

# Conceptual Processes in the Teaching of Thinking-for-Speaking Patterns and Motion Events

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This talk presents Vygotsky (2013)'s (socio)genetic method to be applied in second language (L2) teaching/learning research. The genetic method transcends simple causality and other positivist investigative methods and focuses instead on documenting the development of higher psychological functions through mediation in both experimental and naturalistic settings. Through the method of double stimulation, a methodological turn is proposed in order to understand and document the mediational means of cognitive processes, and the creation of representations as mediational thinking for sociocultural and psychological interaction. To that end, the presentation will illustrate pedagogical interventions among L2-Spanish learners at US universities with a focus on two conceptual categories: (1) motion verb constructions when asking and giving directions, and (2) perspective-taking in deictic verbs of motion. We will observe how both learners and instructors take an active role in the research process. The pedagogical hypothesis in this study is that it is indeed possible to teach concepts in a L2 communicative classroom. We also hypothesize that it is difficult, but also possible to shift L1 thinking-for-speaking (TFS) patterns in a communicative L2 classroom, if students focus on creating, designing, and constructing conceptual categories as tools for orientation. Instructors need: (1) a complete brief conceptual explanation of a minimal unit of instruction, (2) a concise visual representation or materialization of the explanatory concept to be used as a psychological tool and promote sense-making activity in L2 learners, and (3) finally and most importantly, to introduce conceptual reflective tasks that foster mindful conceptual engagement (Aguiló Mora & Negueruela Azarola 2022). Preliminary results based on frequencies of participants' responses show that the documentation of the mediated process by the learners themselves seems to help them construct more meaningful and accurate performances when expressing directionality and deixis. It also fosters on the part of the researcher the focus on the process of transformation and the mediating activity/tool, as a driver of the change and as a potential result of learning itself. In sum, from a conceptual perspective, the point is not only to assess the outcomes, but also to document the creation/manipulation and understanding of conceptual categories as both tools for understanding *and* as the very result of learning. In other words, the point is to evaluate not only the result but the process itself.

## References

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