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0521378117 - Linguistic Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition - Edited by Susan M.
Gass Jacquelyn Schachter

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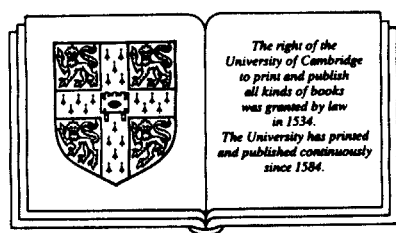
Edited by

Susan M. Gass

Michigan State University

Jacquelyn Schachter

University of Southern California



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Contributors

Josh Ard, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor
Robert Bley-Vroman, The University of Hawaii at Manoa
Suzanne Flynn, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge
Susan M. Gass, Michigan State University, East Lansing
Kevin R. Gregg, St. Andrew's University, Osaka, Japan
Wesley Hudson, University of Southern California, Los Angeles
Juana M. Liceras, University of Ottawa
Jane Lowenstein Mairs, University of Texas at Austin
William Rutherford, University of Southern California, Los Angeles
Jacquelyn Schachter, University of Southern California, Los Angeles
Lydia White, McGill University, Montreal
Helmut Zobl, Carleton University, Ottawa

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Series editors' preface

The Cambridge Applied Linguistics Series (CALS) seeks to publish theoretically motivated, data-based work in applied linguistics, especially work which succeeds in relating research and practice. *Linguistic Perspectives on Second Language Acquisition*, edited by Susan M. Gass and Jacquelyn Schachter, meets these specifications. It is a collection of original papers dealing with linguistically motivated studies of second language development, where implications can be drawn for the foreign and second language classroom.

The relationship between theoretical and applied linguistics has been both productive and stormy, nowhere more so than in language teaching. As might be expected, most useful collaboration has occurred when it has been recognized that insights about language and languages can inform us about part of what is to be taught, but that language is just one term in the equation, one element in a *psycho*-linguistic process. Who is to learn and how the learning takes place are equally important.

Allowing language analysis to determine teaching practice is to reduce applied linguistics to linguistics applied. Exporters of ideas, like everything else, need importers, too, however, and while some linguists have been guilty of assuming their findings were all that teachers needed to know, some applied linguists have been guilty of believing them. There is still a grain of truth to the saying, "When linguists sneeze, language teachers catch cold."

The growing maturity of applied linguistics as an interdisciplinary but autonomous field is reflected in the present volume. Drs. Gass and Schachter have assembled a fine collection of papers written by leaders in the field. They provide a coherent introduction to the scope, methodology, findings, and implications of an important body of second language acquisition research – work that is not only of considerable relevance to language teaching, but which also contributes to developments in linguistic theory.

Michael H. Long
Jack C. Richards