

## TEACHING FRENCH TO SPANISH SPEAKERS: SOME TYPICAL PATTERNS OF ERROR

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### *1. Introduction*

While this paper is addressed primarily to teachers of French whose students include native speakers of Spanish, it is expected that many of the remarks made here will be relevant for teaching French to learners of any language background with prior exposure to Spanish. To a lesser extent, some of the observations made here will be of interest to Spanish teachers whose students are already familiar with French and who are now embarking on the study of Spanish.

The article is based on the author's observations of his mostly Spanish-speaking students' performance in French during classroom activities and homework assignments. These observations were over a period of five years, during which time the author taught French and Linguistics at the San German campus of the Inter American University of Puerto Rico.

The purpose of the paper is to point out several typical patterns of morphological, syntactic, and lexical errors made by these Spanish-speaking undergraduate students and to suggest explanations of some potential sources of the errors. It is hoped that others teaching French to learners with a Spanish background will, by becoming aware of these underlying patterns of error and their causes, be better equipped to deal with them within the framework of whatever teaching approaches they may prefer.

Of course, many types of errors in French, particularly grammatical ones, depend not so much on the learner's language background as on other factors such as over-generalizations of patterns of French itself or the mode of presentation of the target language. These types of errors in French will often be similar for English and Spanish speakers or, indeed, for speakers of other languages as well. In other cases, the patterns of error of Hispanic learners will differ from those of English speakers. It is this latter type of error which this paper seeks primarily to address through a posteriori analysis.

In the rest of this paper, several patterns of error assumed to be specific to the Spanish-speaking learner are pointed out, a likely source of the errors is indicated,

and a few approaches to dealing with these problems which proved to be successful in French classes at Inter American are suggested. Errors are categorized and dealt with as grammatical ones, lexical errors due to phonetic similarity between the two languages, semantic errors, and general lexical errors.

## 2. Grammatical errors

A number of patterns of grammatical errors were observed among the students at Inter American. These included errors in the use of pronouns, articles, verbs, and prepositions, each of which is taken up in turn below.

**2.1. Personal pronouns.** Various types of errors involving the use of personal pronouns were noted. The first of these, the omission of French subject pronouns, is apparently explicable from Spanish, where subject pronouns may usually be omitted without ambiguity, as in *hablo, hablas, habla, hablan* 'I speak, you speak, he/she speaks, they speak'. Hence students frequently try to omit them in French. It is helpful to show students that in the absence of subject pronouns, the homophony of many French verbs forms would result in ambiguity (e.g. *parle, parles, parlent*) and that for this reason the pronouns are obligatory in French, in the absence of subject nouns, even where they might be optional in Spanish.

A second type of error involves the use of subject pronouns where emphatic or disjunctive pronouns are called for in one-word utterances. For example, asking whether the teacher or another student is indeed addressing him/her ("Who? Me?"), the Spanish-speaking student would systematically ask *\*je?* (cf. Sp. *¿yo?*). Asking about someone else, they would say *\*il?* or *\*tu?* or *\*ils?* (cf. Sp. *¿él?* or *¿tú?* or *¿ellos?*). The source of error is easy to understand from a glance at Fig. 1, where it is seen that pronoun choice in one-word utterances in Spanish is identical to that of subject position, while in French there is only partial overlap in these two environments. It is worth noting that English speakers at Inter American seem impressionistically to be more likely to produce the correct *moi?* and *toi?* or even *lui?* and *eux?* in these situations, once the forms had been presented.

Similar errors occur with the pronouns used after prepositions. Here, however, the problem is limited to the 3rd person masculine as in *\*pour il* and *\*pour ils*, modeled on Spanish *para él* 'for him' and *para ellos* 'for them'. Spanish speakers learn *pour moi* 'for me' and *pour toi* 'for you (sing.)' readily enough, perhaps because, as Fig. 1 illustrates, in both Spanish and French, 1st and 2nd person pronouns used with prepositions are distinct from the corresponding subject pronouns. In the case of *pour elle, nous, vous, or elles*, 'for her, us, you (pl.), them (fem.)', there is no problem, since in each of the languages, subject forms and forms used with prepositions are identical. Only with third person singular and plural *lui* and *eux* is there a problem, apparently because in the native Spanish, but not in French, subject forms and prepositional object forms are identical.

As far as the position of personal pronouns is concerned, Spanish speakers are not surprised at placing pronoun object before the verb. However, in Spanish, unlike

### THE PRONOUNS OF SPANISH

		SUBJECT	DIR. OBJ.	INDIR. OBJ.	OBJ. OF PR.	ONE-WORD UTTERANCE
SING.	1st	yo		me	mí (-migo)	yo
	2nd	tú		te	ti (-tigo)	tú
		Usted		se	le (se)	Usted
	3rd	él	lo (le)	él		
		ella	la	ella		
	PL.	1st	nosotros		nos	nosotros
nosotras				nosotras		
2nd		Ustedes		se	les (se)	Ustedes
		3rd	ellos	los		ellos
ellas			las	ellas		

### THE PRONOUNS OF FRENCH

		SUBJECT	DIR. OBJ.	INDIR. OBJ.	OBJ. OF PR.	ONE-WORD UTTERANCE
SING.	1st	je		me		moi
	2nd	tu		te		toi
					vous	
	3rd	il		le	lui	elle
		elle		la		
	PL.	1st			nous	
2nd				vous		
3rd		ils		les	leur	eux
		elles				elles

Fig. 1. The pronouns of Spanish and French in contrast

French, the indirect object always precedes the direct, with the result that another systematic pattern of error often appears in the students' French. Moreover, the fact that Spanish does not allow two pronouns beginning with the sound [l] to occur in succession but requires that the first of them (the indirect object) be *se*, leads to still another error. Thus, in attempting to render *je le lui dis* 'I tell it to him', students were observed to produce *\*je se le dis* on the model of Sp. *se lo digo* or even *\*je se le dis à Marie*, modeled on *se lo digo a María*. This latter sentence illustrates yet another error involving indirect object pronouns stemming from the fact that Spanish often uses a redundant indirect object pronoun with *decir* 'say' and similar verbs of telling even when the indirect object noun is expressed. As a result, Hispanic students will occasionally insert an unnecessary *lui* into sentences with *dire*, yielding sentences such as *\*Dites-lui à Jean que le café est là* 'Tell John that the coffee is there' (Sp. *Dícale a Juan que el café está allá!*).

Still another type of error in pronoun usage involves overextension of the use of *se* in conformity with Spanish patterns. This results in errors such as *\*se parle français en Martinique* on the model of Spanish *se habla francés en Martinica* 'French is spoken in Martinique'. In this case, as in many others, French prefers a verb with *on* as its subject. Occasionally, other structures such as preposition + infinitive, are

involved as when *\*se vend* or *\*se loue* are used for *à vendre* 'for sale' or *à louer* 'for rent' (Sp. *se vende* and *se alquila*).

Finally, pronoun objects of infinitives are often misplaced. Since in Spanish a pronoun object may either follow the infinitive or precede the main verb governing the infinitive, students sometimes say *\*je veux voir le* or *\*je le veux voir* for *je veux le voir* 'I want to see it/him' (Sp. *quiero verlo* or *lo quiero ver*), either *\*je vais à parler lui* or *\*je lui vais à parler* for *je vais lui parler* 'I'm going to talk to him' (Sp. *voy a hablarle* or *le voy a hablar*).

**2.2. Articles.** Fortunately, the uses of the article in French closely parallel Spanish. As a result, Spanish dominant students at Inter American made fewer mistakes with articles than did their English dominant classmates. Still, several types of errors do occur. For example, since no article is needed in Spanish with *otro* 'other', *un* or *une* is omitted with *autre* as in *\*je vois autre voiture* (Sp. *veo otro carro*) 'I see another car'. Conversely, an article may occur where it is not required with *monsieur*, *madame* or *mademoiselle*: e.g. *\*c'est le monsieur Perez* or *\*c'est la madame Lopez* (Sp. *es el señor Pérez* or *es la señora López*) 'this is Mr. Perez/Mrs. Lopez'. Time expressions may also contain an article, as in *\*il est les trois heures* (or even *„sont les trois heures*) patterned in part on Spanish *son las tres* 'it is there o'clock'.

Confusion may result from the different patterns of using the definite article for expressing the days of the week in the two languages. French uses no article for the expression of a single event (e.g. *samedi* 'on Saturday, this Saturday') while Spanish uses a singular article in this situation (*el sábado*). On the other hand, for habitual occurrences, French uses the singular article (*le samedi* 'on Saturdays, every Saturday') where Spanish requires a plural one (*los sábados*). Since *le samedi* resembles *el sábado* structurally, the student may assume that they are identical semantically. Thus, *je vais au cinéma le samedi* 'I go to the movies on Saturdays' (habitual action) is sometimes misunderstood or used in the sense of 'I am going to the movies this Saturday' (single instance).

**2.3. Verbs.** Spanish speakers encounter fewer problems with the semantics of French verb tenses than do English speakers. Since the uses of the various verb tenses have much in common in French and Spanish, once the verb forms have been learned, the choice of one tense over another is relatively easy for the Hispanic learner. Relatively little time need be devoted to the semantics of the imperfect versus the *passé composé* or to explaining the subjunctive. In fact, once the forms of the subjunctive are known, the problem is not so much one of getting students to use them as to get them to restrict their use of the subjunctive. In accord with the more extensive use of the subjunctive in Spanish, they may want to use it with any verbs dependent on *penser* 'think' or *espérer* 'hope', whether affirmative or negative; or in place of the imperfect in *si*-clauses stating conditions contrary to fact (e.g. *\*s'il soit ici, je le verrais* 'if he were here, I would see him'); or in place of the future tense with *quand* (*\*quand tu sois en San Juan* for *quand tu seras à San Juan* 'When you are in San Juan' (cf. Sp. *cuando estés* [subj.] *en San Juan*). Moreover, the subjunctive rather than the indicative may appear with verbs of ordering, as in

*\*Dites-lui qu'(il) ouvre la porte* for *Dites-lui d'ouvrir la porte* on the model of Spanish *¡Dígame que abra la puerta!* 'Tell him to open the door!'

In some contexts where the *passé composé* is required, the *passé simple* occurs occasionally among students who have mastered the latter form. Indeed, two advanced level students, who had learned a great deal of French on their own, persisted for some time in alternating between the *passé simple* (morphologically similar to the Sp. preterite) and the *passé composé* (similar to the Sp. present perfect). It was as if, having taken the trouble to learn these forms in French, they were reluctant to give them up.

**2.4. Prepositions.** A frequent error involving prepositions is use of *de* in *\*devant de* 'in front of' or *\*derrière de* 'behind'. However, the source of this error is not immediately apparent, since the occurrence of *de* may possibly be calqued on the equivalent Spanish expressions *delante de* and *detrás de* or it may be an overgeneralization from other French prepositional expressions such as *à côté de* 'next to', *au milieu de* 'in the middle of', *en face de* 'opposite', *loin de* 'far from', *près de* 'near', etc.

Two minor grammatical problems involving *à* are worth nothing. The first of these is the insertion of an unnecessary *à* in the *futur proche* as in *\*je vais à devenir médecin* (Sp. *voy a ser médico*) 'I'm going to be(come) a doctor'. The second unwarranted use of *à* is patterned after the so-called "personal *à*" of Spanish required before all direct object nouns referring to persons: *\*tu vois à Marie?* (Sp. *¿ves a María?*) 'Do you see Mary?' The two examples just discussed here involve use of prepositions in contexts where they are ungrammatical in French. Another type of error, where the incorrect choice of prepositions is involved, is dealt with in the section on semantics below.

### 3. Phonetic similarity and lexical errors

Several lexical items are frequently misinterpreted or uttered inappropriately, apparently because of phonetic similarity to Spanish. Perhaps the most common of these errors is use of *elle* 'she' where masculine *il* 'he' is intended or the interpretation of *elle* in spoken French as having a male referent (cf. Sp. where masc. *él* contrasts with fem. *ella*). The teacher's feigning surprise at use of *elle* where *il* is clearly intended is an effective reminder to students regarding proper pronoun choice. Eventually students reach a point where they enjoy feigning surprise when they catch a classmate using *elle* for *il*. The student making the error quickly realizes what has happened and is able to self-correct.

A second error apparently resulting from phonetic similarity is the re-interpretation of French *est-ce* 'is it' as a single morpheme corresponding to Spanish *es* 'is'. Initially, a few students seem to have analyzed the two syllables of *Qui est-ce?* [ki] + [es] 'who is it' as being isomorphic with Spanish *¿Quién es?* [kjen] + [es]. This appears to be the source of utterances such as *\*[es mari]* or *\*[es la pɔrt]* for *c'est Marie* 'It's Mary' and *c'est la porte* 'It's the door' in the early stages of the course

(cf. Sp. *es María* and *es la puerta*). The most effective means of dealing with this problem was to delay introduction of *Qui est-ce?* until well after the structures Noun + *est, il/elle + est*, and then *c'est* had been mastered.

Other minor problems involving phonetic similarity include the interpretation of *à qui?* 'to whom' as Sp. *aquí* 'here', the interpretation of *seize* 'sixteen' as Sp. *seis* 'six', *treize* 'thirteen' as Sp. *tres* 'three', and the not infrequent use of *si* for *oui* (cf. the frequent occurrence of *si* in French in response to negative questions). Interestingly, *où?* 'where' is often misunderstood as 'who', clearly under influence from English, the students' second language.

#### 4. Semantics

4.1. *Familiar pronouns.* Speakers of Spanish will readily understand the distinction between the various forms of *tu* (T-forms) and *vous* (V-forms) in French, since a similar distinction exists in the native language. However, in Puerto Rican Spanish, and in other types of Caribbean Spanish as well, T-forms are used in a much wider range of social situations than in France. Hence, Hispanic students may well use *tu* and *vous* inappropriately and will have to learn that the socially acceptable usage of these forms does not correspond entirely to the choice of *tú* vs. *Usted* in Spanish.

4.2. *Possessives.* A more serious semantic problem arises from the students' tendency to equate French *son/sa/ses* 'his, her, its' with the Spanish possessive *su/sus* 'his, her, its, your, formal their' and to extend the use of *son/sa/ses* to situations where *votre/vos* 'your' or *leur/leurs* 'their' would be appropriate (e.g. *\*c'est son stylo* where *c'est votre stylo* 'It's your pen' is intended). To remind students of distinction, it was useful in my classes, when students addressed me with *son/sa/ses* instead of *votre/vos*, to respond as if they were referring to someone else. For example by turning around to see if anyone was behind me. However, an even more effective means of dealing with the problem before it became a problem was to rearrange the order of presentation of the material, delaying introduction of *son/sa/ses* until after *votre/vos* was mastered.

4.3. *Common gender.* In Spanish, a masculine plural noun may be used to designate both male and female members of the species referred to. Thus, while *padre* means 'father' and *madre* means 'mother', *mis padres* means 'my parents' and may be rendered incorrectly in French as *\*mes pères* in place of *mes parents*. Or *combien de frères tu as?* may be misconstrued as 'How many brothers and sisters do you have?' (cf. Sp. *¿cuántos hermanos tienes?*), rather than referring specifically to the number of brothers. Similarly, *elle a trois fils* 'she has three sons' may be misunderstood as a reference to both sons and daughters (cf. Sp. *hijos* 'sons, children') or *les garçons jouent dans la rue* may occur when both boys and girls are involved and where *les enfants* would be more appropriate (cf. Sp. *niños*). In a similar vein, an advanced student once referred to the king and queen of Spain as *\*les rois d'Espagne* where *le roi et la reine* were meant (Sp. *los reyes de España*).

4.4. *Greetings.* As student and teacher pass in the hallway the student may greet the teacher with *\*au revoir, professeur!* When this happens, the student is extending the semantic range of *au revoir* to include what is included by *¡adios!* in Spanish, where it not only means 'good bye' but may also mean 'hello!' when two acquaintances pass without intending to engage in conversation. The students need to learn that *bonjour, monsieur!* or *bonsoir, madame!* are the appropriate utterances when acquaintances pass one another, equivalent here to *¡adios, profesor(a)!*

Students who know *bonne nuit!* are liable to use it where *bonsoir!* is called for (or vice versa) since in Spanish *¡buenas noches!* does duty for both. On the other hand, in the case of *¡buenos días!* 'good morning!' (literally 'good day!') and *¡buenas tardes!* 'good afternoon!', it is Spanish which makes a distinction which French does not. As a result, students who know that *bonjour!* is appropriate in the morning do not realize that its range of appropriateness extends to later in the day and will sometimes ask how to say 'good afternoon!'

4.5. *Miscellaneous semantic extensions.* Second language learners are often unaware of the limits on the semantic range of vocabulary in the target language, as for example when an English speaker says *source* 'spring' when *printemps* is intended. Hispanic learners, like their English-speaking classmates, may extend the semantic range of French lexical items, but in ways that may puzzle the English-language teacher. For example, Puerto Rican students occasionally attempted *\*il vient matin* for *il vient demain*. Such an utterance is not at all surprising when it is borne in mind that both 'morning' and 'tomorrow' are expressed with the same word, *mañana*, in Spanish. Similarly, students sometimes extended the range of *haut* to mean *grand*. Thus, if they knew that *la tour est haute* 'the tower is high/tall' is equivalent to *la torre es alta*, they would expect *\*Jean est haut* to be equivalent for *Juan es alto* 'John is tall.' In the same way, *bas* (Sp. *bajo*) occurred with the meaning of 'short' as in *\*le monsieur est bas* (Sp. *el señor es bajo*) 'the man is short.' The students' error seems explicable from the fact that, while Spanish uses *alto* to mean 'tall' (with reference to people) as well as in the sense of 'high' and uses *bajo* to mean 'short' (referring to people) as well as 'low', French distinguishes between *grand* and *haut* on the one hand and *petit* and *bas* on the other.

Where French clearly distinguishes *pourquoi?* 'why' from *parce que* 'because', the Spanish equivalents *¿por qué?* 'why?' and *porque* 'because' are phonetically quite similar to one another. This fact often leads to still another example of semantic extension by analogy with Spanish, namely the use of *\*pourquoi* in the sense of 'because'.

Another frequent error among Puerto Rican students involved extension of the semantic range of *déjà* to contexts which are ungrammatical in French. *Déjà* 'already' is expressed *ya* in Spanish. However, *ya* may also occur in negative sentences, where it means 'no longer'. Thus, while *no lo sé* means 'I don't know', *ya no sé* means 'I no longer know'. This often led students to construct sentences such as *\*déjà je ne sais pas* where *je ne sais plus* was intended.

In an interesting, though infrequent error of inappropriate semantic extension, one student, knowing that *domingo* 'Sunday' is expressed *dimanche* in French,

cleverly reasoned her way to *\*mon cousin étudie en Saint-Dimanche* for *mon cousin étudie à Saint-Domingue* (Sp. Santo Domingo).

4.6. *Prepositions.* With geographic expressions, Spanish uses *en* 'in' to show location (*estoy en España* 'I'm in Spain') and *a* to show direction (*yo voy a España* 'I'm going to Spain'). Attempting to follow that same pattern in French, Hispanic students will produce sentences like *je suis en Espagne* and *\*je vais à Espagne* or *\*je suis en Porto-Rico* and *je vais à Porto-Rico*. Of course, English-speaking learners produce similar errors, but the problem may be compounded among Spanish speakers by the phonetic and orthographic similarity of the prepositions in the two languages. Moreover, in non-geographic contexts, *en* in Spanish has a much wider range than does French *en*. Hence, students produced *\*en la table* (Sp. *en la mesa* 'on the table'), *\*en le mur* (Sp. *en la pared* 'on the wall'), *\*en la rue* (Sp. *en la calle* 'on the street'), or *\*penser en* (Sp. *penser en* 'to think about'), where in French such various prepositions as *sur*, *dans*, or *à* are required.

### 5. Vocabulary

Even though in the realm of vocabulary the Latino student does enjoy some advantage over the Anglo, since so much of the French lexicon resembles Spanish, the advantage of the Spanish-speaking student in learning vocabulary should not be exaggerated, for a great deal of elementary French vocabulary does not resemble Spanish at all or, indeed, may more closely resemble English than Spanish. The most important problem areas are gender and misleading cognates or *faux amis*.

5.1. *Gender.* The existence of grammatical gender comes as no surprise to Hispanic students and, in fact, is quite helpful in learning French vocabulary, since etymologically related words usually have the same gender in both languages. However, students are bothered by the fact that gender in French is less predictable than in the native language, where the ending is normally a reasonably sure indicator of gender. They expect even unrelated words to have the same gender in both languages and are a little surprised that *montre* 'watch' is feminine in French (cf. masc. *reloj* in Spanish), while *mur* 'wall', *stylo* 'pen', *cahier* 'notebook', *tableau* 'blackboard', or *film* are masculine (cf. *la pared*, *pluma*, *libreta*, *pizarra*, *película*). They are even surprised when closely related words do not exhibit the same gender in the two languages. Fortunately, the number of such cases is small. Common examples include *lait* 'milk', *printemps* 'spring', *fruit* 'fruit', *sel* 'salt', *sort* 'fate luck', *sang* 'blood', *doute* 'doubt', and *miel* 'honey', which are masculine in French but feminine in Spanish (*leche*, *primavera*, *fruta*, *sal*, *suerte*, *sangre*, *duda*, *miel*) and, conversely, *salle* 'room', *banque* 'bank', *dent* 'tooth', *fin* 'end', and *minute* which are feminine in French but masculine in Spanish (*salón*, *banco*, *diente*, *fin*, *minuto*). *Mer* 'sea', feminine in French, may take either gender in Spanish but, except in geographical names, is usually masculine.

Gender differences between the languages include a few common feminine words in *-eur* in French having masculine cognates in *-or* in Spanish. These include

*la couleur* 'color', *douleur* 'pain', *saveur* 'flavor', *faveur* 'favor', and *vapeur* 'steam' (Sp. *el color*, *dolor*, *sabor*, *favor*, *vapor*, etc). Of course, not all French words in *-eur* are feminine (e.g. *honneur* 'honor' and words designating professions: *professeur* 'teacher', *acteur* 'actor', *chanteur* 'singer', *vendeur* 'salesman', etc.).

5.2. *Faux amis.* As is true of the Anglo student, misleading cognates or *faux amis* are a problem for the Latino learning French. However, what might be *faux amis* for the English-speaking learner (e.g. *actuellement* 'at present', *assister* 'attend', *conférence* 'lecture', *déception* 'disappointment', *ignorer* 'not to know', *lecture* 'reading', *librairie* 'bookstore', *note* 'grade in school', *sympathique* 'friendly', etc.) may turn out to be *bons amis* for the Spanish speaker (cf. Sp. *actualmente*, *asistir*, *conferencia*, *decepción*, *ignorar*, *lectura*, *librería*, *nota*, *simpático*, etc.). Conversely, the Spanish speaker's *faux amis* will not necessarily be the same as the English speaker's. Some common examples include those listed in Fig. 2.

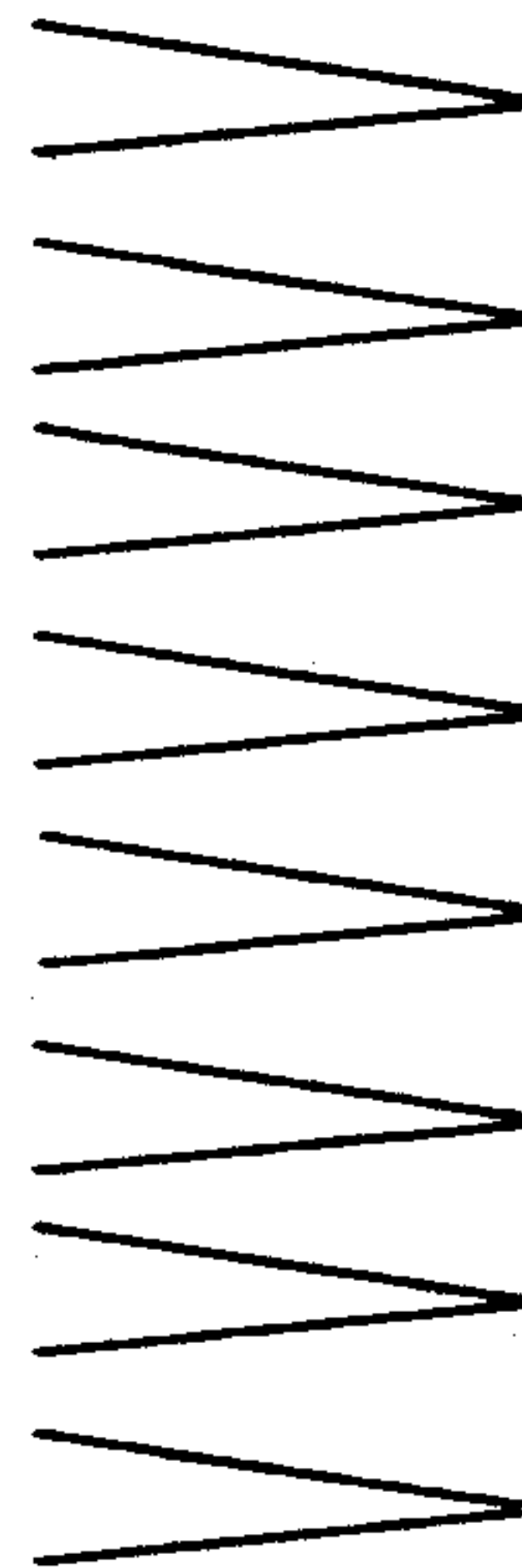
Fig. 2. Misleading cognates

FRENCH ITEM	SPANISH EQUIVALENT OF FRENCH ITEM	SPANISH COGNATE	FRENCH EQUIVALENT OF SPANISH COGNATE
<i>attendre</i> 'to wait for'	<i>esperar</i>	<i>atender</i> 'to take care of'	<i>soigner</i>
<i>aucun</i> 'none'	<i>ningún</i>	<i>alg ún</i> 'some'	<i>quelque</i>
<i>bizarre</i> 'strange'	<i>raro</i> ; <i>original</i> ; <i>extrao</i>	<i>bizarro</i> 'brave; magnanimous'	<i>courageux</i> ; <i>brave</i> ; <i>vailant</i>
<i>brave</i> 'courageous'	<i>valiente</i> ; <i>valeroso</i>	<i>bravo</i> 'ferocious'	<i>féroce</i>
<i>bureau</i> 'desk; office'	<i>escritorio</i> ; <i>oficina</i>	<i>burro</i> 'donkey'	<i>âne</i>
<i>carte</i> 'map; card'	<i>mapa</i> ; <i>tarjeta</i>	<i>carta</i> 'letter'	<i>lettre</i>
<i>casser</i> 'to break'	<i>romper</i>	<i>casar</i> 'to marry (off)'	<i>marier</i>
<i>code</i> 'code'	<i>código</i>	<i>codo</i> 'elbow'	<i>coude</i>
<i>courage</i> 'courage'	<i>valor</i>	<i>coraje</i> 'anger'	<i>colère</i>
<i>dégoûter</i> 'to disgust'	<i>repugnar</i>	<i>disgutar</i> 'to displease'	<i>déplaire</i>
<i>déjà</i> 'already'	<i>ya</i>	<i>deja</i> 'he leaves'	<i>il laisse</i>
<i>demander</i> 'to ask; request'	<i>preguntar</i> ; <i>pedir</i>	<i>demandar</i> 'to sue'	<i>poursuivre en justice</i>
<i>désarroi</i> 'disorder; confusion'	<i>desconcierto</i>	<i>desarrollo</i> 'development'	<i>développement</i>
<i>détresse</i> 'distress'	<i>angustia</i>	<i>destreza</i> 'skill'	<i>habileté</i> ; <i>compétences</i>
<i>elle</i> 'she'	<i>ella</i>	<i>él</i> 'he'	<i>il</i>
<i>embarrassée</i> 'embarrassed'	<i>avergonzada</i>	<i>embarazada</i> 'pregnant'	<i>enceinte</i>
<i>enfermé</i> 'closed up'	<i>encerrado</i>	<i>enfermo</i> 'sick'	<i>malade</i>
<i>entendre</i> 'to hear'	<i>oír</i>	<i>entender</i> 'to understand'	<i>comprendre</i>
<i>large</i> 'wide'	<i>ancho</i>	<i>largo</i> 'long'	<i>long</i>
<i>lettre</i> 'letter'	<i>carta</i>	<i>letra</i> 'words of a song'	<i>paroles</i>
<i>nièce</i> 'niece'	<i>sobrina</i>	<i>nieta</i> 'granddaughter'	<i>petite-fille</i>
<i>quitter</i> 'to leave'	<i>dejar</i> ; <i>abandonar</i>	<i>quitar</i> 'to remove'	<i>enlever</i>
<i>rester</i> 'to remain'	<i>quedarse</i>	<i>restar</i> 'to deduct; reduce'	<i>déduire</i> ; <i>soustraire</i>
<i>salir</i> 'to dirty'	<i>manchar</i> ; <i>ensuciar</i>	<i>salir</i> 'to go out'	<i>sortir</i>
<i>sol</i> 'ground'	<i>suelo</i>	<i>sol</i> 'sun'	<i>soleil</i>
<i>subir</i> 'to undergo'	<i>sufrir</i>	<i>subir</i> 'to go up; climb'	<i>monter</i>
<i>succès</i> 'success'	<i>éxito</i>	<i>suceso</i> 'event'	<i>événement</i>
<i>user</i> 'to wear out'	<i>gastar</i> ; <i>debilitar</i>	<i>usar</i> 'to use'	<i>employer</i> ; <i>utiliser</i>

In addition to the *faux amis* just mentioned, there is a small group of words which cannot be considered *faux amis* exactly, since there is some partial overlap of meaning. In these cases, the cognate word is much more restricted in meaning in one of the languages than it is in the other. In the case of *sentir*, at least, it is Spanish which is more precise than French, in that Spanish has two terms, *sentir* 'to feel' and *oler* 'to smell', corresponding to just one in French. Generally, however, it appears that the opposite is true, i.e. that French is more precise than Spanish. Examples include:

## FRENCH:

*attendre* 'to wait'  
*espérer* 'to hope'  
*avoir* 'to have'  
*tenir* 'to hold'  
*habiter* 'to dwell; inhabit'  
*vivre* 'to live; be alive'  
*adresse* 'address'  
*direction* 'direction'  
*disgrâce* 'disgrace'  
*malheur* 'misfortune'  
*cheveux* 'hair (of head)'  
*poil* 'hair (of animals or of body)'  
*station* 'station'  
*saison* 'season'  
*tirer* 'to pull'  
*jeter* 'to throw'



## SPANISH:

*esperar*  
*tener*  
*vivir*  
*dirección*  
*desgracia*  
*pelo*  
*estación*  
*tirar*

The partial overlap of cognate words could theoretically lead to error on the part of Spanish speakers. In actual fact, errors within this set do not often occur, probably because the term which in no way resembles Spanish is often the one learned long before the other member of the set.

### 6. Conclusion

This has been but a brief survey of some of the types of errors French teachers might be on the watch for among Spanish-speaking students. Anticipating the most common error patterns that arise, the classroom teacher is better equipped to incorporate exercises beneficial to the Latino into the lesson planning.