**Reinforcing intonation: A gestural approach (Ignite session at Caspslap 2018)**

*Goal and background:* The goal of this lesson plan is to incorporate gestural reinforcement in modelling Spanish intonation in statements to L2 learners. Intonation contributes greatly to perception of foreign accent; not interpreting or producing the right intonation can lead to miscommunication and comprehension problems in the L2 (Anderson-Hsieh et al. 1992; Munro 1995; Mennen 2006; Trofimovich & Baker 2007). Intonation is difficult to learn, and tends to be acquired late (Kvavik & Olsen 1974; Mennen 2004). In addition, it is not usually taught in the classroom, probably because of lack of instructor training and adequate pedagogical materials (Mantini 1980; Lord & Fionda 2014).

*Summary of steps:* This proposal involves using two strategies for teaching falling intonation in Spanish statements: (i) intonation awareness, and (ii) gestural reinforcement. The first step involves making L2 learners aware of the intonational differences of statements in Spanish and English. Many speakers of American English are ‘uptalkers’, i.e., they use rising intonation in English statements rather than ‘standard’ falling intonation (see for example Warren 2016). These speakers typically transfer rising intonation in Spanish; this is quite obvious in a classroom setting, and is frequently accentuated when students are not sure of whether their answers are correct. However, ‘uptalk’ to a native speaker of Spanish does not only denote lack of confidence; it also evidences a high degree of foreign accent and might impact intelligibility.

The second step is gestural reinforcement, which involves the association of hand movements with falling or rising intonation. Instructors can align rhythmic up-and-down hand movements to model falling intonation in statements and remind students gesturally whenever they are using uptalk. Since gestures are strongly tied to speech (Kendon 1972, McNeill 1992, Brown 2016, among others) and can facilitate accent reduction in the L2 (Ghulareva & Prieto 2016), the use of this strategy can easily and effectively help L2 Spanish learners to associate falling intonation with Spanish statements and realize when they are not using intonation correctly. The combination of intonation awareness and gestural reinforcement can greatly contribute to a higher awareness of suprasegmental differences in English and Spanish, and to the acquisition of one important intonational characteristic of statements in Spanish.

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