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### Situated Learning – A Tandem Approach

Target audience: Graduate students in the United States.

Note: items in the text boxes should not be read to the learner. Those are my examples that relate to the text. The student playing the instructor should read everything that is **boldface** type.

[Instructor – there will be two students working together. One will be an experienced shmoo spat skikker (peanut butter sandwich) maker. This student will have a list of what the nonsense words mean. It is permissible for students to help each other in this exercise. Before beginning, hang up the signs that go along with this lesson.]

#### Glossary:

Shmoo spat = peanut butter

Sloke – bread

Strab = bag

Seef = plate

Sut = jar

Sweek = knife

Skikker = sandwich

Scoova = slice

Spee = lid

It is very difficult to convey contextual learning with an all-too familiar subject like a peanut butter sandwich. New vocabulary is used to disorient the learner and force the learning to be both contextual and situated. It is not expected this new vocabulary will be memorized because there is no need to retain it. There is an additional role in this lesson – that of expert student. This student has the advantage of having a vocabulary list. This enables the social environment necessary for situational learning. Signs are placed around the room to give the learner some context as to meaning.

**Good morning students.**

**Today we will be making a Shmoo Spat Skikker. (Peanut butter sandwich) By the time you have reached graduate school, you are likely familiar with Skikkers. You have made them before. They consist of two slices of Sloke with something inside, like Shmoo Spat. Today, let's practice our Shmoo Spat Skikker**

**vocabulary before we make our Skikker. If you need help, you have a buddy who can guide you.**

[The instructor should model the following behavior for the students. The instructor can describe the items or mime or draw them. The “expert” student can help the learner.]

**You should have two Scoovas of Sloke. If you don’t have Sloke yet, take two Scoovas out of the Strab and put them on your Seef. Then pick up one of the Scoovas and show it to me.**

[Make sure the student has picked up the bread.]

**Good. Now put the Scoova of Sloke back on the Seef.**

[Pause while the bread is placed on the plate. If the student does this wrong, repeat the instructions, then model the instruction, and ask the “expert” student to help.]

**You should have a Sut of Shmoo Spat. Place your Sweek on your Sut. If you have problems with this, you can ask for help.**

[The student should place the knife on the jar. If the student looks helpless, point to the sign with the knife or mime the action of cutting, then placing the knife on the jar.]

**Place your Sweek on the edge of your Seef. Once you have done this we’re ready to begin.**

[The knife should be on the edge of the plate. If not, help the student.]

The preceding instructions follow the steps outlined by Dennen. There is mentoring and coaching by way first of explanation. Instruction of new vocabulary may have to be given several ways. The student is invited to participate. Opportunity is given to verify and clarify, behaviors are modeled, and the learning environment is made to be contributory.

**1. We’re now ready to begin. First, pick up one Scoova of Sloke.**

[Instructor – model this behavior by acting like you’ve picked up one slice of bread.]

**By picking up the Scoova of Sloke it will be easier to spread the Shmoo Spat.**

[Make sure the student has picked up a slice of bread. Assist if necessary]

**2. Oh, sorry. Place the Sloke back on the Seef**

[Make sure the bread is back on the plate.]

**We forgot to do something first. We need to open our Shmoo Spat Sut.**

**3. Open the Shmoo Spat. Do this by twisting the Spee counterclockwise.**

[Pause briefly and monitor to make sure the student opens the peanut butter jar.]

**4. Pick up your Sweek, but be careful you don't hurt yourself. Remember, think Smifty!**

[The student should pick up the knife.]

**5. Use the Sweek to spread Shmoo Spat on the Sloke.**

[The student should spread peanut butter on the bread. Again, monitor for performance, but also encourage the student to get help from others. IF the student is terribly frustrated, help him or her individually. Repeat the instructions in stages until the student is caught up.]

<p>Note how the concept of proximal development (Vygotsky – repeated in Dennen) is used to bring the student up to speed. Also note how modeling, explanation, coaching, and scaffolding are a part of the instructor's activities.</p>
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**6. Close the jar of Shmoo Spat. Pick up your Spee and twist it back onto the Sut.**

[Student should close the jar of peanut butter]

**7. Place the Scoovas of Sloke together with the Shmoo Spat in the middle.**

[Student should put the sandwich together.]

### **8. Ask: How did you do with your Shmoo Spat Skikker?**

[Pause and wait for student response. Note whether the student uses any of today's vocabulary. Also ask questions like "How did you clean your Sweek afterwards?" or "Do you like smooth or crunchy Shmoo Spat?" ]

Again, this is to encourage the student to assess and analyze performance as proposed by Enkenberg and reported in Dennen. It also encourages students to verbalize what was learned.

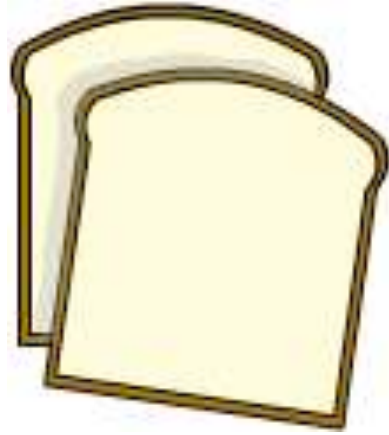
### **9. Go ahead and eat your Skikker**

Employed in today's lesson were all of Henning's suggestions on how to make the learning environment appropriate for contextual learning. There were publicly available representations as given both by the visual signs and the verbal instructions. While students were not given all cues necessary to fully grasp the meaning of the words, context was given as means to interpret the signs and the instruction. This learning environment artificially sets up an advanced and novice (apprentice) role between the students. Hopefully as confidence grows in the new vocabulary, the identity of the learner changes to that of an independent worker and perhaps someday an expert. It would be interesting to have this lesson repeated twice – once with the learner as student and once with him as "expert" learner. The situation sets up a natural learning environment with multiple "signs" as cues.

Also note how this type of learning is only really done in a community. The chapter was good to note that this is a society's way to learn. Whole societies go through patterns of learning new concepts which become the old concepts of the next generation. IF this lesson was repeated to a whole generation, I'm sure we'd have Shmoo Spat commercials in no time.

I learned a lot about the responses my ESL students have had by exploring this type of learning. It is most natural, but is tricky with the "sink or swim" consequences. It's very different from formal education. I can see why this is considered "natural" learning.

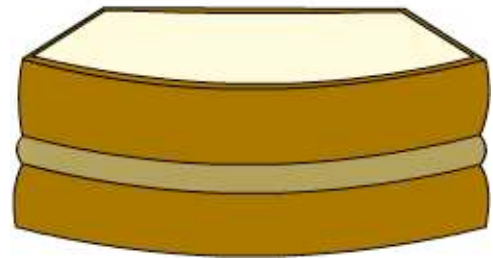
Sloke is  
Sufra!  
Scoom



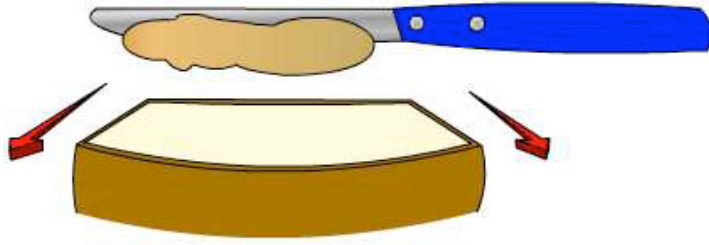
some Sloke today!

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I want a  
Skikker



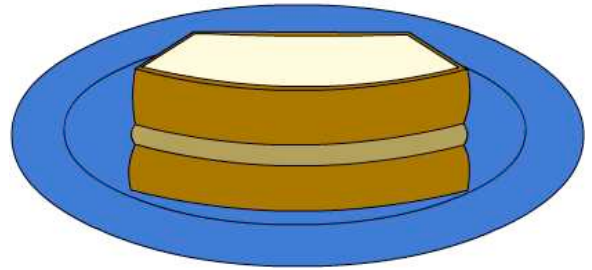
with Shmoo Spat



When  
using  
Sweeks, think Smifty!

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Place your  
Shikker



on a Seef. Avoid Syll.

Advanced learner:

Do not share this list or show it to the beginning learner. This is help for you alone.

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Sloke – bread

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