FL text (Shook, 1996).

By definition, an authentic Spanish-language text has as its intended audience native Spanish speakers/readers; hence, certain assumptions regarding linguistic forms and their meanings, as well as assumptions regarding the cultural norms and values expressed through those forms/meanings, are present in that text. Since those forms/meanings and norms/values are shared by the text's author(s) and its readers: the text, therefore, is authentic.

Also by definition, an FL learner-reader who reads that same authentic Spanish-language text

- a) *may not* understand many of those linguistic forms and their meanings and
- b) *may not* share those same cultural norms and values.

Therefore, when the FL learner-reader encounters such new linguistic and cultural information in an authentic reading, he/she may misunderstand or misinterpret the new information, and comprehension problems with the text *may* develop.

In order to overcome possible mismatches between North American Spanish students and authentic Spanish-language texts, a strategic orientation to reading tasks is advocated. Shook (in press) defines this orientation as follows:

[...] While individual reading tasks, such as making lists, using context to define unfamiliar vocabulary, making use of accompanying pictures and titles, among others, may function as the particular tasks for more than one strategy, their effectiveness is strengthened when organized together in a logical plan to guide the reader through the reading process. [...] In general, strategy-based reading tasks are organized into *prereading, reading, and postreading tasks*.

- *Prereading tasks* enable the reader to activate the appropriate formal and content schemata, that is, the linguistic and cultural background knowledge the reader already possesses, before interacting with the text as a whole.
- *Reading tasks* are designed to enhance text comprehension as the reader delves into the text by building from the activated [...] background knowledge and having the reader interact with macro- and microtext structure (layout, rhetorical structure, semantic and syntactic structures, etc.).
- *Postreading tasks* provide opportunities for the reader to confirm prior predictions regarding the text and comprehension, to integrate/incorporate the new textual information into the reader's knowledge, and serve as a springboard into other language-learning activities.

The use of authentic readings in order to introduce FL learner-readers to the FL cultural is an excellent idea; however, when the instructor identifies possible mismatches that might occur between the FL learner and the FL text, it is paramount that the instructor employ a progression of appropriate prereading, reading, and postreading tasks, designed to help the learner-readers overcome such mismatches.

### Example of a Strategic Approach

The following example is based on a reading activity used to give first-year, university-level Spanish students some insight into the fact that major Hispanic cities are in many ways full of the same advantages and disadvantages as major North American cities. The text chosen to form the basis for the reading activity is a glowing article about the subway system in Mexico City, "El estupendo metro de México," originally published in *Américas* (Vol. 38



No. 5, pp. 2-7). The article presents historical information about the building of the subway system; the transportation and population problems in Mexico City; the cultural and historical ties of the subway stations to the people of Mexico, and so on (see pp. 13-15). What possible cultural mismatch(es) between learner-reader and this text might the instructor identify? The mismatch selected for illustration in this article deals with *personal experience with public transportation*. Especially in the United States, the “love affair” between many North American university students and their personal cars is very evident; for many, legal access to an automobile as a teenager ends any dependence on public transportation, and thus day-to-day experience with public transportation systems in general, and subway systems in particular, is not as common as it might have been previously. Even when utilized, such public systems tend to be characterized in very utilitarian ways (“My car was in the shop, so I *had* to take the subway!”). However, in many Hispanic countries, use of public transportation systems is the norm, and not the exception. The importance placed on such systems in Hispanic societies goes much beyond a utilitarian perspective; indeed, the cultural values placed on different forms of public transportation can be garnered from examining Hispanic perceptions such as the relationship between Chilean bus drivers and their passengers, the insistence (or lack thereof) on adhering to timetables, the naming of stations on subway lines for historical dates or figures, etc. The following sections of this article explore how a strategic orientation to reading tasks might overcome such a possible mismatch for a learner-reader in Spanish reading this text.

### Prereading Tasks

As mentioned above, prereading tasks should seek to activate appropriate linguistic and cultural schemata. Since the text treats the Mexico City subway system, the prereading tasks should activate schema related to subways, Mexico in general and Mexico City in particular, transportation, and so forth.

### Identifying context.

The first step is to use such a text when it relates to information the learners already have integrated: vocabulary, structures, communicative functions, and cultural information related to traveling in the Hispanic world, for example, or maybe environmental problems (pollution, gridlock in metropolitan areas, among others).

### Build from familiar vocabulary

Next, the instructor needs to start the build-up process by activating the Spanish vocabulary already in the heads of the learners, that is, vocabulary with which they are already familiar. Such tasks might include the following:

- In 3 minutes, come up with a list of all the words you know in Spanish that express means of transportation. Do not use any notes, dictionaries, or your textbook!
- Which of the above means of transportation is the most popular in your city for...
  - ... going to the mall?
  - ... getting to another city?
  - ... going to the coast?
  - ... getting to class?
  - ... getting to class on time?

### Activate background knowledge

Following such activities, it is time to get the students to think about subways consciously—something they probably have not done very much. The following listing task could serve this purpose:

- What do you think about your city's transportation situation as it is today? What's the good, the bad, and the ugly? Make lists of your ideas in Spanish by using the following headings:

*Lo bueno      Lo malo      Lo mejor*

After completion of the listing, and examination of the lists, the instructor could have some students talk about their experiences with subways, bad and/or good, if such students are present.

Next, the students should demonstrate to themselves what they know, and how well they know it.

Hence, a “pop” quiz (not for credit) such as that below might be useful in telling the students “Yes, you're very familiar with subway systems” or “You really don't know a lot about subways”. If some students are totally lacking in experience with subways, the instructor can work with them individually to gain some more information before they tackle the reading passage.

- The article you are about to read treats the subway system in Mexico City. Before reading, take the following quiz about subway systems in general. If you are unsure about any statement, answer with a question mark. If you end up with more question marks than definite answers, see your instructor before you start to read the article.
- A subway system is designed for what type of transportation?
    - from building to building
    - within a city
    - from city to city
  - Which of the following cities does not have a subway system?
    - San Francisco
    - New York
    - Moscow
  - What is the power source for subway systems?
    - steam
    - gas
    - electricity
  - What is a generic term in Spanish for people who ride the subway?
    - conductores
    - pobres
    - pasajeros
  - Approximately, what is the population of Mexico City?
    - 3 million
    - 10 million
    - 20 million
  - Which of the following is the top speed of a typical subway?
    - 15 mph
    - 55 mph
    - 75 mph

[...]

Of course, all of the preceding activities are done *before* the students even have looked at the text. At this point in the reading activity, the learner-readers should stand “well primed” with vocabulary and cultural information to delve into the text.

### Reading Tasks

The purpose of reading tasks is to permit the learner-reader to interact



with the textual information in a way which fosters comprehension of said information. The next step is to build from the learner-readers' activated background knowledge in order to discover what *new* knowledge they might develop by interacting with the text. Therefore, the instructor should present a series of tasks that would have the students probe the text for information with which they probably are not familiar – such information is thereby primed then to be incorporated into the students' growing inventory of Spanish linguistic and Hispanic cultural knowledge. Some tasks designed to accomplish this goal are the following:

- A. Read through the article quickly once to get a general idea of what information is presented. Then, read through the following questions, locate the appropriate part of the article, read the information again, and answer appropriately.
1. What two things do the people of Mexico City have in common with their subway system? (Par. 2)
  2. *True or False?* A major lightning strike crippled the system in 1985. (Par. 3)
  3. What percentage (approx.) of the total population use the Mexico City subway each day? What is the main reason for this? (Par. 4)

[...]

(Final task)

Read through your answers to the quiz above and correct them, based on the information you have just read.

Reading tasks such as those above allow the learner-readers to encounter new linguistic and cultural information from a position of strength (their activated background knowledge) in a way that takes into account possible cultural mismatches between the students and the text. In addition, such reading tasks can afford them the opportunity to examine the norms and values placed on subway systems and public transportation in a particular Hispanic culture, as professed in an authentic Spanish text.

### Postreading Tasks

Finally, after students have read through the text and demonstrated a comprehension of the concepts the instructor wanted to get across to them, it is time to have the

learner-readers come to an awareness of the new information they have processed from the text. This should then be followed by a task (or tasks) in which the students actually do something with that new knowledge. In that way, any new information gains importance and usefulness to them, and therefore the information has a good chance of staying with the students past this particular activity and class period.

- A. Summarize the main points of the article by grouping information you have read into the following categories:
  - a. datos/estadísticas
  - b. nombres históricos
  - c. lugares
  - d. información muy interesante
- B.
  1. Using the provided map of Mexico City with a partner, find the places mentioned in the article.
  2. Listen to the new places your instructor announces, and starting at X, find the best route there via metro.
- C. Examine the following questions. Then express your opinions in 2-3 sentences in Spanish for each one.
  1. What seems to be the major role(s) of the subway system in Mexico City?
  2. How do you think the people of Mexico City perceive their subway system?
  3. Do you have a similar or different perception of the transportation system in your city?

Of course, the example tasks used here to illustrate a strategic orientation to reading tasks are only examples, and should not be construed as the only tasks appropriate to this activity. Nor can such tasks during one reading activity “present the whole network of a text’s social and symbolic relations all at once” (Nstrand, 1989: 51). However, the tasks presented here do demonstrate how reading tasks can be oriented strategically by the instructor, in order to overcome a possible mismatch between a particular group of learner-readers and the cultural information found in a given authentic text.

### A Note on Task Construction

The reading tasks utilized for the reading activity presented in this article have been constructed in English, the native language of the vast majority of learner-readers with whom the author has used this par-

ticular activity. This is done even though all other classroom interaction occurs totally in Spanish. Anecdotal as well as empirical evidence (Lee, 1986; 1989) has demonstrated to this author that the use of the native language for certain tasks utilized to assess reading comprehension, especially for early-stage FL learner-readers, tends to increase task comprehension and production, and allows for a more complicated or in-depth task to be accomplished; such use of the native language offers up more insights into the learner-readers' interaction with the text. In other words, giving instructions for the reading tasks and having some tasks (such as the quiz) accomplished in English, in the opinion of this author, allow first-year students to demonstrate their comprehension of the Spanish text better than might otherwise occur with instructions and tasks completely in Spanish. The more advanced the students, or the less rigorous the reading tasks, the more likely the tasks will appear in the FL. Hence, in order to allow first-year learners of Spanish to spend more time on interacting with and comprehending the textual information rather than the instructional information of the reading tasks, this author opted to present the tasks in English. However, one should note that the majority of tasks exemplified here do require production and/or interaction by the learner-readers in Spanish. In order to allow other instructors to use these same tasks, they are presented in Spanish in Appendix A.

### Conclusion

While authentic texts can provide invaluable opportunities for FL learner-readers to interact and integrate not only FL linguistic input but also the FL's cultural authenticity, authentic texts also present the disadvantage of possibly overwhelming the learner-readers when the instructor does not anticipate and plan for any possible mismatches that may occur. This article suggests that when North American learner-readers of Spanish are asked to read authentic texts in Spanish, the instructor needs to utilize a strategic orientation to reading tasks that takes into account any possible cul-



tural mismatches in order that they might be overcome effectively.

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## Appendix A: Spanish Version of the Reading Tasks

- I. Antes de leer**
- A. Dentro de 3 minutos, haz una lista de todas las palabras españolas que sepas que expresen modos de transporte. ¡No se permite el uso de apuntes, diccionarios ni el libro de español!
- B. ¿Cuál de los modos de transporte que mencionaste arriba es el más popular aquí en \_\_\_\_\_ para...  
... ir al centro comercial?  
... viajar a otra ciudad?  
... viajar a la costa?  
... llegar a clase?  
... llegar a clase a tiempo?
- C. ¿Qué piensas en cuanto a los sistemas de transporte en tu ciudad hoy en día?  
Haz listas de tus ideas en el español por usar estas categorías: *Lo bueno Lo malo Lo peor*
- D. El artículo que vas a leer trata el metro de la Ciudad de México. Antes de leerlo, responde a la prueba sobre los metros en general que sigue. Si no estás seguro(a) en cuanto a la respuesta correcta, responde con punto de interrogación [?]. Si al final resultan más puntos de interrogación que respuestas definitivas, habla con el(la) profesor(a) antes de comenzar a leer el artículo.
- ¿Se constuyen metros para cuál tipo de transporte?
    - de edificio a edificio
    - por la ciudad
    - entre ciudades
  - ¿Cuál de las siguientes ciudades no tiene un metro?
    - San Francisco
    - Nueva York
    - Moscú
  - ¿Cuál de los siguientes provee la potencia para los metros?
    - vapor
    - petróleo
    - electricidad
  - ¿Cómo se llaman en general en español las personas que montan en metro?
    - conductores
    - pobres
    - pasajeros
  - Apróximadamente, ¿qué es la población hoy en día de la Ciudad de México (en millones de personas)?
    - 3
    - 10
    - 20
  - ¿Qué es la velocidad máxima del metro típico (en millas por hora)?
    - 15
    - 55
    - 75
- II. Al leer**
- A. Lee una vez rápidamente todo el artículo para comprender bien la idea general de la información presentada. Luego, lee cada pregunta que sigue, ubica el párrafo apropiado, lee el párrafo de nuevo y responde a la pregunta.
- ¿Qué dos características tienen en común la gente de la Ciudad de México y el metro? (Párr. 2)
  - ¿Cierto o falso?: Un relampagueo feroz le incapacitó al metro durante una tormenta en 1985. (Párr. 3)
  - Apróximadamente, ¿qué porcentaje de la población total de la ciudad de México monta en el metro cada día? ¿Por qué resulta este fenómeno? (Párr. 4)
- (Ejercicio final).  
Repasa las respuestas que diste en la prueba anterior y corrígelas según la información que acabas de leer.
- III. Después de leer**
- A. Resume la información principal del artículo por agruparla en estas categorías:
  - datos/estadísticas
  - nombres históricos
  - lugares
  - información muy interesante
- B. 1. Con un(a) compañero(a) usa el mapa de la Ciudad de México y ubica los lugares mencionados en el artículo.
2. Según las instrucciones del (de la) profesor(a), marca la mejor ruta desde X hacia el sitio nuevo que se mencione.
- C. Estudia la preguntas abajo, luego expresa tu opinión en español. Escribe 2-3 frases para cada pregunta.
- ¿Cuál(es) será(n) la(s) función(es) principal(es) del metro en la ciudad de México?
  - ¿Cuál será la opinión/perspectiva de la gente de la Ciudad de México en cuanto al metro?
  - ¿Tienes una opinión/perspectiva similar o diferente del sistema de transporte en la ciudad tuya?





# El estupendo metro de México

**El metro de la ciudad de México transporta a diario al 25% de la población de la capital. El sistema es hermoso y eficiente y el precio del pasaje, todavía un peso, es el más barato del mundo**

**Texto por George R. Ellis    Fotografías por Gustavo Gatto**

LOS GRANDES SISTEMAS de trenes metropolitanos son tan particulares como las ciudades donde se hallan. El de Nueva York es rápido, impaciente y ruidoso. El de Londres conserva un dejo de urbanidad decimonónica y los de París y Buenos Aires tienen cierto aire de refinamiento.

El metro de la ciudad de México también tiene sus características singulares. Aunque es uno de los más modernos y avanzados del mundo desde el punto de vista tecnológico, su encanto es resultado de los mismos factores que componen el carácter de la ciudad: el entusiasmo de vivir y la vitalidad sin límites. Con el transcurso de los siglos los mexicanos han aprendido a tomar las cosas con calma, desde las calamidades más espantosas hasta los logros más espectaculares.

El fuerte terremoto de 1985 apenas afectó el metro. Por la tarde del día del desastre, la mayoría de las líneas funcionaban normalmente. Lo que parecía un milagro era, según los ingenieros, el resultado de un diseño que tuvo muy en cuenta la posibilidad de terremotos. Los trenes que estaban transitando durante el sismo continuaron funcionando con energía suministrada por baterías de emergencia hasta estaciones donde pudieron

descargar a los pasajeros. Algunas estaciones como Chabacano, Isabel la Católica y Pino Suárez fueron cerradas provisionalmente por los escombros de edificios que bloquearon la salida.

El metro hacía mucha falta en una ciudad que según se calcula tiene unos 17.000.000 de habitantes. Entre semana montan en él unos 4.000.000 de personas al día. El tráfico de automóviles es tan malo como en cualquier otra ciudad del mundo. A las horas de mayor afluencia de tránsito, la congestión de vehículos es descomunal. Mientras que los trenes del metro se mueven a una velocidad promedio de 35 kilómetros por hora, contando las paradas en las estaciones, y pueden llegar a 88 kilómetros por hora, los automóviles se desplazan a unos 22 kilómetros por hora y el chofer tiene los agravantes de la tensión nerviosa y la contaminación atmosférica.

La finalidad de este metro, como la de todos los demás del mundo, es brindar transporte rápido y económico a los residentes. Y es indiscutible que lo logra admirablemente. A pesar de que muchas personas de la clase media prefieren arrosar la congestión de tráfico en su auto particular, otros encuentran que las ventajas del metro exceden

a la aglomeración y las molestias que ocasiona a veces. El metro lo usa toda clase de gente. Para los obreros es sin duda la manera más económica de llegar al trabajo. El sistema ha mantenido siempre el precio del pasaje en un peso y, aunque es posible que la inflación lo haga subir, seguirá siendo el más barato del mundo.

Ahora que la línea tres llega a la Universidad Nacional, los estudiantes de toda la ciudad lo aprovechan para ir a clases. El metro es un medio de transporte fácil para los empleados, visitantes y los enfermos que van a las consultas del Centro Médico y el Hospital General. Se ven hombres de negocios, bien vestidos y con su portafolio en la mano, entre los estudiantes y trabajadores. Los niños, asombrados por recorrer los túneles, se agarran de la mano o la falda de su madre. Y hasta los campesinos analfabetos lo usan sin dificultad, guiados por los símbolos de las estaciones que se hallan en las terminales y en los vagones.

En México no hay empleados que empujen a la gente como en el Japón, aunque hay horas en que no vendrían mal. Los pasajeros no se inmutan y, aunque a veces los vagones están tan llenos que apenas puede uno moverse, casi nunca se oye a nadie levantar la voz airado. Cuando las puertas se abren en las estaciones más concurridas, quizás algún pasajero que va de pie se vea de pronto empujado por la masa de cuerpos que están detrás de él, pero no es a propósito ni con mala intención. No obstante, el sistema cuida de que a las mujeres, los niños y los ancianos no les pase nada, pues a las horas de mayor congestión reservan varios vagones solo para ellos y la policía no permite la entrada a otras personas. Por suer-



te, no hay aglomeración en todas las líneas ni a todas las horas. La conducta de los pasajeros del metro sorprende aún más si se tiene en cuenta que los choferes de la ciudad son tan impacientes e irascibles como los de Roma o Madrid.

El orgullo que los residentes de la capital sienten por el metro se refleja en su limpieza y orden. Un estudio sobre delitos en los sistemas de trenes metropolitanos del mundo realizado recientemente reveló que el metro de México es uno de los más seguros, sobrepasado solo por el de Tokio y el de Moscú. (Este último reportó la falta total de delitos.) Esto es notable, si se piensa en las presiones económicas de muchos de los usuarios y el alto índice de criminalidad de la ciudad en general. De vez en cuando algún ratero aprovecha el gentío, pero casi no hay asaltos. En las estaciones hay guardias armados que mantienen este estado de seguridad.

Al final de casi todos los recorridos, un grupo de empleados uniformados de azul sube a los vagones con escobas y trapeadores. Es raro ver papeles en el piso o en los asientos. Solo una vez vi una obscenidad escrita en un vagón, y estaba en inglés.

El metro es un mundo subterráneo, una ciudad debajo de otra. Los planificadores pudieron haberse ahorrado algunos pesos construyendo un sistema que solo fuera funcional, pero los mexicanos no hacen las cosas así. Por el contrario, han construido un metro que Bobrick, en su libro sobre el metro de los distintos países, describe como "tal vez el más señorial y hermoso del mundo". La misma inventiva y audacia que caracteriza el diseño mexicano en otros campos ha dado por resultado una cadena de 105 estaciones, brillantes, alegres y, en muchos casos, impresionantes. En ningún momento hay sensación de oscuridad ni de estar bajo tierra. Todo es vida y color.

Las zonas comerciales que se hallan en las estaciones más concurridas son tan animadas como los bazares orientales. Entre la estación del Zócalo y la de Pino Suárez hay un túnel largo, muy iluminado, donde uno puede com-

prar comida, ropa, libros y chucherías. Por allí también se ven individuos que entretienen a los pasajeros con suertes de prestidigitación y malabarismos.

Las estaciones de los barrios más alejados son más tranquilas, pero todas tienen mucha luz y están diseñadas con mucho gusto. Hasta el andén inferior de la nueva línea número siete en Tacubaya está iluminado con recuadros de luces de colores que crean un efecto de alhaja. La estación de Bellas Artes está adornada con reproducciones de murales mayas y tiene el piso de mármol. Zócalo, una de las estaciones más concurridas, tiene vitrinas donde se reproduce la gran plaza en tiempos aztecas y coloniales. La estación de Insurgentes está decorada con recuadros de piedra arenisca esculpidos y plintos de mármol pulido. La elegante sencillez de la estación de Coyoacán está realizada por los murales abstractos que relucen suavemente a cada lado.

Aunque los trenes dejan de funcionar a altas horas de la noche, la actividad subterránea no cesa. Los trabajadores reponen bombillas quemadas, aseguran losetas flojas, limpian y pulen los pisos y se ocupan de mil tareas de conservación del local. La basura de los túneles se recoge con unas aspiradoras gigantes, que se llevan desde papeles hasta animales muertos. Los técnicos usan delicados instrumentos para nivelar y realinear los rieles, que han soportado el castigo de 18 horas de tránsito. Se permite solo una tolerancia de cuatro milímetros en el espacio que hay entre los rieles y las barras de guía.

La construcción del sistema continúa inexorablemente desde que se inició la primera línea en 1967, por lo cual todas las estadísticas son viejas aun antes de que se publiquen. A fines de 1985 había 127 kilómetros de vías, sin contar los tramos de vías de maniobra y los talleres. Aunque es mucho menos extensa que las redes gigantes de los metros más antiguos como el de Londres o el de Nueva York, el número de pasajeros que el metro de la ciudad de México transporta por kilómetro vial es mucho mayor que el de cualquier otro sistema, incluso el de Tokio.

Pese a los inmensos costos y problemas de ingeniería, se siguen construyendo nuevos tramos de vías. Para 1987 se inaugurará otra línea este-oeste que estará al sur de la que hay ahora. La primera iba de Chapultepec a Zaragoza. Desde entonces se ha extendido hacia el oeste hasta pasada Tacubaya, y en el extremo oriental se empalma con la línea cinco. La línea dos, que se abrió al público poco después, comienza muy al sur, en Taxqueña, circula al ras de tierra por la Avenida Tlalpan, se mete bajo tierra antes de llegar al Zócalo, tuerce al oeste y cruza el centro de la ciudad hasta llegar a Tacuba y el límite del Distrito Federal en Cuatro Caminos.

En 1970 se completó la sección central de la importante línea tres, que funcionaba entre Tlatelolco y el Hospital General, hacia el sur. Más tarde se amplió hacia el norte más allá de la Villa de Guadalupe y hacia el sur hasta la Universidad Nacional, de modo que es posible recorrer la ciudad a lo largo en unos 35 minutos. Por la parte oriental de la ciudad va un elegante elevado en dirección norte-sur. El extremo occidental de la línea cinco se conecta con la línea seis, que llevará a las zonas industriales de la parte noroeste de la ciudad.

Con todo lo progresista que es el sistema mexicano de metro, es a la vez un vínculo con el pasado. Varias de las líneas coinciden con antiguas calzadas elevadas que hace 500 años unían la ciudad-isla de Tenochtitlan con las orillas del lago Texcoco. La línea dos sigue la ruta que Cortés y los suyos usaron para cruzar el lago después de su marcha desde la costa y penetrar hasta el Zócalo de la ciudad en noviembre de 1519. La parte occidental de esta misma línea sigue la ruta de su desastrosa retirada hacia Tlaxcala en junio del año siguiente. En aquel entonces Tacuba era una aldea de tierra firme. La línea tres coincide con otra calzada que conectaba con Tepeyac, lugar donde la Virgen de Guadalupe se le apareció a Juan Diego en 1531.

Desde el inicio de las excavaciones para la construcción del metro, los arqueólogos se dieron cuenta de que estas brindarían la



oportunidad de estudiar la riqueza histórica de la región, aunque también podían constituir un peligro para las ruinas antiguas. Bajo la dirección del Departamento de Arqueología, un grupo de antropólogos, arqueólogos e historiadores de arte han trabajado a la par que los ingenieros para salvaguardar los artefactos de civilizaciones prehistóricas. Tal vez el hallazgo más conocido sea el templo en espiral a Ehécatl, dios de los vientos, que se dejó en su lugar en medio de los espaciosos pasillos de la estación Pino Suárez. Después de haber estado enterrado durante varios siglos, de nuevo recibe la luz del sol por una abertura en el techo de la estación.

Los hallazgos más antiguos fueron los restos de mamuts cuya edad se calcula entre 10.000 y 30.000 años. Cuando se estaban realizando excavaciones para construir la línea dos, se descubrieron muchos tesoros aztecas en la zona sagrada que está en la parte noroeste del Zócalo. En las excavaciones efectuadas para la línea siete, inaugurada recientemente, salieron a la luz restos de culturas primitivas en Tlacopán, una de las ciudades importantes de la triple alianza precolonial del siglo XVI. En Ticomán, en la parte septentrional de la línea tres, se descubrieron una aldea y unas minas de sal. Azcapotzalco, en la porción noroeste, ha sido otra zona de muchos hallazgos.

Los nombres y símbolos de las estaciones del metro son también fuente de encanto e información. Abarcan cinco siglos de historia y tratan desde lo severo y heroico hasta lo fantástico y caprichoso.

El emblema de la estación de Chapultepec, que da acceso al parque con sus famosos museos y castillos, es una cigarra o chapulín, su símbolo tradicional. Más poética es la mariposa de Juanacatlán, que significa "lugar de las mariposas" en náhuatl. La estación del Zócalo, en el corazón de la ciudad antigua y la moderna, está señalada, como era de esperar, por un águila posada en un cacto con una serpiente en la boca.

El que estudia el metro puede catalogar los temas de los símbolos como si fuera un filatelista. El


transporte está representado por la carabela de Cristóbal Colón en la estación de Isabel la Católica, como es natural. En Nativitas se ve la imagen estilizada de una de las grandes canoas que abastecían la ciudad cuando estaba en medio del lago. Una referencia más reciente es la encantadora locomotora de juguete de San Lázaro, lugar de la primera terminal ferroviaria de la ciudad. La época actual está reflejada por el avión que señala el aeropuerto y el trébol que indica el cruce del viaducto.

La historia militar está bien representada con símbolos de guerreros y generales desde Moctezuma y Cuauhtémoc. Miguel Hidalgo, Vicente Guerrero, Ignacio Allende y Benito Juárez están representados en silueta, igual que los generales Pedro María Anaya e Ignacio Zaragoza. Los Niños Héroes están simbolizados por el quepis que llevaban los cadetes. El período revolucionario está representado por Emiliano Zapata con su sombrero y sus cananas, por Pancho Villa a caballo en la estación de División del Norte y por el cañón de la estación de Balderas.

A menudo las estaciones toman el nombre de las calles donde están ubicadas. Xola, Misterios, Talismán y Tlatelolco estimulan la imaginación. En otros casos el símbolo no tiene relación con el nombre. El patito de Candelaria se eligió porque en tiempos antiguos esa era una zona pantanosa junto al lago Texcoco, refugio de muchas aves acuáticas. La estación de Pino Suárez lleva el nombre de un héroe de la revolución, pero el símbolo que tiene es el templo azteca que se halla dentro de la estación.

Hasta la persona más agotada debe sentirse contenta al viajar por este mundo subterráneo tan ameno. Para el que visita la ciudad, el metro no es solo un medio rápido y conveniente de trasladarse a cualquier parte de la capital, sino que también le brinda la oportunidad de conocer a los que viven en ella en su quehacer cotidiano. Y como la tercera parte de las líneas no son subterráneas, el metro es una buena manera de ver la ciudad. Es bueno hacer ese recorrido el domingo por la mañana, porque hay

menos gentío y casi siempre se puede encontrar asiento. Hay que advertir al visitante, sobre todo al que no es joven, que aunque hay escaleras automáticas en algunas subidas muy largas, en las demás son escaleras corrientes. Este es el metro más alto del mundo, pues está a unos 2.250 metros sobre el nivel del mar. Por ello el turista de tierras bajas debe tomar las escaleras con calma hasta que su cuerpo se adapte.

Igual que las arterias y las venas de un organismo gigantesco, las líneas del metro llevan a millones de corpúsculos por la ciudad más populosa del mundo, unos al trabajo y otros a casa. Los que hemos montado en sus trenes hemos experimentado la energía de esta corriente, fuerza vital que se halla en lo profundo de los sedimentos de colonias prehistóricas y que, a pesar de tribulaciones y vicisitudes, continúa denodadamente hacia el futuro. 

*George R. Ellis, radicado en California, fue meteorólogo del Servicio Meteorológico Nacional de los Estados Unidos. Después de jubilarse ha enseñado en muchos países de América Latina a través de la División de Operaciones en Ultramar de dicho Servicio.*

"El estupendo metro de México" por George R. Ellis. *Américas*, Vol. 38, septiembre-octubre 1986. Reprinted from *Américas*, a bimonthly magazine published by the General Secretariat of the Organization of American States in English and Spanish, with permission of Teresa de Perignat, Spanish Editor, *Américas Magazine*.

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All materials will be refereed by members of the Editorial Board and an independent panel.

Manuscripts and other editorial communication should be sent to Prof. Anthony Mollica.

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See page 2 for further information.

**Mosaic**



## SALT for Language Acquisition

W. Jane Bancroft

*Schuster's SALT (Suggestive-Accelerative Learning Techniques) Method, which combines Lozanov's Suggestopedia with such American methods as Asher's Total Physical Response and Galyean's Confluent Education, lays stress on research and relaxation procedures.*

In the early 1970's, following the publication of the Ostrander-Schroeder (1970) *Psychic Discoveries behind the Iron Curtain*, a number of knowledgeable researchers and educational psychologists in the United States – most notably Donald Schuster, Owen Caskey and Allyn Prichard – expressed interest in, or commenced experiments on Suggestopedia. The circulation of an unofficial English translation of the Georgi Lozanov thesis, *Sugestologia*, as well as the publication of a number of articles on what was called the Lozanov Method, also stimulated interest and research. Early pilot studies which were published in the newly founded *Journal of Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching* (which then became the *Journal of the Society for Accelerative Learning and Teaching* and is now called the *Journal of Accelerative Learning and Teaching*) showed that Suggestopedia (or what was known of it at the time) held promise.

My own article, "The Lozanov Language Class" (1975), which provided details on the first version of Suggestopedia (the one largely developed by Aleko Novakov at the Institute of Suggestology in Sofia, Bulgaria in the late 1960's and early 1970's) served as the basis for controlled experiments conducted by researchers affiliated with the Society for Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching. (The name was changed in 1980 to the Society for Accelerative Learning and Teaching and in 1994 to the International Alliance for Learning). In addition to conducting his own research at Texas Tech University, Owen Caskey

supervised theses such as that of Elizabeth Robinett, "The Effects of Suggestopedia in Increasing Foreign Language Achievement," which showed that Suggestopedia had a positive effect on language learning. ("Individual analysis of achievement revealed that the Suggestopedic approach helped students in the lower grade point average ranges more than those with higher grade point averages" (Caskey [1976], p. 353). In their investigation of the influence of a suggestive atmosphere, synchronized music and breathing on the learning and retention of Spanish words, Ray Bordón and Donald Schuster found that, "at a practical level, these variables when present resulted in learning 2.5 times better than when these same variables were absent" (Bordón and Schuster [1976], p. 27). In the 1975-76 remedial reading experiments conducted by Jean Taylor and Allyn Prichard in Atlanta, 75-80 percent of the pupils gained a year or more on the Spache oral and silent reading sub-tests after fourteen weeks in the program, only twelve of which were devoted to the actual teaching of reading (Prichard and Taylor [1976]). Researchers generally concluded that three elements of Suggestopedia were essential for the system to work effectively in an American setting:

1. an attractive classroom (with soft lighting) and a pleasant classroom atmosphere;
2. a teacher with a dynamic personality, able to act out the material and motivate the students to learn;
3. a state of relaxed alertness in the students (Bancroft [1978]).

By the time Lozanov came to lecture to the members of the Society

for Accelerative Learning and Teaching in the late 1970's, the Suggestopedic method had changed. Instead of presenting the Novakov version (Suggestopedia 1) which was largely based on yoga, Lozanov and his new assistant, Evalina Gateva, presented a somewhat different version, one that was more artistic (in that it incorporated more elements of the various arts) but which was deprived of many of the earlier, yogic memory-training and relaxation elements (Lozanov and Gateva [1988]). Researchers subsequently took up elements of the Gateva version (Suggestopedia 2) but also retained elements of the former version (as it had been described in my article, "The Lozanov Language Class"). More importantly, however, they greatly enlarged upon the relaxation and visualization elements as well as the positive suggestions for pleasant learning contained in the two versions of Suggestopedia, modified Bulgarian language programs to appeal to an American (or North-American) audience and created "suggestopedia" programs for a wide range of school and college subjects. In addition, they provided a solid, statistical basis for Suggestopedic research.

*Studies consistently show that students trained with the SALT Method have significantly higher achievement scores and better attitudes than those in the control groups.*

The results of the research of Owen Caskey, Donald Schuster and Allyn Prichard can be seen, not only in their articles in the *Journal of [the Society for] Accelerative Learning and Teaching* but also in their books on the subject: Caskey's *Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching* (1980); Schuster's *Suggestive-Accelerative Learning Techniques* (1986); Prichard's *Accelerating Learning: The Use of Suggestion in the Classroom* (1980). (The *Journal of [the Society for] Accelerative Learning and Teaching*, in addition to the ERIC Documents on Foreign Language Teaching and Linguistics, provides an important source of ongoing research in Sug-



gestopedia and/or accelerated learning).

While the work of all researchers in Suggestopedia and/or accelerated learning may be considered significant and the work of Caskey and Prichard to be pioneering, the leader in Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching (or SALT) research is generally acknowledged to be Donald Schuster, retired professor of Psychology at Iowa State University, founder and long time editor of the SALT Journal and trainer of hundreds of teachers in SALT strategies. Let us now focus on the SALT Method (or SALT variant of Suggestopedia) as it has been described in Schuster's many articles and, most particularly, in the book which he co-authored with Charles Gritton, a dynamic and creative Iowa teacher: *Suggestive-Accelerative Learning Techniques* (1986). (An earlier version was the SALT manual of classroom procedures based on the Lozanov Method).

### Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching (or SALT)

In the introduction to the Schuster-Gritton book, we find the following definition of the Suggestive-Accelerative Learning Techniques (or SALT) Method:

[It] uses aspects of suggestion similar to advertising and unusual styles of presenting material to accelerate classroom learning. The essence of this technique is using an unusual combination of physical relaxation exercises, mental concentration and suggestive principles to strengthen a person's ego and expand his or her memory capabilities while material to be learned is presented dynamically with relaxing music (Schuster and Gritton [1986], p. 1).

According to Schuster, Lozanov was the first to put all of these component elements together in "an integrated and highly effective learning procedure," viz. Suggestopedia (p. 1).

The SALT Method incorporates and, indeed, elaborates upon the basic theoretical elements of Suggestopedia 1 (authority, infantilization, double-planeness, intonation, rhythm and concert pseudo-passivity) as well as the three principles of Suggestopedia 2: joy and absence of

tension and concentrative psycho-relaxation; the unity of conscious and paraconscious and integral brain activity (i.e., whole-brain learning); the suggestive link on the level of the reserve complex (i.e., suggestion is used to tap the normally unused reserves of the mind for increased learning). The suggestopedic means of version two (psychological, didactic and artistic) are also a part of the SALT Method (Lozanov [1978]; Schuster and Gritton [1986]). In addition to providing detailed practical information on the ways of using suggestion in the classroom, the Schuster-Gritton book provides more of a comprehensible background than Lozanov's on the theoretical aspects of suggestion. As opposed to the commonly accepted technical definition of suggestion, i.e., the transmission or influence of ideas and their uncritical acceptance by the recipient, Schuster (like Lozanov) prefers a "humanistic" definition, viz. suggestion as indirect communication, indirection, hinting or intimating. Suggestion in the SALT Method (as in Suggestopedia) is closer to suggestion as used in advertising or the arts.

In the SALT classroom, suggestion may be direct or indirect, verbal or nonverbal. Verbal suggestion may be direct (as in "learning will be easy for you today") or indirect (as in a question such as "Are you willing to find that out [with respect to today's lesson]?" or a truism such as "Sooner or later you are going to do extremely well in class") (Schuster and Gritton [1986], pp. 63 ff.) Direct nonverbal suggestion comprises gestures and mime to get students to imitate the teacher; indirect nonverbal suggestion includes eye contact, manner of speaking, physical posture and location while talking in class (with reference to the teacher); peer success and peer pressure (with reference to the students); and the environment (with reference to the classroom). Regarding environmental nonverbal indirect suggestion, such elements as a semicircular arrangement of chairs, light colors, soft lighting and relaxing background music are important as they make the classroom more inviting for the students.

Suggestion in both Suggestopedia and the SALT Method also involves *desuggestion* and the overcoming of barriers that interfere with teaching and/or learning. Lozanov's barriers to communication, teacher-student interaction and accelerated learning (viz. moral-ethical, rational-logical and intuitive-emotional [Lozanov {1978}]) are expanded by Schuster to include:

1. socially or culturally accepted patterns;
2. body language signals that are culturally instinctive;
3. subliminal communication; and
4. verbal confusion due to images generated by the recipient in interpreting the sounds received (Schuster-Gritton [1986], p. 13).

The teacher has (or may have) barriers or psychological characteristics that interfere with successful teaching; the students have barriers that interfere with learning. Suggestion in its various forms (including auto-suggestion) can be used to work around student barriers to accelerated learning as well as teacher barriers to improved teaching.

The teacher's goal is to integrate all types of classroom suggestions with conscious and paraconscious elements skillfully combined to lead the students to expect that learning will be easy, fun, efficient and long-lasting (Schuster and Gritton [1986], p. 74).

The Schuster-Gritton book is also more detailed and straightforward than Lozanov's when it comes to the theoretical (as well as the practical) aspects of whole-brain learning.

Linguistic symbols such as language are generally associated with slightly increased cortical activity in the left cerebral hemisphere, while listening to music and visualizing a picture are associated with increased right hemisphere activity (p. 74).

Generally speaking, schools emphasize verbal or so-called left brain activities and neglect activities that appeal to or stimulate the right brain. According to Schuster,

research on teaching wherein more than one area of the brain is involved shows that both learning rates and retention can increase dramatically (Schuster-Gritton [1986], p. 75).

In his discussion of general theories of brain functioning, Schuster elaborates on Lozanov's idea that



multiple sensory inputs (auditory, visual, motor) improve memory and accelerate memorization. Teachers should emphasize the

interactive contributions of the right and left hemispheres to the mastery of any given skill (Schuster-Gritton [1986]), p. 81)

and use various modes of presentation in the classroom. Vocabulary, for example, should be taught orally, visually and through physical movement (such as that used in Total Physical Response [Asher (1993)]).

As far as practical applications are concerned, Schuster's SALT follows the general outline of Suggestopedia 1 and 2 in that the lesson is divided into three parts: review of previously presented material; dynamic presentation of new material; repetition of new material to be learned during a "concert session" while the students are in a relaxed, but nonetheless receptive state. Students in a SALT language class (SALT is used, however, for all subjects and not just language) engage in role-playing, games, songs and a final play; attractive, colourful posters and pictures decorate the classroom and/or present lesson points peripherally. During the "review" or "activation" phase, however, in addition to strategies taken from Suggestopedia, SALT uses techniques taken from such American approaches as Asher's Total Physical Response and Galyean's Confluent Education (Galyean [1976]). The first, or "active" concert of Suggestopedia 2 is optional; if used, however, the students are encouraged to visualize images, whether teacher-prepared or their own (Schuster-Gritton [1986], p. 125). The second concert over baroque music, preferably the slow movements in 4/4 time as in Suggestopedia 1, is considered essential for accelerated learning. (SALT students use rhythmic breathing during this concert). SALT makes use of different kinds of music in the classroom: classical, baroque and "subject-appropriate" (for example, French folk songs in a French class), thus following the dictates of Suggestopedia. However, in contrast to Suggestopedia, meditative music (or mood music) is used as a background for mind-calming exercises and guided imagery trips in a SALT class. According to Schuster, the use of appropri-

ate types of music helps learning. Music is a placebo, a relaxant, but it provides another association to stimulate or promote memory.

According to the SALT approach, the teacher should create a favourable atmosphere for learning through suggestions in the form of positive statements as well as suggestions which appeal to the unconscious mind in the form of body language, attitude and expectations. In everything the teacher does and says, there should be a harmony between the conscious and the unconscious, the verbal and the nonverbal levels. Guided imagery (for example, goal setting imagery) and visualization are incorporated into the lesson presentation. Through word and gesture, the teacher establishes and sustains a suggestive, positive atmosphere in which the students understand that effective learning will take place. While the teacher must teach, the students, however, must be in a mental and physical state which enables them to learn. Unlike many educational methods which stress the importance of the teacher and/or various kinds of audio-visual aids and equipment but which neglect to take into account student receptivity, the SALT Method lays great stress on the students. To prepare themselves prior to the presentation of didactic material (for example, just before the lesson begins or just prior to the "concert session") they perform, if need be, various types of physical and/or mental relaxation exercises. The teacher's suggestions will be more effective if the students' minds are calm and if they are physically relaxed. According to the Schuster-Gritton teacher's manual, students learn better when they are relaxed and when they are in a non-threatening, secure situation. Learning is difficult when students are restless or tense and nervous. In addition to transforming a Bulgarian system designed for teaching intensive language courses into one suitable for the teaching of various subjects (including language[s]) in a normal North American school situation and to providing a statistical basis for research into accelerated learning, the Schuster/SALT contribution is one of providing a precise and valuable outline of relaxation proce-

dures for use in the classroom. The preliminary preparation phase, considered so important for accelerated learning, is divided into three parts:

1. physical relaxation;
2. mental relaxation or mind-calming;
3. suggestive set-up (i.e., pleasant learning [re]stimulation).

The sequence of these exercises is important: physical relaxation should precede mental relaxation. (Physical relaxation exercises are considered especially necessary for restless and anxious students). A state of physical relaxation makes it possible for students to relax their minds with mind-calming exercises which are either teacher-directed or self-directed (following upon teacher-given instruction). Suggestion, in turn, is more effective when a student is mentally relaxed. An exercise of pleasant learning (re)stimulation convinces the physically and mentally relaxed students that learning will be easy, efficient and long lasting.

As outlined in the original SALT manual of classroom procedures based on the Lozanov Method and in *Suggestive-Accelerative Learning Techniques* (pp. 109 ff.), exercises include (but are not limited to) the following. (Instructions for these exercises could be given, of course, in a second or foreign language, where appropriate).

## 1. Physical relaxation exercises

### a) Reach and stretch

While standing, raise and stretch one arm as much as possible and hold this position for two to three seconds, return the arm to the side, then reach and stretch with the other arm. (Students may also be requested to stand up, bend over and try to touch their toes).

### b) Tension waves

Divide the body into six sections, tense one section at a time and hold. Progress from the feet, to the calves, to the thighs, to the lower abdominal muscles, to the upper abdominal area, to the chest. Hold, then relax the body parts in reverse order. It is possible to do the contractions in a wave-like motion after a little practice.



### c) Three turtle exercises:

- i) Tense one side of the neck, then the other side and the front.
- ii) Let the head flop forward and touch the chest, then lift the shoulders behind the head, then pull the head up with the neck, tighten the back of the neck, let the head flop forward again.
- iii) Lift the shoulders and rotate the head, with neck tensed, three times in one direction, then three times in the opposite direction; turn the neck once or twice without tension.

### d) Side bends

Standing straight with the hands to the side, slide the hand down the side of the leg below the knee while bending the body sideways as much as possible. Repeat with the other side.

### e) Eye rotation

First look upward to the maximum extent possible. Then rotate the eyes so as to look to the upper right as high as possible, then to the right horizontally as far as possible. Continue down to the lower right, then straight down, lower left, extreme left, upper left. Rotate the eyes slowly 2-3 times to the right in a clockwise direction, then do the reverse 2-3 times. Next imagine holding something a foot or so in front of the eyes and focusing on it. Then imagine looking at something far off on the horizon. Focus your eyes back and forth several times. Finally, rub your palms together briskly several times and place your palms over your open eyes, imagining energy flowing into your eyes to relax and energize them. Hold this position for 1-2 minutes.

### 2. Mind-calming exercises

There are several types of exercises that can be used to calm the students' minds after they have relaxed physically. These include: watching one's breathing (Zen breathing); the little white cloud exercise; walking along the beach; climbing a mountain to view a beautiful sunrise. The little white cloud exercise has the following pattern:

Imagine that you are lying on your back on the grass on a warm summer day and that you are watching the

clear blue sky without a single cloud in it (pause). You are lying very comfortably, you are very relaxed and happy (pause). You are simply enjoying the experience of watching the clear, beautiful, blue sky (pause). As you are lying there, completely relaxed, enjoying yourself (pause), far off on the horizon you notice a tiny white cloud (pause). You are fascinated by the simple beauty of the small white cloud against the clear blue sky (pause). The little white cloud starts to move slowly toward you (pause). You are lying there, completely relaxed, very much at peace with yourself, watching the little white cloud drift slowly toward you (pause). The little white cloud drifts slowly toward you (pause). You are enjoying the beauty of the clear blue sky and the little white cloud (pause). Finally the little white cloud comes to a stop overhead (pause). Completely relaxed, you are enjoying this beautiful scene (pause). You are very relaxed, very much at peace with yourself, and simply enjoying the beauty of the little white cloud in the blue sky (pause). Now become the little white cloud. Project yourself into it (pause). You are the little white cloud, completely diffused, puffy, relaxed, very much at peace with yourself (pause). Now you are completely relaxed, your mind is completely calm (pause), you are pleasantly relaxed, ready to proceed with the lesson.

### 3. Suggestive set-up

The suggestions contained in this section develop in the students a positive attitude toward learning. Exercises include early pleasant learning recall and lifelong learning. While "lifelong learning" is general in nature and directed towards the future, "early pleasant learning recall" is intended to bring back precise memories from the past. The purpose of the latter exercise, as outlined below, is to stimulate or bring to the fore the sensations, feelings and abilities which students had much earlier in their lives, for example, during a period when bedtime stories were being read to them. Typical instructions follow a Gestalt pattern in which the nonverbal components of the previous situation provoke a recall of the appropriate verbal and cognitive aspects.

Return to an experience which made you eager to learn. Get the details of this early pleasant learning experi-

ence in your mind as vividly as possible. Use your imagination, if you need to, to fill in the following information, in order to put yourself in the situation once again. Where were you? (pause) Were you in a room? (pause) Were there people around you? (pause) Who were they? (pause) How did you feel about what you were reading or learning? (pause) Take a look at yourself in this learning situation. How did your hands feel then? Everyone's hands feel different when they are excited (pause). Recall that feeling and let it spread up your arms (pause). Let that feeling spread from the top of your head to the bottom of your feet (pause). Recall how your whole body felt (pause). Recall how naturally motivated you were (pause). Recall the thoughts you were thinking (pause). Take a look at the eager feeling you had that day long ago (pause). Maximize that feeling, hang on to it (pause), bring it here today and use it to learn and enjoy learning as much as you did that day long ago (pause). With positive thoughts and feelings you will remember today as well as you did that day in the past (pause). You still have the ability to remember just as well today.

Since its beginnings in the 1970's, the SALT Method has been frequently, indeed continuously evaluated in field experiments in American public school classrooms and its individual components have been evaluated in analytic laboratory studies with college students. The subject matter in these studies has a wide range from reading, spelling, mathematics, science and art to beginning German and Spanish. Grade levels have ranged from first grade in elementary school to first-year university. Studies consistently show that students trained with the SALT Method have significantly higher achievement scores and better attitudes than those in the control groups. The lab studies have provided significant support for the major component features of the method (Schuster-Gritton [1986], p 2). Insofar as foreign language achievement is concerned, studies with tight experimental designs have consistently shown that the SALT variant of Suggestopedia produces a two or three times greater foreign language achievement than conventional methods (Schuster-Gritton [1986], p 34).



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## French in Disguise

Fred Howlett and Alain Péchon

*Students can use their knowledge of English to expand their French vocabulary quickly. In the process, they learn more than words: they discover the inter-relationship of languages, a powerful motivating force.*

**E**nglish is a goldmine for any student wishing to learn French words. If students were taught to use this resource, they might find the process exciting. It might just dawn on them that French and English have a lot in common. A long shared history, as well as a common vocabulary.

This article provides just a few of the ways a student can use English to help learn what at first appear to be unfamiliar French words. The following is a vastly abbreviated outline of the riches available to French students in the goldmine of the English language.

### Identical Words

In a goldmine, some ore is actually found on the surface and is obvious. On the surface we will find plenty of gold that others have never seen because they aren't looking for it. This gold on the surface is the thousands of words in English and French that are identical in spelling and meaning. Here are just a few examples:

*absent, accident, accuse, admire, alibi, amuse, animal, argument, assume, bandit, bar, basket-ball, biscuit, brutal, budget, building, camp, cause, certain, cognac, compose, constant, courage, danger, direction, discussion, distance, divorce, dose, dynamite, effort, encourage, expert, explosion, stop, etc.*

There are over 3,000 such words with identical spelling in English and French.

### Slightly Disguised Words

Now let us enter the goldmine. Not far within, we find ore that is really rich. If beginning students saw these French sentences, could they understand them without the instructor's help? *Paul signe le chè que* or *Ce boxeur est le champion du Canada*. If the be-

ginners succeed, they are ready to guess the meaning of thousands of French words that look almost like English but are slightly disguised in their spelling. Here are a few:

1. Accent in French:  
*une nièce, une scène, une atmosphère, un câble, un âge*
2. -e at the end of French words:  
*la soupe, la liste, la princesse, la tente*
3. Accent + e in French:  
*une comète, un hélicoptère, l'hydrogène, l'oxygène, la planète*
4. Accent + one s in French:  
*l'accès, le succès, l'excès, le progrès, l'abcès*
5. -r at end of French verb = -e in English:  
*changer, préparer, arriver, recycler, comparer*
6. -er in French = -ate in English:  
*participer, décorer, créer, imiter*
7. -eur = -er/or:  
*un boxeur, un skieur, un danseur, un acteur, un docteur*
8. -aire = -ar:  
*populaire, cellulaire, spectaculaire, circulaire, triangulaire*
9. -oire = -ory:  
*l'histoire, la gloire, l'ivoire, la victoire, le territoire*
10. -té = -ty:  
*l'université, l'électricité, la qualité, la quantité, la beauté*
11. -ien = -ian:  
*l'électricien, le végétarien, le musicien, le magicien, le Canadien*
12. final -e = -a:  
*la Floride, la Russie, l'idée, la banane, l'Afrique*
13. -ai = -ea/-ee:  
*une saison, un traitement, un aigle, une raison, faible*
14. -e = -ea:  
*elle répète, la crème, les perles, il cesse, il révèle*



### More-difficult spelling disguises

Now it is time to get serious about goldmining. Deep down in the mine there are familiar English words that will help you recognize countless more French words without the aid of a dictionary. But you must unmask the spelling disguise. Here are nine important spelling disguises.

1. French words beginning with *esc* or *éc*, *esp*, or *ép* and *est* or *ét* often begin in English with *sc*, *sp*, and *st*.

*espace* = space

*éponge* = sponge.

Some easy examples:

*espèce*, *esprit*, *esturgeon*, *estomac*

More difficult examples:

*épars*, *école*, *éperon*, *échafaud*, *éta-  
lon*, *épelle*, *écluse*, *écran*, *épagneul*,  
*écossais*, *épine*, *écume*, *écope*,  
*écureuil*, *équarrir*, *échauder*, *écaille*,  
*état*, *écarlate*, *épargne*, *épier*,  
*écharpe*, *écolier*, *épineux*

2. The circumflex accent (^) in many French words is represented in English by *s*.

Example: *mât* = mast.

*forêt*, *hâte*, *hôtesse*, *île*, *crête*, *côte*,  
*coût*, *croûte*, *quête*, *plâtre*, *château*,  
*pâte*, *rôti*, *maître*

Some difficult examples:

*bête*, *prêtre*, *dégoût*, *tâche*, *guêpe*

3. The *dé* or *dés* at the beginning of French words is often spelled *dis* in English.

Example:

*déguise* = disguise

*désarme* = disarm

*décourage*, *dégoûte*, *désarme*,  
*désobéit*, *déshonore*, *désastre*,  
*découvre*, *déloge*, *dédaigne*, *détresse*,  
*déplaît*, *désaccord*, *déloyal*, *défig-  
ure*, *décolore*

4. Some French words have a *u* where English uses an *l*.

Example: *paume* = palm.

Also: *saumon*, *échafaud*, *feutre*,  
*peau*, *fausse*

5. In a few words French has *-prime* where English has *-press*.

Example: *réprime* = repress.

Also: *exprime*, *opprime*, *supprime*,  
*déprime*, *comprime*

6. Sometimes French words have an *i* whereas English has a *c*. Example: *instruit* = instruct(s). English uses both *uce* and *uct* as endings: *réduit*, *produit*, *déduit*, *construit*

7. French almost never uses the letter *k*. The *k* sound is spelled *c* or *qu* in French. Similarly, the *w* sound is written *ou* in French.

Example: *banque* = bank;

Also: *lac*, *parc*, *masque*, *ouest*

Many verbs ending in *-que* in French end in *-cate* in English:

*complique*, *communiqué*, *indique*,  
*abdique*, *éduque*

8. French frequently uses *-x* at the end of a word, where English prefers *-ce* or sometimes *-ze*.

Example: *voix* = voice.

Also: *paix*, *choix*, *prix*

9. Some French verbs ending in *-ir* correspond to English verbs ending in *-ish*.

Example: *polir* = polish.

Also: *accomplir*, *chérir*, *établir*,  
*fleurir*, *nourrir*, *périr*, *ravir*, *ternir*

10. French frequently uses *g/gu* where English prefers *w*.

For example,

*guerre* = war

*Guillaume* = William

*guichet* = wicket

*guerrier* = warrior

*gages* = wages

*guêpe* = wasp

*Gauthier* = Walter

*gaufre* = wafer

(le pays de) *Galles* = Wales

*gallois* = Welsh

*garantie* = warranty

*garde-robe* = wardrobe

### Disguises and Associations

We are now deep within the English language goldmine. Down here the French words are even more disguised. But with a little help, even a beginner can recognize them. Here the problem is that the French words have two possible roots, one of which is familiar to English-speakers, the other not.

### The Indo-European connection

The Latin (French, etc.) and Germanic (English, etc.) languages have a common origin. But when these related peoples were separated for thousands of years, the spelling of many common words changed radically. There is, however, a pattern to the spelling changes. As a matter of fact, we can illustrate the pattern of these changes even within English. Here is a short summary of the spelling disguises that make it difficult for us to recognize Germanic and Latin words that have the same origin:

1. *g*, *b*, *d* in a word of Latin origin could be represented by *c* or *k*, *p*, *t* in a word of Germanic origin.

Latin Word in English and Related Germanic in English

*grain* = kernel

*labial* = lip

*denture* = (false) teeth

French words with an unfamiliar form of the root	Related French with root like that of English	Related English that provides the meaning (Not a translation!)
<i>bois, boit, boivent</i>	<i>buvons</i>	beverage (what you drink)
<i>croyable, le crois</i>	<i>crédule</i>	credible (believable)
<i>connais, connaît</i>	<i>connaissons</i>	connoisseur (one who knows)
<i>devons, dois, doivent</i>	<i>débit</i>	debit (what is owing)
<i>dites, disons, dis, dit</i>	<i>dicton</i>	diction
<i>écrivons, écris, écrit</i>	<i>scribe</i>	scribe
<i>envoie, envoient</i>	<i>envoyons</i>	envoy
<i>un fait, fais, fait, faisons, faites, font</i>	<i>facteur</i>	fact, factor, feat
<i>meurs, meurt, mourons, mourez, meurent</i>	<i>mortel, mort</i>	mortal
<i>peux, peut, peuvent</i>	<i>pouvons, pouvoir</i>	power

Figure 1



2. *f* and *h* in a word of Latin origin are sometimes represented by *B* and *gh* (*gu*) in a word of Germanic origin.

*fragile* = breakable  
*host* = guest<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>In spite of their common origin, a *host* now provides hospitality whereas a *guest* receives it.

3. *p*, *t*, *c* in a word of Latin origin are sometimes represented by *f*, *th*, *h*, *sh* in a word of Germanic origin.

paternal = fatherly  
Pisces (the) = Fish (constellation)  
triple = threefold  
maternal = motherly  
cordial = hearty  
curt = short

Now apply the above patterns to French words (i.e., Latin) and English words (i.e., Germanic).

1. French *g*, *r*, *d* English *c* (or *k*) *p*, *t*

*grain* = kernel  
*genou* = knee  
*agri*(culture) = acre<sup>1</sup>  
*bourse* = purse  
*labial* = lip<sup>2</sup>  
*dent* = tooth

<sup>1</sup> Although “*agri-*” is not a translation for “*acre*” these words do have a common origin. “*agri-*” means “*field*” and “*acre*” is now a measurement for a “*field*”.

<sup>2</sup> La *lecture labiale* is “*lip reading*”. The latin word *labrum* (sometimes *labia* or *labium*), meaning *lip* evolved into the French word *lèvre*. Since *labial* in French shows no evolution in spelling, it was introduced at a later period in the history of the language, about 1600 AD.

2. French *f* and *h* = English *b* and *g* or *gu*:

*perfore* Latin *for* = bore through  
*fève* (Latin *fab*) = bean  
*aurifère* (Latin *fer*) = gold-bearing<sup>1</sup>  
*hôte* (Latin *host*) = guest<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> The *fer* in such French words as *préfère* (prefer), *confère* (confer), *conifère* (coniferous), etc., corresponds to bear, meaning “*carry*”, in English. Therefore, *coniferous* not only has the same meaning as *cone-bearing* but also has the same origin.

<sup>2</sup> The French word *hôte* usually means *host* in English, but oddly enough it also means *guest*.

3. French *c*, *p*, *t*. = English *f*, *t* (or *th*), *sh*

*poisson*\* (Latin *pisc*) = fish

paternal (Latin *pater*) = fatherly  
trois (Latin *tres*) = three  
maternal (Latin *mater*) = motherly  
coeur (Latin *cord*) = heart  
court (Latin *curt*) = short

\* Yes, the word *poisson* in French has the same origin as *fish* in English. The ancestor of both the French and the English is the root *pisc*.

Use the above patterns to find the English words which have the same Indo-European root as these French words:

*connais* (Latin *cognosc* or simply *gnos*)  
*cor* (Latin *corn*)  
*neveu* (Latin *nepos*)  
*dis* (Latin *dic*)  
*deux* (Latin *duo*)  
*ped* (Latin *ped*)  
*colline* (Latin *coll*)  
*tonnerre* (Latin *ton*)  
*fleur* (Latin *flor*)  
*larme* (Latin *lacrim*)  
*genre* (Latin *gener*)  
*fracture* (Latin *frag* or *fract*)  
*nuit*<sup>1</sup> (Latin *noct*)  
*sue*<sup>1</sup> (Latin *sud*).

Answers: *know*, *horn*, *nephew*, *teach*<sup>2</sup>, *two*, *foot*, *hill*, *thunder*, *bloom*, *tear*, *kind*, *break*, *night*, *sweat*.

<sup>1</sup> *nuit* and *sue* have the same original root as *night* and *sweat*, but don't follow the patterns.

<sup>2</sup> *dis* and *teach* share the same original root but *teach* is no longer the modern translation for *dis* (say).

### The English connection

So far we have dealt with words that are 100 percent parallel in English and French such as

*bleu* / blue,  
*chat* / cat,  
*guerre* / war,  
*détruire* / destroy,  
*fragile* / breakable.

Perhaps more important are the French words we can know by association. For example, *bien*, *chutes*, and *fer* can be recognized by English-speakers who know *benevolent*, *parachute* or *ferric*. See Figure 2 for examples.

French word	English word with same root as French	Meaning of French word
<i>chaud</i>	cauldron, scald (pot for heating food)	hot
<i>contre</i>	counter (against)	contradict
<i>ciel</i>	celestial (of the heavens, sky)	sky, heavens
<i>marin</i>	mariner (seaman)	sailor
<i>an / année</i>	annual (yearly)	year
<i>fil</i>	filament (slender thread)	thread
<i>incendie</i>	incendiary (causing fire)	fire
<i>lieu</i>	in lieu of (in place of)	place
<i>faim</i>	famine, famished (hungry)	hunger
<i>soleil</i>	solar (of the sun)	sun
<i>maison</i>	mansion (large house)	house
<i>malade</i>	malady (sickness)	sick
<i>pensée</i>	pansy, pensive	thought
<i>poulet</i>	pullet (young chicken)	chicken
<i>bec</i>	beak	bill
<i>enterrer</i>	inter	bury
<i>fatigué</i>	fatigued	tired
<i>bouche</i>	embouchure, buccal	mouth
<i>colère</i>	cholera	anger

Figure 2



If the French teacher constantly encourages students to go from the known to the unknown, to use English language resources to decipher what seem to be unfamiliar French words, students will acquire a large reading vocabulary quickly. But more important, they will begin to see the interrelationship of language, acquire a favorable attitude to language learning... and improve their English!

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The Editor cordially invites our readers to submit articles of a theoretical or pedagogical nature for possible publication in future issues of **Mosaic**. All materials will be refereed by members of the Editorial Board and an independent panel. Manuscripts and other editorial communication should be sent to Prof. Anthony Mollica. Send to either the Canadian or US address. See page 2 for further information.



## Items of Interest

### Canadian Languages Network Launched!

The Saskatchewan Organization for Heritage Languages (SOHL) is proud to be the home of the Canadian Language Network (CLN/RCL). The Network is the result of a successful submission to the Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada, primary funder for the project. The Network has been in full operation since January 1, 1996.

The project provides a nation-wide link between a wide array of heritage language schools that currently use the Internet (communications network linking more than two million computers worldwide).

For those schools that do not have computers, Network staff will carry out searches on the Internet based on requests received from students and teachers.

The CLN is being managed by SOHL. A National Advisory Committee chaired by Betty McDougall, President of SOHL, will assist with the project implementation. The Network will operate as a state of the art resource due, in large part, to the expertise of a National Advisory Committee.

The CLN can be contacted by:

- *e-mail*  
sohladmin@sasknet.sk.ca  
sohlcln@sasknet.sk.ca
- *telephone* (services are available in English or French)  
[306] 780-9464
- *mail*  
Canadian Language Network/  
Réseau canadien des langues  
2144 Cornwall Street  
Regina, SK S4P 2K7

### The Università per Stranieri of Siena Publishes New Journal for Italianists

The Università per Stranieri di Siena has recently founded *Si&na* (*Supporto Informativo & Notiziario Accademico*). The Editor is Susanna Bruni. The first issue (Vol. I, 1), focuses on the teaching of Italian in Canada. The Editor interviewed Leonardo Sampoli, Consul General of Italy in Toronto; Marc Cousineau, Consigliere per gli affari culturali presso l'Ambasciata del Canada a Roma; Anthony Mollica, President of the American Association of Teachers of Italian; Caterina Cicogna, Direttrice didattica presso il Consolato generale d'Italia a Toronto.

In addition to these interviews, the following articles are worthy of our attention:

- "L'insegnamento dell'italiano in alcune province del Canada" by Antonella Besnucci
- "Rassegna bibliografica sull'italiano e gli italiani in Canada" by Gianna Bardotti, M. Serena Bruttini, and Alessandro Corsi
- "L'italianistica in Canada" by Ernesto Virgulti
- "Che cos'è la suggestopedia?" by Letizia Vignozzi

- "Il paradosso come strumento contro gli stereotipi" by Seregio Carapelli
- "Adolescenti si diventa anche a 'parole'" by Maria Catricalà
- "Socrates" by Chiara Bosnelli
- "Un progetto di comunicazione" by Deanna Fineschi
- "CILS - Certificazione di italiano come lingua straniera" by Massimo Vedovelli.

Chiara Busnelli gives some background on the birth of the journal and Antonella Benucci, President of the "Siena per gli italianisti" Association, addresses the membership.

Professor Pietro Trifone, Dean of the Faculty of Language and Culture, wrote the introductory article to the journal, thus providing the reader with the "Realtà e prospettive dell'Università di Siena."

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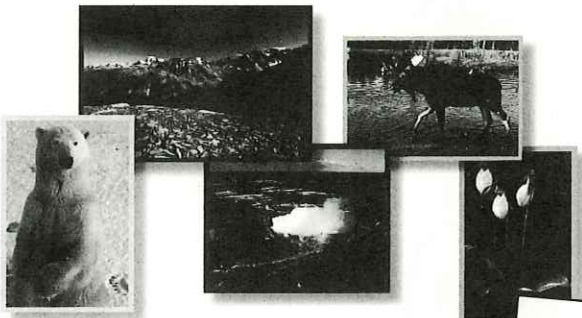
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