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**Sommario/riassunto**

This study addresses the debate about whether adult language learners have access to the principles and parameters of universal grammar in constructing the grammar of a second language. The data are based on two related experiments. The first examines the interpretation of English reflexive pronouns by native speakers of Japanese and of Spanish. The second experiment examines the interpretation of the Japanese reflexive *zibun* by native speakers of English and of Chinese. Three hypotheses are evaluated: (a) that UG is unavailable, and that processing strategies or other non-linguistic