



“The Seven-Lesson Schoolteacher”

by John Taylor Gatto

This issue's quotation:

“It is the supreme art of the teacher to awaken joy, creative expression and knowledge”

Albert Einstein

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The first lesson I teach is confusion. Everything I teach is out of context. I teach the un-relating of everything. I teach disconnections....Even in the best of schools a close examination of curriculum and its sequences turns up a lack of coherence, full of internal contradictions....Confusion is thrust upon kids by too many strange adults, each working along with only the thinnest relationship with each other, pretending, for the most part, to an expertise they do not possess....In a world where home is only a ghost, because both parents work...or because something else has left everybody too confused to maintain a family relation, I teach you how to accept confusion as your destiny. The second lesson I teach is class position....The children are numbered so that if any get away they can be returned to the right class....My job is to make them like being locked together with children who bear numbers like their own....If I do my job well, the kids can't even imagine themselves somewhere else, because I've shown them how to envy and fear the better classes and how to have contempt for the dumb classes....That's the real lesson of any rigged competition like school. You come to know your place. The third lesson I teach is indifference....When the bell rings I insist they drop whatever it is we have been doing and proceed quickly to the next work station. They must turn on and off like a light switch....Bells inoculate each undertaking with indifference. The fourth lesson I teach is emotional dependency. By stars and red checks, smiles and frowns, prizes, honors, and disgraces, I teach kids to surrender their will to the predestinated chain of command. The fifth lesson I teach is intellectual dependency....It is the most important lesson, that we must wait for other people better trained than ourselves, to make the meanings of our lives....[Only], the teacher can determine what my kids must study, or rather, only the people who pay me can make those decisions, which I then enforce. If I'm told that evolution is a fact instead of a theory, I transmit that as ordered, punishing deviants who resist what I have been told to tell them to think....Successful children do the thinking I assign them with a minimum of resistance and a decent show of enthusiasm....Bad kids fight this, of course, even though they lack the concepts to know what they are fighting, struggling to make decisions for themselves about what they will learn and when they will learn it... Fortunately there are tested procedures to break the will of those who resist; it is more difficult, naturally, if the kids have respectable parents who come to their aid, but that happens less and less in spite of the bad reputation of schools. No middle-class parents I have ever met actually believe that their kid's school is one of the bad ones. No one single parent in twenty-six years of teaching. The sixth lesson I teach is provisional self-esteem....The lesson of report cards, and tests is that children should not trust themselves or their parents but should instead rely on the evaluation of certified officials. People need to be told what they are worth. The seventh lesson I teach is that one can't hide. I teach students they are always watched, that each is under constant surveillance by myself and my colleagues....The meaning of constant surveillance and de-

The Choice, by Jim Martin



To be brief and brilliant
 Or long lasting and dull
 To be soft and supple
 Or hard and rigid;
 To be warm and caring
 Or cold and indifferent;
 To be alive and embrace
 life fully
 Or to exist and dread liv-
 ing;
 To be courageous with
 life taking each day as it
 comes

Or cowardly plan each
 move of each day of our
 lives in the name of se-
 curity;
 To be in the driver's seat
 of our lives
 With the vehicle itself
 under our control
 Or a frustrated pessimis-
 tic passenger
 In the hands of a reck-
 less, unknown, unseen
 passenger;

To be as we perceive
 ourselves
 Or as others perceive us;
 To be the unique indi-
 vidualistic self determin-
 ing entity that we are
 Or to be a victim at the
 mercy of the immortal
 snatcher of self-worth
 The choice? The choice
 is simple: You choose.

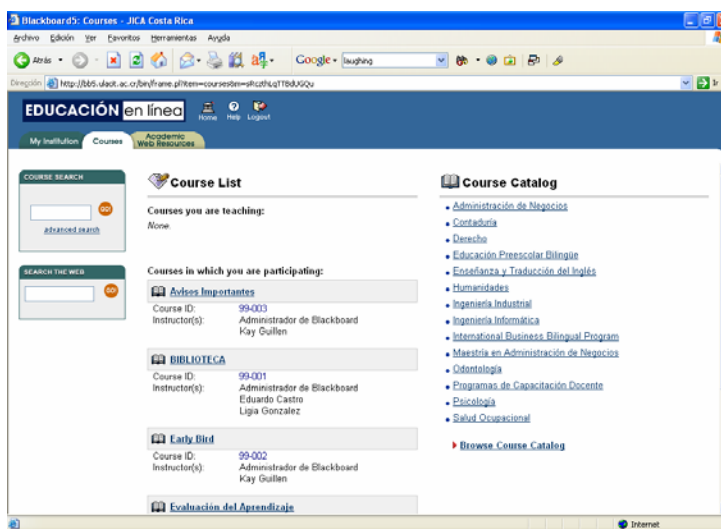
About Blackboard, by Carolina Montoya



Many questions have arisen
 about of the mandatory use of
 Blackboard (Bb). I say manda-
 tory because there is a gen-
 eral feeling of displeas. "I
 don't know how to use it",
 "The system goes down of-
 ten", "I don't have internet
 access at home" are just few
 examples of what students
 think of Blackboard. It is true

that we - students- haven't
 been trained to use Bb. It is
 true that many don't have
 internet at home and yes!
 many times the system col-
 lapses. Nevertheless, we must
 remember that we are all citi-
 zens of a technotronic soci-
 ety. Today's world demands
 people able to deal with the
 latest technology. If we are

not even capable of participat-
 ing in a virtual forum, how
 are we going to be competent
 in the professional world. Be-
 ing computer literacy is as
 important as reading and writ-
 ing. I invite you all to trans-
 form a mediocre attitude to-
 wards an intelligent thought.
 Give your mind a chance to
 expand its knowledge!



Did you know?

- There are more than 2,700 languages in the world. In addition, there are more than 7,000 dialects. A dialect is a regional variety of a language that has a different pronunciation, vocabulary, or meaning.
- The most difficult language to learn is Basque, which is spoken in northwestern Spain and southwestern France. It is not related to any other language in the world. It has an extremely complex word structure and vocabulary.
- All pilots on international

flights identify themselves in English.

- Somalia is the only African country in which the entire population speaks the same language, Somali.
- The language in which a country conducts business is the official language of that country. (which is ours???)
- More than 1,000 different languages are spoken on the continent of Africa.
- Many languages in Africa include a “click” sound that is pronounced at the same time

as other sounds. You must learn these languages in childhood to do it properly.

Taken from “Fact Monster”
www.factmonster.com



Some American English Slangs

To “Paint the town (red)”
To enjoy the entertainment of the city. e.g: after work, let’s go out and paint the town!

To “Hit the books”
To study, to prepare for class

A “poker face”
A face without expression

“The cat is out of the bag”
What was a secret is not a secret anymore.

To “check out”
To look at, watch, examine

To “kick the bucket”
To die

To “con”
To deceive. e.g. “don’t try to con me!”

To be a “couch potato”
To be a lazy person

To “ditch”
“To leave (with)” e.g. “I’ll ditch my little brother with grandma tonight”

“Our is the age of substitutes: instead of language we have jargon; instead of principles, slogans; and instead of genuine ideas, bright suggestions –Eric Bentley-

Don’t ever trust translations!

Here are some funny examples of what can happen if you let your computer translator do your work, plus some other hilarious translations...

In a hotel in Asia:

“You are invited to take advantage of

the chambermaid”

At some European airline counter:

“We take your bags and send them in all directions”

At a Hong Kong dentist clinic:

“Teeth extracted by the latest methodists”

The Chevy **Nova** was never popular in Spanish speaking countries.

In a Paris Hotel Elevator

“Please leave your values at the front desk”

from: english zone.com



By Carolina Montoya and Carlos Guzmán

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We hope to improve the overall design, content and looks of our newsletter. We are hoping to hear your comments and ideas! If you have any question or would like to know more about any language related topic, please let us know. We will be happy to find it out for you. It is our intention to make this newsletter a valuable tool not only for teachers, but for anyone interested in language and its many facets. Hope to know from you soon!

What's the Meaning of "Takoku-go"?

多
国
語

The Word "takoku-go" (tah' koku' goh) is the Japanese term for "multilingual", however, there's a lot more behind this word than meets the eye. Let's analyze the meaning of each character (Chinese characters are called "kanji" in Japanese).

The first character is "ta" (多), which is formed by two 夕.

The idea behind this character was originally a pictograph (an image) of the sun setting in the slope of a mountain. Now, two sunsets



gave the idea of something conti-

nuous, "a lot", "many" (the Chinese were very poetic, weren't they?).

The second character is "koku" (国) (formerly "國") meaning "country". The idea here is that of a somewhat closed area (represented by a square "口") and "玉" or "或" meaning "region". So an enclosed region is "a country".

Lastly, the character "go" (語) meaning "language", is a very interesting one. It is formed by three elements combined. The first one "言" means "to say", it is a pictograph of an open mouth (口 with words (lines)

"一" coming out of it). The second element is the character "五" meaning "five". If we combine it with the character for "mouth" (口), we get "吾". So five "五" or more mouths "口" saying "言" something in common, that would be a language. If we put all the meanings together, we will have "many countries' languages" or "multilingual". See how much meaning can be hidden within a seemingly simple word?