

One of the hypotheses that has been widely discussed over the past 2 decades is the lexical aspect hypothesis (LAH), which argues that perfective

morphology emerges before imperfective morphology and that perfective morphology spreads from telic to atelic predicates, whereas imperfective morphology spreads in the opposite direction. Salaberry's work examines the interlanguage of second language (L2) Spanish classroom learners and discusses to what extent his research finds support for the LAH.

The book is organized following the standard format of a research study: introduction and general background (chapter 1), review of tense and aspect and operational tests for lexical categories (chapter 2), research in first language (L1) and L2 acquisition of aspect (chapters 3-4), discussion of research methodology and statement of hypotheses (chapter 5), and analysis and discussion of results (chapters 6-7).

Although in the introduction the author states that the book will address the issues of ultimate attainment of L2 acquisition of past-tense morphology and the effect of instruction on the acquisition of such morphology, most of the discussion is devoted to the LAH and the proposal for the preterite as a default marker of past tense. The evidence for the default marker proposal is provided by oral and written data, as well as from verbal protocols. The oral data come from narratives by 4 learners in each of four proficiency groups (beginner, low intermediate, high intermediate, and advanced) and 4 native speakers. The written data consist of fill-in-the-blank and editing tasks provided by three groups (23 intermediate, 24 advanced, and 32 native-speaker participants, respectively). The participants in the oral narrative task were paired to elicit think-aloud protocols, which were analyzed to investigate the learners' strategies in the choice of past morphology.

Salaberry's argument that the preterite acts as a default marker of past tense, independent of the lexical aspect of the predicate, is based on evidence from the beginner group. The participants in this group provided almost no instances of imperfect forms, and preterite marking occurred both in telic and atelic predicates. Results from the other groups were more in agreement with the LAH. Results from the fill-in-the-blank task showed that lexical aspect was a significant factor in the choice of preterite or imperfect for advanced and native participants, but not for intermediate learners. Results from the editing task provided evidence that native speakers are more flexible in allowing nonprototypical uses of past morphology than are classroom learners. Finally, the results from the think-aloud task indicated that all participants used learned rules of tempo-

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rality, but the rules provided by the advanced learners were more sophisticated than those of the lower-level learners, who mostly followed rehearsal and translation strategies.

Salaberry's conclusion is that the LAH needs to be reassessed. He proposes the following sequential development of past tense morphology for Spanish classroom learners: no past tense marking, past tense marking with preterite only (default marker), imperfect marking with stative verbs, imperfect marking extended to atelic and telic events, and imperfect and preterite marking for all verbs.

Salaberry's book is important because it adds to the current discussion on the acquisition of L2 morphology and examines both methodological and theoretical issues. However, I have two reservations. First, his discussion of past research is partial and unbalanced. Although it may be argued that research at the beginning of the 1990s seemed to be looking for categorical evidence for the LAH, later in the decade it was argued that acquisition of past morphology was not a matter of *either* marking tense *or* aspect, but rather their interrelationship, as well as such other factors as discourse grounding. Salaberry does not include research from the late 1990s by Bardovi-Harlig (1998, 1999, 2000) that discussed the issues in this book (including her re-analyses of Salaberry's data), but the author does include his own 1998, 1999, 2000, and forthcoming articles.

Second, Salaberry's proposal for a default marker seems too categorical in light of the amount of evidence presented. Given that the reassessment of the LAH is based largely on the results from the beginner group, one would have expected a better characterization of such participants and a more detailed discussion of their performance. For instance, although the lowest proficiency group is labeled "beginner," one may legitimately question whether beginners could perform the written tasks in the study, which are based on narratives by Rulfo and Galdós.

Despite these criticisms, the book is a good addition to the current discussion of the LAH and is a good starting point for further research. The book will also be of interest to teachers of foreign languages who may want to gain knowledge of current research on the acquisition of L2 morphology and the strategies learners follow in selecting preterite and imperfect forms.