

## Deictic verbs in second language acquisition

Fillmore (1966: 220) defines deixis as “the name given to those aspects of language whose interpretation is relative to the occasion of utterance: to the time of utterance, and to times before and after the time of utterance; to the location of the speaker at the time of utterance; and to the identity of the speaker and the intended audience”. Thus, deixis is an extremely complex linguistic phenomenon that covers diverse aspects related to time, space and social aspects of the communicative context. It also affects different linguistic items, including deictic verbs, which are the object of our study.

Stemming from Fillmore’s thesis, Gathercole (1977, 1978) examines deictic verbs from a cross-linguistic point of view. She argues that, when dealing with deictic verbs, Fillmore’s definition falls short, since there are at least two other factors to take into account, the presuppositional content and the goal of motion. In some languages (Spanish, Japanese, and Portuguese), the speaker is the only entity that can act as the deictic centre, whereas in other languages such as English, Italian, and Turkish both the speaker and the addressee can play this role.

Since deixis is one of the most complex phenomenon in a language, it is highly interesting to study how a deictic category such as the verbs *come* and *go* and their causative counterparts *bring* and *take*, are acquired in the process of second language acquisition. This is the aim of this paper, that is, to examine the acquisition of the deictic verbs *ir-venir* (‘go-come’) and *llevar-traer* (‘bring-take’) by L2 Spanish advanced learners whose L1 shows a different deictic pattern, namely, Catalan, French, German, and Italian. Data are elicited using two different stimuli: videos and grammar questionnaires (cloze tests).

It will be shown that these learners have problems with the usage of these verbs and produce a full lexical transfer (Stringer 2007), i.e., a change in the label of the concept when communicating in the L2, while maintaining the characteristic use patterns of the L1 verb. Besides, in the case of Catalan speakers (grown up in a bilingual sociolinguistic situation), another factor will be considered: the age of the L2 acquisition.

It will be argued that, although the use of deictic verbs has not been one of the most studied topics in second language acquisition, it has important consequences for language teaching and acquisition itself.

### References

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