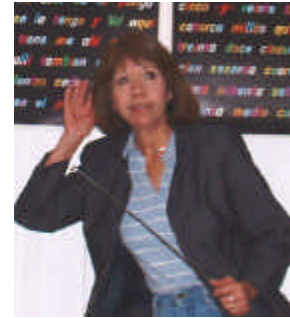


Anatomy of a Silent Way Spanish Course

Presentation on March 30 at TESOL 2005, San Antonio, Texas
by John and Susana Pint

The presentation began with a half-hour videotape which John and Susana Pint made for UCLA in 1979 at the request of EFL/ESL teachers wishing to see the effects of Silent Way techniques used over an extended period of time. The video follows several total beginners working on spoken and written Spanish during a 40-hour course and arriving at a good command of the language. It is hoped that this video may benefit teacher-training courses which refer to the Silent Way in their programs. The video is now available as a DVD (see below).



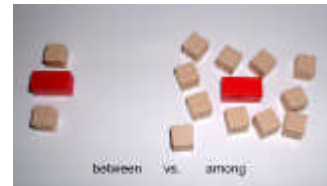
Some of the Silent Way techniques shown in the video were applied to the classroom situations of ESL/EFL teachers:

SELF-CORRECTION

Be Silent! Give the student a chance to make the correction. Fingers can be used to recreate a student's sentence and indicate a missing or incorrect word...or write the sentence and let the student try to find the mistake.

GRAMMAR AND FUNCTION WORDS

The rods can be used for teaching *we* and *she*, *this* and *that*, *my* vs *mine*, *where* and *who*, *is she*, *did she*, *could she*, *would she*: yes, everything a student needs for establishing an unshakeable base. Easiest of all are the spatial prepositions. For example, you can show the difference between *in* and *on*, *on top of* vs *on*, *between* vs *among*, *on the end* vs *at the end*, etc.



MEANINGFUL COMMUNICATION

- **Series of Actions** - Have a student stand up, go to the door, open it, take someone's book, give it to someone else, etc. While these activities are in progress, ask the student as well as class members what he/she is doing. When the student sits back down, ask "What did you do?" Then ask someone else: "What did X do?"
- **The Construction Game** – Build a very simple structure of rods and ask the students to tell you how to build another, identical, one. Don't follow instructions until the students have made their sentences as correct and as precise as possible. Later, use a folder to hide one student's building effort from the eyes of class members giving him or her instructions.



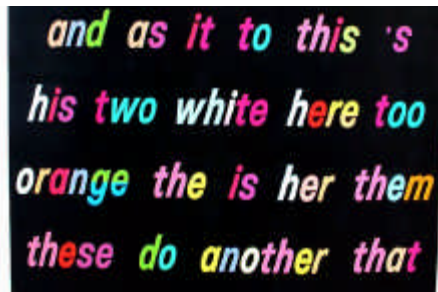
WRITING

Restriction Games are used to stimulate students' imaginations and to get a wide variety of solutions to the same challenge. Examples:

- Make a sentence with *took* and *ran* (plus as many other words as you like).
- Complete the sentences: (again, add as many other words as you like)
 - ...don't have much ...
 - Did Ali ... yesterday?
- Make a sentence containing as many of the words on chart X as possible.

PRONUNCIATION AND READING

Silent Way Word Charts contain almost all the function words of a language, with color coding to indicate pronunciation. Students can "see" the differences between *this* and *these*, for example, and the teacher can point to other words containing the vowel or consonant sounds giving them problems. Once beginning students feel sure of the meanings and pronunciations of the words on one or two Word Charts, these can be used as "landmarks" to conquer more and more of the language.



MASTERY OF VOCABULARY THROUGH SOCIAL INTERACTION

In the video we have seen a few examples of how the teacher, Susana Ibarra de Pint, takes advantage of a spontaneously occurring situation to supply the students with the expressions they need to talk about this subject in a new language. The words supplied by the teacher are then put on home-made charts that go up on the wall and are used in future word games, stories and other activities. Because the Silent Way does not follow a text book or step-by-step program, the teacher and students are free to make the most of the Unexpected, when it occurs in the classroom.

WHERE TO FIND IT:

VIDEO: *Spanish the Silent Way: 40 Hours in Retrospect* - DVD available from thepints@saudicaves.com

Spanish courses with Susana Groups or individuals, please contact thepints@saudicaves.com Courses may be arranged in the USA, Mexico or elsewhere.

Discovering the Silent Way by John and Susana Pint: accepted for publication by UNE EDUCATION POUR DEMAIN, Besançon, France. Electronic version will be available in the summer of 2005 from thepints@saudicaves.com

Silent Way Rods, Charts and books by Caleb Gattegno: available from Educational Solutions, Inc., 99 University Place, 2nd Floor, New York, New York 10003-4555, phone: (212) 674-2988, email edusol99@aol.com. Website: http://members.aol.com/edusol99/silent_way_catalog.htm

Articles on teaching, learning, The Silent Way, Dr. Caleb Gattegno, etc. and this handout! Go to <http://www.saudicaves.com/silentway/> and then follow the links!