

Tartu University  
Faculty of Social Sciences  
Narva College  
Study Program Language Teacher in a Multilingual School

Elizaveta Konovalova

**DIFFERENCES IN ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS AMONG 12TH GRADE  
ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN-SPEAKING STUDENTS IN ESTONIA**

Master's Thesis

Supervisor: lect. Olga Orehhova

Narva 2024

Olen koostanud töö iseseisvalt. Kõik töö koostamisel kasutatud teiste autorite tööd, põhimõttelised seisukohad, kirjandus allikatest ja mujalt pärinevad andmed on viidatud.

*Elizaveta Konovalova*  
20.05.2024

## PREFACE

In today's interconnected world, honing English writing skills is quite important for individuals across diverse spheres. Proficiency in written English facilitates effective communication, enabling individuals to articulate ideas with clarity, coherence, and precision. In academic settings, strong writing skills are essential for composing research papers, essays, and presentations, allowing students to express their thoughts persuasively and demonstrate critical thinking. Moreover, in professional contexts, good writing skills are vital for crafting compelling reports, emails, and business correspondence, fostering credibility and professionalism. Ultimately, mastery of English writing empowers individuals to convey their thoughts, ideas, and experiences with impact and efficacy, driving success in both academic and professional endeavors.

With an observed proficiency gap in 12<sup>th</sup>-grade Estonian and Russian-speaking students' English examination results (EIS, 2022), understanding the exact language difficulties and factors contributing to this gap is crucial for educational equity and effective language instruction. Possible reasons for this gap could stem from differences in linguistic backgrounds, educational resources, or teaching methodologies. Addressing this issue can inform tailored interventions to support all students in overcoming linguistic barriers and achieving proficiency in English, and written English in particular. Moreover, it promotes inclusivity within the educational system by ensuring equitable opportunities for all students, regardless of their linguistic backgrounds.

The research paper consists of four parts: the Introduction, two core chapters, and the Conclusion. The Introduction provides an overview of the educational landscape in Estonia concerning the instruction of foreign languages within its schools. Additionally, it encompasses an analysis of examination data, delineating disparities in performance among candidates whose native language is Estonian or Russian, while also exploring the perceptions of the English language among Estonian and Russian speakers within Estonia. Chapter I *Teaching Writing in Upper-Secondary School* concentrates on elucidating the concept of *the writing skill* and its constituents. Additionally, it scrutinizes various genres of writing and assessment criteria utilized in English examinations. This chapter further contrasts the levels of English proficiency in writing ranging from B1 to C1. Moreover, it discusses different strategies employed in teaching writing and delineates potential challenges encountered by students in this domain. Chapter II *Estonian and*

*Russian-speaking Upper-Secondary School Students' English Writing Skills* focuses on analysis and discussion of the findings of an empirical research study into the differences in English writing skills among 12<sup>th</sup>-grade Estonian and Russian-speaking students. Additionally, it offers methodological recommendations aimed at addressing prevalent errors and challenges identified through the research process. The Conclusion summarizes the primary theoretical and practical findings delineated within the paper.

PREFACE.....	3
<i>Contents</i>	
1. INTRODUCTION.....	6
1.1. Languages in Estonian Education.....	6
1.2. Language Exam Statistics.....	7
1.3. Estonian Speakers' Perception of the English Language in Estonia.....	8
1.4. Russian Speakers' Perception of the English Language in Estonia.....	11
2. CHAPTER I TEACHING WRITING IN UPPER-SECONDARY SCHOOL.....	14
2.1. The Writing Skill.....	14
2.2. Genres of Written Texts in the English State Exam and Cambridge C1 Exam.....	14
2.3. Level of English according to the National Curriculum for Upper Secondary School ..	15
2.4. Level B1-C1 writing.....	16
2.5. Marking Scale of the English State Examination.....	17
2.6. Teaching Writing.....	18
2.7. Writing Difficulties.....	23
3. CHAPTER II ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN-SPEAKING UPPER-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS.....	25
3.1. Participants of the Study and Description of the Curriculum.....	25
3.2. Survey of Students' Exposure to English.....	26
3.3. English State Exam Writing Task Given in Both Groups.....	31
3.4. The Assessment and Analysis of Russian-speaking Students' Writing.....	32
3.5. The Assessment and Analysis of Estonian-speaking Students' Writing.....	38
3.6. Comparison of Results of Russian-speaking and Estonian-speaking Students.....	41
3.7. Methodological Support.....	42
CONCLUSION.....	48
KOKKUVÕTE. EESTI 12. KLASSI EESTIKEELSETE JA VENEKEELSETE ÕPILASTE ERINEVUSED INGLISE KEELE KIRJUTAMISOSKUSES.....	50
REFERENCES.....	52

# 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Languages in Estonian Education

At present, Estonia has a bilingual education system, with schools offering education in both Estonian and Russian languages. The language of instruction in schools can vary based on the demographic composition of the region and the preferences of the local community. In Estonia, many schools conduct classes primarily in Estonian, while others also have Russian as their language of instruction.

Students in Estonian schools are usually required to learn at least two foreign languages. English is commonly taught as the first foreign language, and students also have a variety of languages to learn as a second foreign language as well. These languages are often Russian, German and French. While Russian-speaking students in Estonian schools with Russian as a language of instruction are exposed to Estonian as a subject (Estonian as a second language), they also typically learn foreign languages. Similar to Estonian schools, English is often taught as the first foreign language, and students may have the option to study a second foreign language. Additionally, it is important to mention that, at the upper-secondary level, Russian-speaking students follow the 60/40 system in their studies. 60 percent of the subjects are taught in Estonian, and 40 percent in Russian. Subjects that are considered challenging to understand are often taught in Russian, while all others are taught in Estonian. For instance, Mathematics, Chemistry, and Physics are often taught in Russian.

In addition, Estonia also has a system of A- and B- foreign languages. It is written in the National Curriculum for Basic Schools (2023) that either English, French, or German are studied as A-foreign languages, and English, French, German, Russian, Spanish, Finnish, Swedish, Latvian or another foreign language is studied as a B-foreign language. There is no compulsory B-foreign language for a student studying Estonian as a second language. The choice between A and B languages is made by the basic school, taking into account the school's facilities and the wishes of the students and their parents. By the end of the basic school, students are expected to achieve a B1 level in their A-foreign language.

The National Curriculum for Upper-secondary Schools (2023) follows the concept of the National Curriculum for Basic Schools. Students are now expected to reach a B2 proficiency level in their

A-foreign language (English, German, French) and a B1 level in their B-foreign language (English, German, French, Spanish, Russian, or another B-foreign language). Students studying Estonian as a second language have one compulsory foreign language in their school program.

## **1.2. Language Exam Statistics**

Based on the Estonian Population Census data (2022), English emerges as the predominant foreign language spoken in Estonia, with 48 percent of the population being able to speak English. Notably, 54% of Estonian-speakers speak English, whereas only 29% of Russians-speakers residing in Estonia are conversant in the language.

Students in upper-secondary schools in Estonia have the flexibility to select their preferred English examination. They have the option to choose between the state exam and the Cambridge C1 exam. Additionally, students can opt for alternative international English proficiency exams, such as IELTS or TOEFL and submit the corresponding certificates to exempt themselves from the state exam. Instead of choosing the state exam, numerous students decide to undertake and successfully pass the Cambridge C1 examination; however, they first need to successfully pass the Cambridge English Placement Test (CEPT) in their schools and reach level C1 to qualify for the actual C1 examination.

The primary reason for choosing to do the Cambridge C1 exam may be that it provides students with an internationally recognized certification of their English proficiency based on their performance, an opportunity not offered by the state examination in English. The Estonian Education and Youth Board's (*Harno*) statistics for the year 2022 results of both exams serve as a pertinent example. In 2022, in the English language state exam, 4,015 candidates participated, with 28.6 percent attaining a B1 level (50-74 points out of 100) and 47.5 percent reaching B2 (75-100 points out of 100). The average score stood at 66.5 points out of 100 (i.e., level B1). Contrastingly, during the 2022-2023 academic year, the Cambridge C1 Advanced international English exam witnessed the participation of 4,439 students. Of those students, a notable 81.8 percent, or 3,630 students, achieved a level of C1 or higher.

The Education and Youth Board's statistics (2023) show significant disparities in examination outcomes between speakers of Estonian and Russian in the 2022/2023 Cambridge C1 Advanced examination. Specifically, 20.6 percent of Estonian candidates reached the C2 proficiency level,

and 64.3 percent attained the C1 level, in contrast to the outcomes for Russian speakers, where only 7.4 percent achieved the C2 proficiency level, and 55.1 percent attained the C1 level.

As per the data presented in the Cambridge Annual Report for the Academic Year 2022-2023 (2023), it is evident that proficiency in writing and reading poses significant challenges for English language learners. For example, in the aforementioned academic year, a mere 11 percent of students attained a C2 level while 64 percent achieved a C1 level in writing in the C1 examination. Similarly, in reading, only 24 percent reached a C2 level, with 46 percent reaching a C1 level. In contrast, proficiency in speaking and listening demonstrated relatively higher levels of attainment, with 54 percent achieving a C1 level in listening and 36 percent attaining a C2 level. Additionally, 72 percent of participants reached a C1 level in speaking, while 13 percent reached a C2 level.

### **1.3. Estonian Speakers' Perception of the English Language in Estonia**

English has increasingly impacted the Estonian language and society, particularly due to globalization, technological advancements, and the influence of English-speaking media. English has contributed significantly to the enrichment of Estonian vocabulary, especially in areas like technology, business, and pop culture (Pedaja, 20026). Many English words and phrases have been integrated into Estonian daily speech, particularly among younger generations who are more exposed to English through the internet, social media, and international travelling. Especially among younger Estonians, code-switching between Estonian and English is becoming increasingly common, particularly in urban areas and among bilingual speakers. This can result in a blend of languages in casual conversation, with individuals seamlessly switching between Estonian and English words or phrases.

Associate Professor of Psycholinguistics Vihman (2021) claims that Estonian youth “are characterized by openness to new directions, trends, new words, finding new uses for old words.” The heightened sense of edginess is compounded by the swift pace of social media, technological advancements, and rapid growth and progress. Hence, young individuals demonstrate remarkable agility in adapting to diverse platforms, exhibiting rapid adoption rates as they actively pursue novel experiences. Vihman (2021) also believes that social media platforms exert an influence on language usage, particularly due to the prevalence of English content and the small amount of Estonian content. According to Vihman (2021), Estonian adolescents regard their native language positively, viewing it not as undesirable but rather as a pleasant and familiar aspect of their culture,

akin to “visiting their grandmother’s house during the summer”. Lindström (2021) posits that the characteristics of English language utilization aggregate within the speech patterns of adolescents, representing a prevalent psychological divergence and clash with older generations. Nevertheless, this surge in divergence typically transpires during adolescence and gradually diminishes in subsequent years. Thus, it is not indicative that all linguistic features observed in teenage discourse will endure indefinitely; rather, they are subject to potential alteration.

Argus (2014), an Estonian language professor at Tallinn University, supports that there is the notion of potential change by illustrating how student slang evolves to a certain degree over time. Simultaneously, certain methods of slang formation persist, particularly through abbreviation or the adoption of pre-existing English abbreviations (e.g., “lol”). Additionally, she finds it somewhat unexpected that words borrowed from Finnish are also incorporated, despite the expectation that English would overwhelmingly prevail as a loanword donor in contemporary Estonian. She further noted the emergence of a distinct realm within contemporary popular culture centered on online videos. These videos represent a departure from traditional media focus on movie stars or celebrities, instead featuring commonplace individuals engaged in often mundane or even bizarre activities. The rapid dissemination of content from such videos can lead to widespread adoption of their vernacular expressions in English. Consequently, it is plausible that these colloquialisms will integrate into the lexicon of student language in the foreseeable future.

In contrast, Pervik (2017) suggests that parents should instill discipline in their children regarding language usage. She posits that mixing languages can not only influence thought processes but also lead to confusion of ideas.

The utilization of slang by youth poses challenges for adults in comprehension. For instance, in 2017, an experiment led by Ehin and Gavronski involved Estonian schoolchildren tasked with crafting sentences containing computer terminology that would be incomprehensible to older individuals, incorporating numerous foreign words. Consequently, the groups generated sentences such as “Yo dude, ma rushin mängu, #get ban nub” or “kle tule pelame Robloxi!”.

Older generations of Estonians may hold more conservative attitudes towards the influence of English on their language. They may perceive the increasing use of English as a threat to the purity and preservation of Estonian culture and language. However, younger Estonians may view English

as a tool for global communication and economic advancement, embracing its influence as a means of participating in the globalized world.

Leemets (2009) argues that Estonians should not perceive English as a threat to the Estonian language. However, if native speakers start to regard their mother tongue as lacking, ineffective, or incapable of expressing “novel” ideas, they should reconsider their reliance on English and prioritize the use of Estonian. Leemets (2009) advocates for a greater emphasis on Estonian language usage in such instances.

Tomusk (2023), Director General of the Language Board, underscores the bilingual nature of the prevailing language legislation. He emphasizes that while Estonian serves as the official language, the concurrent prominence of a foreign language in public discourse holds equal standing, exerting a notable influence on our communication patterns. Tomusk’s remarks highlight the significance of the Mother Tongue Day in this context. He asserts that primarily the issue pertains to the language practices observed on social media platforms among young individuals. However, he notes that the integration of a foreign language has somewhat permeated our informal daily communication. For instance, numerous direct translations from English have surfaced, leading to instances where the nuances of the Estonian language are compromised.

Lahe and Väli (2023) present data indicating Estonians' proficiency in foreign languages. The statistics reveal that 78% of Estonian citizens possess some level of proficiency in a foreign language. A notable observation arises when comparing the linguistic abilities of Estonians with other nationalities residing in the country, particularly regarding English proficiency. A significant proportion, 54% of Estonians, demonstrate some proficiency in English, surpassing other nationalities such as Latvians (44%), Finns (39%), Russians (29%), Ukrainians (28%), and Belarusians (19%).

Overall, while English has undoubtedly influenced the Estonian language and culture, the attitudes towards this influence vary among different age groups. Younger Estonians may embrace English as a means of accessing global opportunities and cultural exchange, while older generations may express concerns about the potential erosion of traditional language and cultural values. Balancing the preservation of Estonian language and culture with the benefits of English proficiency and global connectivity remains an ongoing challenge for Estonian society.

#### 1.4. Russian Speakers' Perception of the English Language in Estonia

Like Estonians, many Russian speakers living in Estonia recognize the importance of English proficiency for education and employment opportunities. Russian speakers in Estonia may also engage in code-switching, blending Russian and English in their speech, particularly in urban areas and among younger generations. This can be influenced by exposure to English-language media and social interactions with Estonians.

English is frequently taught as an A-foreign language in Estonian schools providing native Russian-speaking Estonians with exposure to English through formal education. As a result, those who have received such education are quite likely to incorporate English words into their daily conversations. Furthermore, the prevalence of English-language media, including films, TV shows, and music, plays a significant role.

Szabolcs (2010) contends that a prominent impetus behind the integration of English vocabulary into Russian stems from the principle of economical expression. Within the Russian linguistic framework, the preference for succinctness is evident, often manifesting in the utilization of single-word expressions. In this context, anglicisms serve as a pragmatic solution to fulfill the exigencies of concise communication. For instance, the substitution of the lengthy Russian phrase “борьба на руках” with its English counterpart (arm-wrestling) exemplifies this tendency.

Russian-speaking students in Estonia similarly engage in the utilization of slang, akin to their Estonian counterparts. Their slang lexicon comprises elements derived from the Russian, Estonian, and English languages. Afanasiev (2022), a student at Tallinn University, collaborated with fellow students on a research endeavor. Their study involved surveying 195 students from Russian schools, comprising 133 upper secondary students and 63 basic school students. The survey comprised 20 words, each requiring participants to rate the frequency of personal usage. For instance, the word “валик” means an optional subject a student can take in school, derived from the Estonian “valikaine”. However, Russian-speaking students also incorporate a considerable amount of English slang into their language, employing terms like “кринж” (cringe), “треш” (trash), “краш” (crush), and “вайб” (vibe).

Ehala and Niglas (2003) observed that students in Estonian schools whose native language is Russian exhibit notably lower levels of English language usage compared to their Estonian counterparts.

In contrast to Estonians, Russian speakers typically do not fear for their language, largely due to the wider global dissemination of Russian. Often the incorporation of new elements into a language is complicated by the presence of established substitutes that enjoy greater frequency of usage. As elucidated by the *Estonica* encyclopedia (2018), the Estonian-speaking population is estimated at approximately 1.1 million individuals. Likewise, insights provided by the *Wisevoter* website, in their discourse on *Russian-speaking countries* (2023), underscore the expansive linguistic domain of Russian, encompassing an estimated 260 million native speakers alongside an additional 120 million individuals proficient in the language as non-native speakers.

Overall, while Russian remains the primary language of communication for many Russians living in Estonia, English can still play a significant role in their lives, particularly in education, employment, and cultural exchange. The extent to which English influences the Russian language and communication patterns among Russian speakers in Estonia can vary depending on factors such as age, education, and exposure to English-language media and social networks.

Unfortunately, the topic of English skills among 12<sup>th</sup>-grade Estonian and Russian-speaking students in Estonia has not yet been covered much. Raud (2008) undertook an inquiry into the landscape of foreign language instruction, particularly at the elementary level, within Estonia. Within the research, the author notes that the noticeable discrepancy in the level of English language proficiency between Russian- and Estonian-speaking students may be largely due to the unequal distribution of teaching hours and educational support. It is also noteworthy that in schools where Estonian is the sole medium of instruction, English is introduced as the main foreign language (A-language) from the first or second grade. On the contrary, in schools with Russian as a language of instruction, the study of English starts from the first or second grade, albeit as an optional subject, and amounts to only one hour per week. It is significant that the study of a foreign language becomes compulsory from the third grade.

English is a popular choice of the first foreign language in Estonian schools; however, there is a disparity in English language proficiency between Estonian and Russian-speaking students. The present research can be relevant for English teachers as it will help understand the possible reasons

for such differences in language proficiency among students and will provide possible ways how to address these in the classroom.

The aims of the research are:

- 1) to reveal differences in English writing skills among Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking 12<sup>th</sup> graders and possible reasons for such differences;
- 2) to suggest methodological recommendations to improve students' writing skills in English.

The research questions are:

- 1) What issues do Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking 12<sup>th</sup> graders have in writing in English and how do their writing skills compare?
- 2) What methodological support can be suggested to work on these issues and improve students' writing?

## **2. CHAPTER I TEACHING WRITING IN UPPER-SECONDARY SCHOOL**

### **2.1. The Writing Skill**

Herrity (2023) claims that the writing skill in a foreign language refers to the ability to effectively communicate thoughts, ideas, and information using written words. It involves proficiency in grammar, vocabulary, spelling, punctuation, and sentence structure specific to the target language. Furthermore, writing in a foreign language requires understanding of cultural nuances, idiomatic expressions, and appropriate conventions for different types of written communication, such as formal letters, essays, emails, reports, or creative pieces. Given the focus of this research paper on English examinations, formal letters, essays, and reports constitute the typical assignments encountered in such examinations.

Zhu (2004) further noted that academic writing encompasses the comprehension of specific methods of conveying ideas and information, which relies on fundamental writing skills as a groundwork. Additionally, writing fosters creativity, imagination, and comprehension of ideas. It serves as a cognitive process, requiring mental effort to arrange thoughts into written form; thus, writers must engage in imaginative and creative endeavors to articulate their ideas effectively. Consequently, integrating writing skill instruction into primary school curricula is imperative, given its crucial role in communication within our globalized society (Hyland, 2015).

According to the handbook “Assessing Writing for Cambridge English Qualifications: A Guide for Teachers, B2” (2020), students can achieve maximum examination points in their language use by incorporating a diverse range of vocabulary, including less common lexis used appropriately. This refers to vocabulary that is not frequently utilized in a given context, possibly because it expresses highly specific ideas or concepts. Regarding English state examinations, Harno (2018) offers guidance on achieving the highest score in vocabulary, emphasizing the necessity for accuracy, appropriateness, and breadth of vocabulary, as well as maintaining an appropriate tone and register. Some minor errors may be tolerated.

### **2.2. Genres of Written Texts in the English State Exam and Cambridge C1 Exam**

The written components of these exams both comprise two tasks and share a common time constraint of 90 minutes. The English state exam offers such written assignments as formal letters, essays, and reports. The initial task consistently involves composing a letter, limited to 120 words.

These letters may take the form of complaints, job applications, or university admission enquiries. Essays are restricted to 200 words and typically require addressing up to three questions, depending on the assignment, while also expressing opinions. Reports also adhere to a 200-word limit and commonly involve presenting data through tables or graphs containing numerical information. Students are expected to summarize the content of these tables or graphs in text and often analyze the patterns of these numbers or percentages, providing possible reasons for any observed changes.

The Cambridge C1 Advanced examination comprises two written tasks. The first task entails composing an essay, constrained to a word count ranging from 220 to 260 words. Examinees are required to integrate provided information into their essay while articulating their personal viewpoints. While they may utilize provided options as prompts, original expression is encouraged whenever possible.

The second task of the writing component offers a choice. Examinees may opt to produce one of the following: a report, a review, a letter, or a proposal, with the same word limit of 220 to 260. Reports do not entail numerical data but rather necessitate evaluating information and proposing potential reasons and solutions for the future. Reviews involve critiquing a product or location based on specified criteria outlined in the assignment. Letters may adopt either formal or semi-formal tones, providing variation. Proposals involve suggesting plausible solutions for updating and modernizing a particular aspect.

### **2.3. Level of English according to the National Curriculum for Upper Secondary School**

As per the National Curriculum for Upper Secondary Schools (2023), upon completion of their studies, students should demonstrate proficiency in at least two foreign languages at the level of an independent language user (B2-B1). Teachers are responsible for providing ongoing feedback to students throughout the school day to help shape their behavior, attitudes, and values. The teaching of values is integrated into students' English language learning. Passing a foreign language exam is a requirement for graduation from upper secondary school. Students have the option to sit for the state English language examination, assessing proficiency levels at B1 and B2 (depending on the final score). Additionally, students may opt for an internationally recognized language exam equivalent to the national one or submit a previously obtained examination certificate at their own cost instead of taking the exam, as mentioned earlier.

## **2.4. Level B1-C1 writing**

Several instruments originating from the Council of Europe (2001) have exerted a profound influence on the pedagogy of foreign languages. These instruments have been pivotal in promoting methodological innovations and pioneering novel approaches to curriculum development, notably through the advocacy and advancement of a communicative approach. Through the process of identifying language needs, they were able to identify the knowledge and skills necessary for reaching a certain proficiency milestone.

The Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR) categorizes language proficiency into six levels, ranging from A1 to C2, which are further grouped into three overarching categories: Basic User, Independent User, and Proficient User. These categories can be further segmented based on the specific requirements of the local context. The proficiency levels are delineated through “can-do” descriptors.

According to the “Global scale - Table 1 (CEFR 3.3): Common Reference levels” (2001), the C1 level falls within the Proficient User category. A language user at this level can comprehend a broad spectrum of challenging, lengthy texts and grasp implicit meanings. They can articulate themselves fluently and spontaneously, with minimal hesitation in expression. They exhibit versatile and effective language usage across social, academic, and professional contexts. Furthermore, they are capable of generating clear, meticulously structured, and elaborate texts on intricate topics, demonstrating adept control over organizational structures, connectors, and cohesive elements.

The B2 level is categorized as an Independent User. An individual at this level is characterized by their ability to comprehend the primary concepts of intricate texts covering both concrete and abstract subjects, including technical discussions within their specialized field. They can engage in interactions with a level of fluency and spontaneity that facilitates seamless communication with native speakers, without causing strain for either party. Moreover, they can generate clear and detailed written compositions on diverse topics, and articulate their viewpoint on contemporary issues by presenting the pros and cons of various options.

The B1 level also belongs to the Independent User category. At this level, a language user can comprehend the primary aspects of straightforward, standard content on familiar topics commonly

encountered in work, school, leisure activities, etc. They can handle most situations likely to occur while traveling in regions where the language is spoken. Additionally, they are capable of generating simple, coherent written passages on familiar or personally interesting subjects. They can also narrate experiences and events, discuss dreams, aspirations, and briefly provide reasons and explanations for opinions and plans.

According to the “Self-assessment grid - Table 2 (CEFR 3.3): Common Reference levels” by CEFR (2001), individuals learning a foreign language can evaluate their writing proficiency based on the descriptions outlined in this table.

At the B1 level, writers can produce straightforward, coherent text on familiar or personally interesting topics. This includes composing personal letters that delve into experiences and impressions.

Advancing to B2, individuals demonstrate the ability to generate articulate, detailed content covering a wide range of subjects related to their interests. This encompasses crafting essays or reports to convey information or argue for or against particular viewpoints. Additionally, they can craft letters that underscore the personal significance of events and experiences.

Finally, at the C1 level, writers exhibit the capacity to express themselves effectively in clear, well-structured text, delving into viewpoints at length. They can tackle complex subjects through letters, essays, or reports, highlighting key issues. Moreover, they possess the skill to adjust their writing style appropriately to suit the target audience.

## **2.5. Marking Scale of the English State Examination**

The writing assessment may vary slightly when writing the English State exam. For instance, when it comes to grading letters, there are three main criteria: task completion, vocabulary, and grammar. Achieving the highest grade in task completion entails addressing and elaborating on all aspects of the task with clear organization, such as logical paragraph divisions. Regarding vocabulary, the top score is awarded for using appropriate and task-relevant language, with only minor errors allowed. Additionally, maintaining an appropriate tone, register, and correct spelling is essential. Finally, in terms of grammar, the highest rating is given for being grammatically correct, with possibly a few

minor mistakes, utilizing complex sentence structures accurately, and demonstrating proficient punctuation usage.

When assessing an essay for the English state exam, the assessment is categorized into four main areas: task completion, organization, vocabulary, and grammar. Task completion entails addressing all aspects of the task appropriately, with ideas elaborated upon and supported. Organization refers to the essay being well-structured, containing all necessary elements, clear paragraphs, and employing natural linking devices. Vocabulary should be accurate, suitable for the context, and diverse, maintaining an appropriate tone and register, along with correct spelling. Achieving the highest points for grammar involves utilizing a variety of grammatical structures correctly, frequently incorporating complex sentences and structures, and effectively managing punctuation.

Finally, when assessing a report, the assessment criteria align with those of an essay, comprising four categories: task completion, organization, vocabulary, and grammar. Task completion necessitates appropriate discussion of the data, with explanations provided for the resulting outcomes, ensuring relevance and direct linkage to differences. The highest points for organization are awarded to reports that are clearly structured and systematically presented, with paragraphs maintaining a clear focus, purpose, and correct formatting. Vocabulary should be precise and tailored to the task, while maintaining an appropriate tone, register, and spelling accuracy. Grammar proficiency is demonstrated through the use of varied grammatical structures, frequent incorporation of complex sentences, appropriate tense usage, and effective punctuation management.

## **2.6. Teaching Writing**

Harmer (1998) maintains that a proficient teacher is characterized as an attentive listener who prioritizes their students' learning over their own teaching. According to Harmer (1998), teachers should adjust their language by employing precise vocabulary, appropriate tone of voice, and integrating non-verbal cues such as gestures, facial expressions, and body language. Particularly in the early phases of teacher-student interaction, non-verbal communication plays a pivotal role in fostering a welcoming and supportive atmosphere conducive to language acquisition. Another crucial aspect of effective teaching, as underscored by Harmer (1998), is the minimization of Teaching Talking Time (TTT) in favor of prioritizing Student Talking Time (STT). While TTT can be advantageous when utilized judiciously and in moderation, it is important to note that

excessive TTT may impede student engagement and language development. For instance, exposing students to language usage above their proficiency level through TTT can be beneficial, as students may more or less comprehend information. Harmer (1998) suggests that the optimal approach to maximize STT involves allowing students to primarily engage in discourse, with the teacher intervening selectively to summarize, provide feedback, or facilitate discussions. Essentially, TTT should serve as an initiation, while STT should drive the continuity of the topic. In terms of lesson planning, Harmer (1998) emphasizes the necessity for adaptability despite thorough lesson preparations. Factors such as human error, such as forgetting materials, or unforeseen technical issues, such as malfunctioning electronics required for the lesson, require teachers to demonstrate flexibility. This adaptability extends to accommodating variations in the pace of student progress, whether faster or slower than anticipated. The lesson plan serves as a framework that may need adjustments or even abandonment during the lesson, allowing for real-time modifications or the creation of a new plan as needed.

Harmer (1998) contends that there are several reasons for teaching writing. Firstly, writing serves as reinforcement. The visual representation of language construction is invaluable for enhancing our comprehension of its structure and aiding in the retention of new language. Students often find it beneficial to write sentences using newly acquired language shortly after learning it, which reinforces their understanding and memorization of language structures. Secondly, Harmer (1998) emphasizes the importance of catering to students with different learning styles. For some, writing provides a quiet, reflective activity, offering an alternative to the fast-paced nature of interpersonal communication. This approach allows for a more deliberate language production process, accommodating students who benefit from a slower approach. Lastly, Harmer (1998) asserts that writing is an essential skill on par with reading, listening, and speaking. Students require writing in their everyday lives; while traditional pen-and-paper writing may be less common today, the prevalence of digital communication means that individuals frequently engage in writing tasks such as composing emails and texting via smartphones. Scrivener (2011) holds the view that writing is a cognitive process. It serves as a chance to think, contemplate, rehearse, make errors, and ultimately arrive at improved solutions. He also contends that writing is a crucial skill since students employ it in class to log notes for their own reference.

Certainly, the approach to teaching writing should align with the student's proficiency level. For instance, it would be inappropriate for a teacher to assign an elementary school student the task of

composing a report on the historical evolution of a city. Instead, Harmer (1998) advocates tailoring writing activities to suit the student's level and age. For example, for an elementary school student, assignments could include writing a birthday card or composing a brief descriptive text about an animal. Moreover, it is advantageous if the writing topics resonate with the students' interests. Given that many children have a fondness for animals, engaging them in composing a short text about their favorite animal can be highly beneficial for developing writing skills.

Harmer (1998) provides two example activities for teaching writing at the intermediate level. The first activity, termed "altering dictation", involves the teacher dictating a sentence which students then modify based on their perspective on the topic before writing it down. For instance, if the teacher dictates the sentence "Human beings do not treat animals well", a student might alter it to: "Human beings must treat animals better because they are living creatures too". Subsequently, students share their viewpoints with each other and work towards reaching a consensus amidst differing perspectives. This assignment not only facilitates writing practice but also serves as an introduction to the lesson's theme, fostering further discussion based on the modified sentences.

Another suggestion put forth by Harmer (1998) involves the teacher providing students with newspaper headlines (which can be entirely devised by the teacher), prompting students to write corresponding articles. Following this, students can exchange their articles with each other. The teacher's role primarily revolves around correcting errors in the students' writing. Additionally, the teacher can assign distinct article titles to individual students. Subsequently, after reading each other's articles and examining the titles, students can then match each article with its corresponding title. Harmer also offers numerous additional activities for teaching writing, including writing job application letters, encouraging the sending of emails (real or stimulated) to English speakers worldwide, composing various types of invitations, and creating or designing menus.

Scrivener (2011) offers various methods of conducting dictation to engage students in writing practice without becoming tedious. The first type of dictation is referred to as "keywords dictation". The teacher selects a captivating story and identifies fifteen to twenty key words. These words are then dictated to the students, who write them down. Subsequently, students are tasked with crafting their own narratives utilizing the provided words in the sequence dictated by the teacher. Upon completion, students exchange and discuss their stories. Additionally, the teacher may recount the original story to facilitate comparison. The second form of dictation is referred to as "bad cold"

dictation. The teacher recites sentences and deliberately interrupts with a cough to obscure a word. Students are instructed that whenever they hear the cough, they should fill in the blank with a suitable word of their own. Scrivener (2011) provides an illustration: “Last Thursday, Maria decided to have some (cough) for breakfast”. Learners can propose various words to complete this blank, such as “eggs”, “cornflakes”, and others.

Steele (1992) outlined a four-step written production process for implementing in the EFL classroom. First, students are required to carefully study a model composition and take note of its distinctive features, such as the organization of ideas, language usage, and writing mechanics. Second, students engage in controlled exercises aimed at practicing the elements highlighted in the model text. Third, students endeavor to replicate the model by arranging a set of predetermined ideas to align with the model. Fourth, students undertake the task of composing the anticipated composition using their acquired skills, sentence structures, and varying levels of vocabulary.

Scrivener (2011) suggests that many issues arise because teachers often assign a writing task and then leave students to their own devices, only collecting and grading the completed work afterward. Scrivener proposes that teachers should actively assist students throughout the writing process and adequately prepare them beforehand. For example, teachers could aid in selecting a topic and genre, engage the whole class in discussing ideas, take notes, analyze samples of the writing task, plan the text’s organization, and draft a rough version. Additionally, teachers could specify the grammar and vocabulary expected in the text and pre-teach these elements to students. Ultimately, teachers should provide feedback on the written text, highlighting areas for improvement in future assignments.

When it comes to planning classroom writing activities, Scrivener (2011) outlines 14 stages that span from the initial phase to the completion of the written task. The first two stages involve introduction and summarization of the primary writing task. Initially, students need motivation from the teacher, which can be achieved through various means such as reading a text, examining images, or engaging in discussions on key topics. Subsequently, the teacher must provide clear instructions regarding the writing task, specifying the genre, topic, intended audience, and purpose. It is essential for students to understand precisely what is expected of them. The subsequent two stages involve brainstorming and fast writing. Brainstorming entails gathering ideas from all participants, while fast writing involves an individual approach where students quickly draft

everything they can about the topic without concern for spelling and grammar errors, aiming to gather their thoughts efficiently. During the fifth stage, students choose and discard the ideas they have written. In the sixth stage, they commence sorting and arranging ideas, determining their precise location within the text as they plan the structure of their written work. In the seventh stage, Scrivener (2011) explains that students are required to determine the specific instructions provided by the teacher. They need to carefully consider how the text should be structured into paragraphs and identify any particular rules applicable, which may vary depending on the genre of the text (for instance, in a letter, the inclusion of a greeting and farewell is customary). Additionally, students should ascertain any additional elements that need to be included based on the given requirements. In the subsequent stage, the teacher assists students in analyzing sample texts and directs their attention to aspects such as grammar, vocabulary, content, message, and organization. In the ninth stage, students develop the overall structure of the text by utilizing the notes they have accumulated thus far, arranging the layout of the text. In the subsequent stage, students have the opportunity to receive feedback from both the teacher and their peers, facilitating suggestions and improvements concerning the content, vocabulary, grammar, and other aspects. In the 11th stage, students independently compose a full draft of the writing task, while the 12th stage entails reviewing and rectifying any errors. They ensure the accuracy of their language and ascertain whether the task has been fulfilled comprehensively. The last two stages involve producing the final text, incorporating all the feedback received from both the teacher and peers, and in the 14th stage, providing final feedback. Scrivener (2011) suggests that rather than solely receiving marks from the teacher, students should engage in reacting to their peers' texts and expressing their opinions.

Scrivener (2011) also contends that writing can be effectively instructed beyond traditional classroom settings by leveraging technology. For instance, teachers can prompt students to pose their inquiries in English via email. Additionally, students can enhance their writing abilities by sharing content on social media platforms with concise texts or engaging in texting interactions. Presently, the learning process need not exclusively involve human interaction; students can engage in conversations with AI (Artificial Intelligence), which could virtually represent any fictional character they are familiar with from movies or video games, making the English learning journey more captivating for them. Recently, numerous language apps have gained significant popularity as well, attracting not only adults but also younger users (e.g., Duolingo).

## 2.7. Writing Difficulties

The main challenges in completing written assignments arise from the insufficient proficiency in the English language among students for whom English is a second or foreign language. Students may have a deficiency in particular writing sub-skills, such as the correct utilization of grammar, range of vocabulary, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling, as highlighted by Ghabool et al. (2012). On the contrary, certain studies suggest that insufficient pedagogical knowledge among teachers regarding writing instruction and the failure to select appropriate teaching strategies also contribute to the development of ineffective writing skills among EFL students (Yunus and Chan, 2016).

According to Harmer (1998), students learning English may often make errors influenced by their mother tongue. He illustrates this with the concept of 'false friends' — words that resemble English words but have different meanings in the learner's native language (for instance, the Spanish word "assistir" which sounds like English "assist" but means "attend" in Spanish). Additionally, differences in grammar between the learner's native language and English contribute to mistakes. For example, Russian and Estonian languages lack articles, while English employs them extensively, leading Russian and Estonian speakers to omit articles or incorrectly insert them where unnecessary.

Language transfer is another aspect through which the nature of writing can be determined. The failure of weaker writers to employ writing strategies in English was due to their inability to utilize these strategies in their first language. According to Muminova, et al. (2020) the failure of weaker writers to employ writing strategies in English is due to their inability to utilize these strategies in their first language.

Olshtain (2014) contends that learners whose native language employs the Roman script may find it simpler to identify letters when initially exposed to English, and conversely, those whose native language does not use the Roman script will encounter greater difficulty in learning, identifying, and writing these letters from the outset. It is evident that Estonian students possess an advantage over Russian students in this regard, given that the Russian language employs the Cyrillic script. For example, according to Olshtain (2014), students whose native language does not use the Roman script must engage in activities such as tracing letters in texts and independently writing letters in

order to practice and identify them during the initial stages. In contrast, Estonian students might bypass this learning phase and proceed directly to writing meaningful words.

Harmer (1998) also pinpoints developmental errors arising from both conscious and subconscious processing, frequently manifesting as an overgeneralization of a rule. For example, a student might utter “I must to go” instead of “I must go”, mistakenly assuming that “to” is permissible with “must”. This error can be attributed to the influence of the phrase “I have to go” that the student previously learned.

Furthermore, Harmer (1998) emphasizes the importance of teachers correcting students’ mistakes in a supportive manner to foster a positive learning environment. He suggests various approaches, such as seeking assistance from fellow students, providing explanations, pointing out errors and allowing students to self-correct. This approach aims to ensure that students are not deterred from making mistakes in the future and do not feel embarrassed or incompetent.

### **3. CHAPTER II ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN-SPEAKING UPPER-SECONDARY SCHOOL STUDENTS' ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS**

#### **3.1. Participants of the Study and Description of the Curriculum**

The research participants consisted of upper-secondary school students, aged 18-19, drawn from two different schools: a school with Estonian as the sole language of instruction, and a school with Estonian and Russian as the languages of instruction. In total, there were 18 participants, evenly split between the two schools, with 9 from each. The selection of the schools was based on the absence of an in-depth English curriculum in either institution. The students who participated in the study were asked what their mother tongue was to ensure that they were native speakers of Estonian or Russian.

The primary distinction observed was the disparity in the number of English classes held per week, with the Estonian-medium school offering five lessons per week, and the bilingual, Estonian-Russian-medium school offering four. The English groups in both schools are relatively small, typically consisting of around 10-12 students. In terms of overall weekly study hours, there is a minimal difference between the two groups of 12<sup>th</sup> grade students. Estonian-speaking 12<sup>th</sup> graders have a total of 35 hours of classes per week, whereas Russian-speaking 12<sup>th</sup> graders have 34 hours per week.

At the Estonian-medium school, all subjects are taught in Estonian, except for language courses. In the case of 12<sup>th</sup> graders, English is taught as an A-foreign language, and they also study another foreign language, which in the case of this particular group of Estonian-speaking students is either Russian or Italian. Each week, they have four hours dedicated to their foreign language studies.

As delineated in the introductory part of this research paper, bilingual Estonian and Russian-medium schools commonly adhere to a 60/40 instructional model, a pattern upheld by the subject school under consideration. English classes are exclusively conducted in the English language, while the remainder of the curriculum is delivered in either Estonian or Russian. Mathematics, Russian language, Physics, and Biology courses are delivered in Russian, whereas Estonian History, Geography, Computer Science, Law, Music, Career Studies, Physical Education, Arts, and Estonian classes are imparted in Estonian. As noted above, Estonian is posited as a second

language for Russian-speaking students, who undergo 5 weekly hours of Estonian language instruction.

The students from both schools were surveyed regarding the commencement of their English language studies. The majority of Estonian-speaking students indicated that they commenced their English education at the age of seven or eight, during their first-grade year. One student mentioned initiating English learning at the age of five, attributable to attendance at a summer language camp for two consecutive years. Conversely, among Russian-speaking students, not all commenced English instruction in their first year of schooling. Specifically, three students reported commencing their English studies around the age of ten, during their third-grade year. This delay stemmed from a lack of available instructors during earlier years, as English classes in the first and second grades are not obligatory; rather, they are classified as part of an English language club, with only one hour of English instruction per week. Moreover, students do not receive formal grading for participation in these English language club sessions.

### **3.2. Survey of Students' Exposure to English**

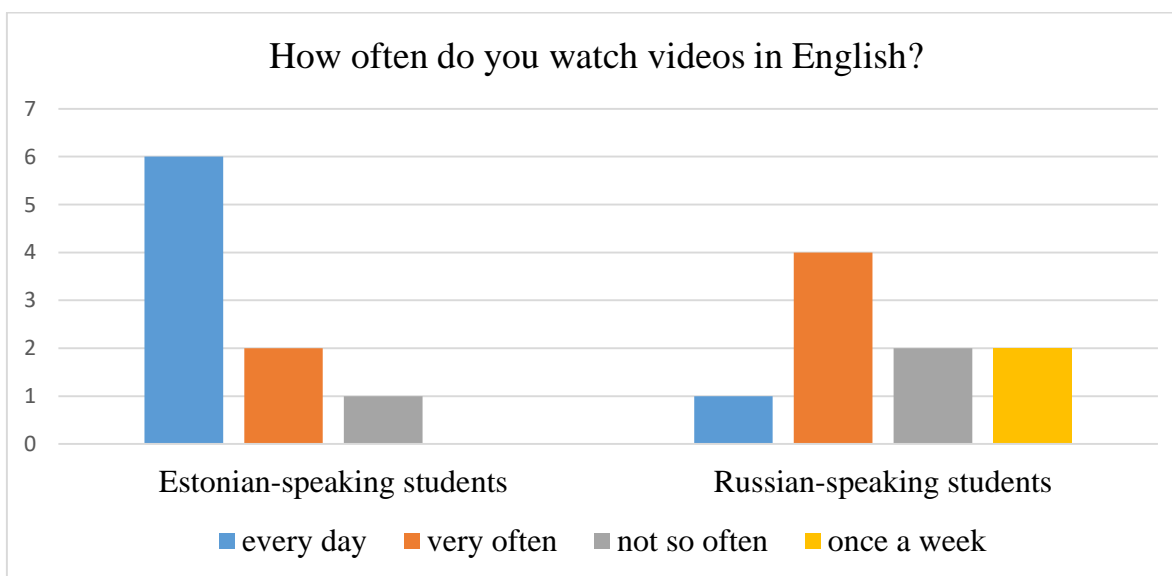
Prior to commencing research into students' writing skills at each school, students underwent a survey. They were presented with five questions regarding their daily interaction in English. The survey utilized Google Forms, featuring open-ended questions to allow students to articulate their experiences in their own words, rather than selecting from multiple-choice options. Nevertheless, the wording in certain students' responses coincided.

The five questions of the survey were:

- 1) How often do you watch videos in English?
- 2) What proportion of music you listen to is in English? (write in %)
- 3) How often do you write or text in English outside school?
- 4) How often do you communicate in English outside school? (In real life and online)
- 5) How often do you read in English outside school?

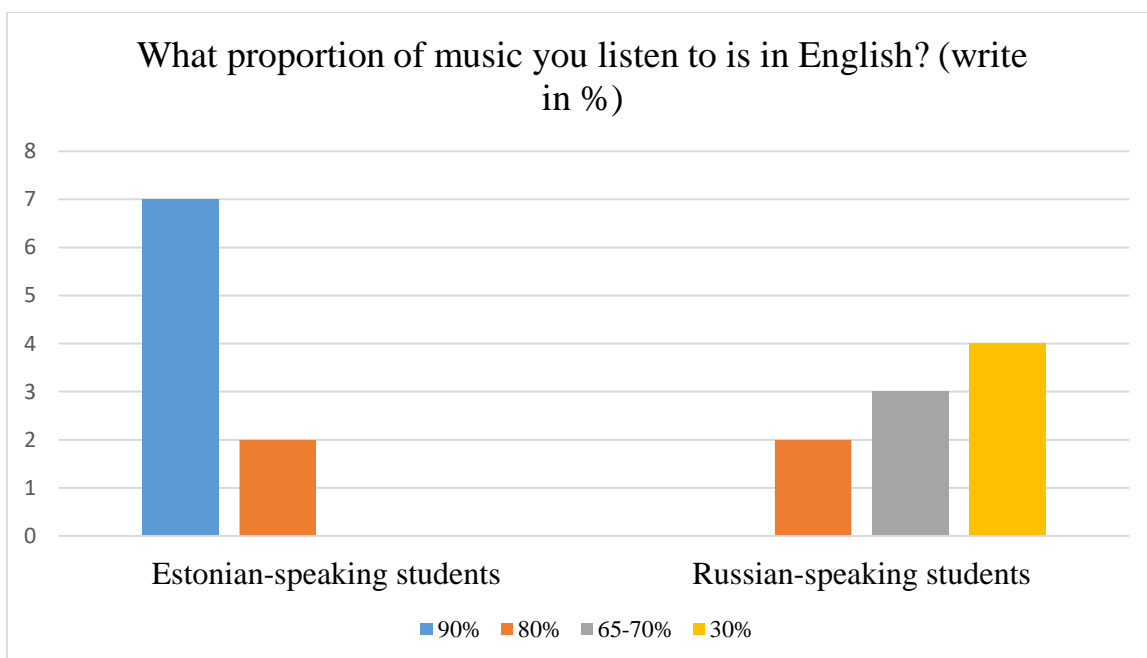
It is important to observe initially that producing or using a language encompasses more than speaking or writing (output). Understanding the language heard or read in the environment constitutes an equally vital component of performance. Additionally, interpreting and analyzing incoming language data in some manner remains essential for language development (Mitchell, et al., 2019). The input students obtain from listening to music and reading books can contribute to expanding vocabulary and observing the grammar structures employed in sentences. Writing encompasses many different aspects, as mentioned earlier, including vocabulary, grammar, and sentence structure. Students can utilize this input knowledge in their writing. According to Hafsa and Sabba (2017), it is believed that language becomes richer when additional opportunities for language activities outside of school are utilized. There is a strong correlation between exposure to the target language and target language proficiency. When a learner is exposed to the target language in their home environment, their learning is enhanced. The responsibility of teaching English should not be confined to the classroom alone. Opportunities for language learning through the mass media, literature and online audiovisual content should be explored.

Hafsa and Sabba (2017) conducted research in which they compared the proficiency of students from two groups, with one group receiving more exposure to English than the other group. The results demonstrated that increased exposure to English results in higher language proficiency. This is why it was essential to inquire about students' exposure to English input (including reading and listening) to determine how it might enhance their output skill — writing.



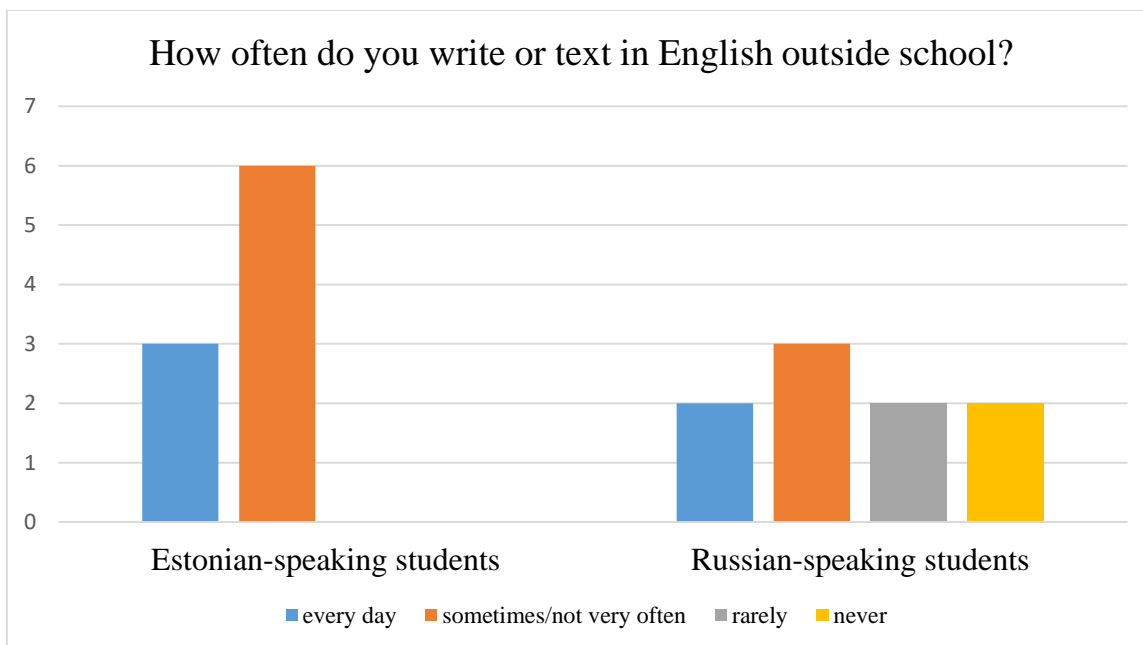
**Figure 1.** How often do you watch videos in English?

As depicted in Figure 1, seven students from both schools are involved in watching videos in English on a daily basis. Three students indicated infrequent English video viewing, while two Russian-speaking students stated a weekly habit. The collective findings suggest a prevalent inclination among 12<sup>th</sup> graders to watch videos in English regularly. Additionally, Estonian-speaking students contributed significantly more responses regarding their daily English exposure compared to their Russian-speaking counterparts. Specifically, out of the 7 students who reported their daily exposure, 6 were Estonian and 1 was Russian. Several students also noted the platforms they utilize for watching videos, namely YouTube and TikTok (daily basis).



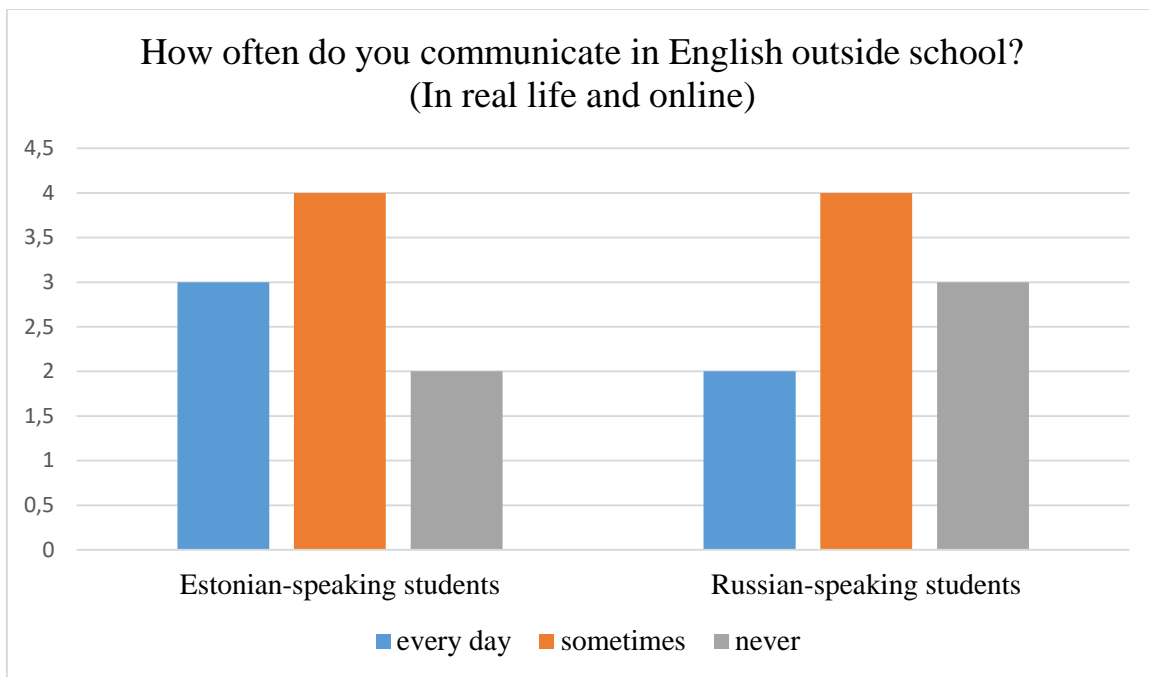
**Figure 2.** What proportion of music you listen to is in English? (write in %)

Figure 2 delineates the comparative distribution of English-language music listening among Estonian-speaking and Russian-speaking students. As can be seen, there is a conspicuous disparity between the two demographics, with Estonians listening to a notably higher percentage of music in English, ranging between 80 and 90 percent. In contrast, Russian-speaking students display a wider range, varying from 30 to 80 percent. Four Russian-speaking students are depicted as solely engaging with 30 percent of their music in English, whereas for two Russian-speaking respondents, 80 percent of the music they listen to is in English. One plausible explanation for these findings may be that Russian-speaking students have access to an extensive selection of music in their native language.



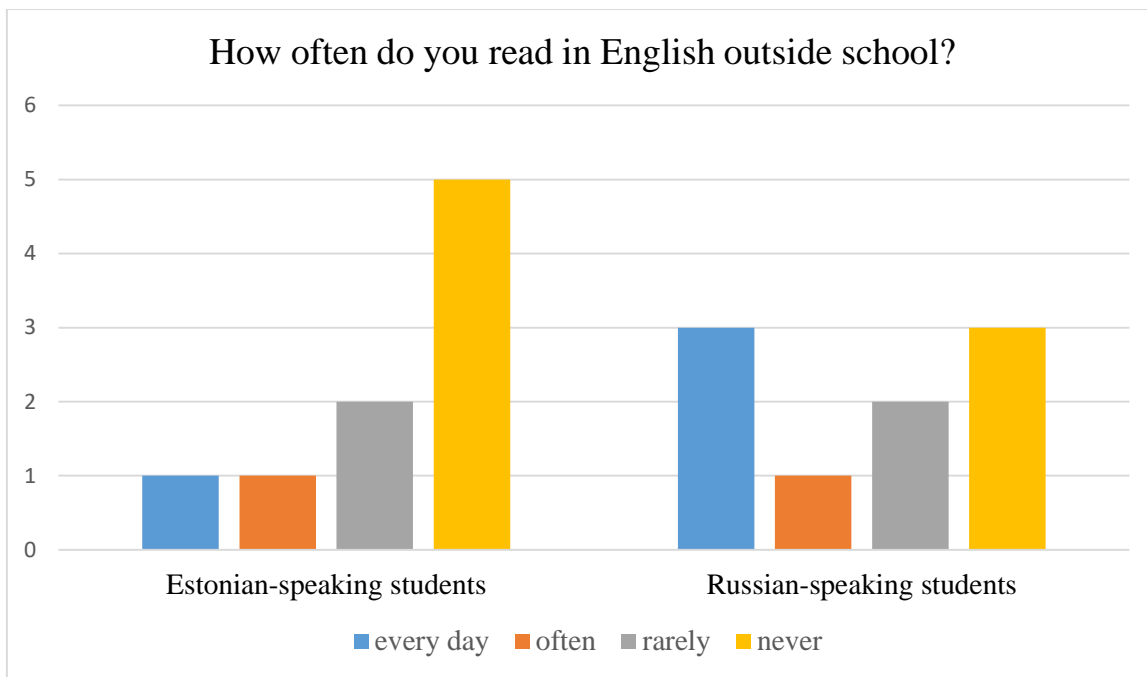
**Figure 3.** How often do you write or text in English outside school?

Figure 3 illustrates the frequency of students' involvement in writing or texting in English outside of school. Estonian students predominantly indicated engaging in this activity either daily or occasionally, with the latter being the more favored choice. Russian-speaking students provided diverse responses: two individuals from the Russian school stated they engage in writing or texting in English daily, two mentioned doing so rarely, and two reported not doing it at all. Additionally, three Russian-speaking students mentioned occasionally writing or texting in English. As a result, the figure shows that Estonian-speaking students are more exposed to English in terms of writing and texting. One potential explanation for this could be the prevalence of social media platforms. These platforms support numerous international languages, including English and Russian. However, for Estonian-speaking students, communicating in Estonian with people from other countries is not typically common on these platforms since Estonian is not considered an international language. Consequently, they opt for English as their language of choice on these platforms. This exposure to English leads them to consume information in English and gradually start texting in English, often blending it with Estonian due to its influence.



**Figure 4.** How often do you communicate in English outside school? (In real life and online)

Figure 4 depicts the survey participants' responses regarding the frequency of communication in English outside of school, encompassing both real-life interactions and online engagement. Among Estonian students, three reported communicating in English daily, four mentioned doing so occasionally, and two stated they never do. Conversely, among Russian students, two reported daily English communication, four mentioned occasional communication, and three stated they do not communicate in English outside of school. While there are differences between Estonian and Russian-speaking students in their responses, these variations are not deemed critical. Additionally, factors such as individual preferences, exposure to English-speaking environments, and personal motivations for language practice could contribute to the potential variation observed between the two groups.



**Figure 5.** How often do you read in English outside school?

Participants were asked about the frequency of reading in English outside of school. Among Estonian students, one reported reading in English every day, one mentioned doing so often, two stated they rarely read in English, and five indicated they never read. Conversely, among Russian-speaking students, three reported reading in English every day, one mentioned doing so often, two stated they rarely read in English, and three indicated they do not read at all. Possible reasons for these differences could include varying levels of exposure to English-language materials, differing cultural attitudes towards reading in English, and individual preferences for leisure activities.

### **3.3. English State Exam Writing Task Given in Both Groups**

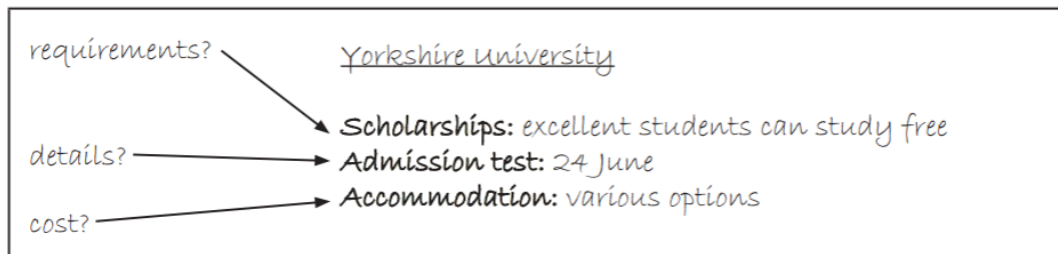
For this research, the 2018 English State Examination, writing Task 1, necessitating the composition of a letter, was specifically selected as the research instrument. The students in both groups were allotted 30 minutes to complete the letter, with a maximum score of 9 points achievable. The rationale behind selecting the letter format over that of an essay pertains chiefly to logistical considerations, notably the time constraints. Whereas the composition of an essay typically mandates a temporal investment of 60 minutes, such time restrictions preclude its completion within the confines of a single 45-minute class session. Both schools' teachers concurred on assigning the letter task, considering it a manageable activity within the allotted time.

Assigning identical tasks to all students facilitated a more straightforward comparison of their writing abilities, given the uniformity in assessment criteria.

**Task 1** (9 points)

**LETTER**

You would like to study at Yorkshire University in the UK. You have studied their webpage and made some notes. Look at the notes below.



Write a letter to Jane Smith, admissions secretary, using all of your notes above.

In your letter,

- express your interest,
- say what you would like to study,
- ask for further information.

Use the pen name Mari Mets/Mart Mets for yourself. **Do not write** any addresses. You should write **120** words.

ROUGH NOTES

SA INNOVE

**Figure 6.** Task 1. Letter

The task entailed composing a letter addressed to Jane Smith, the admissions secretary at Yorkshire University in the UK. The scenario presented necessitated crafting an admission letter, envisioning the applicant's desire to pursue studies at the university. The prescribed content of the letter encompassed articulating one's enthusiasm, delineating the desired field of study, and soliciting additional details. The volume of this task is 120 words.

**3.4. The Assessment and Analysis of Russian-speaking Students' Writing**

Since the research was conducted anonymously, it was determined that each student would be assigned a combination of a letter and a number. For Russian-speaking students, the designated letter is "R", accompanied by a number ranging from 1 to 9. The writing tasks were evaluated in

line with the assessment scale from the 2018 examination. The table presented below illustrates the individual results of each student along with prevalent writing errors.

Student	Writing part score, level	Writing issues, mistakes
R1	Task completion: 3/3 Vocabulary: 2/3 Grammar 1/3 Overall score: 6/9  Level: B1	<p>Some spelling and capitalization mistakes, like advertisement (“e” is missing), “biology”, “chemistry” as subjects must be written with capital letters. The word “I” is written everywhere with a lowercase letter.</p> <p>Many punctuation issues, commas are absent or present somewhere they must not be.</p> <p>Inappropriate prepositions (e.g. “I have some questions <del>to</del> <b>for</b> you”).</p> <p>The student is confused between dependent clauses and questions (e.g. “I do not understand what <del>do</del> I need to do”)</p> <p>One sentence was 4 lines long and considered by the student to be a whole paragraph.</p>
R2	Task completion: 2/3 Vocabulary: 2/3 Grammar: 1/3 Overall score: 5/9  Level: B1	<p>One aspect of the task was not mentioned and some aspects were not expanded.</p> <p>Inappropriate/absent prepositions.</p> <p>Some articles are absent.</p>

		<p>The tone of the letter is informal in some sentences (e.g. “I hope for a quick answer and I will be happy to find out my questions.”)</p> <p>Word order is incorrect in some cases (e.g. “I wanted to know from you at the university can study free only excellent students?”)</p>
R3	<p>Task completion: 2/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 3/3</p> <p>Overall score: 7/9</p> <p>Level B2</p>	<p>The aspects of the task were mentioned, but not all of them were expanded much. Salutation and sign-off are inappropriate.</p> <p>Many spelling mistakes: Intrested, particulary, biology (needs to start with a capital letter), requirments</p>
R4	<p>Task completion: 2/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 1/3</p> <p>Overall score: 5/9</p> <p>Level: B1</p>	<p>One aspect is not mentioned, others aspects are expanded poorly.</p> <p>Some vocabulary is lifted from the task.</p> <p>A lot of punctuation mistakes and the student uses short forms which are inappropriate for the formal style (e.g. “I’d be grateful if you could tell me exact time?”)</p>

		<p>Incorrect use of tenses (Past Simple is mixed with Present Simple).</p> <p>Inappropriate/absent prepositions.</p> <p>Repetition of the sentences.</p>
R5	<p>Task Completion: 2/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 1/3</p> <p>Overall score: 5/9</p> <p>Level: B1</p>	<p>All aspects are mentioned, only two are expanded.</p> <p>Inappropriate salutation (“Dr Sir/Madam”).</p> <p>Many spelling mistakes: “lessens” (lessons), “childrens”, “I want to now” (know), “excelent”.</p> <p>Gerund is not used (e.g. “I writing to ask information about study at Yorkshire University”) (“studying” would be correct).</p> <p>Incorrect use of tenses.</p> <p>Inappropriate/absent prepositions.</p>
R6	<p>Task Completion: 1/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 2/3</p> <p>Overall score: 5/9</p> <p>Level: B1</p>	<p>Only two aspects of the task are mentioned and expanded.</p> <p>A lot of unnecessary information.</p> <p>Some sentences are written in an informal style. Some sentences are meaningfully illogical.</p> <p>Some spelling mistakes like advertisement (“e” is missed),</p>

		“includet”. Some articles are absent.
R7	<p>Task Completion: 2/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 2/3</p> <p>Overall score: 6/9</p> <p>Level: B1</p>	<p>All aspects are mentioned, only two are expanded.</p> <p>Spelling/Capitalization mistakes: “accomodation” with one “m”, “economy” and “english” are not capitalized.</p> <p>Some articles are absent.</p> <p>Inappropriate use of tenses/no auxiliary words (here it is “does”): (e.g. “Excellent means that all my marks are “5”?”).</p>
R8	<p>Task Completion: 2/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 1/3</p> <p>Overall score: 5/9</p> <p>Level: B1</p>	<p>Spelling/Capitalization mistakes: “mathematics”, “physics” are not capitalized; “condidate”, “futher” (further), “studing” (studying).</p> <p>Many articles are absent, incorrect prepositions of place/time e.g. “At your website”, “At 24 of June”.</p> <p>Word order is incorrect in some sentences, e.g. “At your website was information that excellent students can study free, but what are the requirements?”</p> <p>One sentence is informal and is incorrect in context of letter</p>

		writing: “Can you say the price?”
R9	<p>Task Completion: 3/3</p> <p>Vocabulary: 2/3</p> <p>Grammar: 1/3</p> <p>Overall score: 6/9</p> <p>Level: B1</p>	<p>Spelling and capitalization mistakes: “medicine” as a subject must be capitalized, “excatly”, “studyng“</p> <p>“accomodation” x2</p> <p>Inappropriate choice of words in context: “...is there an option to change the <del>profession</del> <del>during</del> studyng?” correct use: “is there an option to change the major while studying?”</p> <p>Word order, e.g.: “Do you have in your website pretest to be ready for real one?”</p> <p>Inappropriate prepositions of place, or prepositions that must be followed after a particular word, e.g. “Interested <del>to</del> study” instead of “interested in studying”</p> <p>Some articles are absent.</p>

**Table 1.** The results of Russian-speaking students

In summary, the majority of Russian-speaking students face challenges primarily in grammar and vocabulary, with spelling being a notable area of difficulty. Moreover, their capitalization, particularly regarding subject-related words, was deficient. The prevalent grammar issues include the lack of articles, misuse of prepositions, improper punctuation, and errors in word order. Additionally, some students struggled with employing the appropriate verb tenses.

### 3.5. The Assessment and Analysis of Estonian-speaking Students' Writing

Similarly to Russian-speaking students, Estonian-speaking students were assigned a combination of a letter and a number. Their designated identifier is “E” followed by a number ranging from 1 to 9. The writing assignments underwent evaluation based on the assessment criteria established for the 2018 exam. The table provided below showcases the individual performance of each student alongside common writing errors.

Student	Writing part score, level	Writing issues, mistakes
E1	Task Completion: 2/3 Vocabulary: 2/3 Grammar: 3/3 Overall score: 7/9  Level: B2	One aspect is not mentioned at all.  Few grammar slips, like one comma is absent, two words are spelled incorrectly: “accomodation” and “intrested”. One article is missing.  Some words are not needed in context “So I would like <del>to get</del> to know”. One sentence is with incorrect word order.
E2	Task Completion: 2/3 Vocabulary: 3/3 Grammar: 3/3 Overall score: 8/9  Level: B2	One aspect of the task is not mentioned at all.
E3	Task Completion: 3/3 Vocabulary: 3/3 Grammar: 1/3 Overall score: 7/9	Many spelling mistakes: “imaged”, “deside”, “sincerally”, “economy” (Economy).

	Level: B2	Use of phrasal verbs: sign up, look at Word order: “I already have looked”, “...a place where can I read...”, “I always have imaged”, “What exactly the cost will be for it?” Inappropriate use of prepositions: “interested at”, “At webpage”, “study free” (without “for”)
E4	Task Completion: 2/3 Vocabulary: 2/3 Grammar: 1/3 Overall score: 5/9  Level: B1	All aspects are mentioned, only two are expanded. No commas at all. Small spelling mistakes: “accomodation”, “estonian”. Some words are not necessary, incorrect use of prepositions. Repetition and word order mistakes. Informal style in some sentences.
E5	Task Completion: 1/3 Vocabulary: 1/3 Grammar: 3/3 Overall score: 5/9  Level: B1	Four aspects are mentioned, only one is expanded. Vocabulary is completely lifted from task. Paragraphs are not divided. Repetition of verb “mention”. Informal sign-off “Best wishes” One time the student used a short form.
E6	Task Completion: 2/3	Four aspects are mentioned.

	<p>Vocabulary: 2/3  Grammar: 3/3  Overall score: 7/9</p> <p>Level: B2</p>	<p>Spelling mistakes, informal style in some sentences, and use of phrasal verbs.</p>
E7	<p>Task Completion: 2/3  Vocabulary: 2/3  Grammar: 3/3  Overall score: 7/9</p> <p>Level: B2</p>	<p>Four aspects are mentioned.  Spelling mistakes: “physics”, “chemistry”, “june” must be capitalized; “intrest”, “accomodation”, “optons” (options).  Small slips with one article, two misuses of prepositions.  Incorrect salutation and sign-off.</p>
E8	<p>Task Completion: 1/3  Vocabulary: 3/3  Grammar: 3/3  Overall score: 7/9</p> <p>Level: B2</p>	<p>The letter is mostly off-topic, only one aspect has been mentioned and expanded.  Salutation and sign-off are inappropriate.  Two slips with grammar tense (forgot to add verb “be” and wrote “do” instead of “does”)  One word order mistake: “I have also some questions”</p>
E9	<p>Task Completion: 3/3  Vocabulary: 2/3  Grammar: 3/3  Overall score: 8/9</p> <p>Level: B2</p>	<p>Salutation and sign-off are inappropriate. The tone of the letter is informal in some sentences.  Some spelling mistakes: “physics”, “chemistry” must be capitalized; “accomodation”</p>

		One slip with absence of preposition: “study free”
--	--	--

**Table 2.** The results of Estonian-speaking students

In summary, Estonian-speaking students primarily struggle with errors in spelling and capitalization, as well as in the use of formal salutations and sign-offs. While some students encountered difficulties with prepositions and articles, this issue was not widespread among the student body. Additionally, a notable observation was that some students frequently deviated from the formal style expected in such letters.

### **3.6. Comparison of Results of Russian-speaking and Estonian-speaking Students**

Both groups exhibited similar errors in spelling, capitalization, and the improper use of prepositions, as well as occasional issues with articles. The word “accommodation” was the most commonly misspelled word among both groups, despite being written in the task. Furthermore, nearly every capitalization mistake involved writing subjects with lowercase letters. Many students from both groups omitted the preposition “for” in the phrase “study for free”, possibly due to the task presenting it as “study free”, leading them to overlook the necessary preposition. Russian-speaking students made numerous errors with articles, whereas Estonian-speaking students tended not to omit any articles. Estonian-speaking students encountered a slightly bigger difficulty in maintaining the formal format and tone of the letter, with numerous students writing salutations and signoffs inappropriately. Overall, Russian-speaking students had more grammar mistakes, particularly in punctuation and word order, likely due to interference from their mother tongue. Russian sentences typically contain numerous commas, and the word order can be more or less flexible.

The average proficiency level of Russian-speaking students is B1, as only one out of nine students was assessed as having a B2 level. Conversely, Estonian-speaking students mainly achieved a B2 level, with only two out of nine students attaining a B1 level.

These outcomes were foreseeable given the survey’s indication that Estonian-speaking students have greater exposure to English compared to their Russian-speaking counterparts. The sole domain where Russian-speaking students exhibited slight superiority is reading in English. Conversely, Estonian-speaking students dominate in other realms such as watching videos, writing

or texting, communicating, and listening to music in English. It can be observed that Estonian-speaking students are more fluent and accurate in their writing, possibly due to their greater exposure to English outside of the classroom as demonstrated by the survey results. However, they struggle to maintain a formal tone, which may indicate that they are exposed to mostly informal English. In contrast, Russian-speaking students struggle with grammar and vocabulary, and not so much with the formal tone, which may be in part that they are not as engaged with English outside of the classroom, and practice English writing (and other skills) mostly in the classroom under teacher’s guidance. Capitalization and spelling seem to be problematic for both groups, presumably, because students nowadays write a lot on either computers or mobile devices, which have a spellchecking function. In addition to the differences in exposure to English outside of the school between the two groups, the differences in writing results between the two groups may be due to the relatively fewer number of English lessons in the school and the later start in English language learning in the case of the Russian-speaking students.

### 3.7. Methodological Support

Drawing from the errors observed in students’ writing from both groups, there is a need for methodological assistance to address these errors and enhance their ability to avoid similar mistakes in the future. A variety of activities that follow below have been developed to work on the errors made by the students.

#### Task 1. Formal vs. Informal Phrases

**Instructions:** Below are pairs of phrases with one being formal and the other informal, but conveying the same meaning. Your task is to identify which of the phrases are formal and which are informal as well as match each formal phrase with its corresponding informal counterpart.

**Phrases:** Yours sincerely; Hello!; Sorry, I can’t make it; I am writing to inform you that, I hope that you will respond at your earliest convenience; Thanks a lot!; Best wishes/regards; I regret that I will be unable to attend; Dear Sir/Madam; Just to let you know that; I hope you’ll get back to me when you can.

Formal style	Informal style


**Task 2. Capitalization Practice**

**Instructions:** Below is a connected text where some words are not capitalized correctly. Your task is to identify and correct the capitalization errors in each sentence. Rewrite the text with your corrections. Consider the rules for capitalizing proper nouns, such as the names of months, subjects at university/school, nationalities, and other proper nouns. Study the example.

**Example:**

**Original text:** i am studying engineering at the university of california. my friend is from brazil, and he speaks portuguese fluently. we have an exam next monday.

**Correction:** I am studying Engineering at the University of California. My friend is from Brazil, and he speaks Portuguese fluently. We have an exam next Monday.

**Text:**

I am majoring in computer science at the university of texas. my roommate is german, and she is studying economics. our finals are in december, and we are all nervous about them. i plan to travel to france next summer to improve my french language skills.

After my trip to france, i hope to explore other european countries as well. my cousin, who is british, will join me on some of these travels. we are considering visiting italy, spain, and greece. after graduation, i intend to pursue a career in international business. my dream job is to work for a multinational corporation.

**Task 2.1.** Develop categories of words that require capitalization in written language. Fill in these categories with the words you capitalized in the exercise above.

For example:

**Subjects:** Computer Science, etc.

### **Task 3. Word Order**

#### **Instructions:**

Write sentences using the words below in the correct order. The sentences must be formed grammatically correctly. Pay attention to the proper word order in English sentences, including subject-verb-object (SVO) structure.

1. have/your/a/on/Do/test/website/you/?

.....

2. free/that/There/information/on/was/excellent/for/your/can/study/website/students/.

.....

3. I/to/when/the/want/admission/know/starts/test/.

.....

4. would/English/at/I/to/your/like/university/study/.

.....

5. imagined/ever/since/I/middle/have/studying/school/there/.

.....

6. on/I/the/is/June/the/admission/24<sup>th</sup>/saw/of/that/test

.....

### **Task 4. Prepositions**

#### **Instructions:**

Below are sentences with missing prepositions. Your task is to complete each sentence by selecting the appropriate preposition from the options provided. Pay attention to the context and meaning of each sentence to choose the correct preposition. Compare how these prepositions differ from your mother-tongue prepositions and learn them.

1. Have you thought \_\_\_\_\_ applying for the scholarship?
  - a) to
  - b) about
  - c) in
2. The university offers courses \_\_\_\_\_ free.
  - a) -
  - b) at
  - c) for
3. We are \_\_\_\_\_ the train station waiting for our friend.
  - a) at
  - b) in
  - c) on
4. She is interested \_\_\_\_\_ learning Spanish.
  - a) on
  - b) in
  - c) on
5. Have you decided \_\_\_\_\_ your travel plans?
  - a) for
  - b) on
  - c) at

### **Task 5. Common Spelling Mistakes**

#### **Instructions:**

Below are sentences with misspelled words. Your task is to identify and correct the spelling errors in each sentence. Underline the mistakes in the words and rewrite the sentences. Pay attention to the correct spelling of each word and use this opportunity to reinforce your memory of these spellings.

1. She booked an accomodation for her vacation.

**Misspelled word:** .....

2. I have a keen intrest in learning new languages.

**Misspelled word:** .....

3. The advertisment for the job position was posted yesterday.

**Misspelled word:** .....

4. Are you studing for the upcoming exam?

**Misspelled word:** .....

5. I take piano lessens every Saturday afternoon.

**Misspelled word:** .....

6. Yours sincirely, Miss Smith.

**Misspelled word:** .....

7. Can you tell me exacly where the meeting will be held?

**Misspelled word:** .....

8. The company provided her with futher instructions regarding the project.

**Misspelled word:** .....

### **Task 6. Punctuation**

Below is a story containing punctuation errors. Your task is to identify and correct these errors. Do not forget to write the first word in each sentence with a capital letter. Pay attention to the placement of commas after linking words and in the complex sentences. Also, pay attention to the conjunctions and questions words like “where”, “when”, etc.

Once upon a time there was a small village where a young girl named Emily lived she had big dreams of becoming an explorer and traveling to far-off lands however her parents wanted her to stay close to home and help with the family's farm every day after school Emily would sit under the old oak tree near her house and read books about adventures in distant places she dreamed of the day when she could leave her village and see the world for herself one day she stumbled upon a dusty old map in the attic of her house it was a map of uncharted lands with mountains and rivers and forests she had never seen before where could this map lead she wondered excitedly she decided to keep it a secret and planned her escape from the village her heart raced with anticipation as she packed her bag with supplies and crept out of the house in the dead of night her adventure was about to begin.

These tasks collectively aim to improve students' writing skill by focusing on specific aspects of language mechanics: formal and informal styles, capitalization, word order, spelling, prepositions, and punctuation. By engaging in these tasks, students develop greater proficiency in writing and learn to communicate more effectively in written English. More activities could be suggested to develop students' academic vocabulary and other grammatical structures (e.g., tenses); these, however, are often present in English course books, but the teacher may need to develop more activities with the target vocabulary and grammar, in addition to the course book, to allow for better memorization of these items.

## CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to identify differences in English writing skills between 12th-grade Estonian and Russian-speaking students in Estonia, as well as to explore potential reasons for these differences. Another objective was to provide methodological recommendations for enhancing students' English writing skills.

Background studies indicate that Estonian-speaking students tend to perform better in English exams compared to their Russian-speaking counterparts (Harno, 2023). Nevertheless, there exists a divergence of opinion within the Estonian-speaking community. Some assert that English represents a language of opportunities, emphasizing its significance for the population of Estonia, while others perceive it as a potential threat to the Estonian language, citing concerns regarding its influence. Conversely, the Russian-speaking population in Estonia exhibits a positive attitude towards English, despite not being able to speak it as much as Estonian-speakers (Estonian Population Census, 2021).

Regarding the teaching of writing, various strategies can be employed. Harmer (1998) addressed the extent of teacher talk time in the classroom, the selection and creation of writing assignments, and different techniques to develop writing skills. Other scholars, such as Scrivener (2011), advocate for a staged approach to teaching writing. This involves collaborative planning between the teacher and students to clarify the writing task and ensure students understand the expectations.

Numerous challenges emerge during the writing process, including errors influenced by the writer's native language. Disparities in grammar and vocabulary between the learner's mother tongue and English contribute to mistakes. Additionally, there are developmental errors stemming from both conscious and subconscious processing of language, often characterized by an overgeneralization of rules, as highlighted by Harmer (1998).

The empirical part of the study concentrated on examining the level of English exposure among 12th-grade students, along with evaluating their writing abilities through the task of composing a letter for the English State Examination. The findings indicated that Estonian-speaking students experienced greater daily exposure to English, which may consequently influence their writing proficiency. The assessments revealed that Estonian-speaking students exhibited higher

proficiency in English writing compared to their Russian-speaking counterparts. Methodological guidance was formulated by considering the prevalent errors observed in both groups.

As it constitutes a case study, its scope is constrained by the participant pool, thereby rendering the application of the acquired data to a broader population challenging. To comprehensively grasp all potential reasons behind the disparities in the English writing skills of both groups, this subject necessitates future investigation involving a larger sample and other research methods.

## **KOKKUVÕTE. EESTI 12. KLASSI EESTIKEELSETE JA VENEKEELSETE ÕPILASTE ERINEVUSED INGLISE KEELE KIRJUTAMISOSKUSES**

Käesoleva uurimistöö eesmärk oli välja selgitada erinevused inglise keele kirjutamisoskuses Eesti 12. klassi eesti ja vene keelt kõnelevate õpilaste vahel ning uurida nende erinevuste võimalikke põhjusi. Teine eesmärk oli anda metoodilisi soovitusi õpilaste inglise keele kirjutamisoskuse parandamiseks.

Teoreetiline taust näitab, et eestikeelsed õpilased kipuvad sooritama inglise keele eksameid paremini kui venekeelsed õpilased. Sellest hoolimata eksisteerivad eestikeelse kogukonna sees eriarvamused. Mõned väidavad, et inglise keel kujutab endast võimaluste keelt, rõhutades selle tähtsust Eesti elanikkonna jaoks, samas kui teised näevad seda potentsiaalse ohuna eesti keelele, viidates selle suurele mõjule eesti keelele. Seevastu Eesti venekeelne elanikkond suhtub inglise keelde positiivselt, kuigi ei oska seda samal tasemel nagu eestikeelsed elanikud.

Kirjutamise õpetamisel võib kasutada erinevaid strateegiaid. Harmer (1998) käsitles õpetaja jutuaaja ulatust klassiruumis, ülesannete valimist ja koostamist ning pakkus välja erinevaid kirjutamisoskuste õpetamise strateegiaid. Teised teadlased, näiteks Scrivener (2011), pooldavad etapiviisilist lähenemist kirjutamise õpetamisele. See hõlmab õpetaja ja õpilaste ühist planeerimist, et selgitada kirjutamisülesannet ja tagada, et õpilased mõistavad ootusi.

Kirjutamise käigus tekivad arvukad probleemid, sealhulgas kirjutaja emakeelest mõjutatud vead. Erinevused õppija emakeele ja inglise keele grammatikas ja sõnavaras aitavad kaasa vigade tekkimisele. Lisaks on olemas nii teadlikust kui ka alateadlikust keele töötlemisest tulenevad "arenguvigad", mida sageli iseloomustab reeglite liigne üldistamine, nagu on rõhutanud Harmer (1998).

Uuringu empiiriline osa keskendus 12. klassi õpilaste inglise keele kokkupuute taseme uurimisele, samuti nende kirjutamisoskuse hindamisele inglise keele riigieksamile mõeldud kirjutamisülesande abil. Tulemused näitasid, et eestikeelsetel õpilastel oli suurem igapäevane kokkupuude inglise keelega, mis võib mõjutada nende kirjutamisoskust. Kirjutamisülesannate analüüs näitas, et eestikeelsetel õpilastel oli võrreldes venekeelsete õpilastega kõrgem inglise keele kirjutamisoskuse tase. Metoodilised suunised sõnastati, võttes arvesse mõlemas rühmas täheldatud valdavaid vigu.

Kuna tegemist on juhtumiuuringuga, on selle ulatus piiratud osalejate hulgaga, mis muudab saadud andmete kohaldamise laiemale populatsioonile keeruliseks. Selleks, et mõista põhjalikult kõiki võimalikke põhjusi, mis on põhjustanud erinevusi mõlema rühma inglise keele kirjutamisoskuses, on vaja tulevikus uurida suuremat valimit ja kasutada teisi uurimismeetode.

## REFERENCES

Afanasjev, N. (2022, October 25). *Noored kasutavad inglise keelset slängi?* <https://luna.tlu.ee/et/noored-kasutavad-inglise-keelset-slangi>

Argus, R. (2014, March 12). *Släng on keele rikkus.* <https://opleht.ee/2014/03/slang-on-keele-rikkus/>

Cambridge. (2023, August 31). *Annual Report Academic Year: 2022-2023, 22-27.* [https://projektid.edu.ee/display/THO/Cambridge+English+-+C1+Advanced?preview=/68668684/216105138/Estonia-Cambridge%20C1%20Advanced%20Project+Annual%20Report%202022-23\\_v2.pdf](https://projektid.edu.ee/display/THO/Cambridge+English+-+C1+Advanced?preview=/68668684/216105138/Estonia-Cambridge%20C1%20Advanced%20Project+Annual%20Report%202022-23_v2.pdf)

Cambridge Assessment English. *Assessing writing for Cambridge English Qualifications: A guide for teachers.* (2020). <https://www.cambridgeenglish.org/images/600975-teacher-guide-for-writing-b2-first-for-schools.pdf>

Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). *Self-assessment Grids. English.* (n.d.) <https://rm.coe.int/CoERMPublicCommonSearchServices/DisplayDCTMContent?documentId=090000168045bb52>

Council of Europe. (2014). *The CEFR Levels. Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR).* <https://www.coe.int/en/web/common-european-framework-reference-languages/level-descriptions>

Ehala, M., & Niglas, K. (2003). *Eesti koolinoorte keelehoiakud.* [https://www.tlu.ee/~kairio/7071/2%20klasteranalyyis/keelehoiakud\\_artikkel.pdf](https://www.tlu.ee/~kairio/7071/2%20klasteranalyyis/keelehoiakud_artikkel.pdf)

Ehin, K. (2017, December 20). *Teismeliste slängi ei mõista täiskasvanud ega vahel nad isegi.* <https://menu.err.ee/649936/teismeliste-slangi-ei-moista-taiskasvanud-ega-vahel-nad-isegi>

EIS. (2022). *Testide tulemuste statistika.* <https://eis.ekk.edu.ee/eis/eksamistatistika>

Estonian population census. (2022, November 16) *Population census. 76% of Estonia's population speak a foreign language* <https://rahvaloendus.ee/en/news/population-census-76-estonias-population-speak-foreign-language#:~:text=78%25%20of%20ethnic%20Estonians%20speak>

Estonica. *Estonian in a world context*. (2018).

[https://web.archive.org/web/20180927005518/http://www.estonica.org/en/Society/The\\_Estonian\\_Language/Estonian\\_in\\_a\\_world\\_context/](https://web.archive.org/web/20180927005518/http://www.estonica.org/en/Society/The_Estonian_Language/Estonian_in_a_world_context/)

Ghabool, N., Mariadass, M., & Kashef, S.H. (2012). *Investigating Malaysian ESL students' writing problems on conventions, punctuation, and language use at secondary school level*. *Journal of Studies in Education*. 2(3): 130-143.

Gümnaasiumi riiklik õppekava. (2023). RT I, 08.03.2023, 6  
<https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/108032023006>

Hafsa, R. & Sabba, M. (2017, April). *The relationship between Proficiency and Exposure to English Language: A study of Functional English and General English Students at Higher Secondary Level in Srinagar*. 17(4).

Haridus- ja Noorteamet. (2022). *Selgusid riigieksamite tulemused*.  
<https://www.harno.ee/uudised/selgusid-riigieksamite-tulemused>

Harmer, J. (1998). *How to Teach English*. Longman.

Herrity, J. (2023, March 11). *5 Basic Writing Skills and How to Improve and Highlight Them*.  
<https://www.indeed.com/career-advice/career-development/writing-skills>

Hyland, K. (2015). *Teaching and researching writing*. London: Routledge

Lahe, A., & Väli, L. (2023, March 14). *EMAKEELEPÄEV Ilmar Tomusk: Kui küsitakse, kelle eest eesti keelt kaitsta tuleb, siis vastan, et ikka eestlaste endi eest!* <https://pealinn.ee/2023/03/14/kui-kusitakse-kelle-eest-eesti-keelt-kaitsta-tuleb-siis-vastan-et-ikka-eestlaste-endi-eest/>

Leemets, T. (2009, March 13). *Kas inglise keelt peaks kartma või armastama?*  
<https://www.sirp.ee/s1-artiklid/c12-uudised/kas-inglise-keelt-peaks-kartma-voi-armastama/>

Mitchell, R., Myles, F., & Marsden, E. (2019). *Second language learning theories* (4<sup>th</sup> ed.). Routledge.

Muminova, S., Tangirova, A. & Fayzullaeva, N. (2020). *Difficulties In Teaching Writing Skill*. International Journal on Integrated Education. <https://www.neliti.com/publications/334445/difficulties-in-teaching-writing-skill>

Mürk, K. (2021, March 12). *Keeleteadlased: noored suhtuvad eesti keelde kui mõnusasse kodukootud asja*. <https://kultuur.err.ee/1608140581/keeteadlased-noored-suhtuvad-eesti-keelde-kui-monusasse-kodukootud-asja>

Olshtain, E. (2014). Practical Tasks for Mastering the Mechanics of Writing and Going Just Beyond. *Teaching English as a Second or Foreign Language, Forth Edition*, 208 – 221.

Pedaja, K. (2006). Kuidas uued laenud eesti keeles kohanevad? *Oma Keel*, 13. [https://www.emakeeleselts.ee/omakeel/2006\\_2/OK\\_2006-2\\_03.pdf](https://www.emakeeleselts.ee/omakeel/2006_2/OK_2006-2_03.pdf)

Põhikooli riiklik õppekava. (2023). RT I, 08.03.2023, 5 <https://www.riigiteataja.ee/akt/108032023005>

Raud, N., (2008). *Seminar Papers on Early Foreign Language Education. Foreign language Education at the Primary Level in Estonia*. [https://erepo.uef.fi/bitstream/handle/123456789/8729/urn\\_isbn\\_978-952-219-188-5.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y#page=37](https://erepo.uef.fi/bitstream/handle/123456789/8729/urn_isbn_978-952-219-188-5.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y#page=37)

Scrivener, J. (2011). *Learning Teaching: The Essential Guide to English Language Teaching. Third Edition*. Macmillan. 234 - 242

Szabolcs, J. (2010) *The Integration of English Loanwords in Russian: An Overview of Recent Borrowings*. *Studia Slavica*. 55: 45-65.

Wisevoter. *Russian-Speaking Countries*. (n.d.) <https://wisevoter.com/country-rankings/russian-speaking-countries/#:~:text=Russian%20is%20a%20widely%20spoken,120%20million%20non%2Dnative%20speakers>

Yunus, M. & Chan, H. C. (2016). *The use of mind mapping strategy in Malaysian University English Test (MUET) writing*. *Creative Education*. 7(04): 619

Zhu, W. (2004). *Faculty views on the importance of writing, the nature of academic writing, and teaching and responding to writing in the disciplines*. *Journal of Second Language Writing*. 13(1): 29–48.

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

Mina, Elizaveta Konovalova,

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) minu loodud teose DIFFERENCES IN ENGLISH WRITING SKILLS AMONG 12TH GRADE ESTONIAN AND RUSSIAN-SPEAKING STUDENTS IN ESTONIA,

mille juhendaja on Olga Orehhova,

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 4.0, 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.

*Elizaveta Konovalova*  
**20.05.2024**