

# Mosaic

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### In this issue...

- 3** On ... Multiple Intelligences  
A Conversation with Howard Gardner  
*Howard Gardner interviewed by Kathy Checkley*
- 8** Implications of the Theories on Aptitude, Intelligence and  
Learning Styles For L2 Teaching  
*Tatiana Carapet*
- 13** French as a Second Language Literacy Strategies for English  
Language Learners  
*Callie Mady*
- 15** Cyberspeak, Netspeak and Textspeak for Spanish  
*Frank Nuessel*
- 19** Recreational Linguistics:  
Labyrinths and Mazes  
*Anthony Mollica*
- 22** Jouons avec les mots  
*Reproducible page*

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# Mosaic

The Journal for Language Teachers

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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



Howard Gardner

## A Conversation with Howard Gardner On ... Multiple Intelligences

*interviewed by Kathy Checkley*

*Human intelligence continues to intrigue psychologists, neurologists, and educators. What is it? Can we measure it? How do we nurture it?*

*Howard Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, described in Frames of Mind (1985), sparked a revolution of sorts in classrooms around the world, a mutiny against the notion that human beings have a single, fixed intelligence. The fervor with which educators embraced his premise that we have multiple intelligences surprised Gardner himself. "It obviously spoke to some sense that people had that kids weren't all the same and that the tests we had only skimmed the surface about the differences among kids," Gardner said. Here Gardner brings us up-to-date on his current thinking on intelligence, how children learn, and how they should be taught.*

**CHECKLEY:** *How do you define intelligence?*

**GARDNER:** Intelligence refers to the human ability to solve problems or to make something that is valued in one or more cultures. As long as we can find a culture that values an ability to solve a problem or create a product in a particular way, then I would strongly consider whether that ability should be considered an intelligence.

First, though, that ability must meet other criteria:

- Is there a particular representation in the brain for the ability?
- Are there populations that are especially good or especially impaired in an intelligence?
- And, can an evolutionary history of the intelligence be seen in animals other than human beings?

I defined seven intelligences in the early 1980s

because those intelligences all fit the criteria. A decade later when I revisited the task, I found at least one more ability that clearly deserved to be called an intelligence.

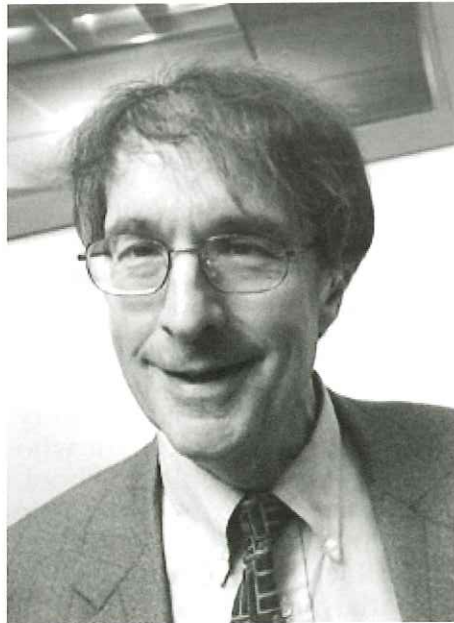


Photo courtesy: Jay Gardner

Howard Gardner

**CHECKLEY:** *That would be the naturalist intelligence. What led you to consider adding this to our collection of intelligences?*

**GARDNER:** Somebody asked me to explain the achievements of the great biologists, the ones who had a real mastery of taxonomy, who understood about different species, who could recognize patterns in nature and classify objects. I realized that to explain that kind of ability, I would have to manipulate the other intelligences in ways that weren't appropriate.

*Intelligence refers to the human ability to solve problems or to make something that is valued in one or more cultures.*

So I began to think about whether the capacity to classify nature might be a separate intelligence. The naturalist ability passed with flying colors. Here are a couple of reasons:

- First, it's an ability we need to survive as human beings. We need, for example, to know which animals to hunt and which to run away from.
- Second, this ability isn't restricted to human beings. Other animals need to have a naturalist intelligence to survive.
- Finally, the big selling point is that brain evidence supports the existence of naturalist intelligence. There are certain parts of the brain particularly dedicated to the recognition and the naming of what are called "natural" things.

**CHECKLEY:** *How do you describe the naturalist intelligence to those of us who are psychologists?*



**GARDNER:** The naturalist intelligence refers to the ability to recognize and classify plants, minerals, and animals, including rocks and grass and all variety of flora and fauna. The ability to recognize cultural artifacts like cars or sneakers may also depend on the naturalist intelligence.

Now everybody can do this to a certain extent – we can all recognize dogs, cats, trees. But, some people from an early age are extremely good at recognizing and classifying artifacts. For example, we all know kids who, at age 3 or 4, are better at recognizing dinosaurs than most adults.

Darwin is probably the most famous example of a naturalist because he saw so deeply into the nature of living things.

**CHECKLEY:** *Are there any other abilities you're considering calling intelligences?*

**GARDNER:** Well, there may be an existential intelligence that refers to the human inclination to ask very basic questions about existence.

- Who are we?
- Where do we come from?
- What's it all about?
- Why do we die?

We might say that existential intelligence allows us to know the invisible, outside world. The only reason I haven't given a seal of approval to the existential intelligence is that I don't think we have good brain evidence yet on its existence in the nervous system – one of the criteria for an intelligence.

**CHECKLEY:** *You have said that the theory of multiple intelligences may be best understood when we know what it critiques. What do you mean?*

**GARDNER:** The standard view of intelligence is that intelligence

is something you are born with; you have only a certain amount of it; you cannot do much about how much of that intelligence you have; and tests exist that can tell you how smart you are. The theory of multiple intelligences challenges that view. It asks, instead, "Given what we know about the brain, evolution, and the differences in cultures, what are the sets of human abilities we all share?"

My analysis suggested that rather than one or two intelligences, all human beings have several (eight) intelligences. What makes life interesting, however, is that we don't have the same strength in each intelligence area, and we don't have the same amalgam of intelligence. Just as we look different from one another and have different kinds of personalities, we also have different kinds of minds.

This premise has very serious educational implications. If we treat everybody as if they are the same, we're catering to one profile of intelligence, the language-logic profile. It's great if you have that profile, but it's not great for the vast majority of human beings who do not have that particular profile of intelligence.

**CHECKLEY:** *Can you explain more fully how the theory of multiple intelligences challenges what has become known as IQ?*

**GARDNER:** The theory challenges the entire notion of IQ. The IQ test was developed about a century ago as a way to determine who would have trouble in school. The test measures linguistic ability, logical-mathematical ability, and, occasionally, spatial ability.

What the intelligence test does not do is inform us about our intelligences; it also doesn't

look at other virtues like creativity or civic mindedness, or whether a person is moral or ethical.

We don't do much IQ testing anymore, but the shadow of IQ tests is still with us because the SAT – arguably the most potent examination in the world – is basically the same kind of disembodied language-logic instrument.

The truth is, I don't believe there is such a general thing as scholastic aptitude. Even so, I don't think that the SAT will fade until colleges indicate that they'd rather have students who know how to use their minds well – students who may or may not be good test takers, but who are serious, inquisitive, and know how to probe and problem-solve. That is really what college professors want, I believe.

**CHECKLEY:** *Can we strengthen our intelligences? If so, how?*

**GARDNER:** We can all get better at each of the intelligences, although some people will improve in an intelligence area more readily than others, either because biology gave them a better brain for that intelligence or because their culture gave them a better teacher.

Teachers have to help students use their combination of intelligences to be successful in school, to help them learn whatever it is they want to learn, as well as what the teachers and society believe they have to learn.

Now, I'm not arguing that kids shouldn't learn literacies. Of course they should learn literacies. Nor am I arguing that kids shouldn't learn the disciplines. I'm a tremendous champion of the disciplines. What I argue against is the notion that there's only one way to learn how to read, only



one way to learn how to compute, only one way to learn about biology. I think that such contentions are nonsense.

It's equally nonsensical to say that everything should be taught seven or eight ways. That's not the point of the MI theory. The point is to realize that any topic of importance, from any discipline, can be taught in more than one way. There are things people need to know, and educators have to be extraordinarily imaginative and persistent in helping students understand things better.

**CHECKLEY:** *A popular activity among those who are first exploring multiple intelligences is to construct their own intellectual profile. It's thought that when teachers go through the process of creating such a profile, they're more likely to recognize and appreciate the intellectual strengths of their students. What is your view on this kind of activity?*

**GARDNER:** My own studies have shown that people love to do this. Kids like to do it, adults like to do it. And, as an activity, I think it's perfectly harmless.

I get concerned, though, when people think that determining your intellectual profile - or that of someone else - is an end in itself.

You have to use the profile to understand the ways in which you seem to learn easily. And, from there, determine how to use those strengths to help you become more successful in other endeavors. Then, the profile becomes a way for you to understand yourself better, and you can use that understanding to catapult yourself to a better level of understanding or to a higher level of skill.

**CHECKLEY:** *How has your understanding of the multiple intelligences influenced how you teach?*

**GARDNER:** My own teaching has changed slowly as a result of multiple intelligences because I'm teaching graduate students psychology theory and there are only so many ways I can do that. I am more open to group work and to student projects of various sorts, but even if I wanted to be an "MI professor" of graduate students, I still have a certain moral obligation to prepare them for a world in which they will have to write scholarly articles and prepare theses.

*The point is to realize that any topic of importance, from any discipline, can be taught in more than one way.*

Where I've changed much more, I believe, is at the workplace. I direct research projects and work with all kinds of people. Probably 10 to 15 years ago, I would have tried to find people who were just like me to work with me on these projects.

I've really changed my attitude a lot on that score. Now I think much more in terms of what people are good at and in putting together teams of people whose varying strengths complement one another.

**CHECKLEY:** *How should thoughtful educators implement the theory of multiple intelligences?*

**GARDNER:** Although there is no single MI route, it's very important that a teacher take individual differences among kids very seriously. You cannot be a good MI teacher if you don't want to know each child and try to gear how you teach and how you evaluate to that

particular child. The bottom line is a deep interest in children and how their minds are different from one another, and in helping them use their minds well.

Now, kids can be great informants for teachers. For example, a teacher might say, "Look, Benjamin, this obviously isn't working. Should we try using a picture?" If Benjamin gets excited about that approach, that's a pretty good clue to the teacher about what could work.

The theory of multiple intelligences, in and of itself, is not going to solve anything in our society, but linking the multiple intelligences with a curriculum focused on understanding is an extremely powerful intellectual undertaking.

When I talk about understanding, I mean that students can take ideas they learn in school, or anywhere for that matter, and apply those appropriately in new situations. We know people truly understand something when they can represent the knowledge in more than one way. We have to put understanding up front in school. Once we have that goal, multiple intelligences can be a terrific handmaiden because understandings involve a mix of mental representation, entailing different intelligences.

**CHECKLEY:** *People often say that what they remember most about school are those learning experiences that were linked to real life. How does the theory of multiple intelligences help connect learning to the world outside the classroom?*

**GARDNER:** The theory of multiple intelligences wasn't based on school work or on tests. Instead, what I did was look at the world and ask, What are



the things that people do in the world? What does it mean to be a surgeon? What does it mean to be a politician? What does it mean to be an artist or a sculptor? What abilities do you need to do those things? My theory, then, came from the things that are valued in the world.

So, when a school values multiple intelligences, the relationship to what's valued in the world is patent. If you cannot easily relate this activity to something that's valued in the world, the school has probably lost the core idea of multiple intelligences, which is that these intelligences evolved to help people do things that matter in the real world.

School matters, but only insofar as it yields something that can be used once students leave school.

**CHECKLEY:** *How can teachers be guided by multiple intelligences when creating assessment tools?*

**GARDNER:** We need to develop assessments that are much more representative of what human beings are going to have to do to survive in this society. For example, I value literacy, but my measure of literacy should not be whether you can answer a multiple-choice question that asks you to select the best meaning of a paragraph. Instead, I'd rather have you read the paragraph and list four questions you have about the paragraph and figure out how you would answer those questions. Or, if I want to know how you can write, let me give you a stem and see whether you can write about that topic, or let me ask you to write an editorial in response to something you read in the newspaper or observed on the street.

The current emphasis on performance assessment is well

supported by the theory of multiple intelligences. Indeed, you could not really be an advocate of multiple intelligences if you didn't have some dissatisfaction with the current testing because it's so focused on short-answer, linguistic, or logical kinds of items.

MI theory is very congenial to an approach that says:

- one, let's not look at things through the filter of a short-answer test. Let's look directly at the performance that we value, whether it's a linguistic, logical, aesthetic, or social performance: and,
- two, let's never pin our assessment of understanding on just one particular measure, but let's always allow students to show their understanding in a variety of ways.

**CHECKLEY:** *You have identified several myths about the theory of multiple intelligences. Can you describe some of those myths?*

**GARDNER:** One myth that I personally find irritating is that an intelligence is the same as a learning style. Learning styles are claims about ways in which individuals purportedly approach everything they do. If you are planful, you are supposed to be planful about everything. If you are logical-sequential, you are supposed to be logical-sequential about everything. My own research and observations suggest that that's a dubious assumption. But whether or not that's true, learning styles are very different from multiple intelligences.

Multiple intelligences claims that we respond, individually, in different ways to different kinds of contents, such as language or music or other people. This is very

different from the notion of learning style.

You can say that a child is a visual learner, but that's not a multiple intelligences way of talking about things. What I would say is, "Here is a child who very easily represent things spatially, and we can draw upon that strength if need be when we want to teach the child something new."

Another widely believed myth is that, because we have seven or eight intelligences, we should create seven or eight tests to measure students' strength in each of those areas. That is a perversion of the theory. It's re-creating the sin of the single intelligence quotient and just multiplying it by a larger number. I'm personally against assessment of intelligences unless such a measurement is used for a very specific learning purpose – we want to help a child understand her history or his mathematics better and, therefore, want to see what might be good entry points for that particular child.

**CHECKLEY:** *What experiences led you to the study of human intelligence?*

**GARDNER:** It's hard for me to pick out a single moment, but I can see a couple of snapshots. When I was in high school, my uncle gave me a textbook in psychology. I'd never actually heard of psychology before. This textbook helped me understand color blindness. I'm color blind, and I became fascinated by the existence of plates that illustrated what color blindness was. I could actually explain why I couldn't see colors.

Another time when I was studying the Reformation, I read a book by Erik Erikson called *Young Man Luther* (1958). I was fascinated by the



## The Intelligences, In Gardner's Words

- **Linguistic intelligence** is the capacity to use language, your native language, and perhaps other languages, to express what's on your mind and to understand other people. Poets really specialize in linguistic intelligence, but any kind of writer, orator, speaker, lawyer, or a person for whom language is an important stock in trade
- People with a highly developed **logical-mathematical intelligence** understand the underlying principles of some kind of a causal system, the way a scientist or a logician does; or can manipulate numbers, quantities, and operations, the way a mathematician does.
- **Spatial intelligence** refers to the ability to represent the spatial world internally in your mind - the way a sailor or airplane pilot navigates the large spatial world, or the way a chess player or sculptor represent a more circumscribed spatial world. Spatial intelligence can be used in the arts or in the sciences. If you are spatially intelligent and oriented toward the arts, you are more likely to become a painter or a sculptor or an architect than, say, a musician or a writer. Similarly, certain sciences like anatomy or topology emphasize spatial intelligence.
- **Bodily kinesthetic intelligence** is the capacity to use your whole body or parts of your body - your hand, your fingers, your arms - to solve a problem, make something, or put on some kind of a production. The most evident examples are people in athletics or the performing arts, particularly dance or acting.
- **Musical intelligence** is the capacity to think in music, to be able to hear patterns, recognize them, remember them, and perhaps manipulate them. People who have a strong musical intelligence don't just remember music easily - they can't get it out of their minds, it's so omnipresent. Now, some people will say, "Yes, music is important, but it's a talent, not an intelligence." And I say, "Fine, let's call it a talent." But, then we have to leave the word intelligent out of all discussions of human abilities. You know, Mozart was damned smart!
- **Interpersonal intelligence** is understanding other people. It's an ability we all need, but is at a premium if you are a teacher, clinician, salesperson, or politician. Anybody who deals with other people has to be skilled in the interpersonal sphere.
- **Intrapersonal intelligence** refers to having an understanding of yourself, of knowing who you are, what you do, what you want to do, how you react to things, which things to avoid, and which things to gravitate toward. We are drawn to people who have a good understanding of themselves because those people tend not to screw up. They tend to know what they can do. They tend to know what they can't do. And they tend to know where to go if they need help.
- **Naturalist intelligence** designates that human ability to discriminate among living things (plants, animals) as well as sensitivity to other features of the natural world (clouds, rock configurations). This ability was clearly of value in our evolutionary past as hunters, gatherers, and farmers; it continues to be central in such roles as botanist or chef. I also speculate that much of our consumer society exploits the naturalist intelligences, which can be mobilized in the discrimination among cars, sneakers, kinds of makeup, and the like. The kind of pattern recognition valued in certain of the sciences may also draw upon naturalist intelligence.

psychological motivation of Luther to attack the Catholic Church. That fascination influenced my decision to go into psychology.

The most important influence was actually learning about brain damage and what could happen to people when they had strokes. When a person has a stroke, a certain part of the brain gets injured, and that injury can tell you

what that part of the brain does. Individuals who lose their musical abilities can still talk. People who lose their linguistic ability still might be able to sing. That understanding not only brought me into the whole world of brain study, but it was really the seed that led ultimately to the theory of multiple intelligences. As long as you can lose one ability while others are

spared, you cannot just have a single intelligence. You have to have several intelligences.\*

*\*Editor's Note:* The interview first appeared in *Educational Leadership*, September 1997, pp. 8-13. It is reprinted here with permission from the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) and Professor Howard Gardner.



**Kathy Checkley** has over 25 years experience as a writer and producer. An



Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (ASCD) staff member from 1994 to 2006, Kathy contributed her time and talents to many product development teams, including serving as a producer for several video-based professional development programs and for many of the PD Online courses ASCD now offers. Kathy managed the ASCD PD Online site and continues to write for ASCD's newsletters and publications, as well as other education-based organizations.

### Suggested Readings on Multiple Intelligences:

- J. Chen, S. Moran, and H. Gardner, eds. 2009. *Multiple Intelligences Around the World*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- H. Gardner. 1983/1993. *Frames of Mind. The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*. New York: Basic Books.
- H. Gardner. 2006. *Multiple Intelligences: New Horizons*

### Books by Howard Gardner

- 1999  
*The Disciplined Mind: What All Students Should Understand*
- 1999  
*Intelligence Reframed: Multiple Intelligences for the 21st Century*
- 1997  
*Extraordinary Minds: Portraits of Exceptional Individuals and an Examination of Our Extraordinariness*
- 1996  
*Intelligence: Multiple Perspectives*

The list of Professor Gardner's books continues on p. 14

*Tatiana Carapet*

## Implications of the Theories on Aptitude, Intelligence and Learning Styles For L2 Teaching

*The article focuses on the implications of the knowledge of the cognitive individual differences (such as aptitude, type of intelligence, learning style) for L2 learning and teaching that can lead to the enrichment of the teaching style and the development of a repertory of relevant teaching strategies, adapted to the L2 learners' styles. It also reviews the research regarding the most common teaching styles that can be useful to the L2 teachers.*

We now live in a global village, with rapid change and constant contact with thousands of others. The more experiences we have, the more media we are exposed to, the more people we interact with, the greater the differences that are likely to emerge. Diversity is the order of the millennium. [...] individuation, not in the sense of selfishness or self-seeking, but in the sense of knowledge about and respect for each individual.

(Gardner, 1999: 217)

One of the most important cognitive individual differences between learners is the aptitude. According to Ellis, the aptitude for languages is "a natural propensity for learning a L2" (1994: 494), and is often linked to the speed of learning (Ellis, 1985: 113; Lightbown and Spada, 1999: 53). It seems that the speed with which the L2 learner acquires knowledge can constitute an indicator of the existence of an aptitude for languages. As an L2 teacher, I often noticed that the good language learners, with high results in their linguistic skills, display a speed of learning and completion of tasks higher than those of others; for this type of learners, the teacher must always have additional tasks if they complete the work before the others because they constantly need linguistic

challenges (Carapet, 2006: 90). In order to identify learners with an aptitude for L2, teachers must collect information in their classes at the beginning of the school year, and make the data analysis. To those who learn and work at a lower speed, teachers must be ready to offer additional assistance and explanations, to make accommodations of the contents and the tasks to be completed, and also of the time allocated for the completion of their work. The most important linguistic skill, the auditory ability, is found among the components of the aptitude in the majority of the theories on aptitude: the difficulties that some learners encounter in their L2 oral communication are often the result of a less developed auditory ability. This is the reason why, in order to acquire linguistic competences in L2, these learners need consistent repetition of language structures (Carapet, 2006: 90).

Two tendencies (or "profiles of language aptitude", according to Skehan) have been observed in L2 learners (not to be confused with the learning styles): some learners have a linguistic orientation, meaning they succeed in their learning

by considering language to be a pattern-making problem, with



rules and analysis figuring prominently; others are memory-dependent learners, and see language less as a system whose rule-based nature can be exploited than as an “accumulation of chunks”, where these chunks or prefabricated elements provide communicative potential directly (Skehan, 1991: 279).

As Skehan emphasizes

Success is achievable for each type of learner provided that learners play to their strengths (1991: 279).

Teachers must know which of these tendencies prevails in their students, so that they adapt the teaching and learning conditions to the learners’ strengths and needs, and stimulate the less developed component on these premises. Therefore, with the purpose of collecting information on the aspects of the aptitude of their students, L2 teachers must keep profiles where they register their observations related to the speed of L2 learning, the components of the aptitude implied, and the type of learning of the students (Carapet, 2006: 91).

Another cognitive individual difference between learners is their type of intelligence. Gardner’s theory of Multiple Intelligences (1983, 1993, 1995, and 1999) accurately defines the concept of intelligence, arguing that the traditional views of this individual difference do not encompass the variety of abilities we display, and that the differences between people consist in the manner in which these “intelligences” combine (Gardner, 1999: 4). In fact, this theory

[...] is an account of human cognition in its fullness - I put forth the intelligences as a new definition of human nature, cognitively speaking (Gardner, 1999: 44).

The condition *sine qua non* for our intelligences to develop is the exposure of learners to stimuli

because, as Gardner affirms

[...] no one – whatever his or her biological potential – is likely to develop an intelligence without at least some opportunities for exploration of the materials that elicit a particular intellectual strength (1993 : 47-48).

Consequently, it seems very important that we teach our students according to their types of intelligence, while respecting Silver’s “principles of diversity” that I adapted for the L2 class this way:

1. Make the students at ease by taking into account their various styles and types of intelligence;
2. Stimulate the learners by challenging them in their L2 learning;
3. Ensure the solidity of their language knowledge;
4. Motivate the learners by helping them to become aware of their own interests and talents, and by helping them to make good choices, and to develop their self-confidence (2000: 43-45, in Carapet, 2006: 91).

While applying these principles, the teachers can adopt the following strategies in order to integrate the aptitudes and the multiple intelligences in L2 teaching:

1. Keep learners’ profiles that include comments or anecdotic observations regarding their aptitudes and types of intelligence. To determine the learners’ types of intelligence, the teachers can either use questionnaires for older students or observe the preferences of younger learners while they work in activity centres, just as Gregory and Chapman (2002) suggest it;
2. Create learning situations and activities that facilitate learning while taking into account the aptitude and the various types

of intelligence of the L2 learners;

3. Integrate the most important aspects of the aptitude and of the eight types of intelligence in their teaching;
4. Organize centers of intelligence in the classroom, where the learners have the opportunity to develop their prevailing type of intelligence and also to develop other intelligences according to their preferences and aptitudes. Gregory and Chapman (2002) recommend that each of these centers of activities offer a type of activity or play, *i.e.* word games or logic problems, creative options, co-operative games for the interaction between learners, etc;
5. Show flexibility in the conception of the evaluation tasks by taking account of the various types of intelligence;
6. Offer the learners the possibility to write reflections on their type of intelligence in log books or journals. Gregory and Chapman (2002) agree that the journal where learners reflect on their learning and their preferences can also help the teacher in keeping learners’ profiles;
7. Take account of the learners’ feedback following learning or evaluations. For the learners in primary education level, Gregory and Chapman (2002) suggest that the teachers use symbols (*i.e.* smiley) instead of words to help learners indicate their preferences related to certain learning activities (2002: 30-34, in Carapet, 2006: 91-93).

According to Skehan, the aptitude for the languages is a “talent” resulting from positive learning experiences (1991: 276), and also from the individual differences between learners such as their



types of intelligence and their learning styles. Nevertheless, Cyr (1996) advances the idea that the aptitude can be the result of the strategies employed by the learner:

The data of cognitive psychology and research on the learning strategies have allowed us to return to a more realistic perspective of the cognitive efforts essential to the L2 learning. Consequently, they enriched and refined our knowledge concerning the ability to learn a L2. Perhaps it is not anymore only an innate gift but a repertory of precise techniques employed by the learner in a voluntary and potentially conscious way (1996: 160).

In Silver's opinion, the question of the types of intelligences must be completed by that of the learning styles:

Without multiple intelligences, learning styles content cannot fully account for the content of learning. Without learning styles, multiple intelligence theory is unable to account for different processes of thought and feeling (2000: 41).

Therefore we will focus next on the possibility of adapting the teaching styles to the students' learning styles.

The teachers of L2 are in the first place learners, and their teaching styles are a reflection of their learning styles (Oxford, 1990) because

[...] our pedagogical intuitions are partly shaped by the theories of language acquisition on which our own training was based (Lightbown, 2000: 453).

Hence, before obtaining information regarding the learning styles of their students, they must know their own learning styles as well. Moreover, teachers of L2 must sensitize learners to the concept of learning style and support its integration within the act of teaching and learning (Carapet, 2006: 94).

Cheng and Banya (1998) argue that the behaviour of the teacher in the class influences the learners' success since the students' achievement depends mainly on the similarities between the learning style and the teaching style (in Reid ed. 1998: 80), like Mc Donough (1986) also stresses:

The competent authority can use the results of individual differences research to design methods of teaching that are matched to the characteristics of the learners. [...] Students may be trained to adopt characteristics that have been shown to be relevant to language learning. [...] Students with certain personal characteristics may be matched with teachers who also have those characteristics. In general educational psychology this option has been treated as the problem of matching learning style with teaching style (1986: 139-140).

As mentioned before, a crucial step in the analysis of the L2 students' learning styles is that of the data acquisition with the purpose of creating the learners' profiles, which can be done at the school or class level, so that the teachers can diagnose certain aspects of the learning style and adapt their teaching to the learners' individual differences (Keefe, 1987: 38). Thus, teachers have the opportunity to observe their learners and to complete their observations with answers to certain questions regarding their learning style. Keefe recommends several types of questions grouped by category as follows:

1. Perceptual Modality questions regarding: what are the types of activity that learners need, which activities are not of interest to them, how do they remember (by silently reading, by reading and listening, by listening only, or by action, etc.), and if their word associations and speech patterns are visual, aural or behavioural;

2. Conceptual Tempo questions regarding their work style: if learners work in a deliberate and accurate style or quickly and inaccurately, if their pace is the same for all tasks or the rate depends on the level of challenge, if learners aim to work well or only to finish tasks;
3. Concept Formation questions regarding the learners' way of seeing the world (simple or complex), if they are able to identify the main idea of an issue or a problem, if they use information in innovative ways, if they define objects in abstract or concrete terms, if they make a plan before beginning a task, or if they start immediately, while working in a linear way (1987: 38-40, in Carapet, 2006: 94-95).

According to Silver, the teachers can use several strategies with the purpose of knowing their students' learning styles. As a result, they can:

1. Target the development of the students' learning styles;
2. Practise a differentiated teaching through the bias of all learning styles;
3. Integrate the curriculum;
4. Allow learners the choice of activities and evaluations;
5. Encourage learning in the learner's predominant style (2000: 30-34).

In order to be able to help with the students' learning under the best conditions and to provide them with learning experiences that will allow them to discover and develop their individual characteristics, the L2 teachers need to enrich their own teaching styles, as Cheng and Banya (1998: 83) recommend to us. Let us see which language teaching styles are the most common according to Cook (1991):



1. The Academic Style consists of the teaching of grammar, and the translation in L1, the learning being based on the conscious acquisition of grammar; this style which is addressed to the exceptionally gifted, academic learner, is not very effective and must be enriched with teaching of other components of the language;
2. The Audio-Lingual Style consists of the use of dialogues and structure drills; the objective is getting the non-analytical and non-academic learners to "behave" in certain situations; at the base of this approach is the habit-formation behaviourist theory where the class is controlled by the teacher; this style must be used for the teaching of certain aspects of the language only;
3. The Social Communicative Style consists of the use of role-play, by facilitating the interaction of learners with L2 speakers, and thus encouraging learning by communicating; this style must be used with certain learners in suitable circumstances, while avoiding the trivialization of content and expectations;
4. The Information Communicative Style consists of the use of information gap exercises, role-plays, aiming to help learners to comprehend information in the L2; this style is addressed to the types of learners who do not want to speak in class; the class is being dominated by the teacher; however, it is essential to adapt teaching to the goals of learners, and to develop specific processes of listening;
5. Other styles: the Community Language Learning, Suggestopedia, the Confluent Language Teaching, and the Self-Directed Learning that all aim at the development of the potential of motivated learners which learn while doing, and in small groups (1991: 135-152, in Carapet, 2006: 96-97).  
Nevertheless, Germain (1993) classifies the contemporary teaching methods/approaches by grouping them according to several teaching trends or currents:
  1. *The Integrated Current* which includes methods centred on the nature of language and on learning:
    - the Audio-Lingual Method,
    - the SGAV Method, and
    - the Integrated Approach;
  2. *The Linguistic Current* which includes methods centred on the nature of the language:
    - the Situational Method,
    - the Communicative Approach;
  3. *The Psychological Current* which includes:
    - a) Learning-Centered Methods: Community Language Learning (Curran), the Silent Way (Gattegno);
    - b) Process and Learning Conditions-Centered Methods:
      - Natural Approach Krashen-Terrell),
      - the Physical Response Method,
      - Suggestopedia (Lozanov),
      - the Comprehension-Centred Approach (1993: 139-310, in Carapet, 2006: 97).

According to Doggett (in Mollica, ed., 1998) there are eight teaching methods which correspond more or less to those identified by Cook and Germain:

  1. *The Grammar-Translation Method* which focuses on the teaching of the target literature and language by translating literary passages, memorizing grammar rules, etc;
  2. *The Direct Method* by which the meaning is perceived directly through the target language because the translation is not allowed;
  3. *The Audio-Lingual Method* which consists of the repetition of the patterns until the learner is able to produce them spontaneously;
  4. *The Silent Way* where learners discuss and interact, while the teacher organizes only the setting up of the situations (based on the idea that teaching must be subordinated to learning);
  5. *The Suggestopedia*, based on eliminating psychological barriers, where the learner chooses a name, a character in the target language, and imagines being that character while relaxing and listening to music;
  6. *The Community Language Learning* which seeks to stimulate students' positive energies for learning;
  7. *The Physical Response Method* where learners demonstrate actively their comprehension while following the directions of the teacher;
  8. *The Communicative Approach* where learners work in small groups on communicative activities, and receive practice in the negotiation of meaning (1998: 185-187, in Carapet, 2006: 97-98).

In conclusion, the teachers' ability to vary their style and their strategies represents one of the characteristics of an efficient teaching. The teaching style must show flexibility with regards to several constraints such as: the learners' characteristics (cognitive individual differences, age, and motivation), the learning task, the learning environment, and the moment of the day when learning takes place (Carapet, 2006: 110). It is extremely important that the teachers have a good comprehension of the individual differences in order to adapt their teaching to the learners' needs, and to their strengths and their



weaknesses, like Gardner also recommends to us:

Knowing the minds of students represents but the first step. Crucial, thereafter, is an effort to draw on this knowledge in making decisions about curriculum, pedagogy, and assessment (1999: 152).

This is why it seems important to conclude this synthesis with the words of Gregory and Chapman on the complexity of the teachers' work in the classroom and on the need for developing a teaching repertory based on the knowledge of the types of intelligence and of learning styles:

Teachers need to build a repertoire that will engage more learners and honour the diversity in each classroom. [...] If a variety of multiple intelligence processes are used, they offer diverse learners more opportunities to learn and to show what they know in many ways. [...] We realize that with individual learning styles and multiple intelligence profiles, one size of learning could not possibly fit everyone in the classroom. Knowing the learners and strategically planning to address their styles, intelligences, and learning preferences will increase the chances of engaging them and offering a variety of ways to learn (2002: 35).

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Callie Mady

## French as a Second Language Literacy Strategies for English Language Learners

*French as Second Language (FSL) teachers find themselves in an advantaged position to provide support to English language learners (ELLs). Many of FSL common practices already respond to many ELLs' needs.*

More and more frequently, French as a second language (FSL) teachers teach French as a second official language to English language learners (ELLs). Given our skills as second language teachers, we may be among the best prepared teachers to meet these learners' needs. In addition to offering our skills as second language teachers, skills that may also enhance English language development, it is important to consider addressing ELLs' experiences, experiences that may be different from our own and those of their peers. The questions that follow may serve as probes for us as we strive to provide a literacy based approach in FSL for all our students.

### Who are ELLs?

As with their Canadian-born English-speaking peers, ELLs bring with them a variety of experiences. In terms of language, some ELLs may have advanced English skills; others may arrive without prior English experience. Some arrive with well developed first language skills; whereas others are not yet literate in their dominant language. Some arrive with a great deal of content knowledge; while others have had gaps in their education. In regard to learning FSL in Canada, research has indicated that ELLs may be advantaged when it comes to learning an ad-

ditional language (Mady, 2007). ELLs often come from communities where it is common to use a variety of languages, thus making the learning of an additional language a common experience for some. Prior exposure to a variety of languages on the part of ELLs' parents can also provide a supportive foundation at home (Dagenais & Berron, 2001). This additional variety of learners reminds us that one size does not fit all. It also highlights the need for us to consider many of the same questions we consider for our Canadian-born English-speaking students when working with text, but with a broadening view to provide links to ELLs' experiences.

### What to consider when choosing a text?

I use the word "text" here to refer to written or spoken text. Many of our prior considerations provide rich FSL texts for our ELLs. As French teachers we already consider the level of language and the supporting visuals for example. When striving to meet the needs of our ELLs in particular, we ask "can the students see and hear themselves in the text?". Responses to such a question encourage us to consider who is speaking and where they are from. Do we have a variety of francophones represented, for example? Do we go beyond the more common expo-

sure to Quebec and Europe to offer text from other francophone areas?

We already consider our students' interests. Do those interests correspond with those of ELLs? Cummins et al (2007) encourage use of a variety of texts with which students from different cultural backgrounds can connect. When students are able to see themselves represented in the text, we have improved engagement and thus, improved success. While still offering texts of interest to many of our Canadian-born English-speaking students, we can also offer texts that would broaden their experience and allow the ELLs to be in a position of knowledge, bringing their personal experience. Although a stereotypical example, I am sure you can imagine offering a text on the topic of camping while at another time consciously choosing a text addressing Oware, a game from Africa. More advanced students could read texts addressing the advantages and disadvantages of arranged marriages and marriages of choice.

### What to consider when working with text?

As FSL teachers, some of us judge when to use English as a means of supporting students' French acquisition. Do we make connections to other languages represented in the lives our students? Do we provide space for the students to make those connections for us and their peers? Spoken text can provide opportunities for sound-symbol connections where students can make those connections between French and their known languages (Anderson, Carr, Lewis, Salvatori & Turnbull, 2008). Video can provide visual support for language learners. As an extension, it may provide opportunities for discussion of body language that varies from region to region. We can also encourage our students to make connections



between languages as they decode written text. French-other language connections could be made in terms of vocabulary, grammar and register for example.

### What to consider in terms of language production post-text?

We often provide models for our students with the goal of offering linguistic support for their own production. In addition to such support, models can also provide an organizational format. This format is worth explicitly highlighting to all of our students but especially for our ELLs who may have learned to produce in a circular fashion where we are expecting a more linear product. It can also be pertinent, in times of student production in the early stages after arrival to Canada, to allow ELLs to work with students who share one of their dominant languages, when possible, so as to provide same language support where necessary. Similarly, allowing ELLs to produce bilingual text, their dominant language and French, acknowledges the value of their

prior knowledge and thus facilitates success.

As FSL teachers, we find ourselves in an advantaged position to provide support to ELLs. Many of our common practices already respond to many ELLs' needs. For example, we choose texts that provide comprehensible text to our students, we provide choral work and we support our language visually. In extension to our already supportive strategies, when we use the variety of experiences and languages represented in our schools as tools in our classrooms, we provide a climate where ELLs are, among other things, sources of knowledge with space to flourish.

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## Books by Howard Gardner

(continued from p. 8)

- **1995**  
*Leading Minds: An Anatomy of Leadership*
- **1993**  
*Creating Minds: An Anatomy of Creativity Seen Through the Lives of Freud, Einstein, Picasso, Stravinsky, Eliot, Graham, and Gandhi*
- **1993**  
*Multiple Intelligences: The Theory in Practice (1993)*
- **1991**  
*The Unschooled Mind: How Children Think and How Schools Should Teach*
- **1990**  
*Art Education and Human Development*
- **1989**  
*To Open Minds: Chinese Clues to the Dilemma of Contemporary Education*
- **1985**  
*The Mind's New Science: A History of the Cognitive Revolution*
- **1983**  
*Frames of Mind: The Theory of Multiple Intelligences*
- **1982**  
*Art, Mind, and Brain: A Cognitive Approach to Creativity*
- **1982**  
*Developmental Psychology: An Introduction*
- **1980**  
*Artful Scribbles: The Significance of Children's Drawings*
- **1975**  
*The Shattered Mind: The Person After Brain Damage*
- **1973**  
*The Arts and Human Development; A Psychological Study of the Artistic Process*
- **1973**  
*The Quest for Mind: Piaget, Levi-Strauss, and the Structuralist Movement (1973)*



Frank Nuessel

## Cyberspeak, Netspeak and Textspeak for Spanish

*The phenomena of cyberspeak, netspeak, and textspeak are now ever-present. These specialized codes are limited in the number of characters allowed. For this reason, the user must find ways to condense standard lexical and grammatical material in order to fit the available space. As a result, such messages utilize the linguistic processes of abbreviation, acronyms, phonetic replacement, compounding, and symbol replacement to achieve brevity. In order to encode and decode messages in this novel linguistic medium, it is necessary to learn a few simple rules to achieve competence.*

### Introduction

The phenomenon of “cyberspeak”, “netspeak”, and “textspeak” is relatively recent. In fact, only a decade ago, David Crystal’s (1999) second edition of *A Dictionary of Language* had no entries for these three terms. Five years later, he would publish an entire book devoted to these matters, namely, *Glossary of Netspeak and Textspeak* (2004). In the latter, Crystal (2004: 78) provides the following definition of netspeak, or cyberspeak as follows:

Terms used by some commentators, devised on analogy with such words as *doublespeak* (as in the work of George Orwell) and *airspeak* (for the language of air-traffic control), to describe the kind of distinctive language found on the Internet.

Although Crystal (2004) has no discrete entry for “textspeak”, he has listings for “texting” (Crystal 2004: 104) and “text messaging” (Crystal 2004: 104). In the former case, he refers the reader to “Short Messaging Service”, which is defined as follows (Crystal 2004: 97):

A GSM (Global System for Mobile Communication) service that enables a user to send short text messages to other mobile users. The service uses the control channels, which allows a message to arrive

while a voice call is in progress, but limits the length of message to a maximum of 160 characters.

In the former case, Crystal (2004: 71-72) defines messaging in the following terms:

The transfer of a text message from a mobile handset or personal digital assistant to one or more persons via email, Short Messaging Service, paging, or other method.

The notion of “twitter” is so recent that it does not appear in Crystal’s (2004) *Glossary of Netspeak and Textspeak*. It was an invention of Jack Dorsey (1976-) in 2006. The *Wikipedia* entry (Twitter, <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twitter>) for “twitter” describes it in the following terms:

Twitter is a free social networking and micro-blogging service that enables its users to send and read each others’ updates, known as tweets. Tweets are text-based posts of up to 140 characters, displayed on the author’s profile page and delivered to other users – known as followers – who have subscribed to them. Senders can restrict delivery to those in their circle of friends or, by default, allow open access. Users can send and receive tweets via the Twitter website, Short Message Service (SMS) or external applications. The service is free over the Internet, but using

SMS may incur phone service provider fees.

Because texting and twittering have an extremely limited number of allowable characters, 160 for Short Messaging Service, and 140 for tweet messages, it is necessary to devise ways of compressing messages through abbreviatory mechanisms including shortening, clipping, and inventive and creative non-traditional orthography, as well as through emoticons. Crystal (2004: 38-39) defines emoticons as follows:

A sequential combination of keyboard characters designed to convey the emotion associated with a particular facial expression. The simplest forms represent basic attitudes – positive, in the case of :) and negative in the case of :( . Emoticons are typed as a string on a single line, and usually located at the end of a sentence; most need to be read sideways. They are not very frequently used in emails, but a large number of jocular and artistically creative emoticons have been devised.

### Spanish Cyber Language

Although relatively few published articles on cyber language and second-language pedagogy exist, some recent material published in the Italian pedagogical journal *Cultura & Comunicazione* is now available (Conrad and Martinez 2008, Danesi 2008a, Marino 2008, Robinson 2008, Rubin 2008, Thodal 2008).

In the latest edition of *Introducción a la lingüística española*, Azevedo (2009: 338-341) has a brief but very useful section on this linguistic phenomenon in Spanish. Furthermore, there are numerous Websites that address cyberspeak, netspeak, and textspeak for Spanish (Diccionario Xat para mensajes de texto, Diccionario SMS, Hernández Pacheco y Miraflores Gómez, Lenguaje chat, Salmerón, 2008, El lenguaje SMS). The fact that the



most recent and up-to-date material on cyberspeak is to be found on the Internet indicates the relatively novelty of this phenomenon.

At this juncture, it is useful to provide some basic Spanish terminology for the general phenomena discussed here. The following is some basic terminology in English and Spanish:

abbreviation: *sigla*

acronym: *siglas*

chat: *el chat, los chats*, the more common *XAT*

chat (to): *chatear*

cyberlanguage: *ciberlenguaje*

email: *el correo electrónico, imilio*, or a Hispanicized pronunciation of *email*

emoticon: *emoticono*

netspeak: *ciberidioma, ciberjerga, ciberlengua*

Short Messaging Service, SMS: *la mensajería instantánea, SMS*

sign: *signo*

text message: *mensaje de texts*

twitter: *twitter*

tweet: *tweet*

Just as in the case of some English teachers and other guardians of the purity of the English language (Breed 2006), this same fear of an impoverishment of the Spanish language also exists (Salmerón 2008). Nevertheless, the e-pal, the twenty-first equivalent of the pen pal, means that students are now able to communicate with Spanish speakers globally via the Internet and various electronic devices. In order for students to do so effectively, they must be able to encode and decode messages sent via e-mail, Short Messaging Service, and Twitter. For this reason, some discussion of Spanish cyber language should be part of the Spanish curriculum.

### Pedagogical Rationale

There are several reasons for the introduction of a lesson on Spanish cyber language into the Spanish curriculum. Because our students are frequent users of e-mail, Short Messaging Service, and Twitter, they should be able to:

1. Encode and decode messages in Spanish cyber language.
2. Appreciate Spanish grammar through the entertaining comprehension of new forms of this constantly changing language.
3. Create novel cyber linguistic forms.
4. Communicate effectively and knowledgeably with Spanish-speaking e-pals anywhere in the world.
5. Acquire a wider knowledge of varieties of Spanish beyond traditional textbook Spanish.

### Linguistic Strategies for Shortening Texts

The compression of information in electronic messages has led to non-traditional orthographic practices, which have been decried by many educational critics (Breed 2006 for English; Salmerón 2008 for Spanish). Despite educators' misgivings about cyberspeak, netspeak, textspeak, and twittering, all of these forms of electronic communication have become ubiquitous, and are now a well-established part of daily life for our students. It should be remembered that the once common telegram contained messages with words eliminated from the text in order to reduce the cost of such communications. Since patrons paid by the word, the most succinct message was the most economical one.

In his book on advertising, *Why It Sells*, Marcel Danesi (2008b: 69) alludes to the American linguist George K. Zipf (1902-1950; see Zipf 1949), who hypothesized that

... languages tend to evolve eco-

nomically, making progressively greater use of 'compression strategies' as abbreviation, acronymy, and the like ...

It is this natural linguistic tendency that explains, in part, why netspeak, textspeak, and twittering have produced condensed electronic messages (See Nuessel 1992: 75-78 for more on shortening devices). Moreover, the frenetic pace of everyday life and the need to accomplish more in shorter time frames is another factor.

Danesi 2008b: 69) states that

there are five types of compression or miniaturization forces that are generally at work in Netlingo, as the language used on the Internet has been called (Crystal 2006): abbreviation, acronymy, phonetic replacement, compounding, and symbol replacement.

More specifically, Danesi (2008b: 69) states that

Abbreviations are shortened words: *ppl* for *people* and *b/c* for *because*. Acronyms are forms composed of the first letters of every word within a phrase: *OMG* for *oh my God* and *LOL* for *laugh out loud*. Phonetic replacements are words in which certain letters and numbers replace entire words because they represent the pronunciation more compactly, such as *cu* for *see you* and *l8r* for *later*. Compounding involves the combination of separate words or parts of words to make a new one (i.e., shorter than the forms taken separately): *mousepad*, *webonomics*, *netlag*, *netizen*, *hackitude*, and *geekitude*. Symbol replacement, as its name implies, is the use of symbols or letters with symbol value (such as *e-*) in place of letters and words: *e-zine*, *e-commerce*, and so on.

### Abbreviation

The following are examples of common abbreviations in Spanish cyber language (Table 1). For a dictionary of cyber linguistic abbreviations, see, for example,



Diccionario Xat para mensajes de texto (<http://www.familia.cl/ContenedorTmp/Xat/chat.htm>).

### Acronymy

The following are examples of common acronyms in Spanish cyber language (Table 2). It must be noted, however, that acronyms existed before Spanish cyber language. These forms were simply a normal development of language's natural tendency toward shortening (Danesi 2008b: 69, Zipf 1949). See, for example, the long listing of acronyms, i.e., abbreviations, in Spain: <http://www.abbreviations.com/acronyms/SPANISH>

### Phonetic Replacement

The following are examples of common phonetic replacements in Spanish cyber language (Table 3). These represent alphabetic, numeric, and alphanumeric combinations to represent the sounds of Spanish.

### Compounding

The following are examples of common compounds in Spanish cyber language (Table 4). See, for example, Azevedo's (2009: 135-136) discussion on shortening in Spanish.

### Symbol Replacement

The following are examples of common symbol replacements in Spanish cyber language (Table 5).

### Emoticons

The following are examples of common emoticons that represent emotional or psychological moods in Spanish cyber language (Table 6). See, for example, the Spanish Wiki entry on emoticons: <http://es.wikipedia.org/wiki/Emoticono>

### Example of a Cyber Language

The following is a short example of Xat language in Spanish with a following Spanish gloss based on the opening lines of Salmerón's (2008, <http://www.elcastellano>).

**Table 1. Spanish Cyber Abbreviations**

Traditional Spanish	Spanish Abbreviation	English
<i>bien</i>	<i>bn</i>	well
<i>cuál</i>	<i>ql</i>	which one
<i>diccionario</i>	<i>dicnario</i>	dictionary
<i>este</i>	<i>st</i>	this
<i>excelente</i>	<i>xclnt</i>	excellent
<i>fuerte</i>	<i>frt</i>	strong
<i>hora</i>	<i>hr</i>	hour
<i>mucho</i>	<i>mxo</i>	much, a lot
<i>nada</i>	<i>nd</i>	nothing
<i>que</i>	<i>q</i>	that

**Table 2. Spanish Acronyms**

Traditional Spanish	Spanish Acronym	English
<i>Consejo de Europa</i>	<i>CE</i>	European Council
<i>Cruz Roja</i>	<i>CR</i>	Red Cross
<i>Red Nacional de los Ferrocarriles Españoles</i>	<i>RENFE</i>	National Network of Spanish Railways (former national railway system of Spain)
<i>Sociedad Limitada</i>	<i>SL</i>	Limited liability
<i>Universidad de Barcelona</i>	<i>UB</i>	University of Barcelona

**Table 3. Spanish Cyber Phonetic Replacements**

Traditional Spanish	Spanish Abbreviation	English
<i>estrés</i>	<i>s3</i>	stress
<i>preparados</i>	<i>prepara2</i>	prepared
<i>saludos</i>	<i>salu2</i>	greetings
<i>se</i>	<i>c</i>	third person clitic pronoun
<i>todos</i>	<i>to2</i>	all

**Table 4. Spanish Cyber Compounds**

Traditional Spanish	Spanish Compound	English
<i>por favor</i>	<i>porfa</i>	please
<i>fin de semana</i>	<i>finde</i>	weekend
<i>automóvil + ómnibus</i>	<i>autobús</i>	bus
<i>información automática</i>	<i>informática</i>	computer science

**Table 5. Spanish Symbol Replacements**

Traditional Spanish	Spanish Symbol	English
<i>igual</i>	=	equal
<i>menos</i>	-	minus
<i>por</i>	x	times (multiplication sign)
<i>ninguno</i>	0	no(ne)
<i>plata</i>	\$	peso
<i>segundo</i>	"	second
<i>suspenso</i>	...	suspense



Table 6. Spanish Emoticons

Traditional Spanish	Spanish Emoticon	English
<i>feliz</i>	:)	happy
<i>triste</i>	:(	sad
<i>diabólico</i>	>:->	diabolical
<i>asombrado</i>	:-0	amazed, surprised
<i>indiferente</i>	:-I	indifferent

org/noticia.php?id=514) essay on Spanish cyber language.

¿Ke l español xa no s lo k ra ntes? y ¿Komo k ls acntos no c usan? ¿Podría dbrse al uso xcsivo d la tcnología?...¿

¿Que el español ya no es lo que era antes? y ¿Cómo que los acentos no se usan? ¿Podría deberse al uso excesivo de la tecnología?...

### Concluding Remarks

The twenty-first century phenomenon known variously as cyber language, netspeak, textspeak is omnipresent. This specialized language, largely one characterized by shortened, or abbreviated linguistic forms as well as the creative use of symbols for their phonetic value, is commonplace among today's students. Most elementary and intermediate Spanish textbooks do not address this widespread variety of Spanish, in part, because some educators see such inventive use of language as a corruption the standard language. It is important, however, for educators to stress that this form of written language is a parallel writing system rather than a substitution for the conventional one. Furthermore, contemporary students need to be aware that this variety of written Spanish is authentic, and that its usage is pervasive. Likewise, today's student is quite likely to engage in e-mail, Short Message Service, and twittering with Spanish-speakers both at home and abroad. For this reason, the ability to use this specialized language is an important part of writing and reading comprehension and literacy. Finally,

the ability to encode and decode the specialized language known as cyber language points toward a high degree of linguistic sophistication on the part of the user.

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Anthony Mollica

## Recreational Linguistics: Labyrinths and Mazes

*Young children and adults enjoy solving mazes. Why not introduce them in the language classroom as an activity?*

A *labyrinth* is a network of paths or passages from which it is difficult to find your way out. It is an irregular network of passages arranged in bewildering complexity from which there is only one exit, often impossible to find. The word comes from the Latin *labyronthu*, which, in turn, comes from the Greek *labyrinthos*. Rossi (2002: 226) suggests that it could also derive from *Labaris*, a pharaoh who had his tomb protected by an intricate network of corridors. A *maze* is a puzzle in the form of a complex branching passage through which the solver must find a route. The *Oxford International Dictionary of the English Language* (1957) identifies *labyrinth* and *maze* as synonyms.

The most famous structure of a labyrinth goes back to ancient Crete. According to Greek mythology, Minos, the king of Crete, had refused to sacrifice a white bull coming from the sea in honour of Poseidon, god of the sea. This lack of action angered Poseidon who decided to punish Minos by having Pasiphaë, Minos' wife, fall in love with the animal. Pasiphaë enlisted the assistance of Daedalus, a famous architect, inventor, and master craftsman, to build a hollow wooden cow in which she hid. The bull found her attractive and from this unnatural union was born the Minotaur, a monster half man and half bull.

The same Daedalus was ordered by King Minos to construct in Knossos a labyrinth which was to house the Minotaur to whom

Athens sent a tribute of seven girls and seven youths to be sacrificed every year. The tribute was part of an agreement between Crete and Athens. The latter agreed to pay the tribute to feed the Minotaur on condition that Crete not attack Athens. This practice continued until Theseus came from Athens as one of the sacrificial victims offered to the Minotaur. Ariadne, the daughter of Minos, fell in love with him and gave him a ball of thread which, after he had slain the Minotaur, enabled him to find his way out of the labyrinth (Figure 1). Theseus' success allowed him to escape Crete with Ariadne.

Minos became so enraged both at the loss of his daughter and at the killing of the Minotaur that he shut Daedalus and his son Icarus into the labyrinth. Since he was familiar with the structure, however, Daedalus managed to get out of the labyrinth and decided to leave Crete with his son Icarus before Minos brought them harm. But Daedalus soon realized that the only escape route was by air since Minos controlled the sea around Crete.

Daedalus then built for himself and Icarus wings fashioned with

feathers held together with wax. Daedalus warned his son not to fly too close to the sun, as the heat would melt his wings, and not too close to the sea, as it would dampen them and make it hard to fly. Unfortunately, Icarus did not heed his father's warning and plunged to his death when he flew too near the Sun and the wax melted.

According to Danesi (2002: 4), labyrinths were an

architectural intelligence test. Finding one's way through their intricate, intertwining passages was considered not only a test of astuteness but also a way of



Figure 1  
*Theseus fights the Minotaur.*  
A bronze statue in the Louvre, Paris, sculpted in 1843 by Antoine-Louis Barye (1796-1875), a French sculptor most famous for his work as an *animalier*, a sculptor of animals.



metaphorically finding the path to enlightenment and true knowledge.

### Pedagogical Applications

Why labyrinths in the language classroom?

Although labyrinths are fun as a pencil-and-paper activity, their educational value is important in the process of learning. The solving of labyrinths

- sharpens the learner's visual acuity,
- is useful for eye and hand coordination,
- sharpens the student's logical skills.

But we would like to "expand" the traditional definition of a labyrinth for use in the language classroom in order to have several students participate in the same activity. We suggest that teachers provide labyrinths or mazes in which more than one solution is possible. The purpose is to have students repeat lexical items as they provide the various solutions.

1. True labyrinths (*i.e.*, labyrinths with the "traditional" definition) are useful to teach/review numbers. In this activity, students are asked to find "their way" by adding from 1 to 20 in order to exit successfully from the labyrinth. At a lower grade, the activity also teaches mathematical skills (Figure 2).

At an advanced stage, teachers may give a labyrinth with both single and double digit numbers and ask students to find a higher total (Figure 3).

2. Labyrinths are also useful to review/recall vocabulary using a thematic approach (Figure 4). While for Figures 2 and 3, there is only one possible answer, and the activity follows the traditional definition of the labyrinth, there are several possibilities for the answer in Figure 4. The purpose, here is

*Work your way through the maze from start to finish adding the numbers as you go to make up the final total of 20. You may go from right to left, from left to right, from bottom to top or from top to bottom always in a straight line.*

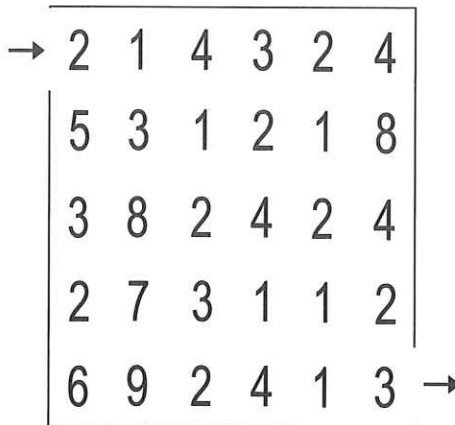


Figure 2

From : Anthony Mollica, *Jouons avec les chiffres !* Welland, ON: éditions Soleil publishing inc., 2001.

*Work your way through the maze from start to finish adding the numbers as you go to make up the final total of 70. You may go from right to left, from left to right, from bottom to top or from top to bottom, always in a straight line.*

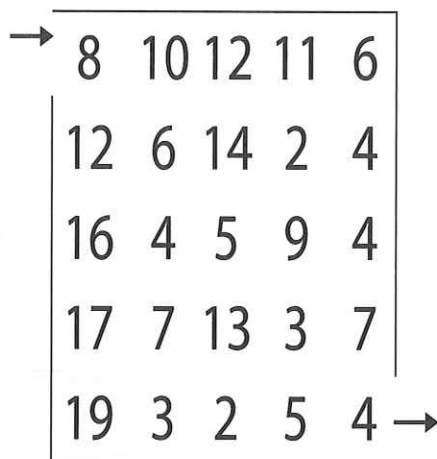


Figure 3

From : Anthony Mollica, *Jouons avec les chiffres !* Welland, ON: éditions Soleil publishing inc., 2001.

to deviate from the original aim of the labyrinth and to involve the student in the

repetition of the members of the family.

Students are encouraged to repeat the names of the members of the family as they solve the puzzle.

During the summer months, I visited all the following members of my family only once. Work your way through the maze from start to finish and indicate in what order I visited these relatives.

3. Labyrinths may also be used in association with images to teach vocabulary (Figure 5). Again, as in Figure 4, there are several possible answers. This activity is most useful at the early stages of language learning particularly, since it involves direct association between word and image.
4. Most mazes, however, do not have any illustrations, and the solver is simply asked to find the correct path which leads to the solution or the exit of from the labyrinth. In this case, there is only one possible answer (Figure 6).

Teachers may decide to introduce the competitive aspect in this activity and, in this case, reward the student who is able to reach the solution first.

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During the summer months, I visited all the following members of my family only once. Work your way through the maze from start to finish and indicate in what order I visited these relatives.

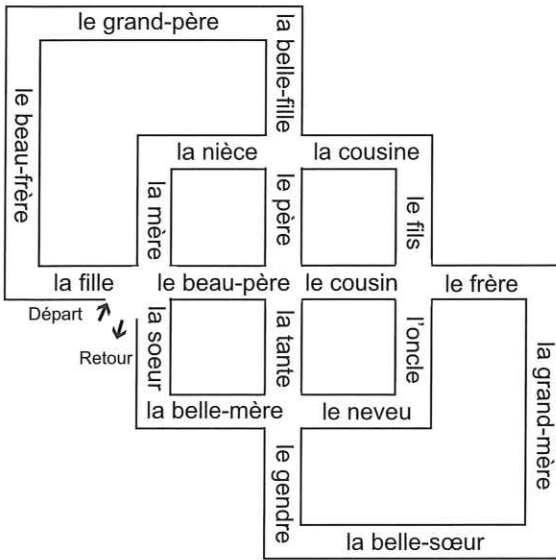


Figure 4

From: Roch Carrier raconte... Textes choisis par Anthony Mollica. Welland, ON: éditions Soleil publishing inc., 2007. Reproduced with permission.

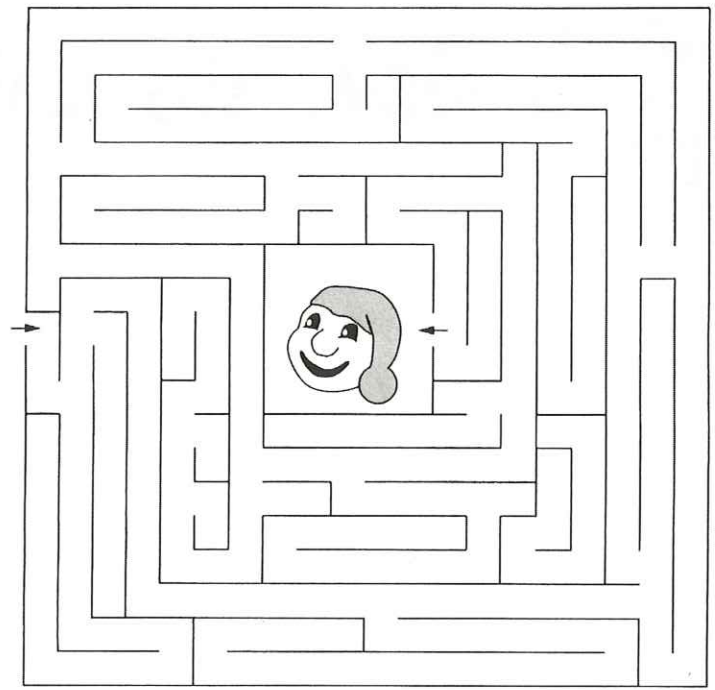


Figure 6

From: Canadian Parents for French, *CPF Early Childhood Activity Book*. Ottawa: CPF, 2007. Reproduced with permission of CPF.

My children and I visited the City Zoo and saw these animals only once. Find out the order in which my children saw these animals. You may enter and exit from any of the entrances/exits indicated by the arrows.

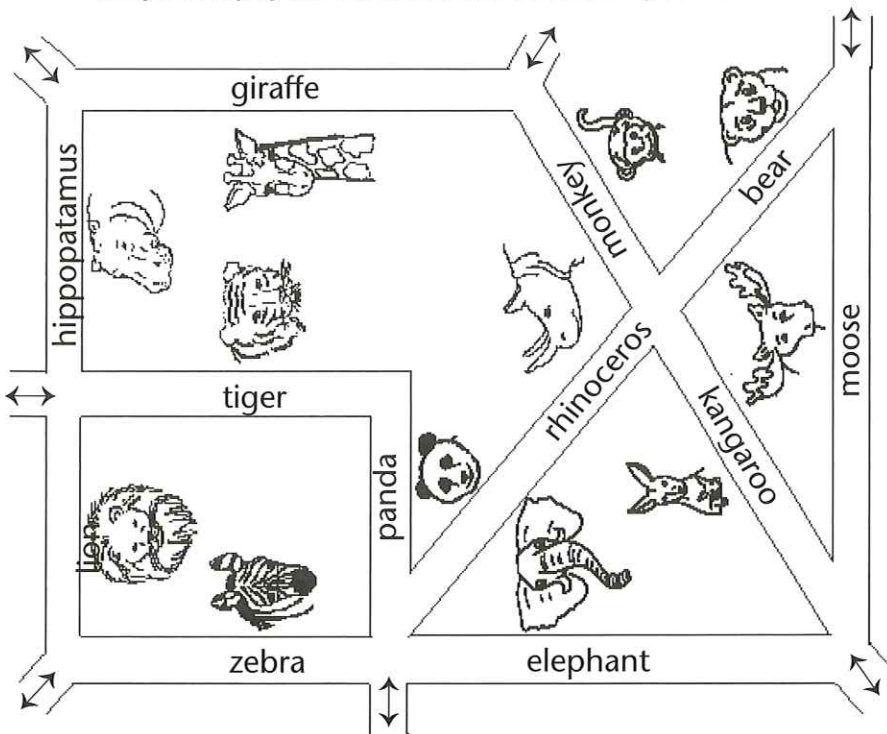


Figure 5

Adapted from: Anthony Mollica, *Attività lessicali 1. Elementare pre-intermedio*. Recanati, Italy: ELI, 2004.

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**Solutions**

Figure 2: two + one + three + one + two + four + one + one + two + three = twenty.

Figure 3: eight + twelve + six + fourteen + five + thirteen + three + five + four = seventy

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# Jouons avec les mots

Anthony Mollica

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## Les couleurs dans le monde...

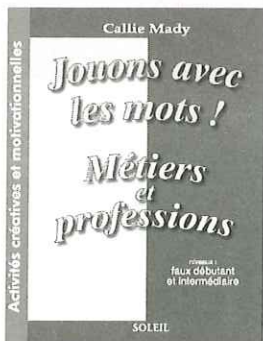
Lisez les questions et puis encerclez la bonne réponse à droite.

- |     |  |     |   |        |
|-----|--|-----|---|--------|
| 1.  | Selon la mythologie grecque, de quelle couleur était le sang des dieux ?                       |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. bleu    C. rouge  | 1.  | A | B    C |
| 2.  | Quelle est la couleur du deuil en Egypte ?   |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. jaune    C. noir  | 2.  | A | B    C |
| 3.  | De quelle couleur doit être le vin qui se boit avec le poisson ?                               |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. rosé    C. rouge  | 3.  | A | B    C |
| 4.  | Au Brésil, de quelle couleur sont les fleurs choisies pour les funérailles ?                   |     |   |        |
|     | A. blancs    B. jaunes    C. rouges  | 4.  | A | B    C |
| 5.  | En France, quelle est la couleur pour indiquer l'infidélité ?                                  |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. jaune    C. rouge   | 5.  | A | B    C |
| 6.  | Au Mexique, de quelle couleur sont les fleurs aux funérailles ?                                |     |   |        |
|     | A. blancs    B. jaunes    C. rouges  | 6.  | A | B    C |
| 7.  | Quelle est la couleur de l'espoir, de la nature et... de l'incroyable Hulk ?                   |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. rouge    C. vert  | 7.  | A | B    C |
| 8.  | De quelle couleur est le drapeau des anarchistes ?   |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. noir    C. rouge  | 8.  | A | B    C |
| 9.  | Quelle est la couleur du Petit Chaperon ?  |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. noir    C. rouge  | 9.  | A | B    C |
| 10. | En Russie, de quelle couleur est la fleur qui peut indiquer manque de respect pour une femme ? |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanche    B. jaune    C. rouge   | 10. | A | B    C |
| 11. | De quelle couleur est le voile des femmes iraniennes ?   |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. noir    C. rouge  | 11. | A | B    C |
| 12. | De quelle couleur est le sang des nobles ?   |     |   |        |
|     | A. blanc    B. bleu    C. rouge  | 12. | A | B    C |

Les réponses: 1. A. blanc; 2. B. jaune; 3. A. blanc; 4. C. rouge; 5. B. jaune; 6. B. jaune; 7. C. vert; 8. B. noir; 9. C. rouge; 10. B. rouge; 11. B. noir; 12. B. bleu.



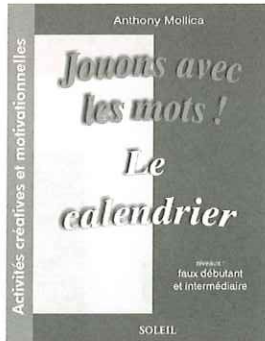
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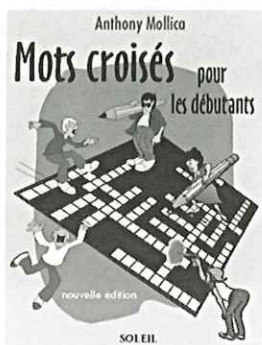
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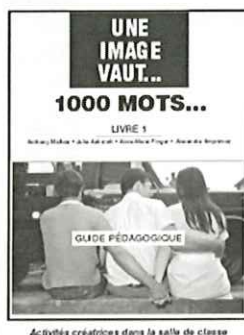
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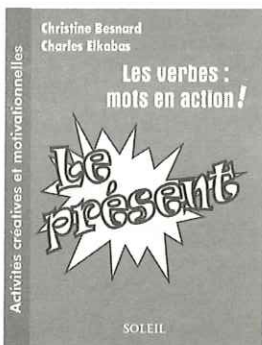
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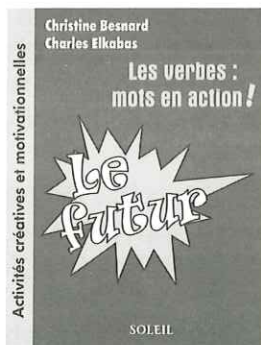
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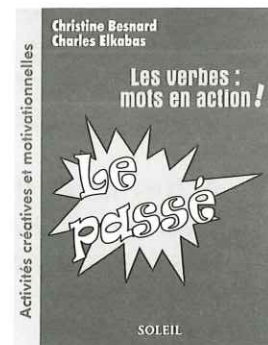
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*Present*

**Non tutti i ladri  
vengono  
per nuocere**

A comedy by  
Dario Fo



**Synopsis**

While a burglar is robbing the house of an affluent man, he is interrupted by a phone call from his own wife! Before the thief has a chance to leave, the man of the house unexpectedly returns home with his lover. The thief quickly takes refuge inside a grandfather clock. Passion ignites, but the love scene between the man of the house and his mistress is stopped short by another phone call from the thief's wife, and then by the discovery that there is an intruder in the house!

At this stage, the plot thickens as the lady of the house returns home, the thief's wife arrives, the lover of the lady of the house appears, and a second and unwitting thief makes his entrance. In this comedy of errors, entertainment is guaranteed!

**Please note that this play is performed entirely in Italian.**

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Sunday, February 28th	3:00 p.m.	Public	\$10.00 (\$5.00 for students)
Saturday, March 6th	7:30 p.m.	Public	<b>At the door:</b>
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