Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) Genitive of Negation Study Reloaded: Non-Acquisition as Evidence of Knowledge

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1. Introduction

Much L2 research has shown that L2ers successfully acquire certain subtle (underdetermined by the input) L2 properties, thus implying UG access in scenarios where transfer-based explanations are ruled out (see, for example, White (2003) for an overview). On the other hand, under the Fundamental Difference Hypothesis (FDH, Bley-Vroman 1989, 1990), UG is assumed not to be involved in adult L2 acquisition and the relative success of adult learners on subtle L2 aspects is routinely derived from a combination of explicit instruction, direct negative evidence, and general cognitive learning capacities, including statistical inferencing, distributional analysis, analogy and so forth.[1] Arguing against the FDH is not always straightforward. It is indeed true that all of the above strategies can potentially be of use to adult L2 learners; however, a principled question is whether or not L2ers end up using those strategies efficiently, i.e. to the degree that would allow us to conclude that domain-general reasoning is all that is required for adult L2 acquisition. I believe the answer to be 'no'. More specifically, focusing on explicit classroom rules in the present paper, I will show that one particular classroom instruction scenario provides evidence that explicit instruction at least can be largely dismissed as a sufficient explanation of L2ers' success.

Most L2 research seeking to prove UG access in L2 acquisition has made its objective to look at L2 properties that are uninstructed; the obvious rationale has been that instructed properties are not truly 'underdetermined', and therefore, UG cannot unambiguously be implicated in cases of L2ers' success.

Despite this well-established tradition, I would like to suggest that we should, in fact, look into acquisition of certain instructed L2 properties: in particular, those for which explicit instruction appears to be linguistically misleading but makes perfect sense domain-generally and faces no (or at most very little) counterevidence in the naturalistic L2 input. Such instructed L2 properties are still underdetermined and even more so than in uninstructed scenarios, *ceteris paribus*. L2ers are in fact explicitly led in the wrong direction, so if they still converge on the native-like representation of the property in question – or otherwise demonstrate clear resistance to the explicit rule – that should be taken as evidence for the relative ineffectiveness of explicit instruction and can arguably be taken as evidence against the FDH. Indeed, if the type of instruction we consider is not internalized by L2ers, one readily available alternative is that L2ers rely on knowledge of what a natural language grammar can and cannot look like, suggesting that UG is still operative.[2]

Turning to the specific L2 acquisition scenario which is the focus of the present paper, Lakshmanan and Lindsey (1998) report that adult advanced Russian L2ers (L1 English) have extreme

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[1] Cf. Clahsen & Muysken (1986), Meisel (1997), for similar versions of a No (UG) Access view of adult L2 acquisition where only cognitive strategies are operative.

[2] Any objection to such an interpretation would need to appeal to quite subtle (implicit) domain-general counterevidence L2ers might be able to detect in the input and make use of (relying on statistical inferencing, distributional analysis, etc.). However, my position is that in the absence of access to UG, if misleading classroom instruction clearly appeals to domain-general problem-solving reasoning and nothing in the input can readily prove it wrong, *explicit* rules should outweigh and neutralize any *implicit* domain-general counterevidence L2ers might be sensitive to; such a position is not apparently shared by some researchers (Susanne Carroll, p.c.).

difficulty acquiring the so-called Genitive of Negation. I show that revisiting Lakshmanan and Lindsey (1998) in light of the explicit instruction Russian L2ers normally receive on this aspect of grammar provides us with the exact acquisition scenario considered above. Non-acquisition is then a remarkable piece of evidence suggesting that implicit language specific knowledge blocks explicit domain-general reasoning.

Before concluding this section, I will briefly review some background on the effects of explicit instruction. One position relevant to the present discussion is that even apparently accurate explicit instruction is 'essentially ineffectual in building grammars' (Schwartz 1993: 159), drawing on the idea that L2 acquisition proceeds through the language module which is informationally encapsulated (in Fodor's (1983) sense). Arguing against Schwartz's (1993) position, some researchers have pointed to a number of studies where explicit instruction and feedback caused certain changes in the L2ers' linguistic behaviour (see, for example, Carroll (2001) for an overview); however, in most cases it remains unclear whether such changes truly indicate that linguistic competence has been affected (and whether or not the changes are long-term).[3] Focusing on empirical evidence that does speak in favour of Schwartz (1993), one striking case comes from White (1991) where French speaking English L2ers were instructed on various aspects relating to verb raising. Although the teaching intervention resulted in L2ers' greater accuracy in the post-test than in the pre-test, a group of L2ers were retested after one year, revealing that those learners completely backslid to their preinstructional behaviour, something which is not expected if the instruction truly affected linguistic competence. 'Knowledge of grammar, it has been argued, is not to be equated with memory' (Schwartz 1993: 159). It is probably safe to claim that White (1991) is just one example of the 'well-known mystery in L2 acquisition' (Schwartz 1993: 149): explicit instruction does not work in L2 acquisition as fruitfully as one might expect it to. In the face of apparently ample explicit and negative data 'to which L2ers have often been repeatedly exposed, sometimes even consistently and sometimes even over years, L2ers' hypotheses seem resistant to revision (e.g. Cohen & Robbins 1976)' (Schwartz 1993: 149).

As to linguistically misleading explicit instruction, an early investigation into its effects is Bruhn-Garavito (1995) who shows that L2 learners of Spanish (with a variety of L1s) arrive at a native-like distinction between two types of subjunctive clauses although the classroom instruction treats them similarly. While L2ers are explicitly taught that co-reference between the matrix and the embedded subjunctive subjects is always illicit, they are in fact able to override this wrong overgeneralization and end up with grammars which correctly allow co-reference more readily in appropriate subjunctive contexts than in inappropriate ones. The conclusion reached by Bruhn-Garavito (1995), namely that UG can override wrong explicit instruction, is only tentative, and has never been followed up. Thus, one point that weakens the conclusion is that the misleading classroom generalization banning co-reference in all subjunctive contexts faces counterevidence in primary linguistic data; as a result, UG is not necessarily implicated.[4] A more recent study of the effects of misleading classroom instruction is Belikova (2008) which deals with adult L2 acquisition of the French reflexive/reciprocal clitic *se*. Classroom FSL instruction consistently misanalyzes *se* verbs as constructions involving a transitive verb and the reflexive/reciprocal object pronoun *se*, whereas, in reality, *se* functions as a detransitivity marker on intransitive verbs, as demonstrated by diagnostics involving ellipsis and passive constructions, *inter alia*. Results of an experiment reported on in Belikova (2008) suggest that L2ers do not generally adopt the pronoun misanalysis of *se*.

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[3] Schwartz (1993) distinguishes between LLK (learned linguistic knowledge) and linguistic competence (cf. Felix (1985): the Problem-Solving Cognitive System (PSC) and the Language-Specific Cognitive System (LSC)). The idea is that both can, in principle, underlie interlanguage behaviour, but explicit instruction can only affect and feed into LLK, and only linguistic competence is UG-based. Although Schwartz's (1993) approach does not exclude the possibility that misleading classroom rules could be adopted at some point by interlanguage grammars, it predicts that such rules will fail to be integrated in the natural growth of the grammar, meaning that L2ers will fail to internalize them in the long term.

[4] Moreover, a transfer-based explanation could not be truly ruled out due to the variety of L1s and a number of bilingual subjects involved in the study: in other words, the relevant knowledge could have been transferred from the L1s and/or other L2s potentially behaving on par with Spanish.

2. The Russian Genitive of Negation
2.1. The Construction: Some Necessary Background

In addition to its other uses which are not directly relevant to the present discussion, Genitive is employed in Russian to optionally mark underlying direct objects which are otherwise assigned Nominative (subjects of unaccusatives and passives) or Accusative (objects of transitives) (Babby 1980, Brown 1999, *inter alia*).[5] This alternation is only possible in the scope of sentential negation (1), as opposed to affirmative sentences (2), or constituent negation (3-5).

(1) Ja   ne   pokupala   knig/   knigi.
    I   NEG   bought   books.GEN   books.ACC
    'I didn't buy books (i.e. it is not true that I bought books).'

(2) Ja   pokupala   *knig/   knigi.
    I   bought   books.GEN   books.ACC
    'I bought (was buying) books.'

(3) Ja   ne   pokupala   *knig/   knigi   (a   prodavala).
    I   NEG   bought   books.GEN   books.ACC   but   sold
    'I didn't buy books (I sold them).'

(4) Ja   pokupala   ne   *knig/   knigi   (a   zhurnaly).
    I   bought   NEG   books.GEN   books.ACC   but   magazines
    'I didn't buy books (I bought magazines).'

(5) Ne   ja   pokupala   *knig/   knigi,   (a   Natasha).
    NEG   I   bought   books.GEN   books.ACC   but   Natasha
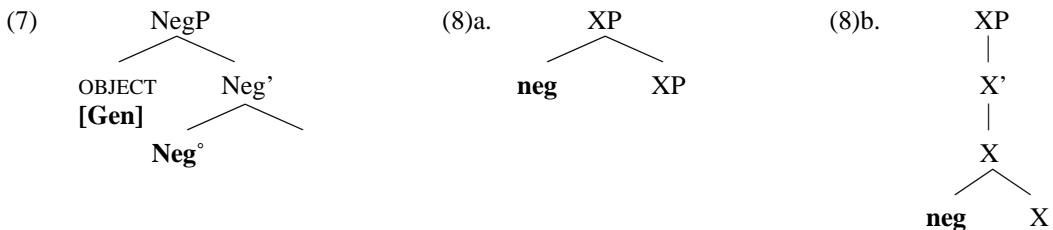   'I didn't buy books (Natasha did).'

Despite extensive research on Genitive of Negation and a number of accounts offering important insights (Babby 1980, Bailyn 1997, Borschev et al. 2008, Brown 1999, Harves 2002, Lindsey 1996, Min-Joo 2004, Partee & Borschev 2004, Pereltsvaig 1999, Pesetsky 1982, Timberlake 1986, to mention just a few), no existing proposal has managed to account for the overall complexity of Genitive facts; only particular sets of data are addressed by each individual analysis. All in all, although certain basic assumptions are shared by the majority of proposals, the exact technicalities often depend on the adopted framework, selected empirical evidence and personal preferences. Indisputably, Genitive of Negation is assumed to be a structural Case licensed by the functional head Neg˚. The DP in question is then sometimes said to move covertly to the specifier of NegP (e.g. Bailyn 1997, Brown 1999), the Spec-Head structural configuration being the environment where feature checking normally takes place. Alternatively, the DP is sometimes said to stay *in situ* and the Case is checked via agreement with the c-commanding Neg˚ (e.g. Min-Joo 2004). As yet another alternative, Genitive is at times said to be assigned by a phonetically null quantifier (Pesetsky 1982) which itself is a negative polarity item (Pereltsvaig 1999) licensed by sentential negation.

The most challenging aspect of Genitive of Negation is its optionality and the exact conditions under which each of the alternating Cases is allowed. A commonly adopted generalization is that while Nominative and Accusative are associated with a definite/specific interpretation or pre-existence of the DP in question, Genitive is associated with indefinite/nonspecific interpretation or absence of the DP (see references above). Although numerous studies (e.g. Min-Joo 2004, Modyanova 2006, amongst others) have taken a generalization along these lines as absolute, it is in fact only a rough tendency, an oversimplified version of Russian. As a matter of fact, definite/specific DPs do not have to be Accusative (6a), and Accusative DPs do not have to be interpreted as definite/specific or even existing (6b).

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[5] Subjects of existential predicates (the so-called bleached or obligatory unaccusatives) in fact require Genitive under the scope of sentential negation, according to many accounts (e.g. Babby 1980).

(6) a. Ja   eshhe   ne   videla   ehtogo   filma.
        I   yet   NEG   saw   this.GEN   movie.GEN
        'I haven't yet seen this movie.'

    b. Ja   eshhe   ne   pekla   pirogi.
        I   yet   NEG   baked   cakes.ACC
        'I haven't yet baked cakes.'

While optionality is generally the most intriguing characteristic of Genitive of Negation, ungrammaticality of Genitive in cases of constituent negation – i.e. the facts in (3-5) – is relatively easy to account for. Unlike sentential negation which – as mentioned – involves the NegP where Neg° is a projecting functional head potentially able to check/assign Case (7), constituent negation arguably involves an (XP- or X°-) adjunction structure (Choi 2004, Embick & Noyer 2001, Iatridou 1990, Kim & Sag 2002) where Case assignment/checking by negation is ruled out in principle (8).

(7)   NegP   (8)a.   XP   (8)b.   XP
             / \   / \ |
        OBJECT   Neg'   **neg**   XP   X'
        [Gen]   / \ |
              Neg°   X
                                                                        / \
                                                                    neg   X

Although a number of generalizations apply to all underlying direct objects, from now on I will specifically focus on objects of transitive verbs (unless indicated otherwise).

2.2. The Nature of Classroom Instruction on Genitive of Negation[6]

Due to the complexity of the exact semantic and pragmatic conditions under which direct objects can be felicitously marked with Accusative or Genitive, the Accusative/Genitive alternation is presented as largely in free variation in the L2 classroom from fairly early on.[7] In particular, although some general tendencies are briefly mentioned, counterexamples (such as (6)) are also presented, and learners are generally instructed to expect Accusative/Genitive alternations under negation, whether or not the nominal is interpreted as definite or pre-existent. In fact, earlier textbooks and prescriptive grammars recommend always using Genitive with negation, to be on the safe side (e.g. Dawson et al. 1964: 247, Lunt 1982 [1968]: 269). As far as the formal environment in which alternation can take place is concerned, some representative examples of explicit instruction are provided in (9).

(9) a. 'Whereas the Accusative is usually used to express a direct object, the Genitive is sometimes used for this purpose in negated sentences. This is particularly true with the pronoun *это* <…> and with nouns after verbs of perception.' (*это* 'this') (Lubensky et al. 2001 [1996]: 225)[8]

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[6] This section is based on Russian textbooks I have examined and on information gained from interviews (both through online forums and in person) with a number of language teachers and instructed L2 learners.

[7] Based on my survey (see footnote 6), Accusative/Genitive alternation is first explicitly introduced as soon as negation, Accusative and other uses of Genitive are briefly covered in the classroom. Although the first introduction is often informal, it is usually highlighted that Accusative/Genitive alternation with negation is a very special property of the language that learners need to keep in mind (also see Lunt 1982 [1968]: 41). The Genitive of Negation rule is backed up by textbooks and exercises somewhat later during the first/second year of study.

[8] According to two Russian teachers I have interviewed and based on numerous online syllabi, Lubensky et al. (2001 [1996]) is amongst the most popular textbooks currently available. It has been used extensively over the last decade.

b. 'The genitive is regularly required as the direct object of a negated verb <…>.
Yet the accusative does occur, especially in colloquial language. No one has managed to delimit this usage, and many of the statements grammarians have made are demonstrably faulty. <…> Use of genitive tends to strengthen the negation, but the nuance of meaning is insignificant.' (Lunt 1982 [1968]: 268-269)[9]

c. 'Although, according to strict grammar rules, the direct object of negated verbs should be in the genitive case, there are some exceptions. The most common of these are: 1. In informal spoken Russian the accusative singular <…> is often used instead of the expected genitive <…>. 2. If the negated verb is followed by an infinitive, the accusative is often used instead of the expected genitive <…>.' (Dawson et al. 1964: 247)[10]

d. 'Both the genitive and the accusative can be used after a negated transitive verb <…>. While in case of doubt it is advisable to use a genitive, there are situations where one case or the other is preferable <…>.' (Wade 1992: 94)

Notably, the Genitive of Negation rule engages the terms 'negated sentence' or 'negated verb' as the licensing condition. It is important to keep in mind that the term 'negated sentence' is never structurally defined in the classroom and is taken to simply refer to a sentence where the negative marker *ne* is found. The term 'negated verb' is actually misleading, since contexts with constituent negation of verbs are exactly the environment where Genitive of Negation is banned, see (3); the classroom term 'negated verb' is intended to refer to contexts where the negative marker *ne* linearly precedes a verb. The crucial characteristic of the classroom instruction, then, is that the generalization regarding Genitive of Negation is formulated in linear terms exclusively and ultimately focuses on the presence or absence of the negative marker *ne*.

Given that Genitive of Negation rules advanced in the classroom do not refer to structural configurations and hierarchal relations, it should come as no surprise that they also do not normally address the difference between sentential and constituent negation. As a result, simply saying that direct objects can be marked with Genitive in the presence of *ne* encourages an overgeneralization where Genitive/Accusative alternation is wrongly allowed with both sentential and constituent negation.[11]

What needs to be highlighted for the purpose of the present discussion is the striking discrepancy between the classroom generalization made in purely linear terms and the actual nature of the syntactic phenomenon. Whatever analysis of Genitive of Negation is adopted, natural languages are organized hierarchically, and, in particular, Case assignment/checking always depends on structural relations (government/Spec-Head configuration, etc., depending on the exact framework). Even more importantly, classroom instruction encourages an overgeneralization that cannot hold in natural language (see section 2.1 for the claim that constituent negation involves a structural configuration where Case licensing is ruled out in principle). On the other hand, the classroom rule appears to be quite simple (roughly, Accusative/Genitive alternations are expected on nominals in contexts involving negation) and it makes perfect sense as far as domain-general problem-solving reasoning is concerned; it also does not face any obvious counterevidence in the input.[12] All this provides us with an

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[9] An informant has pointed out to me that this specific textbook was still in use in the mid-1990s.

[10] According to an informant, this textbook used to be a standard text for high school Russian in the USA. Based on a number of syllabi I have found online, it is still in use in some universities.

[11] An informal interview with a student enrolled in an advanced Russian class (McGill University, Montreal, Canada) has confirmed that it is plausible that learners can arrive at such an overgeneralization, at least (and hopefully, at most) as far as learned linguistic knowledge is concerned. The interviewed student was asked to formulate the rule (which was recently discussed in the classroom) and then to indicate in what contexts s/he believed it should apply. The student explicitly identified cases of constituent negation (3-5) as contexts where nominals could occur in either Genitive or Accusative.

[12] As far as counterevidence is concerned, one could appeal to indirect negative evidence (Chomsky 1981), as in Plough (1995): since Genitive of Negation is never found in contexts of constituent negation, learners could conclude that the classroom generalization is inaccurate. Note, however, that such evidence would be very subtle (particularly in cases of constituent negation of verbs, see (3), and particularly when the contrast is implied rather than explicitly stated) and might only work if learners know (in the UG sense) what evidence to look for (see also footnote 2).

acquisition scenario of the type discussed in section 1. If adult L2 acquisition is merely domain-general and explicit classroom instruction is truly effective, L2 learners of Russian are expected to adopt the simple classroom generalization as is. In particular, they are expected to overgeneralize the rule to cases of constituent negation. Alternatively, if adult L2 acquisition is primarily domain-specific (i.e. UG is still operative), Russian L2ers are expected to resist adopting the rule as is. More specifically, two scenarios are possible, as we will see once the issue of sufficient input is briefly addressed.

Most unbalanced bilingual (simultaneous or early sequential) acquisition scenarios are characterized by incomplete acquisition or attrition of the weaker (secondary) language. Insufficient input is the crucial factor in either case; the key idea is that acquisition of at least certain phenomena requires a frequency threshold that needs to be crossed (Lightfoot 1999, Smith & Cormack 2002). Importantly for us, studies on attrition and incomplete acquisition of Russian have found Genitive of Negation particularly vulnerable (e.g. Modyanova 2006, Polinsky 2007), i.e. Genitive of Negation appears to be largely lost or not acquired. Polinsky (2007) indicates that actual occurrence of Genitive nominals could be as low as 30% in Contemporary Standard Russian and 17% in modern spoken Russian, within all forms under negation.[13] Apparently, this is still enough input for monolingual acquisition under normal circumstances, as Genitive of Negation does continue to pass from one generation to the next[14]; however in acquisition scenarios characterized by impoverished input, instances of evidence in primary linguistic data drop below the threshold. Note now that since the attrition and incomplete acquisition scenarios in question involve child language acquisition, UG access and lack of instruction are implicated by default. This is exactly where the discussion becomes relevant to adult L2 acquisition: the latter is also characterized by impoverished input. If explicit instruction is largely ineffective and UG is still operative, we might expect adult L2 acquisition to exhibit properties similar to those of attrition/incomplete acquisition studies, i.e. non-acquisition of Genitive of Negation, despite explicit classroom instruction discussed above. At the same time, if L2ers have truly had abundant (naturalistic) exposure to Russian over the years, they may be expected to have acquired Genitive of Negation; however, overgeneralization to cases of constituent negation should not take place if UG is involved.

3. Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) Genitive of Negation Study

3.1. Summary of the Design, Results and Interpretation

Lakshmanan and Lindsey (1998) look into whether Russian L2ers whose L1 is English allow Genitive on underlying direct objects in negative sentences (only sentential negation is investigated). Unfortunately, details of classroom instruction are never brought up in the study; we only know that L2 participants are advanced learners enrolled in a Russian classroom at a large US university. As far as experimental tasks are concerned, 7 participants passed a pretest checking the acquisition of Case morphology relevant for the study.[15] The main experimental task is a sentence preference test consisting of 59 pairs of sentences identical except for the Case marking on one of the DPs (Genitive in one sentence and Nominative or Accusative in the other); subjects have to indicate whether only one of the sentences in each pair is acceptable, both of them or neither (10).

(10) a. Ona   ne   smotrela   etogo   fil'ma.
       she   NEG   saw   this.GEN   movie.GEN
       'She didn't see this movie.'

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[13] The rough estimation is based on 1,000 randomly selected sentences within each variety.

[14] Babyonyshev et al. (2001) report on experimental results suggesting that monolingual children acquire Genitive of Negation with transitive verbs by the age of 4 (Genitive response in the non-specific condition is given 75% of the time), although acquisition of Genitive of Negation with unaccusatives appears to be delayed until after the age of 6;6. Note, however, that according to Polinsky (2007), Genitive of Negation is on the steady decline even in Full Russian speakers.

[15] Originally the study involved 6 intermediate and 8 advanced learners of Russian. However, only 1 intermediate and 6 advanced speakers passed the pretest.

b. Ona   ne   smotrela   etot   fil'm.
   she   NEG   saw   this.ACC   movie.ACC
   'She didn't see this movie.'

   a only   b only   a & b   neither

Test items are organized into two major conditions: negative (34 items) and affirmative (25 items), each consisting of the following 5 sub-conditions: subjects of transitive, intransitive, regular unaccusative and existential verbs (see footnote 5), and objects of transitives. Recall that Genitive is allowed only with transitive objects, unaccusative and existential subjects under the scope of sentential negation. These 3 categories involve 4 definite and 4 indefinite items each. All other sub-conditions involve 5 items each.[16]

Outlining the results, advanced L2ers in Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) study correctly reject Genitive on DPs in all affirmative sentences (as well as on subjects of transitive and unergative verbs in negative sentences) with correct response rates ranging from 85.7% to 100%, but they generally fail at accepting Genitive on underlying direct objects in negative sentences. Focusing on the results for objects of transitive verbs in negative sentences, the 'Accusative only' response is given 85.7% of the time, the 'Genitive only' response is given 5.4% of the time, the 'both Accusative and Genitive' response is given 3.5% of the time, and the 'neither' response is given 5.4% of the time.[17] The conclusion therefore is that Genitive of Negation is not acquired, and this finding is interpreted by the authors in terms of L1 transfer, i.e. L2ers treat Russian negative clauses like English ones due to presumably temporary problems with resetting of the relevant UG parameter(s). Briefly, two parametric differences are proposed: (1) [Spec, NegP] is a (Genitive) Case-checking position in Russian, but not in English, and (2) while in English, NegP is fixed above Agr_oP, in Russian, it can also occur immediately above VP.

3.2. Lakshmanan and Lindsey Reloaded

Strikingly, while the authors' interpretation is formulated in domain-specific (UG) terms, there is hardly anything in the perspective they offer that would necessitate a domain-specific view. In fact, a proponent of a No (UG) Access view could take Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) results as readily compatible with the idea that L2 acquisition employs domain-general problem-solving skills exclusively.

However, given the considerations brought to light in this paper, Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) results need to be reinterpreted. As discussed in detail in section 2.2, Genitive of Negation is an instructed L2 property.[18] The classroom generalization – Accusative/Genitive alternations are expected

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[16] The design is in fact somewhat unbalanced, which might be viewed as problematic for my reinterpretation of Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) results. Amongst 35 items where 'only one acceptable' is the target response, sentences with Genitive DPs are never grammatical, while sentences with Accusative DPs (5 items) and Nominative DPs (30 items) are always grammatical. Amongst 24 items where 'both acceptable' is the target response, there are 16 items where Nominative and Genitive DPs alternate, and only 8 items where Accusative and Genitive DPs alternate. Most importantly, the design encourages a bias against Genitive, which confounds the ultimate finding: non-acquisition of Genitive of Negation by advanced Russian L2ers.

[17] (In)definiteness has largely no effect (the acceptance rate for Genitive is in fact slightly higher in the definite condition, but the difference is not likely to be significant). As far as subjects of unaccusative and existential verbs are concerned, the collapsed results for the negative condition are that while the 'Accusative only' response is given 75% of the time, the 'Genitive only' response is given 22.3% of the time, the 'both Accusative and Genitive' response is given 0.9% of the time, and the 'neither' response is given 1.8% of the time. Despite Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) tentative interpretation of these results as a/the first emergence of Genitive of Negation in the unaccusative domain, such results may be more readily explained as a subject effect (individual results show that the relatively high acceptance of Genitive in this category is largely due to two subjects who also accept some Genitive DPs in different affirmative conditions). Further discussion of these results is beyond the scope of this paper (but see footnote 5).

[18] Unfortunately, it is very difficult to trace back the exact instruction the actual participants of Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) study were exposed to in the classroom and the actual textbooks they were using. Based on numerous textbooks I have examined (including those used in the 1990s; see section 2.2 for some references) and a number of informal consultations with Russian language teachers and instructed L2 learners, Lakshmanan and

on nominals in contexts involving negation – appears to be fairly straightforward and perfectly reasonable as far as domain-general problem-solving reasoning is concerned; there is virtually nothing in the input that contradicts it. At the same time, the classroom generalization is linguistically misleading in that it is formulated linearly and encourages a linguistically implausible overgeneralization. With this in mind, the difficulty instructed L2ers experience is rather surprising if domain-general reasoning is what adult L2 learners primarily care about. On the other hand, if L2 acquisition is constrained by a conception of what natural language grammars can and cannot look like, L2ers' non-acquisition of Genitive of Negation in the classroom context is what proponents of domain-specific models actually predict. Recall that insufficient input should hinder L2ers from acquiring Genitive of Negation naturalistically (cf. attrition and incomplete acquisition scenarios discussed in section 2.2).

As the next step, further investigation should look at highly advanced/near native (instructed) Russian L2ers who have been sufficiently exposed to naturalistic input in the L2 and demonstrate acquisition of Genitive of Negation. Testing such L2ers on sentential vs. constituent negation will complete the picture implicated so far. If Genitive of Negation is ultimately acquirable and is not overgeneralized to cases of constituent negation, this will significantly support the domain-specific view on adult L2 acquisition as well as the idea that explicit instruction is relatively ineffective.

4. Taking Stock

The present paper reinterprets Lakshmanan and Lindsey's (1998) finding in view of the research program originally implied by Bruhn-Garavito (1995) and explicitly articulated in Belikova (2008, forthcoming). In L2 acquisition scenarios involving linguistically misleading classroom instruction, the chances of emergence of a non-native-like grammar are considerably enhanced as far as the FDH is concerned. Such scenarios then provide us with important test cases capable of shedding light on the ultimate effectiveness of classroom instruction and involvement of UG. While the original Genitive of Negation study ignores this perspective altogether, the present paper revisits its finding in the context of the exact nature of classroom instruction to which L2 learners are exposed. Non-acquisition of Genitive of Negation by adult L2 learners appears to be indicative of implicit domain-specific knowledge that blocks linguistically misleading explicit instruction.

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Lindsey's advanced participants can safely be assumed to have received the type of instruction discussed in section 2.2.

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