

**Individual Paper Session 8**  
**Syntax and Lexicon/Vocabulary**  
**Tuesday, July 4**  
**1:45-2:15pm**

**The Acquisition of L2 Argument Structure: English Locative Verbs and Constructions**

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Much of the recent debate (Bley-Vroman & Joo 2001; Bullock, 2004; Choi & Lakshmanan 2002; Schwartz, Dekydsprotter, & Sprouse, 2003) on L2 argument structure acquisition has taken place in the terms of the 'verb class camp', with Pinker (1989) providing the theoretical foundation. However, little L2 research taken the approach of the 'construction camp', with Goldberg (1995) providing the theoretical basis, or critically evaluated either approach for implementation in SLA. The lack of empirical evidence of L2 argument structure *development* has further hindered the debate.

The current paper adds to this line of research by reporting a study employing a context-provided acceptability judgment task and cross-sectional analysis to investigate *knowledge and development* of English locatives in 51 Korean L2ers' Interlanguage. The 160-item task included 'locative alternation' (1)-(6) and PP-omission patterns (examples (1)-(6) without the PP).

1. Bob loaded the truck (with apples).
2. Bob loaded apples (onto the truck).
3. Bob filled the truck (with water).
4. \*Bob filled water (into the bucket).
5. \*Mark poured the bucket (with water).
6. Mark poured water (into the bucket).

The results of the (M)ANOVAs suggest a verb-by-verb learning process, resulting in gradual convergence on native-like knowledge for particular verbs as proficiency increases, with statistically significantly variable performance on particular verbs, due to either L1 influence or relative frequency of the target constructions in the input to the learners. This evidence, along with evidence that L2 knowledge of the Holism Effect associated with locative constructions can be attained (Bley-Vroman & Joo, 2001), leads to a rejection of Pinker's (1989) verb class account for L2 acquisition, contra Schwartz, Dekydsprotter, and Sprouse, 2003. It is then shown how Construction Grammar's descriptive (Goldberg, 1995; Bergen & Chang, 2002) and acquisition (Chang, 2004) accounts are most compatible with the evidence.