5.Suggestopedia

One of the alternative methods based on language acquisition belonging to the natural approach is Suggestopedia. The originator of the method, Georgi Lozanov asserts that we set up psychological barriers to learning. Suggestopedia has been developed to help students eliminate the feeling that they cannot be successful and to help them overcome the barriers to learning. Learning is facilitated in a relaxed, comfortable environment. A student can learn from the environment even if his attention is not directed to it. The student must trust and respect the teacher's authority and activate his imagination. The teacher is supposed to increase her students' confidence that they will be successful learners. The more confident the students feel, the better they will learn. When students' attention is off the form of the language and on the process of communicating, students will learn best. The texts students work from contain lengthy dialogues in the target language. Next to the text is a translation in the learners' mother tongue. There are some notes on the structures in the conversation as well. The teacher presents the dialogue during two concerts; the first phase of this presentation is the receptive phase. In the first concert the teacher reads the dialogue, matching her or his voice to the rhythm and pitch of the music. In this way, the "whole brain" of students becomes activated.

The learners follow the target language dialogue as the teacher reads it out loud. They can also check the translation. In the second concert the students simply relax while the teacher reads the dialogue at a normal rate of speed. After this phase the students read over the dialogue again before they go to sleep and again when they get up the next morning.

 In the activation phase students engage in various activities including dramatizations, games, songs and question-and-answer exercises.The goal of the method is to accelerate the process

by which students learn to use a foreign language for everyday communication. This is to be done by breaking down the psychological barriers learners bring with them to the learning situation.

The principles of Suggestopedia:

- the teacher is the authority in the classroom, who must be trusted and respected by the students – once the students trust the teacher, they feel secure, they can be more spontaneous and less inhibited;

- All types of interactions are to be found in case of the method, however first it is the teacher that initiates interactions with the whole group of students and with individuals right from the beginning of a course; in the beginning of the course the students can only respond nonverbally, later the students have more control of the target language and can respond more appropriately, and even initiate interaction themselves. Students interact with each other from the beginning in various activities directed by the teacher;

- Native language translation is used to make the meaning of the dialogue clear, the teacher uses the mother tongue in lesson when necessary; as the course proceeds, the teacher uses the native language less and less;

- Vocabulary is emphasized, the success of the method can be put down to the large number of words that can be acquired;

- Grammar is dealt with explicitly but minimally, students will learn best if their conscious attention is focused not on the language forms but on using the language;

- Pronunciation is developed by reading out loud;

- The culture which students learn concerns the everyday life of people who speak the language. The use of the fine arts is also common in Suggestopedia;

- Speaking communicatively is emphasized, students also read the target language and write, for example compositions;

- Evaluation is conducted on students' normal in-class performance and not through formal tests;

- At the beginning levels, errors are not corrected immediately since the emphasis is on students communicating their intended meaning; when errors occur the teacher uses delayed correction;

- the syllabus used in the method is functional.

Activities characteristic of the method:

- Peripheral learning (This activity is based on the idea that we perceive much more in our environment than that to which we consciously attend. By putting posters on the classroom walls students will absorb the necessary facts effortlessly. Posters are changed from time to time to provide grammatical information that is appropriate to what the learners are studying.)
- Choose a new identity (Learners choose a target language name and a new profession or trade. In someone else's shoes the learners will be less inhibited while using the target language.)
- Role play. (Larsen-Freeman 1986: 72-89)