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# Learn French in the privacy of your home and in your spare time!

by Eleanor Copeland

So you can get by in reading and understanding French (slowly spoken), you frequently apologize for your writing style, and you don't dare speak even when spoken to. You are a typical Anglais, victim of our as yet unenlightened high school language training system.

If you can't take off for France right away your next best bet may be the revised program in French now available at York.

Previously the content, technique, and form of our program was a U of T copy. It wasn't well structured and integrated. With the abolition of French as a requirement it ceased to be a service of the University, a Curriculum Committee was formed, and the department attracted people interested in a new approach to the study of French.

Co-ordinated by Associate Professor H. A. Bournaoui, a program of French language training was established. It is especially significant for those in first and second year now.

First year is geared to language training primarily. It is an audio-lingual approach, most of it listening comprehension and oral production — there is no literature. This has been a successful program in the States for 20 years. It is very intensive — eight hours a week — and very experimental. York is leading the way in Canada, with reps from Calgary, Western and U of T interested in applying the new techniques.

It is turning out to be the most expensive course in the University.

Most of the classes have 13-14 students and are geared to 20 maximum.

The classes are streamlined according to level of fluency, determined by tests given in the beginning of first year. If a student has a high level of ability he is exempt from the first study courses.

The content part of the language training is the culture and civilization of France, giving the student a better understanding of the literature and language because it is inscribed in its own culture. TV is being used for listening comprehension.

One hundred and twenty students and 65 high school students have come to York from all over Ontario to learn audio-lingual techniques which replace the traditional approach.

There is a language course for each year but in second year the literature courses begin. A C grade in French language is required to ensure a strong background for training in the different literary approaches.

New courses, geared for those who want to teach French, will soon be available. It will deal with the functioning of the language and why, the sound system, and phonetics.

Explication de texte and literary criticism train-

ing will be offered to aid those wanting to go on to grad school. At present, there is no grad course here as a strong undergrad program is just starting.

Glendon is more or less following this system. There are eight hours in the first year course but it is not really the same, as Glendon's is geared more to social, governmental and philosophical studies in French.

But what if you're about to graduate now? That means you've missed out on the new technique. You know little or nothing of the structure of the language, you've sort of snatched at phonetics, French language rhythm is pie in the sky for you, and the thought of trying to converse avec les Francais is very upsetting. Que faire? You realize you must head for France or anywhere in Quebec except Montreal. How?

There are several possibilities. If on graduating you can get a position as Assistant you could teach English for around 18 hours a week in a French high school. Unfortunately, the French government does not give out very many of these. If you did get one, you might want to spend the rest of your time studying or working. The latter would be difficult because unless you could line one up while you were still here, a job would be very hard to find in France.

At the moment, if you want to study in France it is something you must arrange and finance independently. It is difficult to get into American or U of T programs which are already heavily subscribed, and even if you could costs are usually around \$3500 per year.

York does not have a Junior Year Abroad program as yet. It has been proposed several times but Bouraoui says the students must push the idea to achieve anything concrete. The money would probably have to come from the Province of Ontario.

What may perhaps be the most feasible way for interested students to spend time in France is that offered by organizations which place you in a French family for a certain length of time. You receive room and board in return for work you do in the family. It is not a money-making opportunity but one to learn and use the language in a French environment.

An organization of all students currently studying French and interested in continuing it has been proposed. A bulletin circulated to determine interest suggested its role might be that of a liaison body between students and faculty, to identify the interests and integrate the efforts of each. This is merely tentative as it is open to suggestion from anyone interested. Whether it will be developed or not will depend on the kind of response from those taking French.



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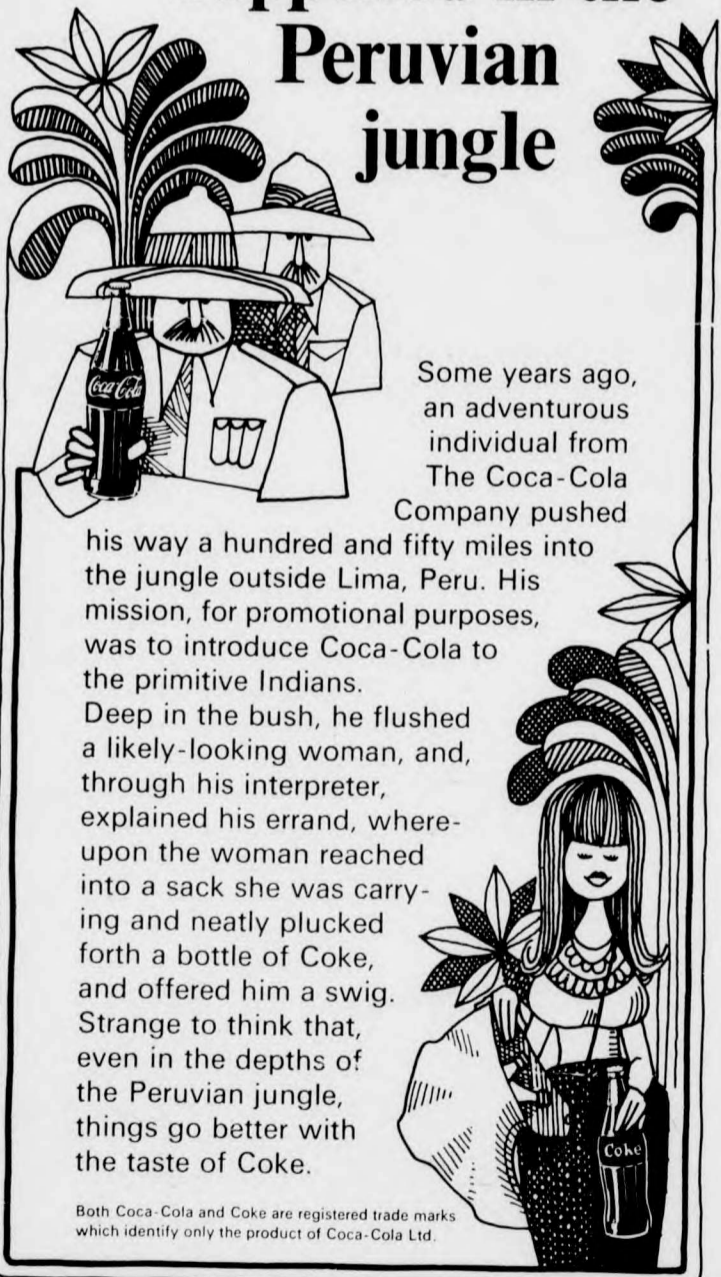
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