

Reciprocity in Russian: An investigation of the syntactic, semantic and pragmatic interfaces

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree Doctor of Philosophy  
in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

Lauren Ressue

Graduate Program in Slavic and East European Languages and Cultures

The Ohio State University

2015

Dissertation Committee:

Andrea Sims, Advisor

Judith Tonhauser, Advisor

Daniel Collins

Copyright By

Lauren Ressue

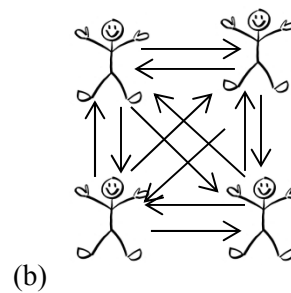
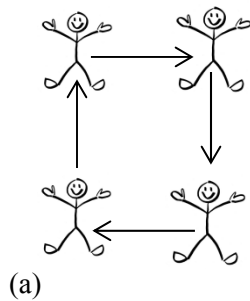
2015

## Abstract

This dissertation explores two reciprocal expressions in Russian, *drug druga* and reciprocal *-sja* verbs to determine their distribution, semantics and pragmatics. I argue that while these two expressions are similar in many ways, they also differ in subtle ways not before discussed. While the empirical foundations of this dissertation are data from Russian, my findings have empirical and theoretical consequences for both the formal semantic and the typological literature on reciprocity.

In English, the reciprocal expression *each other* has been studied in detail to explore the relations between participants it is compatible with (Langendoen 1978, Dalrymple et al. 1998b, Beck 2001). For example, the sentence in (i) is compatible with either of the relations depicted in (a) and (b), where the arrows represent a binary painting relation.

- (i) The four artists painted each other.



In this dissertation, I explore the meaning of reciprocal expressions in Russian to discover whether these expressions have the same meaning as *each other* and whether they contribute any

meaning other than relations between individuals. My data comes from both a corpus study utilizing the Russian National Corpus and elicitation with native speakers of Russian.

My results suggest that while both *drug druga* and the *-sja* verbs, like *each other*, also convey more than one relation between individuals they also contribute other semantic content to a sentence. For example, they both introduce a temporal restriction on events. Some of the *-sja* verbs semantically restrict events to simultaneity, and I argue that *drug druga* gives rise to an implicature that the events are simultaneous. I also explore two different syntactic constructions the reciprocal *-sja* verbs occur in and find a number of semantic differences between the two constructions. I conclude that the syntactic environment of a reciprocal expression can affect its semantics. I furthermore find that *drug druga* is restricted against occurring with the preposition *s* when it introduces a relation of accompaniment to a sentence.

My findings suggest that while reciprocal expressions convey a set of relations between individuals, they also contribute other semantic and pragmatic content that is sensitive to a number of factors. Furthermore, I argue that while reciprocal expressions exhibit some uniformity in their meanings, these meanings also differ. I provide a formal analysis based on those proposed for English *each other* by Dalrymple et al. (1998b), Sabato and Winter (2005) and Dotlačil and Nilsen (2008). My analysis extends this account to the Russian expressions and captures other semantic and pragmatic properties beyond relations between individuals. The core of the semantic analysis consists of proposed lexical entries for *drug druga* and the reciprocal *-sja* verbs, whose truth conditions allow the right predictions about the behavior of these expressions in comparison to each other (and *each other*) and other reciprocal expressions.