

# Pattern Grammar in Language Teaching

# Outline

- Patterns in language teaching: opportunities and challenges
- Focus on awareness
- Focus on accuracy
- Focus on expanding the repertoire
- Writing materials

# Patterns in Language Teaching: the opportunities

- An awareness of pattern on the part of the teacher can help explain what learners are doing.
- Learning about patterns can increase learners' accuracy in language use.
- Learning about patterns can increase learners' flexibility in language use.

# Looking at what learners do

- ...encourage professionals from mainland China to work in Hong Kong
- ...it would encourage youth to be involved in gambling
- ...encouraging them participate with the environment
- ...encourages the teenagers have a more liberal attitude
- (from ICLE-China. Abdullah Alqarni)

# Looking at what learners do

- ...stores allow customers use a credit card...
- It is a place that allows customers chat with each other
- ...which only allow teenage meet other friends
- This cybercafe allow people play online game
- (from ICLE-China. Abdullah Alqarni)

# V n inf

- We watched from the top of the stairs, trying not to let her hear us.
- I made them work four Saturdays in a row.
- She has been wonderful to my family, helping us open a bank account and buy things like a mobile phone.
- All this encourages the teenagers have a more liberal attitude.
- Some stores allow customers use a credit card.

# V n to-inf

- Her forthright views helped her to earn a living as a political analyst.
- The campaign will encourage visitors to explore the city.
- The marking system is constantly adjusted downwards to allow more students to gain top grades.
- They want to encourage professionals from mainland China to work in Hong Kong.

# Looking at what learners do

- I don't agree to construct a second railway...
- For me, I agree to ban smoking in restaurants
- I totally agree to use the recycling as a method of waste management...
- I agree to legalize soccer betting in Hong Kong.
- Nearly all people agree to carry out the death penalty
- (from ICLE-China. Abdullah Alqarni)



# Agree

- **V to-inf**
  - I am not going to agree to lead a party...
  - It could work if he agrees to support her...
- **V that**
  - The policymakers agreed that exchange rates should be stabilised...
  - I had agreed that there should be another council
- **V to n**
  - ...persuade MPs to agree to a change in the law
  - The two sides agreed to a truce

# The challenges

- There are a lot of patterns and a lot of words used with each.
- Each individual word has its own patterns.
- Language creativity
  - *He laughed the conversation on to another topic.*
- Language change
  - *I have been recommended to file the papers again.*
- Patterns are bound up with other things.

# For example

- ‘My parents wanted me to study abroad, so I **decided to apply** to universities in Australia.’
- ‘The main reason for my **decision to apply** to universities in Australia was that my parents wanted me to study abroad.’



# Materials writing

- Focus on awareness
- Focus on accuracy
- Focus on flexibility

# Focus on awareness

# Noticing patterns

- RSPCA Inspectors form a unique corps of trained officers who specialise in animal welfare.
- Inspectors visit places where animals are kept, rescue pets and other animals from dangerous situations, and frequently risk their lives to prevent an animal from suffering.
- Inspectors are asked for advice, they respond to telephone calls, and deal with complaints of animal cruelty. They investigate animal problems of all types, and cope with pleas for help.

# Noticing patterns

- RSPCA Inspectors **form** a unique corps of trained officers who **specialise** in animal welfare.
- Inspectors **visit** places where animals **are kept**, **rescue** pets and other animals from dangerous situations, and frequently **risk** their lives to **protect** an animal from suffering.
- Inspectors **are asked** for advice, they **respond** to telephone calls, and **deal** with complaints of animal cruelty. They **investigate** animal problems of all types, and **cope** with pleas for help.



# What we want learners to notice

- ...form a unique corps of trained officers
- ...specialise in animal welfare
- ...visit places where animals are kept
- ...animals are kept (= keep animals)
- ...rescue pets from dangerous situations
- ...risk their lives
- ...protect an animal from suffering
- ...are asked for advice (= ask them for advice)
- ...respond to telephone calls
- ...deal with complaints
- ...investigate animal problems
- ...cope with pleas for help

- ...form a unique corps of trained officers **V n**
- ...specialise in animal welfare **V in n**
- ...visit places where animals are kept **V n**
- ...animals are kept (= keep animals) **V n**
- ...rescue pets from dangerous situations **V n**  
*from n*
- ...risk their lives **V n**

- ...protect an animal from suffering **V n *from* n**
- ...are asked for advice (= ask them for advice)  
**V n *for* n**
- ...respond to telephone calls **V *to* n**
- ...deal with complaints **V *with* n**
- ...investigate animal problems **V n**
- ...cope with pleas for help **V *with* n**

# In 'Grammar Patterns Online'

- **V in n** (*graduate; lecture; major; qualify; specialise; train; tutor*)
- **V to n** (*chat; complain; pray; reply; talk; write*)
- **V with n** (*battle; contend; cope; deal; fight; juggle; struggle*)
- **V n for n** (*ask; beg; implore; press; pump; touch*)
- **V n from n** (*deliver; excuse; extricate; free; liberate; release; rescue; save; spare*)

# Noticing patterns

- Mack had trained in anthropology
- Firemen freed the couple from the wreckage
- We had to contend with gale force winds
- He saved the club from going bust
- She begged her father for another loan
- Leonard often pressed him for details of his past
- She's happy to juggle with different roles
- He deals in antiques and fine art
- ...as he replied to various other questions

# Matching patterns

<b>Verb</b>	<b><i>in</i></b>	<b>noun</b>
specialise	in	animal welfare
had trained	in	anthropology
deals	in	antiques and fine art
<b>Verb</b>	<b><i>to</i></b>	<b>noun</b>
respond	to	telephone calls
replied	to	various other questions
<b>Verb</b>	<b><i>with</i></b>	<b>noun</b>
deal	with	complaints
cope	with	pleas for help
had to contend	with	gale force winds
juggle	with	different roles

# Noticing patterns

Verb	noun	<i>from</i>	noun
rescue	pets	from	dangerous situations
protect	an animal	from	suffering
<i>freed</i>	<i>the couple</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>the wreckage</i>
<i>saved</i>	<i>the club</i>	<i>from</i>	<i>going bust</i>
Verb	noun	<i>for</i>	noun
ask	inspectors	for	advice
<i>begged</i>	<i>her father</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>another loan</i>
<i>pressed</i>	<i>him</i>	<i>for</i>	<i>details of his past</i>

# Recognising patterns in varied forms

- ...so the organisms have evolutionary pressures to contend with
- ... a situation from which he could have been saved
- This is yet another problem to juggle with
- ...if you've been asked for an interview



# Recognising patterns in varied forms

- ...so the organisms have evolutionary pressures to contend with
- = *contend with evolutionary pressures*
- ... a situation from which he could have been saved
- = *save him from a situation*
- This is yet another problem to juggle with
- = *juggle with another problem*
- ...if you've been asked for an interview
- = *ask you for an interview*



# Awareness from concordance lines

- Look at the word 'essential' in an on-line dictionary. (Adjective uses only)
- Find all the ways it can be used.
- Look at the concordance lines.
- Which lines are which use?
- Are there any patterns which are not in the dictionary you have consulted?

# On-line dictionaries

- Longman: 'LDOCE' online
  - [www.ldoceonline.com](http://www.ldoceonline.com)
- Cobuild: 'Collins Dictionary' online
  - [www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english](http://www.collinsdictionary.com/dictionary/english)
- Oxford: 'OALDS' online
  - [www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com](http://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com)

1. get company. Such optimism is essential. Absent that rosy view, why e  
2. ilson. A nose for business is essential as nine out of ten garden  
3. the vitamins and minerals are essential but only in very small amounts  
4. database remains complete. An essential component of a properly  
5. him by refusing to release essential documents while allegedly  
6. ing brackets; in addition the essential fittings, such as the adjust  
7. to be healthy. Some elements essential for plant growth, such as  
8. me way. Such basic skills are essential for children because they pave  
9. Visiting a chiropodist is as essential for your feet as the dentist  
10. provement. Swimming pools are essential for competition swimming, and  
11. January 2000 Good grooming is essential for keeping up appearances,  
12. the output and the input. His essential function is to meet the needs  
13. ield, because this has become essential in the changed conditions of  
14. the media and the public are essential in combating terrorism. The  
15. commitment have always been essential ingredients for success and,

16. pectators to head for and the essential items to bring as well as  
17. eved an element of chance was essential, or there would be no change.  
18. idering that they are such an essential part of undergraduate courses,  
19. nsure products to comply with essential safety requirements, also appl  
20. mstances, early elections are essential. Still more important is the  
21. but at the same time it is so essential that we keep publicising the  
22. reas of endemic malaria it is essential that your mosquito nets be  
23. n the therapy relationship is essential to an understanding of the  
24. ormal. To be successful it is essential to visualize a positive outcom  
25. is particularly cogent. It is essential to understand the risks  
26. ial to living, the second was essential to being an artist. The relat  
27. ercurrent of fear that it was essential to publicly ignore, Brecht was  
28. do this, it isn't absolutely essential to have a fortune, 25  
29. where I think it's absolutely essential to do the same thing you are



# Focus on accuracy



# Example: which words belong?

- Which of the words below can be put into this sentence?
- *My friends advised me to take a holiday.*
- begged; indicated; invited; ordered; promised; suggested; threatened; told; warned

# A pattern choice exercise

	<b>V that</b>	<b>V n to-inf</b>
	My friends <u>said</u> that a holiday would be a good idea.	My friends <u>advised</u> me to take a holiday.
BEG		
INDICATE		
INVITE		
OBSERVE		
ORDER		
SUGGEST		
TELL		

# A pattern choice exercise

	<b>V that</b>	<b>V n to-inf</b>
	My friends <u>said</u> that a holiday would be a good idea.	My friends <u>advised</u> me to take a holiday.
BEG		They <u>begged</u> me to take a holiday.
INDICATE	They <u>indicated</u> that a holiday would be a good idea.	
INVITE		They <u>invited</u> me to take a holiday.
OBSERVE	They <u>observed</u> that a holiday ...	
ORDER		They <u>ordered</u> me to take a holiday.
SUGGEST	They <u>suggested</u> that a holiday ...	
TELL		They <u>told</u> me to take a holiday.

# Example: filling the gap

- Have you met the latest addition \_\_\_\_ our family?
- He has a special affinity \_\_\_\_ dogs.
- Here is a practical suggestion \_\_\_\_ reform.
- His influence \_\_\_\_ me was enormous.
- I'm not worried about this decline \_\_\_\_ sales.
- She attended a talk \_\_\_\_\_ Shakespeare's plays.
- They often called on his experience \_\_\_\_\_ an administrator.
- *about, as, for, in, on, to, with*

# Example: filling the gap

- Have you met the latest addition to our family?
- He has a special affinity with dogs.
- Here is a practical suggestion for reform.
- His influence on me was enormous.
- I'm not worried about this decline in sales.
- She attended a talk about Shakespeare's plays.
- They often called on his experience as an administrator.

# Example: matching

- He was very angry
- These mushrooms are dangerous
- I feel happy
- We were grateful
- They are hopeful
- I'm not sure I am equal
- She's extremely generous
- about the result
- of a settlement
- with her money
- to eat
- for his words
- to the task
- she had spoken to the press

# Example: matching

- He was very angry she had spoken to the press
- These mushrooms are dangerous to eat
- I feel happy about the result
- We were grateful for his words
- They are hopeful of a settlement
- I'm not sure I am equal to the task
- She's extremely generous with her money





# Focus on flexibility

# Target pattern: **v-link ADJ *about* n**

- ...was enthusiastic about...
- ...was keen about...
- ...was cheerful about...
- ...was unhappy about
- ...were sad about...
- ...was bitter about...
- ...are worried about...
- ...were furious about...
- ...became angry about...

## Example: **v-link ADJ *about* n**

- I described my idea + John was enthusiastic.
- I wanted to meet some friends + Ann was not keen.
- There was a terrible mess + Robin was cheerful.

## Example: **v-link ADJ *about* n**

- I described my idea + John was enthusiastic.
- = *John was enthusiastic about my idea.*
- I wanted to meet some friends + Ann was not keen.
- = *Ann was not keen about meeting friends.*
- There was a terrible mess + Robin was cheerful.
- = *Robin was cheerful about the terrible mess.*

## **v-link ADJ *about* n**

- Some paintings were sold + Jenny was unhappy.
- = Jenny was unhappy about the sale of the paintings.
- They had to leave + they were sad.
- = They were sad about leaving / having to leave
- I wanted to leave + Dave was bitter.
- = Dave was bitter about the fact that I wanted to leave

## **v-link ADJ *about* n**

- Travelling by plane + some people are worried
- = *Some people are worried about flying.*
- The work was delayed + the residents were furious.
- = *The residents were furious about a delay in the work.*
- He lost touch with his family + he became angry.
- = *He became angry about losing touch with his family.*

# Comparing ADJ that

- Some paintings were sold + Jen was unhappy.
- = Jen was unhappy about the sale of the paintings.
- = Jen was unhappy that the paintings were sold.
- They had to leave + they were sad.
- = They were sad about leaving / having to leave
- = They were said that they had to leave.
- I wanted to leave + Dave was bitter.
- = Dave was bitter about the fact that I wanted to leave
- = Dave was bitter that I wanted to leave.

- The work was delayed + the residents were furious.
- = The residents were furious about a delay in the work.
- = They were furious that the work was delayed.
- He lost touch with his family + he became angry.
- = He became angry about losing touch with his family.
- = He became angry that he had lost touch with his family.



# Example: **V n *into* -ing**

- Youngsters eat spinach + scientists brainwash them
- = Scientists brainwash youngsters into eating spinach.
- He cut his hair + his elder brother forced him.
- = His elder brother forced him into cutting his hair.
- People did what he wanted + he frightened them
- = He frightened people into doing what he wanted

# Example: **V n *into* -ing**

- A human judge thought the machine was a person + the machine fooled the human being
- = The machine fooled a human judge into thinking it was a person.
- A business paid for two machines + someone tricked it
- = A business was tricked into paying for two machines.

# Example: **V n *into* -ing**

*galvanize; lead; spur; tempt*

- The school raised funds for a library
- = The school was *galvanized into raising* funds for a library.
- Patients give inaccurate information
- = Patients were *led into giving* inaccurate information.
- Tourists visit this ancient village
- = Tourists were *spurred into visiting* this ancient village.
- People spend more than they can afford
- = People may be *tempted into spending* more than they can afford.

# Example: **N that**

Target forms:

- ...the allegation that he bullied staff...
- ...the argument that she would not have a fair trial...
- ...the remark that the British are a nation of shopkeepers...
- ...a dream that she would succeed...
- ...the recognition that moderate inflation is healthy...

# Example: N that

- 'He bullied staff' + you alleged this
- = I deny your *allegation* that he bullied staff.
- 'She would not have a fair trial' + someone argued this
- = The court rejected the *argument* that she would not have a *fair trial*.
- 'The British are a nation of shopkeepers' + a remark
- = Who made the *remark* that the *British* are a *nation of shopkeepers*?

- 'She would succeed in her exams' + she dreamt
- = She had a *dream* that she would succeed in her exams.
- 'moderate inflation is healthy' + we should recognise this
- =What I am arguing for is the *recognition* that moderate inflation is healthy.

- 'The ship might be in distress' + he was concerned
- = He expressed *concern* that the ship might be in *distress*.
- 'Microwaves are dangerous' + people fear this
- = There are *fears* that *microwaves* are *dangerous*.
- 'She had broken her vows' + she did not feel guilty
- = She felt no *guilt* that she had broken her vows.

# Writing materials



# Raising awareness: “Blood donors”

- We need to make sure that we have enough supplies of all blood groups to treat all types of conditions.
- By giving blood, every donor helps us meet the challenge of providing life-saving products whenever they are needed.
- We need to maintain a regular supply of all blood groups so we can provide it to the patients who need it.
- We sometimes need to target specific blood types. That's why we sometimes contact regular donors and ask them to give extra blood.
- We are indebted to our regular blood donors for their role in helping us to save lives.
- ([www.blood.co.uk](http://www.blood.co.uk); adapted)

# Raising awareness: “Blood donors”

- Which patterns can you identify?
- Are there multiple examples of any one pattern?
- Find other corpus examples of the key patterns.
- Write an exercise to encourage learners to notice patterns.

# Accuracy: comparing word use

- Are there differences in how these words are used? (=the range of ways)
  - ‘make sure’; ‘ensure’; ‘be sure’ + ‘have enough supplies’
  - ‘help’; ‘assist’; ‘enable’ + ‘meet the challenge’
  - ‘provide’; ‘give’; ‘deliver’ + ‘patients’
  - ‘ask’; ‘request’; ‘instruct’ + ‘give extra blood’

# Flexibility: focusing on a pattern

- *They said the allegations were unfounded.*
  - **V that**
- *They dismissed the allegations as unfounded.*
  - **V n as n**
- Write an exercise to practice the use of **V n as n**. (Or another pattern if you prefer)

# **V n *as* n verbs**

- Accept
- Acknowledge
- Attack
- Conceptualise
- Condemn
- Describe
- Dismiss
- Identify
- Interpret
- Recognise
- Regard
- Reject
- Represent
- View

# Example: **V n as n**

- ‘Many of us regard education as rather more than force-feeding students the curriculum.’
- ‘Journalists at the time interpreted his decision as the result of pressure from colleagues.’
- ‘It seemed absurd that the US presented this tiny country as a threat to its security.’
- ‘Early 20<sup>th</sup> century scientists who came across Occult Chemistry felt justified in rejecting it as a fantasy.’

# Tips

- Find a list of the words in the pattern you want to practice.
- Find examples of it in a corpus (amended if necessary).
- Rewrite the examples to form prompts for learners.
- Explain to the learners what to do.

# Flexibility: Focus on a pattern

- ***V for n***
- **N to-inf and *the* N to-inf**
- ***it* v-link ADJ that**



# Flexibility: Focus on a pattern

- What meaning groups would be most important for you and your learners?
- Could you build on what learners already know?
- Are there particular difficulties for learners?
- How would you encourage learning?