The acquisition of English 's Genitive Constructions by native speakers of Italian: some experimental data compared to teaching materials[•]

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ABSTRACT

This work deals with the acquisition of L2 English 's Genitive Constructions with Bare Proper Name possessors by native speakers of Italian. We investigated original L2 English data collected through a written elicitation test from a group of 94 Italian teen-agers learning L2 English in a formal environment.

Results indicate that both Universal Grammar and transfer from the L1 are implied in the acquisition of these structures

In Section 1 we compare Italian and English Possessive Constructions in the light of a model of possessive DPs; in Section 2 we present and discuss the experimental design and the results. In Section 3 we discuss the results and examine how 's Genitive Constructions are presented in a sample of textbooks for Italian teenagers. The conclusions are consistent with the view that a closer relation between L2 acquisition research and teaching materials should be pursued.

1.Possessive constructions in English and Italian and the internal structure of Determiner Phrases

1.1 The aim of this section is to describe and analyze English 's Genitive Constructions and to compare them to other possessive constructions attested in English, as well as to possessive constructions attested in Italian. English 's Genitive Constructions are illustrated in (1.a). The possessor (in this case the Bare Proper name *Peter*) precedes the head noun (*friend*) and is marked with 's. In case of a pronominal possessor, as shown in (1.b), we have a similar situation as far as the relative position of the head noun and the possessor is concerned: the possessor precedes the head noun; in this case, however, the possessor is not marked with 's. Another similarity between nominal and pronominal possessors in English is that they are both incompatible with the head noun determiner, be it definite or indefinite, as shown in (1.c) and (1.d):

(1) a.   Peter's friend
    b.   My friend
    c.   * A/the Peter's friend
    d.   * A/ the my friend

The interpretation of the structures in (1.a) and (1.b) is only definite. If an indefinite meaning is to be conveyed, the available structures in English are the so called Elliptical Constructions shown in (2.a) and (2.b):

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(2) a.   A friend of Peter's
     b.   A friend of mine
     c. * A friend of Peter
     d. * A friend of my
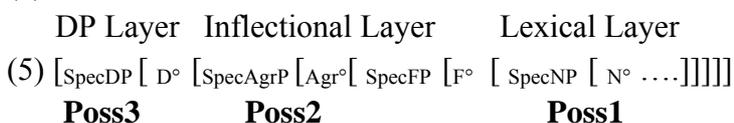   e. * A friend Peter's
     f. * A friend my

In Italian, Bare Proper Name Possessors do not precede the head noun, as shown in (3.a). They only occur post-nominally introduced by the preposition *di* (*of*), in the so called Analytic Construction. Possessive pronouns, on the contrary, can occur pre- or post- nominally as shown in (3.b) and (3.c):

(3) a.   Un/l' amico di Peter
         a/the friend of Peter
     b.   Un/il mio amico
          a/the my friend
     c.   Un/l'amico mio
          a/the friend my

Both pronominal and nominal possessors in Italian are compatible with the head noun determiner, which can be either definite or indefinite, as shown in (3) above. Analytic Constructions are possible (and preferred, see (4.b)) in English with inanimate possessors:

(4) a.   The leg of the table
     b. ?? The table's leg
     c. * The friend of Peter

1.2 Let's now analyze possessive constructions in English and Italian in the light of recent work on the internal structure of Determiner Phrases. Drawing on work by Abney (1987), Szabolcsi (1987) and (1992), Delsing (1998) and Haegeman (2004), we adopt for Determiner Phrases a structure like (5):

DP Layer   Inflectional Layer   Lexical Layer
(5) $[_{SpecDP} [_{D°} [_{SpecAgrP} [_{Agr°} [_{SpecFP} [_{F°} [_{SpecNP} [_{N°} ....]]]]]]$
     Poss3   **Poss2**   **Poss1**

As shown in (5), possessors may occur in three distinct positions: Poss1 in the lexical layer, Poss2 in the Inflectional Layer and Poss3 in the DP Layer. Following a number of proposals, we assume that possessors are always generated in Poss1 as arguments of the head noun. Poss1 is the position where possessors surface in the so called Analytic Constructions[1]:

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[1] According to Cinque (1995) possessors are subjects, hence generated in Spec, NP. The order NPoss observed in Analytic Constructions is derived though movement of the head noun to the left of Poss, to a layer of positions which we have called FP (see (6) and (7)). Although not relevant here, we have to assume that the head noun moves higher in Italian than in English, given its position with respect to adjectives (Cfr. *Una penna rossa* vs. *A red pen*).

(6) [SpecDP [D Un/l' [SpecAgr [Agr [SpecFP [F amico$_i$ [NP t$_i$ [PP di Peter]]]]]]]]]
      Poss3   Poss2   Poss1

(7) [SpecDP [D the [SpecAgr [Agr [SpecFP [F leg$_i$ [NP t$_i$ [PP of the table]]]]]]]]]
      Poss3   Poss2   Poss1

Poss2 is the position where pronominal possessors may surface in Italian[2]:

(8) [SpecDP [D Un/il [SpecAgr mio$_j$ [Agr [SpecFP [F amico$_i$ [NP t$_i$ t$_j$]]]]]]]]
      Poss3   Poss2   Poss1

Poss2 is also the position where pronominal and non- pronominal possessors surface in Hungarian:

(9) a   [SpecDP [D a [SpecAgr Mari$_i$ [Agr kalap-ja$_j$ [NP t$_j$ t$_i$]]]]]]   (Hungarian; Szabolcsi 1994)
             the   MariNOM hat-POSS.3sg
     "Mari's hat"
   b [SpecDP [D az [SpecAgr én$_i$ [Agr vendég-e-m$_j$ [NP t$_j$ t$_i$]]]]]]   (Hungarian; Szabolcsi 1994)
            the   I   guest-POSS-1sg
     "my guest"

    We assume, following Delsing (1998), that the 's Genitive marker is generated in the head position of Poss2 and then moved to (the head position of) Poss3 for definiteness checking requirements [3].

Finally, Poss3 is the position where possessors surface in English 's Genitive Constructions (10) as well as in other languages such as for instance Hungarian (11):

(10) [SpecDP Peter $_i$ [D 's$_j$ [SpecAgr t$_i$ [Agr t$_j$ [SpecFP [F [NP friend t$_i$]]]]]]]]
       Poss3   Poss2   Poss1
(11) [SpecDP Mari-nak$_i$ [D a [SpecAgr [Agr kalap-ja$_j$ [NP t$_j$ t$_i$]]]]]]   (Hungarian; Szabolcsi 1994)
        Mari-DAT the   hat-POSS.3sg
       "Mari's hat"

 English pronominal possessors also surface in Poss3:

(12) [SpecDP My$_j$ [D [SpecAgr t$_j$ [Agr [SpecFP [F friend$_i$ [NP t$_j$ t$_i$]]]]]]]
      Poss3   Poss2   Poss1

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[2] We assume that post-nominal pronominal possessors in Italian ,as in (3.c), occupy Poss1.
[3] One striking reason to treat 's as a head and not as a suffix is that it follows the so called Group Genitives as shown below:
(i) Peter and John's book

2. The L2 acquisition of *'s* Genitive Constructions by native speakers of Italian: some experimental data

2.1 The experiment: subjects materials and procedure

We designed an experiment to examine the acquisition of English *'s* Genitive Constructions with BPN possessors by a group of 94 Italian speakers aged 11-14 studying English only in a formal environment, Scuola Media.

Subjects belonged to three levels: 1st Graders (30), 2nd Graders(25) and 3rd Graders (39) according to their grade of school attendance.

Subjects had to accomplish two written tasks: an Error Detection Task and a Translation Task. The Error Detection Task was preceded by a pretest consisting of three sentences: two wrong (one corrected for exemplification) and one right.

The EDT was accomplished by 1st, 2nd and 3rd Graders, while the TT by 2nd and 3rd Graders only. Each task consisted of 16 sentences : 8 experimental sentences and 8 fillers.

In the EDT the 8 fillers consisted of 4 right sentences and 4 wrong sentences containing various kinds or errors (number agreement, *a* vs. *an*, double past (*did* and −*ed*)).

The experimental sentences consisted of two correct *'s* genitive constructions and six *'s* Genitive Constructions containing errors of various types: lack of possessor movement with or without *'s* genitive marker (*House Peter is near the railway station*; *Car Mary's is red*), presence of a definite determiner preceding the possessee in various environments (*I like Laura's the bag*; *The book Steven's has a blue cover*). Subjects had to detect the wrong sentences and eventually build the corresponding correct sentence.

The TT included 8 experimental sentences containing possessive constructions. All sentences except one (containing a family name preceded by a possessive pronoun) contained BPN possessors and were of course Analytic Constructions. Subjects were asked to translate the sentences in English .The eight fillers were sentences of various types.

2.2 Results

2.2.1 Error Detection Task

2nd and 3rd Graders were significantly more successful in the detection of errors than 1st Graders, as illustrated in Table 1 (81% 2nd Graders and 83% 3rd Graders vs. 64% 1st Graders; 1st Graders vs. 2nd Graders. χ^2=11,4548; p=0.0007, and 1st Graders vs. 3rd Graders χ^2=18,4454 p=0.0000).

Table 1. Detection vs. Non Detection

	Occurrences of error detection	Occurrences of non detection
1st Graders (30)	115/180 (64%)	65/180 (36%)
2nd Graders (25)	122/150 (81%)	28/150 (19%)
3rd Graders (39)	194/234 (83%)	40/234 (17%)

We performed an analysis per sentence, the results of which are summarized in Figure 1:

Figure 1. Error Detection per sentence in the three groups
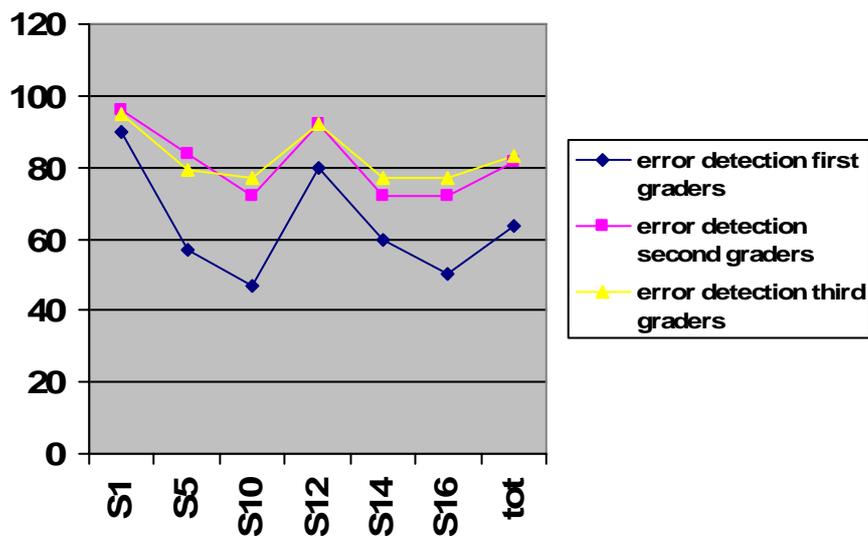
Interestingly, we find an analogous pattern in the three groups. Sentence 1 is recognized as wrong at the highest rate (90% 1st Graders; 95% 2nd and 3rd Graders) and the difference in the detection of wrongness between S1 and the other items is statistically significant except for S12 (which is recognized as wrong at a high rate as well. 80% 1st Graders; 92% 2nd and 3rd Graders).[4] Among detected items, the patterns emerged are summarized in Table 2 and Figure 2:

Table 2. Patterns in detected items[5]

Experimental subjects	Error detection without corrections	Right pattern	L2 creations	Non target
1st Graders	29/115 (25%)	44/115 (38%)	20/115 (18%)	22/115 (19%)
2nd Graders	29/122 (24%)	48/122 (39%)	38/122 (31%)	7/122 (6%)
3rd Graders	23/194 (12%)	108/194 (56%)	55/194 (28%)	8/194 (4%)

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[4] S1= I like Laura's the bag ; S5= I love cat's John; S10= House Peter is near the railway station; S12= Car Mary's is red; S14= The dog Robert barks a lot; S16= The book Steven's has a blue cover
[5] We included in 'Non Target' productions all patterns which were not possessive constructions, as in (i):
(i) I like Laura in the bag

Figure 2. Patterns in detected items in the three groups
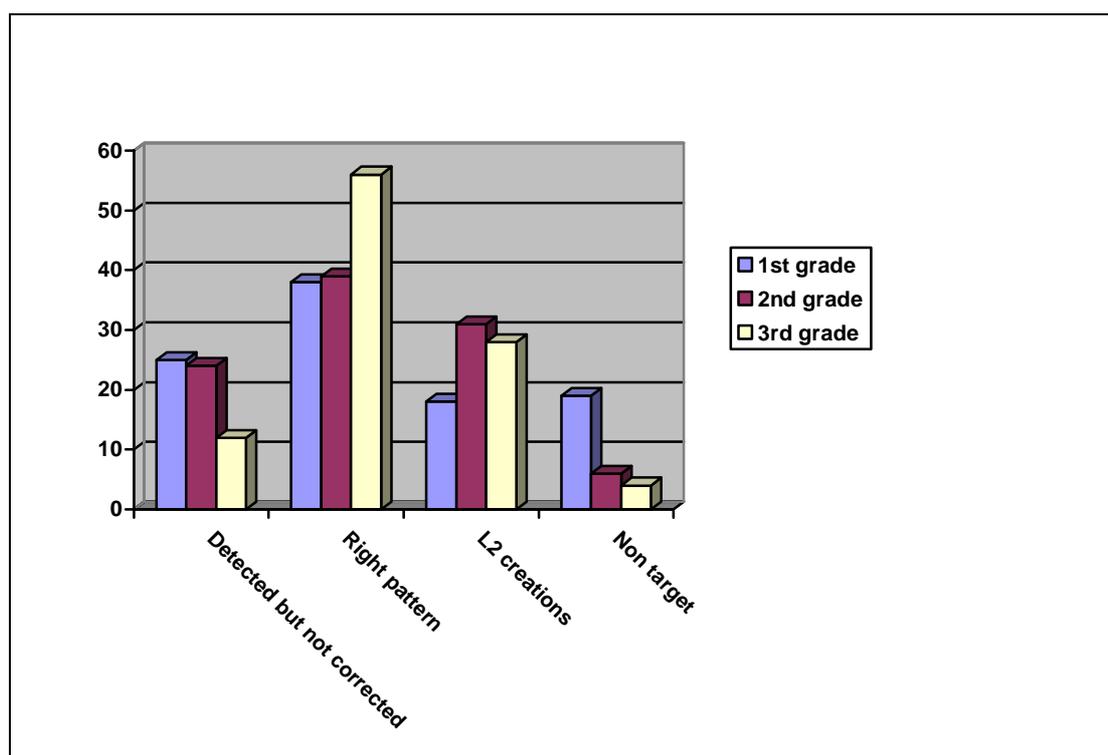
3rd Graders made significantly more corrections than 1st and 2nd Graders: sentences detected but not corrected were 25% for 1st Graders and 24% for 2nd Graders vs. 12% for 3rd Graders; the grouping this time is thus 1st and 2nd Graders vs. 3rd Graders, and the difference is statistically significant, χ^2=10.3157 p=0.0013;

3rd Graders produced a significantly higher number of right patterns than 1st and 2nd Graders (56% 3rd Graders vs. 38% 1st Graders and 39% 2nd Graders). Taking again 1st and 2nd Graders vs. 3rd Graders, the difference is statistically significant : χ^2=11.5123; p=0.0007.

2nd and 3rd Graders dared in producing L2 creations significantly more than 1st Graders (31% 2nd Graders and 28% 3rd Graders vs. 18% 1st Graders). This time thus the grouping is 2nd and 3rd Graders vs. 1st Graders, and the difference is statistically significant: χ^2=5.7104; p=0.0169.

Non target answers decreased robustly in 2nd and 3rd Graders (6% 2nd Graders and 4% 3rd Graders vs. 19% 1st Graders. As for the previous point, the grouping is 2nd and 3rd Graders vs. 1st Graders and the difference is statistically significant: χ^2=20.4329; p=0.0000.

Among L2 Creations we found the following patterns:

Table 3: L2 Creations in EDT

	1st Graders	2nd Graders	3rd Graders
1. D-Poss *'s*-N	8/20 (40%)	27/38 (71%)	34/55 (62%)
2. D-Poss-N	3/20 (15%)	2/38(5%)	3/55(5%)
3. Poss-N	4/20(20%)	6/38(16%)	6/55(11%)
4. N-Poss	2/20(10%)	3/38(8%)	2/55(4%)
5. *of* constructions	2/20(10%)	0/38(0%)	6/55(11%)
6. Attempts of *of* constructions	1/20(5%)	0/38(0%)	4/55(7%)

The cases in which possessors occur pre-nominally are numerous in all groups ((75% in 1st Graders, 92% in 2nd Graders and 78% in 3rd Graders). Within the cases of pre-nominal possessors we found an interesting interaction with the presence of the *'s* marker (which, on the contrary, is totally absent in the case of post-nominal possessor).

The correlation between the pre-nominal position of the possessor and *'s* insertion, is near the chance level for 1st Graders (53%). Interestingly 2nd and 3rd Graders' performance, on the contrary, shows an association between pre-nominal possessor and *'s* on the possessor: the difference between pre-nominal possessors with or without *'s* is statistically significant (77%, χ^2=17.0000; p=0.0000 in 2nd Graders and 79%, χ^2=26.7907; p=0.0000 in 3rd Graders).

Another statistically significant fact noted is the presence of a determiner with a pre-nominal possessor:(73%, χ^2=4.8000 p=0.0285 in 1st Graders; 83%, χ^2= 26.6571 p=0.0000 in 2nd Graders and 86%, χ^2=41.8605 p=0.0000 in 3rd Graders).

As we said, part of the experimental material consisted of right sentences   In all graders right sentences were mostly recognized as right, with no statistically significant difference per sentence.

2.2.2 Translation Task (TT)

As we said, TT was administered only to 2nd and 3rd Graders.

Results show that subjects were mostly able to accomplish the test: the percentage of non accomplished items is very low both in 2nd and 3rd Graders with no significant difference between the two groups:

Table 4 Accomplished vs. non accomplished

	Accomplished	Non accomplished
2nd Graders (25)	188/200 (94 %)	12/200 (6%)
3rd Graders (39)	301/312(96%)	11/312 (4%)

Among accomplished items, the patterns found are summarized in Table 5 and Figure 3:

Table 5. Patterns in accomplished items in TT

	Right pattern Poss 's-N	L2 creations	Non target
2nd graders	34/188 (18%)	128/188 (68%)	26/188 (14%)
3rd graders	99/301 (33%)	175/301 (58%)	27/301 (9%)

Figure 3 Patterns in accomplished items in the two groups
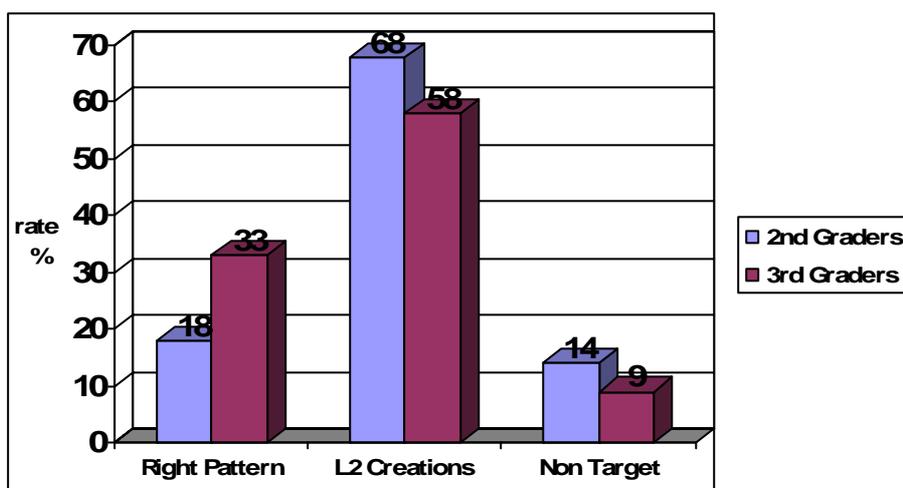
3rd Graders produced a higher percentage of Right patterns than 2nd Graders. The difference between the two groups is statistically significant (33% vs. 18%; χ^2=12.3306; p=0.0004).
2nd Graders resorted to L2 creations significantly more than 3rd Graders (68% vs. 58%; χ^2=4.0229; p=0.0449).The number of Non target productions is quite low (14% vs. 9%) and the difference between the two groups is not statistically significant.
Among L2 Creations subjects produced a variety of interlanguage patterns analogous (although not numerically) to the one found in EDT as shown in Table 6:

Table 6 L2 Creations in TT

	2nd Graders	3rd Graders
1. D-Poss 's-N	44/128 (34%)	47/175 (27%)
2. D-Poss-N	10/128 (8%)	13/175 (7%)
3. Poss-N	8/128 (6%)	4/175 (2%)
4. N-Poss	16/128 (13%)	17/175 (10%)
5. *of* constructions	32/128 (25%)	54/175 (31%)
6. Attempts of *of* constructions	18/128 (14%)	40/175 (23%)

Pre-nominal possessors are again widespread (48% in 2nd Graders and 36% in 3rd Graders)
Among the cases of pre- nominal possessors, we found an interaction with the presence of the '*s* marker and of the determiner *the* as in EDT:
Both in 2nd and 3rd Graders the correlation between pre- nominal possessors and 's marker is statistically significant (70%, χ^2=18.8852; p=0.0000 in 2nd Graders; 73%, χ^2=26.2813; p=0.0000 in 3rd Graders..
Both in 2nd and 3rd Graders the correlation between pre-nominal possessors and presence of the determiner is robust (87% in 2nd Graders and 94% in 3rd Graders)
As a final remark, we observed that the '*s* genitive marker is present in a high percentage of cases where the 3rd Person Singular Present –*s* marker is absent. There were two experimental

sentences able to show the correlation 3rd Person Singular simple present/ *'s* Genitive Construction.[6] When the *'s* Genitive marker is present the *–s* simple present marker is often omitted (76% for 2nd Graders; 96% for 3rd Graders, the difference between 2nd and 3rd Graders not statistically significant). When the *'s* Genitive marker is omitted, the *–s* simple present marker is always omitted.

2.2. 3 L2 creations in EDT and TT

As already observed, the general pattern in the variety of L2 Creations is analogous in the two tasks. However, in TT, as opposed to EDT, a widespread production of 'of Constructions' emerged. Considering 2nd and 3rd Graders only (since 1st Graders did not perform TT), in both groups the difference between the occurrences of '*of* Constructions' in EDT and TT is statistically significant; $\chi^2=10.2169$; p=0.0014 2nd Graders, and $\chi^2=7.6328$; p=0.0057 3rd Graders):

Table 7 L2 Creations in EDT and TT

	2nd Graders		3rd Graders	
	EDT	TT	EDT	TT
D-Poss *'s*-N	27/38 (71%)	44/128 (34%)	34/55 (62%)	47/175 (27%)
D-Poss-N	2/38 (5%)	10/128 (8%)	3/55 (5%)	13/175 (7%)
Poss-N	6/38 (16%)	8/128 (6%)	6/55 (11%)	4/175 (2%)
N-Poss	3/38 (8%)	16/128 (13%)	2/55 (4%)	17/175 (10%)
of constructions	0/38 (0%)	32/128 (25%)	6/55 (11%)	54/175 (31%)
Attempts of *of* constructions	0/38 (0%)	18/128 (14%)	4/55 (7%)	40/175 (23%)

As a consequence, the percentage of occurrences of pre- nominal possessors is inferior in TT (48% in 2nd Graders; 36% in 3rd Graders) than in EDT (92% in 2nd Graders; 78% in 3rd Graders). Finally, in both groups, no statistically significant difference per task is found with respect to presence of the *'s* marker and presence of the determiner with pre-nominal possessors.

3. Discussion and conclusions

Among theories of L2 acquisition, two main issues are currently under debate: the involvement of Universal Grammar (UG) and the existence of transfer from the L1 (see White 2003 a.o. for a brief review). Our data are consistent with the idea that both UG and transfer from the L1 are involved in the acquisition of English *'s* Genitive Constructions by native speakers of Italian.

First of all, subjects move gradually towards the acquisition of *'s* Genitive Constructions (See Table 1 and Figure 1 for EDT, Table 5 for TT) which are explicitly taught only in the first year of Scuola Media. This means that the gradual achievement of the native-like structure is due to a

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[6] Sentence 4 = Il gatto di Alison dorme in cucina ; Sentence 12 = La cugina di Mary scrive poesie

personal elaboration/process in our subjects' mind and not the direct reflex of a teaching procedure or of mechanical learning.

This suggests in principle an involvement of UG which is confirmed more directly by our subjects' L2 creations: subjects do not produce *any* kind of construction, but their attempts can be brought back to a limited range of variation, namely 6 patterns, which are the same in both tasks (see Tables 3, 6 and 7). Interestingly, we never find a post-nominal possessor with *'s*, nor a possessor with *'s* preceding it,. while we find, although not substantially, the pattern N Poss. This suggests that *'s* is correctly analyzed as an independent head and not as a suffix by our subjects. This analysis is confirmed by the fact that the most 'Detected as wrong' sentence is Sentence 1 (*I like Laura's the bag*, see Figure 1) which would be possible with *'s* analyzed as a suffix, as the Hungarian example (11). Furthermore, in both tasks there is a substantial amount of pre-nominal possessors.[7] This fact is surely remarkable given that in Italian non pronominal possessors only occur post- nominally. In L2 Creations, we also found a statistically significant correlation between pre- nominal possessors and presence of *'s* , but only for 2nd and 3rd Graders. [8]

Taken together these facts suggest that pre-nominal possessors are to be analyzed as moved possessors, in a position to the left of the one where *'s* is generated, which we assume to be Poss2 along the lines of Delsing (1998). It is possible that 1st Grader have not yet acquired the relevant morphology to express the agreement relation between the moved possessor and the agreement head: this is why in 1st Graders the correlation between pre-nominal possessors and presence of *'s* is not statistically significant. But in order to see where exactly possessors are moved, we have to take into account another finding, namely that when the possessor is pre- nominal, we often see the presence of the head noun determiner. In L2 Creations, the correlation pre-nominal possessors/determiner insertion is statistically significant in all graders (see Tables 3, 6 and 7). [9]

The presence of an overt head noun definite determiner shows on one side that the intrinsic definiteness of English *'s* Genitive Constructions is not acquired by our subjects. [10] Furthermore, it suggests that possessors are not moved to Poss3, but to Poss 2:

(16) $[_{\text{SpecDP}} [_{\text{D}} \text{ the } [_{\text{SpecAgr}} \text{Alison}_i [_{\text{Agr}} \text{ 's } [_{\text{NP}} \text{ cat } t_i]]]]]$

Poss2 is a position where some possessors move in Italian, namely pronominal possessors. Subjects use as a landing site for moved possessors the position which is active in their language, namely Poss2. In this case, so, we see the effect of transfer from the L1. A study concerning the acquisition

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[7] In order to evaluate the total amount of pre-nominal possessors we should not only consider those found in L2 creations, but also those consisting in the Right pattern. The total amount of pre-nominal possessors is thus the following: in EDT, 59 in 1st Graders, 83 in 2nd Graders, 151 in 3rd Graders; in TT, 96 in 2nd Graders and 163 in 3rd Graders.

[8] Van de Craats et al. (2000) report that native speakers of Moroccan and Turkish in the acquisition of Dutch Genitive Constructions show a significant correlation between pre- nominal possessors and presence of *'s.*

[9] As for the case of 's with pre-nominal possessors, in this case as well it is interesting to evaluate the phenomenon in all cases of pre-nominal possessors. Items with head noun determiner amount to 19% in 1st Graders (EDT only), to 35% and 56% in 2nd Graders (EDT and TT respectively) and to 25% and 37% in 3rd Graders (EDT and TT respectively). As far the difference between the two tasks is concerned we interpret it as a task complexity effect. The fact that determiners are inserted in 19% of the cases of pre- nominal possessors in 1st Graders can be interpreted as follows. 1st Graders produce a very low number of L2 Creations, so with respect to the baseline the Right Pattern occurrences are more consistent than for the other groups.

[10] As they produce *The Alison's cat* they are expected to be able to produce *An Alison's cat.* Unfortunately our test did not contain items able to induce such productions. We leave the matter to future research. Similarly, we expect our subjects to be able to produce *The/A my cat.*

of German possessive constructions by adult native speakers of Italian (Matteini, in prep.) reports similar results: learners systematically resort to determiner insertion with a pre-posed non pronominal possessor:

(17) Mario ruft die Giselas Lehrerin an   (L2 German, Matteini, in prep.)

    Movement to Poss2 seems thus a process activated by native speakers of Italian. Movement to Poss2 also shows that there isn't a single stage in the acquisition of English 's Genitive Constructions but rather there is a dissociation in the checking of two different features, case and definiteness.
Interestingly, the effect of transfer does not lead to a wild output, since in Uralic languages, Poss2 is used as a landing site for both pronominal and non-pronominal possessors, as we saw in (9.a-b)
Even though transfer is active, our subjects' choices are UG constrained.
Finally, we have observed that the 's genitive marker is present in a high percentage of cases where the 3rd Person Singular Present –s marker is absent. This is a restatement of a fact noted in early studies on the order of acquisition of grammatical morphemes (Brown 1973 for L1 English; Dulay- Burt 1973 for L2 English), namely that the acquisition of the 's genitive marker precedes the acquisition of the 3rd Person Singular Present –s marker.
    In order to see how 's Genitive Constructions are presented to L2 learners, we examined 11 textbooks for Italian students attending Scuola Media. In all textbooks 's Genitive Constructions are presented quite early, in a part of the text usually dealt with during the fourth month of the first year. The relevant input is given through a dialogue in which 's Genitive Constructions are included.
    A first observation is that the materials do not include input relevant to capture the intrinsic definiteness of 's Genitive Constructions, namely constructions like (2.a) above, here repeated for convenience:

    (18)   A friend of Peter's

    Furthermore, examining the Grammar Sections we noted that 7 texts (64%) did not mention the fact that the head noun is determiner-less in 's Genitive Constructions. We find quite remarkable that most of the texts examined do not stress a fact that seems quite problematic for native speakers of Italian, namely the intrinsic definiteness of English 's Genitive Constructions. Italian learners should be given first of all the relevant input, i.e. positive evidence such as (18) to discover that English 's Genitive Constructions are intrinsically definite. Moreover, some negative evidence should be given as well, stressing the fact that a pattern that they are likely to produce is ungrammatical in English, namely a pattern like the one exemplified in (19):

    (19) The John's car is new

On the contrary, the case feature expressed by the 's marker, which is explicitly taught, does not seem to raise particular problems for our subjects.
        We think, therefore, that a closer relation between L2 acquisition research and teaching design should be pursued.

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