

GOALS

- Use theory-driven cross-linguistic analysis to identify areas of language use that may pose problems for L2 learners.
- Investigate the nature of the problem in terms of the account of meaning construction, and then formulate appropriately tailored teaching strategies.
- State explicitly how a set of productive teaching strategies devised on the basis of principled (i.e. motivated) systematic contrast between L1 and L2 can be made part of a so-called “pedagogical grammar”.

PEDAGOGICAL PROPOSALS

For figurative language: It is necessary to devise specific teaching strategies for figures of thought with a strongly conventionalized lexical or constructional grounding when such conventionalization has taken different paths for L1 and L2.

For constructions: Constructions are to be taught in connection to one another in terms of family-internal and family-external similarities. For example, the English caused-motion construction is best taught in relation to sister resultative constructions since they share much of their conceptual and formal structure.

FIGURATIVE LANGUAGE

“GET AN IDEA ACROSS”: STEP 1

1. Teach the cognitive motivation behind the figurative expression worded in accessible terms:
 - Sometimes we talk about ideas as if they could be seen, touched, and handled. They are like objects. They can also move or we can make them move. If an idea reaches me, I can handle it and create a picture in my mind of what it is like. That is why we say that ideas get across or that we get ideas across to someone, as if ideas could move (in contact with a surface) from where they are to where we are so we can deal with them.

“GET AN IDEA ACROSS”: STEP 2

Illustrate the use of “get an idea across” on the basis of an ample selection of real examples:

- 1.The demonstrations and dynamic diagrams really get the ideas across effectively.
- 2.We don't need to rely on my presentation skills to get the ideas across to the client.
- 3.Do the pictures help get the ideas across?
- 4.Quite often, parents and teachers rely on lectures and discussions to get the ideas across.
- 5.He was a terrible lecturer, but he got the ideas across and I liked him.
- 6.The fridge didn't work, and I couldn't get the idea across to the staff with limited English to come and fix it.
- 7.I probably won't get the idea across.
- 8.With some individual help, we managed to get the idea across to all of them.
- 9.If you can't get the idea across in just a couple of sentences, you have some more work to do.

“GET AN IDEA ACROSS”: STEP 3

- Make emphasis on usage constraints and their connection with the cognitive motivation in STEP 1.
- For example:
 - 1) Most corpus examples use “get an idea across” in the context of skills and efficacy; so the expression collocates well with inherent modality markers expressing ability like “manage to”, “be able to”;
 - 2) the figurative destination of motion is often omitted when it represents any possible recipient, as in (1), (3), (4), (7), and (9), or when the recipient is straightforwardly retrievable from context, as in (5).

CONSTRUCTIONS

TEACHING THE ENGLISH CAUSED-MOTION CONSTRUCTION TO SPANISH-SPEAKING STUDENTS

- It can be best taught in relation to sister resultative constructions since they share much of their conceptual and formal structure:
 - The child kicked the ball into the net (caused motion)
 - The child molded the clay into a ball (resultative based on figurative use of caused motion)
 - The child rolled the clay flat (transitive resultative)
 - The child made his way into the yard (way construction)
 - The child found his way into the community (figurative use of way construction)
- A possible productive teaching strategy:
 - **Step 1:** Find an adequate L2 source construction:
 - **Step 2:** Use the L2 source construction to understand the L2 target construction
 - **Step 3:** Identify other L2 targets for the same L2 source construction and follow through steps 1 and 2 again.

STEP 1: FINDING AN ADEQUATE L2 SOURCE CONSTRUCTION

- Identify an L2 target construction that is problematic for learners; e.g. the English caused-motion construction for L1 = Spanish and L2 = English; e.g. *The child kicked the ball into the net*/*El niño pateó la pelota adentro de la red.
- Find a close L2 construction (i.e. one bearing family resemblance to the L2 target construction) that has a reasonable equivalent in the learners' L1; e.g. the manipulative (*They wanted him out of the country/Le querían fuera del país*).
- This close L2 construction thus becomes an L2 source construction for comparison with the L2 target construction.
- Study the L2 source construction (e.g. the manipulative) in terms of its formal features, semantic structure and actual use. Make sure the L2 learners master this L2 source construction.

STEP 2: USE THE L2 SOURCE CONSTRUCTION TO UNDERSTAND THE L2 TARGET CONSTRUCTION

- Once mastered, the L2 source construction can be used to understand formal and functional aspects of the L2 target construction.
 - Look for similarities and differences between the source and target constructions.
 - Focus attention on the meaning motivation for the differences and try to determine to what extent they can be (partially) captured through other L2 constructions and even by L1 constructions.

USING THE MANIPULATIVE CONSTRUCTION TO LEARN THE CAUSED-MOTION CONSTRUCTION

- The English (L2) “manipulative” construction has a counterpart in Spanish (L1)
 - English: *I want you in my office now* (cf. *I want you to come to my office now*).
 - Spanish: *Le quiero en mi despacho ahora* (cf. *Quiero que venga a mi despacho ahora*)
 - English: *I want you out of my life* (cf. *I want you to get out of my life*)
 - Spanish: *Te quiero fuera de mi vida* (cf. *Quiero que salgas de mi vida*)
- There are formal and functional coincidences between the English “manipulative” and “caused motion” constructions.
 - Manipulative: *I want you in my office/She wanted me in her office*
 - Caused-motion (lit.): *She pushed me into her office*
 - Caused-motion (fig.): *She stared me into her office*

SIMILARITIES BETWEEN THE MANIPULATIVE AND CAUSED-MOTION CONSTRUCTIONS

- Formal: the two make use of secondary predications:
NP(subj)+V+NP(obj)+PP(loc)
- Semantic: in both someone causes someone else to change location or state.
- Use: they both convey compulsion on the object; the two can be used either literally or figuratively.

STEP 3: FIND OTHER L2 TARGET CONSTRUCTIONS FOR THE MANIPULATIVE

- **The AP and PP resultatives**
- **Intransitive resultatives**
- **Fake reflexive resultatives**

AP and PP RESULTATIVES

- AP resultative: *She painted the house green* (Sp. Pintó la casa verde/*de verde); *The blacksmith hammered the metal flat* (**El herrero martilleó el metal plano/aplanó el metal a martillazos*)> it follows the same pattern as the caused-motion construction, but an AP takes the place of the PP.
- PP resultative: *We hammered hot iron into knives* (**Martilleamos hierro candente en cuchillos/Hicimos cuchillos golpeando el hierro candente con un martillo*) > it makes figurative use of the caused-motion construction usually when there is no resultative adjective available to express result.

INTRANSITIVE RESULTATIVES

- They combine the inchoative construction (e.g. *The vase broke* vs. *Someone broke the vase*) with a resultative pattern:
 - AP resultative + inchoative: *The door slammed close* (La puerta se cerró dando un golpe)
 - PP resultative + inchoative: *The vase broke into a thousand pieces* (El jarrón se rompió en mil pedazos)

FAKE REFLEXIVE RESULTATIVES

- They combine a fake reflexive (cf. **He drank himself*) with a resultative pattern
 - AP resultative: *John drank himself hoarse*
 - PP resultative: *John drank himself to sleep*
- The reflexive is possible only if construed as the object of a causal pattern (i.e. John caused himself to be hoarse or to sleep by drinking). As with other secondary predications (e.g. *He believes himself ugly*), the resultative holds true of the verbal object.
- The resultative element cannot be omitted with fake reflexives: **He drank himself* (vs. *He hammered the metal flat*).