



Teaching L3 through (the unrelated) L1 and (the related) L2 – the role of Contrastive Analysis and Language Awareness

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Contrastive Analysis

- “systematic comparison of two or more languages, with the aim of describing their similarities and differences” (Johansson 2008: 9)
- initially meant to serve both a linguistic and a pedagogical purpose
- should allow for the creation of more effective teaching materials
- seems to be used mainly on a more conceptual level today

Language Awareness

- “a person’s sensitivity to and conscious awareness of the nature of language and its role in human life” (Donnal 1985: 7)
- Language Exploration and Awareness approach to language teaching and learning, encouraging, among others, development of reflective or metalinguistic awareness among learners (Andrews 1998)

Raising LA – theory

- through explicit and implicit means
- by employing cognitive strategies
- by allowing learners to become more curious

Aim of the study (work in progress)

To bring together the notions of CA and LA to see how they can influence and complement each other in a context where:

- (university) students are taught a language (Dutch – L3) which belongs to a different family than their native tongue (Polish – L1) but to the same family as a language they are (fairly) fluent at (English – L2),
- use is made of the learners’ (related) L2 as well as their (unrelated) L1 for the purpose of teaching L3 (as outlined in the previous point).

Dutch Studies in Poland

- students learn the language from scratch
- at AMU:
 - BA & MA
 - focus on literature, culture, translations
 - few linguistic courses (intro, grammar, history, pro-seminar, seminar) but more and more ☺
 - guest lectures
 - English (the students’ L2) at levels B2-A1

Personal convictions

- linguistic curiosity
- student involvement and creativity
- autonomous learning & needs analysis
- culture links
- awareness

Two examples/contexts so far

Example 1 – Contrastive Analysis (Grammar)

Background

- Polish University students of English follow a course called Contrastive Grammar as a continuation of a course in Descriptive Grammar (Chrzanowska-Kluczevska and Mańczak-Wohlfeld 2008), with all the appropriate linguistic terminology and analysis
- impossible when doing a CA-based course with students of Dutch, whose knowledge of the language is at level A1 in their first year.

Solution 1

Pools	Nederlands	Engels	Opmerkingen
a. Przestąpiła palić	Ze is gestopt met roken.	She stopped smoking.	• stoppen met → verb + prep. • zęby / om te / to → purpose • reflexive / perfectum vs. simple past etc.
b. Zatrzymała się, żeby zapalić.	Ze is gestopt om te roken.	She stopped to smoke.	
Język niderlandzki	1. Nederlands 2. Het Nederlands 3. De Nederlandse taal	1. Dutch 2. The Dutch language	• in Dutch 2 = 3 • 1 = context specific • j. holenderski / Hollands
Niedaleko pada jablko od jabłoni	1. De appel valt niet ver van de boom. 2. Zo vader, zo zoon. 3. Bescheten koe, bescheten kalf.	1. The apple doesn't fall far from the tree. 2. Like father, like son.	• cultural aspects • see comment in red ☺

Jaki ojciec, taki syn.

Solution 2

Pools	Nederlands	Engels
kochać	houden van	love
w ten sposób	op deze manier	(in) this way

(EN = PL ≠ NL)

Pools	Nederlands	Engels
czekać na	wachten op	wait for
Stara śpiewka	Hetzelfde ouwe liedje	Same old, same old

(PL = NL ≠ EN)

Other solutions

- What’s the speaker’s native language?
- Pronunciation of French words in Polish, English, Dutch (e.g. *discussion, omelet, toilet*) → phonemes and word stress
- *Eeerrrrr* (translation, functions, realizations) etc.

Example 2 – Using L1

Background/assumptions

- chunks of language (*proverbs, set expressions, collocations*) + known concepts = in practice vocabulary building only
- learners resort to L1 when learning Lx
- make use of chunks which are = L1 but ≠ in L2

Solution 1

Nederlands	Pools	Engels
droog brood eten	jeść suchy chleb	be on the breadline ; live from hand to mouth
alles op één kaart zetten	postawić wszystko na jedną kartę	put all one's eggs in one basket ; put all one's money on one horse

(PL = NL ≠ EN) but word order (see verb)

Solution 2

Nederlands	Pools	Engels
voor geen prijs	za żadną cenę	no way ; never ; even if they paid me
gezond verstand	zdrowy rozum (rozsądek)	common sense

(PL = NL ≠ EN)

Solution 3

Nederlands	Pools	Engels
Wie a zegt, moet ook b zeggen	Powiedział A, powiedz B.	In for a penny, in for a pound. ; take the rough with the smooth
van de club zijn	być z branży	be gay

(PL ≈ NL ≠ EN)

Preliminary conclusions

1. There is still a place for Contrastive Analysis in the classroom, not only on a conceptual level.
2. The learners’ L1 and L2 can or perhaps even should both be resorted to when teaching an L3, regardless of the level.

Literature cited

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For further information

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