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# REVIEWS

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**THE ACQUISITION OF LEXICAL AND GRAMMATICAL ASPECT.** *Ping Li and Yasuhiro Shirai*. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter, 2000. Pp. v + 261. $106.00 cloth.

This book covers everything related to aspect in the field of language acquisition; I was amazed by how the authors managed to do this in such a clear manner in only 261 pages. The book discusses numerous topics related to the acquisition of aspect: from tense to grammatical to lexical aspect, from nativist to functionalist approaches, from a connectionist model to Universal Grammar, and from first language (L1) to second language (L2). It also covers relevant previous research in the acquisition of tense and aspect in Chinese, English, and Japanese. Although the aim of the book is not an extensive survey of the research done on aspect in all possible languages, given the importance of the work done on aspect in Slavic languages, one might have expected to see more discussion of this area.

Chapter 1 is concise and immediately makes clear to what extent this book will be of interest to the reader. The authors have two goals: first, to provide an extensive overview of the research of aspect in Chinese, English, and Japanese; and second, to examine the acquisition of aspect crosslinguistically (Chinese, English, and Japanese) and developmentally (by investigating acquisition at different ages, including adults learning an L2). By the end of the book, both goals are successfully met. The book consists of eight chapters; I will briefly comment on the content of each.

Chapter 2 includes an overview of theoretical work done on both grammatical and lexical aspect, including the work on tense by Klein (1994). Although the space limitations do not allow for detailed descriptions, this book is a helpful starting point for researchers who would like to find out which theory is relevant for the work they are developing. Chapter 3 compares nativist and functionalist hypotheses about aspect in both L1 and L2 acquisition. This chapter includes a very helpful experimental section—methodology, with a brief description and results. The direct comparison between L1 and L2 learners is also valuable. I felt that the book included less L2 theoretical background than Hawkins (2001). However, this book is not dedicated to L2.

Chapters 4–6 cover the work conducted in English, Chinese, and Japanese. These chapters include discussions of three papers by the book's authors—Li and Bowerman (1998), Shirai and Andersen (1995), and Shirai (1998). As before, there is continuous comparison between cognitive and nativist approaches.

Chapter 7 presents a connectionist model of the acquisition of aspect. For those, like myself, with limited understanding of connectionist models, this is perhaps the most intriguing chapter. In spite of a certain apprehension prior to reading it, I found the content of this chapter highly accessible and interesting; once again, I was encouraged to think about the importance of input and frequency—notions that often escape the attention of generative acquisitionists.

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**Ayumi Matsuo**
*Max Planck Institute for Psycholinguistics*

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**PORTRAITS OF THE L2 USER.** *Vivian Cook (Ed.)*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2002. Pp. viii + 304. $89.95 cloth, $39.95 paper.

This volume will be a welcome addition to those who believe, as does Cook, that second language (L2) users should be studied for what they are and can do on their own terms, rather than in comparison to native speakers. However, the book might be less appealing to readers who do not share Cook's L2 user viewpoint, which is reiterated throughout the text. Instead of viewing L2 users as deficient native speakers, this book reflects a significant departure from traditional SLA research by accounting for L2 users' performance independently from that of monolingual native speakers. Cook proposes that this outlook will enable SLA researchers to examine the factors making L2 users what they are, instead of focusing on the reasons for which they have failed to become what they are not—that is, native speakers.

Using the L2 user as the unifying theme throughout, noted scholars in the field address theoretical and methodological perspectives of the following wide-ranging issues: the mental lexicon and processing (de Groot), phonology (Major), Universal Grammar syntax (Flynn & Lust), the development of functional use (Perdue), the cognitive processes of young children (Bialystok), childhood bilingualism (Genesee), neurolinguistics (Fabbro), individual differences (Dewaele), language attrition (de Bot & Hulsen), social identity (Pavlenko), the rights of L2 learners (Gomes de Matos), and language teaching methodology (Cook).

In his introductory chapter, Cook provides a useful background to L2 users, emphasizing multilingualism over monolingualism—that is, the worldwide prevalence of multicompetent users of two or more languages over monocompetent speakers of one. He also highlights the important distinction between the terms *learner*, which suggests a speaker with incomplete knowledge, and *user*, which implies an accomplished individual who functions competently in L2 environments.

The remaining 12 chapters examine different topics through an L2 user perspective. In chapter 2, de Groot discusses a psychological approach to understanding the manner in which the same mind accommodates the vocabularies of two distinct languages. Major (chapter 3) presents L2 users' phonological systems as unique through a discussion of voice onset time as evidence for a balance between first language (L1) and L2, as well as universals characteristic of the human mind. Flynn and Lust (chapter 4),

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redefine *initial state*, with *initial* being task specific rather than the state preceding all experience. In chapter 5, Perdue further demonstrates L2 user independence through the similar grammars they construct, regardless of the language. In response to the question of whether L2 users and monolinguals possess the same concepts, Bialystok (chapter 6) posits a model that embraces analysis of representational structure and control of attention, the latter being age sensitive. Chapter 7, by Genesee, addresses issues regarding young children's concurrent acquisition of two languages. He asserts emphatically that L2 users should be judged on their own merits, and not in comparison to monolinguals.

The brain becomes the focal point of chapters 8 and 9. First, Fabbro discusses how the L2 user's brain functions distinctly from that of the monolingual's. Next, Dewaele studies the brain through recent techniques treating (dis)fluency not as a failure but as a temporal variable of discourse (e.g., speakers' speed, hesitation, and pauses) among L2 users. In chapter 10, de Bot and Hulsen view attrition as gain rather than loss when exploring what happens to the L2 users' languages over time. Pavlenko (chapter 11) presents a poststructuralist approach underscoring the self-created identity of L2 users separate from those associated with native speakers. Gomes de Matos examines L2 users' educational rights as independent individuals in chapter 12. In chapter 13, Cook focuses on the effects of an L2 user perspective on teaching methodologies and syllabi. In an attempt to move away from native-speaker comparisons, the final chapter suggests the following modifications in teaching: an adoption of multiple standards for measuring L2 user varieties, the incorporation of successful L2 users as role models, the inclusion of L2 elements in the features of languages that are taught, the setting of internal educational goals in language instruction, and the emphasis of L1 importance in the classroom.

This volume would be of interest to students and researchers in the fields of L2 acquisition and use, language teaching, psychology, bilingualism, and linguistics. Cook's helpful introductory chapter and brief introductions to the subsequent chapters clarify and synthesize material derived from a variety of sources and fields. Useful references appear at the end of each chapter.

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**Natalie Lefkowitz**
*Central Washington University*

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**SECOND LANGUAGE WRITERS' TEXT: LINGUISTIC AND RHETORICAL FEATURES.** *Eli Hinkel*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2002. Pp. v + 370. $89.95 cloth, $45.00 paper.

This volume provides one of the most comprehensive analyses of academic writing in a second language (L2). Hinkel documents extensive research in the linguistic and rhetorical features found in L2 writing, weaving into her discussion a review of the research in first language (L1) writing. But this is not a book about contrastive rhetoric. Hinkel's purpose is to map out the particular features that constitute L2 academic writing through a review of the literature and her own empirical study, which dominates this book.

The book is divided into four parts: background, linguistic and rhetorical features, prompt effect on English as a second language (ESL) text, and the conclusion. Part 1 explores the research tools used in the analysis of academic and written discourse,

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specifically targeting ESL writers. She provides a brief but helpful discussion of contrastive rhetoric, text linguistics, and corpus analyses. She follows this introduction with a survey of the literature in L1 and L2 academic writing, focusing on common linguistic and rhetorical features found in these texts. She closes this section with a reflective piece on the goals and politics of teaching ESL writing, taking aim at the process-centered approach that dominates the teaching of L2 writing at the expense of direct instruction in vocabulary and grammar. She argues in her findings in a later section that L2 academic writers lack the lexical and syntactic variety necessary for effective academic writing.

Part 2 focuses on Hinkel's empirical study of L2 writing. She analyzed 1,457 native speaker (NS) and nonnative speaker (NNS) essays (242 written by NSs and 1,215 written by NNSs representing six L1s) written in response to six prompts, which were administered as part of the placement and diagnostic testing in several universities. All of the students were enrolled in first-year university composition courses. Her methodology involved comparing frequency counts of the two groups' uses of 68 linguistic and rhetorical features. Because of the problematic nature of identifying errors, correctness of a form was not considered—only frequency. The linguistic features included the use of nouns, pronouns, nominals, verbs, adjectives, adverbs, and subordinate clauses; the range of rhetorical features included cohesion, hedges, and fixed strings. The results are too extensive to describe here; however, in general the findings of the study show "that in formal written text highly advanced and trained NNSs employ the vast majority of language features in dramatically different rates than first-year NS students do" (p. 74). Compared to the NS text, NNS writing exhibited limited syntactic complexity and a restricted lexical range. Features with significantly lower median frequency rates in NNS texts included *it*-clefts, perfect aspect, progressive aspect, predictive modal *would*, passive voice, participles, reduced adjective and adverb clauses, and fixed strings (including idiomatic phrases and collocations). Part 3, which I found to be a bit tedious, analyzes the effects of the six prompts on the L2 texts.

What do these findings suggest? Wisely, Hinkel does not leave the implications to a few sentences calling for further research. Part 4 targets the priorities that administrators and teachers involved in the curriculum planning for English for Academic Purposes programs must consider. On the basis of the empirical data of her study, the research in contrastive rhetoric, and her own teaching experience, she scaffolds these priorities through a three-tier proposal for the L2 classroom: development of NNSs' vocabulary, collocations, and conventions of academic discourse; expansion of the range of syntactic structures; and utilization of verbal aspects, participles, hedging, and adverb clauses. Her recommendations extend beyond the L2 classroom, calling for reform in teacher education programs.

I found much to admire in this book: Hinkel's comprehensive empirical study, her wide reading of the research in L2 writing (particularly contrastive rhetoric), and her passion for reform in the L2 classroom. The major weakness is the unsubstantiated claims as to why there is such a disparity in the writing of NNSs. Except for her reliance on contrastive rhetoric theory to explain some of the variance, can we really argue that the L2 writing classroom, with its process-centered approach, limits a writer's syntax and lexical range? Despite this weakness, Hinkel's findings deserve the attention of anyone involved in the teaching of L2 writing at the college or university level.

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**Michael Khirallah**
*Oakland Community College*

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**COGNITION AND SECOND LANGUAGE INSTRUCTION.** *Peter Robinson (Ed.).* New York: Cambridge University Press, 2001. Pp. xi + 453. $77.00 cloth, $33.00 paper.

This book is part of the Cambridge University Press series in *Applied Linguistics*, edited by Michael H. Long and Jack C. Richards. The edited collection presents cognitive perspectives on second language (L2) learning, a topic that is currently receiving a great deal of attention in SLA research. The series editors, both of whom have produced notable research in L2 learning, point out: "cognition and cognitive factors, therefore, are central to any account of how and why SLA works, or so often fails, and equally central to the theory and practice of second language instruction" (p. vii). Robinson is one of the driving forces behind the current interest in cognitive approaches to SLA. He has proposed a view of the field that involves exploring the connections between SLA and aspects of human cognition, such as attention, awareness, and memory, as well as the role of individual differences in SLA and L2 learning conditions (e.g., Robinson, 1997, 2001, 2002). Robinson has assembled an impressive lineup of contributors.

The book comprises two sections. Six articles in the first section, "Theoretical Issues," introduce central concepts and constructs in cognition and SLA. The second section, "Cognition and Instruction," draws on the theoretical issues introduced in the first section and relates theory to instructional issues. In chapter 1, Schmidt describes the construct of attention and argues for its centrality in all aspects of L2 learning. In chapter 2, Ellis describes another construct relevant to language learning—memory. In chapter 3, MacWhinney examines three components of language learning: input, learner, and context, in the framework of the Competition Model. A review of approaches to sentence processing is provided by Harrington in chapter 4. DeKeyser in chapter 5 describes the concepts of automaticity and automatization and explores classroom practices that may be conducive to the automatization of language skills. In the final chapter of the first section, Gregg critically assesses SLA theories from a learnability perspective.

In the second section, the goal of the chapters is to relate the key cognitive resources described in the first section to issues within instructed SLA. In chapter 7, Skehan and Foster explore task characteristics and activities that may allow learners to direct attention to form. Doughty describes focus on form in cognitive processing terms in chapter 8, presenting some pedagogical recommendations. Theories about incidental and intentional vocabulary learning are reviewed in chapter 9 by Hulstijn, who also discusses their pedagogical implications. Robinson discusses a triad of task complexity, condition, and difficulty factors to investigate task influences on SLA in chapter 10. In a chapter that seems to destined to touch a nerve in much current SLA research, Sawyer and Ranta examine language aptitude as a potentially important factor in accounting for individual differences in L2 learning (chapter 11). In the final chapter of the second section, Jourdenais addresses methodological issues in investigating learners' cognitive processes and helpfully examines the limitations and benefits of protocol analysis.

One of the main strengths of the book is the breadth, scope, and range of perspectives offered by the contributors, some of whom are leading experts in their subfields. Although space precludes a comprehensive review of all the positions, many of the chapters address topics of fundamental importance for current SLA research and are clearly destined to become essential reading. For example, Schmidt's claims about the roles of attention and awareness in SLA (Schmidt, 1995) are critically important in understanding the SLA process, and this update is most welcome. Ellis's influential contributions

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on a range of crucial topics have also driven the field forward in recent years, and his claims about the roles of memory and frequency in SLA are already attracting considerable attention (e.g., Ellis, 2002).

The book covers a wide range of topics in cognition and SLA. There are differences in readability as well as scope of the chapters. In particular, although the second section aims to relate theoretical constructs to pedagogical and practical issues in instructed SLA, some of the chapters are more accessible than others. The only other limitation is that, for a 2001 text, there seems to have been a long interval between the time at which chapters were written and the date of publication. This is reflected in the referencing for some of the chapters, where relevant recent work is occasionally missing.

In summary, this book presents a broad range of important issues in cognition and SLA. It will be read with great interest and much profit. It provides an excellent overview of theoretical as well as instructional issues in cognition and L2 instruction.

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**Alison Mackey**
*Georgetown University*

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**CROSS-LINGUISTIC INFLUENCE IN THIRD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: PSYCHOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVES.** *Jasone Cenoz, Britta Hufeisen, and Ulrike Jessner (Eds.)*. Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2001. Pp. 197. $54.95 cloth.

Although linguists often employ "native-language influence" as a shorthand for language transfer, most are well aware that crosslinguistic influence can come not only from the first language (L1) but also from the second language (L2) in cases where the target language is the third language (L3). Even so, there remains the question of just how similar the acquisition of L3 (or L4, etc.) may be to what is, strictly speaking, L2 acquisition. This question naturally intersects with the complexities of crosslinguistic influence, and the study of transfer beyond L2 has received increasing attention in the past 10 years or so. It was high time for a single volume that would bring together many strands of research on the problem, and this one edited by Cenoz, Hufeisen, and

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Jessner will no doubt become a key resource. The collection has an introduction by the editors and 10 chapters with the following authors: Cenoz; Hammarberg; De Angelis and Selinker; Ringbom; Dewaele; Ecke; Herwig; Kellerman; Fouser; and Gibson, Hufeisen, and Libben.

Most of the papers focus on lexis and on the acquisition of an Indo-European language. The study by Fouser is a remarkable exception on both counts, however, looking as it does at the acquisition of pragmatics of L3 Korean by two speakers of L2 Japanese and L1 English. Another exception is the article by Kellerman, who considers questions of gesture, emotion, and linguistic relativism; by his own admission, the article does not discuss L3 in much detail, but it is nonetheless an engaging look at problems of long-term interest for transfer researchers. The other papers address recurring themes in L3 research, including the role of language distance, the dynamic nature of multilingual competence, and the differing roles played by L1 and L2 or other languages known to the learner. It is possible to give a sense of the wide range of problems explored from considering a sample of the findings.

Two of the studies offer a contrast between the influence of two very different local languages on the target (which in both cases was English). In the study by Cenoz, the local languages were Spanish, which is an Indo-European language, and Basque, which is non-Indo-European. In the study by Ringbom, the languages were Finnish (non-Indo-European) and Swedish (Indo-European). Not surprisingly, the results are somewhat similar in the two studies, with the two Indo-European languages having a very different (and often greater) influence on learners' English. Language distance figures in other studies as well, two of which give cogent examples of morphological blends. De Angelis and Selinker, for instance, report an Italian interlanguage form *è uccido* "is killed" instead of the target Italian form *è ucciso*; the learner's L1 was English, but his L2, Spanish, no doubt explains the *-ido* suffix. Herwig offers similar examples involving multilingualism in Germanic languages. Contrary to the results noted so far, Gibson, Hufeisen, and Jessner did not find any straightforward effects of language distance in their study of prepositional verbs in L3 German, but the wide range of L1s involved in their study as well as other methodological problems will make it difficult to evaluate their conclusions.

If I had to pick the single most intriguing observation in this interesting volume, it would be one involving phonetics, even though the focus of the collection is on lexis. Hammarberg found that a native speaker of English used more L2 German pronunciations in her L3 Swedish at earlier rather than at more advanced stages of proficiency. As the learner became more fluent in Swedish, the phonetic influences from her L1 became stronger than the German. As Hammarberg argues, even an advanced proficiency in L2 (as was the case for this learner's German) seems to constitute a different kind of knowledge from the early established and highly automatic patterns of L1 phonetics.

Along with the factors already mentioned, transfer interacts with variables such as the formality of the speech situation, which is one variable foregrounded in Dewaele's study (with informal speech marked by more language mixing). Moreover, different methodologies give rise to different problems of interpretation, as seen, for example, in Ecke's elicitation of tip-of-the-tongue states. The multiplicity of factors that can affect L3 and subsequent languages makes it virtually certain that any comprehensive account of cross-linguistic influence remains a very long way off.

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**Terence Odlin**
*Ohio State University*

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**DEVELOPING ADVANCED LITERACY IN FIRST AND SECOND LANGUAGES: MEANING WITH POWER.** *Mary J. Schleppegrell and M. Cecilia Colombi (Eds.)*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2002. Pp. x + 274. $69.95 cloth, $29.95 paper.

This volume is an edited collection of essays that was based on a conference organized at the University of California, Davis in 2000. It consists of a preface and 13 chapters. The editors have managed to assemble a respectable and versatile group of contributors: Celce-Murcia, Baugh, Gee, García, Lemke, Martin, Christie, Merino and Hammond, Ramanathan, and Scarcella. These contributors, because of their varied backgrounds, guarantee a well-rounded account of literacy development from the viewpoints of functional linguistics, sociocultural theory, and SLA.

As its title indicates, the book covers issues of literacy development in both first and second languages. In a sense, the collection is an implicit reaction to the criticism targeted toward bilingual programs that quite often leave the students with a command of language considerably beneath advanced literacy. Three populations are identified as vulnerable in that they may not, without intervention, develop advanced literacy: bilingual, English as a second language, and African American students (pp. 4–5). This identification, although to an extent realistic, may simultaneously reinforce stereotypes of immigrant and Black students, and the implication that these groups—and these groups alone—are the vulnerable ones is probably my sole criticism of this book.

With advanced schooling now available to large numbers of students from disadvantaged households (and not just immigrants or African Americans), the language gap between the norm and the discourse patterns that students bring to school with them is no longer an issue merely for teachers and students in lower levels of formal schooling. Students' primary discourses—the discourses they have been socialized into before entering institutions of higher learning—are not going to be enough, and they need to learn to be fluent in secondary discourses as well. The changing world is introducing new kinds of literacies—for instance, Lemke (chapter 2) discusses the recently developed demands of multimedia literacy. It is the process of guiding students into these new discourses in which instructors have a key role: They can either aid the students toward higher levels of literacy or end up functioning as gatekeepers to these discourses of power.

The book offers a good balance between research and pedagogical aspects of teaching advanced literacy. Examples are plentiful. The illustrations of varying literacy skills are often contrastive, ranging from analyses of successful versus nonsuccessful lab reports (Schleppegrell, chapter 6) to multimedia semiotics portraying Web pages intended for different audiences (Lemke, chapter 2). In this contrastive vein, examples of discourses representing a variety of levels are analyzed throughout the book.

The research frame advocated in several chapters makes clear connections, with explicit references, to Hallidayan Systemic-Functional Linguistics—a welcome feature in a book published in North America. Learning new registers and genres is seen as a way into advanced literacy. Focus on form and a meta-awareness of language and textual organization are seen as tools into mastering the new discourses. As Martin (p. 111) puts it, learning "by osmosis" does not necessarily work for nonmainstream students. Celce-Murcia (p. 143) writes about "raising the students' conscious awareness" of gram-

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matical resources. As Scarcella (p. 220) implies, lack of explicit corrective feedback may function as a subconscious gatekeeping device—an unfortunate development that could be remedied by attention to form. Consciousness-raising should, however, be emphasized not only among the students; heightening (language) teachers' metacognitive understanding is also emphasized as a means to empowerment (Ramanathan, chapter 10).

The teachability of advanced literacy is pronounced throughout the book (e.g., Christie, p. 66), and the measurability of achieved advanced literacy is underscored (e.g., Colombi, chapter 4). In offering ways to both teach and research advanced literacy, the book does not remain at the level of abstractions. Nominalizations, lexical density and growth, and grammatical metaphor (p. 67) are used as examples of how to define advanced literacy. On the other hand, sociolinguistic competence is not ignored either. As Gee puts it, in the context of teaching academic discourse to nonnative speakers, "teaching language ought to be about teaching meaning making within Discourses" (p. 173).

The editors identify their audience as "researchers, teachers, and students" (p. vii). Anyone working on teacher training and literacy research can benefit from the multiple aspects presented in this book. Advanced literacy for all may be a utopian goal, but those working in institutions of higher learning should at least be aware of the challenges on the way, as well as of the remedies available to their students on the journey.

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**Helena Halmari**
*University of Florida*

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**DESIGNING LANGUAGE TEACHING TASKS.** *Keith Johnson*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2003. Pp. x + 196. $79.95 cloth, $26.95 paper.

First and foremost, readers should know that this book is not about how to design language teaching tasks. Rather, it is a pilot study of how professional task designers and teachers prepare language tasks for the classroom.

Johnson begins his book with a rationale for studying task design from the perspective of research on expertise. The author is keenly interested in what sets apart an "expert" task designer from a "nonexpert." Thus, the first chapter is devoted to the aforementioned rationale, as well as defining "task" and providing background for the research project.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on studies of expertise. Because very little has been written on expertise in the field of applied linguistics, the majority of studies reviewed here have to do with the general notion of expertise and how it may possibly relate to the preparation of language teaching tasks. Research reviewed here includes such areas as chess playing and mathematical problem solving. This is a fascinating area of study and will most likely be new territory for most linguists and language teachers.

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Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology employed in Johnson's own study. The task to be used in the study is presented here—an oral activity involving the description of people. One also finds an extensive review of the literature on research methodology that is used to justify the use of concurrent verbalization in Johnson's study. Extensive treatment of data coding is also included in this chapter, leading to the development of TADECS, or Task Design Coding System, the coding system used to analyze the data generated in the study.

Chapter 4 presents data from two subjects—one categorized as expert (labeled *specialist* or S for this study) and one categorized as nonexpert (labeled *nonspecialist/teacher* or NS/T). This chapter serves to introduce the reader to the TADECS coding system and to foreshadow some of the more important differences in the manner in which S and NS/T designers go about creating a language task.

Chapters 5 and 6 explore what happens as the subjects design tasks based on the design brief they are provided with. Chapter 5 deals with the early stages of design as subjects read the brief and prepare to design a task that meets the design brief's criteria. Chapter 6 treats the middle and end stages of task design. Ample space is devoted to direct quotes from the subjects' verbalizations during the task design. Each section in these two chapters concludes with a shaded box that includes the author's hypotheses regarding which behaviors seem to lead to good task design. These boxes will be a boon to those short of time or wishing to get directly to the results.

Chapter 7 sums up the hypotheses reached in the two previous chapters. That is, what do good task designers do when they design tasks? For example, Johnson hypothesizes that good task designers are able to visualize possible activities with concrete details, easily abandon dead-end designs, and use their extensive repertoires to create new tasks.

The final chapter describes how the tasks created by the subjects in the study were evaluated. This was an attempt to determine if the so-called experts consistently produced tasks of higher perceived quality than the so-called nonexperts.

Presumably due to the lack of previous research in this area of applied linguistics and also due to the sheer volume of qualitative data generated by this study, Johnson has chosen to present the results in book-length form rather than as a more typical, article-length paper. Several chapters provide more detailed information than strictly necessary along with redundant information that can make for rather tedious reading. For practitioners looking for ideas on designing tasks for the ESL or foreign language classroom, this book will be of limited interest. Other books, such as Lee (2000) and Nunan (1996), provide much more practical approaches to task design. On the other hand, this volume provides an intriguing look into the process of task design from the minds (and mouths) of the designers themselves and gives direction to future research into expertise studies in the field of foreign language task design.

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**Rodney L. Bransdorfer**
*Central Washington University*

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**SPANISH SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: STATE OF THE SCIENCE.** *Barbara A. Lafford and Rafael Salaberry (Eds.)*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press, 2003. Pp. xii + 332. $39.95 paper.

Lafford and Salaberry's new volume provides an overview of the past, present, and anticipated future of SLA theory and research on second language (L2) acquisition of Spanish. Chapters 1–6 summarize some of the major products of Spanish SLA research, whereas chapters 7–9 treat overarching theoretical concerns related to the processes involved in Spanish SLA. The final chapter examines the role of L2 instruction. This accessible work reports on major trends in the field and discusses the results and conclusions of landmark studies published during the last half century.

Elliot's chapter on phonology begins the volume and investigates the effects of age, gender, attitude, and other learner variables on L2 pronunciation. He includes an examination of major phonological studies published during the past four decades and concludes with a section on the role of instructional intervention in L2 pronunciation.

Montrul and Salaberry authored chapter 2, which focuses on acquisition of Spanish tense-aspect. They summarize research on stage development in L2 acquisition of past-tense forms and propose investigation into stage development (of tense and aspect in particular) as indispensable to the validation or rejection of theoretical frameworks and models of SLA.

In chapter 3, Collentine reviews research on L2 acquisition of the subjunctive mood in Spanish. He argues that the ability to process complex syntax is a prerequisite for acquisition of the subjunctive and that a lack of control over particular structures in low-level learners hinders their acquisition of mood.

Lee categorizes and discusses significant studies on L2 acquisition of clitics in chapter 4. Lee divides the studies examined into two main groups: processing focused and production focused. In the first section, he expounds on the first noun strategy and the intended functions of processing instruction, and in the second section he compares L2 learners' use of clitics in a natural setting with use in the foreign language classroom setting.

In chapter 5, Lafford, Collentine, and Karp delineate the microconnectionist perspective and categorize current research on word learning into three main veins of inquiry: partial-precise knowledge, depth of knowledge, and the receptive-productive dimension. The authors discuss how instructional intervention can affect word learning, and make suggestions for future research focusing on depth of knowledge and the receptive-productive dimension.

Koike, Pearson, and Witten have written chapter 6 on pragmatics and discourse. They provide a summary and analysis of theory and research related to L2 Spanish learners' ability to produce appropriate forms (based on situational context) and construct logical, organized discourse like native speakers.

Generative perspectives on Spanish syntax are treated in chapter 7 by Sanchez and Toribio. The authors summarize Government and Binding, the Minimalist Program, the poverty of the stimulus argument, and the debate on access to Universal Grammar. They review research on L2 development of various structures and suggest several lines of inquiry including language attrition and variation.

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In chapter 8, Dussias provides a synopsis of research on the effects of cognitive processes (such as perception and memorization) on the learnability of Spanish. A significant portion of the chapter discusses sentence processing in Spanish-English bilinguals at various levels of proficiency. Dussias concludes by revisiting commonly accepted contrasts such as conscious versus unconscious learning and explicit versus implicit knowledge.

Anton, DiCamilla, and Lantolf focus chapter 9 on sociocultural theory, discussing the relationship between L2s and the mind. The authors review major tenets of Vygotskyan theory and present the notions of scaffolding and language as a cognitive tool. For ease of reading, the authors categorize studies into five principal sections: private speech, lexical organization, reading comprehension, language play, and collaborative interaction.

Grove rounds out this comprehensive volume by presenting a chapter on the role of instructional intervention in Spanish SLA. Grove examines the most prevalent instruction types and neatly categorizes each according to which phase of the acquisition process it attempts to address—input, intake, integration of new knowledge (into the developing system), or production.

Editors Lafford and Salaberry have compiled 10 outstanding contributions from major scholars in Spanish SLA into one cohesive unit. Due to the volume's nature and structure, readers quickly become familiar with linguistic topics, theoretical perspectives, research directions, and foreign language teaching methodologies. Authors seem to have taken particular care in guiding the novice reader through myriad issues central to SLA, defining and explaining pertinent terminology along the way. This well-rounded reference is sure to be selected for a variety of undergraduate and graduate level courses in SLA, applied linguistics, and L2 pedagogy.

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**Andrew P. Farley**
*University of Notre Dame*

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**TASK-BASED LANGUAGE LEARNING AND TEACHING.** *Rod Ellis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Pp. x + 387. $24.95 paper.

This book is part of the Oxford University Press series in *Applied Linguistics*. In the preface, Ellis explains that his goal was to produce a book that "attempts to examine 'task' from a variety of perspectives," noting he was striving in particular for "a rounded, balanced account of how tasks have figured in both SLA and language pedagogy" (p. ix). As Ellis also notes, the book is not a "how to" guide for the teacher or researcher but rather a text that informs about current research and practice on task-based second language research and teaching.

The topic of tasks in second language research and pedagogy is timely and important for the field of SLA. There is currently a great deal of interest in the construct of tasks from second and foreign language researchers, teacher trainers, language professionals, and classroom teachers. In the past few years, most of the

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major applied linguistics journals have published papers relating to some aspect of tasks and most of the recent SLA conferences have hosted presentations on tasks. A quick survey of the Internet suggests that the topic of task-based language learning and teaching is increasingly appearing on syllabi for graduate classes. Recent edited collections that present research on tasks have quickly found their way onto many researchers' and students' bookcases (e.g., Bygate, Skehan, & Swain, 2001) together with work by researchers who developed and shaped ideas about task-based learning and teaching (Long, 2000; Skehan, 1998). With all this interest, there is a clear need for work that contributes to current knowledge about tasks.

This book includes 10 chapters, each focusing on tasks and their rationale, design, and implementation. In chapter 1, definitions and features of tasks are discussed, together with a brief description of the role of tasks in SLA research and language teaching. Chapter 2 focuses on tasks that promote listening comprehension. Chapter 3 describes tasks as promoters of interaction as well as discussing the classification of tasks according to features such as type of information exchange, outcome, and cognitive complexity. Research on factors affecting the implementation of tasks, such as task repetition and interlocutor familiarity, are also discussed. With a related focus, chapter 4 outlines tasks that promote language production. Chapter 5 discusses focused tasks, and chapter 6 examines the use of tasks within sociocultural approaches to SLA. The remaining four chapters are more pedagogically oriented. Chapter 7 addresses the important topic of the design of task-based language courses, task-based teaching methodologies are described in chapter 8 and task-based assessment in chapter 9, and chapter 10 focuses on the evaluation of task-based pedagogy.

One of the main strengths of the book is the fact that it makes explicit connections between theory and practice. Although space precludes a comprehensive review of all the positions Ellis describes, many of the chapters address topics of fundamental importance for current task research and pedagogy. For example, in the thought-provoking final chapter, Ellis summarizes different research positions supporting the use of tasks in research and pedagogy, calls for more empirical research evaluating tasks, and reviews objections to task-based perspectives on teaching. He concludes the chapter by arguing that, although tasks are increasingly seen as an important tool for language teaching, task-supported rather than task-based teaching may be the ultimate outcome.

The book covers a wide range of topics in task-based language teaching and learning, and the coverage of some of the topics is more up to date than others. Many researchers are interested in the relationship between interaction and communicative tasks. Chapter 3 aims to relate the theoretical constructs of input and interaction to pedagogical and practical issues in instructed SLA. However, for a 2003 text, the characterization of the interaction hypothesis is somewhat limited. Despite this criticism, the book clearly achieves its goal of bringing together the fields of SLA and language teaching, using each to inform the other, and the majority of the chapters describe the current state of the art in our knowledge about tasks.

In summary, this book presents a broad range of important issues in task-based language teaching and learning. It will be read with great interest and much profit and seems destined to become one of the standard references on tasks.

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**Alison Mackey**
*Georgetown University*

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**LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: THE GROWTH OF GRAMMAR.** *Maria Teresa Guasti*. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2002. Pp. xvi + 474. $55.00 cloth.

The interrelation between language acquisition and linguistic theory has long been recognized as a fruitful area of research. Guasti provides a detailed and comprehensive review of the major areas of the development of a first language and its relation to linguistic theory. The book consists of 11 chapters on the development of all areas of grammar, with an obvious emphasis on syntax. Each chapter begins with an overview of the theoretical tools necessary to understand the topic of the chapter, followed by the empirical phenomena, and a discussion that integrates the theory and the data.

Chapter 1, "Basic Concepts," introduces the major concepts and questions that are central to language acquisition and linguistic theory: crosslinguistic similarity in the process of acquisition, negative evidence, the minimal effects of cultural differences on the course of grammatical development, and so forth. These and other poverty of stimulus arguments are used to motivate the logical problem of language acquisition. Chapter 2, "First Steps into Language," discusses the development of infants' language-related skills (e.g., phonotactic discrimination at birth; Mehler et al. 1988), followed by the onset of speech production skills (e.g., vegetative sounds, cooing, and babbling). In chapter 3, "Acquisition of the Lexicon," Guasti begins by presenting the reasons why isolating words in the speech stream as well as building word meaning could be problematic for children. She then considers the acquisition of verbs and the difficulties involved, followed by extensive discussion of various bootstrapping approaches to the acquisition of the lexicon.

Chapter 4, "The Emergence of Syntax," is somewhat global in nature, serving as a good transition into the subsequent more focused chapters. Guasti discusses the acquisition of word order, clausal structure, subject agreement relations, and the well-known root infinitive phenomenon. She introduces pivotal notions such as the Full Competence Hypothesis, the Small Clause Hypothesis, and several theories on root infinitives (e.g., Schütze & Wexler, 1996; Rizzi, 1993/1994) as well as child language phenomena that are the basis of much discussion in the literature—for example, the position of verbs in V2 languages or the position of verbs with respect to negation.

The remaining seven chapters are considerably more focused, each dealing with a specific topic in depth. Chapter 5, "Null Subjects in Early Language," discusses the various accounts of null subjects in child language: parametric accounts, the truncation account, and processing accounts. Chapter 6, "The Acquisition of *Wh*-Questions," addresses the acquisition of *wh*-questions (including subject-auxiliary inversion and

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short- and long-distance movement) as well as relative clauses. Chapter 7, "The Acquisition of NP-Movement," discusses the acquisition of the passive and various accounts for problems that English children have with the passive. Chapter 8, "The Acquisition of the Binding Principles," is organized very neatly into three core subsections—one on each principle of the Binding Theory. Chapter 9, "The Acquisition of Quantification," introduces what is arguably the newest area of the study of child language. Guasti spends considerable space discussing the theoretical aspects of adult quantification and then shows the sorts of errors children make with respect to quantification. She tackles the acquisition of control structures in chapter 10. Finally, chapter 11, "Dissociation between Language and Other Cognitive Abilities," deals with the various symptoms of Specific Language Impairment (SLI), as well as theories on SLI. Arguing for a modular view of the mind, Guasti shows that children with SLI are delayed only in their linguistic abilities and not in any other domain, whereas contrastively, children with William's Syndrome have relatively unaffected linguistic abilities but are delayed in other domains.

This book is almost exclusively focused on first language acquisition. However, because a solid understanding of the empirical phenomena and theoretical issues in first language acquisition has a direct bearing on the study of SLA, this book should be of great interest to those researching and teaching SLA. Although Guasti clearly approaches the topic from a generative perspective, the treatment of the empirical phenomena is so well presented that it could be of use to researchers working within any paradigm. Because of the pedagogically sound organization of each chapter, the explicit and detailed presentation of each topic, and the overall thoroughness of the book, I highly recommend this as a textbook or background reading. It is perhaps too advanced for the typical undergraduate class and is most appropriate for an introductory graduate-level class in first or second language acquisition.

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**Kamil Ud Deen**
*University of Hawai'i at Mānoa*

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**CONTROVERSIES IN APPLIED LINGUISTICS.** *Barbara Seidlhofer (Ed.)*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2003. Pp. ix + 346. £22.05 paper.

Echoing Bakhtin's assertion of the importance of a dialogic approach to the study of language and literature and Kramsch's (1995) view that exploring differences is more important than achieving consensus, Seidlhofer's book focuses on the analysis of a col-

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lection of readings from original works by authors with opposing views on several topics in applied linguistics.

To illustrate the dynamism of academic polemical discourse, Seidlhofer chooses five general controversial themes: the global spread of English, corpus linguistics and language teaching, critical discourse analysis, second language acquisition, and the nature of applied linguistics. Each of these themes contains between one and three controversies, which, in kind, are exemplified by two to six complete texts (in chronological order) with opposing viewpoints. For each section of the book, Seidlhofer provides the reader with an advance organizer (e.g., background information of the importance of the controversy) with which to understand the actual papers involved in a given polemic. Next follows a seminal text within a given controversy, followed by reactions from other scholars, which then often leads to a response from the original author—for example, Widdowson (1995) is criticized by Fairclough (1996), and Widdowson responds (1996). Finally, Seidlhofer provides substantial sections on further reading on each topic.

To facilitate the reader's understanding of the arguments presented, Seidlhofer provides generalized study questions, which can be applied to any one of the five controversies covered in the book. The questions involve the content and organization of the argument, the expression and style of the argument, and reader reaction.

Although several books on applied linguistics have critically reviewed controversial topics in the field of applied linguistics (e.g., McCarthy, 2001; McDonough, 2002), Seidlhofer's book is unique in that it provides readers with the raw materials for coming to their own understanding of opposing points of view that researchers in applied linguistics have expressed in academic publications. By bringing together, in a concise manner, published texts with very different views on the same topic, but which do not naturally occur together in print, this volume provides a service to applied linguists, lecturers, and postgraduate students, and those involved in teacher education, who recognize the importance of these controversies to their professions but lack time and accessible library resources to read extensively on these topics.

The depth of understanding that Seidlhofer brings to a breadth of controversial topics is impressive. However, sometimes her insightful discussion of details within a given complex controversy and her assumption that the reader is already familiar with many terms (e.g., behaviorism and the contrastive analysis hypothesis, which she does not define in the text or in footnotes) make the prose less accessible to readers just starting out in the field.

The approach taken in this book—recognizing the value of engendering critical imagination in scholarly discourse—is one that will undoubtedly provide a solid foundation for readers to become engaged with important controversies in the field and will facilitate the honing of argumentation skills in students and practitioners of applied linguistics.

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**Barbara A. Lafford**
*Arizona State University*

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**SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION AND UNIVERSAL GRAMMAR.** *Lydia White*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2003. Pp. xiv + 316. $65.00 cloth, $24.00 paper.

Actually, I could justifiably end my review here. Lydia White has come out with a new textbook on Universal Grammar (UG) and SLA; buy it. End of story. Still, I have 724 words left, so for those readers whose SLA research has been conducted on a different planet, let me pad things out a bit.

In the short history of empirical research in SLA, UG-oriented research has been one research program—I am tempted to say, the only one—that has consistently situated itself within the discipline of cognitive science, in that it has sought to explain the cognitive capacities of second language (L2) learners in light of a coherent and well-developed theory of the human language faculty. White has been at the forefront of this research program from its inception and has been perhaps the most productive contributor to that program.

This volume manages to cover a surprisingly wide selection of that literature, but it is not one of those Jones-says-this-whereas-Smith-says-that-but-more-research-is-necessary kinds of surveys that occasionally escape from their proper place in doctoral dissertations. Rather, White's book is a critically evaluative analysis of the major questions facing SLA research. I stress the "critically": Although quite properly objective, White is, thankfully, not neutral.

Chapter 1 is a brief overview of the logical problem of language acquisition and of UG as a proposed solution and of the idea of "access to UG" in SLA. (This book is not, it should be noted, an introduction to UG theory and indeed presupposes a certain familiarity with that theory.) Still, White keeps discussion at a level that should be accessible to, say, any graduate student in an SLA—rather than TESOL—program. Chapter 2 examines whether interlanguage (IL) grammars are constrained by UG principles; White chooses a couple of intriguingly subtle phenomena (the overt pronoun constraint and the result-process distinction in nominals) to suggest that IL grammars are indeed so constrained. At the same time, she looks closely at evidence that second language (L2) learners may produce "wild" grammars. She makes a strong, although necessarily not compelling, case for "saving the phenomena."

Chapter 3 deals with the vexed question of the initial state of the adult learner at the beginning of L2 acquisition—one place where the SLA waters seem to have been unduly muddied. White explicates and compares the various proposals—the first language (L1) as initial state, UG itself as initial state, UG plus the L1, some sort of UG-with-deficits, and so on—and expertly guides the reader through both the empirical evidence and the conceptual or theoretical issues. This latter discussion is typical of the book's

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transcending of mere reportage and will be welcomed especially by any reader who, like me, finds some of the proposals to be just, well, weird.

Chapter 4 is about parameters and whether they can be reset in conformity with the L2. Discussion here centers on empirical questions, perhaps because, as White seems to suggest at the end of the chapter, the nature of parameters themselves in linguistic theory is rather unclear. Chapter 5 is concerned with the transition-theoretical aspect of SLA—the question of how input can trigger changes in the IL grammar. This is perhaps the least satisfying chapter in the book, but then the topic is perhaps the least satisfying domain of SLA research, where proposals and results are both thin on the ground. Yet, White still manages to provide a useful elucidation of the problem, perhaps the first in the general SLA literature (I second White's recommendation to consult Carroll, 2001, for an ambitious proposal on input in SLA).

Chapters 6 and 7 take us into areas often considered "semantic," such as inflectional morphology, psych verbs, or the English dative alternation. Those readers (who seem to be legion) who think of UG as something relevant only to a small core of abstract syntactic structures would do well to read the discussion here, which gives a good account of the complexities of the issues and the sophistication of the analyses recently offered, miles away from the morpheme studies of yore. Chapter 8 addresses the seemingly widespread failure to converge on a nativelike grammar. All chapters include helpful references for further reading and "Topics for Discussion" that are actually interesting and thought provoking.

White writes, as always, with authority and lucidity, and the result is a magisterial introduction to SLA as a function of the language faculty.

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**Kevin R. Gregg**
*Momoyama Gakuin University, Osaka*

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**THE ACQUISITION OF SPANISH MORPHOSYNTAX: THE L1/L2 CONNECTION.** *Ana Teresa Pérez-Leroux and Juana Muñoz Liceras (Eds.)*. Dordrecht: Kluwer, 2002. Pp. xxiii + 247. $110.00 cloth, $50.00 paper.

Since the middle 1980s, the study of the acquisition of Spanish has blossomed, becoming a diverse field in which new avenues for original research are still quite abundant. More specifically, this volume addresses examples of morphosyntactic optionality observed in the interlanguage grammars of Spanish language learners, both first language (L1) and second language (L2). Furthermore, it describes how morphology can trigger the acquisition of new syntactic knowledge. A major strength of the collection lies in the numerous and varied original contributions it makes to our knowledge of the acquisition of Spanish morphosyntax.

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The book contains eight chapters: four devoted to the study of the L1 and bilingual acquisition of Spanish and four to the L2, preceded by an introduction by the editors. In chapter 1, Bel examines how two groups of children—one learning Catalan and the other learning Spanish—begin using tense. She argues that children understand tense—that is, they produce past and present tense in the appropriate contexts. Bel notes, however, that the children's VP structures are still "truncated" and "defective" compared to adult target usage. In the next chapter, Ezeizabarrena looks at the use of root infinitives (RIs) by Spanish monolingual, Basque monolingual, and Spanish–Basque bilingual children. The researcher found that all three groups produced RIs, even though both languages are pro-drop, which challenges Wexler's (1994) assumption that RIs cannot occur in pro-drop languages. A distinctive strength of this study is how the researcher teased apart RIs that occurred in inappropriate contexts from those that could be grammatical. In chapter 3, Fujino and Sano propose a null object stage in the L1 acquisition of Spanish using data from the CHILDES corpus. The authors maintain that this null object stage is a product of failing to place the correct clitic at spell-out and not related to the null object parameter. In the last chapter on L1 acquisition (chapter 4), Sánchez studies the acquisition of object clitics in Spanish monolingual children and Spanish–Quechua bilingual children. The two groups of children used Spanish object clitics similarly, except that the bilinguals produced more null objects and object topicalizations (structures permitted in Quechua and common in Andean Spanish) than their monolingual counterparts, a difference Sánchez attributes to input conditions.

In the next four chapters, adult L2 acquisition is discussed beginning with Montrul and Slabakova's treatment of aspect in Spanish in which intermediate and advanced Anglophone learners demonstrated their knowledge of the morphosyntactic and semantic qualities of the preterite and imperfect tenses. It was shown that the acquisition of these two qualities is closely tied together and that nativelike acquisition of them is possible. In chapter 6, Bruhn de Garavito and White look at how Francophone learners of Spanish acquire aspects of the determiner phrase. They found that although prenominal adjective placement was readily acquired, the learners made errors in gender agreement, perhaps, as the authors suggest, because they use one gender (usually masculine) as a default due to the idiosyncratic nature of Spanish gender. Next, in chapter 7, Pérez-Leroux, O'Rourke, Lord, and Centeno-Cortés examine whether English-speaking L2 learners of Spanish can acquire possessor-raising grammar. They argue that learners can acquire this structure, although when a subject-control predicate was present, the learners made more errors, possibly due to the input they had received. In the last chapter, Liceras, Diaz, and Salomaa-Robertson present data on the acquisition of Spanish noun-noun compounds. The authors provide evidence that L2 learners of Spanish, regardless of L1 background, do not have access to the [+word marker] feature of Spanish nouns. The authors suggest a top-down processing strategy as a possible reason for the L2 learners' divergence from the L1 target structure.

Overall, Pérez-Leroux and Liceras have given the language acquisition field a strong, varied, and useful collection of studies that contribute to our knowledge of Spanish morphosyntax. As to weaknesses, the chapter contributed by Sánchez is dense and assumes very thorough knowledge of the structures and theories addressed, which may cause some problems for less advanced readers. Also, there are certain typographical errors in the examples and tables throughout the collection that could cause confusion for some readers. Nevertheless, I would recommend this volume for a graduate-level seminar in Spanish applied linguistics, provided that the reader has sufficient knowledge of the theories and terminology employed.

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**Dan Thornhill**
*University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign*

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**EFFECTS OF THE SECOND LANGUAGE ON THE FIRST.** *Vivian Cook (Ed.).* Clevedon, UK: Multilingual Matters, 2003. Pp. viii + 268. $89.95 cloth, $35.95 paper.

This volume represents the first attempt to assemble studies of the effects of the second language (L2) on the first (L1). Underlying the design of the book is Cook's (1991) notion of multicompetence, which refers to knowledge of two or more languages in one mind. From various perspectives and to varying depths, the authors bring evidence to bear on the conceptualization that the L1 of an L2 user is not encapsulated but susceptible to the L2 influence.

The book contains 13 chapters: In chapter 1, Cook opens with a rationale for researching the L2 effects on the L1, drawing on Weinreich's (1953, p. 1) view on interference as "those instances of deviation from the norms of *either* [italics added] language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language." He then goes on to introduce his notion of multicompetence, arguing on the basis of (a) the rights, (b) the number, and (c) the distinctive characteristics of L2 users. He discusses several models of the relationship of the L1 and L2 in the mind of an L2 user, such as the separation model, the integration model, and the interconnection models, suggesting that, together, they make up an integration continuum. Cook closes the chapter with an appraisal of the methodologies employed by the authors of the subsequent chapters.

The ensuing nine chapters, contributed by Laufer; Pavlenko; Cenoz; Jarvis; Porte; Dewaele and Pavlenko; Murphy and Pine; Balcom; and Cook, Iarossi, Stellakis, and Tokumaru report on empirical studies of changes occurring in the L2 users' L1s in domains such as the lexicon, semantics, syntax, and so forth. The remaining three chapters are written by Satterfield, Jessner, and Kecskes and Papp, who, respectively, present a reanalysis of the data from previous research, a new way of looking at multilingualism, and indexes of the L2 to L1 influence for measurement purposes.

With such an array of studies, this book opens up a new genre of research that is, in part, purported to challenge some fundamental SLA conceptions—for example, the monolingual native speaker (NS) model on which SLA research to date has been based. The studies collected in this volume have jointly revealed two phenomena about L2 users—namely, (a) that an L2 user's L1 is different from that of a monolingual NS, and (b) that an L2 user has an expanded linguistic and conceptual repertoire as a result of knowing more than one language. If such findings can be further confirmed by a significant amount of systematic research, theoretical and empirical, SLA research will ultimately have to

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forsake the monolingual NS model. Until then, however, it seems that researchers in this area will have many difficult questions to settle. For example, to what extent is an L2 user's L1 competence different from that of a monolingual NS? What are the extent and depth of changes taking place in the L1s within and across L2 users? Answers to questions of this kind may shed light on the robustness of the notion of multicompetence. Clearly, to this end, the current research has yet a long way to go.

This book is largely descriptive and comparative in nature, and as such, it provides a rather flimsy understanding of why the L1s of the L2 users change the way they do. In spite of Cook's admonition about the comparative fallacy (Bley-Vroman, 1983), a notable number of empirical studies reported herein nevertheless compare the L1s of the L2 users with those of the monolingual NSs, labeling resultant differences as "deviance," "contamination," and so forth. Moreover, the overall tendency is quite strong toward attributing any differences exclusively to the L2 influence, and this is, in some sense, reminiscent of the earliest approach to SLA, the contrastive analysis hypothesis (Lado, 1957), which the new genre of research has rebuked for its inadequacy. What thus seems to be happening is that the comparative fallacy is taking on a different guise. Changing the direction of comparison, which appears to be what the current research on the L2 influence does, will likewise blur the uniqueness of L2 users and learners, leading potentially to a biased understanding of the L2 users' competence.

Although issues remain, this book nevertheless broaches a long-overdue discussion in SLA research on the role of the NS in achieving an understanding of L2 users and learners. Needless to say, it deserves and demands serious attention from anyone interested in SLA.

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**ZhaoHong Han**
*Teachers College, Columbia University*

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**THE JAPANESE COPULA: FORMS AND FUNCTIONS.** *Tomiko Narahara*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2002. Pp. x + 210. $55.00 cloth.

This book examines the Japanese copula, *da* and *datta*, which occurs with predicative nominals and adjectival nominals. Narahara's primary contribution is to challenge the common assumption that the Japanese copula is a tense feature carrier (p. 12). She points out in chapter 4 that copula-less sentences such as *Kwoo-wa nitiyoobi* "Today is Sunday" and *Kita-wa kotti?* "Is north in this direction?" can still be interpreted with the

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present time reference. She proposes that, although the morpheme *ta* in *datta* encodes the past reference, the copula form *da* does not encode the present tense. In chapter 10, she shows that the copula form *da* is systematically excluded when the speaker lacks knowledge of the truth of the sentence. For example, the copula form never appears in yes/no questions such as *Kwoo-wa doyoobi *da/∅?* "Is today Saturday?" and sentences with epistemic modals such as *Yuuta-wa genki *da/∅ rasii* "Yuta seems to be well," whereas it is perfectly acceptable for the copula form *da* to occur in normal declarative sentences such as *Kwoo-wa doyoobi da* "Today is Saturday." She suggests that the copula *da* is a modal expressing what she calls the anti-ignorative affirmative mode, and it is the anti-ignorative mode that makes the copula incompatible with yes/no questions and sentences with epistemic modals. Finally, in chapter 11, she discusses cases where the copula form *da* in normal declarative sentences alternates with the zero-copula. She concludes that the zero-copula is a device to tone down utterances and is used when the speaker attempts to make the expression less assertive and authoritative. This explains why women or children tend to use the zero-copula even in normal declarative sentences.

Narahara goes far beyond the traditional analyses of the Japanese copula and sheds light on its distribution and functions. Although the primary audience of this book will be theoretical linguists, the detailed descriptions of various constructions with the copula (and the zero-copula), especially in part 4, will certainly be beneficial for teachers and learners of Japanese as well.

Her observation of these fascinating facts is intuitively right. However, some parts of her analysis are not very strong. For example, although she attributes the exclusion of the copula form *da* in yes/no questions and sentences with epistemic modals to lack of speaker's knowledge, she explains that the copula form *da* is excluded from sentences with the sentence-final particle *sa* (e.g., *Sonna mono dono hoteru ni mo aru *da/∅ sa* "You'll find things like that at any hotel") because the addressee of such sentences is ignorant of the truth of the sentence (p. 172). If this is the case, sentences with another sentence-final particle, *yo*, such as *Asoko sizuka da yo* "That place is quiet, I tell you/believe me," where the addressee is also assumed to be ignorant, should not allow the occurrence of the copula form *da*. Narahara claims that the differences come from the fact that the particle *sa* is an ignorative particle, whereas *yo* is not (p. 187). However, this part of her analysis is unfortunately stipulative and less convincing than other parts.

Another weakness of this book is that it often does not provide clear implications and directions of its arguments. If the point of each section were spelled out more clearly, and the arguments were integrated around the most important aspects of the analysis, it would be much easier to follow the flow of argumentation.

Finally, the author claims: "The Japanese copula is at the interface of syntax, morphology and pragmatics, performing a wide range of functions" (p. 12). However, analyses of such interfaces are normally understood as those that focus on the interactions of different dimensions of language, but the book does not address such issues. Therefore, it should be understood that this book's function is to explore different dimensions of the Japanese copula rather than address questions of interface.

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**Etsuyo Yuasa**
*Ohio State University*

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**CONSTRUCTING A LANGUAGE: A USAGE-BASED THEORY OF LANGUAGE ACQUISITION.** *Michael Tomasello*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2003. Pp. viii + 388. $45.00 cloth.

Michael Tomasello has an impressive opus of publications in both child language development and primate research. This book represents a synthesis of that work as well as the exposition of an account of language development, which provides a thought-provoking challenge to the generative enterprise. As such, it is an important contribution to the literature of first language acquisition, and by extrapolation, of SLA, because it offers an account of how learners can extract language from the input without reference to linguistic-specific predispositions. It succeeds in many respects and fails in others, as this review will try to explain.

The basic argument is that children become symbolic as a result of their capacity to (a) "read" the communicative intentions of others, (b) acquire words and holophrases through repeated exposure to them in the input, (c) create generalizations through schematization and analogy out of the concrete pieces of language they have heard, constrained by processes of entrenchment and competition, and (d) carry out a functionally based distributional analysis to arrive at paradigmatic categories of linguistic constituents. The claim is that children do not learn rules or representations and that only general cognition is needed to account for the gradual abstraction of language from concrete exemplars experienced over the course of early and middle childhood. Tomasello leaves the reader in no doubt as to how he views alternative proposals when he says:

> We can say that: (1) there are virtually no linguistic items or structures that are universal in the world's languages; (2) there is no poverty of the stimulus in language acquisition; (3) linking does not work; (4) parameters do not help; (5) the continuity assumption is demonstrably false; (6) performance factors and the maturation of universal grammar are simply unprincipled fudge factors used to explain recalcitrant data; (7) invoking extensive lexical learning as necessary for triggering parameters makes the theory basically indistinguishable from other learning theories—except that it has in addition the linking problem; and (8) although the empirical situation cited in support of biological bases for language acquisition mostly do demonstrate such bases, they do not demonstrate in any form representational innateness. (p. 289)

As this quotation makes clear, the book is an attempt to provide evidence not only for the usage-based account but also against the generative account.

Having described usage-based linguistics in chapter 1, the author considers in chapter 2 the emergence of symbolic capacity and contrasts children with animals in this respect. Chapter 3 considers the acquisition of first words, and chapter 4 examines the acquisition of early constructions, which are argued to be lexically restricted and not evidence for genuine (lexically neutral) syntactic representations. Chapter 5 argues explicitly against both the generative and the connectionist enterprises—the latter for being too form based and not including communicative intention in the modeling—and in favor of the three processes of (a) *analogy*, which allows children to create new utterances on the basis of ones they have heard; (b) *entrenchment* of constructions through repeated

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exposure; and (c) *preemption*, which prevents unattested possible generalizations winning out over attested ones. This chapter is the central statement of the model, and the remaining ones simply flesh it out in relation to more complex constructions.

Chapter 6 covers nominal and clausal constructions as means of reference and predication and discusses the acquisition of tense, aspect, negation, and so forth. Chapter 7 covers complex sentences and discourse, with the final two chapters laying out the philosophy of the model under the titles of "Biological, Cultural, and Ontogenetic Processes" (for chapter 8) and "Toward a Psychology of Language Acquisition" (for chapter 9).

I found the early chapters of this book exciting and convincing. The evidence for the beginnings of a theory of mind underlying the capacity to be symbolic and of interpersonal understanding steering the child's attention to early words and holophrases depending on perspective (I would say it was Relevance driven in the sense of Sperber & Wilson, 1995) accords well with the work of people such as Hobson (2002) and is a convincing account of early communication. As Tomasello's account progresses through early childhood, however, it becomes, to my way of thinking, more and more strained. Although it gets further than many earlier pattern-extracting accounts (and includes critiques of these; early Slobin, for example), it still does not fully appreciate the complexity that the generative account is trying to explain.

Some arguments simply will not touch Tomasello. For example, to complain that he offers no account of the distributional and interpretive facts about conjoined clauses or "do so" serves no purpose. For Tomasello, language is as it has evolved phylogenetically to be. Back in the mists of time, everything in language came into existence to meet functional communicative needs, but changing needs, processing constraints, and inefficient transfer from one generation to the next have, as it were, messed things up, leaving modern children with an imperfect system peppered with vestiges of historical change that they pick up because they are there. More to the point, however, are long-distance dependencies such as "Which ghost did John imagine Fred saw last night?" in which "which ghost" must be interpreted as the object of "saw" and not "imagine" or (to borrow an old example from Otsu, 1981) "What is the little girl drawing a picture of a monkey drinking milk with?" This asks about a picture of a girl drawing a monkey drinking milk with a straw, where the answer must be something like "a crayon" and cannot be "a straw." These are the kinds of complexities that generative theory has been built on and that do not figure into Tomasello's account at all. There can be no doubt that these are real facts about native speaker knowledge, so why are they not addressed? Part of the answer seems to be that usage-based theoreticians have not yet got around to tackling these kinds of facts. Tomasello admits as much when he says, after a brief discussion of coreference in utterances such as "Beside him, Bill saw a snake" that "no developmental research has been done on issues of coreference from a cognitive-functional (usage-based) point of view" (p. 207). It might have been wise to wait until such an account could be developed before trying to go head-to-head with generativists with all the aggression that the quotation at the beginning of this review suggests.

In fact, there are not a few promissory notes in this volume and even though (on p. 304) Tomasello acknowledges that his account does not fully succeed in demonstrating that a cognitive-functional account of acquisition can work, I could not help wondering whether this book was not perhaps a bit premature. To give a flavor of what is still to be done, on page 231, he says, "no one has yet proposed a comprehensive account from a usage-based or construction grammar perspective of how children integrate TAM [tense-aspect-modality] marking with their utterance-level constructions"; on page 300, he says that "we still know very little about the specifics of how all of this [referring to

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entrenchment and preemption] works." On page 318, he says, "As their utterance-level constructions become gradually stronger and more abstract, children may begin to find links among them in various ways. We are not in a position to say much about this at the moment, as there is very little relevant research." Certainly, those who favor a cognitive-functional or usage-based approach can find plenty of research topics in this volume. Those who prefer a generative account remain frustrated by the criticisms.

The readers of *SSLA* will no doubt be wondering why, if first language acquisition can be accounted for with an approach such as this, SLA seems to be so difficult. Surely, adult learners have not lost their general cognitive capacities. There are a few references to SLA in this book, and together they suggest that, according to Tomasello, adults do not get enough simple constructions as input to work with and the first language "interferes" (p. 313) with the acquisition of the second. No doubt readers will have their own responses to these as causes of incomplete SLA, depending on their theoretical stance. However, the reason I agreed to review this volume for *SSLA* was that I thought an explicit usage-based account might provide food for thought for those who would appreciate discussion of a well-articulated set of mechanisms that do not make reference to Universal Grammar. Those who are in this camp will, I think, find such a discussion, even though I think the model as a whole is not entirely successful.

Finally, I must draw attention to the fact that Tomasello's whipping boys are too frequently just Chomsky (mostly from work published in the early 1980s) and Pinker (1994). One wonders why he does not put his account up against more recent generative accounts and particularly why he does not compare his work with that of Jackendoff. Jackendoff (2002) not only has several points of contact with Tomasello, particularly in the importance and role of the lexicon, but he actually addresses some of Tomasello's published criticisms of his own work and would have made for a much more satisfying debate partner.

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**Susan Foster-Cohen**
*University of Canterbury*

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**RESPONSE TO STUDENT WRITING: IMPLICATIONS FOR SECOND LANGUAGE STUDENTS.** *Dana Ferris*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2003. Pp. xvi + 194. $45.00 cloth, $22.50 paper.

This volume by Ferris will attract the attention of second language (L2) teachers, particularly those who teach writing classes. The book is divided into two sections. Part 1 reviews research into response given to L2 writers, and part 2 examines the practical

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issues of responding to student writing. Although the title of the book refers to "second language students," the focus is on students learning English as a second language (ESL). In fact, most of the research into response has been conducted with the ESL student population at the college level. That being said, this volume would certainly be an excellent supplemental text to assign for a teaching of ESL class in teaching writing or for in-service training. It is also a useful guide for L2 teachers who must decide how to respond to student writing.

Part 1, "Research," begins with an overview of first language (L1) composition research. Chapter 2 moves into L2 writing and critically reviews studies of teacher feedback by asking some important questions such as: What form does teacher feedback take? How does teacher feedback affect revision and improvement in student writing? The chapter also considers methodological issues, including a brief mention of the difficulty of measuring improvement in student writing. More thorough consideration of this issue would have strengthened the chapter. In fact, there are measures of development that can be used, including measures of fluency, accuracy, and complexity (Wolf-Quintero, Inagaki, & Kim, 1998). L2 teachers and researchers should be made aware of these types of measures.

In recent years, Ferris has engaged in the debate over the effectiveness of correcting student errors, and this is her main research interest. In chapter 3, "Error Correction," the author provides a framework for analyzing error correction studies and summarizes her findings in table format covering three areas: basic parameters, instructional procedures, and research design. Although she avoids making strong claims that error correction works, her analysis seems somewhat skewed in support of her side of the debate. For instance, she reviews Kepner's (1991) study that concluded "the futility of error correction" (p. 63). Ferris "reanalyzes" these findings and determines that Kepner's tables actually show that error correction improves student accuracy. However, no information is given about how the tables were reanalyzed. At the end of the chapter, Ferris admits "that there are many questions in error correction of student writing that have not been adequately researched" (p. 67). Polio (1997) called for the use of accurate linguistic measures to assess the development of student writing, but until more work of this type is carried out to investigate the effects of error correction procedures, the question of effectiveness remains.

The last chapters in part 1 consider two relatively well researched areas in ESL writing: research on peer response and student views on response. Each chapter includes user-friendly tables so that readers can easily refer to these studies and their findings.

Part 2, "Practice," will be of most interest to practicing teachers. Chapters 6–8 cover the following areas: preparing teachers to respond to student writing, suggestions for error correction, and implementing peer response. Each chapter refers to real examples from ESL student papers and includes an appendix of sample materials such as a teacher feedback sheet and a peer response form. Ferris gives helpful guidelines in each chapter and discusses how to use different types of feedback and how to strike a balance between them. In terms of error correction, she offers suggestions regarding giving direct and indirect feedback, structuring feedback according to error type, coding feedback, using error logs, and giving "mini grammar lessons." Ferris is one of the most qualified people in the field to give advice in this area, and she does a fine job. The final chapter on how to implement peer response is also valuable, given that this instructional technique works successfully only when teachers adequately prepare students to engage in peer feedback activities.

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This book will be most useful for ESL teachers, particularly those teaching writing in an academic setting. However, the research findings can be related to the teaching of other L2s, and the practical guidelines will help any instructors who are grappling with the question of how to respond to their students' writing. It is important for L2 instructors to develop both practical skills for response and a philosophy about their own approach. Ferris's book will support both these types of teacher development.

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**Kim Lewis**
*Michigan State University*

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**APPRAISING RESEARCH IN SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: A PRACTICAL APPROACH TO CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH.** *Graeme Keith Porte*. Amsterdam: Benjamins, 2002. Pp. xx + 268. $78.00 cloth, $29.95 paper.

The author states in the preface that this book is intended "to guide student and novice researchers through their critical reading of a research paper in the field of second language learning" (p. ix). It does an admirable job of this and, in fact, should be required reading for every language researcher. Porte emphasizes that the role of the book is not to guide readers toward critical judgments of research articles but rather to constructive reading as consumers of research—which may, in turn, lead to well-designed and presented research studies of their own. To meet these goals, Porte divides the book into two parts: the first portion of the text, the textbook (pp. 3–149), guides readers through analyses of the various components of research studies, and the second portion, the workbook (pp. 153–246), leads readers through a detailed analysis of two sample studies.

The textbook follows the basic structure of a research article: Chapter 1 includes discussion of abstracts, background information, problem statements, literature reviews, research questions, and hypotheses; chapter 2 focuses on the presentation of subjects, materials, procedures, research design, and data analyses; chapter 3 discusses the use of various types of common statistical procedures; and chapter 4 addresses the discussion and conclusion sections of a research study.

In each chapter, Porte poses questions to encourage readers to reflect on the information presented in each section of a research report and on their subsequent expec-

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tations of the study based on what has been written. He does a fine job of connecting previous information presented in the study (e.g., research questions posed) with new information as it appears (e.g., the design of the study), encouraging readers to examine how their expectations have or have not been met as the study proceeds. Throughout the text, Porte emphasizes how the information presented by a researcher in each part of the study leads us to envision the research design and to determine how confident we will be in the results presented. Analyzing a research study thus becomes a contemplative, reflective endeavor, rather than a simple (or not so simple!) comprehension task. I am certain that readers of Porte's book will approach the reading of research from an entirely new perspective.

More frequent use of examples might be helpful in the textbook section to illustrate the concepts at work. As this is the role of the workbook section, however, I am willing to suspend this need, but I recommend working between the two sections to provide students with a more solid application of the ideas—that is, having students read about the goals of a literature review and how they may be fulfilled and then having them turn immediately to the workbook section to examine the samples there. Porte provides guiding prompts to lead readers to thorough, reflective reading of these sample studies. He shares his responses to these prompts for the first sample study. Prompts alone are provided for the second sample. (His Web site provides two more similarly presented studies.)

Research terminology is highlighted in a light gray color throughout the text. A glossary of these terms is provided in the back of the book, serving as a nice resource for the novice researcher. Porte has also reprinted various helpful statistical reference charts from Brown (1992) and Hatch and Lazaraton (1991) in the appendixes.

As an instructor for a master's-level research methods course, I believe that Porte is responsible and fair in his representation of the manner in which studies are reported and of the types of information that we should be interested in seeing as readers. The preface states that he intends the book to serve as either a primary text or supplementary text to a "research-techniques" book. Having some familiarity with research design and methodology would enable readers to apply the concepts much more readily, and I could envision, for example, using a text like Brown (1988)—or the now unavailable Hatch and Lazaraton (1991)—for the first few weeks of a course to familiarize students with the basic tenets of research design and then moving to Porte's text for an in-depth application of the concepts to the reading of research. Students using this book would certainly come away with a much clearer sense of how research concepts interact in the real world of a research study.

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**Renée Jourdenais**
*Monterey Institute for International Studies*

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**LANGUAGE, COGNITION, AND THE BRAIN: INSIGHTS FROM SIGN LANGUAGE RESEARCH.** *Karen Emmorey*. Mahwah, NJ: Erlbaum, 2002. Pp. xvii + 383. $99.95 cloth, $49.95 paper.

In the preface, Emmorey states her goal for this book: to illustrate what can be learned about human language, cognition, and the brain by studying signed languages and the deaf people who use them. She clearly achieves that goal in this excellent volume. Her scholarship is impeccable, something we have come to expect from this author. First of all, the organization of the book is impressive. Each chapter explicitly presents specific goals and then proceeds through those goals in an organized and clear style. The conclusion of each chapter includes suggested readings with a brief explanation of how these suggestions support the chapter. Second, this volume includes research on a variety of signed languages—Nicaraguan, Australian, Danish, and Irish, to name a few—and provides a truly comprehensive approach to the topic.

There are nine chapters that address language, cognition, and the brain. The early chapters primarily focus on language. Chapter 1, "Introduction," lays waste to four misconceptions about sign language and sets the record straight: There is no one universal sign language; sign languages, although gestural, are much more intricate and complex than mime; sign languages developed independently and did not have their beginnings in spoken languages; sign languages can convey concepts that are just as complex and subtle as those conveyed in spoken languages. Then, there is a reporting of the origin of Nicaraguan Sign Language—the foundation for the following chapters—because this discussion contains all the pieces that will be expanded in each subsequent chapter. It is important to note that Emmorey's work focuses not only on a discussion of language but also on the people who use the language—truly a sociolinguistic approach.

Chapter 2, "The Structure of American Sign Language: Linguistic Universals and Modality Effects," presents what we currently know about the structure of American Sign Language (ASL) and explains why and how studying this structure informs us about human languages in general. Chapter 3, "Confluence of Language and Space," presents a clear, concise, and comprehensive explanation of space in ASL. In particular, Emmorey's explanation of ASL classifiers is luminous, from her review of what we already know about the topic to the deceptively simple question, "Why are they called classifiers?" This particular ASL construction is quite complex and is often presented to ASL learners (i.e., speakers of English) with an incomplete explanation. Chapter 4, "Psycholinguistic Studies of Sign Perception, Outline Processing, and Production," explores which parts of language processing are affected by modality (visual vs. aural, gestural vs. articulation) and which parts are universal. Both chapters 5 and 6, "Sign Language Acquisition" and "The Critical Period Hypothesis and the Effects of Late Language Acquisition," are excellent. They fit well into the structure of this volume, but they could also stand alone as resources for those involved in educating deaf students, as well as for second language teachers (of any language). Emmorey's clarity of the sign acquisition process in deaf children is outstanding.

Now that sign language has been comprehensively presented, chapter 7, "Memory for Sign Language: Implications for the Structure of Working Memory," and chapter 8, "The Impact of Sign Language Use on Visuospatial Cognition," shift toward Emmorey's primary discussion of cognition. Chapter 9, "Sign Language and the Brain," questions "whether the contrasting sensorimotor properties of sign and speech constrain the

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underlying neural systems for language" (p. 271). There is also an epilogue in which Emmorey reminds us that this volume is a beginning: "there is currently an explosion of studies" (p. 318) on a variety of signed languages and the brain. I am hopeful that Emmorey's work serves as a model for those involved in the explosion.

This book would be of interest to anyone who wants to understand more about human languages and how the brain processes those languages, although knowledge of ASL and linguistics (especially phonology and morphology) would be helpful. As a second language learner and educator who has spent over 25 years challenged by the nuances and intricacies of ASL, I can honestly say I was fascinated with this book. Some parts were a succinct review of what we already know, some parts presented cutting-edge information, and some parts were quite challenging. Ultimately, however, the book made me think about what I already know and encouraged me to continue exploring how the brain processes language.

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**Christine Monikowski**
*National Technical Institute for the Deaf at*
*Rochester Institute of Technology*

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