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## TEACHING СВОЙ \*

1. Intermediate Russian students frequently misunderstand and thus misuse the reflexive possessive pronoun. Errors in reference and reflexivization are among the commonest I encounter in second- and third-year composition courses. I teach my own annotated text of Dostoevsky's *Преступление и наказание*, and countless times have confronted such sentences as *Раскольников считал, что свой план хорош*. In recent courses I have experimented with a new strategy for teaching reflexivization which has proven at least more effective than benign neglect. The ensuing remarks outline my approach.

Let me look briefly at some textbook treatments of *свой*. Potapova (1958) says that *свой* is "used instead of any possessive pronoun if the possessor is the subject of the sentence" (117). It denotes "possession of the object spoken about: *напишите своей рукой*" or "kinship, friendship, comradeship...with the person referred to: *я получил письмо от своего отца*." By way of commentary I would say that these are two dismal examples for a student's first acquaintance with *свой*. Body parts are not "objects", at least not grammatically; with them as with kinship terms, especially those denoting family members, possessive deletion is common. The first example actually means 'write in your own hand' (that is, not using an instrument or intermediary) and is not a good example of the primary, grammatical meaning of the form. It also, apparently unintentionally, shows that in imperatives the addressee controls reference. In normal colloquial speech the second example would be *я получил письмо от отца*. Another complication here is that 1st and 2nd person controllers (this term is wider and thus more accurate than "subject") may permit both the reflexive and personal pronouns, but under conditions that are complex and not fully understood (see part 5 below); with animate targets (*отца* here is 'target') reflexivization is less common.

Stilman and Harkins (1964, 1972) continue the textbook tradition of family members automatically modified by *свой* which has to be unlearned by our students when studying in Russia. But this book

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does have some good examples illustrating the difference between *его, её, их* and *свой*: *Петр пишет Ивану и своему брату* (130-131); in the 3rd person, of course, Russian distinguishes reference to the subject from other reference. The lesson shows that *свой* is used to refer to a "possessor" in the dative, as well as in impersonal constructions with indefinite or non-specific reference: *нужно знать историю своей страны*. Finally, the book shows that *свой* is not used when its referent "has the same grammatical function in the sentence" (*Иван и его друг*) or when *свой* and its referent (the text has the less felicitous "possessor" and "possessed") are "in different clauses": *Он говорит, что его (\*своей) сестры нет дома*.<sup>1</sup> Finally, p. 144 states: *Note: свой* is used in sentences of the type *у него есть* to emphasize possession or ownership: *У них есть свой дом*. The emphasis here is not in fact on possession or ownership, but on 'one's own' as opposed to 'someone else's'; although this nominative usage of the reflexive is grammaticalized, there is a degree of lexicalization in these constructions ('one's own') that is not present in the other examples ('belonging to the referent'). This distinction ought to be made more prominent.

Clark (337-338) eschews long grammatical discussions, presenting instead the practical information that possessives "when referring back to the subject" are frequently omitted (except for clarification or emphasis): *я жду отца; я не знаю, где шляпа*. "*Свой/своя/своё/свои*," the lesson goes on to say, "always refers back to the subject." If such is the case, the student may well wonder how *своя* can ever occur! (S/he will also need to discard this statement when encountering impersonals and existentials with *свой*.)

*Russian for Everybody* presents *свой* in three stages and in three separate lessons, using a modular format and very concise discussion. Lesson 13 (199-200) speaks of "reference back to the immediately relevant verb": in *Антон знает, где его журнал* this must be the zero copula, not *знает*. "The reflexive possessive may not, as a rule, modify the subject of a verb" (but this will be discarded in Lesson 17, with 'have' constructions). The same lesson shows that the reflexive may refer to datives, arguing, however, that in *мне нужно положить в чемодан свой костюм* the subject of the "relevant verb, *положить*" is *я* instead of suggesting that the dative might be controller. Lesson 16 discusses the use of the reflexive with 1st and 2nd person reference, saying, inaccurately, that the personal pronoun is used for emphasis (243). *Мы любим говорить о нашем походе*, it is affirmed, could as well have the reflexive *своём*. It is true that the meaning of the sentence is not affected by

the use of the reflexive, but it is the case that these forms in 1st and 2nd person usage are not free variants. With the 1st plural and a clear *collective* sense, the possessive pronoun is strongly preferred, and that is why the Russian author has used it.<sup>2</sup> This lesson repeats the argument about immediately relevant verbs with dative subjects (this is the only time, so far as I am aware, when this textbook repeats its own words), this time with the model *мне нужно взять свою бритву*, insisting — and rightly so, I believe — that these sentences are not exceptional. (Why *свою* is here instead of *мою* is not explained.) Finally, a short note in Lesson 17 says that sentences like *у каждого свои увлечения* are an exception to the rule that the reflexive cannot modify the subject of the clause.

*Making Progress in Russian* discusses *его, её, их, and свой* in a single page with three examples (408). All four forms are called “possessives”, and *свой* (which is not explicitly called a reflexive possessive) is said always to refer to the subject of its own clause. Dative and genitive subjects are not discussed, and the focus of presentation is on distinguishing the use of *свой* from other possessives with 3rd person controllers: *Иван сказал, что его друг продал свою машину ~ Иван сказал, что его друг продал его машину*. 1st and 2nd person controllers are said to permit either a personal possessive or *свой*: *я потерял свою книгу / я потерял мою книгу*. No mention of ‘have’ constructions is made, nor is *свой* discussed in a two-page summary of *у + gen* (117-119).

Students and teachers, of course, cannot demand of their introductory textbooks exhaustive and satisfying discussions of all problems. Provided with genuine and illustrative examples in sample dialogues and text, students can ask pertinent questions and teachers can elucidate. Textbook discussions — necessarily brief and general — ought nonetheless to be cogent, informed, and as complete as space and patience permits. They ought to aim at those generalizations which can help the student understand the problem, and they ought to be supported by genuine and natural linguistic examples. Of the textbooks cited above, Potapova errs in the unnaturalness of her examples and incompleteness of analysis, Stilman and Harkins in the complexity and unwieldiness of their discussion, Clark and Davis & Oprendeck in their paucity of data and analysis, and *Russian for Everybody* in the murky shrillness of its presentation. Yet these criticisms do not generally hold for these books taken as a whole. *Свой* does indeed present problems for the instructor, problems inherent not so much in textbook methodology as in the syntactic behavior of the pronoun and in the constraints governing the controller

~ target relationship triggering or blocking its appearance; these are subtle and even today not fully understood.

2. One reason *свой* is difficult is because it seems to be a pronoun with a uniform gloss, like *мой* 'my, mine', *твой* 'your, yours'.<sup>3</sup> Teachers should say at the beginning of the first stage of presentation that all pronouns get their meaning more from grammar and reference to the discourse situation than from inherent lexical content, and that *свой* is particularly tricky as it doesn't mean "one's own" (*Russian for Everybody*, 471; Clark, 316) in its primary, first-level, *grammatical* function. It has to mean 'belonging to some person or entity' which is traditionally the grammatical subject of the clause. I teach *свой* in three stages in the first year, and continue its presentation in a unit in a third-year course. The following discussion outlines my approach in the presentation of *свой* to second-semester language students.

In the sentence *Петя взял свою бритву*, *свою* signals that *бритву* belongs to the subject and refers to the subject as its owner. The speaker asserts an identity between the person referred to in *свою* and *Петя*. In linguistic terminology, *Петя* is the controller, *бритва* the target, and reflexivization signals coreferentiality. The controller is defined as the "subject" in its role as reference-source of an identity-tracing operation. The controller may be 1st, 2nd, or 3rd person (I give standard examples here which the reader may himself supply), so that *свой* can mean 'my, your, our, his, her, their'. In saying *свой* the speaker asserts coreference, and the hearer must be able to trace the elements which are identical: *Петя<sub>i</sub> взял свою<sub>i</sub> бритву*. This is a good time to introduce the information that in the 3rd person *свой* is obligatory if reference is made to the subject, that is, the sentences *он любит свою квартиру* and *он любит его квартиру* necessarily have different interpretations; this is not the case for 1st and 2nd person possessives.<sup>4</sup> I present modal and existential reflexivization at the same time with the above examples and say: "The controller — a logical or grammatical subject — may be nominative, dative, genitive, or the addressee of an imperative (that is, the doer of a potential action); it may even be unexpressed, indefinite, non-specific, or elliptically deleted." Examples include modals with *надо*, *нужно*: *тебе нужно положить свои вещи в чемодан* as well as modals with unexpressed subject: *нужно любить свою родину*. I include normal standard colloquial language with pronoun deletion as well as subject-object inversion — good evidence for avoiding the misleading statement that reflexivization "refers back" (leftwards) to the subject: *Вот тетрадку свою забыл* (= *вот тетрадку забыл*). Sentences with

pronoun deletion in a dependent clause are very useful as they show trace to a deleted subject rather than to a matrix subject: *он сказал, что видел свою новую соседку*. I include 'have' constructions: *у каждого своя машина*.<sup>5</sup> I invite students to see that all of these constructions offer normal and regular environments for reflexivization. Since in English they all may be translated with subjects as the controller ('Peter took his razor', 'one must love one's country', 'everyone has his own car'), students readily learn to group them together instead of thinking of some as exceptions. I ask the students to locate the "subject" in the utterance, left or right, nominative, dative-experiencer of a modal, or possessor-genitive.<sup>6</sup> I do openly speak of "dative subjects" and emphasize that in modal sentences one speaks of tracing to the dative, not the covert subject of the infinitive. I point out here that the controller must be different from the nominal that *свой* modifies: one cannot say *Пришёл \*свой папа*. The same example shows that in seeking the controller one cannot leave the boundary of the sentence to an earlier sentence, e.g. *Петя сидел дома один. Пришёл \*свой/его папа*.

'Have' constructions with *у* may be omitted if they have not yet been presented, but the teacher should not fear treating them as fully regular constructions. It is satisfying for students to hear that *у меня* is a 'logical' subject of 'have' constructions.<sup>7</sup> We capture an important generalization for our students by treating all syntactic varieties of "subject" as liable to function as controllers. Impersonals with *нужно, надо*, critical to learning about the reflexive possessive, ought to be introduced well before *свой*. In this respect the treatment in *Russian for Everybody* is very good, in particular the dialogue material used to illustrate the reflexive, which presents a husband and wife packing a suitcase and discussing who should take what (*твои брюки нужно взять? Антон положил в чемодан её туфли и свой костюм*). Pattern drills and conversations with 3rd person subjects at this stage ought to mix nonreflexive and reflexive pronouns so that students can acquire a feel for the reference paths. These drills may be freely mixed with 1st and 2nd person subjects (with inanimate targets), impersonals, 'have' constructions, and deleted-subject utterances.

With *нужно* and *должен* previously learned, the student has a sense of how nominative, dative and genitive "subjects" differ as well as how they are the same. The teacher, I believe, should not be overly concerned about notions of "subjecthood", nor should s/he worry about confusing students should s/he speak of *меня* as the logical subject of 'have' sentences. In my experience students are ready to appreciate the difference between canonical nominative-case

grammatical subjects and “logical” subjects (“experiencers”) in oblique cases; *свой* helps them to see what they have in common.<sup>8</sup>

3. Stage Two ought to be deferred until a later lesson, with new illustrative material and dialogues. When the time comes for that lesson, I recall to my students that passing a sentence boundary in tracing is not permitted, and say that I shall now introduce an additional restriction on controller searching. Conjunctions — most important, those derived from interrogatives, such as *где, что, когда, как, почему, какой*, and also compound conjunctions like *после того, как, перед тем, как* — also act as blocks to tracing. Now at last my problem sentence *Раскольников считал, что \*свой/его план хорош* may be discussed. It is not that *план* is nominative that prohibits reference identity here; it is the conjunction, barring search for an identical subject outside its range.<sup>9</sup> I ask students to contrast how dative “subjects” permit tracing through infinitives, and give further examples with nominative subjects doing the same: *Антон хотел положить туда свой костюм*. Sentences with a matrix subject different from the deleted subject of a lower infinitive offer an interesting gradation of acceptability which students appreciate, especially if they have already learned such constructions as *Антон хочет, чтобы Нина поступила в консерваторию, Антон попросил меня прочитать книгу, Антон посоветовал мне прочитать книгу*, where the syntax of expanded and compressed subordinate clauses is introduced. In a case like *Профессор нам посоветовал сначала прочитать его (?свой) книги об этом* the trace to *профессор* is an example of a so-called “weak controller”. In such cases other factors may be decisive in tracing — whether the controller is referential or non-referential, for example.<sup>10</sup>

I combine practice on this important syntactic restriction with good examples of possessive deletion. I tell students that reference in certain semantic domains (I don't really define “certain”) — especially kinship terms, body parts, personal items — may, in contrast to English, omit the possessive (reflexive and nonreflexive) unless the context is ambiguous. *Маша не видит брата здесь* is very ordinary Russian unless there are several brothers and several families under discussion. This is a good opportunity for exercises and examples. Complex sentences with an inanimate target will vary: *Иван хорошо знал, что (his: его) работа плохая. Иван знает, где (his: его) пальто*. In wider, specific contexts of discourse the possessives above may be omitted. In *Маша сказала, что (her: её) туфли уже в чемодане, ты должна кончить (your: свою)*

speakers. In simple sentences such as *папа потерял туфли* omission is normal if context is clear to the speakers. With body parts and kinship terms as targets, omission is normal in simple and complex sentences: *когда родители слушали музыку, дети смотрели телевизор*. With less context: *мой знакомый живёт в Москве, а его жена в Петербурге*.<sup>11</sup>

Some examples of 1st and 2nd person reference are appropriate at this stage. While it is true that *свой* is often interchangeable with a possessive modifier — usage may vary — it is also true, as Yokoyama asserts, that the choice to reflexivize or not is never arbitrary or optional (1978, 250); it is not true that the use of the possessive is emphatic, as we often assert in our textbooks.<sup>12</sup> As long as all of the conditions on reflexivization have not been fully explored, what are we to tell our students? In my view we can begin with simple contexts where informants are in overwhelming agreement. As Timberlake says (1980b, 780), in ideal syntactic and semantic contexts — with a consistent and non-isolated controller-subject and an inanimate target, reflexivization is strongly preferred. I mention that animate targets generally prefer personal possessives, to the extent that they are not deleted, while inanimates prefer reflexivization. Thus *я взял свою бритву, я понимаю моего профессора*. There is agreement among analysts that collectivity inhibits reflexivization: *мы любим нашу родину* ‘we love our motherland’, *зимой мы много говорим о нашем походе*. ‘in the winter we discuss our (family) outing a great deal’. Distributive marking favors reflexivity: *когда раздастся звонок, займите свои\*ваши места, каждый у своего столба* ‘when the bell sounds, take your places, each at his post’ ~ *скажите \*свои/ваши условия, мы вам пойдём навстречу* ‘tell us your conditions, we will accommodate you’ (these last examples are from Yokoyama, 263). The nonreflexive with animate targets and with collective controllers ~ reflexive with inanimates and distributives are well enough established for us to introduce them to students at this stage of their study.<sup>13</sup>

4. Stage three, properly still in the first year of study, begins with the introduction of an important pronoun lacking in English, the contrary term to *свой*, namely *чужой*. In its grammatical sense this word means ‘belonging or relating to someone other than the controller’: *я взял чужое пальто* ‘I have taken someone else’s coat’ — a synonym of *не своё пальто*, and, for many speakers preferable to (or interchangeable with) the latter. At this point it is appropriate to address the process of lexicalization of both pronouns — their gradual movement from grammatical to inherent lexical

content. I point out that the “meanings” of *свой* as listed in standard Russian interpretive dictionaries form a continuum from the exogenous to the endogenous, that is, from purely grammatical, discourse-grounded and syntactic to entirely lexical. The first level of lexical meaning is ‘one’s own; belonging to or peculiar to the controller’; this is the gloss to be found in most textbooks, e.g. Clark’s *Russian and Russian for Everybody*. This is inaccurate in the purely exogenous pronoun, however: *он сдержал своё обещание* means ‘he kept his promise’, not ‘his own promise’ or ‘a promise peculiar to him alone’. In this first step toward lexicalization *свой* may be reinforced, for clarity, by *собственный*: *ответить на свой собственный вопрос было очень трудно профессору* ‘it was very difficult for the professor to answer his own question’, *он не понимал свою собственную дочь* ‘he did not understand his own daughter’. I think that here it is useful to mention that there is a marked tendency toward lexicalization in ‘have’ constructions, and that *у каждого свои увлечения* means not ‘everyone has his hobby’ but rather ‘everyone has a hobby of his own, peculiar to himself’ (cf. *у меня свои (собственные) шахматы* ‘I have my (very) own chess set’).<sup>14</sup>

Note that with definite reference in *negative* ‘have’ constructions, reflexivization is avoided, since the meaning is *not* ‘one’s own’: *у меня (моего) учебника нет при себе* ‘I don’t have my textbook with me’. With *свой собственный* the lexicality resides both in the pronoun and the adjective. I ask the students to compare the reflexive pronoun *себя* coupled with the intensifier *сам*: *это он сказал о самом себе, он хорошо знает (самого) себя, он доволен (самим) собой*.<sup>15</sup> *Свой* and *свой собственный* have as antonyms *чужой (не свой)*, and the first levels of lexicalization find them exactly parallel. I mention the common substantival use of the reflexive in first-level lexicalization: *он думал всё о своём, о чужом не хотел слышать* ‘he kept thinking only about his own matters and never wanted to hear about others’ concerns’.

*Свой* can mean ‘native; connected by relationships or by common views’ and *чужой* is its antonym: *Она в семье своей родной / Казалась девочкой чужой (Евгений Онегин)* ‘in her own family / She seemed to belong to someone else’.<sup>16</sup> Some lexical extensions of *свой* may be presented at this stage, or deferred until the second year of study. I like to introduce phrases such as *сказать об этом на своём месте* ‘talk of that in its place’, *продать дом по своей цене* ‘sell a car at its (actual) price’, *я люблю называть вещи своими именами* ‘I like to call things by their proper names’, as they show reference to controllers in oblique cases, as is normal



when the pronoun has lost its grammatical function and is used with very strong inherent semantic content. Idioms with *свой* are frequent in expository Russian and are properly introduced in grammar or reading courses: *жить по-своему* 'to live in one own's fashion', *был сам не свой* 'he was beside himself', *это своего рода неслыханное новшество* 'this is a sort of unheard-of novelty', *в свою очередь* 'in its turn', *кричал не своим голосом* 'he yelled in a wild [unnatural] voice', *умереть (не) своей смертью* 'to die an (un)natural death', *взять своё*, 'to win one's way', *настаивать на своём* 'to insist on one's position', *не в своём уме* 'not in one's right mind'.

5. One difficulty for advanced students who have learned reflexivization is that in both written and spoken Russian one encounters many cases where reflexivization fails when it is expected and occurs where it is supposed to be prohibited. Utterances like those analyzed in Timberlake 1980a and 1980b have explanations which are subtle and extraordinary for the beginning student, and I believe their presentation is properly deferred. Examples of utterances where reflexivization is *not certain by the rules* can be appreciated by advanced classes when native speakers are available for checking specimens. Where tracking occurs in non-modal impersonal constructions there is very often vascillation: *мне достаточно моих/своих друзей, мне не нужны другие люди* 'my own friends are sufficient for me; I don't need other people' (Timberlake 1980a, 244); the analyst says that tracking is preferred here because of "positive set reference". Impersonals such as *страшно, трудно, легко* in certain reference contexts are apparently conducive to reflexivization, while others, such as *тепло, холодно* are not. In the 1st person, Timberlake asserts that non-referentiality favors tracking, while referentiality inhibits it: *мы послали туда наши/свои кадры ~ мы не имеем наших/своих постоянных кадров*. As interesting as they are to us, I recommend avoiding examples of oblique controllers and intermediate cases in the first year. When students ask about them, I give examples with highly lexicalized reflexivization, which I believe to be in fact more decisive than any other single criterion: *между ними установились их/свои, особые отношения* 'their own, particular relations were established among them', *в отделении было много их/своих рабочих* 'there were many of their own workers in the department'.

#### 6.0 Sample textbook discussion of *свой*.

6.1 Lesson I. (Further examples may be drawn from the above text.) *Свой* is a possessive pronoun like *мой, твой, наш, ваш, его, её, их*, with the difference that it indexes the noun it modifies as

belonging to the subject, and is traditionally called the reflexive possessive pronoun. The subject in its role as source of reference we shall call the *controller*. Compare the reflexive pronoun *себя* in *я; вижу себя; в зеркале* 'I<sub>i</sub> see myself<sub>i</sub> in the mirror'. Grammatical reference establishes an identity between the controller and the noun *свой* modifies (the target). In *Иван; взял свою; бритву* 'Ivan took his razor' *свой* marks the razor (target) as belonging to Ivan (controller), and so is translated 'his'. With 3rd person controllers a nonreflexive possessive means that the target does *not* belong or relate to the subject: *Иван; взял его; бритву* 'Ivan took his razor' means that the razor belongs to someone other than Ivan. There is no ambiguity, then, in Russian sentences with 3rd person controllers; *свой ~ его, её, их* lets the listener know whether the possessive refers to the controller or somebody else. *Свой* is also found with 1st and 2nd person controllers (*я, мы, ты, вы*), as are *мой, твой, наш, ваш*; in these cases both *свой* and the nonreflexive possessives mean 'my', 'our', 'your'.

The controller — a logical or grammatical subject — may be nominative, dative, genitive, or the addressee of an imperative (that is, the doer of a potential action); it may even be unexpressed, indefinite, non-specific, or elliptically deleted. Thus *ему нужно взять свою бритву* 'he has to take his razor', *у него есть своя бритва* 'he has his own razor', *возьми свою бритву* 'take your razor', *нужно взять свою бритву* 'one must take his razor'. Sometimes the subject is deleted: *Вот только возьму свою бритву, бритву забыл* 'I'll just take my razor, I forgot my razor'. Modal verbs *нужно, надо* and *должен* track from the dative (or nominative) subject through an infinitive to the target. So do many other verbs with a nominative subject and infinitive: *хочу взять и свою бритву* 'I want to take my razor too'. Sometimes a pronoun is deleted in a subordinate clause; reference is traced to this unexpressed subject: *он сказал, что [он - unexpressed subject;] видел свою соседку; в библиотеке* 'he said he saw his neighbor in the library'.

The controller and target may not be identical nor in the same noun phrase: one cannot say *\*Пришёл свой папа* 'his father came', *\*Пришли Иван и свой папа* 'Ivan and his father came'. Nor may one trace beyond sentence boundaries.

In 'have' constructions *свой* traces from a target to a controller in the genitive. Unlike in constructions with nominative and dative subjects, *свой* in 'have' sentences means more than just 'referring to

controller'; it means 'one's own': *у меня есть своя машина* 'I have my own car'.

**6.2 Lesson II.** Conjunctions — most important, those derived from interrogatives, such as *где, что, когда, как, почему, какой*, and also compound conjunctions like *после того, как, перед тем, как* — block the tracing operation. Thus we cannot say \**Иван знает, где своё пальто* 'Ivan knows where his coat is'. Compare with *Иван знает, что видит своё пальто* 'Ivan knows he sees his coat', with tracing to the deleted subject of *видит*. Compare this restriction with relative freedom of tracing through infinitives in Lesson I. There are cases of so-called "weak controllers", where tracing may or may not be clear: *Профессор нам посоветовал сначала прочитать его (?свои) книги об этом* 'the professor advised us first to read his books about this'. Because *нам* is the deleted subject of *прочитать*, most speakers do not trace all the way to *профессор* (\* marks the sentence as ungrammatical and '?' as questionable or marginal).

With many targets possessive pronouns are not used in Russian. In particular, with kinship terms, body parts, and personal possessions, deletion of possessives is common: *отца очень люблю* 'I love my father very much'. In *папа потерял туфли* 'father lost his shoes' deletion of *свои* will occur if it is clear to the speakers whose shoes were lost.

With 1st and 2nd person controllers we find variation in tracing. Two very general rules of thumb: (1) with animate targets *свой* is avoided in simple declarative sentences: *я там видел моего нового профессора* 'I saw my new professor there', while it often occurs with inanimates or abstract nouns: *хочу рассказать вам о своей жизни* 'I want to tell you about my life'. (2) In collective senses *свой* is often avoided: *мы любим нашу родину* 'we love our motherland (all of us, as a group)', *мы говорим о нашем походе* 'we (in our family together) talk about our trip'. In distributive senses *свой* is more common: *возьмите свои вещи* 'take your things (each individually)'.

**6.3 Lesson III.** The antonym of *свой* is *чужой* 'belonging to someone else': *я взял чужое пальто* 'I have taken someone else's coat'. *Не свой* is often used in place of *чужой*.

Recall that the meaning of *свой* is grammatical: the target is related somehow or 'belongs to' the controller. For *чужой* the meaning is: 'related or belonging to someone other than the controller'. We have seen that in 'have' sentences, however, there is an inherent meaning — 'of one's own, not anyone else's' — that is added to the grammatical meaning. This we call the first level of *lexicalization* in

a pronoun. In many idiomatic uses *свой* has developed lexical meanings, making it very much like an adjective. The meaning 'one's own' in many contexts is *свой собственный*, in which *собственный* reinforces the lexical meaning: *ответить на свой собственный вопрос было очень трудно профессору* 'it was very difficult for the professor to answer his own question'.

The meaning 'one's own' may be seen in the substantival usage: *он всё говорил о своём, о чужом не хотел слышать* 'he kept talking about his own affairs; he didn't want to hear about anyone else's'. In a second level of lexicalization, *свой* can mean 'native; connected by relationships or by common views' and *чужой* is its antonym: *Она в семье своей родной / Казалась девочкой чужой (Евгений Онегин)* 'In her own family / She seemed to belong to someone else'. It is noteworthy that in these extended senses grammatical tracking often collapses and *свой* works like an ordinary adjective, as in the idiomatic usages *я люблю называть вещи своими именами* 'I like to call things by their actual names', *об этом скажу на своём месте* 'I'll speak of that in its proper place'.

Here are a few common idiomatic usages of *свой*: *жить по-своему* 'to live in one's own fashion', *был сам не свой* 'he was beside himself', *это своего рода неслыханное новшество* 'this is a sort of unheard-of novelty', *в свою очередь* 'in its turn', *кричал не своим голосом* 'he yelled in a wild [unnatural] voice', *умереть (не) своей смертью* 'to die an (un)natural death', *взять своё*, 'to win one's way', *настаивать на своём* 'to insist on one's position', *не в своём уме* 'not in one's right mind'.

#### Addendum

Examples for First Year Presentation of *свой*  
(The slash separates two possible correct forms; parenthesized forms are acceptable to some speakers.)

- |    |  |         |   |
|----|--|---------|---|
| 1. | Иван знает, где (his) пальто.                                | его /-- | Deletion possible in some cases. Conjunction or sentence boundary blocks trace. |
| 2. | После того, как умер (her) знакомый, Маша получила 10 тысяч. | её      | (as 1)  |
| 3. | После смерти (her) знакомого, Маша получила 10 тысяч.        | её      | Nominalization of subordinate clause acts like a conjunction and blocks trace.  |
| 4. | Мой знакомый живёт в Париже, а (his) жена в Петербурге.      | его     | Conjunction block.  |

5.	Люба не знала, какого цвета глаза у (her) мужа	её	(as 4)
6.	Саша хорошо понимает, почему (his) мама не на работе.	её / --	(as 4)
7.	Пётр пишет Ивану и (his - Peter's) другу.	своему	3rd person reference distinction.
8.	Это Павел. Пётр любит (his - Pavel's) жену.	его	(as 7)
9.	Коля не знает, куда Маша положила (her) книгу.	свою	(as 7)
10.	Ему нужно положить в чемодан (his) костюм.	свой / --	Modal with dative controller allows reflexivization. Possible deletion.
11.	Ты должна кончить (your) книгу.	свою / --	Personal modal allows reflexivization; inanimate target. Possible deletion.
12.	Антон хочет показать Марии Владимировне (his) фотографии.	свои / --	Tracing permitted through infinitive. Possible deletion.
13.	Нужно знать историю (of one's) семьи.	своей	Non-referential, unspecified modal subject.
14.	Ответьте на (my) вопрос!	мой	Tracing to addressee in imperatives, not speaker.
15.	Я жду (my) отца здесь.	--	Possessive deletion.
16.	Вот только (my) шляпу возьму.	--	(as 15)
17.	Я видел, как (my) родители пошли на работу.	--	(as 15)
18.	Максим стоит здесь на углу, но Маша не видит (her) брата.	--	(as 15)
19.	Дай (your) руку.	--	(as 15)
20.	Он сказал, что видел (his) соседку.	свою	Tracing to deleted pronoun in subordinate clause.
21.	У каждого (his) увлечения.	свои	'Have' constructions with reflexivization.
22.	У нас на факультете (our own) студенты.	свои	Partial lexicalization in 'have' constructions.
23.	Маша, у меня (my very own) шахматы!	свои собствен ные	Lexicalization in 'have' sentences, reinforced with собственный.
24.	Он не понимает (his own) дочь.	свою собствен ную	Lexicalization reinforced with собственный.
25.	Боже мой! Я взял (someone else's) пальто!	не своё / чужое	Antonym of свой.
26.	Там будут и наши и (people from outside our group).	чужие	Lexicalized чужой.
27.	В (other people's) пиру похмелье.	чужом	(as 26)

28.	Мы очень любим (our) профессора русского языка.	нашего	1st person personal possessive favored if animate and/or collective.
29.	Мы должны любить (our) родину.	нашу / свою	collective, but inanimate target; usage may vary.
30.	Мы много говорим о (our) походе.	нашем / (своём)	(as 29)
31.	Возьмите (your) вещи!	свои	2nd person distributive favors reflexivization.
32.	Передайте привет (your) жене!	-- / вашей / (своей)	2nd person, animate target; favors deletion or personal possessive.
33.	У нас всё (our own), даже дом (is our own).	своё, свой	Lexicalization in predicative position.
34.	Он всё говорит о (his own concerns).	своём	Substantivization.
35.	(One's own) рубашка ближе к телу.	своя	Lexicalization; no reference tracing
36.	Он (of a unique, special) рода гений.	своего	Idiomatic lexicalization.
37.	Я люблю назвать вещи (with their proper) именами.	своими	Lexicalization, no reference tracing.

## NOTES

- \* I express my thanks to Joseph P. Mozur, Jr. of the University of South Alabama, and Anna Petrachkova, of Vologda and Tulane University.
1. I use the asterisk to mark ungrammatical or unacceptable words or utterances, and '?' to mark words or utterances that are marginally acceptable.
  2. Two widely differing interpretations of 1st and 2nd person reflexivization agree on this point, Timberlake 1980b, 788 and Yokoyama 1978, 264.
  3. As deictic categories, no pronouns, of course, have simple endogenous glosses, like adjectives; *мой* refers to the speaker, *мы* to the speaker and the group s/he represents, and so on.
  4. As is well known, in colloquial Russian reflexivization may fail even in the 3rd person, in certain contexts. This is because the speaker is tracing identity not to the grammatical subject but to some other entity (see Yokoyama 1978, 252). Reference-tracing in English as well may bypass the subject in favor of the speaker, as in substandard *he gave the prizes to myself and to Paul*. Discussion of this phenomenon belongs in more advanced courses.
  5. In a later lesson I present *у него нет своей машины* 'he doesn't have a car of his own' ~ *у меня в руках нет моего бумажника* 'I don't have my wallet'. With a *definite* referent reflexivization is prohibited, since the

sense of *свой* in 'have' constructions is slightly lexicalized: 'one's own' (vs. simply 'mine, his...').

6. Datives serving as targets are commonest with impersonal modals; in other constructions (to be considered in advanced courses) reflexivization is questionable or prohibited (e.g. *ему холодно в его/? своём пальто*). Examples at the beginning level should be confined to *надо*, *нужно*, *должен*, and infinitive constructions.
7. It is true that there are no other genitive-subject constructions which readily admit *свой* (*\*?сестры не было в своем кабинете*) — but this fact is not a valid argument for the loss of a valuable pedagogical generalization. Indeed there are numerous examples of possible genitive control in stative sentences: *мне не хватит времени для себя* 'I haven't enough time for myself', *мне достаточно? моих/своих друзей* 'my friends are sufficient for me' (Timberlake 1980a, 244), but as the last example shows, with such sentences we enter a zone of 'greater ~ lesser' acceptability for reflexivization which, I believe, properly belongs in advanced classes.
8. What they have in common, according to Yokoyama, is a discourse-grounded dissociation of the speaker *qua P<sup>s</sup>* from the speaker *qua P<sup>n</sup>* (see Yokoyama and Klenin 1978 262-265). This universal principle underlying reflexivization is yet to find acceptance, however, among all analysts. It is generally known, however, that the canonical subject is not the obligatory controller for reflexivization and that a number of semantic, syntactic, and discourse factors influence reference tracing (see Timberlake 1980a and 1980b for argumentation and examples). It is possible that Yokoyama's notion of "center of empathy" (1978, 252) and Timberlake's notions of informational focus and set reference may one day be encompassed in an extra-grammatical notion of "subjecthood"; for beginning language students, however, I believe *свой* can be effectively introduced within a loosely defined sentence-level grammatical format. Experiential datives, it is likely, are not inversions from underlying nominatives (and thus in the strictest sense are not "subjects"); in defense of what may seem a pedagogical deceit in the name of clarity of generalization, I would mention an observation made by Charles E. Townsend many years ago (*viva voce*). It has often been remarked, he said, that the study of a foreign language helps the learner understand his own native language better; but it is equally true — and more immediately practical for the learner in the classroom — that his knowledge of *English* will help in the mastery of a foreign language.
9. *СВОЙ* abounds in the nominative, not only in 'have' constructions but in lexicalized usages (see § 5) and idioms (*своя рубашка ближе к телу* 'one's own shirt is closer to one's body'). Students must not be told that the reflexive cannot modify a nominative; this is simply not so.

10. Timberlake (1980b, 782) gives as an example *он завещал бы мне достроить ?его/свою башню* 'be bequeathed me the task of finishing the building of his tower'; here, he claims, the non-referentiality inherent in opaque contexts (e.g. non-indicative mood) favors reflexivization. Compare also in 2nd person tracing — where reflexive ~ personal possessive does not affect meaning — when an animate target may be modified by the reflexive in strongly non-referential contexts: *это вы рассказывайте дома своей жене, а не на собрании* 'that's the sort of thing you should say at home to your wife, and not at a meeting' (784) ~ *передавайте привет (вашей) жене*. I have not attempted to integrate these factors into my first-level presentation.
11. Advanced grammar courses may pursue the topic of blocking. Generally prepositions permit tracing: *несмотря на свою ловкость, он находился почти постоянно на самом рубеже нищеты* 'despite his adroitness, he was nearly continuously on the verge of destitution' (from Turgenev's *Дворянское гнездо*). Prepositions which govern deverbal nominalizations may act syntactically the same as conjunctions, and strictly speaking they should block tracing; in fact standard usage may vary: *после смерти её/своего близкого знакомого Маша получила 10 тысяч* 'after the death of her close acquaintance Masha received ten thousand: (= *после того, как умер её близкий знакомый*). A deleted subject of a participle may seem to permit tracing, although the use of *свой*, I contend, is often an instance of lexicalization: *у неё свежий талант, вырабатывающий свои убеждения и своё понимание мира* 'she has a fresh talent which is developing *its own* convictions and *its own* understanding of the world' (in *Словарь русского языка*, 1961). Compare the following from Pushkin's *Барышня-Крестьянка: Романтическая мысль жениться на крестьянке и жить своими трудами пришла ему в голову* 'the romantic notion of marrying a peasant girl and living by his *own* labors came to his mind.' This sentence has a dative "subject" identical to that of *жить*, with surface subject *мысль*; the locution is nearly synonymous with *ему вздумалось* 'the idea got into his head'. As the use of *свой* here is partially lexicalized, some native speakers might prefer *своими собственными руками*, with the intensifying lexical adjective making the meaning explicit. (Compare also *у меня свои собственные шахматы* 'I have my (very) own chess set'.
12. It is equally false that failure to reflexivize in 3rd person reference is a "mistake" due to grammatical ignorance. These cases are instances of shift of the controller from the canonical subject to an element in the discourse. These interesting examples also belong only in advanced grammar courses.
13. The question of animacy with 1st and 2nd person controllers is far from settled; Timberlake is surely right to assert that there are a number of discourse parameters that influence the choice of pronoun. Yokoyama finds that with



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verbs of 'analysis', such as 'consider', 'weigh', reflexivization is actually *obligatory*: *я считал тебя своим другом* according to her thesis that this is forced if the speaker is in some way removed from the aspect of himself operative in the discourse (Yokoyama 1978).

14. A further degree of lexicalization can be seen in the move from 'I have my (own) house' to 'the house that I have is my own': *у меня свой дом есть*. Cf. from Chehov: *Никогда я не жил так дешево, как теперь. У нас всё своё, даже хлеб свой* 'I have never lived as cheaply as now. Everything we have is our own, even the bread is ours'. From Mamin-Sibirjak: *Угощение было своё, некупленное: хлеб свой, овощ всякий свой, птица разная своя* 'the refreshments were ours, not bought; the bread was ours, all sorts of vegetables were ours, various game was our own' (examples are from *Словарь* 1964).
15. Idioms are fixed with or without the intensifier; *говорить про (\*самого) себя* 'say to oneself', *прийти в (\*самого) себя* 'come to one's senses', *само собой разумеется* 'that goes without saying'.
16. This is an extension of the first-level lexical meaning 'particular to an individual.' Further levels in most Slavic languages show typical extensions to narrowed or widened meanings, so that the word, in context, may have seemingly contrary senses. In Czech *svůj* can mean both 'belonging to a community; communal, united in a community' and 'Cstrange, peculiar, unique': *celá dědina byla jaksi svá, důvěrná, milá* the whole village was somehow united, trusting, dear' ~ *Ona je trochu zvláštní, svá* 'she is a bit special, unto herself'; a slightly archaic usage in Czech is the meaning 'free': *cigán nikdy nebyl svůj* 'the Gypsy has never been free'. Russian *свои* has similar semantic dimensions.

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