

# Ambiguous Sentences

from manuscript  
of book for advanced  
teaching by Marshall  
and Rivoli

Here are some further ambiguous sentences:

1. How many countries have you got to visit?
2. I haven't heard Tony speak Spanish for a long time.
3. How are you going to work?
4. You just go right over the bridge.
5. Do you know what makes him (right/ write)?
6. Did you get your bed made?
7. One's already visited Paris.
8. It's not fun going to a chiropractor with a headache.
9. We weren't paid for three months.
10. I want to read you something on the phone I've got upstairs
11. Look, is that the loan/lone shark you told me about?
12. They took me in when I needed them.
13. Please transfer your ticks to the boxes.
14. I'm not going for two weeks.
15. The Internet is influencing how many TV networks operate.
16. I read something Jane wrote last week.
17. He rode/rowed all the way to Liverpool.
18. You can look through these, maybe?
19. I am positively dumbfounded by what you have told me.
20. John asked Darren to visit his mother yesterday.
21. I took my sister to work at the BBC.
22. Russia realises it cannot carry out a reconstruction plan for the Kurile Islands alone.
23. We could do with a n odd man.
24. He might have told me.
25. She has left tennis so much the richer.
26. Yes, we do cover up more nowadays
27. What have you got to lose? (triple meaning)

- You dictate the  
sentences - s/s  
write down each sentence  
in their mother tongue

- they work in 5-6's  
and compare their  
translations.

28. The Great Dane was worrying his owner.
29. She created 28 best sellers.
30. I think he's pretty well healed/heeled really.
31. I'll talk to you about it a lot later.
32. An easing of the standards demanded of ski instructors could endanger their charges.
33. I get inspired so much by so little.
34. Oh, it's John, is it? I'll take him upstairs.
35. His installation, showing the Pope being hit by a meteorite, is sure to anger more devout Catholics.
36. I'm afraid some of you'll have to eat on your knees
37. Is the book dated?
38. Crack found in Iceland
39. Milk shortage turns mothers to powder.
40. They've got the nerve to control incontinence.
41. How would you like me to run you a bath?
42. I had this fantastic experience and I keep relating it to people.
43. Juicier today? = D'you see her today?
44. She was a pretty dreamy girl.

Una va llena = una ballena  
 one of them is full a whale

Sentences to dictate:

1. The prince decided he was only happy with six subjects
2. The poor woman was stoned
3. The panda bear lives in South China and eats shoots and leaves
4. He had a complex about the size of his stomach
5. No, I'm sorry, I have a wee cough/ week off ( identical pronunciation)
6. Quite a lot of people don't want to watch the game until the end.
7. We could offer you a bit of a Microsoft person.
8. Join the Navy and feel like a new man each day.
9. He appeared before the Rabbi.
10. They had no protection from the trade union.

11. Do I understand you right/write?

In lesson 2:

1. Ask the students to write all their ambiguous mother tongue sentences on the board and explain them . ( If the class is international there will be a lot of explaining to do and if everybody shares the same mother tongue most of the ambiguities will be clear )

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Simon- let's give them a set of 50 sentences, new ones You hear these all the time.

Should we do any analysis of the different types of ambiguity or should we organise an activity in which they do that?

I feel this exercise could somehow go a lot further.....NLP is very strong here.

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Here is further set of ambiguous HEADLINES

1. Hospital sued by seven foot doctors
2. New vaccine may contain Rabies.
3. Kids make nutritious snacks
4. Red tape holds up new bridges.
5. Two sisters reunited after 18 years in checkout counter.
6. Juvenile court to try shooting defendant.
7. Miners refuse to work after death.
8. Enraged cow injures farmer with axe.
9. President wins on budget- more lies ahead.
11. Survivor of Siamese twins joins parents.
12. Diet of premature babies affects IQ.
13. New laws to limit parent's right to smack.
14. Children are unbeatable.