

## Teaching L2 grammar in an L1 framework: A different take at contrastive instruction

Underlying the mainstream of current foreign language acquisition research is the Ansatz that some level of attention to the formal, discursive and pragmatic aspects of the target language (TL) is necessary for acquisition to take place. At the same time, learning invariably proceeds by relating new facts to the already familiar; in the context of foreign language learning – the student's mother tongue (L1) as well as other languages already at their disposal.

The aforementioned, combined with humans' natural need for safety, suggests that the target language could literally be taught in the framework of the learner's L1. A promising perspective for successful grammatical and pragmatic training is the Interface Model (Gozdawa-Gołębiowski, 2003), which proceeds from an explication of how relevant principles operate in the learners' first language or culture, through an explanation of pertinent target language (TL)/culture rules and norms and subsequent modification of the L1 principle to accommodate target data, to practice first expecting the learner to apply the appropriate FL strategies and speech acts against an *L1* context (or that of another already known language). By such a gradual, multi-stage method the learner can gain command of the target language system and become 'pragmatically fluent' *before* commencing to use the operational principles in the TL itself. The parallel juxtaposition and use of L1 and TL principles lead to successful automatization and internalisation of the material and the development of pragmatic multicompetence. The Interface Model enables students to transfer those patterns of interactional behaviour which will be appropriate.

A controlled longitudinal classroom experiment carried out on secondary-school students ( $n=292$ ) across most out of a representative range of grammar areas (conditional constructions, 'reported speech', articles, *as vs like*, existential *There vs pleonastic It*) reveals considerably improved results of experimental groups over control groups for most of the phenomena investigated.

The instructional model has the potential to be likewise effective with reference to reading comprehension strategies, discourse conventions, academic styles, information structure, or the development of pragmatic competence.

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