



Linguistic Simplification in the Language Education Classroom at the Academic Level: Teachers' Perspectives and Practices

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The need to assist learners in internalizing a language has prompted educators and researchers to explore innovative teaching methods. Within this context, linguistic simplification has emerged as a pedagogical practice used for a significant period (Parker & Chaudron, 1987) and more recently as a communication strategy (Rustipa, 2009) that could facilitate language acquisition. Although the relevance of its practice in printed materials is still debatable (Crossley et al., 2007), it remains a common tool in language courses.

This paper presents a study of the phenomenon of simplifying linguistic structures in a language classroom, focusing on French and Spanish teachers' views and practices in language centres at universities in Finland. The purpose of this article is to shed light on the practice of linguistic simplification and its relevance for language learners that has not been studied in depth in regular classrooms, other than a migrant audience (Maaß, 2020). The study will address the following questions: What does linguistic simplification represent for language teachers of a Finnish audience? How is it used in their teaching practices in French and Spanish language classes? How do teachers perceive this phenomenon, treating the complexity of language in students' textbooks?

The research will adopt a methodological triangulation approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative methods. The qualitative approach will be based on interviews and complemented by a follow-up survey to the teachers consisting of 50 questions (quantitative approach). This survey will encompass 12 language centres in Finland.

The expected results will contribute to the research on Easy Language for language learners, a topic that has not been thoroughly explored (Lindholm & Vanhatalo, 2021). The anticipated findings will provide an overview of pedagogical practices among teachers in language centres, offering insight into its effectiveness and applicability in French and Spanish language courses—languages that rank among the top five most studied languages in Finland (Statistics Finland, 2023).

Keywords: Linguistic simplification, French, Spanish

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