Second Language Acquisition of Russian Applicative Experiencers

by

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A thesis submitted in conformity with the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy
Graduate Department of Linguistics
University of Toronto

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Abstract

This thesis explores the topic of second language (L2) acquisition of Russian applicative experiencers by English and Spanish learners. Applicative experiencers appear with impersonal constructions based on psychological (psych) or activity predicates in Russian. If the verb surfaces in its active form, the nominative argument merges as an experiencer with psych verbs or as an agent with activity verbs; however, if the verb surfaces in its impersonal (non-active) form, this gives rise to a dative experiencer with both types of verbs, which renders these structures interpretationally intricate. These experiencers are proposed to be arguments of a Super High Applicative head. Applicative experiencers are thus argued to manifest yet another type of Russian applicative argument in addition to other previously identified applicatives (Markman 2007). A feature-based approach is taken to delineate the differences between Russian applicative experiencers and their equivalents in English and Spanish, the two background languages of the participants in our studies. Acquisition is also proposed to be understood based on features, in particular on feature re/assembly, as advanced by Lardiere (2009) in her Feature Reassembly Approach (FRA). According to FRA, L2 learners contrast feature configurations from their native grammars with those of the L2, and analyze them by selecting, assembling and mapping the new feature configurations onto appropriate L2 items.
Thirteen advanced English learners, twenty-three advanced Spanish learners, and a control group of native Russian speakers completed Grammaticality Judgement and Semantic Judgement tasks. The results support featural L2 learning; however, the results also show that English learners had more difficulties than Spanish learners in interpreting the target structures, which goes against certain predictions of the FRA. The overall finding suggests that differences in L2 acquisition patterns are modulated by the presence or absence of relevant features in the L1.
Acknowledgments

I have the whole world to thank for this thesis to coming to life.

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Dedicated to my father...

Посвящается папе...
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<tr>
<td>Acc</td>
<td>Accusative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Appl</td>
<td>Applicative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ben</td>
<td>Benefactive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dat</td>
<td>Dative</td>
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<td>Exp</td>
<td>Experiencer</td>
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<td>Gen</td>
<td>Genitive</td>
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<td>Inf</td>
<td>Infinitive</td>
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<tr>
<td>Instr</td>
<td>Instrumental</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ipf</td>
<td>Imperfective</td>
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<tr>
<td>L1</td>
<td>Native speaker</td>
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<tr>
<td>L2</td>
<td>Second language learner</td>
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<td>M</td>
<td>Masculine</td>
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<td>Neut</td>
<td>Neuter</td>
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<td>Nom</td>
<td>Nominative</td>
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<td>Pf</td>
<td>Perfective</td>
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<td>Plural</td>
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<td>Sg</td>
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<td>SLA</td>
<td>Second Language Acquisition</td>
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Chapter 1
Introduction

1 Motivation for the inquiry and objectives

At the core of the present examination are dative applicative arguments and their acquisition by adult second language (henceforth L2) learners. Little research has been done on acquisition in the noncore thematic domain, such as applicative arguments (e.g., Sikorska 2009 on L2 Spanish applicatives, Demuth 1998 on L1 Sesotho applicatives). This calls for the examination of this nontrivial grammatical aspect in languages for at least this reason: as a noncore thematic domain, applicatives, presumably, are computed and acquired differently from the core thematic arguments, such as agent and theme. As we will see in this thesis, their intrinsic properties are complex and subtle. It is therefore important to investigate this domain of grammar not only theoretically, but also empirically, as insights into the acquisition process can shed new light on the nature of noncore argument structure.

In the theoretical chapters, I focus on the structural and semantic properties of dative arguments that receive an experiencer interpretation in Russian. These arguments can be applied to regular impersonal constructions in Russian without affecting the argument structure of an impersonal predicate. Therefore, they are applied or noncore arguments. What is remarkable about these structures is that they alternate between nominative structural subjects and dative applicative arguments. This alternation exists with psychological (psych) and activity verbs alike, as illustrated in (1)a,b with the verb *dream* and (1)c,d with the verb *run*. While nominative structures (1)b,d are regular transitive sentences, their dative counterparts are impersonal sentences where the dative receives an experiencer interpretation. Particularly intriguing is the fact that with activity verbs dative arguments receive an experiencer interpretation.

b. Ja mechtala poplavat’ s del’ finami.. 
I.Nom dreamt.Pst.Ipf.3sg.F swim.Inf with dolphins
‘I dreamt/was dreaming about swimming with dolphins.’

c. Mne segodnja bezhalos’ legko.
‘I felt like running, and I ran, easily today.’
(http://biatlonik.ucoz.ru/news/anastasija_zagorujko_marafonskuju_gonku_mne_bezhalos_legko/2012-03-29-2566)

d. Ja segodnja bezhala legko.
I.Nom today run.Pst.Ipf.3sg.F easily
‘I ran/was running easily today.’

The present examination is carried out within the Minimalist framework (Chomsky 1995, 1998, 1999, 2001), and second language acquisition (SLA) theory. Compared to earlier generative frameworks (Government and Binding, Principles and Parameters, early Minimalism), the advantages of the Minimalist framework are that it has fewer unnecessary restrictions on clausal relationships (e.g., no X’ level), certain stipulations (originally based solely upon English) like pro and theta-theory are considered obsolete and entirely eliminated by some researchers (e.g., Manzini & Roussou 2000), the EPP (i.e., clauses must have subjects) is now parameterized by language, and, among other things, features can bundle, move around and check certain relationships at a distance, via Agree. In principle, the main idea behind Minimalism is to employ the minimum number of operations (Economy) to arrive at an elegant and exhaustive theory of grammar. Guided by these principles, in this thesis I propose a new analysis of applicative experiencer constructions in Russian, and subsequently implement this analysis for the L2 acquisition study described in the second part of this thesis.

All things being equal, the most recent developments in Minimalism, unsurprisingly, have found their way into research on second language acquisition. A parameter-selection view, according to which grammatical settings and their values are predetermined innately by Universal Grammar (UG), has dominated research on language development (both first and second) for decades, but it is being rethought in current research. One way to approach acquisition patterns, be it ultimate attainment in a first (L1) language or variable attainment in a second language, is from the perspective of basic building blocks of grammar, or features. Such a theory has been advanced by Lardiere (2007, 2008, 2009), who hypothesized that L2 learners restructure their grammar by
assembling and reassembling the L1 features, and possibly some new features, into matching lexical items in the target grammar. The Feature Reassembly Approach (FRA) allows an inspection of the grammar that lies beneath parametric classification, and, therefore, aims at offering a more explanatory theory.

Following Lardiere’s introduction of FRA, a few experimental studies have emerged testing the acquisition of formal and semantic features. Perez-Cortes (2012) examined L2 acquisition of a semantic feature [+/-future] that shapes the present progressive in Spanish as acquired by English learners. Another study is by Cho (2012), who investigated L2 acquisition of the semantic features [definite] and [specific] in Russian by English and Korean learners. Further, (2013) claims that acquisition of number and gender in Swahili by speakers of English is best explained by FRA. This approach was also used to explain developmental patterns in L1 acquisition in a study by Stringer (2012), who examined the lexical features, such as [path] and [location], of spatial predicates in French children.

The FRA hypothesis is applied and tested here via studies on the acquisition of applicative Russian experiencers by English and Spanish learners. The acquisition of the construction in question involves much more than the knowledge a learner receives from the input. On the surface, impersonal constructions are marked by distinct morphosyntax (reflexive suffix on a verb, subject in dative case, lack of subject-verb agreement) as in (1)a,c, which triggers subtle semantic interpretations not inferable from the surface alone. Nothing in the syntactic architecture based around an activity verb (1)c makes a learner arrive at an experiencer interpretation, unlike the structure based around a psych verb (1)a where an experiencer argument is expected. The fundamental question, then, is whether an L2 learner only learns patterns seen in the input (for example, Bley-Vroman’s 1989 Fundamental Difference Hypothesis) or an L2 learner is able to go beyond input patterns and acquire very subtle properties of the L2 using universal principles (for example, Schwartz & Sprouse’s 1994, 1996 Full Access/Full Transfer Hypothesis). The debates between these two opposing views on acquisition are fed by the following two observations: (1) the path of learning a second language seems to be different from the path followed in first language acquisition, and, (2) there is evidence that L2 acquisition, unlike L1 acquisition, does not necessarily lead a learner to achieve a full-fledged grammar of the target language. It is thus proposed in this thesis that differential success attested in SLA can be accounted for by FRA.
The choice of L1 grammars in my study is motivated by the following factors. English, a morphologically impoverished language, does not have dative experiencers, and employs different linguistic means (such as the ‘feel like’ construct seen in glosses for (1)a,c) to express an equivalent of the Russian dative experiencer. These learners will have to learn an entirely new feature bundle and map it onto the L2 item. I consider native speakers of English to be ideal subjects to test L2 knowledge of Russian impersonal constructions with dative experiencers. An account of L1 transfer of features and functional categories would be untenable, which calls for investigation into deeper levels of the mental representations of second language learners.

Spanish, by contrast, has both similar grammatical properties to Russian as well as dative experiencers. The morpho-syntactic properties of impersonal constructions are comparable in the two languages, but the semantic components differ such that in Spanish impersonal sentences based on activity verbs (like ‘work’, ‘read’, etc.) take dative benefactive, and not experiencer arguments. Thus, in contrast with English learners, Spanish learners of Russian may supply features (e.g., [benefactive]) of their native grammar to assemble lexical items in the acquisitional mechanism of their L2. Such an inference is based on one of the assumptions of FRA which predicts that the more linguistic features an L2 learner has to select and assemble to arrive at the target grammar, the greater difficulty it poses for learnability.

Of the three languages, Russian is unique in that it allows the application of unselected experiencers to impersonal sentences based on activity verbs. It thus contrasts agent with experiencer arguments depending on whether a verb is in its active or impersonal (reflexivized with –sja) form. Neither English nor Spanish permits this with activity verbs. Consequently, to examine learners’ comprehension of highly complex semantic structures, only advanced speakers of Russian were selected for this study.

1.1 The organization of the thesis

This thesis has two major parts – theoretical and experimental. In Chapter 2, I review the literature on Russian applicative and experiencer constructions and also propose an analysis of Russian applicative experiencers with activity verbs, the theoretical focus of this dissertation.

Chapter 3 examines the current state of second language acquisition theories with an emphasis on the featural approach that is undertaken in the current thesis. I develop a theoretical
framework for the experimental studies and review L2 research on the relevant argument structure, providing the background against which the current investigation can be assessed. In this chapter, I also review English and Spanish experiencer and benefactive argument constructions focusing on how they are represented in the mind of a native speaker. Based on the specific language’s mental representations, learning tasks are formulated for L2 acquirers of Russian, and predictions are laid out at the end of this chapter.

In Chapter 4, I present an experimental study with English learners of Russian based on the theoretical discussion developed in previous chapters.

Chapter 5 presents the data, findings and results from an empirical study with Spanish learners of Russian.

In the final chapter of this thesis, I develop a general discussion of the findings from the two experimental studies and their ramifications for the application of the FRA to the study of second language acquisition. Conclusions, limitations and indications for further work are also reflected upon in this chapter.
Chapter 2
Theoretical background: Russian experiencers and applicative arguments

2 Introduction

The thematic domain of arguments in Russian allows for two types – core and non-core – (or unselected) arguments. Unselected arguments can be broadly defined as elements conceptualized outside of verbal semantics, that is, these are argument-like elements to which a given verb does not assign a thematic role. English, for example, displays cases of unselected complements such as ‘smile her thanks’, ‘run a little run’, ‘wave one’s goodbye’ (Massam 1990, Levin and Rappaport 1988, inter alia), all of which are available in Russian as well.¹ This thesis, however, is concerned with unselected experiencer arguments that do not fall under the grammatical category of complements, but rather are the logical subjects of a proposition they occur with.

More recently, unselected arguments have been standardly referred to as ‘applicative’ arguments (Marantz 1993, Pylkkänen 2002, Cuervo 2003, Georgala 2012, inter alia), and this is the term that will be used in the current work. The non-derivational, or ‘projectionist’, approach is taken in Pylkkänen (2002) (and subsequent work by Cuervo 2003, Grashchenkov & Markman 2008, Rivero 2009, Georgala 2012, inter alia), who builds on Marantz’s (1993)² applicative analysis of English double object constructions, where applicative arguments (low or high) are licensed/projected by an applicative head. The derivational approach to applicative-oblique alternation, in contrast, involves movement to an A-position, as noted in Larson (2014), whereby a thematically marked argument moves into a non-thematic position (Larson 1988). But, as

¹ See Real Puigdollers (2008) for a comprehensive discussion on the status of cognate objects, a type of unselected argument, with respect to their argument/adjunct distinction.

² Marantz (1993) analyses indirect objects in English double-object constructions as arguments of applicative heads (the analysis in (i) is quoted in Larson 2014):

(i)
alluded to in Larson (2014), this approach is burdened by many unresolved challenges and thus fares less well than non-derivational approaches in the overall treatment of applicatives. I shall say no more about derivational analyses of applicatives as it will be argued in this thesis that unselected applicatives are projections of applicative heads.

In this chapter, I first go over the basics of relevant syntactic configurations in Russian and review prototypical Russian experiencer constructions with psychological verbs, placing special emphasis on the constructions with dative experiencers also known as ‘dative impersonal constructions’. The typology of applicative arguments in Russian will be discussed in section 2.3, followed by a review of previous analyses of impersonal constructions proposed in the literature. Based on new empirical facts, I point out the shortcomings of each proposal and subsequently propose a new analysis of impersonal constructions with dative applicative experiencers, detailed in section 2.5 of this chapter.

2.1 Some background on Russian syntax

In Russian, a morphologically rich language, verbal predicates govern and provide information about the argument structure of a sentence. Although standardly Russian is an SVO language, arguments can be scrambled within a sentence without affecting semantic integrity because the verbal predicate carries agreement information pertaining to its arguments, and, in particular, the verb agrees in person, number and gender (in past tense marked sentences) with the subject. Example (2)a illustrates a typical two-place verbal predicate sentence in Russian. As seen in (2)b, the Agent merges in the Spec of vP and subsequently rises to the Spec of T to get its Nominative case, the object NP originates as a complement of V where it checks agreement and gets its Accusative case, and lexical V moves up to v, as standardly analyzed in the literature (cf. Larson 1998, Babby 2009, Bailyn 2012, etc.).

(2) a. Studentka chitala knigu.
   ‘The/a student was reading a book.’
Russian marks canonical subjects with nominative case, but the language also allows for non-canonical case marking on a logical subject. In such construals, the verbal predicate is non-agreeing, or optionally agreeing, with the non-nominative subject (accusative as in (3)a, genitive as in (3)b).

(3) a. Menja toshnit.
   I.Acc nauseous.Pres.3sg
   ‘I am nauseous.’

   b. Pjat’ devushek rabotali/rabotalo tam.
      ‘Five girls worked there.’  
      (from Bošković 2006)
The focal constructions of the present thesis are traditionally referred to as *impersonal* by Slavists due to the absence of a canonical nominative-marked subject. Russian features a plethora of impersonal constructions, with and without logical subjects: with no subject (4)a, with a dative subject and modal predicate (4)b, with a dative subject and infinitival predicate (4)c, with a dative subject and adjectival/adverbial predicate (4)d, and with a dative subject and activity predicate (4)e.

(4)  

a. Na ulitse temneet.  
Outside gets dark.Pres  
‘It’s getting dark outside.’

b. Mne mozhno guljit’ segodnja vecherom.  
I.Dat can walk.Inf today evening.Instr  
‘I am allowed to go out tonight.’

c. Mnepora uxodit’.  
I.Dat time go.Inf  
‘It’s time to go for me.’

d. Mne xolodno.  
I.Dat cold.  
‘I am cold.’

e. Mne prekrasno rabotalos’ s Ridli Skotom i Djulianoj Mur.  
I.Dat wonderfully worked.Refl.Ipf.3sg with Ridley Scott and Julianne Moore  
‘Somehow, it was marvelous for me to work with Ridley Scott and Julianne Moore.’

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3 *Impersonal* is a rather infelicitous umbrella term for the subjectless constructions and constructions with dative, as well as genitive (ia) and instrumental (ib), logical subjects.

(i)  

a. Otveta ne prishlo.  
Answer.Gen not came.Pf.3sg.Neut  
‘No answer came.’

‘The wall was destroyed by a thunderbolt.’

(c)  

nauseous.Pres.3sg  
Intended meaning: ‘One is/ I am nauseous.’

Traditionally, the term was used for proper subjectless impersonals like the one in (ic), but its use has spread to include constructions with non-nominative-marked logical subjects as well (see Shvedova et al. 1980).
Precise analysis of each impersonal type is beyond the scope of this dissertation. I primarily focus on the last type of impersonal constructions, (4)e, which involve an activity verb and an applicative dative argument that receives an experiencer interpretation. Interesting analyses have been proposed in the literature, all of which appear problematic, as I will point out in due course; I will subsequently propose a new applicative analysis.

Because dative case-marked arguments are central to the present examination, let me briefly allude to the case assigning mechanism in Russian, keeping in mind that this thesis is concerned with the unselected, or non-core, dative arguments. There are, unsurprisingly, quite a few approaches to dative case assignment in Russian. Bailyn (2012) proposes a configurational analysis for the VP-internal dative case illustrated in (5), where the dative NP must be located within the c-domain of a verb that assigns that dative case (the feature [quantized] refers to the verb relevant for accusative case assignment in Bailyn’s framework).

(5)  

Another approach, arguably the most prevalent in recent literature, is that of an applicative functional phrase (Dyakonova 2005, Grashchenkov & Markman 2008), whereby dative is assigned by an applicative head in the Spec-head configuration, as in (6).

(6)  

In this thesis, I adapt the applicative approach under the assumption that the applicative head assigns inherent (or theta-based) dative case to its argument (at the pre-derivational/syntactic stage) and that this argument can be carried through the syntactic derivation unaffected. Put more
generally, once inherent case has been licensed along with the theta role on an argument, it remains invisible to, and thus unaffected by, the rest of the derivation (cf. Woolford 2006). It appears that Russian provides independent evidence for the existence of the applicative phrase, as will be shown by the array of constructions (section 2.3) that are best analyzed as applicative.

2.2 Russian experiencers

2.2.1 Russian experiencers with psychological verbs

Psychological predicates (verbs that describe psychological and mental states and verbs of perception) in Russian are traditionally classified into three groups with different case-marked arguments (Holloway-King 1993). These verbs involve an experiencer participant, who is the individual who experiences the mental state/perception described by this verb. Since Belletti & Rizzi (1988), psych verbs have been grouped into classes depending on the case (or syntactic position) of the experiencer that occurs with the verb.4 Consider examples of Russian psych verbs in (7):

(7) Class I (the temere class): Nominative Experiencer (bojatsja ‘fear’, nenavidet’ ‘hate’, xotet’ ‘want’, prezirat’ ‘despise’, etc.)
Sjoma ljubit Mashu.
Sjoma.Nom loves Mary.Acc
‘Sjoma loves Mary.’

Class II (the preoccupare class): Accusative Experiencer (udivljat’ ‘surprise’, privlekat’ ‘attract’, zlit’ ‘anger’)
Sjoma razvlekaet Mashu.
Sjoma.Nom amuses Mary.Acc
‘Sjoma amuses Mary.’

Class III (the piacere class): Dative Experiencer (dokuchat’ ‘annoy’, nравится ‘like’, nadoedat’ ‘bother’, etc.)
Sjoma nadoedaet Mashe.
Sjoma.Nom bothers Mary.Dat
‘Sjoma bothers Mary.’

4 A similar tripartite classification is found in many other languages: Bulgarian (Slabakova 1994), Dutch (Zaenen 1988, 1993), Italian (Perlmutter 1984, Belletti & Rizzi 1988), French (Legendre 1989) to name a few.
Psych verbs are theoretically attractive primarily from the point of view of thematic linking to syntactic positions. They have received a wide spectrum of analyses, especially for non-nominative experiencers (Belletti & Rizzi 1988, Grimshaw 1990, Pesetsky 1995, Landau 2010, etc.). While nominative experiencers (Class I in (7)) are straightforwardly analyzed as regular transitive structures where the experiencer is generated as an external argument and thus receives structural nominative case, accusative and dative experiencers (Class II and III in (7)) are highly problematic due to their syntactic and semantic prominence. In particular, if the same theta-role is assigned to different syntactic positions, then a problem arises for a uniform analysis of (experiencer) arguments (if one adheres to this view), the syntactic principle most notably expressed by Baker’s (1988) UTAH (Uniformity of Theta Assignment Hypothesis), which states that each theta-role is to be associated with a particular syntactic position.

Russian psych verbs with nominative experiencers are not exceptional and so these experiencers occupy the structural subject position in a clause (8)a,c. However, when the verb is reflexivized (suffixed with the reflexive morpheme –sja (–s’ after vowels)), it surfaces with dative arguments, as shown in (8)b,d:

(8) a. Ja uslyshalashagipnay kryshe.  
I.Nom heard.Pf.3sg.F steps.Pl.Nom on roof  
‘I heard steps on the roof.’

5 Sonnenhauser (2010) claims that there is yet another class of experiencer verbs that take nominative experiencers with reflexivized verbs such as radovat’sja (rejoice-sja) and zlit’sja (get angry-sja) (ib) commonly “regarded as the subject-experiencer derivation of a basic non-reflexivized object-experiencer verb (i.e. radovat’ ([to rejoice/please]) and zlit’ ([to anger]) (ia))” (p.331). At odds with the mainstream view, Sonnenhauser proposes that nominative experiencers such as ja in (ib) are object experiencer verb structures of their own kind; see the original source for more details.

(i) a. On raduet/zlit menja.  
He.Nom makes happy/angry me.Acc  
‘He makes me happy/angry.’

b. Ja radujus’ / zljus’ nage.  
I.Nom rejoice he.Dat / anger on he.Gen  
‘I rejoice at him/ anger at him.’

6 In their seminal work, Belletti & Rizzi (1988) treated psychological predicates with accusative and dative experiencers as unaccusative structures such that these verbs assign inherent case to their experiencers in the lexicon, which can only be assigned inside the VP. However, the unaccusative analysis of class II verbs proved to be untenable, as argued in subsequent work by Grimshaw (1990), Pesetsky (1995) and Landau (2010), among others. Class III verbs seem to be truly unaccusative structurally, as pointed out by Pesetsky (1995) and Reinhart (1996).
The morphosyntactic difference between the two alternants is rather obvious. Yet, the dative alternant does not lend itself to a structural subject interpretation. One possibility is to consider the dative alternant as an argument of a class III psych verb. Under this analysis, it would belong with class III psych verbs, where the dative is commonly analyzed as corresponding to a recipient role. In such an analysis, most elaborately examined in Landau (2003/2010) as a locative analysis of experiencers, the dative argument (referred to as a ‘quirky subject’ by the author) originates within a prepositional phrase, where it receives an inherent dative case, and then undergoes inversion and ends up in Spec,TP (under the assumption that multiple specifiers are possible), as shown in (9) (Landau’s 2010 ex. 168):

(N.A.Nekrasov, quoted in Janko-Troickaja 1962)
While this treatment of (stative) psych verbs certainly has its merits, I do not see this option as viable for the constructions highlighted in the present examination which are formed with activity verbs (e.g., work) as in (4)e above. In these examples, the dative obtains an experiencer interpretation only within an impersonal configuration, that is, it is not an experiencer argument selected by the verb, as implicated by Landau’s analysis. Instead, I propose an applicative account for the alternation exhibited in (8) in section 2.5.3.

The nominative subjects in (8) can be characterized as having an agent-like property in addition to being experiencers. At first this claim sounds controversial considering that psych verbs are said to have an experiencer, and not an agent, argument. However, these verbs seem to be only weakly agentive. More specifically, Russian data show that an experiencer argument of class I psych verbs has some agent-like properties, which, I propose, can be encoded in features. The meaning that the nominative experiencer conveys is ‘I am in a state of complete mental awareness’. A sentence with the nominative is thus natural with an agentive adverb such as purposely or consciously (10)a,c. (10)b illustrates that the dative is infelicitous with the agentive

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7 For a similar view on the agentivity of experiencers, see Markman (2004), Sonnenhauser (2010), and Paducheva (2004).
adverb *purposely*, which indicates that there is no kind of control available to an individual and that the dative is the experiencer par excellence.

(10) a. Ja namerenno xotel opozdat’ na uzhin.
    I.Nom purposely wanted.Ipf.M be-late.Inf on dinner
    ‘I purposely wanted to be late for a dinner.’

b. Mne (*namerenno) xotelos’ opozdat’ na uzhin.
    I.Dat purposely wanted.Refl.Ipf.Neut be-late.Inf on dinner
    ‘I wanted to be late for a dinner.’

c. Ta, o kotoroj ja soznatel’no mechtal chut’ li ni s detstva.
    That about whom I.Nom consciously dreamt.3sg.M almost Prtcl from childhood
    ‘That about whom I consciously … dreamt almost from my childhood.’

These two opposites, therefore, surface in two different contexts – the ability to control emotional states, or [+control], and the inability to control emotional states, or [-control]. To formalize the difference, I thus propose to code individuals in these contexts with a feature [control].

The idea of coding arguments in features is inspired by Dowty’s (1991) proto-roles, which are divided into proto-agent and proto-patient domains. Dowty’s proto-agent properties are: 1) volitional involvement in the event/state; 2) sentience; 3) causing an event or change of state in the other argument, and 4) movement. Of these, *volitional involvement* is similar to the feature [control] that I am proposing. There does not seem to be a principled difference between volition and control. My intuition is that ‘ability to control’ communicates the semantics of nominative experiencers more accurately. Additional support for the idea that nominative experiencers are capable of control is found in Serzhant (2013), who claims that

“[t]he presence or absence of volitionality on the part of the highest ranked argument
[i.e., experiencer] is well known to be the conditioning factor behind canonical versus

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8 Intuitions about the presence vs. absence of control with nominative and dative experiencers have been collected from native speakers of Russian. English and Italian speakers (to whom I have communicated the difference in Russian) have very strong judgments about the absence of control. Interestingly, these languages do not have dative alternants with class I psych verbs.
non-canonical case-marking alternations, in combination with additional verb
morphology (cf. McCawley 1976; Klaiman 1980; Melis and Flores 2012). However, in
some cases, there is no additional verb morphology involved, and the presence/absence of
volitionality on the experiencer argument is entailed by the case frame only: only the
Nom marked experiencer is compatible with volitionality on the part of the experiencer,
while the Dat marked experiencer is not.” (p.11).

Wierzbicka’s (1996) research on Russian impersonal constructions emphasizes that dative
constructions (Mne xochetsja (I.Dat want+-sja)) are semantically marked in contrast with
nominative constructions (Ja xochu (I want)). In the nominative construction, subjects are
usually responsible for mental activities (which are not necessarily premeditated), whereas dative
constructions explicitly deny such a responsibility on the part of a dative experiencer. I take
Wierzbicka’s insight as providing further support for my proposal to code arguments in features.

2.2.2 Russian experiencers with activity predicates

The other verbs in this study that take dative experiencers in Russian are activity verbs such as
walk, work, sleep, eat, sing, write, dance, run, play and read. These verbs can function either as
unergatives (verbs which have only one argument – a structural subject) (11)a, or as optionally
transitive verbs (11)b. Both Russian and English allow for sentences like ‘I walked the dog’. The
parallel between the two languages however ends there, since Russian also displays dative
experiencers with these verbs (reflexivized with –sja/-s’), shown in (11)c,d:

(11) a. Ja pochitala s udovol’stviem.
    ‘I read with pleasure.’

    b. Ja prochitala rasskaz {umyshlenno/s udovol’stviem}.
    I.Nom read.Pst.Pf.1sg.F tale deliberately with pleasure
    ‘I read the tale {deliberately/with pleasure}.’

9 (11)d seems to be marginal for some speakers but totally grammatical for others, which, in fact, reflects many
analyses that advocate that the reflexive morpheme absorbs accusative case and that this is why a nominative theme
is ungrammatical in impersonal constructions (cf. se/si in Romance languages as analyzed by Reinhart (1996), etc.).
I attribute this split in judgements to dialect differences.
c. Mne pochitalos’ (*umyshlenno) s udovol’stviem.
   ‘I read (a little bit) with pleasure.’

d. Mne rasskaz prochitalsja (*umyshlenno) s udovol’stviem.
   ‘I read the tale with pleasure.’

The differences between nominative and dative alternants in morphosyntax are narrowed down to the following (the properties of the dative alternant are highlighted below):

i) the highest argument is in the dative case (11)c,d;

ii) a non-agreeing or a default verb suffixed with the reflexive –sjja deriving the so-called ‘non-active’ verbal form;

iii) if there is a nominative argument, the verb is in agreement with it (11)d;

iv) if there is a nominative argument, there is a 3rd person restriction on this argument: ‘*Mne poslyshalsja ty (To me heard-sjja you.2sg).’

As with psych verbs, I suggest that the semantic difference between the nominative (11)b and dative (11)c,d counterparts is attributed to the feature ‘ability to control states/events’, or [control]. Namely, the nominative sentence implies that the act of reading was done by the agent in a state of conscious (self-) control (the reader intentionally engages in reading). Thus, the nominative subject is [+control]. This is also evidenced by felicitous construal with the agentive adverb deliberately (11). The dative sentence, in contrast, implies that the state in which the action of reading was being done was still conscious, but due to some factors extraneous to the experiencer (such as the book being so intriguing, for instance), and was therefore uncontrollable by the reader. The dative experiencer is thus [-control] and is not acceptable with agentive adverbs such as deliberately (11).

An analogous contrast may be shown by the pair of should/would modal verbs in English as in (12), whereby in the situation an (12)a the speaker was in control of the event described by the verb and nothing prevented him/her from running as it was a volitional choice. Thus, when a tag (‘because I chose not to’) implying agentivity/control is added, no contradiction arises. In (12)b,
by contrast, the choice ‘not to run’ was not up to the speaker, as something prevented the event from happening, and this something was beyond the speaker’s ability to control. As a result, an explicit volition-oriented tag results in contradiction.

(12)  
\(a.\) I should have run, but I did not because I chose not to.
\(b.\) *I would have run, but I did not because I chose not to.

I will have more to say about Russian unselected experiencers in section 2.3.3, which, as I propose in this thesis, represent a type of applicative argument. Anticipating the analysis detailed in section 2.5, dative arguments are proposed to be introduced by a Super High Applicative phrase.

2.3 Typology of Russian applicative constructions

Traditionally understood, applicatives are constructions with an additional object selected by a verb, where the verb is marked overtly or covertly with an applicative morphology (e.g., Uto-Aztecan (Langacker 1977) and Bantu (Alsina and Mchombo 1993) languages, among others). Because the applicative approach seems to provide elegant answers to some debated and unresolved conundrums (e.g., double-object constructions), the number of languages where linguists have identified the existence of applicative arguments has grown considerably. Recent research has mapped two of the languages of the present study, Spanish and Russian, onto the continuum of languages with applicative arguments.\(^\text{10}\)

Pylkkänen (2002), in her influential study on applicative arguments, distinguishes between low and high applicative heads – the low applicative relates an applied argument to the direct object, whereas the high applicative relates an applied argument to the event of the predication. To diagnose for the height of the applicative, Pylkkänen argues that low applicatives are incompatible with i) unergatives (which are inherently objectless) and ii) stative verbs like ‘hold’ because low applicatives imply transfer of possession (to or from the applicable argument).

\(^{10}\) See Cuervo (2003) for one of the most comprehensive studies of Spanish applicatives.
Russian unselected arguments represent a range of applicative constructions. Markman (2007) and Grashchenkov & Markman (2008) identify high and low applicative arguments in Russian, and Markman (2007) provides a more fine-grained classification of applicatives in Russian. In the sections that follow, I describe the applicative arguments in Russian identified to date and propose a new type of applicative argument, thus expanding and updating the typology of Russian applicatives.

2.3.1 Russian High Applicatives

2.3.1.1 High Applicative TO

High applicative heads host non-selected datives with the semantics of benefactive/malefactive and relate an individual in the dative to an event, in the sense of Pylkkänen (2002). Datives such as ‘nam’ in (13)a are proposed to be arguments of a High Applicative TO (recipient) head and are interpreted as a possessive and a bene-/malefactive simultaneously as “one usually benefits/suffers from having one’s own possessions affected” (Markman 2007: 3).

(13)  a. Dima s’jel nam ves’ sup.
        Dima.Nom ate.Pf.M we.Dat all soup
        ‘Dima ate up all of our soup on us.’

        b. Mne Dima sbegal v magazin.
        I.Dat Dima.Nom ran.Pf.M to store
        ‘Dima ran to the store for me.’

        c. Dima derzhit Mishe dver’.
        Dima.Nom holds.M Misha.Dat door
        ‘Dima is holding the door for Misha.’
That these datives are in a high applicative phrase is supported by the tests originally proposed by Pylkkänen (2002): the datives are compatible with unergatives (13)b and also with statives (13)c (examples are from Markman 2007). Crucially, the dative involves no transfer of possession, as is the case with low applicative arguments (discussed in 2.3.2). The analysis of (13)a is summarized in (13)d where the VoiceP with the nominative agentive argument in its Spec dominates the High Applicative TO. However, the presence of a VoiceP is not a necessary condition for the grammaticality of the applicative structure as it may freely occur with non-agentive causers, as illustrated in (14)a with the analysis in (14)b:

(14) a. Mne razbilo okno (vetrom).
    I.Dat broke.Pf.3sg.Neut window.Acc (by window)
    ‘The window got broken (by the wind) on me.’
What is noteworthy here is that (14)a is an impersonal sentence of a non-reflexive morphological formation (much like the focal structures of this thesis), which is equally grammatical in the absence of the dative argument. To put it differently, the (impersonal) predicate does not require the dative argument to be present, but it enables its presence by employing an applicative, adjunct licensing, head. \(^{11}\)

High Applicative TO arguments are part of the phenomenon under examination, and are the experimental stimuli in the present study (see Appendix E and F). Example (15) exemplifies yet another instance of applicatives’ recipient semantics rendered with the preposition ‘na’ and translated into English with ‘for’.

(15) Na Fjodora mnogo ljudej rabotaet na fabrike.
    For Fjodor.Acc lots people.Acc work.Pres.3sg at factory
    ‘Fjodor has lots of people work for him at the factory.’

English ‘for’ has a wider distribution of uses and meanings than its Russian literal equivalent ‘dlja’, which is typically used to convey the sense of ‘for the benefit of’, as in (16)a. To this effect, Offord & Gogolitsyna (2005: 338) accurately note that “dlja is much narrower in meaning than English for, which may have to be translated by other prepositions such as za+Acc or

\(^{11}\) Russian impersonal constructions represent an array of structures with different morpho-syntactic make-up examined in works by Comrie (1974), Babby (1989, 1998) inter alia.
na+Acc…, or indeed by no preposition at all.” The former case is illustrated in (15) and the latter in (16)b.

    ‘A present for (one’s) friend.’  ‘A present for (one’s) friend.’

Interestingly, prepositions with applicative arguments are not given any special treatment in previous studies on Russian applicatives where they seem to merge at the Spec, HighAppl along with their respective DPs. Following Landau (2003/2010), Markman (2004) proposes a configuration where PP is merged in the Spec of EventP, whereby the zero preposition (P ‘TO’ in her terms) assigns dative case to the NP. Nothing is said about genitive or accusative assigning prepositions heading the applicative argument, but prima facie there is no reason to treat these prepositions any differently from zero P ‘TO’ since these arguments are marked with the same benefactive semantics.

2.3.1.2 High Applicative AT

Another type of high applicative argument found in Russian is with the preposition ‘u’ that corresponds to the English ‘at’. Building on Pylkkänen’s (2002) typology of applicatives, Markman (2007) suggests that the example in (17)a demonstrates the prepositional argument that ‘possesses/controls a situation x’ (p.6) and is thus dubbed a ‘control locative’, whereas the one in (17)b is ambiguous between a possessor locative and a control locative interpretation.

(17) a. U menja Dima pel i tantseval.
    ‘I had Dima sing and dance.’
    Control locative

    b. U nas Dima s’jel ves’ sup.
    P we.Gen Dima.Nom ate.Pf.3sg.M all soup
    ‘Dima ate up all of our soup on us.’
    ‘We had Dima eat all the soup.’
    Possessor locative
    Control locative
As seen in (17)c, HighApplAT takes VoiceP as its complement, or, in other words, the (genitive) applicative argument merges above the agent and is capable of controlling the agent (which is a controller by definition). This fact is even more intriguing since the configuration in Russian is monoclausal and not biclausal as in English, as the glosses indicate.

To further evidence that genitive applicatives act as controllers, Markman provides examples such as (18) showing that naturally occurring events are beyond the control of an individual and are thus incompatible with applicative controllers ((18) can only have the meaning of a speaker’s location, ‘at our place/location’ in this case):

(18)  
U nas  zashlo  solntse.  
P we.Gen  set.Pf.3sg.Neut  sun  
Control locative: ‘*We had the sun set.’

2.3.2  Russian Low Applicatives

Low applicatives identify certain relations between two entities and introduce possessors (Low Applicative AT), sources (Low Applicative FROM), and recipients (Low Applicative TO). I consider each type in detail below.

2.3.2.1  Low Applicative AT

Low Applicative AT generates possessor arguments, such as ‘u menja’ in (19)a. Markman (2007) refers to these as ‘pure’ possessor constructions, analyzing the genitive possessors as in (19)b:
In Russian, the most natural expression of a possessor is manifested by the genitive case, and since dative-marked arguments do not induce a pure possessor reading in Russian, they are ungrammatical in such semantic collocations (19)a. I shall say nothing else about these structures as they are not part of the present study design.

### 2.3.2.2 Low Applicative FROM

Low applicative FROM relates two individuals/entities such that one is in possession of the other (as in (20)) and then the possessed one becomes lost (pace Pylkkänen 2002) thus rendering an affected interpretation of the possessor. This is why Low Source FROM Applicatives can occur with both transitive and unaccusative (20)a verbs, but not with unergatives since they lack internal arguments (examples are from Markman 2007).

(19) a. U menja / *mne est’ kniga.
    P I.Gen / *I.Dat be book
    ‘I have a book.’

b. PredP
   Pred est’
   PP
   u menja
   LowApplAT’
   NP
   kniga

(20) a. U menja/*mne propal kosheljok.
    P I.Gen /*I.Dat disappeared.Pf.3sg.M wallet.M
    Possessor Loc: ‘My wallet disappeared on me.’
Datives do not appear able to felicitously express a Low Source Applicative, as shown in (20)a, so it is unsurprising that the combination of dative High TO Applicatives and Low FROM Applicatives results in a perfectly grammatical structure as illustrated in (21).\(^{12}\) In other words, high and low applicatives can coexist in one structure.

(21) a. Dima mne s’jel u Mishy vse konfety.
    ‘Dima ate all of Misha’s candies on me.’

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\(^{12}\) Levine (1984) suggests that the choice between dative and genitive marked arguments in Russian possessive constructions depends on the pragmatic choice of a speaker such that “if, in the speaker’s view, the possessor is an affected participant in the situation he is describing, he may (if he wishes to emphasize this fact) select the dative case [(ia)]; otherwise, the genitive [(ib)]” (p.498).

(i) a. Babushka izbalovala mne syna.
    ‘Grandmother spoiled my son.’ (Levine 1984: 494)

Given the semantics of affectedness induced by the dative argument in (ia), a more accurate translation, however, would be ‘Grandmother spoiled my son on me’. The genitive alternant (ib), by contrast, expresses factual, non-emotional information in the relation of possession.
There may seem to be some semantic resemblance between HighApplTO as in (13) above and LowApplFROM, but the two have a different syntax, as Markman (2007) suggests, such that HighApplTO does not require an internal argument, whereas LowApplFROM does.

### 2.3.2.3 Low Applicative TO

Russian evidences yet another Low Applicative head, LowApplTO, that introduces a recipient in double object constructions, as ‘kotu’ in (22)a and ‘sestre’ in (22)b, both bearing dative case.

(22) a. Fedja dal kotu moloko.
Fedja gave.Pf.3sg.M cat.Dat milk.Acc
‘Fedja gave cat some milk.’

b. Sasha poslal posylku sestre.
Sasha sent.Pf.3sg.M parcel.Acc sister.Dat
‘Sasha sent a parcel to his sister.’

It would appear that double object structures syntactically are reminiscent of the High Applicative TO structures as in (13), repeated below as (23), in that they carry dative marked arguments while other Low Applicatives are genitive-marked, and semantically they also seem to overlap in that if one is a recipient of something, then one presumably benefits from the receiving event.
However, clear evidence for a distinct Low Applicative TO, which contrasts with High Applicative TO, comes from semantically ambiguous sentences such as (24), exemplified in Markman (2007):

(24)  
a. Mama ispekla Dima pirog.  
Mama.baked.Pf.3sg.F Dima.Dat pie.Acc  
‘Mom baked Dima a pie (so that Dima has a pie).’  

b.  

When Dima is interpreted as a beneficiary of the baking event, the dative merges in High Applicative TO, and when the dative is the recipient of the theme, it merges in the Spec of Low Applicative TO (24). Once again, the data shows that every applicative head considered above has its own unique semantic/thematic association.

(25) is an example similar to the experimental stimuli from the study with Spanish learners of Russian (see Appendix B, item 72). However, with respect to the target answers, nothing hinges on the fact that these structures are ambiguous between a recipient (rendered with the preposition ‘to’) and a beneficiary (rendered with the preposition ‘for’) reading since the foremost task for the Spanish participant was to differentiate the experiencer context from a non-experiencer (or beneficiary/recipient) one and not between the recipient and the beneficiary (see section 3.9.2.2 on learning tasks for Spanish L2 learners).
(25) V detstve mama pisala Natashe pis’ma.
   ‘In (Natasha’s) childhood, her mother was writing letters for her.’  Beneficiary
   ‘In (Natasha’s) childhood, her mother was writing letters to her.’  Recipient

2.3.3 Russian Super High Applicatives

Russian displays yet another type of unselected argument, mentioned above in section 2.2.2: dative experiencers with activity verbs, which, as I propose, belong to the class of applicative arguments. These arguments can optionally merge in configurations with reflexivized activity verbs as exemplified in (26).

(26) a. Mne spalos’ po doroge v aeroport.
   I.Dat slept.Refl.Ipf.3sg.Neut on way to airport
   ‘I felt like sleeping (and I slept) on the way to the airport.’

   b. Mne chitalos’ vchera nochju.
   I.Dat read.Refl.Ipf.3sg.Neut yesterday night.Instr
   ‘For some reason, I felt like reading (and I read) last night.’

Interestingly, applicative experiencers seem to be compatible with benefactive dative applicatives licensed by the high applicative head. I consider the sentences in (27) grammatical and acceptable, while for some native speakers they are somewhat odd-sounding. What is important, however, is that they are not downright unacceptable.

(27) a. (?) Mne kniga chitalas’ Dime s udovol'stviem.
   ‘For some reason, I felt like reading (and I read) a/the book to Dima with pleasure.’

   b. (?) Mne stixi pisalis’ Dime.
   ‘For some reason, I felt like writing (and I wrote) poems to Dima.’

Standardly referred to as ‘impersonal’ constructions, the construction in (26) has received due attention in theoretical discussions. I will review the most prominent accounts of the Russian impersonal construction with dative arguments in the next section and will point out some
inconsistencies and inaccuracies. The precise analysis of the super high applicative experiencers will be laid out in section 2.5, which, in a nutshell, features experiencer arguments as licensed by the super high applicative head; these applicative datives are found with experiencer (26)a and activity verbs (26)b.

2.3.4 Summary

Russian exhibits a rather wide spectrum of unselected arguments licensed by low and high applicative heads. The licensing position of the applicative within the clausal architecture gives rise to different interpretation. Thus, possessors, sources, and recipients are licensed in low applicative heads, while high applicatives introduce bene-/malefactives and controlling locatives. Controlling locatives merge above agent-introducing heads, which technically makes them very high applicatives (in the absence of a better term). In this thesis, I also propose that Russian exemplifies yet another type of high applicative argument, an applicative experiencer, thus expanding the typology of Russian applicative arguments.

The range of interpretations exemplified by the Russian applicative arguments can be found in other languages as well. Boneh & Hash (2011), in their research on the non-core dative applicatives of French, provide examples with recipients, beneficiaries, maleficiaries, and possessors, which, according to the authors, are to be classified as high applicatives given their syntactic behaviour, unlike applicative arguments in English, which can be only low.13 Roberge & Troberg (2010) propose an elegant account for French unselected high applicative arguments, an account that reconciles the alleged properties of both low and high applicatives in French.

13 The respective examples are from Boneh & Hash (2011, ex.12):

(i) a. Marie a écrit une lettre à Paul.  
Marie wrote a letter to Paul  
‘Marie wrote a letter to Paul.’

b. Marie a repeint un vieux portail à ses voisins.  
Marie painted an old gate to her neighbors  
‘Marie painted the old gate for her neighbors.’

c. Marie a crevé deux pneus à ses voisins.  
Marie punctured two tires to her neighbors  
‘Marie punctured two tires on her neighbors.’

d. L’infirmière scolaire a coupé les ongles à tous les élèves.  
The nurse of school cut the nails to all the pupils  
‘The school nurse cut the pupils’ nails (on them).’
Greek and German are also among the applicative-licensing languages, as Georgala’s (2012) study shows, and so are Italian (Folli & Harley 2006) and Spanish (Cuervo 2003, *inter alia*), the latter of which is of direct relevance to the present examination and will be discussed in section 3.7.

2.4 Previous analyses of dative impersonal constructions

Impersonal constructions with dative arguments (found crosslinguistically in Slavic, Germanic, East-Asian and other languages) have attracted linguists’ attention largely due to the non-canonical nature of the preverbal, and sometimes the only, argument marked with the dative case. Though proposing different analyses and terminology, linguists seem to agree that these arguments manifest the logical subject of a predication. Such arguments were as a consequence baptized ‘quirky subjects’ to fit not only their atypical non-nominative case marking, but also the fact that they pass standard subjecthood tests such as raising (in raising constructions, subjects raise to satisfy EPP), extraction from coordinated structures (only grammatical with coordinated subjects), control (being a controller), reflexivization (ability to bind a reflexive morpheme), adverbial modification, nominalizations and other diagnostics (Thráinsson 1979, Masullo 1992, Sigurðsson 2002, Fernandez-Soriano 1999, *inter alia*).

Pre-minimalist and early-minimalist literature provides insightful analyses for the structural/derivational properties of impersonal structures with datives in Russian. These analyses, however, overlook their semantic interpretations, that is, that of an experiencer (Neidle 1988, Greenberg & Franks 1991, Schoorlemmer 1994, Kondrashova 1994, Moore & Perlmutter 2000, Perlmutter & Moore 2002, etc.). Interpretations of impersonal structures are most commonly referred to as ‘modal’ or ‘vague’. This line of inquiry has produced several notable accounts reviewed in the following sections.

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14 Previous research focuses mainly on infinitival constructions with dative subjects. The idea is that these datives are real grammatical subjects (even if marked with the dative case), and not adjuncts of some sort, when they originate within infinitival clauses as in (i) ((i) is from Moore & Perlmutter 2000: 388):

(i) Mne ne rabotat’ odnomu.
    I.Dat Neg work.Inf alone.Dat
    ‘It’s not (in the cards) for me to work alone.’
2.4.1 Monoclausal analyses of impersonals

2.4.1.1 Rivero (2003)

Rivero (2003) examines in detail ‘involuntary state constructions’, another term for impersonal constructions, with dative subjects in South (Bulgarian and Slovenian) and West (Polish and Czech) Slavic languages. The dative in this analysis is generated in a high Applicative phrase. Rivero argues that involuntary state constructions in West Slavic (Polish (29) and Czech) describe eventualities with the preverbal nominal marked dative being an involuntary agent/doer. More concretely, if a tag such as ‘… but he did not read it’ is added to the Polish/Czech equivalent of ‘John felt like reading books’, it results in a contradiction along the lines of ‘John read this book with pleasure but he did not read it’. By contrast, in South Slavic (Bulgarian (28) and Slovenian) involuntary constructions do not describe eventualities; rather, they are modal or dispositional. That is, if a coda such as ‘… but in fact he did not read any’ is added to a Bulgarian sentence corresponding to ‘John felt like reading books’, no contradiction arises.

(28)  

a. Na decata im se raboteše.  
    P children.the 3Pl.Dat Refl work.lpf.3sg  
    ‘The children {were in a working mood/ felt like working}.’

b. Na Ivan mu se četjaja knigi.  
    P Ivan 3sg.Dat Refl read.lpf.3pl book.Pl  
    ‘John {was in the mood/desired} to read books.’

(29)  

Jankowi czytało się tę książkę z przyjemnością.  
    ‘John read this book with pleasure.’

(30)  

Mne rasskaz chitalsja s udovol’stviem.  
    ‘For some reason, I was reading the tale with pleasure.’

The Russian construction (30) patterns with the Polish-type (29) of involuntary structure, rather than the Bulgarian-type. That is, in Rivero’s terms they are eventualities (i.e., something that actually took place in the past, in contrast to modality). Rivero’s analysis of the eventuality-type constructions is summarized below:
In (31) the dative is directly merged in the Spec of the Applicative phrase, its case is inherent, and since it is not an argument selected by the verb in TP (ApplP takes TP as a complement), its syntactic status is that of an adjunct. According to Rivero, involuntary state constructions can never be paired with control because their subjects are oblique, that is, not agents. Dative subjects are involuntary agents in West Slavic (Polish (29)), and experiencers in South Slavic (Bulgarian (28)).

I likewise propose that Russian datives are in a high Applicative phrase, as indicated by their special interpretative status. According to the pattern that Rivero identified, Russian datives in (30) must be grouped with Polish datives in (29) and thus be treated as ‘involuntary agents’. But this is not the case since Russian datives, as I propose, have an experiencer interpretation with activity verbs.

2.4.1.2 Evaluating impersonal modality: Benedicto (1995)

Benedicto (1995) analyzes Russian dative impersonal structures with activity verbs as in (32) and treats this kind of impersonal as a modal construction. The author claims that one of the most important characteristics of Russian impersonals is that they carry modality and that this modality “is specialized for psychological circumstance”.
To capture the modality interpretation in terms of syntactic representation, Benedicto stipulates a Modal Phrase with the dative in its Spec position. This phrase is headed by an empty modal head $\emptyset \Psi$ whose denotation is: $\lambda P \lambda x (\emptyset \Psi (\chi)(x))$, or a relation between individuals and properties. It thus accounts for the modality interpretation with the following derivation:

For the sake of argument, let us assume that impersonal constructions are indeed modal. If this is the case, the prediction is that impersonal and modal constructions should have the same truth-values. Let us test this prediction by comparing impersonals to structures with other modal verbs such as ‘could’ (34)a and ‘need’ (34)c.\(^\text{15}\)

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\(^{15}\) Not all modal verbs in Russian take dative subjects and no modal verb can host the reflexive marker –sja, i.e. *‘Me could-sja read’ to mean ‘To me was possible/able to read’. Therefore, these modals do not form syntactically impersonal predicates. But dative subjects are quite common with modal verbs as illustrated in (34).
(34) a. *Mne chitalos’ vchera vecherom, no ja ne chitala.
   ‘I felt like reading yesterday night and I read, but I did not read.’

   b. Mne nuzhno bylo chitat’ vchera vecherom, no ja ne chitala.
   I.Dat need.Neut was read.Inf yesterday night but I.Nom not read.Ipf.sg.F
   ‘I needed to read yesterday night, but I did not read.’

   c. *Mne guljalos’ vchera vecherom, no ja ne guljala.
   ‘I felt like going out yesterday night and I went out, but I did not go out.’

   d. Mne mozhno bylo guljat’ vchera vecherom, no ja ne guljala.
   I.Dat may was go out.Inf yesterday night but I.Nom not go out.Ipf.sg.F
   ‘I was allowed to go out yesterday night, but I didn't go.’

The data in (34) shows that the modal and impersonal constructions have different truth-values as diagnosed by the tag ‘but I did not V’. Therefore, the prediction is not borne out. Impersonal constructions denote eventuality, which means that the event has to have occurred (even if for a millisecond). Note also that there are no syntactic or semantic triggers (which would induce telicity or perfectivity) for the sentence to render eventuality. It is indeed an inherent semantic property of the construction. The ungrammaticality of (34)a,c arises, therefore, unsurprising, since what is being denied by the tag ‘but I did not V’ is the event happening (or inherent eventuality of the construction).

My view against modal analyses of impersonal datives is also corroborated by the observation made in Schoorlemmer (1994): “dative subjects express a state of mind or even a physical sensation (like cold). It does not seem to be fruitful for any discussion of modality to include such experiencers in the group of modal subjects. Therefore, if the ability to assign dative to an external argument is linked exclusively with modality, then the MP [Modal Phrase] will not be anything but a Dative Assigning Phrase.” (p.147).

Thus, I conclude that modal analyses are not tenable for the Russian impersonal constructions with dative arguments as they predict inaccurate interpretations.
2.4.2 Biclausal analyses of Impersonals

2.4.2.1 Marušič and Žaucer (2006)

The analysis by Marušič & Žaucer (2006) offers a non-canonical biclausal treatment of Slovenian impersonal structures. Arguing against standard monoclausal approaches (Benedicto 1995, Rivero 2003), Marušič & Žaucer provide compelling evidence showing that dative impersonals (35)a, in fact, consist of two verbal projections – the covert FEEL-LIKE predicate and the overt lexical verb ('dance' in this case). The sentence (35)a can be paraphrased with the overt 'feel like' (35)b construction, which results in a corresponding interpretation. Consider Marušič & Žaucer’s analysis in (36).

(35) a. Gabru se pleše. 'covert FEEL-LIKE construction'
    Gaber.Dat SE dance.3sg
    ‘Gaber feels like dancing.’

    b. Gabru se lušta plesati.  'overt 'feel-like' paraphrase'
    Gaber.Dat SE desire.3sg dance.Inf
    ‘Gaber feels like dancing.’

(36)

Abstracting away from the details, let me briefly go through the structure in (36). There are two verbal projections. The upstairs verb FEEL-LIKE is phonologically silent or hidden, but realized semantically in the respective interpretation. Both clauses are defective according to the authors
– the upper one lacks the active vP (without non-active reflexive se), and the lower one lacks TP and CP. The two clauses thus constitute one strong (or spell-out) phase complementing each other’s defects.

Russian, like Slovenian and other Slavic languages, also exhibits paraphrases of dative impersonal sentences with two verbs (37).

(37)  a. Mne chitalos’.
     ‘I felt like reading and I read.’

     b. Mne xotelos’ chitat’.
     ‘I wanted to read.’

     c. *Mne chitalos’, no ja nichego ne chitala.
     ‘*I felt like reading and I read, but I didn’t read anything.’

     d. Mne xotelos’ chitat’, no ja nichego ne chitala.
     ‘I wanted to read, but I didn’t read anything.’

The two structures ((37)a and its paraphrase in (37)b) are intricately intertwined in their interpretations such that both interpretations have the element of ‘desire’ or ‘wanting’. However, the two structures are also strikingly different when it comes to their truth-values regardless of their superficial similarities, as shown by the contrast between (37)c and (37)d, such that the non-paraphrased impersonal entails eventuality (and results in ungrammaticality if negated) and the paraphrased one has no eventuality implication (that is, the event of reading does not have to have occurred). This contrast is, in fact, reminiscent of the contrast between the modal and impersonal constructions shown in (34) above.

It turns out that both monoclausal modal and biclausal ‘feel-like’ analyses predict wrong modal interpretations for Russian impersonal constructions. In fact, I take it that Marušić & Žaucer’s biclausal analysis is – from the perspective of the Russian data – just another instance of a modal analysis of impersonal structures. A paraphrase of an impersonal sentence with any overt
propositional attitude verb, be it ‘want’, ‘feel-like’, or ‘desire’, results in modality interpretations that have different truth-values from non-paraphrased sentences, as (34) and (37) above illustrate.

The inconsistencies of the previous accounts lead me to propose a new analysis of impersonal constructions detailed in 2.5.

2.4.2.2 Dative impersonals with transitive verbs

Marušič & Žaucer claim that “the Russian [FEEL-LIKE] construction allows only intransitive verbs without a delimiting prepositional phrase or adverb…” (p.1138). The examples in (38)-(41), however, evidence the opposite: transitive sentences with objects are quite natural and, in fact, are fairly common and productive in literary and colloquial speech as evidenced by the fact that many examples in this thesis are taken either from the Internet or literary works:

(38) Za dver’ju mne uslyshalis’ mrachnye shagi. Behind door I.Dat heard.Refl.Pf.3pl murky steps.Nom
‘Somehow, I could hear murky steps behind the door.’
(http://books.rusf.ru/unzip/add-on/xussr_mr/orlovv04.htm?40/68)

‘Somehow she conquered Bangkok and Milan.’
(http://stat.bashedu.ru/vatandash_www/9_02/154.htm)

‘All of a sudden she felt like having a beer and fried drumsticks.’
(http://goroskop.kulichki.net/vodoley.html)

‘Somehow Ira remembered a funny story.’

The claim that only intransitive verbs participate in Russian ‘feel-like’ constructions is also found in previous research (Franks 1995, Schoorlemmer 1994, Benedicto 1995). It is indeed surprising that none of the previous impersonal analyses mentions the existence of the ‘transitive impersonals’ evidenced in the counterexamples above, although there are accounts of nominative
objects in languages such as Icelandic, Faroese (e.g., Woolford 2003, Boeckx 2003, 2006) and others.

Marušić & Žaucer assert that the sentences in (42)a-c are prototypical ‘feel-like’ structures expressing a disposition towards an event. Now, for the sake of argument, let us assume that intransitive and transitive dative impersonals have different interpretations such that (42)a-c are prototypical ‘feel-like’ structures (à la Marušić & Žaucer), whereas (38)-(41) are made of entirely different semantic material. But what is this material? Consider the semantic near minimal pair in (43).

(42)  
a. Mne ne rabotaetsja.  
I.Dat not work.Refl.Ipf.3sg  
‘I don't feel like working.’

b. Jemu rabotaetsja?  
He.Dat work.Refl.Ipf.3sg  
‘Does he feel like working?’

c. Kazhdyj, komu rabotaetsja, dolzhen vzjat' lopatu.  
Everyone who.Dat work.Refl.Ipf.3sg should grab shovel  
‘Everyone who feels like working should grab the shovel.’

(examples are from Franks 1995: 364, quoted in Marušić & Žaucer)

(43)  
a. Mne chitalos’ s udovol’stviem.  
I.Dat read.Refl.Pst.Ipf.3sg.Neut with pleasure  
‘Somehow I was reading with pleasure. / The reading was pleasurable to me.’

b. Jego zametki mne chitalis’ s udovol’stviem.  
His comments.Nom I.Dat read.Refl.Pst.Ipf.3pl with pleasure  
‘Somehow I was reading his comments with pleasure. / The reading of his comments was pleasurable to me.’

(43)a expresses an individual’s predisposition towards the reading event in the past and is felicitously uttered in the following context: the speaker, who is known for disliking reading in general, shares with his friend that he was actually reading sometime in the past and, moreover,
for some reason (for example, the topic of the book is very engaging, or it is written in an easy-to-read style, etc.) he was enjoying the reading very much.\(^\text{16}\)

\((43)\)b also expresses an individual’s predisposition towards the reading event in the past and can be uttered in the following scenario: the speaker and his friend share impressions from reading travel journals of their mutual friend. The speaker, who is known for disliking reading in general, says that he was actually reading the travel journals yesterday (or sometime in the past), and, moreover, for some reason (for example, the journals are written in an easy-to-read style) he was enjoying the reading very much. Thus, both situations encode a positive mental disposition towards the reading event. Also, both utterances denote eventuality: that is, the act of reading has to have occurred and not merely been thought of.

The only difference in interpretation is that \((43)\)b refers to a specific object being read, ‘his comments’, grammatically indicated by the agreement. Hence, I conclude that transitive verbs are not excluded from the dative impersonal construal in Russian contrary to what Marušić & Žaucer claim.

### 2.5 A new analysis of impersonal constructions with dative experiencers

Rivero & Savchenko (2005) previously proposed an applicative analysis of non-nominative preverbal arguments with other types of verbs in Russian. In particular, Rivero & Savchenko analyze the anticausative construction, as shown in \((44)\), which exhibits the genitive-marked argument and the verb in the non-active form (with the reflexive suffix \(-\text{\'sja/-s’}\)) such that the genitive, which is interpreted as a non-volitional causer and a possessor, is generated in the Spec of HighApplP and takes Cause Phrase as its complement.\(^\text{17}\)

\(^{16}\)\((43)\)a is also felicitous without the prepositional phrase ‘with pleasure’. \((43)\)b, however, is judged marginal by native speakers. It would seem that this effect is created by the presence of the Nominative object, which arguably requires an overt expression of predisposition, be it negative or positive.

\(^{17}\)See Rivero & Savchenko (2005) for details of the proposal.
Building on some concepts from Rivero & Savchenko (2005) and Rivero (2009) and updating other proposals (to be explained more precisely in the sections below), I propose a new analysis of Russian impersonal constructions with dative arguments and activity and psych verbs. As a consequence of the new analysis, the typology of Russian applicative constructions (see section 2.3) will be expanded to include yet another type of applicative argument, an unselected experiencer, found with dative reflexive impersonal constructions.

This section is composed of three parts. Section 2.5.1 introduces assumptions and the analysis itself. Section 2.5.1.1 explains the role of the reflexive suffix –sja in the construal, followed by section 2.5.1.2 on issues of agreement in the impersonal construal.

### 2.5.1 The applicative analysis of Russian impersonals with activity verbs

In this thesis it is maintained that dative preverbal nominals such as studentam in (45)b are logical or semantic subjects of a predication, which have nominative structural equivalents, as in (45)a. This predication, in the absence of a dative argument, is a more familiar structure of regular impersonal sentences in Russian (45)c,d, and in Slavic in general ((45)e for Polish):

(45) a. Studenty (namerenno) prochitali knigu. Russian
‘Students (intentionally) read the book.’

b. Studentam kniga prochitalas’ s udovol’stviem(*namerenno)
‘Students read the book with pleasure.’

c. Kniga prochitalas’ s udovol’stviem.
‘{One / The book was} read with pleasure.’
I first spell out the assumptions of the new analysis, followed by a detailed examination of its components. Dative arguments – experiencers – are located in a Super High Applicative Phrase (cf. Pylkkänen 2002; Rivero 2003, 2009; Adger & Ramchand 2007, *inter alia*), which syntactically renders them non-core arguments, that is, they are not selected by the verb. As non-core arguments, datives can be dropped, leaving the structure syntactically unaffected (45)c. Interpretationally, datives in the Applicative Phrase can be compared to the Topic Phrase, which, in fact, is what they are – the formal topic of the construction, an insight articulated by Rivero (2009) in her examination of similar Slovenian constructions with unselected dative arguments that are licensed by the High Applicative Phrase.

I assume that the dative in the Super High Applicative Phrase is assigned inherent case and the theta-role of experiencer (see Richardson (2007) for a similar proposal for Slavic dative experiencers). I can think of three reasons why the dative is not structural in the configuration under study: first, semantically, dative is the subject of a predication, or its topic, and as such it cannot base-generate as a complement of the verb (neither with recipient, benefactive, nor a goal theta-role) with subsequent raising to the Spec,TP (contra Landau 2010)\(^\text{18}\); second, in the presence of the nominative theme, whose case is structural, the only other structural case that can be licensed is accusative, which is ruled out by the structure due to the presence of the reflexive -sja, as elaborated in 2.5.1.1; third, in contrast to the selected experiencers of psych verbs, dative experiencers of activity verbs are non-selected arguments, and, as such, these arguments must be licensed by a different argument-introducing head, which, as I propose, is a Super High Applicative.

\(^{18}\) As was alluded to in section 2.2.1, Landau (2010) proposes a prepositional analysis for non-nominative experiencers, whereby non-nominative experiencers are prepositional objects, governed by the null or dative preposition. In this account, non-nominative experiencers move to the second Spec,TP (occupied by the PP) from either subject (stative Subject Experiencer) or object (eventive Object Experiencer) position of the lexical verb and get their case assigned by the preposition. I refer the interested reader to Landau (2010) for details.
Interpretationally, the dative impersonal construction entails no control of the dative experiencer over the state/event described by the verb. This lack of control can be diagnosed by the presence of agentive adverbs such as ‘intentionally’ or ‘on purpose’, which results in ungrammaticality (45)b, but not when with the nominative subject capable of control (45)a. Thus, the two subjects, nominative and dative, surface in two different contexts – when with the ability to control emotional states/events, or [+control], and when with the inability to control emotional states/events, or [-control]. To formalize the difference, I propose coding individuals in these contexts with the feature [control]. In addition to an experiencer interpretation, the dative participant receives an interpretation of a doer with impersonal constructions based on activity verbs. If one adheres to the view that verbs have intrinsic lexical conceptual structure (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 2011, Wunderlich 1997, Jackendoff 1996, inter alia), it is unsurprising that the event described by an activity verb is experienced (cf. to Pustejovsky’s 1995 experienced causation).\(^{19}\)

The Super High Applicative Phrase is in the C-domain, the domain widely understood to be the interface between syntax and other modules of grammar such as semantics and pragmatics. The material that appears in the C-domain is the so-called ‘aboutness’ or “what the sentence is about” (Reinhart 1981). Indeed, the dative experiencer is such a participant whose feelings and desires are relevant to the interpretation of the impersonal sentence. I thus propose that the dative experiencer of the impersonal construal in Russian is an overtly expressed EPP feature of the predication, which in the absence of the dative is a regular impersonal structure with the logical subject implied (see more on that in section 2.5.1.2).\(^{20}\)

Recent research on the nature of applicative arguments convincingly argues for the existence of so-called ‘super-high’ Applicatives (e.g., Buell 2005; Rivero 2004, 2008; Sedighi 2005, 2009)

\(^{19}\) An interesting proposal is articulated by Kim (2011), who argues for existence of an Applicative head that licenses non-agentive external arguments. While agents are uniformly introduced by a Voice head, an affectee argument is proposed to be licensed by Appl head. I refer the interested reader to Kim (2011).

\(^{20}\) In Hungarian, psych-impersonal predicates taking non-nominative subjects (dative in this case) check their predication relation in PredP, structured above TP, as proposed by Dalmi (2005: 99). The idea seems to reverberate in a number of analyses concerned with the phenomenon under examination here. What differs, however, is the name of the phrase that hosts the dative experiencer (whose functionality nevertheless remains rather similar) – it is a Modal Phrase in Schoorlemmer (1991, 1994) and Benedicto (1995), AgrP (Agreement Phrase) in Kondrashova (1993), and EvP (Event Phrase) in Markman (2005).
that coexist with low and high applicatives (cf. Pylkkänen 2002). Thus, Rivero (2009) justifies the super-high position of an Applicative Phrase (that sits above the TP, in the C-domain) by the fact that there is no well-formed nominalization corresponding to the impersonal construction. Rivero considers this to be “a syntactic restriction on the complementation requirements of the Applicative: its complement must be a TP, and nominalizations lack (syntactic) TPs” (p.59), following the traditional research on nominalization (Stowell 1981, 1982, Siloni 1997, Wiltschko 2003, *inter alia*). Thus, Bulgarian (46)a and Slovenian impersonal constructions of the type discussed here (and analyzed with datives as arguments of a High Applicative phrase) do not have well-formed nominalizations (46)b, and neither does Russian (46)d:

(46)  

a. Na Ivan mu se jadše jabalkata. *Bulgarian*  
P Ivan 3Sg.Dat Refl eat.Ipf.3Sg apple.the  
‘Ivan felt like eating the apple.’

b. Jadeneto na Ivan (na jabalkata) be predizvikelstvo. *Slovenian*  
eating.the P Ivan (P apple.the) was challenge  
Reading 1= Dispositional: * ‘Ivan’s urge to eat (the apple) was a challenge.’  
Reading 2= Nondispositional: ? ‘Ivan’s eating (the apple) was a challenge.  
(from Rivero 2009)

c. Ivanu rabotalos’ s udovol’stiem. *Russian*  
Ivan.Dat worked.Refl.Ipf.Neut with pleasure  
‘Ivan felt like working and he worked with pleasure.’

d. *Rabotanje Ivanu / Ivana s udovol’stiem  
Working Ivan.Dat/Gen with pleasure  
‘Ivan’s working with pleasure.’

The lack of nominalization, then, provides a syntactic argument for placing the Applicative Phrase above the TP since the nominalizations, according to the literature, do not contain syntactic TPs.

The reflexive suffix –*sja* is crucial in the impersonal construal. In my analysis, schematized in (47)b based on sentences like (47)a, this morpheme originates in the VP and attaches directly to V₀. Besides the arity-reducing effect that it has on the verbal/syntactic structure (it absorbs the accusative case and the external theta-role), semantically it feeds the structure for the agentless dative-experiencer interpretation. Such behaviour of the reflexive morpheme is not
unprecedented and is found in the classical (unaccusative and case-absorption) analyses of the Romance reflexive clitic se/si, equivalent to the Russian –sja. In French, for example, the clitic se is said to remove the verb’s accusative case-assigning feature and turn the verb into an unaccusative (see Grimshaw 1982, 1990; Roberge 1990; Chierchia 2004; Embick 2004, inter alia). I examine the role of the reflexive –sja in detail in the next subsection.

Next, if the nominative theme materializes, the reflexive suffix absorbs its accusative case thus forcing the theme to raise to Spec, TP to check nominative case. In structures where no overt movement of the nominative occurs, agreement is established via Agree. I elaborate on the agreement in impersonal constructions below in 2.5.1.2.

(47) a. Mne kniga chitalas’ (s udovol’stiem).
   ‘It was pleasurable for me to read the book.’

21 Labelle (2008) (among others) argues against unificational (i.e., unaccusative) approaches to the clitic se and on the example of French reciprocal and reflexive clauses, proposes that se is multi-functional.
Next I discuss the role of the reflexive –sja and the intricacies of agreement in impersonal constructions, respectively, but first, anticipating the featural theory of L2 acquisition proposed in this thesis (section 3.5), let us take a pretheoretical view into the content of the dative applicative argument. Unselected dative experiencers are marked with the following featural makeup: {+SHAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl}. The bracketed content summarizes what was examined in the previous sections and formally proposed in the next chapter: the unselected experiencer ([+exp]) is marked with the dative case ([+dat]), which is incapable of control ([−cntrl]) or volition in the sense that an agent argument is (which renders agents [+cntrl]), and it is licensed by the super high applicative head ([+SHAppl]), as was just argued for.

### 2.5.1.1 The role of the reflexive suffix

In Russian, there is one single reflexive suffix that forms passive (48)a, reflexive (48)b, impersonal (48)c, reciprocal (48)d, anticausative (48)e, and middle (48)f constructions. Historically, it is a clitic grammaticalized into a verbal suffix parallel to its counterparts in South and West Slavic languages such as se (Slovenian), się (Polish), etc. Traditional literature (Babby 1975, Everaert 1999, etc.) argues in favour of –sja being an accusative case absorber. Others suggest –sja can absorb either nominative or accusative (Franks 1995).

(48)  a. Dom stroitsja. Passive
       ‘The house is being built.’

       b. Ivan moetsja. Reflexive
          ‘John washes himself.’

       c. Xorosho rabotaetsja. Impersonal
          Well work.Refl.Pres.Ipf.3sg
          ‘It/one works well here.’

       d. Drat’sja. Reciprocal
          Tear.Refl.Inf
          ‘Tear each other.’

       e. Dver’ otkryvaetsja. Anticausative
          Door.Nom opens.Refl.Pres.Ipf.3sg
          ‘The door opens.’
f. Rubashka legko stiraetsja. Middle
   ‘The shirt washes easily.’

The reflexive morpheme is essential for impersonal syntax and semantics. Thus, Rivero (2003) analyzes Bulgarian and Czech dative constructions with reflexive clitics originating in the TP node: [ApplP Dative [Appl’ App [TP Refl V NPNom]]], assuming further (following Reinhart 1996 and Chierchia 1989) that the external argument of the verb is available in the semantics, but not in the syntax. This operation, known as Argument Saturation in the lexicon, is enabled by the presence of the reflexive clitic, which, according to Rivero, represents an implicit argument. This treatment of the reflexive clitic that can freely move around in the structure is not tenable for Russian since –sja is a suffix that obligatorily attaches to a verb.

In Schoorlemmer’s (1994) analysis, –sja is base-generated in T, and it absorbs accusative case and the verb’s external theta-role. According to this proposal, only unergative verbs can be reanalyzed into impersonal constructions with –sja absorbing the verb’s external role. However, as we have seen above (see 2.4.2.2), impersonal constructions do allow for nominative themes, a fact that cannot be ignored. Therefore, Schoorlemmer’s treatment of –sja is inaccurate as evidenced by the new data.

In a similar vein, Kapitonov (2007) argues that the reflexive suffix reduces the transitive verb’s arity by one, which makes “–sja … just a morphological detransitiviser, that originates in V, attached right to V₀”. While I share Kapitonov’s approach to the reflexive in general, I also assume that –sja is a syntactic place-holder of the argument, whose accusative case it has absorbed. In sum then, the reflexive suffix is syntactically visible, but semantically vacuous. It is, if you will, a syntactic holder of a semantically blank argument.

2.5.1.2 Agreement in the impersonal configuration

In what follows, I will address the following issues: i) agreement in impersonal structures with dative subjects and no nominative themes as in (49)a, and ii) agreement in impersonal structures without dative subjects and with nominative themes as in (49)b.
There is no morphological agreement with the dative argument in the impersonal construal without a nominative theme (49)a as indicated by the default verbal form, i.e. third person singular and neuter. But then the dative must be related somehow to the predication, more so if one assumes that the EPP (which states that clauses must have subjects) holds. The Extended Projection Principle (Chomsky 1995:199) requires that “[Spec, IP] be realized (perhaps by an empty category)”. I propose that the EPP feature in (49)a is reduced to a feature ‘subject of a predication’ (inspired by Cardinaletti 2002), which, as I argue in this thesis, dative experiencers in fact are. I take the observation made by Roberge (2002) to support my proposal: “the EPP… makes reference to a position and as such is a syntactic condition but it is closely related to semantic (logic) considerations. In fact, it could be argued that the EPP exists because of predication”.

More support for my proposal is found in Becker (2006). Examining adjectival dative subject constructions in Russian, Becker suggests that if we were to assume that the EPP feature need not be satisfied, then impersonal structures can appear without a subject ((51)a, (53), with a PP in topic position (51)b, with a topicalized subject (52)a-c, or with an NP marked with dative case ((50), optional in (52)a,b). As for predicate agreement, Becker suggests that the facts follow from the features of (expletive) pro that he posits in case no overt NP is expressed as in ((51)a, (53) (examples glossed as per the original source).
While I share the general insights of Becker’s analysis, I believe there is a way to dispense with empty categories and replace them with the feature-matching device enabled within the minimalist framework.

Empty categories like pro are not compatible with the analysis proposed here. Stipulating pro would defeat the purpose of my proposal such that the dative would no longer be able to check the EPP’s feature ‘subject of the predication’, becoming thus an orphan in the structure. Likewise, as I illustrate shortly, pro does not fit with my treatment of the nominative theme, which agrees with the phi-features of T and, depending on the word order, occupies the Spec of TP.

Now let us turn to the nominative agreement in the impersonal construal of (49) above, repeated here as (54). In contrast to (54)a, the construction in (54)b exhibits verbal agreement with the nominative theme kniga (‘book’) in phi-features (number, person and gender), a fact that is observed in other languages with quirky (dative) subjects as, for example, Icelandic (55)
(although there are person restrictions on the nominative object in Icelandic such that the sentence is acceptable only when the nominative is 3rd person).

(54) a. Mne ne spalos’ vchera noch’ju.
   Intended meaning: ‘For some reason, {I couldn’t sleep/ I didn’t sleep} last night.’

   b. Kniga prochitalas’ s udovol’stiem.
   ‘The book was read with pleasure.’

(55) Henni voru gefnar bækurnar.
   Her.Dat were.3Pl given books.Nom.Pl
   ‘She was given the books.’

   Sigurðsson (1992:5)

Endorsing a recent viewpoint in the literature, I assume that Tense’s, rather than $v^0$’s, agreement features are responsible for the nominative assignment (Pesetsky and Torrego 2001, Alboiu 2005, Mathieu 2006, etc.). Recall that the reflexive –sja on the verb absorbs accusative case thus forcing the DP to look for an alternative case-assigner/checker. Thus, not only does Tense assign nominative case to the object DP, but it also checks its phi-features with the pronominal features of $v^0$ via Agree. In fact, Tense and Agreement in Russian are so intimately connected that they might be fused into one general inflectional head as argued for by Bailyn (2012) (who builds on earlier work by Franks 1995). Bailyn’s claim is based on the fact that in Russian any nominative case-marked NP/DP agrees with the finite main verb in morphological features.

____________________

22 An alternative to Agree as an assigner of nominative case is Bailyn’s (2012) approach whereby nominative in Russian is assigned under c-command such that an assignee must be within the local domain of finite Tense, as in (i) (i) is from Bailyn 2012: 128). As far as I can tell, nothing seems to empirically hinge on the choice between ‘Agree’ and ‘c-command’ for nominative case assignment. I, therefore, consider both mechanisms applicable.

(i)
Depending on the word order, the nominative theme either moves to the Spec of TP (56)a, thus surfacing preverbally, or remains in situ (56)b, in both instances agreeing with T’s phi-features via (long-distance) Agree as is proposed in the minimalist accounts.

(56)  
(a) Kniga prochitalas’ s udovol’stviem.  
    ‘The book was read with pleasure.’

(b) Prochitalas’ kniga s udovol’stviem.  
    ‘The book was read with pleasure.’

To summarize: dative unselected experiencers in Russian are proposed to be arguments of the Super High Applicative phrase. This new analysis is based on the following facts: 1) contingent on its semantic interpretation, an applicative argument is licensed by a unique corresponding applicative head (as discussed in section 2.3) whose structural location is determined by the semantic nature of the applicative; 2) the syntactic structure to which an unselected experiencer is applied is that of a regular impersonal construction – its syntax and interpretation are unaffected in the absence of the dative applied argument, but when the applicative merges, the interpretation of a sentence is predicated on the applicative dative (whose feelings are relevant); 3) impersonal constructions with applied dative arguments have no well-formed nominalizations; this constitutes a syntactic argument in favour of the super high location of the applicative phrase.

In the next two sections, I show and discuss the analyses of psych verbs with nominative and dative arguments, respectively.

2.5.2  The analysis of nominative experiencers with psych verbs

In the present framework, nominative experiencers such as Ivan and I in (57) are analyzed as external arguments of a typical transitive structure where the thematic interpretation of an experiencer is supplied by the conceptual structure of the psychological verb.23

23 Kupula (2009) proposes a unified analysis for nominative and dative experiencers (classes I and III of Belletti & Rizzi 1998) in Greek claiming that experiencer subjects, while realized in the Spec of a Low Applicative Phrase, are
(57) a. Ivan ljubit Mashu.
   Ivan.Nom loves.Ipf.3sg.Masha.Acc
   ‘Ivan loves Masha.’

b. Ja slyshal shagi na kryshe.
   I.Nom heard.Ipf.3sg.M steps.Acc on roof
   ‘I heard steps on the roof.’

c. 

In the configuration (57)c, the highest argument is interpreted as an agentive experiencer (as discussed in section 2.2.1), which is compatible with native speakers’ intuitions. More precisely, the nominative experiencer in Russian is in control of his/her feelings, emotions, or psychological state, and is endowed with the feature [+control] by virtue of being the argument of TP. The agentivity of experiencers has also been illustrated by the fact that nominative experiencers are compatible with agent-oriented adverbs (see 2.1).

derived, and not selected subjects of psych predicates (but see the original source for more details). This possibility is ruled out for Russian since Russian, as was shown in 2.3.2, has an array of low applicative constructions, and none of the structures in this section is of this kind.
2.5.3 The applicative analysis of dative experiencers with psych verbs

Unlike nominative experiencers, Russian dative experiencers such as mne in (58)a²⁴ are beyond any sort of control over the situation described by the verb, which makes them interpretationally parallel to English nominative experiencers (see section 3.6.2). Featurally speaking, they are [-control] experiencers.

\[(58)\]

\(a.\) Mne (*narochno) slyshalis’ shagi na kryshe.

\(I.\text{Dat}\) on purpose \(\text{heard.Refl.lpf.3pl}\) steps.\(\text{Nom}\) on roof

‘Somehow I could hear steps on the roof (*on purpose).’

\(b.\) \[\begin{array}{c}
\text{SHApplP} \\
\text{Dat} \\
\text{I} \\
\text{SHAppl’} \\
\text{C-Domain} \\
\text{SHAppl} \\
\text{TP} \\
\text{Nom} \\
\text{T’} \\
\text{T} \\
\text{Spec} \\
\text{vP} \\
\text{v’} \\
\text{vEXP} \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{V} \\
\text{V’} \\
\text{DP} \\
\text{V_0-sja} \rightarrow \text{(ACC absorption)} \\
\text{agree} \\
\text{hear} \\
\text{steps}\end{array}\]

There is no a priori reason to treat dative arguments with mental verbs any differently than those with activity verbs (2.5.1), primarily because both are interpreted as experiencers. One may reasonably question, though, the necessity of a Super High Applicative head instead of assuming

²⁴ An attentive reader might notice the conflated inflections for nominative and accusative forms on the noun ‘steps’ in (57)b and (58)a. This is an instance of Russian case syncretism involving collapse of the nominative and accusative case distinction.
the merge position in the Spec of \( \nu_{\text{EXP}} \). Proponents of such a view, however, would need to explain 1) how dative case is assigned to the experiencer, 2) where the argument raises to if it raises from Spec, \( \nu_{\text{EXP}} \) to get its dative case (Spec, TP is not an option due to the case mismatch), and 3) the dative-case assigning mechanism if the argument remains in situ. By contrast, all of this falls out naturally under the current proposal where dative experiencers originate in the Super High Applicative phrase (58)b that hosts experiencer arguments and assigns dative case to them. In such a clausal architecture, there is no room for either an experiencer or an external argument to originate anywhere between TP and VP since the reflexive suffix \(-sja\) eliminates the external argument (agent/causer) position and absorbs the accusative case (as detailed in 2.5.1.1). This analysis fits neatly with the analyses of other Russian applicative arguments such as High Applicatives AT (see 2.3.1.2), independently proposed by Markman (2007). What is noteworthy here is that High Applicative AT merges above the Voice Phrase (59)b thus controlling the external argument (rendered by the Control locative reading), as was shown in (17) above and repeated here in (59):

\[
\text{(59) } \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{U menja Dima } \text{s’jel } \text{ves’ sup.} \\
& \text{P I.Gen Dima.Nom ate.Pf.3sg.M all soup} \\
& \text{Possessor locative: ‘Dima ate up all of my soup on me.’} \\
& \text{Control locative: ‘I had Dima eat all the soup.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\text{b. } \text{[HighAppl(\text{AT})P u menja [HighAppl\text{AT'} [\text{VoiceP Dima [VP s’jel ves’ sup]]]}]} \quad \text{Control locative}
\]

It might be inferred that the structure in (58) has two experiencers since the experiencer licensing the SHAppl Phrase heads the mental-verb-based construction (which by definition implies an experiencer participant). Recall, however, that in the absence of the dative experiencer \( mne \), (58)a is a typical impersonal structure (be it with an activity or a mental state verb), which due to its grammatical configuration (\(-sja\) and the lack of agreement) bars the merge of a structural external argument (elaborated on in sections 2.5.1.1 and 2.5.1.2). Conversely, the personal counterpart of (58)a has an obligatory nominative experiencer participant. In other words, since impersonal constructions allow for an implied perceiver/experiencer of the described event, it is natural that they also allow for an overt manifestation of the implied perceiver/experiencer materialized in the SHAppl Phrase.
2.6 Summary of chapter 2

Dative experiencers with reflexivized mental (or psych) and activity verbs represent a type of unselected argument in Russian. In the absence of the dative experiencer, the structure is that of a regular reflexive impersonal sentence productively used in the language.

Modal monoclausal (2.4.1) or biclausal (2.4.2) analyses are untenable for the dative unselected experiencers since some of the essential facts about dative impersonals are overlooked in these proposals. Dative unselected experiencers, as was argued in this chapter, are best analyzed as arguments of a Super High Applicative phrase that merges in the C-domain (which encodes topic, focus and other illocutionary forces), wherein unselected experiencers are interpreted as logical subjects of an otherwise impersonal predication.

In addition to the several types of applicative arguments in Russian (2.3) identified by the previous research, in this chapter an expansion of the typology of Russian applicatives was proposed to include a Super high Applicative phrase that hosts unselected experiencers found with reflexive impersonals.

Finally, an explanation was offered as to why the dative experiencer with mental verbs is an unselected argument unlike its nominative alternant: the clausal architecture of an impersonal construal does not allow for the external argument to be merged due to the presence of the reflexive suffix which absorbs the syntactic position of the external argument and the accusative case of the theme.

To bridge the theoretical discussion in this chapter to the experimental studies of the construction of interest that follows in Chapters 4 and 5, I next develop a model of second language acquisition that, I believe, is more appealing and explanatory than the traditional parametric approach to acquisition. So-called featural learning, albeit novel in experimental linguistics, is superior to purported parameters in that it allows us to underpin the foundations of the acquisition process at the level of discriminate features.

English and Spanish, the two native languages of Russian learners in the present study, are examined in the next chapter as well in light of relevant and parallel grammatical aspects. Constructions are consistently compared across the languages on both the structural and featural
levels to ultimately allow the reader to understand what is at stake for language acquirers when it comes to unselected dative experiencers in Russian.
Chapter 3
Second Language Acquisition, English and Spanish Data

3 Introduction

In this chapter, I develop a featural theoretical approach to studies of second language acquisition (SLA). I first present an overview of SLA (3.1) as seen within current theoretical developments with particular attention to the featural approach to acquisition (3.2). It will be shown that the featural approach to the constructions of interest here is supported by most recent developments in the SLA theoretical literature with respect to im/possible attainment of a target grammar. A review of L2 research on the acquisition of argument structure, most relevant to the research questions stated in this thesis, is the subject of section 3.4. English and Spanish data are presented and discussed in sections 3.6 and 3.7 respectively, followed by the section on input (3.8) of the relevant Russian constructions. Finally, learning tasks that English and Spanish learners are faced with in the present study are laid out in section 3.9.2 and predictions are maid in section 3.10.

3.1 What’s in L2?

Any discussion of the ontology of second language acquisition seems inconceivable without referring to the concept of first language acquisition, at least in generative research. Most (if not all) L2 theories have L1 as an explanatory element for the observed behaviour in L2 stages in addition to the mechanism which is mostly known under the rubric of ‘interlanguage’ (coined by Selinker (1972)), a separate linguistic system in the L2 brain. Admittedly, the fact that children, starting as blank slates that are pre-wired for language nonetheless, unvaryingly end up being full-fledged masters of their languages within only a few years of birth is fascinating. L1 research has produced a valuable body of knowledge that defines the stages and processes of acquisition (Brown 1973, inter alia), all of which are within the space of ultimate acquisition. Things are muddier and much more uncertain when it comes to non-native acquisition, where the following question stands perpetual: why is there such a wide spectrum of success in non-native acquisition, and can such variability be accounted for given current L2 theories?

It is rather difficult to predict why some learners learn better and are able to attain a better ultimate mastery of an L2 than others. Age is one factor where the widely held view, known as
the Critical Period Hypothesis, is that the earlier the onset of acquisition, the higher the chances are of attaining near-nativeness (Birdsong 1999, 2009, *inter alia*). Another factor is the relative typological proximity of the learners’ L1 to the language being acquired. For example, McDonald (2000) found that Spanish learners of English with L2 onset before the age of five were able to perform indistinguishably from native English speakers on grammaticality judgement tests, whereas Vietnamese learners of English (with matching linguistic background) were not. Other frequently mentioned factors are the amount and quality of input and learners’ attitudes. This list, of course, does not exhaust all factors affecting L2 acquisition, but a full enumeration lies outside the scope of the present thesis.

L1 and L2 acquisitional processes are marked with intrinsic similarities (e.g., identifiable and uniform developmental stages) and differences (e.g., the lack of another language in L1 acquisition), but the L2 process automatically differs from the L1 process because everything the learner acquires and does involves both the first and second languages. Some researchers (e.g., Cook 1999, 2002; Davies 2003, 2004; Piller 2002) take a rather categorical stance and consider the notion of ‘a native speaker’ conceptually erroneous in the context of second language acquisition and applicable only to monolinguals, as L2 learners should be studied in their own right and not as compared to native/monolingual speakers. They claim that there is no inherent reason why an L2 learner should attain the same level as a monolingual learner does. While theoretically attractive, this kind of idea remains idealistic, and the native speaker yardstick proves empirically useful precisely because L2 attainment – whatever stage it is at – remains variable and thus problematic to quantify as a reliable measure.

The current examination is driven by such conceptual curiosity concerning the explanandum of L2 acquisition based on the example of Russian applicative dative experiencers (discussed in the previous chapter) as the phenomenon being acquired. In the following sections, I firstly review theoretical approaches to non-native language acquisition, and subsequently lay out the featural theory of language acquisition.

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25 Extensive sources on the Critical Period Hypothesis can be found in Muñoz and Singleton (2011).
3.2 Recent developments in SLA theory

It is proposed in this thesis that the L2 learning mechanism is based on the restructuring of un/interpretable features, which, generally speaking, proceeds from feature selection to feature assembly. Part of my view on featural L2 acquisition is substantiated in the recent works of Lardiere (2008, 2009), which I review below.

3.2.1 Lardiere’s (2009) ‘Feature Assembly’

Lardiere (2009) promotes the view that a powerful explanation for different levels of success in L2 acquisition can be found in the area of so-called ‘feature assembly’. The core of the ‘feature assembly’ proposal consists of the following: L2 learners select and (re-)assemble features of particular lexical items by means of a ‘contrastive analysis’ with those of the L1, where contrastive analysis presupposes an inductive, and not deductive, learning process. What is more, parameters are conceptually inadequate since, as Lardiere suggests, feature reconfiguration “goes far beyond the simple ‘switch-setting’ metaphors.” (p.175).

In her proposal, Lardiere draws on the grammatical marking of plural in English, Mandarin and Korean and its acquisition by second language learners. In Chinese, the suffix -men attaches to nouns and denotes ‘more than one’. The suffix is said to be optional with restricted distribution, although there is no consensus among researchers investigating this topic, as Lardiere points out. Nouns with -men must be interpreted as definite, whereas in English nouns marked for plural can be either definite or indefinite, depending on whether the definite determiner is present or not. This constitutes the crucial difference in plural marking between the two languages. Thus, an English learner of Chinese will most likely settle on -men suffixation as a marker of plural as it appears to be the closest equivalent to the plurality marker in the native grammar. In Chinese, by contrast, plural is tightly linked with the features [+definite] and [+human]. Thus, if a common Chinese noun is marked for plural, it is also definite and human. Assuming the full transfer of grammatical features, Lardiere predicts that an English learner would apply the Chinese plural marker to indefinite contexts as well. Therefore, the English learner of Chinese has to acquire the fact that -men also carries a feature [+definite], in addition to [+plural], and it needs to be
checked.  But, according to the so-called *Nominal Mapping Parameter* (Chierchia 1998), Chinese, as a generalized classifier language, is predicted not to have pluralization.  

Now, in the reverse learning scenario, a Chinese learner of English is expected to underdistribute the plural marker “particularly since number-marking in the L1 is not obligatory” (p. 198). Lardiere reports that the data from a case-study shows that a Chinese learner of English associates the English plural marker with non-human, quantified and indefinite nouns and “in this sense, she has successfully ‘re-assembled’ the features associated with English plural-marking from the way they are organized in Chinese.” (p. 199). To put it into greater detail, the feature bundle that characterizes the Chinese plural marker *-men* \{+plural, +human, +definite\} was re-analyzed by a Chinese learner of English in a target-like manner resulting in the feature bundle \{+plural, -definite, -human\} which identifies the English plural -s.

Another part of Lardiere’s argument is represented by studies on the Korean plural marker. Like Chinese, Korean is grouped with classifier languages (contrary to the *Nominal Mapping Parameter* predictions) with the plural marker -*tul*. Korean plural also appears to be optional such that if the plural marker is not present on a noun, the bare noun can be interpreted as plural in context, and, as in Chinese, it is underspecified for number and definiteness. However, unlike in Chinese, when Korean nouns are marked for plural, they do not have to be interpreted as definite. As for the feature [+human], as in English and unlike in Chinese, Korean nouns marked plural are not restricted to human nouns.

It is somewhat concerning that while advocating her proposal on feature assembly, Lardiere provides hardly any empirical support from L2 studies and how the results of L2 studies would be interpreted within the feature assembly framework.  As it stands, Lardiere’s proposal needs concrete empirical facts from L2 studies to make it viable. The present research, therefore, intends to do just that.

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26 No empirical study on this subject is reported (or conducted) by Lardiere.

27 Chierchia’s (1998) *Nominal Mapping Parameter* predicts that languages with classifiers have neither a count/mass distinction nor plural marking.

28 Lardiere mentions a study by E. Suh (2008), who examined knowledge of the non-extrinsic plural in heritage Korean speakers as compared to native speakers. That study, however, is not directly relevant to Lardiere’s featural approach in SLA as she claims it in the article.
Lardiere’s claim as to why parameters are no longer viable in SLA, theoretically and empirically, is grounded on the following: the plural marking in the three languages considered – English, Chinese and Korean – is assembled differently such that each language has its unique feature package made up of such features as definiteness, specificity, (human/non-human) animacy, and different conditioning environments for the plural lexical item. The Nominal Mapping Parameter wrongly predicts that “we should not even encounter individual languages that include (generalized) classifiers and a count/mass distinction and plural-marking. In this case … Korean apparently offers a true counter-example and… so does Mandarin.” (Lardiere 2009: 210). In this view, it is feature selection (but not assembly) that is equivalent to parameters. But since feature selection by itself is insufficient for the form-meaning mapping in L2 acquisition, which, in turn, requires knowledge as to how features are assembled in the target grammar, parameters are thought of as ‘distracting’ in L2 acquisition. Instead, a ‘contrastive analysis’ of L1 and L2 lexical items is activated in order to construct (or not) feature assemblies for L2 lexical items.

While I share the general spirit of Lardiere’s Feature Reassembly Approach in terms of rethinking parameters, I have to point out some limitations to the proposal. First, in her critical discussion on the theoretical suitability of parameters for plural-marking, Lardiere fails to distinguish grammatical plural markers (English –s) from pluralizers (Chinese -men). The latter is erroneously equated with the plural marker and is treated as such in the featural system by Lardiere. However, Chinese is considered to be a language with no grammatical number (e.g., Dayal 2004), where -men, although it marks ‘more than one’, also indicates animacy (human) and definiteness on a noun, so it marks much more than mere grammatical number. Given this multifunctionality, -men is hardly just number in the featural sense, but is rather a bundle of features in itself, and the learner’s task is to realize that one of the semantic features of this marker is number. Thus, while Lardiere’s ‘feature re/assembly’ is conceptually credible, it needs to be better supported by empirical studies.

Second, to suggest that parameters are to be replaced with the feature reassembly mechanism is in itself neither sufficient nor adequate for the theory of L2 acquisition. For it to be developed into a competent explanatory theory, one needs to articulate constraints on feature selection and assembly along with a system that supplies features to the parsing module. One such possibility can be found in a ‘combinatorial variability’ (or non-deterministic variation) approach (Adger 2006). In sum, Adger suggests that there are identifiable levels to grammatical variation. The
first level is the universal set of features, from where the selection of formal (uninterpretable) and semantic (interpretable) features occurs, followed by the level where these features bundle. On the third level, features and feature bundles are mapped into a functional lexicon, or lexical items. Each level presents a discrete level of grammar and as such each level may pose a problem for an L2 learner. The advantage of this system is that it allows one to determine (or predict) the grammatical level a learner may have difficulties with. This mechanism will be elaborated on in section 3.5, where I develop a featural approach.

Subsequent research welcomes the feature re-assembly approach with different degrees of friendliness. In what follows, I review the reaction it has received.

### 3.2.2 Reactions to the ‘Feature Assembly’ proposal

#### 3.2.2.1 Montrul & Yoon (2009)

Montrul & Yoon (2009) welcome Lardiere’s proposal in general, but they strongly disagree with the dismissal of parameters, arguing that features and parameters can both be integrated into L2 acquisition theory.

To rescue the concept of parameters, Montrul & Yoon reformulate parameters within the feature selection and assembly approach. The authors argue that neither phonetic features (which are language specific and irrelevant to syntax) nor semantic–conceptual features (which are universal) are adequate to characterize the profile of a given grammar. As a consequence, features of functional categories, or syntactic features that we call ‘formal’, are the only successful candidates for ‘the parametric profile of a language’ (p. 294). Therefore, ‘the absence or presence of certain formal features and how they are packaged into functional categories determines the parametric profile of a given language. It is when things are understood this way that we can speak of (formal) features being equivalent to parameters.’ (ibid.).

The kind of debate that Montrul & Yoon (2009) engage in lacks conceptual importance. Reformulating parameters into features or vice versa has little, if any, impact on the influential theory of feature assembly in L2 acquisition. What is, however, important in Montrul & Yoon’s reaction to the feature assembly theory is their idea that adding features during SLA is easier than subtracting them from the L1 set (contra Lardiere). This is shown by the predictions with respect to feature assembly in L2 acquisition, given the theory. Two logical scenarios come to
mind: 1) if a feature does not exist in the L1 set but does in the L2, it needs to be added to the relevant functional category in the L2; and 2) if a feature does exist in both L1 and L2, but is packaged differently, an L2 learner needs to figure out how to correctly reassemble the feature in the target grammar. The first scenario reflects the familiar idea of transfer. The second scenario is where the authors disagree with Lardiere’s idea of ‘contrastive analysis’ (or inductive learning).

Examining the results of multiple studies (on gender by Franceschina 2005, definite articles and genericity by Ionin and Montrul (in preparation), preterite and imperfect in Romance by Montrul and Slabakova 2002, and the acquisition of Spanish copulas ser and estar by Bruhn de Garavito and Valenzuela 2008), Montrul & Yoon show that feature selection is not sufficient for successful L2 acquisition. Moreover, the observed studies also suggest that it is difficult for a learner to break up a feature bundle and scatter those features onto new (and possibly different) morphological forms. And since Lardiere has no device to resolve the aforementioned problem, it is parameters that must constrain both the selection and the assembly of features, where UG plays a central role.

3.2.2.2 Slabakova (2009)

Slabakova (2009a) also embraces Lardiere’s proposal that the ‘parameter-resetting’ approach to second language acquisition needs rethinking, but the author raises serious concerns with respect to “losing deductive and explanatory power” since Lardiere’s proposal entails a more construction-based approach. Slabakova, in line with Montrul & Yoon (2009), suggests that feature reassembly must be seen as having specific constraints in L2 acquisition, and that feature assembly must avoid being unpredictable, as it is under the construction-based approach.

In a second recent article, Slabakova (2009b) reflects on how uninterpretable features are problematic in L2 acquisition. Uninterpretable, or formal, features (e.g., EPP or person/number/gender) do not contribute to meaning and should be eliminated in the process of computation before uttering (or spell-out) takes place; interpretable, or semantic, features, by contrast, cannot be eliminated since they crucially contribute to the interpretation. Now, since “the selection of a feature as interpretable or uninterpretable is subject to language variation, it is predicted to pose a problem for L2 learners” (p. 160).
Drawing on Chomsky’s *Minimalism* (2001, 2005) and Jackendoff’s *Parallel Architecture* (2002), Slabakova envisions that formal features become available to a learner through UG, whereas interpretable semantic features “come from the common conceptual structure” (p. 163). Within this framework, “the formal features are the new parameters where language differences reside”. When applied to SLA, learners are predicted to re/assemble L1 features of lexical items (and possibly some new features, as argued by Lardiere 2009) “into the matching lexical equivalents” (ibid.).

### 3.3 Summary

In my opinion, Lardiere (2009) succeeds in showing the complexity of the acquirable phenomenon and that feature bundles of the target grammar can not be subsumed under parameters given the initial full transfer hypothesis. Parameters seem inadequate and are explanatorily insufficient in the current approach to formal features and their role in SLA.

Montrul & Yoon’s (2009) skeptical reaction to abandoning parameters in SLA is understandable, although careful, since until recently parameters were the sole available explanation to the variation found in L2 learning outcomes. I disagree with the authors in their claim that we need to reinterpret features as new parameters, especially within the Minimalism framework. That is, formal features in Minimalism are crucial in describing crosslinguistic variation along with the idea of economy, i.e. the fewer the better. While it is true that the predecessor of Minimalism, Principles and Parameters, was reintroduced into Minimalism with a few changes in terminology, *inter alia*, it is also true that feature theory is being unprecedentedly developed in current generative work. To this effect, Travis (2008: 23) writes that features are “at the heart of recent Chomskyan syntactic theory and within this theory at the heart of language variation. Therefore, any study of language acquisition done within this framework is now a study of the acquisition of features”. What is important now is the search for feature assembly constraints.

Before I outline the system according to which the acquisitional process is proposed to proceed, I evaluate the available and relevant research on argument structure.

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29 A similar line of thought is found in works by Birdsong (2009), Tsimpli and Dimitrakopoulou (2007), Tsimpli and Mastropavlou (2007), among others.
3.4 L2 acquisition of argument structure

In this section, I review previous research on second language acquisition of argument structure, focusing on the acquisition of dative subjects. Since the current research examines dative non-core arguments in L2 Russian, the goal of this section is to situate the present study within the pool of similar research.

3.4.1 Learnability problems in the L2 acquisition of argument structure

The acquisition of argument structure is intimately linked to verbal syntax, and vice versa. Essentially, a learner needs to acquire all of the following: how many arguments a verb allows, what the syntactic realizations of those arguments are, what their thematic roles are, and what the grammatical functions of those arguments are. Each of these issues has been addressed by researchers on the acquisition of in/transitive verbs, locative verbs, psychological verbs, causative/inchoative verbs, etc. Take, for example, the psych verbs in (60):

(60)  a. The dog frightened the boy.
     b. The boy feared the dog.

How is a learner to correctly analyze that ‘the boy’, in the position of a direct object, is an experiencer in (60)a, but in (60)b the experiencer is mapped onto the subject ‘the boy’? Given these asymmetries, for example, a learner should deduce that there is no one-to-one mapping between thematic roles (experiencer) and grammatical functions (subjects vs. object) and from there figure out the mechanism that would lead her to a grammatical parsing. The question is: how does the learner arrive at that mechanism?

As mentioned earlier, L1 and L2 learners standardly follow different paths of acquisition. So in implementing the non-trivial task of argument structure learning, the challenges for children acquiring their first language are understood to be related to immature cognition. And yet, despite their immature cognition, lack of negative evidence (a.k.a. poverty of the stimulus), and arbitrariness in the argument choice (as in (60) above), children productively use argument structure (also evidenced by overgeneralization errors as, for example, with non-alternating verbs *I filled salt into the bear*, from Bowerman, 1982) and master an adult-like knowledge by age of 4 (Kim et al., 1999).
The path of L2 learning is complicated by other learnability issues such as L1 transfer, level of proficiency, and input frequency. The question is then whether an L2 learner can achieve target-like knowledge and interpretation of non/alternating argument structure. Thus, research on psych verbs (White 1995, White et al. 1998, Chen 1997, Montrul 1998, etc.) has shown that L2 learners have more difficulties with object experiencer verbs (60)a than with subject experiencer verbs (60)b. This is because the subject experiencer (‘the boy’ in (60)b) is straightforwardly mapped into a subject position and the theme (‘the dog’) into an object position. With object experiencer verbs, by contrast, the theme is mapped into the subject position, which, depending on how experiencers are manifested in the L1 grammar, may be counterintuitive for second language learners since the (presumably) universal thematic hierarchy (Grimshaw 1990, inter alia) dictates that the experiencer argument is higher than the theme argument (and is thus expected to be mapped into a subject position). If an L2 learner manifests such acquisitional behaviour, it is frequently attributed to L1 transfer effects.

Likewise, L2 learners are shown to have difficulties in acquiring locative (Juffs 1996a, 1996b; Joo 2003) and dative alternations (Bley-Vroman and Yoshinaga 1992, Inagaki 1997). Joo (2003) examines whether Korean ‘high-level’ learners of English transfer L1 properties of locative alternation, which overlap with, but are not identical to, the alternation in the target English grammar. The results show no evidence for L1 transfer. Joo concludes that Korean L2 learners of English did not achieve native-like knowledge, which, as the author suggests, could be due to the fact that the learners receive insufficient input on verbs and their syntactic behaviours.

Montrul’s (1999, 2000, 2001) research on L2 acquisition of in/transitive structures is consistent with findings by Hirakawa (1995) and Juffs (1996a), whose analyses showed “overgeneralization of transitive structures and morphological crosslinguistic influence” (Juffs 2009: 197). Researchers may not agree at what stages of acquisition L1 transfer is most pervasive, but, in general, they seem to concur in that the form-meaning mapping is affected by L1 morphosyntax.

It would seem that L2 learners, unlike L1 learners, have difficulties overcoming learnability problems. Researchers have proposed theories to account for differential success attested in

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30 Sato (1999), for example, suggests that Japanese has only subject experiencer verbs, and thus differs drastically from English experiencer constructions.
second language learning, among which are the Full Access/Full Transfer hypothesis (Schwartz & Sprouse 1994, 1996), the Failed Functional Features hypothesis (Hawkins and Chan 1997, Hawkins 2000), the Fundamental Difference hypothesis (Bley-Vroman 1989), and others, all of which are, by and large, based on the parametric variation approach to language acquisition (of course, in addition to universal linguistic principles stated as Universal Grammar). That is, either an L2 learner switches a parameter being acquired to the value of the target grammar, or she doesn’t. Lardiere (2009), however, as discussed earlier, recasts parameters and proposes a new explanatory mechanism for second language acquisition, drawing on the idea that L2 learning is based on acquiring features, whose bundling and assembly constitute lexical items of a target language; this idea is at the centre of the current thesis.

The constructions in the present investigation exhibit argument structure alternations of the form shown in (61), where the sentence in (61)b has an experiencer interpretation (realized as a dative non-selected, or applicative, argument), whereas its nominative alternant (61)a expresses a regular agentive reading of the activity verb ‘sleep’:

(61) a. Ja spala po doroge v aeroport.
I.Nom slept.Ipf.3sg.F on way to airport
‘I slept on the way to the airport.’

b. Mne spalos’ po doroge v aeroport.
I.Dat slept.Refl.Ipf.Neut on way to airport
‘I felt like sleeping and I slept on the way to the airport.’

There is no reported research that examines the non-native acquisition of Russian dative applied arguments or the argument structure of Russian psychological verbs. Thus, in what follows, I review crosslinguistic studies that are related to the phenomenon under examination here.

3.4.2 Previous research on the SLA of dative arguments

3.4.2.1 Montrul (1998)

Montrul (1998) conducted a longitudinal study on the acquisition of the argument structure of dative experiencer verbs in Spanish. The researcher examined whether English and French learners of Spanish attain the following properties of the target grammar: a) dative marked experiencers
are not objects but logical subjects, and b) dative argument are the most prominent argument in dative experiencer constructions. The argument prominence is based on the assumption that structural arguments are constrained by the thematic hierarchy attributed by Montrul to Jackendoff (1990):31

\[(62) \quad \text{Thematic Hierarchy: Agent(Experiencer(Goal/Source/Location(Theme))))}\]

Another research inquiry targeted the role of the L1 in the acquisition of the properties in question. Because English and French express experiencer arguments through different grammatical means, predictions for acquisition were constructed for each language group. It was expected that English learners would have more difficulties acquiring the dative argument since their native grammar has no such property, or dative case per se.32 French learners, in contrast, have the dative case/argument available in their native grammar (evidenced by morphological dative case marking on clitics), which may facilitate their acquisition process.

In Montrul’s longitudinal experiment, learners were tested three times over a period of eight months. Intermediate learners completed two tasks: 1) an Interpretation task, aimed at testing whether L2 learners interpret dative experiencers such as ‘a Juan’ in (63) as subjects (which control the coreferential PRO), and 2) a Preference task (i.e., two sentences vary with respect to only one morphosyntactic feature and participants have to make decisions about the grammaticality of both sentences), designed to test morphosyntactic properties of Spanish dative experiencers. The Preference task included four types of pairs each testing a morphosyntactic property related to the dative case in Spanish such as dative vs. nominative experiencer (64), indirect objects vs. clitic-doubled indirect objects (65), dative experiencers vs. dative experiencers with no clitic, and indirect objects vs. double objects (the last two pairs are not illustrated here).

31 A more accurate attribution of the thematic hierarchy in (62) is Grimshaw (1990), who, unlike Jackendoff (1990), explicitly includes an experiencer argument/role.

32 Montrul (1998) mentions that dative experiencers used to be productive in Old English, but are non-existent in Modern English due to the loss of the dative case. Pesetsky (1995), however, claims there are dative experiencer verbs in Modern English, although very few, like ‘appeal to’.
Overall results showed that both English and French learners do observe the arguments’ prominence in that they identify experiencers as the highest argument indicated by the correct analysis of these experiencers as controllers of the PRO in adjunct clauses. Even though dative experiencers (‘a Juan’ in (63)) on the surface look like indirect objects (‘a Maria’ in (65)) in Spanish, all learners showed knowledge of the obligatory clitic-doubling (le/les in the examples above) on the dative experiencers, and of the optional clitic on the indirect objects (le in (65)). This finding, as argued by Montrul, suggests that learners know the relevant difference in the dative case-assigning mechanism: it is in AgrS (Agreement Subject) for the experiencers (with an obligatory clitic doubling the experiencer subject), and in AgrO (Agreement Object) for the indirect objects (with an optional clitic).

However, unlike French learners, English learners accepted far fewer dative experiencers (and more nominative ones) at the beginning (first testing time), but there was significant progress over time. The author attributes this result to L1 influence: English learners, whose native grammar does not have dative experiencer subjects, favour nominative experiencers even at the intermediate stage. French learners, in comparison, had much higher acceptance rate of dative experiencers at the first testing time, which could be explained by the availability of the dative case/experiencers in their L1 grammar.
Furthermore, Montrul claims, both groups significantly improved over time, suggesting that learners eventually overcome their L1 influence and restructure their grammars to the values that are not part of their L1 through continuous input, which ensures successful acquisition. Montrul concludes that the fact that learners have access to the thematic hierarchy supports the idea that UG is activated in L2 acquisition. However, L1 plays an important role in case assignment and checking mechanisms in L2 acquisition.

3.4.2.2 Bruhn de Garavito (2000)

Bruhn de Garavito (2000) produced a detailed study of the acquisition of Spanish se and le constructions by English and French learners. The reflexive clitic se appears in impersonal and inchoative constructions (66), and the dative clitic le appears in dative subject constructions (among others) with certain psych verbs (67).

(66) Se terminó el postre.
    se finished the dessert
    a. ‘The desserts finished (ran out).’ Inchoative se
    b. ‘The desserts were finished.’ Impersonal passive
    c. ‘The desserts were finished.’ Impersonal reflexive

(67) A Felipe le gusta el fútbol.
    Phillip.Dat Cl.Dat like (please) the football
    ‘Phillip likes football.’

Spanish se/le constructions exhibit subtle properties not easily inferable from the input. Se constructions are challenging for learners since they look similar on the surface, but have different underlying representations and thus semantic properties. Learners are expected to know that the NP in (66) exhibits different properties which result from structural differences not evident in the input. That is, Spanish has the so-called Strong Agreement Object feature that allows the object NP in the impersonal passive (66)b to trigger agreement with the verb, but there is no agreement in the impersonal reflexive, and, in addition, the NP on the inchoative se construction (66)a has all the properties of a post-verbal subject. The learner has to acquire these features.

In the impersonal construal, the agent (one of the properties of which is that it can license a
purpose clause in impersonal sentences as in (68)a is not expressed, whereas inchoative constructions are compatible only with a natural causer as in (68)b, but not with a purpose clause that implies an agent. Participants were tested on their knowledge of these properties of impersonal constructions.33

(68)  
a. Se quemaron los libros para evitar que se leyeran.  
   ‘The books were burned in order to avoid them being read.’  
   Impersonal

b. Se quemaron los libros en el incendio que causó el temblor.  
   ‘The books got burned in the fire the earthquake caused.’  
   Inchoative

As for the le structures (67), the task of an L2 learner is to figure out that dative subjects with psych verbs are always clitic-doubled and do not trigger agreement on the verb, although structurally they are subjects. Similar to the predictions in Montrul’s study, French learners were hypothesized to have an advantage over English learners in that their L1 inventory correlates with the target one in that it exhibits non-agreeing reflexive impersonals with the clitic se, as well as dative constructions with the clitic le.

English and French near-native and advanced learners completed a Story Task (2 sentences were given to be judged for their appropriateness to a story) for the se constructions and a Grammaticality Judgement Task for both se and le constructions. With respect to the se constructions, the study revealed that near-natives performed indistinguishably from the native control group and all participants treated impersonals as different from the inchoatives, correctly accepting the purpose clause with impersonals and rejecting it with inchoatives. Interestingly, not all L2 learners accepted the non-agreeing reflexive impersonal (66)c, which reflects the behaviour of native speakers since, as the author claims, impersonal reflexives are ungrammatical in some Spanish dialects.34 Bruhn de Garavito suggests that “those few subjects who did accept the non-agreeing [reflexive] impersonal clearly had acquired the constraints on its use” (p.129). Some

33 Bruhn de Garavito’s study is very detailed and covers a vast number of properties associated with impersonal and inchoative constructions. I address only those aspects of her study that are immediately relevant to the present examination.
34 I will return to reflexive impersonal constructions in Spanish in my discussion of the Spanish data in section 3.7.
advanced learners, however, did incorrectly accept inchoatives where the verb did not agree with the NP thus treating them as impersonals. Such a pattern could not be explained by L1 transfer since English does not have this kind of impersonal structure.

As for the le constructions, both French and English learners appeared to have acquired all the uses of clitic doubling in Spanish tested by Bruhn de Garavito, that is, affected arguments, dative possessives, and experiencers, of which only the last case is relevant for current purposes. According to the author’s analysis, the dative clitic le merges as the head of a functional Aspect Phrase and checks its features with an oblique NP that in experiencer constructions moves to the Spec, TP.

The general conclusion drawn by Bruhn de Garavito is that L2 learners are able to achieve a final state grammar, thus providing evidence supporting the view that UG is available in adult second language acquisition.

3.4.2.3 Sikorska (2009)

In yet another study, Sikorska (2009) investigated the acquisition of Spanish dative, or quirky, experiencer subjects (69) by English learners:

(69) A Daniela le gustan ciudades grandes
    to Daniela.Dat Cl.Dat like.3pl cities.3pl.Nom big.3pl.Nom
    ‘Daniela likes big cities.’

Specifically, Sikorska asked whether L2 learners are aware that dative applied arguments are not core arguments of verbs, but are non-core arguments of applicative heads.

Following Cuervo (2003), Sikorska analyzed the dative in (69) A Daniela as merged in the Spec of high ApplP. The dative experiencer is ‘external’ to the predication relation between the verb and the nominative DP. The nominative DP theme is the ‘inner’ subject of the structure since it cannot appear as a bare noun in Spanish (Spanish has no bare noun subjects). The dative subsequently moves to Spec, TP to value T’s uninterpretable [EPP] and [person] features. Thus, the task of English learners of Spanish is to establish the correct valuation and deletion of the
uninterpretable features [EPP] and $\varphi$ on T, which in turn will guide their acquisitional process of dative experiencers in Spanish.

Intermediate and advanced learners of Spanish completed two tasks: 1) finishing a short story by choosing one of the two endings (with the target dative subject), and 2) judging the grammaticality of constructions with high applied datives. The results show that advanced English L2 learners know that the dative DPs are higher arguments (or experiencers) since they correctly rejected structures like (70)a, where thematic binding is illicit in contrast with its grammatical counterpart (70)b.

(70)  

a. *[Cada pastel], se le quemó a su cocinero.
each cake SE  Cl.Dat burnt to his cook.Dat
‘Each cake burnt to his baker.’

b. [A cada cocinero], se le quemó su pastel.
to each cook.Dat SE  Cl.Dat burnt his cake
‘To each baker his cake burnt.’

This result indicates that the theta hierarchy is operative in L2 acquisition, since L2 learners correctly fronted the dative experiencer in the presence of nominative themes. However, English learners do not recognize dative arguments as ‘quirky’ subjects, or non-core arguments. The syntax of TP produced by L2 learners deviated from that of native speakers. Thus, for example, with raising predicates the uninterpretable [EPP] feature of T is valued through the features of the dative DP and not through the nominative DP; that is, in this particular structure, EPP forces MOVE to apply. Nevertheless, L2 learners preferred to raise the nominative DP as in (71).

(71)  

*##El fútbol parece gustarle a Pedro.
the soccer.Nom seems to like.Cl.Dat to Pedro.Dat
‘It seems that Peter likes soccer.’

Sikorska suggests that English learners of Spanish cannot automatically adjust their production to the valuation of EPP features within TP in Spanish and this is because “the distribution/valuation of EPP is language specific” (p.10). The researcher concludes that English L2 learners are competent when it comes to dative experiencer constructions, however, their performance is not native-like. While the study and its results present a valuable contribution to
the topic of the L2 acquisition of applicative datives, Sikorska’s explanation is hardly explanatory when she alludes to the idiosyncratic nature of the Spanish EPP feature. In particular, while I believe the premise that the EPP is language specific to be correct, an explanation along the lines of, perhaps, a language transfer or incomplete acquisition would be more fruitful.

3.4.3 Summary

L2 learners seem to acquire the target morphosyntax with just a few difficulties; however, it is exceptional that an L2 learner would reach a level indistinguishable from the native speaker on at least interpretation tasks. These findings reinforce a central question in L2 research – what do L2 learners know when they know the target language, semantically speaking?

Given the previous research, with respect to the present investigation we can expect that L2 learners of Russian 1) would acquire the morphosyntax associated with Russian dative constructions (i.e., dative case on the experiencer coupled with the non-agreeing reflexivized verb), 2) would observe the argument prominence/hierarchy and recognize dative arguments as the most prominent in the impersonal construal, and 3) may show transfer effects in mapping an L1 experiencer to the L2 form. To suggest an answer to the question above, i.e. what do L2 learners know when they know the semantics of the target language, below I present the assumptions of the learning mechanism within the featural approach to SLA.

3.5 The featural approach to language acquisition

Current understanding of the language machinery within the Minimalist framework is based on finely discernable features (see Adger 2006, Boeckx 2008 and references therein). This trend has noticeably increased in SLA studies in the last few years, since Lardiere’s (2007) articulated proposal on assembling features of functional categories instead of switching parameters. Although the switching metaphor (or a bivalent parameter setting to either negative or positive value) is proper to the Principles & Parameters framework, it has firmly established itself as the sole explanatory device in Minimalism as well, or so it was until recently. Since there is an

35 One of the widely cited examples of such is Rizzi’s (1997) finely articulated clausal left periphery, formerly known as just a “CP”.

abundant literature (see references above) on the history and development of features preceding and concurrent with Minimalist syntactic theory, I will not review the genesis of the featural enterprise here. Instead, I next present the acquisition mechanism assumed in this thesis.

Chomsky (1995, 2001, 2004) and others in much subsequent work (e.g., Adger 2006, 2007, etc.) describe features as building blocks (or atoms) of functional categories (FC) and lexical items (LI). Lexical items and functional categories, then, are sets of features (F), whereby syntax is fed by lexical items. The features that comprise LIs are referred to as formal as they enter the syntactic computation, wherein phonetic and semantic features are irrelevant (until the spell-out phase). I assume that features are bivalent (valued as either ‘+’ or ‘-’), and not privative (marked by presence vs. absence), since a finite set of binary features can distinguish a vast number of grammatical attributes crosslinguistically. For example, (72)a is an instance of D(eterminer) and (72)b is an instance of T(ense), where features are pairs made up of atomic symbols of attributes (T, D, past, nominative, etc.) and values (+/-) (example (72) is from Adger 2007):

(72) a. \{D:+, definite:+, nominative: -, singular: -\}
    b. \{T:+, past:+, nominative:+, singular:+\}

In this language, D can be finely distinguished from another instance of D by, for instance, the opposite value on the feature [singular], and so on.

Assembly of the material relevant to the language computation (i.e., syntax) occurs through primary data input (or first grammar), which essentially allows discerning configurations of features on lexical items. Selection of semantic features, by contrast, occurs from the universal pool of conceptual features common to all human languages, what Chomsky (1993) calls the Conceptual-Intentional (CI) system. The universality of the CI system is rooted in the fact that semantic concepts such as, for example, ‘agent’, ‘experiencer’, or ‘possessor’, reside in any natural language. It is the way a particular language manifests these concepts that creates crosslinguistic variation.

36 As commonly understood, the featural approach was pioneered into a featural theory first in phonology by Jakobson, Karchevsky & Trubetzkoy (1928). It wasn’t long after that that the subsequent research spread the featural application into morphology, syntax, and semantics.
We have just established that first language acquisition is a process of feature selection and feature assembly into LIs and FCs through exposure to primary linguistic data. In L2 acquisition, which is marked by a pre-existing complete and assembled set of L1 functional categories and lexical items, feature selection and (re-)assembly of particular lexical items occurs by means of a ‘contrastive analysis’ with those of the L1 grammar, where contrastive analysis presupposes an inductive, and not deductive, learning process (cf. Lardiere’s (2008) ‘Feature assembly’, see 3.2.1). To illustrate the L2 process, let us consider the Chinese pluralizer –men meaning ‘more than one’, mentioned in Lardiere (2009). If -men is attached to a noun, it must be also interpreted as [+definite] and [+human] in Chinese. In languages like English, however, nouns marked for plural can be either [+definite] or [-definite] (and either [+human] or [-human]), depending on whether the definite determiner is present or not. Thus, the category ‘plural’ has different feature bundles in the two languages, which can be represented as in (73):

(73) plural

Chinese

{+plural, +definite, +human}

English

[+plural]37

An English L2 learner of Chinese needs to expand the featural content of the plural in their L1 grammar unspecified for [definite] and [human], whereas a Chinese L2 learner needs to ‘unlearn’ these two features to attain the target grammar. Overall, ultimate attainment of the target interpretation of the plural will result from the contrastive expansion/narrowing of the features in the L1 set. Evidently, if one were to assume an acquisition mechanism within a binary parametric space (which presupposes two values – negative and positive)38, (73) would be grossly overgeneralized, thus falling short of explanatory adequacy.

The advantage of such a featural approach allows for clearly identifiable levels for grammatical variation:

1. The first level is the universal set of features, from which the selection of formal (relevant

37 By convention, curly brackets indicate a set of features and square brackets enclose one feature and its value.

38 In fact, Lardiere argues against Chierchia’s (1998) Nominal Mapping Parameter, which incorrectly predicts that languages with classifiers (such as Chinese) do not have either a count/mass distinction or plural marking.
for computation) and semantic (relevant for interpretation) features occurs;

2. The second level is where features bundle;

3. On the third level, features and feature bundles are mapped into a functional lexicon, or lexical items.

Each level presents a discrete level of grammar and as such each level may pose a problem for an L2 learner, which in turn allows one to determine (and predict) the grammar level a learner should have difficulties with.

The featural approach seems to be naturally supported by the analysis of Russian applicative experiencers presented in chapter 2. An unselected Russian experiencer is bundled from the following attributes and values: \{+SHAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl\} \(^{39}\). According to the proposal outlined above, a lexical item corresponding to the Russian unselected experiencer has the ontology illustrated in (74) (where at level 3 any lexical item can be mapped as long as it satisfies the bundle assembled on level 2):

\[
\begin{align*}
1. & \text{Feature selection: [Super High Applicative]} \\
& [\text{Experiencer}] \\
& [\text{Dative}] \\
& [\text{Control}] \\
2. & \text{Feature bundling: } \{+\text{SHAppl}, +\text{exp}, +\text{dat}, -\text{cntrl}\} \\
3. & \text{Feature-bundle mapping: } \text{Detjam begalos’ v parke.} \\
& \text{Children.Dat run.Refl.Pst.Neut in park} \\
& \text{‘Children felt like running and were running in a park.’}
\end{align*}
\]

One other component of the featural hypothesis that I propose is that I expect linguistic forms in which there is re-assembly of features involved to pose greater difficulties in L2 acquisition. In

\(^{39}\) The set of features an applicative experiencer is marked for represents a combination of semantic and formal features. Proposing such a mixed bundle, I follow Adger (2007, 2010) and Lardier (2008, 2010), among others. Lardiere (2008), for example, building on work by Parrott (2002) and Mittelstaedt & Parrott (2002), suggests a model of acquisition shown in (i), where lexical items, drawn from the vocabulary entry, are made up of abstract morphosyntactic and semantic features:

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Vocabulary Entry} & \Rightarrow /\text{phono}/ \quad f \\
\text{Morphosyntactic/semantic features (abstract)} & \text{Phonological features} \\
\text{Contextual features}
\end{align*}
\]
featural learning, it is easier to learn a new feature rather than restructure an existing one(s) in the L1 grammar.

To sum up, language acquisition in the featural system proceeds from feature selection to assembly. Native grammars construe featural representations of LIs and FCs through primary linguistic data exposure, whereas subsequently acquired grammars are built on the basis of an inductive comparative contrast between L1 and L2 LIs. It follows then that variation in feature selection and specification in functional categories are the foci in the theory of featural acquisition.

Proposal in a nutshell

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Featural Hypothesis:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• L2 learners select and (re-)assemble features of particular lexical items and functional categories by means of a contrastive analysis with the features of L1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Linguistic forms in which there is re-assembly of features involved pose greater difficulties in L2 acquisition</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the next section, I examine what English learners have as the closest equivalent to Russian applicative dative experiencers, followed by a section on the Spanish counterparts of the phenomenon under study. Based on the featural peculiarities of the unselected experiencer arguments in English, Spanish, and Russian, learning tasks are articulated in section 3.9.2 for L2 learners of Russian.

### 3.6 English data

#### 3.6.1 On the dative case in English

The reason English was chosen for the current study is because this language, unlike Russian, does not have dative-marked experiencer subjects any more, nor morphological (marked with an
overt affix) dative case *per se* for that matter. However, the existence of double object constructions in English as in (75)a (with the word order Indirect Object (IO)-Direct Object (DO)) and (75)c (DO-IO order, commonly referred to as *to*-datives), whose syntactic structure is still much debated, has led some linguists to propose that English, in fact, has a structural dative case.

(75)  a. Leila gave Benjamin the book.
    b. (from McFadden 2002)

Relics of the morphological case marking in English are seen in the pronominal system in the modern language, but not on nominal categories.
c. Leila gave the book to Benjamin.
d.

(\begin{center}
\begin{tikzpicture}
  \node (v) {v}
  \node (v') at (0,1) {v'};
  \node (Spec) at (-2,2) {Spec};
  \node (Leila) at (0,2) {Leila};
  \node (v) at (0,1) {v};
  \node (PP) at (2,0) {PP};
  \node (CAUSE) at (2,1) {CAUSE};
  \node (DP) at (2,-1) {DP};
  \node (the book) at (2,-2) {\textit{the book}};
  \node (P) at (2,-3) {P};
  \node (P') at (2,-4) {P'};
  \node (P LOC) at (2,-5) {P-LOC};
  \node (to Benjamin) at (2,-6) {to Benjamin};
  \draw (Spec) -- (Leila); \draw (Leila) -- (v); \draw (v) -- (v'); \draw (v') -- (PP); \draw (PP) -- (CAUSE); \draw (CAUSE) -- (DP); \draw (DP) -- (the book); \draw (the book) -- (P); \draw (P) -- (P LOC); \draw (P LOC) -- (to Benjamin);
\end{tikzpicture}
\end{center})

(from McFadden 2002)

English so-called \textit{to}-dative constructions (75)c appeared in the language in the Early Middle English period (see McFadden 2002 and references therein) as a consequence of the loss of the morphological distinction between dative and accusative cases (increased syncretism). In previously proposed accounts, notably Harley (1999) (who builds on Larson 1988 and Pesetsky 1995), the IO \textit{Benjamin} in (75)b receives its case from the causative (CAUSE) morpheme, to which an abstract preposition P-HAVE has raised to form \textit{give}, whereas the direct object \textit{the book} receives its accusative case from a covert HAVE under the assumption that HAVE functions as its overt verbal twin (examples in (75) are from McFadden 2002, who quotes Harley 1999). In the \textit{to}-dative structure (75)d, the indirect object \textit{to Benjamin} is a complement of a locative phrase (P-LOC), which assigns an oblique case to its complement. Such analyses do not aim to establish the existence of a structural dative case in English (nowhere in her work does Harley mention the term ‘dative’ in reference to the English indirect objects), although such an implication can arguably be inferred.

The structural case assignment view is traditionally opposed by the view whereby a functional category, or rather its head, assigns case to an NP/DP within a local domain via Agree (Chomsky 2000, 2001, and subsequent work by the adherents of this view). In recent proposals, this model of case assignment evolved into an applicative approach with respect to distransitive structures and structures with non-core arguments. I will discuss English applicative constructions in
section 3.6.3, maintaining throughout this thesis that non-core arguments, crosslinguistically, are licensed by applicative phrases.

However, regardless of the theoretical stance one takes on case assignment, English does not have a morphological dative case, nor dative experiencer logical subjects. It is therefore theoretically and empirically significant to test English learners’ knowledge of an L2 phenomenon that does not exist in their L1. The theoretical interest lies in the question of whether subtle semantic knowledge is attainable by L2 learners; to be more precise, whether English learners of Russian interpret dative-marked nominals that occur with activity verbs (like run, walk, work, etc.) as experiencers. The empirical question pertains to the issue of feasibility when it comes to learning and teaching subtle L2 semantics – that of the dative applicative arguments. While the latter issue is not the primary focus here, the overall finding of the current examination may have a pedagogically important impact.

3.6.2 English psychological constructions

In English, experiencer arguments can be marked with either nominative or accusative case, and thus represent two main classes of psych verbs (Jackendoff 1990, Levin 1993), as shown in (76):

\[(76)\]

FEAR class: Experiencer-subject \((admire, detest, enjoy, hate, miss, respect, marvel at)\)

a. John fears dogs.

FRIGHTEN class: Experiencer-object \((amuse, embarrass, irritate, worry, appeal to)\)

b. Dogs frighten John.

As in Russian (see section 2.2.1), English constructions with verbs of the fear class are straightforwardly analyzed as regular transitive structures with an experiencer occupying the structural subject position in Spec, TP and a theme occupying object position. Thematic role assignment does not present any puzzle since the experiencer verb assigns an inherent experiencer role to the structural external argument and the theme role to its internal argument. The class of accusative-experiencer predicates (the frighten type) corresponds to class II of Russian psych verbs, which are notoriously problematic crosslinguistically for the thematic hierarchy misalignment of clausal arguments: themes \((dogs\ in\ (76)b)\) are linked to a subject position, whereas experiencers \((John\ in\ (76)b)\) – which are higher on the thematic hierarchy (if
one assumes one) – are linked to an object position. The problem of mapping the thematic structure to the syntactic one extends to the English *frighten*-type predicates as well; however, this issue is not directly relevant for the current examination (but see Pesetsky 1995, Filip 1996, Landau 2010, *inter alia*) and will not be discussed further. As for dative experiencers, they no longer occur in English (although Pesetsky 1995 mentions a few remaining verbs in this class, such as *appeal to*).\footnote{I refer the interested reader to Brody’s (1989) paper on the transition of English dative constructions from impersonals to regular transitive (nominative – accusative) experiencer structures.}

There is no nominative-dative experiencer alternation in English like the one found in Russian with class I psych verbs (77) (see section 2.1), where the nominative experiencer (77)a is somewhat in control of the perception/feeling expressed by the verb, but not the dative one (77)b.\footnote{One can likewise think of the psych verbs of class I, illustrated in (77), as a ‘weakly agentive’ verbs since not all agent-oriented adverbs can felicitously appear with nominative experiencers.} The English equivalent (77)c of the Russian nominative experiencer (77)a does not allow agent-oriented adverbs and behaves rather like Russian dative experiencers, as seen in (77)b and (77)c–d.

\begin{itemize}
\item[(77) a.] \textsc{Stas umyshlenno pokoril serdce Jeleny cherez 6 let.} [Stas.Nom deliberately won.Pf.3sg.M heart.Acc Helen.Gen in 6 years] ‘Stas deliberately won Helen’s heart in six years.’
\item[(77) b.] \textsc{Stasu (*umyshlenno) pokorilos’ serdce Jeleny cherez 6 let.} [Stas.Dat (deliberately) won.Refl.Pf.Neut heart.Nom Helen.Gen in 6 years] ‘As for Stas, he somehow won Helen’s heart in six years.’
\item[(77) c.] *Stas deliberately won Helen’s heart in six years.
\item[(77) d.] *John intentionally feels like working here.
\end{itemize}

English speakers’ intuition is that nominative experiencers are \textit{not} controllers (i.e., they have no agentive properties, unlike their Russian counterparts) of the states described by class I psych verbs, as illustrated in (77)c,d, which makes these experiencers, featurally speaking, \{+experiencer, -control\}. While an English speaker has the conceptual tools to express the
semantics of Russian dative experiencers (78)b, this is not the case when it comes to the morphosyntactic side of these constructions with activity verbs such as work, as shown in (78).

(78)  a. Ivanu zdes’ xorosho rabotaetsja.
      Ivan.Dat here well work.Refl.lpf.Neut

      b. Ivan feels like working here well.

As the glosses indicate, English (78)b displays the sole argument, the experiencer, in the nominative case with the predicate expressed by the symbiosis of experiencer/attitude (‘feel-like’) and activity (‘work’) verbs and no reflexive morphology. The nominative receives an experiencer interpretation by virtue of being an argument of a perception verb feel and hence has a featural marking {+experiencer, -control}. Structurally, the English experiencer can be represented as in (79), where ‘X’ in the PredP is a variable that the nominative experiencer binds (indicated by means of co-indexing) from the Spec,vP position thus acting as a doer of ‘working’ and an experiencer of the event described in PredP. This kind of theta-bundling has an established tradition in the generative literature, as exhibited in works by Reinhart & Siloni (2005), Pylkkänen (2002/2008), Rivero & Savchenko (2005), among others.

(79)  

          TP

         Nom

         Ivank

          T

          vP

          tk

          v’

          vEXP

          feel-like

          PredP

          Xk working here well
Thus, the following alignment holds between English and Russian experiencers (underlined areas point to the interpretational and structural variation between the two languages):

(80)

a. Russian Nom Exp \{+T, +exp, +nom, +cntrl\} \sim English Nom Exp \{+T, +nom, +exp, -cntrl\}
b. Russian Dat Exp \{+SHAppl, +dat, +exp, -cntrl\} \sim English Nom Exp \{+T, +nom, +exp, -cntrl\}

Based on these differences, learning tasks for English learners of Russian are laid out and discussed in section 3.9.2.1.

3.6.3 English applicative arguments

Applicative arguments are also evidenced in English, but their variety is much more restricted compared to applicative arguments in Russian (see chapter 2) and Spanish (see section 3.7). Non-core arguments can be added to certain (transitive) verbs as in (81)b, where ‘him’, an indirect object, is interpreted as a possessor/recipient in the event. The non-obligatoriness of the applied argument in (81)b is contrasted by the ditransitive constructions like (81)c and (81)d, where the latter is unacceptable in the absence of the indirect object.

(81)  a. I bought a unicorn.  b. I bought him a unicorn.
     c. I gave him a unicorn.  d. *I gave a unicorn.

Ditransitive constructions, traditionally referred to as double-object constructions (DOC), now standardly receive an applicative analysis (a legacy of thoroughly established research on applicatives in works by Marantz 1993, Pesetsky 1995, Pykkänen 2002, etc.), whereby the applicative argument, introduced by the Low Applicative head, is related to the direct object, and not to the event (as is the case with High Applicative arguments). One of the widely cited analyses of English low applicative arguments is illustrated in (82), originally proposed by Pykkänen (2002), where the applied argument ‘him’ establishes a relation with the direct object ‘a unicorn’.
In the literature on applicatives, it is not rare to encounter arguments debating the specific structural position of low and high applicatives (as is the case with, for example, French applicatives discussed in Boneh & Nash (2011), who claim that Low Applicatives generate above VP and below vP); however, linguists seem to be in consensus that English does not have high applicatives as shown by the fact that benefactive arguments cannot be added to unergative verbs (83):

(83)  
a. I ran.  
b. *I ran **him**.  
c. I ran **for him**.

Although English is an applicative-impoverished language when compared to, for example, Russian and its array of applicatives introduced in chapter 2, native speakers of English are nonetheless cognizant of the functional category (low) ‘applicative’. The topic of language inventory will be significant when discussing the acquisition mechanism in Chapter 6 of this thesis.

3.7 Spanish data

Spanish, a morphologically rich language, exhibits a variety of dative arguments including experiencers and benefactives (/malefactives) – the foci of the present examination. In the sections to follow, I present structural and semantic properties of Spanish experiencers and benefactives relevant to and comparable with their Russian equivalents.
3.7.1 Spanish experiencer constructions

3.7.1.1 Dative experiencers

Similar to Russian, Spanish dative arguments are productive and are manifested with various predicates (e.g., psychological gustar ‘like’, adjectival difícil ‘difficult’, existential faltar ‘lack, miss’). Of immediate interest here are Spanish psychological verbs like molestar ‘bother, parecer ‘seem’, and gustar ‘like’ (84) that occur with dative arguments receiving an experiencer interpretation. These predicates, what Belleti & Rizzi (1998) call class III, function analogously to their Russian counterparts (discussed in chapter 2, section 2.1). In her influential study on Spanish dative arguments, Cuervo (2003) argues that dative experiencers are licensed by the high applicative head and not by the psych predicate itself, and that the applicative phrase takes (stative) vP as a complement. The analysis is shown in (84)b.

(84) a. A Daniela le gustan los gatos. (Cuervo 2003)
   Daniela.Dat Cl.Dat like.Pl the cats
   ‘Daniela likes cats.’

   b. 
   \[
   \begin{array}{c}
   \text{DP}_{\text{Dat}} \\
   \text{a Daniela} \\
   \text{APplP} \\
   \text{le} \\
   \text{vP} \\
   \text{DP} \\
   \text{los gatos} \\
   \text{vBE} \\
   \text{Root} \\
   \text{gust-}
   \end{array}
   \]

In this configuration, the dative is the highest argument and occupies the subject position, which does not agree with the verb. The nominative theme, however, does agree with the verb by virtue of being the subject of the stative predicate. The dative argument, which is necessarily doubled by the dative clitic le, receives its case from the applicative phrase headed by le (unlike in previous accounts e.g., Belleti & Rizzi 1998 where the dative is claimed to be inherent) and it can also be dropped resulting in a sentence that expresses the verbal event predicated of the nominative internal argument, exemplified in (85).\footnote{Details of the analysis are omitted, but see Cuervo (2003) for the complete analysis.} This, according to Cuervo, presents

\footnote{Details of the analysis are omitted, but see Cuervo (2003) for the complete analysis.}
additional evidence for the claim that dative arguments in a psychological construal are external to the predication.

(85) Las películas japonesas gustaron mucho.
[The movies Japanese].Nom pleased.Pl a-lot
‘The Japanese movies were very much liked.’
(‘Many people liked the Japanese movies.’)

An applicative analysis thus accounts for the source of the dative case and the adjunct-like, or externalized, status of dative arguments. In the featural dimension, the Spanish dative experiencer has the following description: \{+HAppl, +exp, +dat\}.

There is yet another curious instance of dative arguments in Spanish mentioned in Cuervo (2003), illustrated in (86), where the dative obtains an experiencer interpretation:

(86) a. De repente, a Daniela le dió por bailar.
\[suddenly Daniela.Dat Cl.Dat gave.Sg for to-dance\]
‘Daniela suddenly felt like dancing.’

b. \[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{DP}_{\text{Dat}} \\
a \text{ Daniela} \\
\text{ApplP} \\
\text{Appl} \\
le \\
\text{vP} \\
v_{\text{GO}} \\
\text{Root} \\
dar- \\
\end{array}
\]

The syntactic structure and semantic inference of (86)a are rather similar to the Russian construction under study here (see section 2.2.2). Take, for example, (87), one of the stimulus sentences (see Appendix F, item 30) in the study with Spanish speakers of Russian discussed in Chapter 5:

(87) Mne tantsevalos’ pod muzyku vos’midesjatyx.
I.Dat dance.Refl.Pst.Neut to music eighties
‘Somehow, I felt like dancing (and I danced) to the music of the eighties.’

Structurally speaking, the contrast between the two languages pertains to the reflexive – it is
absent in the Spanish structure (86), but interpretation-wise the two datives receive an experiencer reading where feelings are predicated of the dancing (event).\footnote{Cuervo (2003) points out in a footnote (fn.6, Chapter 4) that “[t]his dynamic expression [(86)a] contrasts with stative desiderative constructions in languages like Russian, Albanian and Finnish. In these three languages, either the case of the experiencer or verbal non-active morphology indicate that the desideratives are stative.” This statement is erroneous, at least with respect to the Russian data, since the event has to take place (and not be identified as only desiderative as per Cuervo) given the conceptual structure of sentences like (87) (the event has to have occurred even if for a millisecond as evidenced when the tag ‘but I didn’t dance’ is added to (87) which results in a semantically unacceptable sentence), which makes this type of structure in Russian dynamic in Cuervo’s terms.}

To recap, Spanish dative experiencers are unselected arguments licensed by the high applicative phrase, which is headed by the dative clitic le and assigns dative case to its argument. Their featural content is \{+HAppl, +exp, +dat\}. Only stative (e.g., psychological) and some dynamic (e.g., activity) verbs can form a construal with dative arguments to result in an experiencer interpretation. Verbs outside the stative-dynamic spectrum produce non-experiencer dative arguments, namely, bene-/malefactives, which I discuss in section 3.7.2.

3.7.1.2 Nominative experiencers

Spanish also has nominative experiencers with psych verbs like amar ‘love’ (88)a and odiar ‘hate’. Nominative experiencers have comparable syntactic and semantic characteristics crosslinguistically and present little or no challenge to the structural analyses. Standardly, nominative experiencers also occupy the syntactic position of regular nominative subjects, as (88)b illustrates.

\footnote{The Spanish sentence, in addition, is biclausal with the infinitival complement. Russian also has a biclausal paraphrase of the monoclausal (87) conveyed with the attitude verb ‘want’ as in (i). However, biclausal paraphrases have different structural properties and truth-value judgements (see Savchenko 2008), and, therefore, will not be included in the present study.}

(i) \begin{quote} Mne xotelos’ tancevat’ pod muzyku vos’midesjatyx. \\
I.Dat wanted.Refl.Pst.Neu to dance to music eighties
\end{quote} ‘I felt like dancing (and I danced) to the music of the eighties.’
Recall that Russian nominative experiencers are weakly agentive in that they are (somewhat) in control of the feeling described by the verb as illustrated by the felicitous construal with the agent-oriented adverbs, and are thus described with the feature [+control]. Spanish equivalents to Russian do not seem to allow for the weakly agentive reading as native speakers judge structures as in (89) marginal at best, but typically rule them out as infelicitous.45

(89) */Juan ama a María interesadamente.
Juan.Nom loves Maria.Acc with purpose
‘Juan loves Mary with purpose.’

It seems that nominative experiencer verbs in Spanish do not allow for the eventive, but only the stative, interpretation unlike their Russian counterparts.

45 My Spanish consultant notes that the control readings can be forced in a context where Juan is pretending to love Mary.
To sum up: Spanish nominative experiencers occupy Spec, TP. They are incompatible with agent-oriented adverbs, which contrast them with their Russian counterparts, so featurally speaking they are \{+T, +exp, +nom, -cntrl\}. Next, I discuss properties of Spanish benefactive arguments.

### 3.7.2 Spanish benefactive constructions

Despite the broad range of constructions with dative arguments in Spanish, bene-/malefactive arguments represent a restricted, but well-defined, set according to Cuervo’s (2003) research on datives. Embedded high in the structure, these unselected arguments are licensed by the High Applicative phrase. A case of typical high applicative bene-/malefactive arguments is shown in (90)a-b, respectively.

![Diagram of benefactive constructions](#)

Cuervo (2003) analyzes (90)c, the structures with activity verbs referred to by the author as dynamic vPs headed by $v_{DO}$, as taking dative pronominal clitics ($le$ and $les$ in (90)) (also known in the literature as the ‘ethical dative’ or ‘dative of interest’, which refers to an individual somehow interested or involved in the event (cf. Strozer 1976), claiming that full dative DPs are unavailable in this configuration. As with experiencer datives, the clitic heads the high applicative, and also spells it out. However, this applicative head is ‘defective’ because it lacks a specifier position. If a full dative DP surfaces with an activity verb as in (91)a, it is interpreted as a regular ditransitive construction whereby the dative is licensed by the low applicative head (91)b.
In Cuervo’s theory, when activity verbs such as bailar ‘dance’, cantar ‘sing’, correr ‘run’, and leer ‘read’ are used intransitively, the dative has no direct object to be related to in terms of possession, and it is thus applied to the whole event (i.e., interpreted as a benefactive) and is merged in Spec, HAppl (90). However, when an activity verb is used transitively, wherein the complement of the verbal root can be either a DP or an applicative phrase, the relationship is established between the dative and the direct object. This relation is established via a low applicative phrase that generates possessor, recipient, or source arguments. The dative in (91), according to Cuervo, is interpreted as a recipient.

In Cuervo’s analysis sentences with full dative DPs as in (92)a are unacceptable under neutral intonation. Only if the dative DP is stressed can (92)a become acceptable. The intonation pattern is comparable to that of a left (or right) dislocated phrase, which leads to the structure in (92)b as the most natural for utterances with a full dative DP.

To reinforce the idea of head ‘defectiveness’, Cuervo argues that the impersonal se in Spanish (93) exemplifies yet another type of construction with a defective head, where the external DP argument is structurally suppressed but semantically implied. The external argument is replaced by se (a third person reflexive clitic that represents an indefinite animate reading), and is
rendered by the indefinite reference as the glosses indicate. In Cuervo’s analysis (93)b, se is realized as the defective Voice head.46

(93)  

a. Se construyó un nuevo edificio.  
Cl.Refl built a new building.  
‘One/people built a new building.’

b. VoiceP  
Voice  
se  
Root  
un nuevo edificio

Spanish seems to also allow structures with two ‘defective’ heads, viz. specifier-less defective applicative and voice heads co-existing in one structure as illustrated in (94)a.47 Here, the first person dative clitic me is, in fact, a benefactive argument that has all the properties of le in (90) discussed by Cuervo (although Cuervo doesn’t mention the type of construction illustrated in (94) in her research). As noted by Rivero (2002), the dative has no effect on the impersonal construal and interpretation as seen from (94)b since, it is a truly unselected, or applied, argument, which, as we have seen in chapter 2, has a structural parallel in Russian (section 2.2.2).

(94)  

a. Antes se me leía estos libros con placer.  
Before Refl me.Dat.1sg read.3sg these books.Nom with pleasure  
‘Before {one/people} read these books to me with pleasure.’

b. Antes se leía estos libros con placer.  
Before Refl read.3sg these books.Nom with pleasure  
‘Before {one/people} read these books with pleasure.’ (Rivero 2002)

46 Spanish se has many functions (reflexives, middles, impersonal/reflexive passives, etc., see Bruhn de Garavito (2000) for full details) and it can be generated in different functional categories (Bruhn de Garavito 2000, Dobrovie-Sorin 1998, Masullo 1992, inter alia). But, in essence, in all proposals the clitic is generated as the head of a functional category (be it AgrO or little-v or Infl) that doesn't project an external argument.

47 Apparently, speakers of some Spanish dialects, notably in Spain, do not allow for impersonal constructions with the (non-agreeing) internal argument, whereas Argentinean dialects are not averse to the combination at all (see Tremblay 2006, in particular fn.4).
At this point it is essential to note that the impersonal constructions are also said to have a defective T since it is phi-incomplete due to the lack of a complete phi-feature DP that can check/match those on T. When, and if, the nominative internal argument merges, its case is checked with T via Agree, but the EPP on T still remains unsatisfied. It is in this sense that T is understood to be defective (little-v is also defective in this configuration since it cannot check accusative case and the phi-features of the internal argument).

A closer inspection of the varieties of Spanish reveals that (some) Spanish dialects do manifest constructions with the full dative DP with impersonals, as in (95)a, where the dative is a full-fledged benefactive argument.

(95) a. A Juan se le trabaja mucho aquí.
John.Dat Cl.Refl he.Dat works much here
‘Here {people work/one works} a lot on John’s behalf.’
NOT ‘John feels like working a lot here.’
NOT: ‘John works a lot here.’

b. Se le trabaja mucho aquí.
Cl.Refl he.Dat works much here
‘Here {people work/one works} a lot.’ (Rivero 2003)

c. Ivanu zdes’ xorosho rabotaetsja.
Ivan.Dat here well work.Refl.Pres.3sg
‘For some reason, Ivan {works / feels like working} well here.’

d. Zdes’ xorosho rabotaetsja.
Here well work.Refl.Pres.3sg
‘People/one works well here.’

Benefactive structures of the type (95)a have the following syntactic properties: a dative case marked argument (indicated by a), a non-agreeing verb, a reflexive clitic se, and a dative clitic le, which obligatorily doubles the dative argument in these structures. (95)b shows the structure without the dative benefactive, which reflects the paradigm seen earlier in (94). To reiterate, the reflexive clitic se, which translates as ‘one’ or ‘people’, is the hallmark of impersonal construal, and functionally it does not differ much from its counterpart in Russian, the reflexive suffix –sja, discussed in chapter 2 and illustrated here in (95)c,d. Recall that the Russian dative in (95)c,d has an experiencer interpretation. Thus, the difference in interpretation between Russian dative
impersonals (95)c and their syntactic equivalents in Spanish (95)a is attributed to the following: “in Romance, the impersonal reading of the construction is not affected, and the dative is interpreted as possessor/benefactive/malefactive” (Rivero 2003: 11). What is noteworthy here is that there seems to be dialectal variation with respect to acceptance of a full dative benefactive DP in these structures just as with the nominative post-verbal nominals in impersonals (94) discussed above (see footnote 12). 48

Next, I propose an analysis of the full DP dative benefactive with impersonal constructions in Spanish.

3.7.2.1 An analysis of Spanish unselected benefactives with impersonals

It has just been established that applicative benefactive constructions in Spanish have two varieties – one allows only a dative clitic as a benefactive argument as analyzed in Cuervo (2003) in (90) above, whereas the other allows a full dative DP to merge in the structure (96)a. The observed variation represents a case of micro-parametric variation found between closely related regional or dialectal varieties (e.g., Kayne 2005). In line with the previously developed featural approach to syntactic variation (in the acquisitional context), I update previous analyses and propose the following structure for the impersonals with full a benefactive DP (96)a in Spanish:

(96) a. A Juan se le baila aquí.
   Juan.Dat Cl.Refl Cl.Dat dance here
   ‘They/one dance here to Juan’s advantage.’

48 The proper name for the structures in (95)a,b is debatable among Hispanists. Some refer to them as ‘impersonal passive’, others as ‘impersonal reflexive/reflexive passive’. However, as shown in (ia), impersonal passives are marked by verbal agreement, and impersonal reflexives (ib) allow for accusative nouns (examples from Juarros-Daussà (2000)). None of this is observed with the impersonals under examination here.

(i) a. Se necesitan buenas ideas
   se need.3pl good ideas
   ‘Good ideas are needed.’
   b. Se los mata
   se cl.ace kill.3s
   ‘They kill them.’
The benefactive dative DP merges in Spec, HApplP. It is obligatorily doubled with the dative clitic *le* (as with other Spanish dative arguments discussed earlier) that heads the HAppl phrase. Unlike with benefactive clitics in (90) above, the applicative phrase is non-defective as it projects the Spec position thus allowing full benefactive dative DPs to occur in the structure alongside the dative clitic. The dative DP subsequently moves to the Spec of TP to satisfy the EPP feature of a predication.\(^{49}\) In featural space, Spanish applied benefactive arguments are marked with the bundle \{+HAppl, +ben, +dat\}, where the feature [control] is irrelevant as it pertains to experiencer and agent arguments only.

Recall that when a dative argument is merged with an event predicate of the type \(vP_{BE}\) (i.e., stative) such as *gustar* ‘to like’, it is interpreted as an experiencer. The other two possible event predicate types, according to Cuervo, are dynamic non-agentive \(vP_{GO}\) (i.e., change/movement) such as *suceder* ‘to occur’, and dynamic agentive \(vP_{DO}\) (i.e., activities) such as *caminar* ‘to walk’. Since the Spanish structures of interest here occur with an activity verb, I assume that they are of the latter event predicate type, i.e. \(vP_{DO}\), with the resulting interpretation of the dative as a benefactive.

\(^{49}\) As suggested in Cuervo (2003: 184), “Spanish T can attract a dative DP to its specifier.”
The reflexive *se* is base-generated as head of little-ν, signaling the absence of a structural agent in line with previous proposals for Spanish impersonal constructions. It subsequently raises to T thus disabling the verb from phi-feature checking.\(^5\)

Discussing the interpretational peculiarities of high applicative datives, Cuervo suggests that “the notions of experiencer, benefactive and malefactive, rather than being part of the semantic content provided by the licensing head, can be the specific interpretation the applied argument gets when the type of event and the idiosyncratic meaning of the predicate are taken into account.” (p.142). It is unclear from her discussion how the dative gets an idiosyncratic interpretation given a particular kind of predicate. What is clear from the analyses proposed in this thesis, however, is that high applicatives license benefactive arguments, whereas super high applicatives generate unselected experiencers. Thus, language-specific syntactic structures encode appropriate interpretations in the two languages – dative arguments merging with (non-active) activity verbs unequivocally result in the experiencer reading in Russian, but the benefactive in Spanish.

### 3.7.3 A word on other dative applicatives in Spanish

There seems to be a fine line between high and low applicatives in Spanish given their apparent similarity, that is, they are both preceded by the marker *a*, which signals, among other things, a dative argument. Only low applicative dative arguments, however, can be realized as prepositional arguments with no doubling *le* clitic. Consider the contrast in (97), where *a Valeria* in (97)a is a possessor low applicative argument realized as a prepositional in (97)b, and (97)c illustrates the analysis of possessor datives proposed by Cuervo (2003):

(97)  a. Pablo le lavó el auto a Valeria
Pablo Cl.Dat washed the car Valeria.Dat
‘Pablo washed Valeria’s car.’

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\(^5\)Tremblay (2006), loosely following Rivero (2002), analyzes *se* as the head of Clitic phrase (ClP) that dominates TP. *Se* is said to be associated with the external argument of the verb by means of co-indexation with a null noun phrase subsequently checking the nominative case with T. However, *se* can equally generate as the head of little-ν and raise to other functional projections should there be a trigger mechanism for that.
b. Pablo lavó el auto de Valeria.
   Pablo washed the car of Valeria
   ‘Pablo washed Valeria’s car.’

c. \[ \begin{array}{c}
   \text{v} \\
   \text{vP} \\
   \text{Root} \\
   \text{lav-} \\
   \text{DP} \\
   \text{Appl} \\
   \text{a Valeria} \\
   \text{le} \\
   \text{el auto} \\
   \text{DP} \\
   \text{LApplP} \\
 \end{array} \]

Other low applicatives in Spanish are recipient and source arguments as illustrated in (98):

(98) Recipient
   a. Pablo le regaló una bicicleta a Andreina.
      Pablo Cl.Dat gave a bicycle Acc Andreina.Dat
      ‘Pablo gave Andreina a bicycle (as a gift).’

   Source
   b. Pablo le robó la bicicleta a Andreina.
      Pablo Cl.Dat stole the bicycle Acc Andreina.Dat
      ‘Pablo stole the bicycle from Andreina.’

These are double-object constructions in Spanish and they correspond to ‘To’ (Recipient) and ‘From’ (Source) low applicatives according to Cuervo (2003). What distinguishes possessive from recipient and source dative applicatives is that the former usually do not co-occur with ditransitive verbs.

Spanish, thus, has an assortment of unselected arguments marked with the dative case and licensed by high and low applicative heads depending on the interpretation of an argument.\footnote{McGinnis (2001) proposes that the distinction between high and low applicative heads is primarily a semantic and syntactic one without any clear morphological correlates across languages. Cuervo’s position is ‘syntactic’ only as her account does not bear on interpretative idiosyncrasies of unselected arguments and the relationship is strictly structural.}

### 3.7.4 Summary of the Spanish data

Dative experiencers and benefactives are unselected arguments in Spanish that are licensed by high applicative heads. Only stative (e.g., psychological) and some dynamic (e.g., activity) verbs
result in an experiencer interpretation with dative arguments. Verbs outside the stative-dynamic set create bene-/malefactive interpretations with dative arguments. The featural make up of applied experiencers is {+HAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl} and that of benefactive applicative arguments is {+HAppl, +ben, +dat}.

Next, I turn to a discussion of the input L2 learners receive in the process of learning Russian and subsequently to the learning tasks each linguistic group – English and Spanish – is faced with.

### 3.8 Input

A number of researchers have argued that frequency, frequency distribution, and prominence of linguistic forms in the input (collectively referred to as input) play the most significant role in the ultimate success of L2 learning. Indeed, Ellis (2002) reports findings showing that input frequency affects language processing in all linguistic modules (e.g., morphosyntax, language comprehension, sentence production). Such sensitivity to input suggests that learners might follow a usage-based model of acquisition.

I have examined the frequency of occurrence of the dative impersonal construction in Russian literature and textbooks for second language learners. In particular, one of the classical literary pieces, Dostoevsky’s tale “Little hero”, yielded the following statistics:

- Total utterances: 678
- Total occurrences of the reflexive –sja/-s’: 476
- Occurrences of impersonal constructions with dative subjects: 46, or 1 dative construction for every 14 utterances.

Undeniably, these numbers show a high incidence of impersonal constructions with datives in such a short tale, and possibly in literary works in general.

Next, textbook materials were examined. Students are formally introduced to these constructions as early as in second year Russian. Students are instructed “that impersonal constructions do not have a grammatical subject in the nominative case. The logical subject in the following constructions is in the dative case: …*Mne xochetsja spat’* (I’m sleepy), *Mne ne xotelos’ idti v
Another textbook says that impersonal verbs usually denote a state independent of a person such as *Mne ne spalos’* (I didn’t feel like sleeping), or *Mne xorosho rabotalos’* (I felt like working well), whereas their personal counterparts without –sja denote a state or an action dependent on an agent as in *Ja ne spal* (I didn’t sleep) and *Ja xorosho rabotal* (I was working well). Interestingly, the grammatical peculiarities of these constructions are explained in detail (i.e., in the present tense the verb is in the 3rd person singular, and in the past it is in singular and neuter), whereas the discussion of semantics is limited to a minimum in classroom instruction.

Nevertheless, the fact that learners are taught that in personal constructions the nominative subject is a controller of the state/event (or the state/event is dependent on an agent), unlike its dative impersonal counterpart, suggests that it is possible to infer from the input that nominatives are [+control], whereas dative subjects are marked by the feature [-control]. What is not inferable from the instructional materials is that the dative is an experiencer, or [+experiencer], and that it merges in the Applicative phrase with the rest of the structure as its complement.

Overall, the examination of classical texts and classroom materials has led me to conclude that impersonal constructions with activity and psych verbs and dative subjects are robustly represented in the L2 input.

### 3.9 Research questions and learning tasks in the acquisition of Russian dative applicative experiencers

#### 3.9.1 Research questions

The present investigation is concerned with several research questions:

1) Do L2 learners assign/map a different (from the native speakers’) meaning to Russian dative impersonal constructions, and if so, why?

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2) Does the difference in the semantic interpretation, if it obtains, pertain to: (a) syntactic structure, or (b) lexical structure, or (c) something else?

3) What conditions the interpretation of meaning in the L2 mind: (a) related L1 structure (i.e., transfer), (b) (in)sufficient access to the L2 lexical structure; or (c) L2 syntactic structure?

To explain the substance of each question in turn:

1) Do L2 learners assign/map a different (from the native speakers’) meaning to Russian dative impersonal constructions, and if so, why?

This question is essential and central to ask in the present examination for several reasons. First, if learners interpret dative applicative constructions in a native-like manner, then the study would provide evidence in support of the possible ultimate L2 acquisition of L2 semantic subtleties based on featural learning. If, however, learners map to a different meaning from the native speakers’ for these structures, then the investigation would offer an answer to how different (and acceptable) an interpretation of an L2 speaker is and what causes the interpretational deviation. As predicted by the featural hypothesis, L2 learners may experience difficulties on all three levels: first, feature selection (what features within the un/interpretable set are challenging for L2 learners, if acquirable at all?); second, feature bundling (can learners properly bundle selected features?); and third, feature-/bundle-mapping onto (L2) lexical items (can learners arrive at the target form-meaning mapping?).

2) Does the difference between L1 and L2 in the semantic interpretation, if it obtains, pertain to: (a) syntactic structure, or (b) lexical structure?

Syntactic structure is hypothesized to bootstrap for semantic interpretation (cf. Chierchia 1994).54 This is so because the dative impersonal structure in Russian is invariably marked by dative case on the experiencer in combination with activity verbs reflexivized with –sja. It is this syntactic complex that is expected to bootstrap the presence of the impersonal ‘feel like’ reading

54 On the example of the mass/count distinction, Chierchia (1994) proposes that learners use morphosyntactic bootstrapping in the process of acquisition whereby the morphological plural allows a learner to determine whether a noun is count or mass.
with the dative applicative participant, whose feelings are relevant to the interpretation of the whole structure.

Besides the aforementioned syntactic cues, there are also language-internal semantic/contextual cues that allow a learner to arrive at the target meaning. These constructions are frequently accompanied by adverbs with the semantics of ‘well/badly’.

Indeed, in an experiencer-oriented context, adverbial expressions describing certain feelings are common. Thus, Russian dative experiencer constructions favour such adverbs as xorosho ‘well’, legko ‘easily’, ploxo ‘badly’, veselo ‘merrily’ among others, as in (99)a:

\[(99) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{a.} & \quad \text{Mne xorosho /ploxo/veselo} & \text{chitalos'/rabotalos'}. \\
& \quad \text{I.Dat well/badly/merrily} & \text{read.Refl.Pst.Neut/worked.Refl.Pst.Neut} \\
& \quad \text{‘For some reason, I {felt like reading/working and I read/worked} well/badly/merrily.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\[(99) \quad \begin{align*}
\text{b.} & \quad \text{Ja xorosho /ploxo/veselo} & \text{chitala/rabotala}. \\
& \quad \text{I.Nom well/badly/merrily} & \text{read.Pst.3sg.F/worked.3sg.F} \\
& \quad \text{‘I read/worked well/badly/merrily.’}
\end{align*}
\]

These adverbs are, therefore, nothing less than contextual enhancers of the experiencer semantics. When the same adverbs are used with agentive nominative subjects (99)b, they are interpreted as manner adverbs, modifying/describing the event expressed by the verb and not the participant. If learners are sensitive to such lexical combinations, their learning curve can be reflected by the absence vs. presence of appropriate lexical clues. Effectively, such a view mirrors the frequency of appropriate adverbial expressions in the input.

3) This research is also concerned with a more general question about what conditions the interpretation of meaning in the L2 mind: (a) L1 related structure (i.e., transfer), (b) (in)sufficient access to the L2 lexical structure; or (c) L2 syntactic structure?

The bulk of L2 empirical research provides evidence for L1 transfer in different aspects and at different stages of the L2 grammar. In the present examination, Spanish L2 learners represent a

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55 Wierzbicka (1986: 418), in her typological investigation of impersonal constructions, writes: “Any adverb can be used as long as it lends itself to an interpretation in terms of ‘well’ or badly.”
particularly curious case since for these learners the L2 syntactic structure under study is rather similar to the L1 (as far as the learner is concerned). So if a learner conflates the two structures/grammars, the predicted outcome is lack of a proper interpretation (i.e. that of an applicative experiencer) of the L2 grammar. Alternatively, if Spanish learners restructure the semantics in a target-like manner, it would indicate that L2 learners have sufficient access to the features and feature composition structure and thus are able to re-assemble features appropriately.

Would English learners, in contrast, be at an advantage since according to the featural hypothesis it is easier to learn new feature-bundles and map them onto L2 items rather than restructure the existing L1 feature-bundles? And if this is the case, are we to posit that languages with (more) distant structures are predicted to be acquired easier?

Answers to the above questions, it is hoped here, will further our understanding of the building blocks in the L2 learning mind, and the epistemology of the unselected arguments crosslinguistically.

3.9.2 Learning tasks

Based on the proposed featural learning theory (section 3.5), there are general and language-specific learning tasks for L2 learners involved in the acquisition of Russian unselected dative arguments. Essentially, to arrive at a target interpretation, a learner needs to go through a non-trivial comparative analysis between L1 and L2 forms based on the inductive method.

**General learning tasks:**

1. The L2 learning mechanism is based on the (re)structuring of features, which proceeds from feature selection to feature assembly to mapping.
2. For L2 learners it is more challenging to re-assemble pre-existing features and feature bundles into acquirable L2 categories that have different feature bundles than to learn entirely new categories and their featural structure.

The next two sections present the language-specific learning tasks involved for English and Spanish learners of Russian, followed by a section describing predictions based on the featural hypothesis.
3.9.2.1 Learning tasks for English learners of Russian

English learners of Russian whose native grammar doesn't enumerate dative experiencers firstly need to recognize that the target grammar has dative experiencers. Because the current study examines semantic subtleties in the L2 grammar, only advanced learners, more specifically, learners who have internalized Russian morphosyntax, were chosen to participate in the study. At this level of proficiency learners have a solid knowledge of the Russian case system (among other grammatical aspects) and are therefore knowledgeable with respect to the nominative vs. dative distinction.

In the section on the theoretical background it was established that English nominative experiencers (section 3.6.2) are [-control] unlike their Russian counterparts (section 2.1), and that Russian dative experiencers are, in fact, equivalent to English nominative experiencers in terms of their semantic features. Therefore, with respect to the semantic features of arguments, the foremost task an English-speaking learner of Russian is faced with is to associate the nominative experiencer in English with the dative one in Russian, as schematized below:

(100) L1 English Nominative Experiencer → L2 Russian Dative Experiencer = [-control]

The next step is to reanalyze the nominative experiencer as an individual capable of control:

(101) L1 Nominative Experiencer [-cntrl] → L2 Nominative Experiencer [+control]

The learner thus ends up with a branching representation of the L2 experiencer conditioned by the case assigned to it:

(102) L1 English Nominative Experiencer [-control]

L2 Russian [-control] [+control]

if Dative if Nominative

The next task, which is central to the inquiry of the present thesis, is to learn that dative applicative experiencers are licensed by the SHAappl head, which involves learning an entirely
new functional category with the following featural reanalysis (underlined areas indicate the
variation in features between the L1 and target grammars):

(103)  a. English L1 representation: \{+T, +exp, +\text{nom}, -\text{cntrl}\} ← Initial stage
       b. Russian L1 representation: \{+\text{SHAppl}, +exp, +\text{dat}, -\text{cntrl}\} ← Final stage

The entire learning process in the featural system is illustrated in Table 1, where underlined areas
indicate the differences and the loci of learning between the L1 nominative experiencer and the
L2 dative applicative experiencer, and bolded areas indicate the differences between the L1
nominative experiencer and the L2 nominative experiencer. Although the latter pair is not a
primary topic of exploration in this thesis, it is nonetheless important as such an assessment will
identify whether English learners are able to discern an L1 experiencer from its immediate
counterparts in the L2 which come in two types.

Table 1. Learning tasks for English learners of Russian within the featural theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L1</th>
<th>Feature selection</th>
<th>Feature bundling</th>
<th>Bundle mapping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>Syntactic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>[-cntrl], [+exp]</td>
<td>[+Nom], [+T]</td>
<td>{+T, +exp, +\text{nom}, -\text{cntrl}}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>[-cntrl], [+exp]</td>
<td>[+Dat], [+\text{SHAppl}]</td>
<td>{+\text{SHAppl}, +exp, +\text{dat}, -\text{cntrl}}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[+cntrl], [+exp]</td>
<td>[+Nom], [+T]</td>
<td>{+T, +exp, +\text{nom}, +\text{cntrl}}</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Since English learners’ L1 inventory, summarized in Table 1, displays (low) applicative
arguments (shown in Table 1 in parentheses under syntactic feature selection), this population is
cognizant of the category ‘applicative’. In other words, the category ‘applicative’ is
conceptualized in the linguistic mind of English speakers. As for the semantic features, only the
relevant ones are mentioned in Table 1 since, presumably, semantic features are universal to
every human language.

In language development theories, it is standard to conceive of abstract and explicit triggers of
acquisition. Having outlined the conceptual acquisition scheme, let us consider what explicit
elements can trigger language acquisition for English learners of Russian. As discussed in
Chapter 2, Russian applicative experiencers have a salient morphosyntactic makeup. Thus, first of all, an explicit affixal (on nouns, and suppletive forms on pronouns) dative marker on Russian pro-/nominal items such as ‘mne’ in (104)a (versus nominative ‘ja’ in (104)b), should cue a learner to analyse this argument as an experiencer, which, of course, implies a solid foundation of the previously learned nominal case system. From within a pool of other thematic roles that take dative marking in Russian, the learner would parse this dative as an applicative experiencer in cases where the verb is suffixed with the reflexive –sj/-s’ thus building an impersonal construal.

(104)  a. Mne xorosho (*namerenno) chitalos’.
I.Dat well (intentionally) read.Refl.Pst.Ipf.Neut
‘For some reason, I felt like reading and I read well.’

   b. Ja xorosho (namerenno) chitala.
I.Nom well (intentionally) read.Pst.Ipf.3sg.F
‘I read well/intentionally.’

Essentially, grammatical elements encoded as a combination ‘NPdat + V-sja’ should prompt the target-like intepretation. Another acquisition trigger is of a contextual or pragmatic nature. Agent-oriented adverbs are perfectly acceptable, unsurprisingly, with agent arguments as in (104)b, but they are pragmatically infelicitous with dative experiencer arguments (104)a.

What is more, since learners receive sufficient input of the target structures, as was discussed in 3.8, they will have been exposed to constructions such as (105), wherein only a nominative experiencer (105)a can be used with the verb ‘love’ in Russian, whereas its impersonal counterpart is with the reflexivized verb ‘like’ and takes a dative experiencer argument (105)b (and is ungrammatical with a nominative argument as shown in the example below).

(105)  a. Chomskij/*Chomskomu ljubit lingvistiku.
‘Chomsky loves linguistics.’

   b. Chomskomu/*Chomskij nravitsja lingvistika.
‘Chomsky likes linguistics.’
So, conceivably, during developmental stages, an L2 learner could produce sentences like (106)a with a dative argument and psych verbs lacking reflexive morphology. Such structures would indicate that an L1 nominative experiencer has been re-analyzed as a target lexical item. I do not predict, however, that a learner would produce sentences like (106)b before sentences as in (106)a since structures with reflexive morphology are more semantically complicated to analyze.

(106) a. Mne mechtaet-∅ eta zhenshchina.
   Intended: ‘I dream of this woman.’

   I.Dat dream.Pst.3sg.F this woman.Nom

   b. Ja mechtaetsja eta zhenshchina.
   Intended: ‘I dream of this woman.’

   I.Nom (∅,Dat) dream.Refl.Pres.3sg.F this woman

However, such observations can only be confirmed in longitudinal studies by eliciting the production of these structures, which is not the method used in the current examination, but could be considered in further investigations.

3.9.2.2 Learning tasks for Spanish learners of Russian

For Spanish L2 learners, acquisition is conceptually different since the morphosyntax is comparable in the two languages. Thus, the foremost task for Spanish learners is to confirm that dative arguments co-occur with a reflexivized activity verb in the Russian impersonal structures, which is not a daunting task since this kind of structure is catalogued in their native grammar:

(107) Dat – V_{ACT} + sja
    ↓  ↓
    Appl Impersonal

56 I am not aware of any empirical study that shows the order of acquisition of grammatical morphemes in Russian. In other words, there is not a point of reference as to whether a learner acquires the Russian case system before the affixal reflexive system. To speculate, I presume that the Russian reflexive suffix and the array of its uses are acquired at a later developmental stage and after the case system. The reflexive suffix appears in reciprocal, middle, anticausative, reflexive, passive, and impersonal structures, each of which has its own idiosyncratic properties. Therefore, the multifaceted uses of the reflexive suffix present a formidable task for a learner of Russian.
The next step is to re-analyze the L1 benefactive as an experiencer with activity verbs in L2:

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{L1 Spanish} & \text{Dat Ben} \\
\downarrow & \\
\text{L2 Russian} & \text{Dat Exp}
\end{array}
\]

For this population, the main learning task pertains to semantic feature re-interpretation. In the process of re-analysis, Spanish L2 learners should realize that dative benefactives and experiencers must have different licensors. That is, since their native grammar licenses dative benefactives in a High Appl phrase, dative experiencers in the L2 grammar must have a different licensor. Therefore, another task for a Spanish L2 learner is to learn that Russian non-core experiencers are licensed by the Super High Applicative head (shaded areas indicate the variation in features):

\[
\begin{array}{ll}
\text{a. Spanish L1 representation: } \{+\text{HAppl}, +\text{ben}, +\text{dat}, -\text{control}\} & \leftarrow \text{Initial stage} \\
\text{b. Russian L1 representation: } \{+\text{SHAppl}, +\text{exp}, +\text{dat}, -\text{control}\} & \leftarrow \text{Final stage}
\end{array}
\]

In addition, the feature [control] is also in question for this population since Spanish (like English) nominative experiencers lack control over the psychological situation described by the verb, unlike their Russian equivalents. However, this aspect of grammar has not been tested in the current thesis as only structures with activity verbs were included in the experiment, and nominative experiencers in Russian are found only with psych verbs.

Overall learning tasks are illustrated in Table 2, where underlined areas indicate the differences and the loci of learning between the Spanish dative benefactive and the Russian dative applicative experiencer, and bolded areas indicate the differences between nominative experiencers in the two languages.
Table 2. Learning tasks for Spanish learners of Russian within the featural theory

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L1</th>
<th>Feature selection</th>
<th>Feature bundling</th>
<th>Bundle mapping</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>Syntactic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>[-cntrl] [+exp]</td>
<td>[+Dat] [+HAppl]</td>
<td>{+HAppl, +ben, +dat, -cntrl}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>([LAppl])</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Russian</td>
<td>[-cntrl] [+exp]</td>
<td>[+Dat] [+SHAppl] ([LAppl], [HAppl])</td>
<td>{+SHAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[+Nom] [+T]</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other relevant syntactic features are identified in parentheses in the table above to show the array of available applicative arguments in the respective languages.

Other than the abstract elements delineated above, what explicit elements can trigger the successful acquisition of the Russian grammar by Spanish learners? As with the English learners, these learners need to detect that the ‘NP_dat +V-sja’ complex is the syntactic core of the impersonal construction with applicative experiencers. The native grammar of Spanish learners enumerates each ingredient found in the L2 complex ‘NP_dat +V-sja’, but this same combination is mapped onto a benefactive argument in their L1. This implies that, by and large, none of these grammatical elements would be critically helpful to arrive at a target-like interpretation. It is contextual clues with an experiencer-oriented sense that will license the target-like interpretation in Spanish learners – a truly subtle and daunting scrutiny. The story exemplified below in (110) is one of the experimental stimuli with an experiencer as the target answer. The bolded expressions in this story describe a certain psychological state, which, as expected, would aid a Spanish learner to analyze this context as an experiencer-oriented one.

(110) It’s been twenty years since Pavel owns the factory that produces high-quality wooden furniture. He loves his family business very much and he is proud of the furniture they produce. Even though Pavel is the owner of the factory, he often carves the furniture by himself because he loves this job.

A. Pavlu rabotaetsja na fabrike. Experiencer √
   'Fedor loves/feels like working at the factory.'
B. Na Pavla mnogo ljudej rabotaet na fabrike. Benefactive *
On Pavel.Gen many people.Acc work.Pres.lpf.3sg on factory
'Many people work for Pavel on the factory.'

3.9.2.3 Summary of learning tasks

To sum up: while English learners, in general, need to learn the entirely new category SHApplP that licenses applicative experiencers, Spanish learners face the rather formidable task of re-analyzing an existing bundle of features of a benefactive argument tied to a specific type of verb (i.e., activity) to arrive at the target interpretation. Table 3 summarizes the entire learning process for both L2 groups.

Table 3. Learning tasks in the acquisition of Russian dative applicative experiencers within the featural system

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>L2-er</th>
<th>Feature selection</th>
<th>Feature re-assembly</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Semantic</td>
<td>Syntactic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English</td>
<td>+/-control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+/-experiencer</td>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>T LAppl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>+/-control</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+/-experiencer</td>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>+/-benefactive</td>
<td>LAppl HAppl</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.10 Predictions

Recall that the current thesis is based on the Featural Reassembly Approach that states:

- L2 learners select and (re-)assemble features of particular lexical items and functional categories by means of a contrastive analysis with the features of L1, where three levels are distinguished:
  - Selection of features from the universal set of features;
  - Feature bundles;
  - Features and feature bundles mapped into a functional lexicon, or lexical items
Linguistic forms in which a re-assembly of features is involved pose greater difficulties in L2 acquisition as it is easier to learn an entirely new feature/feature bundle.

One premise that the featural hypothesis sets forth is that there should be sufficient input for the inductive comparative analysis to be actualized. Such a premise is satisfied as was discussed in section 3.8; L2 learners do receive sufficient input of impersonal constructions with dative applicative arguments.

Predictions for the two studies with English (chapter 4) and Spanish (chapter 5) learners are based on the feature reassembly hypothesis (detailed in section 3.5 of this chapter) and the assumptions about input.

3.10.1 Predictions for English learners of Russian

Based on the featural hypothesis, I predict the following with respect to English learners of Russian:

1) High-level syntactic learners should readily accept dative applicatives not only with psych verbs but also with activity verbs having internalized the ‘verb+reflexive’ structure of the impersonal construal (to which dative applicatives can be freely added). Lower-level syntactic learners are predicted to have more problems with the dative with activity verbs structures, and less so with the dative with psych verbs structures – given that the dative case is acquired – since psych verbs are prototypical verbs in the experiencer constructions.

2) If English L2 learners have internalized the morphosyntax associated with applicative dative impersonals (due to sufficient input), they may employ syntactic cueing for semantic interpretations.\(^57\) This task is facilitated by the fact that the L1 does not have dative experiencers in combination with reflexive verbs. That is, it is easier to learn a new feature (i.e., SHApl).

\(^{57}\) Curiously, there is not much literature on the acquisition of Russian cases by second language learners. One available study is reported in Rubenstein (1995), who identified the following sequence in the L2 acquisition of the Russian case system (which has six cases: nominative, genitive, accusative, dative, instrumental, and prepositional): prepositional and accusative cases are attained first and at early acquisitional stages, the genitive and instrumental cases presented more difficulty for the learners, and the dative case was the last to be acquired.
rather than restructure an existing one(s) in the L1 grammar. The implication of this prediction is that a learner is able to select the target features, bundle them, and map them onto the expected L2 item.

3) However, learners may have difficulties at the level of feature selection. If only features available in the native inventory are also available in the L2, the outcome of this learning scenario is that the feature [SHAppl] won’t be selected and the dative will fail to receive an applicative experiencer interpretation.

4) If the correctly selected features have been properly bundled, it is not expected that learners would map the feature bundle onto a non-target lexical item since there are no dative experiencers in their L1.

5) I also expect English learners (by employing the contrastive method) to re-analyze an L2 nominative experiencer as an individual capable of control, and change the L1 value of the attribute [control] to the target one, i.e. [+control], which would be evident if they readily accepted nominative experiencers with psych verbs.

3.10.2 Predictions for Spanish learners of Russian

1) Advanced Spanish learners are not expected to encounter difficulties with the target morphosyntax. It is therefore predicted that these learners will accept grammatical and rule out ungrammatical dative experiencers in a manner comparable to the monolinguals’ performance. I likewise do not expect these learners to have problems with the benefactive arguments in Russian as they are structurally parallel to those in Spanish (i.e., both are licensed by the high applicative head). Lower-level syntactic learners, however, may exhibit difficulties in rejecting ungrammatical experiencers.

2) If Spanish learners successfully select the feature [SHAppl], they are predicted to appropriately assemble features and map the bundle onto the target L2 item, i.e. the applicative dative. The assumption this prediction is based on is that learners arrive at this analysis through sufficient exposure and comparison of the L1 and L2 forms.

3) However, the similarity in L1 and L2 morphosyntax may obstruct the reanalysis of the L1 dative benefactive into an L2 experiencer. In addition to selecting a new feature [SHAppl], this
population must unlearn the set of L1 features, that is \{+HAppl, +ben, +dat, -cntrl\}, and reassemble them as \{+SHAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl\} to further map this bundle into appropriate L2 lexical items. This learning task is more challenging, if attainable at all. Thus, assuming that there is L1 transfer, Spanish L2 learners are predicted to assign a benefactive reading to the Russian dative applicative experiencer.

4) I do not expect Spanish learners to have difficulties at the level of mapping feature bundles to appropriate L2 items as their previous linguistic knowledge dictates the availability of dative applicative arguments.

Predictions are tested in the studies with English and Spanish learners described in chapter 4 and 5, respectively.

### 3.11 Summary

Supporting the view that the parametric approach to language acquisition is not explanatorily adequate, in this chapter I proposed that a feature-based system in explaining the process of acquisition is both theoretically and empirically superior. Based on the assumption that learners employ an inductive comparison between L1 and L2 forms, the Feature Reassembly Approach underlies the very fundamentals of a language (i.e., features) and allows one to discern the levels at which a learner may have difficulties during the process of acquisition: at the level of selection, bundling, or mapping.

Structural and interpretational idiosyncrasies of the English and Spanish counterparts of the Russian applicative dative arguments were also discussed in this chapter delineating the fact that English has only Low Applicative arguments, none of which equates to Russian dative applicatives, whereas Spanish has comparable dative experiencers licensed by High Applicative heads, but only with psychological verbs. Based on the differences among the three languages, learning tasks were discussed, followed by the predictions for the learning outcomes built on the featural reassembly hypothesis.

The next two chapters present empirical studies that were designed based on the theoretical premises discussed in chapters 2 and 3.
Chapter 4
Experimental study with English learners of Russian

4 Rationale

To operationalize the theoretical discussion of Russian dative applicative experiencers with impersonal structures developed in Chapter 2, an experimental study was conducted with English learners. The choice of L1 grammars (Spanish to be discussed in the next chapter) is motivated by the following factors. English, a morphologically impoverished language, does not have dative experiencers and employs different linguistic means to express the equivalent of Russian dative applicative experiencers. I consider native speakers of English to be ideal subjects to test for L2 knowledge of such Russian constructions since an account of L1 transfer of features and functional categories would be untenable, as was elaborated on in the section on learning tasks (see section 3.9.2.1), which calls for investigation into deeper levels of mental representations of second language learners. That is to say, as hypothesized in this thesis, featural learning may be at the very root of the second language acquisition process. Yet another reason to choose L1 English in the present examination is the distinctiveness of the English grammar from the Spanish grammar (whose native speakers are also tested in the current study) with respect to the phenomenon under study. This fact – given the results of the study – may advance our understanding of how phylogenetically distant languages correlate in the process of acquisition.

4.1 Method

4.1.1 Recruitment

English learners were recruited and tested at Middlebury language school (Vermont, USA). The Russian language program at Middlebury College is an intensive summer immersion program that offers an eight-week undergraduate session and a six-week graduate session; students are placed according to their level of proficiency. The immersion program is designed to rapidly improve language skills based on intense classroom teaching (state-of-the-art textbooks, such as Kagan & Miller’s 2006 ‘V puti. Russian grammar in context’, are supplemented with high-tech audiovisual devices facilitating language learning) in conjunction with cocurricular activities (e.g., theater performances, film screenings, karaoke nights, and cooking and sports clubs, all led
in Russian) outside the classroom. In general, the Middlebury language school enforces the ‘no English spoken’ rule on its campus and it attracts highly motivated students.

The recruitment was conducted through personal contacts and through posters distributed around the school, as well as through classroom announcements made by the researcher. The comprehension of the semantic subtlety of dative applicatives requires a high level of competence in the target language. Thus, participants were recruited from among very advanced speakers: language instructors, graduate students, and the highest-level undergraduate students (n=2) in the Russian language program.

4.1.2 Participants

A total of 23 subjects participated in this study: 13 English learners of Russian and 10 native speakers of Russian that comprised a control group. The mean age of English learners was 28.3 years and ranged from 22 to 52. The age of first exposure to Russian varied from 8 to 20, with the mean age being 16.8. All participants started learning Russian after puberty with the exception of one, whose first exposure to Russian was in a family setting at the age of 8, but his exposure was limited to hearing one way parental interactions (that is, one parent spoke Russian to the other without being responded to in Russian). All others had their first contact with Russian in formal classroom settings in the USA. All had spent some time in a Russian-speaking country and the length of stay varied. The mean length of time of stay was 15.7 months, with the shortest stay at 1 month and the longest at 48 months. Ten out of 13 spoke other languages besides their native English and L2 Russian, although in the language assessment questionnaire all 10 indicated Russian as their second language regardless of the age they started learning other languages.

The control group was made up of 10 individuals residing in Toronto. All of them had either learned English as adults or were still learning. Their ages ranged from 25 to 52, with a mean of 35.7. Three were graduate students in Canadian universities, two were students in specialized colleges, one person was visiting her family in Canada for a year, and the remaining four were otherwise employed. All of them speak either very good or relatively good English, with the exception of one who speaks no English at all. They came from two Russian-speaking countries,
Russia (n=7) and Kazakhstan (n=3).\textsuperscript{58} Table 4 summarizes participants’ age, age of first exposure, years lived in a Russian speaking country, and hours of speaking, listening, and reading Russian per week.

Table 4. Participant information in the English-Russian study

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Age of first exposure</th>
<th>Years lived abroad</th>
<th>Hours per week*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS (n = 13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>28.3</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>15.7 months</td>
<td>53.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>22-52</td>
<td>8-20</td>
<td>1-48 months</td>
<td>2-165</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>47.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSs (n = 10)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>35.7</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>28-62</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>11.6</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
<td>-------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Since participants were recruited from Middlebury language school, some of them gave an hourly breakdown according to the school schedule and not according to their regular social situations outside of school, thus the high range.

4.1.3 Procedure and test materials

Participants completed three tasks: a language assessment questionnaire\textsuperscript{59} (Appendix A), a pen-and-paper Grammaticality Judgement (GJ) task (Appendix B) and a Semantic Judgement (SJ) task (Appendix C). The language assessment questionnaire’s design allows a researcher to evaluate each aspect of language use – speaking, writing, listening, and reading – in the subjects’ social, academic, and cultural environments providing a more precise evaluation of their proficiency. The main task was the Semantic Judgement test. The GJ test served as a kind of pre-test to the main test, as described in the next section. All tests and tasks were written and administered in Russian. Participants were tested individually on the premises of Middlebury College. There was no time limit to complete the test, but no participant took longer than 70 minutes.

\textsuperscript{58} A body of research on native grammar attrition (see Schmid & Köpke (2013) and references therein) illustrates that there is a certain vulnerability at the interfaces between the syntax and discourse/interpretation modules in bilinguals. Given this research, the control group was carefully chosen and none of the Russian native speakers had moved to an English-speaking country during (or before) the age of puberty, or lived there long enough to have developed L1 attrition.

\textsuperscript{59} I thank Jeffrey Steele who kindly allowed me to use his language assessment questionnaire as a template for the one I used in my study.
4.2 Grammaticality Judgement Task

The methodological usefulness of the Grammaticality Judgement (GJ) task (Gass 1994, Ellis 1991, etc.) is that it allows one to elicit inferences about syntactic rules and structures that constitute speakers’ competence. Although there is a body of literature criticizing, with reasons, the method for its limitations (Birdsong 1989, Schütze 1996, *inter alia*), it nonetheless remains one of the most reliable measures of linguistic knowledge, as argued by Mandell (1999), Dąbrowska (2010), and others. This method, therefore, is judged as most fitting for the assessment of morphosyntactic knowledge in L2 speakers in the current examination.

The GJ task consisted of 12 grammatical and 12 ungrammatical sentences (see Appendix B for a stimulus set). Six distractors were included making a total of 30 sentences. Sentences were judged on a five-point Likert scale ranging from -2, fully ungrammatical, to +2, fully grammatical. Participants were instructed to answer ‘0’ if they had no intuition on the grammaticality of a given sentence. However, participants were discouraged from choosing ‘0’ as an answer. They were told to “try to avoid this answer” in order to make them think thoroughly before making a grammaticality decision.

This task was designed to test whether L2 speakers have knowledge of the cooccurrence of dative subjects with reflexive morphology on a verb. Recall that in the impersonal construal dative arguments and reflexivized verbs are in a non-agreeing relation and the verb is in default form (i.e., 3\textsuperscript{rd} person singular). On the whole, the GJ task has a 2x2x2 design illustrated in (111), where ‘√’ means grammatical, and ‘*’ means ungrammatical:

\begin{align*}
(111) \quad \text{Psych Verb} & \quad \text{Activity Verb} \\
& \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{Nom} \\
\checkmark
\end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{Dat} \\
* \\
\checkmark
\end{array} & \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{Nom} \\
\checkmark
\end{array} \quad \begin{array}{c}
\text{Dat} \\
* \\
\checkmark
\end{array}
\end{align*}

60 Originally there were 6 distractors. However, one grammatical sentence was eliminated due to a typo in the test materials.
To explain the design: the stimuli were constructed with three psych (feel, doze, see) and three activity (talk, live, run) verbs. Each verb appeared in four conditions: with a nominative subject and no reflexive marker (grammatical) (112)a, with a nominative subject and the reflexive marker –sja (ungrammatical) (112)b, with a dative subject and the reflexive marker –sja (grammatical) (112)c, and with a dative subject and no reflexive marker (ungrammatical) (112)d:

(112) a. Ja dremala tselyj chas po puti v Middlebury.
   I.Nom dozed.Ipf.Sg.F whole hour on way to Middlebury
   ‘I dozed a whole hour on the way to Middlebury.’

b. *Ja dremalos’ po doroge v Middlebury.
   I.Nom dozed.Refl.Ipf.Neut on way to Middlebury
   Intended meaning: ‘I was dozing on the way to Middlebury.’

c. Mne sladko dremalos’ po puti v Middlebury.
   I.Dat sweet dozed.Refl.Ipf.Neut on way to Middlebury
   ‘To me dozed sweetly on the way to Middlebury.’

d. *Mne xorosho dremala v mashine po puti v Middlebury.
   Me.Dat good dozed.Ipf.Sg.F in car on the way to Middlebury
   Intended meaning: ‘I dozed well on the way to Middlebury.’

Essentially, the GJ task establishes whether learners have a solid knowledge of the morphosyntactic properties of dative applicative arguments and the reflexive marker –sja on a verb in Russian. And if a learner has mastered the grammaticality of the applicative construction, this knowledge should effectuate comprehension of the acquirable phenomenon. It is in this sense that GJ task is considered to be a pre-test to the Semantic Judgement test.

4.2.1 Results

The data were analyzed by analysis of variances (ANOVA). The scaled scores were converted into logit-transformed proportions and then submitted to statistical analysis.  

61 The scaled scores were first transformed into proportions (between 0 and 1), and then proportions were logit-transformed. The logit transformations make distributions symmetric and remove the scale boundaries.
4.2.1.1 Participants’ proficiency

Four independent measures of proficiency were considered in this study, summarized per participant in Table 5: 1) L2 learners’ self-assessment, 2) native speakers’ judgements of L2 learners’ proficiency, 3) score on ungrammatical distractors, and 4) score on grammatical distractors within the GJ task. Learners were asked to assess themselves on a four-point scale on the five criteria: reading, writing, speaking, listening, and overall proficiency. Native speakers of Russian were asked to judge the proficiency of each participant (based on listening to a sample of speech) on a five-point scale on the five criteria: fluency, pronunciation, syntax, vocabulary, and overall proficiency.

Table 5. Participants proficiency evaluation scores (English-Russian study) (letters in combination with numbers correspond to individual participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>L2 group</th>
<th>Self-assessment /4</th>
<th>Judges’ assessment /5</th>
<th>Ungrammatical distractor /-2</th>
<th>Grammatical distractors /2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>M1</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.9</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M3</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M5</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M6</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>-2</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M8</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M9</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M10</td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M11</td>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M12</td>
<td></td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M13</td>
<td></td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td>-2</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>T2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-2</td>
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</table>
Because learners of very high language proficiency participated in the experiment, they were not arbitrarily placed in different proficiency groups based on their scores on the four measures mentioned above. Nonetheless, participants’ proficiency was assessed for two reasons: one, to see if there is variation between the scores of advanced learners given the highly complex nature of the acquirable construction; and two, to see if there is progress in learning the target construction, which would be supported if more advanced learners differed in scores.

A correlational approach was taken to show participants’ learning curve. Such an approach allows for continuous comparison within all participants without unnecessarily dividing them into groups (thus risking a loss of statistical power). Two-tailed correlations were run separately on the native and non-native speakers.

All four independent measures were correlated with all 8 variables (i.e., experimental conditions) for the non-native speakers. The results of these correlations are presented in Table 6 (the last four columns are independent variables). Recall that the ungrammatical use of the dative with psych verbs (as in *Mne mechtaj segodnya ‘I.Dat feel like dreaming-∅ today’) is the locus of the GJ test since the correct judgment of its ungrammaticality (-2) reveals L2 knowledge of the cooccurrence of datives with the reflexive –sja on verbs. And if an L2 learner is able to rule out the ungrammatical morphosyntactic structure (instead of simply accepting the grammatical one), it should indicate a solid knowledge of the L2 morphosyntax. Therefore, it was decided to identify the difference (if any) in proficiency of L2 participants based on the correlation between the ungrammatical distractor and the ungrammatical dative with psych verbs variables. The result of this correlation is shown in Figure 1 (‘Mn’ identifies a participant’s code) (all analyses are shown in logit-transformed proportions). The lower the dot is in this scatterplot, the better a participant’s morphosyntactic knowledge is. This ratio corresponds to the best answer on ungrammatical stimuli, which is ‘-2’, and transformed values are not that far off from the original ‘+2’ and ‘-2’ values as seen in the graphs (and throughout the analysis).

Yet another assessment measure was considered: the size of the difference in judgements between ungrammatical and grammatical distractors. The difference between the two measures was calculated and the newly obtained variable was run through correlations with all dependent variables. While some correlations yielded significant results, the ungrammatical distractor variable correlated significantly with more dependent variables. Such a measure of acquisition potentially might produce very accurate results and might be recommended for use in a methodology-oriented research project.
Table 6. Results of correlations between dependent and independent (grammatical distractor, self-assessment, judges’ assessment, and ungrammatical distractor) variables for English L2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>Logit PsychDatBad</th>
<th>Logit PsychDatGood</th>
<th>Logit PsychNomBad</th>
<th>Logit PsychNomGood</th>
<th>Logit ActDatBad</th>
<th>Logit ActDatGood</th>
<th>Logit ActNomBad</th>
<th>Logit ActNomGood</th>
<th>Logit gr.distr</th>
<th>Logit self.assess</th>
<th>Logit Judges</th>
<th>Logit Ungr. Distr</th>
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</tbody>
</table>
| Note: 'Logit' precedes all variables in the table and indicates 'logit-transformed proportions'.

Read the variables as follow:
Logit PsychDatBad = ungrammatical dative w/psych verb;
Logit PsychDatGood = grammatical dative w/psych verb;
Logit PsychNomGood = grammatical nominative w/psych verb;
Logit PsychNomBad = ungrammatical nominative w/psych verb;
Logit ActDatBad = ungrammatical dative w/activity verb;
Logit ActDatGood = grammatical dative w/activity verb;
Logit ActNomBad = ungrammatical nominative w/activity verb;
Logit ActNomGood = grammatical nominative w/activity verb;
Logit. gr. distr = grammatical distractor;
Logit self. assess = self-assessment;
Logit Judges = judges’ assessment;
Logit Ungr. Distr = ungrammatical distractor.
The dependent variable (i.e., the ungrammatical dative with psych verbs) significantly correlated only with the ungrammatical distractor ($r(13)=.585$, $p=.036$) (by the Spearman, as shown here), but not with two other independent measures. What the presence of the significant correlation means is that the better the learners judge different syntactic structures (in this case, rejection of ungrammatical distractors), the better they are at performing on the target structures, or ungrammatical datives with psych verbs.

For the native speakers, the ungrammatical distractor did not correlate with the ungrammatical dative with psych verbs variable ($r(10)=-.321$, $p=.366$), or with any other variable, as seen in Table 7. Lack of correlations for the native speakers, graphed on Figure 2 (where ‘Tn’ identifies a participant’s code), indicates that their scores were at a high level on the tested conditions, although as seen in the graph they did not score in the same narrow range.

---

Figure 1. Correlation between Ungrammatical Distractor and Ungrammatical Dative with psych verbs for English L2 group (M# corresponds to an individual participant)

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63 The fact that the two ratings-based proficiency measures did not correlate significantly by the Spearman (non-parametric) test but the ungrammatical distractor variable did, again, speaks in favour of the latter measure being the more accurate proficiency predictor for the present experiment.
### Table 7. Results of correlations between dependent and independent (grammatical and ungrammatical distractors) variables for L1 in the English-Russian study

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<th>LogitActNomGood</th>
<th>Logit.gr.distr</th>
<th>LogitUngr.Distr</th>
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</table>

**Note:** ‘Logit’ precedes all variables in the table and indicates ‘logit-transformed proportions’.

Read the variables as follow:
- LogitPsychDatBad = ungrammatical dative w/psych verb;
- LogitPsychDatGood = grammatical dative w/psych verb;
- LogitPsychNomGood = grammatical nominative w/psych verb;
- LogitPsychNomBad = ungrammatical nominative w/psych verb;
- LogitActDatBad = ungrammatical dative w/activity verb;
- LogitActDatGood = grammatical dative w/activity verb;
- LogitActNomBad = ungrammatical nominative w/activity verb;
- LogitActNomGood = grammatical nominative w/activity verb;
- Logit.gr.distr = grammatical distractor;
- LogitUngr.Distr = ungrammatical distractor.
The fact that for the current study I focused on high-level syntactic competence constitutes additional evidence in favour of the use of ungrammatical distractors rather than the two ratings-based proficiency measures (i.e., self-assessment and judges’ assessment). What is also notable is that the ungrammatical distractor correlates significantly with the two ratings-based proficiency measures as seen in Table 6, \( r(13) = .574, p = .040 \) for judges’ assessment and \( r(13) = .574, p = .040 \) for self-assessment. I take it as yet another piece of evidence for using this independent variable as a proficiency predictor.

4.2.1.2 Grammaticality Judgement Task results

As was stated above, the Grammaticality Judgment task served as a pretest to the main task (the Semantic Judgment task) and tested L2 learners’ morphosyntactic knowledge of the cooccurrence of dative experiencers with reflexive morphology on a verb, and, conversely, the
disallowance of cooccurrence of nominative subjects with the reflexive –sja on a verb. Learners are required to establish the relevant L2 morphosyntax before they can grasp the semantic component of the Russian construction. It is in this sense that the GJ task served as a pretest.

Logit-transformed proportions were submitted to a mixed ANOVA (with the alpha value set at 0.05 level) with group (control and L2) as a between-subject factor and verb (psych, activity), case (dative, nominative), and response (grammatical, ungrammatical) as within-subjects factors. The mixed analysis of variance showed a significant four-way verb*case*response*group interaction F(2,22)=6.716, p=.017. Since the group factor showed up in the four-way interaction (which means that three-way verb*case*response interaction was significant for at least one of the groups), separate ANOVAs were run as follow-up simple interaction tests.

The first attempt at this was done by splitting the data by groups. However, neither of the groups showed a significant 3-way interaction, so this approach was abandoned. In order to find a meaningful path through the complex interaction, the data was also analyzed separately by splitting it by verb, case, and response, and the analysis by verb was chosen since I predicted some group differences on this factor, although a more precise prediction was not possible. This yielded the results summarized in Table 8:

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<tr>
<td>Case<em>response</em>group</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Case*response</td>
<td>F(2,22)=10.173, p=.004*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

One grammatical item with the activity verb ‘talk’ with the dative subject was excluded on the grounds of native speaker judgements (7 out of 10 speakers ruled it out). It was the only token with the activity verb used transitively (that is, with a nominative theme). The rejection of transitive impersonals may be attributed to different dialects of native speakers as monolinguals in my pilot study did accept this item.
Thus, for the activity verbs a three-way case*response*group interaction was significant, but for the psych verbs only the two-way interaction case*response was significant. I next performed separate simple interaction ANOVAs on the activity verb data split by group. The results showed that the two-way case*response interaction was highly significant for the control group \( (F(2,8)=18.140, p=.002) \), but not for the L2 group. Follow-up paired t-tests were carried out for the L1 group, the results of which are summarized in Table 9.

Table 9. Results of t-tests on the activity verbs for the L1 group (GJ task, English-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error of Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>LegitAct Dat Bad - Legit Act Dat Good</td>
<td>-3.3915000000</td>
<td>1.220771193</td>
<td>.375719089</td>
<td>-4.24064250</td>
<td>-2.522315750</td>
<td>-9.599</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>LegitAct Nom Bad - Legit Act Nom Good</td>
<td>-5.0221300000</td>
<td>1.432213493</td>
<td>.453263570</td>
<td>-6.04663386</td>
<td>-4.097576194</td>
<td>-11.089</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
<td>LegitAct Dat Bad - Legit Act Nom Bad</td>
<td>-4.2764300000</td>
<td>.911382824</td>
<td>.288179256</td>
<td>-6.04663386</td>
<td>-2.522315750</td>
<td>-9.599</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
<td>LegitAct Good - Legit Act Nom Good</td>
<td>-1.6165900000</td>
<td>1.278270425</td>
<td>.403224601</td>
<td>-2.831906957</td>
<td>-1.092230423</td>
<td>-4.742</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The interaction was clearly caused by the fact that there was only one non-significant pair, the nominative vs. dative ungrammatical sentences. Bonferroni adjustments (a method used to counteract p-level bias of overlapping comparisons) did not affect this finding.

Thus, all pairs with activity verbs with the opposite responses (i.e., good/bad) significantly differed from each other (pair 1 and 2), an unsurprising result. However, unexpectedly, there was a significant difference between grammatical dative vs. grammatical nominative \( (t(9)=-4.742, p=.001) \) (pair 4 in Table 9) such that native speakers responded with more accuracy on the nominative grammatical stimuli with activity verbs, as confirmed by the table of means in Table 10. The lower acceptance of the dative experiencers with activity verbs might reflect a methodological weakness in the design. I will return to this result in my discussion of the experiments in Chapter 6.
Table 10. Table of mean differences between two variables for paired t-tests on the activity verbs for the L1 group (GJ task, English-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1 LogitAct-dot.Bad</td>
<td>-2.60593000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.200906451</td>
<td>.408198940</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogitAct-dot.Good</td>
<td>.68037000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.965577086</td>
<td>.360342828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2 LogitAct-nom.Bad</td>
<td>-2.41940000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.467072669</td>
<td>.463929113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogitAct-nom.Good</td>
<td>2.60272000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.125272977</td>
<td>.365842560</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3 LogitAct-dot.Bad</td>
<td>-2.09583000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.290806451</td>
<td>.406188840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogitAct-nom.Bad</td>
<td>-2.41940000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.467072669</td>
<td>.463929113</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4 LogitAct-dot.Good</td>
<td>.68037000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>.965577086</td>
<td>.360342828</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LogitAct-nom.Good</td>
<td>2.60272000</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>1.125272977</td>
<td>.365842560</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Paired t-tests were carried out for the psych verbs (recall that there was a significant case*response interaction for these verbs, detailed in Table 8), which showed the following results summarized in Table 11:

Table 11. Results of t-tests on the case*response interaction for psych verbs across both English L2 and L1 groups (GJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Test</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error Mean</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>Lower</th>
<th>Upper</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig. (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4 LogitPay-dot.Good - LogitPay-nom.Good</td>
<td>-1.03691304</td>
<td>1.357624270</td>
<td>.20384229</td>
<td>-.819772063</td>
<td>-.243605456</td>
<td>-3.441</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In particular, psych verbs with the opposite responses (i.e., good/bad) were treated significantly differently from each other (pair 1 and 2), an expected result, and the stimuli with ungrammatical datives and nominatives were ruled out equally well (pair 3), but, surprisingly, grammatical datives were accepted significantly less than grammatical nominatives with the psych verbs, as seen in the table of means below (pair 4):
Table 12. Table of mean differences between two variables for paired t-tests on the psych verbs across both English L2 and L1 groups (GJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std. Error</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1 Logit.Psy.Dat.Bad</td>
<td>-2.13580870</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.374921313</td>
<td>2.8059612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logit.Psy.Dat.Good</td>
<td>65676087</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.378550774</td>
<td>2.8744707</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3 Logit.Psy.Dat.Bad</td>
<td>-2.13580870</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.374921313</td>
<td>2.8059612</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Logit.Psy.Nom.Good</td>
<td>65676087</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.378550774</td>
<td>2.8744707</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

What is important, however, is that both groups ruled out the ungrammatical structures, which indicates that participants have intuitions about the relevant morphosyntax with psych verbs.

Finally, because I had predicted a difference between the groups in their treatment of dative arguments with activity verbs, but not with the psych verbs, I also performed planned comparisons (independent samples tests), which showed that the two groups significantly differed in rejecting ungrammatical dative with activity verbs \( (t(23)=2.143, p=.044) \) and with psych verbs \( (t(23)=2.100, p=.048) \) alike such that native speakers performed significantly more accurately than the L2 speakers. That L2 learners did not rule out the focal structures (the ungrammatical datives with psych and activity verbs) in the GJ task at rates comparable to the native speakers suggests that on average even highly proficient L2 speakers have not fully acquired the relevant morphosyntax.

Another planned comparison was performed between the L1 and L2 groups on their performance on nominative vs. dative arguments with activity verbs in order to be able to subsequently compare the performance of English and Spanish learners on the acquisition of this aspect of their L2 Russian grammar. Independent samples t-tests showed that the L1 and L2 groups significantly differed on the acceptance of grammatical nominative agents \( (t(21)=3.750, p=.001) \), and the means show that L2 speakers accepted nominative agents much less than the L1 group. Such a result is rather surprising since nominative agents represent basic knowledge in any acquirable grammar, and, leads me to suggest that these speakers’ judgements are overall uncertain.
For descriptive purposes, means and standard deviations (SD) of untransformed scores were calculated separately for the stimuli with psych and activity verbs, presented in Table 13 and Table 14, and graphed in Figure 3 and Figure 4, respectively.

Table 13. Rates of responses of English L2 and L1 group on GJ task with psych verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gram Dat</th>
<th>Ungram Dat</th>
<th>Gram Nom</th>
<th>Ungram Nom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 (n=13)</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 (n=10)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>0.4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 3. Mean responses of English L2 and L1 group on GJ task with psych verbs
Table 14. Rates of responses of English L2 and control group on GJ task with activity verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gramm Dat</th>
<th>Ungramm Dat</th>
<th>Gramm Nom</th>
<th>Ungramm Nom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 (n=13)</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 (n=10)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 4. Mean responses of English L2 and L1 group on GJ task with activity verbs

After the Grammaticality Judgement task, participants completed the main task of the study, the Semantic Judgement task, which I report next.

4.3 Semantic Judgement Task

The Semantic Judgement Task (see Appendix C) designed for this study was comprised of short stories each followed by a sentence that concludes or summarizes the story. This task is similar to other comprehension techniques such as truth-value and felicity judgement tasks used in studies on L2 acquisition (e.g., Bruhn de Garavito 2000, Slabakova & Montrul 2000, Cho 2012), where participants have to choose whether the sentence following each story is true/felicitous or false/infelicitous. Participants in the present study had to give a scaled judgement about whether the sentence following each story was appropriate and semantically adequate (see examples
below). The advantage of a scaled (as opposed to a binary) approach is in that scaled answers allow us to observe the general direction of comprehension responses with more certainty (in plain English, on a scale ‘-2 -1 0 1 2’, ‘1’ is closer to ‘2’ than ‘-2’ to ‘2’).

The task evaluated learner sensitivity to the differences between the semantics of dative and nominative arguments and their respective interpretations in specific contexts. As far as Russian is concerned, the contextual differences between the [+control] nominative experiencers and the [-control] dative experiencers are truly subtle; in fact, native speakers do not find them easy to articulate. Nonetheless, the two contexts are discernable, as was established in section 2.2.1 and section 2.2.2. That is, the contexts narrow down to the following: the nominative agent/experiencer reads as ‘X is in a conscious state and capable of controlling events/perceptual processes’, or ‘X is in a state of complete mental awareness’. The dative counterpart says that there is not any kind of control available to an individual and that the dative is an experiencer *par excellence*. The two cases (nominative and dative), therefore, surface in two different contexts – [+control] and [-control] events (with activity verbs) and emotional states (with psych verbs). 65

The Semantic Judgement Task design is illustrated in (113), where the first line represents the type of verb, followed by the type of contextual condition, the third line is for the nominative/dative choice of argument, and the fourth line is for the target answer:

(113)    

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Psych Verb</th>
<th>Activity Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>[+Control]</td>
<td>(+Control)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(-Control)</td>
<td>(Nom)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nom, √</td>
<td>D+sja, *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D+sja, *</td>
<td>Nom, √</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The task consisted of short stories followed by a sentence, the latter being judged on a five-point scale. Overall, the 32 story-sentence combinations were distributed over the following conditions/contexts: 16 story-sentence combinations with psychological verbs crossing

65 Contextual triggers for these scenarios are contained in agentive (e.g., *deliberately*) and non-agentive (e.g., *unintentionally*) adverbs, thus indicating the presence of an agent or an experiencer. Adverbs, however, are not part of the stimulus sentences.
[+control] and [-control] contexts with nominative and dative arguments, and another 16 with activity verbs. Thus, each verb appeared a) two times in agreement with nominative arguments and two times with dative arguments, and b) in two appropriate and two inappropriate contexts for a total of four times. The stimuli were randomized. The story-sentence combinations are exemplified below for the activity verb sleep (the target answer is highlighted). Participants were told to interpret the scale as follows (but see Appendix C for the complete test):

-2 = sounds bad, it is not appropriate to the story
-1 = sounds bad, but not so much
0 = you cannot decide (try to avoid this answer)
1 = sounds relatively good, is relatively appropriate to the context of the story
2 = sounds very good, appropriate to the context

The materials of the test, including instructions, were written entirely in Russian. Thirty-two story-sentence combinations were presented for judgment such that the participants had to give their first impression of the sentences’ appropriateness to the story. Four class I psych verbs (want, hear, woo/conquer, dream) and four activity verbs (work, sleep, read, walk) were tested in this study. Each verb appeared in four different conditions:

1) without –sja in [+control] contexts with nominative subjects (grammatical √) (114);
2) with –sja in [-control] contexts with dative arguments (grammatical √) (115);
3) with –sja in [+control] contexts with dative arguments (ungrammatical *) (116);
4) without –sja in [-control] contexts with nominative subjects (ungrammatical *) (117).

66 The decision to include a different set of verbs in the semantic judgement task was motivated by the idea to test more verbs in the lexical inventory of L2 learners.
**Condition 1: [+control] context with nominative subject √**

This year my niece went to a private school. She finds it really difficult to study there. Today she will have her first exam on biology and so she studied the whole day yesterday preparing for it. But she wanted to be even more prepared and so she studied all night long without any sleep.

(114) V etu noch’ moja plemjannitsa ne spala.

In this night my niece. Nom not slept. Ipf. 3sg. F

‘My niece didn’t sleep last night.’

**Condition 2: [-control] context with dative subject √**

Maxim is a first-year student in a prestigious university. He finds it really hard to study there. Today he will meet two professors for the first time and will report his research. Last night Maxim studied really hard; he even learned his report by heart. But he was so anxious that he was not able to fall asleep even though he felt very tired.

(115) V etu noch’ Maksimu ne spalos’.

In this night Maxim. Dative not slept. Refl. Ipf. Neut

‘Maxim {couldn’t sleep / didn’t feel like sleeping} last night.’

**Condition 3: [+control] context with dative subject * **

My research paper is due in a week. I am a slow worker and so now I have to work even during the night. For the last three nights I had to work without any sleep.

(116) Mne ne spalos’ tri nochi podrjad.

Me. Dative not slept. Refl. Ipf. Neut three nights in a row

‘I {couldn’t sleep / didn’t feel like sleeping} three nights in a row.’

**Condition 4: [-control] context with nominative subject * **

My friend Galya called me yesterday and told me very exciting news – she took three days off and so she doesn’t have to wake up early in the morning. Galya spent the whole day outside and she was very tired when she returned home at night. But for some reason she couldn’t sleep all night.

(117) Galja ne spala vsju noch’.

Galya. Nom not slept. Ipf. 3sg. F whole night

‘Galya didn’t sleep the whole night.’

As was noted in section 3.8 on Input (Chapter 3), discussion of the semantic differences between nominative and dative logical subjects with class I psych verbs and activity verbs is somewhat limited in Russian L2 instructional materials. Grammar books used in classrooms (as discussed
in section 3.8 on input) introduce learners to impersonal constructions mentioning in passing that they can be used with nominals marked with dative case and that they usually indicate some mental state of the individual marked dative. Learners do not receive specific training on the semantic distinction between the nominative and dative logical subjects as articulated in this thesis. This means that the features [+/-control] and feature combinations of the target L2 forms (as discussed in section 3.9.2.1 on the learning tasks) might be underdetermined in the input. As for negative feedback, even if we are to assume that L2 speakers receive it on production errors, it is highly unlikely to be systematic and explicit (in general, negative feedback is vague and language teachers rarely correct the form, but rather the content, as shown by Chaudron 1986) and, thus, insufficient for the target acquisition of the semantics. Since this thesis is concerned with whether L2 learners can comprehend the complexity of the semantic component of the acquirable construction, the Semantic Judgment task was deemed to be the main task of the study. I present the results next.

4.3.1 Semantic Judgement Task results

The Semantic Judgement task was the main test in this study. The purpose of the semantic task was to find out whether an L2 learner is sensitive to the occurrence of dative experiencers in [-control] contexts – that is, in contexts where the dative is an experiencer lacking control over the situation/event described by the verb. If learners know the interpretative peculiarities of the target constructions, it should be revealed by the results of this test.

The item with the psych verb ‘dream’ with the nominative subject in the [-control] context (designed to be infelicitous) was excluded from the entire analysis because of its overall mean score of 1.8 (vs. -2 ‘not felicitous’ for the native speakers). Mechta ‘dream’ is a verb with a highly abstract lexical meaning (like seem, appear, etc.), which may result in conflation between the [-control] dative and [+control] nominative. Ultimately, the choice of the item for the semantic test may have been infelicitous. Another item with the activity verb ‘read’ with the nominative subject in the [-control] context was excluded from the analysis as well. Native speakers accepted the sentence with an overall mean score of 1.5 (vs. -2). The story for this particular sentence was falsely structured, such that the sentence sounded as if it were affirming one of the events described in the story, and so the sentence was thus incorrectly accepted.
The mean proportions per participant per condition were first quasi-logit transformed, and then submitted to a mixed ANOVA (with the alpha value set at 0.05 level), with repeated measures, with group (control, L2) as a between-subjects factor and verb (psych, activity), case (dative, nominative), and felicity (felicitous, infelicitous) as within-subjects factors. The results showed a significant two-way verb*group F(2,22)=5.175, p=.034 interaction (means are shown in Table 15) and a significant three-way verb*case*felicity interaction F(2,22)=9.141, p=.006 (means are shown in Table 16).

Table 15. Means for significant verb*group interaction from a mixed ANOVA on SJ task (English-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Psych</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 (n=13)</td>
<td>.440</td>
<td>.613</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control (n=10)</td>
<td>.975</td>
<td>.430</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16. Means for significant verb*case*felicity interaction from a mixed ANOVA on SJ task (English-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Felicity</th>
<th>Psych</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>Nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Felicitous</td>
<td>.552</td>
<td>1.535</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Infelicitous</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>.589</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For the two-way verb*group interaction, the data were divided by group and correlated samples t-tests were run showing no effect of verb within either group. However, independent samples t-tests showed that the L1 group did significantly better than the L2 group across all conditions on psych verbs (t(23)=−2.252, p=.035), but there was no significant difference on activity verbs.

To visualize the direction of the mean differences, the mean responses and standard deviations of untransformed scores were calculated separately for psych and activity verbs for each group. Table 17 shows mean responses and standard deviation for psych verbs, visualized in Figure 5,
and Table 18 shows mean responses and standard deviations for activity verbs, visualized in Figure 6.

Table 17. Rates of responses of English L2 and L1 group on SJ task with psych verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Felicit Dat</th>
<th>Infelicit Dat</th>
<th>Felicit Nom</th>
<th>Infelicit Nom</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 (n=13)</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 (n=10)</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 5. Mean responses of English L2 and L1 group on SJ task with psych verbs
Table 18. Rates of responses of English L2 and L1 group on SJ task with activity verbs

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Felicit Dat $M$</th>
<th>Felicit Dat $SD$</th>
<th>Infelicit Dat $M$</th>
<th>Infelicit Dat $SD$</th>
<th>Felicit Nom $M$</th>
<th>Felicit Nom $SD$</th>
<th>Infelicit Nom $M$</th>
<th>Infelicit Nom $SD$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L2 (n=13)</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 (n=10)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 6. Mean responses of English L2 and L1 group on SJ task with activity verbs

For the verb*case*felicity interaction, the data were split by verb type. The analysis revealed a significant two-way case*felicity interaction for both psych verbs ($F(1,22)=8.508, p=.008$) (means are shown in Table 19) and activity verbs ($F(1,22)=4.399, p=.048$) (means are shown in Table 20).
Table 19. Means for case*felicity interaction for psych verbs (SJ task, English-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Psych</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felicitous</td>
<td>Infelicitous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>.495</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>1.479</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 20. Means for case*felicity interaction for activity verbs (SJ task, English-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Activity</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Felicitous</td>
<td>Infelicitous</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dative</td>
<td>.831</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nominative</td>
<td>1.131</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As we can see from the followup t-tests (Table 21-Table 24), and as expected from the fact that the 3-way interaction is significant, the pattern of two-way interactions is different for each verb type.

The interaction for the psych verbs was caused by the fact that there was one marginally significant pair, the grammatical vs. ungrammatical dative sentences. Bonferroni adjustment rendered this finding insignificant. The other three pairs – grammatical vs. ungrammatical nominative, grammatical dative vs. nominative, and ungrammatical dative vs. nominative – were significant, of which the grammatical dative vs. nominative sentences were unexpectedly treated significantly different with the dative accepted significantly less than the nominative.
Table 21. Results of t-tests on the psych verbs across both English L2 and L1 groups (SJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Test</th>
<th>Paired Differences</th>
<th>95% Confidence Interval of the Difference</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Sig (2-tailed)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
<td>Std. Deviation</td>
<td>Std. Error Mean</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Dat Ok - Lgt S. Psy Dat Bad</td>
<td>.3552568 - .8894804</td>
<td>.2285672</td>
<td>.7859052</td>
<td>1.955</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Nom Ok - Lgt S. Psy Nom Bad</td>
<td>.906729 - 1.1879453</td>
<td>.2476762</td>
<td>1.4179060</td>
<td>3.600</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Dat Ok - Lgt S. Psy Nom Ok</td>
<td>-.3841345 - .1274864</td>
<td>.2350983</td>
<td>-.485984</td>
<td>-4.083</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Dat Bad - Lgt S. Psy Nom Bad</td>
<td>-.4354174 - .7432471</td>
<td>.1549986</td>
<td>-.1139706</td>
<td>-2.909</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 22. Table of mean differences between two variables for paired t-tests on the psych verbs across both English L2 and L1 groups (SJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>Std Error Mean</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
<td>.496020</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.0601931</td>
<td>.2189804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Dat Ok</td>
<td>.496764</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.3906695</td>
<td>.0814602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Dat Bad</td>
<td>.479154</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.2677822</td>
<td>.2522657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
<td>.675181</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.3903672</td>
<td>.1439515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Nom Ok</td>
<td>.496020</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.0501931</td>
<td>.2189804</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Nom Bad</td>
<td>.479154</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>1.2677822</td>
<td>.2522657</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
<td>.38764</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.3906695</td>
<td>.0814602</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Dat Bad</td>
<td>.575181</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.3903672</td>
<td>.1439515</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lgt S. Psy Nom Bad</td>
<td>.38764</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>.3906695</td>
<td>.0814602</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For activity verbs, only two pairs were significant, grammatical vs. ungrammatical dative (an expected result), and ungrammatical dative vs. nominative such that ungrammatical dative was ruled out significantly more than the ungrammatical nominative. Adjustment of significance level by Bonferroni did not affect this result.
Table 23. Results of t-tests on the activity verbs across both English L2 and L1 groups (SJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Test</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paired Differences</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 24. Table of mean differences between two variables for paired t-tests on the activity verbs across both English L2 and L1 groups (SJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paired Samples Statistics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Mean</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg.t.S Act Dat Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg.t.S Act Norm Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg.t.S Act Norm Ok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg.t.S Act Norm Bad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pair 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lg.t.S Act Norm Bad</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It is noteworthy that while the infelicitous condition with psych verbs was not rejected at the expected rate even by the native speakers, the infelicitous dative with activity verbs was, which underlines participants’ intuition for the difference between proper psychological states/verbs and the psych states resulting from a special configuration of conceptually non-psych verbs as manifested by the syntactic structure in Russian. Designing a proper semantic difference between nominative and dative arguments with psych verbs appears to be tricky, and this intricacy is seen in current results.

4.4 Summary of Chapter 4

4.4.1 Summary of the Grammaticality Judgement task

Overall, the results indicate that the judgements of the L2 group and L1 group on psych verbs are similar on all conditions, except for the ungrammatical datives. The pattern is similar with the
activity verbs as L2 learners ruled out ungrammatical datives significantly less often than the control group. On other tested conditions, English learners performed in the same direction as the control group. Native speakers produced expected responses on all conditions with psych verbs, but they were less confident at accepting grammatical datives with activity verbs, and I believe this may reflect certain limitations in the study design.

The fact that L2 speakers performed significantly worse at rejecting ungrammatical datives with both psych and activity verbs suggests that lower-competence learners are insensitive to the relevant morphosyntax of the dative applicatives in the target grammar. This inference is also corroborated by the fact that these learners accepted nominative agents significantly less than the control group.

4.4.2 Summary of the Semantic Judgement task

The main task of the study was designed to determine whether L2 participants had the same intuitions as native speakers for the dative versus nominative experiencers with psych and activity verbs. Overall findings indicate that an insensitivity of L2 learners to the grammaticality of applicative structures found in the GJ test mirrors the results in the SJ task.

Although responses in the SJ test are not as clear-cut as in the GJ task, there is an identifiable pattern for each verb type. Nominative subjects with both psych and activity verbs are treated by both groups in a similar way and are not excluded (which is an unexpected result) from infelicitous contexts.

Responses on dative experiencers were not uniform. With activity verbs, infelicitous datives, as expected, were ruled out in [+control] contexts by both groups, but less so by L2 speakers. As for the felicitous datives in [-control] contexts, both groups correctly accepted them. Dative experiencers with psych verbs, however, appear to be trickier. Felicitous datives in [-control] contexts were correctly accepted by the native group and accepted less often by the L2 group. Unexpectedly though, infelicitous datives with psych verbs were accepted by both the native and L2 groups. This result suggests that it is truly difficult to draw borders between [-control] and [+control] conditions with ontologically psychological verbs. Despite the unexpected responses on infelicitous items, what is important to note here is that responses of the L2 group are in the
same direction as those of the native speakers on all conditions, although they are consistently worse.
Chapter 5
Experimental study with Spanish learners of Russian

5 Rationale

Spanish equivalents of the Russian constructions examined in this thesis are quite similar in terms of syntactic, but not semantic, structure. As was discussed in chapter 3, the syntactic scheme of ‘Dat – Refl – activity verb’ in Spanish yields the interpretation of a benefactive argument, while the same construal in Russian results in an experiencer reading. It is therefore particularly interesting to examine how Spanish learners acquire this aspect of L2 Russian grammar since, as hypothesized, if these learners do not discriminate on the semantic aspect between the two grammars, this would indicate that feature bundles cannot be restructured in L2 learning. By contrast, if Spanish learners show evidence of target-like semantic knowledge (i.e. that of an applicative experiencer), it would indicate that L2 learners have sufficient access to features and feature composition structure and thus are able to re-assemble features appropriately. Ultimately, it is hoped that studying this linguistic group will further our understanding of whether and how structurally invisible differences between unrelated languages are acquired.

5.1 Method

5.1.1 Recruitment

Twenty-three Spanish speakers of Russian were recruited in Spain (Granada, Barcelona, and Madrid). These participants were recruited from among very advanced speakers: language professors, graduate students and the highest-level undergraduate students in the Russian language programs in the universities. This population was identified by a careful search throughout Slavic Languages programs available at Spanish universities. Once contact was established with the key personnel to recruit participants, the researcher approached speakers individually and through posted ads. Participants were remunerated for partaking in the study. Participation was voluntary so participants could withdraw from the study at any time, without penalty.
5.1.2 Participants

All participants were asked to provide demographic information in the Language Assessment Questionnaire (see Appendix D for the full version of it). Their mean age was 30.3 and their ages ranged from 20 to 44. The age of first exposure to Russian varied from 9 to 21, with the mean age being 18.1. All participants started learning Russian after the age of puberty with the exception of one, whose first exposure to Russian was in a family setting at the age of 9. All others had first contact with Russian in formal classroom settings in Spain. Most of them had spent some time in Russia and the length of stay varied. The mean length of stay was 25.3 months, with the shortest stay at 0 months and the longest at 72 months. All 23 participants indicated that they speak other languages (the most frequently mentioned languages were Catalan, French, German, and English). Of the 23 participants, eight indicated that Russian was their second language, twelve considered Russian their third language (while English was the second), and two were simultaneous Spanish-Catalan bilinguals and Russian was their third language.

The control group consisted of 13 native speakers of Russian residing in Montreal, Canada, and Kazakhstan. Those who reside in Montreal (n=8) also speak English as a second language with differing proficiency levels; those speakers acquired English in adulthood. None of the native Russian speakers from Kazakhstan (n=5) speaks English. Six of these native speakers also participated in the experiment with English learners of Russian.

The results of the Language Assessment questionnaires are presented in Table 28. (NNS = non-native speakers, NS = native speakers).

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67 This participant indicated that his mother would sometimes talk to him in Russian, but the exposure was not consistent or regular.
68 This multilingual situation is the norm in most of Europe. It would be very difficult, I believe, to find Spanish speakers who do not speak any French or English (as was the case with my participants).
69 The Russian-speaking residents of Montreal are all immigrants from different former Soviet Union republics who have lived in Canada for a few years. Monolinguals from Kazakhstan were asked to complete the tests via email.
Table 25. Spanish L2 participant information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participants</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Age of first exposure</th>
<th>Months lived abroad*</th>
<th>Hours per week**</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NNS (n = 23)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>30.3</td>
<td>18.1</td>
<td>25.3 months</td>
<td>22.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>20-44</td>
<td>9-21</td>
<td>0-72 months</td>
<td>2-80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td></td>
<td>9.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NSs (n = 13)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>45.1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Range</td>
<td>17-70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SD</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* ‘Months lived abroad’: ‘abroad’ means a country where Russian is spoken as a lingua franca and/or is (one of) the state languages, i.e. Ukraine, Kazakhstan, and other ex-Soviet Union Republics.

**Hours per week includes reading, listening, and speaking in Russian (but see Appendix D for the details).

5.1.3 Procedure and test materials

Participants were first asked to fill out the Language Assessment questionnaire (Appendix D), after which they were asked to complete two written tasks – the Grammaticality Judgment (GJ) task (Appendix E) and the Semantic Judgment task (SJ) (Appendix F). The main test was the Semantic Judgement task, for the same reason as in the experiment with English learners, as the study was designed to test advanced learners’ knowledge of the semantic intricacy of Russian applicative experiencers. As a pre-test to the SJ task, Spanish participants first completed the GJ task that was intended to determine their knowledge of the morphosyntactic grammaticality of the target structures. All tests and task descriptions were written and administered in Russian. There was no time limit, but no participant took longer than 60 minutes. Participants were also discouraged from going back to previous answers and changing them. Next, I explain the design and results of each task respectively.

5.2 Grammaticality Judgment task

The purpose of this task was to test whether L2 learners have knowledge of morphosyntax associated with Russian dative experiencers and benefactives. As detailed in Chapter 3, Spanish learners must internalize the fact that dative experiencers co-occur with reflexivized activity verbs, but not nominative ones, and that the relevant benefactive arguments in Russian can either
be marked with the affixal dative case or occur with a preposition and accusative case on a
pronoun/noun.

A total of 72 stimuli (24 ungrammatical, 24 grammatical, and 24 distractors – 12 grammatical
and 12 ungrammatical) were constructed with experiencer, benefactive (dative and prepositional)
and agent arguments and activity verbs (reflexivized with –sja and regular). Sentences were
judged on a five-point Likert scale ranging from ‘-2’ (fully ungrammatical) to ‘+2’ (fully
grammatical). Participants were instructed to answer ‘0’ (0 = ‘I cannot tell’) only if they had no
intuition on the grammaticality of a given sentence, but they were discouraged from choosing ‘0’
as an answer.

The stimuli with the nominative agent arguments were included in the study design for two
reasons: first, to test whether morphosyntactic knowledge of various L2 arguments is in place,
and second, to compare the L2 knowledge of Spanish and English learners of Russian
nominatee vs. dative experiencers, the module which is tested in the comprehension task in the
two experimental studies.

Eight activity verbs were included in this test: eat, read, work, sing, write, dance, play, and run.
Each verb appeared in six conditions: with a nominative subject and no reflexive marker on the
verb (grammatical) (118)a, with a nominative subject and with the reflexive –sja
(ungrammatical) (118)b (unglossed as there is no sensible translation for this ungrammatical
sentence), with a grammatically structured benefactive (with the preposition (118)c or dative
case marked (118)d), with an ungrammatically structured benefactive (118)e (the use of an
inappropriate preposition ‘na’ instead of ‘dlja’), with a dative subject and the reflexive marker –
sja (grammatical) (118)f, and with a dative subject and no reflexive marker (ungrammatical)
(118)g (unglossed as there is no sensible translation for this ungrammatical sentence):
Distractors consisted of 12 grammatical and 12 ungrammatical Russian sentences with the focus on different grammatical aspects such as nominal and adjectival gender agreement, number agreement, and others. The stimuli were randomized with the distractors to avoid any bias effect.

5.2.1 Results

5.2.1.1 Participants' proficiency

L2 participants were asked to assess their linguistic knowledge on the four-criteria scale (beginner, intermediate, advanced, and near-native) with respect to reading, listening, and speaking in Russian (see Language Assessment questionnaires, Appendix D). This measure was considered as one of the three independent proficiency measures in addition to the learners’ scores on grammatical and ungrammatical distractors. The scores of participants on these measures are summarized in Table 26.
Table 26. Participants proficiency evaluation scores (Spanish-Russian study) (letters in combination with numbers correspond to individual participants)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>L2 group</th>
<th>Self-assessment /4</th>
<th>Ungrammatical distractor /-2</th>
<th>Grammatical distractors /2</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>G1</td>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>-0.2</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G2</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.6</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G4</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G5</td>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G6</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G8</td>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G9</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G10</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G11</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G12</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G13</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-0.1</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M15</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-0.3</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M16</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M17</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B18</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B19</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B20</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B21</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>B22</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Control group</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>1.4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RT1</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.7</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>R3</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.2</td>
<td>1.8</td>
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<tr>
<td>R4</td>
<td></td>
<td>-0.9</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R5</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R6</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R7</td>
<td></td>
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<td>1.7</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>R8</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.0</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA9</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.6</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA10</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>1.8</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R11</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.6</td>
<td>2.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>RA12</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RA13</td>
<td></td>
<td>-1.3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

To enable the comparison between the native and non-native speakers, separate correlations were run on all tested variables with the scores on self-assessment (for the L2 group), and
The results are illustrated for the L2 group in Table 27, and for the L1 group in Table 28.

Table 27. Results of correlations between dependent and independent (grammatical distractors, self-assessment, and ungrammatical distractors) variables for Spanish L2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>logitBenGood</th>
<th>logitBenBad</th>
<th>logitExpGood</th>
<th>logitExpBad</th>
<th>logitNomGood</th>
<th>logitNomBad</th>
<th>logit.gram.distr</th>
<th>logit.self.assess</th>
<th>Ungram. Distractor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logitBenGood</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logitBenBad</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>logit.gram.distr</td>
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<tr>
<td>logit.self.assess</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ungram. Distractor</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Note: ‘Logit’ precedes all variables in the table and indicates ‘logit-transformed proportions’.

Read the variables as follow:
- logitBenGood = grammatical benefactive;
- logitBenBad = ungrammatical benefactive;
- logitExpGood = grammatical experiencer;
- logitExpBad = ungrammatical experiencer;
- logitNomGood = grammatical agent;
- logitNomBad = ungrammatical agent;
- logit.gram.distr = grammatical distractor;
- logit.self.assess = self-assessment;
- Ungram. Distractor = ungrammatical distractor.

There is a different pattern of correlations between dependent variables and each of the three independent variables, as can be seen in the last three columns. Thus, grammatical distractors

---

There is growing consensus among researchers suggesting that measuring learners’ proficiency according to self-reported rates with a subsequent split into low and high proficiency groups is often arbitrary, as is the median yardstick. Dichotomizing continuous variables, such as proficiency, into ‘low’ and ‘high’ groups will result in a loss of information, and, ultimately, in a loss of statistical power. Most researchers advise treating scores as falling along a continuum (e.g., Newman et al. 2012). This approach was taken in the current examination.
(coded as ‘logit.gram.distr’) significantly correlated with five out of six dependent variables, and so did ungrammatical distractors (coded as ‘Ungram Distractor’), while the variable self-assessment (coded as ‘logit.self.assess’) significantly correlated with only one dependent variable, ungrammatical benefactives. Naturally, the self-assessment independent variable was thus excluded from the analysis as the best predictor of proficiency.

The pattern of correlations is similar for the native speakers: grammatical distractor correlated with four out of six variables, and ungrammatical distractor significantly correlated with three out of six variables. There was no self-assessment measure for native speakers.

Table 28. Results of correlations between dependent and independent (ungrammatical and grammatical distractors) variables for L1 (Spanish-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Correlations</th>
<th>logitBenGood</th>
<th>logitBenBad</th>
<th>logitExpGood</th>
<th>logitExpBad</th>
<th>logitNomGood</th>
<th>logitNomBad</th>
<th>logit.ungr.Distractor</th>
<th>logit.gram.distr</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Spexman’s rho</td>
<td>-2.01*</td>
<td>-6.47*</td>
<td>4.30*</td>
<td>-0.06*</td>
<td>1.12*</td>
<td>-0.08*</td>
<td>-0.01*</td>
<td>0.001*</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>logitBenBad</td>
<td>-0.04*</td>
<td>1.000*</td>
<td>5.19</td>
<td>4.62*</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>4.62*</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>logitExpGood</td>
<td>-0.02*</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>logitNomGood</td>
<td>-0.01*</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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<tr>
<td>logit.ungr.Distractor</td>
<td>-0.01*</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
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<td>13</td>
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<tr>
<td>logit.gram.distr</td>
<td>-0.02*</td>
<td>0.00*</td>
<td>3.15</td>
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<td>0.00*</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sig (2-tailed)</td>
<td>0.000</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).
** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: ‘Logit’ precedes all variables in the table and indicates ‘logit-transformed proportions’.

Read the variables as follow:
logitBenGood = grammatical benefactive;
logitBenBad = ungrammatical benefactive;
logitExpGood = grammatical experiencer;
logitExpBad = ungrammatical experiencer;
logitNomGood = grammatical agent;
logitNomBad = ungrammatical agent;
logit.ungr.Distractor = ungrammatical distractor;
logit.gram.distr = grammatical distractor.
As was mentioned earlier, the locus of the GJ task is to find out whether Russian L2 acquirers know the morphosyntactic differences between benefactive and experiencer arguments and discriminate between the two, which would be evidenced if they correctly rule out the ungrammatical structures, and specifically ungrammatical experiencers since these are central to the present examination. Essentially, if an L2 learner is able to bar an ungrammatical morphosyntactic structure (rather than simply accept a grammatical one), it would indicate that L2 knowledge has been internalized. Therefore, since the study focuses on high-level syntactic competence, it was decided to assess participants’ proficiency with respect to the ungrammatical distractor variable. Just like in the experiment with English learners, described in section 4.2.1.1, I decided against splitting participants into arbitrary proficiency groups given their scores on the ungrammatical distractors. Furthermore, to see whether there is variation even within very high-competence syntactic learners (which, in turn, should signify that there is learning over time), I expected a positive correlation between the ungrammatical distractors and the ungrammatical experiencers. In other words, the better participants are at ruling out ungrammatical structures (such as distractors), the better they are at ruling out the ungrammatical benefactive and experiencer structures (on a five-point Likert scale as explained above in 5.2, the best answer is ‘-2’), and thus the stronger the correlation between the dependent (the ungrammatical experiencer in this case) and independent (ungrammatical distractor) variables would be.

The results of the correlation between the Ungrammatical Distractor and Ungrammatical Experiencer are $r(23) = .718, p = .000$ for the L2 group and $r(13) = .622, p = .023$ for the L1 group, which is illustrated in Figure 7 and Figure 8, respectively (again, all analyses are shown in logit-transformed proportions).
Figure 7. Correlation between Ungrammatical Distractor and Ungrammatical Experiencer for Spanish L2 (B#, G#, and M# correspond to individual participants)

The dots found at the upper part of the scatterplot represent participants who did worse, and, conversely, the dots in the lower part represent participants who performed better. Recall that the best answer with the ungrammatical stimuli is ‘-2’, which in these scatterplots corresponds to the lowest negative value (where transformed values are not that far off from the original ‘+2’ and ‘-2’ values).
The fact that correlation is significant for the L2 group supports the prediction: the better participants were at ruling out ungrammatical distractors, the better they were at ruling out the target variables – ungrammatical benefactive and experiencer arguments.

However, the fact that the correlation was significant for the control group must have different causes because native speakers have intuitive knowledge about ungrammatical target structures regardless of their performance on ungrammatical distractors. I examined the scores on the ungrammatical distractors and found that there was a range in judgements of ‘badness’ such that some distractor items were not categorically rejected (such as the one in (119), experimental item 58 in Appendix E, where no grammatical subject nor object are present, and yet the scores on this item ranged from ‘-1’ to ‘+2’), and this sensitivity could be due to different factors (for example, pragmatic context, or even non-linguistic factors). Thus, the range in scores on ungrammatical distractors correlates with the experimental variable.

(119) *Sochinil po etomu povodu.
Composed.Pf.3sg.M on this occasion
5.2.1.2 Grammaticality Judgment Task results

To enable proper statistical analyses, the scaled data were converted into logit-transformed proportions and submitted to a mixed analysis of variance with group (control, L2) as a between-subjects factor and argument type (benefactive, experiencer, agent) and response (grammatical, ungrammatical) as within-subjects factors. The results revealed a significant three-way type*response*group interaction (F(2,34)=3.038, p=.05).

Because group is part of the significant three-way interaction, simple interaction tests were performed by running a separate repeated measures ANOVA for each group with factors type (benefactive, experiencer, agent) and response (grammatical, ungrammatical). A two-way interaction type*response was significant for the L2 group F(2,21)=17.076, p<.001 (means are shown in Table 29) and for the L1 group F(2,11)=8.375, p=.002 (means are shown in Table 30).

### Table 29. Means for type*response significant interaction for Spanish L2 (GJ task)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Benefactive</th>
<th>Experiencer</th>
<th>Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gramm.</td>
<td>-.309</td>
<td>-.370</td>
<td>-.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungramm.</td>
<td>-1.395</td>
<td>-2.534</td>
<td>-3.971</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 30. Means for type*response significant interaction for L1 (GJ task, Spanish-Russian study)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Response</th>
<th>Benefactive</th>
<th>Experiencer</th>
<th>Agent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gramm.</td>
<td>-.185</td>
<td>-.232</td>
<td>-.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungramm.</td>
<td>-1.922</td>
<td>-4.107</td>
<td>-3.714</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Follow-up two-tailed paired samples t-tests were conducted revealing the following patterns. For both groups, the direction of grammatical vs. ungrammatical response differences was always the same, and, as expected, the grammatical response was always significantly different from the ungrammatical one (p<.001) on all three argument types as seen in Table 31. Such a result was of course expected for both groups of participants. The other six pairs (the difference between the types within grammatical and ungrammatical responses) were thought of as planned comparisons since these conditions were predicted to disclose differences within and between the
L1 and L2 groups. Following the Bonferroni procedure, correction to the significance level was made such that each of the six t-tests must come out with the alpha level at $p=0.008$ to be significant (i.e., $\alpha=0.05/6=0.008$).

Table 31. Results of paired t-tests in GJ task for Spanish L2 and L1 groups

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pairs</th>
<th>L2 (n=23)</th>
<th></th>
<th>L1 (n=13)</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>t</td>
<td>df</td>
<td>Sig. (2-tailed)</td>
<td>t</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical vs. Ungrammatical</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BenGram - BenUngram</td>
<td>5.734</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>11.454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExpGram - ExpUngram</td>
<td>4.621</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>5.891</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>AgGram - AgUngram</td>
<td>6.559</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>5.785</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grammatical argument type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BenGram - AgGram</td>
<td>-8.719</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>-5.635</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ungrammatical argument type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BenUngram - ExpUngram</td>
<td>3.054</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.006</td>
<td>3.646</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BenUngram - AgUngram</td>
<td>4.919</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.000</td>
<td>3.308</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExpUngram - AgUngram</td>
<td>2.847</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>.009</td>
<td>-.642</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The reason for the significant interaction is evident from Table 31. Both groups accepted grammatical Benefactive and Experiencer equally well (thus the lack of significance indicated by the shaded areas), however both groups accepted Agent at a significantly higher rate when compared to Benefactive and Experiencer.

The pattern is different with the Ungrammatical Response as the control group correctly ruled out both Experiencer and Agent at a high rate (thus the lack of significance indicated by the shaded area), but significantly less so the Benefactive argument. For the L2 group, all three argument types significantly differed from each other (the difference between ungrammatical Experiencer and Agent showed marginal significance at $p=0.009$ according to the Bonferroni
procedure, where .008 is the cutoff) with the Benefactive argument being ruled out at the lowest rate.

Since specific predictions on the differences in performance of the (grammatical and ungrammatical) Experiencer and Benefactive arguments between the groups were made in advance, I carried out planned comparisons despite the lack of a significant 4-way interaction. These independent samples tests showed that there was a significant difference between the L1 and L2 groups on the ungrammatical Exp \( t(34)=1.974, p=.057 \) and ungrammatical Benefactive \( t(34)=1.958, p=.058 \) (these two are on the border with marginal significance), as well as on grammatical Benefactive \( t(34)=-3.033, p=.005 \), but not on the grammatical Experiencer argument \( t(34)=-1.530, p=.135 \). Notably, I predicted that the two groups should not treat the Benefactive argument differently, and yet Spanish learners are significantly different from the control group at accepting and ruling out these arguments. I do not believe these speakers are not able to recognize or have not acquired the target Benefactive argument, but they may have difficulties with various morphosyntactic manifestations of the Russian benefactive (it can be marked only by dative-case, or it can take different prepositions, as detailed in section 2.3). I will have more to say about this finding in the discussion in the next chapter. As for the Experiencer argument, it seems that Spanish learners are not very confident yet at rejecting the ungrammatical ones, but they readily accept the grammatical Experiencer, which suggests that their acquisition process is still ongoing.

To visualize the results presented in the statistical analyses, mean scores from each participant per condition were calculated. Table 32 shows the rates of responses per group for each condition in the GJ task, illustrates these results graphically.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Group</th>
<th>Gram Ben</th>
<th>Ungram Ben</th>
<th>Gram Exp</th>
<th>Ungram Exp</th>
<th>Gram Ag</th>
<th>Ungram Ag</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>( M )</td>
<td>( SD )</td>
<td>( M )</td>
<td>( SD )</td>
<td>( M )</td>
<td>( SD )</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2 (n=23)</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-0.7</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>-1.1</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L1 (n=13)</td>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td>-1.4</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-1.8</td>
<td>0.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>0.2</td>
<td>-1.7</td>
<td>0.3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Participants were then asked to complete a comprehension task, the main task of the study.

5.3 Semantic Judgement Task

The semantic judgement task was designed to test whether L2 learners are able to interpret dative arguments with reflexivized activity verbs as experiencers, which, in turn, would demonstrate use of the feature re-assembly mechanism in their acquisition.

A total of 32 combinations of a short story and two associated sentences at the end of each story were written (see Appendix F). Of the 32 story-sentence combinations, 16 were the experimental stimuli, and 16 were the distractor items. One sentence was structured with an experiencer-oriented meaning (120)A, and the other with a benefactive-oriented meaning (120)B. The two sentences thus differ with respect to one semantic feature. The same eight verbs (eat, read, work, sing, write, dance, play, and run) used in the Grammaticality Judgement Task were used for the Semantic Judgement task as well. Two stories were made up with each verb such that each verb showed up once in an experiencer-oriented context (121), and once in a benefactive-oriented context (120). That is, there were a total of eight stories with an experiencer target, and eight stories with a benefactive target. Relevant contexts were created with the aid of appropriate phrasing and adverbial expressions that favour either experiencer or benefactive arguments. Four choices followed each story: 1) a sentence with an experiencer argument, 2) a sentence with a
benefactive argument, 3) an option that says both sentences describe the story equally well, and 4) an option that says both sentences describe the story equally badly. Learners were asked to choose one sentence (either A or B in (120)) as the most appropriate/logical description/continuation of the story.

The test also included the following two options: i) if both sentences were judged as equally appropriate description of a given story, e.g. (120)C, participants were forced to judge the appropriateness of each sentence on a five-point Likert scale; ii) if both sentences were judged as equally inappropriate description of a given story, e.g. (120)D, participants were forced to judge the inappropriateness of each sentence on a five-point Likert scale. This option allowed the researcher to avoid undetermined replies, and, at the same time, find out whether learners perform at chance (as the lack of discrimination on a Likert scale would indicate). Ultimately, C and D are not really response categories, but serve to force a choice.

(120) Fjodor owns a jewelry factory that produces expensive golden jewelry. Sometimes Fjodor makes jewelry by himself because he is a very good jeweller. Fjodor doesn't come often to the factory, but to make the factory run flawlessly and bring good profit, he hired a lot of experienced administrators.

A. Fjodor rabotaetsja na fabrike. Experiencer *
   Fjodor.Dat work.Refl.Pres.Neut on factory
   ‘Fjodor loves/feels like working at the factory.’

B. Na Fjodora mnogo ljudej rabotaet na fabrike. Benefactive √
   On Fjodor.Gen many people.Acc work.Pres.3sg on factory
   ‘Many people work for Fjodor on the factory.’

C. Both sentences A and B similarly well describe the story.
   Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5
   Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

D. Neither A nor B describe the story adequately.
   Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5
   Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

(121) It’s been twenty years since Pavel owns the factory that produces high-quality wooden furniture. He loves his family business very much and he is proud of the furniture they produce. Even though Pavel is the owner of the factory, he often carves the furniture by himself because he loves this job.
A. Pavlu rabotaetsja na fabrike. Experiencer ✓
Fedor loves/feels like working at the factory.’

B. Na Pavla mnogo ljudej rabotaet na fabrike. Benefactive *
On Pavel.Gen many people.Acc work.Pres.3sg on factory
‘Many people work for Pavel on the factory.’

C. Both sentences A and B similarly well describe the story.
Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5
Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

D. Neither A nor B describe the story adequately.
Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5
Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

To control for any bias/recognition effect, sixteen distractors were included and randomized with the experimental stimuli. A propos of the distractors, those stories were made up with the agent and experiencer-oriented contexts. That is, one sentence had a nominative agent (122)B and the second sentence had a dative experiencer (122)A at the end of a given story (a story example is illustrated in (122) with the verb *dance*). The same verbs were used in distractor items resulting in a total of eight stories with an experiencer target and eight stories with an agent target.

(122) My friend Volodya had a stroke recently, after which he was partially paralyzed. By nature Volodya is a radiant and cheerful person. In an attempt to recover from the partial paralysis, Volodya would force himself to physically move all the time. Thus, for example, for several months he would dance daily for hours even if he felt a lot of physical pain.

A. Volode tantsevalos¹ posle dolgoj bolezni. Experiencer *
‘Volodya felt like dancing (and was dancing) after a long illness.’

B. Volodja tantseval posle dolgoj bolezni. Agent ✓
Volodja.Nom danced.Ipf.3sg.M after long illness
‘Volodja was dancing after a long illness.’

C. Both sentences A and B similarly well describe the story.
Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5
Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5
D. Neither A nor B describe the story adequately.

Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5
Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

Such a design allows us to indirectly compare the two experimental groups, L1 English and L1 Spanish, on their sensitivity to Russian dative experiencers with activity verbs since this task was also the main task (i.e., Semantic Judgement task; see section 4.3) in the study with English learners of Russian (reported in chapter 4). I present the results of this task below.

5.3.1 Semantic Judgement Task results

To submit data to a statistical analysis, mean proportions out of 8 (per participant, per condition) were calculated and subsequently quasi-logit transformed. A mixed ANOVA (with the alpha value set at 0.05 level) was run with group (control, L2) as the between-subjects factor and type (benefactive, experiencer, agent) as the within-subjects factor. The results showed a significant main effect for the type factor ($F(2,68)=5.431, p=.006$) and no significant interaction. This result suggests that there is no difference between the L1 and L2 groups on their treatment of the overall means for the argument type. However, because I had a strong theoretical prediction with respect to the Experiencer arguments such that a (lower proficiency) L2 learner would tend to treat Russian applicative experiencers as L1 benefactive arguments, I followed up with targeted planned comparisons on each argument type between groups. Independent t-tests revealed that the groups did not differ on the Benefactive ($t(34)=-.825, p=.418$) or Agent ($t(34)=-.746, p=.462$) arguments, but there was a marginally significant difference on the Experiencer type ($t(34)=-1.787, p=.083$). These results are illustrated in Figure 10 (the scores on the Y axis are proportions correct (out of eight), and not logit-transformed proportions).
Because the significance was marginal for the Experiencer type, I decided to do a post-hoc analysis on learners level. Spanish L2 learners were median-split based on their performance on the ungrammatical distractors because this variable, as was discussed above in section 5.2.1.1, was a reliable measure of proficiency. Thus, L2 learners’ scores were matched against those of the control group. The mean group response on ungrammatical distractors of the control group was -1.3 out of -2 with the worst response -0.9. The worst L1 response (i.e., -0.9) was the cutoff point to split L2 learners into proficiency groups. According to this split, eight Spanish learners made up a less advanced L2 group, and fifteen learners made up a highly advanced L2 group. Independent t-tests revealed that the two L2 groups significantly differed on the Experiencer argument ($t(23)=3.797$, $p=.001$).

The lower level learners, therefore, had not yet established a solid knowledge of Russian applicative experiencers, as supported by the predictions and discussed in the next chapter. Furthermore, the fact that Benefactive and Agent types did not come even close to significance can be taken to corroborate the prediction on the difference between L1 and lower level L2 for the Experiencer arguments.
5.4 Summary of Chapter 5

5.4.1 Summary of Grammaticality Judgement task results

Judgments of the L2 group tended to be less accurate than those of the native speakers on every experimental condition. While nominative agents presented no difficulty for the L2 group and judgements were very close to those of the control group, as was expected, ungrammatical experiencer arguments were ruled out by these speakers significantly less often than by the control group, which implies that some L2 learners have not yet reached full morphosyntactic competence with respect to the structures under study. Predictions with respect to lower level learners are thus borne out. The same explanation can be applied to the result with benefactive arguments as L2 learners unexpectedly under-accepted these arguments. However, the fact that significance on ungrammatical Experiencer and Benefactive was marginal may indicate that only lower level syntactic learners have difficulties with these conditions.

5.4.2 Summary of Semantic Judgement task results

In the comprehension task, Spanish learners closely followed the response pattern of native speakers with the Benefactive and Agent arguments. This result clearly suggests that these learners’ knowledge of the target contrast has settled and they can tell the two arguments apart effortlessly. However, L2 learners diverged in their treatment of the Experiencer arguments, as was disclosed by a marginally significant result, and confirmed by the post-hoc test on learners’ level, which indicates that lower-comprehension level L2 learners are still establishing the featural content of the target Experiencer.

In the next chapter, the results of both experimental studies will be assessed from the perspective of language acquisition theories, and a discussion on implications of the present study will be developed with particular attention paid to the Feature Reassembly Approach in language acquisition.
Chapter 6
General Discussions and Conclusions

6 Where it all converges

In this chapter, I first assess the results of the two experimental studies within the Feature Reassembly Approach (FRA) to language acquisition. To accomplish this, I evaluate predictions made for each language group and ask whether these predictions are borne out by the results. I then briefly discuss whether the results can be explained by a parametric approach to language acquisition, noting, however, that it is not the goal of the present thesis to argue for the elimination of the parametric approach to SLA in favour of the featural approach. The theory that employs parameters in SLA has remained the most vital until recently, but, as I discussed in Chapter 3, it has been recently challenged by the Feature Reassembly Approach to SLA pioneered by Lardiere (2007, 2008, 2009), a theory that is believed to adequately explain much of the theoretical challenges pertaining to the minimal building block of grammars. Both approaches assume that an L2 linguistic mind is to some degree restricted by Universal Grammar, a view deeply integrated in traditional generative linguistics. And although I do not dwell much on the concept of UG in this thesis, in the discussion to follow I touch upon the issue of language input versus Universal Grammar through a FRA lens since this approach is based on the interactive contrast of L1 and L2 grammars.

At the end of this chapter, I draw conclusions, address some limitations of the studies, and suggest directions for further research.

6.1 Interpreting the results within the Feature Reassembly Approach

The reader will recall that the two experimental studies reported in this thesis tested the validity of the FRA:

- L2 learners select and (re-)assemble features of particular lexical items and functional categories by means of a contrastive analysis with the features of L1
- Linguistic forms in which re-assembly of features is involved pose greater difficulties in L2 acquisitions
Predictions generated for English and Spanish learners were based on this hypothesis and their respective L1 grammars, and discussed below.

6.1.1 English learners of Russian

Five predictions were made for the English learners of Russian. Let us consider each prediction and whether it is confirmed by the results of the study.

Prediction-1: High-level syntactic learners should readily accept dative applicatives not only with psych verbs but also with activity verbs, having internalized the ‘verb+reflexive’ structure of the impersonal construal (to which dative applicatives can be freely added). Lower-level syntactic learners are predicted to have more problems with the dative with activity verbs structures, and less so with the dative with psych verbs structures – given that the dative case is acquired – since psych verbs are prototypical verbs in the experiencer constructions.

The results on the Grammaticality Judgement task revealed that L2 speakers performed consistently worse than the control group at rejecting ungrammatical datives with activity and psych verbs alike. Such a result suggests that lower-competence learners’ knowledge of the relevant morphosyntax is still unstable, although the response pattern of the L2 group was overall in the same direction as that of the native speakers, which is likely due to the performance of higher-competence speakers (as measured by the correlations; see Figure 1 in section 4.2.1.1). Therefore, Prediction-1 is borne out for the lower-competence syntactic learners.

It seems that L2 learners exhibit a learned behaviour in accepting dative experiencers with psych verbs for had they truly acquired the category Super High Applicative, they would also accept experiencers with activity verbs.

A rather unexpected result is that English learners accepted grammatical nominative agents with activity verbs significantly less than the control group, given that knowledge of nominative-marked arguments characterizes the basic level of L2 acquisition. This result also seems to suggest that the L2 morphosyntactic grammar of Russian among the English learners is still incomplete even at this high level of attainment.
Prediction-2: If English L2 learners have internalized the morphosyntax associated with applicative dative impersonals (due to sufficient input), they may employ syntactic cueing for semantic interpretations. This task is facilitated by the fact that the L1 does not have dative experiencers in combination with reflexive verbs. That is, it is easier to learn a new feature (i.e., Super High Applicative [SHAppl]) rather than restructure an existing one(s) in the L1 grammar. The implication of this prediction is that a learner is able to select the target features, bundle them, and map them onto the expected L2 item.

This prediction is not borne out, as shown by the results of the Semantic Judgement task. Both groups ruled out at the expected rate infelicitous datives only with activity verbs, while accepting infelicitous datives and nominatives, an unexpected result. While L2 learners performed similarly to native speakers, the reasons for this pattern are likely different across groups. Native speakers rejected infelicitous datives in the contexts with activity verbs for expected reasons, that is, because they have strong intuitions about agent vs. experiencer arguments with activity verbs. By contrast, L2 speakers rejected datives with activity verbs because these structures are not part of their interlanguage yet and therefore learners reject them. Note that this result is similar to the one in the GJ task, which further substantiates the explanation that English learners employ a learned pattern, and thus show no evidence for having internalized the feature [SHAppl].

Prediction-3: Learners may have difficulties at the level of feature selection. If only features available in the native inventory are also available in L2, the outcome of this learning scenario is that the feature [SHAppl] won’t be selected and the dative will fail to receive an applicative experiencer interpretation.

Indeed, this prediction is confirmed as well by the results of the SJ task, and this prediction follows from the outcomes of Predictions 1 and 2. To restate, L2 learners rejected infelicitous datives with activity verbs because these structures are not yet internalized in the L2 grammar, and they accepted datives with psych verbs as a learned behaviour (because these are robustly represented in the target language) as supported by the results on the GJ task, all of which indicates the lack of the feature [SHAppl] in the L2 grammar.

Prediction-4: If the correctly selected features have been properly bundled, it is not expected that learners would map the feature bundle onto a non-target lexical item since there are no dative experiencers in their L1.
This prediction cannot be confirmed since, as concluded from testing the previous predictions, the feature [SHAappl] has not been acquired yet by these learners. Conceivably, English learners did select some (or they are in the process of conjoining) features of the target bundle and combined them into something like [ _, +experimenter, +dative, -control], where the feature [SHAappl] has not been selected/acquired yet and therefore is unspecified. This incomplete feature bundle seems to be a reasonable explanation since these learners manifest vacillating behaviour on the target structures evidenced by the correct direction of judgements, although at a low rate.

Prediction-5: I also expect English learners (by employing the contrastive method) will re-analyze an L2 nominative experiencer as an individual capable of control, and change the L1 value of the attribute [control] to the target one, i.e. [+control], which would be evident if they readily accepted nominative experiencers with psych verbs.

This prediction is borne out, and conclusively so, as the L2 group accepted not only felicitous, but also infelicitous nominatives with psych verbs (on a par with the native speakers). It appears that these learners have firmly acquired the target value of [+control] nominative experiencers, and this I consider to be the first definite step on their way to a target-like reanalysis of nominative versus dative experiencers. One thing is certain: English learners have identified that there are nominative and dative experiencers in the target grammar; however, they have not yet achieved native-like comprehension of applicative experiencers.

Now let me address some unexpected responses by the native speakers. In judging the grammaticality of dative experiencers with activity verbs, native speakers near unanimously rejected the grammatical experimental item with the verb ‘talk’, shown in (123):

(123) Mne govorilos’ ves’ den’ o poezdke v Kitaj.
I.Dat talked.Refl.Pst.Ipf.Neut all day about trip to China
‘I felt like talking (and I talked) all day about a/the trip to China.’

It would seem that native speakers parsed this sentence linearly with the noun phrase ‘all day’ as an object, and thus ruled this sentence out as ungrammatical, as one would expect since the object is downright unacceptable with this impersonal verb (unlike with the verb ‘read’ which in Russian can take an object in its reflexivised form as in ‘Mne kniga prochitalas’ ‘I.Dat
read.Refl.3sg.F a book.Nom.3sg.F’). Of course, such an interpretation was not meant for this item, and the sentence would be analyzed as originally conceived if ‘all day’ was fronted at the beginning of the sentence. The overall mean score on grammatical dative experiencers with activity verbs was thus significantly lower than the mean score on grammatical nominative agents.

In the SJ test, native speakers did not rule out infelicitous nominative arguments. Recall that the task was to judge a sentence on a five-point scale on its appropriateness to the story it followed. One of the experimental items (item 8, Appendix C) that was accepted by the majority of Russian speakers, and at a high rate, was with the verb ‘read’ (124) (translated here for analysis purposes), although the story was designed to fit an experiencer interpretation as can be inferred from the experiencer-oriented contextual clues (such as ‘a thrilling read’ and ‘I tried to fall asleep, but I could not’).

(124) Yesterday night, already in bed, I decided to start reading a new book by Akunin called ‘Azazel’. I knew I could not read for long, as I had to get up early and go to the university. But, unexpectedly, the book turned out to be such a thrilling read that I couldn't stop reading. When I accidentally looked at the clock, it was four in the morning! Even if I tried to fall asleep, I could not until I finished reading ‘Azazel’.

Ja prochitala etu knigu za noch’. -2 -1 0 1 2
‘I read this book during the night.’

The expected answer was for the sentence with an agent argument ‘Ja’ to be judged as infelicitous, however, the native speakers seem to have judged the truth-value of this sentence as applied to the story, which indeed in this case corresponds to the stated proposition since the book was indeed read. Perhaps a more appropriate design would be to present the participant with a choice between an agent-oriented and an experiencer-oriented argument, the method that was used in the SJ task in the experiment with Spanish learners.

On the other hand, nominative agents and experiencers are undoubtedly more frequent in the language (as examination of the Russian National Corpus has revealed), which might partly
explain the lower than expected acceptance of dative experiencers. For example, the corpus study of the verb ‘read’ displayed the following statistics: out of the total 19 362 746 sentences, there were 1202 documents with the nominative agent ‘I’, and only one document with the dative ‘mne’ (I.Dat read-

$m$). This is not to say that Russian native speakers reject dative experiencers as ungrammatical, but they may be biased by the high frequency of the nominative agents in the language.

Contexts with psych verbs in the SJ task appeared to be even more vague as evidenced by native judgements. It is not entirely surprising that the native speakers accepted infelicitous dative and nominative experiencers in these contexts as both contexts were based on the same psych verb. If anything, such a result tells us about the truly subtle semantic distinction between [+control] and [-control] experiencers with these verbs of highly abstract mental representations. However, there is an identifiable pattern in native speakers’ judgements such that infelicitous datives were consistently less accepted that felicitous ones, which suggests that there is a fine-grained distinction between the two contexts. It would appear that forcing speakers to reject either one as downright unacceptable (or ‘-2’ on the presented Likert scale) is doomed to fail. To elicit a more accurate intuition response on psychological predicates, future studies could benefit from the following improvement to the design: each [+control] nominative and [-control] dative experiencer should be accompanied by two stories (one of which would be [-control] experiencer-oriented, and another [+control] experiencer-oriented) and participants would need to choose a story appropriate to a given experiencer.

The current study might have certain methodological weaknesses, but the results nonetheless confirmed to predictions for the English acquirers of Russian – even very advanced learners have not yet selected an appropriate feature [SHAppl] that would allow them to package the target applicative experiencer into the target bundle to arrive at the native interpretation. The study also established that English learners have successfully re-analyzed an L1 [-control] nominative experiencer into the [+control] nominative and [-control] dative L2 experiencers, and this step is the first towards a target-like grammar of the relevant structures.

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71 I thank Alexei Kochetov for suggesting the Russian National Corpus to me.
6.1.2 Spanish learners of Russian

Now let us consider predictions made for Spanish learners of Russian and whether these predictions are confirmed by the results of the empirical study.

Prediction-1: Advanced Spanish learners are not expected to encounter difficulties with the target morphosyntax. These learners will accept grammatical and rule out ungrammatical dative experiencers in a manner comparable to the monolinguals’ performance. I likewise do not expect these learners to have problems with the benefactive arguments in Russian as they are structurally parallel to those in Spanish (i.e., both are licensed by the high applicative head). Lower-competence syntactic learners, however, may exhibit difficulties in rejecting ungrammatical experiencers.

Spanish learners demonstrated various degrees of morphosyntactic knowledge, which, expectedly, correlated with their proficiency level. In particular, while learners accepted grammatical experiencers in a manner indistinguishable from the L1 group, they ruled out the ungrammatical experiencers less often than the native speakers, but this result is only marginally significant. It was argued that if L2 learners are able to rule out ungrammatical focal structures, their target morphosyntax can be considered ingrained. The result indicates that the higher-competence learners (recall that the level of participants’ competence is measured by correlations; section 5.2.1.1) have the Russian morphosyntax in place, but the lower-competence learners are still in the process of settling it. Therefore, this prediction is borne out.

One unexpected result that arose, and contrary to part of this prediction, shows that Spanish learners are significantly different from the control group at accepting and ruling out Benefactive arguments. I do not believe these speakers are not able to recognize or have not acquired the target Benefactive argument, but they may have difficulties with various morphosyntactic manifestations of the Russian benefactive (it can be dative-case marked only, or it can take different prepositions as detailed in section 2.3). And, in fact, Spanish learners did not accept the structure with a dative-case marked Benefactive argument ‘Dashe’ as illustrated in (125) (experimental item 64 in GJT, see Appendix E), but they had no difficulties accepting the prepositional Benefactive argument as ‘dlja amerikanskogo pisatelja’ in (126) (experimental item 28 in the GJ task, see Appendix E):
As it may be the case, the Spanish learners had not yet fully internalized the prepositionless Benefactive argument in Russian, but, evidently, they have no problem parsing the prepositional one as it aligns with their L1 grammar. Albeit interesting, this result does not negate their knowledge of the target Experiencer morphosyntax, and presents an intriguing topic for further investigation.

Prediction-2: If Spanish learners successfully select the feature [SHAppl], they are predicted to appropriately assemble features and map the bundle onto the target L2 item, i.e. the applicative dative. The assumption this prediction is based on is that learners arrive at this analysis through sufficient exposure and comparison of the L1 and L2 forms.

The results of the SJ task identified a marginal significance between the L1 and L2 groups in their treatment of Experiencer arguments. This suggests that lower-level syntactic learners (as shown by the results in the GJ task) have not yet achieved the desired restructuring in the L2 grammar. By contrast, higher-competence Spanish learners can be argued to have successfully acquired the target feature [SHAppl] and reassembled the L1 feature set \{+HAppl, +ben, +dat, -cntrl\} into an L2 bundle \{+SHAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl\}. Moreover, the fact that no significant difference was revealed on the Benefactive versus Agent arguments in this task lends additional support to the L2 ability to distinguish between the three types of arguments. Patterns of acquisition observed in this study suggest that there is a positive correlation between the knowledge of morphosyntax and semantic inferences.

Prediction-3: The similarity in L1 and L2 morphosyntax may obstruct the reanalysis of the L1 dative benefactive into an L2 experiencer. In addition to selecting a new feature
[SHAppl], this population must unlearn the set of L1 features, that is \{+HAppl, +ben, +dat, -cntrl\}, and re-assemble them as \{+SHAppl, +exp, +dat, -cntrl\} to further map this bundle into appropriate L2 lexical items. This learning task is more challenging, if attainable at all. Thus, assuming that there is L1 transfer, Spanish L2 learners are predicted to assign a benefactive reading to the Russian dative applicative experiencer.

This prediction is not borne out for the higher-level learners since, as was determined in the discussion on the previous prediction, these learners successfully repackaged the L2 feature bundle. Clearly, the implication of such a result is that not only do morphosyntactic similarities between L1 and L2 grammars not hamper acquisition, but prearranged L1 feature bundles can be successfully restructured. The lower-competence learners might still be struggling with the selection of the feature [SHAppl], and it may be unreasonable to suppose that at this point in their acquisition they still have not learnt that the L2 experiencer is [+dat]. I presume that the interlanguage of this competence group is in the midst of the process of sorting out features according to the L2 grammar.

Prediction-4: I do not expect Spanish learners to have difficulties at the level of mapping feature bundles to appropriate L2 items as their previous linguistic knowledge dictates the availability of dative applicative arguments.

As evidenced by the results from the SJ task, learners know the difference between the three types of arguments they were tested on. Specifically, there was no difference between the groups in the treatment of Benefactive and Agent arguments, but there was marginally significant variation in the interpretation of experiencers. Thus, this prediction is also confirmed by the results.

Spanish higher-competence learners seem to have acquired the semantic contrast between benefactive and applicative experiencer arguments in Russian. For the lower-competence learners this contrast is still erratic, which means that they may still be treating L2 applicative experiencers as L1 benefactive arguments since their native grammar allows only Benefactive arguments with activity verbs. But when do they break through the critical point in acquisition and start interpreting applicative datives in a target-like way? To answer this question, one would need to conduct a longitudinal study and observe the pattern of development in the same
population. What is shown by the present study is that this language population can learn semantic contrasts between L1 and L2 and this learning appears to be featural.

6.1.3 English versus Spanish learners of Russian

One of the inquiries this research was concerned with is how typologically distinct languages are acquired by language learners. Such is the case with English and Spanish learners of Russian, a suitable choice of languages (albeit all three are Indo-European) to provide some answers to this question. While the two experimental groups of learners cannot be compared directly, an indirect comparison can be entertained based on their performance and knowledge of the relevant contrasts. One other important premise that validates this comparison is that both groups included advanced speakers of Russian.

As discussed in the theoretical part of this thesis, only Russian allows applicative experiencers with activity verbs. Thus, the sensitivity learners display for agent versus experiencer arguments with these verbs was tested. What was found is that both English and Spanish learners overall treated experiencer arguments significantly differently from the control group, and I attributed such a result to lower-competence learners. Both groups ruled out ungrammatical experiencers at a significantly lower rate in the GJ task, which, as I argued, indicates incomplete knowledge of these structures. But one condition where English speakers unexpectedly diverged from the native speakers as well as from the Spanish learners was with nominative agents in grammatical contexts – these were accepted significantly less frequently when compared to the native speakers, which suggests uncertain intuitions on the L2 morphosyntax in general.

The Spanish group, by contrast, judged un/grammatical agents just as well as the native speakers. Such result is hardly surprising since nominative agents are acquired fairly early in the process of L2 acquisition. And, because the Russian case system is marked (as identified by pro-/nominal inflections), learners are exposed to visible morphological clues amply represented in the language. However, morphological evidence alone is not sufficient. Spanish learners seem to have a solid knowledge of agentive morphosyntax, but they are still en route to internalizing the morphosyntax of dative experiencers.

Conceptually different for each experimental group, the learning task for English participants presupposes learning of an entire construction without a pre-established L1 counterpart, whereas
for Spanish participants the learning process is featural and is instantiated in the decomposition of a pre-existing L1 feature bundle. So, did the English group learn the Russian applicative experiencer? The answer seems to be “not yet”, as, although these learners did select appropriate features into the set \{+\text{dat}, +\text{exp}, -\text{cntrvl}\}, there is evidence that the feature [SHAppl] is still not determined, thus resulting an incomplete L2 feature set.

Did the Spanish group learn the Russian applicative experiencer? The answer seems to be positive for the higher-competence learners, as there is evidence that they achieved the target contrast, and therefore re-analyzed the L1 feature combination into the L2 one. However, assuming that English and Spanish speakers’ proficiency in Russian is matching, we should see English learners attain a better result, as predicted by FRA. Curiously though, in this empirical study we observed the reversed acquisition pattern between the two groups, an unexpected outcome that I discuss in the next section.

6.2 Does the Feature Reassembly Approach explain the results?

If the Feature Reassembly Approach is correct, and it undeniably has explanatory power, then L2 learners should have shown the in/ability to select and re/assemble lexical and functional features of applicative experiencers in the target grammar by means of a contrastive analysis with the features of L1. The contrastive analysis presupposes that a learner selects a feature in question and figures out its syntactic and semantic restrictions in the acquirable language as compared to its occurrence environment in the native language. The second part of the FRA states that linguistic forms in which the reassembly of features is involved pose greater challenges in L2 acquisition. Both parts of the FRA were shown to be testable, as the results obtained from two experimental studies with English and Spanish participants reveal.

The results of the study with Spanish speakers suggest that higher-competence learners were able to re-assemble an existing L1 feature bundle \{+\text{HAppl}, +\text{ben}, +\text{dat}, -\text{cntrvl}\} and successfully achieve the target feature bundle \{+\text{SHAppl}, +\text{exp}, +\text{dat}, -\text{cntrvl}\} thereby mapping it into an L2 item in confirmation for FRA. Learners employed a contrastive analysis between L1 and L2 forms and were able to correctly analyze morphosyntactic similarities, which nevertheless underline different semantic interpretations in the two languages. However, it is not true of these learners that prearranged feature combinations are harder to re-assemble into an L2 feature bundle, as evidenced by the different acquisition pattern of the second experimental group.
For English learners, the acquisition of a new L2 form was predicted to develop in a less obstructed way since the task for these learners was to build an entirely new feature package without redistributing the pre-existed ones in their L1. The results revealed that these learners have less accurate intuitions about the Russian applicative experiencer than the Spanish group, although the higher-competence learners can arguably be considered to have acquired the L2 form. The second part of the FRA stating that L2 acquisition is more arduous if reassembly of features is involved has thus been disconfirmed by the results obtained from the English group.

One possible explanation is that because English enumerates only low applicative heads, unlike Spanish, which also inventories a high applicative head, the learning process towards the target grammar for an English learner starts off at a lower structural point and proceeds in a hierarchical sequence. This idea resonates with the proposal of Vainikka & Young-Scholten (1994, 1996), who argue that ‘lower’ functional categories are acquired before ‘higher’ ones (a view that is known in the acquisition literature as the Minimal Trees Hypothesis). If this is the case, then English learners need to go through more learning stages than Spanish learners before they assemble the SHAppl category, which merges very high in the structure, in fact, in the C-domain (the domain which closes grammatical information in the inflectional phrase and relates it to pragmatics). In fact, this view is compatible with the analysis of applicative experiencers proposed in this thesis (section 2.5.1), which merge in the C-domain, above TP. Crucially though, under this explanation nothing prevents learners from the ultimate attainment. For Spanish learners, the computing of L2 forms is more efficient due to the similarities between affixal forms in the L1 and L2 grammars. And if hierarchical learning is at work, these speakers are advantaged in that their target learning starts off at a higher-level L1 category (i.e., High Applicative head) when compared to the starting point of learning of English speakers (i.e., Low Applicative head).

That the C-domain is vulnerable in L2 acquisition has been extensively argued for in previous research. Platzack (2001), for example, claims that L2 learners of Swedish have no problem acquiring structures in the I-domain (Inflectional and Verb phrase), but “[t]he picture is different for C-domain phenomena like V2 and obligatory subject, which are almost never produced fully target-like (see, e.g., Hammarberg & Viberg, 1977; Hakansson, 1997; Pienemann & Hakansson, 1999)”. What is more, the group that has problems with learning the components of the C-domain seems to constitute a natural class and includes very early L1 learners, children with
Specific Language Impairment, adult L2 learners, and patients with Broca’s aphasia, as identified by Platzack (2001). More research that demonstrates difficulties in L2 learning related to interfaces between syntax and semantics and pragmatics is found in work by Sorace (2004, 2005), Tsimpli & Sorace (2007), among others.

So, does the Feature Reassembly Approach explain the results obtained? Yes, it does. The FRA applied in the process of learning the Russian construction from an L1 English grammar because these learners showed evidence of selecting some appropriate features of the target bundle, and these are [+exp], [+dat], and [-cntrl], but not the feature [SHAppl], which thus remained unspecified and resulted in incomplete acquisition. The implication of such a result is that functional features, such as [SHAppl], are harder to select for L2 learners because they are language-specific, but semantic features (such as [exp]) may present fewer difficulties as they are presumably universal.

The FRA also applied in the process of learning the Russian construction from an L1 Spanish grammar because these learners were able to select appropriate features [SHAppl] and [+exp] and reassemble the existing L1 bundle by including the selected features, further mapping the newly derived feature bundle onto the appropriate lexical L2 item.

Given these results, we can conclude that second language acquisition is not more challenging if it involves re-assembling pre-existing structures and re-analyzing them into L2 forms. The results also indicate that L2 learners did not reveal any learning deficit (as evidenced by the variation in acquisition within highly advanced learners of Russian), and that complete acquisition of semantically complex structures is possible.

6.3 Can parameters account for the acquisition patterns?

Most of the research done in acquisition and variation within generative syntax has been based on the theory of parameters. The parametric approach is thought to capture cross-linguistic differences (that are nonetheless limited by universal principles) by way of values that define an absence or presence of a certain grammatical aspect.

In explaining acquisition patterns, the parametric approach is useful as a characterization of the differences, however, it may not account for them, as it seems to be descriptive only. Take for
example the Chinese plural marker –men, discussed by Lardiere (2009), as mentioned in section 3.2.1. If -men is attached to a noun, it must be also interpreted as [+definite] and [+human]. In a language like English, however, nouns marked for plural can be either [+definite] or [-definite] (depending on whether the definite determiner is present or not), and [+human] or [-human]. Thus, the category ‘plural’ has different featural representations in the two languages, as can be illustrated schematically (127):

(127) plural
    |
    Chinese | English
    +plural, +definite, +human | [+plural]

But in a binary parametric space, according to which languages have a default initial UG setting ([+plural] or [-plural] in this case), (127) is grossly overgeneralized, and thus falls short of explanatory inadequacy.

Another downside of the parametric approach is that it assumes a universal inventory of functional categories. Thus, if a language has a [+SHAapl] category, then there is a language where this category exists, but with a negative value. However, this implication is clearly false as the analyses of the three languages considered in this thesis show (only Russian has the category of SHAapl). As it is, the phenomenon of applicative experiencers cannot be conceptualized within parametric space for what would it mean for a language to be a [+SHAapl experiencer] or a [-SHAapl experiencer]? Therefore, the differences between Russian, English, and Spanish are not necessarily describable, let alone explainable, in terms of parameters. What is more, the parameter-selection approach seems to fare less well than the FRA in accounting for differential success in L2 acquirers. As Lardiere (2012) puts it: “[the FRA] is more compatible than parameter-setting models with the longstanding observation that for any given feature of category, any given learner’s production of the corresponding inflection may be highly variable, and a learner’s L2 grammatical idiolect may not exactly match that of either the native or the target language” (p. 114). To state the obvious, an acquirable aspect of grammar is not identified only by the production of inflections, but also by the comprehension of those inflections and the
way they are restricted by syntactic, semantic, or pragmatic contexts, as is the case with Russian applicative experiencers that are marked by the inflection amalgam ‘Dat V+*-sja’.

To emphasize, however, it was not the purpose of this thesis to dispose of parameters as an explanatory mechanism of second language acquisition, but the theoretical and empirical steps considered here indicate that the FRA is theoretically superior.

6.4 Conclusions

6.4.1 Conclusions and implications for SLA theory

In this thesis, I examined Russian applicative dative experiencers and their acquisition by non-native speakers. In the theoretical section, I first proposed to expand the typology of Russian applicative arguments to include an applicative experiencer that has idiosyncratic syntactic and semantic properties. I then proposed that these arguments are best analyzed as arguments of a Super High Applicative head that occupies a structural position above TP, which means it is located in the C-domain. This applicative head licenses unselected dative experiencers found with impersonal constructions in Russian. What is curious about these constructions is that a regular activity verb, such as walk or work, can take an unselected dative argument when it surfaces in its non-active form with the reflexive suffix –sja, thus creating an impersonal construal, and this argument receives an experiencer interpretation whose mental state is predicated of the action described by the verb. Canonical structural subjects cannot be manifested in these impersonal sentences due to a valency-reduced verbal architecture; however, dative experiencers can easily be added to the impersonal construction. But the fact that impersonal sentences with activity verbs have an experiencer reading when prefixed with the dative applicative is non-trivial and is not inferable from the structure. It thus may present a problem for language learners, which is what I tested in the second part of this thesis.

In a parallel fashion, some prototypical psychological verbs in Russian, such as hear or want, can take either nominative or dative experiencers. If the latter merges in the structure, then the verb surfaces in its impersonal form, just like with activity verbs. The two experiencers are discerned by a different degree of agentivity such that the nominative experiencer is more agent-like, or more volitional if you will, but the dative experiencer is an experiencer par excellence, and, as I proposed, the two can be distinguished by the feature [control]. Thus, the nominative experiencer
is [+control], whereas the dative one is [-control]. Dative experiencers with psych verbs were also analyzed as arguments of a Super High Applicative phrase. Again, such language-internal interpretational idiosyncrasies can cause problems for language learners, and therefore are important to examine.

In the second part of this thesis, I examined how second language learners acquire Russian applicative experiencers. The subtle interpretational differences exhibited by these structures represent a formidable inferential task for second language learners. And although these structures are robustly represented in the input, they are not explicitly taught in classroom settings. I proposed that the acquisition mechanism be conceptualized within the Feature Reassembly Approach, as articulated in work by Lardiere (2007, 2009), which hypothesizes that L2 learners build up a target grammar by selecting and re/assembling features and feature bundles of L2 lexical forms by contrasting their conditioning environment with that of L1, but if reassembly of feature bundles is involved, it is harder for a learner to disassemble and construct a new L2 bundle than learn an entirely new feature package.

This hypothesis was empirically tested. Advanced speakers of two background languages from different language families, English and Spanish, were predicted to have different outcomes for learning Russian applicative experiencers because their native grammars bundle features in the related structures in an incomparable fashion. In other words, all three languages have distinct representations of the equivalent of Russian applicative experiencer argument in terms of feature content. While the English learners’ task was to select and assemble a new feature bundle and map it onto an appropriate L2 item, Spanish learners had to re-assemble the pre-existing feature unit before they could do so. The results revealed an unanticipated acquisition pattern between the groups. English participants exhibited less accurate morphosyntactic knowledge of applicative experiencers (as shown by the results of the GJ task), and their comprehension intuitions resembled a learned behaviour since they accepted experiencers with psych verbs (the prototypical verb that takes an experiencer argument) throughout (as shown by the results of the SJ task). Such results led me to conclude that this group had not yet achieved the target knowledge of the acquirable phenomenon. Spanish learners, in contrast, showed a better grasp of the related morphosyntax (as revealed by the results the GJ task), and some learners, whose competence can be regarded as more advanced, have arguably learned the semantic content of applicative experiencers. Thus, the second assumption of the hypothesis, that it is easier to learn
an entirely new feature bundle rather than restructure an existing one, does not seem to be supported by the results obtained from the study of English learners. By contrast, high-competence Spanish learners demonstrated that predetermined L1 feature bundles can be reanalyzed into L2 morpholexical items. That is not to say that Spanish speakers can acquire Russian applicative experiencers effortlessly. In fact, the opposite was shown by the results from the lower-level learners indicating their incomplete acquisition as their L1 grammar is still interfering with the analysis of the target structures (evidenced by the fact that these learners accepted the benefactive argument at an overwhelmingly high rate, and rejected experiencer arguments). But high-competence Spanish learners were able to eventually bypass learning difficulties by contrasting L1 features with those of L2, and in particular L1 [ben] with L2 [exp].

The FRA seems to supersede the idea that learning is input-driven since if this were the case, then we would not be able to explain the variable success between the two L2 groups given that the learners L2 competence is comparable, and very high. The overall result from the two studies is consistent with the FRA, and the results also suggest that learning an entirely new feature bundle is not necessarily a simpler task in adult language acquisition.

6.4.2 Limitations of the study

The experimental studies reported in this thesis were challenged by certain methodological limitations. Firstly, the study with English learners included a relatively small number of participants. Although I did obtain significant results from this study, a bigger sample is likely to produce more robust statistical generalizations. At the time when I was recruiting participants at the Middlebury language school, there were not many who qualified to participate in the study due to the level of their proficiency, and only participants with high proficiency in Russian were sought for the study. I piloted this study with a different set of participants, but I did not include their results as some of the experimental stimuli were later modified.

Secondly, some of the experimental stimuli had to be eliminated from the results in the Semantic Judgement task with English participants as they were rejected by the control group. It was indeed quite difficult to construct appropriate contexts based on a psych verb that would differentiate nominative and dative experiencers. What was even more difficult is to judge those sentences on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from ‘-2’ to ‘+2’. The two contexts are truly subtly discerned and the scale might not have been appropriate for the expected judgements. For future
studies, I would recommend a positive-only scale, or a true/false design for judgements that target fine-grained semantic distinctions.

6.4.3 Indications for further research

Applicatives, I would like to claim, are still an unknown terrain in language acquisition studies (with the exception of the few mentioned in this thesis), native or non-native alike. Theoretically, applicative arguments are an intriguing territory to analyze mental representations of an argument structure that is beyond the canonical one. And if future research pursues this line of inquiry, it might shed light on how the linguistic mind is organized with respect to canonical versus noncanonical argument structures.

With reference to the phenomenon examined here, a potentially interesting question for future studies, and something that I did not have a chance to test, is whether Spanish learners interpret Russian nominative experiencers with psych verbs as [+control] or not. English learners adjusted the value of the target nominative experiencer, as illustrated by the present results, and their baseline grammar does not have dative experiencers, or at least not in a morphosyntactic shape similar to the target one. Thus, for Spanish learners, tentatively, I would predict the [+control] nominative experiencers to be puzzling as their native counterparts are [-control] on both nominative and dative experiencers.

Future investigations can also benefit from sharpened designs, as there is always room for perfecting methodology, or even combining various methodologies and techniques, in second language research. When eliciting learners’ comprehension of target forms, the level of sophistication of that knowledge in L2 interlanguage is hardly ever clear for researchers due to its tacit nature and to the fact that a researcher cannot examine an L2 mind introspectively. This leads one to ponder over the application of neurolinguistic techniques in SLA. Such a suggestion is not inconceivable, and, in fact, is being implemented in SLA and foreign language learning by several researchers (see Ellis & Sagarra 2010, Paradis 2009) whose technique is based on the framework of Paradis’ (2004) neurolinguistic theory of bilingualism.

Finally, language instruction can possibly benefit from the findings of the present study by incorporating explicit teaching of the semantic contrast of complex applicatives (given that, of course, this knowledge is made available to language instructors). This can be achieved by
consistently comparing similarities and differences between L1 and L2 grammars of the relevant aspects, paying special attention to how closely related (or unrelated) these languages are.
References


Appendices

Appendix A  Language Assessment Questionnaire used for the English learners of Russian

Participant:  
Department of Linguistics  
University of Toronto  
Language Questionnaire

Please answer the following questions as accurate as possible. This information is indispensable to assess your language qualifications and will further help to process the results of the test you are about to take.

A. Personal Information

• Sex:  Male  Female
• Year of Birth:  

• Place of Birth:  City _____________________ Country _____________________
• Occupation:  

• Highest Level of Schooling:  Secondary  CEGEP/College/Professional  University
• If you were not born in Canada, at what age did you move here?  

B. First Language

What is your first language?  

What is the first language of:  
your mother? ____________________ your father? ____________________

Did you learn your first language from birth?  Yes  No
• If you answered ‘No’ to the question above, please explain:  


Which language(s) did you speak at home as a child?

__________________________________________________________

Is your first language the language with which you are the most comfortable?  Yes  No
• If you answered ‘No’ to the question above, please explain:

__________________________________________________________

C.  Education & Language Use

Which language(s) were you formally educated in? Where (i.e. country)?

Primary/Elementary School ____________________________________________________________
High School ________________________________________________________________
CEGEP/College _____________________________________________________________
University ________________________________________________________________

Which language(s) do you use (Indicate approximate percentage, e.g. 0, 50, 100%)

At school ________________________________________________________________
At home ________________________________________________________________
At work ________________________________________________________________
In social situations __________________________________________________________

D.  Second Languages

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Second Languages</th>
<th>A.</th>
<th>B.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>At what age did you begin to learn your 2nd language?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Where did you learn your 2nd language? Give place and years.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Were your teachers native speakers of this language?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Did you learn this language as a subject or was it the principal medium of instruction?</td>
<td>Subject</td>
<td>Medium of Instruction</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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<tr>
<td>Have you ever spent time in an area where this language was the native language?</td>
<td>Where?</td>
<td>How long?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Approximately how many hours a week do you use this language? Specify for each of speaking, listening and reading.</td>
<td>Speaking: _______ hrs</td>
<td>Listening: _______ hrs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Please rate your linguistic ability in each of your second languages in the following areas by checking the appropriate answer.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Beginner</th>
<th>Intermediate</th>
<th>Advanced</th>
<th>Near-Native</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>READING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language A</td>
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<td></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language B</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>WRITING</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language A</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>SPEAKING</strong></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language A</td>
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<tr>
<td>Language B</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>LISTENING</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>Language A</td>
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<td>-----------</td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language B</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

**OVERALL COMPETENCE**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language A</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language B</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Do you know any other second languages? Please specify:

____________________________________________________________
Appendix B: Grammaticality Judgement Task used in the experimental study with English learners of Russian (instructions are translated)

**Russian Test 1**

**Participant:**

**Study:**

**Instructions:**

In the following pages, you will see a list of sentences. Your task is to decide whether these sentences are grammatical or ungrammatical in the Russian language. Try not to apply any grammar rule that you might have ever learned. Try not to pay attention to style, or to a possibility that there may be a more elegant or cultivated way of forming the sentence.

Read each sentence carefully. Try to think of the sentences as if they were spoken and not written. After each sentence you will find five numbers. For each sentence, circle only one of the numbers to indicate your opinion about the grammaticality of the sentence. Interpret the numbers in the following manner:

-2 = very ungrammatical

-1 = ungrammatical

0 = I cannot decide (try to avoid this answer)

1 = relatively grammatical

2 = grammatical

**Beginning of the test:**

---

**Русский Тест 1**

**Участник:**

**Исследование:**

**Задание:**

В этом тесте Вам предлагается список предложений. Ваша задача – решить, как они звучат в русском языке. То есть, Вам нужно определить, возможное ли или невозможное данное предложение в русском, правильное ли оно или неправильное, или так себе. При этом, мы Вас просим, по возможности, не применять когда-либо выученные правила русской грамматики, а также, не обращать внимания на стиль предложения или думать о
том, что можно построить это предложение лучше, чем оно есть.

Внимательно прочитайте следующие предложения. Думайте об этих предложениях так, как будто они произнесены в потоке речи, а не написаны. В конце каждого предложения даны пять цифр. Обведите только одну цифру, соответствующую вашему мнению по поводу грамматичности данного предложения. Значение цифр:

-2 = очень неграмотное
-1 = неграмотное
0 = не могу сказать (пытайтесь избегать этого ответа)
1 = относительно грамотное
2 = грамотное

Начало теста:

1. Мне чувствовала приближение урагана. -2 -1 0 1 2
2. Неделю назад моя подруга подарил мне тропическую пальму. -2 -1 0 1 2
3. Я дремала целый час по пути в Миддлбери. -2 -1 0 1 2
4. Позавчера моя племянница говорилось всю ночь со своим другом. -2 -1 0 1 2
5. Древние греки говорили, что в человеке должно быть все прекрасно:
   и душа, и тело, и ум. -2 -1 0 1 2
6. Я дремалось по дороге в Миддлбери. -2 -1 0 1 2
7. Вчера утром мне не бегала. -2 -1 0 1 2
8. Говорят, что на подготовку к экзамену всегда не хватает одного день. -2 -1 0 1 2
9. Мне хорошо дремала в машине по пути в Миддлбери. -2 -1 0 1 2
10. Вчера утром я бегалось в парке. -2 -1 0 1 2
11. Мне говорил всю ночь со своим другом. -2 -1 0 1 2
12. Петя был любил в Дашу с шестого класса. -2 -1 0 1 2
13. Людям в Советском Союзе жилось хорошо, как говорит старшее -2 -1 0 1 2
поколение.

14. Вчера утром мне бегалось с удовольствием. -2 -1 0 1 2
15. Карлу Марксу общество виделось идеальным. -2 -1 0 1 2
16. Мне чувствовалось приближение грозы. -2 -1 0 1 2
17. Я всегда мечтал побывать в российской глубинке. -2 -1 0 1 2
18. Вчера утром я бегала в парке. -2 -1 0 1 2
19. Знаменитый поэт Лермонтов прожил всего двадцать семь лет. -2 -1 0 1 2
20. Я весело живется в Миддлбери. -2 -1 0 1 2
21. Особенно спортивные машины люблю водить. -2 -1 0 1 2
22. Мне сладко дремалось по пути в Миддлбери. -2 -1 0 1 2
23. Десять лет назад я виделось будущее неопределенно. -2 -1 0 1 2
24. Мне говорилось весь день о поездке в Китай. -2 -1 0 1 2
25. Родители чувствуют, когда с детьми случается беда. -2 -1 0 1 2
26. В русском языке много французских слов. -2 -1 0 1 2
27. Я чувствовалось приближение урагана. -2 -1 0 1 2
28. Говорят, что Гитлер за десять дней до падения Рейха все ещё видел победу за Германией. -2 -1 0 1 2
29. Мне весело живу в Миддлбери. -2 -1 0 1 2
30. В детстве мне часто видела страшные сны. -2 -1 0 1 2
Appendix C: Semantic Judgement Task used in the experimental study with English learners of Russian (instructions are translated)

**Russian Test 2**

Participant:

Study:

**Instructions:**

In the pages below, you will find a list of stories. Each story is followed by a sentence. Your task is to decide whether the sentence adequately describes the story, or is appropriate as a continuation of the story.

Read the sentences carefully. Try to think of the sentences as if they were spoken and not written. Don’t pay attention to the vocabulary, spelling, punctuation or style.

After each sentence you will find five numbers. For each sentence, circle only one of the numbers to indicate your opinion about the appropriateness of the sentence to the story. Interpret the numbers in the following manner:

-2 = sounds bad, it is not appropriate for the story

-1 = sounds bad, but not so much

0 = you cannot decide (try to avoid this answer)

1 = sounds relatively good, is relatively appropriate to the context of the story

2 = sounds very good, appropriate to the context

**Beginning of the test:**

Русский Тест 2

Участник:

Исследование:

Задание:

В этом тесте Вам предлагается прочитать короткие истории. В конце каждой истории дано предложение. Ваша задача - решить, правильно ли это предложение, и подходит ли оно к данной истории. То есть Вам нужно определить, хорошо ли звучит данное предложение, и насколько оно подходит по смыслу к истории.
Внимательно прочитайте предложение. Думайте о предложениях так, как будто они произнесены в потоке речи, а не написаны. Не обращайте внимания на правописание или пунктуацию. Хорошо подумайте перед тем, как сделать свой выбор.

В конце каждого предложения даны пять цифр. Обведите только одну цифру, соответствующую Вашему мнению по поводу данного предложения. Значение цифр:

-2 = неправильно звучит, совершенно не подходит к истории
-1 = неправильно звучит, но не так плохо; не очень подходит к истории
0 = не могу сказать (пытайтесь избегать этого ответа)
1 = звучит относительно приемлемо, относительно подходит к истории
2 = звучит очень хорошо, совершенно подходит к истории

Начало теста:

1. История

Катя работает швеёй в престижном доме моды. У хозяйки этого швейного дома очень богатые клиенты и она часто настойчиво просит своих работников работать в выходные. Катя, как главная швея, отвечает за качество каждого изделия. В последние две недели Катя оставалась на работе в выходные, чтобы выполнить план, установленный хозяйкой.

– Кате работалось без выходных две недели. -2 -1 0 1 2

2. История

Моя подруга Ксения месяц назад закончила школу дизайнера и уже работает по специальности. Ей так нравится новая работа, что она даже отказывается от выходных и выходит на работу. Последние три выходных подряд я приглашала Ксению в гости, но она была так увлечена работой, что отказалась, но пообещала встретится со мной в следующую субботу.

– Ксения работала во время выходных. -2 -1 0 1 2

3. История

Люди старшего поколения часто вспоминают послесталинскую эпоху. В особенности слышны рассказы о том, как свободно, ни о чем не думая, все выходили на улицы и не задумывались о последствиях того, с кем встречавшись и куда идешь. Люди наслаждались свободой и беззаботностью в любое время дня и ночи.
– В послесталинскую эпоху люди безопасно гуляли как днем, так и ночью.

4. История

Русские альпинисты амбициозные люди. После Эвереста и Альп, альпинисты решили взойти на Анды. Это было настоящим испытанием для них, так как Анды очень особенные и крутые горы. За восхождением альпинистов я следила по новостям. Альпинисты настойчиво повторяли попытки восхождения, и только после нескольких попыток они овладели Андами.

– Русские альпинисты покорили Анды после многочисленных попыток.

5. История

У меня есть друг. У него всегда очень много планов на серьезные и крупные покупки, но, на самом деле, он эти планы не осуществляет. Так, года два назад он сказал, что покупает водный мотоцикл, но так до сих пор и не купил его. А три месяца назад он сказал, что едет покупать загородный домик. Но, как я сегодня узнала, он его так и не купил, впрочем, как и водный мотоцикл. Одним словом, у моего друга всегда масса идей и желаний, которые, к сожалению, так и остаются идеями.

– Мой друг хотел водный мотоцикл и загородный дом.

6. История

Моя беременная подруга Марина никогда не знает, что она захочет съесть через 5 минут. В тот день, когда она была у меня в гостях, у меня были всевозможные фрукты. Я предложила Марине фрукты, но она пожелала только манго, которого у меня, к сожалению, не было. Я предложила сходить на базар и купить манго, но Марина сказала, что ей лень и мы не пошли. И все ж Марина думала о манго.

– Марине хотелось манго.

7. История

Иван работает электриком на заводе уже много лет. Обычно он не выходит в ночной смену, но прошлой ночью начальник попросил Ивана поработать хотя бы три часа в ночь. Иван согласился и остался на всю ночь.

– Иван работал всю ночь.
8. История

Вчера вечером, уже лёжа в постели, я решила начать новую книгу Б.Акунина «Азазель». Долго читать я не могла, так как мне рано вставать и идти в университет. Но, вопреки моим ожиданиям, книга оказалась такой интересной, что я не могла оторваться. Когда я случайно подняла глаза на часы, было уже четыре утра. Хоть я и пыталась заснуть, но так и не получилось пока я не закончила «Азазель».

– Я прочитала эту книгу за ночь.

9. История

Жена моего брата, Ольга, прихотлива в еде. Два дня назад они зашли ко мне в гости с работы перед тем, как идти домой. Я предложила им поужинать, но все, что у меня было на ужин, это блины с мясом. Ольга отказалась от блинов и настояла на том, чтобы мы поужинали в ресторане, где подают её любимое блюдо. Так мы поужинали запеченной рыбой в тот вечер.

– Ольге хотелось запеченной рыбы.

10. История

Сегодня утром на уроке я представляла себе путешествие в Аргентину. По какой-то причине я совершенно не следила за обсуждением в классе, но была сильно увлечена размышлениями об этой южно-американской стране. И только после того, как учитель трижды произнёс моё имя, я очнулась от своих мечтаний.

– Сегодня утром мне мечталось о путешествии в Аргентину.

11. История

История славянских племён тринадцатого века ознаменована захватами татарских племён во главе с Батыем. Войско Батыя было многочисленно и серьёзно вооружено. Славянские же племена понимали преимущество татар, и поэтому многие добровольно и без боя приходили к Батыю и принимали его подданство. Даже Александр Невский сам пришёл к Батыю и признал его власть.

– В тринадцатом веке Батый покорил многие славянские племена и народы.
12. История
Мой брат пишет курсовую работу. Вчера я встретила его и порекомендовала прочитать увлекательную историческую книгу, которая поможет ему освободиться от стресса в работе. Он ответил, что у него очень много научной литературы, которую он должен читать. Но я настояла на том, чтобы он прочитал эту книгу в первую очередь. Он так и сделал, и позже поделился со мной, что закончил эту книгу за ночь с большим удовольствием.

– Брату читалось с удовольствием всю ночь.

13. История
Через две недели мне нужно сдавать свою исследовательскую работу. Так как я работаю медленно, у меня остается очень мало времени, и поэтому я работаю даже по ночам. Последние три ночи я работала, не поспав ни часу.

– Мне не спалось три ночи подряд.

14. История
В детстве у меня был сосед Сашка, который никогда не выходил на улицу играть с нами. Он предпочитал оставаться дома и читать книги. И только поздно по вечерам он выходил на улицу, чтобы выгулять своего пса Артамона. Одну вещь Сашка знал твердо — Артамона надо было выгуливать перед сном.

– По вечерам Сашке гулялось на улице со своей собакой.

15. История
Моя тётя домохозяйка. У нее очень хороший слух и она всегда слышит шаги своих детей издалека. Вчера она мыла двор и ждала своего младшего сына со школы. Я смотрела на тёту из окна, когда она вдруг прекратила работать. Тётя внимательно прислушивалась к чему-то. Мне показалось, что она сейчас заторопится к воротам открывать двери сыну, но тётя вернулась к работе.

– Тёте послышались шаги сына.

16. История
Я пишу диссертацию. Вчера мой научный руководитель порекомендовала мне прочитать одну книгу, которая должна мне помочь в работе. Я была очень занята, но она настойчиво
попросила, чтобы я одолела эту книгу как можно скорее, желательно за ночь. Итак, я заставила себя и закончила эту книгу за ночь.

– Я прочитала эту книгу за ночь.

17. История
Сегодня утром я бегала в парке. Хотя и было очень рано, я видела как две молодые мамы неторопливым шагом гуляли с детьми в колясках. Через 2 часа я шла в университет той же дорогой, по которой бегала с утра. Я опять увидела тех же мам, но на этот раз они быстрым шагом возвращались домой.

– Молодые мамы гуляли в парке часами.

18. История
Дедушка наших соседей все время находится дома. Несмотря на свой возраст, у дедушки очень хороший слух и он всегда слышит шаги внука издалека. Вчера он окучивал огородик и ждал своего любимого внука со школы. Я смотрела на него из окна, как вдруг он заторопился к воротам дома. Дедушка открыл дверь внуку.

– Дедушка услышал шаги внука.

19. История
Вчера вечером я гуляла в парке, когда меня кто-то окликнул. Я обернулась, но никого не увидела и пошла дальше. Но через некоторое время меня опять кто-то позвал, и на этот раз я увидела моих соседей по дому. Оказывается, первый раз, когда они меня позвали, я их не увидела из-за дерева, которое было на пути.

– Гуляя в парке, мне послышались голоса.

20. История
Во вчерашней газете написали статью про молодую российскую балерину Волочкову. После окончания театрального училища, Волочкова очень надеялась сразу же попасть в Большой театр, так как она была лучшей танцовщицей. Балерина сказала в интервью, что если её пригласят солисткой в Большой театр, мечта её жизни сбудется.

– Балерина мечтала танцевать в Большом театре.
21. История

Федя работает слесарем в энергетической компании уже много лет. Обычно он не выходит в ночной смену, но прошлой ночью начальник попросил Федю заменить ночной слесаря всего на два часа. Федя согласился. Ночной слесарь пришел как и обещал через 2 часа, но Федя остался до конца смены, потому что он был полон энергии и совсем не хотел спать.

– Феде хорошо работалось всю ночь.

22. История

Первые альпинисты, покорившие Гималаи, считаются настоящими героями. Это восхождение было серьёзным испытанием для них, так как Гималаи непредсказуемые горы. Многие попытки заканчивались неудачно, так как на альпинистов обрушивался то проливной дождь, то обильный снегопад, то град.

– Альпинистам покорились Гималаи после многочисленных попыток.

23. История

Вчера под вечер у нас в районе отключили свет, а ещё позже начался сильный ливень. Я долго не могла заснуть. Но только я стала засыпать, как показалось что кто–то зашагал по крыше. Я подумала, что воры лезут и пошла на чердак с фонарём. Я подождала ещё десять минут, но к счастью на крыше никого не оказалось.

– Вчера ночь я услышала шаги на крыше.

24. История

Моя племянница Настя перешла в частную школу в седьмой класс. Насть считает, что учиться в этой школе трудно, ведь это её первый опыт в частной школе. Сегодня у неё первый экзамен по биологии. Вчера Настя прожилась весь день, готовясь к экзамену. Но ей хотелось подготовиться еще лучше, и она прожилась всю ночь, так и не проспав.

– В эту ночь моя племянница не спала.

25. История

Вчера утром мама ехала в метро на работу, и, так как дорога была дальней, у мамы было много времени подумать обо всём. Как мама рассказывала мне вечером, после того, как она придумала что приготовить на ужин, она думала, что хорошо было бы съездить на
Тибет, где многие болезни лечат травами и медитацией. Ей даже представлялось, что она встретит Далай Ламу и по возможности побеседует с ним.

– Мама мечтала о поездке на Тибет. -2 -1 0 1 2

26. История

Вчера мне позвонила моя подруга Галя и поделилась новостями. Самая большая новость это то, что она взяла три дня выходных и ей не нужно вставать рано утром на работу. Весь день Галя провела на улице, и, вернувшись домой, она чувствовала себя весьма уставшей. Но, по какой-то причине, она так и не сомкнула глаз всю ночь.

– Галя не спала всю ночь. -2 -1 0 1 2

27. История

Муж моей сестры, Стас, начал ухаживать за ней за 6 лет до свадьбы. Елена, моя сестра, очень красивая девушка и у неё всегда было много поклонников. Стас это понимал, и упорно не сдавался. Он приложил много усердий и стараний, чтобы завоевать сердце Елены. В конце концов Стас добился своего.

– Стасу покорилось сердце Елены через 6 лет. -2 -1 0 1 2

28. История

До недавнего времени, моей четырнадцатилетняя племянница хотела стать актрисой. Пять лет она посещала театральную студию и даже выступала в городских спектаклях. А месяц назад я с ней поговорила о её будущей карьере. Как оказалось, теперь она уже собирается учиться на психолога, и этот выбор она считает осознанным.

– Племяннице мечталось стать актрисой. -2 -1 0 1 2

29. История

Моя беременная подруга Марина никогда не знает, что она захочет съесть через 5 минут. В тот день, когда она была у меня в гостях, у меня были всевозможные фрукты. Я предложила Марине фрукты, но она пожелала только клубнику, которой у меня, к сожалению, не было. Марина так мечтала о клубнике, что она пошла на базар и купила ее.

– Марина хотела клубнику. -2 -1 0 1 2
30. История

Максим только что поступил в престижный университет. Максим считает, что учиться в этом университете трудно, ведь это его первый год. Сегодня он встречит двух новых преподавателей и должен будет сделать доклад о своём новом исследовании. Максим выучил свой доклад наизусть, но, тем не менее, он так волновался, что всю ночь так и не смог заснуть.

– В эту ночь Максиму не спалось.

31. История

Сегодня утром я бегала в парке. Хотя и было очень рано, я видела как две молодые мамы неторопливым шагом гуляли с детьми в колясках. Через 2 часа я шла в университет той же дорогой, по которой бегала утром. Я опять увидела тех же мам, и они все еще прохаживались тем же неторопливым шагом, улыбались и мило разговаривали.

– Молодым мамам гулялось в парке часами.

32. История

Моя племянница не большая любительница читать. Но я считаю, что для девочки это очень важно быть начитанной. Хоть ей это и не очень нравится, я её заставляю читать классические произведения, когда она гостит у меня. На этот раз я ее настоячиво убедила познакомиться с рассказом Булгакова «Собачье сердце». На чтение этого рассказа у неё ушла неделя.

– Племяннице прочитался рассказ за неделю.
Appendix D: Language Assessment Questionnaire used in the experimental study with Spanish learners of Russian

Участник:
Кафедра Лингвистики
Университет г.Торонто
Языковой Опросный Лист

Пожалуйста, ответьте на следующие вопросы как можно более точно. Эта информация необходима для оценки Ваших языковых навыков и поможет далее оценить с большей определённостью результаты тестирования.

A. Личная информация

• Пол: □ Мужской □ Женский
• Год рождения: ________________________________
• Место рождения: Город __________________ Страна __________________________
• Род занятий:
• Уровень образования: □ Средний (школа) □ Технический (колледж) □ Высший (университет)
• Если Вы родились не в Испании, в каком возрасте Вы сюда переехали?

________________________________________________________________________

B. Первый язык

Какой Ваш родной язык? ________________________________________________

Какой первый язык Ваших родителей: матери? __________ отца? __________

Вы с рождения учили Ваш первый язык? □ Да □ Нет

Если Вы ответили ‘Нет’ на вопрос выше, пожалуйста объясните:

________________________________________________________________________

На каком языке (или языках) Вы разговаривали дома будучи ребёнком?

________________________________________________________________________

Ваш первый язык – язык, говоря на котором Вы чувствуете себя наиболее комфортно?

□ Да □ Нет
• Если Вы ответили ‘Нет’ на вопрос выше, пожалуйста объясните:
В. Образование и использование языка

На каком языке (или языках) Вы получили образование? Где (укажите страну)?

Начальная школа

Средняя школа

Колледж

Университет

Какие языки Вы используете (укажите приблизительный процент, т.е. 0, 50, 100%):

В вузе

Дома

На работе

В общении

Г. Другие (неродные) языки

<table>
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<th>Другие языки</th>
<th>Второй</th>
<th>Третий</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>А.</td>
<td>Б.</td>
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В каком возрасте Вы начали изучать Ваши другие языки?

Где Вы изучили Ваши другие языки? Укажите место и годы.

Были ли Ваши учителя носителями этого языка?

Изучали ли Вы этот язык как предмет или как основное средство обучения?

В ученике ли Вы этот язык как предмет или как основное средство обучения?

Где? Как долго?

Примерно сколько часов в неделю Вы используете этот язык? Укажите в часах для Разговорной речи, Аудирования и Чтения.
- Оцените Ваши языковые способности в каждом из Ваших родных языков в нижеуказанных областях, отметив соответствующий уровень

<table>
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<th>Средний</th>
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Владеете ли Вы другими иностранными языками? Пожалуйста укажите:

_________________________________________
Appendix E: Grammaticality Judgement Task used in the experimental study with Spanish learners of Russian (instructions are translated)

Russian Test 1

(Summer, 2011)  

Participant:  

Study:

Instructions:
In the following pages, you will see a list of sentences. Your task is to decide whether these sentences are grammatical or ungrammatical in the Russian language. Try not to apply any grammar rule that you might have ever learned. Try not to pay attention to style, or to a possibility that there may be a more elegant or cultivated way of forming the sentence.

Read each sentence carefully. Try to think of the sentences as if they were spoken and not written. After each sentence you will find five numbers. For each sentence, circle only one of the numbers to indicate your opinion about the grammaticality of the sentence. Interpret the numbers in the following manner:

-2 = very ungrammatical
-1 = ungrammatical
0 = I cannot decide (try to avoid this answer)
1 = relatively grammatical
2 = grammatical

Beginning of test

Русский тест 1

(Лето, 2011)  

Номер участника:  

Исследование:

Задание:
В этом тесте Вам предлагается список предложений. Ваша задача – определить, насколько правильно они звучат в русском языке с точки зрения русской грамматики. При этом, мы Вас просим не обращать внимания на стиль предложения или думать о том, что это предложение можно построить лучше, чем оно есть.
Внимательно прочитайте каждое предложение. Представьте, что предложение произнесено в потоке речи, а не написано. Напротив каждого предложения даны пять цифр. Обведите только одну цифру, соответствующую Вашему мнению по поводу правильного написания данного предложения. Значение цифр:

-2 = очень неграмотное
-1 = неграмотное
0 = не могу сказать (пытайтесь избегать этого ответа)
1 = относительно грамотное
2 = грамотное

Начало теста:

1. Катя ела творог для мамы, хоть Катя совсем и не любит творог. -2 -1 0 1 2
2. Королевская свадьба расписана буквально по минутам. -2 -1 0 1 2
3. Космонавты говорят, что им на орбите хорошо читается фантастика. -2 -1 0 1 2
4. Швея работает хозяйке фабрики. -2 -1 0 1 2
5. Кавалер пел на неё серенаду. -2 -1 0 1 2
6. Мне диссертация писалась с вдохновением. -2 -1 0 1 2
7. Профессор читал студентам лекцию по теологии. -2 -1 0 1 2
8. Очки были сломана Колей. -2 -1 0 1 2
9. Он принесла мне мои любимые цветы. -2 -1 0 1 2
10. Влюбленные танцевалось всю ночь напролет. -2 -1 0 1 2
11. Красная шла к бабушке шапочка по лесу. -2 -1 0 1 2
12. Вчера в парке два монаха пели псалмы. -2 -1 0 1 2
13. Говорят, что на подготовку к экзамену всегда не хватает одного день. -2 -1 0 1 2
14. Строители работалось комфортно в новых костюмах. -2 -1 0 1 2
15. Рыбки оживленно плывали по аквариуму.

16. Вазу разбило ветром.

17. Ученики писали экзамен два часа.

18. Американский лидер предложился Сенату назначить его на пост министра обороны.

19. Пушкин читалось по ночам.

20. К одиннадцати утра актёры собрались.


22. Болезнь делает людей слабым и беззащитным.

23. В перерыве я бегал неё за водой.

24. Осенью Пушкин обычно писалось хорошо и много.

25. Мне не поётся, когда я без настроения.

26. Витя играет с Леной в прятки.

27. У котят родилось кот.

28. Даша работает для американского писателя.

29. Знак ордена носится на шелковой ленте красного цвета.

30. Гостям танцевалось в ресторане и без водки.

31. Клоун пел для детей частушки.

32. Маме не работала три дня после операции.

33. Три дня подряд сын бегал для папы за лекарствами в аптеку.
34. Мне хорошо работалось после прогулки в парке.
35. Для реализации планов необходимо страны.
36. Дети пелось без желания.
37. Миша и Варя поступила в медицинский университет.
38. Вчера в зоопарке две панды ели кукурузу.
39. Вчера на вечеринке Маше пела под гитару.
40. Мне танцует под звуки любой музыки.
41. Когда я нервничаю, мне ничего не естся.
42. Танцоры танцевали нам фламенко.
43. Малыш елось с неохотой.
44. Вчера вечером мне не читала.
45. В русском языке много французских слов.
46. Новые русские делают много денег в нефтяном бизнесе.
47. Сегодня мне не играется в хоккей.
48. Вчера я игралось в карты.
49. Сегодня мне как-то особенно не играет.
50. Моя сестра читала на детей сказку перед сном.
51. Я работала два месяца без выходных.
52. Музыкант оценил свои владения в 10 миллионов долларов.
53. Вчера утром я бегала в парке.
54. Мне статья написала легко.

55. Раньше школьники читали «Войну и мир» в пятом классе.

56. Киплинг писал на детей истории про Маугли.

57. Весь мир от палубы до морозных звёзд был полон голосов.

58. Сочинил по этому поводу.

59. Вчера утром я бегалось в парке.

60. Знаменитый поэт Лермонтов прожил всего двадцать семь лет.

61. Вчера в обед Маше ела борщ.

62. Брат ел мне манную кашу.

63. В это время завтра мама уже будет на балете.

64. Петя играет Даше на баяне.

65. Вчера утром мне бегалось с удовольствием.

66. Мой одноклассник писал мне стихи.

67. Женщины танцевали на сцене без мужчин.

68. Все участники конкурса будут награждены дипломами для.

69. Неделю назад моя подруга подарил мне тропическую пальму.

70. Вчера утром мне не бегала.

71. Женя играет Лиду на скрипке.

72. Мама нарисовала Коле смешного гнома.
Appendix F: Semantic Judgement Task used in the experimental study with Spanish learners of Russian (instructions are translated)

Russian test 2

(Summer, 2011)

Participant:

Study:

Instructions:

Below you will see a set of stories and two sentences at the end of each story. Your task is to read each story and decide which of the two sentences describes the meaning of the story best. If you think that both sentences are equally appropriate for the story, circle answer C. Alternatively, if you think that neither of the sentences describe the story appropriately, circle answer D. Only in the case if you circled either C or D, give your preference to both sentences on a five-point scale.

For example, if you think that both sentences are equally appropriate for the story and you circled answer C (as on the example below), now give your preference to both sentences relative to the story on a five-point scale, where ‘1’ means ‘the least appropriate’, and ‘5’ – ‘the most appropriate’.

So if you think that sentence A describes the story slightly better, circle 5 (or another number you deem appropriate), and then judge sentence B accordingly. The example is given for you below.

Example:

A. This sentence describes the story best.

B. This sentence describes the story best.

C. Both sentences describe the story equally well.

Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5

Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

D. Neither sentence A nor B describes the story appropriately.

Sentence A: 1 2 3 4 5

Sentence B: 1 2 3 4 5

Beginning of test
Русский тест 2

(Лето, 2011)

Номер участника:

Исследование:

Задание:

В этом тесте Вам предлагается прочитать короткие истории. В конце каждой истории даны два предложения, А и Б. Ваши задача выбрать предложение, которое больше всего подходит по смыслу к данной истории или же лучше описывает общий смысл этой истории. Если Вы считаете, что оба предложения одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории, обведите ответ В. А если же Вы считаете, что ни одно из предложений не подходит по смыслу к истории, обведите ответ Г. Только в случае, если Вы обвели ответ В или Г, оцените Ваше предпочтение предложениям по пятибалльной шкале.

Например, если Вы считаете, что оба предложения подходят к истории и Вы обвели В (как на примере внизу), теперь Вам нужно оценить предложения между собой по отношению к данной истории более конкретно, где 1 значит 'меньше всего подходит', а 5 – 'больше всего подходит'. Так, если Вы считаете, что предложение А описывает историю каким–то образом немного лучше чем Б, обведите цифру 5 (или другую, в соответствии с Вашим мнением), и затем оцените предложение Б (4 на примере внизу) так же в соответствии с Вашим мнением.

Пример:

А. Это предложение подходит по смыслу к истории.

Б. Это предложение подходит по смыслу к истории.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5

Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5

Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Внимательно читайте предложения. Думайте о предложениях так, как будто они произнесены в потоке речи, а не написаны. Не обращайте внимания на правописание или пунктуацию.

Начало теста:
1. История

Мой знакомый Володя недавно пережил инсульт, после чего его частично парализовало. Володя по натуре – жизнерадостный и весёлый человек. Чтобы полностью избавиться от паралича, он все время заставлял себя двигаться. Так, например, в течение нескольких месяцев он включал музыку и намеренно танцевал часами, даже если ему было физически очень больно.

A. Володя танцевалось после долгой болезни.
B. Володя танцевал после долгой болезни.
V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

2. История

Фёдор владеет ювелирной фабрикой, на которой производят дорогие ювелирные изделия из золота. Иногда Фёдор сам делает украшения, ведь он хороший ювелир. Фёдор не часто бывает на фабрике, но, чтобы фабрика работала безупречно и приносила много денег, он нанял на работу много опытных администраторов.

A. Фёдор работает на фабрике.
B. На Фёдора много людей работает на фабрике.
V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5
3. История

Мой приятель Сергей – профессиональный оперный певец. Он редко поёт за пределами театра, даже если его очень просят. Позавчера у меня была вечеринка, и, как обычно, Сергей не хотел петь. Тогда мой другой друг, Виталий, встал напротив Сергея и начал петь ему песни Пугачёвой. И только тогда Сергей присоединился к Виталию, и то без особого желания.

A. Мой друг Виталий пел Сергею на вечеринке.
B. Сергею пелось у меня на вечеринке.
В. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

4. История

Вчера у нас был выпускной вечер. Все были красиво одеты и с нетерпением ждали бала после праздничного ужина. Наконец—то двери зала открылись и заиграла музыка. Все мои друзья веселились и танцевали. Я немного потанцевала и вернулась за стол. Мне стало так грустно осознавая, что веселая университетская жизнь уже закончилась.

А. Мне не танцевалось вчера на выпускном вечере.
Б. Я не танцевала вчера на выпускном вечере.
В. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5
5. История

Мы с Наташей делим офис на двоих. Сегодня Наташа была в очень весёлом настроении, потому что на выходных её парень сделал ей предложение и они уже начали планировать свадьбу. Наташа радостно напевала какие–то песни целый день, но я была так рада за неё, что меня это не отвлекало от работы, и я даже пела с ней.

А. Наташе пелось в офисе сегодня.

Б. Я пела для Наташи в офисе сегодня.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

6. История

Пару месяцев назад я писала статью в журнал. У меня оставался всего один день перед тем, как отправить статью, а мне ещё нужно было прочитать пять статей для обзора! Но как бы я не хотела спать, мне нужно было работать. И так моя ночь прошла в работе.

А. Я читала всю ночь.

Б. Мне читалось всю ночь.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

7. История

Мы с другом Димой пошли в казино. На меня напал азарт и я попробовала свою удачу в рулетке. Увы, в азартных играх мне не везёт, и тогда я попросила Диму действовать за
меня и только на мои деньги. Дима не любит азартные игры, но так как я его очень просила, он согласился.

A. Дима играл в рулетку для меня.
B. Мне в казино игралось.
V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

8. История

Оля пишет статью для публикации в престижном журнале антропологов. Но Оле очень трудно работать над статьёй, так как в последнее время у неё нет настроения. Её муж Андрей тоже публикуется в журнале по антропологии, и он предложил Оле помочь писать статью. Но Оля ведь сама должна писать статью!

A. Андрей писал для Оли статью.
B. Оле статья не писалась.

V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

9. История

Я составляю письмо мэру нашего города с просьбой о финансовой поддержке нашего факультета. Это нелегкая работа – убедить мэра в финансировании, но, во что бы то ни стало, я должна закончить письмо сегодня. Итак, мне пришлось работать до позднего вечера.

A. Невзирая на поздний час, мне писалось.
Б. Невзирая на поздний час, я писала.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4

10. История

Вот уже двадцать лет, как Павел владеет фабрикой, на которой производят высококачественную деревянную мебель. Он очень любит свое семейное дело и гордится производимой продукцией. Хоть Павел и владелец фабрики, он часто сам вырезает по дереву потому, что он очень любит эту работу.

А. Павлу работается на фабрике.
Б. Для Павла много людей работает на фабрике.
В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

11. История

Сегодня я работаю над своей статьёй. Обычно это процесс медленный и мучительный. Но сегодня у меня почему–то прекрасное настроение: то ли потому, что сегодня тёплый и солнечный день, то ли потому, что вчера мне дали грант на исследование. Ну, в любом случае, работа сегодня идёт быстро, чему я очень рада!

А. Сегодня я почему–то быстро пишу.
Б. Сегодня мне почему–то быстро пишется.
В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.
12. История

Говорят, что завтрак – это самая важная еда дневного меню, и что он должен быть полезным и питательным, и что нельзя начинать день не позавтракав. Но мне себя почему-то очень трудно заставить завтракать... Завтрак не приносит никакого удовольствия, что бы я не употребляла – будь то овсяная каша, или же фруктовый йогурт.

А. По утрам мне не естся почему то.
Б. По утрам я не ем почему то.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

13. История

Федя работает слесарем на заводе уже много лет. Обычно он не работает в ночную смену, но прошлой ночью начальник попросил Федю заменить ночного слесаря всего на два часа. Федя согласился и остался на работе.

А. Феде работалось в эту ночь.
Б. Федя работал в эту ночь.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.
Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

14. История
После дня работы за компьютером к вечеру у меня сильно болят глаза. А я люблю читать новости, особенно вечером. Так, вчера моя племянница ночевала у меня, но я воспользовалась случаем и попросила её ознакомить меня с новостями.

А. Вчера вечером моя племянница читала мне новости.

Б. Мне не читалось вчера вечером.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

15. История
Хоккей – очень популярная игра в Канаде. У меня такое впечатление, что ни один канадец не равнодушен к хоккею. В один день мой парень взял меня с собой на хоккейное поле и показал мне основные движения этой игры. Я не думала, что хоккей меня когда-либо заинтересует и что я даже буду гонять за шайбой по катку. Но я так вовлеклась в игру, что даже собрала зрителей вокруг себя!

А. Мой парень играл для меня в хоккей.

Б. Мне игралось в хоккей.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
16. История

Когда я серьёзно занималась легкоатлетикой, у нас было по две тренировки в день. Мы очень уставали, и к вечерней тренировке у нас уже не было сил на бег. Но наш тренер был очень строгий, и тех, кто отказывался бежать, он наказывал дополнительным километром пробега. И так мы заставляли себя бежать, потому что никто не хотел быть наказан.

A. На вечерних тренировках нам бегалось через силу.
B. На вечерних тренировках мы бегали через силу.
V. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

17. История

Саша – начинающий молодой актёр в московской киностудии. Уже его второй фильм принёс ему славу и признание актёрского таланта. Как Саша сам говорит, герой этого фильма был ему очень близок, потому как всё его детство проходило так же, как у героя в этом фильме. Именно поэтому при съёмке фильма Саша чувствовал себя как дома.

A. Саше легко работалось в этом фильме.
B. Саша легко работал в этом фильме.
V. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

18. История

В детстве моя соседка Наташа жила с дедушкой и бабушкой, так как её мама работала инженером на севере. Наташина мама редко видела Наташу, но она очень часто
присылала ей письма. Наташа всегда очень скучала по маме и с нетерпением ждала маминых писем, отвечая на каждое из них.

А. В детстве Наташе писалось с вдохновением.

Б. В детстве мама писала Наташе письма.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

19. История

Недавно я наконец–то познала игру в покер. Игра эта непростая, потому что надо уметь читать эмоции на лицах игроков, а также уметь блефовать. Вчера мой друг организовал турнир покера среди друзей. Я тоже пришла на игру, но мне было очень трудно продержаться долго в игре среди мастеров.

А. Вчера мне игралось в покер.

Б. Вчера я играла в покер.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

20. История

Мой брат разводится с женой и очень сильно из–за этого переживает. Он уже несколько дней никуда не выходит и ничего не готовит для себя! Я пришла к нему, приготовила ужин, и мы сели за стол. Я начала кушать, а он сидит не двигаясь. Но я так настаивала, чтобы он покушал, что, в конце–концов, он согласился.

А. Мой брат поел для меня в этот вечер.
Б. Мне елось в этот вечер.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

21. История

В детстве мои родители хотели, чтобы я играла на пианино, или хотя бы пела в хоре. Но, как оказалось, слуха у меня не было, и играть на пианино меня не взяли. И так родители отвели меня в хор, хотя эта идея меня совершенно не привлекала. Продержалась я в хоре всего один год.

А. В детстве я пела без желания.

Б. В детстве мне елось без желания.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

22. История

Вчера я прочитала новую книжку Акунина. Книга написана исключительно хорошо! Я получила столько удовольствия от чтения этой книги за день, сколько не получила за год, читая всякую бессмысловику. Я даже как-то не заметила, что весь день пропустила в чтении.

А. Эта книга мне читалась легко.

Б. Я читала эту книгу легко.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.
Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

23. История

Сербская православная певица Дивна побывала на Украине со своим хором. Дивна поделилась, что у неё сложилось фантастическое впечатление об Украине и людях. А ещё певица добавила, что она так наслаждалась пением Литургии, что, как ни странно, чувствовала себя как дома.

А. На Украине Дивне пелось.
Б. Дивна пела на Украине.
В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.
Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.
Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

24. История

Мне друзья говорят, что я хорошо готовлю, и особенно русские супы. Вчера я приготовила борщ, получился, как мне показалось, на славу! Мой парень не любит супы; он немного попробовал суп, и отодвинул тарелку в сторону. А я так соскучилась по супу, что с удовольствием опустошила три тарелки. Давно со мной такого не было.

А. Вчера мой парень ел суп для меня.
Б. Вчера мне суп елся.
В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.
Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.
25. История

Когда я только начала заниматься лёгкой атлетикой, я очень боялась дистанций с барьерами. Мой тренер много раз объяснял мне теорию, но, так как он был после травмы, сам он не мог показать, как преодолевать такие дистанции. В конце концов, через месяц, мой выздоровевший тренер сам показал мне технику бега, и так я научилась бегу с барьерами.

A. Мне плохо бегалось на дистанции с барьерами.

B. Тренер пробежал для меня дистанцию с барьерами.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

26. История

Вчера у нас была конференция, на которой я делала доклад своего нового исследования. Доклад мой был запланирован на одиннадцать утра, но я не позавтракала, потому что нервничала накануне доклада. Но я знала, что без еды меня тошнит и болит голова. Так я заставила себя и подкрепилась пирожком с картошкой.

A. Мне всё таки поелось вчера перед конференцией.

B. Я всё таки поела вчера перед конференцией.

В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
27. История

Я и мой друг Влад пошли на шоу чечётки. Я никогда раньше не была на таком шоу и не умею танцевать чечётку, но под звуки музыки я даже немного подвигалась. А мой друг — большой любитель чечётки, и более того, он мастерски двигается под чечётку. Так Влад показал мне, как исполнять этот танец.

A. Мой друг танцевал чечётку для меня.
B. Мне танцевалось под чечётку.
V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

28. История

Я всегда бегаю по утрам, так как бег придаёт мне бодрости и заряжает меня на день. Так и сегодня не было исключением и я вышла на пробежку. Но, к сожалению, утро началось безрадостно: я не выспалась, всю ночь мне снись кошмары, и вообще я себя как-то тяжело чувствовала. Таким образом, хоть я и попыталась, утренний бег не удался.

A. Сегодня утром я не бегала.
B. Сегодня утром мне не бегалось.
V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение B: 1 2 3 4 5

29. История

Я уже несколько лет хожу в тренажёрный зал. Но я не люблю бегать на беговой дорожке, ведь это так монотонно. А мой инструктор всегда бегает на беговой дорожке. Я
пожаловалась ему на то, как я не люблю бегать на дорожке. Тогда мой инструктор включил музыку в зале, потом мы вместе встали на дорожки и побежали. Я даже не заметила, как прошло 30 минут! На следующий день я купила iPod и теперь всегда бегаю с музыкой.

A. Мне легко бегалось под музыку.
B. Мой инструктор бегал для меня под музыку.
В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

30. История

Мой парень устроил мне сюрприз на день рождения, и, ничего мне не сказав, привёл меня на дискотеку, где играют музыку восьмидесятых годов. Он знает, что я обожаю эту музыку. Я веселилась всю ночь. Я так натанцевалась, что утром у меня болели ноги.

A. Мне танцевалось под музыку восьмидесятых.
B. Мой парень танцевал для меня на мой день рождения.
В. Оба предложения, А и Б, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5
Г. Ни А, ни Б не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение А: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение Б: 1 2 3 4 5

31. История

Футболист Погребняк, нападающий 'Штутгарта', рассказывает, что матчи в Германии проходят великолепно потому, что атмосфера там всегда фантастическая: трибуны всегда заполнены, а когда выходишь на поле, от шума даже мурашки по коже! А полузащитник 'Ювентуса' Каморанези – большой мастер, и быть с таким соперником на поле – это одно удовольствие!
A. Погребняк: Я, как нападающий, с Каморанези здорово играю.

B. Погребняк: Мне, как нападающему, с Каморанези здорово играется.

V. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение В: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение В: 1 2 3 4 5

32. История

Моя племянница Маша гостила у меня два дня. У меня дома большая библиотека. Вечером я предложила Маше выбрать какую-нибудь интересную книгу, потому что у них дома нет библиотеки, и потом сама села читать. Маша взяла книгу Булгакова и села у лампы полистать её. Она так заинтересовалась книгой, что просидела читая всю ночь.

A. Маше читалось всю ночь.

B. Вчера вечером я читала Маше книгу.

В. Оба предложения, A и B, одинаково подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение В: 1 2 3 4 5

Г. Ни A, ни B не подходят по смыслу к истории.

Предложение A: 1 2 3 4 5
Предложение В: 1 2 3 4 5

Конец 2-го теста