

**UNIVERSITY OF TARTU  
DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH STUDIES**

**ESTONIAN EFL LEARNERS' MISUSE OF THE ENGLISH  
ARTICLE SYSTEM: A CORPUS-BASED STUDY**

**MA thesis**

**JOHANNA KONSO  
SUPERVISOR: *Lect.* LIINA TAMMEKÄND**

**TARTU  
2023**

## ABSTRACT

The English article system is seemingly straightforward but is the cause of many errors in learner language. To assure grammatical accuracy, the tendencies among Estonian English as a foreign language (EFL) learners must be analysed with productive skills such as writing. The current thesis aims to provide an overview of the types of errors Estonian EFL learners most commonly make in their writing. The thesis addresses the following research questions: 1) How do Estonian EFL learners misuse the English article system in university entrance exam essays in the *Tartu Corpus of Estonian Learner English*? 2) Which uses of articles do Estonian EFL learners find most challenging? In order to find the article uses that learners find most challenging, 60 essays from the part-of-speech-tagged TCELE corpus were analysed. The emerging 2,138 article uses were assigned their article use based on the classification of articles by Quirk *et al.* (1985) and, when needed, the correction.

The thesis begins with an introduction to the topic and its urgency. The first chapter provides an overview of the classification of articles used for the study at hand. What follows is a discussion of previous research on the English article system, with a more narrow focus on the relationship between different EFL learners and articles. The second chapter introduces the corpus used, provides an overview of the methods and presents as well as discusses the findings. The paper ends with a conclusion.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	2
LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	4
INTRODUCTION	5
1 The English article system	9
1.1 Article uses	9
1.1.1 The definitive article <i>the</i>	10
1.1.2 The indefinite article <i>a</i>	12
1.1.3 The zero article	13
1.2 L2 learners and articles	14
1.2.1 The order of article acquisition	15
1.2.2 Article misuse	17
1.2.3 Teaching the article system	18
1.2.4 Common article errors by Estonian EFL learners	19
2 Empirical analysis of the article uses	22
2.1 TCELE corpus	22
2.2 Method	22
2.3 Data analysis and results	27
2.3.1 Errors in the use of the definite article	29
2.3.2 Errors in the use of the indefinite article	32
2.3.3 Errors in the use of the zero article	33
2.3.4 Other article errors	35
2.3.5 Article error types	36
2.4 Discussion	38
CONCLUSION	43
REFERENCES	45
APPENDICES	47
Appendix 1. Selected POS tags from the UCREL CLAWS7 Tagset	47
Appendix 2. Article errors per essay	49
RESÜMEE	51

## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

CEFR — Common European Framework of Reference for Languages

EFL — English as a foreign language

ESL — English as a second language

L1 — first language

L2 — second language

TCELE — Tartu Corpus of Estonian Learner English

## INTRODUCTION

Articles — *a/an, the*, zero<sup>1</sup> — are extremely common in any English text, be it spoken or written. Despite having no lexical meaning, they still convey meaning. Language learners have the misconception that articles are rather straightforward as a result of how early they are taught (Master 1997: 216). As explained by Krashen (1982: 18), this is not surprising given how simple they are to “describe formally — one simply inserts *the* or *a* or sometimes nothing before the noun”; however, when it comes to semantics, the articles become challenging to describe, which then explains why English as a foreign language (EFL) learners worldwide struggle with this seemingly simple grammar topic, as shown by the multitude of studies of EFL learners’ article usage (see Barrett & Chen 2011; Crompton 2011; Miller 2005; Narita 2013; Torn & Kährrik 2004).

Article errors<sup>2</sup> are frequent and they affect the flow of the conversation to some extent, mainly comprehension. Parrott (2000: 32) notes that individual article errors are harmless in conversation, but prevalent ones may complicate the listener’s or reader’s ability to comprehend what was conveyed. Master (1997: 216) also highlights that it is rare for errors in article use to cause any miscommunication between speakers, which, he reasons, might be why learners do not pay much attention to the article system. While errors do not usually impede communication then, especially in academia, they “may undermine the author’s integrity”, something that proficient speakers of English will undoubtedly wish to avoid (Master 1997: 216). While the impact of such errors might not be very noticeable, it is ever-present.

There are a number of reasons why learners might make errors when using articles. As articles are commonly pronounced using their weak form, learners at beginner levels might

---

<sup>1</sup> No article

<sup>2</sup> While “error” and “mistake” are their separate terms, then in the current thesis, no difference is made between them as it is near impossible to determine whether an incorrect article usage with productive skills was merely a slip-up or something they were unaware of. While it is more likely that in the case of writing it was an error as they still had some time to focus on form (unlike speaking), it cannot be said with absolute certainty.

not “recognise” or even “distinguish” them (Parrott 2000: 32). Besides failing to comprehend the article system, Parrott (2000: 32) explains that it might be because they simply have not learnt the correct rule — or phrase in the case of fixed expressions — or have not “internalised” them. Negative transfer<sup>3</sup> may also come into play, especially if their first language has an article system that slightly differs from that of English (Parrott 2000: 32). These cases are highly dependent on learners’ language background and situation, for instance, Turkish and Italian EFL learners might incorrectly place an article before a possessive adjective, such as *my* or *your*, because that is the case in their mother tongue (Parrott 2000: 33); therefore, it is essential to take into consideration the language learners’ peculiarities when attempting to find reasons for certain errors.

Unlike Turkish and Italian, Estonian has no such articles, thus learners have no prior knowledge to draw upon. Though Estonian does have words such as *üks* ‘one’ and *see* ‘this’, which can, in a way, be compared to the indefinite and definite articles respectively (Pajusalu 1997), the fact of the matter is that Estonian is an article-less language, which means that this aspect of language that is already complex for any EFL learner puts Estonian EFL learners at an even greater disadvantage. That Estonian EFL learners are prone to making article errors is something that Kahur (2021: 7) reported in her Master’s thesis, saying that they were the most prominent grammar errors in her experience of teaching students of Grade 6. Her thesis analysed the exercises in the English coursebook *I Love English 4*, specifically those dealing with the article system. Her Master’s thesis appears to be one of the few on the topic of the English article system; however, it did not examine the errors that were made but rather the best way to teach articles.

However, to teach articles better, it is vital to know the uses of articles that learners find most difficult. One such study that has a clear focus on Estonian EFL learners’ use of

---

<sup>3</sup> Negative transfer is when L2 learners transfer items and structures that are not the same in both languages from their L1 to the target language.

articles is the one by Torn and Kährnik (2004). Their study aimed to ascertain whether any functions of articles posed more difficulties to advanced or intermediate learners, using a cloze test to do so. They found that the definite article was overused, especially with non-count abstract nouns and the generic use (for a more detailed overview of the study, see section 1.2.4). This short overview shows there is room for further research in the Estonian context, especially research that looks into article usage with productive skills.

While many other researchers have opted to analyse article usage based on a grammar test (see Ekiert 2004; Ionin *et al* 2008; Miller 2005; Ouertani 2013) thanks to the possibility of replicating the study and the ease of checking the answers, among other reasons, some aspects simply cannot be examined with grammar tests. Ur (2012: 82), for example, highlights the issue of students that have no problems completing grammar exercises but, when tasked with producing their own piece of writing or speech, make errors with the same grammar items they seemingly had already mastered. This phenomenon can be explained by Krashen's (1982: 16–17) Monitor hypothesis, which states that learners can use conscious rules when they focus on form, know the rule and have enough time. Learners typically focus more on communication than form when speaking or writing, meaning they use the Monitor less owing to a lack of time to consider how exactly they are expressing themselves. Ur (2012: 82) explains that dependence on conscious monitoring signals that the student cannot automatically use the grammar point as it has not yet been thoroughly mastered. According to her, errors in such instances are commonly rooted in their first language. While the National Curriculum for Foreign Languages of the Republic of Estonia (2014: 8) (hereafter National Curriculum) states that “[m]istakes are considered normal in language learning” then “their analysis facilitates understanding and enables the students to correct their language use”, making it an aspect of language learning that is still worth discussing.

This is precisely what the current thesis hopes to achieve. The present thesis aims to provide an overview of the types of errors Estonian EFL learners most commonly make in their writing to help teachers better grasp the most troublesome uses, which would then aid them in focusing their teaching of the article system. This would help teachers in basic and secondary schools who can make slight adjustments to their current teaching of articles, as well as university lecturers who can pay more attention to the uses that cause more problems. As such, the thesis will answer the following research questions:

1. How do Estonian EFL learners misuse the English article system in university entrance exam essays in the *Tartu Corpus of Estonian Learner English* (TCELE)?
2. Which uses of articles do Estonian EFL learners find most challenging?

In order to answer the research questions, an empirical study of the English article system was carried out.

The first chapter provides an overview of the article uses based on the chosen classification by Quirk *et al.* (1985). That is followed by a discussion of previous research on the topic, with a focus on the relationship between different EFL learners and articles. The second chapter describes the empirical analysis of articles. It begins with an introduction of the corpus used, followed by a thorough overview of the methods. After the methods, the data is analysed, and the results are presented. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the results.

## 1 The English article system

The English article system — consisting of the indefinite article *a/an*, the definite article *the* and the omission of one (i.e. the zero article) — is an area of grammar that is so central to the language, yet appears quite incomprehensible the more one learns about it. For this reason, section 1.1 focuses on the different uses of articles, with a separate subsection dedicated to each article. The following section 1.2 builds on that knowledge, exploring the studies that have been carried out regarding the topic. First, in the context of the world and then already in the more narrow context of Estonia, from which it is possible to proceed to the author's empirical work.

### 1.1 Article uses

There are several different grammar frameworks (e.g. Quirk *et al.* 1985; Greenbaum & Quirk 1990; Greenbaum 1996; Biber *et al.* 2021) for article uses; however, the thesis at hand defines the article uses according to Quirk *et al.*'s (1985) *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. While it is not the most recent of publications, it is not dated in the slightest, seeing as even newer grammars (see Biber *et al.* 2021) are largely based on it. Moreover, Quirk *et al.*'s (1985) framework has been used by Torn and Kährnik (2004) in a modified way, whose study is one of the first of its kind in the Estonian context. The choice of framework then also allows for a comparison between the studies to be made.

While it is not unique to the current framework, a distinction between the specific and generic reference must be made. The reference is specific when a particular tiger in the class 'tiger' is discussed (as in example 1). In contrast, example 2 refers to tigers generally, meaning no particular tigers are dangerous, but the whole species is (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 265).

(1) *A tiger escaped the zoo.*

(2) *Tigers are dangerous animals.*

Specific reference is more frequent than the generic, as exemplified by Table 1, in which the specific reference has six uses and the underlined generic reference has four. The table focuses on specific reference since the difference between definite and indefinite, singular and plural, and count and noncount matter more than for the generic. However, generics are common in academia as generalisations need to be made, so both will be discussed in detail.

**Table 1. Use of the articles with specific reference (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 265)**

	DEFINITE		INDEFINITE	
	COUNT	NONCOUNT	COUNT	NONCOUNT
SINGULAR	<u>the tiger</u>	<u>the furniture</u>	<u>a tiger</u>	(some) <u>furniture</u>
PLURAL	<u>the tigers</u>		(some) <u>tigers</u>	

### 1.1.1 The definitive article *the*

Based on the classification of articles by Quirk *et al.* (1985: 265–272), the following uses can be highlighted:

**(1) the situational reference in the immediate situation**, in which the definite article “is derived from the extralinguistic situation” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 266):

- (a) (Parent to child:) *Could you feed the cat?* (Both speaker and hearer know which cat was meant.)

**(2) the situational reference in the larger situation** (general knowledge), in which “[t]he identity of the referent may be evident from knowledge of the ‘larger’ situation which speaker and hearer share” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 266), for instance, *the Prime Minister* (national knowledge), *the North Pole*, *the sun*, *the Estonians*, *the working class*.

**(3) the anaphoric reference** (either direct or indirect), in which a previously introduced object is referred to again, either directly or indirectly, meaning that it is “contextually known” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 267):

- (b) *Rebecca got a book and a dress for her birthday, but she didn’t like the book.* (direct)

(c) *I bought a blazer online, but when it arrived, the sleeves were stained and the lining was torn.* (indirect)

**(4) the cataphoric reference** is the opposite of the anaphoric reference, meaning that “what follows the head noun, rather than what precedes it, enables [one] to pinpoint the reference uniquely” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 268):

(d) *The President of Estonia made his annual speech.*

(e) *The children playing there are her grandchildren.*

However, it does not necessarily mean the head noun needs to be postmodified. As Quirk *et al.* (1985: 268) point out that cataphoric reference “is limited to cases where modification of the noun phrase restrict the reference of the noun, so that its referent is, for the purpose of the discourse, uniquely defined”. What this means is that instead of the *of*-phrase in example (3d), the same could also be expressed as in (3f):

(f) *The Estonian President made his annual speech.*

**(5) the sporadic reference**, which is used in reference to an institution (*the cinema*), mass communication (*the news*) and transport (*the train*)

**(6) the ‘logical’ use**: the definite article is in these cases used with “postdeterminers and adjectives whose meaning is inalienably associated with uniqueness”, such as ordinals (*first, next, last*), *same, only, sole*, superlatives (*best, biggest*); except in fixed phrases (*best man* ‘groomsman’)

**(7) the use of *the* with reference to body parts**, in which case it follows a preposition:

(g) *They pulled her by the hair.*

(h) *Everyone gave us a pat on the back.*

**(8) the generic use**: the definite article can either be used with singular noun phrases, “indicating the class as represented by its typical specimen” (see 8i, 8j) or with plural noun phrases, with nationality nouns (*the Estonians, the English*) or “phrases with an adjective

head referring to a group of people” (*the poor* ‘people who are poor’) (Quirk et al. 1985: 282–283):

(i) *No one knows exactly when the wheel was invented.*

(j) *My friend plays the piano very well.*

### 1.1.2 The indefinite article *a*

As explained by (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 272) the indefinite article is “typically used when the referent has not been mentioned before, and is assumed to be unfamiliar to the speaker or hearer”. In total, the authors highlight four different uses for the indefinite article:

**(1) first mention** (followed by the anaphoric *the* in subsequent mentions):

(a) *Rebecca got a book and a dress for her birthday, but she didn't like the book.*

(b) *Sam lost a gold watch a few days ago, and Rob was wearing a gold watch tonight.*

Even though in example (1b) the noun phrase *a gold watch* is the same, the speaker does not assume it to be the same watch. That would be the case had the speaker replaced the article in the second *a gold watch* with *the gold watch* as it would indicate that Rob was indeed a thief for having Sam's watch.

**(2) nonreferring use**, which is “strongly associated with the complement function in a clause” and it may even have a “descriptive role” (Quirk et al. 1985: 273):

(c) *Einstein was a great scientist.*

(d) *What a beautiful day (it is)!*

**(3) numeral one**, in which the indefinite article replaces the numeral *one*, making it less emphatic:

(e) *The Smiths have two daughters and a son.*

However, it can also be seen in different expressions (*a hundred, a quarter*) and quantifiers (*fifty euros a day, half an hour*).

**(4) the generic use**, which “picks out any representative member of the class” (see 4f), but it cannot refer to a class or a species as a whole“ (see 4g) (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 281):

(f) *The best way to learn a language is to live among its speakers.* (can be substituted with *any language*)

(g) BUT NOT: ~~*A tiger is becoming almost extinct.*~~ (cannot be substituted with *any tiger*)

### 1.1.3 The zero article

As for the zero article, based on Quirk *et al.* (1985: 274–287) classification, five uses emerge:

**(1) plural count nouns and noncount nouns**: the zero article is used instead of the indefinite article (see 1a):

(a) *Do you know what gooseberries look like?* (= *Do you know what a gooseberry looks like?*)

**(2) the generic use**: it is used with both plural nouns and noncount nouns, and it “identifies the class considered as an undifferentiated whole” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 282):

(b) *Tigers are fierce animals.*

(c) *This book attempts to trace the history of man/mankind ‘the human race’.*

**(3) definite meaning**, in which “the complement (or an equivalent appositive noun phrase) names a unique role or task” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 276):

(d) *Luka Modrić is (the) captain of the team.*

(e) *As (the) chairman of the committee, I declare this meeting closed.*

**(4) noncount abstract nouns** (such as happiness, literature, sleep):

(f) *Perfectionism and procrastination go hand in hand usually.*

(g) *I studied English literature.* (premodified) (but when postmodified *I studied the literature of England.*)

**(5) fixed phrases** in a number of different categories:

- institutions (rather than a specific entity): *go to hospital, be in town, go to sea*
- means of transport and communication (after the preposition *by*): *go by bus, send by mail*
- times of the day and night (especially after the prepositions *at, by, after* and *before*): *at dawn, by night, before morning came*
- seasons (article usually omitted): *in (the) spring*
- meals (as institutions): *after lunch, stay for breakfast, have brunch*
- illnesses (except with some more well-known infectious diseases): *diabetes, pneumonia*
- parallel structures: *face to face, side by side*
- other fixed phrases involving prepositions: *at home, by hand, on foot, in turn*

The current section identified the multitude of different functions the articles may take, which in the following section will be viewed in the context of second language (L2) learners.

## 1.2 L2 learners and articles

When it comes to L2 learners and the topic of articles, a distinction between learners whose L1 has no articles ([−ART] speakers) (e.g. Estonian, Japanese) and those whose L1 has an article system ([+ART]) (e.g. Spanish, Arabic) needs to be made. As a result of that, when learning the article system, [−ART] speakers are at a disadvantage when compared to [+ART] speakers (Master 1997). However, both [−ART] and [+ART] speakers alike make errors when using the language (see Barrett & Chen 2011; Crompton 2011; Ekiert 2004; Leroux & Kendall 2018; Narita 2013; Torn & Kährrik 2004). The emerging patterns of misuse, the reasons behind such incorrect usage, and the order in which articles are acquired will be discussed in sections 1.2.1 and 1.2.2. In section 1.2.3, the teaching of articles will briefly be covered to give some underlying reasons for the persisting troubles. The final section of this

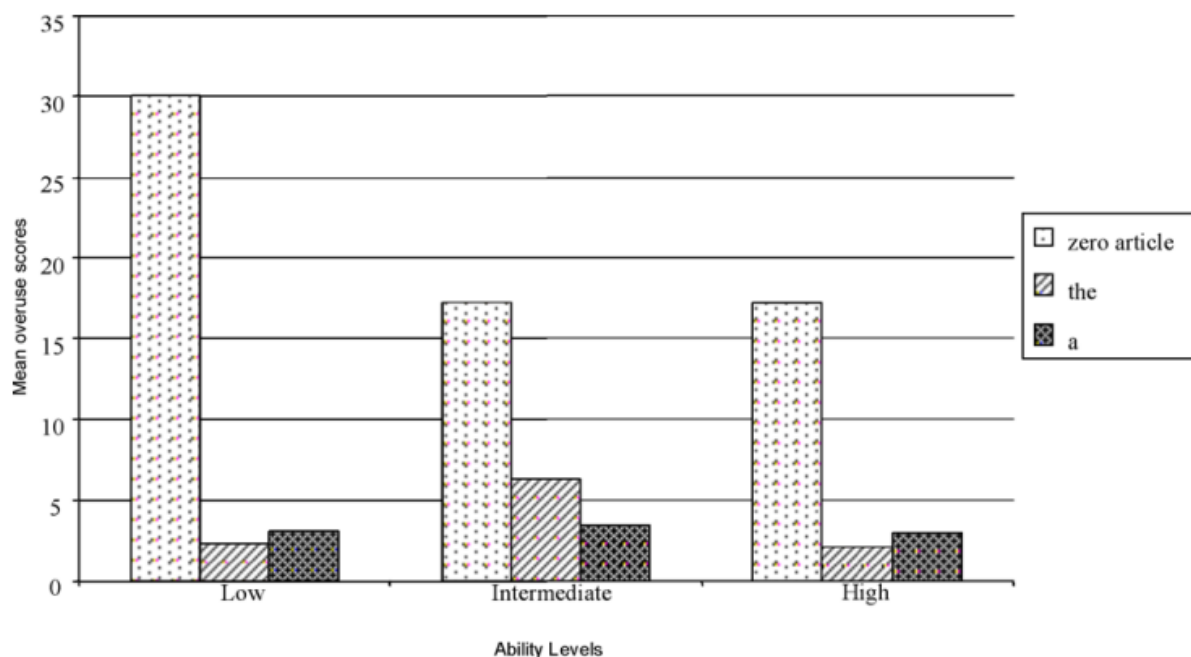
chapter will be dedicated to the study by Torn and Kährik (2004) that is most relevant to the study at hand as it deal with Estonian EFL learners in specific.

### **1.2.1 The order of article acquisition**

One area of the English article system that has seen much research over the years is the order of acquisition. As per Krashen's (1982: 10) first hypothesis, the acquisition-learning distinction, language acquisition is a subconscious process similar to how children develop in their L1, in other words, "picking up" a language, while language learning refers to the conscious knowledge of it, for example, knowing the rules and grammar. According to Master (1997: 216–218), [-ART] speakers first acquire the zero article, after which they start to overuse *the*, while the acquisition of *a* happens later independently. This could also be seen in Ekiert's (2004) small-scale study with Polish EFL and ESL learners. Figure 1 exemplifies the overuse of the articles on all ability levels — low, intermediate and high — determined with a grammar placement test and should, therefore, mostly correlate with the order Master outlined.

In the case of the zero article, the acquisition is "largely by default" as distinguishing between the zero article and article omission is not possible (Master 1997: 216), which Ekiert (2004: 15) also called into question. Master (1997: 227) suggests that "the persistence of zero article usage by [-ART] speakers, even at advanced proficiency levels, may be due not only to interference from L1 and the difficulties of applying the article sytem [sic] but to the frequency with which the zero article occurs in the input".

**Figure 1. Mean proportion disparity of unnecessary *zero*, *the*, and *a* by ability level (N=20) (Ekiert's 2004: 16)**



L1-transfer<sup>4</sup>, input<sup>5</sup>, and Universal Grammar<sup>6</sup> as the three sources of knowledge as well as the patterns of (mis)use is something that Ionin *et al.* (2008) studied. They analysed the article usage of both [-ART] (Russian) and [+ART] speakers (Mexican Spanish) based on the results of a cloze test of L2 proficiency. Ionin *et al.* found that all three factors — L1-transfer, input, and Universal Grammar — are relevant for the acquisition of English articles. The Spanish learners of English were found to have an advantage over the Russian ones as they had no major issues with definiteness thanks to positive transfer. In contrast, Russian learners had trouble with the concepts of definiteness and specificity. Ionin *et al.* (2008: 574) explain that “[l]earners fluctuate between these patterns – definiteness and specificity – until the input tells them that only one of these patterns is appropriate for English”. As Master (1997: 228) suggests, [-ART] speakers are in a way a step behind [+ART] speakers since they do not have any prior knowledge to activate; however, once they

<sup>4</sup> L1-transfer stands for the occurrence of L2 learners transferring items and structures from their L1 to the target language, it can either be positive or negative.

<sup>5</sup> Input refers to the exposure L2 learners have to authentic language use.

<sup>6</sup> Universal Grammar is a theory in linguistics usually credited to Noam Chomsky that suggests that the ability to learn grammar is innate regardless of language.

understand the difference between English and their L1 their “acquisition roughly parallels [+ART] acquisition”. When it comes to ESL and EFL learners, Ekiert (2004) states that no distinction between the language settings needs to be made in the order of language acquisition. So, the previous discussion has shown that while they all have their own troubles, the acquisition of articles is largely the same for both [-ART] and [+ART] speakers, as well as ESL and EFL learners.

### **1.2.2 Article misuse**

An issue that pertains to article acquisition in which studies (Barrett & Chen 2011; Crompton 2011; Leroux & Kendall 2018; Narita 2013; Torn & Kährrik 2004) have been undertaken is article misuse. Several of them have been corpus-based, either using a corpus of argumentative essays (Barrett & Chen 2011; Crompton 2011; Narita 2013) or speech (Leroux & Kendall 2018). Starting with speakers of an [-ART] language, Narita (2013), for instance, studied the use of articles among Japanese EFL learners and found that omission-type errors were persistent on all proficiency levels. This aligns with Master (1997), who points out the *zero-for-the* errors as a characteristic of [-ART] speakers during all proficiency levels. Overall, the number of errors decreased as the L2 learners’ writing skill level increased; however, even advanced-level learners had difficulty with the definite article due to their tendency to overuse it (Narita 2013). Barrett & Chen (2011) also report that Taiwanese English learners overused the definite article, but at the same time, the indefinite article was also overused, while the zero article was underused. Taiwanese learners seemed to struggle most with “the semantic/pragmatic relationships of specificity and hearer (or reader) knowledge” (Barrett & Chen 2011: 1). The results of the study by Leroux and Kendall (2018) showed that the learners’ proficiency level and backgrounds did not affect their use of articles much and that speakers prefer grammatical structures such as the definite and the zero article that can be used in a variety of contexts. Furthermore, the data revealed that speakers try to

make the article system simpler and, whenever possible, avoid using articles at all, such as using ‘some’ instead.

When it comes to [+ART] speakers, a similar picture regarding *the*-overuse emerges based on the one study<sup>7</sup> that was consulted. This study by Crompton (2011) examined the article errors that advanced L1 Arabic learners made in their argumentative essays. While the learners had no issues with specific reference, then the most problematic area appeared to be errors with generic reference, mostly the overuse of *the*, which the author suggests might be caused by the high frequency of generic reference articles in the argumentative genre of texts in general. Crompton concludes that the cause of such errors is most likely transfer, even though Master (1997: 218) emphasises that “L1 influence usually decreases with increasing L2 proficiency”.

### 1.2.3 Teaching the article system

By virtue of how complex the grammar topic of articles is to both [-ART] and [+ART] speakers, it is not surprising to see a multitude of grammars<sup>8</sup> (see Quirk *et al.* 1985; Greenbaum & Quirk 1990; Greenbaum 1996; Parrott 2000; Swan 2017; Biber *et al.* 2021) and studies (see Miller 2005; Yoo 2009; Kahur 2021) on the topic. Yoo (2009), for instance, compared what popular EFL/ESL grammars that are likely to be used in class say regarding the definite article to corpus findings, for which the author used the Longman Grammar of Spoken and Written English corpus as it provides information in different major registers such as conversation, fiction, newspaper language, and academic prose. An important discovery that Yoo (2009: 276) made is that while “most ESL/EFL grammars provide examples of all the uses of the discussed in the literature”, they are too general for learners of English to understand and differentiate between them. Perhaps an even more crucial finding that

---

<sup>7</sup> [+ART] speakers’ article use is not in the focus of the thesis, as such, only one such study was used for the purposes of the thesis

<sup>8</sup> Not all of the grammars are suitable for teaching purposes, though Parrott’s (2000) and Swan’s (2017) ones are certainly more designed for teaching and learning owing to their ease of use and phrasing.

emerged is that most ESL/EFL grammars pay too much attention to the anaphoric use of *the*, while overlooking situational and cataphoric uses, which are more common and relevant to learners.

What is likewise relevant to learners is what happens in the classroom itself. One such study is by Miller (2005), who conducted an exploratory study to develop a suitable teaching method for primarily Chinese ESL learners. At the beginning of the session, students needed to complete two exercises: a gap-filling exercise and then inserting articles into a paragraph with omitted articles and no gaps. The following lesson helped them understand the notions of countability and definiteness. They were given another exercise for practice and at the end of the session were asked to complete the two original exercises once again. The author followed an inductive approach as learners had to formulate the rules. Miller (2005: 84) found that the results of both exercises had improved, and more importantly, in the second exercise “they had established that a singular countable noun requires an article, and had then chosen that article correctly”. The author concludes that the students had “effectively understood and applied the notion of countability”, while definiteness remained problematic. It can be assumed that the participants were on an intermediate level based on their study experience and IELTS scores, in which case Master’s (1997) pedagogical framework applies as it suggests that beginners and advanced learners acquire the articles through a lexical approach rather than through the teaching of rules, while the explicit teaching of rules is still recommended for intermediate learners.

#### **1.2.4 Common article errors by Estonian EFL learners**

One of the few pieces of research that seems to have been conducted regarding Estonian EFL learners’ use of articles is the one by Torn and Kährik (2004); as such, an overview of it will be provided. Their study aimed to find out whether any functions of articles posed more

difficulties to advanced or intermediate learners, using a cloze test to do so. Their cloze test used four authentic book and newspaper texts, which they deleted all the articles from, replacing them with gaps. The authors' chosen classification of articles was based on the one by Quirk *et al.* (1985). In total, they highlighted seven uses: non-count abstract nouns (zero article); specific (unique) reference in the larger situation (definite article); specific reference in the immediate situation (definite article); non-referring uses of the indefinite article; the generic use (zero article); the anaphoric use (definite article); and the cataphoric use (definite article). In the texts, the most widely represented use in terms of frequency was the generic use (52/149). Meanwhile, specific reference in the immediate situation and the anaphoric use were not as frequent with 6 and 4 uses, respectively. The test was given to the advanced (23) and the intermediate (19) groups.

Based on the results, a number of conclusions could be made. They found that the definite article was overused, especially with non-count abstract nouns and generic use. In the case of non-count abstract nouns, both groups had trouble with it. For example, the word “compatibility” was assigned the wrong article in about half the cases for the intermediate and roughly a third for the advanced learners. As for the generic, errors were also made in noun phrases with a pre-modifier (see example 1) as it may have been “considered a specifying element” (Torn & Kährrik 2004: 183) as well as with non-referring *of*-phrases (see example 2).

(1) *\*THE enlightened companies must recognise the need to adjust some of their working patterns if they want to keep \*THE good people.*

(2) *She is \*THE mother of three.*

The rest of the uses did not cause any significant problems. They concluded that the overuse of the definite article could be observed in Estonian EFL learners' English and that “variation according to article type was more characteristic of intermediate learners” (Torn & Kährrik 2004: 184).

An explanation for article errors could be found in how they are taught. Kahur's (2021) MA thesis explores that in greater detail, focusing on the English coursebook *I Love English 4*, a popular choice in Estonian basic schools. The author found that explicit article exercises were relatively scarce in these study materials meant for students of Grade 6, and those that were present were all fill-the-gap exercises and included no example sentences. This is the reason she analysed other exercises that could be used to teach the article system. As Kahur stated, it is crucial to teach them in context through speaking, listening, writing, and reading, which is in accordance with the National Curriculum (2014). In an attempt to counter the disadvantage of not having similar articles in learners' first language, Kahur suggests using L1 translations as well as exemplifying articles and their rules using real-life examples. One of the recommendations was also to create a suitable language-learning environment in which learners could not only learn but acquire the English article system.

In conclusion, this chapter introduced the English article system and the issues pertaining to it. The chapter began with an overview of the classification of articles by Quirk *et al.* (1985), which will be used for the following empirical part. In the second half of the chapter, research on article acquisition and misuse was presented. The similarities and differences between [-ART] and [+ART] speakers, as well as EFL and ESL contexts, were investigated, and the most prevalent errors were highlighted. In the following section, it can be seen what uses grammars focus on and how the article system can be taught. Lastly, the chapter closed with a discussion of common article errors by Estonian EFL learners, based on the study by Torn and Kährik (2004).

## 2 Empirical analysis of the article uses

### 2.1 TCELE corpus

Since the focus is on productive skills, writing in this case, to find an answer to the research question about article misuse, data from the *Tartu Corpus of Estonian Learner English* (TCELE) was used. It currently consists of 599 university entrance exam essays, collected in 2014 and 2020–2022. Apart from 2014, each year included a choice between two tasks, meaning that the essays are based on seven texts. The passages, roughly a page to a page and a half long, were all either from opinion columns from news articles or were purely academic in nature. They were concerned with topics such as the English language, literature, and university education (see Table 2), which is fitting given that the examinees were applying to the English Language and Literature Bachelor's programme. Although no background information about the examinees other than their age and gender is known, then their education level should be at least upper secondary school level since it is the requirement for applying to the programme. In order to write the essays, the examinees first had to pass the lexico-grammatical test, bar 2014. Thus, for 2020–2022, the examinees' proficiency level can be estimated to correspond with at least the level of B2 from the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (Council of Europe 2001) (hereafter CEFR). No generalisations can be made about the examinees who took the 2014 entrance exam.

### 2.2 Method

#### *Sample*

As analysing the entire corpus would be an enormous undertaking, a random sample of 10% (i.e. 60 essays) was chosen for the study (see Table 2 for the sample overview), taking into account the time constraints. The random sample was determined with the help of the =RAND() function in Google Sheets (Google LLC 2023). The 60 essays were manually

cleaned, during which the titles, references and rough notes were removed. After the cleaning, 14 essays were deemed too short, meaning they contained fewer than 180 words, and one was incomplete, ending mid-sentence and mid-word. The word counts of these essays that did not meet the threshold ranged from 61 to 177 words, with a mean of 129 and a median of 126. However, it must be mentioned that these counts may be slightly imprecise since contractions and misspelt words ("aswell") were counted as one word. The length requirement was determined based on the only available task from 2014. The task required the examinees to write around 200 words, so the length requirement that was decided on has 10% of leeway. Upon closer inspection, most of the excluded essays that were too short were written by slightly lower-level learners of English, at least based on their vocabulary use and the number of mistakes. This process thus had the additional benefit of making the proficiency level more even. The excluded essays were replaced with the next ones in line from the generated random order. The essays that formed the sample ranged from 213 to 740 words in length, with a mean of 275 and a median of 263. The sample itself was 16,496 words long.

**Table 2. Sample representation in TCELE**

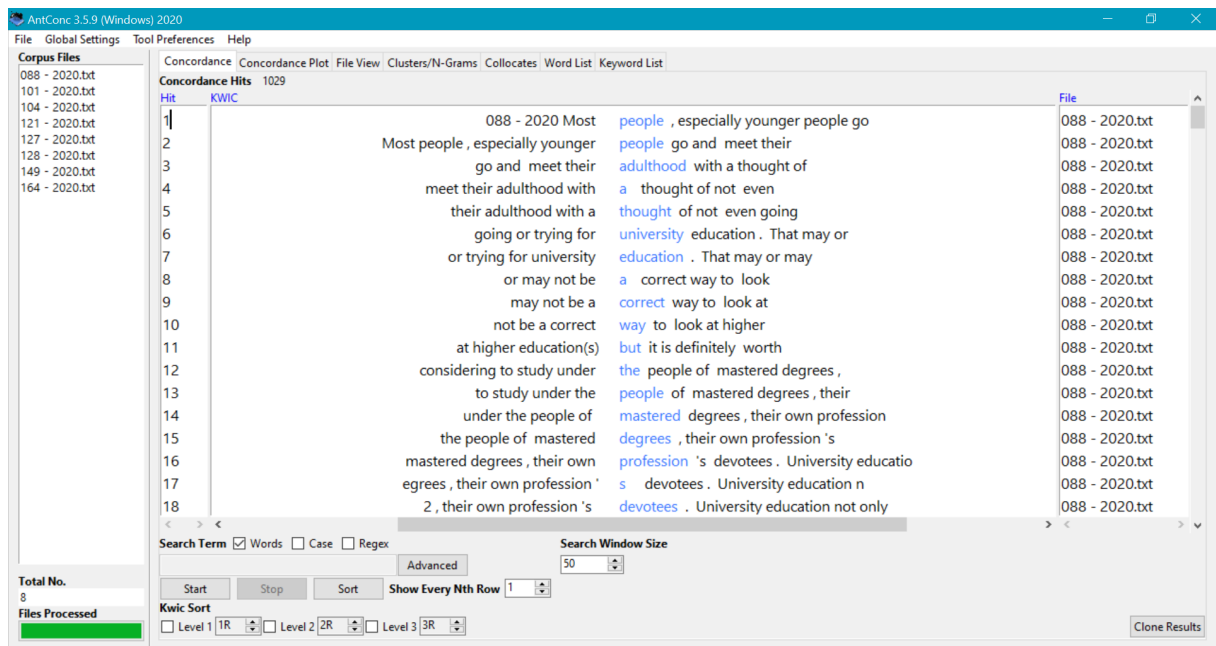
YEAR	ESSAYS IN TCELE	ESSAY TOPIC(S)	ESSAYS IN THE SAMPLE	SAMPLE REPRESENTATION
2014	126	Consequences of a new standard of international English emerging	12	9.52%
2020	183	Why study the humanities?	20	10.93%
		Why choose university education?		
2021	133	How important is it to use a language correctly?	10	7.52%
		Do changes in language use lead to linguistic decline?		
2022	157	Attitudes to the study of literature then and now	18	11.46%
		Reading as an activity of value		
<b>TOTAL</b>	599		60	10.02%

After this, what would have followed would have been the annotation of the sample with part-of-speech (POS) tags; however, that had previously already been done by Tammekänd and Torn-Leesik (2022), who used the CLAWS7 (Constituent Likelihood Automatic Word-tagging System) tagger (UCREL. n. d.a.). Thanks to this, the cleaned-up essays from the sample only needed to be double-checked in Antconc (Anthony 2020), which allows the tags to be hidden conveniently. This was done to check that nothing crucial was accidentally removed during the initial cleaning phase.

### *Data analysis*

To find all article uses, a selection of the CLAWS7 tagset was used, which can be seen in Appendix 1. The tags were determined based on their possibility to co-occur with articles, meaning, as can be observed in Appendix 1, verbs and the like were excluded from the selection, despite the risk of the tagger mistagging (see Tammekänd & Torn-Leesik 2022 for an overview of the problems encountered when tagging TCELE). Tags were included even if the chance of an article use appearing was slim; for instance, this was the case with proper nouns.

Following the decision on the use of tags, Antconc's advanced search was utilised to find all the relevant POS for each essay (see Image 1). The data were copied to Google Sheets for displaying and analysing purposes. Due to the choice of POS tags, there appeared to be some overlap; on Image 1, for instance, lines 4 and 5 should be combined. This case might then beg the question of why articles must be searched separately. The answer to this question is quite simple — the author of the present thesis wished not to exclude any crucial information about article misuse, one of which is redundancy, no matter how uncommon. However, with the examinations being computer-based, bar 2014, such errors are not unlikely.



**Image 1.** Concordance lines for TCELE’s 2020’s humanities essays

The resulting overlap was manually cleaned. During this process, the initial 6,284 concordance lines were consolidated into phrases. Besides that, the redundancies, such as on line 3, where the noun is preceded by the possessive determiner *their*, were removed. What were also excluded were quotes and noun phrases borrowed from the text and oftentimes repeated many times, even ones containing mistakes. Other removed instances included numerals (e.g. *100 years ago*), proper nouns (e.g. the source text’s author’s name), 'quantitative' determiners (e.g. *every English speaker*, *all things*), as well as quantifiers such as *a few* and *a lot of*. These quantifiers were excluded since the indefinite article “belongs to the quantifier alone” in these cases (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 263). On the whole, the removed phrases were not relevant to the study at hand or did not reflect the examinees’ own writing, with one exception below:

*“The positive aspects of having a new standard of international English would help all non-native speakers a more standard English that would non-native speakers understand eachother better.” (088 - 2014)*

This sentence was deemed incoherent and excluded to avoid making any assumptions about the intended meaning.

After the final cleaning process, 2,138 concordance lines remained. All of these lines were assigned their article use and, when needed, the correction. The uses were based on the classification of articles by Quirk et al. (1985) that was outlined in section 1.1. The only modification was the addition of the fixed phrases category for the definite and indefinite articles, necessitated by the data found in the sample. To assist in identifying article errors, the correction tool Grammarly (2023) was used, owing to its accessibility and ease of use. Moreover, it is a tool the author of the thesis is most familiar with. Assistance in this form was necessary as assigning the article uses was done only by the author of the thesis. In view of this fact, the intra-marker reliability was also calculated based on a random essay — 041 - 2020<sup>9</sup>. This essay was re-marked after all the essay article uses had been assigned to check the consistency of the marker. In both instances, six mistakes were identified and corrected in the same way. However, in the case of the article uses, five out of 32 uses (see Table 3) were assigned uses differently, although three of them were part of the same noun phrase. This means that there was a discrepancy of 15%. All of the uses concerned the zero article. All but one had an issue selecting between the generic and the plural count nouns and noncount nouns.

**Table 3. Discrepancies in the intra-marker test**

NO.	LEFT CONTEXT	KWIC	RIGHT CONTEXT	CORRECT USE (1)	CORRECT USE (2)	ESSAY
1	comparison of what kind of	subject	will be helpful to be	ZERO_2	ZERO_1 <sup>10</sup>	041 - 2020
2	have a wide variety of	cultures	, languages , and different	ZERO_1	ZERO_2 <sup>11</sup>	041 - 2020
3	a wide variety of cultures,	languages	, and different opinions .	ZERO_1	ZERO_2	041 - 2020
4	of cultures , languages , and	different opinions	. These subjects can help us	ZERO_1	ZERO_2	041 - 2020
5	bring the most amount of	contribution	. That what made me to	ZERO_4 <sup>12</sup>	ZERO_2	041 - 2020

<sup>9</sup> This is the 41st essay in the 2020 subcorpus.

<sup>10</sup> ZERO\_1 stands for (1) plural count nouns and noncount nouns

<sup>11</sup> ZERO\_2 stands for (2) the generic use

<sup>12</sup> ZERO\_4 stands for (4) noncount abstract nouns

The table shows that the marker's understanding of the categories had increased. For example, in the case of mistake 5, "contribution" was at first incorrectly assigned the use of a noncount abstract noun. In contrast, in the second pass, it was identified as a count noun but in generic reference. Although the essays were double-checked, such mistakes on the marker's part are still present. This inconsistency means similar cases might have been assigned different uses, reducing the reliability of the assigned uses in certain contexts, such as the ones witnessed in Table 3. However, as mentioned, the identified mistakes and the given corrections were consistent.

### **2.3 Data analysis and results**

A total of 2,138 concordance lines emerged in the analysis of the TCELE sample; these included noun phrases (e.g. *a piece of literature*) and other structures (e.g. *for the better*). In Table 4, an overview of all the article uses can be seen in numbers. The distribution of article uses is unbalanced, which is to be expected from the genre of writing as the tasks and source texts expect the learner to write in generic terms and use more abstract nouns, so there are fewer chances to use, for instance, the definite article in the situational reference in the immediate situation. More importantly, writing allows one to choose the structures and vocabulary they wish and feel comfortable using. Despite this fact, 94 errors (4.4% of total uses) were made in relation to articles in a total of 39 essays, meaning that 65% of the examinees in the sample misused an article at least once.

In Appendix 2, a more detailed overview of the errors that were made in each of the 39 essays can be seen. Based on that table, eight essays (13% of the sample) contained more than three errors and had an error percentage higher than 10%, though these eight were not necessarily the same. The error percentage ranged from 2.1% to 21.4%. While the essay with the code 164 - 2020 had an extremely low error percentage (0.9%), based on the number of total article uses, it is evident that the essay was much too long in comparison to the rest. It

contained a significant amount of repetition, meaning that the 114 uses are by no means unique contexts. Therefore, the essay should be considered an outlier in this regard.

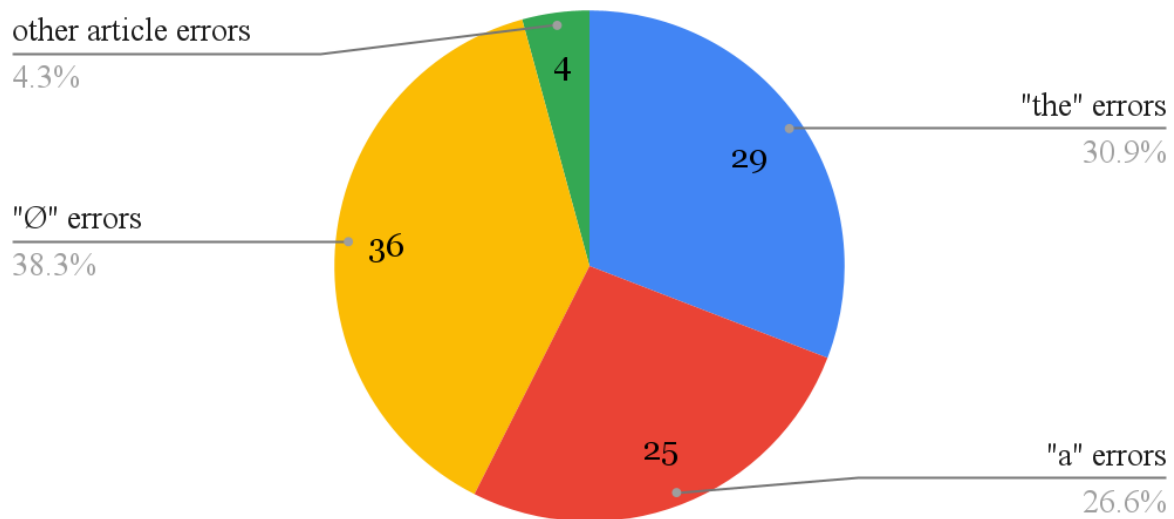
**Table 4. Overview of the article uses in the TCELE sample**

ARTICLE USE	TOTAL USES	ERRORS	ERROR RANGE
THE (1) the situational reference in the immediate situation	12	0	0
THE (2) the situational reference in the larger situation	86	2	2
THE (3) the anaphoric reference	135	1	1
THE (4) the cataphoric reference	320	21	14
THE (5) the sporadic reference	1	0	0
THE (6) the 'logical' use	116	1	1
THE (7) the use of <i>the</i> with reference to body parts	0	0	0
THE (8) the generic use	26	2	1
THE (9) fixed phrases	15	2	2
A (1) first mention	6	2	2
A (2) nonreferring use	206	17	15
A (3) numeral one	58	2	2
A (4) the generic use	74	3	3
A (5) fixed phrases	12	1	1
ZERO (1) plural count nouns and noncount nouns	219	0	0
ZERO (2) the generic use	429	21	14
ZERO (3) definite meaning	4	0	0
ZERO (4) noncount abstract nouns	366	11	10
ZERO (5) fixed phrases	49	4	4
Other article uses (redundancy)	4	4	4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>2138</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>39</b>

When looking into the mistakes in more detail, based on Graph 1, it can be seen that the distribution of article mistakes was fairly even. Errors when using the zero article were the most common (38.3%), followed by errors in the use of the definite article (30.9%) and the

indefinite article (26.6%). There was also a lower percentage (4.3%) of other article errors related to redundancy. These errors will be analysed in more detail in the following subsections.

**Graph 1.** Article error distribution in the sample



### 2.3.1 Errors in the use of the definite article

#### *(1) the situational reference in the immediate situation*

There were no errors in the use of the indefinite article in the immediate context most likely because of how little the use was understandably needed. In a majority of instances, articles with this use referred back to *the author* or *the text* without any prior mention of them.

#### *(2) the situational reference in the larger situation*

In this use, the definite article was omitted in two instances, both with the word “future” (see sentence 1). However, according to the Cambridge Dictionary (2023), the phrase “in future” is in fact acceptable in British English, which the authors of the two essays may or may not have been aware of.

- (1) *Besides I want to develop my English language skills even more and hopefully find a job in \*FUTURE as an English teacher or use it as my advantage in business world.* (121 - 2020)

### **(3) the anaphoric reference**

Out of 131 cases, only one instance (see sentence 2) of the anaphoric definite article was erroneous as it was clear that they were referring back to a specific language.

- (2) *People - especially from the older generation- are afraid that the adjustments are causing linguistic decline in \*LANGUAGE.* (126 - 2021)

### **(4) the cataphoric reference**

By far the most actively used was the cataphoric reference with a total of 320 uses across the sample. Perhaps as a result of this, it was also the most misused one in terms of the definite article (see Table 4). In its usual *of*-construction (11), it had in all but one instance been replaced with the zero article (see sentence 3). When premodification was used to define the referent uniquely, the most prevalent errors were those referring to languages (see sentence 4). The confusion may have arisen from phrases also premodified by “English” or any other language, for instance, in the phrase “English literature”.

- (3) *\*VALUE of a book does not depend on its genre.* (106 - 2022)  
 (4) *Also as \*ENGLISH language spreads more widely, more people start to use it ...* (044 - 2014)

### **(5) the sporadic reference**

This use was extremely rare in the sample, being used only once to refer to “the streets”. The likely factor for the infrequency of sporadic use has to do with the genre of writing as well as the fact that many phrases have become institutionalised and, therefore, part of idiomatic usage (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 277).

### **(6) the ‘logical’ use**

Despite its high frequency in the sample, articles in this use were misused only once. This instance can be seen in sentence 5. The examinee may have intended to use the indefinite article in a nonreferring way; however, the adjective “correct” is restrictive and requires the use of the definite article in this example.

(5) *That may or may not be \*A correct way to look at higher education(s) ... (088 - 2020)*

**(7) *the use of the with reference to body parts***

There were no occurrences of the definite article in reference to body parts and as such no errors. The phrase “on the other hand” that seems to conform to this use was deemed better fitting for the category of fixed phrases.

**(8) *the generic use***

In generic reference, the definite article was used in 26 cases, which compared to the zero article (425) and the indefinite article (74) is quite low, but not unexpected. As Quirk *et al.* (1985: 282) state it is “rather limited in its generic function”. While the definite article was correctly used in most cases, then there was one phrase — “the youth” — where it was not (see sentence 6). While “youths” is a word that can be used to refer to a group of boys or young men, then based on the context, it is evident that they were referring to young people in general.

(6) *There is always a group people that believe \*YOUTHS are abusing the language with all of their slangs and lack of proper grammar. (114 - 2021)*

**(9) *fixed phrases***

Over half of the phrases that were assigned this use were the phrase “on the other hand” (8), which was used in its correct form in all cases. However, there were two phrases that were not, those being “the upper hand” (sentence 7) and “pass the time” (sentence 8). In the case of

the latter, it may be that the weak pronunciation of the definite article had made them misremember the phrase as simply “pass time”.

(7) *When it comes to literature, I've \*AN upper hand since I can enjoy Estonian and English books.* (088 - 2020)

(8) *Literature is still widely regarded as simply a way to pass \*TIME.* (091 - 2022)

### 2.3.2 Errors in the use of the indefinite article

#### (1) *first mention*

This use did not see much representation in the sample as unfamiliar referents were introduced in other ways. Despite that, two similar errors emerged, both of them to do with the omission of the article (see sentence 1). The examinee in this instance may have confused the phrase with “do business with” and therefore left out the article.

(1) *When people travel to another country or start \*BUSINESS with some foreign company, they are not able to learn the language in such short period of time.* (101 - 2014)

#### (2) *nonreferring use*

This was by far the most troublesome use, seeing how many examinees committed the error (see Table 4). The indefinite article was most commonly substituted with the zero article (11) (see sentence 2) but also with the definite article (5) (see sentence 3) and once with the incorrect form of the indefinite article.

(2) *When you want to live \*GOOD LIFE then you choose a well-paid job and work yourself up to prove the opposite to people.* (047 - 2020)

(3) *People today like to think that we are living in \*THE age where all the important pieces of literature have already been written ...* (082 - 2022)

#### (3) *numeral one*

In its numeral function, the indefinite article was used incorrectly only twice, as can be seen in sentences 4 and 5. The latter was determined to belong to this article use due to the phrase “in a/one sense”. In this case, it has been premodified; however, they likely forgot to change the form of the indefinite article to match the following vowel sound.

- (4) *According to J. Y. T. Greig about \*HUNDRED YEARS ago the study of literature was perceived as merely entertainment. (059 - 2022)*
- (5) *Using English correctly in \*A informal sense to me isn't very important, ... (009 - 2021)*

#### **(4) the generic use**

In generic reference, a variety of errors appeared. In sentence 6, it can be seen that the article has been omitted, while in sentence 7, the person mistakenly used the wrong form of the indefinite article. This last error is likely due to the preceding word starting with a vowel. Lastly, there was also a rare case of two articles being used (see sentence 8), making it impossible to say which of the two they meant to use.

- (6) *From it also depends ability to adapt to \*ALWAYS CHANGING ENVIROMENT. (040 - 2020)*
- (7) *\*AN united group of individuals who share a common goal and have a good understanding of each other are more stronger and more resilient than any other. (164 - 2020)*
- (8) *... and not just any literature, but good one, which could pass on \*THE a worthwhile experience to the reader. (155 - 2022)*

#### **(5) fixed phrases**

In terms of fixed phrases and structures, the structure “a variety of” seemed to cause some issues in two essays, both with the omission of the indefinite article (see sentence 9) and with its form (see sentence 10). However, it had been used correctly even when premodified in all other cases. As such, it was not a prevalent issue.

- (9) *English gives me \*WIDE VARIETY of jobs to chhose from. (079 - 2020)*
- (10) *To furthermore support the point, in universities you can see a \*VARY of different people with different social and cultural backgrounds. (164 - 2020)*

### **2.3.3 Errors in the use of the zero article**

#### **(1) plural count nouns and noncount nouns**

This use of the zero article did not cause any problems, despite its frequency in the sample.

### ***(2) the generic use***

The generic reference with the zero article was the most common use of article (425) and it was misused 18 times. The most frequent instances referred to a group of people, such as in sentences 1 and 2. There were also a few errors in which the noun was premodified (see sentence 3), which might have given the examinees the idea of it being specific.

- (1) *To conclude Shape subjects do not prepare \*THE students to do a specific job, but they prepare them to manage in the real world after school. (079 - 2020)*
- (2) *\*THE children would learn English as their mother's tongue and would not learn other languages. (111 - 2014)*
- (3) *There were \*THE serious people 100 years ago and they are still here ... (083 - 2022)*

### ***(3) definite meaning***

The zero article was used with definite meaning four times, though in only one of them had the definite article been omitted. There were no errors in the few instances.

### ***(4) noncount abstract nouns***

This use of the zero article was also fairly frequent in the sample and caused some issues. In sentence 4, one of the two errors with the indefinite article can be seen, while in sentence 5, the more common error with the definite article is exemplified.

- (4) *... while capturing it on a device and uploading it then and there on \*A social media. (083 - 2022)*
- (5) *Although at first it may seem that a new standard of international English would lessen the importance of \*THE native English and other languages also ... (023 - 2014)*

### ***(5) fixed phrases***

The zero article was used quite often in fixed phrases, although a number of the uses (13) were due to “in conclusion”, which is a typical phrase in essays. Besides that, it was also used in phrases such as “in mind”, “at school” (see sentence 6) and “over time”. The phrase in sentence 6 is quasi-locative, meaning that it may “appear to have locative meaning” but its

“function is rather more abstract” (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 277). This function is similar to sporadic reference and that is because many sporadic phrases have become idiomatic, resulting in the omission of the definite article (Quirk *et al.* 1985: 277). This fact may explain the error in sentence 6 and many other similar cases.

- (6) *Although a lot of students do not find literature courses at \*THE school necessary or fun, they still understand the importance behind it. (071 - 2022)*

#### 2.3.4 Other article errors

Besides the errors in the use of specific articles, some other noteworthy errors also emerged. Four of them had to do with redundancy. For instance, in sentence 1, the possessive determiner “my” should have been used instead as it is a personal statement. They have instead tried to use cataphoric reference. There was another similar case with the word “worldview”. In sentence 2, on the other hand, the examinee likely considered the Latin phrase a noun phrase, inserting the indefinite article before it probably due to their lack of familiarity with the phrase. Lastly, in sentence 3, redundancy in the form of two determiners can be seen. Such an error can, however, be likely attributed to changing their mind mid-sentence about how to express their thought as it was the only error of this kind in the essay as well as the sample.

- (1) *\*THE real interest of this subject came when I started researching about different English accents. (036 - 2020)*  
 (2) *An improved and an educated person is always valuable. Better at making decisions, raising their quality of life and all that is \*A pro bono publico. (088 - 2020)*  
 (3) *The only reason people feel that the language is declining is due to our short lifespan and how we feel \*THE our way of speaking has been lost to time. (114 - 2021)*

In addition to errors in the use of articles, there were a number of related issues, such as misspelt, missing or wrong words, the use of “more” in the comparative, using plural instead of the singular or vice versa, agreement issues and countability issues with noncount words. While not all of them are relevant to the study at hand, countability is certainly a key aspect of article use. Examples of such issues can be seen in sentences 4 and 5. While “contemplation”

in sentence 4 is purely noncount then “writing” in sentence 5 can also have a plural when referring to the written works of a person, which in this context does not work. The fact that the word has different forms and meanings was likely the cause of the error. On the whole, these other errors were not common, and no specific words seemed to cause issues for multiple examinees.

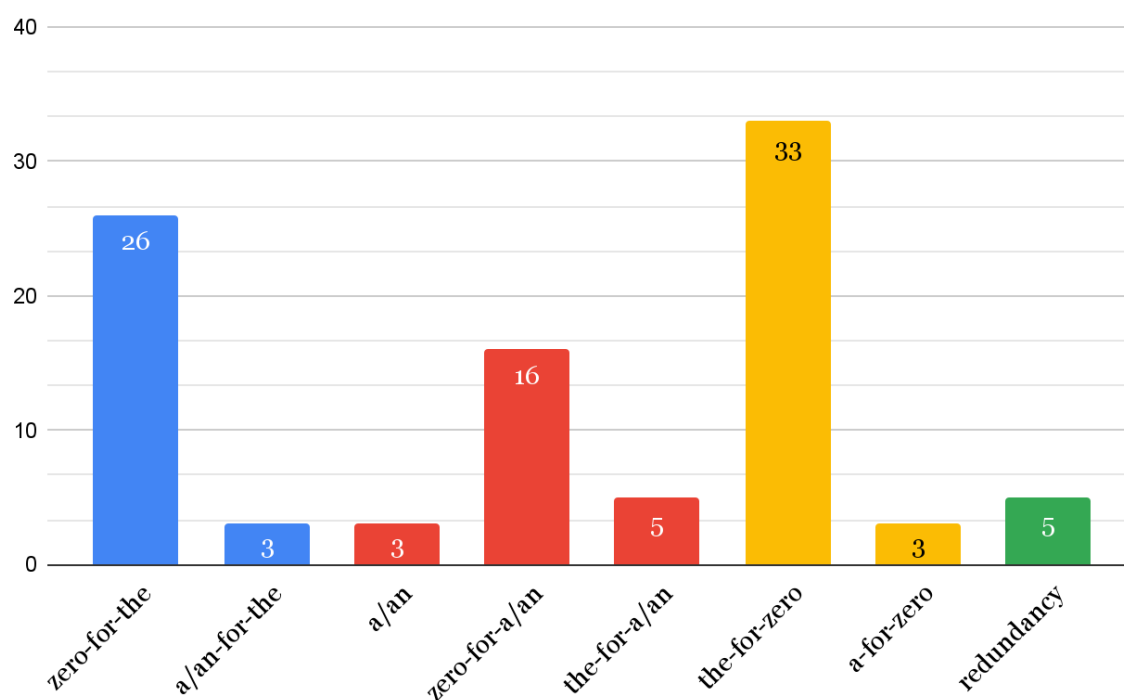
(4) *People valued action not \*CONTEMPLATIONS, and literature offered too much sentimentalism.* (028 - 2022)

(5) *More so nowadays, we need literature with beautiful \*WRITINGS that come from a pure heart and experiences that moves people...* (083 - 2022)

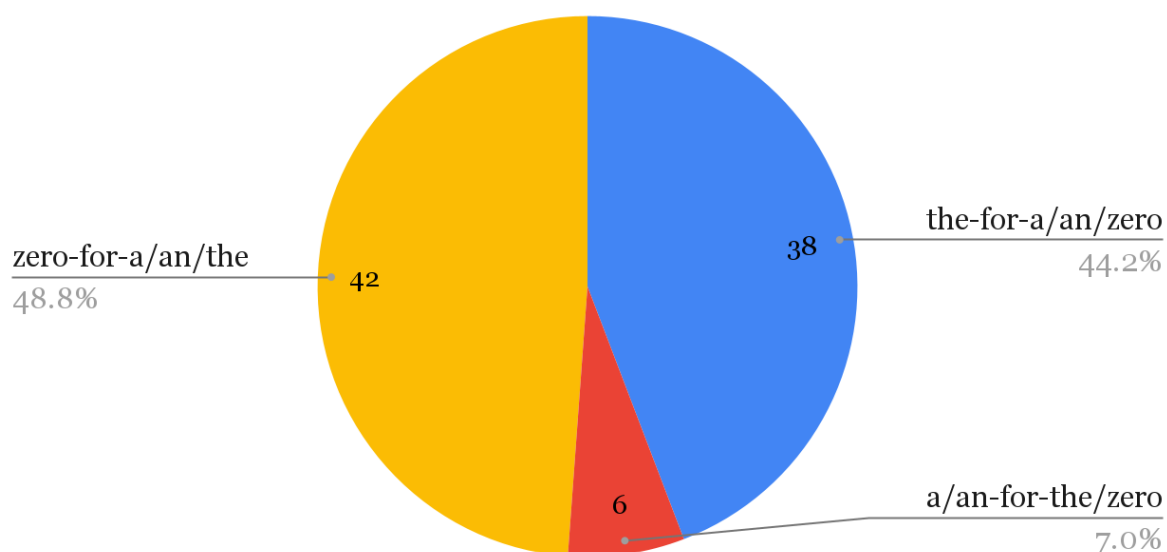
### 2.3.5 Article error types

With the article uses and errors that appeared in mind, it will be convenient to look at the error types more generally. These error types are illustrated in Graph 2, which shows what articles were most commonly used instead of others. On top of such replacement-type errors, there are also errors concerning the form of the indefinite article (3), whether “a” was used for “an” or vice versa, and redundancy (5). In the case of redundancy, instances where the article used was either unnecessary or should have been replaced with a possessive determiner were included.

Based on the graph, it can be seen that the definite article was most frequently used instead of the zero article (33), while the opposite was also fairly common (26). Using the zero article for the indefinite article (16) could also be observed in the sample. Other error types were relatively infrequent.

**Graph 2.** Error types in the TCELE sample

Based on Graph 3, it can be seen that the definite and zero articles were most often overused, in other words, used instead of the correct article. Whereas the indefinite article was mistakenly chosen only in 7% of the cases. These results show that when unsure which article to opt for, learners are more prone to choosing either the zero or definite article, both of which can be used in more contexts (Leroux & Kendall 2018).

**Graph 3.** Article overuse

## 2.4 Discussion

The emerging results indicate that Estonian EFL learners find the zero article most challenging as errors in two of its uses (generic reference, noncount abstract) had been made by ten or more people. At the same time, only one use of the definite article (cataphoric reference) and the indefinite article (nonreferring use) proved difficult. However, all four of these uses had been incorrectly used by 10–15 learners. To put the previously mentioned into context, errors in all other uses were misused by only four or fewer examinees. This difference in the number of mistakes may be due to the four most challenging uses being fairly frequent as a whole, meaning that since they were used so often, there were also more opportunities to err.

Although there were 2,138 article uses in the sample, only 4.4% (94) of them contained mistakes. This could be attributed to the fact that the examinees were presumably motivated learners of English as they had applied to the English language and literature programme. They were generally also more proficient English speakers, meaning they made fewer errors. This tendency is reported in the CEFR (2021: 114) that speakers at the B2 level “[show] a relatively high degree of grammatical control”. Although, because of the outlier that was 2014, the author of the current thesis took measures to make the proficiency level more consistent across the board, the length requirement alone was insufficient. For further research, it would be beneficial to consider, for instance, the lexical complexity of each essay as another criterion.

In addition, the seeming lack of mistakes reflects only some of the errors in the sample. Phrases that had either directly or indirectly been taken from the source text were excluded from the analysis. While with grammar tests, the vocabulary and structures are uniform and controlled, with essays dependent on another text, the boundaries between the

examinees' writing and what has been borrowed from the text start to blur. This means the findings only represent errors that were made in certain contexts.

According to one of the study's findings, omission-type errors, or in other words using the zero article instead of other articles, were the most frequent (see Graph 3). This is supported by the study by Narita (2013), who found that omission-type errors were frequent among Japanese EFL learners. Ekiert (2004) too saw a tendency to overuse the zero article among Polish learners, while Barrett & Chen (2011) observed the complete opposite — the zero article was underused. Despite the slight deviation, Master (1997: 227) further corroborates the inclination for [-ART] speakers to generally omit articles, stating that zero-for-*the* errors are a feature of [-ART] speakers' English usage. This corresponds with the findings of this study as this error type was found to be the second most common among the errors in the TCELE sample, only upstaged by *the*-for-zero errors.

There are a few possible explanations for such a tendency. Master (1997: 227) proposes that “the persistence of zero article usage by [-ART] speakers, even at advanced proficiency levels, may be due not only to interference from L1 and the difficulties of applying the article system [sic] but to the frequency with which the zero article occurs in the input”. Leroux and Kendall (2018) suggest a slightly different reason for such behaviour as they observed that the definite and the zero articles, which can be used in various contexts, were preferred. The same two articles were found to be overused in the current study as well, making Leroux and Kendall's explanation plausible.

*The*-overuse has been reported in numerous previous studies (e.g. Barrett & Chen 2011; Crompton 2011; Ekiert 2004; Narita 2013; Torn & Kährrik 2004), which is why it was not unexpected to see the same in the TCELE sample. Quirk *et al.* (1985: 254) reason this phenomenon might partly be due to the “the overuse of stressed articles for expected unstressed articles, especially on radio and TV” to, for instance, “indicate excellence” (e.g. *He*

would be *the* /ðɪ:/ man for the job). Thus, the overuse of the definite article is, similar to the zero article, attributed to its role in input.

Torn and Kährik (2004), who researched the use of articles among Estonian EFL learners, found some evidence of *the*-overuse. The authors identified two zero article categories that caused the most issues in that regard, those being the generic reference and noncount abstract. The same results emerged in the current study. Similarly to Torn and Kährik, errors in the generic and non-referring *of*-phrases were recorded in instances where the head noun was pre-modified. While they did not find any other category being a cause for worry, most likely because their main focus was one *the*-overuse, then in the thesis at hand, the cataphoric reference appeared also to be somewhat problematic. The reason for that might be as Yoo (2009) found that most ESL/EFL grammars overlook cataphoric uses, focusing too much on the anaphoric use of the definite article.

In addition to article use, some signs of article avoidance appeared. For example, Leroux and Kendall (2018) observed that one avoidance strategy speakers use is replacing the article with “some”. This was noted in the TCELE sample as well:

*When people travel to another country or start business with SOME foreign company, they are not able to learn the language in such short period of time. (101 - 2014)*

There were other instances of avoiding articles altogether with the numeral use of the indefinite article, such as using “100 years ago” instead of “a hundred years ago” or replacing the article with the numeral *one* for more emphasis. In many cases, examinees had also opted to use a determiner instead (e.g. *this interpretation, in his essay*), whether knowingly or unknowingly. Some article avoidance is typical and to be expected from more advanced learners of English, who are supposed to use more varied structures. Thus, the previously-mentioned instances are mere observations and are not generalisable to Estonian EFL learners at this point. To say anything more certain, the topic of article avoidance would need further research.

While some conclusions can still be drawn, that is not to say the study did not have its limitations. One of the more significant shortcomings was that the data analysis was done by one person only. Even if the consistency might be higher when compared to having multiple people assigning uses, then the results can be slightly biased without anyone to consult when unable to choose between two uses. There may also be human error, whether with cleaning or assigning uses, as well as errors due to the tagger mistagging certain words as ones that were excluded, resulting in those words not reaching the assigning phase. However, since such a variety of tags were pulled, mistags in multi-word phrases were more likely to be spotted.

As previously mentioned, sometimes selecting between two uses proved problematic. This was most often the case with phrases that seemed to belong into many categories; such instances were found working with cataphoric constructions that contained the logical use, such as in the following example:

*In conclusion I think the primary purpose of universities will help people reach their full potential and also make an impact on the common good. (164 - 2020)*

While the phrase “the primary function of universities” as a whole is cataphoric and would be even without the restrictive adjective “primary”, in such cases, its logical use was considered more significant. The cataphoric reference is already very much represented in the sample, so opting for the logical use in similar sentences means that the results are more nuanced and telling. While such choices may have affected the assigned uses, they did not affect the errors and corrections given.

Despite the study’s shortcomings, some small-scale conclusions can be drawn about Estonian EFL learners. While the study analysed the article use of learners who are perhaps more interested in their grammatical accuracy, it still provides valuable insight into errors that even more motivated learners make. The analysed participants being possibly more driven makes it, in fact, more likely for other Estonian EFL learners to commit such errors when writing essays or other texts. There is always the possibility of Estonian EFL learners making

errors not documented in this thesis or perhaps even fewer errors, depending on their previous language learning experiences; however, the current study provides a good starting point for identifying learner errors in Estonian learner English.

## CONCLUSION

Articles can be found in any English text. Despite the lack of lexical meaning, they nevertheless convey meaning, meaning that mistakes may affect the flow of conversation or “undermine the author’s integrity” (Master 1997: 216). Language learners consider articles rather straightforward due to how early they are taught. This might be due to how simple they are to describe formally. Yet, the semantics are challenging to describe, which is evident by the multitude of studies of EFL learners’ article usage (see Barrett & Chen 2011; Crompton 2011; Miller 2005; Narita 2013)

However, the same cannot be said about Estonian EFL learners, who have received only some attention. One of the most notable studies is by Torn and Kährik (2004). While their study provided insight into the mistakes Estonian EFL learners make, it did not analyse their writing. This topic is of importance as Estonian has no articles, thus learners with this first language have no prior knowledge to draw upon. Meaning that this aspect of language that is already confusing for any EFL learner puts Estonian EFL learners at an even greater disadvantage.

The present thesis addressed this research gap by posing the following research questions: 1) How do Estonian EFL learners misuse the English article system in university entrance exam essays in the *Tartu Corpus of Estonian Learner English* (TCELE)? 2) Which uses of articles do they find most challenging? The thesis at hand aimed to provide an overview of the types of errors Estonian EFL learners most commonly commit.

In order to answer the research questions about article misuse, 60 essays from the POS-tagged TCELE corpus were analysed. The concordance software Antconc was used to find all the necessary tags in the sample. The initial 6,284 concordance lines that emerged were cleaned to remove all unnecessary phrases that did not reflect the participants’ writing or instances where articles were impossible to be used. After the cleaning was complete, 2,138

concordance lines remained. These lines were assigned their article use and, when needed, the correction. The uses were based on the classification of articles by Quirk *et al.* (1985) with minor additions.

Out of all article uses, 4.4% were erroneous, which was expected from learners of English assumed to be at a B2 level. The findings suggest that Estonian EFL learners overuse both the zero and definite articles, which is in accordance with most previous studies (Ekiert 2004; Master 1997; Narita 2013). The two most common error types that emerged were replacing the definite article with the zero article, and vice versa. The results indicate that Estonian EFL learners find the zero article most challenging due to the generic reference and noncount abstract use. What also proved difficult was the use of the cataphoric reference of the definite article and nonreferring uses of the indefinite article. These results are in accordance with Torn and Kährik's (2004) study, where *the*-overuse was found to be prominent in zero article's generic reference and noncount abstract, and to a lesser extent in non-referring *of*-phrases. The results reveal that further attention should be given to the teaching of problematic article uses.

The present thesis provided some insight into the use of articles by Estonian EFL learners; however, further research on the topic would be valuable. Additional research could consider, for instance, article avoidance, of which some evidence was found in the current study. Likewise, an inquiry into the article usage of basic school Estonian EFL learners could contribute to a better understanding of Estonian EFL learners' peculiarities at different proficiency levels and ages.

## REFERENCES

- Anthony, Laurence. 2020. AntConc (3.5.9). [Software]. Tokyo, Japan: Waseda University. Available at <https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software/antconc/>, accessed 3 May 2023.
- Appendix 2 of Regulation No. 1 of the Government of the Republic of Estonia. National Curriculum for Basic Schools. 2014. Available at <https://www.hm.ee/en/national-curricula>, accessed March 2023.
- Barrett, Neil Edward and Li-mei Chen. 2011. English Article Errors in Taiwanese College Students' EFL Writing. *International Journal of Computational Linguistics & Chinese Language Processing*, 16: 3–4, 1–20.
- Biber, Douglas, Stig Johansson, Geoffrey N. Leech, Susan Conrad and Edward Finegan. 2021. *Grammar of Spoken and Written English*. Amsterdam and Philadelphia: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Cambridge Dictionary. 2023. in future. Available at: <https://dictionary.cambridge.org/dictionary/english/in-future>, accessed 14 May 2023.
- Council of Europe. 2001. *Common European Framework of Reference for Languages: Learning, teaching, assessment*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Crompton, Peter. 2011. Article Errors in the English Writing of Advanced L1 Arabic Learners: The Role of Transfer. *Asian EFL Journal*, 50: February, 4–34.
- Ekiert, Monika. 2004. Acquisition of the English Article System by Speakers of Polish in ESL and EFL Settings. *Studies in Applied Language and TESOL*, 4: 1, 1–23.
- Google LLC. 2023. Google Sheets. [Application]. California, USA. Available at: <https://www.google.com/sheets/about/>, accessed 3 May 2023.
- Grammarly. 2023. Grammarly. Available at: <https://app.grammarly.com/>, accessed 14 May 2023.
- Greenbaum, Sidney. 1996. *The Oxford English Grammar*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Greenbaum, Sidney and Randolph Quirk. 1990. *A Student's Grammar of the English Language*. Harlow: Longman.
- Ionin, Tania; Maria Luisa Zubizarreta and Salvador Bautista Maldonado. 2008. Sources of linguistic knowledge in the second language acquisition of English articles. *Lingua*, 118: 4, 554–576.
- Kahur, Helen. 2021. *Teaching the English article system based on 'I Love English 4'*. Unpublished MA thesis. Department of English, University of Tartu, Tartu, Estonia.
- Krashen, Stephen. 1982. *Principles and Practice in Second Language Acquisition*. Oxford/New York: Pergamon Press.
- Leroux, William and Tyler Kendall. 2018. English article acquisition by Chinese learners of

- English: An analysis of two corpora. *System*, 76: August, 13–24.
- Master, Peter. 1997. The English article system: Acquisition, function, and pedagogy. *System*, 25: 2, 215–232.
- Miller, Julia. 2005. Most of ESL students have trouble with the articles. *International Education Journal*, 5: 5, 80–88.
- Narita, Masumi. 2013. The use of articles in Japanese EFL learners' essays. In Sylviane Granger, Gaëtanelle Gilquin and Fanny Meunier (eds). *Twenty Years of Learner Corpus Research. Looking Back, Moving Ahead*, 357–366. Louvain-la-Neuve: Presses universitaires de Louvain.
- Ouertani, Yosra. 2013. Errors in the use of English articles among 1st and 4th year EFL students at the Higher Institute of Languages of Tunis (ISLT). *Journal of Teaching and Education*, 2: 4, 353–363.
- Pajusalu, Renate. 1997. Is there an article in (spoken) Estonian? In Mati Ereht (ed). *Estonian: Typological Studies II*, 146–177. Tartu: Tartu Ülikooli eesti keele õppetool.
- Parrott, Martin. 2000. *Grammar for English Language Teachers*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Quirk, Randolph, Sidney Greenbaum, Geoffrey Leech, and Jan Svartvik. 1985. *A Comprehensive Grammar of the English Language*. New York: Longman.
- Swan, Michael. 2017. *Practical English Usage*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Tammekänd, Liina and Reeli Torn-Leesik. 2022. POS-tagging Tartu Corpus of Estonian Learner English with CLAWS7. *Estonian Papers in Applied Linguistics*, 18, 263–278.
- Torn, Reeli and Kaja Kährrik. 2004. Lost in world of the articles. A study of the use of articles by Estonian learners of English. In Neil Murray and Tony Thorne (eds). *Multicultural Perspectives on English Language and Literature: International conference; Tallinn; 22.-23.05.2003*, 179–185. Tallinn, London: Tallinna Pedagoogikaülikooli Kirjastus.
- UCREL. n. d.a. CLAWS part-of-speech tagger for English. Available at <https://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws/>, accessed 3 May 2023.
- UCREL. n. d.b. UCREL CLAWS7 Tagset. Available at <http://ucrel.lancs.ac.uk/claws7tags.html>, accessed 3 May 2023.
- Ur, Penny. 2012. *A course in English language teaching*. 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Yoo, Isaiah WonHo. 2009. The English definite article: What ESL/EFL grammars say and what corpus findings show. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 8: 4, 267–278.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix 1. Selected POS tags from the UCREL CLAWS7 Tagset

AT	article (e.g. the, no)
FU	unclassified word
FW	foreign word
GE	germanic genitive marker - (' or's)
JJ	general adjective
JJR	general comparative adjective (e.g. older, better, stronger)
JJT	general superlative adjective (e.g. oldest, best, strongest)
MC	cardinal number, neutral for number (two, three..)
MC1	singular cardinal number (one)
MC2	plural cardinal number (e.g. sixes, sevens)
MCGE	genitive cardinal number, neutral for number (two's, 100's)
MCMC	hyphenated number (40-50, 1770-1827)
MD	ordinal number (e.g. first, second, next, last)
MF	fraction, neutral for number (e.g. quarters, two-thirds)
ND1	singular noun of direction (e.g. north, southeast)
NN	common noun, neutral for number (e.g. sheep, cod, headquarters)
NN1	singular common noun (e.g. book, girl)
NN2	plural common noun (e.g. books, girls)
NNA	following noun of title (e.g. M.A.)
NNB	preceding noun of title (e.g. Mr., Prof.)
NNL1	singular locative noun (e.g. Island, Street)
NNL2	plural locative noun (e.g. Islands, Streets)
NNO	numeral noun, neutral for number (e.g. dozen, hundred)
NNO2	numeral noun, plural (e.g. hundreds, thousands)

NNT1	temporal noun, singular (e.g. day, week, year)
NNT2	temporal noun, plural (e.g. days, weeks, years)
NNU	unit of measurement, neutral for number (e.g. in, cc)
NNU1	singular unit of measurement (e.g. inch, centimetre)
NNU2	plural unit of measurement (e.g. ins., feet)
NP	proper noun, neutral for number (e.g. IBM, Andes)
NP1	singular proper noun (e.g. London, Jane, Frederick)
NP2	plural proper noun (e.g. Browns, Reagans, Koreas)
NPD1	singular weekday noun (e.g. Sunday)
NPD2	plural weekday noun (e.g. Sundays)
NPM1	singular month noun (e.g. October)
NPM2	plural month noun (e.g. Octobers)
PN1	indefinite pronoun, singular (e.g. anyone, everything, nobody, one)
RGT	superlative degree adverb (most, least)
RRT	superlative general adverb (e.g. best, longest)
ZZ1	singular letter of the alphabet (e.g. A,b)
ZZ2	plural letter of the alphabet (e.g. A's, b's)

## Appendix 2. Article errors per essay

ESSAY	TOTAL USES	TOTAL ERRORS	ERROR %	zero-for-the	a/an-for-the	a/an	zero-for-a/an	the-for-a/an	the-for-zero	a-for-zero	redundancy
114 - 2021	28	6	21.4%	2			1		1	1	1
041 - 2020	30	6	20.0%					2	4		
040 - 2020	26	5	19.2%	2			1		1		1
088 - 2022	22	4	18.2%	3					1		
069 - 2014	24	4	16.7%	3					1		
121 - 2020	43	6	14.0%	3			1		1	1	
047 - 2020	24	3	12.5%				2		1		
088 - 2020	35	4	11.4%		2		1				1
101 - 2014	21	2	9.5%				1		1		
111 - 2014	21	2	9.5%				1		1		
083 - 2022	64	6	9.4%	1				1	3	1	
023 - 2014	34	3	8.8%						3		
068 - 2020	25	2	8.0%	1			1				
036 - 2020	40	3	7.5%	1					1		1
079 - 2020	40	3	7.5%				1		2		
082 - 2022	43	3	7.0%					1	2		
027 - 2014	15	1	6.7%	1							
099 - 2014	32	2	6.3%	1			1				
037 - 2014	18	1	5.6%				1				
155 - 2022	55	3	5.5%						2		1
059 - 2022	37	2	5.4%				1		1		

ESSAY	TOTAL USES	TOTAL ERRORS	ERROR %	zero-for-the	a/an-for-the	a/an	zero-for-a/an	the-for-a/an	the-for-zero	a-for-zero	redundancy
062 - 2022	37	2	5.4%						2		
014 - 2020	38	2	5.3%					1	1		
044 - 2014	39	2	5.1%	2							
126 - 2021	41	2	4.9%	1					1		
093 - 2014	22	1	4.5%						1		
048 - 2020	46	2	4.3%	1	1						
106 - 2022	23	1	4.3%	1							
149 - 2020	27	1	3.7%				1				
071 - 2022	27	1	3.7%						1		
091 - 2022	28	1	3.6%	1							
135 - 2022	32	1	3.1%			1					
009 - 2021	35	1	2.9%			1					
010 - 2020	38	1	2.6%						1		
002 - 2022	38	1	2.6%	1							
009 - 2022	39	1	2.6%				1				
017 - 2020	44	1	2.3%				1				
120 - 2021	48	1	2.1%	1							
164 - 2020	114	1	0.9%			1					
<b>Total</b>	<b>1393</b>	<b>94</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>26</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>5</b>

## RESÜMEE

TARTU ÜLIKOOL

ANGLISTIKA OSAKOND

**Johanna Konso**

**Estonian EFL learners' misuse of the English article system: a corpus-based study**  
**Eesti inglise keelt võõrkeelena (EFL) õppijate inglise keele artiklisüsteemi väärkasutus:**  
**korpusepõhine uuring**

magistritöö

2023

Lehekülgede arv: 50

Annotatsioon:

Käesolev magistritöö uurib Eesti inglise keelt võõrkeelena (EFL) õppijate inglise keele artiklisüsteemi väärkasutust, eesmärgiga anda ülevaade vigadest, mida teevad Eesti EFL õppijad kirjutamisel kõige sagedamini. Selleks, et leida artiklikasutused, mida õppijad peavad kõige keerulisemaks, analüüsiti 60 esseed sõnaliikidega märgendatud TCELE korpusest. Selle tulemusena määrati 2138 artiklikasutusele nende artiklikasutus, mis põhines Quirk *et al.* (1985) artiklite klassifikatsioonil, ja vajaduse korral ka parandus.

Magistritöö koosneb kahest peatükist: kirjandusülevaatest ja empiirilisest analüüsist. Esimeses peatükis antakse ülevaade antud uurimuses kasutatud artiklite liigitusest. Sellele järgneb arutelu inglise keele artiklisüsteemi varasemate uuringute kohta, keskendudes erinevate EFL õppijate ja artiklite vahelistele suhetele. Teises peatükis tutvustatakse kasutatud korpust, antakse ülevaade meetoditest ja esitatakse ning arutletakse tulemuste üle.

Tulemused näitasid, et vaid 4,4% artiklitest vajasid parandust, mis on B2-tasemel inglise keele õppijate puhul ootuspärane. Tulemused viitavad sellele, et Eesti EFL õppijad kasutavad nii null- kui ka määravat artiklit liigselt, mis on kooskõlas enamiku varasemate uuringutega. Kaks kõige sagedasemat veatüüpi, mis ilmnesisid, olid määrava artikli asendamine null artikliga ning vastupidi. Tulemused näitavad, et Eesti EFL õppijad peavad nullartiklit kõige keerulisemaks selle üldises kasutuses (*generic reference*) ning loendamatu abstraktsete sõnade kasutuses (*noncount abstract use*). Keeruliseks osutusid ka määrava artikli katafoorne kasutus (*cataphoric reference*) ja umbmäärase artikli mitteviitavad kasutused (*nonreferring uses*).

**Märksõnad:** Inglise keel ja keeleteadus, grammatika, õppijakeel, õppijakorpus, korpusuuring, artiklisüsteem

**Lihtlitsents lõputöö reprodutseerimiseks ja lõputöö üldsusele kättesaadavaks tegemiseks**

Mina, Johanna Konso,

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) minu loodud teose Estonian EFL learners' misuse of the English article system: a corpus-based study, mille juhendaja on Liina Tammekänd, reprodutseerimiseks eesmärgiga seda säilitada, sealhulgas lisada digitaalarhiivi DSpace kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.
2. Annan Tartu Ülikoolile loa teha punktis 1 nimetatud teos üldsusele kättesaadavaks Tartu Ülikooli veebikeskkonna, sealhulgas digitaalarhiivi DSpace kaudu Creative Commons'i litsentsiga CC BY NC ND 3.0, mis lubab autorile viidates teost reprodutseerida, levitada ja üldsusele suunata ning keelab luua tuletatud teost ja kasutada teost ärieesmärgil, kuni autoriõiguse kehtivuse lõppemiseni.
3. Olen teadlik, et punktides 1 ja 2 nimetatud õigused jäävad alles ka autorile.
4. Kinnitan, et lihtlitsentsi andmisega ei riku ma teiste isikute intellektuaalomandi ega isikuandmete kaitse õigusaktidest tulenevaid õigusi.

Digiallkirjastatud  
Johanna Konso

16.05.2023

**Autorsuse kinnitus**

Kinnitan, et olen koostanud käesoleva magistritöö ise ning toonud korrektselt välja teiste autorite panuse. Töö on koostatud lähtudes Tartu Ülikooli maailma keelte ja kultuuride kolledži anglistika osakonna magistritöö nõuetest ning on kooskõlas heade akadeemiliste tavadega.

Digiallkirjastatud  
Johanna Konso

16.05.2023

**Lõputöö on lubatud kaitsmisele.**

Liina Tammekänd

16.05.2023