

## Possessives in Russian as a foreign and a heritage language: comprehension-production (a)symmetry?

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The Principle B of Chomsky's Government and Binding Theory (1981) that describes the distribution of anaphors and pronouns has been widely researched in first (e.g., Conroy et al., 2009) and second (e.g., White, 1998; Kim et al., 2015) language acquisition. However, most research so far has focused on comprehension, production data (but see Ruigendijk et al., 2010) and data from heritage speakers as a special case of acquisition with features of both L1 and L2 (Kim et al., 2009) have rarely been considered. In our study, we want to address these gaps by investigating the comprehension and production of Russian reflexive and non-reflexive possessive pronouns by heritage speakers with German as a dominant language in comparison to foreign language learners.

Russian is one of the few European languages that distinguish between anaphors / reflexives and pronouns not only for personal but also for possessive pronouns. In 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> person, they are considered to be in free variation. In the 3<sup>d</sup> person as in (1), they are in complimentary distribution as captured by Principle B: the reflexive possessive refers to the subject of the same clause, whereas the non-reflexive normally has its antecedent in the preceding clauses.

(1) *Oleg<sub>1</sub> uechal v otpusk.*

'Oleg<sub>1</sub> has gone for vacation.'

<i>Mark<sub>2</sub></i>	<i>nakormil</i>	<i>ego<sub>1</sub></i>	<i>/ svoju<sub>2</sub></i>	<i>sobaku.</i>
Mark	feed-PST.SG.M	NONREFL-3SG.M	REFL-ACC.SG.F	dog-ACC.SG.F.
'Mark <sub>2</sub> fed his <sub>1</sub> / his <sub>2</sub> dog.'				

Using a two-alternative forced-choice design, we tested how heritage speakers and foreign language learners interpret the two Russian possessives in the 3<sup>d</sup> person. The production of possessives was studied in written essays from the Russian Learner Corpus.

Our results confirm that pronouns are more difficult to interpret than reflexives. Both learners and heritage speakers allowed reflexive interpretation of non-reflexive possessives but not the other way around. This tendency was also evident in production: both learners and heritage speakers used the non-reflexive possessive in contexts where the reflexive possessive was required in monolingual Russian. With regard to the production of the reflexive possessive, however, heritage speakers were crucially different from learners. First, heritage speakers never used reflexive in syntactically inappropriate contexts. Second, heritage speakers produced more reflexives in the 1<sup>st</sup> person than learners did. Finally, heritage speakers made an extensive use of idiomatic expressions with reflexive possessives. We will try to explain these findings based on usage-based accounts of language and language acquisition.

### References

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