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THE L2 ACQUISITION OF TENSE-ASPECT MORPHOLOGY. *Rafael Salaberry and Yasuhiro Shirai (Eds.)*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2002. Pp. x + 489. \$110.00 cloth.

This volume originated from a colloquium on the second language (L2) acquisition of tense and aspect organized by Salaberry and Shirai at the Annual Meeting of the American Association of Applied Linguistics in 1999. It contains revised versions of a selection of the colloquium papers and additional invited contributions for a total of 15 chapters authored by 16 contributors, many of whom have already made important contributions to our understanding of this area of SLA. Six L2s are investigated: English, Italian, French, Spanish, Mandarin Chinese, and Japanese.

Following an introductory chapter by Salaberry and Shirai, there are four chapters providing overviews of different issues in tense-aspect research (Weist, Andersen, Noyau, and Bardovi-Harlig) and 10 reporting findings from empirical studies (Housen, Rohde, Giacalone-Ramat, Rocca, Wiberg, Kihlstedt, Slabakova & Montrul, Salaberry, Duff & Li,

“past,” Noyau discusses discourse factors that lead learners to entertain competing hypotheses concerning the function of tense-aspect markers, and Bardovi-Harlig provides a critical analysis of different quantitative approaches used to evaluate claims of the Aspect Hypothesis. The 10 empirical studies present different designs (descriptive and experimental; longitudinal, cross-sectional, and bidirectional) and approaches (cognitive, discourse functional, generative, and semantic), and investigate tense-aspect acquisition at different points of development among both child and adult learners in second and foreign language learning contexts. The type of data also varies; in addition to a range of production measures, there are also judgment tasks (Slabakova & Montrul) and think-aloud protocols (Duff & Li).

This volume is an important addition to the literature on tense-aspect acquisition in SLA. The edited format gives voice to a number of researchers from different perspectives and approaches, thereby complementing and updating Bardovi-Harlig's (2000) synthesis of tense-aspect research findings. The introductory chapter identifies common ground across the many chapters, and the separate reference lists allow each chapter to stand on its own. In addition to the variety of acquisition issues addressed, the volume also provides detailed descriptions of the tense-aspect systems of six languages and contrastive information on several others. Readers interested in research on English and Romance languages are particularly well served. In addition to references to these languages in the overview chapters, there are also two empirical investigations for each of English (Housen, Rohde), Italian (Giacalone-Ramat, Wiberg), and Spanish (Slabakova & Montrul, Salaberry), and a bidirectional study of the acquisition of Italian and English (Rocca).

The number of issues related to this area of SLA is large, and no one volume could do justice to them all. There are, however, some limitations that should be noted. Although the role of L1 is mentioned in the introduction and in several chapters as a potential explanation for interlanguage behavior, no overview or empirical chapter expressly targets it for investigation. Additionally, even though many of the chapters interpret data collected in instructed environments, no chapter focuses on any of the various pedagogical issues related to tense-aspect acquisition (pedagogical implications of acquisition findings, effectiveness of different types of pedagogical intervention, or comparison of tutored and untutored learners). Nor are connectionist or frequency-based accounts of tense-aspect acquisition profiled. There is also a disproportionate number of descriptive studies: Of the 10 empirical studies, only two are experimental (Salaberry and Slabakova & Montrul). These are also the only studies to include significance testing measures, even though many others report quantified findings. The editors might also have cast their language net a little wider to include languages with rich aspectual systems (e.g., Slavic) and more non-Indo-European languages, including those that make less use of grammaticized markers to convey tense-aspect meanings. In the subject index, many topics discussed across different chapters in the volume are not listed (e.g., discourse, pragmatics, and transfer or crosslinguistic influence) and others have several lines of page references with no subindex (e.g., 17 lines for “present” with no breakdown by language).

These limitations notwithstanding, this is definitely a volume that any SLA scholar interested in tense and aspect will want—indeed needs—to own. It would also be appropriate as a text for a graduate seminar on the acquisition of temporal morphology, as an introduction to a variety of issues and methodologies, and as a rich source of research questions for future studies.

REFERENCE

Bardovi-Harlig, K. (2000). *Tense and aspect in second language acquisition: Form, meaning, and use*. Oxford: Blackwell.

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