

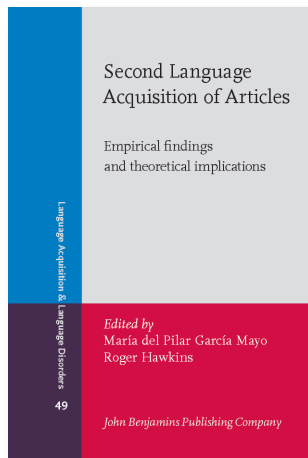
## Linguistics

# Second Language Acquisition of Articles

## Empirical findings and theoretical implications

Edited by **María del Pilar García Mayo** and **Roger Hawkins**

University of the Basque Country / University of Essex



The studies in this collection address a topic that has recently become the focus of considerable interest in second language acquisition (SLA) research: the acquisition of articles. Languages appear to vary in whether they have articles (English, German, Norwegian do, but Chinese, Japanese, Russian do not). Languages that have articles also appear to divide into those that realise definiteness (e.g. English) and those that realise specificity (e.g. Samoan). When speakers of one type of language learn an L2 of a different type, issues of central concern to SLA research arise: the

nature of L1 influence, the time course of development, ultimate attainment, the relationship between performance and competence, and the role of Universal Grammar. These issues are considered in nine studies, written by researchers whose work is at the forefront of enquiry, that offer new data, new perspectives and new insights into the way L2 speakers acquire articles.

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“This volume is an excellent example of how bringing together studies on a specific theme from leading researchers in a field can lead to a work greater than the sum of its parts. This enables the editors, María del Pilar García-Mayo and Roger Hawkins, not only to present us with a state of the art picture of what is involved in the second language acquisition (SLA) of articles, but also to show very clearly how the acquisition of this area of grammar can provide a test case for current SLA theories. This book represents an invaluable contribution to current knowledge and understanding not only of this subfield, but of SLA theorising in general.”

**Florence Myles**, *University of Newcastle*

“The acquisition of nativelike morphosyntactic, semantic, and pragmatic knowledge of definite and indefinite articles in a second language is one of the thorniest and most persistent learning problems language learners face. This valuable collection offers findings from several new experimental studies of article acquisition, covering a range of methods and L1-L2 (and even L3) language combinations. The empirical results are brought to bear on important theoretical questions in SLA such as the role of transfer, the role of syntactic, semantic, and prosodic constraints of universal grammar, and the interaction between such constraints and other components of linguistic and extralinguistic knowledge. Readers will certainly come away with a deeper appreciation of what it takes to acquire (and to study) such knowledge.”

**Donna Lardiere**, *Georgetown University*

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