SUGGESTOPEDIA: ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENT, DISSEMINATION, EFFECTIVENESS

(A literature overview)

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Abstract

This master thesis presents a literature overview of Suggestopedia: its origins, development, dissemination, and effectiveness. Suggestopedia is an alternative teaching method which stimulates the human mind through the use of art and classical music and the reduction of stress in the learning environment. Nowadays Suggestopedia is used mostly for L2 teaching for both children and adults. The method was created in the 1970s in Bulgaria by psychologist and psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov, with a significant contribution from his colleague Evelina Gateva.

Suggestopedia is based on the seven laws of love, freedom, the teacher's conviction that something unusual is taking place, manifold increase of learning material, the interplay of global and partial, the golden ratio, and application of classical arts and aesthetics. A suggestopedic lesson consists of four main parts: deciphering, concert session (active and passive), elaboration, and production.

The thesis focuses on Suggestopedia's dissemination in the former USSR, Bulgaria, the United States, Germany, Spain, and Scandinavia. Subsequently, evidence for the method's effectiveness is presented in the form of testimonials from teachers and students. Their general conclusion is that Suggestopedia is very effective for the accelerated acquisition of a new language, yet it primarily develops students' oral skills, neglecting grammar and written skills. From the literature it seems that Suggestopedia is very useful for beginner learners, up to level B1 (according to CEFR), and then learners could continue with a more text-based method.

Keywords: Suggestopedia, Teaching methods, Georgi Lozanov, Relaxation, Music

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Table of Contents

Acknowledgements

List of abbreviations

ALL: Accelerated Language Learning

CLIL: Content Language Integrated Learning

CLT: Communicative language teaching (approach)

DUB: Dynamic Usage Based (approach)

L1: first language

L2: second language

SALT: Suggestive Accelerated Learning and Teaching

S1: Student 1

S2: Student 2

S3: Student 3

TPR: Total Physical Response

T1: Teacher 1

T2: Teacher 2

INTRODUCTION

This thesis discusses Suggestopedia—a Foreign Language teaching approach—which has been quite controversial over the years. Because it originated from my home country and I had heard about it in my courses at my home university, I wanted to find out how it started, how it spread over the world and what adaptations had been made, what studies had been done to show whether it was effective or not. I also wanted to find out how teachers and students who had actually worked with the approach had experienced it.

Suggestopedia has had its ups and downs over the course of time. It could be stated that it used to be a revolutionary, even scandalous development in teaching methodology when it first appeared. Like everything new, it evoked various reactions among researchers, teachers and learners. Suggestopedia had been both praised (statement of UNESCO from 1978) and rejected (Richards and Rogers, 2014). It is interesting to follow how it has changed over time since Suggestopedia is not a very popular teaching method nowadays. The number of citations of the original *Suggestology and Suggestopedia: theory and practice* (Lozanov, 1979) is low. It has only 123 citations according to a search in Google Scholar in February 2018. Moreover, there is an overall absence of specialized literature when it comes to textbooks for foreign language teaching.

Despite the fact that most conceived teaching methods have changed over time, it is important to mention that Suggestopedia—even after it was spread and adapted in different countries—has kept its original principles. To date, it is being applied unchanged in countries like Norway (Hartmark, 2015) and Sweden. The goal of this thesis is to see if the method is still viable and whether it should be continued. Since there are very few empirical studies in this area – as mentioned above, I myself have not found similar literature overviews on the topic – I am aiming at filling a niche. Having in mind that education is one of the academic fields related to applied linguistics, Suggestopedia, as a teaching method, would be of interest to both applied linguistics scholars and teachers. In my opinion, Suggestopedia is worthy of attention not only because it uses rather rare techniques – classical art, music, drama and games – but also because it is aplicable to both young and adult learners. In addition, Suggestopedia is suitable for people of various educational background, comparing illiterate immigrants in Norway (Hartmark, 2015) and people with higher education who attended a course in French (S1) both people who are naturally inclined to acquiring foreign languages and such for whom

linguistics is not a strenght because it activates the hidden reserves of the human mind. Another feature of Suggestopedia that might be of interest to L2 instrucors is that the teaching method could be adapted to the needs of both formal (eg. universities) and informal (e.g. indipendent language schools) education.

Considering the rather unusual nature of the topic, a different approach is needed so that its development could be traced. Therefore, the format of a literature review best suits the purposes of this study. After an overview of the origins and history of Suggestopedia is given, the development and dissemination of the method will be traced, concentrating on the former USSR, Bulgaria, USA, Germany, Spain, and Scandinavia. Lastly, evidence and evaluation of its effectiveness will be provided. The data in this paper was gathered mostly from articles from journals available through the online libraries of Groningen, Lund and Oxford University, including journals in the fields of language, second language acquisition and education. The source language of the materials was for the most part English, but also Norwegian, Swedish, Russian and Bulgarian. The relevant information needed for backing up the separate sections that were in languages different from English was translated into English.

Additional information about the history and development of Suggestopedia in Bulgaria was collected via interviews—which have been recorded—with suggestopedic teachers (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018; Kaloyanova, personal interview, 2018).

In order to give an objective picture of the effectiveness of Suggestopedia, teachers' and students' opinions were gathered via emails. The participants were asked to give their opinion about the effectiveness of the suggestopedic teaching method: why and how it is useful, occasionally in comparison with other 'classical' teaching methods. The evaluations were given by three teachers and three students, all of them Bulgarians. A few additional views on how and why Suggestopedia works were found in one of the articles included in the reference list of this thesis (Hartmark, 2015).

I. HISTORY AND GENERAL PRINCIPLES

In this chapter, we shall trace the origins of Suggestopedia, explain what its essence is as a teaching technique, what stands behind the term, the theoretical pylons on which it is built and the specific parts a suggestopedic lesson consists of. Moreover, we will look at personal qualities a suggestopedic teacher should possess, the differences between Suggestopedia for adults and Suggestopedia for children, the, the positive effects it can have on humans' health and, finally, compare Suggestopedia to a similar L2 teaching technique.

History

Suggestopedia is a teaching method developed by the Bulgarian psychotherapist Georgi Lozanov (1926—2012). Although the teaching method was originally developed for teaching various kinds of disciplines (including Geography, History, Biology, Physical education etc.), nowadays it is used mostly for teaching foreign languages (Kaloyanova, personal interview, 2018).

Georgi Lozanov, born, raised and educated in Bulgaria, was very much interested in psychology and teaching methodology, which formed the main focus of his field of interest and studies. In the 1970s, he started developing a new teaching method, which unites psychology and pedagogy, and he wrote a PhD dissertation in 1972 called "Suggestopedia". After that he received postgraduate qualification, as well as training in the field of pedagogy and psychology in Wien (Lozanov, 2005).

In 1966, Lozanov established the Scientific Research Institute for Pedagogy in Sofia, Bulgaria. Its main task was to research phenomena that have to do with suggestion, including parapsychology. In 1978, Suggestopedia was recognized as the best teaching method and thus recommended for applying all over the world by UNESCO and the Pedagogical Academy in Wien, Austria (Lozanov, 2005, pp. 11-16).

In 1980, Lozanov was fired from his position, and placed under house arrest. This was due to the political situation in Bulgaria at that time (the Republic of Bulgaria was ruled by the Bulgarian Communist Party). In an official statement of the government, Suggestopedia was called "too revolutionary, even bordering on esoterism; dangerous for learners; especially for children, and

therefore should be forbidden" (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018). The Scientific Research Institute was closed down in 1991, along with other state-funded institutions, during the transition from totalitarianism to democratic capitalism. Up to the year 2000, Suggestopedia fell into oblivion in its home country, Bulgaria.

Thanks to the personal invitation he had received from the president of Austria, Professor Lozanov changed his place of residence from Sofia to Vienna. There, he continued developing his method in the newly created International Centre of Desuggestology. In the course of the 1990s, he devoted most of his time to spreading the ideas of Suggestopedia around the world (Lozanov, 2005, pp.11-16).

Suggestopedia has been disseminated to various countries, including Austria, Germany, Norway, Sweden (where it can be found in its 'purest' form), Russia, the United States and Japan. It has been slightly adapted and modified according to the specific needs and tastes of the teachers and students in those countries.

What stands behind the term Suggestopedia are two other words: "suggestion" and "pedagogy". Professor Lozanov coined this term with the intention to put an emphasis on students' choice; "suggestion" in the meaning of "proposing" or "offering". (Mihaila-Lica, 2008). Nowadays, the teaching method focuses more on desuggested learning and is therefore sometimes called deSuggestopedia (Rashtchi, 2018).

Another person who greatly contributed to the development of Suggestopedia and significantly improved the methodology was Professor Evelina Gateva. Gateva started working at the Institute for Suggestology only six years after it had been founded. Professor Lozanov describes her as "an extremely talented colleague and associate …who helped me incorporate classical art into the teaching techniques."

Evelina Gateva was a musician, opera singer, linguist; she developed the 'art part' of the method, underlying the training programs for children and adults. She enriched the methodology with examples, reformed the textbooks, composed many songs for foreign language learning and children's operas needed for mathematics training at elementary school classes in Austria and Bulgaria.

After we have taken a look at the historical background of the method, we can proceed with introducing the famous seven laws of Suggestopedia, as well as the suggestopedic cycle of instruction, which are crucial for understanding the essence of the teaching method.

The seven laws of Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia is a teaching method characterized by the reduction of learners' stress, expanding the reserves of the human mind and the use of art for stimulating and releasing students' potential so that manifold increased learning material could be acquired. Nowadays, it is used mostly for L2 instruction but its principles can also be adapted to many other disciplines. In this section, we are going to look at the seven laws of Suggestopedia, the four main parts of a suggestopedic lesson, as well as the qualities a suggestopedic teacher is expected to have.

Suggestopedia is based on the following seven laws: 1) love, 2) freedom, 3) the teacher's conviction that something unusual is taking place, 4) manifold increase of learning material, 5) global-partial, partial-global, partial through global, 6) the golden ratio, or the perfect balance between the different parts that constitute a suggestopedic lesson, and 7) application of classical arts and aesthetics.

1. Love

In Professor Lozanov's own words, "If there's no love there's no Suggestopedia." He did not mean sentimental love but rather love for the human being, for humankind. The presence of love is an essential condition for accessing the reserves of the human mind. In Suggestopedia, the teacher's love for his/her students could be compared to parents' love for their children, and in particular, the support they provide for their child when he/she is learning to cycle. Parents' support is subtle, yet affirming and encouraging, which gives the child an impulse to continue cycling. In the context of Suggestopedia, the teacher provides subdued and unobtrusive guidance, modelling, and implicit, tactful correction of the learners' output, most often without their realisation that they are being corrected. The example of the bicycle is used here to emphasize the aspect of love, the caring and loving support of the teacher to the learners, to whom it is most welcome because it is tenderly offered and not imposed. Thus they feel more secure (lozanov.org, 2009).

2. Freedom

"No great achievements were made without love." (Professor Lozanov)

Students are given the freedom to choose how to perceive the knowledge they have been offered access to. Freedom is seen as very important in suggestopedic learning, since the learner is able to listen to his/her inner voice and thus choose his/her own path towards accessing their mental reserves. Students are also given the freedom to choose whether they want to participate in certain

activities (such as the drama classes, singing, games) or not. They are also allowed to go out of the classroom at any time (lozanov.org, 2009).

3. The teacher's conviction that something unusual takes place

This is the teacher's personal belief that during classes, something unusual takes place. By encouraging the students with facial expressions, body language, gestures, appraisals, he/she stimulates them, and the students in turn have the feeling that they have achieved something on their own. The teacher's help is seen as a hand lent by a friend. The teacher's expectations are both about his/her ability to activate the reserve capacity, and about the learners' ability level of their reserves (vihrovenia.bg, 2017).

4. Manifold increase of learning material/input volume

Thanks to the fact that Suggestopedia stimulates the right hemisphere of the brain (through music, dance, drama) unlike other traditional teaching methods, the learning material which students are expected to acquire in a specific time frame should be two to five times larger in volume than that in the already established norms of other existing methodologies. For instance, the study material in a suggestopedic foreign language course with a duration of one month is expected to be at least two times larger than that of a similar traditional language course (Lozanov, 2005, pp. 65-73).

5. Global-partial, partial-global; partial through global

For all fields of knowledge, when new study material is taught, there should be no separation between the whole and its elements. In terms of language teaching, grammar and words should not be presented as two components of language which exist separately, because they are both part of the discourse. Each individual unit is part of something global and this global is in turn part of something larger; this progression goes to infinity (suggestopediabg.com 2018). Furthermore, the concept of global-partial, partial-global, partial through global is in line with Aristotle's philosophical view which states that the whole is in the part and the part is in the whole and they are mutually indivisible. In addition, the fifth law of Suggestopedia is based on scientific research on brain functioning, which has shown that the parts of the brain contain information about the whole brain. The entire human being reacts as a whole complex system to external stimuli. This once again shows that the elements do not exist apart but always as part of the whole (Lozanov, 2005, p.135).

6. The golden ratio

The golden ratio, or proportion, comes first when distributing time for the various components of a suggestopedic lesson. The golden ratio is a special number found by dividing a line into two parts so that the longer part divided by the smaller part is also equal to the whole length divided by the longer part. It is often denoted by phi, the 21st letter of the Greek alphabet. The rounded number is 1,618 (Hom, 2013).

In the suggestopedic process of teaching and communication, the relation among the parts and the whole follows the golden ratio principle. A skilful teacher should be able to find the ideal balance between giving to and taking from his/her students. Moreover, harmony is essential for the process of teaching and learning such a large volume of study material in such a short period of time (Lozanov, 2005, pp. 65-73).

7. Application of classical art and aesthetics

Classical art and aesthetics are used as extremely effective means of meditating communicative suggestion. Art creates conditions for optimal psycho-relaxation. The harmonious state of mind contributes to the spontaneously increased acquisition of the students; to expanding the capacity of their mind reserves. Classical art is introduced through carefully selected classical music, arias and songs, poetry, reproductions of paintings, etc. (lozanov.org, 2009).

The atmosphere in the classroom and the physical surroundings are considered crucial for creating a sense of comfortableness and relaxation in the students. Dimmed light, soft pillows, even tea are offered to students. It is very important that they do not see the lessons as something compulsory and demanding but rather as leisure, fun (Hartmark, 2015).

While the seven laws set up the theoretical framework of Suggestopedia, we need to look at the concrete ways in which they are implemented during a suggestopedic lesson. The four main components, or the suggestopedic cycle of instruction as they are also known, can give us a concrete image of what actually happens in the classroom. It should be noted that the format of a suggestopedic lesson is very unusual, especially from the point of view of someone with more "classical" training or a more traditional approach to teaching. The parts were originally three: deciphering, concert session and elaboration, but later on, a fourth one was added: production.

1. Deciphering

In this part, the teacher introduces the vocabulary and grammar of the new lesson. In most suggestopedic students' books, the materials in the foreign, L2 language are on the left side, and translation is provided on the right side. In this sense, Suggestopedia could be compared to the bilingual method (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018).

2. Concert session (active and passive)

During the active part of this session, the teacher reads the text at a normal pace. It is possible that he/she puts an emphasis on certain words while students follow the text in their textbooks. During the passive part of this session, they just listen to the teacher read the text again, without actively participating. Classical music is often played in the background. (suggestopediabg.com, 2018)

3. Elaboration

The students apply what they have learnt by putting it into practice with the help of songs, drama and games. (suggestopediabg.com, 2018)

Later on, a fourth phase was added to the first three.

4. Production

During the production session, students are given the opportunity to freely speak and interact in the target language without receiving any form of correction or being interrupted (Lozanov, 2005, p. 132).

Given the specifics of the seven laws and the structure of the suggestopedic lesson, a suggestopedic teacher should have a particular set of qualities to fit them better. These were described in details by suggestopedic pioneers and teachers.

Teachers' characteristics

Although it is not possible to teach without a special suggestopedic instruction and certification, a training course is not sufficient for one to become a successful suggestopedic teacher. Personal

qualities are also needed and valued. Even though the teacher figure in Suggestopedia is very important because the method is, on the whole, teacher-controlled, it is expected that the teacher should not be in any way dominant, but rather guiding (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018). It is also expected that he/she should have inclinations for art; should be able to use his/her voice in an artistic manner; sing and act. Furthermore, teachers not only need to be acquainted with the teaching techniques but also to fully understand and implement them in the instruction process. If these conditions are not met, their work will not lead to learners' successful results and could even have a negative impact. Therefore, it is crucial that teachers have received a course training by certified instructors (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018). According to Galya Mateva (1997), a suggestopedic teacher should be "patient, delicate and tactful, tolerant, serene and smiling, a good psychologist, with a good sense of humour, soft-spoken and suggestive, clever and knowledgeable, charming, charismatic, artistic, emotional, highly sensitive, empathetic."

Positive side effects

Lozanov (2005) claims that the positive results from his method can be observed not only in language learning but also in the favourable side effects on one's health, psychological and social relations as well as success in other spheres of life. In particular, Suggestopedia has proven to have a beneficial effect on clinical diseases such as dermatological problems, allergies (Lozanov, 2005) and even high blood pressure (Hartmark, 2015).

Suggestopedia for children

The suggestopedic method, originally developed for adults, includes long learning sessions without movement, as well as learning materials suitable for the respective age group. Therefore, another approach, which involves more physical activity and different materials should be applied to children, considering their learner's characteristics. Lessons developed for children are shorter in duration and rely strongly on spontaneity (Lozanov, 2005, pp. 12; 16). The method for children is called preventive Suggestopedia because, if applied for a sufficiently long period of time, it protects the children from various brainwashing or restrictive pedagogical influences of society.

Lozanov points out that it is crucial for parents to be well familiar with the method and teaching techniques because, since they have great influence on their children, they are capable of influencing

them both in a positive and a negative way; for instance, they could create a wrong attitude towards the teaching, respectively learning, process (Lozanov, 2005, pp.3; 112).

Similarities with other theories and teaching methods

Suggestopedia is not the only successful non-traditional method for L2 teaching/learning. People have developed similar techniques in other corners of the world, completely independently. To begin with, parallels could be drawn between Suggestopedia and Total Physical Response. Total Physical Response (TPR) is a method developed in the late 1960s by Dr. James Asher, a psychology professor at San Jose' State University, California, to aid in the learning of foreign languages. This coincides with the time of creation of the suggestopedic method. It could be assumed that it was namely during that time that there was a rising need for new teaching approaches.

The approach is based on the theory that memory becomes activated through association with physical movement. TPR is considered to resemble parental commands adults give to their children and L1 acquisition in early childhood. The method relies primarily on listening, which, in its turn, is linked to physical actions designed to assist the comprehension and memorizing of specific basic notions (Talley, Hui-ling, 2016). As Krashen and Terrell (1983, p. 76) have noted, TPR is a behavioural method and relies on the assumption that when a student learns a second language, that language is internalized through a process of code breaking similar to the original first language development of the student.

The role of a teacher using TPR is to connect certain items with corresponding body actions/gestures. As Asher, the creator of the method himself, states, in classical instruction, there is too much focus on the individual learner in the classroom, and thus the level of anxiety is usually too high. Therefore, "the instructor is the director of a stage play in which the students are actors" (tpr-world.com). Since TPR learning takes place in a group, and students repeat in a choir, if someone makes a mistake, this remains imperceptible and the level of stress is minimized. In this fashion, learners do not feel uncomfortable and do not become self-defensive (Brown, 2000, p.107). Furthermore, TPR is a Naturalistic approach (Krashen & Terrell, 1983, pp. 76-79) and its focus is not on grammar but on communicative skills.

The conclusions that could be drawn are that TPR resembles Suggestopedia, first of all, in terms of the dominating role of the teacher; second of all, the pursuit of a peaceful and friendly classroom atmosphere and thus reducing the level of anxiety among learners; and thirdly, their focus on the communicative side of language without dwelling on grammatical structures too much.

Another teaching method that Suggestopedia could be compared to is Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL). The name was introduced by David Marsh from the University of Jyväskylä, Finland, in 1994, and refers to both the subject matter and the target language. CLIL is used when a subject is taught in a particular second language. In other words, while students are learning about the subject matter, they are also acquiring a new language alongside with it (fluentu.com, 2018).

The teaching method has four basic components, usually called 'the 4 Cs': 1) Content (refers to the aims of the subject), 2) Communication (learners are expected to produce L2 in both oral and written form), 3) Cognition (the method stimulates critical thinking skills), and 4) Culture (teaching/learning a L2 also involves understanding the culture of the target language) (British Study Center Oxford, 2012, pp. 4-5).

Core features of CLIL's methodology are authenticity, or the connection between what is happening in the classroom and in real life; scaffolding, or the teacher's role to support students' language needs, to build on their existing knowledge and 'recycle' information in correspondence with individual learning styles; active learning, or involving students into various activities, based on peer cooperative work; multiple focus approach, or integration between language classes and different subjects; and cooperation, or active communication between teachers, parents and local community (British Study Center Oxford, 2012, pp.4-8).

Suggestopedia and CLIL are similar in the structure of their lessons. Firstly, the deciphering part in Suggestopedia and the activation part in CLIL introduce new material. Secondly, the elaboration part (Suggestopedia) and the production part (CLIL) consist of various activities (drawing, fill in the gaps, reading, interactive peer tasks) that aim to solidify the gained new knowledge and check whether students have understood the content of the lesson.

In chapter I, we became acquainted with the place of birth and the father of Suggestopedia, the theoretical laws it is built on, the components a suggestopedic lesson consists of and the individual qualities a suggestopedic teacher should have. In addition, we gave an idea of how Suggestopedia can be beneficial to one's health, how Suggestopedia for children is different from Suggestopedia for adults, and lastly, drew a comparison with TPR and CLIL, L2 teaching techniques.

II. DEVELOPMENT AND DISSEMINATION

Suggestopedia has spread to various countries around the world, including Austria, France, Japan, China, Ukraine, Macedonia. However, due to an insufficient amount of sources and the limitations of the languages used, this chapter will focus on the former Soviet Union, Bulgaria, USA, Germany, Spain, and Scandinavia.

Suggestopedia has expanded in four main directions. The first one, called Suggestopedia like the original method, was developed in Eastern Europe and used techniques different from the ones originally proposed by Lozanov (Bancroft, 1999). The other three were named Superlearning, Suggestive Accelerated Learning and Teaching (SALT), and Psychopaedie (Uschi, 1989). Psychopaedie was developed in West Germany, and SALT and Superlearning, in North America. Even though all four branches are slightly different from Suggestopedia in its original form, they have kept the common traits of suggestion, relaxation and music (Uschi, 1989). It is important to note that the above mentioned varieties share Professor Lozanov's original concepts but are based on earlier experiments which were later left behind during the improvements of the method.

Whereas some of the countries discussed below (such as Norway) have remained close to the original principles of Lozanov's Suggestopedia, others (such as the US and Russia) have modified the method considerably.

Suggestopedia in the former USSR

In the former Soviet Union, Suggestopedia was first called *express-method* and later on, *Intensive method of language teaching* (Kitaygorodskaya, 1982). Already in the 1930s, the Russian psychologist and psychotherapist Svyadosht conducted experiments for imposing information into the human mind during sleep. His attempts matched with Lozanov's theory in the sense that every conscious acquisition of information is accompanied by unconscious mental activity (Akopyan, 2014).

Russian scholars started showing interest in Suggestopedia towards the end of the 1960s. By that time, the format of a suggestopedic lesson was limited to monthly courses for adults, intending to immigrate. This was seen rather as a restriction and a problem by Russian scholars. Their efforts were

directed into how the existing method could be modified in such a way that it could be used at universities (Gegechkori, 1977).

In the beginning of the 1980s, the intensive teaching method was introduced in more than 30 universities in Russia. One of the researchers who actively contributed to developing the principles of intensive foreign language teaching was Kitaygorodskiy. He proposed the following main methodological conditions which guarantee the effectiveness of the learning process: 1) virtual interaction, or knowledge acquisition through watching films; 2) mutual interaction, or discussion between students in the classroom; 3) personally oriented communication, or giving each student the opportunity to talk in an impromptu interview; 4) roleplay elements in the educational process; 5) polyfunctionality of the exercises, for instance developing grammar and vocabulary at the same time (Kitaygorodskaya, 1982).

In the 1990s, another innovation was brought to the already existing method, namely the 'freezing technique' (Kurbakova, 2016). The freezing technique implies that the learner should be corrected only in most extreme cases, i.e. incorrectly constructed sentence structures or grave errors. Even then, it is required that the teacher should listen carefully to his/her students until they have finished their utterance and should only afterwards analyse their mistakes, moreover in a very delicate form. Such a technique contributes to the student's fluency in speaking by eliminating the language psychological barrier. Students need not be grammatically correct but—most importantly—they should be understood. Emphasis is put on fluent communication.

As to drama, or role playing, which is part of the third, elaboration part of a suggestopedic lesson, the intensive method of language teaching has adopted the format of an interview. The teacher takes the role of the interviewer and the student—that of the interviewee (Akopyan, 2014).

L.B. Smirnova emphasises the importance of what is called "activation" of the learning process. This concept refers to the activity of teachers and students (Podkina & Solovyova, 2009). For the teacher, this concept implies accelerated transfer of necessary knowledge and skills to students. Moreover, this activity aims to stimulate the learners' creativity (Podkina & Solovyova, 2009). For the students, on the other hand, activation aims to accelerate the assimilation of this knowledge, the formation of skills necessary for the classroom environment and skills for developing active personal beliefs (Akopyan, 2014).

According to Kurbakova (2006), before acquiring new material, students need to be predisposed through interactive exercises based on their already existing knowledge. According to Khimukhina

however (2012), the already existing communicative method is in its essence a pragmatic approach to learning a foreign language. In applied linguistics, the communicative method is fundamental for education but grammar is not neglected. She argues that Suggestopedia is not suitable for applying in a university environment because it mainly focuses on oral skills and does not develop written/academic skills.

In order to support her statement, Khimukhina proposes a variation of the method in which film plays a central role. In her view, a film in the foreign language provides authentic input, thus replacing the native speaker teacher, and giving more specific context to what is being learned (Khimukhina, 2012). Her variety of Suggestopedia/intensive method of language teaching includes a transcript of the shown film which students work with in three stages: pre-text stage, text stage and post-text stage.

1. Pre-text stage

This first stage aims at motivating learners, at "putting them in the right mood" for completing the subsequent tasks. At this stage, students are given tasks which help facilitate the process of understanding the new text. These include showing excerpts from the film a couple of times without sound, and a following discussion. Students are asked to make a list of the new words and technical terms and are given exercises with translation or definitions which would help them acquire the new learning material.

2. Text stage

This is a further development of students' language, speech, and socio-cultural competence. Exercises included in this part of the process have to do with grammar, phonetics, morphology, intonation. They are all interactive, logically connected, and gradually lead from easy to more difficult. An example of a useful skill that students learn is the ability to find common inter-cultural patterns.

3. Post-text stage

This stage prepares students for using the L2 orally. Again, different approaches are used: group (mostly visual) projects, roleplay, retelling the film's content from a different perspective.

Suggestopedia in Bulgaria

In 1975, Yuriy Gagarin High School in the capital city of Sofia became the first school to introduce Suggestopedia as an official teaching method for all disciplines from first to fourth grade (ages 7 to 11). The intention behind this step was to "let children be children" (Kaloyanova, personal interview, 2018). A general suggestopedic rule is that students should not have homework, i.e. extracurricular work. Everything they learn in the classroom is then left to their subconscious. In such a way, pupils have more free time, their minds are unburdened and the study process becomes more effective.

Teachers and the suggestopedic school programme were sponsored by the Institute for Suggestology. There were also other schools which introduced Suggestopedia as a main teaching principle, both in the capital (three other schools) and in other cities in Bulgaria. All teachers underwent a special preparatory training which lasted 1 month. The organisation of the learning process was different from the one at a "mainstream school". Students went to school 5 days a week, and the sixth day, Saturday, was "a theme day" in which extracurricular activities took place, such as sport games, picnics, visits to state institutions.

Analogy was widely used in suggestopedic instruction and it was generally based on inter-subject relations—in accordance with the law of global-partial, partial-global, partial in global.

The positive stimulation and encouragement of the students has been another leading rule in suggestopedic teaching. For instance, even though a student could not write legibly or spell properly, they were encouraged to continue and told that it was going to get better. The general idea behind this was that quantitative accumulation leads to a qualitative change, i.e. knowledge accumulated over time would be unleashed at some point.

In Kaloyanova's view, the relation teacher-student in a suggestopedic environment is more humane and friendly, which is especially important for young children. Parents also approved of this teaching method.

However, it lasted only 4 years, until 1980. The teachers decided that Suggestopedia included too much play but not enough persistent effort, which is also important for the effective acquisition of knowledge.

According to Kaloyanova, the best possible result would be achieved if classical education could incorporate suggestopedic elements.

Contemporary suggestopedic schools or centres in Sofia include the Artis Private School of Arts and Languages, the Renaissance Suggestopedic Centre, the Easy Way Suggestopedia Center, the Go Beyond Suggestopedia Center (for children), Alegro Vivace, Vihrovenia (for teenagers and adults). There are similar institutions in other Bulgarian cities too. As a whole, Suggestopedia in Bulgaria has become increasingly popular in recent years. However, it is no longer used in public schools, i.e. the state curriculum does not see it as a viable method, for reasons that are beyond the scope of this paper. All the institutions that use Suggestopedia are private enterprises: be they schools or training courses, for children or adults.

Suggestopedia in the United States: Accelerated Language Learning

In the USA, the term "Suggestopedia" was changed to its current name Accelerated Language Learning (ALL), or SALT (Suggestive Accelerated Learning and Teaching) by the International Alliance for Learning. In adult education, the term is usually associated with language courses designed especially for adult learners who, because of work and family duties, cannot attend regular programs. Different organisations and institutions, including the Society of Accelerative Learning Techniques, have developed such programs to meet the needs of modern adult learners (Imel, 2002).

Among the linguistic theories that have influenced ALL are Gardner's theory of multiple intelligences, natural learning, collaborative learning. "Accelerated" generally refers to time and intensity and not so much to methodology (iaalp.org). There are two main features that distinguish ALL from Suggestopedia: the use of Baroque music and the structure of the lesson.

ALL regards the use of classical music in suggestopedic lessons as only one possible strategy for creating an inviting learning environment. Baroque *largo* movements (counts) normally have the same number of beats per minute as the heart of a person in a state of relaxation. By introducing this music, the student's pulse can be reduced, which leads to relaxation (Vitarelli, 2012).

Classical Suggestopedia, on the other hand, uses the music of Viennese classicists and early Romantics, which is very diverse in terms of tempo and moods, and falling asleep while listening to it would be rather hard. Baroque music is monotonous and thus can lead the mind to a dreamlike state very similar to hypnosis, which Lozanov strongly disapproved of. Guided meditation and guided relaxation, which are very popular in the United States, in some ways restrict the freedom of the human mind (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018).

While a suggestopedic lesson consists of four phases—as mentioned earlier—an ALL lesson consists of six: relaxing the mind, acquiring facts, searching out meaning, triggering memory, exhibiting what is known and, finally, reflecting on the process (Imel, 2002).

Suggestopedia in Germany

In Germany, Suggestopedia was adapted to secondary school teaching already in the 1980s (Prichard and Schuster, 1980). It was used not only for teaching languages but also other disciplines such as Geography, Biology, History, following the Bulgarian model.

In recent years, there has been a renaissance of Suggestopedia in Germany. Similar to Russia, the teaching method had been introduced to institutions of higher education, though considerably later —in the 2000s (Van der Merwe, 2005). It is used especially for teaching German to first year students, e.g. in Stellenbosch University.

The structure of the classical suggestopedic lesson has been preserved as a whole. There is a decoding, or pre-session phase, in which the teacher gives global insights into the material; first concert (active phase), which lasts 20-30 minutes and the teacher reads the text slowly, as if they were not paying attention to the meaning, synchronizing the reading with the rhythm of the music; second concert (passive phase), which lasts 15 minutes, where students listen to the music and the teacher reads the text with animation corresponding to the meaning of the text; and active, or post-session phase, which is part of the interactive phase where implementation, transfer, elaboration and integration take place.

The new element in German Suggestopedia is a computer program, which, according to Van der Merwe, could be used for activation of the already acquired knowledge. It gives learners the opportunity for revision and self-testing, as well as for expanding their knowledge of German.

The component provides learners with the opportunity to:

1) read and listen to the German text (and consult a translation, if desired)

2) read the German text together with its translation

3) read only the German text

4) study the text in detail page by page and do exercises to test their progress.

The choice in what sequence to complete the activities is left entirely to the learners.

Furthermore, the newly developed computer module consists of different kinds of exercises such as multiple choice, true and false, drag and drop, matching and fill-in-the-gap. This variety of

exercises addresses different learning styles. The component is organized on a scene-by-scene basis and gives students the opportunity to acquaint themselves with the text and complete the activities at their own pace.

The visual layout of the program is also worth mentioning since it is in agreement with the seventh law of Suggestopedia, namely—application of aesthetics. According to Van der Merwe (2005), colour can be used for positive suggestion, creating a low anxiety environment and inspiring a learning atmosphere. The main colours used are white, pink and neon green.

Suggestopedia in Spain

According to Moore (1992), Suggestopedia in Spain was developed through introducing meditation in the classroom. He himself started experimenting with doing meditative exercises with his students at the beginning of the class. As a practitioner of Tai Chi, he transferred his knowledge of martial arts into teaching.

The exercise he used is known as "holding post" and requires a student to keep his/her arms extended at shoulder level, circle around an imaginary post while standing with slightly bent knees and breathing through the diaphragm. The posture needs to be held for four to six minutes. After doing the exercise, students are presented with an extensive vocabulary list and allowed to sit still, continue standing or even lie down.

At the end of the experimental semester, which consisted of evening classes twice a week in the course of three months, Moore's students (45 in number, aged from 19 to 75) demonstrated mastery of vocabulary introduced in the course of the lessons and stated that they had developed self-confidence in communicating in Spanish with their fellow students. At the end of the course, an inquiry was conducted. Even though the responses were contradictory—one third of the students wanted to continue using the technique, one third remained ambivalent, and the last third was in favour of dropping its usage—there was a unanimous agreement that they had learned a great deal through the meditation sessions.

Suggestopedia in Scandinavia

In Norway, Suggestopedia is applied strictly according to the original technique, only under the name "deSuggestopedia" or simply "Lozanov's method". Barbo Thorvaldsen is one of the important figures who, already in the late 1990s, contributed actively for the spreading of the method.

After a report from 2001 (Hartmark, 2015), the Kingdom of Norway decided to provide financing for training suggestopedic teachers in order to contribute to the more effective dissemination of the Norwegian language and culture. In recent years, there has been a specific focus on refugees and immigrants. In this way, Suggestopedia had been officially made the main tool of what is known as "social inclusion policy", which aims to actively engage both children and adult members of the immigrant families from the Middle East and the Horn of Africa (nyttomefteruddannelse.dk, 2012). The Danish government, too, has recently funded accelerated language learning projects in schools (nyttomefteruddannelse.dk, 2012).

To summarize, in this chapter, we looked at the four main branches of Suggestopedia, and focused on variations in different countries, namely: the former USSR, Bulgaria, North America, Germany, Spain and Scandinavia. Given the information we have, it can be concluded that Suggestopedia in Scandinavia has remained closest to its original form in Bulgaria. Experts in Germany and Spain on the other hand have added new elements to the already existing format, whereas ALL in the USA and the Russian express-method have gone their own path of development thus becoming radically different from the classical teaching method.

III. EVIDENCE FOR THE METHOD'S EFFECTIVENESS

Very few empirical studies have been done in the field of Suggestopedia. Therefore, evidence for its effectiveness was gathered from different countries and mainly on anecdotal evidence. The general outcomes of these personal testimonies show that Suggestopedia is very effective when it comes to good performance at tests, reducing stress, tension and anxiety, as well as improving L2 oral skills.

Empirical studies

Lisa Hartmark, a Norwegian certified suggestopedic lecturer, has been doing observations on students' performance. The students who are in the field of her interest are all immigrants who have attended a suggestopedic language course in Norwegian. In a report from 2015 (Hartmark, 2015), she summarized all the results from recent years.

The first evidence for Suggestopedia's effectiveness she provides is that seventeen out of eighteen working immigrants from Spain passed the test for *Norskprøve 2* (corresponding to level A2 from CEFR) after only 64 hours of training in Norwegian in July 2013, Oslo. Subsequently, all of them started work in private companies. None of them could speak Norwegian before they came to the country.

Hartmark also describes the case of a group of Somali women in the city of Bydel who had 4 months of training in Norwegian. 90% of them passed the oral part of *Norskprøve 2,* Norwegian level B according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages. Before attending the course, they had had 4 years of general school education on average (suggestopedi.no-2013/05/04/deltakerevalueringer).

Another successful group she reports about is a group of illiterates. They were all financed by an EU project and passed *Norskprøve 2* after 7 weeks of intensive training (suggestopedi.no-2013/05/04/deltakerevalueringer). Hartmark also gives evidence that in January 2015, a suggestopedic

Norwegian course for adults started in Bodø. Currently, three qualified teachers work there. According to their observations, students were able to talk in Norwegian after only three weeks of training.

Another person who has contributed to the field of Suggestopedia with research is Else Bakkehaug. For her thesis "Suggestopedia—a teaching method to promote learning in the second language classroom" (Bakkehaug, 2017), she conducted an experiment consisting of a pre-test and a post-test to evaluate a group of students' performance on vocabulary after a 20-hour course of suggestopedic training in English. The group was small, consisting of only 10 people. The results show that the average number of words produced on the pre-test was 59.27, and on the post-test, 95.72 (out of 100 words in total). This comes to show that students produced approximately 35 more words on the post-test than on the pre-test.

A second study she did was on verbs and articles and their use in text students were able to produce. The average number of verbs produced was 14.9 and 20.45 on the post-test and the pre-test respectively, which indicates an increase of approximately six verbs.

Similar observations, but this time with children, were done by Dora Davidova, a suggestopedic pedagogue at a primary school in Bulgaria with 15 years of experience. She has taught mathematics, reading and writing in Bulgarian to almost 200 children aged from 8 to 12. According to Dora Davidova's report from the summer of 2015, 90% of the preschoolers who attended the reading and writing classes were able to read in Bulgarian only after a week of suggestopedic instruction. Another group of children (5-, 6- and 7-years old) who had gone through the Mathematics suggestopedic programme, within only 20 hours of instruction were able to acquire learning material that is usually taught within the course of the first two years at primary school (in the first and second grades of Bulgaria's current educational system).

It is important to mention that all children who attended the courses reported that they enjoyed them. Moreover, none of them mentioned to have felt fatigue; on the contrary, they increased their emotional and physical tone.

Dora Davidova has experience also with children with special learning needs. She reports that two such children attended individual literacy lessons during the same year. For them, the methodology had a rather communicative-therapeutic effect, and they "were full of joy" in her words. A 22-year-old girl diagnosed with epilepsy and dyslexia began to read more smoothly and more emotionally. Her interest and desire to learn rose significantly, and, in her own words, "she is feeling like a complete

person" (Davidova, 2015). Similar is the case of a 9-year-old boy who could not speak due to epilepsy. He began to pronounce separate sounds and words at the end of the training.

Similarly, Veselina Damaskova, a primary teacher at The Little Prince private school in Varna, Bulgaria, shares her personal experience and results from suggestopedic training in the classroom environment in her report from year 2000. She provides a summary of the results obtained during a four-year study of primary school pupils trained in a suggestopedic and traditional pedagogical system. Damaskova also includes additional information from observation of pupils in classes during the 2014/2015 school year.

It is important to note that suggestopedic pedagogical training exceeds the Bulgarian state's official educational requirements and standards multiple times and preserves student's mental health. In addition, over 70% of the children do not experience frustration during exams. This is proven by the results from Damaskova's report (2015). According to the results, 65% of the children never felt angry at school.79% of them stated that they felt comfortable in a classroom setting and did not experience anxiety. When it comes to pupils' attitude towards the suggestopedic teaching method, 90% of the children self-defined their attitude towards the method as "excellent" (the other possible answers in the questionnaire were "good", "normal", "poor", "very poor").

The objective of a study entitled "Teaching Speaking Using "Suggestopedia Method" in EFL Context at the 8th Grade of SMPN 1 Mande Cianjur" (http://publikasi.stkipsiliwangi.ac.id, 2013) was to find out whether or not the Teaching English Speaking Using Suggestopedia Method was effective to improve students' speaking abilities. This quantitative study was done by conducting a pre-test and a post-test with a group of students: six eight-grade classes consisting of 240 students for the 2012-2013 academic year. The data was collected by testing the students' oral skills and analysed by T-tests. The results showed that the mean score of the pre-test was 68.8, and the mean score of post-test was 74.6. For the size of the test sample, this was sufficient to prove that teaching using the Suggestopedia method improves the students' speaking ability.

To summarize, this section has provided anecdotal evidence for Suggestopedia's effectiveness as a teaching method. Unfortunately no studies were found to compare the method's effectiveness with controls. Still, results from students' performance on tests in Norway, Bulgaria and Indonesia were gathered. The results suggest that it is effective for both adults (Norway and Indonesia) and children (Bulgaria) in the sense that students are able to pass their tests, improve their speaking abilities, experience less anxiety and feel less stress.

Personal testimonies

In this section, we include several personal testimonials by teachers and students using Suggestopedia. While they constitute only anecdotal evidence, they still contain valuable observations that deserve further investigation by empirical studies. All participants are personal acquaintances of the author of this thesis. Their testimonies were collected via email. They were asked to describe their experience with Suggestopedia as a teaching/learning approach and explain why they think it is effective, and to mention possible disadvantages.

Teacher 1

Teacher 1 is a 31-year-old female bilingual (Bulgarian raised in Canada) with a linguistic educational background in English literature and studies. At present, her working occupation is an English private suggestopedic teacher of young children (aged 3-6).

As a teacher versed in Suggestopedia, Teacher 1 shares her impressions of the training course she has undertaken. During the first day of the training, she was placed in the position of a student and the method was demonstrated on her with a language she does not speak—French. T1 reports that at the beginning of the day, she could not even follow which line of the text was being read to her. At the end of the same day, she could lead a conversation with a waiter, give him an order and understand his replies. The same text was read to her again before leaving, and this time, she was able to understand every part of it. T1 believes that on its own, this is the greatest advert the method could receive.

T1 reckons the secret to its success lies in the fact that new vocabulary, once introduced, is being recycled over and over throughout the day in different forms. If one does not memorize it in the first game, one has a dozen other chances before the end of the session (sessions have a mandatory duration of at least several hours for the effect to take place).

In addition, T1 puts a great emphasis on the lack of stress during learning. She provides an explanation for this phenomenon with the concept that nervousness may only block one's learning abilities. Thus, students are never being tested, never compared to each other. Quite the contrary, they are given plentiful enjoyable games and reasons to laugh. They are even given pretend names so they can completely disassociate themselves from their identity, which might carry stress or trauma.

T1 says that she loves "the fact that emotions and impressions are made use of to the fullest". In order to associate each new word visually with a corner of the room, one of the people present and even

28

the teacher wear a different colour each day of the week. In this way, knowledge can be interwoven with other perceptions.

Different types of learners are also taken into account: predominantly visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic. The latter is exceptionally useful for young learners who are incapable of sitting still—and this is used to their benefit. The visuals benefit from a classroom covered in posters with useful grammar. The auditories get to listen to numerous songs and a teacher speaking only in the target language. T1 mentions that Suggestopedia also incorporates some concepts of TPR (Total Physical Response), which we have already discussed above.

The most popular association in T1's opinion, when it comes to Suggestopedia, however, remains music. At the beginning of the day, students are asked to follow a text read aloud whilst classical music is being played to them. At the end of the day, the same text is read whilst they are asked to relax, close their eyes and just listen to the words; this time, baroque music is played in the background. Studies show that certain classical pieces improve concentration. Baroque music, on the other hand, consists of two simultaneous melodies, which makes it impossible to follow, thus one shuns the music and concentrates on the teacher's voice. There are varieties of the reading techniques, as in some branches of Suggestopedia no background music is applied but instead the texts are read with an exaggerated intonation that varies from shouting to whispering. T1 recalls she has been exposed to the latter only once but found it quite appealing since it is something so unusual that a student may spontaneously try to copy afterwards, thus it would ingrain itself deeply in their oral and auditory memory.

Teacher 2

Teacher 2 shares some practices from her experience as a suggestopedic teacher of English. According to her, the method of Suggestopedia involves various means of stimulating creativity in human beings. In fact, one of the aims of this method is to unlock the infinite potential of each student and, as part of that, to unlock their infinite creative potential, no matter what the particular subject taught is (be it a foreign language, chemistry, or engineering). T2 finds it difficult to separate one practice from the other, as they complement each other to help achieve the final effect of revealing one's creative reserves. She briefly describes the main aspects of this method in relation to creativity.

A suggestopedic teacher believes that every person possesses an unlimited potential. Her attitude towards people is based on this belief. She believes that something extraordinary is happening

in the group and often witnesses extraordinary achievements and displays of authentic creativity by students. She states that it is extremely important for a teacher to thoroughly believe in his/her students' creativity as a starting point. The teachers themselves re-create the learning process each time, and each teacher is free to create the process according to her/his own personality within the suggestopedic method. That means the teacher herself/himself is deeply involved in a creative process during the course, which has an impact on the students, who seek to imitate her/him not only consciously but also subconsciously.

What T2 has also found very important is that classes take place in a special, yet relaxed, easy-going atmosphere. What makes it special is, in her view, the overall decoration, the classical reproductions on the walls, the roles the teacher plays, the classical music. What makes it relaxed is singing songs with positive vibrations, i.e. messages, making jokes and laughter. She is careful not to correct students too much, as long as the communication is clear. In this way, they do not worry too much that they might make a mistake and it helps them achieve more. Overall, T2 strives to create a relaxed, cosy and cheerful environment where students feel at ease.

In fact, the whole language course has a very creative foundation. The first appearance of the teacher is unforgettable. He/she enters the room not as a teacher but as a character, e.g. a producer, a choreographer, or a film director looking for actors for his new movie. So throughout the course the teacher treats the students as actors. The students themselves choose a new personality under which they exist in the course and which they develop during the course. The main texts in the book are written as a script and everybody works on it as if they were actors preparing to perform on stage. So, with T2's belief in students' unlimited potential and in such a relaxed creative atmosphere, T2 also offers them some additional creative stimuli: from time to time, T2 would read an inspiring story or poem to them against a classical-music background. Or she would tell them a short inspiring fairy tale.

And then comes the provoking. T2 would spread around some intriguing pictures and photographs (mostly but not only landscapes) and would challenge the students to write a short poem on their own, or just to give a poetic expression of their thoughts on a certain picture. T2 would suggest they imagine being someone or something that is in the picture and see how they feel and then write from that viewpoint. At other times, she would challenge them to alter some song lyrics that were originally sad or angry and make them positive. T2 participates actively in these creative exercises, believing her internal mental effort also helps the students around. Finally, she and the students share their work with everyone, and students are often surprised by what they have achieved in these first

creative attempts in a foreign language. Perhaps the most amusing creative exercises for the students are the short sketches they make up in couples. These are everyday situations but they need to play them out, to improvise. Props are available, which further stimulates their creativity and makes the show even more amusing both for the performers and for the audience.

This is just a sketchy overview of some creative aspects of the Suggestopedia method. At first glance it might seem possible to separate all these activities. However, T2 firmly believes that their power is in their joint application. Because they are merely different sides of the whole process, of the whole method Suggestopedia, which helps students learn much more, without tedious homework, without unnecessary stress, without getting tired but with lots of joy, unforgettable moments and great new friends instead.

Student 1

Student 1 is female, aged 27. Her education is in the field of Linguistics. She took a Suggestopedia course in French a year and a half ago and chose particularly this course because she loves French music and it was her dream to learn French. She has summarized her experience with Suggestopedia.

S1's teacher was the same age as herself (26 at that time). She was quite confident, spoke very good French (she told S1 that she had studied French in high school, at university and spent some time in France). She was also very artistic and managed to attract and keep the group's attention throughout the lessons.

The small group consisted of 6 people. S1's companions were aged 23-35, all well educated— with higher education in music, medicine, arts, sociology, etc. It was an evening course because most people were working until 5-6 pm. The course took place at a small private school in Sofia. Course duration was one month, every week from Monday to Friday. Before the course started, the participants' level of French was tested. Students were given a small text to translate (extract from "Le petit prince") after which they spoke to the teacher in person.

The book used in class strictly followed Lozanov's standards, and was approved by him. It follows the story of a husband and wife who spend some time in France for work and vacation. The textbook used in class was illustrated with paintings by French artists (Claude Monet, Paul Gauguin, Renoire, Antoine Blanchard and more). The main textbook only contained text in French. However, students were encouraged to make notes, write word meanings, translations. They were also given extra

materials to read (for example, poems by Jacques Prevert) and offered to borrow books to read at home.

During the lessons, students listened to classical music in the background (Mozart, Bach) and French composers like George Bizet. Additionally, they exercised listening comprehension through modern music, retro chansons, popular songs, children's songs. Some of the singers S1 can recall are Vanessa Paradis, Joe Dassin, Zaz.

In terms of grammar, students were acquainted with the French alphabet, vowel and consonant pronunciation, numbers, feminine and masculine forms of adjectives and nouns, plural forms of adjectives, nouns, pronouns; they also studied the most common prepositions, rules of negation in French. The verb forms they covered were *imparfait, present, futur simple, passé composé, impératif.* In terms of vocabulary, students learned how to describe people, surroundings, situations; talk about work, family, dreams, etc. They went through some basic vocabulary: hours, seasons, months, days of the week etc. S1 can definitely say that Suggestopedia helps one remember mostly words and phrases. One can really learn a lot of new words but only so much grammar and proper spelling. S1 admits that she is still terrible with French verbs.

What they achieved as final results of mastery level was mostly through games and roleplaying (examples of roleplay: at the restaurant, at the airport, at the train station, at the opera, meeting friends, travelling in the country, sightseeing, shopping). Students were encouraged to start dialogues with their "classmates". As far as examinations are concerned, since the course is intended for busy adults who work during the week, there was no continuous assessment and no homework. The final task (game) was to prepare a dialogue based on the story in the book. Students also had a written test on grammar at the end of the course.

S1 had chosen namely this course because it promised an intensive but stress-free learning. And indeed, it was not at all difficult. It was not a challenge for her, but a pleasure. Her expectations were that she would be confident in speaking French after the course. She hoped that she could overcome the language barrier. She is not sure if she really managed to accomplish this but she confesses that she never had the chance to practice French after that. She adds, "if you don't use your knowledge it fades away." S1 thinks this course gives one a good foundation upon which one can build in the future. She knows that it will be easier for her to advance in French now. She reports that the course was an interesting experience for her. It was not just a language course, but also an opportunity to learn about French culture and meet nice people who shared similar interests to hers.

Sadly, the school could not gather enough participants for the second course (French advanced), but S1 strongly hopes that this is going to happen the coming year. She would also be happy to take similar courses in other languages. S1 strongly recommends the classes to her friends.

Student 2

S2 is a 50-year-old woman, a salesperson. She categorises herself as someone who does not learn foreign languages with ease. Together with her inclination for perfectionism, communicating in a foreign language has always scared her. She started learning English at the age of forty in a "standard" course. She did not have time for self-preparation and doing any sort of homework, and thus the level she managed to achieve did not give her the confidence to talk to native speakers. In 2009, she heard from friends that suggestopedic courses were taking place in her hometown, Sliven. She had heard very little of Dr. Lozanov before, and the mystery around his method was definitely appealing to her. She signed up for the course.

S2 reports that she and her classmates were asked to take their shoes off, to choose themselves other names. They were sitting on the ground, surrounded by theatrical scenery, and the grinning, friendly teacher was sitting opposite them. To their honour and joy, the creator of the method, Georgi Lozanov, was present at both levels S2 signed up for. "A bright, warm and magnetic man, bearing the scars of his life and time, he made the experience special in an invisible way."

Suggestopedia gave S2 "a lot of laughter". Never, nowhere and under no circumstances had she laughed so much, every day: true, genuine laughter from the bottom of her heart. "The magic of the stories that each participant was creating on the spur of the moment was an extraordinary experience for our whole group." They were living in a world parallel to their own, which magically intertwined with their beings and they, without even noticing, became the characters they themselves chose to become; they were not shy to communicate in English to each other, they were not afraid of making mistakes, of drawing, reading aloud or of playing the roles they were asked to. S2 doubts that there is any other feeling that makes one be so punctual and dedicated to what one is doing. She is not sure how exactly it happens. S2 has never asked Dr. Lozanov or her teacher how they manage to fill the air with so much warmth and love. What she can say for sure is that the room was overflowing with the inspiration and joy of a group of adults, who were becoming childish and happy just because they were playing.

When participants start attending a suggestopedic course, they are asked to promise that that they are not going to skip classes. S2 describes herself as a very busy person, afraid that she would not be always available. However, in her words, "there's something about this method, something that attracts you unconditionally; something called love." S2 admits she never thought of the courses she took as something compulsory or as something that has to do with school. She thought of them as meetings with friends whom she spoke bad English with, and each of the students was feeling welcome to be themselves.

Already after the first course S2 took, she felt free to communicate in English. She started speaking without fear and was capable of applying the knowledge she had gained by that moment. Words would just come by themselves without her needing to repeat them over and over again, she had been doing all of her life before that. She was surprised how many new words she was able to reproduce. The only disadvantage of the method S2 can point is that her oral English was many steps ahead of her written English.

"This suggestopedic course is a very significant event in my life," S2 reports. Probably because she had always been a diligent student at high school, at the expense of a lot of pressure and stress, and Suggestopedia showed her that learning can be actually fun. To her, Suggestopedia is not just a language teaching method; it is a "life teaching method". It taught her how to dream big, to step confidently into the unknown, to behave naturally and be fun. All of this might sound like a cliché but before she had had the chance to experience this suggestopedic course, she had not realized how much she could actually not do.

Sadly, she rarely needs to use English on a daily basis and it is very likely that she will forget words and grammar. However, the lesson of love S2 learned will always remain in her heart.

Student 3

Student 3 is a 49-year-old woman with no background in linguistics. She had read about and heard of Lozanov's method from friends before she attended an English language course. S3 had also attended a lecture by Vanina Bodurova, one of the main organisers of various events and teacher training courses in Bulgaria. She gives a detailed description of what the lecture was like. "It was more of a theatre play." The action carried the audience back to the 1930s. S3 recalls producing whole sentences in Spanish, a language she does not know. All of the spectators were singing a Spanish

nursery rhyme. This was the moment when S3 made a decision: that she wanted to take a suggestopedic language course.

Three years later, she had a lot of free time and the opportunity to do that. A month after the beginning of the course, S3 had to attend a conference in England and she was afraid that she would not be able to freely converse in English since her level at that point was "not high enough". She was, however, curious and determined to try and take the risk.

During the first day of the course, all students had to come up with a fictitious identity and were encouraged to use various accessories in order to play their role accordingly. The training had already begun, and students found themselves in "a new, yet forgotten childhood world". "It was all like a game," S3 exclaims. Students were changing clothes, making pictures, organizing performances, singing and dancing. "I was 6 again but I was able to go to kindergarten on my own." Every day offered new experiences. S3 recalls that all students were coming on time and even early, looking forward to every new lesson, and no-one skipped a single class.

What is more, she was not forced to do homework in the evening, write down each and every word a 100 times, and read the lesson another 5 times, trying to learn it by heart. All of her dictionaries were resting on the shelf and she would gladly share how her day had passed with her family. The only homework S3 reports having done is read the new lesson once before going to bed but this she would do by her own free will. "I was part of a story which I was sharing with the characters, or rather—a movie actress."

The end of the course was celebrated with a play in which students were screenwriters, directors, actors. A week later, S3 went to England. She was surprised by the ease with which she was able to communicate with native speakers at the restaurant, ordering coffee or buying a ticket. The professional training went smoothly, and she was content with the results. "Just like in a game, I started speaking English."

To summarize, this section provided five personal opinions (two from teachers and three from students) about the effectiveness, advantages and disadvantages of Suggestopedia. They are all of high value since readers can get an impression of the teaching method from two sides. Both teachers and students are unanimous that having fun and stimulating one's inner potential through creativity is a definite positive feature of Suggestopedia. It should be noted that S2's and S3's testimonials were originally written in Bulgarian (and afterwards translated into English by the author of the thesis),

because both participants said that they did not feel confident enough to write in English even if they had completed a Suggestopedic course in this language. Furthermore, as we can see from S1's testimonial, the lack of explicit focus on grammar can be a weakness of the Suggestopedia method; this coincides with the criticism brought up by Baur (1984) in the next chapter.

IV. DISCUSSION

In this chapter, we are going to make a critical analysis of both the advantages and the downsides of Suggestopedia. In order to do that, we are going to use the theoretical framework of other teaching methods.

Advantages

Just like in CLIL, suggestopedic training is entirely in the target language. This means that the teacher, whether a native or non-native speaker, talks in the L2 all the time. In the previous chapter, the songs Student 1 reports learners have listened to represent, in CLIL terminology, authentic input (onestopenglish.com, 2018). Furthermore, the frequency of exposure, which can again be related to CLIL, seems to have a beneficial effect on the learning outcomes too: S1 reports that her French course took place three times a week, three hours each session; and according to S2, "participants ... are asked to promise that that they are not going to skip classes."

Teacher 1 did not speak French at the beginning of her training course. And yet, thanks to the repetition of the vocabulary, she was able to freely hold a conversation at a restaurant. "The secret to [Suggestopedia's] success lies in the fact that new vocabulary, once introduced, is being recycled over and over throughout the day in different forms. If one does not memorize it in the first game, one has a dozen other chances before the end of the session." Just like TPR (Talley, Hui-ling, 2016) and CLIL (Dale, can der Es, 2010, p.184), Suggestopedia relies on repetition. This seems to be very effective judging by T1's experience with French vocabulary. In addition, her observations prove the theory of statistical learning in L2 acquisition according to which one uses mostly those words and phrases that one is most frequently exposed to (Romberg & Saffran, 2010).

T1 puts a great emphasis on the lack of stress during learning. She provides an explanation for this: "nervousness may only block one's learning abilities." Similarly to TPR, where focus is not on the individual but on the entire group of learners, suggestopedic "students are never being tested, never compared to each other. Quite the contrary, they are given plentiful enjoyable games and reasons to laugh."

T1 also explains that "knowledge can be interwoven with other perceptions." In order to associate each new word visually with a certain object in the room, the teacher wears a different colour each day of the week. This is in line with CLIL's main principle of noticing. Certain words and phrases in suggestopedic student's books are underlined, which helps students notice them by engaging their vision. Simultaneously, when the teacher reads, s/he puts an emphasis on these phrases with her/his voice or makes an intentional pause in order to draw students' attention. In other words, their receptive skills—reading, listening and seeing (Dale & van der Es, 2010) —are actively engaged while studying. Association is a key feature in acquiring a L2. When one is able to associate a word or phrase with a sound, smell, picture, movement, as in TPR, or colour, as in the suggestopedic example above, the probability of memorizing something is higher (Dale & van der Es, 2010, pp.99; 101).

"Different types of learners are also taken into account: predominantly visual, auditory, or kinaesthetic... The auditories get to listen to numerous songs and a teacher speaking only in the target language." This quote from T1's testimonial proves that the method of Suggestopedia takes into account individual learners' differences, which corresponds with Gardner's multiple intelligence theory, according to which, for successful L2 learning outcomes, different types of learners should be taken into account: visual-spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, musical, interpersonal, intrapersonal, linguistic, logical-mathematical (Smith, 2002; 2008).

According to T2, "one of the aims of this method is to unlock the infinite potential of each student and, as part of that, to unlock their infinite creative potential, no matter what the particular subject taught is (be it a foreign language, chemistry, or engineering)." CLIL has also been developed not only for L2 teaching but also for other subjects at high school. Stimulating creativity is a very important part of the learning process because, through creating something themselves, students implement what they have learned (Dale & van der Es, 2010, p. 210).

S1 reports that Suggestopedia helps one remember words and phrases in oral communication but ignores grammar. Her statement proves that Suggestopedia, like CLIL, focuses on meaning and communication and not so much on grammar, because the ability to communicate freely, to be understood, in the target language is seen as most important. This seems to be a working strategy, since all of S1, S2 and S3 report they are able to talk in the L2 after the end of the course. In S2's words, "[students] were not shy to communicate in English to each other, they were not afraid of making mistakes, of drawing, reading aloud or of playing the roles they were asked to." This comes to show that the language barrier has been overcome, i.e. no language anxiety was experienced.

According to Dynamic Usage Based approach (DUB), language is a dynamic, complex, adaptive system and so is the learner (Verspoor & Nguyen, 2015). Language processing means using and learning, and language is seen as lexically driven. Suggestopedia focuses precisely on the practical side of a L2, i.e. language use, which seems to be efficient since people start talking very quickly. Furthermore, DUB stimulates the use of language for real usage events. Similarly, suggestopedic students are encouraged to produce real-life situations and not repeat ready-made phrases that copy the student's book, e.g. they are asked to set a play (Bodurova, personal interview, 2018) or S3 communicates freely with native speakers, orders coffee or a meal at the restaurant, or buys tickets. Thus, it can be concluded that Suggestopedia is a communicative language teaching approach because it prioritizes understanding of the meaning of utterances over the grammatical form of these utterances (Verspoor & Nguyen, 2015).

It is not hard to notice teachers' and students' tendency for using words like "fun", "a lot of laugher" (S2); "just like in a game, I started speaking English" (S3); "jokes and laughter" (T2); "plentiful enjoyable games and reasons to laugh" (T1). According to Bodurova (personal interview, 2018), a crucial element for Suggestopedia's effectiveness is the infantilisation of the method. Therefore, a lot of creative and relaxing activities take place in class (similar to games in CLIL). They all aim at getting students' minds into a child-like state, because children most often acquire a language through playing.

Disadvantages

Baur (1984) claims that the input students receive during Suggestopedic lessons, is in the areas of musical-emotional background, listening and reading. Other important factors of language acquisition, such as writing and proper grammar, however, are being neglected (Baur, 1984, pp. 291-326). Hartmark (2005) contains a similar criticism: that the method has been designed primarily for speed learning, for adult immigrants who need to quickly acquire a new language, and thus the focus is on communication, i.e. orality (Hartmark, 2005). This criticism seems to have been confirmed by the observations of S2 who points out that her oral English was many steps ahead of her written English. Similarly, S1 admits that she still struggles with the grammar of French verbs. "One can really learn a lot of new words but not so much grammar and proper spelling". Clearly, during suggestopedic classes, perceptive skills are being actively engaged. When it comes to productive skills, however, a certain disbalance could be observed: students are able to talk freely but feel less sure about their writing.

SUGGESTOPEDIA: ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENT, DISSEMINATION, EFFECTIVENESS

Nowadays, it is commonly accepted that it is not possible to learn a L2 the same way as L1 was learned because, if one is not an early bilingual, the L1 already exists in the mind and cannot be erased (Du, 2016, pp. 16-18). This refutes the infantilisation aspect of Suggestopedia, whose main goal is to bring the adult's mind into a child-like state so that learning could take place more easily.

The role of the L1 in L2 learning has been discussed extensively in the literature. According to Ellis (1994, p. 300), learners' prior linguistic knowledge is an important factor in L2 acquisition, and theories of L2 acquisition ignoring learners' L1 cannot be considered complete. This contradicts Suggestopedia's idea that a L2 could be learned as if it were L1, since for adult learners, their L1 is already present.

According to Lukesch (2000), Suggestopedia lacks a scientific background and therefore it can be criticized as being a pseudoscience. He attacks such features of the method as "the nonconscious/subconscious" acquisition of a language, or bringing the learner into a childlike state (Lukesch, 2000, pp. 59-62). Nowadays, the view that it is impossible to learn a L2 as if it were a L1 is commonly accepted by scholars since L1 already exists in the learner's mind and whatever they do, it will always be there.

Richards and Rodgers (2014) also call Suggestopedia "pseudo-science". They state that the method's effectivity depends on the trust students develop towards it. On the other hand, Lozanov argues that Suggestopedia cannot and should not be compared to the placebo effect. However, he admits that the placebo is indeed of very high effectiveness (Lozanov, 2005, pp. 49-50).

The downside of the rapid acquisition of learning material, as some learners report, is that if they do not start using the new language immediately after or already while studying it, they tend to forget it very quickly, and even shortly after they have attended the course, they admit they are not able to use the target language effectively on a daily basis. (Student 2 and Student 3!).

Another line of criticism is that the method is too teacher-centred and teacher-controlled and thus does not give students freedom of action; freedom for making their own decisions (Bakkehaug, 2017). In her paper "Suggestopedia", examining the positive and side effects of suggestopedic teaching, Bhakti (2011) points to a few disadvantages the method has, the first one to be the environment limitation. Having in mind the author's country of origin (India), this is not surprising. She explains that most classes in developing countries consist of 30 to 40 students. This is a rather large number and the atmosphere is not conducive enough for doing relaxation, considering the amount of noise in the classroom.

Bhakti also sees the infantilisation of the learning process as another limitation of the teaching method, given that some adult learners would not like to be treated as "children". This might be due to their previous learning experience or simply because they consider themselves "mature".

As a third weak point of the method, Bhakti points the use of classical music, considering the individual differences in learners' tastes for music. She notes that students from non-European countries often find classical music irritating rather than stimulating, and "foreign" to the ear. Additionally, the lack of distinctive categories in the lessons, e.g. "grammar", "vocabulary", "sentence structures" etc. might be perceived as rather confusing and chaotic by some students, especially those who have had previous experience with more classical teaching methods.

Talley and Hui-ling (2016) point at other downsides of Suggestopedia. First of all, it makes a considerable demand on time (one hour, five days a week), conditions, and resources. Second of all, small groups need to be seated in comfortable rooms, while most other methods do not require such elaborate surroundings. Third of all, suggestopedic teachers need to have theatrical abilities. Talley and Hui-luin also note that the Eastern raja-yogic traditions may not appeal to some western students in a classroom setting.

CONCLUSION

This master thesis's main goal was to trace the origins, history, development and dissemination of the teaching method Suggestopedia, as well as to examine how effective it is and whether it is viable and teachers should continue using it. It was not easy to find much objective data on the method as it seems to have developed almost within its own world and is not taken very seriously by the Applied Lingusitics community.

Still Suggestopedia has spread and evolved in many countries in Europe, North America and Asia. Increasingly, various age groups, private and state schools and universities have been experimenting with Suggestopedia, which comes to show that it is still a viable teaching method.

However, within the field of Applied Linguistics, there has been little interest in the method as it does not seem scientific, and there is very little empirical evidence that it is particularly effective. On the other hand there is a great deal of anecdotal evidence that it is effective when it comes to acquiring large amounts of learning material in short periods of time (especially for L2 learning), where the focus is on the communicative side of language. Teachers and adult students who have experience the method are very positive and they mention how the fun and creative process helps to learn. Critics in th other hand think the learning process is too infantile and think it would be particularly effective for children whose attention could be easily drawn by games. Also in the personal testimonies, Student 2 and Student 3 pointed out that they have difficulties writing in their L2 after completing the course, which can be seen as a disadvantage of the method.

To answer the research question, I do think Suggestopedia is effective on its own when it comes to laying the grounds of a L2 and to giving students the freedom to speak. It enables students to communicate in the L2 without anxiety and stress. The learners seem to become self-confident.

However, judging from the personal stories, the teacher needs to be a creative, talented person too, to be able to teach accoriding to the method. He or she also needs to have professional training. In other words, it may not be a method that would feel comfortable to all teachers. Also, the method may be more suitable for the lower levels than for higher, more academic levels.

A future research direction for Suggestopedia would be to investigate how it has developed in countries mentioned in this paper (Austria, Ukraine, Macedonia, China, Japan) for which there were

insufficient materials available. Other studies that deserve further investigation are Sigrid Gassner-Roberts' "Some personal observations of SALT, Suggestopedia and other accelerative learning methods in Japan and Europe" (1984), which mentions a four-year school experiment (from 1974 to 1978) with Suggestopedia, conducted in Vienna under the direct supervision of the Austrian Ministry of Education and Dr Lozanov; and "Using Suggestopedia in ELT in Saudi Arabia" (Zaid, 2014). Due to time and volume limitations they were not included in this study.

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Appendix

Interview with Irina Kaloyanova (2018)

Suggestopedia was introduced in Yuriy Gagarin School in 1975. Teachers and the suggestopedic school programme were sponsored by the Institute for Suggestology. There were also other schools which have introduced Suggestopedia as a main teaching principle, both in the capital (3 other schools) and in other cities in Bulgaria.

All teachers have undergone a special preparatory training which lasted for 1 month. The organisation of the learning process was different from that at a "mainstream school". Students went to school 5 days in a week and the sixth day, Saturday, was "a theme day" in which extracurricular activities such as sport games, picnics in the nature, a visit of a state office were planned.

She reports that parents approved of the teaching method.

This form of instruction however lasted only for 4 years.

Because of the general idea of joy and non-tension, the element of children's labour was underestimated.

The positive stimulation and encouragement of the students was another leading rule in suggestopedic teaching. For instance, even though a student did not write well and was not able to spell properly, they were encouraged to continue and told that it was going to get better. The general idea behind this was that quantitative accumulation leads to a qualitative change, i.e. knowledge accumulated over time would be unleashed at some point.

In Kaloyanova's view, the relation teacher-student in a suggestopedic manner is more humane and friendly which is especially important for young children.

According to her words, the best possible result would be if classical education could make use of suggestopedic elements.

Analogy was widely used in suggestopedic instruction and it was generally based on inter-subject relations—in accordance with the law of global-partial, partial-global, partial in global.

Interview with Vanina Bodurova (2018)

SUGGESTOPEDIA: ORIGINS, DEVELOPMENT, DISSEMINATION, EFFECTIVENESS

From 1965 until 1980 dissemination and promoting of Suggestopedia is financed by the Bulgarian government. All suggestopedic students' books and materials published in this period are kept as a historical heritage.

The time of his home arrest was also a period of withdrawal from the academic life for Professor Lozanov. Namely during this period, due to his inability to keep track of what was happening around the world, different varieties of Suggestopedia emerged (e.g. Accelerated Language Learning, Superlearning in the US). According Bodurova's words, Bulgaria is the only place in the world where Suggestopedia is kept in its original form, and therefore is called "classical Suggestopedia".

The varieties of the term: deSuggestopedia and reservopedia, are a reflection of this process. They were created so that the new "waves" of Suggestopedia could differentiate themselves.

There is also a centre for "modern Suggestopedia" *Modena* in Sofia, the capital of Bulgaria. What distinguishes this form of Suggestopedia from the classical one, is the adding of NLP (Neuro-linguistic programming), Zen meditation or sophrology as parts of the suggestopedic lesson. This is seen not as dissemination but rather as contamination by teachers with classical suggestopedic training.

Professor Lozanov had indeed started developing Suggestopedia from hypnosis since he saw its benefits on L2 learning but shortly after that, he realized that hypnosis violates the free will of a man and therefore tried to develop other, a similar technique which can facilitate the process of learning without actually limiting one's personal freedom—namely Suggestology.

As mentioned earlier, ALL uses near prayer-like state of mind

Suggestopedia and deSuggestopedia constitute the way towards the final result, namely—reservopedia, or pedagogy on the level of the reserves (of the human mind).

TC: An important notion to mention here would be peripheral perceptions: what we unconsciously perceive from the world around us. Therefore, it is extremely important what the classroom would look like and what the teacher is going to be dressed in/wearing, i.e. not only what impression he/she would make on students but also what subconscious message they are going to leave in others.

Use of voice pitch and intonation are also considered extremely important since they are an instrument which, applied skilfully, should guide the whole teaching-learning process. Therefore, suggestopedic teachers undergo special training in voice production and acting.

The figure of the teacher figure does have authority because of their knowledge they can share with others but instructors and students are considered to be equals in the classroom.

Critics of the suggestopedic teacher to classical L2 students' books and instruction: Learning material is introduced incoherently; words, grammar and themes are presented separately from one another and not seen as an inseparable linguistic whole.

"If there is fatigue, there is no Suggestopedia." People experience fatigue when there is a discrepancy with the golden ratio, i.e. the balance between work and relaxation is violated. It is scientifically proved that the brain needs variety in order to function more effectively. Therefore it is crucial to change the types of activity at certain intervals.

It is important to note that even though infantilisation is a very important part of Suggestopedia, having fun is not its ultimate goal.