

Learner's Difficulties Acquiring English: The Case of Native Speakers of Rio de La Plata Spanish Towards Justifying the Need for Corpora

Authors : Maria Zinnia Bardas Hoffmann

Abstract : Contrastive Analysis (CA) is the systematic comparison between two languages. It stems from the notion that errors are caused by interference of the L1 system in the acquisition process of an L2. CA represents a useful tool to understand the nature of learning and acquisition. Also, this particular method promises a path to understand the nature of underlying cognitive processes, even when other factors such as intrinsic motivation and teaching strategies were found to best explain student's problems in acquisition. CA study is justified not only from the need to get a deeper understanding of the nature of SLA, but as an invaluable source to provide clues, at a cognitive level, for those general processes involved in rule formation and abstract thought. It is relevant for cross disciplinary studies and the fields of Computational Thought, Natural Language processing, Applied Linguistics, Cognitive Linguistics and Math Theory. That being said, this paper intends to address here as well its own set of constraints and limitations. Finally, this paper: (a) aims at identifying some of the difficulties students may find in their learning process due to the nature of their specific variety of L1, Rio de la Plata Spanish (RPS), (b) represents an attempt to discuss the necessity for specific models to approach CA.

Keywords : second language acquisition, applied linguistics, contrastive analysis, applied contrastive analysis English language department, meta-linguistic rules, cross-linguistics studies, computational thought, natural language processing

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