

Perspectives On The L2 Phrasicon: A Comprehensive Examination

The L2 Phrasicon, a term coined by Schmitt (2004), refers to the inventory of lexical phrases that second language (L2) learners acquire and use. These phrases, which may range from simple collocations (e.g., "heavy rain") to more complex multi-word units (e.g., "kick the bucket"), play a crucial role in language processing and communication. This article provides a comprehensive examination of the L2 Phrasicon, exploring its definition, theoretical underpinnings, and implications for second language acquisition research and pedagogy.



Perspectives on the L2 Phrasicon: The View from Learner Corpora (Second Language Acquisition Book 148) by Sylviane Granger

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Definition and Characteristics

The L2 Phrasicon encompasses a wide range of lexical phrases that L2 learners acquire and use. These phrases share several defining characteristics:

- **Fixed or semi-fixed structure:** L2 phrases typically exhibit a fixed or semi-fixed structure, meaning that their constituent words cannot be freely rearranged or replaced without altering their meaning.
- **Idiomacity:** Many L2 phrases are idiomatic, meaning that their meaning cannot be directly inferred from the individual words that compose them. For example, the phrase "kick the bucket" does not literally mean to kick a bucket, but rather to die.
- **Frequency of use:** L2 phrases tend to be frequent in native speaker discourse. This frequency of use makes them important targets for L2 learners to acquire.

Theoretical Underpinnings

The L2 Phrasicon has been studied within several theoretical frameworks, including:

- **Cognitive Linguistics:** Cognitive linguistics views L2 phrases as chunks of language that are stored and processed in the brain as units. This perspective emphasizes the role of frequency and usage in the acquisition and processing of L2 phrases.
- **Usage-Based Linguistics:** Usage-based linguistics focuses on the role of language use in the acquisition of L2 phrases. This perspective suggests that learners acquire L2 phrases through repeated exposure to and use of these phrases in authentic language input.
- **Construction Grammar:** Construction grammar views L2 phrases as constructions, which are pairings of form and meaning. This perspective emphasizes the importance of understanding the syntactic and semantic properties of L2 phrases.

Implications for Second Language Acquisition Research and Pedagogy

The L2 Phrasicon has significant implications for both second language acquisition research and pedagogy:

Research Implications

- **Understanding L2 learner language:** The L2 Phrasicon provides a framework for analyzing and describing the language produced by L2 learners. This analysis can help researchers understand the developmental progression of L2 phrase acquisition and the factors that influence this progression.
- **Cross-linguistic comparisons:** The L2 Phrasicon can be used to compare the phraseology of different languages, identifying similarities and differences in the way that L2 learners acquire and use phrases in different linguistic contexts.

Pedagogical Implications

- **Teaching L2 phrases:** The L2 Phrasicon can inform the development of effective pedagogical techniques for teaching L2 phrases. This includes identifying the most frequent and useful phrases for learners to acquire, as well as developing strategies for teaching these phrases in a meaningful and engaging way.
- **Assessment of L2 phrase competence:** The L2 Phrasicon can be used to develop assessment tools that measure L2 learners' competence in using a range of phrases. These assessments can provide feedback to learners and teachers on the learner's progress and areas for improvement.

The L2 Phrasicon is a complex and dynamic phenomenon that plays a crucial role in second language acquisition and communication. By understanding the definition, theoretical underpinnings, and implications of the L2 Phrasicon, researchers and practitioners can gain valuable insights into the process of L2 phrase acquisition and develop more effective approaches to teaching and assessing L2 phrase competence.

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