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Suggestopedia in Turkish Language For Foreigners: Georgian In Practice: Georgia

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ABSTRACT

Suggestopedia, developed by Georgi Lozanov, used mostly in language learning although it is applied in many fields such as psychology and pedagogy. This method focuses not only on language instruction but also the conduct of the language class through suggestions made by instructors and the environment as well. It depends on psychological, didactic and artistic means to reach its aim. This paper discusses the methods of suggestopedia and its application in Turkish language teaching in Georgia.

Keywords: *Suggestopedia, Turkish as a Foreign Language, Second Language Acquisition*

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INTRODUCTION

Everyone wants to learn a new language but scared of making mistakes throughout the learning process. Most of the language learners are discouraged due to prejudice, difficulty of the target language structure or teachers' attitudes. At this point, suggestopedia, suggestology in other words, offers language learners more comfortable, effective and faster way through suggestion of the positive side of learning in a relaxed, peaceful environment by use of music. Suggestopedia which is the combination of two words Suggestion and Pedagogy was originally developed by Georgi Lozanov in 1970s. Lozanov's aim was to set up a more profound and conducive environment where the students would get rid of psychological barriers and concerns against language through suggestopedia. It was aiming to provide students peace of mind which would facilitate the learners with high retention ratios which could help learners to reach their full potential. (Lozanov, 1978) He states that suggestology was not a theory of language but an approach to language teaching in terms of environmental and psychological improvements. Lozanov emphasized the importance of meaningful communication between the language learners and the materials. In his terms, the target language to be taught was regarded as "material". In Suggestology the memorization, the lexical translation for language learning and drama is encouraged. It facilitates the use of stories which make the lesson more fun and interactive for the learners. Learning through listening to the materials is very important. (Larsen-Freeman, 1986)

Suggestopedic teaching focuses on 3 key features in language learning which are a comfortable environment, use of music which is mostly baroque type of 17th century, and peripheral learning provided by posters or extra materials provided during the process of learning.

Comfortable Environment

Comfortable environment implies a unique order of the class in which the chairs and the desks are arranged mostly in semicircle and the light in the classroom is dim to make the students' mind more relaxed.

The walls are covered with posters related to the topic as well. The environment in suggestology plays an important role since it helps to concentrate well. (Lozanov & Gateva 1988:113)

Music

The role of music (baroque type as indicated by Lozanov) in suggestopedia is important since it helps to create a state of peaceful mind with its 60 beats per minute and specific rhythm as well. The reason why

60 beats per minute music was chosen was the similarity between the heart pulse of a human being and the beats of the music. According to Lozanov (1978) and his related researches, the baroque type music of 17th century complies with the multi rhythmical feature which accelerates the learning process. The music beat rates ranging 60 to 80 helps concentration by therefore logical and spiritual concentration is achieved. Music is believed to combine the power of two lobes of the brain to work perfectly so that the learning becomes easier (Bancroft,2001). Since the left hemisphere of the brain is dominantly responsible for the language learning and the right for reasoning and creativity. The research also showed that music does involve both sides of the brain although the most of the musical activity occur on the right side of the brain. In other words, Lozanov's choice of music for language learning was not a coincidence but theright choice.(Levitin, 2006)

Peripheral Learning through decoration and posters.

In suggestology, students not only learn through educational materials but also from environmental detailssuch as grammar rules and language posters related to the target language. The posters and other informative designs are means of peripheral learning in suggestology. Related class materials are hung on the walls visible by all students although the learning occurs indirectly according to the method. Every detail on the posters must possess the target language and its features such as grammar and the structure. (Ramirez,2003)

Besides, Lozanov's approach promises the students a stress free language learning. Learners are not pressurized by lots of homework and andin suggestology, errors are not important since the teachers focus on the content not the structure. The mistakes during the learning process are tolerated. Homework or assignments limited to revision of the learned topic before sleep and in the morning before the language classes(Larsen-Freeman, 1986: 75-76).

Another aspect of suggestopedia is art,drama and music integration to learning process. Suggestopedia makes use of these assets as much as possible in order to provide with a multi-dimensional atmosphere which facilitates most of the senses.

In suggestology texts are set according to the level of students and they are given in a certain procedure which includes; first concert, second concert, primary activation and secondary activation.

In the first concert, Students read the text with the music. And focuses on pronunciation andintonation. Second concert is the teachers' turn. He or she reads the text at normal speed normally when the students are listening without the scripts.

In primary activation, students read the text loudly either individually or in groups.

In the second activation, students engaged in several activities including singing, dancing, dramatization and games intended to use the learned language patterns or vocabularies.

Although suggestology stands for alternative to conventional language methods, it has some drawbacks as well. It is criticized by researchers because of the following weak points:

1. Students are considered to be the same in terms of IQ, talent, attitude against the language
2. The learning speed of each learner is regarded as the same
3. All learners are regarded equal without considering any emotional and personal differences
4. The age level of the learners and the level to be taught are not clear in the system.
5. Providing comfortable and cozy classes in our ordinary institutions is difficult.

The selection of the text and other class materials might be confusing especially for unexperienced language teachers.

Suggestology In Practice

To assess the effect and the result of suggestopedia, an experiment with a Turkish language class conducted. The main aim of the experiment was to see the output of the method which was claimed 3 to 5 times faster than ordinary methods in language learning. The experiment was conducted in Turkish language class among Georgian students. In this practice, two grade 10 classes have been selected. Both of the classes have 15 students and the lessons have been conducted in the same classroom. The students have been learning Turkish for 3 years and regarded in intermediate level of Turkish according to the textbooks provided. They were taught 3 hours of Turkish weekly.

The control group, Grade 10A, was given a suggestopedic instruction of Turkish language, however Grade 10B was instructed with conventional methods. Both of the classes have been given the same selected texts prepared by the teacher. The teacher has performed the suggestopedic teaching techniques in Grade 10A although in 10B class, He has followed the conventional methods.

	EĞİTİM	ULAŞIM	ALIŞVERİŞ
			
GEÇMİŞ	Eskiden eğitim, sadece okullarda yapılıyordu. Yazı tahtası olarak ise yalnızca kara tahta kullanılıyordu.	Eskiden insanlar ulaşımda atlı araba kullanıyordu. Motor icat edildikten sonra otomobil kullanılmaya başlandı.	Para icat edilmeden önce insanoğlu, değiş tokuş yöntemiyle alışveriş yapıyordu.
ŞİMDİ	Günümüzde eğitim, hem okulda hem de okul dışında yapılabilir. Ayrıca, eğitim kurumlarında artık akıllı tahtalar kullanılıyor.	Günümüzde konforlu ve modern otomobiller tercih edilirken, elektrikli otomobiller de kullanılmaya başlandı.	Bugün alışverişte çoğunlukla para ve kredi kartı kullanılmakta. İnsanlar, alışveriş yapmak için genellikle mağazaları tercih etmekte.
GELECEK	Gelecekte ise insanlar okula gitmek zorunda olmayacak. İnsanlar, okula gitmeden de eğitim alabilecekler.	Gelecekte ise daha çok uçan otomobiller ve yakıtını kendisi üretebilen otomobiller kullanılacak.	Gelecekte ise alışveriş, evdeki hizmetçi robotlar tarafından yapılacak. İnsanlar alışveriş yapmak için mağazalara gitmek zorunda kalmayacak.

Diagram: Reading text from course book (Lale Turkish Textbook 3 page:111)

In the first concert session, a traditional folk music was chosen) Georgian folk song called Orovelainstead of Baroque type music. The first reading session was conducted with this song.

First, teacher let the students read the text while playing the Georgian folk song. Following that the teacher read the text dramatizing and explaining while music playing background. In the third stage, students are told to read the material loudly one by one until everyone at least read the passage once. In the last step, teacher explained the text and gave the definition of new words in English(Note: Translations can be made either in mother tongue or the second language of communication. In our experiment, all the words are given with their English definitions). At the end of the class, students are given homework of re-reading the passage once again before sleep and in the next morning. The next lesson, students are told to retell the text in their own words. Most of the students have remembered the basic lines of the reading part. The retention of the vocabulary and the memorization was promising.

In the control group, however, teacher conducted the lesson in conventional way. He distributed the text to the students and told them to read the passage one by one. They read the text and then teacher asked the students about the text mostly WH-questions to measure the comprehension of the text. Teacher has given new vocabulary by writing their English meaning on the board. Students were told to copy the new vocabularies to their notebooks. Then the teacher read the passage for last time and the lesson finished. The next lesson students are directed WH- questions related to the text but the only few students were able to recall the basic line of the reading and the vocabulary comparing to experiment group.

CONCLUSION

Introduced by Georgi Lozanov and adopted by many researchers as an alternative method in language teaching, suggestopedia is still popular among the researchers due to its wide application in many fields from education to psychology. Its adoption as an alternative language learning method by United Nations has played a big role on its popularity. Its unusual approach and proven success promises a new world of opportunities for language learners all around the world.

At the end of 3 hours of comparative study of suggestopedia in Turkish as a foreign language, the control group, Grade 10B, has made no remarkable progress in terms of vocabulary learning and key concepts of the text. In the next lesson, when students were asked about the reading material they read and learned, only 3 out of 13 students have remembered the theme and the basic lines of the text. However, the number of students who remembered the vocabulary of the reading text was much higher in suggestology group. In spite of the fact that it has some drawbacks such as difficulty of application in government institutions and some other weaknesses stated above, up to date Suggestology stands as an alternative language teaching approach even for teaching Turkish as a foreign language. Although the experiment was conducted in a very limited time and with many limitations such as materials and environment, it has

turned out good results in terms of comprehension of the passages and target vocabulary. The result of the experiment is encouraging for further practices of the method in Turkish language classes. Suggestology and its practice in Turkish Language will benefit not only the teachers but also learners.

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