

Desuggestopedia (Ch6)

Introduction

In this lesson, students will learn about Desuggestopedia. Desuggestopedia was designed by Georgi Lozanov, a psychiatrist-educator. It derives from his science of Suggestology, which explores learning in relation to the non-rational or non-conscious influences that people experience in their lives. Music and drama are prominent features of Desuggestopedia.

Learning Objectives

- Students will learn about Desuggestopedia and its techniques and principles.

Learning Outcomes

- **Principles:** Students will be able to describe key principles of Desuggestopedia such as its goal and “desuggesting” psychological barriers to learning.
- **Techniques:** Students will be able to describe and express their thoughts about the predominant techniques and resources used in a Desuggestopedia lesson.
- **Application:** Students will be able to create a dialogue of 5-6 lines on a topic of their choice and a sequence of activities that matches the four phases of a Desuggestopedia lesson.

Key Vocabulary

- Georgi Lozanov (p. 71)
- Psychiatry (p. 71)
- Suggestology (p. 71)
- Psychological barrier (p. 71)
- “desuggest” (p. 71)
- Bright and colourful classroom set-up (p. 72)
- Positive suggestion, direct suggestion, indirect suggestion (p. 72, p. 81)
- New identities (i.e., roles) (p. 72)
- Peripheral learning (p. 75)
- Feeling of security (p. 76)
- Freeing the speech muscles (p. 76)
- Conscious and subconscious plane (p. 77)
- Fine arts (e.g., music, art, drama) (p. 77)
- Receptive Phase (i.e., First Concert, Second Concert) and Active Phase (i.e., Primary Activation, Creative Adaptation) (p. 82)

Video (watch before class)

- <https://youtu.be/3rkrvRlty5M>

Understanding Desuggestopedia

1. What is the goal of Desuggestopedia?
2. Deliberate suggestion can influence how people perform. For example, some people believe that having a glass of wine at a party can help them become more sociable (i.e., perform better). Other people believe that eating “sticky” food will help them to do better on tests, and that conversely, eating “slippery” foods will cause them to forget.
 - a) Can you think of other **suggestions** that influence performance?
 - b) Do you think **the power of suggestion** can influence language learning?
3. Psychiatrist-educator and creator of Desuggestopedia, Georgi Lozanov believes that we set up **psychological barriers** to learning, we fear that we will be unable to perform, that we will be limited in our ability to learn, or that we will fail. For example, we might think discouraging thoughts such as, “I can’t do this,” or, “This is too difficult”. One result is that we do not use the **full mental powers** that we have. In order to make better use of our **mental reserves**, the limitations that we think we have (i.e., our negative thoughts) need to be “**desuggested**”. Desuggestopedia is an application of the study of suggestion to language teaching. It is designed to help students believe that they can overcome the barriers to learning and become successful.
 - a) What barriers do your students bring with them to class that may negatively affect their learning?
 - b) Do you think there is any truth to the idea that psychological barriers need to be “desuggested”?

Experience

4. Consider the Desuggestopedia video, the sample lesson in the textbook (pp. 71-75), and the observations and principles of Desuggestopedia in the textbook (pp. 75-80).
 - a) What did the students learn? What were the topics of the lessons?
 - b) How are the arts integrated? What is the role of drama?
 - c) What were the different activities? How were the four skills of listening, speaking, reading, and writing used?
 - d) What was desuggested? What are some of the ways that direct positive suggestions were present? How about indirect positive suggestions?

Reviewing the Techniques

5. Look at the list of techniques on textbook pages 81-82. In your own words, explain the characteristics of the two concert phases, the primary activation phase, and the creative adaptation phases. What do you think is the purpose of each phase?
 - First concert
 - Second concert
 - Primary activation
 - Creative adaptation

What do you think?

6. Let’s find out what everyone thinks about Desuggestopedia. The textbook on page 83 asks several questions for reflection. First, **choose one question** that you want to discuss with your classmates. Second, **prepare a sample answer** to share with the class.
- a) What connection, if any, can you make between Desuggestopedia and your approach to teaching?
 - b) Does it make sense to you that when your students are relaxed and comfortable, their learning will be facilitated?
 - c) Should the teacher’s role be one of being a respected and trusted authority?
 - d) Should direct and indirect suggestions be used?
 - e) Should learners be made as enjoyable as possible?
 - f) Which, if any, of the other principles of Desuggestopedia do you accept?
 - g) Do you think students can learn peripherally?
 - h) Would it be useful for your students to develop a new target language identity?
 - i) Would you consider presenting the material with a musical accompaniment?
 - j) Are any of the activities of the activation phase of use to you?
-
-
-

In-Class Activity

7. In this question, you will apply what you have understood about Desuggestopedia. A typical Desuggestopedia lesson has four phases: presentation, first concert, second concert, and practice (i.e., activation-adaptation).

Create a sequence of activities that includes a **dialogue of 5-6 lines** and the **four phases** for a **high school intermediate** language class.

Presentation	The main aim is to help students relax and move into a positive frame of mind, with the feeling that learning is going to be easy and fun.
First Concert	This involves the active presentation of the leaning material by the use of dialogues, vocabulary lists, and grammar points. These dialogues are read aloud to the students with background classical music. The teacher exaggerates the rhythm and intonation of the reading in order to match the rhythm of the music.
Second Concert	The students are now guided to relax and listen to some more classical music. After the readings of these long dialogues to the accompaniment of music, the teacher makes use of the dialogues for more conventional language work.
Practice	The use of a range of role-plays, games, puzzles, and so on to review and consolidate the learning. Homework is limited to re-reading the dialogue once before going to bed and again before getting up in the morning.