Reciprocal Verbs in the L2 French of Native Speakers of Russian

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1. Introduction

In generative linguistics, L1 acquisition is assumed to be mediated by Universal Grammar, providing innate knowledge of certain linguistic principles and parameters. If a parameter is associated with a cluster of properties, once a prominent property of the cluster is acquired, the subtler properties do not have to be learned, but emerge accordingly. A 'full competence' view on foreign language acquisition, such as advocated by the Full Transfer Full Access hypothesis (FTFA) of Schwartz & Sprouse (1996), is that UG is available in L2 acquisition as well. L2-ers start off by adopting the L1 grammar ('full transfer'), but given a sufficient trigger (for example, the prominent properties of parameters), restructuring of the interlanguage grammar takes place, including parameter resetting. As a result, L2-ers might end up knowing even very subtle properties of the target language, in particular, those associated with UG principles and certain parameters they have succeeded in resetting. Importantly, L2-ers are not predicted to always arrive at an analysis of the L2 input identical to the that of a native speaker; 'full access' however guarantees a UG-constrained analysis.

The present paper deals with L2 acquisition of reciprocal verbs, that is, verbs denoting an event whose participants are acting on each other (see examples in (1)). The recently proposed analysis of reciprocal and reflexive verbs in terms of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter (Reinhart & Siloni 2005, 2004; Siloni to appear) claims that reciprocalization and reflexivization take place in the syntax or in the lexicon, and that a cluster of prominent and subtle properties is associated with each setting. The FTFA makes certain predictions with respect to what one would expect to find in L2 acquisition of such verbs in a situation where the L2 and the L1 are set differently. Given that the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter is argued to be set differently in French and Russian, it is of particular interest to look at the combination of these languages to check whether predictions with respect to 'full access' are borne out.

I will first lay out the background of the linguistic property in question, concentrating on how it comes into being in French and Russian. I will then discuss in detail the scenarios that the FTFA predicts for acquisition of reciprocals by Russian-speaking advanced L2 learners of French. Next, I will turn to the design of the experiment, followed by the discussion of the findings and speculations on the direction of future research.

2. Lexicon-Syntax Parameter

2.1 General Remarks

Briefly, the operation of reciprocalization suppresses the syntactic realization of the object of transitive verbs, so that the intended subject and the intended object of a given verbal entry both end up associated with (and syntactically realized in) the subject position of the resulting intransitive verb. Consider the French and Russian examples in (1a) and (1b), respectively, which show how the intransitive verb 'kiss(rec)' is derived from the corresponding transitive verb.[1, 2]

(1) a. *French*
Jean et   Marie   embrassent leurs parents. → Jean et   Marie   **s'**embrassent.
Jean and Marie   kiss(trans) their parents   Jean and Marie   kiss(rec)

   b. *Russian*
Ivan   i   Masha celujut   roditelej. → Ivan   i   Masha celujut**sja**.
Ivan   and Masha kiss(trans) parents   Ivan   and Masha kiss(rec)

An important distinction to keep in mind is between reciprocal verbs, which are intransitive, and syntactic reciprocal constructions involving a transitive verb and a reciprocal object pronoun (anaphor) (2). Note that while the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter, discussed in detail below, deals with reciprocal verbs, it has nothing to say about anaphors. Nevertheless, as will become clear, such syntactic reciprocal constructions turn out to be relevant when L2 acquisition of the parameter becomes the focus of discussion.

(2) *Russian*
Ivan i   Masha celujut   **drug druga**.
Ivan and Masha kiss(trans) each other

Turning to the discussion of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter, the knowledge associated with reciprocal verbs has been argued to relate to a number of linguistic properties that cluster in such a way that the world's languages seem to be elegantly split into two groups (Reinhart & Siloni 2005, 2004; Siloni to appear). For example, in languages like French, Spanish and Serbo-Croatian, the operation of reciprocalization is highly productive; it can affect complex predicates and allow direct objects, while the so-called discontinuous reciprocals are generally banned. In contrast, in languages like Russian, Hebrew and Hungarian, reciprocalization is restricted to a particular set of verbal entries; direct objects are banned with reciprocals, while discontinuous reciprocals are licensed.

The Lexicon-Syntax Parameter captures the outlined cluster of properties by asserting that reciprocalization can apply either in the syntax (French, Spanish, Serbo-Croatian) or in the lexicon (Russian, Hebrew, Hungarian), and that the properties of the cluster neatly follow from the locus of the operation. For the present discussion, it is important to keep in mind that some of the properties are quite prominent (productivity in a 'syntax' language), while others are very subtle (the ungrammaticality of discontinuity in a 'syntax' language).

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[1] Reciprocal verbs can be either morphologically identical to their transitive counterparts, as in English (i), or morphologically distinct from them, as in French and Russian (see examples above). In French, reciprocals are formed with clitic *se*, while in Russian they are derived with the *-sja/-s'* suffix.
(i) a.   John kisses Mary.
    b.   John and Mary kiss.
[2] Note that reflexivization operates in a similar fashion, deriving intransitives denoting events whose participants are acting on themselves. In fact, the issue of reflexive verbs is intimately related to reciprocals, so that the acquisition of the latter cannot truly examined in isolation. (For example, *se* verbs in French and the *-sja/-s'* suffix in Russian are ambiguous between a reciprocal and a reflexive meaning.) Nevertheless, the present discussion focuses on reciprocal verbs, unless specified otherwise.

2.2 Productivity

The set of verbal entries that undergo reciprocalization in 'lexicon' languages is restricted to verbs denoting situations of intimate/social interaction.[3] Thus, the verb *kiss* can be reciprocalized in Russian (3a), while *hate* and *draw* cannot (4a, 5a). Of course, 'lexicon' languages are not defective in any sense, since they can in addition express reciprocity via syntactic reciprocal constructions (3b, 4b, 5b); the relevance of this fact will become clear in section 3.3.

(3) *Russian*
   a. Oni   celujutsja.
       they   kiss(rec)

   b. Oni   celujut   drug druga.
       they   kiss(trans)   each other

(4) *Russian*
   a. *Oni   nenavidjatsja.
        they   hate(rec)

   b. Oni   nenavidjat   drug druga.
       they   hate(trans)   each other

(5) *Russian*
   a. *Oni   risujutsja.
        they   draw(rec)

   b. Oni   risujut   drug druga.
       they   draw(trans)   each other

In contrast, in 'syntax' languages, the operation of reciprocalization is highly productive; consequently, all three verbs, *kiss*, *hate* and *draw*, can undergo reciprocalization in French (6).

(6) *French*
   a. Ils   s'embrassent.
       they   kiss(rec)

   b. Ils   se détestent.
       they   hate(rec)
       'They hate each other.'

   c. Ils   se dessinent.
       they   draw(rec)
       'They draw each other.'

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[3] The label 'verbs of social interaction' (Siloni to appear, among others), when taken literally, might be misleading. For example, it is taken to refer to verbs like *kiss*, *hug*, *caress*, *meet*, *write*, *whisper*, and *telephone* but not to verbs like *teach*, *hate*, and *dress*. Note that certain verbs from this list seem to form a core that is universally included as a set of verbs affected by reciprocalization. *Kiss*, *hug*, and *caress* are such verbs, as well as verbs referring to sexual intercourse. However, others, like *write* or *telephone*, do not necessarily undergo reciprocalization in every 'lexicon' language (for example, they do not in some dialects of English). Perhaps, the right generalization to make is that the universal set of reciprocal verbs includes only verbs of intimate interaction, and although the set is restricted, it is not completely closed in the sense that 'lexicon' languages are free to somewhat expand it.

As noted by Siloni (to appear), the difference in the productivity of reciprocalization in Russian vs. French is expected if the locus of the operation is different in the two languages; it has been argued independently of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter that idiosyncrasies are associated with the lexicon, while regularities are characteristic of the syntax (Wasow 1977, among many others).

Note that the discussion so far implies that the French clitic *se* is analyzed as a reciprocal marker on an intransitive verb, rather than as a reciprocal clitic pronoun. Indeed, certain constructions where *se* verbs do not behave on a par with syntactic reciprocal constructions involving clitic anaphors strongly motivate this view; consider, for example, the passives in (7), where genuine clitic object pronouns are licenced (7a), while the clitic *se* is ungrammatical (7b).[4] The intended meaning of (7b) can be expressed as (7c), which involves a reciprocal pronoun, *l'un l'autre* 'each other'.[5]

(7) *French*

    a. Roméo et Juliette nous sont présentés par Shakespeare.
       Romeo and Juliet us AUX presented by Shakespeare
       'Romeo and Juliet are presented to us by Shakespeare'

    b. *Brigitte et Marc se sont présentés par Una.
       Bridget and Mark SE AUX presented by Una
       Intended meaning: 'Bridget and Mark are presented to each other by Una.'

    c. Angelina et Brad sont présentés l'un à l'autre par le producteur du film.
       Angelina and Brad AUX presented to each other by the film producer
       'Angelina and Brad are presented to each other by the film producer.'

2.3 The Discontinuous Construction

As pointed out by Frajzyngier (1999), the discontinuous construction expresses reciprocity between the subject set and the oblique set introduced by the preposition *with*, entailing that both the subject and the oblique constituent play the same role in the event. Crucially, the discontinuous construction is generally possible only in 'lexicon' languages (8) (Siloni to appear).[6]

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[4] Other constructions where *se* does not behave on a par with object pronouns involve causatives, ellipsis, certain adjectival phrases, etc. Note that such constructions provide very little positive evidence, so that they are unlikely to be taken advantage of in language acquisition.

    I will briefly report on a preliminary study on ellipsis constructions (i) conducted with French controls. The idea is that since *se* is not the object (argument) of the verb, it cannot be referred to by the comparative remnant (Zec 1985); the latter can refer to the subject or to true object clitic pronouns in transitive constructions (ia), but only to the subject in the case of reciprocal verbs (ib).

(i) a. Lucie et Louise me rencontrent plus souvent que leurs frères.
      Lucie and Louise me meet(trans) more often than their brothers
      (i) Lucie and Louise meet me more often than their brothers meet me.
      (ii) Lucie and Louise meet me more often than they meet their brothers.
  b. Lucie et Louise se rencontrent plus souvent que leurs frères.
      Lucie and Louise meet(rec) more often than their brothers
      (i) Lucie and Louise meet (each other) more often than their brothers meet (each other).
      (ii) ??*Lucie and Louise meet (each other) more often than they meet their brothers.

    8 native controls involved in the preliminary study treated items like (ia) and (ib) differently. They accepted the subject reading and the object reading in transitive constructions 78.1% and 81.3% of the time respectively (no significant difference); in contrast, in the case of reciprocal verbs, native controls accepted the subject reading 100% of the time, while they accepted the object reading only 21.9% of the time (the difference is clearly significant).

    Against the unaccusatives approach to reciprocals, see Siloni (to appear).

[5] The use of the French reciprocal pronoun, *l'un l'autre* 'each other', is generally limited to the few contexts where intransitives are not allowed.

[6] Importantly, closer inspection reveals that isolated reciprocals can be licensed as discontinuous in certain

(8) a   *French*
     Jean   s'embrasse   avec   Marie.
     Jean   kisses(rec)   with   Marie

  b. *Russian*
     Ivan   celuetsja   s   Mashej.
     Ivan   kisses(rec)   with   Masha
     'Ivan and Masha kiss.'

It is important to understand exactly how the property of discontinuity follows from the location of the operations in the syntax vs. the lexicon. Briefly, Siloni (to appear) follows Dimitriadis (2004), claiming that, first, only predicates denoting reciprocity in the lexicon must denote symmetric events (9), and, second, the discontinuous construction is only possible with such predicates.

(9) a. *French*
     Jean et   Marie   se sont embrassés cinq   fois.
     Jean and Marie   kissed(rec)   five   times
     (i)   There were 5 symmetric kissing events.
     (ii)   There were 10 asymmetric kissing events.

  b. *Russian*
     Ivan   i   Masha   pocelovalis' pjat'   raz.
     Ivan   and Masha kissed(rec) *five   times*
     (i)   There were 5 symmetric kissing events.
     (ii)   *There were 10 asymmetric kissing events.

The first part of the proposal is based on the intuition that the lexical operation of reciprocalization can have no access to (asymmetric) sub-events resulting as an interaction of the predicate and its arguments in the syntax; 'the only way an atomic event in itself can convey a reciprocal reading is by being symmetric' (Siloni p.c.). As for the second part of the proposal, discontinuous reciprocals are argued to have a lexical representation where in addition to the Agent-Theme role assigned to the subject, there is an empty role assigned to the discontinuous argument and interpreted as being in a *symmetric* relation with the subject (Siloni p.c.). I assume that the proper account is indeed along these lines.

Before briefly addressing the rest of the properties of the cluster, note that syntactic constructions involving anaphors are incompatible with the discontinuous construction (10); the relevance of this fact will become clear in section 3.3.

(10) *Russian*
     *Ivan   celuet   drug druga   s   Mashej.
     Ivan   kisses(trans) each other   with   Masha

2.4 Other Properties

Before turning to the design of the pilot experiment, I will briefly expand on two more properties of the cluster, to provide a broader perspective and also to give an idea of what a follow-up study will need to be involved with.

Reciprocalization suppresses syntactic realization of internal arguments. One way this could actually work is through Case reduction: lack of Case prevents an internal theta role from mapping onto its canonical position. Interestingly, in 'lexicon' languages, but not in 'syntax' languages, the operation always absorbs the accusative Case of the verbs, even when dative arguments are suppressed

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'syntax' languages (Siloni to appear); this point will be brought up again and discussed in some detail in section 5.

(Reinhart & Siloni 2005, 2004; Siloni to appear). Compare (11), Russian, vs. (12), French.[7]

(11) *Russian*

    Ivan   i   Masha   perepisyvajutsja   (*pis'ma).
    Ivan   *and*   *Masha*   *write(rec)*   *letters.ACC*

(12) *French*

    Jean   et   Marie   s'écrivent   des   lettres.
    Jean   *and*   *Marie*   *write(rec)*   *IND.ART* *letters*

Finally, only in 'syntax' languages can reciprocalization target ECM predicates (Reinhart & Siloni 2005, 2004; Siloni to appear). The internal theta-role of ECM verbs is assigned to a clause, so the operation then actually acts on the theta-grids of two distinct predicates: the one of the ECM verb and the one of the predicate inside its clausal complement (13).

(13) *French*

    Jean et   Marie   se trouvent   très gentils.
    Jean and Marie   *find(rec)*   *very nice*
    'Jean and Marie find each other very nice.'

As Siloni (to appear) notes, this property of 'syntax' languages is again predicted from the Lexicon-Syntax parameter. Since in languages like French, reciprocalization takes place in the syntax, complex predicates are expected to be an appropriate input for the operation. Note that the same is inconceivable in a 'lexicon' language, where reciprocalization is limited to operating on a single predicate and its theta-grid.

In addition, some other properties of 'lexicon' vs. 'syntax' languages are discussed in the literature (Reinhart & Siloni 2005, 2004; Siloni to appear), but are not referred to in the present study: reciprocal event nominals are possible only in 'lexicon' languages; only 'lexicon' languages allow reciprocal verbs to have meanings and appear in idioms that are not shared by their transitive alternates; only 'lexicon' languages can have reciprocal verbs lacking a transitive counterpart.

3. FTFA Scenarios for L2 Acquisition of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter
3.1 General Remarks

As briefly discussed in section 1, a 'full access' view on foreign language acquisition, such as advocated by FTFA, assumes that UG is available in L2 acquisition; L2-ers start off by adopting the L1 grammar, but whenever L1-based interlanguage grammar fails to deal with the new L2 input, a UG-constrained restructuring takes place, which can, although does not have to, lead to an analysis of the L2 input identical to that of a native speaker. In the case of Russian-speaking L2 learners of French, the productivity of reciprocalization in French (along with the availability of accusative objects with reciprocals and the grammaticality of reciprocalized ECM predicates) is predicted to serve as a trigger for restructuring. The type of restructuring that would lead to a native-like grammar involves parameter resetting. In addition, productivity can trigger two other types of UG-constrained restructuring: L2-ers can misanalyze *se* verbs as syntactic reciprocal constructions involving anaphors, or they can enlarge the set of verbs undergoing lexical reciprocalization in their L2 grammar of French. There is of course a question as to what conditions would force this or that type of restructuring, and

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[7] My current account of the facts in (11) and (12) is as follows. The syntactic operation manipulates arguments, and therefore can be selective in that it reduces Case for each given argument it is going to suppress. Thus, if a dative argument is to be suppressed, dative Case is reduced; if an accusative argument is to be suppressed, accusative Case is reduced. On the other hand, the lexical operation acts on theta roles; since it is not clear at which point a theta role gets associated with a specific Case, a plausible assumption is that the lexical operation is Case blind, and in order to ensure lack of Case for an argument it is going to suppress, it should reduce Case in principle, both accusative and dative.

whether L2-ers can recover from every false path. There is no clear answer to this so far; see section 3.5 for some speculation. Crucially, only parameter resetting necessarily implies UG access; the other two types of restructuring are also compatible with a 'no access' view of L2 acquisition, such as advocated by the Fundamental Difference hypothesis of Bley-Vroman (1990).

3.2 Parameter Resetting: Getting the Judgments Right

Given that the productivity of reciprocalization is a very prominent property of French, FTFA predicts that once L2-ers are sufficiently exposed to L2 input containing relevant positive evidence, resetting of the Lexicon-Syntax parameter can be triggered.

Consider now the ungrammaticality of the discontinuous construction in French, which looks like a genuinely subtle fact for a native Russian speaker to acquire. If UG is not available, the property is an isolated phenomenon that could be only acquired based on negative evidence (as, for example, correction); however, the latter often is lacking and/or ignored in language acquisition in general.[8, 9] Russian and French are then in a classical superset-subset relation with respect to the discontinuous construction: Russian, the superset, allowing the equivalents of both (14a) and (14b), and French, the subset, allowing just (14a). The Subset Principle (Berwick 1985) is unavailable to apply (White 1989, among others), according to which the ungrammaticality of the discontinuous construction in French cannot be acquired by Russian-speaking L2-ers.

(14) a. John and Mary kiss(rec)
     b. John kisses(rec) with Mary

However, if L2 acquisition is mediated by UG, this subtle property is not something that has to be independently learned, but rather naturally emerges (in spite of the apparent learnability problem), once the parameter is reset.

3.3 Misanalysis of Se: Getting the Judgments Right

Recall that the discussion of productivity in section 2.2 made the following point. Although 'lexicon' languages are restricted in expressing reciprocity via reciprocal verbs, they are not deficient in any sense, since in addition they can do so via syntactic reciprocal constructions involving anaphors. As mentioned, French *se* verbs do not behave on a par with such constructions (recall passive constructions in (7) and footnote 4); however, it is plausible that when an L1-based interlanguage grammar with the lexicon setting of the parameter fails to deal with the productivity of reciprocalization in French, the restructuring of the interlanguage grammar that takes place does not reset the parameter (as in section 3.2) but misanalyzes *se* as a reciprocal pronoun. The important question at this point is what this type of transfer predicts with regards to discontinuity. Interestingly, since syntactic reciprocal constructions are not licensed as discontinuous (recall (10), repeated here as (15a)), the misanalysis of *se* as a reciprocal pronoun will in fact result in a roundabout acquisition of the subtle fact associated with the syntax setting of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter, the ungrammaticality of discontinuous reciprocals (15b).

(15) a. *Russian*

*Ivan	celuet	drug druga	s	Mashej.
Ivan	*kisses(trans)*	*each other*	*with*	*Masha*

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[8] For L2 acquisition, see Schwartz & Gubala-Ryzak (1992). To be more specific, the ungrammaticality of discontinuous reciprocals is not taught in the classroom/discussed in textbooks. It is not generally corrected, either (Siloni p. c.). Moreover, as suggested by an informal follow-up on two subjects provided with negative evidence as a part of the debriefing procedure, even explicit feedback regarding the ungrammaticality of discontinuity in French is ignored in the long-term (see White 1991 for a similar finding).

[9] However, see section 3.3 where the *se* misanalysis scenario leads to a roundabout acquisition of the property via a sort of transfer.

b. *French*
  *Jean   s'embrasse   avec   Marie.
  Jean   kisses(rec)   with   Marie*

Consequently, given that parameter resetting and the misanalysis of *se* as a reciprocal pronoun both lead to the knowledge of the productivity property and the unavailability of discontinuous reciprocals, one should make sure that the two types of restructuring can be properly distinguished. As discussed in section 4.4.5, passive constructions as in (7) are used in the experiment for this exact purpose.

3.4 Expanding the Set of Lexical Reciprocals: Getting the Judgments Wrong

The other logically possible type of restructuring triggered by productivity but leading to a kind of transfer rather than to parameter resetting, is to enlarge the restricted set of verbs that can undergo reciprocalization; new reciprocal verbs found in French are learned on an item-by-item basis, as new lexical reciprocals, and thus are all allowed in the discontinuous construction. There is a question as to what extent such a restructuring can be considered UG compatible; I will outline two ways of dealing with it in the FTFA model. First, although the set of verbs undergoing reciprocalization in 'lexicon' languages is restricted, it is not completely closed in the sense that 'lexicon' languages are free to somewhat expand it (recall footnote 3). Consequently, an interlanguage grammar dealing with the productivity property via expanding the set of lexical reciprocals (naturally licensed as discontinuous) could be viewed as UG compatible in that respect. Second, reciprocals in some Bantu languages are both productive and licensed as discontinuous (Dimitriadis 2004). While this fact has yet to be understood and properly accounted for in terms of the Lexicon-Syntax parameter, the empirical evidence suggests that the type of restructuring of interlanguage grammar allowing for both productivity and discontinuity cannot be readily ruled out as 'wild'.

3.5 Concluding Remarks

In the present section, I will briefly speculate on what conditions would force this or that type of restructuring, and whether L2-ers can recover from every false path.

First, there is the issue of economy, namely, whether interlanguage grammars prefer restructuring that is less costly. Intuitively, restructuring that avoids parameter resetting, and employs some sort of transfer instead, involves less effort, and thus respects economy. This line of reasoning implies that transfer is not an option, but rather an obligatory step. On the other hand, a question of possible grammars arises; namely, whether the *se* misanalysis and the expansion scenario could be the final (or any stable) state in a UG access model. Bantu languages seem to provide a positive answer for the expansion scenario (section 3.4), and perhaps L2-ers that take this false path never recover; however, a language without reciprocal verbs but with two kinds of reciprocal pronouns (as in the *se* misanalysis scenario) is an unlikely candidate for a possible grammar. In other words, a UG access model seems to predict a subsequent restructuring for L2-ers in the *se* misanalysis scenario, once they have been sufficiently exposed to constructions involving the French reciprocal pronoun *l'un l'autre* 'each other', and to the fact that there no other candidates for reciprocal verbs besides *se* verbs.

Further work on the acquisition of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter should contribute to better understanding of the exact scenarios taking place.

4. Experiment
4.1 General Remarks

The pilot experiment is conducted to examine the FTFA scenarios for acquisition of reciprocal verbs by advanced French L2-ers whose L1 is Russian. As mentioned in section 3, three types of UG-constrained restructuring can be triggered by the productivity property of French; however, only the scenario involving parameter resetting will necessarily support a 'UG access' view of L2 acquisition.

4.2 Subjects

Two groups of subjects are involved in the study, an experimental group and a control group. The experimental group consists of 14 advanced-intermediate French L2-ers whose L1 is Russian, all of them immigrants to Quebec, residing in Montreal, with an average of 10.2 years of French learning, including classroom instruction and self learning. Language profiles confirm that all subjects were immersed in the French-speaking community after puberty (the average age of arrival is 27.4, ranging from 16 to 42); the average length of exposure is 7.3 years. In addition to French, some L2-ers are proficient in Hebrew and English, both 'lexicon' languages.[10] Crucially, no L2-er is proficient in a 'syntax' language other than French. The average age of the participants is 34.1, ranging from 22 to 51.

In addition, 7 native speakers of French serve as controls, and were also tested in Montreal, Quebec.

4.3 Design

The experiment consists of two major parts, a proficiency test and the actual experimental tasks. The proficiency test is a multiple-choice task assessing grammar, vocabulary and understanding in French.[11] L2-ers' scores are based on the percentage of correct answers; thus, the maximum possible score is 100. The average score for participants is 87.8, ranging from 74 to 96.

The experimental tasks are a grammaticality judgment task, a translation task and a 'why not task'. The experiment is organized in the following way. First, the subjects are presented with fifty-four French sentences, which they have to classify as either possible or impossible in French. In addition to *possible* and *impossible*, the subjects have the option of choosing *je ne sais pas* 'I don't know' in case they feel uncertain. Once this task is completed, participants are asked to go over all the sentences again. This time, they are required to provide a translation for each French sentence they judged as possible, and explain what exactly seems wrong in the French sentences they judged as impossible. The purpose of the translation task is to make sure that subjects assign appropriate interpretations to the accepted reciprocal verbs, while the purpose of the 'why not' task is to ensure that participants do not reject items for independent reasons (such as seemingly wrong spelling, incorrect agreement, etc.). If the translation task reveals that a subject does not assign the appropriate interpretation to a certain item, this item is no longer counted towards the total of items judged as grammatical. If the 'why not' task reveals that a subject rejects an item for an independent reason, this item is added to the items judged as grammatical.

4.4 Experimental Items
4.4.1 General Remarks

A total of 54 French sentences were presented to participants. 28 out of 54 items are experimental items, 18 grammatical and 10 ungrammatical. To balance the items with respect to their (un)grammatical status, 8 ungrammatical fillers were added, all of them including *se* verbs. In addition, 18 distractors containing no *se* verbs were added, 9 grammatical and 9 ungrammatical. The present section discusses the 28 experimental items in terms of sentence types tested.

4.4.2 Cross-linguistic Reciprocals

The first set of items includes five French sentences with reciprocals having a corresponding

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[10] As noted by Siloni (to appear), although English is a 'lexicon' language, its behavior is special (for example, not all reciprocals allow discontinuous constructions, etc.).

[11] The proficiency test is adapted from the French proficiency test at http://www.transparent.com/tlquiz/proftest/french/tlfretest.htm. I am grateful to Transparent Language, an on-line resource for language learners, for making it available to me and granting their permission to use it in my experiment.

Russian counterpart, that is, reciprocals of intimate/social interaction; for example, *s'embrasser* 'kiss(rec)' (16). These experimental items are to make sure that the participants know the very basic properties of French reciprocals, such as reciprocal morphology. These items should be judged as grammatical from very early on, as they are supported by both transfer and positive evidence readily available in the input. Note that if participants do not have native-like judgments for such items, there is no sense proceeding with further testing (either the participants are not advanced enough, or there are methodological problems with the task).

(16) *French*

Madonna et	Britney Spears	se sont embrassées	pendant un gala télévisé.
Madonna and	*Britney Spears*	*kissed(rec)*	*during a performance*

4.4.3 Productive Reciprocals

The purpose of the second set of items is to check whether the participants have acquired the productivity property of French reciprocals. To test this, five sentences include only those French reciprocals that are lacking a corresponding Russian counterpart, such as *se détester* 'hate(rec)' (17). Thus, if the property is acquired, L2-ers should accept such items as grammatical, in spite of their ungrammaticality in Russian.

(17) *French*

Les	familles de	Roméo	et	Juliette	se détestent	vraiment.
the	*families of*	*Romeo*	*and*	*Juliet*	*hate(rec)*	*really*

4.4.4 Discontinuity

The next set of items includes the discontinuous construction, which is ungrammatical in French (18). Recall that the ungrammaticality of discontinuous reciprocals in French is a very subtle property for a native speaker of Russian, where this construction is perfectly grammatical (see the discussion in section 3.2, especially footnote 8). However, if productivity triggers parameter resetting (section 3.2), this property should automatically follow. Alternatively, this property also falls out if productivity triggers the misanalysis of the reciprocal marker *se* as an object pronoun (section 3.3).

(18) *French*

*Brigitte	s'est embrassée	avec	Marc	à	la	fin	du	film.
Bridget	*kissed(rec)*	*with*	*Mark*	*in*	*the*	*end*	*of+the*	*movie*

The set of items testing discontinuity includes six sentences, three with reciprocals existing in Russian, and three with reciprocals lacking a corresponding Russian counterpart.

4.4.5 Se Verbs as Reciprocal Verbs vs. Syntactic Reciprocal Constructions

The purpose of the last set of items is to distinguish parameter resetting (section 3.2) from the type of sophisticated transfer discussed in section 3.3 where *se* verbs are misanalyzed as syntactic reciprocal constructions. The experimental items of this set involve passive constructions, briefly discussed in section 2.2, where the clitic *se* is ungrammatical (19b), while genuine clitic object pronouns are licenced (19a).

(19) *French*

a.
Roméo	et	Juliette	nous	sont	présentés	par	Shakespeare.
Romeo	*and*	*Juliet*	*us*	AUX	*presented*	*by*	*Shakespeare*

'Romeo and Juliet are presented to us by Shakespeare'

b. *Brigitte et Marc se sont présentés par Una.
   Bridget and Mark SE AUX presented by Una
   Intended meaning: 'Bridget and Mark are presented to each other by Una.'

The ungrammaticality of reciprocalized passives (first noted by Kayne 1975) is most likely explained by the fact that the two operations, passivization and reciprocalization, exclude each other as competing for the same input. Once one of them acts on a predicate, its output is no longer an appropriate input for the other operation (see Reinhart & Siloni 2005 for details of an account along the same lines).

In addition, a passive construction with an actual reciprocal pronoun *l'un l'autre*, that is, a grammatical counterpart of (19b), is included in the testing material. The purpose of items like (19c) is to offer a grammatical alternative to (19b), and thus to avoid a situation where L2-ers are perhaps forced to accept (19b) based on the intuition that there has to be a way to express that meaning in French.

(19) *French*
   c. Angelina et Brad sont présentés l'un à l'autre par le producteur du film.
      Angelina and Brad AUX presented to each other by the film producer
      'Angelina and Brad are presented to each other by the film producer.'

This last set of items includes twelve sentences: four different passive constructions are presented in three conditions, namely, with a clitic pronoun, with the clitic *se* and with the reciprocal pronoun *l'un l'autre*.

4.4.6 Concluding Remarks

In the present section, I summarize the predictions for each sentence type in the scenarios for UG-constrained restructuring outlined in section 3 (table 1).

Recall that only parameter resetting necessarily implies UG access (and also leads to the analysis identical to that of native speakers); the other two type of restructuring are compatible with both 'full access' and 'no access' views of L2 acquisition.

Table 1   Summary of predictions (acceptance %)

		Cross-ling. Reciprocals	Productive Reciprocals	Discont. Reciprocals	Passives with *se*	with obj. cl.
Native controls		100	100	0	0	100
L2-ers	Expanding the set of lexical verbs	100	100	100	0	100
	Misanalysis of *se* as a rec. pronoun	100	100	0	100	100
	Parameter resetting	100	100	0	0	100

5. Results and Discussion

5.1 Overall Results: Native Control and L2-ers

Table 2 presents the overall results for native French controls and L2 subjects. On the whole, native controls performed as expected, with near 100% accuracy on all items, except for passives with object clitics, which they correctly accept 89.3% of the time. The distribution of non-target responses is not equal across all subjects; only 3 controls had difficulty accepting those items. The 'why not' task reveals that the motivation in rejecting them is most likely pragmatic, and that one needs to provide a larger context to guarantee their felicitousness; subjects kept saying that the construction itself was good, but the sentences turned out to be somewhat awkward. Nevertheless, 89.3% acceptance is

sufficiently good for our purposes (especially given that reciprocalized passives are never accepted, which gives us the contrast in treating *se* vs. true object pronouns we are looking for).

As for French L2 speakers, the observed pattern does not seem to fall into any of the outlined scenarios (compare to table 1 above); on average, L2-ers are quite accurate at accepting both cross-linguistic and productive reciprocals (97.1 % and 91.4% of the time, respectively); they also seem to know that *se* does not behave on a par with object pronouns, treating the two types of clitics differently (33.9% vs. 83.9% acceptance rate, respectively). However, on average, L2-ers exhibit at-chance performance with discontinuous reciprocals, which could be interpreted as 'wild' and therefore most compatible with a 'no access' view of L2 acquisition. Let me now challenge this interpretation and show that it is ultimately incorrect.

Table 2   Summary of results per sentence type (acceptance %)

	Cross-ling. Reciprocals	Productive Reciprocals	Discont. Reciprocals	Passives	
				with *se*	with obj. cl.
Native Controls (n = 7)	97.1	100	0	0	89.3
L2-ers (n = 14) Advanced-Intermediate	97.1	91.4	**47.6**	33.9	83.9

As mentioned in footnote 6, closer inspection reveals that isolated reciprocals can in fact be licensed as discontinuous in certain 'syntax' languages (Siloni to appear); this is due to the fact that outputs of syntactic operations can get lexicalized (idioms and many other idiosyncrasies are born this way), so that if syntactic reciprocals undergo lexicalization (for example, as a result of semantic drift), they can then be allowed as discontinuous. Thus, it was claimed that the French reciprocal *se battre* 'beat(rec)' got lexicalized with the meaning 'fight(rec)' (Siloni to appear), and therefore is possible in the discontinuous construction in the drifted meaning (20b).

(20) *French*
    a. Jean   et   Pierre   se sont battus.
       Jean   and Pierre   beat(rec)/fought(rec)
    b. Jean   s'est battu   avec   Pierre.
       Jean   *beat(rec)/fought(rec)   with   Pierre

Accordingly, the following UG-constrained scenario is possible. The lexicon setting (L1 Russian) is initially adopted for L2 French; hence, cross-linguistic reciprocals are initially allowed as discontinuous. Given the point made regarding (20), when the interlanguage grammar shifts the locus of reciprocalization from the lexicon to the syntax, cross-linguistic reciprocals can be in fact still allowed as discontinuous if L2-ers reanalyze them as *lexicalized*. If this is correct, we expect L2-ers to be generally better at rejecting productive discontinuous reciprocals than at rejecting cross-linguistic ones; in other words, the performance on discontinuous reciprocals should not be truly at chance. Importantly, this prediction is borne out (table 3), suggesting that the relevant L2-ers' knowledge one should be checking with respect to the discontinuity property is whether or not *productive* reciprocals are allowed to be discontinuous (rather than reciprocal verbs in general).

Table 3:   Summary of results for discontinuous reciprocals (acceptance %)

	Discont. Cross-linguistic	Discont. Productive	Overall
L2-ers (n=14)	61.9	33.3	47.6

The punch line so far is that once the proper distinction between productive and cross-linguistic discontinuous reciprocals is made, the overall L2-ers' pattern is in fact most compatible with the resetting scenario.

5.2 L2-ers: Grouped Individual Results

Grouped individual results (tables 4 and 5) reveal a somewhat different picture, namely, that all three types of UG-constrained restructuring are in fact attested. In addition, a group of L2-ers perform in a way that is not readily UG compatible. However, there is good reason to believe that this is due to their being generally less advanced than required: they are less accurate on the productivity property (80%) than the others, and their proficiency test score is on average lower (83.8/100) than that of the rest of the subjects (89.4/100).

Table 4: Grouped results for L2-ers (acceptance %)

	Cross-ling. & Product. Reciprocals	Discont. Product. Reciprocals	Discont. Cross-ling. Reciprocals	Prof. Test out of 100	Age of arrival	Length of exposure
Expanding the set of lexical verbs (n = 3)	100	88.9	100	88.7	27y	9.7y
Misanalysis of *se* as a rec. pronoun (n = 3)	93.3	11.1	33.3	89.3	27.7y	4.5y
Parameter resetting (n = 4)	100	8.3	50	90	26y	8y
Mixed performance (n = 4)	80	33.3	15.5	83.8	29.3y	6y

Table 5: Summary of results for passives: *se* misanalysis vs. resetting scenarios (acceptance %)

	Passives with SE	Passives with object clitics
Se misanalysis (n = 3)	91.7	83.3
Parameter resetting (n = 4)	0	93.8
Native (n = 7)	0	89.3

Concluding this section, the results of the pilot study suggest that the productivity of reciprocalization can trigger different UG-constrained types of restructuring, which presumably hinders parameter resetting, and explains why L2-ers have a general difficulty acquiring the ungrammaticality of discontinuous reciprocals in French. It is not clear at this point whether every false restructuring can be recovered from (see section 3.5 for some speculations); however, the results suggest that resetting of the Lexicon-Syntax parameter is possible, but it might not be a guaranteed outcome for a Russian-speaking French L2-er. The crucial finding is that the parameter resetting scenario is indeed attested with a group of advanced L2-ers, which supports a 'UG access' view of L2 acquisition.

6. Conclusion and Implications for Further Research

In conclusion, the present study shows that L2-ers do not in general have problems acquiring the productivity property of French reciprocals, thus switching from the non-productivity associated with the lexicon setting (L1 Russian) to the productivity associated with the syntax setting (L2 French) of the Lexicon-Syntax Parameter. However, they do show a certain difficulty acquiring the ungrammaticality of the discontinuous construction. The interpretation I suggest is not in terms of a failure to truly reset the parameter, but that the difficulty is related to the fact that the productivity of reciprocalization can actually trigger more than one type of UG-constrained restructuring of the interlanguage grammar. It can indeed lead to parameter resetting which is necessarily UG-constrained. However, productivity can alternatively trigger certain types of transfer that are also compatible with a 'no access' view of L2 acquisition: the misanalysis of *se* verbs as syntactic reciprocal constructions,

and enlarging the set of verbs undergoing lexical reciprocalization in L2-ers' interlanguage grammar of French. It is not particularly clear at this point what conditions would force this or that type of restructuring, and whether L2-ers can recover from every false path. What is indeed obvious is that the chance to be misled is quite high, and hence actual parameter resetting is not easy.

The crucial finding at this point is that the parameter resetting scenario is indeed attested with a group of advanced L2-ers, which supports a 'UG access' view of L2 acquisition. Further testing of highly advanced subjects will reveal to what extent the parameter resetting scenario is representative.

Clearly, a follow-up study will have to take care of certain drawbacks of the present study. First of all, a larger sample size of truly advanced L2-ers is essential for conclusiveness. As to the experimental material, the most obvious imperfection of the present pilot study is associated with two types of items. First, it is clear that subjects treated cross-linguistic and productive French reciprocals differently in the discontinuous construction. To reach more conclusiveness here, larger sets of each type of reciprocals should be involved. Second, some of the passive constructions, used to distinguish the *se* misanalysis and parameter resetting scenarios, turned out to be difficult to judge even for native controls. Clearly, this sentence type should be refined so that the sentences would be felicitous pragmatically. Alternatively, other constructions where *se* and object pronouns do not behave on a par could be involved (see footnote 4). Moreover, follow-up studies will have to look into other properties associated with the parameter, such as the availability of accusative objects, reciprocalization of ECM constructions, and so on (section 2.4). Finally, since the Lexicon-Syntax parameter makes the same claim for reciprocals and reflexives, follow-up studies should look into reflexivization as well.

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