

From Construction Grammar to embodied construction practice

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German preposition

bis ('up to/until')

(1) *Wir fahren **bis** Paris*

(‘We drive **up to** Paris’)



(dreamstime.com)

(2) *Wir fahren **bis an** den See*

(‘We drive **up to** the lake’)



(powerslider.de)

(3) *Das Auto ist **bis in** den See gefahren*

(lit. 'The car is **up to into** the sea driven')



(4) *Sie fahren **bis an den See hinunter***

(Lit. 'They drive **up** to the lake **downwards**')




(rabe-bike.de)

(5) **Sie laufen *bis an* den See *hinauf***

(Lit. 'They run **up to** the lake **upwards**')




(alpinforum.com/1234gifs.de)



- Few pictures illustrate **variation in use of ‘bis’**
- **need to focus on larger sequences**
- Even more obvious with **more abstract expressions**, e.g.

(6) *Ich werde dich lieben bis in den Tod* (DWDS Kernkorpus)
(Lit. ‘I will you love up to into the death’)

(7) *Er ist verliebt bis über beide Ohren* (DWDS Kernkorpus)
(Lit. ‘He is in love up to over both ears’).

- Not spatial, but temporal or metaphorical
- Non-compositional phrases
- But entrenched in German

- Complex constructions with *bis* not present in other languages (e.g. English, French, ...)
- Translation difficulties
- **Challenge for learners!**

➤ **ISSUE: how to teach such constructions?**

- Topic of my presentation

Structure of presentation

- Brief **historical overview** about learning of sequences
- Show and illustrate **assets of CxG** for FLT/FLL
 - C with German *bis*
 - C with German placement/posture Vs
(e.g. *stellen/stehen, legen/liegen, setzen/sitzen*)
 - ditransitive phraseologisms
- Design interactive activities for FLT based on
constructions + embodiment

1. Brief historical overview



1.1. Lado (1961): *Pattern Practice*

- reaction to translation approach
- in language laboratory, audiolingual method
- aimed at habit formation with drills of ‘language patterns’
- „the significant framework[s] of the sentence”
(Lado und Fries 1967: xv)
- lexical elements as slot-fillers
E.g. *Do you see the train/ship/car/truck/...?*

Critique:

- Main patterns of FL practised **without learners knowing what they say!** (Politzer 1961: 19)
- **Non-authentic** language
- Learners **not able to produce** sentences
- No communicative situations

But:

- Innovative: **Focus on larger structures**
- Inspired language pedagogy



1.2. Further research

- **Wong-Fillmore (1976):**
 - first study on prefabricated patterns in language acquisition by young Spanish-speaking children
 - Conclusion: prefab. patterns play major role in language acquisition
- **Hausmann (1984):**
 - vocabulary learning = collocation learning

Studies on sequences in FLT/FLL:

- ‘lexical phrases’ learnt as whole
(Nattinger & DeCarrico 1992: 114)
- ‘formulaic language’ (Wray 2002: 192)
→ success in second language dependent on ability to learn sequences.
- Need to teach in ‘chunks’
(Handwerker 2008; Handwerker & Madlener 2006)
- or in ‘formulaic chunks’ (Ellis & Cadierno 2009: 114).

More recent studies:

- Ellis & Ferreira-Junior (2009a/2009b);
Robinson & Ellis (2008):
 - ‘**constructions**’ = conventional form-meaning mappings
 - based on Goldberg’s model (1995; 2006)
 - **abstract Cs have meaning of their own,
with open slots**
- De Knop/Gilquin (2016): *Applied Construction Grammar*
 - FLT/FLL can be fostered by insights from CxG

2. Assets of CxG for FLT/FLL

2.1. Exs with German preposition *bis*

(1) *Wir fahren bis Paris*

(‘We drive up to Paris’)

(2) *Wir fahren bis an den See*

(‘We drive up to the lake’)

(3) *Das Auto ist bis in den See gefahren*

(lit. ‘The car is up into the lake driven’)

Spatial meaning:

- expression of stretch + viewpoint
- Prototypical meaning



But also temporal meaning:

(8) *Große Spieler sitzen spät bis in die Nacht* (Cosmas II:100/DEZ.75273)

(Lit. 'Great players sit late until into the night')

(9) *In Wien tanzt man gewöhnlich bis zu Ostern, also bis in den April hinein*. (DWDS)

(Lit. 'In Vienna dances one usually until to Easter, i.e. until into the april within')

➤ Metaphorical extension: 'TIME IS SPACE' (Radden 2003)

Also fictive motion/mental scanning

(10) *Ich werde dich lieben bis in den Tod* (DWDS)

(Lit. 'I will love you until into the death')

(11) *Die Älteren sind motiviert bis unter die Haarspitzen* (Cosmas II: M02/FEB.10642)

(Lit. 'The elder are motivated up to under the hair ends')

(12) *Er ist konservativ bis in die Knochen*

(Lit. 'He is conservative up to into the bones')

➤ Metaphorical extension:

‘ABSTRACT STATE IS LOCATION/MOTION’

➤ Often **bodypart** for ‘limit’ (cf. anthropocentric view)

ASSET 1 of CxG:

➤ **Postulate 1 entrenched abstract C**

Cs with *bis*: prototypical meaning of stretch

– Realized with concrete spatial expressions

➤ **If learner knows meaning of abstract C, s/he can reconstruct meaning of new constructions**

ASSET 2 of CxG:

- Temporal + mental expressions are linked to prototype by inheritance links:
metaphor/part of/polysemy/instance of
- Cs organized in structured inventory = **constructicon**

2.2. Placement and posture verbs in Cs

Use of Placement (PLV) and Posture (PSV) Verbs in German => **challenge for learners**

German posture verbs	German placement verbs
<i>stehen</i> ('to stand')	<i>stellen</i> ('to put upright')
<i>sitzen</i> ('to sit')	<i>setzen</i> ('to put in a sitting position')
<i>liegen</i> ('to lie')	<i>legen</i> ('to put in a lying position')
<i>stecken</i> ('to be stuck')	<i>stecken</i> ('to put into sg tight')

Learning difficulties:

- correct selection of a PLV (*stellen/setzen/legen*) or PSV (*stehen/sitzen/liegen*)
- Cross-ling.: different categories, e.g. no generic term in German like English *to put*.
- obligation to express manner of motion/location in main V, e.g.

(13) *Er stellt den Teller auf den Tisch*

lit. 'He puts (upright) the plate on the table'

(14) *Die Mutter setzt das Baby in den Kinderstuhl*

lit. 'The mother sets the baby in the children chair'

- Specification of morpho-syntactic cases in sequences
- in fixed collocations ('Funktionsverbgefügen', Eisenberg 2006 or Van Pottelberge 2001), e.g.
 - *in Verbindung setzen*
lit. 'to set into contact' = 'to get in touch'
 - *in den Vordergrund stellen*
lit. 'to put into the foreground'
= 'to place special emphasis on'

➤ Posture and Placement Vs used in specific Cs:

➤ **PLVs** in caused motion constructions

Sem.	CAUSE-MOVE	<cause	theme	goal >
	↓	↓	↓	↓
Synt.	VERB	SUBJECT	OBJECT	OBLIQUE
	<i>stellte</i>	<i>die Tochter</i>	<i>die Teller</i>	<i>in die Spülmaschine</i>

(Goldberg 1995 and 2006)

(15) *Die kleine Tochter stellte die Teller in die Spülmaschine.*

Lit. 'The young daughter put upright the plates into the dishwasher'.

➤ **PSVs** in intransitive motion constructions

Sem.	MOVE	< theme	goal >
	↓	↓	↓
Synt.	VERB	SUBJECT	OBJECT
	<i>liegt</i>	<i>das Kind</i>	<i>im Bett</i>
	'lies'	'the child'	'in the bed'

(16) *Das Kind liegt im Bett*

Lit. 'The child lies in the bed'

➤ **Intransitive motion C linked to Caused motion C**

by '**part-of-relation**'

Test with Italian learners of German

(De Knop & Mollica 2016)

■ AIM

- Compare traditional teaching method with constructionist
- More efficient to describe + teach both V types in Cs ?
- More efficient to teach them at same time?

■ PARTICIPANTS

- 2 Groups of Italian master-I students at University of Milano, learning German
- N = 20 students per group



■ TEST DESIGN

- Cloze test, fill in a verb
- 30 sentences, 7 distractors
- Pretest & posttest: same amount but different sentences

Ex.

Setzen Sie das fehlende Verb ein.

	Satz	fehlendes Verb
1	Seitdem er klein ist, ... er in Berlin.	
2	Kannst du bitte die Teller in die Spülmaschine ...	
3	Ich habe großen Hunger, wann kann ich etwas ...?	
4	Kannst du ohne Brille lesen, was an der Tafel geschrieben	
5	Er ... vor einem Problem.	
6	Die Verletzten ... ihre Hoffnung in die Hände der Helfer.	
7	Er wollte ein neues Auto ..., hatte aber kein Geld.	
8	Seitdem sie arbeitslos ist, ... sie in Schwierigkeiten.	
9	Der Arzt fragte: Wo ... der Schmerz?	
10	Ich habe so viel zu tun und ... unter Druck.	

- **PRETEST:**

- done 1 week before the lessons
- « out of the blue »

- **TEACHING METHODOLOGY CONTROL GROUP:**

- traditional lesson by Fabio M. (45 min)
- Differences in orientation with PSVs and PLVs
- Also possible use in fixed expressions
(‘Funktionsverbgefügen’)
- Case-marking

■ TEACHING METHODOLOGY TEST GROUP:

- Lesson by Sabine DK (45 min)
- Starting point: both Cs (caused motion + intransitive motion) + realisation with Vs
- Enriched with inventory of exs from tables with semantic uses of PSVs + PLVs: postural, locational, metaphorical

(inspired by De Knop & Perrez 2014, Lemmens 2002, Lemmens & Perrez 2010)

Stehen/Stellen

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>stehen</i>	<i>stellen</i>
postural	Be/Put on a base	Die Teller stehen auf dem Tisch Lit. 'The plates stand on the table'	Stelle bitte die Teller auf den Tisch Lit. 'Please put (vertically) the plates on the table'
locational	Extend upward from a base	Mit dem Supergel stehen die Haare den ganzen Tag Lit. 'With the supergelly the hair stands the whole day'	/
	Verticality in absence of base	Die Teller stehen schon in der Spülmaschine Lit. 'The plates already stand in the dishwasher'	Stelle bitte die Teller in die Spülmaschine Lit. 'Please put (vertically) the plates into the dishwasher'
metaphorical	Being/Put in a canonical position	Er steht vor einem Dilemma/Problem Lit. 'He stands in front of a dilemma/problem'	Vor eine Verantwortung stellen Vor Gericht stellen Lit. 'to put/place in front of a responsibility' Lit. 'to place/to bring to court/justice'
	Written text	Was steht an der Tafel? Lit. 'What stands on the blackboard?' Ein Komma <u>steht</u> zwischen den beiden Wörtern Lit. 'A comma stands between both words'	/ Er <u>setzt</u> ein Komma zwischen die beiden Sätze Lit. 'He sets a comma between both sentences'

LIEGEN/LEGEN

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>liegen</i>	<i>legen</i>
postural	Be/Put on one's side/not on the base with horizontal orientation	Wo liegen meine Schuhe? Lit. 'Where do my shoes lie?' Sie lag im Bett und schlief Lit. 'She lay in bed and was sleeping'	Wo hast du meine Schuhe hingelegt? Lit. 'Where did you lay my shoes?' Die Mutter legte das Baby ins Bett Lit. 'The mother laid the baby in the bed' Die Henne legt ein Ei Lit. 'The hen laid an egg'
locational	Location of dimensionless entities	Es liegt viel Salz auf dem Tisch Lit. 'There lies much salt on the table' Der Ball liegt im Sand Lit. 'The ball lies in the sand'	Sie hat viel Salz auf den Tisch gelegt Lit. 'She has laid much salt on the table' Er hat den Ball in den Sand gelegt Lit. 'He has laid the ball into the sand'
	Geotopographical location	Köln liegt am Rhein Lit. 'Cologne lies at the Rhine'	Der Nebel legt sich über die Stadt (REFL) Lit. 'The fog lays itself over the town'
metaphorical	Abstract entities	Die Verantwortung liegt bei dir Lit. 'The responsibility lies with you'	Die Verletzten legten ihre Hoffnung in die Hände der Helfer Lit. 'The wounded laid their hope in the hands of the helpers' Den Fokus/den Akzent/den Schwerpunkt auf etwas legen Lit. 'to lay the focus/the accent/the emphasis on something' Der Streit/die Aufregung legt sich (REFL) Lit. 'The quarrel/The upset lays itself'
	Scale	Der Punkt liegt auf der Gerade Lit. 'The point lies on the line'	Er <u>setzt</u> den Punkt auf die Gerade Lit. 'He sets the point on the line'

SITZEN/SETZEN

USE	DESCRIPTION	<i>sitzen</i>	<i>setzen</i>
postural	Be/Put in a sitting position	<i>Ein Ehepaar sitzt am Tisch</i> Lit. 'The couple sits at the table' <i>Das Baby sitzt auf der Kommode</i> Lit. 'The baby sits on the dresser'	<i>Das Ehepaar setzte sich an den Tisch</i> Lit. 'The couple sat down at the table' <i>Die Mutter setzt das Baby auf die Kommode</i> Lit. 'The mother sets the baby on the dresser'
locational	Location of small animals (+ insects)	<i>Wieviele Vögel sitzen im Baum?</i> Lit. 'How many birds sit in the tree?' <i>Eine Fliege sitzt auf dem Kuchen</i> Lit. 'A fly sits on the cake'	<i>Das Rotkehlchen setzt sich in den Baum</i> Lit. 'The robin sits down in the tree' <i>Die Fliege setzt sich auf den Kuchen</i> Lit. 'The fly sits down on the cake'
	Containment (+ Affiliation)	<i>Er sitzt im Gefängnis</i> Lit. 'He sits in prison' <i>Der Schmerz sitzt in dem Bauch</i> Lit. 'The pain sits in the stomach' <i>Er sitzt im Parlament</i> Lit. 'He sits in parliament' (= is a member of parliament)	<i>Die Polizei setzte den Kriminellen ins Gefängnis</i> Lit. 'The police set the criminal guy in prison' <i>Der Chirurg setzt eine Prothese in die Hüfte</i> Lit. 'The surgeon sets a prosthesis in the hip' /
	Contact	<i>Die Brille sitzt schief auf der Nase</i> Lit. 'The glasses sit crooked on the nose' <i>Das Messer sitzt an der Kehle</i> Lit. 'The knife sits at the throat'	<i>Er setzt die Brille auf die Nase</i> Lit. 'He sets the glasses on the nose' <i>Der Bandit setzte ein Messer an ihre Kehle</i> Lit. 'The bandit set the knife at the throat'
metaphorical	Containment	<i>Er sitzt in der Falle/in den Problemen</i> Lit. 'He sits in the trap/in the problems'	<i>Er hat sein Vertrauen in seine Schwester gesetzt</i> Lit. 'He has set his confidence in his sister'
	Contact	<i>Das Kleid sitzt nicht</i> Lit. 'The skirt does not sit' (= does not fit)	
	Written text	<i>Ein Komma steht zwischen den Wörtern</i> Lit. 'A comma stands between the words'	<i>Der Lehrer setzte ein Komma zwischen die Wörter</i> Lit. 'The teacher set a comma between the words' <i>Einen Diskussionspunkt auf die Tagesordnung</i>

SITZEN/SETZEN

Synonym of <i>bringen</i>		<i>In Kopie stehen/sein</i> <i>In Bewegung sein</i> <i>In Verbindung stehen</i> <i>In Verlegenheit sein</i> <i>In Kenntnis sein</i> <i>Unter Druck stehen</i> <i>Jmd steht vor der Tür</i>	<i>In Kopie/cc. setzen</i> <i>In Bewegung setzen</i> <i>In Verbindung setzen</i> <i>In Verlegenheit setzen</i> <i>Einen Motor in Gang setzen</i> <i>In Kenntnis setzen</i> <i>Unter Druck setzen</i> <i>Ein Gerücht in die Welt setzen</i> <i>Jmd vor die Tür setzen</i>
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■ RESULTS

Control group + Test group compared:

	Pretest CG	Posttest CG	Pretest TG	Posttest TG
Correct answers	34 %	60 %	23 %	62 %

- Similar results with posttests CG & TG;
- But TG not so good results for pretest => great progress!
- Progress confirmed by Chi-square test: $p = .004$, **very significant**

Asset 3 of CxG for FLT/FLL

➤ integrative approach

- Learn lexemes in context/with matching Cs (=PLVs/PSVs)
(cf. Ellis & Ferreira 2009a and 2009b)
- Describe PLVs & PSVs in parallel:
 - in caused motion Cs: Placement V
 - in intransitive motion Cs: Posture V
- Additional info about morpho-syntactic cases
 - accusative in caused motion Cs
 - dative in intransitive Cs
- Favorite prepositions in Cs (Schönefeld 2006)

2.3. Ditransitive phraseologisms

(De Knop/Mollica 2016), e.g.

(17) *Isabella gab ihrem Verlobten einen Korb.*

Lit. 'Isabella gave her fiancé a basket.'

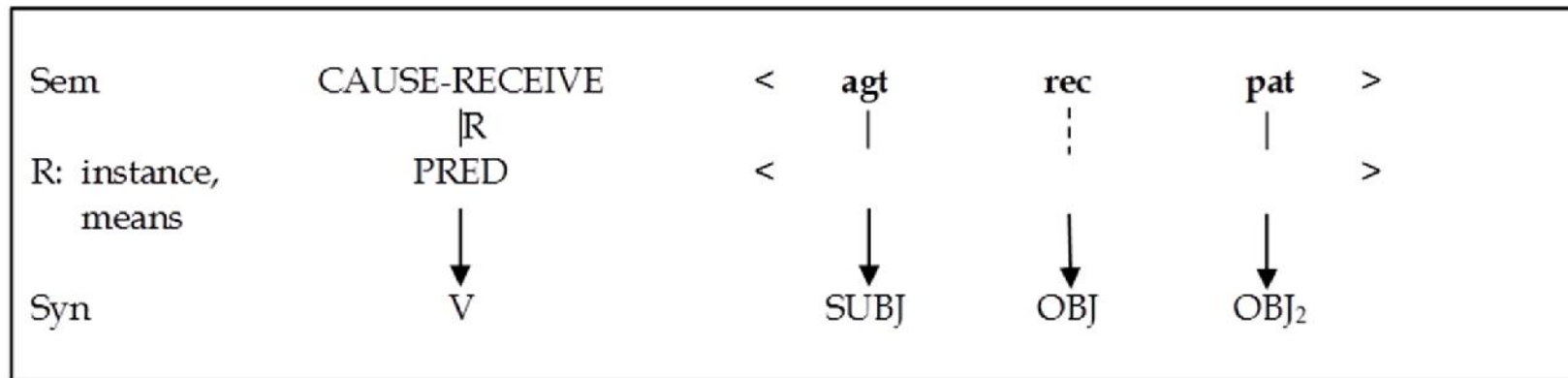
= 'Isabella turned her fiancé down.'

(18) *Der Verkäufer zeigte mir die kalte Schulter.*

Lit. 'The salesman showed me the cold shoulder.'

= 'The salesman ignored me/could not be bothered.'

Ditransitive construction (Goldberg 1995: 142)



(19) *Peter gibt Maria ein Buch.*

‘Peter gives Maria a book.’

- Meaning of **transfer**
- In phraseologisms: metaphorical/metonymical transfer

Study with learners:

- AIM

- show that learners identify the same patterns in ditransitive phraseologisms as in ditransitive non-phraseological Cs
- Exploit this for FLT/FLL of ditransitive phraseologisms
- Sorting task, inspired by tests by Bencini & Goldberg (2000) + studies by Baicchi (2013), Della Costanza & Mollica (2015), Valenzuela Manzanares & Rojo López (2008)

- Participants

- 15 Belgian French-speaking Master I-students in translation studies in Brussels
- 15 Italian Master I-students in language studies at the University of Milano.

- Task:

- Sort 25 mixed sentences according to meaning and/or form
- 14 sentences with ditransitive C (incl. 11 phraseol.) + 11 mixed constructions



– Different Cs with same V

(20) *Die Kuh gibt Milch.*

Lit. 'The cow gives milk.' = 'The cow produces milk.'

(21) *Isabella gab ihrem Verlobten einen Korb.*

Lit. 'Isabella gave her fiancé a basket.'

= 'Isabella turned her fiancé down.'

– or same C with different Vs:

(22) *Peter zeigt seiner Schwester die Krallen.*

Lit. 'Peter shows his sister the claws.' = 'Peter threatens his sister.'

(23) *Die Mutter verpasste ihrer Tochter einen Denkzettel.*

Lit. 'The mother gave her daughter a think-card.'

= 'The mother gave her daughter a warning/st to think about.'

■ Results:

Construction-based vs. verb-oriented classification of examples

	Italian learners	French-speaking learners
Ditr. Cx/Phraseol.	73%	69%
Verb-oriented	19%	38%

➤ Learners sorted intuitively according to C and not V!

ASSET 4 of CxG for FLT/FLL

- first refer to prototypical, non-phraseological ditransitive C with idea of transfer (concrete or abstract).
- extend to ditransitive phraseologisms, esp. with Vs with ditransitive valency, e.g. *geben/zeigen/versprechen*.
- Motivation for extension: principle of “structural persistence” (Konopka & Bock 2009)
- Figurative aspect of phraseologism explained by metaphor/metonymy.

3. Teaching Methodology: Constructions + Embodiment



Observation:

- Having learnt Cs of L2 → no guarantee for ability to produce Cs + instantiations in communicative way!

➤ **Practice needed!**

- Cognitive Linguistics: conceptual categories + expressions are result of **embodied processes**.

(Lakoff 1987)

Surprisingly:

- CL-insights about embodiment not much exploited in FLT/FLL.

3.1. Evidence for embodiment

■ in neurolinguistics

Feldman/Narayanan (2004: 389): *... all understanding involves simulating or enacting the appropriate embodied experience. When asked to grasp, we enact it. When hearing or reading about grasping, we simulate grasping or watching someone grasp.*

Rathunde (2009: 71): *Embodiment suggests that it is through our bodily perceptions, movements, emotions, and feelings that meaning becomes possible.*

Difficulties in FLL:

- when learning L2, you have L1-categorization and L1-expressions in mind
 - Learners have not made the experience of embodiment with L2-categorization as a child!
 - FLT methodology is ‘disembodied’ in our Western world.
- FLT should be grounded in embodiment to make up for the missing link between foreign concepts and language not acquired in childhood.

3.2. Studies on embodied language pedagogy:

- James Asher (1982) '**total physical response**':
interactive activities, motion in class-room
- David Birchfield (2015) '**smallLAB learning**':
(imagined) activity can aid reading comprehension in
young children
- Rathunde (2009: 73): create more embodied
educational environments through **integration of nature**

3.3. Construction practice

3.3.1. Constructions with *bis*

A. Interactive practice with own body

- Start with spatial Cs and ask learners to perform what they hear

(24) *Peter geht bis an die Tür und öffnet sie mit dem Schlüssel*

Lit. 'Peter goes up to the door and opens it with the key'

(25) *Maria streckt sich bis an die Tischecke*

Lit. 'Maria stretches herself up to the table corner'

B. Work with pictures/images for bodyparts:

Ex. (25) *Das Wasser steht dem Mann bis ...*

Lit. 'The water stands to the man up to ...'



(faz.net)

(26) *Das Wasser steht dem Mann bis ...*



(zoonar.de)

(27) *Das Wasser steht dem Hund/der Frau bis ...*



(28) *Das Wasser steht dem Mann bis ...*

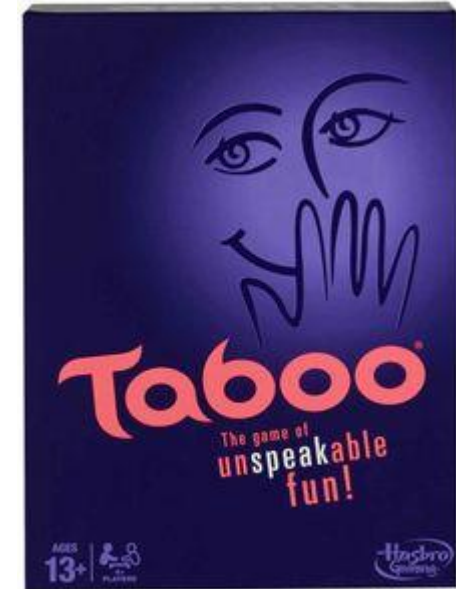


(zoonar.de)

3.3.2. Constructions with PSVs/PLVs

C. Interactive exercises with games

- Inspired by games like 'Taboo' (1989).
- Teacher brings some objects which can be moved or pictures representing « scenarios/ lifelike situations» (Di Pietro 1987: 3)



- One student should perform a scene without words, the other students have to guess what is represented
- Students become “full participants in human discourse” (Di Pietro 1997: 3) and use their body to represent scenes.

D. Use of puppets/Playmobil-figures



- Teacher/Learners use puppets/Playmobil-figures to represent caused motion situations which have to be guessed by other students.
- Importance of correct selection of V + case + prep!

4. Conclusions

- Adequate teaching methodology starts from concrete exercises
- Then extend to more abstract domains with explanation by metaphor/metonymy
- Exs. of **fictive motion** in De Knop (2015)
 - (20) *eine Sprache in eine andere übersetzen*
Lit. 'a language into another translate'
 - ACCUSATIVE CASE for expression of dynamic motion (use of pictures/boxes)
 - (21) *Er verliebte sich in eine junge Afrikanerin*
Lit. 'He fell in love himself in a young African (lady)'

- Teaching in Cs + embodiment is promising.
- Talk only described a small sample of basic Cs

- Future perspective:

develop list of main relevant Cs in each language

(cf. also FrameNet for different languages;

FrameNet Brasil (Torrent et al.);

Gfol for German (Boas et al.);

Swedish constructicon (Loenheim et al.)



Thank you !