

Translation and the Use of L1 in Spanish Language Classes

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Example: Verbs like “gustar” L2-to-L1 translation

Me gusta la clase de español.

(indirect object)

(subject)

(Literal translation) The Spanish class *is* pleasing to me.

(subject)

(indirect object)

Example: Verbs like “gustar” L2-to-L1 translation

Me gust**an** la**s** clases**s** de español.

(Literal translation) The Spanish classes **are** pleasing to me.

Example: Verbs like “gustar” L1-to-L2 translation

I like the Spanish class(es).

which tends to lead to this *incorrect* sentence in Spanish:

Me gusto la(s) clase(s) de español.

Example: Impersonal “Se” L2-to-L1 translation

Se habla **a** español.

Spanish **is** spoken.

One speaks Spanish.

You (or They) speak Spanish.

Example: Impersonal “Se” L2-to-L1 translation

Se hablan inglés y español.

English and Spanish are spoken.

One speaks English and Spanish.

You (or They) speak English and Spanish.

Example: Accidental “Se” L2-to-L1 translation

Se me perdieron las llaves del coche.
(indirect object) (subject)

(Liberal translation)

I lost the car keys.
(subject) (direct object)

which tends to leads to:

(Se me) **Perdí** las llaves del coche. **(X)**

Example: Accidental “Se” L2-to-L1 translation

Se me perdieron las llaves del coche.

(indirect object)

(subject)

(Literal translation)

The car keys got lost on me.

(subject)

(indirect object)

Translation Competition

Overwhelming student interest and participation.
Consisted of oral and written translation of sentences.
Buzzers were used, and time limits were set.
Fierce Competition at the elementary level.
Students really enjoyed competing.

Final Observations

- Translation is an effective tool for teaching unfamiliar Spanish grammar constructions.
- The order of translation makes a big difference.
- Using L1 appropriately helps students to be more open to Spanish.
- Students enjoyed Translation Competition.
- The balance between translation and other teaching tools needs to be maintained.

Thank you!

¡Gracias!

Grazie!