

**UNIVERSITY OF JYVÄSKYLÄ**

**A cookbook for Hungry Teachers**

**SUGGESTOPEDY AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN  
PRACTISING ORAL SKILLS**

**A material package**

**A Pro Gradu Thesis  
by  
Sanna Rovasalo**

**Department of Languages  
2008**

# HUMANISTINEN TIEDEKUNTA KIELTEN LAITOS

Sanna Rovasalo  
COOKBOOK FOR HUNGRY TEACHERS  
SUGGESTOPEDY AND COOPERATIVE LEARNING IN PRACTISING ORAL  
SKILLS  
A Material Package

Pro gradu –tutkielma

Englannin kieli  
Huhtikuu 2008

178 sivua

Viime vuosien aikana suullisen kielitaidon merkitystä on alettu korostaa kieltenopetuksessa, ja se on kirjattu opetussuunnitelmaan yhtenä tärkeänä kieltenopetuksen tavoitteena. Todellisuudessa suullisen kielitaidon harjoittelu jää kuitenkin usein kirjallisen harjoittamisen varjoon, etenkin lukio-opetuksessa, jossa ylioppilaskoe paljolti määrää oppituntien sisällön. Lisäksi lukiossa tehtävät suulliset harjoitukset ovat usein hyvin virallisia ja muodollisia, jotka eivät välttämättä inspiroi oppilaita aitoon, mielekkääseen keskusteluun. Oppilaille tulisi tarjota vaativampien aiheiden rinnalla mahdollisuus kommunikoida heille merkityksellisistä, arkipäiväisistä asioista.

Tämä oppimateriaali perustuu suggestopediaan ja yhteistoiminnalliseen oppimiseen, jotka molemmat korostavat oppilaan kokonaisvaltaisen huomioinnin ja luokan ilmapiirin tärkeyttä. Oppilaan persoonan tukeminen on koulun yksi tärkeimmistä tehtävistä. Luokan ilmapiiriin vaikuttamalla opettaja voi vaikuttaa siihen, että oppilaat viihtyvät koulussa. Tämä oppimateriaali koostuu suullisen kielitaidon tehtävistä, joiden tarkoituksena on luoda mukava ilmapiiri luokkaan, ottaa huomioon oppilaiden tarpeet ja lisätä yhteistyötä sekä spontaania vuorovaikutusta oppilaiden välillä.

Kyseistä oppimateriaalia ei ole tarkoitettu millekään tietylle lukion suulliselle kurssille, vaan sitä voi hyödyntää millä tahansa lukion englannin tunnilla, kun opettaja näkee, että on tarve tehdä jotain normaalista ohjelmasta poikkeavaa. Oppimateriaali on rakennettu keittokirjan muotoon, mikä antaa opettajalle vapauden valita reseptejä, jotka parhaiten sopivat tunnille ottaen huomioon ryhmän koon, käytettävissä olevan ajan, ja vuorokauden ajan. Oppimateriaalia ei ole testattu systemaattisesti, mutta yksittäiset kokeilut osoittavat reseptien toimivuuden aidossa luokahuonetilanteessa.

Keittokirja koostuu viidestä eri osasta: alkupalat, aamupalat, välipalat, pääruuat ja jälkiruuat. Alkupalat jakautuvat kahteen osioon, joista toinen puoli tarjoaa erilaisia tutustumisaktiviteetteja, ja toinen tuntien alkuun sopivia alkulämmittelytehtäviä. Aamupalat sisältävät rauhallisia keskusteluaktiviteetteja, jotka huomioivat oppilaiden aamutuntien vireystilan. Välipalat sisältävät erilaisia sanastopelejä, jotka inspiroivat oppilaita leikkimieliseen kilpailuun. Pääruuat on ainoa osio, johon täytyy varata koko oppitunti eli 45 minuuttia. Pääruuan reseptit koostuvat keskusteluaktiviteeteista, jotka antavat ryhmänjäsenille mahdollisuuden antaa positiivista palautetta toisilleen. Tehtävien kautta oppilaat voivat myös tutustua toisiinsa paremmin. Jälkiruuat jakautuvat kahteen osaan, joista ensimmäinen osio sisältää erilaisia tehtäviä, jotka korostavat oppimisen mukavuutta. Toinen puoli kannustaa keskustelemaan tunteista, mikä saattaa avartaa oppilaiden käsityksiä toisistaan. Keittokirjan eri osiot palvelevat eri tarkoituksia, ja yhdessä ne muodostavat monipuolisen työkalun opettajalle.

Asiasanat: communicative competence, oral skills, suggestopedy, cooperative learning, material package

## Table of Contents

<b>1</b>	<b>INTRODUCTION .....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>2</b>	<b>COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH AS A STARTING POINT .....</b>	<b>8</b>
2.1	COMMUNICATIVE LANGUAGE COMPETENCE .....	8
2.1.1	<i>Canale and Swain's model .....</i>	<i>8</i>
2.1.2	<i>Bachman and Palmer's model.....</i>	<i>10</i>
2.1.3	<i>Common European Framework.....</i>	<i>11</i>
2.2	TEACHING ORAL SKILLS - COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH .....	13
2.3	THE ROUTE OF COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO SCHOOL.....	15
<b>3</b>	<b>SPEAKING – A CRUCIAL, NEGLECTED SKILL.....</b>	<b>19</b>
3.1	DEFINING SPEAKING .....	19
3.2	AFFECTIONS INFLUENCING SPEAKING .....	23
3.3	INVOLVING THE LEARNER.....	25
3.4	THE ROLE OF ORAL SKILLS IN SCHOOLS.....	28
<b>4</b>	<b>SUGGESTOPEDY - “WHY CAN’T WE DO ANYTHING FUN?” .....</b>	<b>32</b>
4.1	HUMANISTIC APPROACH.....	32
4.2	BACKGROUND ON SUGGESTOPEDY .....	34
4.2.1	<i>Definition of suggestology and suggestopedy .....</i>	<i>35</i>
4.2.2	<i>The origins and the spread of suggestopedy .....</i>	<i>37</i>
4.3	CORNERSTONES OF SUGGESTOPEDIC TEACHING .....	38
4.3.1	<i>The principles of suggestopedy .....</i>	<i>39</i>
4.3.2	<i>The suggestopedic means.....</i>	<i>42</i>
4.4	SUGGESTOPEDY IN PRACTICE .....	43
4.5	THE CHALLENGING ROLE OF THE TEACHER.....	48
4.6	RESEARCH RESULTS OF THE USE OF SUGGESTOPEDIC TEACHING.....	51
4.7	CRITICISM ON HUMANISM AND SUGGESTOPEDY .....	54
<b>5</b>	<b>COOPERATIVE LEARNING - “SINK OR SWIM TOGETHER”.....</b>	<b>57</b>
5.1	SOCIO-CONSTRUCTIVE APPROACH.....	57
5.2	GENERAL BACKGROUND ON COOPERATIVE LEARNING .....	59
5.3	CLARIFYING THE TERMINOLOGY CONCERNING COOPERATIVE LEARNING.....	60
5.4	PRACTICAL ASPECTS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING.....	62
5.5	INTERACTION AT THE HEART OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING .....	64
5.6	COOPERATIVE LEARNING AND HUMANISTIC IDEAS: POINTS OF CONTACT .....	66
5.7	SOCIAL, COGNITIVE AND PSYCHOLOGICAL BENEFITS OF COOPERATIVE LEARNING .....	68
5.8	CRITICISM ON COOPERATIVE LEARNING.....	71
<b>6</b>	<b>THE AIMS OF THE MATERIAL PACKAGE.....</b>	<b>74</b>
6.1	TARGET GROUP .....	74
6.2	CORNERSTONES OF THE MATERIAL PACKAGE .....	76
6.3	DISCUSSION ON THE ECLECTIC USE OF SUGGESTOPEDY .....	78
6.4	COOKBOOK .....	79
<b>7</b>	<b>DISCUSSION.....</b>	<b>85</b>
<b>8</b>	<b>BIBLIOGRAPHY .....</b>	<b>88</b>

# 1 INTRODUCTION

“A couple of years ago I graduated and my grade in Swedish matriculation exam was a strong eximia [the second best grade] and I still read formal Swedish texts quite fluently, but in real-life speaking situations it seems like I don’t get by at all. I can hardly flounder something like “um,uh, jag.. förstår.. inte. Kan.. du.. tala.. mera.. saktare?”, or something else as clumsy that contains embarrassingly basic mistakes. So the active speaking skills are getting very rusty, cuz I haven’t used the language anywhere. Do you have any advice for me?” (Anonym writer in Suomi 24h forum, translated from Finnish)

Emphasising the importance of oral skills is a common feature of today’s foreign-language teaching. Yet, the comment of a young person above indicates the inefficiency of current foreign language teaching when it comes to oral skills. Acquiring speaking skills is a major goal in the official curriculum. The teaching, however, is not always very systematic (Takala 1993:ii) and oral skills are often neglected for various reasons. More recent studies also indicate that oral skills often remain subjected to written skills, for example at upper-secondary school level (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006:127). There are many reasons why speaking in a foreign language should gain more attention. With globalisation, international contacts have increased tremendously. More people than ever before get involved in situations where they have to communicate in a foreign language: understanding and speaking the foreign language becomes necessary. Communication in the work life takes place mostly orally as international contacts are increasingly handled with personal meetings or phone conversations (Salo-Lee 1991:1). Even the written form of communication including e-mail, text message and messenger is partly becoming “more oral” as the new media enables communication which is close to oral communication. This affects inevitably language use as well (Salo-Lee 1991:1).

The present material package, *A Cookbook for Hungry Teachers*, aims to promote the role of oral skills in upper-secondary schools and to provide teachers with speaking activities which create a pleasant and safe learning atmosphere in the classroom and encourage interaction in a foreign language between the students. The exercises in the material package are based on the theoretical framework provided by two teaching approaches: suggestopedy and cooperative learning. *Suggestopedy* is a

teaching method that views the human being as a whole, acknowledging the necessity to take the emotional state of the learner into account in teaching. *Cooperative learning* refers to a pedagogical practice where learners work in small groups trying to accomplish shared goals (Gillies 2007:33). The reason for choosing cooperative learning as a basis to practise oral skills is that it makes learning to speak very effective as language is learned through interaction. Yli-Renko (1991:30) refers to several studies made in the United States and claims that an essential prerequisite and the best way to learn a foreign language is social interaction where the learners interact reciprocally in different kinds of communication situations.

In recent years, affective factors in learning have been taken into consideration on a larger scale (Littlewood 1992: 98). Human being as a learner always has his or her positive and negative feelings which should not be excluded from language teaching (Kaikkonen and Kohonen 1998). Stevick (1996 as cited by Kaikkonen and Kohonen 1998) states that consideration of the affective aspect results in effective language learning that involves the language learner in many ways. This is the main reason for choosing *suggestopedy* and *cooperative learning* as cornerstones of the material package, which both put great emphasis on the observance of the learners' needs. A supporting and safe environment in the classroom is of special importance when the goal of teaching is to encourage learners to use the foreign language.

The theoretical framework of the present study consists of four chapters. Chapter 2 discusses the communicative approach and provides a starting point for the whole material package. The chapter sheds light on different models of communicative competence and the way in which the Common European Framework views communicative competence. Special attention is paid to the way in which the models of communicative competence and the Common European Framework take the affective state of the learner into account.

Chapter 3 focuses on oral skills. As the terminology related to oral skills is defined, a short review to previous literature is presented providing information on the role of oral skills in Finnish upper-secondary schools during the last two decades. The earlier studies indicate the great need for a stronger emphasis on oral skills and provide reasons why the practice of these skills is often neglected in the language

classroom. The chapter also discusses some affective factors of the learner that have an impact on willingness to speak. Finally, a framework to teaching oral skills by Littlewood (1992) is presented. The principles of this framework seem to have a great deal in common with both suggestopedy and cooperative learning.

Chapter 4 draws an outline of an off-stream teaching method, suggestopedy, which puts learners' emotions into a very central position. When starting to work on my pro-gradu thesis, I was wondering if suggestopedy is an obsolete teaching method with nothing to offer for today's language teaching. This question bothered me and when I found a small grub from the pages of the old work of Lozanov, I concluded that this learning philosophy is not too popular today. However, after visiting a suggestopedic school in Tampere I was enthusiastic to continue working on suggestopedic activities that could be used by every teacher. Chapter 4 starts with a discussion of the ideas of humanism, which provides a general background for suggestopedy. The chapter also provides a definition of the core terms of suggestopedy, gives an outline of the theoretical cornerstones of suggestopedic teaching and describes it in practice. The role of a suggestopedic teacher is also discussed. The chapter ends with a discussion on the results of research on suggestopedy and criticism attributed to suggestopedy, and humanism in general.

Chapter 5 deals with cooperative learning. The socio-constructive approach to teaching provides a general framework for cooperative learning. The chapter clarifies the terminology found in literature and sheds light on the practical issues concerning group work. The factors which affect interaction are discussed for interaction is a key element in cooperative learning. In addition, cooperative learning is contrasted with the ideas of suggestopedy, as an attempt to show points of contact between the two approaches. Finally, the benefits as well as the criticism attributed to cooperative learning are presented.

Suggestopedy and cooperative learning are not two completely isolated and contradicting approaches to teaching. In contrast, cooperative learning shares ideas with humanistic views. As a matter of fact, cooperative learning emphasises the needs of the learner and the importance of personal experiences for growth of personality (Kohonen 1992), similarly to humanistic psychology. Learners'

experiences, attitudes and feelings about their learning gain a great deal of attention in cooperative learning. It is interesting to note that the development of the whole personality is also considered very important by the Common European Framework, as it is seen as an object of language education (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:1). Thus, sharing some ideas, suggestopedy and cooperative learning together form a useful whole to practise oral skills in language lessons.

## **2 COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH AS A STARTING POINT**

Communicative competence has long been a goal of language teaching. The communicative approach to language teaching means that the emphasis is not on learning specific language features, but rather on putting the language into use in different circumstances (Stern 1992: 178). Canale and Swain (1980:2) compare grammatical and communicative approaches and they say that the latter is organized on the basis of communicative functions, such as apologizing and describing, that the learner needs to know. The communicative approach stresses the ways in which grammatical forms can be used to express these functions appropriately.

### **2.1 Communicative language competence**

Defining communicative language competence has inspired numerous researchers to study this complicated issue. The number of theories on language competence is abundant. In this section 2.1, I intend to present two models of communicative competence by Canale and Swain and Bachman and Palmer. The Common European Framework (CEF), which gives a thorough description of communicative competence, is discussed as well. Special attention is paid to the way the models and the CEF take affective factors of the learner into account. Section 2.2 discusses the communicative approach from the viewpoint of teaching. The last section 2.3 provides a historical perspective on the different phases of communicative competence.

#### **2.1.1 Canale and Swain's model**

Canale and Swain define communicative competence in terms of three main competencies (Canale and Swain 1980:28). The framework of Canale and Swain is a well-known model of communicative competence developed in the 1970s (Huhta 1993:85). This framework aims to describe the *knowledge* the language user needs in order to be able to speak a language in meaningful interaction. The language learner has to have knowledge about the foreign language literacy and the language



itself. Furthermore, speaking proficiency and cross-cultural awareness are important aspects of language as well. As a basis of the framework, Canale and Swain (1980:29) have specific assumptions about the nature of communication. They think that communication is based on sociocultural, interpersonal interaction, which involves unpredictability and creativity. Similarly, Canale and Swain (1980: 29) subscribe to the idea that communication is carried out under performance constraints and it is judged as successful or not on the basis of behavioural results.

The three components of the framework are *grammatical competence*, *sociolinguistic competence* and *strategic competence* (Canale and Swain 1980: 29), which form the basis of the language competence model that is commonly used in the area of language teaching. *Grammatical competence* refers to the knowledge of language, in other words, language user knows how to use the forms of the language. To be more exact, grammatical competence includes knowledge of vocabulary, rules of morphology, syntax, sentence-grammar semantics, and phonology (Canale and Swain 1980: 29). *Sociolinguistic competence*, in turn, consists of two sets of rules: sociocultural rules of language use and rules of discourse. The former is about understanding aspects of the culture, using language in various situations in an appropriate manner. The latter deals with the rules concerning the cohesion and coherence of groups of utterances (Canale and Swain 1980: 30). *Strategic competence* refers to both the verbal and non-verbal compensators, which can be called into action when a lack in some area of a language occurs (Canale and Swain 1980: 30).

In the model of Canale and Swain, the competencies are only about *knowledge*. The conscious *ability* to use the knowledge has been excluded from the model, because the creators of the model found that it had not yet been sufficiently investigated (Huhta 1993:86). In addition to competences, motivation, needs and psycholinguistic factors such as memory and perception strategies belong to communicative performance as well (Huhta 1993:85). Motivation is considered a significant factor in determining the success of the communicative approach (Canale and Swain 1980:38). Canale and Swain (1980:38) aptly point out that without motivation, the learner who has an adequate level of communicative competence may not be willing to perform well in the second language.

This model by Canale and Swain is a so called descriptive model which presents the parts of the language competence but does not show how the parts are linked to one another or what happens when the language is processed (Cziko 1984 as cited by Huhta 1993:86). In terms of affective factors, motivation is mentioned as an aspect affecting communicative performance.

### **2.1.2 Bachman and Palmer's model**

The model of Bachman and Palmer is based on the classifications of Canale and Swain, but it is presented in a more detailed and versatile way (Huhta 1993: 87). The model does not merely clarify the structure of the language, but it also attempts to explain the ways the linguistic competence is realized in the form of performance, which is the language use (Huhta 1993: 87).

According to Bachman and Palmer (1996:78), language ability consists of *language knowledge* and *strategic competence*, or metacognitive strategies. Language knowledge includes both organizational knowledge and pragmatic knowledge. Organizational knowledge, in turn, includes grammatical knowledge and textual knowledge. This enables language users to create and interpret utterances that are grammatically accurate. Pragmatic knowledge including functional knowledge and sociolinguistic knowledge, enables the language user to relate words, utterances, and texts to concepts, communicative goals, and the features of the language use setting. Strategic competence consists of metacognitive strategies that enable language users to engage in goal setting, assessment, and planning (Bachman and Palmer 1996:70).

Bachman and Palmer (1996 as cited by Juurakko-Paavola and Airola 2002: 8) think that language competence is not the only matter that affects language use, but the emotional experiences also have an impact on it. They see that language competence is not the only matter that affects language use, but the general knowledge, personality features and emotional experiences also have an impact on it (Juurakko-Paavola and Airola 2002:8). Personality features that affect language use include age,

gender, nationality and education among other things. General knowledge refers to the general knowledge of the learner or professional knowledge.

### **2.1.3 Common European Framework**

The Common European Framework (CEF) provides a firm basis for language learning and teaching. It thoroughly describes what the language learner needs to learn in order to use a language for communication and what knowledge and skills she or he is to develop so as to act effectively in interaction (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007: 1). A language user draws upon a wide range of different competences when engaging in communication. As a result of participation in communication, the competences are developed further for both short and long-term use (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007: 101). According to the CEF (2007:101), the great number of learner's or user's competences can be divided into two groups: *general competences* and *communicative competences*.

Let us first clarify the term *general competences*. General competences are not directly connected to language but they contribute to successful conversation. General competences of the language learners consist of their *knowledge*, *skills*, *existential competence* and *their ability to learn* (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:11). Human communication is based on the shared knowledge of the world. *Knowledge* refers to both empirical knowledge relating to day-to-day living and to academic knowledge relating to scientific or technical educational field. *Skills* or know-how has to do with the ability to carry out certain procedures. In order to become a skilful language user, a great deal of practice, repetition and experience is necessary.

*Existential competence* takes the affective side of the learner into account as the learner's personality traits, individual characteristics and attitudes have an impact on language learning. Attitudes that are of special importance deal with the learners' self-image, their way of viewing others and their willingness to engage in social interaction (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:12). The

CEF stresses that the existential competences are to be taken into consideration in language learning and teaching (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:12). The final component of general abilities is the learner's *ability to learn*. It is the ability to participate in new experiences and to integrate new knowledge into existing knowledge or to alter the existing knowledge (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:106). Language learning abilities help the learner to deal with the language more independently and effectively. These abilities are not acquired overnight; rather they are developed in the course of learning experiences.

Let us now consider the elements related to *communicative competence*. Similarly to general competences, communicative competences consist of several components. These are *linguistic, sociolinguistic and pragmatic competences* (CEF 2007:13). The communicative competence includes the following factors that “empower a person to act using specifically linguistic means” (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:9). First, the student should have knowledge of the vocabulary, grammar, semantics, phonology and orthography. These are all *linguistic knowledge* and skills, so they deal with the language itself. Second, *sociolinguistic awareness* of the appropriate language use is necessary. Mastering the social conventions of a particular language such as rules of politeness, norms governing relations between generations and sexes have a great influence on communication despite the fact that the language users are often unaware of their impact (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:13) Third, *pragmatic skills* are concerned with two matters: the functional use of linguistic resources referring to speech acts and the production of language functions and the mastery of discourse, cohesion and coherence (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:13).

This particular framework acknowledges the need to observe the affective side of the learner as was already pointed out when the existential competence of the learner was defined. It is also acknowledged that the development of communicative proficiency has to do with other dimensions besides the purely linguistic aspect (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:7). These aspects are sociocultural awareness, imaginative experience, affective relations and learning to learn, among other things (Common European Framework of reference for

languages 2007). What is more, the learner's self-esteem, referring to a positive self-image and lack of inhibition, motivation, emotional state and attitude are considered important factors affecting successful task completion (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:161). The object of language education is to promote the development of the whole personality according to the CEF. The fact that the CEF splits the language into small parts is slightly problematic. As a matter of fact, communication has to do with the whole human being. According to the Common European Framework of reference for languages (2007: 1), it is the task of the teacher to integrate the several parts into a whole.

The models of Bachman and Palmer and Canale and Swain as well as the Common European Framework imply that the affectionate factors have an impact on language use. In addition, the models and the framework indicate that communicative competence is a complex issue including a wide range of factors. To illustrate this, the linguistic component, including lexical, phonological and syntactical knowledge is very important even if the aim of teaching is to provide the students with communicative competence. There is therefore little justification to think that the teachers who put emphasis on communication as the goal of language teaching could totally ignore the linguistic aspect (Littlewood 1992). Let us now move on to discuss the communicative approach adopted in teaching.

## **2.2 Teaching oral skills - communicative approach**

Communicative foreign language learning is based on the idea that oral communication is a primary way of communication in the interaction of human beings (Kaikkonen 1998). This is why foreign language learning should take place with the emphasis on oral communication right at the beginning of language learning. Communicative oral competence has been a major goal in language teaching for a long period of time. The term communicative oral competence includes a great deal of factors (Harjanne 2004). Thus, if the teacher wants to have communicative oral competence as a goal in teaching, he or she has to pay attention to several skills and knowledge.

In order to understand the nature of teaching that puts emphasis on communication, let us compare traditional instruction, where the communication does not have a major role, and communicative instruction. Traditional instruction refers to a situation where the language is being taught to a group of second or foreign language learners (Lightbown and Spada 1993: 70). In this case, the focus is on the language itself, rather than on information which is carried by the language. The teacher's task is to make sure that students learn the linguistic material such as vocabulary and the grammatical rules of the target language. The goal of learners is often to pass an examination rather than to use the language for daily communicative interaction (Lightbown and Spada 1993: 70).

Similarly to traditional instruction, communicative instruction environment also involves learners whose goal is learning the language itself, but the emphasis is different. The teaching focuses on interaction, conversation, and language use, rather than on learning about the language *per se*. The topics which are discussed in communicative instruction environment are often topics of general interest to the learner (Lightbown and Spada 1993: 70).

Both of these approaches have their advantages and disadvantages. According to Lightbown and Spada (1993), learners continue to have problems with basic structures of the language if form-focused instruction is not provided. They further state that teaching that is limited "to an exclusive emphasis on accuracy or an exclusive emphasis on fluency, meaning-focused" (Lightbown and Spada 1993:105) is not as effective in promoting second language learning as form-focused instruction with a communicative emphasis.

The communicative competence of a foreign language is a very extensive and complex whole, as shown in the section 2.1. It is important to bear in mind that only a part of the goals can be accomplished in teaching. It is very likely that the majority of students need the foreign language in different kinds of oral contexts, often in discussions. This is to say that the students should be given opportunities to systematically practise oral skills in language classes (Harjanne 2004). The communicative speaking exercises which require student's own production and application of linguistic material contribute to successful learning. Harjanne (2004)

brings up an important matter as she says that communicative oral practice supports the comprehensive learning of language and the time used to practise speaking is taken away from something else. The fact that the student can and wants to participate in discussion is an indication of the mastery of the language

The instruction that emphasises communication puts stress on genuine interaction. Thus the aim of the teaching of oral skills should be to allow the students to discuss naturally and interactively (Juurakko and Airola 2002:108). This is to say that in language teaching, the focus should move from the linguistic accuracy to social interaction, which is very important in terms of the successfulness of the communication. When it comes to teaching oral skills, Juurakko and Airola (2002) argue that the starting point should be the communicative use of language rather than a theoretical knowledge of language. Speaking is a skill that needs to be practised. Contextual aspects make speaking challenging and for this reason practising oral skills should contain several kinds of speaking situations. This would contribute to the success of real-life communication. Even though the communicative speaking exercises discussed above might sometimes feel artificial, they are nevertheless useful as they increase the storage of language routines of the language user in real-life situations (Luoma 2001, as cited by Juurakko and Airola 2002:108).

### **2.3 The route of communicative approach to school**

One could easily think that emphasizing the importance of oral skills in schools is a modern phenomenon. Our own parents who were born in the 40s and 50s mostly concentrated on translation in English classes and ignored the speaking part. However, the idea that the oral skills have gained ground only recently turns out to be a misconception. As a matter of fact, teaching oral skills has clearly longer traditions than teaching written language. Already during the antiquity, rhetoric was a very important and appreciated skill (Takala 1993:v).

As Takala (1993: ii) points out, there are clear formalistic and functionalist periods in the history that have taken turns. In other words, there have been times when the emphasis has been on language forms, but gradually a new way of thinking has

replaced the grammar-focused teaching and language use has again gained centrality. Takala (1993:i) mentions four different phenomena when oral competence has gained special attention in the past: the 19<sup>th</sup> century Reform Movement, the Direct Method, the Audiolingual Method and the Communicative Language Teaching.

Before the emphasis was put on speaking, the scholars stressed the importance of reading comprehension, grammar and literary appreciation (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 6). The Reform Movement is a term used to refer to the effort of teachers and linguists to switch the emphasis from linguistic mastery of language to proficiency in speaking. The roots of the Reform Movement date back to 1886, when the International Phonetic Association set goals for the improvement of teaching of modern languages. Among these goals one can find the “study of spoken language” (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 7). Yet, a great deal of attention was paid to the accurate pronunciation of the language (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 7), which led to the use of drills. The speech patterns instead of the grammar were considered fundamental elements of language (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 8).

The growing interest towards speaking proficiency was not the only reformative thought among linguists. Linguists became, as a matter of fact, interested in the naturalistic principles of language learning (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 8). The Direct Method belongs to a wider phenomenon called *natural methods* which refer to the way of viewing second language learning similar to first language acquisition (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 9). The scholars who advocated the Direct Method believed that the language could be learned through the strong use and presence of the target language in the classroom. Thus, there was no longer a need to translate or use the learner’s native tongue as the meaning could be conveyed through actions and demonstrations (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 9). The principles of the Direct Method included the following factors among other things: classroom instruction was always in the target language, only colloquial vocabulary and sentences were taught, oral communication skills were developed gradually and correct pronunciation and grammar were stressed. Despite the popularity the Direct Method gained, it came to an end owing to the lack of systematic basis in applied linguistic theory and practice (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 33).



The Audiolingual Method is a structure-based approach to language teaching (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 53). It views language learning as a process of habit formation (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 51), which strongly reflects the behaviouristic ideology behind this particular method. As the name suggests, the language should be taught in the following order: listening, speaking, reading, and writing (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 53). Audiolingualists required a complete transformation in the foreign language syllabus, which was to say that they advocated going back to the speech-based instruction the goal of which was to provide the students with oral proficiency (Richards and Rodgers 1986: 52). Audiolingualism was a prevailing method in the 1960s.

The most recent approach to language teaching, Communicative Language Teaching, emphasises the functionality of the language. According to the functional view, language competence can be defined by describing the use where the language is needed. Often times, the term language competence is replaced by the term communicative competence to make a clear difference to earlier language skill-models (Huhta 1993: 83). The real-life use of language is characterized by the following factors, according to Morrow (1979 as cited in Huhta 1993: 83).

- It is based on interaction between the language users
- It takes place in a discourse context and in a sociocultural context
- It is often creative and unpredictable
- The language use has a purpose
- The language use is restricted by some factors (memory, noise, fatigue)
- The language used is authentic
- The language is only one factor when it comes to the successfulness of the communication
- The meaning of the utterances varies depending on the context
- Language use is accompanied with a continuous assessment of the successfulness of communication and negotiation of meaning in different situations.

Along with the approaches and methods discussed above, oral communication has become an important goal of teaching in the official curricula and the communicative approach to teaching has been adopted in teaching. However, as Takala (1993:ii) admits, teaching oral skills is not very systematic in Finland despite the fact that it is clearly written in the curriculum. Romo (1991) brings up the same contradiction and says that teaching oral skills is not sufficient even though it is generally considered a

major goal in teaching. More recent studies indicate that oral skills often remain subjected to written skills for example at upper-secondary school level (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006:127). Despite the fact that the focus has moved from language forms to language use in research, the results of the studies are applied to practise very slowly when it comes to altering teaching and teaching materials (Salo-Lee 1991:2).

To sum up, chapter 2 has discussed the communicative approach from different points of view. Discussion of different models of communicative language competence showed the importance of affective factors when it comes to language ability. The chapter aimed to show that, contrary to common belief, the communicative approach in teaching is not a recent phenomenon. The focus of teaching has been shifting between the form-based and meaning-based approaches in the past.

### **3 SPEAKING – A CRUCIAL, NEGLECTED SKILL**

Having seen that speaking is an important goal of teaching, let us now take a look at different aspects of speaking. This chapter consists of four sections. Firstly, the basic concepts related to oral skills are defined (section 3.1). Secondly, the chapter deals with some affective factors of the learner which have a great impact on speaking (section 3.2). Thirdly, a framework by Littlewood (1992) to teaching oral skills is presented, the principles of which seem to have a great deal in common with both suggestopedy and cooperative learning (section 3.3). Finally, a short review of previous literature is presented providing information on the role of oral skills in the upper-secondary school during the last two decades (section 3.4). The earlier studies indicate a great need for a stronger emphasis on oral skills and provide reasons why the practice of these skills is often neglected in the language class

#### **3.1 Defining speaking**

The terminology concerning spoken language seems to be a dense jungle in the literature. A great number of terms such as oral skills, oral proficiency, communicative competence, communicative proficiency, to name but a few, are all used to refer to the mastery of speaking in one way or another. Translating the original terms used in sources from Finnish into English makes the issue even more complicated. In the following, I attempt to clarify the terms oral skills, interaction and negotiation of meaning that are slightly overlapping concepts, but which all shed light on specific aspects of speaking that are essential in the present study.

*Oral skills* or *oral communicative proficiency* is defined in a very simple way by Hellgren (1982). A synonym for the term is *oracy*, which means an ability to express oneself fluently in speech (Hellgren 1982: 55). In order to be able to express oneself fluently, knowledge of the language is needed. Thus, oral skills are not a separate group of skills from other aspects of language. The task of foreign-language teaching is to prepare learners to be able to use the language. It goes without saying that in order to be able to speak a foreign language, it is necessary to know something about

the grammar, vocabulary and the basic rules of pronunciation (Salo-Lee 1991:18). Thus, speaking is closely tied to other levels of language.

Expressing oneself and speaking is not fully understood if other matters, such as *interaction* and non-verbal communication are excluded. Interaction and speaking go hand in hand. Interaction is an inseparable part of communication. Hellgren (1982:52-53) discusses the nature of speaking and draws interaction and non-verbal communication into discussion.

As a communicative activity speaking is usually face-to-face interaction, constituting part of the conversation or dialogue. Thus what is said depends on what else has been said in the interaction. Consequently, speaking is part of the exchange of words which consists of words which consists of receiving and producing. In interaction speaking is accompanied by gestures, facial expressions, and as a matter of fact, the utilization of the whole body (Hellgren 1982:52-53).

Bygate (1987:3) makes a difference between a skill and knowledge. The learner has to have *knowledge* about the language itself, just as the driver has to have some sort of understanding of the basic functions of the car and the traffic rules. However, the car does not move without the *skill* of driving. The driver knows that it is not possible to drive 80km/h through downtown on a slippery road. Similarly, a skilful language user knows that it is not appropriate to use a vulgar language in a job interview. The ability to adapt one's language in accordance with the context is an important skill. This distinction between a skill and knowledge is crucial in the teaching of speaking (Bygate 1987: 3).

Oral skills do not only refer to the person's ability to speak. Similarly to Hellgren (1982), Bygate (1987: 5) takes interaction into consideration and divides skills into motor-perceptive skills and interaction skills. Both of these are necessary for successful communication. According to Bygate (1987: 5), motor-perceptive skills include perceiving, recalling, and articulating sounds and structures of the language in the correct order. These skills form the "mechanical" part of a language and they do not lead communication anywhere. It is the interaction skills that brings context along and allow people to use language for specific purposes.

Interaction skills have to do with “making decisions about communication, such as: what to say, how to say it, and whether to develop it, in accordance with one’s intentions, while maintaining the desired relations with others” (Bygate 1987:5). Interaction skills involve the ability to use language in order to meet particular demands such as *processing conditions* and *reciprocity conditions* (Bygate 1987:7). The former refers to the internal conditions of speech, which means that the speaker does not have time to plan one’s utterance as the speech takes place under pressure of time (Bygate 1987:7). The latter is related to the dimension of interpersonal interaction in conversation as the name suggests. These demands affect the nature of speech.

Interaction skills include a wide range of skills that are needed for a successful conversation. Interaction involves *negotiation of meaning* between the interlocutors. Negotiated interaction occurs when the interlocutors find a need to modify and adjust the utterance in order to be clearly understood (Bitchener 2004:81). This is to say that the conversational participants attempt to achieve a mutual understanding. When the communication difficulty occurs, the “participants may engage in a simple sequence of moves comprising the utterance that triggered the difficulty--“ (Bitchener 2004:81).

Making oneself understood is the goal of negotiation of meaning. In order to ensure understanding, Bygate (1987: 29) brings up two factors that need to be considered. The first factor is the “level of explicitness” (Bygate 1987: 29). Depending on the interlocutor, the speaker has to make choices concerning how explicit to be. Factors such as, what the listener knows and what she or he can understand, should be taken into consideration (Bygate 1987: 29). The listener wants to hear what is essential, not too much of information or not too little (Bygate 1987: 29). To illustrate this, the level of explicitness varies a great deal if a husband is talking about his work with his wife or with a neighbor who knows very little about his job.

Another factor Bygate (1987: 29) mentions has to do with the procedures that speakers use to ensure understanding. Negotiation of meaning concerns not only how much information is conveyed but also how specific the speakers are (1987: 32). Procedures of negotiation involve various strategies of communication such as

paraphrase, metaphor and the use of vocabulary to vary the level of precision with which we communicate (Bygate 1987: 32). Often it is sufficient to refer to a general term and modify it only if the listener misunderstands the matter or other problems occur. For example, a very specific language is needed when giving directions to a foreigner who is visiting a particular town for the first time. The interlocutors can only rely on common knowledge of, for example, what the traffic lights are and how they function. A less specific language is needed when the stranger asking for directions is a local.

When it comes to second language learning, it is believed that negotiation of meaning contributes to L2 acquisition. Long (1996 as cited by Bitchener 2004:82) distinguishes two ways in which the contribution takes place. First, the feedback the learners receive on their utterances, which are the source of understanding difficulty, provides a possibility to acquire new information. Feedback may be a modified form of an utterance and it provides the participant with the appropriate target language word (see example 1). The second way in which the acquisition might take place is through the opportunity learners receive to modify their utterances (see example 2)

Example 1:

SI: I blame the doctor, he ampatated the wrong leg.

S2: What means ampatated?

SI: The doctor cut off the leg.

S2: So he ampa . . . amp . . . amp-u-tated the leg, yeah?

SI: correct.

(Bitchener 2004:82)

Example 2

SI: Platform two door is closed.

S2: You mean the gate is closed?

SI: Gates? Yeah, the gates are closed. Yeah, yeah, the gate is like door.

(Bitchener 2004:82)

Negotiation of meaning is an inseparable part of interaction. Bygate (1987:41) states that if non-native speakers have the ability to understand and handle different aspects of oral language, such as negotiation skills, management of interaction and turn-taking, they are likely to be confident speakers of the foreign language.

### 3.2 Affections influencing speaking

There is a common stereotype of Finns that speaking does not belong to their strengths. One could argue that this is a false generalisation and no longer applies to Finns in today's Finland. However, there have been several studies on this particular topic. Sallinen-Kuparinen (1986) claims, that the teachers especially in Finland should focus more on teaching students to speak bravely. She justifies her claim by saying that the oral communication of the Finns is characterized by fear of communication even when they are using their mother tongue. This is due to the nervousness of performing alone and social anxiety. Even a normal communication is regarded as a performance.

Lehtonen and Sajavaara (1982) also discuss the reticence of the Finns bringing up the fact that Finnish participants in international conferences and meetings are often labelled as "silent Finns" (Lehtonen and Sajavaara 1982: 3), who never participate in the discussion. What is different from the results of Sallinen-Kuparinen (1986) is the reason lying behind the silence. Unlike in her study, the shyness does not seem to play a role here, but rather incapability to express oneself in a foreign language or the transference of Finnish speech culture over to foreign language situations (Lehtonen and Sajavaara 1982: 3). It is worth pointing out that both of these studies are fairly old and it is good to ask in the globalised world to what extent this myth of a silent Finn is still valid.

It is interesting, however, to note that this intriguing stereotype inspires researchers even in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Vaahterikko (2003) conducted a study on cultural differences and examined Finnish communications with Spaniards in a business context. Latin American perceptions about Finnish negotiators provide us with interesting insights. The old stereotype is strongly visible in the following paragraph.

The main deficiency in Finnish international preparedness is their insufficient verbal expression (6/17,6 %). Finns are good at languages. They know [sic] to listen to their partners, but their communication (expression) skills do not fit the Latin American demands. Finns are too silent. The Latin Americans do not seem to understand the Finnish communication style. Two other characteristics outside of the list of aspects were chosen referring to the communication. They are *timid* (1/2.9%) in personal characteristics and *too silent* (1/29%) in communication skills. (Vaahterikko 2003: 107)

If communication even in Finnish has brought about problems, speaking foreign languages has indeed caused anxiety through times for the Finns. As an example of this, Yli-Renko (1991: 26) points out that the leading officials of the city and the administrators of the state were afraid of speaking foreign languages in spite of otherwise good language competence. They blamed foreign language teaching and said that the reason for the high threshold to start speaking lies in its focus on grammar, which made students scared of mistakes. Their bad experiences of language lessons date back to 1960s and 1970s.

The situation had not become any better in the 90s. Yli-Renko (1991) conducted a study in Finnish upper-secondary school and concluded that 90% of the students were *scared of* speaking foreign languages. The students were happy with the teaching overall and they found that the upper-secondary school had provided them with good writing skills, good knowledge of grammar and pronunciation. Tattari (2001) found out the same phenomenon, but it was the teachers who stated that their students are shy in speaking English. The percentage was significantly lower than in the study of Yli-Renko. In the study of Tattari (2001), the percentage was as low as 30%. It is interesting to notice such a great discrepancy between these two studies. One could suggest that maybe the internalisation and globalisation has had its impact on becoming more open. It is also possible that the teachers do not either acknowledge or notice the shyness of speaking a foreign language.

One could expect that possessing good speaking skills in a foreign language is taken for granted in the 21st century and being afraid of speaking a foreign language is an obsolete phenomenon. There are no studies available on the student's opinions on their oral skills in this decade, but the study conducted by Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006) looks at the issue from the teachers' point of view. Interestingly, as a factor hindering practice of oral skills, they mention student-related reasons, such as students' shyness to speak and lack of motivation, complicated social relations in class and students' poor oral skills (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006:84). One could conclude that affective factors still play a role in the language classroom.



Shyness is only one example of an emotion that hinders speaking or reduces the willingness to speak. Changing students' personality is an impossible task, but every teacher can make an effort to change the atmosphere in the classroom. Making the classroom environment favourable for speaking is very essential. A safe and encouraging atmosphere where the learner's feelings are taken into consideration can have very positive effects on the language development of the students.

### **3.3 Involving the learner**

Practising oral skills in the language classes is necessary in order to provide the students with sufficient communication skills. However, a great deal of attention needs to be paid to planning teaching. Involving the learner is the most crucial aspect in teaching: if the teacher does not succeed in involving the student, all the efforts to improve learning are most likely done in vain (Littlewood 1992: 97). Littlewood (1992: 97) provides a framework including four principles that should be taken into consideration in order to involve the learners. These are:

1. The classroom atmosphere must be conducive to communication and learning.
2. Learning must be relevant to learner's interests and needs.
3. Processes as well as products are important in the language classroom.
4. Learners must perform active roles in the classroom

(Littlewood 1992: 97)

Let us now look at these principles in greater detail. I attempt to summarize the main idea of each principle according to Littlewood (1992: 98). The first principle presents the most important factor or condition for learning, according to Littlewood (1992:98). As a matter of fact, the classroom atmosphere should be the kind that the learners could engage in the activities and interactions without any constraint. Littlewood (1992:98) calls for the feeling of security in the environment as the students engage in conversation in a foreign language and thus give up the security of the mother tongue. The first principle deals with the purely emotional aspect of the learner.

In order to make the atmosphere conducive to communication and learning, the following aspects should be taken into consideration. First, the dominance of the teacher should be reduced. As Littlewood (1992:98) points out, the idea of this is linked with the fourth principle, which demands that the learners should perform active roles. Second, the relationship between the learners is of special importance not to forget the relationship between the teacher and learners (Littlewood 1992:99). The class should provide a network of human relationships for the students in which they feel secure and accepted. The teacher has a significant role in creating an interpersonal climate in the classroom. Similarly, different modes of working such as pair- and group-work contribute to the increased interaction between the learners (Littlewood 1992:99).

In terms of observing this principle, the communicative approach to teaching is very beneficial for the learner in comparison to approaches dominating in the past, which emphasise the accurate control of the language system (Littlewood 1992:100). Emphasis on the language forms resulted in a situation where learner's errors were at the center of attention and this, in turn, created a feeling of inadequacy and hopelessness among the slower learners in particular (Littlewood 1992:100). The communicative approach focuses on what the learners already can do with the language and what they achieve rather than what they lack (Littlewood 1992:100). This approach inevitably leads to a more positive and encouraging learning environment.

The second principle suggests that the learners should feel motivated to engage in the activities and tasks the teachers offer. As noted by Littlewood (1992:100), we as teachers cannot have the control over the learning process, but we can create contexts which make learning easier and more motivating. The activities should be relevant to the interests and needs of the learners. Relevance is a concept hard to define, since the question what is relevant varies from learner to learner. However, some general points can be distinguished in terms of relevance. Littlewood (1992:102) refers to other studies and says that the functional approach to learning can motivate the learners as they see that their learning has a practical value in real-life communication. Additionally, referring to other studies, Littlewood (1992:102) claims that the use of so called authentic materials such as menus or brochures or

authentic tasks is relevant for several learners. However, according to Littlewood (1992:102), the most important factor in motivating learners is the authentic *interaction* between the students. Littlewood (1992:102) says that learners are best motivated when they can use the language as a medium with the help of which they can exchange meanings that are important to them. To conclude, Littlewood (1992:102) emphasises the fact that the most crucial thing is that the learners' response is authentic.

The third principle functions as a reminder for the teachers who easily focus merely on observable products or outcomes that can be evaluated. According to Littlewood (1992:104), teachers often consider outcome more important than the process of producing it. When it comes to communication, the aim in language teaching should be to enable the students to participate in the process of conveying meanings. Hence, it is not important whether the linguistic products, the words and phrases, are formally correct as long as the communication is understandable. Yet, language teaching does also want to provide the learner with sufficient knowledge of grammar and vocabulary to help the learners express themselves clearly. To conclude, a delicate balance should be maintained between the linguistic form and communicative process as Littlewood (1992: 105) states.

The final principle can be situated at the heart of learner-centered approaches (Littlewood 1992: 105). The active processing of the learners is seen very significant in the learning process. Adopting roles means making choices that have an impact on one's learning activity. There is a continuum concerning the scale of learner-choices. At the lowest end of the scale, there are role plays where the teacher determines the activity and the roles, but where the learners can have control over the interaction. At the highest end, more creative role plays, improvisations and debates give the learner the freedom to form for themselves a role to adapt within a task (Ur 1981 and Littlewood 1981 as cited by Littlewood 1992: 107). Switching from a passive role into an active role might cause anxiety in some students. Therefore, the change has to be done gradually so that nobody feels that they have been left alone, unsupported in an unstructured environment.

These four principles should be kept in mind when planning speaking activities for the students. For the present study, the framework provides a basis for adopting suggestopedia and collaborative learning as theoretical cornerstones of the material package. As a matter of fact, both the suggestopedia and collaborative learning call for the fulfilment of the first, second and the fourth principle.

### **3.4 The role of oral skills in schools**

A review to previous research done on oral skills shows that the role of oral skills in upper-secondary school has slightly increased during the past two decades. Yet, the focus is still often on written skills while the speaking skills are left on the second plane.

Yli-Renko (1991) conducted a study the aim of which was to know more about the upper secondary school students' experiences of language teaching. In addition to this, Yli-Renko (1991) surveyed their conceptions of the oral test in the matriculation examinations. The study covers eight different upper-secondary schools from different parts of Finland. The results imply that a significant reason to increase the role of oral skills in schools is that the students, who are the main actors in teaching, want more practice on oral skills (Yli-Renko 1991:54). In the study, the upper-secondary school students wished to have more discussions and interaction in a foreign language in lessons, which would help them to carry out many of their most basic transactions. As high a percentage as 94% of students called for more oral skills practice. According to Yli-Renko (1991:54), the Finnish upper-secondary school seniors regarded learning to speak a foreign language as a major goal. Moreover, they wished that language teaching could concentrate on speaking ever since elementary school.

This opinion is reinforced in the study conducted by Romo (1991). Romo (1991) investigated teachers' and students' attitudes towards spoken English testing and test types in upper secondary school. The sample of the study consists of 66 second grade students and 16 teachers. For the present study, the most essential information that the study provides is the teachers' and students' opinions about teaching oral skills at

school. The results indicate that among the upper secondary school students speaking English is considered very important, but it seems like it is not mastered very well. As Romo (1991) points out, there is the clearest difference between the mastering and the usefulness of a skill. The attitudes of the students towards the language seem to be very positive and students are willing to study the language. Most of the students disagreed when asking if practising English oral skills is disagreeable. The students also shared the view that practising speaking skills in lessons is inadequate.

There are several reasons why the role of oral skills in classrooms has been and still is minor. Romo (1991: 56) also investigated the attitudes of the teachers towards spoken English testing. She found out that the teachers acknowledged the poor speaking skills of the students and regarded the lack of a speaking test as the major culprit: if speaking skills are not measured in the matriculation exam, there is no time or “need” to concentrate on them. In addition, according to the teachers, there were not suitable exercises for speaking practice in the course book. The teachers admitted that they should put more emphasis on practising oral skills and they felt frustrated for not doing so.

The study by Tattari (2001) provides more recent information on the teachers’ attitudes towards oral skills in general and towards teaching oral skills. Reasons for the insignificant role of oral skills are partly the same in the 21st century. A slight progress can, however, be seen. Tattari (2001) investigated teachers’ views on practising and testing oral language skills at school. The data of the study consisted of 96 questionnaires filled by upper comprehensive school and upper secondary school teachers. For the present study, the most essential information that the study provides is the teachers’ opinions about oral skills and about teaching them at school. The teachers’ views reflect the attitudes of the students. The results indicate that the teachers highly value the mastery of speaking skills and say that the students are very motivated to practise oral skills. Furthermore, the results suggest that practising oral skills has a central role in language classrooms (Tattari 2001). The attitudes of the teachers towards oral skills were overall very positive, but the situation in practice seems to be problematic. The teachers claimed that the role of oral skills should be greater already in teacher education. Similarly, teachers blamed the lack of time and

big group sizes for making practising oral skills difficult. In addition, the lack of suitable material was one reason according to Tattari (2001).

The most recent study on oral skills was conducted by Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006). The aim of the study was to find out what kind of role oral competence has in Finnish upper-secondary schools. To be more exact, the study attempted to answer questions such as how oral skills are practised, tested and evaluated and what kind of attitudes teachers have towards oral skills. The study was done through a questionnaire which was filled by 80 teachers. The results indicate that teachers have very positive attitudes towards oral skills. However, oral skills are still neglected: a lack of an oral test in the Matriculation Examination seems to be the main reason for neglecting oral skills. Similarly, big group sizes and lack of time deteriorate the possibilities to practise speaking skills. It is very paradoxical that the teachers themselves are considered to be the main opponents of oral tests, because of the size of its workload (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006: 2). Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006:84) also mention student related reasons, such as students' shyness to speak and lack of motivation, complicated social relations in class and students' poor oral skills, as a factor hindering practice of oral skills.

Despite the positive attitudes of the teachers towards oral skills, the focus of teaching in Finnish upper secondary school has remained on written skills (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006:77). It is startling to see that over half of the teachers (60,8) think that teaching written skills in upper secondary school is more important than teaching oral skills (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006: 77). Here again, the reason is most likely the lack of an oral component in the matriculation exam, which has a great impact on what is practised in the classes. The teacher and his or her attitudes have a central role and she has a great impact on what is learned in lessons.

It seems like the old tradition has grown its roots very deep in ground as the teachers still eagerly stick to the written language. As Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006:1) point out, one would think that the teachers would willingly provide the students with speaking skills that are so greatly needed today. All the teachers in upper secondary school do not, however, agree with this need and they want to keep the school very theoretically oriented, which means focusing on the written language.

This surprising opinion that came out in the study of Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006:1) includes an idea that speaking skills are somehow too practical to be thought in upper secondary school. Bygate (1987:viii) discusses the same subject and says that speaking is often considered a “popular” form of expression, which does not use the prestigious register, whereas literary skills are more valued, more prestigious skills. This distinction might also be due to the fact that “speaking is transient and improvised, and can therefore be viewed as facile, superficial or glib” (Bygate 1987:viii).

The study by Huuskonen and Kähkönen (2006:85-86) reveals that the teachers had also a lot of positive experience from practising oral skills that has to be taken into consideration. Several factors such as students’ motivation and good teaching materials encourage teachers to spend time on speaking. In addition, the teachers think that the students enjoy speaking and doing oral exercises makes the atmosphere relaxed according to some teachers. Some teachers thought that one learns by doing and this was the reason why they focused on oral skills. Naturally, the teacher’s positive attitude towards oral skills can be seen in the amount of time spent on practising them (Huuskonen and Kähkönen 2006:33).

To sum up, chapter 3 discussed speaking and showed the importance of taking the learners with their needs into account when encouraging them to use a foreign language. Despite the fact that speaking as a skill is clearly recorded in the official curriculum, it often remains subjected to written skills in upper-secondary school for various reasons. Therefore, there is still a great need to improve the role of oral skills and to provide tools for teachers to make the situation better.

## 4 SUGGESTOPEDY - “WHY CAN’T WE DO ANYTHING FUN?”

In the present material package, I make use of some suggestopedic elements. I want to emphasise the words *some elements*, because the package cannot be made purely suggestopedic for various reasons. However, a theory framework of the suggestopedy is needed to help the reader to pick up the suggestopedic elements used in the material package. In this section I attempt to cover the philosophy of the *pure* suggestopedy. First, I will present the wider framework of suggestopedy, the humanistic approach (section 4.1), which may facilitate the understanding of suggestopedy. Second, some background information about the suggestopedy (section 4.2) is provided. Third, I am going to shed light on the main theoretical cornerstones of suggestopedy (section 4.3) and describe it in practice (see section 4.4) Fourth, the challenging role of the suggestopedic teacher is discussed (section 4.5). Finally, I attempt to present the research results of the use of suggestopedic teaching as well as the criticism that has been attributed to the philosophy (sections 4.6 and 4.7)

### 4.1 Humanistic approach

The question of how people learn languages has inspired researchers in the area of linguistics and psychology to study this complicated issue. If we want to make learning oral skills more effective, we need to consider how learning theories contribute to the accomplishment of this goal. Several theories have been created and four main learning concepts can be distinguished: behaviouristic, cognitive, humanistic and constructive. It should be noted that none of these theories exist purely as such. In this section, I will cover the humanistic approach, which provides a framework for suggestopedy. The socio-constructive learning theory is discussed together with collaborative learning.

When I began to work with humanistic activities, I never anticipated such universally positive reactions. It has been a lesson I have loved learning and a message worth spreading. Yes! People **are** alike – they **all** need to be listened to, cared about, understood, and accepted for the persons they are. And they **will** share and self-disclose given a safe and non-threatening environment. (Moskowitz 1982: 33)



As this comment of a humanistic teacher and the name “humanistic” itself suggest, the humanistic approach puts the human in a central role. The term humanistic is a very extensive concept including a wide range of methods. This ideology battles with the traditional way of teaching where the student’s desires are not taken into consideration; they only work mechanically with the grammar exercises and repeat a series of dialogues, because a distant authority requires doing so (Stevick 1982: 7). This exaggerated description helps to picture the opponents of the humanistic approach.

Humanistic teachers do not see the language as a purely intellectual matter. In contrast, they see it as something that must engage the whole person with her emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs (Brumfit 1982: 11). The starting points of humanistic thinking are that the main focus should be on human experience and the human is whole. All efforts to divide the human experience into discrete parts are against humanistic thinking (Brumfit 1982: 16).

The methods that label themselves as humanistic differ from the traditional way of teaching in the following way; they can be divided into three dimensions (Stevick 1982: 7). The first dimension is that humanistic methods direct their focus on the purposes of the learner. In terms of language learning, the central role is on what the learner is interested in, what they need the language for and what they are expected to learn by the end of the course other than pronunciation, vocabulary and grammar (Stevick 1982: 7). The second dimension emphasises the democracy in the classroom. This “balance of power” grants the learner with freedom and autonomy, but also with responsibility. The third dimension deals with the process of learning and the humanistic methods differ in the way they view this issue. There is a dispute between those who believe language learning takes place similarly to that of an infant and those who believe that it takes place as that of a post-adolescent (Stevick 1982: 8).

Five emphases within humanism indicate the importance of the learners’ needs. The humanistic approach puts weight on the following aspects, according to Stevick (1982: 23): 1) feelings, 2) social relations 3) responsibility, 4) intellect and 5) self-

actualization. *Feelings* include both personal emotions and esthetic appreciation. Anything that makes people feel bad or destroys esthetic enjoyment is against this aspect of the humanistic view. *Social relations* is an aspect that encourages cooperation and friendship, while opposing to anything that tries to reduce them. *Responsibility* is a component that acknowledges the need for public scrutiny, criticism, and correction. The term *intellect* includes knowledge, reason and understanding and it battles against anything that interferes with the free exercise of the mind. The final aspect is *self-actualisation*, which is searching for full realization of one's own deepest true qualities, in other words, pursuing uniqueness. These five aspects and the two first ones in particular, are compatible with the suggestopedia.

Having covered some of the main points of humanism, it is of interest to see what the humanistic communication activities, which are used in foreign language teaching, are like. According to Moskowitz (1982: 20), the purpose of using the activities to teach foreign languages is to boost the self-esteem of the students, to increase positive thinking, to build a greater closeness among the learners and to help the students to find the strength and goodness in themselves and in their peers. It is worth noting that the greatest goal is not the language, but it is commonly held that when students feel comfortable and safe in the classroom, their willingness to learn is far greater.

## **4.2 Background on suggestopedia**

During the 1970s, different kinds of humanistic thoughts were born to provide alternative ways to learn and teach languages. Stevick (1990:7) mentions Total Physical Response, the Silent Way, Community Language Learning and Suggestopedia as the most visible methodologies that were born. There is a little controversy about whether suggestopedia is a purely humanistic method or not. Mateva (1997:57) refers to several studies which label suggestopedia as a purely humanistic method sharing the five emphases with humanism, on feelings, social relations, responsibility, intellect and self-actualisation (Stevick 1990: 23). Stevick (1990) does not label suggestopedia as a purely humanistic method but rather as an approach having humanistic elements in it.

“Suggestopedy is a philosophy of learning and teaching that arouses strong enthusiasm in the devotee and much suspicion among the orthodox” (O’Connell 1982: 110). This definition aptly describes the attitudes towards the teaching method which tries to reverse the idea of the proverb “there is no royal road to learning” (Jaatinen and Rannikko 1984:5). The proverb implies that learning is always somehow very troublesome. One of the aims of suggestopedy is to make learning easy and enjoyable in order to get hold of the unused capacities of the brain.

Sharing the humanistic emphasis, suggestopedy does not see language as a purely intellectual matter. In contrast, it sees the language as something that must engage the whole person with her emotional, spiritual and intellectual needs (Brumfit 1982: 11). As a human approach putting emphasis on communicative skills, suggestopedy might have something to offer to learning and teaching oral skills. Foreign language suggestopedy is in accordance with widespread and well-grounded theories of communicative language learning (Mateva 1997:61).

As far as the literature on suggestopedy is concerned, there is a large number of studies and books related to the subject. However, the majority of available literature concerning the theory of suggestopedy is fairly old and mostly based on the ideas of the creator of suggestopedy, Dr Lozanov. This makes the issue slightly one-sided. Furthermore, the books that are written by other experts on suggestopedy mostly rely on the writings of Lozanov. Yet, there are some newer articles and studies where suggestopedic elements have been applied to different practices of teaching.

#### ***4.2.1 Definition of suggestology and suggestopedy***

Suggestopedy is an application of suggestology into pedagogy (Lozanov 1978). Suggestology, in turn, is “the scientific study of suggestion” (Bancroft 1999). Understanding the term “suggestion” facilitates comprehension of the whole method. Lozanov (1978: 201) puts forward a following definition of suggestion: “Suggestion is a constant communicative factor which chiefly through paraconscious mental activity can create conditions for tapping the functional reserve capacities of personality.” Suggestion exists in a wide range of contexts; it is utilized in business,

particularly in advertising to encourage the consumer to buy goods without being aware of the reasons for buying it; the power of suggestion is exploited in religion and similarly, the artists exploit the suggestion as they must win over their audiences by appealing to their emotions (Lozanov 1978 and Bancroft 1999).

The number of suggestion is immeasurable. If a human being reacted to all the suggestions, she or he would become helpless (Marckwort 1994:33). For this reason, the human being is equipped with so called anti-suggestive barriers (Lozanov 1978:163), which accept or reject the effect of suggestion. The first one is called “the critical logical barrier” (Lozanov 1978: 163), which rejects everything that reason judges unacceptable. The second barrier is “the intuitive-affective barrier”, which rejects anything likely to produce a feeling of lack of confidence or insecurity. “The ethical barrier” is a final aspect that is in contradiction with the ethical sense of the personality. The task of the suggestopedic teacher is to overcome the anti-suggestive barriers (see section 4.5)

The terminology concerning suggestopedy needs clarification. The term *suggestion* is often related to the term *hypnosis*. This might partly explain the negative attitudes of some people who feel that suggestopedy has to do with manipulating students. Lozanov (2003) wants to disprove the misconception by saying that in English the word *suggest* means *to offer* and *to propose*. These terms reflect the core idea of suggestopedy; the learner is never forced to do anything, but rather different kinds of possibilities are *offered* to him or her. Owing to the connotations of the term *suggestopedy*, a new term *desuggestive learning* has been taken into use (Lozanov 2003). Desuggestive learning could be described as “free, without mildest pressure, liberation of previously suggested programs to restrict intelligence and spontaneous acquisition of knowledge, skills and habits” (Lozanov 2003:2). Despite the possible connotations, I will stick to the term suggestopedy, since it is a well-known and widely used term. The term suggestopedy comes from the word suggestion and pedagogy (Lozanov 1978:1).

As mentioned above, suggestopedy is a pedagogical application of suggestology. Suggestopedy is a science that develops different non-manipulative and non-hypnotic methods for teaching and learning languages and other subjects for every age group

at the level of potential, unused capacities of the brain and mind (Lozanov 2003). This means, according to Lozanov (2003), that the language is learned at least three to five times faster, in comparison to conventional methods, in a fairly easy way. He also claims that the learning is deeper and it allows inner freedom. In addition, the students' motivation for learning increases similarly to psycho-physiological well-being. These strongly positive effects have been confirmed by the most prestigious international commissions and scientists, according to Lozanov (2003). However, it should be born in mind that suggestopedy is a fairly old method of teaching and the effectiveness of suggestopedy was measured in relation to the other methods dominating in the 70s.

#### ***4.2.2 The origins and the spread of suggestopedy***

There is a good reason why suggestopedy is often associated with hypnosis. The creator of suggestopedy is not a language teacher, but a doctor of medicine, a psychiatrist Georgi Lozanov. As a psychiatrist, Lozanov had successful experience of hypnotism in his therapeutic work and he was sometimes able to affect amelioration of symptoms simply by using suggestion alone (O'Connel 1982:110). In his career, Lozanov became aware of and strongly impressed by two phenomena in the human life (O'Connel 1982:110). The first of these is the great capacity of the human brain. Lozanov became particularly impressed by the amount of unused capacity, which he calls "reserve powers". He claims that the unused capacity of the brain is as high as 96 percent (O'Connel 1982:110). Another matter that Lozanov found interesting is the power of suggestion.

Suggestopedic teaching has gained ground, despite the criticism that has been attributed to it through times (see section 4.7). Suggestopedia originated in Bulgaria in 1970s (Lozanov 2003). There are many thousands of primary schools in Bulgaria where the children learn all subjects with suggestopedic methods. The method has not remained only in Bulgaria, but it has spread to several countries, for example, to the Western Europe and to the United States (O'Connel 1982). It is worth noting that unlike in Bulgaria, these countries have adopted suggestopedy as a way to

merely teach adult learners, despite the fact that Lozanov considers the method suitable for all age groups.

Despite the old theory and criticism attributed to the method, suggestopedy can still be found even in Finland. The method has been used ever since 1980s in Finland (Suggestopedia Ry 2007). Suggestopedia Ry is an association the aim of which is to make suggestopedy more popular in Finland and to foster the contacts between people interested in the method both in Finland and around the world. Furthermore, different kinds of trainings are provided by Suggestopedia Ry. The newsletter *Aktiviteetti*, including members' experiences within suggestopedy, comes out twice a year providing information about the current situation of suggestopedy in Finland.

In terms of suggestopedic teaching materials, there are some text books with teachers guide available for different languages. The English ones are called *Enjoy it* and *On Top of the World*. The teaching material has been created by Finns who have become fascinated by the suggestopedic teaching method and some of whom have themselves been in the Institute of Suggestopedia in Bulgaria. The materials are, however, very old and they require the teacher to use suggestopedy as the only method throughout the book. The books follow the principals of the traditional suggestopedic teaching materials (see section 4.4).

Suggestopedy has not, however, gained ground in Finland on a larger scale. Suggestopedic language courses are held in the bigger cities, but suggestopedic schools are few. Suggestopedic courses are arranged for example, by Kielikoulu *Nuevo mundo* in Helsinki, by *Onnenkieli Oy* in Tampere and by *Boyling* in Tampere. Suggestopedic teacher training does not exist and therefore the teachers are trained by more experienced teachers.

### **4.3 Cornerstones of suggestopedic teaching**

In order to get a picture of the outlines of suggestopedy, we should take a look at the main ideas, different principles of suggestopedy and the ways the principles are

fulfilled in practice. These are called suggestopedic means. The principles and the means together form the basis of suggestopedy.

#### ***4.3.1 The principles of suggestopedy***

Suggestopedy battles with the so called suggestive norm, which is a set of assumptions that the learner has about learning and about his or her own capacities. According to the “suggestive norm”, which is often a burden of learners, the human capacities are limited and learning is troublesome (Lozanov 1980). People grow into this kind of thinking from birth, which later begins to restrict or slow down one’s abilities to learn. Saféris (1987:107) talks about her teaching experience with adult learners and says that the adults have often been surprised by how much they have enjoyed being in class. This implies that concepts of having fun and learning are rarely associated. One of the great aims of suggestopedy is to help people to liberate from this negative suggestion (Lozanov 1980: 33). As a matter of fact, Lozanov claims that liberating from the “suggestive norm” enables the learner to gain access to some of the reserve powers, which is the unused capacity of the brain (see O’Connel 1982: 111).

There are three principles concerning suggestopedy (Lozanov 1978:258). The first one is called enjoyment and relaxation. The second principle deals with the harmonious collaboration of the conscious and the unconscious. The final principle has to do with gaining access to the so called reserve powers (unused capacities of the brain). Next I am going to describe each principle separately. It should be borne in mind, however, that in practice the principles interact and form an integrated whole (Saféris1987:110).

The first principle deals with the emotive aspect of the learner. Joy and relaxation are the necessary prerequisites for effective and fast learning. This is to say that in language classrooms the students should feel unthreatened, secure when involved in meaningful activities using a foreign language (O’Connel 1982: 111). Anxious tension should be avoided, because it hinders learning and makes the learner tired and exhausted. Anxious tension is caused by the learner’s lack of confidence in his or

her “ability to understand, memorize and utilize the material given in the lesson” (Lozanov 1978: 258). It is easy to support this principle as many of us have memories from classes where we have been scared of teacher making us a question on an issue we have not fully understood. Uncertainty inevitably creates tension, which inhibits learning, in turn. A pleasant and safe learning atmosphere is considered very essential in suggestopedic teaching and Lozanov (1978) claims that when this principle is neglected the educational process is joined with a great amount of tension.

There seems to be an equivalent for the principle of joy and relaxation in Krashen’s affective filter hypothesis. In his theory, “Affective filter” is an imaginary barrier which prevents learners from using input which is available in the environment (see Lightbown and Spada 1993:28). “Affect” includes motives, needs, attitudes and emotional states and they all have an impact on language learning. As Lightbown and Spada (1993:28) say, the filter is operating “when the learner is stressed, self-conscious, or unmotivated” whereas the filter is not in operation when the learner is relaxed and motivated. A very similar idea can be found in Lozanov’s principle of joy and relaxation. Furthermore, a third similar observation can be found in the Common European Framework; it is said that learner’s physical and emotional state has an impact on performance. This is to say that an alert and relaxed person is likely to learn better than a tired and anxious one (Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007:161).

All in all, it can be said that in recent years a great deal of attention has been paid to the importance of learners’ feelings in determining the quality of learning that takes place in the classroom (Littlewood 1992). In the framework of Littlewood discussed above (see section 3.3), one of the principles also deals with the classroom atmosphere, which should be encouraging for the learners to participate in the activities and interactions without any constraint. Littlewood (1992:98) calls for the feeling of security in the environment as the students engage in conversation in a foreign language and thus give up the security of the mother tongue. It is remarkable that despite the fact that suggestopedy is a fairly old teaching method, it nonetheless sees the affective state of students very crucial.



The second principle, which is called “the unity of conscious and paraconscious and integral brain activity” by Lozanov (1978:259) is about gaining access to the subconscious capacities of the brain. This means that the teaching should be organised in such a way that both the conscious and paraconscious reactions and functions of the students could be utilised. In addition, the integral and purposeful participation of the both brain hemispheres is an essential matter. In practice, this is to say that the suggestopedic teaching should regard the student as a whole and make sure that he or she can fully participate in the learning process on the logical, rational and affective level (Saféris 1987:108).

The third principle has to do with gaining access to the so called reserve powers. The process of teaching should be constructed in such a way that mutual relations are created. In suggestopedic teaching, this is to say that mutual trust and respect should prevail in the relationship between the teacher and the students (Saféris 1987:109). Similarly, the educational process should take place on the level of the unused capacities of personality, which have not yet been utilized. This can only be fulfilled by observing all three principles simultaneously. It is interesting to notice a very similar emphasis within the framework of Littlewood (see section 3.3) when it comes to the importance of mutual relationships among the members of the class. Littlewood (1992) stresses the significance of the relationship between the learners and also the relationship between the teacher and learners (Littlewood 1992:99). The class should provide a network of human relationships for the student in which they feel secure and accepted, according to Littlewood (1992:99).

None of these principles discussed above can alone make learning successful. In contrast, the observance of all principles simultaneously makes the learning joyful and easy leading to the tapping of complex reserves. If one principle is neglected, one can no longer talk about suggestopedy (Saféris 1987:110).

### **4.3.2 The suggestopedic means**

Let us now consider the means through which the principles are realized. Lozanov (1978:261) divides the means into three different groups: 1) psychological 2) didactic and 3) artistic.

*Psychological means* are considered a separate group of means even though they are also present in the other two means. However, they have a specific additional significance for suggestopedic teaching in primary schools and this is why these means are discussed separately. Lozanov (2003) emphasises the importance of peripheral perceptions, in other words, unconscious or partially conscious perceptions. He claims that these peripheral perceptions play a significant role in the assimilation of any knowledge. To illustrate this means, when starting to teach children to read the first few days rely extremely on peripheral perceptions: walls are covered with appropriate pictures with, for example, a word or relevant sentences. Children's attention should not be turned to these pictures, but gradually, within a day or two they begin to read the words. According to Lozanov (2003), high percentages of peripheral perceptions are learned, without loss of energy. The teacher must be well-trained to utilize unconscious perceptual and thinking processes in the educational process.

*The didactic means* basically refer to the presentation of the learning material (Saféris 1987:111). The material should be presented in a structured fashion, combining the big picture "the enlarged teaching unit" (Lozanov 1978:261) and the detailed picture of the subject taught. This principle requires "a great deal of common sense in teaching, the avoidance of repeated exercises on details, and the gradual introduction of new subjects for study" (Lozanov 1978:261). An example from the area of foreign language teaching might facilitate the understanding of this means. When facing a new sentence, the students' attention should be directed to the whole sentence and to its communicative aspect while pronunciation and grammar remain on the second plane. These aspects are also assimilated, but students' attention should not be directed at the second plane for too long. Lozanov (1978)

claims, that a considerable part of the elements are learned along with the whole structure without special attention being paid to them. The teacher should be able to balance between the poles of general picture and detailed picture.

*The artistic means* of suggestopedy including, for example, the use of music, literature and acting are used for a special purpose. They are not used merely to create a pleasant and safe atmosphere, but also “to enhance the emotional impetus, the suggestive setup, attitude, motivation, expectancies” (Lozanov 1978:261). The use of artistic means enable the students to assimilate part of the material immediately. Lozanov (1978) emphasises that the artistic means are built into the contents of the lesson so that they are not separate parts of the class.

Suggestopedy is known for the use of classical music during the concert session (see section 4.4). Classical music has been chosen owing to its great emotional impact on learners (Saféris 1987:113). As a way of relaxation, baroque music in particular is used since its pulse is close to human’s resting pulse (Matikainen 2007:10). It is believed that music has a great number of advantages in terms of language learning. Matikainen (2007:10) claims that, with the help of music, extensive areas of the brain are activated. Similarly, music gains access to the subconscious mind and thus activates the memory. What is more, the relaxing effect of music reduces inhibitions and helps the person to gain access to deeper state of consciousness. That is when the creative resources are utilized in a more effective way. In short, with the help of music, learning can be made more holistic (Matikainen 2007:10).

#### **4.4 Suggestopedy in practice**

Having covered the theoretical aspect of suggestopedy, it is worth considering how the suggestopedic principles and means are implemented in practice. It is good to bear in mind that suggestopedy is used in all the fields of knowledge, but it is mostly applied in the field of foreign language studies (Lozanov 2003). This section deals merely with the suggestopedic practices in the area of foreign language learning. The model which is presented here (see O’Connel 1982:113) is used in all courses run along suggestopedic lines and it comes from the Institute of Suggestology in Sofia. It

is aimed at adults, many of whom are about to go abroad and need survival skills in the language. Thus, the course is designed to teach only oral language. It is worth pointing out that there is variation between different suggestopedic practices but the following description gives a sufficient picture of the main practices of suggestopedy.

The suggestopedic classroom looks very different from a traditional classroom. The posters including essential linguistic information on the walls serve the purpose of utilizing peripheral perceptions. The students and the teacher sit in a circle in armchairs and the classroom is equipped with carpets, curtains, pictures and good lightning (O'Connel 1982: 113). As a matter of fact, the physical surroundings and atmosphere in the classroom are vital factors to make sure that the students feel secure and unthreatened. Lozanov puts stress on mental relaxation of the students and the coziness of the classroom works as a silent suggestion that the course is relaxed and comfortable (O'Connel 1982:114). It is not hard to imagine that the first impression of the suggestopedic classroom is very positive, but this is not the only goal of the physical environment. O'Connell (1982) points out that the effect of the physical facilities is great and the physical setup encourages students "to speak on their feet and to move as they speak, to use gestures and to feel free in the new language" (O'Connel 1982: 114).

The suggestopedic textbook must follow the principles of suggestopedy. This means, according to Lozanov (1978) that the material for each new lesson should be given in large portions and the theme of each lesson must form a complete entity. In addition, the material should be presented in meaningful wholes and it should be communicative in nature. In order to gain the students' attention, the stories should be interesting and entertaining for the students, while traumatic themes and unpleasant lexical material should be avoided. The dialogues should form a light-hearted story running through the text book and "the plot must turn on the emotional content of the story" (Lozanov 1978:278).

A traditional suggestopedic textbook differs a great deal from the contemporary text books used in language teaching. The textbook includes about 10 dialogues, each of which is fairly long, 8-10 pages including a short grammar section (Saféris 1987).

The reason for the vast amount of material is explained by Lozanov (as cited by O'Connell 1982:114) in the following way: a small number of simple utterances suggest to students that the work is troublesome and that they could be expected to master only small samples in the early stage of the course. Thus, the teacher's task is to start the "desuggestion" by introducing the students to lengthy dialogues. All the dialogues are translated into student's mother tongue to reduce possible anxiety caused by the foreign language. This is not to say that the use of target language is neglected. On the contrary, the target language is strongly present in the teacher's talk from the very beginning. There seems to be variation in terms of the use of the target language, as Matikainen and Lippu (2004) state that the target language is not used at all in suggestopedic teaching. Dictionaries in the classroom and posters including essential phrases on the walls support learning.

It is worth pointing out that long before the contemporary emphasis on communicative competence, Lozanov realized that adult learners could not enjoy learning a language if not engaged in meaningful conversations (O'Connell 1982). For this reason, on the first day beginners are given new identities including a name, profession and address and the roles are used throughout the course. The fact that everyone has a role in the dialogue makes students "responsible" for telling other students about their experiences. This way every student has a personal investment in the dialogue. In addition, the use of role plays is justified by the creative versatility, which is natural for the human personality (Matikainen and Lippu 2004). In teaching it would be recommendable to get rid of the narrow self-image and this is how the suggestopedic role play functions: having roles forces one to change the point of view (Matikainen and Lippu 2004). The roles, furthermore, liberate one from having to talk about oneself, which is not enjoyable for everyone (Littlewood 1992). However, having a role is not natural for every student either so a great deal of sensitivity is expected from the teacher to find the preferences and the needs of the students.

When it comes to homework, students learning a foreign language by the suggestopedic system have hardly any homework (Lozanov 1978). The only homework, which is not compulsory, is reading the new dialogue cursorily, much of the same way as reading the newspaper. The students are recommended to do this

both in the evening and in the morning. The purpose of this is to facilitate the assimilation of the new material. There is, however, variation in this respect depending on the emphasis of the course. To exemplify this, the suggestopedic school I visited, Onnenkieli Oy, had students do a great amount of homework in order to provide the students with sufficient reading and writing skills as well. The class sessions devoted mainly to the practice of oral skills, whereas exercises requiring reading and writing were done at home.

The course is run following a strictly structured schedule. Traditional suggestopedic teaching takes place within two sessions, which both last for 1h 30min. The teaching is divided into four different phases: introduction, concert sessions (passive and active), elaboration and production (Lozanov 2003). There is variation in terms of the names of the sessions, but the principle is the same. I attempt to describe each phase to give an idea of the practical realization of suggestopedic teaching.

**Introduction.** In this phase, the teacher reads the dialogue and at some points comments on the situations and on some linguistic matters (Saféris 1987). The students listen to the teacher and they are allowed to make some notes on the text. The teacher presents the material in “a playful manner” instead of analyzing lexis and grammar of the text in a directive manner.

**Concert session.** After the introduction, the teacher announces to the students that it is time for the concert to start. The music used is baroque music (O’Connel 1982) including composers such as Bach, Corelli, Vivaldi, Handel and Mozart. In the active session, the students are asked to follow the text and the translation as the teacher reads the dialogue by imitating the rhythm and tone of the music. This is to say, the teacher tries to match the musical phrases with the linguistic phrases to form a harmonious whole (Saféris 1987). This is not an easy task and it requires good musical understanding from the teacher and training is necessary.

This phase that we are describing is a so-called active session, but one could argue that the students are merely listening to the teacher and following the text so they are acting rather passive. In order to avoid the possible feeling of passivity, Lozanov had to alter the phase so that the students stand up twice and read a few pages

together with the teacher (See Lozanov 2003). Thus, they act as co-creators with the teacher. Other alterations were also made concerning the music. In moments when the music is very soft and quiet, the teacher interrupts reading for a couple minutes and allows the group only to listen.

In the passive session, the teacher reads the dialogue for the second time slightly faster than in the first run. The music is changed as well. The students are asked to put the books aside and simply listen to the music and relax. The reason for listening to music reveals one of the Lozanov's principles – the value of peripheral learning (discussed in 4.3.2). On the basis of his experimental work, Lozanov (1978 as cited by O'Connel 1982: 115) claims that “stimuli received peripherally go into the long-term memory”. Thus, when students listen to the music, they act passive, but they are in fact utilizing reserve powers and creating conditions for very efficient memorisation according to Lozanov as cited by O'Connel (1982: 115).

**Elaboration.** This is a stage when students have a chance to practise the language learned from the dialogue. Unlike in the first phase, the teacher acts more like a consultant during the elaborations (Lozanov 2003). The language practice work is always done in the form of games, songs, jokes, dramatic episodes and sketches. The reason for the frequent use of songs is that they help to create and sustain the pleasant and relaxed atmosphere. Jokes are used for two functions; to illustrate a particular linguistic matter (idiom, structure, element of phonology etc) and most importantly to provide the students with a delight of understanding a joke in a foreign language (O'Connel 1982:116). Role playing and preparing sketches in small groups is used to create humor and inside jokes among other things. This certainly has also an effect on the group spirit. Team competition is also used in the phase of elaboration.

O'Connel (1982) states, that all kind of language practice is used and encouraged in the phase of elaboration. The only matter to be kept in mind is that the exercise should never become a drill. The use of a ball is common in suggestopedic teaching as it enables “the linguistic gain of a drill without its negative force” (O'Connel 1982:116). The throwing and catching of the ball becomes the main focus while the

language is “peripheral” (see section 4.3.2) and the students are helped to remain “infantilised” (see section 4.5) (O’Connel 1982: 116).

**Production.** In the final phase, the students speak spontaneously and they interact in the target language. They are not interrupted for correcting mistakes, because the teachers trust in self-corrections and peer-corrections. Only some mistakes that are constantly repeated are corrected, but quickly as an aside, suggesting that communication is the group’s function. Furthermore, it is believed that it is better “to be on one’s feet and boldly using the new language with pleasure than seeking perfect repetitions of meaningless segments in language laboratory” (O’Connel 1982: 116).

#### **4.5 The challenging role of the teacher**

The teacher has a very challenging role in the realization of suggestopedia: his or her highest duty is to liberate the student from the power of suggestive norm and encourage him or her in learning. In practice, this is done by following consistently the principles and the means of suggestopedia (see section 4.3). However, the matter is not as simple as that, but training is needed in order to become a suggestopedic teacher. Lozanov (2003) emphasizes the importance of training in the following way:

There is no other method or system that operates on this level. That is why working with this method requires the teacher to be properly trained. There is a lot of information in the authentic publications of Dr Lozanov but unfortunately this is not enough for a teacher to be trained. (Lozanov 2003)

In order to get a better understanding of the requirements that are set for a good teacher, Bancroft (1999) lists a number of skills and characters that the suggestopedic teacher is to possess. First, in addition to proficiency in the target language, the teacher should have the ability to speak the native language of the students. Second, suggestopedic language teachers must have good voice quality and acting abilities including effective use of body language. Finally, the teacher should have knowledge of music and good understanding of suggestion and relaxation techniques. These factors among other things make the role of the teacher very challenging.



One of the tasks of the teacher is to overcome the anti-suggestive barriers of the student (see section 4.2.1)(Lozanov 1978). Overcoming means that the suggestion is brought into harmony with the barriers of the students. To illustrate this, the teacher should not impose on students something that is totally against their will, but rather find compromises between the suggestion and the will of a learner. Overcoming the anti-suggestive barriers is done by four means: *authority*, *double-planeness*, *infantilisation* and *concert pseudopassiveness*.

The *authority* of the teacher is the key term in changing students' attitudes towards their unrestricted capacities. The term authority should not be confused with authoritarianism. While having authority, the teacher is encouraging and supportive (O'Connel 1982:112). It is the authority of the teacher that creates the secure feeling in the classroom. The second means, *double planeness*, refers to the two levels of communication: non-verbal and verbal communication (Saféris 1987:96). Double planeness has a special function in suggestopedy as Lozanov (1978) claims that if the words and other signals, such as intonation, voice quality, posture and gesture, contradict, one cannot talk about the effect of suggestion. As a matter of fact, the two levels should always be in harmony in order to maintain the authority: only when the behavior and function of the teacher is genuine and sincere, the information is convincing. Understanding the effect of these powerful interactive forces or suggestions is very important in suggestopedic teaching while they are given little attention in "orthodox" teacher training (O'Connel 1982).

*Infantilisation* is a term that might evoke suspicion when presented in the context of adult learning. This term used by Lozanov refers to "the achievement by adults of an open, trusting and spontaneous attitude to learning" (O'Connel 1982:112). Infantilisation is directly connected to authority and double planeness: with the help of these, the teacher attempts to relax the students and to encourage creativity in them, which is important in language learning. The final means of suggestion is called *concert pseudopassiveness*. The word concert refers to two separate matters: first, it refers to music used in the concert session of the lesson. Second, it has to do with the state of mind when listening to classical music - calm, relaxed and expectant. This is to say that when the students listen to the music, they seem very

passive, but actually much is happening in their mind. So the passivity is not genuine, but rather pseudo (O'Connell 1982:112).

Having dealt with the tasks of the teacher, let us look at the personal characters of the suggestopedic teacher. Mateva (1997) conducted a study the object of which was to form a portrait of a suggestopedic teacher. The aim of the study was twofold: to find out how the teachers view themselves and how the students view the teachers. There were 28 teachers, of whom 8 were full time teachers and 16 used to work at the Institute of Suggestology in Sofia. The rest of the teachers took part in a recorded interview and their statements confirmed the research data from the questionnaires. When it comes to the students, a questionnaire was filled by 345 students, whose age range was 18-60. They all needed a quick mastery of a foreign language.

The following comments of the students shed light on the teacher's characteristics. All the comments are highly positive and they indicate that these particular teachers have succeeded well in their challenging task. The comments below were mentioned by at least half of the students (Mateva 1997:64). The list does not include a single negative comment, which is surprising when considering the scope of the study. When reading the list, one may wonder if these characteristics are innate personality features, which cannot be gained through training.

- extremely devoted, dedicated
- tolerant (usually preceded by “extremely, unbelievable, etc.”)
- calm and relaxed
- smiling and encouraging
- highly qualified and experienced
- artistic
- with a sweet, melodious voice
- with a sense of humour
- with superb communications skills
- not only an excellent teacher but also the perfect human being
- great, unique, incomparable

Mateva 1997:64)

A good relationship between the teacher and the students is extremely important in suggestopedic teaching. As a matter of fact, it is one of the basic values of suggestopedy (see principle 3 in section 4.3.1). The students' opinions above indicate a very warm and positive relationship between the teacher and the students. The positive atmosphere is also strongly visible as Mateva (1997:65) states that in

suggestopedic classes students always thought that they had the best teacher, in the same way as teachers thought that they had the best students. The study also revealed that the teachers treat the student as a whole person and they believe in learners' unique personality and their "potential abilities for language acquisition and overall development" (Mateva 1997:66).

#### **4.6 Research results of the use of suggestopedic teaching**

Considering the results and the effectiveness of suggestopedic teaching is important when producing more material based on this particular method. In the following, I will present the results of different studies that support the use of suggestopedy.

In the study conducted by Mateva (1997) (see section 4.5), the students (n=345) were asked to report on the learning process during the suggestopedic foreign language course. The following comments indicate the successfulness of the course. For the present study, the comments which refer directly to spoken language are of special importance (numbers 1, 6 and 9). Comment number 9 clearly indicates how the different levels of language are intertwined and when practising communication skills, the other aspects are dealt with as well. All in all, the comments are very encouraging and they clearly indicate that the students find the suggestopedic method very effective

1. I learned how to communicate in English
2. I learned English in an easy and enjoyable way
3. I could learn a lot of words and phrases while listening to the music (singing songs, role playing)
4. I felt so immersed in the new language that I started to dream in English
5. I recalled words and phrases spontaneously at work, at home
6. I felt that all my blocks and barriers to speaking had been removed
7. I felt calm and relaxed and at the same time intellectually active
8. I was amazed how much I could learn in such a short period of time, and with less effort
9. This is the best way to get the basics of grammar and spoken English

(Mateva 1997: 64-65)

Reading the overly positive comments of the students might evoke suspicion in the reader. At least I was personally little skeptical about the "real" effects of suggestopedy when I read these comments for the first time. However, after visiting a suggestopedic school, it was easier to relate to the comments of the students.

Observing the Finnish classes for the adult immigrants and having conversations with both the teachers and the students made me more convinced about the efficacy of suggestopedia. The atmosphere in the classroom was indeed very positive and active. All the exercises were communicative in nature and students had a great number of opportunities to speak the target language. Several students said to me that suggestopedia is the best method of learning a language they have experienced. When I asked about its suitability for all students, they said that there are only one or two students who think the method is too childish for adults.

More encouraging results of suggestopedic teaching are provided by Sarkissian (1997). Despite the fact that suggestopedia as a teaching method is very communicative in nature, it has been successfully applied to teaching grammar as well. Sarkissian (1997) conducted a study on students' attitudes toward the use of suggestopedic role playing in a grammar class. The study included 30 students half of whom studied English as a second language at a regular school and the other half studied English as a foreign language at the suggestopedic school. Both groups had the same grammar content and role playing techniques. The results are in favor of suggestopedia. As a matter of fact, they show that the students became highly motivated to learn grammar and they freely applied their knowledge to practical use in real life situations with the help of suggestopedic role playing. Additionally, the students became more aware of their own mistakes and they often made a right choice when interacting in class and outside of the classroom (see Sarkissian 1997). This study suggests that suggestopedic operation modes are beneficial in a wide range of contexts.

The creator of suggestopedia, Lozanov (2003) proves the efficacy of the method by referring to "the most prestigious international commissions and scientists" who have confirmed the benefits of suggestopedia. According to Lozanov (2003), the method has also been officially tested by an international expert group of UNESCO that recommended suggestopedia to be applied all over the world. Here is an extract of the recommendation (Lozanov 2003:1):

There is consensus that Suggestopedia is a generally superior teaching method for many subjects and for many types of students, compared with traditional methods. We have arrived at this consensus following a study of the research literature,

listening to the testimony of international experts, observing films portraying Suggestopedia instruction and visiting classes in which Suggestopedia is practiced. The films were prepared and the classroom visitations were impressive.

This comment indicates the effectiveness of suggestopedia as the word method is preceded with the word “superior”. In addition, one essential benefit of suggestopedia is brought up; it is applicable to many types of students. Yet, it should be borne in mind that these results are fairly old. The extract above, for example, was published in the journal of the society for accelerative learning and teaching in 1978. Newer results are needed to prove the successfulness of the method. As already mentioned, these positive results have been made in relation to other teaching methods of the decade such as grammar-translation approach and audiolingual method. Thus, they cannot be applied to modern language teaching as such.

The summary of a study conducted by Maderdonner (1993) provides interesting information about the efficacy of suggestopedia in communicative language teaching. These results are significant in terms of the present study. The study deals with teaching Japanese to young people within the framework of secondary education in Austria. The teaching aims at communicative competence in three dimensions: code competence including a wide range of structure and vocabulary, knowledge of the target culture and attitudinal values. According to Maderdonner (1993), “additional support must be provided as the volume of language material introduced at the same time is generally larger than in grammar-based methods”. Additional support refers to methods such as suggestopedia and Total Physical Response which are the most efficient approaches, according to Maderdonner (1993). The reason for the effectiveness is that they aim at “providing multi-sensory input through vision, audition and movement to ensure high motivation and long-term recall”. Suggestopedic activities maintain a playful atmosphere, which motivates students to put the language to communicative use in the classroom (Maderdonner 1993). In short, suggestopedia is considered very effective when communicative competence is the aim of instruction.

## 4.7 Criticism on humanism and suggestopedy

So far I have made suggestopedy sound like a heaven lowered unto the earth. There is also another side to the matter that needs considering. Suggestopedy has its opponents and it has been criticised for various reasons.

The strongly positive results of Lozanov have often been criticized for the lack of reliability. O'Connel (1982) discusses the effectiveness of suggestopedy and acknowledges that evidence based on carefully administered tests is scarce. The figures that come out of Sofia, which were dealt with above, are impressionistic. O'Connel (1982: 116) states:

The analytical, controlled, impersonal approach to testing that satisfies the applied linguists is unlikely to measure fairly the performance of students who still have a euphoric attitude to the language. Some careful tests have been administered in the Suggestopedic School in Paris and the results tend to confirm that many students (not all) learn rapidly and well, but there is no solid evidence for "super-learning" (O'Connel 1982: 116).

In spite of the lack of careful tests, it is mentioned in the comment above that *many* students learn quickly and well, which is a positive sign of the effectiveness of suggestopedy. Furthermore, O'Connel (1982:116) goes on by saying that it is consistently demonstrated that when leaving the elementary course the students are very attached to the language and they have a desire to use every opportunity to speak and improve their performance in communication.

Humanistic approaches, particularly those which have been created by psychotherapists have been criticized for linking teaching with "therapeutic" activity (see Stevick 1990:66). This is to say that the line between teaching and therapy is sometimes indistinct. The reason for this might lie in the fact that Lozanov (1978) found out that the suggestopedic courses have a number of positive psychotherapeutic effects on learners such as gaining confidence in oneself, becoming stress-free etc. Mateva (1997:65) made similar observations; the students reported that the suggestopedic foreign language course had improved their health. The course had had a positive effect on headaches, insomnia, irritability, low or high

blood pressure and on psychotraumatic experiences. However, Stevick (1990:66) states, that the techniques of psychotherapy are very powerful tools, which can cause great harm as well as great benefit.

An essential element of suggestopedy, the use of classical music, has been criticised by some scholars. Hoskyns (1993) reviews the book *Suggestopedic Methods and Applications* by Schiffler (1992) and brings up some issues related to music. Schiffler (1992 as cited by Hoskyns 1993) claims that “the use of suggestopedic techniques does *not always* predict improved learning performance in a modern language as Lozanov states”. According to Schiffler (1992 as cited by Hoskyns 1993), some students find the classical and baroque music distracting. Schiffler (1992), furthermore, questions the use of classical music overall. Lozanov (1978) justifies the beneficial use of this particular genre of music by saying that the pulse of baroque music is closely linked to the resting pulse of a human being. However, Schiffler (1992 as cited by Hoskyns 1993), disproves this claim and states that music psychologists have not been able to agree about “the significance of pulse/heartbeat and identification with particular musical pulses.” For this reason, Schiffler (1992 as cited by Hoskyns 1993) raises a question whether some other genre of music would cause greater motivation. Lozanov (1978:333) strongly sticks to classical music as he says that the music included in the suggestopedic course is checked experimentally in the laboratories of the Insitute. What is more, he claims that the fact that some students do not like the particular music is not of essential importance, since the effect of music has little to do with one’s musical taste. To conclude this discussion, Lozanov (1978:333) says that changing of music is not recommendable unless careful study of the effects of the music is carried out.

Despite the criticism towards classical music, Schiffler (1992 as cited by Hoskyns 1993) acknowledges that the majority of the students enjoyed the classical music and thought that the music had a motivating effect on them. In addition, the words *not always* that Schiffler uses, implies that the use of suggestopedic techniques very often improve language learning. Thus, this criticism does not make suggestopedy a powerless teaching method. As a matter of fact, I also find Lozanov’s claim - suggestopedic techniques always predict improved language learning – very strong. It is practically impossible to create the kind of teaching method which would be

entirely approved by every single student. For this reason, the results that Schiffler (1992 as cited by Hoskyns 1993) brings up such as students enjoying and benefiting from the music are sufficient to support the effectiveness of suggestopedy.

In summary, this chapter provided an outline of the old humanistic teaching method suggestopedy. Despite the fact that suggestopedy is an old teaching method, it contains a great deal of fruitful elements that can be utilized even today providing that the possible weaknesses of suggestopedic teaching are taken into account. A teaching method that would be suitable for every student hardly exists. It is easy to agree with Littlewood (1992:2) as he says that “no single prescribed set of procedures can be valid for all learners, all situations and all teachers.” Rather, a looser framework is needed of principles and practices which help teacher to find the direction, but does not constrain him or her (Littlewood 1992).



## **5 COOPERATIVE LEARNING - “SINK OR SWIM TOGETHER”**

Collaborative or cooperative learning has gained ground in recent years and it has been applied to several subjects at all levels of education (Kauppila 2007:155). This chapter will shed light on different aspects of cooperative learning. Section 5.1 discusses the socio-constructive approach to teaching, which provides a general framework for cooperative learning. Section 5.2 gives general background on cooperative learning. Section 5.3 clarifies the terminology related to cooperative learning found in literature and section 5.4 sheds light on the practical side of applying cooperative learning to teaching. The factors which affect interaction are discussed in section 5.5, for interaction is a key element in cooperative learning. In addition, this chapter contrasts cooperative learning with humanistic ideas (section 5.6), as an attempt to show points of contact between the two approaches. Finally, the benefits as well as the criticism attributed to cooperative learning are presented (sections 5.7 and 5.8).

### **5.1 Socio-constructive approach**

Teaching is always based on the way the teacher sees teaching, studying and learning (Harjanne 2004). According to the learning concept that dominates at present, learning languages takes place in the following way: the learner constructs herself or himself the knowledge by using language in *social interaction*. This phrase contains the core idea of socio-constructivism (Harjanne 2004). The socio-constructive approach considers social interaction to be of special importance.

Socio-constructivism goes under the term constructivism (Tynjälä 2000:55). Constructivism cannot be regarded as an integrated whole (Tynjälä 2000:37), but it should be borne in mind that a great number of slightly different theories go under the umbrella. Constructivism has some common features with humanism, but its emphasis is slightly more on the intellectual side of the human. Similarly to humanism, constructivism puts emphasis on the learner, who is at the center of the learning process (Simina and Hamel 2005). The role of the teacher is not to pour

information into the student's heads, but she or he is seen as a guide or a facilitator in the learning process. According to constructivism, the interaction of the learner with his or her social and physical environment is considered very important (Simina and Hamel 2005).

Radical constructivism claims that knowledge is the self-organized cognitive process of the human brain. This is to say that the process of constructing knowledge regulates itself, and since knowledge is a construct rather than a collection of empirical data, it is impossible to know the extent to which knowledge reflects reality (Tynjälä 2000:40). Radical constructivism supports holistic, individual foreign language teaching (Kaikkonen and Kohonen 1998:6). Cooperative learning is holistic in nature as it aims to support the growth of the whole personality (Kohonen 1990: 92).

Socio-constructive practices are in favor of cooperative working methods (Kauppila 2007:155). This is to say that socio-constructivism provides the background theory with the help of which cooperative working methods are launched into practice. However, Kauppila (2007:155) claims that cooperative learning is rarely associated with the socio-constructive learning concept owing to the scarce application of socio-constructivism into practice.

The idea of the socio-constructive theory becomes clearer when it is applied to practice. The teacher should pay attention to the following aspects when planning communicative speaking activities for students. According to the socio-constructive theory, the tasks should meet the following criteria among other things: They require thinking and spontaneous language use, they are based upon previous learning, they enable student's own goal setting and they should guide the student to use the learned language in many different communication situations. In addition, the tasks should give the student a possibility to communicate in a way that is meaningful for the student and use the language in *collaborative interaction* with the fellow students (Harjanne 2004).

## **5.2 General background on cooperative learning**

Cooperative learning is an extensive whole of working methods rather than a simple method (Kujansivu 2002: 200) ranging from short-term pair work to long-term group work. Cooperative learning is not only about working cooperatively on a specific theme, but it is a philosophy of upbringing which is based on a humanistic conception of a human. In practice, this is to say in lines of cooperative learning that the students are taught the knowledge and skills such as democracy, equivalence, positive interdependence, respecting diversity and responsibility that are needed in life (Kujansivu 2002: 201). Cooperative learning puts the learner in the center of attention. Being cooperative requires accepting others, possession of cooperation skills, an ability to ponder and solve problems and an ability to communicate orally (Kujansivu 2002: 200).

Cooperative learning is considered very beneficial as it does not merely result in cognitive and skill-related benefits but also in social ones (Kauppila 2007:156). Cooperative learning attempts to change the atmosphere in the school from competition to collaboration and thus make learning more enjoyable for the student. As a matter of fact, the school is often perceived as a competitive enterprise and learning is often seen as individualistic and competitive acts (Johnson et al 1984:2). As a result of this, students are divided into two groups: those who work really hard to do better than other students and those who give up, because they believe they have no chance to win (Johnson et al 1984:2). Another reason why there is an increased need for the use of cooperative methods is a crisis in socialization. Johnson et al (1984:4) argue that a significant number of children, teenagers and young adults feel disconnected from their family and friends. In addition, many are isolated from society and they are not able to build and maintain social relationships with others. The newer research implies (see studies referred by Gillies 2007:1) that the benefits attributed to cooperative learning are numerous and widely spread. Slavin (1999 as cited by Gillies 2007:1) claims that cooperative learning is “one of the greatest educational innovations of recent times.”

### **5.3 Clarifying the terminology concerning cooperative learning**

The terms collaborative learning, cooperative learning and experiential learning are used in the literature to refer to the same phenomenon - cooperation. Most of the time they are used interchangeably, but some authors have attached a specific meaning to each term. Kauppila (2007:156) makes a distinction between the terms cooperative and collaborative learning. According to him, the term cooperative learning has been used in basic education instruction in USA to refer to the effective and successful cooperation of the students who come from different cultures. Thus, education of intercultural tolerance is involved in collaboration. Collaborative learning, in turn, has been used to refer to the collaboration of adults and young adults in the college and in the university. The collaboration in this case is related to studying issues (Bruffee 1999 as cited by Kauppila 2007:156).

Oxford (1997) also distinguishes cooperative learning from collaborative learning. The former refers to “a particular set of classroom techniques that foster learner interdependence as a route to cognitive and social development” (Oxford 1997: 443). The latter is less structured and less prescriptive for the teacher and less directive to students about how to work together in the group. Collaborative learning is based on social constructivism, which “holds that learning is acculturation into knowledge communities” (Oxford 1997: 443). In the present study, the words collaborative, cooperative and experiential learning are used interchangeably and the nature of cooperative learning is discussed in the following.

Cooperation has become a popular concept that is emphasized in different fields of life, but in teaching in particular. Cooperative learning as a concept sounds simple enough, but as noted by Johnson et al (1984:7), many practitioners including teachers who “believe that they are making use of cooperative learning are, in fact, missing its essence.” Johnson et al (1984) go on and say that there is a difference between putting students to sit by one another to learn and in building cooperative interdependence among students. Cooperative learning can best be defined in terms of four elements which are to be present in truly cooperative learning. These are

positive interdependence, individual accountability, face-to-face interaction and cooperative skills (Johnson et al 1984: 8). Let us look at each component separately.

**Positive interdependence** refers to the atmosphere in the group: all the members of the group are dependent on one another in a positive way. The positive interdependence may be achieved through different factors such as mutual goals, division of labor, dividing materials, resources or information in the group or assigning students different roles or by giving shared rewards (Johnson et al 1984: 8). The learning situation is not cooperative in nature unless the students understand that they are positively interdependent with other members of the group (Johnson et al 1984: 8).

**Face-to-face interaction** is the second component of cooperative learning, which involves students working in the small group where they can see each other. This enables face-to-face communications where the students listen to other members' ideas and bring up their own views (Gillies 2007: 5). Interaction can be very fruitful when the students learn to explain their ideas and experiences negotiate meaning and build up new ways of thinking (Gillies 2007: 37). Cooperative learning requires interaction among the group members. As noted by Johnson et al (1984:8), positive interdependence is not created magically, but it is the interaction and the verbal transaction among the individuals, promoted by positive interdependence, which influence the educational outcomes. The most important factor concerning face-to-face interaction is that through discussion, the group members facilitate each other's learning (Gillies 2007: 48).

**Individual accountability** for mastering the assigned material needs to be taken into consideration as students work collaboratively so that none of the group members can "hitchhike". In collaborative learning, every student is given feedback on their progress. The aim of the learning situation is to maximize the accomplishment of each student (Johnson et al 1984: 8). Thus, determining the level of mastery of each member is crucial so that the students can provide support and assistance to one another. Being accountable for one's individual contribution to the group avoids the possibility of free-loading in the group (Gillies 2007: 5).

**Cooperative skills** are mentioned as a final element of cooperative learning by Johnson et al (1984). Cooperative learning requires that the group members use “*interpersonal and small-group skills*” (Johnson et al 1984: 8) appropriately. Placing learners in the same group and telling them to work cooperatively does not guarantee that the members of the group use the interpersonal and small-group skills (Gillies 2007: 37). In contrast, the students should be taught the social skills needed for collaboration and they must be motivated to use them (Johnson et al 1984: 8). Furthermore, the group should be given a possibility to reflect on the functioning of the group (Johnson et al 1984: 8). This way every member can weight their contribution to the effective working relationships within the group.

#### **5.4 Practical aspects of cooperative learning**

The four basic elements discussed above form the theoretical basis of cooperative learning. When cooperative learning is applied to practice, several practical factors such as the size of the group and grouping practices need to be taken into consideration.

The size of the group has an effect on the efficiency of learning. The groups should not be too large. As noted above, face-to-face interaction is a key element of successful cooperative learning. Thus, groups including 8-10 members are no longer beneficial for the learners, for genuine group discussion in such a big group is hardly possible (Gillies 2007: 7). According to Lou et al (1996) (as cited by Gillies 2007: 7), the optimal size of the group is three to four members, whereas groups of between six and ten members have not achieved any better learning results than those students who worked in whole classes.

Saloviita (2007: 33) argues that a good way to start cooperative learning is to start from pair work. He justifies his claim by two facts. First, interaction in such a small group is fairly simple and it provides a good opportunity for the learners who do not yet possess social skills needed for work in bigger groups to practise their interpersonal skills. Second, pair work allows both the members to have very active roles, as each member has 50% of the time to speak. If there are four members in the

group, the percentage is 25%. Saloviita (2007:34) states that the smaller the group, the more active the students are. What is more, free-loading is far more difficult in a small group than in a big group. Thus groups including two to four people are idealistic for gaining good learning results (Saloviita 2007:34).

Who to place in the same group to make learning effective is another question the teacher has to consider. Johnson et al (1984:27) recommend placing high-, medium-, and low-ability students in the same group. This is justified by the fact that “more elaborative thinking, more frequent giving and receiving of explanations, and greater perspective in discussing material” (Johnson et al. 1984:27) seem to come about in heterogeneous groups. This is all very beneficial for learning. Kohonen (1990: 94) exemplify the benefits of heterogeneous groups and says that the slower learners get help from the faster ones, while the more advanced students also deepen their knowledge as they have to explain and justify matters to their peers. Simultaneously, the members in the group practise often unconsciously their social skills when interacting with one another.

Division into groups can be done in several ways. Johnson et al (1984:28) suggest that the teacher would allow students to select one person they want to work with and the teacher chooses the rest of the students for the group. Alternatively, students can be divided into groups randomly, by having students count off and placing the same numbers in the same group (Johnson et al 1984:28).

Johnson et al (1984:28) do not consider student selected groups beneficial since the groups tend to be fairly homogeneous when students can decide who to work with. To illustrate this, the advanced students who are usually very task-oriented work together, while the least motivated, low-ability students seek their way to the same group. What is more, student selected groups tend to reinforce the cliques existing in the classroom (Saloviita 2007:35). Saloviita (2007: 38) suggests that the division into groups should be done on the basis of students' grades so that there would be one weaker and one gifted student and two medium-ability students. This suggestion is similar to that of Johnsons' et al. (1984) discussed above. It should be borne in mind, however, that this kind of teacher selection approach requires a great deal of sensitivity of the teacher since the students can easily realize the logic behind the

division and it hardly encourages anyone to cooperate if one knows that she or he is the worst student in the group.

Consideration of the group size and heterogeneity are important factors when introducing cooperative learning into the classroom. Similarly, it is recommendable to spend time on creating a learning environment that is conducive to this type of learning (Gillies 2007: 198). It would be beneficial to discuss with students the new way of learning within cooperative learning so that the students understand that they are expected to work together to facilitate each other's learning and to adopt more active roles (Gillies 2007: 199)

### **5.5 Interaction at the heart of cooperative learning**

There is a link between the communicative approach to foreign language teaching and cooperative learning in small groups (Bejarano 1987 as cited by Nunan 1992:4). Small group oral interaction has been widely put forward over the last 30 years, especially within a more general communicative approach to language teaching (Naughton 2006:179). Interaction is a keyword in cooperative learning: learning in the classroom takes place through interaction with peers. Small group oral interaction in the language classroom has long been regarded as advantageous to learners who aim at target language competence (Naughton 2006: 169). Naughton (2006: 169) refers to several studies and says that through communicative interaction, input can be made comprehensible as the learners are able to negotiate meaning and make sure that the understanding is mutual. When interacting with one another, learners give and receive support and thus they function as mutual scaffolders (Naughton 2006: 170).

However, interaction only results in acquisition providing that the group members engage in the types of "negotiation moves" that are important for acquisition (Naughton 2006:180). Negotiation moves refer to receiving input and producing output during the interaction and negotiating of meaning when problems occur in understanding. Thus, the interaction *per se* does not guarantee enhanced oral skills, but it is the quality of communication. The same observation is done by Meloth and



Deering (1999 as cited by Gillies 2007). They claim that despite the fact that cooperative learning provides opportunities for students to interact with one another, it does not guarantee that they are doing this in an appropriate manner. Meloth and Deering (1999 as cited by Gillies 2007) state that students rarely give rich and detailed help to each other or engage in sophisticated talk unless they are explicitly asked to do so. This stresses the need to discuss the purpose of interaction with the students and to prepare careful instructions before having students cooperate and interact in small groups.

Oxford (1997: 443) regards cooperative learning, collaborative learning and interaction as three communicative strands in the language classroom. According to Oxford (1997), interaction involves interpersonal communication. In the second language classroom, interaction is affected by four different aspects (Oxford 1997: 449): types of language tasks, learners' willingness to communicate with one another, learning style dimensions and group dynamics. Let us now look at the types of language tasks and learners' willingness to communicate with each other in greater detail.

The goal of language tasks promoting interaction is to encourage interaction between learners. Oxford (1997: 449) mentions simulations, games, role plays, drama, and the use of electronic media as examples of such activities. The term simulation includes a wide range of activities such as games, drama activities and role plays that are often used in language teaching. Simulation allows practicing situations that resemble those of real-life and actually simulation is current reality in itself. What is more, simulations enable making mistakes with a low cost. According to Oxford, (1997:449) in a second language classroom where the teacher is encouraging, physical and emotional safety are guaranteed, students can make mistakes without serious real-world consequences. All the activities mentioned above enable learners to produce a great amount of authentic language and to practise their communicative skills (Scarcella and Crookall 1990 as cited by Oxford 1997)

Willingness to communicate in the language classroom, which refers to student's intention to interact with others in the target language, has a great impact on learning (Oxford 1997: 449). Oxford (1997: 449) states that "willingness to communicate in

one's mother tongue is related to a feeling of comfort, high self-esteem, extroversion, low anxiety, and perceived competence." Unwillingness, in turn, is connected with the opposites. This can be applied to a second language learner as well. Oxford (1997: 450) refers to research done in the second language domain and claims that learners who are eager to learn the language can tolerate more ambiguity and they dare to speak up despite the possible risk of making mistakes. In contrast, learners who do not take any risks at all are less likely to have any positive experiences of language use and they are often more prone to language anxiety (Oxford 1997: 450). Unwillingness to communicate might be explained by the lack of connection with the target language group or by the feeling of threat of losing one's native-language identity. Being able to take risks is of special importance when it comes to learning to speak. The communicative approaches recommend taking risks as the old saying aptly puts it: "Nothing ventured, nothing gained" (Beebe 1983 as cited by Kohonen 1992:26)

One cannot alter the personality features of the learner, but the factors affecting the learning environment can be taken into consideration to maximize the feeling of security. An encouraging teacher and a pleasant learning environment can have a positive contribution to learner's second language learning. It is especially important when the goal is to encourage to use the language. One of the principles of Littlewood (1992) deals with the affective side of the learning environment (see section 3.4).

## **5.6 Cooperative learning and humanistic ideas: points of contact**

Collaborative learning shares ideas with humanistic views. As a matter of fact, similarly to humanistic psychology, collaborative learning emphasises the needs of the learner and the importance of personal experiences for the growth of personality (Kohonen 1992: 15). Learners' experiences, attitudes and feelings about their learning gain a great deal of attention in experiential learning. This is justified by the fact that if learners improve the way they view themselves as learners, they might become better learners and thus utilize their learning *potential* more fully (Kohonen

1992: 15). This idea reflects the suggestopedic idea of “the suggestive norm”, (see section 4.3.1) which hinders the learners to use their potential.

More shared views can be found in terms of how the affective side of the learner is taken into consideration. As noted by Kohonen (1992), the impact of affective personality factors on language learning is clear despite the fact that it is difficult to measure their influence in a reliable way. In cooperative learning, the learner’s needs are considered of special importance, for the learner finds school motivating to the extent that it satisfies his or her needs. Satisfying work includes the following factors according to Kohonen (1992:18): feelings of belonging, sharing, power, importance and freedom concerning the decision what to do and as a final factor he mentions having fun. These aspects are essential since if the learners do not have feelings of belonging to school or some other feelings mentioned above, they lose interest to learning (Kohonen 1992). Glasser (1986 as cited by Kohonen 1992: 18) proposes the cooperative learning techniques as a pedagogical solution to fulfilling needs of the learners. As a matter of fact, a team that functions well fulfils different needs of the learners and thus contributes to successful learning (Kohonen 1992:18).

Similarly to suggestopedy, cooperative learning criticises the common way of teaching where lectures, seatwork or competition dominate and where students are isolated from one another, and forbidden to interact (Johnson et al 1984:6). Things might have changed as cooperative learning is gaining more and more attention today, but this fairly strong claim by Johnson et al. (1984) indicate clearly the matters that are emphasised within cooperative learning. The ignorance of the importance of relationships with children and teenagers “for *constructive* socialization and healthy cognitive and social development” (Johnson et al 1984: 6) are of great concern in the field of cooperative learning. Johnson et al (1984:6) argue that constructive peer relationships which are characterized by caring, support and encouragement are as important as the adult-child relationships for the development of balanced adults.

The strong emphasis on affective factors in the area of experiential learning can be also seen in the following phrase: “competence develops through confidence” (Kohonen 1992: 23). This is to say that language learners should be given positive

experiences of what they can do with their language communicatively. These experiences of successful communication result in increasing learners' self-confidence and boosting their self-confidence, which are, in turn, crucial in terms of language learning (Kohonen 1992:23).

According to cooperative learning theories, the learner is put at the center of attention. As a suggestion to make schools more effective, cooperative learning theories demand that "learners' basic needs for love, belongingness, power, freedom and fun are satisfied from their early classes onwards" (Kohonen 1992: 32). Interestingly, this citation, along with the previous paragraphs, shows the strong emphasis on the emotional side of learning, which is also present in the humanistic approach, suggestopedy.

### **5.7 Social, cognitive and psychological benefits of cooperative learning**

Despite the benefits that have been attributed to cooperative learning experiences, there are critics who challenge its use. In this section we shall review the research results that support cooperative learning.

Cooperative learning is said to have a positive effect on social relations among the students. Saloviita (2007: 138) refers to several studies conducted in America and states that using group work has improved the relations between students from different ethnic backgrounds not only in school but also outside of school. In addition to positive social effects, cooperative learning has an impact on psychological factors. Saloviita (2007: 139) again refers to several studies and claims that cooperative learning has a positive effect on the student's self-esteem. In addition to this, cooperative learning has helped students to create a more positive attitude towards school and learning. Furthermore, it has had an effect on self-control, unselfishness and positive impact on learning experience, in general.

Johnson et al (1984) assert that cooperative learning has a wide range of advantages for the learner. They mention, among other things, the positive effect on attitudes toward the subject area being studied and critical thinking competencies. In addition,

Johnson et al (1984) claim that the students master collaborative competencies much better than do the students who study competitively or individualistically. Cooperative learning is positively linked with psychological health as Johnson et al (1984: 17) claim that emotional maturity, well-adjusted social relations, strong personal identity, and basic trust in people are consequences of cooperative learning. Other benefits Johnson et al (1984) attribute to cooperative learning are seen in the list below.

1. Promotive interaction
2. Feelings of psychological acceptance
3. Accurate perspective-taking
4. Differentiated, dynamic, and realistic views of collaborators and one's self
5. Psychological success
6. Basic self-acceptance and high self-esteem
7. Liking for other students
8. Expectations of rewarding, pleasant, and enjoyable future interactions with collaborators

(Johnson et al. 1984: 18)

Kohonen (1992:34) claims that cooperative learning should gain more attention among educators since it contributes to the learner's personal growth in terms of academic achievement, personal growth and the development of social and learning skills. The advantages of cooperative learning seem to be great. Oxford (1997: 445) claims that numerous studies have shown that cooperative learning is more effective in terms of promoting intrinsic motivation and task achievement in comparison to competitive or individualistic learning methods. What is more, it has an impact on heightening self-esteem, creating caring and altruistic relationships, and lowering anxiety and prejudice.

It has been empirically proven that children with low-ability especially benefit from cooperative learning. A review of eight studies that explored children's academic and social behaviour from grades 5 to 11 on seven subject areas reveals that all children, but especially low-ability children achieve academic and social benefits within cooperative learning (Shachar 2003 as cited by Gillies 2007: 49). Similarly, Gillies (2007: 49) reinforces the positive outcomes discussed above by referring to a great number of studies done during the last two decades. The positive outcomes involve increased motivation to learn, more positive attitudes towards school and an enhanced sense of psychological health

Yamari (2007) provides interesting information about the use of cooperative learning in the discipline of economics. Yamari (2007:259) conducted a study the objective of which was to investigate the impact of cooperative learning in economic instruction. The study was carried out using a two-group experimental design which means that one section of intermediate macroeconomics was taught following the principles of cooperative learning, while the other section was carried out using a traditional lecture format (Yamari 2007:260). The sample of study consists of 116 students who enrolled in the courses. The purpose of the study was to track five types of student learning outcomes: interest, preparation, participation, attendance, and performance. The first three results were collected from a questionnaire filled both before and after the experiment. The outcomes for attendance and academic performance were collected from attendance records and graded course material. The results indicate that cooperative learning enhance academic performance in the form of higher exam scores (Yamari 2007:275). In brief, the learning outcomes were higher in the course led according to cooperative learning principles in comparison to the course carried out in the form of a traditional lecture (Yamari 2007).

A more detailed discussion of the research results gives insight into the reasons behind the successfulness of cooperative learning in economic instruction. Yamari (2007:275) discusses three possible reasons for the positive outcomes of cooperative learning. Firstly, cooperative learning increased student-instructor interaction and the students frequently, without inhibition asked questions in the small groups. Yamari (2007) points out that in the cooperative learning class, students asked questions more often than in the lecture class, despite the fact that asking question was constantly encouraged during the lecture. Secondly, cooperative learning was beneficial in terms of studying together for the exam. Students in the cooperative learning sections were more likely to form study groups for the exam. Finally, the newness of working in small groups caused greater interest in the material and the feedback on the course revealed very positive attitudes towards cooperative learning. This study is one example which shows that cooperative learning can be widely applied regardless of the level or the age of the group members or the discipline.

## 5.8 Criticism on cooperative learning

The studies that I referred to above show a wide range of benefits that cooperative learning can result in. Yet, not all the studies support these positive outcomes. It is self-evident that not all the students are cooperative, which can result in rivalry, hostility and aggression among the learners who prefer working alone. Thus, the students who prefer working with others on different projects, tasks and activities might benefit more from cooperative learning than other students with different predilections. Furthermore, one could ask how extensively cooperative practices should be implemented in the classroom as the students should also learn to work individually and take the responsibility without the involvement of others in school and later in life. Every individual has their own preferences concerning learning methods and one teaching method or mode of working cannot be applied to everyone. Let us now look at other criticism attributed to cooperative learning.

Huber et al (1992 as cited by Oxford 1997: 445) reveal that not all students consistently benefit from this particular learning method. The study is an analysis of four studies the sample of which is nearly 1,000 students from grade school through university. It was the students who could deal with uncertainty who preferred cooperative learning over other methods. The students who lacked certainty and confidence performed worse in cooperative learning and preferred traditional learning methods.

A webpage designed for people interested in cooperative learning, Cooperative and collaborative learning (2004), discusses the common critical perspectives related to cooperative learning. Some critics challenge the use of cooperative learning appealing to vague objectives and poor expectations for individual accountability. Others claim that small-group work enables the teacher escape his or her responsibility to teach (Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004). Randall (1999 as cited by Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004) warns about the danger of overuse of group work and identifies two problems as common weaknesses. The first problem is to make group members responsible for each other's learning. A heterogeneous group which does not function well, might end up in a situation where the more advanced students do most of the work and they are left to teach the weaker

students. Too much burden is thus left on some students. The second possible weakness is that only lower-level thinking is encouraged as in small groups, there is sometimes only enough time to concentrate on the task at its most basic level. As a result of this, the strategies necessary for the inclusion of critical or higher-level thought are ignored (Randall 1999 as cited by Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004).

According to Cooperative and collaborative learning (2004), some critics consider heterogeneous groups a source of problems, although they are not unanimous when it comes to defining which types of groups are problematic. Similarly, the overuse of cooperative groups is seen disadvantageous from the point of view of the students who benefit more from learning alone. Other matters for what cooperative learning has been criticized have to do with racial and gender inequities (Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004). Several studies have shown (see studies referred by Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004) that, for example, in science group learning may be less equitable for girls than independent learning as common stereotypes of math as male domain might be reinforced in the group. These studies suggest that adoption and implementation of cooperative learning does not automatically result in more effective and equitable learning environment for females and minorities (Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004 ).

One cannot deny the possible weaknesses of cooperative learning discussed above or claim that cooperative learning is suitable for every single individual. However, the difficulties can be avoided or rather decreased if careful planning and consideration of possible problems is done in advance. The advocates of cooperative learning provide suggestions or advice how to avoid possible difficulties pointed out by critics. These recommendations involve five factors (Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004). First, right from the beginning, one should make sure to identify clear questions and show how these questions are in relation to learner's interest and abilities and the teaching goals. Second, the possible problems and conflicts should be resolved as they arise and the group members could be shown how the problem can be avoided in future. Third, the student should be provided with a list of objectives that helps them to know what is required from them at the beginning of any assignment. This should be guiding the student during the learning process and



when assessing final work. Fourth, students should be given an opportunity to reflect on their progress. Fifth, confidence between the student and the teacher is important. The teachers should believe in their students' skills and their ability to produce outstanding work (Cooperative and collaborative learning 2004).

It should be borne in mind that people who subscribe to the ideas of cooperative learning do not entirely exclude other working methods such as working individually or competitively. Rather, a skilful teacher knows how and when to structure student's goals competitively, individualistically, and cooperatively. All these modes of working are important and they have their own place in teaching (Johnson et al 1984:1). If cooperative relationships are the only way the students interact at school, students will not be able to compete for fun or follow a learning path on their own (Johnson et al 1984:2). Thus, a balance between different working methods should be maintained.

To sum up chapter 5, cooperative learning is a complex term including a wide range of factors that need to be taken into account when applying the cooperative approach to teaching. Cooperation is a key word in today's working life and therefore it would be recommendable to adopt cooperative working methods already in school. The research results indicate that cooperative learning contains a great deal of social, cognitive and psychological benefits. Cooperative learning shares several emphases with humanism. The humanistic approach is very beneficial when encouraging learners to interact in English and to cooperate.

## **6 THE AIMS OF THE MATERIAL PACKAGE**

Despite the fact that communicative competence has been a major goal of language teaching in upper-secondary school, oral skills are still often neglected as the previous studies indicate. The goal of this material package is twofold: to promote the role of speaking and to enhance the feeling of belonging, self-growth and cooperation among the group members in upper-secondary schools. The present material package encourages teachers to give weight to speaking skills by providing them with activating and pleasant speaking exercises. This material package is in the form of a cookbook including appetizers, breakfast, snacks, main meals and dessert to serve different purposes. The cookbook is not meant for a specific course where oral skills are practised, but it is designed for any English teacher who can use the exercises whenever there is a need and time to make students interact in English in a pleasant atmosphere.

### **6.1 Target Group**

The present material package is aimed at upper-secondary school students. Yet, it can easily be modified to serve other purposes as well. Studying in upper-secondary school is often very challenging and requires hard work. According to my own experience both as a student and as a teacher, the atmosphere in the language classroom is often quite passive: students study lengthy texts on fairly challenging topics without feeling any personal interest in the material being studied. I can easily remember the frustration from some English classes when I felt that I mastered the skill of speaking fairly well, but I was hardly ever given a chance to use the language as an instrument to exchange information that was meaningful to me. Debating about recycling or global warming did not have much personal significance to me and speaking in class was rarely a pleasure to me despite the fact that I liked it. Life is more than a debate. I and some of my classmates were hoping to have more informal, normal conversation on everyday matters. This fairly strong opinion is not to say that all the important topics mentioned in the curriculum of upper secondary school such as environmental issues, technology and economy should be ignored and neglected, but the students should also be given a chance to interact at a more informal level

alongside the more challenging language material. The exercises provided in the present material package are designed to serve this purpose. As a matter of fact, speaking is more than extending one's vocabulary and improving the fluency, it is about building up a positive atmosphere in the classroom and creating, maintaining social relationships. The following excerpt from National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2003: 246) supports the opinion that also the more informal discussions should be given space. This is a description of what the language user should be able to do with a language at the level B2, which is the target level of upper-secondary school education.

Can give clear, accurate descriptions of a variety of topics within his/her sphere of experience, talk about impressions and highlight the personal significance of events and experiences. Can play an active role in the majority of practical and social situations and in fairly formal discussions. Can interact regularly with native speakers without unintentionally amusing or irritating them. Linguistic expression is not always completely elegant. (p. 246, underlinings added)

The phrases I underlined reflect one of the goals of upper-secondary school, which is to allow the learners use the language that is personally meaningful and significant to them. It is not only the formal discussions that are mentioned in the curriculum, but also the “practical and social situations” are considered important. Foreign language learning at upper secondary school level is often fairly serious aiming mainly at matriculation exams. This can affect the atmosphere in the classroom, and both the students and the teacher might forget that after the exams, the language is most often used in fairly informal contexts.

The basic values of education as presented by The National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2003:12) includes a statement that education is to “support the development of students’ self-knowledge and their positive growth towards adulthood--“. Emphasising the importance of social relationships and personal growth of the student is especially important in today’s non-graded upper-secondary school, where students can easily feel disconnected and isolated from their peers. The non-graded upper-secondary school has recently evoked a great deal of discussion in public. Supporting the growth of the student is often left for study counsellors and special support groups, but it is also the duty of a language teacher to do his or her contribution (see The National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary

Schools 2003:18). The present material package gives tools for the teacher to make his/her contribution to improve the situation.

## **6.2 Cornerstones of the material package**

The present material package is based on the ideas that rise from the philosophy of suggestopedy and cooperative learning. Let us now look at the justifications for choosing these particular approaches as starting points.

This material package is anchored in the kind of conception of human which takes the human being as a whole and not merely as an information processor. The emotions including attitudes and motivation have a great impact on language learning. As a matter of fact, Goleman (1995 as cited by Kaikkonen and Kohonen 1998) says that the western civilisation has emphasised cognitive learning so much that the affections have very often been excluded from language learning. Belonging to humanistic approaches, suggestopedy and cooperative learning put emphasis on the affective state of the students. Suggestopedy considers the emotional state very important: the very first principle of suggestopedy has to do with the emotions of the learners. Similarly, cooperative learning stresses the importance of the learner's needs and calls for their observation. The human being as a learner has always his or her positive and negative feelings, which should not be excluded from language teaching (Kaikkonen and Kohonen 1998).

Suggestopedy is often labelled as an alternative, off-stream method, which does not merit anything but a brief mention in the prevailing literature. Suggestopedy is indeed mentioned in several contexts, but studies from 21<sup>st</sup> century are hard to find. It seems that suggestopedy is considered an obsolete method of language teaching, which no longer has anything to offer to language teaching. Yet, I would argue that suggestopedy can still work as a valuable source of fresh ideas, diverse experiences and techniques in the foreign language domain. I can justify this belief by encouraging results of suggestopedic teaching (see section 4.6) and by my own experience.

I find that the suggestopedic principle of “joy and relaxation” is of an essential importance in this time where the fast-paced lifestyle and rapidly changing atmosphere prevail. Bancroft (1999) supports the use of some suggestopedic elements by saying that in an era when students suffer more than in the past from tiredness and tension and when their concentration is in a great need of improvement, because of television and other factors such as rock music, junk food, lack of exercise, physical and psychological stress, not to mention drugs and alcohol, the subject of suggestopedy is more timely than ever. Bancroft (1999) acknowledges that despite the latest equipment that the teachers in North America have access to, the students were not often in the proper state for learning. Thus, new methods are needed.

Similarly, cooperative learning makes learning very effective as language is learned through interaction. As a matter of fact, interaction is about speaking and communicating. Salo-Lee (1991) refers to several studies made in the United States and claims that an essential prerequisite and the best way to learn a foreign language is social interaction, where the learner interacts reciprocally in different kinds of communication situations.

Cooperative learning provides a perfect framework for practicing oral skills. While practicing speaking skills, students learn many useful skills of cooperation that are greatly needed today. Being a prevailing teaching “method”, the cooperative learning is strongly supported in the national curriculum. It is stated there that the studying environment should enable students “to work independently and collaboratively in different groups and networks” (The National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003:14).

Cooperation is seen to be very useful in many respects because of its benefits. The following citation from the National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2003:26) clearly shows the recommendations of the use of cooperative learning practices:

Skills and abilities to be promoted as being necessary for co-operation comprise self-expression skills, including the second (non-native) national language and foreign languages, the ability to take other people into account and the ability to revise one’s

beliefs and actions as required. Co-operation, interaction and communication skills must be developed by means of different forms of collaborative learning. (The National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003:26)

Similarly to suggestopedy, cooperative learning pursues the values such as personal growth, cooperation, social relationships, joy of learning and learner centeredness. Together suggestopedy and cooperative learning form a good basis for practicing oral skills.

### **6.3 Discussion on the eclectic use of suggestopedy**

The present material package is based on the combination of suggestopedy and cooperative learning. Furthermore, the activities will be most likely integrated with main-stream teaching methods. Thus, the material is not purely based on suggestopedy, but the package is eclectic in nature. However, the eclectic nature of the present study is strongly criticised by Lozanov (1978), who claims that suggestopedy must be adopted as a whole. In this section, I attempt to justify the reasons for choosing an eclectic approach. In the following paragraph, Lozanov explains the abusing use of suggestopedy:

One often comes across specialists who for different reasons and from different standpoints may approve suggestopedy, but who begin to seek purely mechanical ways of combining it with other educational systems. They fail to see that suggestopedy is built on specific principles which are indivisibly united and which are realized in indivisible unity with the means of suggestopedy in order to tap the reserve complex of the student—Any eclectic combination of suggestopedy with other methods brings a risk of lower effectiveness and of fatigue in the students. (Lozanov 1978: 333)

However, the goal of the present material package is not to tap all the reserve powers of the learners and guarantee three to five times more effective learning, but rather to provide the students with a pleasant learning environment to practise oral skills within the framework of suggestopedy. Mateva (1993:66) alleviates the strong claim of Lozanov and states that “suggestopedic teaching styles and techniques function at their best in original suggestopedy but recent experience suggest that some of them can be incorporated into existing pedagogic practice”.

There are a great number of examples where suggestopedic elements have been integrated with main-stream methods. The first example is found from the newsletter

Aktiviteetti, where Lindgrén (2005) says that as a teacher she does not adapt the suggestopedy as a whole but rather takes some suggestopedic working methods that she finds amusing and suitable for her personality. Lindgrén (2005) claims that students are fairly conservative in terms of teaching methods and this is one reason why she does not use suggestopedy as an only method; students want to stick to old familiar and secure methods of teaching.

Another example is provided by Bancroft (1999), who says that it is possible to use some, but not all of the elements that were originally a part of suggestopedy, in the conventional language classrooms. As examples of the elements that are hard to apply to a conventional classroom Bancroft (1999) mentions suitable chairs and 20 minute introduction session in an hour-long class. It is generally possible, however, to use a mini-session occasionally and exploit the elements that promote concentration and memorization (Bancroft 1999).

Suggestopedy is, in fact, applied to large extent as a useful working method rather than a dominating teaching method despite the fact, that it is strongly criticised by Lozanov. As an example of this, the curriculum of basic education in Järvenpää describes the wide range of working methods that make language learning more efficient (see Järvenpään OPS 2004). Suggestopedy is mentioned as one working method along with group work, presentations, portfolio and individual work, to name but a few.

All these examples described above indicate that the elements rather than the whole method of suggestopedy are widely used. In fact, Lozanov does not deny the successfulness of the eclectic approach, but rather warns about “a risk of lower effectiveness and of fatigue in the students.” (Lozanov 1978:333)

## **6.4 Cookbook**

In the present material package, speaking exercises are presented in the form of a cookbook. The reasons for the cookbook format need to be clarified. As the name cookbook implies, this material is not meant to be read from cover to cover. The

present material package is not aimed at a specific English course where oral skills are practised, but instead, it is designed for any English teacher who can make use of the speaking exercises whenever they best suit the schedule. Cookbook format leaves freedom for the teacher to choose what to do depending on the hunger of the students, time available and the ingredients, in other words, the group size, time and the needs of the students affect decision making.

The cookbook consists of 40 speaking recipes, which contribute to spontaneous communication and interaction among the students. The aim of the cookbook is to meet the following goals rising from suggestopedic and cooperative learning. First, this material is designed to increase the joy of learning. This is to say that class atmosphere and group spirit are considered of special importance and the exercises aim at enhancing positive feelings among the class members. Second, the significance of social relationships and cooperation is conveyed through the recipes. Third, the learner and his/her needs are put at the center of attention. The range of human needs is unlimited, but the needs here refer to the general needs that all people share: feelings of belonging, sharing power, freedom concerning decision making and having fun (Kohonen 1992:18). Referring to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, Jolliffe (2007:2) points out that we need to feel "secure, valued, and with our physical needs of food, heat, clothing, environment fulfilled". It is remarkable to point out that safety needs, belongingness and emotional needs and esteem needs go before the self-actualisation. This indicates the importance of paying attention to the emotional needs in the learning process. All in all, within the speaking goals, the aim of the cookbook is to support the growth of the learner, which is the duty of every teacher.

The cookbook includes recipes for appetizers, breakfast, snacks, main meals and desserts. Let us now look at each section and its goals. The goals of the exercises are not discussed in every recipe, but they are dealt with at the beginning of each section.

### **APPETIZERS - Getting to know each other, Warming up**

The section of appetizers is divided into two parts. The first part provides exercises for the very first classes, when the group members are still foreign to one another.



This is, in fact, a situation that the students in upper-secondary school face very often owing to the course-based system of the school. For this reason, getting-to-know-each-other-exercises are frequently needed. The second part, in turn, consists of warming up exercises to be used at the beginning of any class. The first impression the students make on the class can have long lasting consequences, so it is worth investing in the very first meeting.

The purpose of the exercises getting to know each other is to create a positive and encouraging atmosphere in the classroom so that the students get interested both in their peers and in the subject to be studied. The nature of the exercises implies that learning is not about working alone in the spirit of competition, but rather, it is social interaction and cooperation.

Warm-up exercises are meant to be used at the beginning of the class whenever the teacher finds that there is a need to cheer the students up and make them speak right at the beginning. They help the student to orient to the English class. Furthermore, these exercises can be utilized when students seem bored to discuss the actual topic meant for the class and the atmosphere is passive. Most of the warm-up exercises allow the student to talk about matters that are meaningful to him or her. In addition, several of the exercises require moving in the classroom, which can itself be refreshing for some students having difficulty with sitting still. The number of appetizers is great in comparison to other sections owing to the importance of the first impression of the class; it is always important that the class starts in a way that evokes interest in learners. Lesson starters help students to quickly orient to the English class

### **BREAKFAST- Relaxation**

For many young kids, morning is not the best time of the day and sometimes coming to school at 8 o'clock can be pretty tough. Morning classes are often quite passive as the physical state of the students is not always ideal for studying. Delicious breakfast can save students' day so that they can gather up their energy for the school day.

This section provides breakfast exercises, which can be served in the morning when the students are still somewhat tired. The purpose of the exercises is to show the students that their needs are taken into consideration. A relaxing start for the school day can have very positive repercussions.

### **SNACKS – Playing with words**

The section of snacks consists of the exercises where students are encouraged to interact and speak English with the help of light-hearted competitions. Snacks can be served when students are in need of a little refreshment. Afternoon classes, when the students are beginning to get weary of studying, are an ideal time to eat snacks

Competing in groups against other groups increases the feeling of interdependence within a group so that the members understand that “we sink or swim together”. Every member is needed and responsibility is left for each student. At their best, snacks can create a very cheerful and active atmosphere in the classroom and students can share feelings of belonging and having fun. Having eaten the snacks, students are more likely to have energy to start a more demanding work even at the very last classes of the day.

### **MAIN MEALS– Class atmosphere**

Recipes found in this section can be used when there is time to devote the entire class to speaking. The aim of the main meals is to contribute to the personal growth of the learners as they are able to get positive feedback from their peers. Giving feedback is not easy, and especially saying good things aloud about others seems to be extremely difficult. The main meals give the learners an opportunity to say positive things about their peers and thus enable students to see how she/he is seen by others. This can have a great impact on the group spirit and on the prevailing social relationships in the classroom. In addition, students are allowed to concentrate on matters that have a real meaning to them. Main meals function best when the group members are familiar to each other.

## **DESSERTS- Enjoying learning, Feelings**

Desserts are served to give pleasure to people. In real life, desserts are offered after the main course is finished. In the classroom, desserts can be offered to students after the actual studying session is over. The teacher can use these exercises as a treat for good work or just to end the class in a positive atmosphere.

The section of desserts is divided into two parts: enjoying learning and feelings. The purpose of the former exercises is to imply that life is not so serious and learning is enjoyable. The aim of the latter part is to take the learners' feelings and personal experiences into account. Talking about feelings might help one to liberate from the emotional block that hinders learning.

The ideas of the exercises rise from a wide range of sources. Some of the exercises are based on traditional classroom activities that are widely used in language teaching, which can explain why some of the activities might sound familiar to the reader. Many of the exercises have been created from scratch for this material package. The ideas of my own have developed in course of time during the teacher training and when planning lessons as a substitute teacher. Exercises that are fairly traditional are not given a source, because the nature of the exercise is very universal and the person to give merit to is hard to know.

Second source of the exercises is the cooperative structures which have been developed by Spencer Kagan. This is to say that I have adopted the cooperative structure as such, but the content of the exercise has been created for this specific material package. The cooperative structures, which are distinguished by the use of citations in the cookbook, I have used are called "Doughnut", "Three-step-interview", "Round-Robin", "Corners". In addition, exercises called Quick interview, Spotting the lie and the second stage of the Lost countrymen derive from cooperative structures, but they have been strongly modified. Hot ball is an activity which can be found both in suggestopedy and in cooperative learning structures.

Literature related to suggestopedy and cooperative learning functions as a third source of ideas. However, none of the exercises found in the cookbook were

presented as ready-to-use material in the background literature, but rather, they were described in books or article as examples of suggestopedic or cooperative activities. These exercises have been modified for the purposes of the present material package and this way I have made them available for any teacher to use. In terms of these exercises, the credit is given to the original source in the cookbook despite the modifications.

Activity called Gallup poll in the classroom originates from the suggestopedic school I visited. The questions have been altered to serve the purposes of the present material package. When it comes to pictures used in the cookbook, most of them are downloaded from clipart or the Interenet, while few of them are from my own photo albums. The internet source of the pictures is provided. The selection of music for the activities is based on the recommendations of Lozanov (Lozanov 1988:74-77 and Lozanov 1978:270-271)

## 7 DISCUSSION

Being based on suggestopedy and cooperative learning, the present material package provides humanistic tools for the teacher to develop the practice of oral skills. The purpose of the study was to produce teaching material, which would improve the role of speaking and to enhance the feeling of belonging, self-growth and cooperation among the group members in upper-secondary schools. Paying attention to the atmosphere in the classroom and to the affective state of the student can have very positive repercussions not only on speaking, but also on the language competence in general. In the present material package, practicing speaking has been linked to the challenging goal of supporting the self-growth of the student, which is the duty of every teacher.

Despite its widely acknowledged advantages, cooperative learning in its proper meaning is rarely applied to the classes, excluding some occasional trials. The present material package allows the teacher to safely experiment with cooperative learning as the recipes are firmly based on the theoretical points of cooperative learning. Similarly, the material package enables the teacher to see the beneficial aspects of an old teaching method, suggestopedy, which has sunk into oblivion. It is interesting to point out the great number of similarities between suggestopedy and cooperative learning, the former of which dates back to 1970s while the latter is a trendy concept of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Putting emphasis on the affective state of learner, these two approaches form a favourable starting point for oral skills practice.

In terms of the advantages of the cookbook, the recipes can inspire different kinds of learners to use the language willingly as a means of exchanging meaningful information. Doing something different, being able to move around in the classroom and having a chance to talk about fairly easy topics can help students to enjoy learning and to realize the importance of social relationships. The recipes in the cookbook can inspire the teacher to modify or create new activities to serve different purposes. As a matter of fact, one of the benefits of the present material package is that it can be easily modified to suit different age groups, and a wide range of topics.

While acknowledging the possible advantages of the present material package, a critical perspective towards its applicability must be adopted. The decisions when, with whom, and how to use the activities, require a great deal of sensitivity and delicacy from the teacher owing to the diversity of predilections of the students. It should be borne in mind that some students might find revealing personal information threatening. Furthermore, students' thoughts about studying in upper-secondary school might be in contradiction with the philosophy behind the activities. This is to say that some students might think that working cooperatively on fairly "emotional" themes is a waste of time or childish. In order to avoid or alleviate negative attitudes of some students, the teacher should justify the use of activities by mentioning the goals of education which are not only cognitive based but also related to personal growth. While acknowledging the fact that no one method is suitable for all, the teacher should not give up immediately if facing resistance when trying out the activities. Students can sometimes have a surprisingly negative attitude towards something new and different, and they would like to stick to the traditional methods, which give them a feeling of security. Bearing this in mind, the teacher has to make gradual steps towards the fulfilment of the activities.

As it was shown by the earlier studies, teachers often consider big group sizes a hindrance for oral skills practice. Someone could criticise the present material package and claim that the activities can only be carried out in small groups. While acknowledge the possible problems of the big group, I would argue that even in a big group, learning and teaching can be made more student centred and cooperative. However, it has to be admitted that the activities function at their best in smaller groups.

The recipes provided by the cookbook have only been partially tested in the classroom. Overall, the activities have received a warm welcome from the students, but a more systematic trial should be carried out in order to prove the applicability of the cookbook. The present material package was an attempt to help teachers to promote the speaking skills of the students. However, as noted by Kohonen (1992:26), materials do not as such guarantee anything, but the core question is what the students do with them. If the learner refuses to take the benefit from the material, all the efforts are done in vain no matter how good the material is. Similarly, a great

number of cookbooks come out every year, but many of them are left in the cupboard to get dusted. The fate of the present cookbook is left for the teachers to see in the future.

## 8 BIBLIOGRAPHY

- Bachman, L.F and Palmer, S. 1996. *Language Testing in Practice*. Oxford: Oxford University Press
- Bancroft, W. J. 1999. *Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition. Variations on a Theme*. Amsterdam: Gordon & Breach Publishing Group.
- Bitchener, J.2004. The Relationship between the Negotiation of Meaning and Language Learning: A Longitudinal Study. *Language Awareness* [online], 13(2), 81-95. (22 Feb 2008)  
<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/detail?vid=8&hid=112&sid=a304787e-9435-4fcf-adc1-59c34b0f4cb1%40sessionmgr8>
- Brumfit, C. 1982. Some humanistic doubts about humanistic language teaching. In The British Council/Central Information Service/English Language and Literature Division. (ed.). *Humanistic approaches: an empirical view*. ELT documents 113. London: The British Council, 11-19.
- Bygate, M. 1987. *Speaking*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Canale, M. and M. Swain 1980. Theoretical Bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and Testing. *Applied Linguistics* (1), 1-47.
- Common European Framework of reference for languages 2007. The Common European Framework in its political and educational context [online]. (16 Oct 2007)  
[http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework\\_EN.pdf](http://www.coe.int/t/dg4/linguistic/Source/Framework_EN.pdf)
- Cooperative and collaborative learning (2004): A series of work shop. What are some critical perspectives? (22 Nov 2007)  
[http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/coopcollab/index\\_sub4.html](http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/coopcollab/index_sub4.html)
- Gillies, R. M. 2007. *Cooperative Learning. Integrating Theory and Practice*. California: Thousand Oaks.
- Harjanne, P. 2004. Viestinnällinen suullinen kielitaito. Opetushallitus.(23 Aug 2004)  
<http://www.edu.fi/pageLast.asp?path=498,1329,1513,29698,29916,29917>
- Hellgren, P. 1982. *Communicative proficiency in a foreign language, and its evaluation. An analysis of the concept and an experiment with oral proficiency*. Department of Teacher Education. Helsinki: University of Helsinki.
- Hoskyns, J. 1993. Book review: Suggestopedic Methods and Applications by Ludger Schiffler. *Educational Studies* [online], 19(2),235. (10 Oct 2007)  
<http://web.ebscohost.com/ehost/results?vid=3&hid=15&sid=ddd5d737-b3d2-43b1-a5a3-117b96b9d1c7%40sessionmgr7>



- Huhta, A. 1993. Teorioita kielitaidosta – Onko niistä hyötyä testaukselle? In S. Takala (ed.), *Teoriaa ja käytäntöä. Suullinen kielitaito ja sen arviointi*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopiston monistuskeskus, 77-142.
- Huuskonen, M-L and M. Kähkönen 2006. *Practising, testing and assessing oral skills in Finnish upper secondary schools: Teachers' opinions*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.
- Jaatinen, A. and M. Rannikko 1984. *Enjoy it. Englantia suggestopediseen opetukseen* 1. Keuruu: Otava.
- Juurakko, T. and A. Airola 2002. *Tehokkaampaan kielenoppimiseen*. Saarijärvi: Saarijärven Offset Oy.
- Juurakko-Paavola, T. and A. Airola 2002. Minustako tehokas kielenoppija? Vinkkejä elinikäisen oppimisen matkalle. KeVät projekti. [online]. (27 Sep 2007) <http://www3.hamk.fi/esr-kevat/verkkojulkaisut/Tehokas%20kielenoppija.pdf>
- Johnson, D.W, R.T. Johnson, E. Johnson Holubec and P. Roy 1984. *Circles of Learning. Cooperation in the Classroom*. United States of America: Edwards Brothers, Inc.
- Järvenpään OPS 2004. Järvenpään kaupungin perusopetuksen opetussuunnitelma, oppiaineosa [online]. (11.Oct 2007) [http://www.jarvenpaa.fi/liitetiedostot/ editori\\_materiaali/741.doc](http://www.jarvenpaa.fi/liitetiedostot/ editori_materiaali/741.doc)
- Kaikkonen, P. 1998. Kohti kulttuurien välistä vieraan kielen oppimista. In P. Kaikkonen and V. Kohonen (eds.), *Kokemuksellisen kielenopetuksen jäljillä*. Tampere: Tampereen yliopisto, 11-24.
- Kaikkonen, P. and V. Kohonen (eds.) 1998. *Kokemuksellisen kielenopetuksen jäljillä*. Tampere: Tampereen yliopisto.
- Kauppila, R. 2007. *Ihmisen tapa oppia. Johdatus sosiokonstruktiviseen oppimiskäsitykseen*. Juva: Bookwell Oy.
- Kohonen, V. 1992. Experiential language learning: second language learning as cooperative learner education. In D. Nunan (ed.), *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 14-39.
- Kohonen, V. 1990. Yhteistoiminnallinen oppiminen pedagogisena eheyttämisenä. In R. Laukkanen, E. Piippo and A. Salonen (eds.), *Ehyesti elävä koulu. Kohti kokonaisvaltaista oppimista*. Helsinki: Valtion painatuskeskus.
- Kujansivu, A. 2002. Vieraiden kielten oppiminen yhteistoiminnallisen oppimisen avulla. In P. Sahlberg and S. Sharan (eds.), *Yhteistoiminnallisen oppimisen käsikirja*. Helsinki: WSOY, 199-220.
- Lehtonen, J. and K. Sajavaara 1982. *The Silent Finn*. Department of English. University of Jyväskylä.

- Lindgren, I. 2005. Haastattelu. *Aktiviteetti* (2), 9-11.
- Lightbown, P. and N. Spada 1993. *How Languages are Learned?* Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Littlewood, W. 1992. *Teaching Oral Communication: A methodological framework.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Lozanov, G. 1978. *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy.* London: Gordon and Breach Science Publishers Ltd.
- Lozanov, G. 1980. *Suggestopedia. Uusi hämmästyvä tapa oppia.* Jyväskylä: Gummerus.
- Lozanov, G. 1988. *The foreign language teacher's suggestopedic manual.* New York: Gordon and Breach.
- Lozanov, G. 2003. Suggestology and suggestopedy [online]. (30 Dec 2003)  
<http://lozanov.hit.bg/>
- Maderdonner, O. 1993. Applying New Methods to Support Communicative Language Teaching. *Japanese-language Education around the globe* [online], 3 (3) (10 Oct 2007)  
<http://www.jppe.go.jp/e/japan/publish/globe/03/report.html#06>
- Marckwort, A and R. Marckwort 1994. *Kouluttajan uudet vaatteet.* Tampere: Tammer-Paino Oy.
- Mateva, G. 1997. A Portrait of the Suggestopedic Teacher. *Teacher Development* [online], (1)1, 57-67. (23 October 2007)
- Matikainen, M-L. 2007. Musiikki ja rentoutus kielenopiskelun tukena. *Tempus* 1/07, 10-11.
- Matikainen, M-L and Lippu, H (2004). Suggestioterapeutin työkalupakkiin. Suggestiot ja elämyksellinen oppiminen. Suggestopedian näkökulmia oppimiseen. *Hypnologia* [online], 4/2004. (01 November 2007)  
<http://www.hypnologia.com/fin/hypno/2004/4/suggestiot.html>
- Moskowitz, G. 1982. Self-confidence through self-disclosure: The pursuit of meaningful communication. In The British Council/Central Information Service/English Language and Literature Division. (ed.). *Humanistic approaches: an empirical view.* ELT documents 113. London: The British Council, 20-33.
- National Core Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools 2003. *National Core Curriculum for General Upper Secondary Education Intended for Young People.* Vammala: Vammala 2004.

- Naughton, D. 2006. Cooperative Strategy Training and Oral Interaction: Enhancing Small Group Communication in the Language Classroom. *Modern Language Journal* [online], 90 (2), 169-184. (15 November 2007)  
<http://www.blackwell-synergy.com/action/showPdf?submitPDF=Full+Text+PDF+%28145+KB%29&doi=10.1111%2Fj.1540-4781.2006.00391.x&cookieSet=1>
- Nunan, D. (ed.) 1992. Experiential language learning: second language learning as cooperative learner education. In D. Nunan (ed.), *Collaborative Language Learning and Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1-10.
- O'Connell, P. 1982. Suggestopedia and the adult language learner. In The British Council/Central Information Service/English Language and Literature Division. (ed.). *Humanistic approaches: an empirical view*. ELT documents 113. London: The British Council, 110-117.
- Oxford, R. L. 1997. Cooperative Learning, Collaborative Learning, and Interaction: Three Communicative Strands in the Language Classroom. *Modern Language Journal* [online], 81 (4), 443-456. (12 Oct 2007)
- Richards, J.C and T. S. Rodgers 1986. *Approaches and Methods in Language Teaching*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Romo, M. 1991. *Spoken English testing and test types: Attitudes among Upper Secondary School Teachers and Pupils*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.
- Saféris, F. 1987. *Suggestopedia. Oppimisen vallankumous*. Keuruu: Kustannusosakeyhtiön Otavan painolaitokset.
- Salo-Lee, L. and K. Yli-Renko 1991. *Vieraiden kielten puheviestintä ja sen oppiminen lukiossa*. Turku: Turun yliopiston offsetpaino.
- Sarkissian, S. 1997. Students' Attitudes Toward the use of Suggestopedic Role Playing in a grammar Class [online] (17 Oct 2007)  
<http://web.archive.org/web/20030415181654/humanities.byu.edu/linguistics/thesis1997.html>
- Simina, V and M-J. Hamel 2005. CASLA through a constructivist perspective: WebQuest in project-driven language learning. *Cambridge Journals*. [online], 17 (02), (28 Nov 2005).  
<http://journals.cambridge.org/action/displayAbstract;jsessionid=174D4184683959CFB01013BB1B3BA4C2.tomcat1?fromPage=online&aid=355482>
- Stern, H.H. 1992. *Issues and Options in Language Teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Stevick, E.W. 1990. *Humanism in Language Teaching. A critical perspective*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

- Stevick, E.W. 1982. Humanism. In The British Council/Central Information Service/English Language and Literature Division. (ed.). *Humanistic approaches: an empirical view*. ELT documents 113. London: The British Council, 7-10.
- Suggestopedinen Ry 2007. Suggestopedia. (11 Oct 2007)  
<http://www.suggestopedia.fi/suggestopedia.php>
- Takala, S. (ed.) 1993. *Teoriaa ja käytäntöä. Suullinen kielitaito ja sen arviointi*. Jyväskylä: Jyväskylän yliopiston monistuskeskus.
- Tattari, S. 2001. *Practising and testing oral language skills at school: Teachers' views*. Unpublished Pro Gradu Thesis. University of Jyväskylä, Department of Languages.
- Tynjälä, P. 2000. *Oppiminen tiedon rakentamisena. Konstruktivistisen oppimiskäsityksen perusteita*. Tampere: Tampere-Paino Oy.
- Vaahterikko-Mejía, P. 2001. Cultural Differences in Ibero-Nordic Communications. Perceptions about Finnish and Colombian Negotiators [online]. University of Jyväskylä, Department of communication 14. (25 Sep 2007)  
<http://selene.lib.jyu.fi:8080/vaitos/studies/studcomm/9513914224.pdf>
- Yamarik, S. 2007. Does Cooperative Learning Improve Student Learning Outcomes? *Journal of economic education* [online], 38 (3), 259-277. (22 Nov 2007)  
<http://www.csulb.edu/~syamarik/Papers/CollabLearna.pdf>
- Yli-Renko, K. and L. Salo-Lee 1991. *Vieraiden kielten puheviestintä ja sen oppiminen lukiossa*. Turku: Turun yliopiston offsetpaino.

# **Cookbook** for **Hungry Teachers**



**Suggestopedy and  
cooperative learning  
in practising  
oral skills**

**Sanna Rovasalo**

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

APPETIZERS - Getting to know each other.....	4
Getting to know each other.....	5
1. Lost countrymen.....	5
2. Walk around and talk about.....	7
3. Knitting a web.....	9
4. Seating arrangement.....	10
5. Find someone who.....	12
6. Quick interview.....	15
7. “Doughnut”.....	16
Warming up.....	18
8. Meaningful/peculiar object.....	18
9. Spotting the lie.....	19
10. Gallup poll in the classroom.....	20
11. Hot ball.....	22
12. “Three step interview”.....	24
13. Our school - quiz.....	25
14. What if...?.....	27
15. Who am I?.....	29
BREAKFAST.....	30
1. Imaginative trip.....	31
2. Peaceful start.....	34
3. Daydreaming.....	36
4. Poem recital.....	37
5. Visiting paradise.....	40
6. Art Gallery.....	41
SNACKS – playing with words.....	42
1. Vocabulary Relay.....	43
2. Ask and Guess!.....	45
3. Words and associations.....	46
4. Looking around – classroom objects.....	48
5. Ball in the bucket.....	49
MAIN MEALS– Class atmosphere.....	52
1. Assessing strengths.....	53
2. Associations.....	56
3. Memories through pictures.....	58
4. People around the world.....	60
5. Friendship.....	61
6. “Corners”.....	65
DESSERTS.....	67
Enjoying learning.....	68
1. Just joking!.....	68
2. Picture gossip.....	72
3. Broken phone.....	75
4. Visitors in the classroom.....	76
Feelings.....	78
5. English – my passion/my enemy.....	78
6. “RoundRobin” - How do you feel now?.....	79
7. Pleasant childhood memories.....	80
8. Know me better.....	82
BIBLIOGRAPHY:.....	84

**Dear teacher,**

The 40 recipes in the cookbook have been created for you to inspire your students to speak English with their peers and for your class to enjoy learning. Many of these recipes were created from scratch for this material package, some are traditional recipes that are widely used in the classrooms and some are innovations from old recipes.

The cookbook includes recipes for appetizers, breakfast, snacks, main meals and desserts. Each section serves for a specific purpose, but they share some general goals. These recipes have been designed to increase the joy of learning. This is to say that class atmosphere and group spirit are considered of special importance and the exercises aim at enhancing positive feelings among the class members. In addition, the significance of social relationships and cooperation is conveyed through the recipes. What is more, the learner and his/her needs are put at the center of attention.

I hope that you will enjoy the taste of the recipes! If you would like some recipes to be slightly more salty or a lot sweeter, you can easily modify them to suit your taste.

*Sanna Rovasalo*

## **APPETIZERS - Getting to know each other**

The section of appetizers is divided into two parts. The first part provides exercises for the very first classes, when the group members are still foreign to one another. The second part, in turn, consists of warming up exercises to be used at the beginning of any class. The first impression the students make on the class can have long lasting consequences, so it is worth investing in the very first meeting.



The purpose of the exercises getting to know each other is to create a positive and encouraging atmosphere in the classroom so that the students get interested both in their peers and in the subject to be studied. The nature of the exercises implies that learning is not about working alone in the spirit of competition, but rather, it is social interaction and cooperation.

Warm-up exercises are meant to be used at the beginning of the class whenever the teacher finds that there is a need to cheer the students up and make them speak right at the beginning. These exercises help the student to orient to the English class. Furthermore, these exercises can be utilized when students seem bored to discuss the actual topic meant for the class and the atmosphere is passive. Most of the warm-up exercises allow students to talk about matters that are indeed meaningful them. The number of appetizers is great in comparison to other sections owing to the importance of the first impression of the class; it is always important that the class starts in a way that evokes interest in learners. Lesson starters help students to quickly orient to the English class.



# APPETIZERS

## Getting to know each other

### 1. LOST COUNTRYMEN

Source of the second stage: Kagan (1992 as cited by Jolliffe 2007:58)  
Ready in: 15 min

Ingredients: small slips of paper with the text American, Englishman/Englishwoman, Australian (see the following page).

Directions:

#### Stage 1

1. Each student is given a piece of paper with a nationality.
2. A short imitation of each English variant is provided by the teacher.
3. Students are asked to imitate the English variant and its speakers and walk around the classroom while listening to others. The aim of the game is that all the nationalities distinguish the speech of their countrymen and find their way to the same group.
4. When every student has found his/her group, the second stage starts.

#### Stage 2

1. In their own group, students are asked to line up according to height.
2. Students are asked to line up according to the alphabetical order of their first name/last name.
3. ... according to their age (date of birth).
4. ...according to the size of their family.
5. ...according to the number of countries visited.
6. The group that was the first one to line up according to the instructions in the majority of the tasks is the winner.

**Variation:** In the first stage, students can be divided into different groups on the basis of animal sounds. In this case, the small pieces of paper include a name of an animal that the student is supposed to imitate. In the second stage, the teacher can leave out some of the criteria of lining up or create new ones.

# APPETIZERS

**Other comments:** One can check that the students actually are standing in the right spot in the line by checking them when they were born, how big their families are etc. This enables other groups to hear more about each individual. The group that is the fastest in the majority of the tasks can be given a little treat.

American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman
American	Australian	Englishman/ Englishwoman

# APPETIZERS

## 2. WALK AROUND AND TALK ABOUT...

Ready in: 10-15 min

**Ingredients:** Slips of paper with questions (see the following page), cd-player, remote control (if available)

**Suggested music:** Mozart: Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A Major No. 23 Kv 488, Allegro assai

### **Directions:**

1. Each student is given a slip of paper with a question
2. Music starts and students begin to walk in the classroom.
3. When the music pauses after a while, students stop and pose the question to the person who is nearest to them.
4. The person answers the question and presents his/her question in turn.
5. When both of them have asked and answered the questions, students swap questions.
6. The music continues and students start walking with a new question in hand. When the music pauses, they stop to talk to a new person.

### **Variation**

This exercise is also useful after longer breaks such as Christmas break, summer holiday, ski break etc. Questions can easily be made up for different situations. Students can also write the questions themselves, which might make the activity even nicer for the students.

### **Other comments:**

The exercise can continue until the students have had a chance to chat with several different students. The teacher can also encourage students to find people to whom they have never talked to. If the teacher has a remote control, it is recommendable for the teacher to take part in the activity. Short discussions with students provide interesting information about the students and they allow a personal contact with every student.

# APPETIZERS

Do you like to be in upper-secondary school? Why, why not?



What do you think about your hometown?

What are you going to do after upper-secondary school?

Would you like to spend a year abroad? Why/Why not

Have you ever spoken with an English speaking person? If so where and when?

What do you like to do in your free time?

Could you tell me something fun that happened last week?

What would you like to do as an adult?

Do you think English is important for you?

What did you do last weekend?

Have you ever been abroad? If so where?

What is the nicest thing about upper-secondary school?

What do you think about our group?

# APPETIZERS

## 3. KNITTING A WEB

Source of the idea: Faine (2007)

Ready in: 15min

**Ingredients:** Ball of yarn

**Directions:**

1. Students sit in a big circle on the floor.
2. The teacher holds the end of the yarn ball in his/her hand and tells something about himself/herself.
3. After this, the teacher tosses the ball to someone in the group who can now tell something about himself/herself. The student holds the yarn and throws it to someone else.
4. When everyone is part of the web, the group can be encouraged to talk about the importance of cooperation and the group spirit.
5. In order to wind the yarn into a ball, the student who got the ball of yarn last can throw it now back to the person who threw it and make up a question for him/her.
6. Having answered the question, the ball is thrown again with a new question.

**Variation**

If students find it difficult to make up a question for a person they do not really know, the teacher can provide questions on the transparency. The questions for the exercise *walk around and talk about* can be used here as well (page 8).

**Other comments:**

Students can be encouraged to tell the kind of information about themselves that they think no one else in the classroom has done. Information such as "I wear size 50" or "I have never had a chickenpox" can create a humorous atmosphere in the classroom.

# APPETIZERS

## 4. SEATING ARRANGEMENT

Ready in: 15-20 min depending on the size of the group

**Ingredients:** sheets of papers (half of an A4), desks arranged in formation of four desks, example of a description (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. Students can choose their place when they enter the classroom.
2. Students sitting face-to-face form a pair.
3. Everyone is given a piece of paper, on which they are supposed to write a short description of their partner (6-7 sentences). The teacher can provide a model of a description of herself/himself (see the following page). The last sentence should reveal the name of the person.
4. Students are encouraged to interview their partner in order to find out information needed for the description.
5. The teacher collects the papers and distributes them randomly to the students.
6. A seating arrangement is created so that one of the students reads the description she/he received sentence by sentence and the others try to guess who the person is.
7. When students guess who the person is, the person who was just being described takes over the seat of the reader. Now it is her/his turn to read the description she/he has and the person who is being described comes to sit by the reader.
8. The game goes on until everyone has read their description and all the students have found their place.
9. The seating arrangement can be maintained during a couple of weeks so that the students have a chance to get to know their group better.

**Comments:**

This works well also with a group in which students already know each other. They can make up very funny descriptions of their peers which creates a nice atmosphere in the classroom. Before doing the activity, the teacher could remind the students to write only positive things about their partners.

## APPETIZERS

1. She was born in Jämsä in 1985.
2. She did not learn to walk until she was 2 years old.
3. She is quite short for her age and her hair is blondish.
4. Right now she's wearing a blue hooded sweater, black pants and high-heels.
5. At school she is often seen to walk out of teachers' room with a cd-player.
6. Her name is Sanna – the teacher.

# APPETIZERS

## 5. FIND SOMEONE WHO...

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** slips of paper with a task (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. Each student is given 3-4 task slips.
2. Students are supposed to find a person defined in the slip by making questions for every student in the classroom.
3. As the student has found the person, she/he writes the person's name on the other side of the slip.
4. When all students have found the people in question, they are divided in groups of four.
5. In the groups, students tell what they found out about the group members. For example, "Susanna is the only child in her family".

**Other comments:**

The teacher can take several copies of the same task sheet and make as many slips as needed. It does not matter if there are the same tasks as long as one student has three different tasks. The same activity can be used as a warm-up exercise when beginning a new theme. The task sheet on the page 14 provides an example of tasks relating to the theme of working life.



## APPETIZERS

Find someone who has twins in their family (suku)



-----  
Find someone who has a sister-in-law in their family

-----  
Find someone who has nieces and nephews in their family

-----  
Find someone who is the only child in the family

-----  
Find someone who has more than 4 godparents

-----  
Find someone who has been to the United States

-----  
Find someone who has lived abroad

-----  
Find someone who likes classical music

-----  
Find someone who has never been to Estonia

-----  
Find someone who has a birthday within two weeks

-----  
Find a person who lives farthest away from school

-----  
Find a person who has studied four or five languages

-----  
Find a person whose both grandparents are alive

-----  
Find a person who plays the piano

-----  
Find a person who is going to apply to medical school after graduation

-----

## APPETIZERS

Find out where your friends have been working in the summer



Find out how many of your friends have worked as a babysitter.

Find out whose parent is a nurse.

Find out how many of your friends have never had a summer job.

Find out how many of your friends are going to another city to work next summer.

Find out what your friends are going to do as a profession.

Find out how your friends have found their summer jobs.

Find out how many of your friends' parents are teachers.

Find out what has been your friends' best workplace.

Find out how many of your friends have been picking strawberries in the summer.

# APPETIZERS

## 6. QUICK INTERVIEW

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** slips of paper, timer (cellphone)

**Directions:**

1. Students are asked to go sit by someone to whom they have never talked to. They form a pair.
2. Student A is given 2 minutes to find out as much information as she/he can during that time. Taking notes is recommended.
3. After the first part of the interview, it is student B's turn to do the same.
4. Students are asked to form a big circle on the floor.
5. One student at a time introduces the person she/he interviewed to others.

**Variation**

If the size of the group is very big, the last stage (5) can be done in groups of four. A short introduction of every student to the whole class would still be recommendable.

**Other comments:**

All people do not like to reveal information about themselves and therefore the students should be given a possibility to take an imaginative role. Some people might still reflect their own personality in the shade of the role.

# APPETIZERS

## 7. "DOUGHNUT"

Source of the structure: Kagan (2002:30)

Ready in: 10 min

Ingredients: transparency of the task sheet (see the following page)

### Directions:

1. Students stand in a big circle.
2. Every other student is asked to take one big step backwards so that two circles are formed.
3. People in the inner circle are asked to turn around so that they are face-to-face with the people in the outer circle.
4. Students in the outer circle start by introducing themselves and by telling what their attitude towards English is.
5. The students in the inner circle can now tell the same things about themselves.
6. The teacher tells the outer circle to move e.g. four places so that they are facing a new person. Now they can freely choose a task from the task sheet and act accordingly.

### Variation

If the size of the group is too small to form two circles, a good alternative is to form two rows facing each other. The same pattern can be done here as in the doughnut.

Questions meant for *walk around and talk about* (page 8) can also be used here so that the students pick up a question they like and ask the person they are facing.

### Other comments:

The doughnut pattern, which is a typical structure of cooperative learning, can be easily applied to serve other functions besides getting to know each other. After longer breaks, the doughnut pattern functions as a good way to exchange thoughts. It can also be useful when wanting to check what the students have learned. Students can, for example, explain some grammar points to one another with the help of doughnut pattern.

## APPETIZERS

FOR EXAMPLE....

1. Introduce yourself (name, age, place of living etc)
2. Tell about your attitude towards English.
3. Say what you like to do on weekends.
4. Say what you think about your home town.
5. Tell how much time you spend on homework.
6. Suggest a good place for a class trip and justify your choice.
7. Tell what you would like to learn in this English course.

# APPETIZERS

## Warming up

### 8. MEANINGFUL/PECULIAR OBJECT

Source of the idea: Moskowitz (1982:30)  
Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** either a meaningful or a strange object from every student, groups of six to seven

**Directions:**

**Meaningful object:**

1. Every student gives a short presentation on the object they have brought with them. They explain where they got it from, why it is so precious to them and other matters that they want to share with others.
2. The object can be passed around for everyone to see it.
3. Other members of the group are encouraged to make questions and comments on the object.

**Peculiar object:**

1. Students bring objects that evoke curiosity like the painted smiling statue in the right corner.
2. Other students try to guess the story behind the object or the purpose of its use by making questions.
3. The owner of the object can answer only yes or no to the questions.
4. If the group is not able to solve the mystery and the curiosity increases, the owner can tell the story at the end.

**Other comments:** The teacher can also bring an object and she can give an example of a presentation by presenting it first. Talking about a meaningful object, the teacher allows the students to see herself/himself in a more intimate light.



# APPETIZERS

## 9. SPOTTING THE LIE

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** 3 small objects from every student, groups of four.

**Directions:**

1. In small groups, students present the objects they have with them: the origin of the object, the purpose of use, age, and other interesting information related to it.
2. One of the stories related to the object is a lie
3. Other members listen carefully to each presentation.
4. After everyone has presented their objects, the members of the group try to spot the story that did not sound true.
5. When everyone's lie has been revealed, group members can discuss how and why they knew that the given story/description of an object was a lie.
6. The teacher can also ask for volunteers who would like to present their objects to the whole class. This is especially useful if someone has brought objects that are extremely peculiar and interesting.

**Other comments:**

Exercises like this can function as an oral test. Students often find it easy to talk about objects that are meaningful to them.

# APPETIZERS

## 10. GALLUP POLL IN THE CLASSROOM

**Source of the idea:** Suggestopedic class in Onnenkieli Oy.  
Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** Question for each student (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. A short review session on how to be polite when stopping someone walking on the street.
2. Every student is given a question to be researched (see the following page).
3. Students are reminded to ask the question from every student in the classroom so that the results are reliable.
4. Taking notes is necessary in order to remember the answers.
5. When the Gallup poll has been realized, every student makes conclusions about the results.
6. Students form a big circle in the classroom and reveal the results to other members of the group. A ball can be used to point who has the turn to speak.

**Variation**

If there is less time available, questions can be formed so that they require only yes/no answers. Students can be encouraged to make up their own Gallup poll questions that they find interesting.

**Other comments:**

This activity can easily be linked to the actual subject being studied by modifying the questions. For example, if the topic of the course is environment, the questions can deal with the consumption habits of the students or environment consciousness etc.

*“Excuse me, do you have a minute? I am a student at the upper-secondary school and I am making a Gallup poll. I would like to know what you think about the number of immigrants in Finland?”*



# APPETIZERS

## Question suggestions:



-----  
What is the biggest reason for the exhaustion of young kids?  
-----

-----  
What would be an ideal length for a break between classes?  
-----

-----  
What are the three most important characteristics of a good teacher?  
-----

-----  
What is the best thing about English classes?  
-----

-----  
What is the worst thing about English classes?  
-----

-----  
If you got to choose, would you like to have a non-graded or graded upper secondary school? Why?  
-----

-----  
How do you indulge yourself after having worked hard? For example, after an exam week?  
-----

-----  
How do you cheer yourself up in the midst of the darkest period of winter?  
-----

-----  
What's your favourite sport during the winter?  
-----

-----  
Are you planning to go abroad as an exchange student? If so, where?  
-----

-----  
Do you think drinking is a problem among the upper-secondary school students? Why, why not?  
-----

-----  
Are you planning to continue studies either in the university or in the polytechnics? Why, why not?  
-----

-----  
Should young kids in Finland get their driver's licence at the age of 16? Why, why not?  
-----

-----  
What do you think about the tradition of "welcoming" the first-graders as they come to the upper-secondary school? Should they be changed or not?  
-----

# APPETIZERS

## 11. HOT BALL

Source of the structure: Kagan (2002 as cited by Saloviita 2006: 91)  
Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** two to three balls and two to three groups of 8 depending on the size of the group, question sheet (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. Students stand or sit in small circles.
2. One of the students tosses the ball randomly to another student while making up a question or picking it from the question sheet.
3. Having answered the question, the student throws the ball to the next person.
4. The game goes on until every student has had a chance to say something in English and students seem to be ready to start the actual topic of the day.

**Variation**

Throwing and catching the ball can be linked to many activities. At the beginning of the class, a good way to review the vocabulary learned in the previous class is to use the ball.

**Other comments:**

If the group is really big, this activity can be done simultaneously in several groups. The teacher should have balls with her/him depending on the group size.

## APPETIZERS

WHAT DO YOU REMEMBER FROM THE PREVIOUS ENGLISH CLASS?

WERE YOU HAPPY TO COME TO THIS ENGLISH CLASS? WHY/ WHY NOT?

IF YOU GOT TO DECIDE, WHAT WOULD WE DO IN THIS ENGLISH CLASS?

HOW WAS YOUR MORNING?

WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED TODAY?

WHAT WAS THE NICEST THING THAT HAPPENED TO YOU YESTERDAY?

WHAT WAS YOUR TOPIC OF DISCUSSION DURING THE LAST BREAK?

DID YOU READ THE NEWSPAPER THIS MORNING? IF SO, WHAT WAS THE MOST IMPORTANT PIECE OF NEWS?

CAN YOU REMEMBER SOMETHING SPECIAL THAT HAPPENED IN THE ENGLISH CLASS DURING THE LAST TWO MONTHS?

# APPETIZERS

## 12. "THREE STEP INTERVIEW"

Source of the structure: Kagan (2002: 30)  
Ready In: 10 min

**Ingredients:** pairs, students' names written on slips of paper, hat, timer

**Directions:**

1. Students draw one name from the hat and go find that person.
2. Student A makes questions for student B about her/his weekend. After two minutes, the roles are changed.
3. Having interviewed one another, the pair forms a group a four with another pair who is close by.
4. Student As tell the group about the student Bs weekend and vice versa.

**Other comments:**

This exercise is a useful and a quick way to let every student say something about their weekend. This exercise is also worth doing after longer breaks when the students have the need to share thoughts about the vacation. The exercise is useful since it does not only require speaking, but careful listening as the speech has to be reported to another pair.

# APPETIZERS

## 13. OUR SCHOOL - QUIZ

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** blank slip of paper handed to every student, answersheet (see the following page), students sit in groups of four

### Directions

1. Every student makes up a question which is somehow related either to the class or to the school.
2. They should also provide an answer on the other side of the slip.
3. The teacher collects the questions and reads them to the class.
4. Students talk about the possible answer in the group (like who is the oldest teacher in the school, etc.) and write their answer on the answer sheet.
5. After all the questions have been asked, groups swap their answer sheets and every group functions as a judge for their peer groups.
6. The teacher reads the answer to every question from the other side of the slip and groups give points for correct answers.
7. The winning group can be given applause.

### Variation

Questions can be linked to the actual topic of the day.

### Other comments:

The teacher can also make up questions which can be used in case the students have not taken the task very seriously and the questions are inappropriate.

Students can be reminded to speak only English and if some groups resort to Finnish, they are given a minus point.

If the group size is very big, and there is not much time, students can make up a question together with a friend, which halves the number of questions.

# APPETIZERS

QUIZ ON OUR SCHOOL  
ANSWER SHEET  
NAME OF THE GROUP:

\_\_\_\_\_

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

6. \_\_\_\_\_

7. \_\_\_\_\_

8. \_\_\_\_\_

9. \_\_\_\_\_

10. \_\_\_\_\_

11. \_\_\_\_\_

12. \_\_\_\_\_

13. \_\_\_\_\_

14. \_\_\_\_\_

15. \_\_\_\_\_

# APPETIZERS

## 14. WHAT IF...?

Ready in: 10-15 min

**Ingredients:** Question slips (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. Each student is given a slip of paper with a question
2. Students walk around in the classroom and find someone to whom she/he makes the question.
4. The person answers to the question and presents his/her question in turn.
5. As both of them have asked and answered the questions, the students swap questions.
6. Students continue walking with a new question in hand and they find a new person to talk to.

**Other comments:**

The exercise can continue until the students have had a chance to chat with every member of the class. It is recommendable and easy for the teacher to take part in the activity.

# APPETIZERS

<sup>1</sup> If you had only 24 hours to live, what would you do? Why?



-----  
If the whole world were listening, what would you say? Why?

-----  
If you could be an animal, what would you choose to be? Why?

-----  
If you could be another person for a day, who would you be? Why?

-----  
If you could be invisible for a day, what would you do and why?

-----  
If you could change one thing in the world, what would it be? Why?

-----  
If you could meet any famous person, dead or alive, who would it be and why?

-----  
If you could speak any other language (besides English), which language would you like to speak? Why?

-----  
If you had the opportunity to be different, what would you change in yourself? Why?

-----  
If you were American/Chinese/Mexican, how would your life be different? Why?

-----  
If you were given a choice between being given great wisdom or great wealth, which one would you choose? Why?

-----  
If you were given one million dollars, what would you do? Why?

-----  
If you were given three wishes, what would you wish for? Why?

-----  
If you were going to a deserted island and could only take three things with you, what would you take? Why?

-----  
If you were invited to have tea with the Queen of England, what would you say? Why?

-----  
If you were the leader of your country, what would you change? Why?

-----  
If you woke up suddenly because your house was on fire, which three things would you save as you ran outside? Why?

-----  
What kinds of problems would you have if you had to always tell the truth? Why?

---

<sup>1</sup> Questions adopted from Matthew Keranen



# APPETIZERS

## 15. WHO AM I?

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** students' names written on slips of paper, roll of tape. Also staff members' names and the names of some celebrities can be used

**Directions:**

1. The teacher together with the students tapes name tags on the back of every student so that the name is visible to others. The person is not supposed to know who he/she is.
2. Students are asked to find out who they are by asking questions such as: Am I short? Do I live in Kuokkala? Am I a social person?
3. In order to avoid clicks (students speak only with their friends), students can only ask two questions from the same person and then she/he has to move on to get hints from the next person.
4. As the students have guessed who they are, they can be given a new name.
5. At the very end when no new names are given, students are asked to go help those who have not yet guessed who they are by giving hints and descriptions of the person.

**Other comments**

A couple of celebrities can be added among the names of the class members to make the game little more challenging. It should be noted, however, that the celebrities should be very famous so that it is easy for everyone to give information about them.

If the school is small, the teacher can also use the name of students who are in the same school

## **BREAKFAST**

For many young kids, morning is not the best time of the day and sometimes coming to school at 8 o'clock can be pretty tough. Morning classes are often quite passive as the physical state of the students is not always ideal for studying. Delicious breakfast can save the students' day so that they can gather up their energy for the school day.

This section provides breakfast exercises, which can be served in the morning when the students are still somewhat tired. The purpose of the exercises is to show the students that their needs are taken into consideration. A relaxing start for the school day can have very positive repercussions.



# BREAKFAST

## 1. IMAGINATIVE TRIP

Ready in: 15-20 min

**Ingredients:** story (see page 33), cd-player

**Suggested music:** J. Haydn, Concerto No. 1 in C Major for Violin and Orchestra, Adagio

**Directions:**

**Stage 1:**

1. Students are asked to make themselves comfortable and they are told that the teacher is going to read a "story" and their task is to imagine the surroundings.
2. Background music is turned on, the volume is very low.
3. The teacher reads the story, students listen quietly.

**Stage 2**

1. Students are divided into groups of four
2. The teacher asks students to describe the elements mentioned in the text: path, trees, branch, water, intersection, building, key, and wall. This is done so that one student at a time tells what their path looked like while others listen. To facilitate description, the teacher can put the story on an overhead so the students remember what they were asked to imagine. After everyone has described their path, the teacher tells what the path symbolises. This might evoke discussion among the students, which should be allowed.
3. After this, the group moves on to discuss the next object and each object is described in a similar way and the symbol is provided after all the members have described the given object.
4. At the end, students are given time to discuss and make up some possible significations or explanations for the matters they experienced during their trip.
5. The teacher can ask some general questions about the students' imaginative trip.

# BREAKFAST

## **Other comments**

Groups are likely to be very different so that others have described their objects fairly quickly while others end up in longer discussions. For this reason, the teacher should observe the groups and provide the symbols individually for each group as the group members are finished with describing.

# BREAKFAST

Imagine that you are walking on the **path**. What does the path look like? Is it narrow or broad? Bumpy or even? What do you see around you? Can you hear anything? Can you smell something? What time of the day are you walking?

Is it still dark outside? What time of the year is it? You examine the surroundings and you see **trees** around you. What do they look like? Are there many of them? What do you think about them?

You keep walking. You walk slowly. Suddenly you bump into a **branch** which is blocking your way. You have to stop. What does the branch look like? What do you do to it? How do you get over it?

The path goes on. You walk and walk until you see **water** on the right side of you. What is it? Is it a sea, lake, spring, stream or what is it? What do you do now? Can you see fish in the water? How does the water look like? Is it clear or muddy? Is it deep or shallow?

It is time to continue walking. You walk on the path and you notice that another path separates from the path you are walking on. What do you do? Do you take a left or right?

Having decided the direction you continue your hike. After a few minutes you see a **building** on your right side. What does it look like? Are there people inside? Do you go there or not?

The trip is not over yet, you walk on the same path. A **key** on the path catches your eye. You stop. What does the key look like? Is it old or new? What do you do with it?

Having examined the key you keep walking. All of a sudden, the path comes to an end. There is a **wall** in front of you. What is it like? Can you see behind it? Is there anything behind it? What do you do now?

Now the trip is over. You can gradually open your eyes and come back to the reality.

## **SYMBOLS:**

path – life

trees – people

branch – obstacles in life and attitude towards them

water – love and attitude towards it (fish in the water – sensuality)

intersection – decision making

building- childhood home, relationship with homefolks

key – relationship with materialism

wall – death

# BREAKFAST

## 2. PEACEFUL START

**Source of the idea:** Matikainen (2007)

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** Story (see the following page)

**Suggested music:** Mozart, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A Major No. 23 Kv 488, Adagio.

1. Students make themselves comfortable
2. The teacher reads the story in a soft voice while the music is playing at the background.
3. Students are asked to “wake up” and form groups of four.
4. In small groups, students talk about the story and discuss what kinds of thoughts it evoked in them. If the story did not evoke any special feelings or thoughts, students should justify this as well.
5. Questions related to the story can be used to help the students get started with the discussion.

### **Variation:**

If the teacher wants to link this exercise to the subject studied, she/he can read the chapter that the students had as homework instead of the story. After the reading session, students can discuss the chapter (whether they like the chapter or not, whether they learned something new or not, what was particularly interesting to them and so on).

# BREAKFAST

## *A Story on Friendship*

(Author Unknown)

A story is told about a soldier who was finally coming home after having fought in Vietnam. He called his parents from San Francisco.

"Mom and Dad, I'm coming home, but I've a favor to ask. I have a friend I'd like to bring home with me.

"Sure," they replied, "we'd love to meet him."

"There's something you should know," the son continued, "he was hurt pretty badly in the fighting. He stepped on a land mine and lost an arm and a leg. He has nowhere else to go, and I want him to come live with us."

"I'm sorry to hear that, son. Maybe we can help him find somewhere to live."

"No, Mom and Dad, I want him to live with us."

"Son," said the father, "you don't know what you're asking. Someone with such a handicap would be a terrible burden on us. We have our own lives to live, and we can't let something like this interfere with our lives. I think you should just come home and forget about this guy. He'll find a way to live on his own."

At that point, the son hung up the phone. The parents heard nothing more from him. A few days later, however, they received a call from the San Francisco police. Their son had died after falling from a building, they were told. The police believed it was suicide.

The grief-stricken parents flew to San Francisco and were taken to the city morgue to identify the body of their son. They recognized him, but to their horror they also discovered something they didn't know, their son had only one arm and one leg.

The parents in this story are like many of us. We find it easy to love those who are good-looking or fun to have around, but we don't like people who inconvenience us or make us feel uncomfortable. We would rather stay away from people who aren't as healthy, beautiful, or smart as we are.

Thankfully, there's a miracle called Friendship That dwells in the heart You don't know how it happens Or when it gets started But you know the special lift It always brings.

Friends are a very rare jewel, indeed. They make you smile and encourage you to succeed. They lend an ear, they share a word of praise, and they always want to open their hearts to us. Show your friends how much you care....

<http://jmm.aaa.net.au/articles/3454.htm>

# BREAKFAST

## 3. DAYDREAMING

Source of the idea: Aaltonen (1987: 77)

Ready in: 15 min

Ingredients: cd-player, pens, colour pencils

Suggested music: Peer Gynt, Aamutunnelma

Directions:

1. Students are asked to listen to the music quietly and to draw a picture of the music. The work of art can be very modern and abstract, but it should show how the listener perceives the music.
2. After ten minutes, the music stops and students form groups of four.
3. Rotating turns, students show their pictures and explain what the picture tells about the music.





# BREAKFAST

## 4. POEM RECITAL

**Source of the idea:** Aaltonen (1987: 48)

Ready in: 15-20min

**Ingredients:** question sheet (see the following page), writing a poem (see page 39), hat

### **Directions:**

1. Students are asked to write a poem on one of the topics: life, friendship, childhood memory, home.
2. Some students might find writing a poem difficult and the teacher can help them by giving them a list of questions (see the following page) that the students should answer quickly, without thinking too hard. They just write down the words that come to mind first.
3. When they are done with the questions, students are asked to include the words that they had in their answers in the poem.
3. After 10 minutes, the teacher collects the papers and puts them in a hat. All the poems are collected, no matter how incomplete they are.
4. Each student draws one anonymous poem from the hat.
5. The teacher asks for a volunteer to be a speaker at the poem recital.
6. The speaker announces who's going to read the first poem and asks one of the students in front of the class to read the poem.
7. Every student reads a poem she/he randomly selected from the hat to others and applauses are given to every reader.

### **Other comments**

The range of possible topics of the poems is unlimited and those mentioned here are just examples. The teacher can freely choose the topics that best suit the class or the theme being studied

# BREAKFAST

Listen! What did you hear? A nice sound in the nature:

---

Who lives in the nature?

---

How does it move in the tree?

---

See your old friend, when is the best time?

---

A scary and exciting place?

---

Animal with a fur:

---

What's the best time to have a picnic:

---

What is a strong river or water fall like?

---

It's late in the evening... Somebody runs outdoors, who?

---

What's the ocean like?

---

She/he/it does something. What?

---

You can see it on the sky:

---

Where are the clouds going:

---

Where would you like to be now:

---

What could you hear or feel in the deep forest?

---

It's early morning. What kind

of? \_\_\_\_\_

You saw something in nature. What did animals do? \_\_\_\_\_

Adopted from  
<http://koti.mbnet.fi/~solmu/ohje/makepoem.php>

# BREAKFAST

Writing a poem

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Writing a poem

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Writing a poem

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Writing a poem

Topic: \_\_\_\_\_

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

# BREAKFAST

## 5. VISITING PARADISE

Source of the idea: Matikainen (2007:10)

Ready in: 15 min

Ingredients: pens, colour pencils, cd-player

Suggested music : Mozart, Concerto for Piano and Orchestra in A Major No. 23 Kv 488, Allegro

### Directions:

1. Peaceful music is played.
2. Students are asked to imagine a perfect place where they would like to be right now.
3. The teacher makes questions about the place: Where are you now? Who is with you? What are you doing? What have you taken with you? Is there something that you would like to bring and show to others? What's the weather like? What do you see around you? etc.
4. After five minutes, students draw a picture of their ideal place while listening to the music. Alternatively, students can write a shortish story of the place.
5. In groups of four, students discuss the pictures or stories and talk about their idealistic places.



# BREAKFAST

## 6. ART GALLERY

**Source of the idea:** Aaltonen (1987: 48)

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** Pictures/paintings taped on the wall,  
cd-player

**Suggested music:** L. van Beethoven: Concerto for Violin and  
Orchestra in D Major, Op. 61, larghetto.

**Directions:**

1. Students walk around the classroom and stop to look at each work of art.
2. As in a real art gallery, students are asked to be quiet and just to enjoy both the music and the paintings.
3. After students have seen all the paintings or pictures, they are divided into groups of four.
4. In small groups, students share thoughts about the paintings/pictures and tell what was their favourite work of art, and what was the least interesting one, on the other hand.
5. At the end, students are asked to vote for the best work of art. Justifications are asked as the results are revealed.

**Other comments:**

The teacher can bring her/his own posters to be presented in the gallery. Pictures in old calendars provide perfect material for the art gallery.

## **SNACKS – playing with words**

This section consists of exercises where students are encouraged to interact and speak English with the help of light-hearted vocabulary competitions. Snacks can be served when students are in need of a little refreshment. Afternoon classes, when the students are beginning to get weary of studying, are an ideal time to eat snacks

Competing in groups against other groups increases the feeling of interdependence within a group so that the members understand that “we sink or swim together”. Every member is needed and responsibility is left for each student. At their best, snacks can create a very cheerful and active atmosphere in the classroom and students can share feelings of belonging and having fun. Having eaten the snacks, students are more likely to have energy to start a more demanding work even at the very last classes of the day.



# SNACKS

## 1. VOCABULARY RELAY

Source of the idea: Marckwort and Marckwort (1994: 90)

Ready in: 10-15 min

**Ingredients:** groups of six, blank slips of paper

**Directions:**

1. Students are divided into groups of six.
2. Every group is given 10 empty slips of paper and they are asked to write one word on each paper relating to the topic or text that has recently been dealt with. The teacher can remind that everyone's contribution is necessary.
4. The words are now given to another group so that none of the groups have the words that they made up.
5. The slips are then taped on the wall one below the other so that the word is not seen.
6. Each group forms a line on the other side of the classroom so that they can see their slips taped on the opposite wall.
7. After the teacher has given a sign, one student from every group fetches one slip from the wall and explains the word to his/her group. If the student does not remember the meaning of the word, he/she can take another word and leave the word for another member of the group. The group tries to guess the word.
8. The group that is the first one to have explained all the words is the winner.

**Variation**

It can also be the teacher who makes up the words, for example, if she/he wants to make sure that certain words have been learned before an exam.

# SNACKS

## Other comments:

If the group size is really big, individual groups can be bigger than 6 members. The number of paper slips can be varied according to the group sizes and the time that can be allocated to the game. If there is only little time for the game, the paper slips can be laid on a desk on the other side of the classroom, instead of taping them on the wall.

The game can be made more challenging by setting some rules: pantomime is not allowed, synonyms or antonyms cannot be used etc. Similarly, even a slight use of Finnish can result in minus points.



# SNACKS

## 2. ASK AND GUESS!

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** words written on slips of paper, groups of five

**Directions:**

1. Students are divided into groups of five.
2. Groups gather around four desks so that they are facing each other.
3. Each group is given a certain number of words (10-15) relating to the topic studied. They are set on the desk on a pile so that the words cannot be seen.
4. Students decide the order of turns and the student who has the first turn takes one word and reads it. Other group members do not know the word.
5. Other students start immediately making questions about the word to which the person knowing the answer can only answer yes or no. (E.g. Is it a person? Is it visible? Do we all have it with us now? Etc.)
6. As someone in the group has guessed the word, the next student takes a word and the game goes on until all the words have been guessed.

**Variation:**

Similarly as in the *Vocabulary Relay*, also the students can create the words in the group. They should only be reminded not to take words that are too obvious and easy to guess.

**Other comments:**

Use of Finnish should be "punished" by giving minus points.

# SNACKS

## 3. WORDS AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** wordlist (see the following page), groups of four

**Directions:**

1. Students work in groups of four
2. Every group is given the wordlist.
3. Every student picks three words from the list that are somehow meaningful to them.
4. After everyone has chosen the words, the group members tell the group the reasons they chose them. The reasons might vary so that one picked up a word because it sounds nice while someone else because she associates the word with a particular event in her/his life.
5. After the first round, the students look at the list again and select one word that evokes most negative associations in them.
6. As soon as everyone has made the decision, it is time to share the thoughts that the word evoked with different group members.

**Variation:**

The teacher can easily vary this game by introducing new word lists. The students can also be asked to make up the words.

**Other comments:**

At its best, this exercise can result in very philosophical and profound discussions.

# SNACKS

Pleasure

Work

Happiness

Lingonberry

Nature

Freedom

War

Feather

Industry

Cancer

Kaísa varís

Summer

Bruise

George Bush

Ash

Wind

# SNACKS

## 4. LOOKING AROUND – CLASSROOM OBJECTS

Source of the idea: Aaltonen (1987:38)

Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** a sheet of paper to each student, groups of four

**Directions:**

1. Students look around the classroom and write down all the nouns they can see. At this point they work individually for a couple of minutes (3-4).
2. After all the group members have completed their list or when the time is up, each group creates now one list on the basis of the words mentioned in the individual lists.
3. One group at a time reads their list, while other groups cross out the words mentioned by others.
4. As every group has had a chance to read their words out loud, it is time to count the points. The group that has the most words left after having crossed out all the words mentioned by others is the winner.

**Variation:**

This exercise can also function as a warm-up exercise before moving into a new chapter or a new theme. It is a good way to chart how extended of a vocabulary students possess on a specific theme (technology, tourism, education etc). Time permitting, this exercise could be done twice, before a new theme and after it. This way the students can see their progress.

# SNACKS

## 5. BALL IN THE BUCKET

Source of the idea: Marckwort and Marckwort (1994: 92)  
Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** buckets and balls for each group, same number of identical questions in each bucket (Example questions provided on the following page), answer sheet (page 51)

**Directions:**

1. Students are divided into groups of six.
2. Each group forms a line at the other end of the classroom
3. Buckets are placed a couple of meters away from the line so that throwing the ball in the bucket is a little bit challenging.
4. The first students in the line start the game by trying to throw the ball into the bucket. If the ball does not go in the bucket, the student fetches the ball and gives it to the next person. If it goes in, the student goes to get the ball and a question from the bucket.
5. Student comes back to the group and reads the question. The group has to negotiate and find an answer that everyone agrees on.
6. After the group is unanimous on the answer, they write it on the answer sheet and the game goes on.
7. When one of the groups has answered all the questions, the game is over.
8. Groups swap answer sheets and they give points for the correct answers as the teacher reads the right answers.
9. The group that got the most points is the winner. The group that was the fastest gets an extra point.

**Other comments:**

Questions provided on the following page are just examples and the teacher should make up his/her own vocabulary-related-questions that best suit the group.

# SNACKS

For example...

1. What is the plural form of the following words: reindeer, knife, pike, mouse, louse, sheep, fish?
2. What are the American English equivalents of the words: colour, lift, plaster, centre, biscuit, flat, programme
3. What is the word behind the definition: well-known for something bad?
4. What is opposite of improve?
5. What are synonyms of beautiful?

Answers:

Question 1

1. reindeer-reindeer
2. knife-knives
3. pike-pike
4. mouse-mice
5. louse-lice
6. sheep-sheep
7. fish-fish/fishes

Question 2.

1. color
2. elevator
3. band-aid
4. center
5. cookie
6. apartment
7. program

Question 3

notorious

Question 4

deteriorate

Question 5

lovely  
gorgeous  
cute  
pretty  
attractive  
(other possibilities might rise)

# SNACKS

Answer sheet

Group: \_\_\_\_\_

1.

---

---

---

2.

---

---

---

3.

---

---

4.

---

---

5.

---

---

---

---

## **MAIN MEALS– Class atmosphere**

Recipes found in this section can be used when there is time to devote the entire class to speaking. The aim of the main meals is to contribute to the personal growth of the learners as they are able to get positive feedback from their peers. Giving feedback is not easy, and especially saying good things aloud about others seems to be extremely difficult. The main meals give the learners an opportunity to say positive things about their peers and thus enable students to see how she/he is seen by others. This can have a great impact on the group spirit and on the prevailing social relationships in the classroom. In addition, students are allowed to concentrate on matters that have a real meaning to them. Main meals function best when the group members are familiar with each other.





# MAIN MEALS

## 1. ASSESSING STRENGTHS

Source of the idea: Moskowitz (1982: 29)

Ready in: 45 min

**Ingredients:** slips of paper (see page 55)

**Directions:**

1. Students write down as many strengths as they can think of about themselves on a piece of paper.
2. After they are done with it, they can put the list aside for a little while.
3. Now each student writes down the names of all the group members on slips of paper and two strengths that the person possesses.
4. When the class is finished with this part, the group can form a circle on the floor and focus now on one person at a time.
5. Everybody reads the strengths they wrote about the person. Then the person who heard what other people thought of her/him can look at her/his own list of strengths and say if they are true to any extent. It might be difficult to talk about one's own strengths in a big group, so this will be done later in smaller groups.
6. The slips of paper are given to the owner of the strengths.
7. After everyone has heard their strengths, students form groups of four. This is not done randomly but, in this case, they can decide themselves who to work with.
8. In small groups, students can freely discuss what they thought of the comments they just heard. They can browse through the strengths again and say what they found surprising, most significant, or false. In these groups, students can talk more about how they see themselves vs. how others see themselves.

# MAIN MEALS

## Other comments

The teacher can provide a list of adjectives on an overhead to help the students to do versatile descriptions. This is not to say that strengths are only adjectives, rather the teacher should remind that the range of strengths is very wide.

# MAIN MEALS

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Strengths: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

# MAIN MEALS

## 2. ASSOCIATIONS

Ready in: 45 min

**Ingredients:** words/phrases cut from the magazines (example provided on the following page), paper for counting the points

**Directions:**

1. Students sit in a circle in groups of 8-10.
2. One student draws a word from the pile and reads it aloud.
3. Students think about the word and look at the people in the circle trying to decide who they associate the word with.
4. As the students have come up with a person they associate the word with, they write down the name of the person.
5. After all have decided the person, everybody says who the person is.
6. The student whose name was mentioned most often gets to hear the justifications why her/his name was chosen.
7. The students who had written the name of the most frequently mentioned person get a point. Students keep track of the points themselves.
8. The person who gets an agreed number of points (10-15) is the winner.

### **Other comments**

Words provided on the following page can be used, but students can also pick up the words from the magazines.

## MAIN MEALS

FRIEND

ARTS

BUSINESS LEADER

ECO-AWARENESS

BEAUTY

SECRET

AFRICA

ACHIEVEMENTS

CLEANLINESS

"I FEEL OPTIMISTIC"

OPPORTUNITY

MUSICAL TASTE

POLITICIAN

NATURE

ACCIDENT

APPETITE

ECONOMY

HUMOR IN LIFE

BEYOND RED ROSES

WORLD OF POTENTIAL

AT HOME WITH NATURE

CHANGE WE CAN BELIEVE IN

THE GREAT LEAP FORWARD

# MAIN MEALS

## 3. MEMORIES THROUGH PICTURES

Source of the structure: Kagan (1992 as cited by Saloviita 2007:101)  
Ready in: 45 min

**Ingredients:** Every student has brought pictures (5-10) from a personally important event (trip abroad, trip in Finland, sports event, confirmation camp etc.), classroom arranged to look like a gallery, timer or music

**Directions:** Example of a class of 24 students

1. The group is divided into exhibitors and exhibition visitors (12 exhibitors and 12 exhibition visitors)
2. Exhibitors exhibit their pictures on the desks. The gallery consists of four displays arranged in different corners of the classroom (a group of three students have their pictures in the same display)
3. Exhibition visitors are divided into groups of four and each group is shown a display where to start.
4. Five minutes per display is given for each visitor group to look at the pictures and to listen to the stories related to the pictures. Visitors are encouraged to ask about the pictures and to comment on them.
5. After the visitors have seen all the four displays, the roles are changed.

**Variation:**

Instead of a timer, the teacher can use some peaceful music as a sign when to move from one display to another. Music stops when it is time to move on.

## MAIN MEALS

### Other comments:

The teacher can also bring pictures to class. Pictures from a trip to an English speaking country, for example, provide a perfect opportunity to talk about culture with the personal experiences.

If there is more time available, having seen the pictures, students could discuss the pictures in small groups (what pictures arose their curiosity, what they found interesting, scary etc.)



# MAIN MEALS

## 4. PEOPLE AROUND THE WORLD

Source of the idea: Jolliffe (2007:85)

Ready in: 45 min

**Ingredients:** pictures of people around the world (pictures are missing for copyright reasons), pieces of paper

**Directions:**

1. Students are divided into groups of four and they are asked to make up a name for their team.
2. Every group is given a picture of a person.
3. Students look at the picture and write down 6-8 questions that the picture evokes in them.
4. After the group has come up with an appropriate number of questions (10-15), the questions together with the picture are handed to another group.
5. Now every group has a new picture with a great number of questions. The groups are asked to discuss on the basis of the questions and try to find possible answers. Before writing anything down, all the group members should be unanimous in terms of the answers.
6. At the end, groups can go listen to the stories that the other groups made up. The group members should make sure that there is always one or two people presenting their picture while the rest of group is listening to other groups' stories. Every group member should have a chance to present their picture.



# MAIN MEALS

## 5. FRIENDSHIP

Ready in: 45 min

**Ingredients:** pink hearts made of cardboard, yarn, song (see page 65), list of positive adjectives (see page 66), cd-player,  
**Suggested music:** Vivaldi, *The four Seasons*, Op. 8, winter

### Directions:

1. The lesson starts by singing the song *You are My Sunshine*
2. The teacher introduces the theme of friendship and briefly talks about the importance of friends, in general.
3. In groups of four, students write down as many positive adjectives as they can think of and they write them on the transparency.
4. The lists of positive adjectives are reflected on the screen. The teacher can also show his/her list of adjectives (page 66)
5. Each student is given a heart which they hung in their back like shown in the picture below.
6. Students are instructed to write something positive on every student's heart.
7. When the music starts, students start walking in the classroom.
8. Music pauses, students stop to write something positive on the heart of the person nearest to them.
9. Music continues and students continue to walk.
10. As everyone has written something positive on everyone's heart, students go sit in circles. 4-5 people in one circle.
11. Students read out loud what other students wrote on his/her heart.
12. After this, students can discuss the comments (what was surprising, what is not true, what was the nicest comment, etc.)

# MAIN MEALS

**Other comments:**

An ideal time to do this activity is Valentine 's Day when friends are on students' minds. It can be done anytime, however.



## MAIN MEALS

You are my Sunshine

You Are My Sunshine,  
My only sunshine  
You make me happy  
When skies are gray.  
You'll never know dear,  
How much I love you,  
So please don't take my sunshine away.

The other night dear,  
as I lay sleeping,  
I dreamed I held you in my arms,  
but when I woke dear, I was mistaken,  
and I hung my head and I cried.

You Are My Sunshine,  
My only sunshine  
You make me happy  
When skies are gray.  
You'll never know dear,  
How much I love you,  
So please don't take my sunshine away.



Source: <http://www.ziplo.com/Sunshine.html>

## MAIN MEALS

helpful	humorous	rich	positive
sincere	lucky	powerful	strong
imaginative	athletic	flexible	attractive
friendly	brilliant	reliable	energetic
tidy	natural	good-hearted	active
open-minded	sensible	calm	precious
glad	laid-back	brainy	special
cute	good-looking	good-natured	
funny	sensitive	awesome	
talkative	good-mannered	energetic	
beautiful	brave	sunny	
sympathetic	perfect	stylish	
attractive	creative	fashionable	
efficient	nice	mature	



# MAIN MEALS

## 6. "CORNERS"

Source of the structure: Kagan (2002: 30)  
Ready in: 45 min

**Ingredients:** Question sheet (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. Students stand in the middle of the classroom.
2. The teacher presents a question and shows which corners represent which answers.
3. Students search their way to the corner that corresponds to their answer.
4. Students in the same corner share the reasons why they came to this conclusion. Every student should be able to present their views.
5. The teacher asks for some general comments from each group in each corner.
6. Students come back to their original places, and the teacher reads a second question and points the corners.

**Other comments:**

Questions can be easily linked to the subject studied.

## MAIN MEALS

1. Which of the four seasons is the best one?

(Corners: fall, winter, spring, summer)

2. If you had to be an animal for a day, which animal would you be?

(Corners: a lion, a dog, a horse, a mouse)

3. What school subject is the most useful one?

(Corners: English, mathematics, physical education, home economics)

4. What is the most interesting profession?

(Corners: fireman, police, lawyer, surgeon)

5. What is the most fascinating country?

(Corners: Norway, United States of America, Island, Australia)

6. What is the best car?

(Corners: BMW, Volvo, Mercedes-Benz, Honda)

7. What is the nicest time of the year?

(Corners: Christmas, New Years, Midsummer, Easter)

8. What is the scariest threat in the world?

(Corners: global warming, terrorism, AIDS, poverty)

## DESSERTS

Desserts are served to give pleasure to people. In real life, desserts are offered after the main course is finished. In the classroom, desserts can be offered to the students after the actual studying session is over. The teacher can use these exercises as a treat for good work or just to end the class in a positive atmosphere.

The section of desserts is divided into two parts: enjoying learning, and feelings. The purpose of the former exercises is to imply that life is not so serious and learning is enjoyable. The aim of the latter part is to take the learners' feelings and personal experiences into account. Talking about feelings might help one to liberate from the emotional block that hinders learning.



# DESSERTS

## Enjoying learning

### 1. JUST JOKING!

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** One joke from every student that students have printed from the Internet or typed on a paper, sample of jokes provided on the following pages

**Directions:**

1. Groups of four are formed.
2. The teacher collects the jokes from students and distributes four jokes randomly to each group. If some students have forgotten to bring a joke, the teacher can use the jokes provided on the following pages.
3. The group is supposed read all the jokes and make sure everybody understands the jokes and can tell them in his/her own words. They can themselves agree on the division of work in the group.
4. After all the groups have finished this stage, groups of four join another group of four.
5. One at a time, students tell the jokes in their own words to others.
6. If there are difficult words in the joke, the joke teller can make sure that the other group members understand them before telling the joke.
7. At the end, students can vote for the best joke and justifications are needed.

**Other comments**

The following pages include only some examples of jokes that could be used. The teacher can easily find more jokes on the Internet or in books.



## DESSERTS

An 80 year old couple were having problems remembering things, so they decided to go to their doctor to get checked out to make sure nothing was wrong with them.

When they arrived at the doctors, they explained to the doctor the problems they were having with their memory. After checking the couple out, the doctor told them that they were physically okay but might want to start writing things down and make notes to help them remember things.

The couple thanked the doctor and left. Later that night while watching TV, the man got up from his chair and his wife asked, "Where are you going?" He replied, "To the kitchen." She asked, "Will you get me a bowl of ice cream?" He replied, "Sure." She then asked him, "Don't you think you should write it down so you can remember it?" He said, "No, I can remember that."

She then said, "Well I would also like some strawberries on top. You had better write that down because I know you'll forget that." He said, "I can remember that, you want a bowl of ice cream with strawberries." She replied, "Well I also would like whipped cream on top. I know you will forget that so you better write it down."

With irritation in his voice, he said, "I don't need to write that down! I can remember that." He then fumes into the kitchen. After about 20 minutes he returned from the kitchen and handed her a plate of bacon and eggs. She stared at the plate for a moment and said angrily: "I TOLD you to write it down! You forgot my toast!"

---

During their silver anniversary, a wife reminded her husband: Do you remember when you proposed to me, I was so overwhelmed that I didn't talk for an hour?" The hubby replied: "Yes, honey, that was the happiest hour of my life."

---

A hobo comes up to the front door of a neat looking farmhouse and raps gently on the door. When the farm owner answers, the hobo asks him, "Please, sir, could you give me something to eat? I haven't had a good meal in several days."

The owner says, "I have made a fortune in my lifetime by supplying goods for people. I've never given anything away for nothing. However, if you go around the back, you will see a gallon of paint and a clean paint brush. If you will paint my porch, I will give you a good meal."

So the hobo goes around back and a while later he again knocks on the door. The owner says, "Finished already? Good. Come on in. Sit down. The cook will bring your meal right in."

## DESSERTS

The hobo says, "Thank you very much, sir. But there's something that I think you should know. It's not a Porsche you got there. It's a BMW."

---

The teacher of the Earth Science class was lecturing on map reading. He spent the class explaining about latitude, longitude, degrees, and minutes. Towards the end of class, the teacher asked his students, "Suppose I asked you to meet me for lunch at 23 degrees, 4 minutes north latitude and 45 degrees, 15 minutes east longitude..." A student's voice broke the confused silence, and volunteered, "I guess you'd be eating alone, sir."

An elderly widow and widower were dating for about five years. The man finally decided to ask her to marry. She immediately said "yes". The next morning when he awoke, he couldn't remember what her answer was! "Was she happy? I think so, wait, no, she looked at me funny..." After about an hour of trying to remember to no avail he got on the telephone and gave her a call. Embarrassed, he admitted that he didn't remember her answer to the marriage proposal. "Oh", she said, "I'm so glad you called. I remembered saying 'yes' to someone, but I couldn't remember who it was."

---

Little Johnny's kindergarten class was on a field trip to their local police station where they saw pictures, tacked to a bulletin board, of the 10 most wanted criminals. One of the youngsters pointed to a picture and asked if it really was the photo of a wanted person. "Yes," said the policeman. "The detectives want very badly to capture him." Little Johnny asked, "Why didn't you keep him when you took his picture?"

---

The new employee stood before the paper shredder looking confused. "Need some help?" a secretary, walking by, asked. "Yes," he replied, "how does this thing work?" "Simple," she said, taking the fat report from his hand and feeding it into the shredder. "Thanks, but where do the copies come out?"

---

Jones came into the office an hour late for the third time in one week and found the boss waiting for him. "What's the story this time, Jones?" he asked sarcastically. "Let's hear a good excuse for a change."

Jones sighed, "Everything went wrong this morning, Boss. The wife decided to drive me to the station. She got ready in ten minutes, but then the drawbridge got stuck. Rather than let you down, I swam across the river -- look, my suit's still damp -- ran out to the airport, got a ride on Mr. Thompson's helicopter, landed on top of Radio City Music Hall, and was carried here piggyback by one of the Rockettes."

"You'll have to do better than that, Jones," said the boss, obviously disappointed. "No woman can get ready in ten minutes."

---

Two confirmed bachelors sat talking, their conversation drifted from politics to cooking. "I got a cookbook once," said one, "but I could never

## DESSERTS

do anything with it." "Too much fancy work in it, eh?" asked the other. "You said it. Every one of the recipes began the same way - 'Take a clean dish.'"

---

A lady dropped her handbag in the bustle of holiday shopping. An honest, little boy noticed her drop the handbag, so he picked it up and returned it to her. The lady looked into her handbag and commented, "Hmm... That's funny. When I lost my bag there was a \$20 bill in it. Now there are twenty \$1 bills." The boy quickly replied, "That's right, lady. The last time I found a purse, the owner didn't have any change for a reward."

---

Jokes downloaded from:  
<http://www.lotsofjokes.com/classic.htm>

# DESSERTS

## 2. PICTURE GOSSIP

Source of the idea: Marckwort and Marckwort (1994:97)  
Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** pictures (examples on the following pages), groups of five

**Directions:**

1. Students sit in a circle on the floor.
2. The teacher gives an identical picture to one of the members of every group so that the other group members do not see it.
3. Students look at the picture for a short while after which they are told to put the picture aside. At this point they can ask for some vocabulary needed for the pictures.
4. When the teacher gives a sign, students who have seen the picture whisper as detailed of a description of the picture as they can remember to the ear of the next person.
5. This person, in turn, listens carefully and passes the description to the next person.
6. The last person in the circle has to draw the picture according to what she/he was told.
7. The group that managed to draw a picture closest to the original one is the winner. Students can vote for the winner, but the teacher is a judge.

**Other comments**

The activity can be related to the actual theme of the course by choosing pictures that require using a specific vocabulary. Pictures should not be too complicated.

# DESSERTS



VEGETABLE ART



VEGETABLE ART



CLIPART

# DESSERTS



CLIPART



CLIPART



CLIPART

# DESSERTS

## 3. BROKEN PHONE

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** groups of 6-8

**Directions:**

1. Students sit in circles in their group.
2. One of the students whispers something fairly short to the person sitting next to him/her.
3. The person listens carefully and puts the message forward just as he/she heard it. The whisper cannot be repeated.
4. The last person says out loud what he/she heard and the first person judges whether the story reminds the original one.
5. If the story has been modified, each person has to say what they heard starting from the last person so that the source of confusion is clarified.

# DESSERTS

## 4. VISITORS IN THE CLASSROOM

Ready in: 15-20 min

**Ingredients:** role tags (examples on the following page), groups of four, some props for the actors (not necessary)

**Directions:**

1. Students sit around the desks in groups of four
2. The teacher distributes one role for each group, but nobody should look at what the role is at this point.
3. The group casts lots for who gets the role. Alternatively, the role can be given to a volunteer.
4. The person can now look at the role tag and together with other role-owners she/he goes out of the classroom for a little while.
5. Outside the classroom, the teacher can give some props for the actors who want to take them.
6. Students with a role enter the classroom and go to their own groups.
7. Other group members start asking questions from the person and they should find as much information as they can in 3-4 minutes. They need to at least find out why the person has come to class. The actor has to make up the answers.
8. When the time is up, all the groups present their visitors to the whole group.

**Other comments:**

The teacher can create new roles and students can help with making up roles.



# DESSERTS

ROLES:

-----  
80-YEAR-OLD WIDOW



-----  
MATTI VANHANEN

-----  
THE OLDEST PERSON IN THE WORLD

-----  
3-YEAR-OLD GIRL

-----  
PRINCIPAL OF THE SCHOOL

-----  
TEEMU SELÄNNE

-----  
<sup>2</sup>MARRIED COUPLE WHO IS CELEBRATING  
THEIR 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY (husband)

-----  
MARRIED COUPLE WHO IS CELEBRATING  
THEIR 50<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY (wife)

-----  
REBELLIOUS TEENAGER

---

<sup>2</sup> Roles of the married couple (husband and wife) should be given to the same group

# DESSERTS

## Feelings

### 5. ENGLISH – MY PASSION/MY ENEMY

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** space for students to sit in a circle on the floor

**Directions:**

1. The desks are pushed aside so that the students can sit in a circle on the floor.
2. Every student is given a chance to talk about his/her experiences and feelings about studying English.
3. The teacher and other students can make questions about or comments on what they hear.
4. At the end, the teacher can make some kinds of conclusions about the discussion. If the attitudes are towards English are very negative, the group could together with the teacher try to find some solutions or suggestions to improve the situation.

**Variation:**

If the group is very big or if the students prefer speaking in smaller groups, the exercise can be done in groups of four as well.

**Other comments**

The language in this activity is naturally English, but if someone is not capable or totally refuses to speak English, he/she should still be given an opportunity to express his/her feelings towards English. The main purpose here is to allow the students reveal their frustration or admiration towards the language.

# DESSERTS

## 6. "ROUNDROBIN" - HOW DO YOU FEEL NOW?

Source of the structure: Kagan (2002 as cited by Saloviita 2006: 97)  
Ready in: 10 min

**Ingredients:** space for students to sit in a circle

**Directions:**

1. Students sit in a circle on the floor.
2. Every student is given a turn to describe their feelings at that moment with a couple of words.
3. In order to make sure that the students listen to one another, the next person in the circle first summarises what the previous person said after which it is his/her turn to reveal his feelings.

**Other comments**

If there is only little time available, the same exercise can be done in groups of four. In this case, every student can be given one minute to describe his/her feelings.



# DESSERTS

## 7. PLEASANT CHILDHOOD MEMORIES

**Source of the idea:** Moskowitz (1982: 27)

**Ready in:** 10-15 min

**Ingredients:** list of categories (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. The teacher introduces the theme of childhood with a couple of words. A good way to do this is that the teacher tells a short pleasant memory from his/her own childhood.
2. Students work in pairs. They could be encouraged to work with someone that they hardly know.
3. Students take turns asking questions with the help of the list of categories (see the following page).
4. When the pair is finished with childhood memories, they join another pair
5. Each member of the group of four tells a few things about the childhood of the person he/she interviewed.

### **Other comments**

Talking about childhood usually raises positive reactions in people and they are often willing to share their memories with others who might have fairly similar experiences. However, it should be borne in mind that childhood has not been the happiest time for everyone and therefore the students should have a chance to take a role and make up stories about their childhood.

## DESSERTS

<sup>3</sup>Childhood: What was your favourite \_\_\_\_\_ when you were little?

Toy? Why?

Candy?

Holiday?

Play activity?

Book or story?

Place to go?

Song?

Outfit?

Comic strip?

Friend? Why?

Grown-up (other than family)?

Teacher?

Relative?

Memory of snow?

Memory at a beach or pool?

Thing that was scary?

Birthday?

TV or radio program?

---

<sup>3</sup> Categories adopted from Moskowitz (1982: 28)

# DESSERTS

## 8. KNOW ME BETTER

Ready in: 15 min

**Ingredients:** task slips (see the following page)

**Directions:**

1. Students are divided into groups of four
2. Every group is given 14 task slips so that the questions are not visible.
3. One student at a time takes a task slip and reacts to it accordingly (ask or tell)
4. Students are told that they are welcome to elaborate on topics that they find interesting.
5. Students can ask for clarification and make comments when other people are talking.

**Variation:**

The exercise can be carried out in a variety of ways. The same questions can be used if the exercise is done following the structure of *Doughnut* or *Walk around and talk about*. However, discussions can evolve more in-depth when the activity is done in small groups.

# DESSERTS

<sup>4</sup>Tell the group members about a time you felt really proud of yourself.



Tell the group members what would enable you one day to look back and feel satisfied about your life.

Tell the group members what the major issues are that you have to face in the next two months, and how you feel about them.

Ask the group members what they liked about you when they first met you.

Ask the group members how they think you handle criticism.

Ask the group members to discuss what they think you would do if you had only 1 month to live.

Ask the group members what they think you have taught or can teach them.

Ask the group members what they think would happen if you left the team.

Tell the group about a time you helped someone through a transition in their life.

Ask the group members what they think your feelings are about school.

Tell the group how your life has been affected by people with physical disabilities.

Tell the group about a tradition or cultural value that is particularly important to you. Why?

Tell the group what you could do to improve the attitude of family and friends toward members of other cultural or racial groups.

Ask the group what special days or public holidays they think are most important to you. Why?

---

<sup>4</sup> Task slips adopted from The Freeman Institute 2008

## **BIBLIOGRAPHY:**

Aaltonen, K-M (ed) 1987. *Aktiviteetteja suggestopediseen kieltenopetukseen*. Keuruu: Otavan painolaitokset.

Faine 2007. A to Z teacher stuff. ( 12 Jan 08)  
<http://www.atozteacherstuff.com/pages/220.shtml>

Jolliffe, W. 2007. *Cooperative Learning in the Classroom. Putting it into Practice*. London: Paul Chapman Thousand Oaks.

Kagan, S and Kagan, M. 2002. Rakenteellinen lähestymistapa. In P. Sahlberg and S. Sharan (eds.), *Yhteistoiminnallisen oppimisen käsikirja*. Helsinki: WSOY,24-57.

Marckwort, A and R. 1994. *Kouluttajan uudet (v)aatteet*. Tampere: Tammer-Paino Oy.

Matikainen, M-L. 2007. Musiikki ja rentoutus kielenopiskelun tukena. *Tempus* 1/07, 10-11.

Moskowitz, G. 1982. Self-confidence through self-disclosure: The pursuit of meaningful communication. In The British Council. Central Information Service. English Language and Literature Division. (ed.). 113 – *Humanistic approaches: an empirical view*. ELT documents. London: The British Council. 20-33.

Saloviita, T. 2006. *Yhteistoiminnallinen oppiminen ja osallistava kasvatus*. Juva: WS Bookwell Oy.

The Freeman Institute 2008. The know me game. (13 Feb 08)  
<http://www.freemaninstitute.com/johari.htm>