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**MARKING PAST TENSE IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: A THEORETICAL MODEL.** *Rafael Salaberry*. New York: Continuum, 2008. Pp. xiv + 289.

The acquisition of tense and aspect continues to be a topic of research that receives considerable attention in the field of SLA. Salaberry makes a timely and valuable contribution to this line of inquiry with the present book, which bridges the gaps between various lines of tense-aspect research in order to formulate a theoretical proposal that incorporates findings from diverse theoretical and methodological perspectives. Although the focus is the SLA of Spanish tense-aspect by native speakers of English, this book will be of interest to researchers who investigate the acquisition of tense-aspect in any second language (L2).

Salaberry begins by outlining the difficulties that speakers of English experience in acquiring the uses of the preterite and the imperfect in Spanish and goes on to present a convincing argument for the importance of a clear definition of the nature of tense-aspect knowledge for the investigation of its acquisition. A particular strength of this work is Salaberry's thorough discussion of theoretical conceptualizations of aspect, with a focus on the nature of tense-aspect meanings as having both invariant (i.e., prototypical) and contextually determined (i.e., nonprototypical) facets.

After carefully defining the notions of aspect underpinning the theoretical proposal he later describes, Salaberry outlines hypotheses previously proposed to account for the development of tense-aspect knowledge in L2 Spanish. He then narrows his focus to a review of findings related to two theoretical frameworks: the default past tense hypothesis (DPTH; e.g., Salaberry, 2000), and the Minimalist approach (e.g., Montrul & Slabakova, 2002). Salaberry argues for the vital role of context in defining tense-aspect knowledge and in the investigation of its development and claims that any theory that does not consider both the invariant meanings and the contextualized uses of the preterite and the imperfect as fundamental elements of tense-aspect knowledge (i.e., the Minimalist approach) is limited in its applicability and explanatory potential. Salaberry then develops his own theoretical proposal based on this contention and asserts that the difficulties experienced by native speakers of English in the SLA of Spanish tense-aspect are related to an inability to acquire the invariant meanings of Spanish aspectual morphological markers. Specifically, although L2 learners have no difficulties understanding aspectual concepts, they are unable to acquire how these concepts map onto the morphological forms of the preterite and imperfect, forms that do not exist in English. Salaberry relates this inability to the adult learner's reliance on general, rather than modular, learning mechanisms to acquire language. He goes on to explain how the DPTH, which posits that English learners of L2 Spanish use the preterite as a default marker of past tense, can best account for the empirical data reviewed in this book. A discussion of areas in the investigation of L2 tense-aspect that are in need of further research concludes this book.

In general, Salaberry's theoretical analysis of tense-aspect acquisition in L2 Spanish is well presented, with logical and convincing argumentation built on empirical evidence from a number of previous studies. His incorporation of data from strands of research not typically considered to be complementary represents a step forward in the quest to understand how learners acquire tense and aspect. However, at times, it is not immediately clear how the empirical evidence reviewed supports his argumentation (e.g., what is the precise relationship between the DPTH and the findings of Liskin-Gasparro [2000] and Antonio [2007]?). Aside from this limitation, this work represents a successful attempt to pull together research from various paradigms to explain how learners acquire tense and aspect. As such, it is a valuable contribution to the field of SLA, not just as a proposal about the development of tense-aspect in L2 Spanish by native speakers of English but also in the implied predictions it makes for other language combinations. As further empirical evidence accumulates in this area of research, it will be interesting to see how Salaberry's proposal holds up as an account of the acquisition of tense and aspect in L2 Spanish and how it is extended to account for the acquisition of aspect in other languages.

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**THE PRISM OF GRAMMAR: HOW CHILD LANGUAGE ILLUMINATES HUMANISM.** Tom Roeper. Cambridge, MA: MIT Press, 2007. Pp. xviii + 255.

For anyone interested in the core issues of first language acquisition and for those in search of research ideas for both first and second language acquisition studies, especially the interaction between syntax and semantics, this book is an obligatory read. This work, aimed at a general audience, is as interesting and intriguing for the beginner as it is for the expert. The theoretical issues are made tractable, the ethical issues are not forgotten, and the intricacies of the linguistic system are explained and illustrated by brilliantly simple