Image Schemas in Second Language Learning and Instruction

A Case for a Multidisciplinary Approach

Dominik Lukeš, 2004
http://www.bohemica.com



Presentation outline

- Caveats and limitations
- The questions asked
- Czech *na* and its extensions
- Czech *na* and learners
- Native speakers' imagery
- Using images to teach
- Using images to learn



Caveats and limitations

- Limited time in presentation to explore full implications (focus on data results and over complete discussion of implications)
- Work in progress: need for refinement of the research task (particularly work with learners)
- Role of language of presentation (English / Czech)
- Sources of data
  - contrastive analysis (textbooks, grammar books, dictionaries)
  - corpus analysis (Czech only)
  - introspective analysis (need for honesty)
  - experimental data from Czech native speakers
  - pedagogical experience (anecdotal evidence from students and teachers)



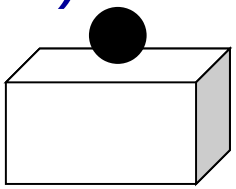
Questions asked

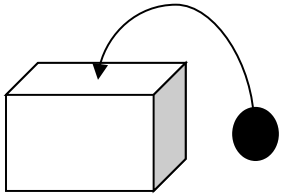
- What is the link between a schematic image (such as may govern our use of preposition) and a specific rich image?
- Do all native speakers have the same system of image schemas? Do they use similar schemas in similar ways?
- How is the link between a schematic and a rich images established?
  - In producing sentences
  - In decoding meaning
  - In first language acquisition
  - In second language acquisition



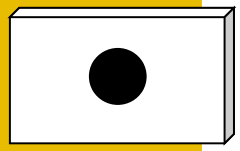
Czech preposition *na*

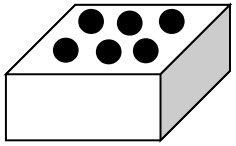
- Core spatial configurations (also used by textbooks)

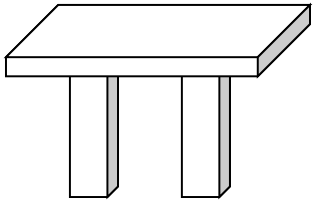


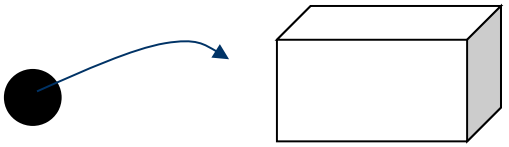


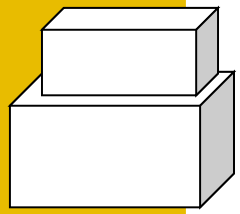
- Extended spatial configurations (non-metaphorical)

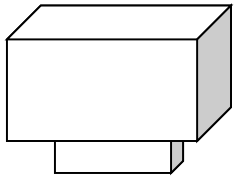


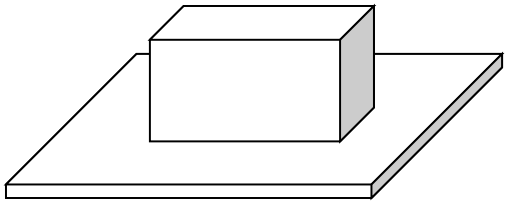


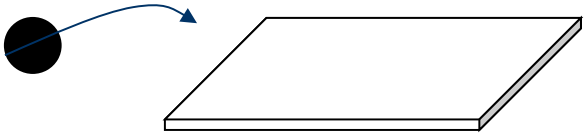














Metaphorical extensions

- Spatial configuration (differences in conceptualization)
  - in countries that are islands, peninsulas, archipelagos and Moravia, Slovakia and Ukraine (vs. V/DO – in/into)
  - local places considered on hills (vs. V/DO – in/into)
  - at institutions or public places as institutions (post office, exhibition, opera, university, ministry, disco) (vs. V/DO – in/into)
- Visual field as space
  - direction of attention (look at, think about, laugh at)
  - wishes (to health, to meeting again)
  - blame (blame on)
- Covering as cause and effect
  - purpose (shoes for playing football)
  - instruments (car uses petrol, door locks with a lock)
  - cause (die of, make to order, fulfill a wish, about to happen)
  - partial change (mostly as prefix)
  - filling up (only as prefix)
- Time as space
  - for a period of time (with intention)
  - at events (holidays, vacation, Olympics, competition)



NA vs. ON

1. Spatial configuration similarities
   a) on the table, on legs, on the groun
2. Spatial configuration differences
   a) directionality / locality
   b) in island countries, at events, at institutions, etc.
   c) in the tree, in the sky, in the square, in the street, in the garden, in the field, BUT on TV/radio
3. Space as something else: similarities
   a) work on, rely on, insist on, on the sly, on order, blame on
4. Space as something else: differences
   a) direction of attention
   b) purpose
   c) instrument
   d) events
   e) intention for a period of time

Uses describing spatial configuration only about 25% of instances in both spoken and written corpus

2a and 2b biggest challenge for learners



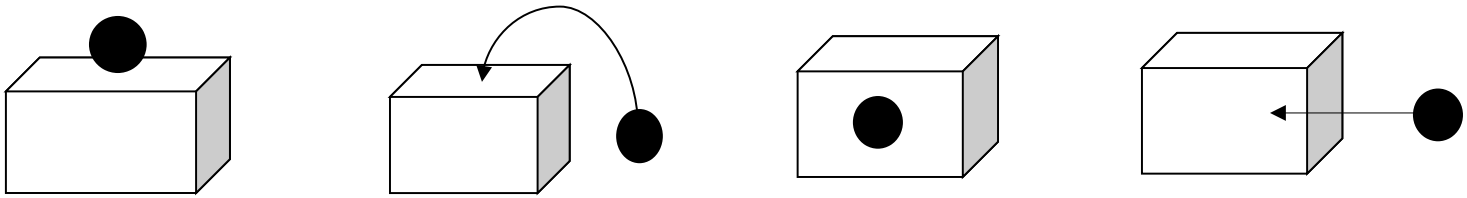
NA and learners of Czech

- Beginners learn core meaning and set of exceptions
- When introduced to schemas and their extensions later, they express desire to have known this from the start
- When introduced to schemas and extensions as beginners, no immediate jump in proficiency can be observed
- Hypothesis: native-like fluency can only be achieved when not only lexis and syntax but also conceptualizations can be switched

Spatial configuration schemas and native speakers

- Data collection
  - 15 sentences dealing with spatial configuration
  - 10 with NA and 5 distractors with V/DO (in/into) which are in opposition to NA

- Two tasks
  - A: draw the meaning of prepositions
  - B: choose which picture best fits the sentence





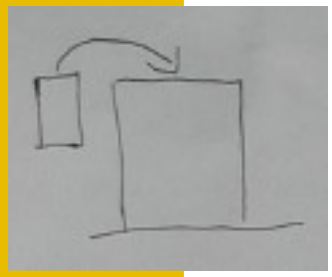
Preliminary results

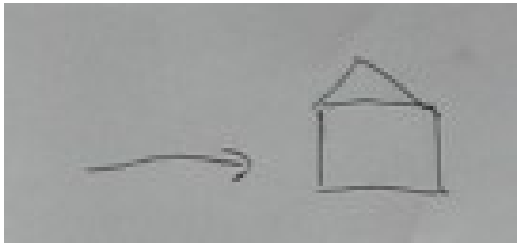
- No variability in core spatial meaning
- Little variability in direction vs. location (mostly caused by motion of trajector within location)
- Great variability in extended spatial meaning
- The shape/nature of trajectors and landmarks is important in conceptualization
- The configuration of trajector and landmark is important
- The level of schematicity varies by sentence

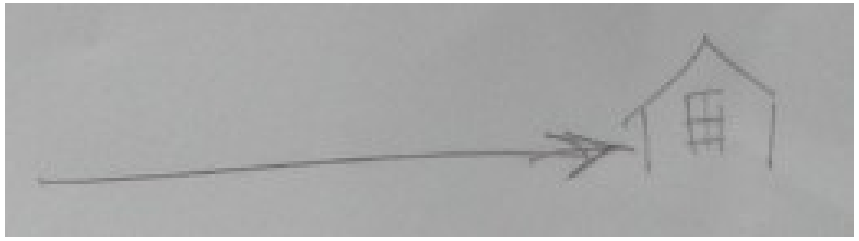


Examples of results

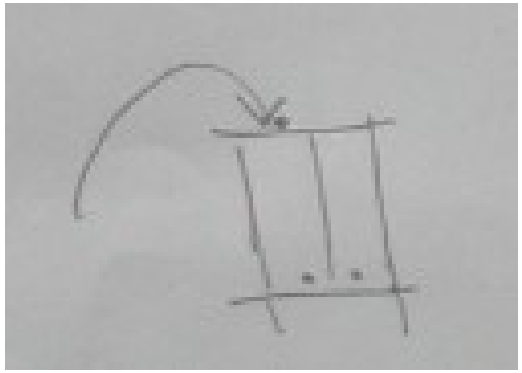
- Distance between TR and LM reflected







- Choosing either TR or LM is significant





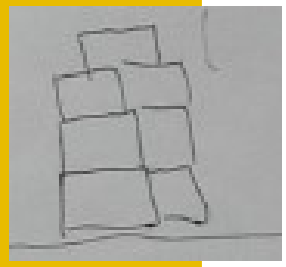
Examples of results (cont.)

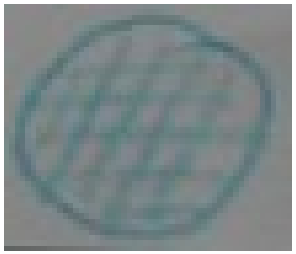
- Nature/shape of LM and/or TR matters





- Configuration of LM and TR matters

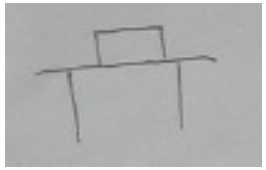
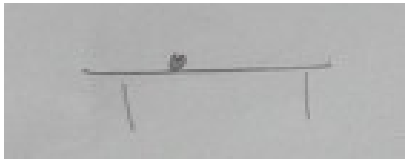
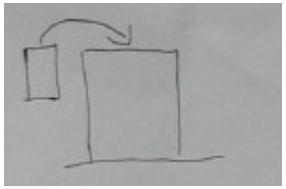


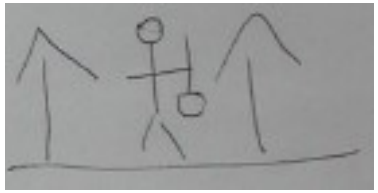


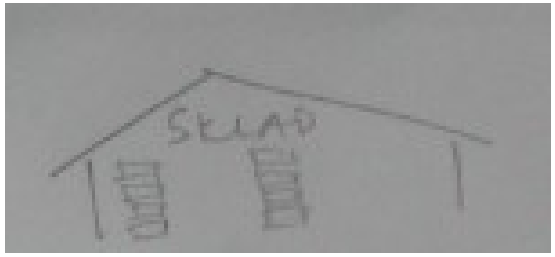


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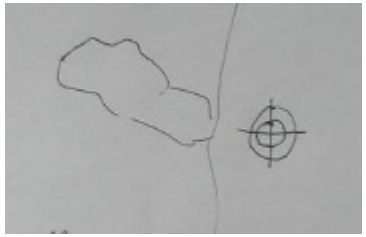
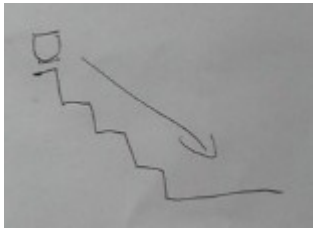
- Different levels of schematicity





- Knowledge of the world matters



Preliminary conclusions

- Native speakers vary in how they conceptualize metaphorical extensions of core image schemas
- There is a scale of schematicity and different native speakers rely on images of variable richness when producing/interpreting sentences
- Native speakers vary in their competence and ability to manipulate image schemas
- Non-native speakers cannot acquire this through explicit instruction; rather, they must acquire a bank of rich images and (actively) create a set of links to schemas that motivate the use of the preposition



Advice given to students

- Learn the core spatial meaning of each preposition
- Learn as many different uses of each preposition
- Create an image for each use based on the core meaning
- For abstract meanings link elements on both sides of the preposition to the original meaning