The Role of Semiosis and Affordance in the Suggestopedia Language Classroom

by

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Glossary

Term	Definition
anti-suggestive barriers	A mental protection system to prevent unwanted influences from suggestions. The protection system consists of three anti-suggestive barriers: 1. a logical (or reasoning) barrier that eliminates unreasonable suggestions to maintain logical consistency; 2. an affective (or intuitive-emotional) barrier that intuitively blocks incoming suggestion to maintain emotional stability; 3. an ethical barrier that eliminates immorality by checking against personal morals.
condentrative psycho-relaxation	A dynamically fluctuating mental state in which students can creatively learn while they maintain good quality concentration.
desuggestion	A liberation from social suggestive norms and their unwanted influences.
desuggestive-suggestive process	The process in which a person acquires a different view of society and his/her ability as a consequence of desuggestion.
paraconscious mental activity	All mental activities other than ones that are consciously recognisable.
social suggestive norms	Norms in the society which influence a society member's way of thinking and decision making.
suggestibility	Degree of ease with which one can be influenced by suggestions.
suggestion	All stimuli that are sensed and processed by the whole brain and that potentially influence the human personality as a whole through brain activity.
suggestive stimuli	Stimulus elements that influence humans as suggestion.
suggestology	The study of suggestion.

Abstract

This study contributes to our knowledge of Suggestopedia, a teaching method which is receiving increasing attention from researchers of second language learning and teaching. Despite the interest in Suggestopedia, very few studies have investigated Suggestopedia from a sociocultural perspective, and none have used semiotic analysis to analyse the teacher's conduct in design and practice within an actual Suggestopedia language course. This study fills a gap in Suggestopedia and language teaching research by providing a description of the role of semiotic affordances in Suggestopedia's conceptual framework and philosophy.

In this study, concepts relating to semiotics/semiology and affordance are applied to analyse the course design and teaching practice in a Suggestopedic Japanese course. The teacher's utterances, behaviour, teaching materials and course structure were observed and analysed. Elements identified in the observation were examined in their symbolic function, i.e. how these signs were interpreted, in what context and what kind of semiotic environment was created in the introductory Japanese course. These findings were further discussed in the light of Suggestopedia theory.

The research demonstrates that the way Suggestopedia concepts are enacted in teaching can be explained in semiotic terms. Firstly, "suggestion" in Suggestopedia can be understood in terms of the semantic affordances of symbol–meaning connections and so new social suggestive norms to optimise learning can be created in Suggestopedic courses based on the affordances of each symbol that the teacher introduces to the students. Secondly, the integration of suggestions in Suggestopedia can be explained as an organic integration in which symbol–meaning connections create semantic affordances that give a certain positive direction to learning in the classroom. The research found the teacher was arranging verbal and non-verbal stimuli to produce a consistent direction in creating affordances so that symbols used in the language course could be associated with favourable meanings in learning. And thirdly, other unique terminology used in Suggestopedia such as the "desuggestive-suggestive process", "infantilisation", "pseudo-passiveness" and "prestige" can also be understood in terms of semiology/semiotics and affordances theory. A semiotic explanation can help teachers and researchers understand Suggestopedia by providing an alternative way to work with technical Suggestopedia concepts.

Overall, this study shows that semiotic analysis of Suggestopedia language teaching is beneficial in allowing us to understand teacher behaviours when they are implementing the principles of Suggestopedia. In addition, it demonstrates that semiotic analysis is a valid methodological approach to understanding teaching practice, which may be applicable in other language teaching contexts.

Declaration

This thesis presents work carried out by myself and does not incorporate without acknowledgment any material previously submitted for a degree or diploma in any university; to the best of my knowledge it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person except where due reference is made in the text; and all substantive contributions by others to the work presented, including jointly authored publications, are clearly acknowledged.

Kazuhiko Hagiwara

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This thesis has been professionally copyedited and proofread according to Standards D and E of the *Australian Standards for Editing Practice.*

Introduction

This is a qualitative study of language teaching using Suggestopedia. Suggestopedia is a philosophy and a set of practices of learning and teaching that were developed in Bulgaria from the 1960s through to the early 2000s by Georgi Lozanov, Ph.D., a psychotherapist, and Everina Gateva, Ph.D., a philologist. Suggestopedia has been taken up in many publications as one of the particular methods that emerged in the modern era, and was once known for its effectiveness in aiding memory retention and speed in students' acquisition of teaching material. Most textbooks of language teaching methodology, such as Stevick (1980), Richards and Rodgers (1986) and Nunan (1991), include Suggestopedia as one of the must-know terms in the history of the field. However, in spite of it being a well-known teaching method, there are very few language courses currently running using Suggestopedia. This is partly because Suggestopedia is believed to require special skills to teach and is considered as a difficult method to use (Osman, 2017). In addition, teachers tend to be unsure about what they should do in Suggestopedia classes even after they have read publications about Suggestopedia, and they are unsure what elements in actual classroom activities will bring about what *suggestive* effect.[1] Felix (1989) expressed the obscurity of this method in her doctoral thesis as follows:

> His [Lozanov's] main publication in English "Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy" (1978), based on his Ph.D. thesis published in Bulgaria seven years earlier, is poorly organised and somewhat vague when it comes to a description of what actually happens in a suggestopedic classroom. (2–2 Suggestopedia, paragraph 1)

Felix argued that Lozanov was not able to explain clearly what teachers should do in the actual Suggestopedia classroom. Felix's argument can be interpreted as an expression of her frustration about the absence of a concrete picture of connections between practical elements in the classroom and the concepts of Suggestopedia. The problem is that Lozanov's book cannot give concrete ideas about what a teacher can do in a Suggestopedia class, that is, it cannot explain what event at what moment of classroom activity means what and will bring about what effect. Tarr pointed out that Suggestopedia is not only a teaching technique, but should be understood as a philosophy (Tarr, 1995, p. 75). If so, teachers need to understand how every element in the classroom is significantly connected to each educational concept to real-

[1] Throughout the thesis, terms with specific meanings in Suggestology and Suggestopedia are indicated in italics.

ise this pedagogical philosophy. Teachers also need a benchmark against which they can monitor and judge themselves in class activities. However, it is indeed the case that useful and concrete information about practical connections between the theory (philosophy and concept) and practice in Suggestopedia is very limited, not only in the Lozanov's book mentioned by Felix, but also in all other books published by the developers of Suggestopedia.

This obscurity about the connections between each element in a Suggestopedia course and the important concepts has been a huge obstacle for teachers and researchers who have tried to properly understand and implement Suggestopedia and has led to criticism; indeed it has become one of the factors that have hindered the spread of this teaching method. Therefore, in this research, I attempt to clarify such connections in the teaching practice of Suggestopedia, using sociocultural theory to fill the gap between the theory and teaching practice. To do this, I observe a Suggestopedia course taught by an experienced teacher and developed under the supervision of the original developer of the method, and analyse it using a semiotic method to understand the connections between the signs found in the Suggestopedia class activities; following this, I try to describe the concepts of Suggestopedia theory in terms of semiotic study.

In Chapter 1, I provide an overview of Suggestopedia: a brief history, the background of the theory and the structure of a typical course. Then in Chapter 2, I review the literature regarding Suggestopedia and semiotic study to clarify the significance of this research. After this, in Chapter 3, I discuss the research design of this project. The analysis is reported in Chapters 4, 5 and 6, and I discuss the findings of this study in Chapter 7.

Chapter 1 Suggestopedia

1.0 Introduction

Suggestopedia[2] is an education system that follows the natural functioning of the human brain. It was developed in the 1960s on the basis of his knowledge of psychotherapy by a Bulgarian psychotherapist, Georgi Lozanov (1926–2012). Since its introduction to the public, it has been discussed in the framework of personal development and the enhancement of abilities. In much of the literature, the background theory and the philosophy of Suggestopedia tend to be simplified or abbreviated.[3] However, Lozanov designed the Suggestopedia method with a certain philosophy that is based on research into the relationship between *suggestion* and brain function. He considered that the learning group is an extension of the brain, and the brain works as a complex whole. Therefore, an entire Suggestopedia course is designed as a complex group made of inseparable, interconnected, inter-influencing learning tasks. A teaching/learning method that has such a perspective deserves to be discussed in the framework of sociocultural theories[4] that describe social phenomena as events in a complex whole.

In this section, I will look back at the history of Suggestopedia and summarise the basic points of the theory, as well as providing an overview of a practical course for language learning as an application of the theory.

1.1 A Brief History of Suggestopedia

In 1955, when Lozanov was working as a doctor in a psychiatric clinic in Sofia, he discovered that improvements in his psychosomatic disorder patients could take place through *suggestions* that he gave to his patients. As part of this discovery, he found that effective *suggestions* are not only verbal, but also non-verbal: environmental *suggestions* are equally effective. He

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[2] Lozanov attempted to rename Suggestopedia several times, with the names Desuggestopedia (Lozanov, 2006, 9-Oct-1994), Reserves-Capacity Communicative (Re-Ca-Co) method (Lozanov, 2006, 22-Dec-1998) and Reservopedia (Lozanov, 2009), all different names given to the same teaching method. In this thesis, I use Suggestopedia as the original name of the method, so as to describe it in a consistent manner.

[3] For example, see the early reports on Suggestopedia in Ostrander and Schroeder (1970) and Ostrander et al. (1979), and also research on the American adaptation of Suggestopedia in Bancroft (1978).

[4] Sociocultural theory was conceptualised by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky (1896-1934). In sociocultural theory, human mind is mediated by every cultural elements (artefact). I will address sociocultural theory more in detail in Chapter two.

also discovered that improvements in psycho-physiological condition can also improve other brain functions, such as memory (Lozanov, 1955, cited in Lozanov, 2009, pp. 31–32).

For this reason, Lozanov hypothesised that improving the brain/mental condition can also improve learning, and he started a series of experiments in 1963. Lozanov's research project gained national interest, and in 1966, the Bulgarian government funded the establishment of a national centre dedicated to his project, called the "State Suggestology Research Centre" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 45), and Lozanov was appointed to head the project.

In the experiments at the State Suggestology Research Centre, researchers gave verbal and non-verbal *suggestive stimuli* to their subjects, and quantified the changes in their health and brain activity. Language was used in the experiments to quantify the levels of memory. The language material used in Lozanov's memory experiment was a list of vocabulary. The researchers sometimes used Bulgarian poems, but in most cases they used words from foreign languages that were popular in Bulgaria, such as English, French and German. On the list, each word was given with its equivalent Bulgarian word. The memory experiment started with the memorisation of the meaning of 100 foreign words in one session. The number of words increased as the experiment progressed, and it finally reached 1000 words in one session.

As language was a research tool for the experiment, the memory session (which would later be called a "Concert session" in the theory) took the form of an independent session within a conventional language course. However, it gradually became known that the interconnection of *suggestive stimuli* in the entire language course could enhance the effect of the memory session. Lozanov started to redesign a language course in which the memory session is naturally incorporated. The basis of the current version of Suggestopedia was formed when Evelina Gateva (1939–1997) joined the research centre in 1970. Gateva was a young opera singer who had studied in Italy. She provided a number of important suggestions from her experience as an artist to the redesigned integrated Suggestopedic teaching method: the integrated method now developed as "Suggestopedia". Suggestopedia was designed so that the learners could be stimulated by a variety of verbal and non-verbal *suggestive stimuli*. The non-verbal *suggestive stimuli* introduced in Suggestopedia were more multivalent than in the stand-alone Suggestopedic memory session and included classical music, songs, colours, artistic drawings and pictures, posters, voice intonation, atmosphere, emotion, body movement and the structure of the story-line in the textbook.

Suggestopedia was applied not only to language teaching, but also to other subjects. For example, in experiments conducted in 1970s, Suggestopedia was applied to all academic subjects in elementary and secondary schools, and it successfully shortened study hours without reducing the educational effect (Lozanov, 1978, 2009). The Austrian government became interested in Suggestopedia and it offered Lozanov an experimental environment in Vienna (Beer, 1978, 1979). Lozanov's first major English publication was produced as *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy* (1978). The book was written based on his experiments at this time.

During this period, UNESCO was invited to examine the effects of Suggestopedia. It formed its own expert working party and examined the 1977–1978 experiments and the outcomes of first-grade children in elementary schools. After several meetings of its working party, UNESCO made a positive recommendation on Suggestopedia (UNESCO, 1980). The UNESCO recommendation (1980) identified an immediate need for systematic training for Suggestopedia teachers, and a future need for a periodic international conference of experts. It also suggested withdrawing Suggestopedia variants that had begun to appear and maintaining Lozanov's original form of Suggestopedia.

In spite of his domestic and international success, in January 1980, Lozanov was placed under house arrest due to changes in the political climate within the Bulgarian regime. The Bulgarian government stopped all support for Suggestopedia, and closed down the State Suggestology Research Centre (Lozanov, 2009). As a consequence, all communication channels between Lozanov and the rest of the world were closed until he was freed again in 1989. During the years of his house arrest, Suggestopedia as a teaching method lost its direction, the background philosophy was lost, and the people who wanted to understand his method became confused about its principles. Some tried to understand Suggestopedia in association with their own knowledge about brain and mind. Yoga-like breathing exercises and meditation were added to the Lozanov-style memory session. In such sessions, learners were asked to lie down on a reclining couch (Bancroft, 1978, 1999). Criticism was directed at the "quasi-scientific" (Scovel, 1979) practice of "Suggestopedia".

In the meantime, while under house arrest, Lozanov was given a small laboratory within Sofia

University.[5] He and Gateva kept working to address the UNESCO recommendations on Suggestopedia (UNESCO, 1980). They wrote a book for future Suggestopedia teachers (Lozanov & Gateva, 1988) and also refined Suggestopedia to make it look more sophisticated (Gateva, 1991a). Their ambitious goal was to make their method able to unleash the natural abilities of a learner's brain, not by verbal *suggestions*, but only by non-verbal *suggestions* that are set up throughout the course.

In 1989, Lozanov and Gateva restarted their teacher training on the basis of their refined version of Suggestopedia in order to put the UNESCO recommendation in practice. The final version of Suggestopedia was established in 1994, and it has not been changed since Gateva's death in 1997. Lozanov died in 2012.

1.2 The Learning Theory of Suggestopedia

1.2.1 The Basic Concepts

In the research area that Lozanov called "Suggestology", he studied the role that *suggestion* has in influencing the functioning of the brain. In parallel, he attempted to build a brain-function model that is influenced by *suggestion*. Suggestopedia was developed in such an environment.

The brain-function model that Lozanov was attempting to build was not based on anatomical research about the brain, such as the theory of localisation of brain function. Rather, he considered the brain as a black box that functions as a complex whole. He tried to conceptually understand the information-handling function of the brain. He argued that the information that the brain handles is the stimuli that the sensory organs receive. The stimuli that a person receives in everyday life are rich, complicated and inseparable. Such stimuli are a complex whole continuously influencing the brain, and the body of the person is also a complex whole. As a result of such understandings, Lozanov also included social stimuli in his research focus.

Lozanov linked the idea of stimulus to that of *suggestion* and defined "*suggestion*" as all stimuli that potentially influence a human personality (Lozanov, 1978). Lozanov made an

[5] It was called the "Research Laboratory of Suggestology and the Development of Personality" or Сч "Климент Охридски" Пнил по Счгестология и Развит ие на Личността in Bulgarian.

assumption that various *suggestions* in society can influence the quality of a person's activity through his/her brain. And as a whole, the social *suggestion* found in each society tends to be directional and directive. It gives direction to the members of the society and tells them what to do and what not to do, what is possible and what is impossible. Lozanov calls such directional/directive social *suggestions* "*social suggestive norms*". In other words, he saw *social suggestive norms* as the common reaction to certain social symbols in a society. However, he believed that the influence caused by reacting to such social symbols is not necessarily positive. According to Lozanov's (1978) observations, a certain portion of the influences from *social suggestive norms* acts negatively on learning, personal development or health. *Social suggestive norms* sometimes require an effort from a person that contradicts the natural function of the brain and the body.

Lozanov (1978) hypothesised that a person would suffer a mental and physiological disorder when s/he continuously made efforts to meet the requirements of *social suggestive norms* that contradict the natural function of the brain and the body. He tested his hypothesis in the form of an experimental psychotherapy that was designed to liberate patients from the negative influence of *social suggestive norms*, and obtained positive outcomes. Lozanov coined the term "*desuggestion*" to express the liberation from *social suggestive norms* and their unwanted influences. He also coined the term "*desuggestive-suggestive process*" to express the process in which a person acquires a different view of society and his/her ability as a consequence of *desuggestion*.

While patients' psychosomatic disorders were being improved through *desuggestive-suggestive* treatment, Lozanov observed that some patients' memory functions were also significantly improved. That was when he first came up with the idea for developing Suggestopedia. Lozanov recalled it as follows:

> In 1955, one of our patients who was an arch welder attending evening high school classes told me, "Doctor, I now have to go to the evening class. We were given a poem to learn by heart but I didn't even open the textbook. If they ask me to recite it, it will be terrible." We asked him, "Did you hear the poem in class?" "Oh, yes," he answered, "we elaborated it together with the teacher". We told him very calmly, "Don't worry. If you have heard the poem only once in class it is in your paraconsciousness. Don't refuse to talk. Start with the first word that comes to your mind". And he went out. The next day, he came to our office very excited and said, "What did you do? It was a miracle. I was

> asked to recite the poem. I tried and, to my surprise, I recited the whole of it without any mistake". And as a confirmation, he showed us an excellent mark in his mark book.
>
> We ourselves did not know what had happened the day before. We thought that we might have made involuntarily suggestions for refreshing his memory. The case was communicated in Bulgarian (*Suggestology*, 1971, p. 20) and also in English (*Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy*, 1978, p. 12). We had neither hypnotized him nor made any attempts with non-hypnotic clinical suggestion. We just had a calm friendly talk with him. We were convinced of what we were telling him. We were really convinced. (Lozanov, 2009, p. 31)

Later, Lozanov interpreted the phenomena he had witnessed as being a *desuggestive-suggestive process* that had unexpectedly occurred during normal communication, and that had enabled the welder to increase his ability to recall his memories. In other words, a previous commonsense idea – "It is impossible to recite a poem from memory without study at home" – was replaced in the conversation with a new commonsense idea – "Once the first word of the poem comes out, the rest will automatically come out of the brain because the memory is already in it." Further, Lozanov explained that situational factors acted like a placebo that helped the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. That is, the place where the "normal conversation" took place was actually a medical examination room where *prestige* is usually given to the doctors. Naturally, their relationship in the room was "a doctor and a patient" or "an advisor and his client" or "a specialist and a lay man". Lozanov presumed that the placebo effect was also an effect of *suggestion* because the body of the patient receiving a placebo reacts to the *suggestion* that a tablet given "in the hospital" by "the doctor" is "a medicine". In such cases, there is no verbal *suggestion* to support the effect of the placebo because researchers never tell the patients whether the medicine is effective or not. If a placebo is effective even though it is not attached to any verbal *suggestion*, the effectiveness of the placebo must be attributed to the effect of non-verbal *suggestions* that are given in the situation.

Even though a placebo can promote *desuggestive-suggestive processes*, a fake medicine itself does not have real effectiveness. However, a practical effect that is caused by a *desuggestive-suggestive process* will provide an experience for a person, and the experience will further help that person form a new belief. It is possible that if a person attains something once, s/he will believe the same thing can be attained again. The memorisation ability that the welder in Lozanov's recollection once showed in his classroom could become a new commonsense for

him, and would influence the rest of his life. Lozanov tried to implement the basic mechanism of the *desuggestive-suggestive process* through the teaching approach developed for Suggestopedia.

The core concepts that Lozanov wanted to implement in Suggestopedia can be summarised as follows:

1. Suggestopedia temporarily isolates learners from the influence of the *social suggestive norms* of the real society, and provides them with new *suggestive norms* in a new society and culture (Lozanov, 2009, p. 134).
2. In the new society with new *suggestive* norms, learners encounter new commonsense ideas created under the "new philosophy" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 69) of learning that are based on natural brain function. The new commonsense ideas will then be accepted when the learners feel it is a better environment for their learning. Then the new commonsense ideas will be confirmed and internalised as a belief when students have actually attained something in the course.

1.2.2 The Method of Suggestopedia

Lozanov attempted to give his learners a new commonsense idea that is based on the natural function of the brain. To define "the natural function of the brain", and know how a teacher can expect a learner to renounce his/her old commonsense idea and gain a new one, Lozanov first collected the known facts about the brain in his day and used these as the basis of his model of brain function. This can be summarised as follows:

1. The brain inherently desires to learn and feels happiness when it learns.
2. It is natural for the brain to recognise all information at once. It does not matter if the information is given to the central or the peripheral area of consciousness. Also, it is natural that the brain retains the information to which it has been exposed for a long time in near-perfect shape. In this sense, what one can improve is only the ability to recall as the ability to memorise is already at its maximum.
3. Mental activities in the brain occur on two conceptual planes: (1) the conscious plane and

(2) the *paraconscious* (not conscious) plane.[6] Both planes coexist in parallel and constantly exchange information with each other to help maintain the entire activity in the brain. Conscious mental activity and reactivity require support from a large mass of information stored in the *paraconscious* area. Brain activities on the *paraconscious* level are more or less automatic, emotional and unlimited. When the brain is required to do intensive conscious mental activities without sufficient reserves of mind in the *paraconscious* area, the brain becomes frustrated.

4. Information given to one part of the brain will immediately be shared by other parts of the brain. It is impossible to stop information from spreading around the brain. Therefore, for example, the brain is not good at separating logic from emotion. It is good at association.
5. In general, to some extent, the brain likes changes and surprises. It does not like mechanical repetition or highly predictable linear consequences. At the same time, the brain likes a safe and consistent environment. In other words, the brain is naturally curious and creative when it does not feel threatened.
6. The brain tends to create multiple personalities. Many personalities appear from time to time in many aspects of the life of a normal healthy person.
7. The brain as an information processor has an integrated structure of holographic and hierarchic functions. In such a structure, while each element of the brain can represent the whole brain system, it processes certain types of information in certain ways on demand from the integrated core personality.

As mentioned in the last section, Lozanov's brain-function model does not place much importance on anatomical research on the brain such as the theory of localisation of brain function, but stresses the importance of empirical research made through the observation of human behaviour. Therefore, with Lozanov's model, internal processes of the brain are always associated with the world outside the brain. Hence, the brain is continuously exposed to *suggestion* from the outer world, and most brain activity is associated with handling those *suggestions*.

The characteristics of brain function in Lozanov's model have points in common with the notion of "society" in sociocultural theory. Society in sociocultural theory is assumed to be a

[6] The term "*paraconscious*" is a term coined by Lozanov to distinguish it from the "subconscious" and avoid the negative connotations of the term "subconscious". Lozanov (2006, 9-Feb-1989, 7-Dec-1998) indicated that he wanted to avoid confusion between his own concept of unconscious mental activities and the Freudian idea of the subconscious, which had often been associated with one's hidden aggressiveness. The *paraconscious* also includes the concept of "unconscious" and it means all mental activities other than consciously recognisable ones (Lozanov, 2009, p. 100).

complex whole where all phenomena are interconnected and inter-influencing in non-linear causal relationships (Byrne, 1998; Van Lier, 2004). In such a society, various individuals in diverse cultures exist in relation with the whole, and they share information through communication (Byrne, 1998). Each individual has multiple roles in the society. One person can exist as an independent individual, and at the same time the same person can be a member of a group with a social order. There are no linear causal relationships in society (Byrne, 1998, Peak & Frame, 1994). Each social phenomenon spontaneously takes place, and it is impossible to accurately tell when, where and how it emerges. And, when something goes beyond a threshold, a dramatic change called "phase shift" (Crook et al., 1992) can occur. Lozanov's brain function model has such sociocultural features. In other words, from Lozanov's point of view, each person's brain exists within a relationship with a larger brain (that is called "society"), and a large part of brain function is used to handle *suggestive stimuli* from society.

Based on his model of brain function, Lozanov observed how a person reacts to *suggestive stimuli* from the external environment including the verbal and non-verbal *suggestions* of the society. The following is a summary of his observations:

1. *Suggestion* is any social stimulus that influences the development of human personality. A person is consciously or unconsciously, constantly and holistically influenced by *suggestions*. *Suggestion* conveys to a person some sort of message in a verbal or non-verbal way. For example, if some feeling is evoked in a person by seeing an abstract sculpture, the person has received a non-verbal *suggestion* from the sculpture.
2. A belief as a commonsense idea is acquired through the experience of negotiating with *social suggestive norms* in society. Depending on the nature of the society and its *social suggestive norms*, the belief acquired as a commonsense idea can either limit or promote a person's ability. In many cases, *social suggestive norms* limit human personality.
3. A person can renounce an old belief and acquire a new belief through a *desuggestive-suggestive process*. Such a process can take place spontaneously and unpredictably.
4. A person's *suggestibility* level decreases when the person has become conscious of the influence of *suggestion*. A person can become conscious of the influence of *social suggestive norms* when the person relativises his/her own commonsense idea by experiencing another commonsense idea in a different society. As a result of decreased *suggestibility*, the person can become more resistant to being influenced by *social suggestive norms*.
5. The mental state of a person is always changing, and different types of personality can coexist within one person. The forms of reaction to *suggestive stimuli* are different and

unique depending on each person.

6. Every person has a mental protection system to prevent unwanted influences from *suggestions*. The protection system consists of three *anti-suggestive barriers*:
   (1) a *logical* (or *reasoning*) *barrier* that eliminates unreasonable *suggestions* to maintain logical consistency;
   (2) an *affective* (or *intuitive-emotional*) *barrier* that intuitively blocks incoming *suggestion* to maintain emotional stability;
   (3) an *ethical barrier* that eliminates immorality by checking against personal morals.
7. The states and heights of these barriers are diverse and unique to each person. They also constantly change their form from one time to another.
8. Nevertheless, there are general tendencies in *suggestibility*:
   (1) *suggestions* from a more prestigious source are more acceptable;
   (2) *suggestions* made in more trustful human relationships are more acceptable;
   (3) *suggestions* given in less aggressive and less defensive communication are more acceptable.

Even though one of the primary roles of the brain is to react to *suggestion*, it is impossible to force someone to believe something by directing a *suggestion* to the person. A person is protected by *anti-suggestive barriers*. These will heighten to block a *suggestion* when the person feels the *suggestion* is unexpected and weird, or illogical, or unethical. However, Lozanov argued that it is dangerous to use hypnotic techniques such as "guided imagery"[7] to make someone believe something.

The safest and most long-lasting effect can be obtained when each learner discovers by himself/herself the best belief for brain functions. For that purpose, it is necessary to create a system in which *desuggestive-suggestive processes* like the one that unexpectedly took place in Lozanov's examination room can take place in the language classroom as the result of the learner's own discovery. This discovery can be triggered by relativisation: experiencing something new will draw the attention of the learners to compare the new with the old. A Suggestopedia approach will first provide learners with something new. That is, it invites learners to participate in a new world as a new person. In the new world, the learners will have an

[7] the guided imagery method is an activity in which an instructor orally gives guidance to the participant to have a visual image in their mind so that they can control their mind into a preferred direction and it is often used in sports rehabilitation to control patients' anxiety (e.g. Cupal & Brewer, 2001; Hall et al, 2006).

opportunity to acquire a new commonsense idea through new *social suggestive norms*. In order for this to happen, the new world must not be something unacceptable to learners that would heighten their *anti-suggestive barriers*, rather, it should be a world that reminds learners of their infant years when they were at their most creative and most open to learning. The new world should be colourful and stimulating rather than monotonous. Also, the new world must look prestigious, hopeful and attractive to the learners. The world must also be well balanced and psychologically protected.

To avoid evoking an *affective barrier* in response to the sudden impact of a *suggestion*, Suggestopedia uses peripheral perception. In his observations, Lozanov confirmed that the human brain automatically records peripheral information that is sensed in the edges of consciousness. Suggestopedia makes use of this ability of the brain. It places information in the outskirts of the consciousness of the learners prior to its practical use. One such technique is the "Concert session", which is derived from the memory session of Lozanov's initial experiment. In Concert sessions, Suggestopedia exposes new learners to more than 800 new words on the first day of the course. An ordinary language course would not introduce such a large amount of foreign vocabulary on the first day. Therefore, learners (whose commonsense idea is still the old one) might perhaps heighten their *affective barrier* and refuse such a sudden introduction of bulky information. However, in terms of natural brain functioning, language learning will be easier if each learner in the learning group has a large amount of language information in advance, and the brain is able to get the gist of the whole at once. Hence, Suggestopedia places this large amount of vocabulary in the peripheral area of the consciousness of the student, who concentrates on listening to classical music. The language information that is given will be recorded in the learner's brain in any case, and will not evoke the *affective barrier* when it is focused on in a practical way in the context of a course task.

Music is usually attached to personal preference. Some people like particular types of music that others dislike. Also, there are a variety of themes in music. Some sound negative, pessimistic or destructive, while others sound positive, optimistic and encouraging. Some are monotonous while others are colourful. If the theme of the music that is used in the classroom severely conflicts with the learner's morality or rationality, the learner may reject it together with the learning content. For example, music that has a theme that promotes immorality may be rejected by a learner's *ethical barrier*. If the learner feels that with such immoral music the reason for learning is lost, the language class itself will be rejected by the learner's *logical/reasoning barrier*. In this respect, music must be carefully chosen even if it is to be used for a

"tentative purpose" in a language task. Conversely, the good use of music can give affirmative *suggestive* influence to the learning. In Suggestopedia, the music used for the Concert sessions is selected on the basis of quantitative research conducted by Gateva (1990, 1991a), and songs used during the course are to be selected by the teacher who designs the course. The general criteria for selecting music are set as follows: (1) dynamism, to avoid monotony and stimulate creativity; (2) a balanced structure that secures psychological safeness; (3) affirmative themes that promote optimism in the classroom; and (4) *prestige* and/or fame as a psychological support for the significance of course participation.

Similar principles apply to designing all the course activities in Suggestopedia. To avoid any "sudden introduction", difficult material will be put in the outskirts of the learner's consciousness before the teacher actually focuses on it in the class. If possible, difficult material will be first introduced in association with something fun. Thus, learners will have a good impression of the material before it is "officially" introduced. In such learning, reproduction of the material can be unexpectedly attained without any effort that would be accompanied by fear and fatigue. When such an environment has started working as a *social suggestive norm*, a new brain-function-friendly learning style will become a new commonsense idea in the Suggestopedia world. The learners will then compare their old commonsense idea with the new commonsense idea, and they will choose the better one for themselves.

1.3 Suggestopedia Course Design

Suggestopedia courses are designed to realise an environment in which learners can be liberated from limiting *social suggestive norms* in order to obtain a new, more positive belief as commonsense knowledge through the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. The whole course feeds learners with a sufficient amount of both logical and intuitive information from all directions so that their brains can function naturally. The course also stimulates both consciousness and *paraconsciousness*, that is, it stimulates the brain as a whole. In order not to heighten the *anti-suggestive barriers* in the learner's mind, content that is important but thought to be difficult is first given as peripheral information. This content will later be focused on in the classroom in a variety of ways. Lozanov stresses the importance of an "orchestrated" manner that is a *suggestively* interconnected, inter-influencing manner of delivery of the teaching: "the tapping of man's reserve capacities can only be achieved under the conditions of excellent suggestive organization, orchestration and harmonization of the conscious–paraconscious

functions" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 20).

1.3.1 Suggestopedia Course Structure

A typical Suggestopedia language course for adult learners has a basic activity cycle of: (1) an "Introduction"[8] to introduce learners to the atmosphere and the content of the target language; (2) "Concert sessions" to peripherally input a mass volume of language information; (3) a series of "Elaborations" to focus on linguistic targets in the chapter; and an activity called "summary" is often held to be the final part of the series of Elaborations in which learners are asked to do a creative task according to their level. This cycle is repeated in each chapter. To avoid monotony, teaching is delivered using colourful styles and techniques in each cycle. All elements of the activities and props in the cycle are carefully allocated so that they are interconnected and inter-influencing. The approximate duration of each part in a course structure is shown in Table 1.

Table 1 Type of session and their duration in a typical intensive Suggestopedia language course

		Type of session	**Duration**
First day of the course	Day 1 of the course	Introduction	30 to 45 minutes
		Active Concert session	60 minutes
		Passive Concert session	30 minutes
Teaching cycle for the rest of the course	Day 1 in the course book chapter	Elaboration	90 minutes
			90 minutes
	Day 2 in the course book chapter	Elaboration	90 minutes
			90 minutes
	Day 3 in the course book chapter	Elaboration	90 minutes
			90 minutes
	Day 4 in the course book chapter	Elaboration	90 minutes
		Summary (as a part of Elaboration)	15 to 30 minutes
		Introduction	15 to 30 minutes
		Active Concert session	60 minutes
		Passive Concert session	30 minutes

[8] Hereafter, I use "Introduction" with a capital "I" to refer to one of the three stages of the Suggestopedia cycle, as opposed to "introduction" in the general sense. The same applies to the words "Concert" and "Elaboration".

A typical day of an intensive course consists of two 90-minute sessions with a 30-minute break between them. Each chapter of the course book usually takes 4–5 days. However, the duration of the course and each cycle, and each part of the activities, can be decided flexibly depending on the nature of the learning group.

An orientation session is held prior to the beginning of the course. In the orientation, learners are advised not to worry if they do not understand when the teacher is talking in the target language, but just to enjoy what is happening. Learners are also advised that no study at home is necessary.

Introduction

The first day's Introduction is a prelude to the whole course. It can be considered as a kind of stage performance in which the teacher as a performing artist involves all learners in his/her communication in order to quickly immerse them in the world of the target language (Hagiwara, 1993b). In this session, the course is given the key atmosphere of a new world in which learners do not have to worry about making mistakes, and their creativity is always welcomed. The Introduction also gives learners a direction, a goal and a reason to learn the language in implicit or non-verbal ways. Taking the opportunity to make a strong impression during the first encounter in the course, some important elements in the target language are introduced to the learners. Introductions to other chapters are given either within the Elaboration or as an independent session, depending on the structure of the course book.

Concert sessions

In the set of Concert sessions, the teacher reads the textbook with selected background music (Lozanov & Gateva, 1988). This set of sessions exposes the learners to a large amount of target-language information with the expectation that this will create sufficient information reserves in the learner's brain prior to the following Elaboration. The set consists of two reading sessions, an "active Concert session" and a "passive Concert session", and the same part of the textbook is read through in each reading. In the active Concert session, the teacher reads the passage dynamically and slowly so that his/her intonation harmonises with the rhythm and melody of the music. The music selected for the active Concert sessionare pieces with relatively high dynamism and are typically taken from symphonies and concertos of the Classical or Romantic periods. All target-language passages in the introductory textbook are accompanied by a literal translation so that learners can follow the meaning. Before the session starts,

the learners are invited to follow the passages and the translation while they listen to the music. Eventually the learners will receive the effects of the Concert session even if they concentrate on the music as their eyes follow the passages being read. During the lengthy active Concert session, the teacher periodically stops reading, and invites the learners to stand up to repeat the teacher's reading. This is done to promote blood circulation, and prevent learner drowsiness.

In the passive Concert session, the teacher repeats the same passages, but with the normal speed and intonation that is used in daily life. The music selected is cheerful and lively but less dynamic, and is usually taken from the Baroque period. In this session, learners can listen to the music and voice either with or without the textbook. This time, the teacher does not ask learners anything. Once the teacher has finished the organised part of the session, s/he gradually softens the sound and stops the music, says "see you next time" and leaves the room.

The passive Concert session must immediately follow the active Concert session: they cannot be given on separate occasions because "they are both sides of the whole" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 152). According to Lozanov, the set of two readings is necessary. The active Concert session activates the learner's emotions, and the passive Concert session calms them down. Also, Lozanov believes that learners need to listen to the normal intonation of the language after they have listened to the less natural intonation used in active Concert session. The term "passive" in Suggestopedia is often described as "*pseudo-passive*".[9] *Pseudo-passiveness* is "behavioral passiveness of attention with considerable internal activity" in which "very often processes with much higher efficiency than the ordinary occur, releasing reserve possibilities" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 60). The passive Concert session is called the "*pseudo-passive* concert session" in the Suggestopedia teacher's manual (Lozanov & Gateva, 1988, p. 23).

One of the roles of the background music is to maintain a psychological level at which one can easily concentrate on a mental activity. The structural beauty, dynamism and emotion of the music is intended to stimulate a learner's creativity. Also, the music is expected to have an effect that turns the learner's attention away from the amount of vocabulary. If the learner's attention moves from the vocabulary to the music, the large amount of vocabulary in front of them will no longer heighten their anxiety, a mental block forming an *anti-suggestive barrier*.

[9] The term *pseudo-passive* is written as a single word without a hyphen in *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedia* (Lozanov, 1978). The hyphen was inserted in Lozanov's last publication, *Suggestopedia/Reservopedia* (2009). This thesis uses the hyphened version.

Thus the vocabulary will enter into the learner's brain, and in this way the teacher can send the necessary volume of language information for the learner's brain to work well.

The main purpose of the Concert sessions is to create a reservoir of information that will become a firm foundation for the learner to later process the new language. Therefore, not all the linguistic information given in the Concert sessions is a teaching target in the Elaboration sessions.

Elaboration

Elaboration starts on the day following the Concert sessions, and consists of a series of sessions in which learners read the chapter of the course book that has been read in the previous Concert sessions. The learners are taught the four macro skills of language use in the various activities in Elaboration. Superficially, these sessions look similar to ordinary communicative language classes that give learners tasks such as oral practice, reading comprehension, an introduction to grammar, grammar tasks, games, songs, role-plays and storytelling. However, in Suggestopedia, the concept that is employed by the teacher when preparing classroom tasks is very different from conventional language instruction. The Suggestopedia teacher prepares the classroom so that the plentiful and diverse information can reach the learner's *paraconscious* through peripheral perceptions. The teacher considers how to use the peripheral area of a learner's attention in order to introduce difficult content before it has to be highlighted in classroom tasks.

The Elaboration sessions are also the main body of Suggestopedia's "new target-language world" where the new *social suggestive norms* apply. Learners are invited to take a new personality with a new name, a new age, a new occupation and even a new gender. Creativity from the learners is always welcomed. There is no rigid schedule for the day's task. A flow-like state of psychological concentration[10] is respected in the classroom, and the task schedule changes in accordance with students' psychological states. The Elaboration sessions of one chapter often include the Introduction to the next chapter.

[10] "Flow" is a term coined by the American psychologist Mihaly Csikszentmihalyi (1996) to express a state of psychological concentration. A person in the state of flow is fully immersed in an activity. A feeling of "timelessness" usually accompanies flow.

Summary

At the end of each chapter, learners are encouraged to try a creative task in which they spontaneously use the chapter's learning content. This activity is often called the Summary and may be incorporated into the Elaboration. The teacher asks learners to do the Summary task; however, the task is never enforced, and the teacher will wait until the learner is ready.

1.3.2 Suggestopedia Course Books

Each Suggestopedia course has a specially designed textbook to suit its own needs. Suggestopedia textbooks have significant characteristics in terms of the quality and quantity of their information. They are all content-based, dialogue-oriented textbooks that have a consistent story-line to be played by dramatis personae.[11] Plain narratives, poems and songs are also included, as well as prestigious classical visual arts selected from the target-language culture. In this sense, a Suggestopedia textbook is created so that the learners can absorb themselves in the complexity of the rich sociocultural context of the target language. In short, textbooks are written to give learners a "complex whole".

To maintain the complexity in the textbook,[12] the narrative content is not simplified on the basis of learners' language levels. Stylistic variations of the language are introduced according to the situation in the story. Each sentence line is given a literal translation with important words highlighted in some way. All grammatical information about the target language is put together at the end of the textbook; in addition, important grammar points are highlighted at the place where they appear.

A Suggestopedia textbook exposes learners to more than 800 unique words on the very first day of the course. In Suggestopedia, the amount and complexity of the information contained in the textbook is thought to contribute to the healthy functioning of the brain.

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[11] Bodenstein (1996) has pointed out that textbooks used in Suggestopedia are different from ordinary language textbooks, and often appear to be incongruent to readers who expect an organisation that presents linguistic elements in their order of difficulty and that focuses on the necessity of practical communication. In contrast, Suggestopedia textbooks are made to be congruent in terms of the theory of Suggestology and show drama-like consistency in their story-line and multifaceted variation in the language that is used.

[12] Here I am describing textbooks for language courses for adults. Suggestopedia textbooks for children are constructed differently. Children have fewer resources from their experience than adults, that is, they are less influenced by limiting *social suggestive norms*. Accordingly, a Suggestopedia course for children is produced differently from an adult course.

Table 2 Content structure of a Suggestopedia Japanese textbook

Chapter	Unique words introduced	Unique *kanji* introduced	Words (duplication inclusive)	*Kanji* (duplication inclusive)	Grammar	Artistic elements (total number of appearances)
Prologue+	197+	69+	303+	227+	Exposed grammar items: No limit Target grammar items: Introductory-level Japanese grammar	Poem/rhyme/song (9) Prose/story (2) Word game (3) Visual art: engraving, ink drawing, brush calligraphy, oil painting (19) Photography (5) Drawing/illustration (13)
Chapter 1	675	238	1729	1718		
Chapter 2	502	210	1783	1948		
Chapter 3	369	132	1469	1536		
Chapter 4	378	114	1702	1668		
Chapter 5	418	128	2150	1805		
Chapter 6	240	68	1377	1449		
Total	2779	959	10513	10351		

Hagiwara (2011) shows the characteristics of Suggestopedia textbooks in his analysis of his own Suggestopedia Japanese textbook (Hagiwara, 2009); that analysis is reproduced in Table 2. With this textbook, learners will be exposed to a lexicon of 872 unique words in the "Prologue" and "Chapter 1" on the first day of the course (and to 2032 words in total). The first lesson also includes 307 unique *kanji*[13] and their readings (with 1945 *kanji* in total). Learners will be exposed to most grammatical sentence patterns from the beginning of the course as the grammar used in the textbook story is not restricted. They will also be exposed through the course to many forms of arts in the target-language culture (this case, Japanese culture), such as poetry, prose, games, songs, visual arts, calligraphy and photography.

Suggestopedia recommends that teachers create their own textbooks to suit their own teaching needs (Lozanov & Gateva, 1988) because there are no Suggestopedia textbooks available on the market. Gateva published English textbooks for introductory and advanced learners (Gateva, 1998, 1991b, 1991c) and an introductory Italian textbook (Gateva, 1978), however these are not sold commercially but were given out in her courses.

1.3.3 Summary

Suggestopedia is a teaching method that uses *suggestion* to promote brain activity and, as seen above, the main purpose of Suggestopedia is to regain the best possible mental state for the natural functioning of the brain. The working mechanism of the brain as it is conceptualised

[13] *Kanji* are ideographic characters of Chinese origin.

in Suggestopedia's model looks similar to that of society in the context of sociocultural theories. However, it is still unclear what *suggestion* corresponds to in sociocultural theories. If Suggestopedia has similarities with sociocultural theories, then the basic terminology in Suggestopedia should be able to be explained using sociocultural terminology. We may be able to understand Suggestopedia better if we can interpret Lozanov's description in the sociocultural context. I will address this issue in the following chapters.

Chapter 2 Literature Review

2.0 Introduction

This literature review is divided into two sections. In the first section, I review the major literature about Suggestopedia, including works by the developers of the method and by authors who have attempted to understand it. These gives insights into the teaching method that is the focus of this thesis. In the second section, I review academic literature in the field of semiotics/semiology and affordance in order to show how these are appropriate devices for analysing Suggestopedia in a sociocultural context.

2.1 Literature on Suggestopedia and Acceptance of Its Concepts

2.1.0 Introduction

In this first section, I begin by reviewing studies by Lozanov and Gateva, who have been the main forces in developing the current version of Suggestopedia. Then I review publications from North American and Western European authors who have written about Suggestopedia, such as Ostrander and Schroeder, Bancroft, Schuster and Benitez-Bordon, Caskey, Gassner-Roberts and Brislan, Philipov, Lerède, Schiffler, Scovel, Bayuk, Wagner and Tilney, and Zeiss, to see how they have introduced, understood and criticised Suggestopedia. Finally I discuss the work of authors such as Tarr, and Colliander and Fejes to clarify the issues that this thesis targets.

2.1.1 Georgi Lozanov and Evelina Gateva

Georgi Lozanov and Evelina Gateva were long-time research partners who developed the final version of the method that Lozanov called "Suggestopedia/Reservopedia" in his last publication from 2009. This final version of Suggestopedia is the target of study in this thesis. While Lozanov was the originator of Suggestopedia and developed the philosophy and main structure of the method, Gateva added more practical devices to the method, realising Lozanov's philosophy by introducing art and dynamism into the method. There are not many English publications by these two authors; however, I review here their main publications written in English.

2.1.1.1 Lozanov's Early Publications in English

Most publications made by Lozanov in the early years of Suggestopedia were written in Bulgarian and the number of his publications written in Western European languages were very limited in this period. Three of the earliest written in English were published in 1967, the year after the establishment of State Suggestology Research Centr in Sofia, as conference papers for the International Psychosomatic Week held at the Rome Catholic University on 11–16 September 1967. The first of the three conference papers was about Lozanov's unique group psychotherapy method which he called "Integral Psychotherapy" (Lozanov, 1967a); the second was about an experimental surgical operation performed on a patient in a waking state using verbal *suggestions* to minimise his pain (Lozanov, 1967b); and the third was about a language teaching method using the principle of Suggestology (Lozanov, 1967c). He also wrote another conference paper in English for the 4th International Congress of Group Psychotherapy held at the University of Vienna on 16–21 September 1968. This paper was about *suggestions* that can be seen in psychotherapy (Lozanov, 1968). Lozanov also published two papers in German: one was a book about danger of hypnosis (Lozanov, 1971b) and the other was about *suggestions* created by society and their influence on the human personality (Lozanov, 1973). All these publications are referred to in his doctoral thesis (Lozanov, 1971a) and his first English book published in the United States, *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy* (Lozanov, 1978). These early papers by Lozanov show the connections between the basic concepts of Suggestopedia and the development of a group psychotherapy method; the influence of *suggestions* given to person in a waking state on human physiology; and an awareness of the danger of hypnosis.

Lozanov's doctoral thesis *Suggestologija* was written and published in Bulgaria in 1971 (see Bancroft, 1976) and defended also in the USSR in 1972 (see Lozanov, 2007). According to Bancroft (1976), an unofficial English translation of this thesis was handed out to foreign researchers at an international conference on Suggestology held in Varna, eastern Bulgaria, in 1971 by the National Centre for Suggestology. Following that, a copy of this unofficial English translation of the Lozanov thesis was circulated among researchers in the United States (Bancroft, 1976, p. 52). Lozanov's thesis was about the nature of *suggestion* and the need for a corresponding field of study, "Suggestology". It included justifications for research about *suggestions*, the background of this, and the possible development of "Suggestopedy"

as an application of the study of *suggestion*.

Seven years later in 1978, Lozanov submitted a working document to UNESCO when its working party began examining his method. The document was published by UNESCO as *Suggestology and Suggestopedia: Theory and Practice; Working Document, vol. 1* (UNESCO & Lozanov, 1978).[14] The structure of the method seen in this document was similar to its present form and the document included all the core concepts of Suggestopedia which we can find in the current version, such as definitions of the terms "*suggestion*" and "*desuggestive-suggestive process*", the need to attend to *anti-suggestive barriers*, and the importance of the integration of *suggestions*.

2.1.1.2 *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy*

Lozanov's first book in English, *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy* was published in the United States in 1978. In this book, Lozanov discussed the theory of *suggestion* (Suggestology) and outlined the concept and the structure of Suggestopedia, which he described as a "Suggestopedic foreign language system" (p. 266). Lozanov used approximately two thirds of the book to discuss the fundamental issues regarding suggestion: what is *suggestion*, what types of *suggestions* exist in human society, how *suggestions* affect a person, the possibilities for using the effects of *suggestion*, and so on. On the other hand, less than one third was used to describe Suggestopedia as a teaching method. Most of the pages allocated to Suggestopedia were spent on a theoretical explanation of the effect of *suggestion* in the "session" (what will later be called the "Concert session"), and descriptions about its positive effects on memory retention and health promotion as a result of its psychotherapeutic effects. Given its structure, the main focus of the publication is Suggestology rather than Suggestopedia.

The information about applying Suggestology in a foreign language course was not extensive in this book. In particular, descriptions about practical Suggestopedia course management were very limited. Readers could only find a simple description of the unique structure of the "Suggestopedic foreign language system" and the attitudes required of teachers in the course,

[14] UNESCO later published the final report of their examination, in French, as the *Rapport final* of the Expert Working Group on Suggestology and Suggestopedia (UNESCO, 1980).

and the supporting background theories. This short section was followed by a copy of excerpts from Gateva's Italian textbook (Gateva, 1978) and the songs which Gateva composed for her course as an example of the teaching material used in the course. There are in total 55 pages of information about course activities for Suggestopedia. However, this is still very much a rough sketch of the method in the context of the complete volume of 330 pages. Hence, as Lozanov later admitted in his teacher training course (Lozanov, 2006, 25-Aug-1989), this book did not provide a fully comprehensive resource for those teachers who were interested in Suggestopedia. Indeed, it was very difficult for a teacher to understand how s/he could operationalise Suggestology theory and concepts, which are based on the results of many basic experiments described in the first two thirds of the book, in his/her teaching practice.

In spite of not giving sufficient information about Suggestopedia's teaching practices in actual classrooms, this book became *the* book to refer to among researchers who were interested in this method, because it was the only official publication containing direct information from the inventor of the method. Also, for those teachers who wanted to apply this method, this was the only authentic reference for the next ten years, until Lozanov and Gateva's teacher's manual appeared in 1988.

2.1.1.3 *The Foreign Language Teacher's Suggestopedic Manual*

Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy (Lozanov, 1978) was a difficult reference book for teachers who were interested in Suggestopedia, as it was not dedicated to the end users of this method. In 1988, Lozanov, with Gateva, published *The Foreign Language Teacher's Suggestopedic Manual* (Lozanov & Gateva, 1988) for those who needed more practical information about designing a foreign language course using this method. This publication was an English translation from a Bulgarian original published in 1981, which made it the second official English-language publication by the developers of Suggestopedia. It consists of a theoretical part and a practical part about a Suggestopedia course. The practical part provides instruction about how to structure an entire course, including instruction about forming a learning group, pre-testing, course preparation, materials preparation, the use of teaching props, writing a textbook, reading in Concert sessions and post-course language proficiency maintenance. It also refers to the difference between children and adult learners, which the teacher should consider, depending on the nature of their students. The book has a large sec-

tion showing readers an extensive amount (a total of eight chapters) of Gateva's Italian language textbook and the teaching materials she used in her course. This publication also includes the music list for Concert sessions.

In comparison with Lozanov's previous publication (Lozanov, 1978), this teaching manual provided readers with more detailed instructions about designing language courses with Suggestopedia. It was a better book, in particular in the sense that it gave a clearer idea of how teachers could prepare teaching materials for a course and what they should keep in mind while they are in the classroom. However, the information that a teacher needed most in their actual teaching was not explained in this book: that is, information about what *suggestions* should be given, in what forms, on what occasions in classroom activities, and how those *suggestions* should be integrated into a course to fulfil the requirement of Suggestopedia's philosophy.

2.1.1.4 *Creating Wholeness Through Art*

Evelina Gateva played an important role in developing the teaching practice of current Suggestopedia. She joined the project in 1970 when Lozanov was experimenting with the introduction of Baroque-period classical music to his method. When she had completed her German class as a student at the National Centre for Suggestology, Gateva suggested that Lozanov introduce more variety in the classical music. She had a music background as an opera singer and this led her to believe that she could help develop Suggestopedia with her knowledge of art. Soon after, she proposed herself for Lozanov's project and was accepted.[15] With Gateva's input, Lozanov introduced into Suggestopedia the use of intonation, the use of a textbook that has a consistent story-line throughout, the introduction of vocabulary and grammar according to the context of the story, creative classroom activities and post-Baroque classical music for Concert sessions.

After joining the project, Gateva started her research study for a doctoral thesis under the supervision of Lozanov about introducing art in education. She then published *Creating Wholeness Through Art* (Gateva, 1991a) on the basis of her doctoral thesis. Gateva's research aimed to obtain insights into the effect of art as a *suggestive* element which could stimulate

[15] This information is based on the author's conversations with Lozanov in May 2009.

student's emotions, that is, stimulate activity in the *paraconscious* area of the brain, which is thought to support conscious activities on the basis of a double-plane structure. In this publication, she used statistical methods to examine how the introduction of art stimulated students' creativity, and pointed out that students' heightened creativity has the potential to heighten the effectiveness and efficiency of their language learning. She also pointed out that there was a correlation between the type of art and learning effectiveness, which further implies that not all art forms have positive effects on learning. In her study, she suggested a need for a good selection of music and art pieces in learning. The music list for Concert sessions that is currently used in Suggestopedia was selected through the series of experiments in this research.

2.1.1.5 Suggestopedia/Reservopedia

Lozanov published his last book in his final years of his life. The book, *Suggestopedia/Reservopedia: Theory and Practice of the Liberating-Stimulating Pedagogy on the Level of the Hidden Reserves of the Human Mind* (Lozanov, 2009), reflected thirty years of improvements to Suggestopedia since UNESCO's final report (UNESCO, 1980) had endorsed his method in 1980.

Different from his first English book published in 1978, this book has Suggestopedia as its main theme. Although the theoretical part and the basic concepts of Suggestopedia look unchanged in this book, some changes were made to points of theoretical emphasis, and accordingly to teaching practice. In the earlier book, the emphasis was on *suggesting* or giving *suggestion*, and the teacher's *authority* was emphasised in such a context. Accordingly, a theatre-like activity formed part of the Introduction and Concert sessions. However, in the later book, the emphasis was on *desuggestions* that should occur spontaneously without overt *suggestion*. In accordance with this change of emphasis, course activities were designed so that the students would notice fewer *suggestions*. The teacher's role was thus changed so s/he could enjoy class activities together with the students. Even in the most theatrical activity, the Concert sessions, the active session was changed so that the teacher, during the reading, invites students to read together. What had earlier been talked about as the teacher's "*authority*" was more often referred to as "*prestige*" in the new book. Although its importance remains the same, *suggestions* of *authority* are expressed more softly and less overtly in front of the students. In accordance with these changes made to the theoretical emphasis, this book also added new explanations regarding the *suggestions* used in Suggestopedia (pp. 47–50). This

added explanation clarified differences in the way the term "*suggestion*" was understood between North American methods that looked similar and Suggestopedia as understood by Lozanov. Changes were also made about what the teacher should do in a Suggestopedia classroom. The requirements for Suggestopedia teaching in this book were added as "seven laws" (p. 55), which all Suggestopedia teachers are expected to respect. They are symbolised as seven general terms: "love", "freedom", "conviction of the teacher that something unusual is taking place", "manifold increase of input volume", "global-partial, partial-global; partial through global", "the Golden Proportion" and "use of classical art and aesthetics". However, these terms intended to symbolise the Suggestopedia teacher's conduct still seem vague, and readers may feel that it is difficult to get a concrete idea of what to do in classroom practice to express the basic concepts of Suggestopedia. Lozanov admitted that there are parts of the book that the teachers would not fully understand, and stated that "those interested in using Reservopedia [Suggestopedia] should seek teacher training through certified teacher trainers" (p. 148).

As has been seen, the literature created by the developers of the current version of Suggestopedia was published as four major books and several conference papers, which were produced during the fundamental experimental period of the development of the theory of Suggestology. Through these publications, the nature of *suggestion* was theoretically explained, insights into the relationship between artistic elements and education were given, and basic instructions for the teacher to prepare for an actual Suggestopedia course were provided, along with examples of practice. However, it is not clearly indicated even in these original publications how the concrete ideas of the philosophy of Suggestopedia and its basic concepts are functionalised in what connections with which *suggestive* elements in a practical Suggestopedia classroom. The answer to the question of what a teacher can actually do in the classroom to realise the basic concepts of Suggestopedia cannot be found in these books written by the developers of Suggestopedia. They indicate only that the answers can be found empirically within the teacher's own experience of attending a Suggestopedia course as a student and from being a designer of a language course under the supervision of experienced Suggestopedia trainers.

2.1.2 Criticisms of Suggestopedia

A number of criticisms have been made of Suggestopedia since its development. Suggestopedia consists of a unique educational concept and theory, with the evidence supporting it being derived from the results of Lozanov's scientific experiments. The scepticism and criticisms have been directed at both these aspects of Suggestopedia.

Lozanov's Suggestopedic memorisation experiments and their results were first criticised in Bulgaria when they were published in 1963 and 1964 (Lozanov, 1978, p. 13). The results from the experiments were far too good for academics to believe: "Such high rates of success as Lozanov has reported are nowhere else to be found in statistical experiments in the area of psychology" (Schiffler, 1992, p. 15). Lozanov recalls:

> Many around us doubted my experimental results. Some were obviously hostile. That was the first crucial moment for Suggestopedia. (Lozanov, 2006, 24-Aug-1989)

Suggestopedia had to answer such early scepticism raised in its country of origin. In 1965, the Bulgarian government ordered Sofia University to develop their own experiment to test Lozanov's results ("Report for the Scientific Council of the Pedagogy Research Institute and the Ministers of National Education and Public Health and Social Welfare in accordance with Ordinance 2541", cited in Lozanov, 1978, p. 24). To minimise Lozanov's control, all experimental staff including teachers and students were selected by Sofia University. Lozanov's commitment was limited and all he did "was to instruct teachers the way to read in the session" (Lozanov, 2006, 24-Aug-1989). The report that Sofia University's Suggestopedy Research Group submitted to the government (Lozanov, 1978, p. 23) recognised the uniqueness of the problem that Lozanov was dealing with, and the effectiveness of the method. The only concern showed by the group was "the possible risk of the health of the student" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 24), as this would need longitudinal research. As I mentioned earlier, a similar, more wide-scale test was conducted by the research working group formed by UNESCO later in 1978 (UNESCO & Lozanov, 1978), and the working group did not indicate any concerns about Lozanov's theory and the supporting evidence (UNESCO, 1980).

The results obtained by Lozanov naturally raised scepticism in the West. However, most critics did not go beyond speculation about the results. For example, Schiffler (1992) doubted Lozanov's experiment as "one cannot exclude the possibility that the selection of students of and in itself led to an elitism" (p. 15). He argued this based on a report by Lerède (1983, p. 243) that "the students at the Institute for Suggestology in Sophia were selected from a

waiting list of thousands". Schiffler's claim can be rejected because what Lerède reported about the waiting list in the "Institute for Suggestology" must refer to the State Suggestology Research Centre, which was only established in 1966, after the Bulgarian review had been conducted – the establishment of the Centre was based on the fact that Lozanov's results had been tested by the research group formed by Sofia University in 1965. Schiffler (1992, p. 16) also doubted that there was equality between the experiment groups and the control groups. However, the two major tests, by the Bulgarian government and UNESCO, did not indicate problems with the research settings.

Scovel (1979) produced one of the most cited criticisms of Suggestopedia. In his book review of Lozanov's first major English publication, *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy* (1978), he pointed out numerical errors, and therefore doubted the book's scientific accuracy. He took "Table 2 Results of the first written test" in the book (p. 17) as an example to show readers that calculation errors were made which favoured Suggestopedia, and he concluded that what Lozanov claimed in his book was scientifically questionable. However, as Scovel himself wrote (p. 257, note 1), the text he used for his book review was an imperfect pre-publication manuscript sent to him by the publisher. There were discrepancies in page references, and a numerical typographical error was present in the table on which Scovel based his argument. However, these errors were corrected in the published version. Moreover, Scovel himself made errors in his revised calculation, making it less favourable to Suggestopedia than the correct calculation.

As well as the results of the experiments, the concepts of Suggestopedia have also received harsh criticism in the West. The major criticisms related to doubts about the effectiveness of the components that make up the method. One such criticism was made by Bayuk in her research paper "Socio-Cultural Environments and Suggestopedia" (1983). In her study, Bayuk examined the sociocultural education environment of Suggestopedia in a comparison between Eastern Bloc communist society and liberal society in the West. Bayuk's argument was that the sociocultural sense of value of Suggestopedia, which was developed under the communist regime, may not be applicable to the education systems of the West. She pointed out that the characteristics of a communist set of values, such as the authoritarian teacher and mental manipulative activities (the use of hypnosis, yoga-like meditation and alpha wave feedback techniques), are found in Suggestopedia, and urged caution for teachers who wished to use such a method (p. 37). She concluded that a mentally manipulative educational philosophy that might be effective in a communist society would be criticised in a non-communist

society (p. 38). However, Bayuk's scepticism towards mental manipulation was, in fact, in agreement with Lozanov's philosophy. Lozanov was himself against mental manipulation throughout his research and in the development of Suggestopedia. He argued that mental manipulation can be dangerous to a person's health (Lozanov, 1971b, 1978), and he emphasised throughout his books that the *suggestions* used in Suggestopedia were "non-manipulative" (Lozanov, 1978, 2009). Lozanov also tried to remove all mental manipulation factors from Suggestopedia because of his concern that activities involving them could heighten the *anti-suggestive barriers* of the students, who may sense and become cautious about being mentally manipulated (Lozanov, 2006, 23-Aug-1989). In other words, what Bayuk's criticism was directed at was something that was not a part of Suggestopedia as Lozanov developed it.

2.1.3 Publications from Suggestopedia's First Introduction to the West

As seen in the previous section, some criticisms of Suggestopedia related to elements that were not part of the proposals made by Suggestopedia. In the following sections, I will address works published during the early period of the introduction of Suggestopedia to North America to further clarify aspects of Lozanov's work that were modified in popularising the theory in the West.

2.1.3.1 The First Introduction

Psychic Discoveries Behind the Iron Curtain (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1970) was one of the earliest publications to introduce Lozanov and his educational method to the West. This book was written for general readers and was produced, more or less, to lead readers to be surprised about what was being researched in the Eastern Bloc communist countries. Suggestopedia was introduced as one of the exotic scientific research projects being conducted secretly behind Iron Curtain. The authors visited Bulgaria and had a short interview with Lozanov about his early experiments and what was going in the newly established National Centre for Suggestology. In the book, Lozanov's experiments, which were conducted for specific research purposes such as to understand brain function or the nature of *suggestion*, were described in a sensationalising tone. Although it was not an academic publication, this book triggered North American interest in Suggestopedia, including among "a number of knowledgeable researchers and educational psychologists in the United States" (Bancroft, 1999, p. 245).

2.1.3.2 Introduction to North America and the Formation of the SALT Movement

W. Jane Bancroft was one of the researchers whose interest in Suggestopedia was triggered by Ostrander and Schroeder's (1970) book and she focused on Suggestopedia during its earliest period of introduction into North America. Bancroft, who was teaching French at the University of Toronto, visited Bulgaria in 1971 and stayed there for five days to attend the First International Symposium on Suggestology held in Varna, a city in the east of Bulgaria.[16] During her visit, she had a short interview with Lozanov and later published a report of her visit (Bancroft, 1972). Three years later, Bancroft presented a paper entitled "The Lozanov Language Class" (Bancroft, 1975) to the Second International Symposium on Suggestology, held in Washington, DC, in 1975. In this paper, Bancroft analysed the elements found in the course activities in Suggestopedia on the basis of information given by Aleko Novakov, who was teaching French as a program designer under Lozanov's direction (Bancroft, 1999, p. 61) at the National Centre for Suggestopedia, and an English translation of Lozanov's doctoral thesis, *Suggestologija* (Lozanov, 1971a), that she had been given at the symposium she attended in Bulgaria. From this time on, Bancroft published many articles and books about Suggestopedia, through which she became one of the most influential figures in the area of Suggestopedia in the West. The book she wrote in her final years, *Suggestopedia and Language Acquisition: Variations on a Theme* (Bancroft, 1999), is valuable in understanding the acceptance and transformation of Suggestopedia in North America and elsewhere in the West.

Another researcher who should be mentioned as an early contributor to the development of Suggestopedia in North America is Donald Schuster, who was considered as one of the most important figures in North American Suggestopedia. He was another researcher whose interest began with Ostrander and Schroeder's (1970) book (Bancroft, 1999). Schuster, who was a professor of psychology at Iowa State University in the early 1970s, established the Society for Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching (SALT) with Charles Schmidt in 1975, and was a long-time chief editor of its academic journal. Schuster, with others, published a teaching manual, *Suggestive, Accelerative Learning and Teaching: A Manual of Classroom Procedures Based on the Lozanov Method* (Schuster, et al., 1976), in the year following the establishment of SALT. This teacher's manual was published twelve years earlier than the

[16] The First International Symposium on Suggestology was held in Varna on 5–10 June 1971. Researchers from thirteen countries, including the USA and Canada, attended this symposium (Lozanov, 2007; Bancroft 1972).

official teaching manual written by Lozanov and Gateva (1988), and two years earlier than Lozanov's first official English publication, *Suggestology and Outlines of Suggestopedy* (1978). In the same year that their teacher's manual was published, Schuster and Benitez-Bordon conducted an experiment to examine the effectiveness of Suggestopedia using their manual, and published a paper "The Effects of a Suggestive Learning Climate, Synchronised Breathing and Music, on the Learning and Retention of Spanish Words" (Benitez-Bordon & Schuster, 1976). This research paper was published in the inaugural issue of the society's academic journal, the *Journal of the Society for Accelerative Learning and Teaching*. The experiment of Benitez-Bordon and Schuster compared each suggestive element of "music", "rhythmical breathing" and "oral suggestion and mind-calming with guided imagery" and examined their effect on memory retention of fifty Spanish words. They compared each element, each combination of two elements with the absence of the third, and the combination of all three elements. They concluded the combination of all three elements brought about the best results.

Since its establishment, SALT as both an academic society and an academic journal has provided spaces for sharing knowledge of Suggestopedia and accelerative learning and teaching methods in North America.

2.1.3.3 Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia, SALT and Superlearning

There are records of Western educators working with Lozanov after the wider dissemination of Suggestopedia in North America. Schuster invited Lozanov and Gateva to Iowa State University on 22–24 April 1977, two years after he established SALT. Lozanov, at that time, had completed the manuscript for his first English publication and was thought to be preparing for the investigation by the UNESCO working group. Therefore, Schuster and others had an opportunity to experience the latest developments in Lozanov's Suggestopedia soon after they founded SALT. On his three-day visit, Lozanov gave a public lecture (Lozanov, 1977a), had a discussion with Schuster (Lozanov & Schuster, 1977) and was interviewed by a local TV station (Lozanov, 1977b). In addition, Gateva gave a demonstration Italian language class (Lozanov & Gateva, 1977).

By the time of their visit to Iowa, Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia and North American interpretation of Suggestopedia (SALT) had already started moving in different directions.

The 1977 visit revealed the consequences of six years of developments in Suggestopedia after North American researchers first experienced the method in Bulgaria in 1971. Bancroft (1999) reports that Suggestopedia as presented by Lozanov and Gateva in 1977 had developed into a version in which Gateva's ideas had been widely introduced, with the 1977 version already very close to the current version. She pointed out several important changes that were found in the 1977 version (Bancroft, 1999, p. 18): the overt elements of yoga had been removed from learning activities; and the music in the Concert sessions had been changed from using only slow movements of Baroque music to the use of a wider range, with Baroque music assigned only to the passive Concert session, while more dynamic and emotional Romantic classical pieces had been introduced to the active Concert session. Bancroft (1999) presumed that the changes seen in the 1977 version were made in order to be more acceptable in the North American education environment (p. 246). Indeed, being a socioculturally acceptable method was in line with one of the basic concepts of Suggestopedia in the sense that it could help maintain students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level (Lozanov, 1978, p. 163). In this sense, the 1977 version of Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia can be seen as an improved version in terms of comprehensive integration of *suggestive* elements.

While Lozanov developed his method towards holistic organisation, in which all *suggestive stimuli* are integrated and do not contradict one another, researchers in SALT were interested in incorporating separate individual techniques as components into conventional language classrooms. This trend in the United States was seen in publications by the founders of SALT, and by other authors publishing in the SALT journal, such as Owen Caskey, who had become interested in Suggestopedia as early as Schuster (Bancroft, 1999, p. 245). Caskey published the book *Suggestive-Accelerative Learning and Teaching* (1980) for teachers who wished to use the SALT method. He introduced SALT techniques in such a way that readers could use "some of the components at one time or another as a part of effective teaching" (p. 62) in their own "typical class settings" (p. 61). One can imagine that Caskey's (1980) approach filled a need for those teachers who wanted to try Suggestopedia in their environment, because it is not always easy for a teacher to change his/her physical and structural teaching environment, while it may be possible to include components of the method. As Hagiwara (1993a) pointed out in his report on an attempt to introduce Suggestopedia in a large-scale university Japanese course, factors in the teaching environment can limit the possible elements that can be incorporated from Suggestopedia. In such a case, it can be a practical option for a teacher to select appropriate components from Suggestopedia to incorporate into his/her ongoing teaching.

Lozanov did not deny the possibility of selectively using Suggestopedia components in a conventional teaching environment as a part of the process of disseminating his method. In his teacher training course, he advised participants not to insist on changing the existing system but to try to solve the problem in harmony with the system (Lozanov, 2006, 16-Feb-1989). However, even in such cases, Lozanov required the teachers to make a consistent integration of *suggestive stimuli* (Lozanov, 1978, p. 319) in the course, rather than just using techniques from the method, as he believed effects from Suggestopedia would be limited if the course lacked such comprehensive integration (Lozanov, 2006, 7-Oct-1994). However, SALT did not seem to be greatly concerned with integrating *suggestive stimuli* when incorporating separate components into conventional teaching approaches. In the SALT movement, researchers and teachers were generally positive about introducing external elements into SALT, some of which did not look *suggestively* congruent with Lozanov's Suggestopedia. Some of these elements were newly developed techniques based on scientific findings in the areas of psychology and cognitive science, and others were from studies of traditional exercises used to obtain a state of relaxation.

This trend of using separate techniques external and internal to Suggestopedia without consideration of integrating them can already be seen in early SALT publications, such as Bancroft (1975), Schuster et al. (1976), Prichard and Taylor (1976) and Caskey (1980). Some of these techniques were not consistent with Suggestology theory, and others were not consistent with Suggestopedia practice, although they had been studied by Lozanov. These techniques, which included visualisation (Schuster et al., 1976) and guided imagery (Caskey & Meier, 1987), had been developed in the area of cognitive therapy in the United States in the 1970s as a way to cure patients' anxiety (Beck, 1976). However, they were not included in Suggestopedia teaching activities as techniques for giving *suggestions* for the reason that these practices contradict some of the basic concepts of Suggestopedia, even though each of them may be effective in individual use (Lozanov, 2009, p. 47). Relaxation exercises and guided imagery are not consistent with Suggestopedia concepts such as *concentrative psycho-relaxation* and learners' spontaneity. *Concentrative psycho-relaxation* is a term Lozanov coined to express an ideal mental state for learning, which is a dynamically fluctuating mental state in which students can creatively learn while they maintain good quality concentration. In Lozanov's theory, a fixed state of deep relaxation is unnecessary. This is firstly because the ideal state of *psycho-relaxation* is different in each personality. Hence, giving a fixed state of relaxation does not necessarily cause positive effects for everyone (Lozanov, 2009, p. 114). Secondly, the deep mental relaxation associated with physical relaxation can induce hypnosis,

and Lozanov argues that instructions directed to a person in a hypnotic state can cause unwanted effects on the person's health (Lozanov, 2009, p. 87). Other external elements – such as the use of yoga, zen, alpha brain waves and the slow movements of Baroque music – were studied by Lozanov in his doctoral thesis and subsequent research conducted at the National Centre for Suggestology in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Lozanov, 1978), but they were either not included in the practice of Suggestopedia from the beginning, or excluded after having been tried (Lozanov, 2009) because they were found to be inconsistent with the theoretical model developed in Suggestology.

The same trend of introducing external elements into Suggestopedia has continued in more recent activities of SALT. For example, Lynn Dhority's ACT (Acquisition through Creative Teaching) method (Dhority, 1992) was developed based on Gateva's version of Suggestopedia and followed Gateva's teaching activities, such as using lively Baroque and dynamic Romantic classical music, but Dhority also included activities such as guided fantasies and visualisation in her method.

Thus there were substantial differences between Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia and the version of SALT. A major difference was in their attitudes towards integration. While the former aimed for a congruent, consistent, comprehensive and seamless integration of all *suggestive stimuli* in the course, the latter did not place much attention on such integration and took a more eclectic approach when selecting and incorporating elements that they believed to be effective into the existing teaching environment.

Despite the differences that distinguish the two versions, they were easily confused and often understood as the same method as they shared the same starting point, with the North American version arising from the book *Psychic Discoveries Behind The Iron Curtain* (Ostrander & Schroeder, 1970). This conceptual conflation of Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia with SALT became even more widespread when a book targeting general readers, *Superlearning* (Ostrander et al., 1979) was published and became a bestseller. Since this book continued on from their previous book but with added information from the development of the North American SALT movement, it naturally included Lozanov's Suggestopedia as one of the major teaching methods for superlearning. As a result, Lozanov's Suggestopedia continued to be widely conflated with SALT methods, this time, under the name of superlearning.

Since superlearning became widely known as a teaching method, several studies were conducted to examine the effectiveness of what the book claimed, many appearing in 1983. Wagner and Tilney (1983) and Zeiss (1983) were two such studies. These were both quantitative studies about the effectiveness of the teaching techniques presented in the book *Superlearning*. Wagner and Tilney (1983) compared the memorisation of 300 German words between experimental and control groups and concluded that "the combination of relaxation, special breathing, intonation, and music apparently were not enough to produce 'super' results" (p. 16). Zeiss (1983) studied an experimental group "trained in relaxation skills" being taught with classical music containing sixty beats per minute "played in the background during the entire class sessions for two consecutive weeks" (p. 4) and concluded that "using Ostrander and Schroeder's methods for Superlearning" had no individual effect (p. 8).

These two studies show examples where Lozanov's Suggestopedia and the SALT-related superlearning were conflated. Indeed, these studies should be taken as research on the methods of SALT, rather than on Lozanov's Suggestopedia, as their research context showed the characteristics of SALT: the language courses they examined were an eclectic mix of teaching techniques, some of which were recommended by Lozanov while others were not.

2.1.4 Towards Understanding Lozanov and Gateva's Philosophy of Integration

One of the most significant differences between Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia and SALT, as mentioned above, was the concept of integration. Given that Suggestopedia was a by-product of developing Integral Psychotherapy, which aimed at curing patients by integrating their personality, Lozanov's intention in integrating *suggestive stimuli* basically concerns the integration of the student's personality. Lozanov believed that if the integration of personality was not taken into consideration, his method would not be able to keep students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level and thus realise the *desuggestive-suggestive process* (Lozanov, 1978, p. 170). As the brain plays the main role in developing one's personality in Lozanov's theory, integration in Suggestopedia can be understood as something that has to do with all possible *suggestive stimuli* that the brain can sense; stimuli can be sensed consciously as well as *paraconsciously*. Lozanov claimed that integration should be realised through the "excellent suggestive organization, orchestration and harmonization of the conscious–paraconscious functions" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 20). However, SALT studies (e.g. Schuster et al., 1976; Caskey, 1980) do not take this point into consideration.

One study that gives us an opportunity to think about integration in Suggestopedia and the teacher's role in it was Tarr's (1995) study. In a part of her doctoral thesis studying the influences of Suggestopedia on various people in the field of teaching and academic research in education, she found three different types of lack of integration in studies of Suggestopedia early in the history of SALT. Tarr examined quantitative studies by Benitez-Bordon and Schuster (1976), Philipov (1978) and Gassner-Roberts and Brislan (1984), which were considered as important examinations of Suggestopedia in the early days of SALT. She first pointed out that all three studies were made using a mixture of Suggestopedia and elements external to Suggestopedia, which was, as mentioned earlier, one of the characteristics of SALT. Tarr also pointed out that each study had a different understanding and handling of integration. For example, she found the concept of integration was missing in Benitez-Bordon and Schuster's (1976) examination of Spanish word retention, as this broke up Suggestopedia activities into separate components and tested them simply used alone and used in combination (Tarr, 1995, p. 81). Thus, in this study the elements were considered in an unintegrated way. Tarr argues that Gassner-Roberts and Brislan's (1984) study lacked *suggestive* integration between how they ran the target course and the method of measurement of the effectiveness of the course in their research design. While they basically followed Lozanov's work in running their experimental German language course, they also had to follow the university's assessment structure, which was not consistent with Suggestopedia aims and undermined integration. In addition, the way they tested students' improvement during the course was not in line with the theoretical position of Suggestopedia, as frequent testing done for the research would be likely to give students negative *suggestions* (Tarr, 1995, p. 87). Tarr further pointed out that Philipov's (1978) design for the Suggestopedia course had an element that could work negatively in Suggestopedia terms, although it produced positive results in her study. Philipov mostly followed the techniques and the structure of Lozanov and Gateva's version when she taught Bulgarian to American students. Her course showed significantly better results compared against a control group to which she taught Russian[17] in a conventional way. However, she added guided imagery, which Lozanov rejected because it is against the philosophy of Suggestopedia that considers learner freedom to be important (Tarr, 1995, p. 87) and guided imagery therefore a problem for the integration of *suggestive stimuli.* Tarr's (1995) study of this body of SALT research suggests that each study lacked integration in different ways. Her

[17] Philipov's use of Russian course as her control group was accepted when she included this study in her doctoral thesis submitted to the US International University in 1975.

analysis suggests that the integration needed for Suggestopedia does not only mean the integration of the *suggestive* elements themselves within the target language course, but also requires the integration of all *suggestive* elements that students' brains can sense, including the research purpose and research design when the course is a focus of the research. These peripheral elements can also give *suggestions* to the students in the course and possibly affect their results.

Another interesting point Tarr (1995) made in her analysis was that Philipov's course showed very good results even though it contained *suggestive* elements that could conflict with each other. Tarr attributed Philipov's (1978) good result to her talents as a teacher:

> I conclude the following from a careful reading of Philipov's research study: Philipov is an excellent teacher who has a fine intellectual and intuitive grasp of Lozanov's suggestopedic principles. She is a sensitive, caring pedagogue who believes in every one of her students, and knows how to challenge them to break through self-imposed and societally-imposed limitations. She seems to love teaching, resonates with the aesthetic nature of Lozanov's work, and very naturally embodies the liberating spirit of the work. Rather than imitating Suggestopedia as if it were a set of techniques to follow mechanically, she interprets the guidelines of the approach in a way which is congruent with her own artistic and pedagogical sensitivity. In fact, her practice of leading students in guided imagery exercises goes blatantly against Lozanov's recommendations. (p. 94)

What Tarr (1995) pointed out was that the course brings about good results even though it contains elements that could conflict with each other because the teacher uses her intelligence and intuition to cover such negative factors by integrating *suggestions* naturally and consistently. This suggests the importance of the teacher in the classroom and that the success of Suggestopedia owes a lot to its teacher.

Little research has been done with a focus on the teacher in Suggestopedia courses. In one such study, Colliander and Fejes (2020) studied teachers in Suggestopedia courses in Swedish as a second language in Sweden. They observed the courses and analysed interviews with teachers and students to gain insights into the role of the teacher, particularly in terms of how they create scaffolds, in Vygotsky's (1978) sense, by using "mediational artefacts" within the fictional identity given in Suggestopedia course. The researchers concluded that by using

these artefacts in their Suggestopedia courses, the teachers created reduced stress in learning, promoted mutual respect among students and created a cooperative atmosphere, and this structured scaffolding in the course provided students with positive learning experiences (p. 12). The central interest of Colliander and Fejes (2020) study was not the integration of *suggestive* elements, but rather their analysis was limited to *suggestive* elements within each artefact. That is, they did not mention the interconnection of those *suggestive stimuli*. However, in their study, Colliander and Fejes pointed out that semiotic resources such as appropriate positioning of photographs and text lines in the textbook helped students, as they could be used as scaffolds to assist in their reading, and they also mentioned a semiotic combination of visual images, pronunciation, and target grammar as constructing a scaffold to help students understand the language (p. 8). This study also suggested that a sociocultural perspective, including semiotic analysis, would be significant in studying the role of the teacher in Suggestopedia (p. 13).

These studies suggest some specific issues that need to be taken into consideration when studying Suggestopedia classrooms. Tarr's (1995) study pointed out the importance of comprehensive and consistent integration of *suggestive stimuli* in the whole environment of Suggestopedia research including research design and course implementation. She also reemphasised the importance of the role of the teacher in assuring such integration. Colliander and Fejes (2020) suggested that semiotic analysis can contribute to gaining insights into the role of the Suggestopedia teacher. Considering these two studies together, it could be said that they suggested possibilities for getting insights into what *suggestion* is and how *suggestions* are integrated in Suggestopedia by analysing how the teacher uses and combines symbols in the Suggestopedia course.

2.1.5 Summary

In this section, I have reviewed publications around Suggestopedia to understand those issues which are still relevant today. I first overviewed the publications of Lozanov and Gateva, the co-developers of Suggestopedia, to see how their publications evolved over the time frame during which the method was being developed. Next, I examined publications from outside Bulgaria to see how the method was introduced, interpreted and criticised in North America and other Western countries. This examination has revealed that Suggestopedia became widely mixed with ideas from external sources in forming an educational movement, SALT,

after its introduction to North America. Hence, research on Suggestopedia needs to distinguish between Lozanov and Gateva's Suggestopedia and SALT, or "Suggestopedia" as described in the book *Superlearning*, and should be designed based on a clear understanding of the key concepts of the core philosophy presented by Lozanov and Gateva, such as integration. In addition, Suggestopedia practice needs a consistent sociocultural description to identify what elements in the practical teaching situation play what roles in Lozanov and Gateva's philosophy and concepts.

2.2 Suggestopedia and Concepts of Semiotics and Affordance

2.2.0 Introduction

In the last chapter, I wrote that Suggestopedia uses non-verbal (*paraconscious*) *suggestive stimuli* for the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. I quoted Lozanov's story about a communication between him and a young welder that indicated non-verbal (*paraconscious*) communication played a significant role in making verbal (conscious) *suggestive stimuli* more effective.

Despite this, the literature on Suggestopedia has not presented a concrete theory of how to give non-verbal *suggestive stimuli* in the language classroom. Lozanov said that "the tapping of man's reserve capacities can only be achieved under the conditions of excellent suggestive organization, orchestration and harmonization of the conscious–paraconscious functions" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 20). However, literature written by Suggestopedia authors only mentions the use of classical art as an example of "organization, orchestration and harmonization". It says that it is important to introduce elements of the classical arts throughout the course (Gateva, 1991a). How teachers can choose such elements in their classrooms is simply explained by Lozanov as: "In the end, a lasting concern of the teacher is to develop an intuitive sense of the harmonious eternal proportions and observe these wherever possible for him/her" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 76).

This explanation seems ambiguous and puzzling, because it does not define the stimuli with which teachers should be concerned in the classroom. Also, it does not mention the relationship between stimuli drawn from classical art and stimuli that the teachers can use in their classroom for language teaching. In a practical teacher training course, Lozanov explained the use of stimuli as a part of actual teaching practice in the classroom in the following terms:

> These things [orchestration of stimuli] have not been considered in the traditional methods. So, the teachers gave all kinds of stimuli – stimuli which would cause students to like the subject, and stimuli which would causes students to dislike the subject, together with other kinds of stimuli – all at once. But it is not good for students' memory. For example, if an intimidating teacher teaches a subject in a dirty classroom, the situation will work negatively on the student's memory. (Lozanov, 2006, 2-Feb-1989)

Here, Lozanov says that stimuli are things that produce a particular meaning or message, and if a teacher does not recognise their existence, he/she can send students a set of contradictory messages simultaneously. Even if the school subject itself is interesting, an "intimidating teacher" and a "dirty room" can attach a negative impression to the subject.

What a teacher does and says in a classroom can also affect his/her credibility in that classroom. In his lecture, Lozanov conducted two small psychological experiments to show how non-verbal *suggestive stimuli* can influence verbal *suggestive stimuli*, and how a psychological set-up arranging verbal and non-verbal stimuli can affect the teacher's credibility in the classroom. Lozanov's demonstration was as follows:

> I named my method "Suggestopedia" because of the suggestibility that all human being have. Indeed, every single person is suggestible. We have several tests to measure a person's suggestibility. Now I will show you one or two of them.
>
> [Lozanov put out coloured chalks and picked up one of them to smell it. He closed his eyes, breathed in and enjoyed the smell, then he invited the students to smell it. Lozanov asked the students if they sensed any scent. Some students replied "yes", although the chalk in fact had no scent.]
>
> How about that? This chalk has no scent at all. But this is what "suggestibility" is. Those students who said they smelled something believed that it smells because of what I did … because of me who is the teacher in this room. Thinking of this, you will understand the importance of the role of the teacher. Even in normal communication in the classroom, your prestige from your position as a "teacher" and your high-level knowledge about the subject can influence your classroom. This applies to

> the relationship of a doctor and his patient, and parents and children. Whether you are aware of it or not, a person with prestige is influential. That is why a teacher has to take care of his or her attitudes in the classroom.

In this first experiment, Lozanov showed the audience the importance of the role of the teacher in the teaching room, in that students can be easily misled by the teacher's behaviour. In the lecture room, Lozanov closed his eyes, breathed in and enjoyed the smell of the chalk, then invited students to smell it. Because he sent a message that he had smelled a scent, the students also smelled it. However, the message sent to the audience could be different if someone else did the same thing in the same place. For example, if a small boy did the same thing to his mother, the mother would not believe that the chalk had a scent. The boy does not have the same prestige for his mother that Lozanov had as the lecturer in his lecture series. Lozanov showed that the social context helped him send a message to his audience that the chalk had a smell.

Lozanov then continued his experiment in order to show his students that the context in a situation can affect the teacher's credibility in the teaching room.

> [Next, Lozanov showed a picture, saying, "Now I show you a picture. I will ask you some questions after." In the picture there were two children playing in a room. It was clear that their mother was not there. After he put the picture face down on the desk, Lozanov asked the students where the mother was. The students instantly replied that there was no mother in the picture. Then, Lozanov asked them where the ship was. Everyone replied that there was no ship. However, there was a ship in the drawing, in the ocean outside the window of the children's room.]
>
> This shows the effect of the set-up of the situation. A prior set-up of the situation can affect a person's suggestibility. In this case, the first obviously misleading question acted as a set-up for the next question that tricked all of you. Set-up is something to do with a placebo. (Lozanov, 2006, 23-Aug-1989)

The lecturer who made his audience believe that something that does not smell smells was already someone who tricked the people in the room, and what his next "experiment" showed was him tricking them again. Therefore, it was natural for his audience to get ready for the next trick.

In other words, Lozanov first created a situation where some people did not believe their teacher, then he tricked the same people again by using their own logic. The whole story of the audience who believed a falsehood when they wanted to believe, yet they did not believe the truth when they did not want to believe, was created in a particular context. And he created that context by making good use of the situation, which is a group of stimuli.

Therefore, the creation of meaning in a context that involves using the meanings of verbal and non-verbal stimuli can affect the credibility of the information given as verbal stimuli. *Suggestive stimuli* are not limited only to verbal stimuli, and the relationship between each stimulus and its meaning is not limited to a one-to-one correspondence. The meaning produced by a stimulus can develop in one direction or another in a given situation. Therefore, in Suggestopedia, for a teacher to realise the organisation, orchestration and harmonisation of *suggestive stimuli* in the classroom, he/she should first be aware of what each stimulus means, and in which way the meaning of a group of stimuli develops. Then he/she should set up the group of stimuli so that they will not contradict one another in relation to what the students learn in the classroom.

If, as Lozanov expected, the effectiveness of Suggestopedia depends on the organisation, orchestration and harmonisation of *suggestive stimuli*, an observation and analysis of the stimuli present in the classroom can bring us ideas about how to create indicators of the possible effectiveness of Suggestopedia in both Suggestopedia and also non-Suggestopedia classrooms. However, as mentioned above, the developers of Suggestopedia did not conduct such an analysis.

The discussion above raises two significant questions. What can we use to analyse the relationship between *suggestive stimuli* and the meanings they produce? How can we describe potential ways of developing of meaning in the classroom?

Our concern in this study is the *suggestive stimuli* that are used in language education. That is, how the stimuli that come from a teacher's talk, his/her attitudes, the human relationships in the classroom and the atmosphere may be interpreted by class participants, and how they develop in the classroom community to form *social suggestive norms*. Two tools seem to be relevant in this study. They are semiology/semiotic analysis, and context and situation analysis using the concept of affordance. Semiology/semiotic analysis will give us insight into how

each *suggestive* stimulus may be interpreted by the participants in the classroom, and the analysis of affordance in the situation and the context of classroom activities will show us what contexts may be set up by the teacher in order to form desirable *social suggestive norms* throughout a course.

2.2.1 Semiology/Semiotics

Semiological analysis is based on the study of meaning by Ferdinand Saussure (1907), Charles Sanders Peirce (1894, 1902) and others. It has been widely used in the analysis of text and context in literature (e.g. Barthes, 1975; Kristeva, 1974; Hasumi, 1979a, 1985; Hutchings, 1990), cinema (Hasumi, 1979b) and culture (Barthes, 1983; Lévi-Strauss, 1963/1967). Semiological analysis can handle not only verbal stimuli but also non-verbal stimuli. When those stimuli create "meanings" or "messages", the stimuli are called "signs" or "symbols", and the process of sign–meaning connection is called "semiosis".

Saussure and Peirce separately developed their thinking about semiosis. Whereas Saussure developed his ideas in the process of constructing a model of the language system, Peirce developed his thought as a part of his study of pragmatism.[18] However, they reached similar conclusions, summarised here:

1. A meaning process includes two elements. They are the sign that indicates a thing (for example, the word "rabbit") – Saussure called this the "signifiant" ("signifier" in English), while Peirce called the same element a "representamen" – and the concept that is indicated by the sign (for example, the animal that is called "rabbit") – Saussure called this the "signifié" ("signified"), while Peirce called it the "referent".
2. The sign–meaning relationship is basically arbitrary, that is, anything can mean anything. For example, the animal rabbit can be called "*usagi*" in Japanese because there is no inherent connection between form and meaning that requires any particular meaning to be attached to any particular form.
3. A sign–meaning connection itself can create further meanings. For example, the word

[18] Peirce coined the term "pragmatism" to express his (and his group's) attitude towards understanding social phenomena. The basic concept of pragmatism is given in his early work "How to Make Our Ideas Clear" (1878): "The central tenet of Pragmatism is that the meaning of a concept is given by its practical utility and nothing else". To Peirce, a sign is the most elementary object that is to be observed by its practical utility (Peirce, 1878, 1894; Queiroz & Merrell 2006; Fisch 1986).

"rabbit" is used to indicate a quiet, fluffy animal but it can also indicate "gentleness".

4. A system of meaning production develops from the interconnection of a form and a unique meaning domain[19] and these interconnections are specific to particular languages. For example, the English words "rabbit" and "hare" indicate different animals, but they are both "*usagi*" in Japanese.

An analysis that takes semiotic characteristics into consideration may be effective for understanding what is happening in the Suggestopedia classroom. For example, the "intimidating face of a teacher" in the classroom does not always add a negative sense to learning. It can sometimes attach a positive sense to the classroom. If a teacher knows what the "intimidating face of a teacher" can mean, he/she can consciously make use of it in the classroom. An intimidating face could work as an icebreaker, an atmosphere changer or a dramatic face to show an extraordinary emotion in a humorous context.

Such knowledge about semiosis appears relevant especially when a Suggestopedia teacher uses all possible *suggestive stimuli* in the classroom to create a different world of new *social suggestive norms* in which learners can acquire new more positive commonsense ideas about their ability to learn.

In a teacher training course, Lozanov explained about the world of Suggestopedia as follows:

> The Introduction at the beginning of the course is extremely important because it means the beginning of the "game". I am not talking about the games to be played in the learning activities, but Suggestopedia itself is a "game".
>
> Within the big "game" of Suggestopedia, smaller games take place. For all the participants, Suggestopedia is a very interesting "game" that has many stages within it. (Lozanov, 2006, 12-Dec 1998)

If Suggestopedia is a game, the world of Suggestopedia is a complete world that has its own rules. It is important for the Suggestopedia world to be different from the real world not only

[19] Saussure called such a meaning domain "langue", an individual language. Later in the 1960s, Barthes developed the concept of "langue" into his "myth" concept (Barthes, 1972), with which he analysed a novel as a closed semiotic domain that stands by itself being independent even from the author of the novel. The concept of "langue" has also been used in areas of research as a tool to analyse the structure of social systems, in particular in structuralist sociology (Baudrillard, 1970) and cultural anthropology (Lévi-Strauss, 1963/1967).

because it aims to isolate students from the limiting *social suggestive norms* of the real world, but also because it can psychologically protect the student's real self against being affected by mistakes and failures that occur in the Suggestopedic world (Lozanov, 1978, 2009). Students should not be afraid of making mistakes in the Suggestopedia world, because it is only a game. The world of Suggestopedia is after all a fiction. It invites students to choose new names, ages, genders, occupations and so on in order to enjoy their new selves and human relationships in the new world. Such a fictional world can be analysed as a closed semiotic domain. It is therefore necessary in this closed semiotic domain to understand the stimuli that create meaningfulness in this domain.

2.2.2 Sociocultural Theory

I have said above that Lozanov's Suggestopedia includes sociocultural elements. Sociocultural theory was first conceptualised in the early twentieth century by Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky to explain the relationship between mental development and society (Mahn, 1999., Lantolf, 2000. etc.). Vygotsky hypothesised that the development of the human mind is mediated by various factors in the society. Vygotsky claimed that mental development of a person is a development of how the person negotiates in the society. He argued one's mental development comes about as a result of a social process in which more competent others provide support by using symbol systems, such as language, as intermediary tools. As the learners' abilities develop, this support is reduced/withdrawn leading to independent action. Vygotsky included signs and symbols available in the society as tools to help developing one's mental skills. These signs must be commonly interpreted in the cultural context to convey the meaning that the helper intends to convey. In other words, the factors that influence one's cognition and judgement involve signs in the social environment that symbolise some meaning in the society and that regulate, or normalise, the scope of meaning of a sign can symbolise is the cultural context in the society.

"Culture" in terms of sociocultural theory is a unique domain in which signs are interpreted according to specific meanings in a society. This is a semiotically consistent domain which is similar to "langue" in Saussure's (1907) linguistics and "myth" in Barthes's (1972) literature analysis. What these conceptual domains have in common is the sense that they consist of a consistent system of sign and meaning. At the same time, "society" in sociocultural theory is conceptualised as a complex whole (Byrne, 1998; Van Lier, 2004) in which people move around dynamically in accordance with a commonsense idea (Garfinkel, 1967; Van Lier

2004). Van Lier (2004) attempted to grasp the whole picture of culture and society in the concept of sociocultural theories by considering them as an ecosystem. He hypothesised the sociocultural world can be understood as a semiotic ecosystem which is complex, inseparable and completed, and argued language learning should take place in such a context. In his conceptual system, all symbols in the society are interconnected as in the analogy of creatures in an ecosystem. In this ecosystem, multimodal symbols and their meaning are interconnected and each connection creates further symbols and meanings. The sociocultural world as conceptualised by Van Lier is semiotically highly complex yet has an order, and semiotic contexts are created in accordance with this order, that is through shared interpretation of the symbols in the society.

In relation to how sociocultural theories see society and culture, it is possible to say that Suggestopedia shares many ideas with the sociocultural theories as described above. In particular it shares a belief that society is an inseparable complex whole that influences members' activity and decision making through cultural norms which regulate interpretations of the elements that the society consists of.

2.2.3 Affordance

Gibson's Affordance Theory (Gibson, 1979) is a theory that gives an insight into the relationship between sociocultural context, signs and the meaning. This idea relates to the quotes in section 2.2.0 about Lozanov's two small experiments regarding suggestibility, in which he successfully showed that a situational setting in a particular context can influence the learner's interpretation of the signs sent from their teacher, and that this further affects the teacher's credibility in the classroom. As Lozanov explained, he used his *prestige* in his lecture room, and he owed the success of his presentation to the environment and the relationship between him and the audience. If the environment and the relationship were different, so too might be the outcome.

We can understand such relationships between the interpretation of a sign and the environment through the concept of "affordance". Affordance was conceptualised by James Gibson as follows:

> Affordances are relational properties which pertain between organisms and their environment. Affordances are functional meanings, and depend upon the perception of

> invariant properties in the environment which are detected through the pick-up of structured stimulus information. (Gibson, 1979, p. 180)

For example, a cavity in a tree can mean a food storage space for the winter to a squirrel while the same cavity can for a human child mean a foothold to climb the tree. If the same child sees the cavity in a dark forest, it may scare them because they sees it as the dark eye of a monster. The concept of affordance therefore shows the relativity in the relationship between an organism and their environment.

A series of actions that is described as "holding a chalk and smelling it" can be interpreted in different ways according to who does it, when and where. If a baby did it on the kitchen floor, it would create a different meaning from the same action being done by a prestigious professor. Also, a person who has been tricked many times may interpret a sign that is created by "receiving new information" differently compared to another person, who has not been tricked. The difference of interpretation can be described as the consequence of the changes in the affordance of meaning of "smelling a chalk" or "receiving new information".

As I mentioned above, a sign can be used effectively in the classroom when used in an appropriate context in an appropriately set situation. For example, the intimidating face of a teacher can be associated with a difficult learning situation by the students, but it can also be associated with an interesting and creative classroom where the teacher always shows a lot of humorous facial expressions to focus students' attention.

If "the intimidating face of a teacher" is always interpreted as an expression of creativity in the language classroom, that is a an understood view within the classroom as a mini society in which there are *social suggestive norms* for the commonsense idea to function.

An affordance of the interpretation of a sign is naturally determined by the situation and the context. This can help Suggestopedia establish an atmosphere where learners can acquire their own positive commonsense ideas while they freely interpret a group of signs in the learning environment. However, this freedom in the classroom does not mean anarchy in the classroom, because the learner's interpretation is directed by the affordances of the given situation and context. In this sense, the initiative in designing a learning environment is always in the hands of the classroom teacher. The teacher uses his/her position to set the affordances so that

they can direct students' semiotic interpretations in a favourable direction for language learning. In other words, the teacher has the privilege to create *social suggestive norms* in the language classroom by setting up a favourable affordance in the language-learning environment.

2.2.4 Summary

In 1994 when Lozanov announced the final version of Suggestopedia, he looked back at the experimental period of the method:

> Now I clearly oppose my old ideas. When I started to experiment in 1969, I persisted in memorisation of 1500 Greek words in one day without a repetition. At that time, I was satisfied by proving the existence of "hypermemory".
>
> Students did memorise all those words, but they could not speak the language. They could not communicate with those words. My mistake was that I was sending suggestions to only one state of mind and did not think of integration. (Lozanov, 2006, 9-Oct-1994)

As Lozanov says here, Suggestopedia started as an experiment in memorisation using the unfamiliar words of a foreign language. Then he realised that a language classroom needed more than memorisation of words. He thought a classroom for language communication would need an "integration" with which the memorised foreign words can function. What he described as "integration" was later paraphrased as "suggestive organization, orchestration and harmonization of the conscious–paraconscious functions" (Lozanov, 2009). With Gateva he started to design a system which realises an optimal learning environment where all possible *suggestive stimuli* are organised, orchestrated and harmonised to help learners unleash their natural learning ability.

Student-teachers of Suggestopedia could learn what Lozanov meant through their experience in a practical teacher training course. However, such student-teachers were expected to "develop an intuitive sense of the harmonious eternal proportions" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 76) even in Lozanov's teacher training course. This implies that an important part of the practical application of Suggestopedia relies on the teacher's development of an "intuitive" sense, which

is not able to be taught. Moreover, publications by the creators of Suggestopedia did not provide a concrete practical theory of what to think about in the language classroom for those who want to apply Suggestopedia in their courses. As a result, the way teachers work in Suggestopedia has never been fully operationalised in the literature on the approach. However, we may be able to understand more practically the "organization, orchestration, and harmonization of suggestive stimuli" if we consider Lozanov's "*suggestion*" as influential in the semiotic process, giving a direction to the interpretation of the stimuli. "*Suggestive stimuli*" in this sense will be interpreted as stimuli in an environment, as set up and mediated by the teacher, that can control affordance.

Therefore, Suggestopedia's "organization, orchestration, and harmonization" can be interpreted as a teaching practice in which a teacher prepares and teaches his/her class by keeping an eye on the semiotic potential of the surrounding stimuli and by dynamically arranging them in a consistent situation and context. If so, we might be able to judge if a teacher has successfully created an environment where Suggestopedia can function by observing the language class and analysing the semiotic characteristics of the existing stimuli, and the affordances in the situation and the context.

Chapter 3 Methodology

3.0 Introduction

The purpose of this study is to investigate how the basic concepts of Suggestopedia can be explained in terms of semiotics by observing and examining a Suggestopedia teacher's handling of the *suggestions* in the teaching activities of an actual course. The observations of elements such as the teacher's behaviour, the preparation of the course and the teaching activities were analysed in semiotic terms. This chapter explains the research method of this study.

3.1 Research Questions

The following are the research questions set for this study.

Main question:

> *What affordances for learning are developed through semiosis in a Suggestopedia language class?*

Suggestopedia aims at maximising student learning by creating an environment where each student becomes able to control the negative influence of conventional *social suggestive norms* that inhibit the natural learning function of the brain. Lozanov (1978, 2006, 2009) claims that students can control the influence from *social suggestive norms* by giving each student an environment where they can spontaneously choose a better influence from social stimuli by relativising conventional *social suggestive norms* and comparing them to the new *social suggestive norms* created by Suggestopedia.

Such social norms can be considered from a sociocultural point of view as a matter of the scope and direction of the interpretation of symbols that are normalised in the society, i.e. the question of affordances of a symbol and its meaning. If *social suggestive norms* in Lozanov's terms refer to such a normalised interpretation of symbols, by preparing a course in a way which assists students to notice the existence of such *social suggestive norms*, the teacher can

create an alternative society which has different *social suggestive norms* that consist of different affordances through the interpretation of symbols. By participating in such an alternative society, students may be able to relativise their experiences of being influenced by the symbol–meaning connections that exist outside the Suggestopedia course. This possibility has led to the main question of this study: how does the teacher construct such affordances and what kinds of affordance are constructed in the society of the Suggestopedia classroom during an actual course constructed according to the basic concepts of Suggestopedia?

To find answers to this question, I have developed the following sub-questions.

Sub-questions:

1. *What is semiosis in the context of a Suggestopedia class?*

As constructing alternative *social suggestive norms* in a course to allow students to relativise the *social suggestive norms* of conventional society is a part of the requirements of Suggestopedia, the teacher needs to create new affordances, or connections between symbols and meanings, while course activities are in progress. In this case, how does the teacher handle symbols and what symbols are prepared and arranged in the context of a Suggestopedia course?

There will exist an uncountable variety of symbols even in the limited environment of language education. Naturally, the teacher cannot access every single symbol in the limited time taken by a course activity. Hence, it would be expected that it would be possible to find some form of intentional selection process undertaken by the teacher in accordance with the theory of Suggestopedia. This raises the question: How is the teacher selecting the symbols to make the Suggestopedia course effective?

2. *How does the teacher realise the semiotic potential of symbols as affordances for learning?*

The central concept in improving learning in Suggestopedia is to liberate students from the negative influence of *social suggestive norms* that inhibit their natural learning ability. Suggestopedia requires the teacher to make this happen without relying on explicit words, or ver-

bal language. At this point, the teacher needs to think about creating an ideal learning environment by making good use of symbols other than explicit words in order to allow students to realise the existence of alternative *social suggestive norms* which can promote (or help them regain, in Suggestopedia terms) their learning ability. This raises the question: How does the teacher do this in class activities? To allow students to realise the existence of alternative *social suggestive norms* by using non-verbal symbols, the teacher needs to handle a holistic interconnection of symbols and meanings taking into consideration that *social suggestive norms* entail a large group of socially standardised interpretations of symbols which semiotically influence one another. The influence of the interconnection of symbol and meaning on the direction and scope of the interpretation of a symbol is defined as affordance (Gibson, 1950). Hence, this study has developed this sub-question to find answers to how the Suggestopedia teacher creates affordances and which affordances are created to give students an environment where they can relativise conventional *social suggestive norms* and activate learning.

3. *What role does semiosis have in structuring the teaching/learning process in Suggestopedia as a complex whole?*

Learning in accordance with the natural function of the brain is what Suggestopedia considers one of the keys to the success of learning in this method. Suggestopedia also considers that the brain is made to handle the complex whole and needs incoming information in the form of a complex whole in order to process the information well. Therefore, Suggestopedia requires the teacher to prepare a course that gives information in the form of a complex whole (Lozanov, 1978, 2006, 2009; Gateva, 1991a). On the other hand, Suggestopedia requires that the complexity and wholeness given in the course should be integrated without contradiction, as the world of the Suggestopedia course needs to have its own complete *social suggestive norms* which exist as viable alternatives that the students can choose. This raises a number of questions: What is the complex whole in terms of a language course? How does the teacher realise such an integrated complex whole in the course structure? What is the role of symbols when the teacher attempts to create such an integrated learning environment? The third sub-question of this study was developed to find answers to such questions.

3.2 The Qualitative Approach

This study adopts a qualitative research approach. The qualitative approach is a research approach that can handle data that cannot be handled quantitatively, such as data collected with the aim of studying complex sociocultural phenomena as a whole; for example, data from interview recordings, audio and visual recordings, records of history, literature, arts and philosophy and so on (Newby, 2014; Yin, 2009). These data consist of multiple elements which interconnect and inter-influence one another and often the interconnections and inter-influences form an important part of the research questions. Hence, these data are difficult to separate, simplify or quantify. Qualitative studies take an approach in which they conduct objective observations in order to find plausible interpretations that can explain the nature of the entire phenomena.

While qualitative studies can handle subjects that cannot be dealt with in quantitative studies, they have the disadvantage that, unlike quantitative studies, the results cannot be generalised immediately. Also, in comparison with quantitative studies that obtain results in numeric form, the results obtained from qualitative studies may appear to lack concreteness. However, with a quantitative approach, researchers need to simplify complex research subjects so that they can be dealt with numerically. In doing this, the simplification process needs to be performed precisely on the basis of a good understanding of the nature of the research subject in order to obtain meaningful results that reflect the complex reality. Moreover, a good understanding of the research subject requires careful and deep thought about the qualities of the subject. Therefore, both qualitative and quantitative studies need to complement each other to acquire a good insight into any particular research subject.

Quantitative methods have been primarily used in the history of Suggestopedia studies. Lozanov's early studies quantified levels of memorisation as the number of words recognised after one "memory session", or what is now known as a Concert session (Lozanov, 1978, 2006). Gateva (1991a), the Suggestopedia teacher who introduced artistic elements into Suggestopedia under Lozanov's direction, used statistical methods to analyse her results, which indicated that certain types of music activate students' creative learning. She quantified correlations between the pieces of music used in Concert sessions and the learning effects and data obtained from a student survey about their like or dislike of the types of music and their self-assessment of how the music promoted their creativity. Quantitative methods were also the most used approaches in research studies conducted in the United States and in Australia which were aimed at introducing Suggestopedia or applying Suggestopedic elements to existing teaching methods (such as Benitez-Bordon & Schuster, 1976; Caskey, 1980; Prichard

& Taylor, 1980; Schuster & Gritton, 1986; Gassner-Roberts & Brislan, 1984; Felix, 1989) . They quantified the effectiveness of learning with Suggestopedia or elements of Suggestopedia by comparing test results between Suggestopedia students and control groups.

However, Tarr (1995) pointed out that the developers of the method (Lozanov and Gateva) and researchers in other countries did not share the same basic understanding about the concepts of Suggestopedia. Tarr suggested that in fact a research design set up in order to obtain numerical data may contradict the core philosophy of Suggestopedia. As an example, she pointed out that a research setting which gave students frequent quizzes and tests in order to measure the speed of their development could have sent participants negative suggestions about learning (Tarr, 1995, p. 111). In the case of Suggestopedia, such a research setting could degrade the integration and consistency of the whole course, and as a result, could sacrifice the true potential of the method. This indicates that there have been problems in how the core philosophy and concepts of Suggestopedia have been understood among researchers targeting Suggestopedia. Such inconsistency among researchers in their understanding of the core concepts of the research target could reduce the credibility of any comparison between the outcomes obtained in quantitative studies about the teaching methodology. Also, it would be difficult for teachers and course designers who wish to introduce Suggestopedia to be confident in what they are doing if the grounds on which they interpret the basic concepts of Suggestopedia are unstable due to a lack of understanding of the core concepts. In this sense, extensive qualitative research about how to recognise and how to apply the basic concepts of Suggestopedia is necessary in order to understand Suggestopedia and also for its practical implementation. One study which was developed in such a direction was Colliander and Fejes (2020). This was a qualitative study of a Suggestopedia course which attempted to get insights into the concepts of Suggestopedia teaching activities in the light of Vygotsky's scaffolding theory. A qualitative study like Colliander and Fejes's (2020) can show teachers and researchers an index of what activities can bring about what effects in a Suggestopedia course. In this thesis, I aim to contribute to the qualitative side of Suggestopedia research in order to consolidate the grounds on which the method can be understood and implemented in practice.

3.3 Case Study Research

This research was designed as a qualitative case study of a single teacher. The case study is a research method in which a researcher observes a target social phenomenon in depth to find

out how it is structured and how it operates. The method takes up a single context of the phenomenon to investigate what is happening in that target context, that specific "case".

A case study can provide complex descriptions of how the members of a social group experience the target sociocultural situation (Bassey, 1999; Yin, 2009; Mack et al, 2005; Punch, 2014). Therefore, a case study was an appropriate method given the purpose of this research, which was to understand real-life sociocultural events as a complex whole. To answer the research questions mentioned above, the research needed to get an insight into how the teacher attempted to create a *suggestive* environment in the course where he could give students alternative *social suggestive norms* to secure the effectiveness of Suggestopedia. In so doing, this research had to analyse the nature of the events happening in the classroom. Activities in the classroom are, so to speak, arranged events that are designed purposefully. Yet, there are uncountable social elements that exist simultaneously and which affect one another. Qualitative research using a case study can handle such complex social phenomena as a whole (Yin, 2009).

3.3.1 Case Setting

Case study research requires an appropriate case setting and a determination of the way in which observation will occur (Liamputtong, 2009; Newby, 2014). In identifying cases for a case study, it is possible to have a single case in order to study the research target in depth, or multiple cases in order to compare them to find shared or divergent elements to allow for generalisation. The present research aimed to gain insights into how the basic concepts of Suggestopedia were implemented in a practical teaching situation using the understanding of the core concepts of the original developers of the method. In order to do this, it first required a detailed observation of how Suggestopedia concepts are applied in an actual language course and to examine what mediates between the theory and the practice. Understandings about the core concepts of Suggestopedia, particularly the views on *suggestion*, seem not to have been shared among researchers. For example, Schuster et al. (1976, p. 24) describes in the teaching manual of an accelerative learning class that applies Lozanov's method that it gives students a "training" to calm down their physical and mental states by oral instruction before the day's class starts. In contrast, as pointed out by Tarr (1995, p. 90), Philipov used guided images as a method of *suggestion* for her research group to study the effectiveness of a Bulgarian language course conducted with Suggestopedia. In such a situation, it seemed that the best place

to start was by studying one case in depth to understand the relationship between Suggestopedia theory and the practical elements of a Suggestopedia course. Therefore, this research was conducted as a single-case study. Needless to say, a single-case study handles only one case among many other similar cases, which means it has the disadvantage that the outcome of the study cannot immediately be generalised (Yin, 2009). However, a comparison of similar cases of Suggestopedia courses to establish a more general method of application of the theory would seem to be a next step after a single-case study to investigate the ways the theory is enacted.

It was important in designing this single-case study to determine what the case would be, how it would be observed and how the data would be collected and analysed. In particular, the reliability of the data obtained would seem to depend on how the selected case was able to reflect the reality of the research target, that is to say, how natural and authentic the case was. The most appropriate target course for this single-case research would thus be a course that was designed and practiced precisely as Suggestopedia theory requires, and a course that was natural and authentic in the sense that it was designed to be dedicated to realising learning using Suggestopedia, rather than being set up for a particular research purpose. To fulfil such conditions, this research targeted a Japanese language course held in 2009 in Wales. This course seemed particularly appropriate for this research for a number of reasons.

Firstly, this course was designed and taught by a teacher who had been trained and certified as a Suggestopedia teacher and teacher trainer by Georgi Lozanov. The course was held in Wales over two weeks in June 2009 as an intensive-mode Japanese course, and followed another similar course held in Sliven, Bulgaria, the previous month. The course in Bulgaria was held as part of a course development process and a test-run which involved daily discussion between the teacher and Lozanov, who attended the classes regularly as course supervisor. In this sense, this course in Wales can be considered an authentic Suggestopedia course that reflected the method's core concepts as precisely as possible and the latest ideas of the developer of the method. Also, this course was one of the last courses designed under the supervision of the original developers of Suggestopedia, as Lozanov died in 2012, three years after this course was held. Secondly, this course in Wales, conducted three years prior to the commencement of this study, was designed to teach Japanese to Welsh students and was not designed for the purposes of this study. Therefore, at the point that the course was held, no adjustments were made to meet the needs of this research project. The researcher was purely a teacher at the time of the course and did not have a focused idea of any possible research

based on the course. In this sense, this course seemed an appropriate research case to study the natural sociocultural phenomena seen in an authentic language classroom. Thirdly, the course was videotaped and a suitable number of video recordings of the course were available which could be used for research purposes, although this was not the motivation for the original recording. In addition, course participants had given permission for this video material to be used for future research. (A detailed description of the video data will be provided later in this chapter.)

A potential downside to the use of a language course that has already been completed as a research case is that the researcher cannot construct an ideal setting for the purposes of research. For example, this study lacks field notes and interviews with the course participants that might have helped the researcher in analysing the course. The lack of field notes was because the researcher was the teacher of the target course; and because the course was not thought of as the target for a specific research study when it was held, there were no interviews with participants. However, those would appear to be unavoidable negative elements given the importance this study places on the naturalness and authenticity of the research material. Naturalness and control in research settings are in a trade-off relationship, and as Tarr (1995) pointed out, a controlled research environment can degrade the authenticity of Suggestopedia as a research target.

For the abovementioned reasons, the Japanese Suggestopedia course in Wales was thought to be highly suitable data for this study and to provide an appropriate research context for this single-case study because of its authenticity as a Suggestopedia language teaching course, its naturalness as a language course and the availability of suitable material for analysis.

3.3.2 Observation in the Case Study

The data obtained from this single-case study took the form of participant observation. Participant observation is an observation method in which the researcher who observes the group is a full member of the group being observed (Dörnyei, 2007; McKay, 2006). Zacharias (2012) points out that this method has a downside as the observer "might lose insight and focus on what is happening" and "might not be able to observe fully what all the participants do because [the observer] might focus on the activities at hand" (Zacharias, 2012, p. 144).

However, in the same article, Zacharias points out this observation method is beneficial because the observer "might develop a sense of what being a participant in the research settings feels like" (p. 144).

As mentioned in the last section, this study used video material from the language course that the researcher of this study taught as the teacher for the purpose of using the most authentic research material available at the time of the commencement of this project. As a result, the researcher in this study needed to observe himself teaching the course, which is a type of participant observation. However, because it used video material recorded in the past for observation, it could minimise the downsides of this type of observation that were pointed out by Zacharias (2012), as the observer could watch what happened in the target scenes many times using the replay function of the video player and was not limited to observations made in the present moment. In addition, analysis of the recorded video compensated for the lack of field notes, which were impossible to take during practical teaching in the classroom.

3.4 The Participants

One teacher and seven students participated in this study. The main focus of the study was on the teacher, his course design and teaching activities, his speech, his attitudes and his use of teaching materials in the Suggestopedia course. Students' reactions in the classroom were also referred to in examining the teacher's activities.

3.4.1 The Teacher

The teacher who taught this Japanese language course was a male Japanese native-speaker, 51 years old at the time of the course. He was an expert in teaching Japanese as he had taught the language for 25 years in English-speaking countries at secondary and tertiary level institutions. He was also a qualified Suggestopedia teacher who had been trained intermittently by Georgi Lozanov and Evelina Gateva between 1989 and 2009. He had taught a similar course in Bulgaria under the supervision of Lozanov two weeks before the course that this study investigates. The textbook used in this course was written by the teacher, who is also the writer of this thesis.

3.4.2 The Students

This study observed the students in the course as interactants with the teacher or as recipients of *suggestions* in the Suggestopedic environment.

The student participants in this study were the teaching director and the teachers of a private Welsh language school. There were five female and two male students aged between 45 and 55 years old. All except one American-born female student, were native speakers of Welsh but also spoke English as a normal language of communication. The American-born student had acquired Welsh in a Welsh university and then later married a Welsh man. Although they were all bilingual in English, all used Welsh as an everyday language. At the beginning of the course, Japanese was a totally unfamiliar language for all of the students: pre-course test results of their Japanese language skills indicated they had no linguistic knowledge of Japanese. English was used as a mediating language in the course as all students understood English and this was the only shared language between the students and the teacher.

The students had been informed about the method of Suggestopedia although most of them had little knowledge about it. One of the participants, the teaching director of the school, knew the method and had been trained at the same level as the teacher of the course, being a Suggestopedia teacher and teacher trainer certified by Lozanov. This means that one of the student participants had a good knowledge of the method; but for the other students, Suggestopedia was nearly unknown. The course was held by the school in order to offer an opportunity to the teachers to experience learning a new language with the method as the school was planning to introduce it to teach Welsh. The students worked as Welsh teachers in the afternoon after they had attended the Japanese course, which was run in the morning.

As the Suggestopedia teacher was the main subject of this research project, the students were secondary participants. They were needed for this study in order to analyse how the teacher's work was responded to and understood by them in the course of the class.

3.5 Data Collection

This research aims at understanding the use of semiosis in the Suggestopedia language classroom. It attempts a semiological analysis on the teacher's practices and speech in the classroom, and to give an insight into the semiological context by making use of the concept of

affordance. Below the types of research data and the ways in which the data was collected are presented.

3.5.1 Types of Data

This study primarily used visual and audio data recorded on a digital video camera. Although the videos of the course were the main data for this study, it also analysed a range of other data sources. These were text materials that were used in the actual course: the textbook, song sheets, *hiragana* cards, music notes and teacher's journal. The data obtained was of the classroom environment and the teaching activities. The audio data was transcribed into text for analysis. Pre-course test result data was also used to measure the target language level of the participating students.

3.5.1.1 Visual and Audio Data

This study analysed visual images and sound recorded on a digital video camera in order to get insight into the roles of signs and affordances in course interactions between the teacher and students. In this research, video was nearly the sole medium for recording ongoing events in the classroom as no field notes could be taken in the situation where the researcher was the teacher of the course. Also, this research required detailed analysis of multimodal symbols – visible, invisible, tangible and intangible signs that symbolise something – in order to get insights into how the theory of Suggestopedia was implemented in the course by the use of signs existing in the classroom. The digital video file was ideal material for analysis using the stop motion, slow replay, repeat, magnify and loudness functions of computer software.

The video data was a recording of the Japanese Suggestopedia course that the researcher taught in June 2009 in Wales. The video was recorded daily on a digital camera then copied onto a laptop computer after the day's sessions. The video recorded classroom activities from the beginning to the end of the course. A single digital camera was set on a tripod in the back corner of the room. The camera captured the teacher's actions, body movements and facial expressions, the reactions of all seven students who sat around a hexagonal table, the posters put up on the front walls and the visual images projected on one of the front walls of the classroom. This study selected key scenes from the recording and analysed the excerpts based on the theme of each thesis chapter. The key scenes used in this research included verbal

elements and non-verbal elements. The verbal elements are the oral communication among the class participants, while the non-verbal elements are the visible and audible environment surrounding the students. The teacher's posture and movements, his facial expressions and displays of emotions, and the loudness and intonation of his voice are analysed as non-verbal elements. The physical appearance of the room, posters, props, chairs and tables, internal and external noise, music and so on are also included as non-verbal elements recorded on the video.

3.5.1.2 Textbook, Song Sheets, *Hiragana* Cards and Music Notes

This study also conducted an analysis of the textual teaching materials given to students in the learning activities in order to understand the roles of symbols and affordances they contained that could be effective as *suggestions* in the course. The Japanese textbook used in the course, *Wataru* (Hagiwara 2009), was written by the teacher for this Suggestopedia course in 2009 in accordance with Lozanov and Gateva's *The Foreign Language Teacher's Suggestopedic Manual* (1988). The copies of the textbook were printed at the Griffith University Print Service in Australia and given to the students in Wales as part of their course package; it is not commercially available. In addition, song sheets for this course were handed out to students when the class was invited to sing Japanese songs. Separate *hiragana* cards were handmade by the teacher and used to introduce each of the 47 *hiragana* (phonetic) characters to the class. A song written and composed by the teacher to support students' memory of the Japanese phonetic system was presented to the students with musical notation.

3.5.1.3 Teacher's Journal

This study also used part of the teacher's journal for analysis as an alternative to field notes to collect information that might not be observable in the video or other materials. This journal is a diary completed by the teacher at the end of each day's class. He noted down in the journal the number participants that day, their names, what points were introduced in the class, the learning activities and their content, the intention of the activities, the students' reactions, ideas to improve his teaching, and so on. The journal was written in Japanese on a laptop computer using text editor software which enabled it to be locked so that no further editing was possible after the completion of the course. When material from the journal is referred to in this thesis, it has been translated by the author from Japanese.

3.5.1.4 Language Proficiency Pre-Course Test Data

At the time the Suggestopedia Japanese language course was held, the teacher conducted pre/post-course language tests. As the participants' knowledge of the Japanese language could affect their reaction to the teacher's use of *suggestion*, this study used its pre-test data to determine the students' Japanese language proficiency levels at the beginning of the course.

The test consisted of two parts, an oral interview and a reading comprehension test. The oral interview was conducted on a one-on-one basis between the interviewer (teacher) and the student. In the interview, the teacher asked the student ten short-answer questions and one open-ended question (see Appendix 1a). Following a greeting, the questions, asked in Japanese, related to: (1a) the student's name; (2) their nationality (asked as a yes/no-question); (3) where they lived (yes/no); (4) things they have at home (yes/no); (5) their past activities (yes/no); (6) their favourite things (interrogative); (7) their past experience (yes/no); (8) things they wanted to do (interrogative); (9) use of words to express location (interrogative); (10) the day of the week (interrogative). After these short-answer questions, the teacher asked the student in English to construct Japanese sentences to describe themselves and their family. The reading comprehension test was held in a group. In the test, students were asked to read paragraphs written in Japanese with Japanese characters and asked to translate the underlined parts into English. The students were given the same test sheet but assigned a number and required to translated different underlined parts in order that the answers of the students sitting next to each other were not the same (see Appendix 1b).

The results of the pre-test indicated that each student's Japanese language proficiency was zero at the commencement of the target Suggestopedia course.

3.5.2 Transcribing and Organising the Video

The transcription of the video recording was first made on spreadsheets with memos to examine the meaning and affordance of each recorded event (see Appendix 2), then copied to fit into the analysis of each chapter in the thesis. The transcription on the spreadsheets was formatted to show events in chronological order in rows, while the columns show the categorised affiliations of each events. The columns were labelled "Scene", "Event number", "Sign",

“Affordance (strongest meanings generated in the situation)”, “Message” and “Memo”. The actual text transcription of the recorded video scenes was placed in a column labelled “Symbol”. A short analysis of the event recorded in under the Sign column was then made in the Affordance, Message and Memo columns. The example of how an event was recorded and analysed will be described later in Section 3.6.2, “Method of Analysis”.

Sub-columns were made under the Sign column and labelled “Agent”, “Non-verbal” and “Verbal”. The Agent column showed the owner of the sign, i.e. what was done and who did it. In the transcribed text, the teacher as action subject is indicated as “T” while “S1”, “S2”, “S3” and so on are used to indicate the students as agents of speech and action. Non-verbal signs – sound, movement, facial expressions and so on – were recorded in the Non-verbal column. Three categories were made under this label to categorise the nature of signs as “Place”, “Environment” and “Action”. Verbal signs such as verbal interactions were recorded in the Verbal column. Two subcategories were made under this column: “Speech” showed the content of speech, and “Language” showed the language in which the speech was made. The video recorded three languages used in the classroom: Japanese, Welsh and English. In the “Language” column, English was recorded as “E”, Japanese as “J” and Welsh as “W”.

A short analysis was made in the columns next to the Sign column. In the Affordance column, a note was taken when the researcher needed to explore what the recorded sign could mean, and a further note was made in the Message column where the researcher could consider the message that the sign could symbolise in the situation. Under Message, two columns were created to categorise signs by marking if the message was created by each semiotic element or by the context. Other things the researcher noticed were recorded in a Memo column. For example, if a note was written in the Sign column as “An iPod in the chest pocket and earphones in the teacher’s ears”, the Affordance column might contain “the teacher is listening to music”. Then in the Message column, a note would be added such as “This single sign is saying that no one should disturb the teacher, who is enjoying the music”. Also, a note would be added in the Message Generated in the Context column as “Students can stay as onlookers who do not have to speak to to the teacher in this context”.

The original transcriptions and the notes were made in Japanese using Japanese characters, as Japanese was the target language of the course and also the researcher’s native language. For the readers of this thesis, verbal expressions made in Japanese have been retranscribed using the Latin alphabet and a common set of Romanisation conventions – for example, “げんきで

すか" is transcribed as "*Genki desu ka?*" – then an English translation is given in the brackets next to it – for example, "(How are you?)". Student speech in Welsh was also translated into English.

3.5.3 Limitations of Data Collected Using a Video Camera

As mentioned earlier, this study used an already completed language course as the case study. This enabled the research to study an authentic Suggestopedia course in a natural setting. However, as a result, the recorded video has some limitations. Firstly, the video was not filmed for this research, and some semiotic elements are inevitably missing from the recordings due to the way the camera was set up. A single camera was set on a tripod in a back corner of the room. The camera lens was set on wide-angle and faced towards the teacher, and this was the only video image. From this position, the camera recorded the teacher's actions, body movements and facial expressions, and the visual image projected on the front wall of the classroom clearly, but it recorded only the side of students' faces or in some cases the backs of their heads. Some students were sometimes out of the frame, depending on the slightly different camera angle set each day. The camera was operated by the teacher. The teacher pressed the record button before the students came into the room and stopped recording after they left the room. Setting the camera to begin recording was the only camera operation that the teacher made. This means the recording was made with no cuts, but also that the camera angle was fixed to one angle throughout the time of filming, with no change of angle or panning during the course. As a result, some students' facial expressions captured on the video are unclear and others are missing. Also, it did not record the teacher's actions when he moved outside the camera angle. The microphone equipped with the camera captured all the sound in the room. It also recorded the different characters of each student's voice. However, the fact that facial images were missing led to difficulty in identifying the speaker in some instances. With these limitations of the visual images, the researcher could not use all scenes in the course. However, the video file as a whole did provide enough options for the researcher to select appropriate scenes for the theme of this thesis.

As a general limitation of video material, video cannot capture the internal self of a person. It does not capture what the participants are really feeling and thinking. However, this is not a problem in this research as the theme of this study is signs and their affordances. Affordances are the scope of the meanings that a symbol can create in a particular situation. In other words,

affordances are the potential of signs placed in a sociocultural environment. For this reason, semiotic analysis has little to do with the participants' real internal selves. As the theory of Suggestopedia (Lozanov, 1978, 2009) recognises, external expressions and internal psyche do not always match in a person and it is impossible to know them from the outside; however, this internal psyche is not the subject of this research.

3.6 Data Analysis

This research attempts to understand the Suggestopedia teacher's teaching activities in establishing an ideal learning environment which, as Suggestopedia claims, can give students the maximum learning possibility.

In so doing, this study needed to look into the relationship between Lozanov's theory and actual classroom observations and their semiotic interpretation. As the birth of Suggestopedia was in the area of psychotherapy, most of the terminology to explain its concepts and theory is associated with the field of psychotherapy and related areas of medical research. Some example are terms such as "*suggestion*", "*desuggestion*", "*relaxation*" and "*placebo*". This thesis examines how the concepts explained by these terminologies can be put in practice in teaching an actual Japanese language course, and has attempted to interpret them in sociocultural terms by analysing them semiotically.

3.6.1 Semiotic Data

The basic research approach of semiotic analysis is to consider every element in the targeted social activity as a potential element that symbolises something. Analysis is made through observation of the roles of individuals and the combination of symbols in the social context (Malinowski, 1923; Barthes, 1975, 1983; Lévi-Strauss, 1963/1967, Hasumi, 1979a, 1979b; Halliday & Hasan, 1991; Kress & Van Leeuwen, 1996).

Sociocultural phenomena are complex and multimodal. Everything in human society can function as a symbol. Letters and characters, words, phrases, figures and shapes, voice, sounds, intonations, facial expressions, body movements, surrounding environments, softness, colours and other attributions of materials, changes and repetitions in time, how the course is structured and so on are all able to function as signs.

In semiotic analysis, it is assumed that everything can symbolise anything. So, it is important for a researcher to observe which signs appear in which contexts in order to judge what the sign is symbolising. The context is important because the same phenomenon can symbolise different meanings in different contexts. Gibson (1950, 1979) conceptualised the scope of meanings as being determined by the context and called it "affordance". He explained in his affordance theory that it is the context itself that determines the affordances of a symbol and that it is also made as a combination of symbols. Therefore, semiotic analysis has been conducted in conjunction with the theory of affordances in the following. First, the researcher observed the target of analysis to identify the symbols in it, observed where and how those symbols appeared in the given sociocultural context, and constructed hypotheses about what they could mean in the given context (i.e. the affordances of each symbol). Next, the researcher observed how the affordance created in the context affected new symbols being introduced to the same context, and vice versa, how the newly introduced symbols affected the context and changed the affordance.

3.6.2 The Method of Analysis

In the Suggestopedia course, in order to realise an ideal Suggestopedic environment, the teacher is considered to make efforts to give students appropriate *suggestions* according to the situation on the basis of Suggestopedia theory. Therefore, this study needed a detailed chronological observation of the teaching activities that aimed to achieve the goals of Suggestopedia in order to find how the symbols were arranged, what affordances they offered and what meanings they created. This study used a similar method to that used in Van Leeuwen (2005, 2008) in his discourse analysis of the classroom. Van Leeuwen selected key scenes from teaching activities, then transcribed them in the chronological order of the events, including verbal and non-verbal discourse and other semiotic elements, and analysed the roles of the symbols in detail. This study followed Van Leeuwen's method of analysis to analyse the *suggestions* that the teacher used in order to implement Suggestopedia and attempted to give a semiotic explanation to the theory of Suggestopedia.

To understand the roles of symbols in Suggestopedia as a whole, it was decided to use two steps. First, an analysis of a short key scene was undertaken to understand the basic roles of the symbols. Then, with the insights obtained from the previous analysis, the roles of the

symbols were analysed over a longer time span which covers the characteristics of Suggestopedia's structure. For this reason, this study selected two key scenes from the video material, one short and one long, as targets of analysis.

For the short key scene, the first two minutes at the beginning of the course were selected, as it was thought to be the scene where the symbols were most intensively used to impress upon students that this course was different from conventional language courses. Detailed observation and analysis were made of the teacher's use of symbols and the students' responses during this first two minutes of the course to understand the basic characteristics of the use of symbols in Suggestopedia.

Next, this study analysed the roles of certain symbols in a larger time span in order to understand the role of symbols played in the integration of the whole Suggestopedia course. The research focused on the key symbols found in the analysis of the first two minutes of the course, and examined how the teacher attempted to take small affordances created by the symbols at the beginning of the course and maintain, change and develop them so that they could form a large affordance to integrate the whole course. To do this, the study observed the activities which aimed to introduce and consolidate Japanese phonetic characters in the structure of one Suggestopedia cycle (i.e. Introduction, Concert sessions and Elaboration). In the learning of Japanese, the acquisition of the Japanese writing system is one of the more challenging tasks, as Japanese characters are very different from the Latin alphabet. Also for the teacher, teaching the Japanese writing system to students who are not familiar with non-alphabetic writing systems is a challenging task. Nonetheless, Suggestopedia cannot avoid the introduction of Japanese characters as the large amounts of language information that must be stored in the brain through Concert sessions relies on written information. For this reason, the teacher needs to make his students familiar with Japanese characters as quickly as possible. In this situation, it is presumed that the teacher is required to enact Suggestopedia as ideally as possible to make students feel the difficult task is easier by integrating *suggestions* in the structure of the Suggestopedia course.

As mentioned above, in this study the events recorded on video files were transcribed. The symbols found in the transcribed events were recorded separately on the spreadsheet. Each symbol is marked with notes to indicate the speculated affordances in the sociocultural context and the possible messages created by the combination of each symbol's affordances. For ex-

ample, the event “the teacher wearing a baseball cap entered the classroom” is analysed separately as the symbols “teacher”, “baseball cap”, “enter” and “classroom”, each of which was annotated with notes about its affordances such as “teacher: a person who is knowledgeable about teaching contents”, “baseball cap: a cap to wear in leisure time”, “enter: starting of something” and “classroom: place to study”. In addition, the possible message created by the affordances in combination with each symbol is analysed as “the beginning of an active and fun class with an unusual teacher”. Affordances that were created as combinations of symbols would later affect the affordances of other symbols that were introduced in the continuation of the same context. In the analysis of one Suggestopedia cycle, the study examined how the initial context continued, changed and developed to form global affordances in the course in order to identify its relationship with Suggestopedia theory and its concept of integration of *suggestions*.

3.7 Ethical Considerations in Educational Research

“Educational researchers must take into account the effects of the research on participants; they have a responsibility to participants to act in such a way as to preserve their dignity as human beings” (Cohen et al., 2018, p. 183).

Generally, an individual student in a beginner-level language course is a receiver of information and instruction in terms of the teacher–student relationship, and at the same time, may be put in a competitive situation with other students in terms of the acquiring of language skills. For this reason, mentally, the student is in a weaker position in the teacher–student relationship and is exposed to competition in the relationship with other students. In particular, in the case where the student is an adult, the social status and roles of the student are different inside and outside the classroom. Even if the person is in an influential or leading position in society, the same person can be put into a weaker position in the learning environment. Such psychological issues for learners need to be considered when undertaking educational research.

3.7.1 The Ethical Consideration in Suggestopedia Research

As mentioned earlier, the research target of this study, the Japanese Suggestopedia course, was designed and conducted for the purpose of teaching, not for this research project. Hence,

the course itself was not designed considering the ethics associated with any particular research project. However, Suggestopedia theory originally incorporated consideration for ethics. Issues of ethics in Suggestopedia are issues related to *anti-suggestive barriers*. *Anti-suggestive barriers* are the three types of mental barriers – the *logical barrier*, the *affective barrier* and the *ethical barrier* – that block *suggestions* from coming into one's inner self. As *suggestion* is, needless to say, the core concept of Suggestopedia, Suggestopedia requires teachers to design courses in a way which does not heighten these barriers during course activities. The teacher of a Suggestopedia course needs to guarantee that the classroom is a reasonable and accountable environment (in education, it must be an environment where students can acquire the knowledge or skills that they expect), a psychologically safe environment (in education, it must be an environment with no harassment, no humiliation and no demotivation) and an environment that does not contradict one's convictions (no course activity must go against one's social, religious or philosophical morals).

In addition, as a research project, this research considered ethics for the participants as follows. Informed consent was obtained at the time that the original course commenced and a consent form was read and signed by all participants (see Appendix 3). This form was developed specifically for use in recording the classes involved and included permission to collect data and to use images from the data for research purposes. The participants were free to give consent or not and were informed that whether they gave consent or not did not affect their status in the class. All participants in the course gave consent for their data to be used. The ethics for the project were subsequently considered by the ethics committee of the University of South Australia (UniSA) and the ethical approach adopted at the time was considered to be consistent with UniSA requirements. The application was approved by UniSA (approval number 0000031525).

In order to protect confidentiality, in the writing of this thesis, all identifying information for the participants has been removed and all names used are pseudonyms.

3.7.2 The Ethics of Researching One's Own Practice

This study is, so to speak, research that targets the researcher's own practice in his teaching. Concerns have been expressed by researchers such as Helps (2017) about the ethics of researching one's own practice. Helps made the point that researchers who research their own

practice might carry out their tasks differently from their normal style of practice in order to suit the purposes of their research when they know they are being recorded and the data will be used for research. This means the data obtained from a teacher's actions with their students, in the case of educational research, might not reflect real life and not be authentic.

However, as mentioned earlier, the video data analysed in this study was recorded three years before the commencement of this research project. Although the participants' consent to use data from the Suggestopedia course was given to the researcher at the time of the course, the topic of the research project was not set, and the researcher did not know how he would use the data at the point when the course was held and recorded. As this was the first running of this Japanese Suggestopedia course, after a trial of the same course in Bulgaria, it would be safe to say the researcher's primary concern as the teacher of the language course was how best he could functionalise Suggestopedia in his course. In this sense, the abovementioned concern of Helps is not applicable to this research.

3.8 Summary

This chapter has explained the method that this study employed to find answers to the research question and sub-questions. A qualitative research design with a single-case study was used for this study which targeted an authentic Suggestopedia Japanese language course. The video recording of the course and its text materials were analysed semiotically. Ethical considerations were made throughout the research activity. The actual analysis will be presented in the next three chapters.

Chapter 4 Analysis of the First Moments of Introduction: Creating the Semiotic Foundation of the Whole Course

4.0 Introduction

This chapter examines how a Suggestopedia teacher prepares semiotic affordances in a language course, by analysing the very first scenes of the first day of the Japanese course, covering about the first two minutes of the class. These scenes show the first contact of the teacher with students who have not previously experienced Japanese language learning and so constitute the moments in which the teacher needs to establish the basis for a Suggestopedic way of learning. Analysis of the first scenes will show us how the teacher arranges the semiotic elements to create his position in the course, and what semiotic affordances he tries to prepare for the course. The discussion will begin by examining how the room is prepared and then move to analyse aspects of the teacher's interactions with the students.

4.1 Symbols in the Environment of the Room

This section shows how the Suggestopedia teacher arranged his classroom environment. To show the Suggestopedia teacher's intentions clearly, I compare the room layout of the Suggestopedia classroom with a typical layout of the classroom, one that was referred to in a TV drama as a small-sized teaching room for a Japanese course in Tokyo.[20]

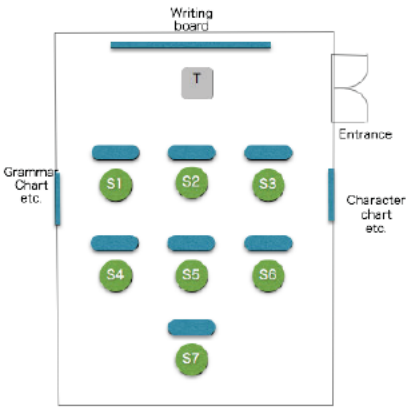

Figure 1 Room layout of a traditional Japanese course

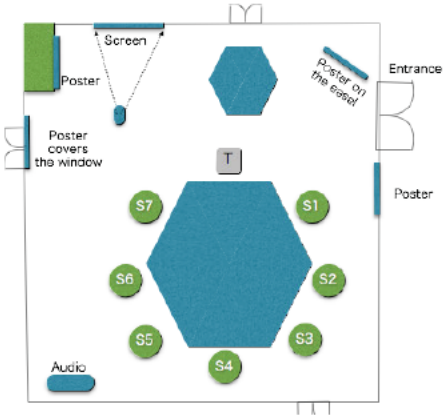

Figure 2 Room layout of the Suggestopedia Japanese course

[20] This is the room layout that was used in a Japanese TV drama "Nihonjin no Shiranai Nihongo" (Japanese language that Japanese people do not know; Yomiuri TV & Media Factory 2009), and is a stereotypical layout for a Japanese language teaching room in Japan.

The typical layout of the room for a traditional Japanese language class is as seen in Figure 1. It has a writing board and possibly a teacher's platform at the front of the room. All the students sit facing towards the writing board. Textbooks, notes and pens can be found on each desk. On the wall there are usually posters such as a grammar chart, the Japanese phonetic system, the Japanese character system and a map of Japan.

Figure 2 shows the room layout from Scene 1, the room environment just before the whole Suggestopedia course starts.

Scene 1 Before the course starts

1 Learners are waiting for the teacher to come into the room.
2 The clock on the wall shows 10 a.m.
3 The small room is equipped with two hexagonal tables.
4 The larger table of about two metres across is placed in the centre of the room. There are eight chairs around the table.
5 Seven students are already sitting around the table and chatting in Welsh. One chair in front is left vacant for the teacher.
6 On the larger table, there is nothing but a water pitcher and eight empty glasses.
7 A smaller table of about one metre across is placed in the front corner of the room behind the teacher's chair. No chairs are placed around the smaller table, but there is enough of a gap for people to stand around it.
8 The room has white walls. On each of three sides of the room there is a small window to let through light. All the windows are closed to block outside noise and cold air.
9 The entrance to the room is on the right-hand side of the teacher's chair. Travel posters are placed around the room, and the posters show a Japanese castle, a five-storey pagoda of an old temple in Kyoto.
10 A poster showing a Shinkansen (high-speed train) running past the foot of Mt. Fuji is set on an easel placed the right front corner of the room.
11 A data projector connected to a laptop computer is set to project pictures on the front wall. It shows a photo taken from the front of a large passenger jet that has just taken off into the air.

A comparison of the different classroom arrangements shows the semiosis that is created in

each.

The teacher's position in the traditional classroom as seen in Figure 1 is set at the front, with the teacher facing the students. Each student is given a personal table and a chair facing towards the front wall of the room where there is a writing board. This layout suggests that the classroom is a place where information is mostly conveyed in one direction from teacher to students. In this arrangement, the teacher is represented as the sole information-giver, and the students are the information-receivers. In other words, the teacher is given authority in this layout of the classroom. In the traditional layout, multidirectional communication among students is less expected because students cannot freely face one another. The only person they look at directly is the teacher.

In the Suggestopedia classroom as seen in Figure 2, a large table is shared by all participants. This "round table" set-up (described in line 3 to line 5) implies the classroom is a place where multidirectional and equal opportunities for communication can occur. Multidirectional communication can promote multilevel communication, where "multilevel" in Suggestopedia terms represents many levels of mental activity. Lozanov believes that human communication is established not only through conscious-level activity such as exchanging logic using language, but also through other unconsciously exchanged peripheral information such as visual impressions, voice quality, body movement and atmosphere (Lozanov, 1978). The Suggestopedia learning group, which is situated in a multidirectional communication environment, can therefore share richer information than a traditional learning group who sit apart and face forward. Suggestopedia students can therefore acquire *paraconscious* information such as peers' facial expressions, body movements, laughter and murmuring, as well as conscious information given as linguistic material. In this information-rich environment, it is possible, according to Suggestopedia theory, for students to use richer *paraconscious* information to tag conscious information, which makes it easier for students to recall memorised information and use it on the conscious level than would be the case for the students of the traditional classroom.

There are also differences in the peripheral areas of the two rooms. The traditional classroom is equipped with a large writing board, a blackboard in a traditional teaching room or a whiteboard in a modern teaching room. The writing board is a sign that symbolises "institutional education", because writing on a board is a very common method of giving instruction to the students in such classrooms. Usually such instruction is enacted using written characters, with

simplified drawings as the most artistic form of use of the board.

The teacher of the Suggestopedia class however has not placed a writing board in the room. Instead, he has used a portable data projector. Prior to the class, before the students came in, he connected it to his laptop and turned it on to show a photo slide on the wall. The slide shows a photograph of a passenger jet that has just taken off (as seen in line 11). This represents a replacement of a symbol that signifies rigid institutional education with a symbol that signifies flexible instruction using a versatile device, a computer. A data projector is not unique to Suggestopedia classrooms and can be used in institutional educational contexts to show instructional material. However, the teacher is using it to show photographic art in the Suggestopedia room. He is also using the walls to show artistic posters (as seen in line 9). Although the walls in a traditional Japanese classroom are usually used to display instructional posters, such as verb conjugation tables and Japanese character charts, this teacher is using them to show tourism posters that artistically show the beauty of Japan. Symbolically, he has placed one of the posters on an easel. An easel is a wooden frame for holding an artistic work in production and so it has a strong semiotic tie with "artistic creation", which is not commonly found in a language classroom. In other words, the teacher of the Suggestopedia class has prepared the room to send a message that his language course is something to do with art or artistic creation rather than with institutional education. Thus, the teacher is softly challenging his students' preconceptions about language courses, and inviting them to relativise their commonsense ideas and so create new possibilities for learning by reducing the influence of old commonsense ideas on students' perceptions and responses.

At the beginning of the class, the data projector is showing an image of a large passenger jet that has just taken off and is going up into the sky. The large passenger jet is a symbol of long-distance travel, and long distance can further imply an unknown world. Taking off is a departure and ascent, and the idea of rising further implies improvement and positivity. It is important that the environment provided by the teacher appears positive and prospective when the students start comparing it with the language classroom of their own commonsense understanding because the teacher wishes his students to choose to learn in the Suggestopedia environment. The use of this particular photograph therefore creates a sign to represent the positivity of his environment.

On the central hexagonal table, there is a water pitcher and empty glasses for each of the

participants (as described in line 6).[21] The combination of the water pitcher and the empty glasses means the water is there to be drunk by the participants. The number of empty glasses shows that the opportunity to drink water is secured for every participant. Water is, unlike other beverages, harmless and safe for anyone who feels dehydrated. In this sense the water is positioned in front of the students as a symbol of security for every student. Water prepared for each student is a courtesy for the students which is rarely found in a traditional Japanese classroom. This provides another set of semiotic affordances that attach a sense of positivity as a form of security in the Suggestopedia classroom, and the unusualness of the courtesy given to the students can create for them a trigger to relativise their commonsense ideas.

There is a small hexagonal table placed in a corner of the room (described in line 7). The use of this table is unknown. However, its similarity in shape to the main table suggests that it is intentionally placed there, and its position hints that some activities might take place around it. An object whose application is unknown but which looks as if it has been deliberately put in a certain place is a mystery. A mystery can draw and maintain curiosity until its secret is revealed. The teacher has presented a symbol signifying a mystery in front of his students, and this has the potential to draw their curiosity and create an expectation about what will happen in the classroom.

In summary, a traditional Japanese classroom seems to have a semiotic affordance which constructs the classroom as a place where individual students passively receive information given unilaterally by the teacher. Each individual student sits facing the same direction. Therefore, the traditional classroom setting can imply a place for competition to reach a certain goal. Such a room can intimidate students who are less confident. In contrast, the Suggestopedia teacher has prepared a semiotic affordance that creates the room as a place in which students as a group can collaborate and share their experiences of flying out towards an unknown world where something exciting will happen. The teacher has avoided symbols that can signify separated individuals and competition and, therefore, the room has been set up to seem less intimidating than the traditional setting. Such a difference between the two classroom settings invites students to compare between two *social suggestive norms*: the old norms of their normal lives and the new norms of the Suggestopedia class. Through this process, students can relativise their own commonsense idea and voluntarily choose the better one for their Japanese

[21] The water pitcher and the glasses described here were kindly provided by the organisers of this course. The teacher appreciated their offer, and was able to use it as a meaningful sign attached to the course environment.

study. The teacher has created a semiotic affordance in the Suggestopedia classroom so that it can better appeal to the natural appetite of the students' brain.

4.2 Symbols in the Scene of the Teacher's First Contact

It has been argued above that the teacher has prepared a different learning environment from what commonsense would imagine as a teaching room. In Scene 2, the teacher enters this environment.

Scene 2 First contact

> A Japanese man (who is the teacher) comes into the classroom. He wears a casual shirt, colonial-style white cotton trousers, sunglasses and a baseball cap backwards on his head. His sweater is around his shoulders as if he did not need to wear it as he is already warm. A large black soft travel bag hangs on his shoulder. He also wears a set of earphones connected to a music player in his chest pocket. He seems to be listening to the music as he is humming and singing a song.[22] The song has Japanese lyrics. He goes straight to the travel posters without a glance at the students, and speaks to himself in Japanese. He then starts looking around the room.
>
> When he notices the students sitting around the table, he shows surprise. The students laugh lightly. The man says in Japanese, "*Koko wa doko?* (Where is here?) *Nihon?* (Japan?) *Īe, koko wa Nihon ja arimasen.* (No, here is not Japan.)"[23] He opens his arms and shrugs his shoulders as if he is at a loss. In the next moment, he looks convinced that he is in Wales as he points with both index fingers down and says, "*Koko wa Uēruzu desu!* (Here is Wales!)", and then says, "*Uēruzu desu ne*? (Wales, isn't it?)" with a rising intonation. Then he smiles and nods, saying "*Hai?* (Yes?)" with a rising intonation. Some students respond with "*Hai.* (Yes.)" and others respond saying "Wales".

In his first introduction, the teacher acts as if he has strayed into an art gallery that is exhibiting

[22] The song he was listening to and humming was "*Nani mo Nainodesu*", written by Takuro Yoshida in 1970. The same song was sung later in the same session as the course's first song.
[23] In the romaji (alphabetic transcription) used in this thesis, Japanese long vowels are represented with a macron: ā, ī, ū, ē and ō.

Japanese posters. He plays the role of a man who has come into the room without knowing about the presence of other people, and shows his interest first in the exhibited posters.

Just as the room does not look like a normal teaching room, the man who has come into the room does not look like a teacher. The casual shirt, colonial-style white cotton trousers, base-ball cap, sunglasses and travel bag conventionally signify a traveller. His Japanese language and his gesture of shrugging his shoulders suggest that he is a Japanese traveller who is not familiar with this part of the world. The teacher, who pretends to be a stranger, asks the students about the place where he is. The students answer what he asked. In this interaction, the teacher has indirectly assigned the students the role of locals, and up to this point, the teacher has created a story of local people who encounter a stranger from Japan, which replaces an alternative story of students waiting for their teacher in a classroom. In other words the teacher has established two simultaneous story-lines in his course, one of which represents institutional language learning and another that represents what Lozanov calls "a common game-project" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 148). The use of "game" refers to the idea that the project is not real and that students can act freely without worrying about their attachments in the real world. Errors and mistakes that a student makes in the game will not affect his/her real life or real self. In the game-project, the teacher does not use his words to ask students to take the role of the locals, as Suggestopedia puts importance on students' voluntary participation. Instead, he has provided a plausible set of affordances that makes the story comprehensible and easy for students to participate in, and then waits for them to react. He acts out a role that indirectly assigns a counter-role to the students. He leaves the students the choice about whether they play the assigned role.

At the same time, the teacher has prepared a device to lower the students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. He has created an occasion for surprise and laughter. The study of laughter indicates that laughter is a sign of relieving tension (e.g. Freud, 1928, 1905/1974; Spencer, 1911). Alternatively, the teacher can use positive laughter "to open up students' minds, and to relieve them from the fear of learning" (Lozanov, 2006, 24-Aug-1989). The game-project thus works at an affective level to create an appropriate learning environment.

Referring to Suggestopedia's model of the brain, "the brain likes changes and surprises". In other words, Suggestopedia believes that including a pleasant surprise in the learning context will attract the student's brain for learning. Lozanov has said in his teacher training that "when the unexpected occurs, people wake up, laugh and learn" (Lozanov, 2006, 9-Dec-1998). The

teacher has brought surprise and laughter into his classroom by playing with the students' expectations of how a language lesson starts. Hijacking an expected story with another, unexpected story is a surprise for those who are expecting the story to unfold in a particular way. The teacher pretends that he found the students for the first time in the room and showed surprise. The teacher's show of surprise sends the students a message that he did not expect their presence, and this is something the students did not expect from their teacher. The laughter comes from this odd discrepancy created by the teacher. The teacher's decision to bring out the second (common game-project) story-line appears to have succeeded in lowering the student's *affective anti-suggestive barriers* by surprising them.

It should be noted that the first meaningful communication between the teacher and the students established at the end of this scene is in Japanese. The teacher talks to himself in Japanese before he starts talking to the students. Students may assume that he is talking in Japanese, but his Japanese is not meaningful to them, as none of students has previous experience of Japanese language learning. They therefore cannot be expected to understand any of the Japanese words until they hear the teacher say "*Uēruzu*", which is a word that they may be able to identify in context. Soon after, he repeats "*Uēruzu*" in another sentence. Some students have caught the word and repeated it, probably as it sounds similar to the English word "Wales". The second time, the word "*Uēruzu*" is presented with body language: both the teacher's index fingers are pointed down. Pointed index fingers usually signify "here" or "this place". Students' responses indicate that, using these cues, some students have guessed that the teacher is asking them if he is in Wales. When the teacher immediately follows with the word "*hai*" with a rising intonation, it can be seen that some students have guessed that the word "*hai*" is a phrase used to affirm, that it is a question because of its rising intonation, and they respond by repeating the word. Although Japanese language plays a minimal role in this communication which is established with a significant help of body language and intonation, it superficially looks like successful communication in Japanese because the only language so far used by the teacher and the students is Japanese. This fact connects semiotic elements in the scene and thus creates an affordance between an unfamiliar Japanese language and successful and meaningful communication.

Within such semiotic affordance in this first contact by the teacher with students, meaningful communication has been established in the Japanese language, between Welsh learners of Japanese and a native Japanese speaker, on Welsh soil in a fictional context. In other words, the teacher has used the arbitrariness of semiotics and connected elements such as "Japanese"

"Wales", "affirmation" and "communication with a foreigner" in a plausible context to justify Welsh students using the Japanese language in Wales.

4.3 Symbols in Interaction in Contexts and Roles

In the previous scenes, the teacher has created a base on which students can feel equality with the teacher, expect their future learning to be easy, and rationalise their learning of Japanese within this method. This has been achieved by attending to *anti-suggestive barriers* by creating a unique set of semiotic affordances that is different from an ordinary Japanese language classroom. This is done by providing students with an element of surprise, laughter and initial success in their Japanese communication. In the third scene from the Introduction session, the teacher actively interacts with the students. He starts with the first student (S1[24]) who is sitting to his immediate right.

Scene 3 (lines 40–95)

40	T:	<Showing his palm to the students.> *Chotto matte.* (Wait a moment.)
41	T:	<Teacher pulls out earphones from his ears.> *Anō, sumimasen, sumimasen. Ā, sumimasen.* (Umm, excuse me, excuse me, excuse me. Oh, excuse me.)
42	T:	<Puts his hand in his travel bag.> *Kore wa…* (This is…)
43	T:	<Takes out his Japanese-brand SLR camera and shows it to the students.> *Kamera desu, kamera desu.* (A camera, camera.)
44	Ss:	<Light laughter>
45–46	T:	<Approaches S1 with his camera in his hand.> *Uēruzujin desuka? Uēruzu…* (Welsh person? Wales…)
47	S1:	<Nods.>
48	Ss:	<Murmuring.> Wales…
49	T:	*Hai?* (Yes?)
50	S1:	*Hai.* (Yes.)
51	T:	*Hai! Ā, sō desuka.* (Yes! Oh, I see.)
52–53	T:	<Moves eye gaze from S1 to the whole class with a smiling face.> *Hai,*

[24] Henceforth I call the students "S1" to "S7". "T" represents the teacher.

		hai, hai. (Yes, yes, yes.)
54	T:	<Reaches out to and faces S1.>
55	T:	*Uēruzujin desuka?* (Are you Welsh person?)
56	S1:	*Hai.* (Yes.)
57	T:	<Moves his eye gaze from S1 to the whole class, and smiles.> <Nods.> *Hai, hai. Ā, sō desuka.* (Yes, yes. Oh, I see.)
58	T:	<Spreading both arms to Ss.> *Hai, hai.* (Yes, yes.)
59	Ss:	<Nod and laugh.>
60	T:	<Takes off his baseball cap and puts it on the table.>
61	T:	<Opens his right hand and puts it on his chest.> *Watashi wa nihonjin desu.* (I am a Japanese person.)
62	T:	*Tomodachi.* (Friends.)
63	T:	<Reaches out to shake hands.>
64	T:	*Hajimemashite.* (Nice to meet you.)
65	S1:	<Responds to the teacher and shakes hands.>
66	T:	<Looks around the classroom while he keeps holding S1's hand and alternately points to himself and S1 with the other hand.>
67	T:	*Tomodachi, tomodachi.* (Friends, friends.)
68–69	T:	<To all students, clearly, but with softer tone than his Japanese speech, in English.> Friends, friends.
70	T:	<To S1.> *Hai?* (Yes?)
71	S1:	Oh, yes. *Hai.*
72	Ss:	<Laughter.>
73	T:	<Nods to all students with smiling face.> *Hai, hai, hai, hai.* (Yes, yes, yes, yes.)
74	T:	<To all students.> *Tomodachi desu.* (We are friends.)
75	T:	<Picks up his camera and starts adjusting something.>
76	Ss:	<Laughter.>
77	T:	*Chotto matte, chotto matte.* (Wait a second, wait a second.)
78	T:	<Points to his camera.>
79	T:	*Kamera desu.* (This is a camera.)
80	T:	<Performs the action of turning the focusing ring.>
81	T:	*Chotto matte, chotto matte.* (Wait a second, wait a second.)
82	T:	<Stands beside S1 and talks to her.> *Sumimasen.* (Excuse me.)

83	T:	*Shashin o totte mo ī desuka?* (May I take a photo?)
84	T:	<Shakes hands with S1 again and alternately points to himself and S1.>
85	T:	*Tomodachi desu, tomodachi desu, tomodachi desu.* (We are friends, we are friends, we are friends.)
86	T:	<Looks at S6 as if he has just noticed she is there. Reaches out and approaches her.>
87	T:	*Sumimasen, sumimasen, sumimasen.* (Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me.)
88	T:	<Passes his camera to S6 and points to the position of the shutter release button.>
89	T:	*Shattā o oshite kudasai.* (Press the shutter, please.)
90	S6:	<Receives the camera and starts checking the position of the shutter button.> *Hai.* (Yes.)
91	T:	<Points to the position of the shutter as he goes back to S1.> *Sore desu, sore desu.* (That's it, that's it.)
92	S6:	<Smiles.>
93	T:	<Shows his hand to shake hands with S1 and looks towards the camera.>
94	S1:	<Takes the teacher's hand and smiles at camera.>
95	S6:	<Presses the shutter button.>
96	Env:[25]	<Shutter clicks.>
97	T:	*Arigatō gozaimasu.* (Thank you very much.)

In this scene, the teacher takes a camera out of his travel bag, approaches a student with the camera, shakes hands, makes friends and asks another student to take a photograph of him and his new friend. He keeps speaking in Japanese throughout the scene.

line 40	T:	<Showing his palm towards the students.> *Chotto matte.* (Wait a moment.)

Showing one's palm to someone is a common use of body language to halt another's action. This gesture helps to convey the meaning of the words being spoken and so the students do

[25] "Env" represents environmental factors such as noise, temperature, light and so on.

not need to rely only on understanding the teacher's language to understand his message. The use of the gesture together with language can also indicate that the teacher does not expect the students to know the phrase. Nevertheless, the teacher presents the Japanese phrase to the students at an appropriate point in the context to help them comprehend it.

line 41 T: <Teacher pulls out earphones from his ears.>

The teacher has been wearing earphones, and this has symbolised that he has been listening to music on the music player. Pulling out his earphones when he finds the students signifies that he shifts his attention from the music to something else. He has found something more interesting; that is, the students. The students receive the message that now the teacher is interested in them.

line 42 T: <Puts his hand in his travel bag.>

Putting a hand in a bag indicates that there is something in the bag. What this something is is not revealed at this point. This therefore creates a little mystery and there is the expectation that the hand will come out of the bag with something. Therefore, this action is inviting students' curiosity.

line 43 T: <Takes out his Japanese-brand SLR camera and shows it to the students.>
Kamera desu, kamera desu. (A camera, camera.)
line 44 Ss: <Light laughter>

The teacher takes a single-lens reflex camera out of his bag and at the same time says the Japanese phrase "*kamera desu*". The real single-lens reflex camera suggests the owner's enthusiasm for photography, and the high quality of the images it captures. More significantly in the context created by the classroom layout and the semiosis of the teacher's dress, a person with a camera invokes a stereotype of the traveller. The students return light laughter to this very predictable action of the teacher as traveller.

line 45 T: <Approaches S1 with his camera in his hand.>

When a traveller approaches someone with his camera, what happens next will be something to do with taking a photograph. As the teacher approaches S1, she is therefore given resources for understanding the interaction that is about to take place and must get ready for an interaction with the traveller regarding a camera and photography. The other students form an audience for the interaction and can attend to what is happening with S1.

line 46 T: *Uēruzujin desuka? Uēruzu…* (Welsh person? Wales…)

The teacher says "*Uēruzujin deska*" with a rising intonation indicating a question. The phrase "*Uēruzujin*" involves a recognisable word for students that can be associated with Wales by the Welsh students. The rising intonation indicates that the teacher is asking a question about this recognisable word and invites a response from the students.

line 47 S1: <Nods.>
line 48 Ss: <Murmuring.> Wales…

S1 nods to the teacher. Nodding does not always indicate a listener's comprehension of a speaker, but in the context in which the teacher has (1) used cognate words that can be recognised across languages, such as "*Uēruzu*", (2) used context to support meaning, (3) used gesture to support meaning, and (4) invoked students' existing knowledge, it seems to indicate that comprehension is the most probable meaning of S1's nodding. The murmuring voices from the other students saying "Wales" also indicates that the teacher's question has been understood by those students.

line 49 T: *Hai?* (Yes?)
line 50 S1: *Hai.* (Yes.)
line 51 T: *Hai! Ā, sō desuka.* (Yes! Oh, I see.)

The teacher asks for a confirmation of the student's understanding using the word "*hai*" with a rising intonation. S1 repeats the teacher's talk with a falling intonation. The difference in intonation between the two indicates that S1's response through nodding has now been verbalised as an explicit response to the question. S1's correct use of "*hai*" is immediately confirmed by the teacher by repeating "*hai*" with a falling intonation.

line 52 T: <Moves eye gaze from S1 to the whole class with a smiling face.>

line 53 T: *Hai, hai, hai.* (Yes, yes, yes.)

The teacher's attention has moved from S1 to the whole class. He repeats "*Hai*" to all the class while smiling as if he wants to tell everyone that he has found the person who he wanted to see. A smiling face signifies the teacher's happiness and further it confirms the affirmative sense of the word "*Hai*" to the class.

line 54 T: <Reaches out to and faces S1.>

line 55 T: *Uēruzujin desuka?* (Are you a Welsh person?)

line 56 S1: *Hai.* (Yes.)

The teacher reconfirms the meaning of the interaction. S1 reconfirms that she correctly reacted to the teacher.

line 57 T: <Moves his eye gaze from S1 to the whole class, and smiles.><Nods.>
Hai, hai. Ā, sō desuka. (Yes, yes. Oh, I see)

line 58 T: <Spreading both arms to Ss.> *Hai, hai.* (Yes, yes.)

line 59 Ss: <Nod and laugh.>

Switching his gaze from S1 to the whole class (line 57) sends a message to the students that he has not forgotten about the other members, and that he wants to invite all the students to attend to his communication with S1. He confirms he is now paying attention to the other students by smiling and opening his arms in a gesture that is directed to them (line 58). The repeating of "*Hai*" to the whole class has the function of reconfirming that S1 has reacted appropriately in the Japanese interaction. S1's success in the Japanese interaction has showed the other students the possibilities for learning that can occur through the teacher's approach to the course. They thus serve an affective function that addresses *anti-suggestive barriers*. In reaction, the students nod and laugh in return. The action of nodding and laughing signifies their affirmative acceptance of the interaction being created in the class.

line 60 T: <Takes off his baseball cap and puts it on the table.>

It is not usual for a person to keep a hat on in a room. Someone who has come in from outside

and does not take off his hat may indicate a person who will go out again soon. Someone who takes off and holds the hat may also be a person who will go out soon. The teacher took off his baseball cap and put it on the table. This action signifies he will stay in the room for a while. This means for the students that they will have to attend to this person for some more time. It also signifies that the traveller personality that the teacher is playing might not be just a temporary one, and this semiotic affordance might continue, rather than stopping at some stage after which the class will go back to being a normal language classroom.

line 61 T: <Opens his right hand and puts it on his chest.> *Watashi wa nihonjin desu.* (I am a Japanese person.)

The posture of putting an open palm on one's chest is a form of Western body language to mean oneself. The teacher produces this as the only action to make what he has said in Japanese understood. He has said in Japanese "I am a Japanese person", but students will naturally not understand his Japanese speech by itself. At this point, they can only understand, from context – the teacher's body language – that he is talking about himself. The teacher looks as though he does not care if he is understood correctly as he moves on to something new and keeps talking in Japanese.

line 62 T: *Tomodachi.* (Friends.)
line 63 T: <Reaches out to shake hands.>
line 64 T: *Hajimemashite.* (Nice to see you.)
line 65 S1: <Responds to the teacher and shakes hands.>

Shaking hands is a symbol to signify an equal relationship. This is a repetition of the same message sent in Scene 1 through the seating layout around the table. The appearance of the same theme in different forms is a characteristic of much classical music, known as theme and variation, and this is something that the teacher builds in this classroom, producing similar semiotic messages in different ways. Reaching out and shaking hands is a strong body-language sign of meeting and making friends. Although the students can therefore understand what is going on without the accompanying language, the teacher attaches the phrases "*Tomodachi*" and "*Hajimemashite*" to the body language. The body language therefore provides a resource for understanding the language being produced.

line 66 T: <Looks around the classroom while he keeps holding S1's hand and alternately points to himself and S1 with the other hand.>

line 67 T: *Tomodachi, tomodachi.* (Friends, friends.)

Once again, the teacher looks around to draw the attention of all the class members, and shows the meaning of "*tomodachi*" as a relationship of the two people shaking hands. Drawing attention to and showing an example in an instructive way is a form of conventional teaching. This means the teacher has started teaching in a conventional way for the first time in the course. This action compensates for the unusualness of the "game-project". In order to involve students in his game-project, the teacher started playing the role of a traveller from the very beginning of the class, which is different from conventional language teaching. This shift is important in constructing the learning environment, as Lozanov (2006, 23-Aug-1989) argues that if the way a language class is being taught is very far from the existing social norms, it will not be accepted by students and it may unnecessarily heighten students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. In the worst-case scenario, students may lose their rationale for staying in the room if a serious question is raised about why they should learn Japanese in a way they are not familiar with. "In actual fact, the overcoming of barriers signifies harmonization with the barriers" (Lozanov 1978, p. 165). At this point in the lesson, the teacher addresses such barriers by showing that he can adopt conventional elements of language teaching. In so doing he signals that the class is in fact a recognisable language lesson and that it fits with aspects of the students' expectations even if it diverges from them. He also does this in other ways.

line 68 T: <To all students, clearly, but softer tone than his Japanese speech.>

line 69 T: Friends, friends.

Using a mediating language to help students understand is obviously a form of teaching. The teacher, who has not previously shown his persona as a teacher, now clearly shows his teacher's identity to the students. This action may moderate any heightening of *logical anti-suggestive barriers* for those students who believe that a teacher should teach language in a language class. For such students, the teacher's action is logically reasonable.

In his teaching action, the word "*tomodachi*" has been highlighted as it is the first translated word in the class. It is the first Japanese word for which the students clearly know the meaning. Again, as the meaning of the word "friends" signifies an equal relationship, it is another

variation on a theme that has already been established. Now, he has revealed himself as a teacher, but at the same time, he maintains what he has been highlighting since even before the beginning of this class – the equal relationship between him and the students. This is the beginning of establishing the position that the teacher wants to create in his classroom: that of the teacher as "a very good, knowledgeable friend" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 149). By being knowledgeable, he can control students' *logical anti-suggestive barriers* because it attends to students' logical requirement that a person who teaches should be knowledgeable about the subject being taught, and by representing himself as a friend, he can control the *affective anti-suggestive barrier* because he adopts a persona that is not intimidating in order to make students feel more comfortable.

Another device adopted by the teacher is a change in voice quality between the use of Japanese and the mediating language. He uses a soft and level voice when he speaks English while he speaks Japanese louder and with a more dynamic intonation. In this way the two languages are distinguished to show Japanese is the main language for communication, and English is used as an auxiliary.

line 70	T:	<To S1.> *Hai?* (Yes?)
line 71	S1:	Oh, yes. *Hai.*
line 72	Ss:	<Laughter.>
line 73	T:	<Nods to all students with smiling face.> *Hai, hai, hai, hai.* (Yes, yes, yes, yes.)
line 74	T:	<To all students.> *Tomodachi desu.* (We are friends.)

The teacher requests S1's confirmation of what he meant. S1 shows she is now confident about the meaning of "*tomodachi*", and gives him her confirmation. She also gives a confirmation to the class members that she knows the meaning of "*hai*" by saying "yes" before "*hai*". Her confirmation of the meaning can be immediately shared by other students and draws laughter that indicates they have understood the situation. The teacher also confirms the situation by nodding, smiling and saying "*hai*" four times. The meaning of the interaction between the teacher and S1 is now shared and confirmed for all members in the room. The students' laughter (line 72) is a sign that their *affective barriers* have been lowered as it is the result of being relieved of tensions and anxiety, as Freud (1928) and others have pointed out.

This short interaction shows that the use of a mediating language can help students understand the situation. At the same time, it indicates that a mediating language is not always necessary for students to understand target-language phrases. The meaning of the target-language words and phrases can be understood and confirmed by the learners without a mediating language through contextual and other forms of support. An accumulation of such small experiences in the classroom can help students control their *anti-suggestive barriers* by creating a sense of success. It can therefore help relieve them from a fear of encountering unknown words and phrases because they have been shown that they will be able to understand it sooner or later by translation or in context.

line 75 T: <Picks up his camera and starts adjusting something.>
line 76 Ss: <Laughter.>
line 77 T: *Chotto matte, chotto matte.* (Wait a second, wait a second.)

Having adopted the position of a teacher for a while, the teacher now goes back to his traveller persona by picking up his camera and starting to adjust functions. “Traveller”, “camera” and “new friend” are a stereotypical set that enables students to create an expectation about what will happen next. The students’ laughter confirms their understanding of the situation in which the new friend will be photographed.

line 78 T: <Points to his camera.>
line 79 T: *Kamera desu.* (This is a camera.)

This is the second occasion on which the teacher points to his camera and says “*kamera desu*”. The first occasion was in line 43 when the teacher used this camera to signify a traveller. The teacher has developed his story of a traveller making new friends since he showed his camera for the first time in the class, and he now comes back to the same camera when he has finished the act of making friends with a local person. This reappearance of the camera and his body language signifies the end of an episode. His method of creating an episode in the story resembles how an episode is structured in an art form, for example, in music. Often, a composer sandwiches a musical passage with the theme and a reappearance of the theme to structure a musical chunk and this is what the teacher has done.[26] The lesson is thus provided with an

[26] A typical example of this “sandwich structure” is seen in the song “Twinkle Twinkle Little Star”. It is called “recapitulation” in a larger form, such as in the sonata form of classical music.

internal structure that creates a shape for students' experiences.

line 80 T: <Performs the action of turning the focusing ring.>

The end of one episode implies that another episode is about to begin and prepares for some new action. The teacher in his traveller persona starts adjusting the camera's focus ring. As the focus ring is always adjusted moments before the shutter button is pressed, this action creates the conditions for contextual understanding that the next action must be pressing the shutter. This gives students an idea of what is to come next.

line 81 T: *Chotto matte, chotto matte.* (Wait a second, wait a second.)
line 82 T: <Stands beside S1, and talks to her.> *Sumimasen.* (Excuse me.)
line 83 T: *Shashin o totte mo ī desuka?* (May I take a photo?)
line 84 T: <Shakes hands with S1 again and alternately points to himself and S1.>
line 85 T: *Tomodachi desu, tomodachi desu, tomodachi desu.* (We are friends, we are friends, we are friends.)

When one episode ends and another is about to begin, the teacher says something in Japanese that the students would not know, then shakes hands with S1, and repeats the Japanese phrase to confirm that he and S1 are friends.

None of the words and phrases presented in lines 81–83 have been explained to the students. They have heard the phrase "*chotto matte*" on only two previous occasions (line 40 when he pulled out his earphones after showing his palm to the students and line 77 when he starting adjusting the camera's functions), and "*sumimasen*" on one occasion (line 41 when he started his first interaction with the students). They have never heard the phrase "*shashin o totte mo ī desuka* (May I take a photo?)" in this class.

Although what the teacher has said in Japanese fits in the context of a traveller and his new friends, students cannot be expected to understand linguistically what has been said. Moreover, the teacher appears to put no importance on what he has said and instead leaves it with no explanation of its meaning. There will be other cases in which the teacher exposes students to unfamiliar Japanese phrases merely as sounds in a comprehensible context. It is important for students to become used to being exposed to unfamiliar words and phrases without fear

for the purpose of creating a language reserve through peripheral perception. The teacher was talking to himself in Japanese in Scene 2, and on several occasions the teacher has not indicate that he was concerned whether his Japanese speech was correctly understood by the students or not. In this way, the students have been exposed to more Japanese words and phrases than they have understood. For Suggestopedia, it is more important for students to build large language reserves in the *paraconscious* area, for future use, than in the conscious area, for immediate use. To build up such a structure, students need to become used to being exposed to unknown words and phrases without frustration. According to Suggestopedia's theory of learning, such a way of thinking among the students creates a base on which they can acquire a large amount of language information and build a good volume of passive reserve in their *paraconscious* area (Lozanov, 1978, 2006, 2009).

After he has presented these unfamiliar phrases, the teacher quickly goes back to what the students can more fully understand. The unfamiliar parts of the teacher's speech are left untouched, but the familiar body language of shaking hands and the recently learned word, "*tomodachi*" have replaced the unfamiliar language.[27]

line 86 T: <Looks at S6 as if he has just noticed she is there. Reaches out and approaches her.>

For the first time, the teacher approaches an individual student other than S1. Until now, the other students have been given the role of onlookers in this interaction. However, now S1 is not the only student who individually becomes the focus of interest of the traveller.

line 87 T: *Sumimasen, sumimasen, sumimasen*. (Excuse me, excuse me, excuse me.)

The phrase "*sumimasen*" is presented again, this time with a somewhat more concrete situation of requesting than in its previous appearance.

line 88 T: <Passes his camera to S6 and points to the position of the shutter release

[27] A similar strategy was often used in Gateva's Italian course (Lozanov, 2006, 9-Feb-1989) . She frequently used the Italian phrase, "*Lasciamo la!*" (Let's leave it) to leave the new or difficult material after she introduced it during the early stages in her Italian course.

button.>

line 89 T: *Shattā o oshite kudasai.* (Press the shutter, please.)

From the action of handing over the camera and pointing at the shutter button, the traveller's request is made obvious to S6 in the context being created by the teacher. With this action, the meaning being conveyed is already made available for the students independently of the Japanese phrase but there are some possible sources of comprehension of the language as well as it contains the word "*shattā*" that resembles the English word "shutter". The phrase in line 89 is introduced by the teacher as the first example of a request structure in Japanese and is produced in an appropriate context that makes the meaning of the structure evident. Again, the teacher does not focus on the students' understanding of the phrase at this point and there is no indication that they should memorise or recall this Japanese phrase.

line 90 S6: <Receives the camera and starts checking the position of the shutter button.> *Hai.* (Yes.)

Having received the camera, S6 starts checking the position of the shutter button as if she has completely understood the teacher's Japanese. That is, she has understood the request because of the affordances that come from the meaning of the signs created by the actions rather than her understanding of the language. Nonetheless she displays confidence in her comprehension of the message, as represented in her own "*Hai*".

line 91 T: <Points to the position of the shutter as he goes back to S1.> *Sore desu, sore desu.* (That's it, that's it.)

line 92 S6: <Smiles.>

On this occasion, the teacher has used the Japanese phrase "*sore desu*", which has not been used previously. Again, the teacher does not focus on the comprehension of this word. However, S6's smile and her engagement in the action indicate that she does not find a problem in teacher's use of the unfamiliar Japanese phrase.

line 93 T: <Shows his hand to shake hands with S1 and looks towards the camera.>

line 94 S1: <Takes the teacher's hand and smiles at camera.>

line 95 S6: <Presses the shutter button.>

line 96 Env: <Shutter clicks.>

line 97 T: *Arigatō gozaimasu.* (Thank you very much.)

The shutter click noise (line 96) completes the second episode. It follows a reappearance of the activity of shaking hands (line 93) that symbolically reminds the class of the success of the Japanese interaction in the first episode. The two consecutive successes in Japanese interactions in the two episodes of the game-project of a traveller making friends with a local (lines 45–85) and of the traveller asking another local to take a photo of him and his new friend (lines 93–97) signifies that Japanese is a usable tool for communication. This is a classroom application of Lozanov's first idea of Suggestopedia, that an accumulation of successful experiences forms a belief in success.

Throughout Scene 3, the teacher has sent several messages to the class through his language and attitudes that are aimed at lowering students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. These messages are directed to the different types of *anti-suggestive barriers*.

There are messages directed to student's *logical anti-suggestive barrier*, which can block incoming *suggestion* when a person has encountered a situation that conflicts with what he or she believes to be a legitimate cause of things. One such message relates to the possibility that conflicts between expectations and experiences can heighten *anti-suggestive barriers*. If a student has a very strong belief that a language class should be run according to a traditional framework, a different type of language class, such as one using a Suggestopedia approach, may heighten that student's *anti-suggestive barrier*. The teacher has anticipated this and included a traditional teaching component to send a message that the Suggestopedia Japanese class corresponds to at least some expectations about language classes through his interactions with students (see, for example, line 69, where the teacher used a mediating language to translate his Japanese). The teacher has also created a consistent and plausible story within the class context that would create the feeling in students that this class is well planned (for example, as seen in lines 75–77, his action of picking up his camera was stereotypically expected in the context). Well-planned teaching can create the sense that the class involves professionally designed teaching that is worth students' investment of time and money. This is another harmonisation (Lozanov, 1978, p. 165) between this class and the students' beliefs that is designed to avoid heightening the *logical anti-suggestive barrier*.

There are also messages directed to the *ethical anti-suggestive barrier*. The *ethical anti-suggestive barrier* is explained by Lozanov as a mental barrier that "rejects any influence or proposal which is counter to the ethical structure of the personality" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 120). One's ethical structure is the nucleus of a person's ethical values, which have been acquired through individual experience (Lozanov, 1978). Lozanov discovered this type of *anti-suggestive barrier* during his experiments on *suggestions* given to hypnotised people, and he found that the *ethical anti-suggestive barrier* is so immovable that even during hypnosis it rejects external *suggestions*. In an extreme example, Lozanov states that "if the hypnotised subject is induced to commit a crime or perform a sexual act, he would spontaneously come out of hypnosis" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 120). In the end, teachers of Suggestopedia have no way to proceed other than to "bring the *suggestion* into harmony with [the learner's] individual [ethical] structure" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 165).

However, it is not possible for a teacher who has met his students for the first time to know each individual student's ethical background. At this stage, what the teacher can do to cope with students' ethical structures is limited to doing nothing that contravenes the general social etiquette of the society to which the students belong. In this lesson, the teacher has performed his actions in accordance with the commonsense of modern Western democratic society. He has tried to treat students as equally as possible. For example, he has indicated that he acknowledges the presence of all students evenly when he is interacting with one selected student (as seen in lines 57–58, 66–77 and 73–74). Similarly, he has selected the Western custom of shaking hands to express new friendship (as seen in lines 63–65 and 93–94), although, shaking hands is not a part of traditional Japanese culture. The teacher's inclusion of these elements is therefore a strategy to harmonise with students' ethical structure as much as he can at the first stage of his teaching.

Naturally there is a limit to the teacher's knowledge about the students' background. To minimise unwanted conflict with students' ethical structures, the teacher has used the situation of a traveller and locals. In this context, he could have used the commonsense idea that an alien does not know the local rules. By playing an innocent stranger, the teacher has avoided possible conflicts he might cause in the course of interaction with his students due to his lack of cultural knowledge of individual students' ethical structure.

There are also messages directed to the *affective anti-suggestive barrier*. The *affective anti-suggestive barrier* intuitively blocks incoming *suggestions* to maintain emotional stability. In responding to this, the teacher has directed students' attention away from fear by developing a style of presentation that draws on their curiosity. He has set up a small mystery with his actions when he showed his bag as if something interesting was hidden in it (as seen in line 42). He has also developed the students' feeling of fun by stimulating laughter from time to time. He has made the teaching content look easy by using body language (seen in showing his palm in line 40, nodding in lines 57 and 73, putting his palm on his chest in line 61, reaching out to shake hands in line 63), using words that are pronounced similarly to English equivalents (as seen in "*kamera*" for "camera" in line 43, "*Uēruzu*" for "Wales" in lines 46, 48 and 55), English translation ("friends" for "*tomodachi*" in line 69), showing real material (such as the camera shown in line 43), developing consistent and foreseeable contexts, and using intonation to indicate his emotions and intentions.

While dealing with *anti-suggestive barriers*, the teacher has also reinforced semiotic affordances of the Suggestopedia Japanese class that have been built up since the beginning of the course. In particular, he has reinforced the significance of using Japanese in the class. In Scene 2, he created a language class where Japanese is naturally spoken to establish meaningful communication. In this scene, he has reinforced that by emphasising the roles of a traveller and locals in the prepared context in which the locals are enabled to understand the intention of the traveller through his verbal and non-verbal actions. Also, the teacher has given meaningful roles to two of the students: one became friends with the traveller, and the other helped the traveller by taking a photo to capture their friendship. Making friends and helping someone are commonly understood as good deeds. The positiveness that comes from doing the right thing is then semiotically attached to the Japanese language learning in which all students in the room are now engaged. Playing along and watching these positively signified roles can confirm the point of their participation in this Japanese language course.

Another thing the teacher has reinforced in this scene through using the context of a traveller and locals is a relationship based on mutual aid. What has been symbolised as a multidirectional communication by the arrangement of seating around the round table has now become a place for helping and being helped. In this relationship, the teacher as traveller is not an authoritative dictator, but someone who sometimes needs help from the locals. This has created sense of an equal relationship between the teacher and the students in spite of the difference of their positions as they would be viewed through commonsense ideas.

In the meantime, the Suggestopedia world that the teacher has prepared is not a precise reflection of the facts of the real world. The teacher's body language and the concrete materials that teacher shows have helped students to understand what is happening in the context. However, they are not necessarily a reflection of real life. For example, putting a palm on one's own chest to indicate self (line 61) is not a typical Japanese gesture. Shaking hands (line 63) at the first meeting is similarly not found in traditional Japanese culture.[28] These are actually instances of Western body language that are familiar to the students and which are used to support comprehension. Equally, SLR cameras are not actually popular among modern tourists, who would tend to use compact digital cameras or smartphones. Also, the focus ring on the modern SLR is of virtually no use because they have an auto-focus function. However the teacher has borrowed their semiotic affordances to create the basic atmosphere of this Suggestopedia Japanese course. Thus, the first moments of the course are designed to create a specific learning environment in which semiotic affordances are created in order to address the requirements of Suggestopedia's learning theory.

4.4 Summary

This chapter has analysed the first two minutes of the Introduction of the course, the very beginning of the Japanese Suggestopedia course. The first minutes are important; Lozanov places great emphasis on the way the teacher makes the first contact with the students as it determines the teacher's position through the whole course (Lozanov, 2006, 14-Feb-1989). By creating an appropriate position in the first contact with the students, "the teacher introduces a spirit of easiness and delicacy into his or her attitude towards the group as a whole and towards each student as an individual" and "invites the students to join immediately and willingly in a common game-project" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 148) that aims to achieve the appropriate psychological conditions for effective learning.

Lozanov assigns the Suggestopedia teacher the role of treating the group of students as a whole and as individuals at the same time. This reflects his idea of society as being an extension of the brain, which functions as a complex whole. In a Suggestopedic context, Lozanov's

[28] The Japanese way of indicating oneself is to point to one's nose. Shaking hands is a new custom in Japan, used among business people. Traditionally Japanese people just bow when they meet someone for the first time.

mention of "a spirit of easiness and delicacy" and "a common game-project" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 148) seem to represent the unique set of semiotic affordances of Suggestopedia. To "invite the students to join immediately and willingly" can be paraphrased as controlling the strength of students' *anti-suggestive barriers* so that they can accept and voluntarily acquire the semiotic affordance of Suggestopedia. So, the teacher's task is to give the students through his or her behaviours a set of semiotic stimuli that will create an environment where the students can freely make a choice between their old *social suggestive norms* and the new ones that are created in the Suggestopedia class. Importantly the teacher must make the new social norms more attractive to the students' natural brain function. Therefore, the semiotic affordances in the Suggestopedia classroom "should not create an impression that the class is weird or incomprehensible" (Lozanov, 2006, 23-Aug-1989), because the impression of weirdness or incomprehensibility can heighten some of the *anti-suggestive barriers* of the students.

So, the Suggestopedia teacher's task at the beginning of the course is to prepare to fulfil the requirements of Suggestopedia. It requires two conflicting elements at once in the classroom. On the one hand, the teacher needs to impress the students with a different learning environment where they will not be afraid of learning, by introducing a set of semiotic affordances. On the other hand, at the same time, the teacher has to make the students feel comfortable by ensuring logical, affective and ethical consistency in the class context, so that they will not develop heightened *anti-suggestive barriers*.

The teacher's foremost task in a Suggestopedia language course is to introduce students to and involve them in a unique environment of learning through a common game-project. Suggestopedia's common game-project should be equipped with a set of semiotic affordances which are as attractive to the students as they can be (in terms of natural brain functions that are creative, curious about new things and positive about helping and sharing), so that they can offer a better option for their learning. The teacher in this lesson has accomplished his task through his behaviour of promoting information-sharing among students (as seen in lines 70–74 in Scene 3); what Lozanov calls an "attitude towards the group as a whole and towards each students as an individual" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 148). His attitude in this first moment represents a spirit of easiness and delicacy. In other words, the teacher has made his attitude signify ease of learning in his course, and delicacy in protecting the students' personalities by taking care of their *anti-suggestive barriers*.

The teacher has chosen the story of a traveller who has just arrived in Wales and meets new

friends as an appropriate fiction. It was appropriate because the story-line is familiar and very easy to follow for mature students. It contains stereotyped actions that students can easily use to predict the development of the story and understand the meaning of the actions that are performed. In such an environment, students can concentrate on their language experience in interaction without being preoccupied by other factors, such as consulting dictionaries. Also, the setting of the story has given the teacher a margin to escape from possible conflict with students' *anti-suggestive barriers* as it provides him with a reason for a lack of knowledge about the students' background culture. At the same time, the teacher has balanced his role as the innocent traveller and his profile as a teaching expert to impress student that he is a very good, knowledgeable friend in this course. He has successfully positioned himself as a prestigious, easy-to-approach teacher whose knowledge is something students can rely on and easily access.

The teacher has initiated the basic semiotic affordances of his course in the first few minutes. With the new affordances in this course, learning occurs in a meaningful context with no requirements for any particular effort to learn. In other words, the teacher has offered students an alternative set of *social suggestive norms* of language learning which is different from the *social suggestive norms* that students had unknowingly obeyed in their real life. The teacher has paid attention to students' *anti-suggestive barriers* so that students will not refuse the new *social suggestive norms* in the Suggestopedia Japanese course and can voluntarily choose the better norms for their language learning. How does the teacher consolidate the semiotic affordances in his course and further develop new *social suggestive norms* using the semiotic affordances? In the following chapter, I will examine a larger structure within the Suggestopedia course to gain insights into integration in Suggestopedia courses.

Chapter 5 Integration in the Suggestopedia Course

5.0 Introduction

The Suggestopedia teacher has to handle students' ever-changing psychology in a way that is enjoyable, as the method has been developed based on a brain-function model that claims that a student can learn well when he/she learns in enjoyable freedom and what Lozanov calls *concentrative psycho-relaxation* (Lozanov, 1978, p. 258). *Concentrative psycho-relaxation* is a dynamically fluctuating mental state in which students can creatively learn while they maintain good quality concentration. The teacher is required to promote the dynamism of each student's mental activities rather than a calm and static state of mind. Naturally, the teacher is required to design diverse activities to stimulate the student's interest in various ways. However, the teacher is also required to design diverse activities with meaningful connections so that they can be integrated as a coherent context. Lozanov expresses this coherence as "integration". He emphasises the importance of integration within a course because integration enhances the meaningfulness of what is taught, and therefore promotes a student's motivation to learn (Lozanov, 1978, p. 319).

5.1 Integrating the Stages to Create a Systematic Approach

Each stage in Suggestopedia – the Introduction, the Concert sessions and the Elaboration – has its own purpose with its own suggestive effect. For example, the Introduction is expected to give students the psychological impact of a new experience, the Concert sessions are focused on creating vocabulary resources in the reserves of mind through *paraconscious* mental activity, and the Elaboration (including the Summary) is designed to give students an experience of creative learning in a psychologically absorbing learning environment. At each stage, the teacher needs to respect and make good use of the suggestive character of the stage while s/he connects all stages in a particular way to establish their integration.

This raises the question of how a teacher connects the elements of the three stages in accordance with the theory of Suggestopedia to integrate the stages. Here, I will take up scenes relating to the introduction of Japanese characters to the students to analyse the teacher's

teaching practice. Japanese is written with a different character system from European alphabets.[29] Therefore students who are literate in European languages find it more difficult when they learn Japanese than when they learn another European language. The discussion below will analyse how the Suggestopedia Japanese teacher handles Japanese characters in each stage of the course and examine how his practice is integrated with the theory of Suggestopedia.

5.2 Creating Basic Affordances in the Social Context

In the last chapter, I analysed the beginning of the Introduction of the Japanese Suggestopedia course. In the Introduction, the teacher established some of the fundamental semiotic affordances in the course, which relate to the scope of the meaning of the teacher, the room and the peer learners. He started this task the very moment he came into the classroom and completed the main shaping for this in the first two minutes.

The following is a transcription of a segment of teaching from the Introduction. This segment occurs about two minutes after the teacher has set up the basic relationship between himself and the students in the scenes that were analysed in the previous chapter. It shows how the teacher introduces Japanese characters for the first time in the course.

Scene 4 (lines 239–284)

239	T:	<With both pointing fingers pointing to the floor.> *Koko wa Denbī desu.* (Here is Denbigh.)
240		*Chotto matte ne.* (Wait a moment.)
241		*Kinen shashin o torimashō ne.* (Let's take a souvenir photo.)
242		<Singing.> *a, i, u, e, o…*
243		<The teacher takes out a stack of *hiragana* cards. The cards are coloured based on the consonant they contain (such as *k*, *s*, *t*, *n*, *m*, *y*, *r* or *w*); these form syllables with the vowels (*a*, *i*, *u*, *e*, *o*). He starts pick-

[29] The Japanese writing system uses a combination of two syllabaries – called *hiragana* and *katakana* – and also Chinese ideographic characters – called *kanji* – which can all be used together in the same sentence. *Hiragana* is used for most purposes, and especially for grammatical particles and verb endings; *kanji* is used to write many of the main content words; and *katakana* is used for words of foreign origin, other than those borrowed from Chinese.

ing up cards and reads each card aloud as if he is looking for a particular character.>

244 <Putting a card on the table with the *hiragana* character て (*te*) written on it.> *"Ta", "chi", "tsu", "te", "to". "Te"..., sorekara...* ("*Ta*", "*chi*", "*tsu*", "*te*", "*to*". "*Te*"... and then…)

245 <Putting down another card with *hiragana* ん (*n*) written on it.> *"N"..., "n"...*

246 *Sorekara, "ha", "hi", "fu", "he", "ho"...* (And also, "*ha*", "*hi*", "*fu*", "*he*", "*ho*"...)

247 <Putting down another card with *hiragana* ひ (*hi*) written on it.> *"Hi".*

248 *Sorekara, "a", "i", "u", "e", "o"... "I".* (And also, "*a*", "*i*", "*u*", "*e*", "*o*"... "*I*".)

249 *Sumimasen, sumimasen.* (Excuse me, excuse me.)

250 <Teacher goes around the table, and hands the card て (*te*) to S2.> *Chotto, kore, mottekudasai.* (Hold this for a moment please.)

251 *Hai?* (Yes?)

252 S2: *Hai.* (Yes.)

253 T: <Pointing at the card て.> *"Te".*

254 S2: *"Te".*

255 <Handing the card ん to S3.> *Kore.* (This one.)

256 S3: *Hai.* (Yes.)

257 T: *"N".*

258 <Handing the card ひ to S4.> *Kore, motte kudasai.* (Please hold this.)

259 *"Hi".*

260 S4: *"Hi".*

261 T: <Handing the card い to S5.> *"I".*

262 S5: *"I".*

263 T: *Nnnnn...* (mmm…)

264 *"Tenhii".*

265 *"Tenhii"..., chotto chigaimasu.* ("*Tenhii*"…, sounds a little wrong.)

266 <Return to the front.> *Īe, īe, "Tenhī" ja nai, "Tenhī" ja nai.* (No, no, it is not "*Tenhī*", it is not "*Tenhī*".)

267 <Showing his right-hand pointing finger upwards in front of his face.>

Aaa! (A ha!)

268 *Chotto sumimasen.* (Wait a moment.)

269 <Pointing a pen in front of S7.> *Kore wa pen deska?* (Is this a pen?)

270 Pen, pen.

271 <Reaching out both hands towards the pen.> *Aaa, kashite kudasai.* (Umm, please lend me.)

272 <Picks up the pen and hold it in front of his forehead.> *Arigatō gozai-masu. Arigatō gozaimasu.* (Thank you. Thank you.)

273 <Going back to S2.> *Arigatō gozaimasu.* (Thank you.)

274 <Getting back the て (*te*) card, he adds the diacritic mark ゛ (*ten ten*) to the character "*te*" to make it で *(de).*> *"Te", ... ten ten...* ("*te*" … dot dot…)

275 *"De"*.

276 *"De, n"....*

277 <Goes to S4 and adds the diacritic mark to the character ひ (*hi*) on his card.> *"Hi"...*

278 *Ten ten.* (Dot, dot.) "*Bi*".

280 OK.

281 *"Denbī".* (Denbigh.)

282 *"Denbī", "Denbī".* (Denbigh, Denbigh.)

283 Ss: <Laugh> A ha!

284 S2: <Pointing to the cards one after another says to her peers.> *"De, n, bi, i",* "Denbigh".

285 T: "*Sumimasen*". (Excuse me.)

286 <To S4 who has the card び (*bi*).> "*Chotto, kocchi mukete*". (Turn it towardes this way.) <Going to the front of the room.>

287 "*Sumimasen, kameraman!*" (Excuse me photographer!)

288 <Picks up the camera and hands S6.>

289 S6: "*Hai*". (Yes.)

290 T: "*Ē, chotto...*". (Umm, well…)

291 <On the way going back to the four students holiding hiragana cards, teacher waves both hands upwards> "*Agete kudasai. Motto!*". (High up. More!)

292 <Waving both arms upwards several times.> "Ue, ue, ue". (Upwards,

		upwards, upwards.)
293	Ss:	<Moving cards upwards.>
294	T:	"*Ue, ue. Sō, sō. Ue ni agete*". (Upwards, upwards. That's right, that's right. Higher up.)
295		<When the students moved up the cards in the right position.> "*Hai,hai, hai, hai*". (Yes, yes, yes, yes.)
296	S6:	<In English.> "OK"
297		< Shutter clicks.>

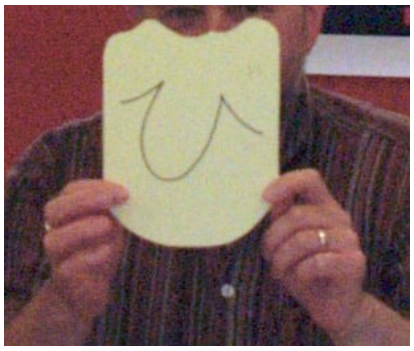

Figure 3 The card showing *hiragana* ひ (*hi*)

In this scene, the teacher is still in the context of "a traveller meeting the locals and taking souvenir photos". He takes out a stack of *hiragana* cards from his bag, and starts singing while he chooses characters to express the name of the town, Denbigh. Denbigh is pronounced as "*denbī*" in Japanese, and it requires four *hiragana* to represent *de*, *n*, *bi* and *i*. He selected four students to hold cards and passes a card to each student (figure 3). After he has passed the four characters to the students, he mimes realising that something is missing from the two characters that should express the sound *de* and *bi.* What was missing was a diacritic marker that turns *te* into *de* and *hi* into *bi*. He adds the marker, which he calls "*ten ten*" to the characters て (*te*) and ひ (*hi*) to make で (*de*) and び (*bi*) to form the word でんびい (*Denbī*, Denbigh). In the beginning of this scene when the teacher takes out a set of hiragana cards, this traveler's action is a mystery to the students as they do not understand what the teacher is saying. However, through all the actions the teacher made in this scene, the students understand the intention of the traveller that he wans to label the next photo with the name of the town he has just arrived.

The very first Japanese characters have been shown to the students to meet a particular need. The teacher has set up a context that creates a need to use Japanese characters at the time when the traveller is taking souvenir photos. In this way, he has used the context to indicate

to students that they have a need to learn Japanese characters, but does this without explicitly focusing on the content of the teaching. The way the teacher introduces *hiragana* characters is not done in the context of teaching students how to read and write them. Rather, he asks students to help him take his photos with the name of the town. Students are asked to hold the cards in front of the traveller while they are looking at him as he talks to himself to organise the characters into the correct order and forms. At this point, students have been presented with no obligation to learn Japanese characters as they are put in the position of onlookers.

This is the second time in the course that students have been put in the position of onlookers when something new is being introduced. As seen in the previous chapter, they had a similar experience at the beginning of the course when they first saw a person who speaks Japanese. The teacher just came into the classroom talking to himself in Japanese pretending he was not aware of the students' presence. At that time also, the students were put in the position of onlookers when something very new was introduced. By setting up a plausible context and putting students into it in the position of onlookers, the teacher is seeking to avoid the fear of learning among the students. Onlookers are in a safe position in the sense that they are permitted to stand outside the ongoing event and look at the event without being involved. Being onlookers, the students are not required to participate in the communication in Japanese with the teacher. By placing them in such a position, the teacher has tried to free the students from the fear of being forced to be involved in communication in Japanese.

However, the students are not in the position of absolute onlookers because what the teacher-traveller is trying to express with the Japanese characters is the name of their town. In this sense, they are involved in the situation where Japanese characters are used communicatively. When the students say "Aha!" and S2's action in sharing her findings with her peers (lines 283 and 284) both show engagement with the Japanese characters. The action of labelling the photos has contextually justified the use of Japanese characters in this class on Welsh soil. By putting the students in such a quasi-onlooker position – in which the students are onlookers and at the same time involved in the ongoing teaching situation – the teacher has been able to create an environment where he can start introducing Japanese characters as a relevant activity.

Once the students' have been presented with a small number of *hiragana* in a contextualised way, the Introduction continues as follows:

Scene 5 (lines 298–334)

298 T: “Arigatō gozaimasu”. (Thank you very much.)

299 <Walking towards the front of the room.> “*Watashi wa Kumada desu*”. (I am Kumada.)

300 “*Watashi no namae wa…*”. (My name is…)

301 <Looking for a card from the stack.> “*Ka, ki, ku, ke, ko*”

302 <Reading each cards in tonal phrase as if he is singing> “a, i, u, e, o, ka, ki, ku, ke, ko…”

303 <Placeing the card く (*ku*) on the table.> “*Ku*”.

304 “*Watashi no namae….wa… ha, hi, fu, he, ho…*”. (My name is… “*ha*”, “*hi*”, “*fu*”, “*he*”, “*ho*”…)

305 “*Ma, mi, mu…*” (“Ma”, “mi”, “mu”…)

306 <Placing the card む (*mu*), and holds back.> “*Mu ja nai, Mu ja nai*”. (Not “mu”, not “mu”.)

307 “*Ma, mi, mu…, ha, hi, hu, he, ho…*” (“*Ma*”, “*mi*”, “*mu*”…, “*ha*”, “*hi*” “*fu*”, “*he*”, “*ho*”…)

308 “*Ma!*” (“*Ma*”!)

309 <Placing the card ま (*ma*) on the table.> “*Ku, ma*”. (“*Ku*”, “*ma*”.)

310 “*Ta, chi, tsu, te, to…*” (“*Ta*”, “*chi*”, “*tsu*”, “*te*”, “*to*”…)

311 <Having pulled out the card た (*ta*).> “*Ta*”. (“*Ta*”.)

312 <Picking up the card く (*ku*) from the table and hold in front of his chest.> “*Ku*”. (“*Ku*”.)

313 <Picking up the card ま (*ma*) and た (*ta*) and add to the card く (*ku*) so that everyone can see all three cards in his hand.> “*Ma, ta*”. (“*Ma*”, “*ta*”.)

314 “*Ē, sumimasen*”. (Well, excuse me.)

315 <Showing his palm moving downwards to the four students still holding the cards of でんびい (*Denbī*, Denbigh).> “*Sore wa mō…*”. (That’s O.K now.)

316 <Hands the card with the character く(*ku*) to S3 and shows her how to hold it so it can be seen by the others.> *Sumimasen, sumimasen, kore o chotto.* (Excuse me, excuse me, hold this for a moment.)

317 S2: <Responds to the card that S3 holds and reads.> *“Ku”.*

318 S3: *“Ku”.*

319	T:	<Hands the card with the character ま *(ma)* to S4.> *"Ma".*
320	S4:	<Takes the card and holds it.> *"Ma".*
321	T:	<Hands the card with the character た (*ta*) to S5.> *"Ta".*
322		*"Ta"... Chotto matte.* ("*Ta*"… Wait a moment.)
323		<Holds the card so that everyone can see it.> *Kore wa "ta" desu. "Ta".* (This is "*ta*". "*Ta*".)
324		*"Ta", "ta", "ta", "ta"...*
325		<Adds a diacritic marker to the character た (*ta*) to make it だ (*da*).> *Ten ten, ... "da".* (Dot dot, … "*da*".)
326		*Kumada* (Kumada.)
327		*Watashi wa, watashi wa...* (I am, I am…)
328	S2:	<Takes over from the teacher.> *Kumada.*
329	T:	*Watashi no namae wa...* (My name is…)
330		<In English.> My name…
331		*Namae.* (Name.)
332		<In English.> Name.
333		*Watashi no namae wa Kumada desu.* (My name is Kumada.)
334	S2:	<Nods.> *Hai.* (Yes.)

Figure 4 Three cards showing the teacher's name, Kumada.

Here, the teacher repeats the same process, but this time he takes a picture of himself with his name, Kumada (Figure 4). The only difference between this scene and the previous one is the name is not the name of the Welsh town, which belongs to the local students, but his own name, which belongs to him and his background culture. The students are able to understand what is happening from the context as the teacher is repeating what he did in the last scene. S2 has expressed her correct understanding of the context by taking on the teacher's words to say "*Kumada*". She has further confirmed her understandings using the Japanese word "*hai*". This interaction between S2 and the teacher is witnessed by all the other students and so it is a shared experience.

An affordance is formed here by the repetition of a similar context. This affordance means that Japanese characters can be easily learned within a context. A successful experience that may be perceived by a student as pure chance when it happens once can become a norm as he/she repetitively experiences the same success in a similar context. This can therefore create a conviction of success in the student's mind. Also, the context of this scene has sent a message to the students that they will need *hiragana* to express Japanese. So far, the teacher has presented only seven characters. This sends a message to the students that learning all the *hiragana* characters is not important at the moment. In his message, the teacher on one hand gives the message that *hiragana* is useful while on the other hand that *hiragana* is not very important at this stage. *Hiragana* is only a part of the whole communicative structure in this scene. In other words, students have received the message that *hiragana* is useful and important while they are freed from feeling that learning the Japanese characters is difficult through the teacher's minimisation of the need to learn them. The teacher has not explained it using words, but instead he has given these messages to the students as semiotic messages that he has put into the context of the story. The story is shared by and predictable for all students, and it requires almost no Japanese knowledge to understand it. Yet, a context is created in which students can become interested in Japanese characters and learn them without pressure. It also gives students an opportunity to feel they can read Japanese characters without intentional and repetitive learning. This further creates an affordance that learning can happen without effort, and that students can trust their memories.

5.3 Enriching the System of Affordances

Since an affordance is the scope of meaning that a sign can create in a certain context, a group of various signs that have similar affordances can work as a system to strengthen one another. In this sense, a richer affordance system can create a norm more easily in students' minds. At this point in the course, the teacher starts enriching the affordance in order to confirm the new norm that Japanese characters are easy.

Once students have been presented with the three additional *hiragana* characters that form the teacher's name, the Introduction continues.

After the first scene of *hiragana* introduction, the class moves away from *hiragana* and

focuses on another activity for about fifteen minutes. During this time, the teacher introduces the students to the names of the things that he has brought from Japan. He takes out many things from his travel bag: a map, books, a newspaper, pens, a jumper, shirts, toys and his family photos. Showing the photos to the students, he introduces his wife, mother, father and younger brother, their jobs and their hobbies. Then, after this has been completed, he takes out another bunch of *hiragana* cards from his travel bag. This time, he completes the whole set of characters.

Scene 6 (lines 774–827)

774	T:	<Picks out a red card. On the card is written the character **あ** (*a*).> *Kore wa hiragana, "a" desu.* (This is *hiragana,* "*a*".)
775		*"A", "a".*
776	Ss:	<Repeat after the teacher.> *"A."*
777	T:	*"A."*
778	Ss:	<Repeat after the teacher.> *"A."*
779	T:	*Hai, hai, hai*. (Yes, yes, yes.)
780		<Goes to S5 and picks out another red card which reads "*i*".> *"I", Denbī no "i".* ("*I*", "*i*" for "*Denbī*").
781	Ss:	*"I".*
782	T:	<Shows the two cards in turn.> *"A", "i".*
783	Ss:	*"A", "i".*
784	T:	<Hands out another red card, **う** (*u*), to a student.> *"U".*
785	Ss:	*"A", "i", "u".*
786	T:	<Hands a red card with the character **え** (*e*) to S7.> *Hai, kore wa "e" desu.* (Here, this is "*e*".)
787	Ss:	*"A", "i", "u", "e".*
788	T:	<Hands out another red card, **お** (*o*), to another student.> *Kore wa "o". Kore wa "o" desu.* (This is "*o*". This is "*o*".)
789		<Points at each *hiragana* card holder one after another.>
790	Ss:	<Respond to teacher.> *"A", "i", "u", "e", "o".*
791	T:	*"A", "i", "u", "e", "o".*
792	Ss:	<Together with teacher.> *"A", "i", "u", "e", "o".*
793	T:	<Picks up a green card.> *Jā, kore wa nan desuka?* (Then, what is this?)

794 <Holds a green card at face level.> *Kore wa "ka" desu.* (This is "*ka*".)

795 *"Ka."*

796 Ss: *"Ka."*

797 T: *"Ka."*

798 Ss: *"Ka."*

799 T: *"Ka."*

800 S: *"Ka."*

801 T: <Picks up another green card with the character "*ki*", and swaps it for "*ka*".> *Kore wa "ki" desu.*

802 Ss: *"Ki".*

803 T: *Sō, sō, sō.* (Right, right, right.)

804 <Hands "*ka*" to S2.> *"Ka".*

805 <Moves to S3 and hands "*ki*" to S3.> *"Ki".*

806 S2: "*Ka", "ki"?*

807 T: <Points to each *hiragana* card holder one after another.> *"A", "i", "u", "e", "o", "ka", "ki".*

808 <Stands behind S3 who has a green card "*ku*", which she was given when the teacher took a photo of his name, Kumada.> *Tsugi wa nan desuka? Tsugi wa nan desuka? Tsugi wa "ku" desu.* (What's next? What's next? Then next is "*ku*".)

809 <Points at the card in front of S3.> *Kore desu, kore desune. Sumimasen.* (This is it. This is it. Excuse me.)

810 *"Kumada" no "ku".* ("*Ku*" for "*Kumada*".)

811 <Hands "*ku*" to S4.>

812 *"Ka", "ki", "ku".*

813 <Back at the front, the teacher looks up into the air as if he is trying to remember something.> *"A", "i", "u", "e", "o", "ka", "ki", "ku".*

814 <Picks up another green card and makes a smiling face.> *"Ke"!*

815 Ss: *"Ka", "ki", "ku", "ke".*

816 T: <Hands "*ke*" to S5.>

817 <Picks up the green card "*ko*" and starts pointing to each card holder.> *"Ka", "ki", "ku", "ke".*

818 Ss: *"Ka", "ki", "ku", "ke".*

819 S2: *"Ko"!*

820 T: <Pointing to S2 with his palm as if he praises her.> *"Ko"!*

821 <Making a smiling face showing his happiness and says it again.> *"Ko"!*

822 Ss: <Laugh>

823 T: *Sō desu, sō desu.* (That's right, that's right.)

824 <Hands "*ko*" to S4.>

825 <Starts singing and waving his hand as if he is conducting a choir.> *"A…i…u…e…o, Ka…ki…ku…ke…ko"*

826 Ss: <Join the teacher> *"A…i…u…e…o, Ka…ki…ku…ke…ko"*

827 T: <Picks up an orange card. Continues singing and makes intonation in line with the music phrase.> *"Sa…"*

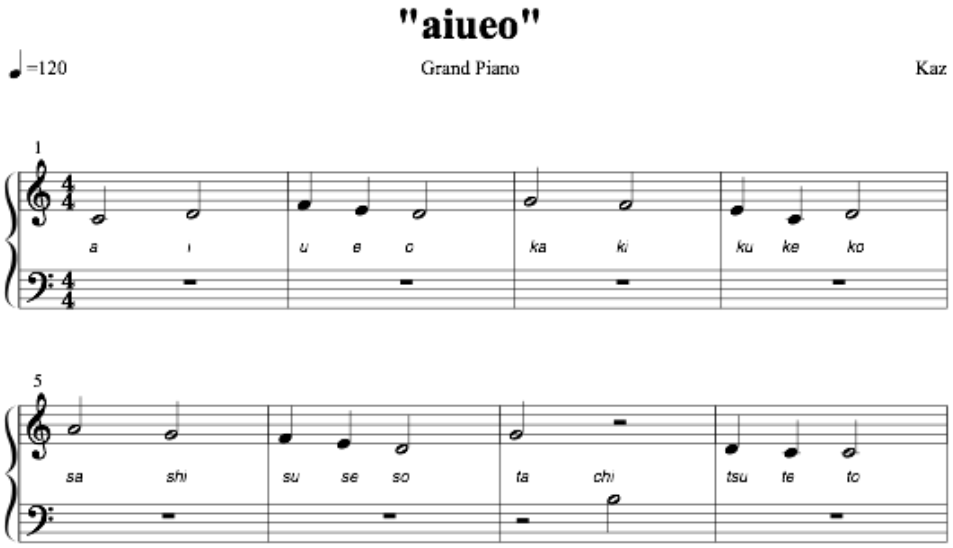

Figure 5 Musical notation of the song used to introduce *hiragana*

This introduction of *hiragana* continues using the same structure until the teacher has delivered all the *hiragana* cards to the students. In the end, each student has six or seven cards in front of them. The class sings a musical phrase at the completion of each consonant group (see the muscial notation in Figure 5). The song is made complete at the end of the last character and the teacher invites the students to sing it again. He asks them to pick up and raise the appropriate characters in front of them while they sing along so that each student takes responsibility for six or seven cards. After the song, the teacher picks up the things on the table that he has introduced a while ago, and asks what each is called in Japanese. The students respond, and start holding up the characters い (*i*) and し (*shi*) to form the word "*ishi*" (stone) when the teacher picks up a fist-sized stone.

In this activity after he has introduced the Japanese names of things orally, the teacher starts an intensive introduction of *hiragana* in accordance with the order of the *hiragana* chart (see Figure 6). In contemporary Japanese teaching, the set of *hiragana* characters is usually introduced as a chart that consists of a matrix of vowel and consonant symbols. The first row shows the basic vowels – *a*, *i*, *u*, *e*, *o* – and the combination of those with the consonants – *k*, *s*, *t*, *n*, *h*, *m*, *y*, *r* and *w* – follows after that. Needless to say, the character strings on the chart do not mean anything other than the conventional vowel and consonant sequence used for ordering *hiragana* characters. They have neither meaning nor context. However, according to the Suggestopedia model of brain function, the brain is not good at handling isolated information because the brain always creates memories through associations (Lozanov, 2009, p. 54). To respond to this need for an association, the teacher gives a musical intonation to the meaningless strings of *hiragana* characters on the chart and creates a melody as a non-verbal context. He also associates body movement to the music and *hiragana* characters by asking the students to hold up the appropriate card while singing along.

	a	*i*	*u*	*e*	*o*
	あ	い	う	え	お
k	か	き	く	け	こ
s	さ	し	す	せ	そ
t	た	ち	つ	て	と
n	な	に	ぬ	ね	の
h	は	ひ	ふ	へ	ほ
m	ま	み	む	め	も
y	や		ゆ		よ
r	ら	り	る	れ	ろ
w	わ				を
nn	ん				

Figure 6 The *hiragana* chart

Another strategy the teacher uses in this scene is to associate *hiragana* characters with Japanese words with which the students are already familiar. The students have already experienced this sort of strategy when the teacher wrote the name of the town using *hiragana* in the context of a traveller meeting locals and wanting the name of the town in his souvenir photo.

To expand the application of this method, the teacher has left teaching about *hiragana* to one side and has orally introduced the many names of the things he has brought from Japan by showing these things to the students; following this, he comes back to introducing the *hiragana* to connect the words with the *hiragana* characters. He has created such connections as he works through the *hiragana* chart once again. For example, when he came to the point of the character し (*shi*), he asks the students to find the character い (*i*) which has already been

introduced and placed on the table in front of them. Then he forms the word いし "*ishi*" (stone) and picks up the stone that he showed earlier in combination with its Japanese name. The students are able to remember this word in context as it is unusual for a traveller to carry a fist-sized stone in his bag.

In working in this way, the teacher has introduced the set of isolated characters on the chart as a contextual experience in association with a non-verbal experience, by using the melody, and in a verbal context, by using the *hiragana* to express known Japanese words.

In addition, the teacher has allocated different colours to the *hiragana* based on the consonants of the syllable: a green card is used for the "*k*" series, a blue card for "*t*", and so on. Also, each card has differently shaped corners (see Figures 3 and 4). The students are not informed what these symbols mean as the teacher has not mentioned about these symbols. Hence, the students can freely react to these symbols. Some students are able to learn *hiragana* in the context of solving the mystery of the difference in the colours of the cards, while others may simply enjoy the colours and shapes and memorise the characters in this intuitive context. The teacher has provided the various types of non-verbal information in the peripheral area of the learning target to leave it to the students' creativity to shape their learning. If this approach provokes creative learning, such as discovering the secret of the colours, this keeps these students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level because it reinforces the significance of participating in this course. Even if it does not provoke instant creativity, learning target information together with the peripheral information of the colours and the shapes can be captured in the *paraconscious* area of the brain.

5.4 Smoothing Transitions of Activities with the System of Affordances

To integrate the entire course, the teacher needs to devise a way in which course activities with different themes stay in the common context when he switches activities.

Once the students have been presented with the whole set of hiragana characters in the context of a musical intonation and the names of objects, the Introduction continues as follows:

The teacher again leaves the *hiragana* aside for several minutes in order to introduce more

names of the things he has brought from Japan. All the things on the table come from his travel bag. He has pulled things out one by one as if each one is important and precious. For each object, he says what it is called in Japanese and shows how he uses it with actions and body language. Among the traveller's items there are clothes, objects, things to read, things to write with and travel documents, unusual items such as toys and a fake stone (a rubber stone in addition to the real stone that students have already seen), which are included to surprise students.

As a result of the teacher having taken many interesting things out of his travel bag, the teacher's action of putting his hand into his bag will draw the attention of students. In other words, the teacher has been establishing an affordance about the meaning of his travel bag from the beginning of the course – it is a source of interesting things. He has used this affordance to change activities. For example, he used the bag to introduce *hiragana* learning when he took the first *hiragana* card out of his bag to express the name of the Welsh town. He started the *hiragana* lesson in the context of the story of the traveller who meets the locals and takes his souvenir photo with the name of the town. The travel bag has fitted into this context naturally. The teacher was then able to leave the introduction of *hiragana* and start to introduce Japanese vocabulary, making the transition in the same context of using his travel bag. Likewise, he was able to return smoothly to the focus on *hiragana* when he took a set of *hiragana* cards out of the same travel bag. After he has introduced the whole set of *hiragana* characters, he went back to return to a focus on vocabulary, taking other interesting things he brought from Japan out of his bag. This means that any activity he starts by taking things out of his travel bag is located within the same context, and this allows activities to be connected and integrated in the course.

5.5 Integrating the Activities in the Introduction

The teacher also needs to show the students that what has been done in the classroom is worthwhile. In doing so, the teacher can ensure that the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* are at a low level.

Once the students have been presented with the names of objects, the Introduction continues as follows:

The teacher again puts his hand into his bag to look for something.

Scene 7 (lines 1186–1211)

1186	T:	<Searches in his bag and sings.> *Nani ga aru…?* (What is there?)
1187	S6:	<Looking at S1, then S2.>
1188	T:	<Takes out a bunch of sheets.> *Kore wa nan desuka?* (What is this?)
1189		*Minna, uta wa suki kana?* (Does everyone like songs?)
1190		*Kore wa…. uta desu!* (This is… a song!)
1191		<Whispers in English.> Song, song.
1192		<Smiles.>
1193	S6:	Mmmm.
1194	T:	<Goes around the table and delivers song sheets, and responds with the same intonation of S6's "Mmmm".> *Aaaa…*
1195	S2:	<Smiles.>
1196		*Arigatō.* (Thank you.)
1197	T:	<Shows surprise at S2's Japanese response.> *Arigatō!* (Thank you!) *Hai, hai, dōitashimashite.* (Yes, yes. You are welcome.)
1198		<Still going around the table delivering song sheets, talking in English and Japanese.> Thank you, *Arigatō.*
1199		*Arigatō.* (Thank you.)
1200		<At normal speed, inviting softly.> *Utaimashōka? Utahashōka? Utai-mashō.* (Shall we sing? Shall we sing? Let's sing!)
1201	S2:	<Starts reading the song sheet.> *Ano yama no…* (That mountain…)
1202	T:	<Goes to the audio set while he hums the song's melody.>
1203		<Places audio set on the bench behind S4.>
1204:		<The song[30] starts. The song is accompanied by a folk guitar and sounds like a Bob Dylan song. A blues harp or harmonica plays in the bridging part. This song is commercial music, not made for language education.>
1205	T:	<Counts before the first phrase of the song.> *Ichi, ni, san, shi…* (One, two, three, four…)
1206		<Sings.> *Ano yama no mukō ni nani ga aru…* (What is there over that mountain?)

[30] "*Nani mo nainodesu*" (1971) by Takuro Yoshida.

1207	Ss:	<Sing together.>
1208	T:	<Leads students by giving the next phrase.> *Nani ga aru*? (What is there?)
1209		<Sings.> *Nani ga aru?* (What is there?)
1210		<Bridging part with harmonica.> *Hārmonika desu. Gitā desu.* (It's a harmonica. It's a guitar.)
1211		<Song has finished. The teacher stops the music, and claps his hands.> *Aaaa!*

This time, the teacher takes a bundle of song sheets out of his bag. He invites students to sing a song. A song is an integrated form of words, meanings, *hiragana* characters, intonation of voices and musical phrases with which the students can experience the *hiragana* characters in an integrated form. The characters are used to express meaningful content that is sung using authentic pronunciation and intonation. In this sense, the *hiragana* characters in the song play more a practical role than those in the chart.

The content of the song lyrics expresses a traveller's curiosity, which can also represent metaphorically the excitement of participants at an early stage in the Japanese course. This metaphor signifies that the students themselves are also travellers heading into the unknown world of the Japanese language. In this sense, the students are singing the song about themselves, which gives students a significance for this singing activity. If the given activity can make sense in terms of language learning, it can remove elements that might cause uncomfortableness in the students' minds, and the teacher can keep the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level.

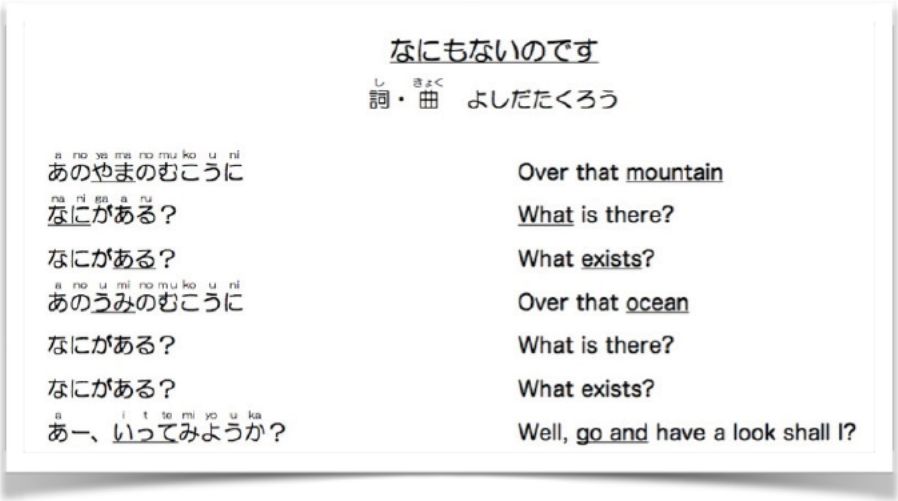

Figure 7 Song sheet layout

The song sheet has an English translation so that the students can know what the song is about. The English translation is written side by side with the original lyrics on the song sheet (see Figure 7), the Japanese in the left-hand column and the English translation on the right. The lyrics are all written with *hiragana*, and each character has the sounds written above it in Latin script to assist less confident students. Some words are underlined to show the correspondence between the Japanese words and the English translation. However, the teacher has not drawn students' attention to the use of underlined words. At this stage, they are underlined to draw students' attention to the role of underlining in the layout, as the same layout will be used later in the reading material used in the Concert sessions.

5.6 Concluding the Introduction

The teacher has to conclude the Introduction in an appropriate way so that it makes students feel their participation in this course is worthwhile. This can reinforce the meaningfulness of his Japanese course to the students, allowing the teacher to keep the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level.

Once the students have sung the song, the Introduction continues as follows:

> The teacher has inserted a short review of the names of the things he has produced from his bag before he invites the students to sing the same song again. The song is the last activity of the Introduction.

Scene 8 (lines 1859–1870)

1859	T:	<Song finishes and recorded audience applause from the live recording is heard. The teacher also claps his hands.> *Aaaaa…*
1860		<Making surprised face as if he has just realised the time.> *A!* (Oh!)
1861		<Looking at the wall clock. Putting both his hands up in the air.> *Jikan desu*. (It's time.)
1862		*Ja, mata!* (See you later.)
1863		<Showing his three fingers to the students.> *Sanjuppun!* (Thirty minutes!)
1864		<In English.> Thirty minutes!
1865		<Waves his hand as if he is saying goodbye.> *Ja, mata*. (See you

later.)

1866 <Goes out of the room and closes the door.>

1867 S6: <Waves her hands with a smiling face.>

1868 <The teacher has left the room and the students are left behind.>

1869 Ss: <Laughter among the students.>

1870 S5: <Claps his hands as if he is applauding at the completion of a performance.>

The Introduction finishes at the same time as the second singing of this song has finished. In order to make students feel that their participation in this course has been worthwhile, the teacher has briefly reviewed what he introduced in the session. During the Introduction, he has introduced the students to Japanese characters in three ways on four separate occasions. The first time, he introduced Japanese characters in the context of including his name and the name of the town in his souvenir photographs. The second time, he introduced the whole set of *hiragana* characters in the context of spelling the names of the things he had brought from Japan. The third and fourth times, he used the *hiragana* on the song sheet to sing the Japanese song that he was listening to on his music player when he arrived in the classroom. The teacher has kept showing his eagerness to communicate with his students in the context he has prepared from the beginning of the lesson, that is, the first meeting of a traveller from Japan with local people. The first introduction of the Japanese characters was incorporated in the context as though it was a natural need in the situation. The whole Introduction session was integrated in the sense that the character introduction was not practiced in a separate teaching context, but was incorporated within the same consistent ongoing context.

Throughout the Introduction, the teacher swung between introducing vocabulary and introducing characters. In the centre of this swinging, there was always the black travel bag that the teacher–traveller brought from Japan. The teacher used this bag as if it were a switch box to shift between activities. The aim of these changes of focus is for the students to not have to concentrate for a long period of time, which can be tiring: changing the focus of learning prevents this. The teacher did this following Suggestopedia's model of brain function, which requires that teachers should not stop the ever-changing states of the brain because continuously changing states is its natural habit. Teachers should stimulate and encourage changes in the state of the brain to activate brain activity (Lozanov, 2009) and this teacher sought to achieve this by switching between activities.

5.7 Connecting the Concert sessions with the Introduction

In the Introduction, the teacher first introduced a few *hiragana* characters in the stereotypical context that he had created of a traveller making friends with locals. This is not a new or written context. The teacher has used this stereotype to help everyone anticipate the development of the story that shows the students the usefulness of Japanese characters. Next, he introduced the *hiragana* chart in which each character has only a sound and no meaning. The teacher added to it a musical phrase to create a non-verbal context. He then showed the students that *hiragana* can express Japanese vocabulary that they have learned through the use of real materials in the context given in the Introduction session. After that, the teacher gave the students a song in which there are melody, voice, characters and, with the translation, a meaningful context to create an integrated form. In doing this, he has introduced Japanese characters by enriching semiotic affordances as a base for the following sessions.

The next stage in the Suggestopedia Japanese course is the set of Concert sessions. The purpose of the Concert sessions is to expose the students to a large volume of target-language information in order to create a passive reserve that is not for immediate use but will be available for access later in the course. So, the method of handling Japanese characters in the Concert sessions is different from the approach in the Introduction because the purpose is different. In the Concert sessions, the teacher puts students in a *pseudo-passive* state for the purpose of directing a large volume of language information to the students' brains. The *pseudo-passive* state, according to Lozanov (1978), is the mental state in which a person is physically passive but mentally active and he argues that "although this activity is unconscious, very often processes with much higher efficiency than the ordinary occur, releasing reserve possibilities" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 60).

At the Concert sessions stage, the teacher exposes the students to Japanese characters more intensively and at the same time extensively. It is a form of intensive learning because the students' eyes have to follow the Japanese script in the textbook continuously for approximately one hour during the first Concert sessions. It is also extensive learning because the variety of Japanese scripts the students are exposed to is not limited by the syllabus and is instead based on the needs of the text. The students are to experience all of the Japanese writing systems in this session. They are exposed to *katakana*, which is another set of Japanese

phonetic characters, and to *kanji*, which are ideographic characters of Chinese origin, in addition to the *hiragana* characters that they have already met. In the first Concert sessions, the students are exposed to 48 *hiragana* characters, 48 *katakana* characters and 258 *kanji* characters, used to create 872 unique words. If this amount were given in one session in a traditional Japanese classroom, it would cause a lot of stress for the students.

Lozanov designed the Concert sessions so that it can avoid potential uncomfortableness in the students while they are exposed to such a large amount of language information as the whole shape of the language. One of the basic ideas for doing this is to make the session as different from the real world as possible. Marking the difference in the Concert sessions also marks a change of atmosphere from the Introduction. This is important because changing the atmosphere can refresh students' minds for learning.

The point of the Concert sessions is to introduce as much language information as possible without making students feel uncomfortable. Suggestopedia argues that the language information that students are exposed to should not be limited to their current language level as this is not relevant for the brain, which acquires information as it is given unless the students feel uncomfortable. Therefore, students in Suggestopedia classes are exposed to the whole shape of the language. The character system of Japanese is handled in the same way. All

Figure 8 The tidied-up materials on the table

characters used in Japanese – *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji* – should be introduced equally from the beginning in the Concert sessions. The teacher has to manage this task without making students uncomfortable as uncomfortableness may heighten their *anti-suggestive barriers* and block the information.

The following description of parts of the class shows how the teacher tried to accomplish the

two contradictory tasks of marking the Concert sessions as distinct from Introduction yet similar to the Introduction in some ways.

01 During the break after the Introduction, the students get together in the common room to have a rest. During this time, the teacher returns to the classroom to prepare for the Concert sessions. He tidies up so that all the props he used in the Introduction are placed neatly on the table. He also places a copy of the course book on the table in front of each chair. He tidies up the chairs around the table. (Figure 8 shows the table as it looked after the teacher tidied up the props used in the day's class.)

Figure 9 Page layout of the textbook

02 The students come back into the room from their break, sit at the table and start turning the pages of their new textbook. This textbook has been written by the teacher of this course and his name is on the front page. As seen in Figure 9, each page of text in the textbook has two separate columns, the left column showing the main Japanese text, while there is an English translation on the right. Also, each sentence in the book is divided into short phrases so that the students can easily associate the underlined Japanese words and phrases with their English equivalents, which are also underlined. The text shows the students all three scripts used in Japanese, *hiragana, katakana* and *kanji*. *Hiragana* glosses are given to each *kanji* and *katakana* character to help students read the words written in the other scripts. Some pages have pictures, which show Japanese classical visual arts: traditional paintings, brush paintings and wood prints. Each artwork is captioned with a title, the name of the author and the date of its creation.

03 The teacher comes back into the room. He looks calmer and more formal than in the Introduction (Figure 10). The teacher moves to the back of the room where a small audio set is placed. The teacher takes a music player out of his chest pocket and connects it to the audio set. He turns the music on. Mozart's Violin Concerto No. 5 starts playing.[31] The volume of the audio is set so that the music is clearly heard but does not compete with the teacher's voice. The teacher stands straight and holds the book as if a poet is starting a recital. He

Figure 10 Teacher in the Concert session

[31] The Concerto for Violin and Orchestra No. 5 in A major, KV219, by W.A. Mozart is specified in the "Music List" of Lozanov and Gateva (1988) for the active Concert session.

lets the music flow until it finishes the whole introduction part of the first movement. He indicates “Page 2” of the textbook, both with English words and with a finger sign. The students open their books to page 2.

04 The teacher starts the active Concert session. He reads the textbook in time with the music. Sometimes his intonation flows with the music as if it forms a “unison” and at other times it goes apart from the music as if it forms a “duet”. In both cases, the reading follows the timing and rhythm of the music. The teacher uses different voice colours depending on the passages of music. His voice changes in many ways according to the movement of the music, from hissing to tonal, monotonous to emotional, gentle to intense, and so on. The reading voice reacts to the colour of the music, not to the development of the story in the textbook.

05 The teacher generally reads the textbook more slowly than normal talking speed. He puts pauses between phrases to emphasise important words and phrases that are underlined in the textbook.

06 During his reading, the teacher sometimes stops reading for a while to let the students listen to parts of the music. When the first piece of music has finished, the teacher stops reading and waits for the next piece of music to begin. The next piece of music starts automatically as it has been programmed on the music player. It is a classical symphony.[32]

07 At a point in the middle of this piece of music, the teacher invites the students to stand up, saying calmly “*Sumimasen, tatte kudasai*” (Excuse me, please stand up) and making a rising motion with his arms. Then he asks them in English to “Repeat after me”. He reads one line after another, and the students repeat after him. While he leads the students, his voice is softer and more gentle and the intonation is closer to that used in normal speech. This time, he does not react much to the flow of the music. After the students have repeated several Japanese sentences, he asks them to sit down, saying “*Suwatte kudasai*” (Please sit down)

[32] W.A. Mozart, Symphony No. 29 in A major, KV 201. This music is specified in the “Music List” of Lozanov (2009, pp. 154–159) for the active Concert session.

accompanied by a downward hand motion. After all of the students have sat down and got settled, the teacher chooses a place in the music to resume his reading and starts reading as he did before. He repeats the same type of repeat-after-the-teacher activity once again in the later part of his reading. The reading in the active Concert session lasts 67 minutes.

08 When he has completed the entire reading, the teacher puts his textbook down on the table and goes to the back of the room to fade out the music.

09 At the audio set, he tells the students in English that he is going to read the same part of the textbook once again, but that this time he will reads it with a normal intonation and at a normal speed. He also tells them that they can spend the passive Concert session however they feel most comfortable. They can either open the textbook and follow the passage, or close it and listen to the music or the teacher's voice.

10 The teacher switches on the audio player. An organ work from the Baroque period starts.[33] The teacher returns to the front of the room, sits down in his chair and quietly opens his book and starts listening to the music. The volume of the music player is set at a level that is loud enough for the students to appreciate the music. After a while, still in his seat, he starts reading the same part of the textbook. This time the teacher does not follow the music's timing, rhythm or phrasing as much as in the first reading. The intonation of his reading in the passive Concert session is less dynamic than the reading in the active Concert session and it reacts more to the content of the textbook than the flow of the music. His reading speed is faster than the active Concert session but it stays at the slow end of normal talking speed. He does not use the types of vocal colour he used in the first reading. Instead, he uses natural voice control similar to that used in storytelling. This time, he does not ask students to stand up or to repeat after him. The passive Concert session is finished in 35 minutes, compared to the 67 minutes of the reading in the active Concert session.

11 When he has finished the second reading, he closes his book, turns down the

[33] J.S. Bach, Fantasies for Organ in G major, BWV 572; and J.S. Bach, Fantasies for Organ in C minor, BWV 562.

volume to slowly fade out the music, quietly says "*Mata ashita*" (See you tomorrow), waves his hand and leaves the room.

In this set of the Concert sessions, the teacher has used many signs to make the time of reading a special moment. These will now be discussed in detail.

5.7.1 Part 1: Setting Up the Room before the Concert sessions

Following the end of the Introduction, the teacher comes back to the classroom by himself to prepare for the next session. This separation from the students has a practical reason in that he needs time to tidy up the mess on the table to make a space to put out the textbooks for the students and to change his appearance from casual to formal. There are also semiotic reasons for him to separate himself from the students. By not mingling with them in the break, he is distinguishing himself in order to symbolise his position, preserving the teacher's *prestige* for the next session. This is because, when students need to access stored information in their language reserves later, the *prestige* attached to the information source can help them in recalling it (Lozanov, 1978, p. 188). The teacher also uses the distance between him and the students as an analogy of the relationship between a performer and his/her audience. In the performing arts, performers keep away from the audience before the show opens in order to preserve their positions as distinguished people with *prestige* in terms of being privileged specialists in the performance.

The teacher tidies up the top of the table and the surrounding chairs because a tidy environment generally signifies a more formal environment and so he marks a difference between the tabletop which was littered with all the props in the Introduction and the tabletop which has been neatly arranged to make students feel the formality of the coming Concert sessions. The course book is now placed in front of each chair. The students do not see the textbook until they find it on the table. As they have been learning Japanese in the Introduction without a textbook, they have now been given the textbook for the first time in the course, and this creates a strong symbol of formal study. Thus, the textbook also signifies the formality of the coming session.

In this first part of the set of Concert sessions, the teacher has started to form new semiotic affordances. Different from the affordances formed in the Introduction, the new affordances

of the room are formed with symbols that mean formality, which attaches *prestige* to the event that is shortly starting in this room.

5.7.2 Part 2: The Textbook to Be Read in the Concert sessions

As noted above, the Suggestopedia textbook has a full translation beside each target language sentence, and this is done for two reasons. Firstly, seeing that there is a full translation of the Japanese text can minimise student stress. The students have already been informed that the teacher will read a lot from the textbook in the Concert sessions, and this can potentially cause anxiety for the students. Therefore, the presence of the full translation is an important sign to reduce the stress when the students see the textbook for the first time. This matters because student stress can heighten the *anti-suggestive barriers*. A large amount of text material can cause a fear of learning and negate the ability to learn. Suggestopedia theory argues that, if the class is a negative place, there is no possibility of learning, so a negative atmosphere means the loss of significant learning in the course. In other words, the ultimate purpose of the Concert sessions, which is to expose students' brains to a large volume of language information, could at the same time be a session that diminishes students' motivation to learn. Therefore, the most important issue in the Concert sessions is to control the *anti-suggestive barriers* and keeping them at a low level, because an *anti-suggestive barrier* would create a block that would mean students refuse to accept incoming information, ruining the ultimate purpose of the session. Thus the translation is given in the textbook to free the students from learning stress in order to control the *anti-suggestive barriers*.

Secondly, the layout of this textbook (Figure 9) has a similar appearance to the song sheet that was used in the Introduction (seen in Figure 7). Both the song sheet and the textbook use the same Japanese font. In this sense, the students are already familiar with the Japanese text of the newly presented textbook. This coherence in appearance creates a semiotic connection between the Concert sessions and the Introduction and shows that students have been prepared for the activity. The familiar format on the textbook pages can ease students' anxiety as they have already experienced how to match up the marked words on both Japanese and English columns. This is intended to create a feeling of security, which also reduces learning stress for the students and can contribute to controlling their *anti-suggestive barriers*.

Some pages in the textbook are allocated for Japanese traditional and modern arts (Figure 9).

These arts symbolise Japanese culture as the background of the Japanese language. It also shares a sense of beauty with the posters that have been put up on the classroom walls and the easel. This classroom first appeared as an analogy of an art gallery in the Introduction when the teacher came in. In this sense, the art in the textbook has some connection in terms of similarity of affordance.

The main content of the textbook consists of dialogues and narratives that tell a consistent story. The theme of the textbook story is a journey. Two main characters, a young man and a young woman, have coincidently met at a point of their journey from where they start discovering the meaning of their lives. The theme of "journey and discovery" that is seen here is shared in the song "*Nani mo Nainodesu*" which the students have sung in the Introduction.

In the lesson so far, the teacher has already created two signs that are important for the progress of the lesson. One sign signifies the difference between the Introduction and the Concert sessions and the other signifies the similarity. The difference is created through the impression of formality that is designed to enhance the *prestige* of the course, and the similarity seen in this textbook shows that the new activity is a continuation of what they have started in the previous session. Creating the difference on one hand while creating the similarity on the other hand looks contradictory. However, both have one common purpose, to control the students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. The particular *anti-suggestive barrier* that the teacher is trying to keep at a low level is the *logical* or *reasoning anti-suggestive barrier*. The formality which is the new element in the Concert sessions can help rationalise the course to those students who believe in a traditional teacher–learner relationship. Also, the similarity with the previous part of the course, which signifies continuation, can give the students a sense of the consistency of the course structure. The structural consistency can lower the students' *logical anti-suggestive barriers* and help the students find a significance in participating in the course.

The students can understand the story in the textbook while it is being read by the teacher, which also helps to keep the students' *affective anti-suggestive barrier* at a low level by reducing the anxiety of not understanding what is read. They can compare the Japanese words with the English words. When they follow the content of the textbook through the translation, they are also able to see the written Japanese text and hear the teacher's voice reading it. In this way, they are exposed to the language's oral and visual features in connection with a meaningful situation that is provided by the translated story-line.

5.7.3 Part 3: The Teacher Starts Reading

Information given with high *prestige* is more accessible in the *paraconscious* reserve and easier to recall (Lozanov, 1978, p. 188). Following this theory of *suggestion*, the teacher wears formal clothes and behaves like a priest in a ceremony and by doing this he aims to portray himself to the students as a prestigious person.

The nature of the music and how he uses it also form an affordance that maintains the *prestige* of the Concert session. In the Concert session, he uses classical orchestral music that uses complex polyphony that creates a rich orchestral sound. Classical music composed by high-status composers is a sign of *prestige*. This also helps to construct the image of *prestige* associated with the information presented in the session.

The semiotic affordances of the setting, the teacher's appearance, the textbook and the music create a sense of *prestige* to impress upon the students that the information content of the textbook is significant and worth learning. Yet, at the same time, there are signs that imply the integration of the whole course, such as the similarity in the script layout between the song sheet and the textbook, and the use of music and visual arts.

5.7.4 Part 4: The Teacher's Reading Style in the Active Concert Session

The reading style adopted in the Concert sessions is not an ordinary method of reading from a textbook. The teacher attaches intonation to his reading voice not according to the development of the story, but according to the flow of the music. This practice signifies the teacher's intention to put an equal importance on the music and the content of the textbook. The Suggestopedia teacher thus directs students' attention to the mixed information of his reading and the music. This mixture of the language information and the musical information is directed to the whole brain to stimulate both conscious and *paraconscious* areas simultaneously (Lozanov, 2009, p. 171) in order to activate associations between the information stored in the two areas. In this case, the teacher is not concerned about whether students focus their minds on the music or on the language, as the target-language information will be received by the student's brain and be stored there in any case (Lozanov, 1978, p. 160).

In the Introduction, the teacher introduced the *hiragana* chart in association with music. Likewise, he now associates the non-verbal context of classical music for the large volume of characters and vocabulary being used in the Concert session. Unlike the introduction of the *hiragana* chart, this time the characters are introduced in a meaningful written context. However, in reading the text, the teacher follows the intonation of the music more than the emotion expressed in the written text. Although the students have been told that they can concentrate on either the textbook content or the music, the non-verbal message from the teacher's conduct has the potential to lead students to concentrate more on the music. In other words, the teacher is redirecting students' attention from the large volume of reading material and the teacher is aiming at using the *paraconscious* area of the brain. The teacher is trying to send a large amount of learning material to the *paraconscious* area by redirecting student's attention to the music in order to put the information from the reading material into the peripheral area of their attention. By doing this, the teacher can expose the students to a large volume of language information without heightening their *anti-suggestive barriers*.

5.7.5 Part 5: The Teacher Invites and Assists the Students, but Does Not Direct Them

The teacher invites the students to participate in the Concert sessions in a particular way using semiotic symbols in his reading practice. The slow reading speed signifies that he is willing to work at a pace that is suitable for the students, and each pause before a word gives the students notice that they should pay attention to the word to be read next. He does not verbally direct what the students should do as he does not want to disturb the students' freedom to find their own new norms of learning (Lozanov, 2009, p. 58). In this sense, the students are allowed to choose their own way of participating during the Concert session. The teacher can only invite the students to participate in the Concert sessions in the way that is most effective in terms of Suggestology.

5.7.6 Part 6: The Teacher Stops Reading in Order to Listen to the Music

The teacher indicates the importance of listening to the music by stopping reading while the music is playing. When there is only music playing, this shows that the students can concentrate on and enjoy the music as a legitimate classroom activity as the music is given priority at such moments. The teacher indicates the priority of the music once more when he stops reading to wait for the next music to start. The teacher sends a message to the students that he

considers the music important by not continuing to read once the music has stopped. If he were to keep reading without the music, he would have sent the students the opposite message, which may have directed the students' attention back to the large amount of reading material. This may have led the students to develop a fear of learning and as a result they could have heightened their *anti-suggestive barriers*. Here, the teacher's practice – giving way to the music and waiting for the music to begin again – signifies that the music is given precedence over the language information.

5.7.7 Part 7: The Teacher Stops Reading to Invite Students to Repeat after Him

The teacher invites the students to stand and repeat his reading. This new activity is different from what has happened in the class since the teacher started reading in this Concert session. It is different in terms of semiotic affordances. In this case, the teacher verbally suggests that students to undertake a particular action during the reading, which he has avoided doing previously in this session.

He also changes the way that the music and the reading go together. For this reading, he does not use colourful intonation and he disregards the music, which breaks his conduct and the semiotic affordance that he has established so far in this session. The teacher has changed the meaning of his presence from that of a performer to that of a teacher. That is, he has switched semiotic affordances of the meaning of the teacher in this short activity. This change of affordance also changes the way the students attend to this activity as they are not passive listeners to the concert, but rather active readers of the textbook.

The change of posture can also be a form of physical refreshment for the students. Since the beginning of this session, the students have been concentrating on the Japanese script. At the same time, they have continuously attended to the teacher's voice. Although the students may have been enjoying the music, they may also have become tired from remaining with the same posture and doing one single task for a long period of time. The teacher has switched between two types of activity at a point where he felt that students had become tired. The activity he has inserted was a repeat-after-the-teacher task in a standing posture. This activity refreshes the students because of the different way they participate compared to the Concert session: a standing posture in the refreshment activity as opposed to a sitting posture in the Concert

session; actively vocalising the script in the refreshment activity as opposed to passively listening in the Concert session; and not attending to the spoken word in the refreshment activity as opposed to attending to the music in the Concert session.

The repeat-after-the-teacher task is one of the most traditional activities in language teaching. The teacher has chosen this old-style task to integrate this activity in the active Concert session semiotically. This old-fashioned language teaching activity has a common affordance with the Concert sessions in terms of the high *prestige* of the teacher. Therefore, the task can refresh the students because of the difference in their way of participating, while not contradicting the Concert sessions because of this common affordance.

5.7.8 Part 8: Fading Out the Music

The music is usually still playing when the teacher has finished the reading of the textbook in the active Concert session because, in the Concert sessions, the teacher does not read unless the music is playing. Nonetheless, the teacher has to stop the music that has been used for the active Concert session before he starts the second reading, which requires different music. He fades out the music instead of cutting it off, signifying softness and thoughtfulness, whereas cutting it off could signal thoughtlessness, recklessness or even aggression. This softness and thoughtfulness are further intended to signify the teacher's care for the students.

5.7.9 Part 9: Pre-Instruction to the Passive Concert Session

Lozanov explains that the purpose of the passive Concert session session is to expose the students to how the target language normally sounds (Lozanov, 2006, 24-Aug-1989). The necessary linguistic information – the characters and the words and their meaning in the language and in its cultural context – has already been presented to the students' brains. However the students have not yet been exposed to the normal intonation of Japanese. Because the focus is on the sounds of the language, the teacher wants the students to do nothing more than listen to him reading with normal Japanese intonation. Now, the students do not need to open their textbook. Although the purpose of the passive Concert session is different from the active Concert session the teacher maintains the affordance in the Concert sessions by maintaining the same prestigious atmosphere.

5.7.10 Part 10: The Teacher Changes His Reading Style

The teacher reads the story with the background music. Lozanov calls the passive Concert session a "recital" as opposed to the "melodrama" of the active Concert session (Lozanov, 2009, p. 154). A recital is a stage performance in which a sole performer enacts a performance for the audience, who do not participate in the performance. Hence, the teacher does not invite the students to stand or to repeat after him. This practice could imply that the students are expected to passively attend to the teacher's voice and the music. Usually, the word "passive" signifies that the students would be non-active, calm, unemotional or obedient. However, the music the teacher plays does not necessarily signify this sense of passiveness. The selected organ pieces from J.S. Bach's Fantasies are philosophical music (Lozanov, 1978, p. 270) that is usually performed to provoke emotions in the minds of the audience during a religious function. The teacher has used the musical function of Bach's organ pieces as a strategy to optimise the students' level of relaxation. The aim is that in this session the students should be relaxed but at the same time their brains should be active enough to learn. With this type of music, the teacher is therefore creating a *pseudo-passive* state (Lozanov, 1978, p. 60).

5.7.11 Part 11: Concluding the Day's Lesson

Fading out the music marks the end of the Concert session. When the teacher closes the text-book and leaves the room, this signals the end of the day's class. With this natural flow of the context and his body action, the students can understand in general terms what "*Mata ashita*" means.

At the end of passive Concert session, the teacher again communicates with the students in Japanese. This signifies the end of passiveness and a return to Japanese language communication at the end of the day. At the same time, the last moment of Japanese communication reminds students of the atmosphere of the Introduction class where Japanese communication was beginning. This concludes the whole day's session in the same way as a theme and variation in classical music concludes with the original theme. In this sense the insertion of an element from the Introduction is used to symbolise the completion of the day's study, which provides the students with a return to a focus on the significance of attending this course. This significance is also an element that is intended to control the *logical anti-suggestive barrier*.

5.8 Connecting the Elaboration to the Previous Day's Activities

The first day of the course finished with the Concert session. The next day starts with the Elaboration activities. The Elaboration stage is designed to follow up the new material that has been introduced in the Introduction and the Concert sessions stages. The Elaboration stage lasts four to five days until it finishes the part of the textbook that the teacher read in the Concert session. The purpose of the Elaboration is to invite students to assimilate the language material they have been given through imitation, reproduction and creative production (Lozanov, 1978, 2009). It gives students reading-aloud tasks, grammar games, role-plays, opportunities to express themselves in their own words, and free conversation and group performance opportunities. These activities promote the four macro skills of communication: reading, listening, writing and speaking. Promoting these skills in a variety of communicative activities is a practice that is commonly found in modern communicative language teaching. In this sense, so to speak, an ordinary communicative language class takes place in this session. However, it is also the teacher's task is to arrange communicative activities in accordance with the concepts of Suggestopedia.

The teacher wrote in his journal each day throughout the course, reviewing that day's activities, concisely describing what happened at key points during his four-hour teaching block. The following fourteen excerpts from his journal record what he did and what he noticed during Day 2, the first Elaboration sessions.

Figure 11 Writing *hiragana* with a brush in the Day 2 Elaboration class

Day 2 First Half Session

1. The class reviewed all *hiragana* characters by singing the "*a*, *i*, *u*, *e*, *o*" song. After that, they wrote all of the characters, one after another, with *mizu-shodō* [Japanese water-based calligraphy using a brush, as seen in Figure 11]. They started with *ka*, *ki*, *ku*, *ke* and *ko* as they are simplest to write, and finished with *ya*, *yu* and *yo*.

2 S4 knows some Japanese words. He started to recall them while he was writing on the pad. When it came to the character "*mu*", he shouted that it means "nothing" as a term in Zen Buddhism. Immediately, S5 reacted, pointing his finger to his head and saying "*mu!*". Everyone burst into laughter.

3 After the moment of laughter, I asked them to choose a Japanese name for "the new film". They chose: *Yōko* (S7), *Shino* (S6), *Hiroshi* (S5), *Takahiro* (S4), *Ai* (S3), *Chihiro* (S2) and *Ayumi* (S1). S3 did not respond immediately when others were choosing their names. Some kind of mental block could have occurred. She eventually chose *Ai*, which means "love".

4 They look comfortable maybe because they have finished all the *hiragana*. This was when I invited them to sing the song, "*Nani mo Nainodesu*".

5 After the song, the class focused on introducing location words using body movement to indicate up, down, front, behind and sides. Next, I introduced the sentence pattern to locate things: "*XX no ue (shita/mae/ushiro/yoko) ni YY ga arimasu*" (There is something on (under/in front of/behind/on the side of) something).

6 S2 was confused about Japanese word order. S5 who has been looking analytic, used hunches well and got the correct word order. S3 stayed as an onlooker. I turned the music player on, and invited the class to sing the song again. Finished the morning session.

Day 2 Second Half Session

7 Students' laughter is heard from the room before I go back in, which is a good sign.

8 Went into the room, and soon I started a new song on the music player. The new song is about the days of the week, occupations and names. I planned to sing this song with dance-like hand movements. I gave out copies of the song card of the

song "*Unjarage*"[34] to the students. I started singing and dancing. No one reacted in the beginning, but gradually the students started smiling. Having sung it once, I repeated the song. I invited the students to join in. I asked them to put their hands up and turned the music on. I read the song one phrase earlier so that the students could follow me. They started singing and waving their hands and happily finished the song.

9 After the song, I asked them to choose an occupation to attach to their personality in this course. They chose *gaka* (painter) (S7), *tenmongakusha* (astronomer) (S6), *saundo enjinia* (sound engineer) (S5), *hebī meteru gitarisuto* (heavy metal guitarist) (S4), *kagakusha* (scientist) (S3), *kashu* (singer) (S2) and *gengogakusha* (linguist) (S1).

10 Started deciphering the content of the textbook for the first time. The students just repeated after me up to page 11. Then, went back to the beginning to look at the meaning. Stopped from time to time when important elements came up. At the word *shikisha* (orchestra conductor), I directed students' attention to the projector screen where the *hiragana* chart was still projected, then introduced how to write Japanese contracted sounds (i.e. *sha*, *shu*, *sho*) with *hiragana* characters.

11 The mood among students changed positively when we started reading the textbook as if they had been starving for written text. Having looked at structured sentences and their English translations, the students looked relieved. It may be because they are all mature adult language teachers, they felt better with analysable language material.

12 I took the moment of positive mood in the class to introduce and practice key sentences to express location and existence. Also, I introduced Japanese body language such as to express the feeling of being troubled.

13 The class sang "*Nani mo Nainodesu*" to finish the day's class.

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[34] "*Unjarage*" (1969) by Toshio Fujita and Yasushi Miyagawa Crazy Cats.

14 Left the room saying "*Mata ashita*" (See you tomorrow).

The Elaboration activities took place in the same classroom as the first day's class. The classroom retained the same atmosphere as when the Concert session finished the day before in order to retain the semiotic affordance created in the previous day's activities.

The various activities mentioned above will now be discussed in detail.

5.8.1 Review of *Hiragana* Characters

The teacher starts with a review of the previous day's lessons. In the Introduction, he first showed Japanese characters using names and then he introduced the whole set of *hiragana* to the students with a song. Then in the Concert sessions stage, he introduced the whole Japanese writing system that includes *hiragana*, *katakana* and *kanji*. In the Concert sessions stage, he also invited students to read parts of the textbook aloud. Now, in the Elaboration, they reproduce Japanese characters by themselves. In this class he reviews *hiragana* by singing the *hiragana* chart with the melody, then writing all the characters.

The term "review" usually means to look back at what the class has been taught in a previous lesson to remind them of the content they have learned. Suggestopedia uses the practice of reviewing to connect stages semiotically as each review naturally contains elements of the previous lessons. It also adds the notion of "theme and variation", which is borrowed from music, to its idea of a review so that it can create changes in the review that form an upward "spiral" to integrate the whole course (Lozanov, 2006, 10-Dec-1998). Lozanov explains that revisiting the same theme with a different approach can add dynamism and enrich the learning content in a way that helps the integration of the course, and calls this the "spiral" method of review. Since the beginning of the course, the teacher has handled Japanese characters using a number of different approaches.

Lozanov often uses the analogy of a spiral to explain the Suggestopedic approach to learning content. In the traditional step-by-step approach, the basic *hiragana* system is often introduced block by block, day by day: the teacher introduces one or two characters in a lesson, and further characters in later lessons. With this approach, teacher can only use the limited vocabulary that is associated with the characters that have been learned so far. As a result, he/she

often has to neglect the consistency of the language with the context and this has a negative impact on the integration of the whole course. Unlike the traditional approach to teaching characters, the Suggestopedia teacher first introduces the whole system in a general way, leaves it for a while, and then revisits it from different angles in line with the evolving context of the course. In Suggestopedia, the teacher keeps revisiting the same learning target to refine and enrich the whole shape as if the class is moving upward on a spiral staircase.

In Suggestopedia terms, the whole includes peripheral information attached to the characters themselves. In this scene, the teacher reviews Japanese characters using traditional brush-writing, which would rarelly happen in an ordinary Japanese class. Conventionally, Japanese teachers use a blackboard or a whiteboard to show how to write characters, and students copy them into their notebooks with their writing tools, usually a pencil or a ballpoint pen. This teacher has decided to use brush-writing to introduce the writing of Japanese characters. Brush and ink have traditionally been used to write Japanese characters for hundreds of years, and symbolise Japan's culture of literacy. Brush calligraphy has also been recognised as an art form that symbolises East Asia. In other words, here, the teacher has introduced Japanese characters in a way that signifies tradition and art. The central role of characters is to write meaningful sentences. Memorising how to read and write the characters is a conscious activity. However, the characters themselves also symbolise the background culture and connect to its beauty. The writing task also creates a kinetic experience through the use of handwriting. The beauty that the students feel in looking at the Japanese characters and the kinetic sense from the motion of their arms and fingers when writing the characters are intuitive *paraconscious* activities. In this way, the teacher has given both conscious and *paraconscious* experiences to the students through the brush-writing activity that contains rich information.

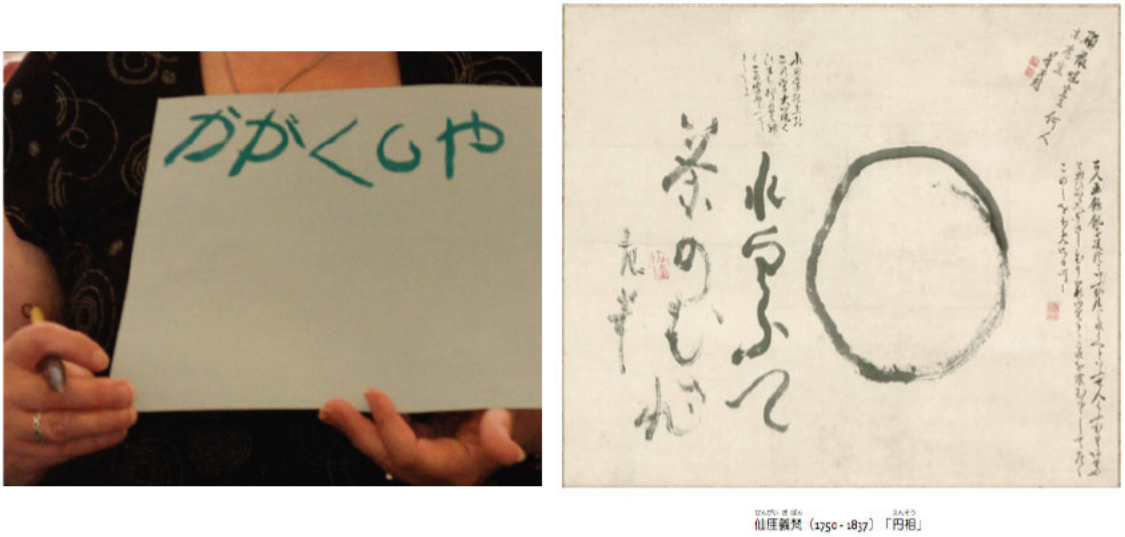

Figure 12 A student's brush-writing in the Elaboration and an example of Japanese brush-writing work used in the textbook

Using this method to start Japanese writing practice creates a consistency in the context of use of real-life materials. In the Introduction, the teacher used a real camera to help create an authentic context for using Japanese. Now, in the Elaboration, he uses a real writing brush in order to justify writing Japanese characters in a culturally contexted way. Brush-writing also creates a consistency in the context of the use of art; the course began as an analogy of an art gallery with the teacher-traveller in the Introduction, the students have been surrounded by artistic posters from the beginning and they have seen brush-written Japanese characters in the textbook in the Concert sessions (see Figure 12). Now in the Elaboration, they themselves write Japanese characters in an artistic manner, thus actively participating in the Japanese-language world.

5.8.2 The Students Start Demonstrating Creativity in Learning

Laughter is another element that is brought forward from the Introduction. Obviously, laughter in this scene occurs purely by chance and was not planned: it comes about because a student recalls a Japanese word and it is used in a joking context. The laughter is a creation of two unexpected acts of creativity put together. The teacher does not do anything but provide a situation where such humour can occur. The situation the teacher has provided is an artistic task done in a friendly atmosphere where there is an absence of learning pressure, and this atmosphere has activated creative learning among the students.

5.8.3 The Students Choose a Japanese Name

The teacher uses the moment of laughter to change tasks. This time, in the persona of a travelling movie director, Mr. Akira Kumada, he asks students to become actors in his new film and choose Japanese names for the film. The names they choose are used to refer to them for the rest of the course. Getting new names in the target language is common in Suggestopedia courses. Lozanov explains that giving students new names and letting them play a new role in the course liberates them from their social position in the real world, and it can also remove *anti-suggestive barriers* and "stimulate the spontaneous and immediate expression of their abilities" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 192).

The teacher has noticed that S3 appears to be confused in the task of selecting a name. He has noted this as he needs to keep an eye on changes in the students' mental states. The teacher observes this student's mental states as if one student has heightened *anti-suggestive barriers* this can result in him/her losing learning motivation, which can also negatively influence other students.

5.8.4 The Students Look Comfortable

The teacher has judged that the students are not feeling negative about the activity in spite of S3's initial confusion. He invites the students to sing the song that they had sung at the end of the Introduction session the day before. Singing this song is intended to give students a feeling of ease and accomplishment: it is easy because they know this song; and they feel they have achieved something because they can sing it better than before. The teacher has invited the students to sing when they are likely to feel they have accomplished something after having completed writing all the *hiragana* characters. Therefore, singing this song at this time can be used to create a synergy effect to re-enforce the positive atmosphere in the classroom.

The singing also works to integrate aspects of the lesson. Singing the song is a connection between the Introduction and the Elaboration. On the other hand, the song sheet connects the Concert sessions and the Elaboration as it has a common format with the textbook pages that were intensively read in the Concert session. In this sense, this song is semiotically connecting all three stages.

5.8.5 The Teacher Introduces Location Words and Sentences

The teacher changes focus from Japanese characters to grammar points relating to location words immediately after the song. Continuing the atmosphere developed through the singing, the teacher starts to introduce location vocabulary using body actions. This use of body movement to introduce location words brings the class to the first introduction of grammar in the class; the sentence pattern used to express the location of things and its word order.

In this transition between teaching *hiragana* and teaching grammar, the teacher has focused on integrating the two components. When Lozanov discusses integration, most of the time he focuses on the problem of connection and urges the importance of making good connections between activities (Lozanov, 2006, 9-Dec-1998). Writing the *hiragana* characters and introducing grammar are two different types of activity, one of which focuses on the reproduction of the characters and the other on understanding location words and the acquisition of the sentence pattern and word order. The teacher has placed singing and body action activities in between these two activities. The teacher first made a move from the calm activity of brush-writing to the active reading and vocalising in the song. Then he moves from the physicality of the song to introduce location words with body movement. Thereafter he starts to introduce grammar. The teacher has connected the first and the second activities with the learning target, that is, the characters. Then he has connected the second and third activities with mental states, that is, excitement and interest. Then he has connected the third and the fourth activities with the learning target, that is, expressions of location. In other words, the teacher has made a smooth transition between learning targets and mental states using symbols.

5.8.6 Student Reactions in the Classroom

The teacher has noted S5's use of intuition. Using intuition is welcomed as a logical form of problem-solving in Suggestopedia, since using intuition indicates the student's mind is "close to child-like setting" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 192) in which *anti-suggestive barriers* are low. He also keeps an eye on S2 and S3 who have shown confusion. When he notices confusion and irritation among the students, the teacher switches activities from looking at grammar points to the character-reading activity associated with positive emotions, that is, singing. At this point he ends the morning session.

This is another occasion that singing activity is used when finishing a session. The first time when he did the same was at the end of the first day Introduction. The repetition of the same pattern is setting a semiotic affordance which contributes to building the structural framework of the course. The singing activity has now started signifying a separator between activities and/or sessions just like a bookend. The teacher can use semiotic affordances like this to ensure the integration of the whole course by repeating the same pattern throughout the course.

5.8.7 The Students Are Laughing

At the beginning of the afternoon class, the teacher is monitoring the class atmosphere and checking if they are in good mood before he goes in. Laughter is a sign that the students are relaxed and enjoying themselves in the class, which further means their *anti-suggestive barriers* are kept at low levels.

5.8.8 The Teacher Starts the Second Half of the Day's Class

The teacher ensures the affordance of the song that means a transition device. Songs have been sung at the end of the Introduction, at the beginning and the end of the morning session of the Elaboration, and at the beginning of afternoon session of the Elaboration. In the classroom, a pattern has now emerged where songs are sung at the time of switching activities.

げつようびは、うんじゃらげ	Monday
かようびは、はんじゃらげ	Tuesday
すいようびは、すいすいすい	Wednesday
もくようびは、もりもり	Thursday
きんようびは、きんきらきん	Friday
どようびは、ぎんぎらぎんの	Saturday
ぎんぎらぎんの	
ぎんぎらぎんの ぎん！	
にちようびは、らんららんららんらん	Sunday

サラリーマンは、うんじゃらげ	Office worker
おやくにんは、はんじゃらげ	Bureaucrat
こっかいぎいんは、すいすいすい	Parliament member
おひゃくしょうさんは、もりもり	Farmer
おまわりさんは、きんきらきん	Policeman
だいがくせいは、ぎんぎらぎんの	University Students
ぎんぎらぎんの	
ぎんぎらぎんの ぎん！	
みんなそろって、らんららんららんらん	All get together and

Figure 13 Part of the lyrics of the song "*Unjarage*"

This time he has brought in a new song. This also means that he has returned to a reading task as the students have to read the new lyrics written with *hiragana* characters while they are singing. The teacher's choice of song relates to the learning targets of the day, as the students

have just chosen their Japanese names and after the song will move on to choose the profession they will claim through this course. The content of the new song includes the names of professions.

Apart from the lexically meaningful words, this song also contains a series of onomatopoeia that indicate a mood or emotion that is attached to what each word means, and the level of excitement shown through the onomatopoeia increases from Monday to Sunday. Figure 13 shows part of the lyrics of the new song: "Monday, *unjarage*. Tuesday, *hanjarage*. Wednesday, *sui sui sui*. Thursday, *mori mori*. Friday, *kin kira kin*, Saturday, *gin gira gin no gin gira gin no gin gira gin no gin*. Sunday, *ran ra ran ra ran ran*." All the parts written in italics are onomatopoeia. The series of onomatopoeia in this song starts with the onomatopoeia "*unjarage*", which sounds a little dull, then moves to the less dull "*hanjarage*". Next, "*sui sui sui*" sounds like a swimmer swimming smoothly, then it continues to "*mori mori*", which sounds more powerful. "*Kin kira kin*" implies sparkling, and the repetition of "*Gin gira gin*" reminds Japanese speakers of strong glittering sunlight. The final "*ran ra ran ra ran ran*" is used to express skipping or dancing. This series of onomatopoeia is repeated three times in this song, and it takes up more than half of the lyrics of the song. The use of onomatopoeia, which have no lexical meaning, reduces the burden for students in reading the characters and understanding the content of the new song. They can concentrate just on reading the *hiragana* when it comes to onomatopoeia.

The emotional characteristics of onomatopoeia also help the teacher to introduce emotion into his course. Emotion, that is *paraconscious* mental activity, promotes creative learning, which is a characteristic of the child-like mindset that Suggestopedia believes to be the optimal mindset for learning (Lozanov, 1978, p. 191). The teacher uses the emotion of the music and onomatopoeia's emotional characteristics by adding choreographed hand movements in association with the emotion that each onomatopoeia implies: for example, he dangles both hands when he sings the onomatopoeia "*unjarage*" that follows the word "Monday", and raises both hands with open fingers in the air and quickly twists his wrists when he sings the onomatopoeia "*gin gira gin no gin gira gin no gin gira gin no gin*" that follows the word "Saturday". The teacher notices the change in the students' reaction. They do not react to the teacher's choreography during the first singing, and this is understandable because they are too busy reading the song sheet and might feel embarrassed to copy the teacher's actions. However, during the second time of singing the song, the teacher is able to attach emotion to the song by involving the students in his choreography, as seen in Figure 14.

By the second time he sings the song, the teacher has succeeded in making the students stop reading by drawing their attention to his actions and encouraging them to copy him. To support the students, he reads out the lyrics prior to singing each phrase to reduce the student's burden of reading. In other words, the teacher has changed the purpose of the song in the course of one activity. The first time the new song was sung, he is giving the students a reading task; and soon after, he redirects his students' attention from reading to participating in an activity that includes emotion and body movement.

Also, the change of activity from intensive reading to a non-reading activity is another repetition of a similar pattern of alternating between tasks. Here, the teacher uses one song twice for two different purposes – reading characters and moving the body. The teacher makes this change of use of the same song to encourage changes in students' states of mind that activate their brains and stimulate their creativity. From a Suggestopedia perspective, the use of the same song in multiple applications can stimulate the students' creativity through expanding the scope of the affordances of the song as it is used in the classroom. This reminds the students of the original scope of affordance of the song; that is, the song is for reading lyrics, vocalising, moving their bodies and dancing. Using songs with a wider scope of affordances can liberate students from limiting the range of meanings associated with the song to that of "teaching material". In this sense, widening the scope of affordances can also be a liberation of the students' creativity. The teacher has created a basic atmosphere in which the students can unleash their creativity by using the same song in different ways.

Figure 14 Hand movement associated with the song

5.8.9 After the Song, the Teacher Asks the Students to Choose an Occupation

The teacher next returns to a reading and writing activity. It is a similar task to the one in which the students chose their Japanese names. He gives the students a list of occupations written in *hiragana* with an English meaning alongside each. They choose an occupation for their new personality in the course. The teacher asks students to write their name of occupation on the calligraphy pad (see Figure 15). Students now have chosen new names and professions for their roles in the Suggestopedia course, as a way to free them from the *social suggestive norms* of the real world. At the same time, this is a revisiting of a familiar Japanese character reading and writing task, similar to what the students did in the first half session.

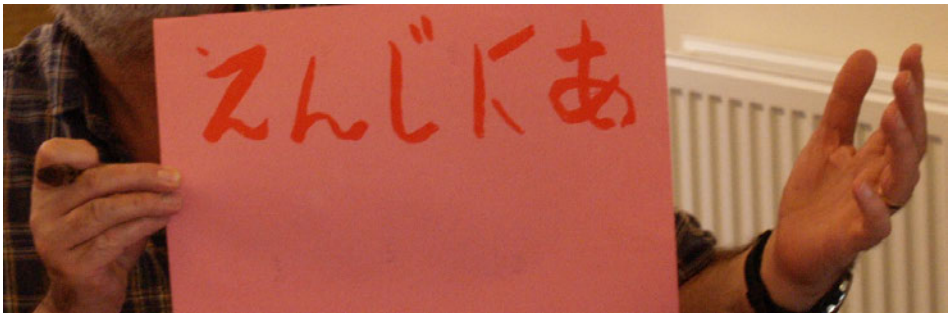

Figure 15 Writing the chosen profession; in this case, "*enjinia*" (engineer)

The revisiting in this course provides an occasion for students to confirm their progress. They

had not finished recognising the whole *hiragana* set when they did the task in the first day session but by now they have written the whole set of *hiragana* characters, and they are completing their task to choose their new roles. Through revisiting activities, students have an opportunity to recognise that things have progressed every time and this contributes to their sense of success. This upward spiral experience can help students develop their self-esteem and maintain their *anti-suggestive barriers* at low levels.

5.8.10 Reading the Textbook

As mentioned earlier, the repeat-after-the-teacher style of teaching is one of the oldest techniques in language teaching. The teacher uses this old style of teaching partly because it can symbolise language teaching for the students. A typical language teaching activity can reinforce that the purpose of this course is language learning, and this can help control the students' *logical anti-suggestive barrier* by showing them that this course is following the norm of what a language class should be. At the same time, the teacher uses this activity to connect the Elaboration with the Concert session. The repeat-after-the-teacher style is the only common activity between the two very different stages. This activity, as a conventional teaching activity, can also remind the students of the teacher's *prestige*, which was also emphasised in the Concert session. This is another semiotic connection the teacher has designed to integrate the stages.

This time, the teacher also confirms the meaning of what the students have read by letting them translate the Japanese phrases and sentences into English. Translation could seem an overwhelming task for the students at this early stage. However, the full translation has already been given on the page beside the Japanese words. In practice, all they are doing is just confirming the words they read by checking against the English translation. Therefore, this task has a practical emphasis in that the students can associate the Japanese words with the English translation and compare both the structure and the meaning. As a result, the students are in a position where they experience success in understanding the context of the story in the textbook and in translating it into English. In doing this activity, the teacher provides students with opportunities to handle as many Japanese characters and vocabulary items without heightening their *anti-suggestive barriers*.

In addition, the teacher inserts different types of activity during the reading and translation

tasks to activate the students' brains. The teacher repeatedly leaves and returns to activities. On one occasion, he leaves the repeat-after-the-teacher activity for a meaning-recognition activity and then comes back. On another occasion, he leaves a reading activity for other related elements such as a pronunciation practice game and comes back to the reading again. On yet another occasion, he goes back to the *hiragana* chart to introduce extra rules for combining characters.

5.8.11 Positive Changes in the Students' Psychology

The teacher has noted the change of atmosphere in the language classroom. He shows that he is monitoring the changes in the students' psychology and adjusting his plan of class activities depending on the changes as a continuing negative mood in the classroom could heighten the students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. Although he is not a psychologist and cannot precisely analyse the students' psychological states, he can sense and monitor each student's happiness, unhappiness, openness and closedness.

5.8.12 The Teacher Introduces New Grammar

The teacher has used the information acquired from his monitoring of the class in order to decide when he should introduce new grammar. This time, he focuses on the Japanese sentence structure used to express that something is at a location. After the introduction of the grammar, he moves to a less grammatical and more emotional activity, Japanese body language to express feelings. In other words, the teacher has moved from a conscious intensive grammar activity to a *paraconscious* activity involving body movement before he goes on to revisit a reading activity with emotion, the song. The teacher continues activating students' brains by giving them a variety of activities such as reading aloud from the textbook after the teacher, translation, new grammar, body language to express emotions, and so on.

5.8.13 The Class Sing the Song "*Nani mo Nainodesu*" to Finish the Day's Class

This is another revisiting of this song. As seen before (Figure 7), the lyrics of this song contain the sentence structure used to express location and existence, which the students have just learned in the Elaboration. This was after they had sung the song several times, which means

that they had already seen the "new" grammar when they learned it for the "first time". The teacher made that possible by exposing the target teaching material to the peripheral area of the students' minds prior to introducing it to the conscious area. The teacher encourages students to develop their self-confidence about their potential by giving an opportunity to feel "I know this from the beginning". In addition, what the students were introduced to as an element of grammar – an activity at the level of logic and the consciousness – is now repeated in singing an already known song – an activity at the level of emotion and the *paraconsciousness*.

The teacher's choice of this song at the end of the day is effective in terms of Suggestopedia. The song is a bundle of conscious and *paraconscious* activities. It is a "revisiting" of the day's activities: the *hiragana* Japanese characters and the target-language grammar. Also, it consolidates the course's semiotic affordance that revisiting means a confirmation of a "step up but not difficult", and the singing means "a bookend" of a class activity.

5.8.14 The Teacher Leaves the Room Saying "*Mata ashita*" (See You Tomorrow)

The teacher repeats the same Japanese phrase "*Mata ashita*" that he used when leaving the previous day's class. The students have already been introduced to the meaning of the Japanese phrase without a linguistic explanation. Another successful experience of immediate Japanese communication has semiotically connected the first two days of the course.

5.9 Summary

This chapter has looked into how the teacher used the introduction of Japanese characters and practice activities to analyse how the teacher establishes and maintains the integration of the Suggestopedia course.

Through the three stages of Suggestopedia – the Introduction, the Concert sessions and the Elaboration – the teacher has introduced and consolidated Japanese characters by offering the students a variety of tasks and activities. The *hiragana* that was first introduced in the peripheral area of the story of the traveller making friends was next fully introduced in a chart. The *hiragana* was then used meaningfully to support singing a song, and in the Concert session was then introduced to the *paraconscious* area of the students' brains together with a large

numbers of other characters, pronounced by the teacher, listened to by the students, written with a brush, read and translated.

The teacher has created a frequent swinging between activities by providing a variety of tasks in which he has continuously moved the focus of the learning targets from the centre to the peripheral areas of student's attention in order to use *paraconscious* mental activity. By doing so, the teacher has helped students to accumulate language resources in their minds without heightening their *anti-suggestive barriers*.

The teacher has created semiotic affordances in each scene of the course's activities with the intention that these affordances will not heighten the students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. Hence the timing of switching between activities was organised by the teacher in response to his monitoring of the psychological state of the students. Therefore, these changes have been made intuitively and are unplanned. These changes, which have sometimes created moments of surprise, have been aimed at controlling students' *affective anti-suggestive barriers* by easing fatigue, reducing anxiety and promoting creativity and spontaneous responses in target-language communication. At the same time, he has structured the course with planned changes between the three stages: the Introduction, the Concert sessions and the Elaboration. These changes between the stages are securely planned and scheduled so that the format can satisfy students' *logical anti-suggestive barriers*.

This has created a layered structure in the Suggestopedia course. On the base layer, the teacher has designed a concrete structure where planned changes of the stages occur with a foreseeable timing: at the start of the day or after the midday break. These macro-level changes are substantial, so that they change the character of the classroom and the forms of students' participation. On the next layer, which lies on top of the base layer, the teacher has made micro-level changes and swings in an unscheduled way in accordance with the group dynamics, the changes in the students' mental states, and their spontaneous actions and reactions. These changes are also planned beforehand, however the timing of the changes and whether or not the teachers applies the change is not rigidly planned.

The teacher has used symbols and their affordances to integrate all three stages in spite of the changes he has made at macro and micro levels. He has attached to his black travel bag the meaning that it is the source of interesting things, and used it as an activity switcher in the Introduction. He has also used the common structure of the song sheets and the textbook as a

symbol to connect the Introduction and the Concert session. The theme of the song that was used in the Introduction – travelling for discovery – links with the theme of the textbook story read in the Concert sessions and the Elaboration. The teacher has also used the teacher's *prestige* as a symbol to connect the main activity and refreshing activity in the Concert session. The teacher has used the style of repeat-after-the-teacher reading activities to create a connection between the Concert sessions stage and the Elaboration stage. The integration of the course contributes to keeping the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level by structuring the whole course to look logically sound and mentally safe.

The shape of the Suggestopedia course that the teacher has integrated is not simple. He has not simply implemented a plan as if piling up blocks to create a tower. Rather he has introduced elements of complexity and uncertainty to integrate his course in accordance with the requirement of Suggestopedia theory, based on the idea that the brain requires those elements to function well. In practice, the teacher has made use of the function of symbols and semiotic affordances to integrate such elements of complexity and uncertainty as the semiotic network in the structure of Suggestopedia.

In this process, the teacher has expanded the scope of the meaning of "teaching materials" by changing their use in the classroom. The songs in the classroom are not only for language study, but also for bodily movement to create a feeling of excitement or entertainment. The brush-writing is not only to practice how to write characters but also to enjoy creating art. Thus, the widening of the scope of the meaning of the materials in this course can work to liberate the students' creativity. In this way the teacher has designed the course in response to Suggestopedia theory so that it does not inhibit the students' ever-changing brain states, but to promote students' brain activities. I will address the issue of widening the semiotic affordances more extensively in the next chapter.

Chapter 6 Using Diverse and Composite Signs and Symbols in Suggestopedia Teaching

6.0 Introduction

In the previous chapter, I observed how the teacher attempted to integrate the whole course by relating the three stages of Suggestopedia on different structural levels. In so doing, the teacher combined the stability of the course brought about by following the planned framework and the impromptu activities within the framework, and established a multilayered, complex and comprehensive integration which models brain activity as theorised in Suggestopedia to activate students' brain functions holistically. Lozanov's brain-function model includes the notion of continuously changing states of mind within a personality. That is, a student's mind is dynamically and continuously changing from one state to another, and it shows different characters of his/her personality at different times (Lozanov, 2009, pp. 114–117). These changes affect the levels of influence from *social suggestive norms* and the levels of *anti-suggestive barriers* (p. 121). Suggestopedia does not inhibit such vigorous changes in a student's mind as it is a part of the natural function of the brain. This means that the teacher needs to be appropriately ready at any moment during the course to cope with vigorously changing student states of mind. The teacher needs to prepare a course environment that is flexible and fluid enough to handle these changes in such a way that the designed environment can also give students an opportunity to relativise influences from conventional *social suggestive norms*.

In this chapter, I will examine the signs and symbols in the factors that form classroom language teaching and analyse the way the teacher creates flexibility in his course to handle his students' ever-changing states of mind in the Suggestopedia course. I will particularly focus on how the teacher semiotically prepared for three factors of the educational environment: the room environment, the selection and handling of teaching materials, and the affordance he gives to the character of the teacher himself.

6.1 Establishing Semiotic Diversity in the Learning Environment

When we look at the three factors of the educational environment in the conventional *social*

suggestive norms – the classroom, the teaching materials and the teacher – the ties between the sign and what the sign means are rigid and clear. Moreover, it seems difficult to disconnect such ties and reconnect them to give them other affordances within the conventional *social suggestive norms*. For example, the conventional *social suggestive norms* signify the term "classroom" as little more than a room where instructional teaching takes place. Similarly, the term "teaching materials" signifies materials used to explain the theoretical concepts behind what is being taught, and "the teacher" signifies the person who performs instruction to pass knowledge onto the students.

In examining how the teacher creates semiotic diversity, I will first look into the environment the teacher has prepared in the classroom. The teacher of this Suggestopedia course has bestowed a wider scope of affordances on it. In Chapter 4, I examined his teaching room and found that the teacher had set up the room for collaborative learning in such a way that individual students would not feel intimidated or isolated. In this chapter, I will revisit the same room and look more closely at the flexibility in semiotic affordances that the teacher has given to his teaching environment.

As we semiotically observe what the set-up of this room potentially means, the two hexagonal tables – the large one and the small one – look like game tables or decorative tables in shape. The posters are ornaments to decorate the room with the pictorial beauty of Japanese culture and nature. The computer is a modern versatile device which can control other devices. Currently, it is showing through the connected data projector a photograph of large passenger jet in flight. Both the posters and the slide symbolise nothing much more than "travel" at this moment. This room, which has been pre-announced as the place for a language course, should be a room for language instruction. However, the signs that strongly symbolise conventional "instruction", such as desks in lines with chairs facing to the front and posters showing linguistic rules, are missing. The signs seen in this room do have affordances to indicate a place of education, because of the pre-announcement of the language course and the fact that tables, posters and computers are often seen in ordinary instructional teaching rooms. But in this environment, they are not strongly symbolic of teaching and learning in a traditional sense. At this point, students are receiving a mixed message, part of which is given by their conventional predictions about what a language class will be and the other part of which is given by the actual arrangement of the room, symbolising other things such as travel, games and art. In other words, what the teacher has prepared here is a semiotically obscure environment.

This semiotically obscure environment is also an open environment where the teacher can freely use the arbitrariness of signs to create new alternative affordances. If the signs in the environment were monotonous and clearly signifying only one thing, such as traditional learning, it would not be easy for the teacher to create new affordances with which he can offer students different *social suggestive norms* to the conventional ones. This is because less arbitrariness of a sign means less freedom for the teacher in assigning meanings to it. Whereas, in the semiotically obscure environment that the teacher has prepared for this course, the potential for new affordances is set high.

While the teacher has created a space to handle affordances semiotically by preparing a diversity of signs, he has also prepared a physical space where he can move freely in the room. There is a wider space on the teacher's side of the table, where he can move freely and assume various postures. The degree of freedom in semiotic affordances and physical space gives the teacher room to show his creativity.

6.2 Preparing Semiotically Diverse Teaching Props

Once the course has started, various props will be put on the table and left there (Figure 16). The term "teaching materials" in conventional *social suggestive norms* signifies materials used to explain the theoretical concepts behind what is being taught. However as examined in Chapter 4, the teacher uses materials to stimulate the students' curiosity, lead students to enjoy a relaxed atmosphere, and switch activities in the class work. In addition, most of the props that he takes out of his bag will be left in the room, some on the large table and others on the wall or by the window.

Figure 16 Props and posters at the end of Day 1

The props that the teacher

takes out of his bag are diverse in colour, size, shape, quality and use. For example, during the first day's Introduction he used the following props: a real Japanese-made single-lens reflex camera, a shirt, a hat, a stack of newspapers, a passport, a book, coloured felt-tip pens, a real stone, a piece of sponge that looks like a stone, a stuffed bear, traditional Japanese toys, a fan, family photos, song sheets and *hiragana* cards. In comparison to the teaching props used in a traditional teaching room such as textbooks, notebooks and pens, all of which signify traditional instruction, the props seen in the room for the Suggestopedia class are diverse in their semiotic characteristics.

In addition, each prop that the teacher has brought into the classroom has composite semiotic characteristics. As mentioned in Chapter 4, "a real Japanese-made single-lens reflex camera" can signify meanings such as "authenticity", "high-quality", "high-tech", "photograph", "travel", "souvenir" and "typical Japanese person". Given that it is used as a prop in a language course, these primary meanings attached to this camera can potentially be combined to develop secondary meanings such as "an authentic high-quality Japanese language course", "a language course that has a familiar theme: travelling" and "opportunities to take souvenir photos in this language course". Moreover, how to use the possibilities of semantic spread in a single item like this is left to the discretion of the teacher. In fact, the teacher used the "real Japanese-made single-lens reflex camera" to develop the story of a traveller who makes friends with local people, in which he created opportunities to use Japanese in authentic situations. In addition to the camera, the teacher has brought into the classroom various other props with diverse and composite semiotic functions that can be used in various ways.

6.3 Taking Steps to Form Alternative Affordances with Composite Symbols

Figure 17 Props on the table

To look more closely into the diverse use of the composite semiotic characters of teaching props, I will consider here another example of how the teacher uses his teaching materials – this time, a stuffed bear. The teacher uses the same stuffed bear in several ways through the course. The tiny white stuffed bear is wearing a green frog costume, as can be seen in the centre of the table in Figure 17, and is first introduced in the Introduction on the first day when the teacher introduces the negation phrase "*īe*". The following is an excerpt of the scene.

Scene 9 (lines 596–621)

596	T:	*Sorekara...* (And then...)
597		<Takes out a stuffed toy that looks like a green frog.> *Etto, kore wa nan desu ka?* (Umm, what is this?)
598	S1:	<Hands over the Japanese kaleidoscope she picked up after it was introduced by the teacher.>
599	T:	<Puts the stuffed toy on his left palm.> *Kore wa nan desu ka?* (What is this?)
600	Ss:	<Turn their eyes to the stuffed toy on the teacher's palm.>
601	T:	<Looks over to the students.> *Kore wa nan desu ka?* (What is this?) In English?
602	Ss:	<In English.> Frog.
603	T:	*Aa, kaeru desu. Kaeru.* (A huh, frog. It's a frog.)
604	S2:	*Kaeru desu.* (It's a frog.)
605	T:	<To all students.> *Kore wa kaeru desu ka?* (Is this a frog?)
606		*Hai?* (Yes?)
607	Ss:	*Hai.* (Yes.)
608	T:	<Smiles mischievously.> *Īie.* (No.)
609		<Takes the hood with a frog face off the stuffed toy. Students see the bear face under the hood.>
610	Ss:	<Laugh.> Ah…
611	T:	<Points at the now revealed stuffed bear.> *Kore wa kuma desu.* (This is a bear.)
612		*Kuma desu. Kuma.* (It's a bear. Bear.)
613	S:	*Kuma desu.* (It's a bear.)
614	T:	*Kuma desu. Kuma.* (It's a bear. Bear.)

615 <Points at the *hiragana* cards in front of him.> *Kumada. Watashi no namae wa "ku"–"ma"–"da".* (My name is "*ku*"–"*ma*"–"*da*".)

616 S3: <S3 is allocated the *hiragana* card that shows *hiragana* く. She checks her card.> *"Ku".*

617 T: <Puts his right hand on his chest.> *Watashi no namae wa Kumada. Kumada-san. Kumada-san desu.* (My name is Kumada, Mr. Kumada. Mr. Kumada.)

618 <Points at the bear, smiling.> *Demo, kore wa Kuma-chan desu.* (Though, this is Kuma-chan.)

619 <Lightly pats the bear on its head and says its name.> *Kuma-chan!*

620 *Kore wa Kuma-chan desu.* (This is Kuma-chan.)

621 <Puts the bear on the table.>

Figure 18 *Kuma-chan*

As seen in Figure 18, this stuffed bear is in a green frog costume, and it looks like a green frog when its face is covered with the hood of the costume on which the two frog eyes stand out. The teacher uses a semiotic feature that symbolises "a trick" to introduce a Japanese negation phrase in a way that is designed to help the students recall the phrase easily through a memorable experience of being tricked by a stuffed bear. This stuffed bear also has other semiotic features that symbolise textures, shapes, looks and colours such as "soft", "round", "cute", "white" and "green" that the teacher later uses to introduce Japanese adjectives.

In the scene excerpted above, the teacher tells the students that the bear has a name, "*Kuma-chan*". Then, he emphasises that the name Kuma-chan shares phonetic features with the teacher's surname, Kumada. Here, the teacher has semiotically connected this stuffed bear with himself through the resemblance in their names. By associating his name and the name of the stuffed bear, the teacher can add new affordances to both the bear and himself. In other words, from this time on, the bear shares affordances that the teacher has, and vice versa. The teacher has been associated with the relaxed and mischievous features of the bear, and the

bear has now become somewhat more prestigious than ordinary childish toys by being semiotically associated with the teacher.

The teacher leaves this stuffed bear on the table for the rest of the course after he has finished using it for the initial purpose of introducing a grammar point, rather than removing it from the teaching room. He picks it up nine days later and uses it for another purpose.

The following is a transcription from Day 10.

Scene 10 (lines 10499–10511)

10499	T:	<Picks up Kuma-chan and turn its face to him.> *Kuma-chan, genki desuka?* (How are you, Kuma-chan?)
10500		<Laughs.>
10501		*Kuma-chan, genki desuka?* (How are you, Kuma-chan?)
10502	S5:	*Hai.* (Yes.)
10503	T:	<Towards Kuma-chan.> *Ee, watashi wa Kumada Akira desu.* (Ummm, I'm Kumada Akira.)
10504		*Watashi wa Nihon kara kimashita.* (I came from Japan.)
10505		*Nihon kara Singapōru ni itte, Singaporu kara hikōki de Pari ni itte, Pari kara hikōki de Amusuterudamu ni itte, Amusuterudamu kara Manchesutā…, aa, Ribapūru ni itte, Ribapūru kara kuruma de Denbī ni kimashita. Denbī wa totemo ii tokoro desu.* (I went from Japan to Singapore, and from Singapore to Paris by aeroplane, from Paris to Amsterdam by plane, from Amsterdam to Manchest…., oh, Liverpool, and came from Liverpool to Denbigh by car. Denbigh is a very nice place.)
10506		<Points to all the students.> *Tomodachi ga takusan dekimashita.* (I could make many friends.)
10507		<Points to each student and counts one after another.> *Tomodachi ga hitori, hutari, sannin, yonin, gonin, rokunin, nananin dekimashita.* (I have made one, two, three, four, five, six, seven friends.)
10508		<Shows a happy face.> *Minna ii tomodachi desu.* (All are my good friends.)
10509		*Kuma-chan, watashi wa yokatta desu yo.* (Hey, Kuma-chan, I'm lucky.)

10510 S2: <Laughs.>

10511 T: <Reaches out as though to hand over the stuffed bear to the students.> *Āa, minasan mo Kuma-chan ni nanika hanashite kudasai.* (Um, please everyone say something to Kuma-chan.)

The teacher has greeted the stuffed bear and talked to it about what has happened since he left Japan. Then, he hands the bear over to the students and suggests that they say something to it. In this scene, the teacher uses the stuffed bear as a prop to encourage them to compose Japanese sentences.

Talking to a stuffed toy has a Suggestopedic advantage. By talking to a toy s/he is holding, a student can avoid the audience – the eyes of the students who are his/her peers – that may cause embarrassment when making mistakes. Also, the student does not have to worry about incomprehensible words in the language of the conversational partner, because it never talks back. The students can spend as much time as they wish composing sentences because the toy can wait. The other students – the audience – can also relax because they are onlookers, seeing how another student composes sentences. In addition, the stuffed bear's softness and fluffiness can symbolise relaxation and comfort. In this sense, talking to a silent toy provides a psychologically safe environment for the student when he/she takes on a challenge, and it prevents a heightening of the *affective anti-suggestive barrier*, which can be heightened when a person feels insecure. Here, the teacher has used the stuffed bear's original semiotic features – its touch, feel and look and its inability to talk back – to minimise the students' fear and frustration in order to help maintain their *affective barriers* at a low level.

On the other hand, this task has the potential risk of giving students a negative impression that would heighten their *logical anti-suggestive barrier*, as talking to a toy is what an infant would do. "*Infantilisation*" is a basic concept in Suggestopedia: to put the minds of the students in a child-like state by giving them an environment where they can behave like children. Usually, children are free from the social expectations that originate in the conventional *social suggestive norms*. *Infantilised* adult learners, like children, can be curious and not afraid of making errors. However, *infantilisation* does not mean treating adult learners as infants. Treating adult learners as infants would insult them and simply lead the students to heighten their *anti-suggestive barriers*. To prevent this negative impact, the teacher has already taken steps to add extra affordances to the stuffed bear's original semiotic affordances. He has used this bear as,

so to speak, an intellectual objective teaching prop that expresses features attached to intellectual human activities, such as tricks, and logical knowledge such as grammatical use of adjectives. He has also semiotically associated this particular bear with himself to make it share his prestige as the leader of this language course. Such intellectual connotations and prestige that have been added to this particular stuffed bear can turn the direction of its semiotic affordances away from impressions of "childishness".

The teacher has attempted to secure the options that he can take at each point in his course by utilising the stuffed bear's composite semiotic characteristics. In this process, he has prepared a teaching prop (the stuffed bear) with multiple semiotic features, and has added extra semiotic affordances to it in preparation for changes in the students' states of mind that might heighten their *logical anti-suggestive barriers*.

6.4 Establishing Composite Semiotic Characteristics in the Teacher

Another composite semiotic element to consider is the teacher himself. In the conventional social norms, the term "teacher" signifies the person who performs instruction to pass knowledge onto the students.

Here, I revisit the scene in which the teacher first made contact with his students.

> A Japanese man (who is the teacher) comes into the classroom. He wears a casual shirt, colonial style white cotton trousers, sunglasses and a baseball cap. His sweater is around his shoulders as if he did not need to wear it as he is already sweating. A large black soft travel bag hangs on his shoulder. He also wears a set of earphones that is connected to a music player in his chest pocket. He seems to be listening to the music as he is humming and singing a song. The song has Japanese lyrics. He goes A Japanese man (who is the teacher) comes into the classroom. He wears a casual shirt, colonial-style white cotton trousers, sunglasses and a baseball cap backwards on his head. His sweater is around his shoulders as if he did not need to wear it as he is already warm. A large black soft travel bag hangs on his shoulder. He also wears a set of earphones connected to a music player in his chest pocket. He seems to be listening to the music as he is humming and singing a song. The song has Japanese lyrics. He goes straight to the travel posters without a glance at the students, and

speaks to himself in Japanese. He then starts looking around the room.

When he notices the students sitting around the table, he shows surprise. The students laugh lightly. The man says in Japanese, "*Koko wa doko?* (Where is here?) *Nihon?* (Japan?) *Īe, koko wa Nihon ja arimasen.* (No, here is not Japan.)" He opens his arms and shrugs his shoulders as if he is at a loss. In the next moment, he looks convinced that he is in Wales as he points with both index fingers down and says, "*Koko wa Uēruzu desu!* (Here is Wales!)", and then says, "*Uēruzu desu ne*? (Wales, isn't it?)" with a rising intonation. Then he smiles and nods, saying "*Hai?* (Yes?)" with a rising intonation. Some students respond with "*Hai.* (Yes.)" and others respond saying "Wales".

As seen in Chapter 4, in the classroom the teacher switches between two characters, one of whom is a Japanese language teacher while the other is a traveller from Japan. It is clear that this person is the Japanese teacher, and all the students know this. However, by first appearing as a traveller rather than a teacher in this room – analysed in Section 6.1 – the teacher blurs the semiotic ties between the room and studying. In other words, he challenges the conventional *social suggestive norms* under which the students would not doubt that "this room is a classroom and it should be a room for study because it has been assigned to a Japanese language course and I am here to study Japanese". For Suggestopedia, creating ambiguity in the semiotic ties between the "classroom" and "studying" can trigger a *desuggestion* among students by giving them an opportunity to question the conventional *social suggestive norms* and further relativise them. At the same time, loosening the ties between signs and meanings in the room gives the teacher freedom in the sense that he can give new meanings to signs in the room to create new directions in affordances.

Next we can consider the scene in which the teacher introduces himself to his students for the first time.

From Scene 5 (lines 329-334)

329 T: *Watashi no namae wa…* (My name is…)
330 <In English.> My name…
331 *Namae.* (Name.)
332 <In English.> Name.
333 *Watashi no namae wa Kumada desu.* (My name is Kumada.)

334 S2: <Nods.> *Hai.* (Yes.)

Students know that Kumada is not the teacher's real name and that he did not come directly from Japan. They know from the pre-course instructions provided by the organisers of this course that his real name is Kaz Hagiwara and that he lives in Australia. Kumada is, so to speak, his stage name for this course. Hence, the teacher has established at the initial stage of this course a multilayered personality in which Kaz Hagiwara plays the role of the Japanese traveller, Kumada. This gives an example to the students of how they can detach themselves from conventional society that is normalised by the conventional norms. They will do the same later in the course, as discussed in Section 5.8.3.

At the same time, the teacher has shown them a different direction in the semiotic affordances of the term "teacher". The term "teacher", at least in this Suggestopedia course, does not only mean a person who performs instructional teaching, but it also means a person who has another name and performs a role like an actor does. The connotation of "an actor" adds further affordances to the term "teacher" that give it a new direction. It can now connote "acting", "fake", "performing", "creation" and "freedom from the personality made in the conventional *social suggestive norms*". This has given the teacher a wider range of options, and in this sense, a flexibility in designing his teaching conduct.

To see an example of what the teacher can do with this acquired flexibility, I examine the transcription of the following scene from the Introduction on the first day.

Scene 11 (lines467–501)

467 <A ring tone starts on the teacher's mobile phone.>
468 T: <Picks up his mobile phone.> *Hai.* (Yes.)
469 Ss: <All students pay attention to the teacher.>
470 T: <Talks to the person on the phone.> *Hai.* (Yes.)
471 <Turns away from the students and shows them his back while talking on the phone.> *Hai.* (Yes.)
472 <Bows to the phone as if apologising to his superior. Scratches the back of his head.> *Aa, aa, sumimasen.* (Oh, oh, sorry.)
473 *Aa, sō desu ka. Wakarimashita, wakarimashita. Hai, hai. Ja.* (Oh, I see. I understood, understood. Yes, yes. Well then.)

474		<Hangs up.>
475		<With hissing voice, and slowly.> *Watashi wa, watashi wa…* (I am, I am…)
476		<Makes a body action as though he is rolling a motion picture camera.> *Ēga no kan…, Ēga kantoku desu.* (A director of a m… a movie director.)
477		<In English.> Film director.
478	S6:	<Smiles and nods.>
479	T:	<Still making the action of rolling a camera.> *Watashi wa ēga kantoku desu.* (I am a movie director.)
480		*Ēga kantoku desu.* (A movie director.)
481		<Points to the floor with both hands.> *Watashi wa koko de, Uēruzu de…* (Here, in Wales, I…)
482		<Makes the action of rolling a camera again.> *Ēga o tsukuri ni kimashita.* (I came here to make a movie.)
483		*Soshite...* (And then...)
484		*Haiyū o sagasanakereba narimasenn.* (I have to find actors.)
485		<Directs his hand towards the students.> *Minasan wa Nihongo o hanashimasu ka?* (Do you speak Japanese, everyone?)
486		<Quickly in English.> Do you speak Japanese?
487		<With upward intonation.> *Hai?* (Yes?)
488	Ss:	<Answers in smiles.> *Hai.* (Yes.)
489	T:	<Shows a full smile on his face.> *Hai, hai, hai!* (Yes, yes, yes!)
490		<Both arms in the air.> *Aa!* (Oh!)
491		<Makes a "victory pose".> *Uēruzu jin de, Nihongo o hanashimasu!* (Japanese-speaking Welsh people!)
492		*Sō, minasan wa watashi no haiyū desu.* (That's right, you are my actors.)
493		<In English.> Actors.
494	S6:	<Nods while smiling.>
495	T:	<Looking towards S6 and S7, reaching out to them.> *Aa...* (Oh...)
496		*Minasan, watashi no haiyū desu.* (All of you are my actors.)
497		<Picks up his mobile phone and points to it.> *Ima no denwa wa…* (That phone call was…)

498		<Keeps pointing his mobile phone set.> *Denwa, denwa.* (Telephone, telephone.)
499		*Purodyūsā desu.* (It was from the producer.)
500		<Makes a body action to count currency notes.> *Purodyūsā wa watashi ni okane o takusan kuremasu.* (The producer gives me a lot of money.)
501	Ss:	<Giggle.>

In this scene of the Introduction, the teacher reveals that he is a movie director, and says that the reason he is here is to look for actors for his new movie. This "fact" is reinforced by the ringtone (which was set on a timer) and the following "conversation" with his producer. At this point, it turns out that this person exists in front of the students as a personality that is attached to composite symbols, that is a Japanese language teacher who has other names outside, but in this course, he is a travelling movie director who calls himself Akira Kumada. Hence, the teacher composes yet another personality on top of "teacher" and "traveller".

6.5 Establishing Composite Semiosis in the "Objectives of the Course" — Acquiring Flexibility in Designing Class Activities through the Use of Composite Symbols

When the teacher "revealed" himself as a movie director, the relationship between the teacher and the students that had been created as "a traveller from Japan and the local people" changed to the relationship between "a movie director and actors". It is a development of the story. Now the traveller is a movie director, and he has started recruiting actors to fill the cast of his new film. His purpose is to film a movie with his actors.

At this point, he has made the objective of this course ambiguous by recasting his identity as a movie director. On this first day, the students had gathered in this room to learn Japanese, but now, learning Japanese seems to be put aside in favour of "the real objective", filming a movie with this movie director. Before this scene, because of the teacher's initial set-up of the course, semiotic connections between what signifies and what is signified have already been weakened when it comes to "the classroom", "the teaching props", and "the teacher". Now, in addition, the teacher has obscured the aim of the course. The obscured objective has, on the one hand, dodged the students' predictions about the path that the course would take, and given them an opportunity to spontaneously relativise the conventional norms. On the other

hand, the new role adopted by the teacher has authorised him to act like a film director. The roles of a teacher and a film director are similar in that they both lead a project. However, they are different in practice. For example, whereas a teacher is mainly an academic instructor who explains things in a logical way, a film director is an artistic instructor who directs actors to express thoughts and emotions in their acting. In other words, at this point the teacher has acquired a wider range of choices of activities to deal with students' changing states of mind in both logical and emotional ways.

The teacher started his course as a language instructor, and as the students' new friend from Japan. Now he has revealed himself as a Japanese film director who is looking for a group of actors. As a consequence, the objective of this course now seems to have become the learning Japanese in order to act in a film with a friendly director. In other words, the purpose of the course has acquired composite semiotic characteristics, and hence wider affordances.

What does this change mean for the teacher's course design? I quote from the journal that the teacher made during his teaching. In the excerpt below, the teacher describes how he undertook a reading activity in the Elaboration.

> The 10th of June (ninth day of the course)
> Students pronounce better in repeating my Japanese after they have copied my intonation by just humming. (They can't read the text alone, though.)
> Also, introducing emotion activates their reading.
> Today, I showed students a kabuki video at the beginning. So, I carried out an idea of introducing kabuki intonation into the reading. Student 5 liked it very much.

Here, the teacher has given the students reading activities which are not usually seen in ordinary Japanese classes: humming the intonation of the phrases, emotional reading and playing with kabuki intonation. These activities are in fact connected with the teacher's role as a director.

First, the teacher asks the students to repeat only his intonation by making a humming sound with their mouths closed. While doing this, the students do not have to repeat the language itself, but are asked only to copy the tonal intonation of the Japanese phrases that the teacher has read from the textbook. Doing this with a tonal language such as Japanese makes language phrases sound like music. Inserting an activity like this during a reading activity can refresh

students as it is a different task from what they do in the reading activity, i.e. reading aloud Japanese characters from the textbook and taking their meaning from the associated translation column. It is presented as a relaxing activity in which the students do not have to worry about how the *hiragana* should be pronounced or what the phrases mean. It is also presented as a fun game as the students need to concentrate on extracting only the intonation – the high–low movement of the sound of the phrases – and copy this as precisely as possible. The teacher mentions in his diary that this task has made the students' pronunciation better.

Next, he asks the students to read the textbook paragraphs with emotion. In the emotional reading task, the teacher arbitrarily specifies an emotion that should be attached to the content of the paragraph to be read. For example, when he says "*Waraimasho!*" (Let's giggle!), he starts reading the paragraph with smiles and giggles as if he is reading a funny story. He does not care what the Japanese paragraph being read really means. The students repeat the words after the teacher, copying the way he reads. It causes laughter in the classroom because of the gaps and mismatches between the specified emotion and the real meaning of the sentence. For example, they read, "Showers and thunderstorms are expected this afternoon. The temperature today will be 32 degrees" with giggles, sobs or astonishment.

The first activity, repeating after the teacher by humming, is intended to lead to the students acquiring the correct Japanese intonation. This activity has a logical reason that is consistent with the study of prosody, and is not particularly aiming at stimulating the students' emotions. However, the changes in voice pitch that they make in this activity is closer to "music" than to logic. In addition, the students have been released from the stress of reading the Japanese characters.

In the second activity, the teacher has given the students a task that deviates from the significance of the language. In this task the students read out sentences that express specific meanings in a way that attaches an emotion that has nothing to do with what the sentence means. Here, the language is handled as emotional intonation that is detached from meaning.

Through these activities, the teacher has disassembled the semiotic ties among the components of the language in terms of conventional *social suggestive norms*, that is, characters, meaning, voice and emotion. In other words, the teacher has let the students experience another aspect of language and language learning that can lead them to relativise the beliefs that they have created under the influence of conventional *suggestive* norms. The teacher has been

able to rationalise these activities as “voice training” because of his role as “the film director”.

This role as the film director has given the teacher an ability to carry out his impromptu idea of playing with Japanese by reading with traditional kabuki-like intonation. As the cinema is normally considered an art form, a movie director has the privilege of carrying out any necessary artistic training activities and acting instruction. The teacher has the idea of using the kabuki theatre that he had introduced to give the students a cultural experience for “voice training” for his “film creation”. In other words, by adding the role of the film director to his personality, the teacher has obtained the freedom to carry out unusual activities as far as they can be considered as a part of his “film creation” in order to stimulate student’s *paraconscious* mental activities by giving them artistic and creative experiences.

6.6 Establishing Composite Semiotic Characteristics in the Course Objectives to Fulfil the Requirement of Suggestopedia

Suggestopedia theory (Lozanov, 1978, 2009) defines *paraconscious* mental activity as any mental activity other than that which occurs on the conscious level. *Paraconscious* mental activities work together with conscious mental activities to help maintain the entire brain activity. In Suggestopedia the teacher needs to stimulate the *paraconscious* area by providing information that is processed as *paraconscious* mental activity: intonation, body movements and emotion. Activities that involve such information are often unusual in terms of language learning within conventional *social suggestive norms*. The Suggestopedia teacher, however, has to carry out such “unusual” activities in his class to fulfil the two major requirements of a Suggestopedia course: (1) giving students an opportunity to relativise conventional *suggestive* norms, and (2) sending information to reach peripheral areas of students’ consciousness to stimulate their *paraconscious* mental activities. The teacher also has to carry out these activities without heightening the *anti-suggestive barriers* in the students’ minds, because the unusualness of an activity can heighten the three *anti-suggestive barriers*: the *affective barrier*, the *logical barrier* and the *ethical barrier*.

In this course, the teacher has attempted to fulfil these requirements by creating composite semiotic characteristics for the purposes of his course activities by adding the role of film director to his personality. He has attempted to maintain students’ *affective barrier*s at low levels by giving each student a role as an actor, with a different personality and a stage name that is different from his/her real self. The teacher has also attempted to maintain the students’

logical barriers at a low level by giving reasons for the unusual activities, such as voice training and acting training, as these activities normally form part of the production of a film. The *ethical barrier*s of students can also be maintained, as anything that happens in the story of the movie is not viewed as real.

A foreign language course may sometimes have a specific purpose that is different from the acquisition of generic language skills. For example, a foreign language course for restaurant staff who will serve foreign guests will include training students to become hospitality staff in a restaurant as well as training them to become speakers of the foreign language. From the Suggestopedia point of view, such a vocational language course could be categorised as an immersion program (e.g. Lapkin & Swain, 1983) which might use Total Physical Response techniques (Asher, 2010) and will stimulate student's *paraconscious* mental activity through its association with body movements. Such a course can therefore also widen the scope of affordances by adding another purpose to the language course in terms of semiotics. However, students in such a course are not free from conventional *social suggestive norms*, because the purpose of the course is strongly attached to the students' real-life goals. In the case of the course under discussion in this thesis, the Suggestopedia teacher has established "film production" as the purpose of the course, and this task can stimulate students' *paraconsciousness* as it involves artistic activities such as acting and singing, and using particular intonations and body movements. In addition, students can detach themselves from their real lives in the sense that they have stage names and roles that are different from reality. When a student is going to play a role in the film as an actor, his/her actor's self is not his/her real self. In this sense, each student's real self is securely protected from conventional *social suggestive norms*. The detachment of and protection from conventional *social suggestive norms* can also be a mechanism for the teacher to maintain students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level when he gives them activities unique to Suggestopedia. This means that this setting gives the teacher a wide choice of activities without being too worried about heightening students' *anti-suggestive barriers*.

Thus the teacher has established an environment in which he can fulfil the requirements of Suggestopedia by establishing composite semiotic characters and creating parallel objectives for the course.

6.7 Summary

In this chapter, I have analysed the teacher's conduct in preparing the classroom environment, in using teaching materials, and in introducing his personality in the course to get an insight into the practical methods that the teacher has used to create enough flexibility in the course to be able to respond to the students' ever-changing states of mind (Lozanov, 2009, pp. 114–117), which is a requirement that Suggestopedia places on the teacher.

Lozanov regards the entire Suggestopedia course as a game that is isolated from the conventional *social suggestive norms* of the real world. He states, "The whole learning process is a strange, pleasant, double-plane [of conscious and *paraconscious*] game" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 121). To make this happen, the teacher had to create an environment where the students can spontaneously participate in what Lozanov calls the "common game-project" (p. 148) while, on the other hand, he had to maintain the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level by flexibly handling their ever-changing states of mind. That is, his course has to be "strange, pleasant, double-plane" and flexible.

The teacher has utilised the composite semiotic characteristics of various symbols to accomplish his task. By using the arbitrary nature of semiotics, he has loosened the traditional symbol–meaning ties of several key elements in the course. In so doing, he has widened the scope of the semantic affordances of the elements by semiotically connecting those symbols with different elements to create new symbol–meaning connections. He has widened the scope of semantic affordances of "the classroom" and "the teaching props" by showing and using them for art and play as well as study. He has also done this in relation to the affordances of "the teacher" by concurrently holding the positions of a traveller, a film director and a language instructor. He has given a part of his assumed name to a stuffed bear to associate it with himself and the associated affordances: the friendliness and easiness of a traveller and the prestige of a teacher and a film director. The bear was then held by the students to comfort and encourage them when they had to do a challenging task. The teacher also widened the scope of the meaning of "language" from a tool for conveying messages to an artistic toy which one can play with. This alteration of the meaning of "language" and its associated activities was carried out in a way that was designed to be safe in terms of the *anti-suggestive barriers*, as a result of previous alterations that were made to the affordances of the "course objectives". The teacher widened the affordances of the course objectives from being the mastery of a language to participation in a film production project. This change made the change

in the meaning of “language” safer, because the change in the course objective has given the teacher a rationale for training the “actors” in artistic ways.

This unique environment is one where the conventional *social suggestive norms* should not strongly affect students’ behaviour, and so they can spontaneously begin to compare the norms of the world of Suggestopedia’s “common game” with the conventional *social suggestive norms* by which they had previously been influenced. In this teaching environment, the teacher has attempted to give the students learning content as a holistic experience of surprise, laughter, pleasantness, ease and artistic emotion without heightening the *anti-suggestive barriers* in the learning group. He has made this possible through an appropriate use of the arbitrariness of semiotics to create a semiotically flexible environment.

Chapter 7 Discussion and Conclusion

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I will summarise the findings obtained in the previous chapters and discuss how Suggestopedia theory was implemented in the Japanese language course in ways that were consistent with sociocultural theory, especially with semiotics and affordance theory. First, I will interpret the key concepts of Suggestopedia theory using ideas from semiotics, and next, I discuss how the elements of the teaching activities in Suggestopedia work together semiotically to form an integrated whole within the system of Suggestopedia. I will then present answers to my research questions in the conclusion to this thesis.

7.2 Discussion 1: The Sociocultural Interpretation and the Practical Implementation of the *Desuggestive-Suggestive Process*

7.2.1 Introduction

In this thesis, I have attempted a semiotic analysis of selected scenes in the organisation of a Suggestopedic Japanese language course and its teacher's course preparation and teaching practice. In my analysis, it was seen that semiotic elements in the course environment through the affordances they provide play a significant role in the course design and the teaching practice structured on the basis of Suggestopedia theory. This suggests that Suggestopedia theory includes elements closely related with semiotic theory, although this was not made explicit in Lozanov's work. This means that the key concepts around *suggestion* that were proposed by Lozanov can be interpreted within the framework of semiotic theory. In the following discussion, I will attempt to interpret these concepts through semiotic and affordance theory as they are revealed in the design of the teaching and in teaching practice.

7.2.2 *Suggestion*

Understanding the use of "*suggestion*" in Lozanov's work has always been the first and biggest question for a teacher trying to understand and implement Suggestopedia. The key terminologies in Suggestopedia were defined and explained by Lozanov in the scope of his specialty of medical science, brain physiology, psychology and psychotherapy. From this perspective, he defined *suggestion* as being all stimuli that are sensed and processed by the whole

brain and that potentially influence the human personality as a whole through brain activity (Lozanov, 1978, 2009). However, as Lozanov also recognised, it has not necessarily been easy for teachers to understand the term when they attempt to implement or apply his method (Lozanov, 2009). Lozanov repeatedly expressed the view in his teacher training that Suggestopedia had been misunderstood because of the use of the term *suggestion* (Lozanov, 2006, 31-Jan-1989, 1-Feb-1989, 15-Feb-1989, 6-Dec-1998). Indeed, an understanding that the use of the term *suggestion* is the same that it has in hypnosis – i.e. a technique to manipulate personality – has been widely shared since Suggestopedia was first introduced to the United States in a book written by Ostrander and Schroeder (1970); but Lozanov clearly stated that Suggestopedia uses only "non-manipulative communicative suggestion in a normal state of vigilance" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 25). However, if *suggestion* in Suggestopedia only relates to communicative suggestions in a normal state, how can a teacher give students *suggestions* to obtain greater effectiveness than in ordinary teaching? Does the teacher need any special skills to provide *suggestions*? If so, what should the teacher recognise as *suggestion* to make Suggestopedia work?

As stated above, Lozanov defines *suggestion* as all stimuli processed by the whole brain which potentially influence the human personality (Lozanov, 1978; 2009). In this sense, the materials and the phenomena themselves that exist around a person are not yet a *suggestion*, but they become a *suggestion* when they are processed by the brain as stimuli. Stimuli are assigned meanings in the brain, and they make *suggestions* to the person. In this sense, a person makes decisions in reaction not only to stimuli but also to the meanings assigned to the stimuli, that is to *suggestion*. In other words, Lozanov's term, *suggestion*, includes the concept of "interpretation". This suggests that the *suggestion* of a symbol in Lozanov's terms is the range of interpretations of the symbol in the situation and the society; that is, that it is a synonym of "affordance" in semiotics. Hence, "accepting a *suggestion*" can be paraphrased as "having one's thoughts and decisions influenced by one's own interpretation of a symbol in a certain situation in a society". Equally, "giving a *suggestion*" can be paraphrased as "preparing affordances so that a symbol can be interpreted in a certain way".

In this study, it was observed that the teacher continuously made an effort to alter the affordances of symbols within his Japanese course in the preferred direction required by Suggestopedia theory. As analysed in Chapter 6, the teacher was attempting to alter the shape of affordances of symbols by weakening negative meanings and strengthening positive mean-

ings. Taking instances of the symbol "learning" as an example, he avoided the negative meanings from the range of affordances – such as "learning" as "discipline", "endurance" and "endeavour" and derivative meanings such as "painful", "anxious" and "bored" – and emphasised the positive and motivating meanings of the symbol "learning" – such as "enlightening", "pursuit", "discovery" and "creation" and the derivative meanings "enjoyable", "achievement" and "satisfaction". On the other hand, using the arbitrary nature of symbol–meaning connections, the teacher attempted to alter the shape of the affordances by adding new meanings to the existing affordances of the symbol. For example, the teacher used this arbitrariness to merge meanings in the affordance of "small stuffed bear" and the affordance of "teacher" by making them share the same sounds in their names. The teacher implemented this process of altering affordances using the interaction with the students in the physical environment of the classroom and in the context of the story that the teacher has arranged. If such interactions in a prepared context are considered as a form of "communicative suggestion", it is possible to say, as Lozanov requires, that the *suggestion* was given through natural communication. Therefore, in this course, the teacher attempted to adjust the possible influence of the symbols, that is the potential *suggestion*, by working to weaken or strengthen certain meanings of, and add new meanings to, the range of meanings available, i.e. the affordances. Thus, what Lozanov calls "*suggestion* used in natural communication" can be interpreted as the presentation of selected affordances of the symbols used in classroom interactions and communications. Hence, what the teacher should be aware of is the symbols that exist in the learning environment, and what these symbols could possibly mean to students, i.e. the scope of affordance of each symbol. The teacher should then choose the particular meanings of a symbol that are desired, emphasise them by selecting the occasions where the symbol is used, and connect the affordances of the different symbols to bring them to share the same desired meaning.

7.2.3 *Desuggestion* and the *Desuggestive-Suggestive Process*

The *desuggestive-suggestive process* (Lozanov, 1978, 2009) is a conceptual process through which Suggestopedia makes it possible for students to acquire "inner freedom" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 14) . "Inner freedom" is defined as a state in which one can be oneself regardless of the situation by being liberated from a state of "inner conformity" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 53) in which one has lost critical thinking as a result of being psychologically familiarised with social norms. To realise the *desuggestive-suggestive process* in an actual language course, the teacher first needs to understand what *desuggestion* means.

Lozanov mentioned two aspects of *desuggestion*. Firstly, *desuggestion* involves escaping from the influence of existing (traditional or conventional) *social suggestive norms*. Secondly, *desuggestion* is being aware of *suggestion*, being able to judge *suggestions* based on critical thinking, and choosing a preferable *suggestion* for oneself (Lozanov, 2006, 6-Dec–1998).

There seem to be two options for the teacher to allow students to become aware of *suggestion*. One is to let them know of the existence and function of a *suggestion* by speaking about it. For example, Lozanov's series of lectures in his teacher training would be an example of this. The other option is to create a context in the situation in which it is easy to understand what is going on without words. In an obvious and plausible context, the teacher can present alternative interpretations of a symbol that are different from what students believe to be its only interpretation in conventional society. This can make students aware of the *social suggestive norms* that have influenced their thoughts and decisions. The teacher we observed in this study took this second option, reflecting Lozanov's requirement that a teacher must give *suggestions* as part of normal communication. However, he also avoided using verbal communication in the support language (English) to impress on the students the usefulness and learnability of the target language, especially at the beginning of the course. Using a supporting language could interfere with the teacher's intention; and it would be impossible for the teacher to use Japanese to explain about a *suggestion* and its influence at the very beginning of a Japanese course.

If, as discussed in the previous section, we paraphrase *suggestion* in Suggestopedia as the presentation of ways of interpreting – i.e. the affordances – of a symbol in semiotic terms, we can also paraphrase other terms used by Lozanov. For example, the influence of the conventional *social suggestive norms* can be interpreted in semiotic terms as the thoughts and behaviours that have been acquired through one's life experience within the scope of affordances of conventional society. Further, in this way, we can also understand the term *desuggestion* as referring to the liberation of one's thoughts when one becomes aware of the relative and arbitrary nature of the connection between symbols and meanings. This makes it possible for a person to spontaneously choose more positive and productive meanings from the range of meanings in the scope of affordances of surrounding symbols. If one can notice that one's low self-image is a result of interpreting symbols in the regular way it is done in one's own society, and also notice there are better ways to interpret the same symbols in another society, then one can avoid unwanted interpretations of those symbols and choose the more positive way

of interpreting them to project a better self-image. With this understanding, the teacher can invite students to *desuggest* themselves by altering the shape of the affordances of the symbols attached to a student's personality such as "age", "gender", "education" and "profession". For example, the teacher observed in this study gave each student the freedom to choose his/her name, age, gender, education and profession for the course. By creating different self-attributions, they could relativise their real selves with fictional selves during the course. In other words, the learning ability they perform through playing with other possible personalities is not the ability of the person they are role-playing, but their real ability. This fact allows them to start relativising the meaning of their attribution, and notice that personal attributions in one society are not an absolute determinant of learning ability.

With this understanding of *desuggestion*, the *desuggestive-suggestive process* can be semiotically interpreted as an interdependent process of *suggestion* and *desuggestion* by providing resources to support the process. First, the teacher proposes new affordances that are different from those in the conventional *social suggestive norms* (giving *suggestions*). Second, as a result, the student can become aware of the relativity of the symbol–meaning relationship (becoming *desuggested*). Third, the student can spontaneously choose meanings from the proposed options created in the relativisation of affordances to be more positively influenced for learning (receiving *suggestions* in the "normal state of vigilance"). In this process, *suggestion* and *desuggestion* need one another to function.

7.2.4 *Infantilisation*

Lozanov proposed *infantilisation* as a conceptual means to enable the *desuggestive-suggestive process* in a Suggestopedia course (Lozanov, 1978). *Infantilisation* was introduced together with two other conceptual means, *prestige* and *pseudo-passiveness*, which are discussed in the following subsections.

Lozanov explains *infantilisation* as follows:

> [Infantilisation] is a universal reaction of respect, inspiration and confidence which, without disrupting the level of the normal intellectual activity, considerably increases the perception, memory and creativity functions. In infantilization, perception, mem-

> orization and creative imagination seem to return, to some extent, to the more favorable level of the earlier age periods. (Lozanov, 1978, p. 191)

Lozanov also notes that the term *infantilisation* should be used "in the sense of increased trust and receptivity while retaining a critical attitude and self-control" (Lozanov, 2009, p. 103). His account makes it clear that *infantilisation* does not mean putting a person in a helpless state in relation to incoming *suggestion*. Hence, this concept does not conflict with the concept of *desuggestion* as the *infantilised* person retains critical thinking while being more easily able to accept *suggestion*.

Earlier in this chapter, I interpreted *suggestion* as the semantic affordance of a symbol, and *desuggestion* as relativising the symbol–meaning connection to make ways to interpret the symbol choosable. On this basis, *infantilisation* can be interpreted as giving adults the semiotically flexible environment that they once had in their early childhood in order to make *desuggestion* possible. In this sense, it is possible to say *infantilisation* is a means to start the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. Therefore, an *infantilised* person in Suggestopedia terms is a mature and experienced adult who has semiotically flexible thoughts like an infant, who is free from *social suggestive norms*.

To call such an infant forth from inside an adult, the teacher observed in this thesis firstly treated the students as mature adults to make it clear that he respected the adult side of the students. In so doing, he did not damage the students' self-esteem. Next, he gave the students the role of local people by treating them as such. In the relationship between the newly arrived foreign traveller and the local people, the students were naturally assigned the role of helping the teacher as traveller. The fact that, in this relationship, the person who provided help was not the teacher but the students, sent the students a message which can be understood as the teacher showing he respects the students. On this basis, the teacher began by presenting a model of *infantilisation* by showing the students that an adult can also enjoy child-like activities. He led his students to sing frequently, and to dance at times, but the songs he used in the course were selected from songs for a mature audience, not for a child. When he changed his role from "traveller" to "movie director", he again showed respect for his students as independent adult actors. The students were able to choose their own stage names and backgrounds and created their own way of acting out the characters in the script of the movie. In such an environment, the students could play with their other selves, acting out another char-

acter in the movie while keeping their real selves. This was created as a psychologically protected environment for the students in the sense that their real selves were securely covered by the layers of other selves. In this environment, students could participate in a kind of "pretend play"[35] (e.g. Pederson et al., 1981; Bergen, 2002). Children's pretend play may be categorised as a type of role-play. However, there are key differences between role-play and the ways of playing seen in the class. In role-play, students play specified roles in a scripted dialogue in a limited situation. In contrast, in the pretend play that occurred in the class, there are only roles and a situation, but no script. This resembles the pretend play of children, who spontaneously develop the situation and necessary language communication. Moreover, in pretend play, children can freely assign meanings to the things around them to use in their story so that, for example, a piano stool can become a rocket cockpit and a keyboard the controller switch panel. They could go on a space trip in the rocket and find a strange creature, which is really a cat. The teacher observed in this study characteristically created an environment in which pretend play naturally occurs among the students. He directed the pretend play in the Elaboration to a setting which justified the role-taking and the role-playing. In the semiotically tolerant environment of pretend play, the teacher and the students were able to freely assign meanings to things around them, and the *suggestions* coming from one another could be easily accepted. In this way, a pretend story of the film production that would cover the whole course was created. That is, the teacher realised *infantilisation* in his course through his practices.

7.2.5 *Prestige*

Another Suggestopedia term, *prestige*, is also an element that helps in creating an environment where *suggestion* can become more acceptable (Lozanov, 2009). Lozanov explains that *prestige* can do this by heightening the credibility of the source of the presented information (Lozanov, 2009, p. 104). How can this term be interpreted in the terms of semiotic theory?

If we interpret *suggestion* as a symbol's affordance, *prestige* itself is also a *suggestion*. Therefore, *prestige* makes another case that, in Suggestopedia, *desuggestion* is attained by the use

[35] "Pretend play" is a term used in the study of early childhood development. It is a form of child's play in which children copy fairytales or the real life of adults. It usually starts spontaneously in a group of children, and they freely assign roles to themselves and the surrounding symbols in accordance with the scope of their affordances in the course of developing their own story (Pederson et al., 1981). Researchers such as Bergen (2002) believe pretend play helps children to develop their cognitive, social, communicative and academic skills.

of *suggestion* because the influence of *prestige* is to create an environment in which one can realise one's own unexpectedly high ability to learn (i.e. *desuggestion*). Lozanov considers as respected such things as the social position of a doctor or a teacher, music composed by famous composers, pictures painted by famous painters and traditions maintained in history as *prestigious* (Lozanov, 1978, 2009). In other words, those symbols that contain meanings that the majority of the members of a society recognise affirmatively in their affordances can be judged as *prestige*. Lozanov also considers *prestige* to be a type of *placebo* (Lozanov, 2009, p. 31), and it is possible to interpret the effectiveness of a *placebo* as brought about by the affordances of symbols that have *prestige* in their scope, such as "doctor" and "hospital". In a semiotic account, if something that is naturally not effective can become effective to someone because of the symbols in the context, this can be explained as an affordance. It is made possible through the arbitrariness of the symbol–meaning relationship in which any symbol can mean anything.

In his teacher training course, Lozanov repeated that the teacher should never lose *prestige*, as losing *prestige* would mean losing the primary power for operationalising *desuggestion* in the course. That is, for example, the teacher should avoid going out to drink with students and getting drunk during the course (Lozanov, 2006, 10-Feb-1989) or wearing clothes that emphasise sexual parts of body when teaching (28-Aug-1989). This means that teachers should avoid putting themselves in a position where they become associated with symbols that the majority of the members of a society interpret negatively. The affordances of these symbols can fuse with one another, and negatively influence the affordances of the symbol "teacher", which is an important source of *prestige*. In contrast, if the teacher can selectively bring in symbols that the majority of the members of a society interpret as *prestigious*, s/he can expect *prestige* effects in the course. This necessarily implies that the teacher should be sensitive to the norms of the society to which the students belong, and should prepare for the course with symbols that can be interpreted as showing *prestige*. The teacher should also be sensitive to the meanings that can be projected in the scope of affordances of a symbol. For example, "authority" as a symbol does not always function as *prestige* as it has negative meanings that limit freedom in the scope of its affordances, such as "enforcing", "prohibition", "control" and "dictatorship". In this sense, the teacher should not act as an authoritarian.

Looking back at the teacher's conduct in this course, he used *prestige* effects on many occasions. The symbol "teacher" was already a symbol meaning *prestige* even before he came into the first class. He used his *prestige* to get students' attention at his first appearance, to behave

himself as he wished and to make his course something different from an ordinary language course. Because the meaning "leader" is found in the scope of the symbol "teacher", the students paid attention to him and accepted him behaving like a traveller. The students also accepted Japanese as something worth speaking because, by then, it had already been associated with the *prestige* of the teacher. Furthermore, *prestige* made it possible for the teacher to shift his role arbitrarily from traveller to movie director, which added another way of claiming *prestige* for the teacher. From this, the teacher was able to use two *prestige* options when required, one was of the symbol "teacher = language course leader", and the other was of the symbol "movie director = leader of a movie production". He then enabled his movie director's *prestige* to be transferred to the affordances of the "stuffed bear" by giving a part of the name of the movie director (Kumada) to the mascot bear (Kuma-chan). By using the *prestige* of the movie director, the teacher attempted to diminish negative meanings such as "kid's toy", "fake" and "foolish" in the scope of its affordances. The teacher also used *prestige* from other sources. He associated the *prestige* of famous composers with what he was reading in the Concert sessions by telling students the names of the composers before he played the background music on the audio set. The music played in the Concert sessions was classical music, which is also associated with *prestige*. What the sound of the music expresses (solemnity, magnificence, elegance, vividness and tranquillity) can also be associated with *prestige*. The words and phrases of the Japanese text had nothing to do with the genre of the music or the composers. However, in semiotic terms, any symbol–meaning connection can be established in an association of affordances. The teacher could expect *prestige* effects from associating his course with symbols that have *prestigious* meanings.

7.2.6 *Pseudo-passiveness*

The third means to make *suggestion* more acceptable is what Lozanov calls "*pseudo-passiveness*", the state in which one looks passive outside but is mentally very active inside. As discussed above, both the setting up of the course and the ways of verbal and non-verbal communication are forms of *suggestion* which are interpreted as affordance, i.e. the scope of symbol–meaning connections. It is therefore important to consider how the teacher established kinds of symbols in practice, and how he used them.

From the analysis, the teacher's behaviours can be understood as deliberately chosen for the purpose of creating a state of *pseudo-passiveness*. As seen in Chapter 4, the teacher started

the course by putting the students in the position of onlookers (or an audience) to show that something out of the ordinary was happening. He came into the classroom in a traveller's costume, went straight to the posters on the walls and slowly strolled around the room while looking at the posters and speaking to himself. At this point, the students – ignored by the teacher – were put into the position of onlookers. As a result, the students were not required to take any action. All they had to do was watch what the teacher was doing, and in this sense, they were in a passive state. However, at the same time, they would have begun a process of trying to understand the situation. Looking at the man murmuring while going back and forth in the classroom with a traveller's bag over his shoulder, the students would start trying to understand what was going on. In other words, the students started a creative search to interconnect with their existing knowledge in order to figure out the meanings of the symbols that the teacher adopted (body movement, costume, belongings, voice intonation and facial expressions) while they were experiencing the situation from their seats. Therefore, in the very beginning moments of the course, the teacher attempted to put the students into a state where they were physically passive, and at the same time, mentally active.

As Lozanov says "what is required [to acquire a state of *pseudo-passiveness*] is only the set-up" (Lozanov, 1978, p. 198), The teacher did not verbally instruct the students to put themselves in a state of *pseudo-passiveness*. The first thing he did was to come into the room wearing casual clothes, a baseball cap backwards on his head, sunglasses, with a traveller's bag on his shoulder and a single-lens reflex camera around his neck. However, needless to say, such a way of starting a language course is not usual. As soon as the teacher came into the room in this way, the students were put in the position of bystanders, not language learners, because the teacher simply ignored them. That was probably not something that the students had expected. The unexpectedness of the situation can be understood as aimed at stimulating the students to understand and adapt themselves to the situation. Hence, at the point that the teacher came into the classroom as a traveller, the students spontaneously put themselves in a state of *pseudo-passiveness* as a result of the way that the teacher established the context. In other words, the set-up and the context that the teacher prepared with the selected symbols gave a direction to the scope of affordances in the situation, and led the students into a *pseudo-passive* state.

At this point, it must be noted that the students already knew that the person who was acting as the traveller was their teacher. That is, the teacher–student relationship was already there for the teacher to be able to expect a *prestige* effect in the classroom. In other words, the

prestige that made it possible for the teacher to act like a traveller was created and supported by this predetermined teacher-student relationship. The students would have attempted to remove him from the room if this person were really an unexpected intruder. In other words, the teacher used the *prestige* existing in this predetermined set-up to put his students in a *pseudo-passive* state in natural communication. The students' position changed from that of bystanders to that of participants when the teacher acting as a traveller asked students to commit to his role. Soon after, the teacher revealed that the traveller was a movie director. When he did this, he asked the students as local people to play a role in his movie and the role of the students shifted to the role of actors in his movie production. Students were also passive in the sense that they easily accepted the series of changing roles according to the teacher's shifting roles. However, at the same time, they were creative and free when they created their own identities in the course by choosing new names, ages, professions and genders. Hence, they selected their own ways to participate in this course spontaneously and creatively.

Another example of *pseudo-passiveness* was seen in the Concert session, as analysed in Chapter 5. The purpose of the Concert sessions is to present a large amount of language material to students, who are in a state of *pseudo-passiveness* (Lozanov, 1978, p. 197). For this reason, putting students into a *pseudo-passive* state is more important in this session than in the Introduction and the Elaboration. Hence, a brief verbal instruction was made in the support language before the teacher started reading in this session, but this type of instruction was not seen on other occasions in this course. The teacher needed to instruct students on how to participate in this session in a language that the students could understand, as this session is unique to Suggestopedia. At this point, the teacher shifted his role to that of troubadour (the poet). This could mean the students were back in a position of merely passive onlookers in the troubadour–audience relationship. However, the teacher kept stimulating the students mentally during his reading by using the dynamism and cheerfulness of the music, unique intonation and a colourful voice in reading. He sometimes stopped reading and let the students just listen to a passage of music, and at one point he invited the students to stand up and read the Japanese passage with him. In doing so, he tried to maintain the students' *pseudo-passive* states.

The method that the teacher used to put his students into a state of *pseudo-passiveness* involved using a role relationship in such a way that when a role is determined on one side, another role is automatically determined on the other. He kept shifting his roles to stimulate the students in order to provoke their creativity and spontaneity. In this process, the affordance

of each symbol that determined the counterpart role relationships was made visible. For example, in the "teacher–student" relationship in language teaching, the symbol "student" naturally made visible the presence of the "teacher" as the counterpart. Hence, when one role is the students', the other role is determined as the teacher's. He applied this method to the role relationships of "actor–audience", "traveller–local people", "movie director–actors" and "troubadour–listeners". Such counterpart role determination is in the scope of each symbol's affordance. Therefore, *pseudo-passiveness* can be interpreted as a mental state that is established with the help of affordances (i.e. *suggestion*) in which the students can easily accept information, be creative and be spontaneous. In this sense, *pseudo-passiveness* in the Suggestopedia course is preconditioned by the *prestige* of the symbol "teacher". Therefore, it is understandable that the Suggestopedia teacher must keep his/her *prestige* throughout the course as it is the primary power for the whole *suggestive* process.

7.2.7 Summary

In this section I have discussed the meaning of basic concepts in Suggestopedia and how the teacher worked to operationalise *suggestion* by using the theory of semiotics and considering its practical application in the course. In conclusion, the concepts on which Suggestopedia is based can be interpreted in terms of semiotics and affordance theory without contradiction. In this interpretation, *suggestion* can be understood as involving the affordances of symbols; *desuggestion* as altering the affordances of symbols to relativise pre-existing affordances; and the *desuggestive-suggestive process* as a chain-reaction reciprocal process of *suggestion* and *desuggestion* in which symbol–meaning relationships loosen and reconnect in creative ways. The three means of *suggestion* are interdependent semiotic conditions with which affordance theory plays a role to operationalise the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. This whole process of *desuggestion* and *suggestion* can be considered as a practical method which can realise the claim made in Vygotsky's constructivism that people use language and physical signs to change social relations into psychological functions. Being *desuggested* in Suggestopedia is a mental development. Suggestopedia triggers students' mental development by giving them an environment in which they can easily negotiate with a new small social group created in a language course so that they can maintain this inner change in the outer and larger society. What Suggestopedia teachers do to prepare such a small society is to use a new semiotic system through *suggestions* to help trigger *desuggestion* in students' minds, which can be perceived as a practical method to realise Vygotsky's ideas.

7.3 Discussion 2: Understanding the Concept of *Social Suggestive Norms* and Their Use in the Suggestopedia Course

7.3.1 Introduction

As mentioned in the previous sections, Suggestopedia aims at relativising conventional *social suggestive norms* to let students become aware of and avoid negative influences from the symbol–meaning relationships (i.e. *suggestions*) of the social norms. However, it should be noted that the Suggestopedia teacher observed in this thesis did not look to avoid all influences from conventional *social suggestive norms*. What, then, is the *social suggestive norm*? What does the social norm mean in the *desuggestive-suggestive process*? How does the teacher avoid or use the affordances of the symbols within specific *social suggestive norms*?

7.3.2 Selective Use of *Social Suggestive Norms* in the Classroom

As mentioned in Section 7.2.5, *prestige* is a meaning included in the scope of affordances of many symbols such as "teacher", "movie director" and "classical music". Such symbols are associated with high status by the majority of the members of society. In this sense, these symbols' association with *prestige* is a part of the function of conventional *social suggestive norms*. From this point of view, when the teacher first used the *prestige* of the symbol "teacher", he made use of conventional *social suggestive norms*. Indeed, it would be difficult for the teacher to put the students into a *pseudo-passive* state at the very beginning of the new language course without help from the *social suggestive norms* that tell the students that the teacher has *prestige*.

When the teacher made use of conventional *social suggestive norms* in the classroom, what he had to consider was what the symbol he was using in the teaching context could mean to the students. In other words, he needed to grasp what meanings are contained in the scope of the conventional affordances of the symbol, as he needed to make a decision about which meaning he should use or emphasise to make the *desuggestive-suggestive process* work. In constructing his practice in the lesson, the teacher elected to use or emphasise some meanings associated with the symbol "teacher" while he did not touch on other meanings. At the first moment of the Introduction, he drew on the teacher's "responsibility" and "authority". In this first moment of the course, the teacher could expect the students to respect what he does in his classroom because that is the social norm. With the social norm that the teacher is the

authority in the course and a responsible person, the students would stay in the room, at least for a while, and try to understand the situation even though something unusual was happening from their point of view.[36] This psychological attitude of the students would give the teacher time to alter the affordances of other basic symbols in the course. In this time, the teacher could add new meanings to the affordance of the symbol "teacher". When he went into the classroom wearing the traveller's costume and started talking to himself as if he did not notice anyone in the room, he actually started creating a new affordance of "the teacher" outside the frame of the conventional *social suggestive norms*. Then, in a series of interactions with the students, he de-emphasised the negative meanings of the symbol – such as "punisher", "commander" or "inhibitor" – and emphasised meanings such as "friendly person who welcomes help from students" and "person who encourages students' spontaneous efforts towards communication". In addition, he emphasised the teacher's leadership by actively involving students in the traveller's context. He also emphasised his teaching skills by making students understand him even though he only spoke Japanese, and by enabling them to use some Japanese phrases effectively in the context. All this time, the teacher kept sending the message that he was outside the framework of the conventional *social suggestive norms* by behaving as if teaching was not his first priority. In so doing, the teacher diminished the unwanted parts within the conventional scope of affordance of the symbol "teacher" and emphasised the wanted parts in order to construct a new set of meanings in the affordance of the symbol for the Suggestopedia course.

What he used in this process was the group of symbols that can depict a typical figure of the traveller. Casual clothes, sunglasses, traveller's bag, hat, camera and his attitude of curiousity about the surrounding environment were all indicating that the person was a typical traveller. This typical image of "traveller" is a form of stereotype. Stereotypes, for good or ill, are a strong form of affordance that is shared by the majority of the members of a society. Therefore, in the stereotypical context, the development of the story is obvious to everyone, and communication can function without language as far as it corresponds to the context. This also means that the stereotype is a product of *social suggestive norms* in the sense that the majority of the members of the society associate a certain symbol with a certain meaning. Hence, so to speak, the teacher used the conventional *social suggestive norms* to show the students that he is a teacher who stands outside of the scope of the affordance of the symbol

[36] This psychological phenomenon can be explained as the "continuity principle" (Omer & Alon, 1994), a phenomenon whereby a person who has been in a continuous situation maintains his/her previous behaviour, even when a sudden and unusual event happens.

"teacher" in the conventional *suggestive* norms. In this process, he has attempted to diminish the negative preconceptions associated with symbols such as "teacher" and "new language", and at the same time, he has emphasised the positive meanings of those symbols in his course. Diminishing negative preconceptions and emphasising positive meanings at the same time is, in other words, the realisation of the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. He operationalised this process by using the strong ties between symbol and meaning in the stereotype, i.e. the function of conventional *social suggestive norms*.

7.3.3 Summary

In the process of starting up the *desuggestive-suggestive process* in his course, the teacher selectively used meanings associated with each symbol from its semantic scope of affordances that are built into the conventional *social suggestive norms*. In particular, he used the strength of the conventional symbol–meaning connection in stereotypes to create a plausible context that, in fact, leads the students to go out of the frame of conventional norms. He used a positive set of meanings in the scope of conventional affordances and diminished the negative set of meanings. At the same time, aiming to stimulate the students' creativity, he added new meanings to the conventional affordances in order to expand the scope beyond the conventional *social suggestive norms*. The teacher used this process to liberate students from unwanted influences from the conventional *social suggestive norms* and present a new set of affordances, and started building the course's own *social suggestive norms*, which stimulate students' creativity, i.e. their natural brain functions. This can also be perceived as a mental scaffolding formed for the students by using symbols in a sense of Vygotsky's constructivist term.

7.4 Discussion 3: *Anti-Suggestive Barriers* in Semiotic Terms

7.4.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 1, care must be taken with the *anti-suggestive barriers* in the effective use of *suggestion* (Lozanov, 1978, p. 164). The *desuggestive-suggestive process* would be difficult to use if the initial *suggestion* was blocked by the students' *anti-suggestive barriers*. Therefore, the teacher must take action to control the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* in order to eliminate any obstacles standing in the way of incoming *suggestions*, and so he simultaneously employs the different means of *suggestion*, such as *prestige*, *infantilisation*

and *pseudo-passiveness*. The *anti-suggestive barriers* can be heightened against new incoming *suggestions* by incongruity, odd feelings and uncomfortableness in logic, intuition and ethics. For example, any incongruence in logic may create a distrust of the information source, odd feelings may cause fear or hate and remarks or conduct which go against one's ethics may cause disgust. This raises the question: What kind of care was taken in the semiotic context by the teacher in the actual classroom?

7.4.2 Arranging Affordances to Manage the Students' *Anti-Suggestive Barriers*

As discussed in the previous sections, the teacher used conventional *social suggestive norms* to start up the *desuggestive-suggestive process*. The use of conventional norms secured the effect of teacher's *prestige* to minimise risks of heightening the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* in the initial communication with them in the target language. In addition, from the perspective of the management of *anti-suggestive barriers*, the use of conventional norms was also effective as it allowed for the use of affordances that were familiar to students in their everyday lives. In the Introduction of the course, the teacher made efforts to create a context and situation in which the students could maintain their *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level. He organised each symbol and its affordances in order to affect one another and so created a context in which students could easily follow the situation. For example, the teacher organised tangible symbols such as the camera, the sunglasses, the traveller's bag and the passport to create intangible symbols such as "a context with a traveller who needs help from local people". This organisation of the symbols and their affordances is logically sound, intuitively enjoyable and ethically neutral. Another example is the teacher's use of the stuffed bear. He used the affordance of the tangible symbol "small bear-shaped stuffed toy" when he assigned the students a challenging task such as oral language reproduction to ease anxiety through its softness and cuteness. At the same time, he associated the bear with the academic side of the course by giving the students the task of describing the characteristics of the bear. Also, giving the bear a name and treating it as the course mascot communicated a message that the bear is a respected member of the learning group. In addition, the similarity in the sounds of the names of the bear and the teacher connected the affordances of both symbols. Hence, the stuffed bear in this course came to mean something academic, something comfortable and something to be respected. Being academic does not conflict with logic, the reason why the students are in the course. Being comfortable does not conflict with the students' intuition that it is worth attending this course. Being respected does not conflict with the students' ethics. In this way, the teacher aimed to expand the affordances of the intangible symbol "language

course" by attaching the stuffed bear's affordances to the language course, without heightening students' *anti-suggestive barriers*.

In addition, the symbols that the teacher used to maintain low *anti-suggestive barriers* were mostly non-verbal symbols. He used both tangible and intangible symbols, but he used very few verbal symbols – that is, he did not use the support language except for a few examples, such as when he briefly instructed the students on how to participate in the Concert sessions. He did not give detailed explanations about the effectiveness of Suggestopedia in English nor did he use English even when he was encouraging the students. In order to maintain the students' low *anti-suggestive barriers*, the teacher could have said "Well done!", "Excellent!" or "Don't worry" in English, to encourage the students or remove their anxiety. However, he did not do so.

The first possible reason is that, if the teacher predominantly used the support language, it would diminish the value of the use of the target language as the means of communication in the course. In other words, giving the support language the role of managing the course could have compromised the meaning "practical communicative means" in the affordances of the symbol of the target language, in this case the symbol "Japanese". If acquiring the skills to communicate in Japanese is the students' main purpose for attending the course, lowering the position of target-language communication could also reduce the significance of the course itself. In this case, continuing to attend the course with a reduced significance for attendance could cause discrepancies between the reasons for attending and the real situation. That would heighten the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* in the sense that it would lower the level of logical consistency.

The next possible reason resides in the very reason why the support language is used. The teacher would use the support language – in this case, English – because the students understand it well. Understanding English well also means that English plays a significant role in their conventional *social suggestive norms* to reach rich affordances of the symbols. Therefore, if the teacher said in English, "Don't worry", it would also possibly convey to the students that there is something to be worried about in this situation, thereby heightening the students' *affective anti-suggestive barriers*. In this sense, using the Japanese word "*daijōbu*" (don't worry/it's all right) would not cause such problems, as the students would not immediately access the full range of affordances of the Japanese word at this early stage of the course. This kind of attention is thought to be particularly important in the early stages of a

language course because students actually do have many things to worry about. Despite all this, however, the teacher did use the support language before the first Concert sessions in the course. It is understandable from the point of view of managing the *anti-suggestive barriers* that he used the support language when he briefly explained how to participate in the Concert sessions, which are very different from ordinary language course activities. The teacher had no other choice than to use the support language, given the risk of heightening the students' *affective anti-suggestive barriers* by starting this session without an understandable explanation. The uniqueness of the Concert sessions makes it a symbol that could lead to a negative meaning such as "unusual", "abnormal", "doubtful" and "meaningless" in its affordances during the students' first experience of a novel activity. However, at the same time, the teacher explained no more than how to participate in the session and avoided going into the theoretical importance and the expected effect of the Concert sessions to avoid provoking critical attitudes in the students' minds. Such analytic attitudes could heighten the *logical anti-suggestive barriers* if the students did not fully agree with the concept or the logic in the explanation.

7.4.3 Summary

The teacher attempted to maintain students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level by taking into consideration the semiotic scope of the affordances of symbols in the course. Most of this was done by using non-verbal symbols, which seem to be appropriate for the earliest stages of a language course for the purpose of acquiring communicative language skills. This effort to manage the *anti-suggestive barriers* maintained the conditions in which *suggestion* could work.

7.5 Discussion 4: Suggestopedic Integration in Semiotic Terms

7.5.1 Introduction

As mentioned in Chapter 2, "integration" is one of the most important keywords in Suggestopedia. However, the comprehensive shape of Suggestopedia's integration has not been very clear. Lozanov (2006) made a number of remarks about this in many different contexts but most of those were about elements that hinder integration and did not to directly refer to a concrete definition of integration. Nevertheless, a teacher needs to have a definition of integration because it is a highly necessary condition for the success of a Suggestopedia course. What, then, is the definition of integration? How did the teacher attempt to establish it in his

course?

7.5.2 The Semiotic Integration of the Course

Lozanov's remarks about Suggestopedia's integration were given as practical advice to his student teachers. The teacher should not say "learning a language is difficult" nor even say "let's have a rest because we are tired", as it means learning makes students tired (Lozanov, 2006, 9-Feb-1989, 7-Dec-1998). The teacher should make the class fun, but at the same time, should not forget what the students need from the course, that is, learning. The teacher should not be afraid of nor avoid difficult class tasks that s/he thinks may make students feel bad, such as teaching difficult grammar (Lozanov, 2006, 10-Feb-1989, 16-Feb-1989, 7-Dec-1998). The teacher should not use only a superficial part of Suggestopedia's teaching techniques (Lozanov, 2006, 10-Feb-1989, 22-Aug-1989). The teacher has to make changes in his behaviour in order to make clear contrasts between the Introduction, the Concert sessions and the Elaboration, however all of them must be connected on the basis of a deep understanding of Suggestopedia (Lozanov, 2006, 7-Dec-1998).

Such fragmentary remarks in mostly negative sentences indicate that it was difficult to make a short comprehensive description about integration in Suggestopedia even for Lozanov himself. This description of the behaviour of the teacher does not cover the whole, and in this sense, it is not a comprehensive explanation. However, taking the fragmentary remarks together, the integration of Suggestopedia appears to be a dynamic integration of consistent structure, consistent content, consistent purpose and the personality of the teacher. That is, this holistic integration is the required environment in which the *desuggestive-suggestive process* can function. Then what can support the consistency of each structure that forms this larger integration?

If we consider, for instance, Suggestopedia's cyclic structure that consists of differently characterised stages – Introduction, Concert sessions and Elaboration – Chapter 5 showed that the teacher took small elements from the activities done in each stage of the cycle and inserted them into activities in other stages as symbolic hints to semiotically connect one stage to another. The hints seen in the Japanese course were tangible symbols: the stuffed bear, other teaching props, the students' work from previous days, the layout of the textbook and song sheets. The mascot bear was used in almost all occasions in the course. The central part of the large table was always the place where the things students used in the course were displayed. The students could always find and refer to their previous work on the walls. The textbook

that was read by the teacher in the Concert sessions was also read by the students in the Elaboration. The song sheets used when they sang songs were printed with the same layout as the textbook. Other intangible symbols to be sensed in peripheral area of consciousness were also seen in the fundamental attitude of the teacher: his respect for the students, their culture and their reasons for learning Japanese, his confidence in his teaching skills and the methods he used. The teacher used these multimodal symbols to interconnect their affordances for the purposes of establishing integration.

It would have hindered integration if the teacher had given contradictory messages to the students. For example, if a teacher who has tried to create the affordance that "Japanese is an easy language to learn" says in the class, "This grammar is too difficult for you now" or "Are you tired? OK. Let's sing", it would give the students the message "Japanese is difficult" or "learning Japanese makes you tired". Doing this would have meant giving a contradictory meaning to the affordances of the same symbol, "Japanese". Emphasising contradictory meanings within affordances at the same time would have created a discrepancy in the semiotic structure of the course and so it would not contribute to establishing integration. Semiotic contradictions in the affordances of each symbol could cause a failure to establishing the integration of the whole course. Therefore, what supports the integration of the Suggestopedia course as a whole would be a semiotically sound environment where there is no contradiction in the affordances of the multimodal symbols that the teacher emphasises in the course. However, it is not possible for the teacher to be aware of the possible affordances of every single symbol in the course because there are countless numbers of symbols that potentially mean something, even in the limited environment of the language course. Also, as mentioned in Chapter 1, if the teacher is not familiar with the students' background culture, he cannot know what a particular symbol might means in their specific culture. In this sense, it is impossible for the teacher to create an environment where there are absolutely no contradictory meanings in the affordances of any symbol. Yet, it is at least possible to address each contradiction as soon as it appears if the teacher is sensitive to such semiotic contradictions. Lozanov (2006) proposed one example to handle such a case. He said: "When you realise that you have made a mistake, don't blame yourself. You can just laugh it away. Laugh at it with your students. You must laugh" (7-Dec-1998). The symbol "teacher's mistake" can be associated with negative meanings such as "lack of teaching skills", "insufficient organisation" or "careless teacher" in its scope of affordances. Such negative meanings contradict the teacher's efforts to maintain his *prestige*. If negative meanings dominate the affordances of the symbol "teacher of this course", the *prestige* effect that the teacher uses in his/her course would be

weakened. To handle this dangerous moment, Lozanov strongly suggested that teachers use laughter. Looking at Lozanov's suggestion from a semiotic point of view, the symbol "the teacher laughs at his own mistakes together with the students" can add to the affordance of the symbol "teacher's mistake" meanings such as "witnessing a rare happening", "an interesting attraction" and "not a big issue". At the same time, laughing together can prevent the teacher's isolation in the classroom by emphasising the meanings "the teacher is a colleague of the students" and "the teacher is only a human just like the students". As a result, the teacher can maintain his/her *prestige* by de-emphasising negative meanings. In this sense, Lozanov's suggestion looks highly semiotic.

In his attempt to establish a suggestive integration, the teacher appears to have considered almost anything as a potential semiotic element and has used many different elements as tools to integrate the whole course. In other words, his task was to use multimodal symbols in the course environment to accomplish teaching in his classroom, which is similar to Kress's argument that semiosis is punctuated by moments of fixing and framings in the multimodal context which consists of visible, tangible and audible signs (Kress, 2000). In his argument, a text in social semiotic terms is a complex of signs which is designed to be internally cohesive and coherent, and which is coherent with relevant other semiotic entities in the context of use (Kress, 2010). This semiotically cohesive and coherent environment seems to be what the Suggestopedia teacher is aiming at and can be seen in the practice of the teacher in this study. In his course, the teacher made an effort to create a rich semiotically multimodal environment by taaking any useable sign, and framing and reframing its affordances in a desired semantic direction to integrate his course as a semiotically cohesive and coherent environment. This method the teacher used seems to correspond to Bezemer and Kress's (2017) statement that "the process of sign-making is always subject to the availability of semiotic resources and to the aptness of the resources to the meanings which the sign-maker wishes to realise" (Bezemer & Kress, 2017, p. 513).

7.5.3 Summary

In the context of semiotics, the integration of Suggestopedia can be interpreted as a corrective and dynamic effort to maintain a semiotic environment where the affordances of the symbols in the course are consistently interconnected. On this basis, the importance of the integration of Suggestopedia can be understood as conditioning the semiotic balance, which encourages

the maximising of the learning effect based on *suggestion*. If so, the teacher's role is to create interconnections between affirmative affordances of symbols without them contradicting one another in order to maintain a balance in the semiotic environment.

7.6 Summary of the Discussion

In this chapter, I have discussed the questions raised in regard to the key concepts in Suggestopedia from the viewpoint of semiotics. In the various discussions, I have reviewed Lozanov's account of each key concept in Suggestopedia and have attempted to demonstrate, using the theory of semiotics and particularly affordance theory, how this was accomplished in the teacher's practice. The summaries of the different discussions have shown that (1) all the key concepts I have examined can be explained using affordance theory and (2) the key concepts and the actual teaching practice are consistent in this interpretation.

7.7 Conclusion of the Thesis

In this thesis, I have conducted a piece of qualitative research in which I observed a Japanese language course conducted with the final version of Suggestopedia and analysed how the course was conducted in practice. The Japanese course was designed and structured in Australia by the teacher of the course, and then tested in Sliven, Bulgaria, under the supervision of Lozanov, the inventor of the method, before the actual course was carried out in Denbigh, Wales. The analysis of this course showed that it is possible to explain the key concepts of Suggestopedia using sociocultural concepts. It showed the possibility of interpreting *suggestion*, the most basic concept of Suggestopedia, in terms of the affordances of symbols. In so doing, one possible answer to the initial question of this research was obtained: What affordances for learning are developed through semiosis in a Suggestopedia language class? The answer is: semiotic affordances that are harmoniously organised and aim at a *suggestive* integration of Suggestopedia in order to facilitate *desuggestion*. In semiotic terms, it was the case that the teacher's practice selectively used the affordances of existing *social suggestive norms* to expand or alter the affordances of the key symbols in his course in order to make a smooth transition from the old social norms to the new norms that were being created in his course. In this sense, there was a harmonisation between the existing affordances in the conventional *social suggestive norms* and the new affordances in the Suggestopedia course. In

his practice, the teacher needed to consider how the new affordances could be created in combination with symbols that have a conventional scope of affordances. In practice, it can be seen that he selected some symbols that globally covered the whole course as key symbols, and expanded and altered their affordances and organised them to create the global affordances of the course. Then he organised other symbols in the course environment in accordance with these global affordances so that they worked together in harmony to create the new *social suggestive norms*. Such harmony and organisation aimed to maintain the students' *anti-suggestive barriers* at a low level, and so to make the *suggestive* influences more easily accepted by the students. In creating the course's semiotic harmony and organisation, the teacher can be seen to have given the students a high degree of freedom in their choices and their decision-making by avoiding verbal orders, and making each symbol's symbol–meaning connections more flexible. In so doing, the teacher created an environment where the students could act creatively – i.e. in accordance with the natural function of the brain as understood in Suggestopedia theory – and could learn the language by being liberated from the negative influences of the conventional *social suggestive norms*.

7.8 Limitations of this Study

In this research, I focused on the social scientific nature of Suggestopedia theory, and attempted to identify its semiotic characteristics by analysing consistency between Suggestopedia theory and the actual course organisation that included the teacher's course planning and his in-class behaviour. The subject of this study was a Japanese course designed and taught by a single teacher. Therefore, the subject of observation and analysis were limited to a single teacher's behaviour and the way he set up the course. Study of other teachers in other language courses may reveal different ways of working with the ideas of Suggestopedia. Also, this study aimed at understanding how a Suggestopedia teacher worked with Lozanov's theoretical concepts to develop practice, but did not aim at defining the practice of Suggestopedia teachers. In addition, most of the material analysed was taken from the activities of the first few days of the course, as they seemed to show most clearly the distinguishing characteristics of Suggestopedia. Hence, this study did not examine changes in the design of class activities and the teacher's in-class behaviour as the course advanced. These topics would require separate studies.

7.9 Future Prospects

This thesis did not aim to examine the effectiveness of Suggestopedia. Its effectiveness was scientifically defended nationally in Bulgaria (Lozanov, 1978, p. 24) and internationally by UNESCO in the 1970s (UNESCO & Lozanov, 1978; UNESCO, 1980). However, it has not been significantly re-examined since then, particularly not at a similar scale of research design. Also, any improvements in the effectiveness of Reservopedia, the final version of Suggestopedia, have not yet been examined in comparison with the older versions. The main reason would appear to be the lack of a benchmark standard for the research, caused by a lack of understanding of the concept of *suggestion* in Suggestopedia terms. The same lack of a benchmark has also made Suggestopedia teacher training difficult. Because of the generalness of the term "*suggestion*" and its wide scope of affordance, the meaning of this word has not been uniquely defined in Suggestopedia research. This has also caused confusion for teachers who attempt to use this method, and as a result, the way they apply *suggestion* has varied. This has made an effective re-examination of Suggestopedia difficult. The understanding of *suggestion* presented in this thesis is an interpretation based on a semiotic analysis of Suggestopedia. This interpretation could contribute a benchmark to standardise the base in future research and in teacher training for Suggestopedia.At the same time, semiotic research such as that used in this research looking at the teaching environment and teaching practice could also be further developed to understand what a teacher is doing in a classroom. This is because semiotic integration which was one of the main issues in Suggestopedia can be also an issue in other teaching/learning environments. For example, an analysis of semiotic comparisons between an expert teacher's teaching and an inexperienced teacher's teaching may provide useful information for teacher education. A semiotic study could provide a qualitative benchmark to measure the (conscious and unconscious) use of semiotic elements by successful teachers in classroom activities and in the design of entire courses.

It would also be an interesting research topic to see the influence of semiotic integration of other language courses in the sense of *suggestion* of Suggestopedia by analysing how the semiotic integration of a whole course can have an affirmative influence on the course. The outcome of such research may be applicable to improving the overall integration of a language course. For example, it may contribute to to integration of a course taught using "focus-on-form" (Long, 1991; Long and Robinson,1998). A course using focus-on-form changes the focus of teaching from one aspect of the target language to another but frequent shifting of the teaching focus may give students an impression that the course is not integrated. A method of semiotic integration such as seen in the Suggestopedia course analysed in this thesis could

have the potential to contribute to integration of different forms in a focus-on-form course by creating a semiotic context to connect different teaching forms within the course context. This could also be applicable to other courses with different approaches.

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Appendices

Appendix 1: Pre-Test Sheets

a) Oral Interview Questions

日本語プリ・ポストテスト　オーラルコンポーネント（ブルガリア編）

インタビュー質問表

1　こんにちは、
1a　なまえはなんですか。

2　　○○さんは、日本人ですか。

3　　○○さんの、いえは、スリブエンにありますか。

4　　○○さんは、くるまがありますか。
　　（補足 ○○さんのくるまは、にほんの車ですか。）

5　○○さんは、きょう、あさごはんを食べましたか。

6　○○さんは、あさごはんは、何をたべましたか。
　　または
　○○さんは、何が好きですか。
（補足的に、「たべものは、何が好きですか」「スポーツは何が好きですか」）

7　すしを食べたことがありますか。
　　または
　日本へ行ったことがありますか。
　　または
　すもうをみたことがありますか。

8 （7）を受けて、○○たいですか。

9　カメラはどこにありますか。

10 きょうは何曜日ですか。

D 英語で質問、日本語で返答

Please describe about yourself or your family

名前_____

b) Written Test Questions

Names _____

Please translate the marked words into English (or your own language).

わたしの①a なまえは、たろうです
わたしは、②a にほんからきました。③a わたしは、おんがくが①b すきです。
よくおんがくをききに①c いきます。うたも②b うたいます。①d ときどき、
②c カラオケに③b いきます。③c ピアノをならったことがあります。②d でも
人の前で①e ピアノをひいたことは②e ありません。
うちには、いぬがいます。①f でも、ねこは、③d いません。うちのいぬは、
②f ちいさいです。②g 外国へいきたいですが、③e おかねが①g ありません。
かぞくは、②h ちちと、①h ははと、あにと、いもうとがいます。③f ぜんぶで
五人です。
わたしは、③g 学生です。大学で英語を勉強しています。②i ときどき、兄に
べんきょうをおしえて①i もらいます。勉強は③h やさしいですが、
わからないことがあったら、なんでも聞きます。③i そして、いもうとには、
漢字をおしえて②j あげます。母は、おいしい料理を作って③j くれます。
ときどき、①j 電話してください。あそびにいきましょう。

きのう、すしを k たべました。あしたは、ピザを l たべたいです。
いっしょに m たべましょう。

① ② ③

a _____
b _____
c _____
d _____
e _____
f _____
g _____
h _____
i _____
j _____
k _____
l _____
m _____

Appendix 2: Spreadsheet Sample for Transcription and Analysis

Scene	Event #	Sign						Affordance (strongest meanings generated in the situation)	Message		Memo
		Non Verbal Semiotics				Verbal Semiotics					
		Agent of speeh/action/sign	Location	Environment	Action	Speech	Language		Message can be generated by each semiotic element	Message can be generated by the context	
Waiting	1	Room	壁	時計は10時を指している。				時を示すもの	朝、始まり	あたらしい経験。一見日本語教育とは無関係の行動を観客のような気分で眺めることによる、ことによる、安心感と期待感。	アフォーダンスは「日本語を教える環境」という枠にしばられるはずだが、ここにはまだ語学そのものを指す記号はあまりない。 ふだん教室として使われている部屋とテーブルと椅子は「学習」を指す記号だが、その中に「旅行」「芸術」「建築」「テクノロジー」「文化」などを意味する記号がふんだんに配置されている。
	2	Room	周囲	白い壁のこぢんまりした教室				授業の場所	清潔感、安心感		
	3	Room	周囲	小さい窓がふたつ。窓は閉まって、外界のノイズをさえぎっている。				外を見る穴、光を入れる穴	外界とのやわらかな隔絶		
	4	Room	窓	左側の窓をふさいで日本の松本城のポスター				旅行、異国の文化への誘い	エキゾチックな日本文化		
	5	Room	ドア横	右側の窓のお側にはイーゼルに富士山と新幹線のポスター				イーゼルは絵画を載せるもの	クラスには芸術的な要素がある		
	6	Room	壁横	前方の壁にデータプロジェクターが写真を映し出している。				データ機器、コンピュータ画面、動画を写すもの	さまざまな映像を使用するクラス		
	7	Room	壁	写真は飛行機が滑走路から青い空に飛び立って行く瞬間の様子がプロジェクターで投影されている。				飛行機は海外旅行に使うもの。飛び立つ飛行機はどこかへ向かうもの	遠の世界への旅立ち		
	8	Room	手前	学習者用に直径2mほどの六角形の白いテーブル				教科書を置き勉強する場所	ひとりひとりに十分な広さ		
	9	Room	奥	活動用に直径1mほどの六角形の白いテーブル				何かがおかれるべき場所	まだ明かされていない秘密		
	10	Room	テーブル上	コップと水				喉が渇いたときに飲むもの	安心感		
	11	Learner	テーブル周り		テーブルを囲んでに7人の学習者が座り談笑しながら教師を待っている			一緒に学習する仲間	安心感		
	12	Teacher	テーブルからは慣れた前方、左から右に移動	教師は野球帽をななめにかぶり	右手の入り口から教師が入ってくる			スポーツに使うもの	遊び、楽しみ、若さ	外とは違う世界の始まり。旅、歌、絵画、写真、行動の要素の導入。 一見日本語教育とは無関係の行動を観客のような気分で眺めることによる。(とりあえず自分に関わって来ない、おとなしく、危険人物でなさそうな)安心感と(何が起るだろうという)期待感。	人が一人入って来る。それが教師であることは分かっているが、「教師」という記号ではなく「旅人」の記号をまとって入って来る。「教師」についてもっている固定観念を心地よく破るように、この人は「歌」「写真」「若さ」「行動力」「自由」などの記号をふりまきつつ、学習者とコミュニケーションを取ろうとする。 多方向のアフォーダンスが共存するカオスな時間帯。「学習」、「カジュアルさ」、「旅」、「音楽」、「変な人」。 「謎と種明かし」のモチーフの最初の登場。カオスはだんだん方向性を見せ、解決していく。この場合は入ってきた人物の素性、目的が後に明かされていく。
	13			肩に黒い旅行用ソフトかばんとセーター				旅行に使うもの	旅行		
	14			襟付きシャツ、綿のスラックス、				適度にフォーマル	大人、信頼感、安心感		
	15			顔にサングラス				旅行に使うもの	くだけた感じ、		
				胸にiPod。イヤホンが両耳に入っている				自分のプライベートな世界	見知らぬ世界、見知らぬ人		
	16				学習者の方を見ず、ポスター方面に向かいながら、鼻歌をうたって教室内を観察している			見知らぬ他人、無関係の人に見えるが訳あってここに入ってきたらしい	意外性、明かされていない秘密。注目しなければならない		
	17				イヤホンからの音楽に合わせて歌を歌う	歌「あの 山の むこうに何がある？ 何がある？」	J	これから習う言語、これから習う歌	これから習う言語とリラックスした雰囲気は結びついている		
	18				京都のポスターを見て			日本の文化に関心があるしぐさ	この人が見ているものを学習者にも見て欲しい		
	19					「京都？」	J	ポスターが紹介する地名	これから習う言語は伝統文化と結びついたものである。プレスティジの存在。		
	20				松本城のポスターを見て			日本の文化に関心があるしぐさ	この人が見ているものを学習者にも見て欲しい		
	21				ポスターを指さし、サングラスを持ち上げ裸眼で見て	「松本…… これ、日本？」	J	ポスターが紹介する建物	これから習う言語は伝統文化と結びついたものである。プレスティジの存在		
	22				急に学習者に気づいてびっくりしてみせる。		NV	何かに気づいた	学習者の存在の認識	見ているだけの存在から、コミュニケーションを求められる存在へと、学習者の状況が変化する。 学習者は、当然日本語がわかるかのごとくに扱われる。しかし、実際、コミュニケーションは成立し、そして、そのコミュニケーションは楽しい。 旅人をむかえるホストの気分は、旅人を助けたい気分。日本語しか話さないこの人を助けたいというポジティブな気分と日本語が結びつき、日本語はポジティブであるというメッセージを学習者に伝えている。	
	23	L	テーブル周り		軽い笑いが起る						
	24	T	テーブルからは慣れた前方			「あー？ ここはどこ？ 日本？ いいえ、ここは日本じゃありません。」	J	これから習う言語	これからコミュニケーションの道具としてこの言語を使う		「言語学習」というアフォーダンスの方向性はまだ確立していない。教師は、教師として振る舞っていない。 ここにあるのは「旅人とそれを助ける地元の人」の構図。「旅人は、自分の知らないところから来て、自分たちのことを知ろうとしている。この土地のことを愛そうとしている」という物語がつくられ、それにそったアフォーダンスが創作されようとしている。 知っているはずの教師が「何も知らない人」を演じて助けを求め、日本語についてなにもしらない学習者が逆に「土地のことを知っていていろいろ助けられる立場にいる」という設定になっている。 つまり学習者の自発的なコミュニケーションが発生しやすい設定を教師は意図的に演出している。 参考:「ハトマメ」の世界では日本のことを海外に教えたいこと
	25				両手を広げる西洋風の？のポーズ		NV	疑問があることを示す	この人のボディーランゲージは理解できる。		
	26				両手の人差し指を下に向け指さしながら		NV	指で示した先に注目を求めている	この人のボディーランゲージは話している言語と連動している		
	27					「ここは、ウェールズです。」	J	ウェールズと言った	教師が取ろうとしているコミュニケーションは自分たちと関係がある。		
	28					「ウェールズです…」	J	日本語の中に「ウェールズ」という言葉が入っている	この言語は理解可能である		
	29				上昇イントネーションで	「ね？」	J	質問に対する答えを要求している	答えなければならない		
	30				上昇イントネーションで下を指さしながら	「はい？」	J	くりかえしをもとめている	繰り返しを求める人は、この場ののリーダーである。つまり教師による「リーダーであることの宣言」		
	31	L	テーブル周り			「はい」	J	くりかえし	この言語は発音可能である。この言語でコミュニケーションが成立した。 繰り返しの求めに応じたということは、「旅人」によるリーダーシップを地元民である学習者が承認したこと。		学習者の最初の発話が「はい」であること。ポジティブネスによってコースが始まる。
	32					「ウェールズ」	J／E	くりかえしだが、自発的でもある。教師が求めた以上のものを返した。	「旅人の言いたいことは分かった」という意思表示＝コミュニケーション成立のコンファーメーション。		
	33	T	テーブルにやや近い前方		学習者の待つテーブルに近づき、サングラスを外してその上に置く	「ここは、デンビーです。」	J	クラスの行なわれている町の名前	歩み寄り		ウェールズからデンビーへ、よりローカルに絞り込み、歩み寄る「旅人＝教師＝教師の代表する日本語コース」
	34				学習者に向かって	「はい？」	J	応答を求めている	ふたたびリーダーシップは自分が取るという宣言。		
	35	L	テーブル周り		教師に向かって	「はい、はい」	J	応答する	「旅人＝教師」のリーダーシップの承認と、「旅人＝教師」が始めた自分たちとのコミュニケーションが成立したことの再確認。		
	36				初めて聞いたというイントネーション	「あー、デンビーです！」	J	クラスの行なわれている町の名前	「旅人」にとって、この街が目的地であった。		
	37				両手を広げて			うれしそうな教師	この先生は自分の町を好きらしい。		

Appendix 3: Informed Consent Form Collected from Students in the Course in Wales

Informed consent

I _____

express my consent to have the data from my participation in the Japanese Course held at [redacted] Denbigh 1 - 12 June 2009, analysed and used in the research on Japanese language learning with the Suggestopedic method.

Signature _____

Date (dd/mm/yy) _____

In addition, I give the researcher a permission to use my photographed and filmed image solely of the purpose of his research publication.

Yes / No

Signature _____

Date (dd/mm/yy) _____

Researcher's name and address

Kazuhiko Hagiwara

[redacted]