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INFLUENCE OF LEARNERS' MOTHER TONGUE ON THEIR  
MISTAKES IN THE WORD ORDER IN THE ENGLISH LANGUAGE

Bachelor's thesis

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## **PREFACE**

Today, the ability to speak several languages is a very current issue because globalisation and worldwide mobility require from people the mastery of not only their mother tongue, but of foreign languages as well. The ability to speak starts from the skills of putting words together, making meaningful phrases and sentences. However, the issue of faulty word order in the case of a foreign language is very common due to many reasons, with people's natural tendency to make up phrases in their native language and then translate them into the target one being the main of them.

The present Bachelor's thesis titled "Influence of the Learners' Mother Tongue on Their Mistakes in The Word Order in The English Language" is dedicated to studying the main reason why English language learners make mistakes in the word order in the English language.

The aim of this Bachelor's thesis is to analyse how learners' mother tongue can influence the mistakes in word order in the English language.

This paper consists of the Introduction in which considers the notion of the word order and differences in English, Russian and Estonian syntax; Chapter I, which provides the theoretical background about reasons why learners make mistakes and some examples of mistakes in the word order; Chapter II, the practical part of this thesis, which introduces the results of the survey conducted among pupils of Estonian and Russian medium schools who study English as a foreign language; the Conclusion which sums up the results of the research and comments on the hypothesis. The thesis also includes the Summary in Estonian.

## INTRODUCTION

The word order is the multifunctional formal tool which is used to build sentences. Every language has own word order. In the article “Word order in utterances of direct speech in English: a subtle balance between conventions and innovation” by Grégoire Lacaze writes that: “A given person who speaks his/her own mother tongue is normally able to say whether a given utterance is grammatical or not.” (Lacaze: 2013). As the article “Word order and inversion” says, for most languages, the basic word order can be defined in terms of the finite verb and its arguments, the subject and object. The latter are typically noun phrases, although some languages do not have a major word class of nouns. It means that people more often use in making sentences SVO word order. (Word Order and Inversion)

### The Word Order in the English Language

The word order plays an important role, because it shows relationships between words in a sentence. The word order in the English language is strict, because, unlike the Russian and Estonian language, the English syntax has few endings that show person, tense, number and case. Most English clauses conform to the SVO word order, it means that in the first place is Subject, further comes Verb and after it comes Object. For example “She (S) does not like (V) dogs (O)”. The object can be direct or indirect. The indirect object cannot be used without the direct object. The indirect object follows the direct object when it is formed with the preposition “to”, and the indirect object comes in front of the direct if the preposition “to” is omitted. For instance, “The teacher gave some advice on writing essays to the students” or “The teacher gave the students some advice on writing essays”. SVO word order is called direct word order. If sentence includes other parts of speech, such as adverbial modifiers or attributes (pronouns, adverbs or adjectives), they have a specific places in the sentence. Thus, adverbial modifiers are placed at the end of the sentence after the object, attributes come before their nouns, and attributes in the form of nouns with preposition stand after their nouns. “He wrote an interesting article about hockey”. (Galina 2007-2014: 1)

Besides the direct word order, the English language has the inverted word order, or inversion. Inversion changes the standard word order, what usually refers to placing the modal, auxiliary, or main verb before the subject. The type of inversion is often used in questions, for example, “What are you doing now?”. Apart from it, inversion is used as a

grammatical means of subordination in some complex sentences joined without connectors, “Were I not so tired, I would do all my homework”; in sentences beginning with adverbs denoting place, “There goes another bus”; after reported speech, “Thank you for your help,” she said”. There are a lot of cases in the English language, when we used inversion.(Ibid: 2, 5)

The English word order has several functions – the grammatical that expresses grammatical relationships define the grammatical status of a word by fixing its position in the clause; the emphatic and communicative functions, which expresses prominence or information focus, and emphasis; and the linking function. This function expresses continuity of thought in sentences.(Кобрина et al. 1999: 393)

To sum up, the word order in the English language is fixed, semantic shades of meaning are expressed by other means, and the grammatical sense depends on the word order.

### **The Word Order in the Russian Language**

“Russian is a Slavic language that displays great flexibility in the ordering of sentence constituents. On account of this fact, it has often been referred to as a “free word order” language, with SVO order of constituents posited as basic but not obligatory. Possible word order alterations have often been considered as stylistic devices in order to change or increase emphasis.” (Rodionova2001:2)

The word order in Russian is very flexible. It means that members of the sentence do not have a specific position within it. The SVO word order is also used in the Russian language, but the grammar rules allow to use any combination of the subject, verb and object. For instance, the sentence “*A cat caught the mouse*” can be translated into Russian in several ways:

- Кошка поймала мышь.
- Мышь поймала кошку.
- Поймала кошку мышь.
- Кошка мышь поймала.
- Мышь кошку поймала.
- Поймала мышь кошку.

As it can be seen from this example, the word order does not change the meaning of the sentence, but there is one condition, the sentence should be taken out of the context. From the above mentioned, it can be said that SVO, OVS, VSO, SOV, OSV and VOS word order patterns are possible in the Russian language (Perera&Siyambalagoda 2009: 28)

The permutation of words changes the meaning of the sentence in the case, when the sentence is a part of a particular setting. In every complete sentence there is the theme and rheme. The theme in the sentence expresses the already known or understood information, the rheme is the new information that the speaker wants to stress. For example, in the following sentence “*Last year my friend built a house near a lake*”, the meaning changes depending on the word order:

- Впрошломгоду мой друг построил домвозлеозера – in this case, it is stressed that a house was built near a lake
- Домвозлеозера мой друг построил впрошломгоду – there is emphasis on the fact that a house was built by his friend a last year, not two years ago or this year.

In this sentence, also, can be stressed, that house was built his friend, but not someone else. (Валгина, 2000)

If to compare the Russian and English languages, they are different in many important aspects. As it is written in article “The Differences between English and Russian” (2012) the main difference lies in the fact that Russian is a synthetic language, whereas English is an analytical language. English, as an analytical language conveys grammatical relationships without using inflectional morphemes, English has lost much of the inflectional morphology and has not gained any new inflectional morphemes in the meantime, while Russian, as a synthetic language uses a lot of prefixes, suffixes and inflections. English has a fairly fixed word order. The meaning in the English language is expressed through the addition of words and movement of words within limited boundaries, while Russian conveys the meaning largely through changes in the composition of words. Its word order is very fluid. Because of these differences Russians often find learning English, especially the structure of phrases and sentences, a serious challenge. (Shoebottom, 2014)

### **The Word Order in the Estonian Language**

The Estonian language has a free word order, like Russian. The word order in Estonian is defined by the needs of organising the known and new information but not by the purely syntactic criteria. As in English and Russian, the base word order in Estonian is SVO, which is the most frequent surface word order in Estonian main clauses; “surface word order was not forced by any grammatical requirement but rather reflected a prosodically driven propensity for the use of the low subject position in

topicalized sentences.” (Kroch & Santorini); and it is also the order of neutral declarative sentences, “use a neutral head position and little or no shaking or nodding”, for example, *I GO STORE*. (“I’m going to the store.”). (Vicars) The SOV order is also common in main clauses with negations, but in many cases the word order might be different, for example “*Tihti taevas tähti nähti*”, in English, it like that “Often in the sky stars were seen”. If grammatical relations are expressed by suffixes, the position of words in a sentence is not important, but if there are no case endings, the only way to specify these relations is the - word order. (Sutrop 2004:27).

“Estonian uses relatively many postpositions. For instance, instead of *all laua* ‘under the table’, an Estonian says *laua all* ‘the table under’. However, there is growing tendency to substitute prepositions for postpositions in modern Estonian, e.g. the expression *teed mööda* ‘the way along’ is more and more replaced by *mööda teed* ‘along the way’. Estonian is also characterised by a relatively free word order.” (Ibid.)

This shows that the Estonian language is significantly different from English, because the meaning of an Estonian sentence is conveyed through word endings rather than through the word order, and different from Russian, despite the fact, that the both languages have the free word order.

The hypothesis of this paper is the following: on the basis of the native language learners can make mistakes in the word order in the English language. Differences in English, Russian and Estonian syntax can influence mistakes in the word order in English.

## **CHAPTER I. ERRORS VS MISTAKES**

In modern times the foreign language is necessary for self-development and for employment. However learning a second language is not an easy task, for this we need to work hard. One of the most important languages is English. This language is common in many countries.

The English word order is confusing for many people whose first language is not English, because many languages in the world just do not have an equivalent word order to the English one. As a result, when a person begins to learn the language, there can occur some very strange sentences. English is a difficult language to learn. There are many irregularities and odd grammar rules.

The Introduction considered the main features of the English, Russian and Estonian word order. It can be concluded that all the three languages differ from each other. The main distinction is that English, unlike Russian and Estonian which have fairly free word order, has a strict word order. The Estonian and Russian languages do not have the equivalent word order to that found in English, this is the reason why the English word order is confusing for many learners of English. This is the main reason why English learners make mistakes.

### **1.1. Errors VS Mistakes**

It is important to distinguish errors from mistakes. To define a difference between the terms error and mistake is difficult. The main difference between errors and mistakes is that “an error takes place when the deviation arises as a result of lack of knowledge. It represents a lack of competence i.e. the learner’s underlying deficient knowledge of the target language linguistic system”, while mistakes “occur when learners fail to perform their competence (Corder, 1967)”. As it was written in the paper “An Analysis of the Prepositional Errors of Time, Place and Direction among Chinese Secondary School Students” mistakes “reflect processing failures that arise as a result of factors such as memory lapses, emotional strains, carelessness and lack of automaticity.” (Foo 2007: 12).

On the basis on the above-said, it can be stated that English learners make mistakes, because, despite the fact that they know the rules of the word order in the English language, they simply forget them, when they write or say something.



## 1.2. Types of Mistakes

Some researches distinguish errors between performance errors and competence. The first type of errors is not as serious as the second one. Learners make performance errors when they are tired or hurried, while competence errors reflect inadequate learning. Therefore, researches said that mistakes are lapses in performance and errors reflect inadequate competence.

Other researches (cf. Burt and Kiparsky 1974) distinguish errors between local and global errors. First type of errors does not prevent communication and understanding the meaning of saying. This type of errors can be seen in noun and verb inflections, and the use of articles, prepositions, and auxiliaries. Global errors are more serious because “global errors interfere with communication and disrupt the meaning of utterances”. This type of errors includes wrong word order.

All errors, which language learners can make “involve all language components: the phonological, the morphological, the lexical, and the syntactic.” Phonological errors distinguish between phonemes; morphological errors are “the production of such errors as *womans*, *sheeps*, and *furnitures*”; lexical errors it is wrong translation from learner’s mother language into second language or “the use of wrong lexical items in the second language.”; and syntactic errors meet in word order and “the use of the resumptive pronoun in English”, for example, “The boy that I saw is called Ali” or “The boy that I saw *him* is called Ali.” (Touchie:76)

## 1.3. Causes of mistakes

“Errors due to the influence of the native language are called interlingual errors. Interlingual errors are also called transfer or interference errors. The view that the native language plays a mostly negative role was emphasized as early as the forties and tile fifties by Fries (1945) and Lado (1957).” (Ibid: 77)

However, other researchers try to “minimize interlingual errors and emphasize intralingual and developmental errors”, because interference is an important factor in second language learning.

Jack C. Richards classified causes of errors in the acquisition of English as a second language into overgeneralization, ignorance of rule restriction, incomplete application of rules, false concepts hypothesized. Overgeneralization occurs when learners of second language sometimes apply previously learned rules in the target language without

appropriate knowledge of their application, for example “She was unhappy at the development: so I was”; on the basis of this they make an error. The second type occurs when learner does not keep the restrictions or existing structures. The third one occurs “when the learners fail to fully develop a certain structure required to produce acceptable sentences”; and finally, “false concepts hypothesized, deriving from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language.” (Khansir 2012: 1029).

#### **1.4. The Interference**

Errors, influenced by mother tongue, are called interference. In the article “The error in the Second Language Acquisition” the author writes that “errors occur as a result of interference when the learners transfer native language habits into the second language. It was also believed that interference takes place whenever there is a difference between native mother tongue and the target language” (T. Maicusi et.al 1999-2000: 169)

The interference of the native language is the cause of mistakes in the use of prepositions, articles and so on. A common mistake is the wrong word order in the sentence. The reason of origin of the interference is the fact that people build their speech according to the norms of the native language. The interference may occur at the phonetic, lexical, grammatical and syntactical levels. At the syntactical level the phenomenon of interference is detected in violation of the word order in the sentence. (Dwinastiti, 2013)

B. Lekova in her article “Language Interference and Methods of its overcoming in Foreign Language Teaching” wrote that “From the point of view of psycholinguistics, it is a negative transfer of language habits and skills from the mother tongue or from a foreign language to another foreign language.” (Lekova 2009: 320)

In the article “Language Interference”, author writes that there are some factors that cause language interference. The first factor is the speaker bilingualism background. It is a main factor, because “the speaker is influenced by both of the source and the target language. The second factor implies disloyalty to target language. It is has a negative attitude, because “This will lead to disobedience to target language structure and further force the bilingualist to put uncontrolled structure of his first language elements to output in practicing words utterances both oral and written”. The third one is the limited vocabularies of target language mastered by a learner. In learning of second language, vocabularies play a big role, because a learner “will meet new words differ from his native words” and “the more vocabularies someone has, the better he masters target language”. The next factor is the needs of synonym, “implementing synonym in a language contact

will contribute to interference in the form of adoption and borrowing of new words from first language to target language.” Finally, the last factor is the prestige and style. In this case “interference will appear as there are certain words even though the receiver probably cannot catch the real idea of the speech.” (MarlinDwinastiti 2013: para. 5-10)

Consequently, Russian and Estonian speakers build sentences the way they want to say those in their own language, where the word order is relatively free, with the result that there are errors in the English language, which, as was mentioned earlier, a strict word order.

### **1.5. Mistakes in the English Word Order Made by Russian and Estonian-speaking Learners**

In the article “Comparison of Language Modelling Techniques for Russian and English” the authors write that the reason of free ordering in Russian is inflections which change the grammatical case, gender, and etc. of the word. Thus, Russian speakers can change the order of words, changing the endings of the words, but the meaning of the sentence will remain the same. In the English language this is not possible, therefore, English learners make mistakes, thinking in their native language and making proposals as they would say in Russian, for example, “*Поймаламышькошка*”, (*A cat caught the mouse*). (Whittaker & Woodland, 1998)

A. Wallwork writes in the book “English for Writing Research Papers” (2011), Russians have difficulties with constructing correct English sentences because there are no strict rules for the word order, as was mentioned above. For example, in Russian a simple tongue twister that is translated as “the mother was cleaning the window” would mean exactly the same thing if “mother” and “window” switch places. In English, it would of course make no sense. (Wallwork 2011: 22). Errors, influenced by the mother tongue, are that the words are arranged in the same way as in the Russian language. For example: I with friends yesterday went to a disco. (Incorrect)- My friends and I went to a disco yesterday. (Correct)

In the English language there is a strict word order of adjectives, therefore for learners, whose English is not a first language, some difficulties can occur. For example, many languages would say “*I have a bag brown.*” But in English we always put the adjective before the noun and say, “*I have a brown bag.*”

The word order of adjectives in the English language is the following: observations (beautiful, lovely); size (big, small); shape (round, square); age (new, antique); color (black, white); origin (Italian, Germany) and the last one is material (gold, silk).

For example, *I want to buy a beautiful, new, Germany car*. For comparison in the Russian language people can say “Я хочу купить новую красивую машину красного цвета.” (I want to buy a new, beautiful red car.). The same situation is observed in the Estonian language: *Ma soovinosta uus, ilus, punane auto*.

The following tables show some examples of mistakes by English learners: in the first table there are mistakes by Russian speakers, in the second table there are examples of mistakes by Estonian speakers.

Table I

Wrong	Correct	Translation
An old fridge there is in the room	There is an old fridge in the room	В комнате есть старый холодильник
A lying on the floor mattress	A mattress lying on the floor	Лежащий на полу матрац
The guests will be tomorrow here	The guests will be here tomorrow	Гости будут завтра здесь
Is the room enough large?	Is the room large enough?	Комната достаточно большая?
The two first chapters	The first two chapters	Две первых главы

Table 2

Wrong	Correct	Translation
Then man a knife wanted to take	The man wanted to take a knife	Mees tahtis noa võtta or, mees tahtis võtta noa
The man his leg has broken	The man has broken his leg	Mees on oma jala murunud or, mees on murdunud oma jala
Mother has child school taken	The mother has taken the children to the school	Ema on lapsed kooli viinud or, ema viis lapsed kooli.
that Jaan must want to do this job'	that Jaan must this job do want	et Jaan peab seda tööd teha tahtma

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### 1.6. Error Treatment

English, Russian and Estonian languages differ from each other. It is the main reason why English learners make mistakes in in the phonetic, lexical, grammatical and syntactical levels. In this situation, the teacher can help to correct mistakes, but it should not to disturb the process of foreign language learning. First of all, teachers should correct global errors more than local. Teachers should correct errors, which are made more frequently, for example the omission of the third person Singular *s* is an error of high frequency and generality. Errors which most of the students makes should also be corrected by the teacher. (Touchie 1986:79)

To avoid mistakes in second language learning, learners should adhere to the following rules:

- Use simple language. Learners should not build very complicated sentences. Learners should say what they can say i.e. simple sentences
- Be slow and careful.
- If you're not sure how to say something, don't say it. Learners should not say something, if they are not sure that it is correct. "You don't want to teach yourself the wrong way to say it."
- When writing, always look things up. Learners should use a dictionary or different kinds of translation means, if they are not sure that it is correct.
- Know where you can make a mistake. "Sometimes learners don't even realize how different English is from their native language. When speaking, they translate word for word from their native language, and they think their sentences are okay." English learners should pay attention to word order, articles, prepositions, and tenses. They should "Compare sentences in English with equivalent sentences in your native language. Notice the differences in words and in word order." (Szynalski 2001: 2)

All these rules can help to learn a foreign language and minimize the number of errors. If students want to succeed in learning English as a second language, first of all, they should want to learn it. It is important to adhere to strict rules and not to search for analogies with the native language, such as Russian or Estonian.

## **CHAPTER II. STUDENTS' MISTAKES IN THE ENGLISH WORD ORDER**

Based on the theoretical finding of the previous chapter, it can be seen that the mother language plays a significant role in second language learning. The English language differs considerably from Russian and Estonian. The main syntactic difference between these languages is that English has a strict word order and sentences have a structure of S-V-O word order. While both other languages have a free word order, sentences can have structures of word order, such as S-V-O, O-V-S, V-S-O, S-O-V, O-S-V and V-O-S word order. This is due to the fact that these two languages have endings and if Estonian and Russian speakers change the order of words, changing the endings of the words, but the meaning of the sentence will remain the same.

### **2.1. The Research Method**

For the practical part, in order to achieve valid results, the survey was conducted by means of a questionnaire given to secondary school students to complete. This type of research methods was chosen, because it takes around ten-fifteen minutes to do exercises, the questionnaire is anonymous. There were compiled two questionnaires for students whose native language is Russian and for students whose mother tongue is Estonian.

The main aims were to support the theoretical part and to confirm or refute the hypotheses of the paper: on the basis of the native language learners can make mistakes in the word order in the English language. Differences in English, Russian and Estonian syntax can influence mistakes in the word order in English.

The questionnaire consisted of two tasks. Firstly, students had to translate the sentences from Russian or Estonian into the English language. There were given the sentences with different types of the word order. The main task of the second exercise was to make the sentences using the given words in the English language. The goal of these exercises was to see how students know the rules of the structure of the English language, and how they translate sentences from their native language into English.

The result of the first task will show how student translated the sentences. Whether they translated word for word, or they followed the rule of the S-V-O word order in the English language. For the analysis of the result of the first task, I made a diagram, which shows how many students translated the sentences correctly.

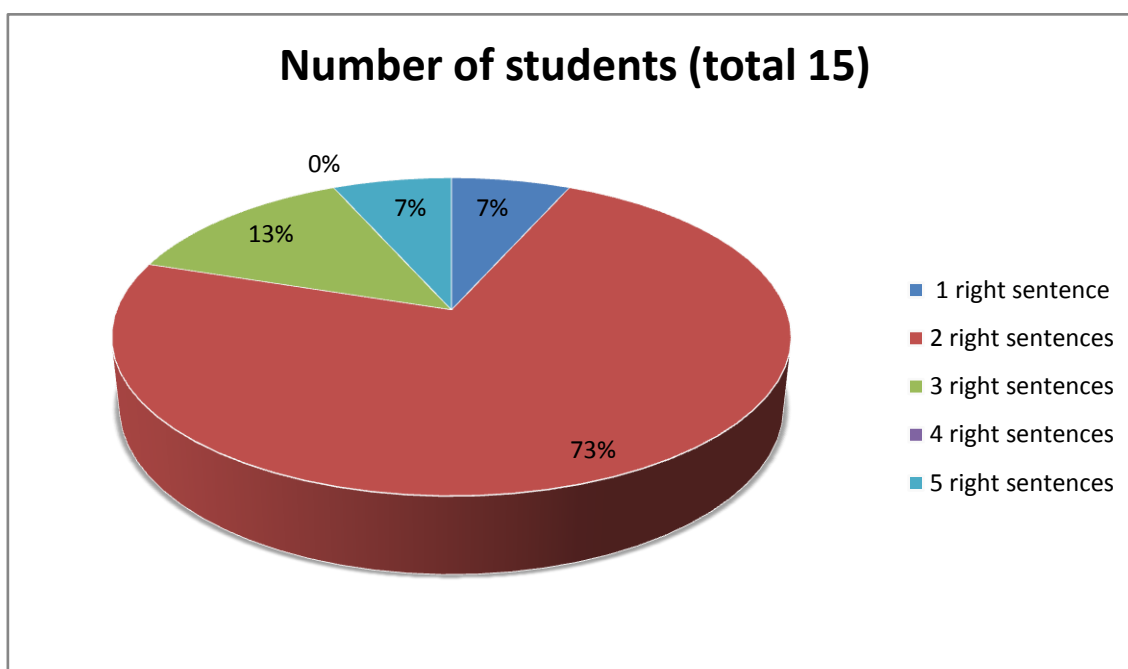
The results of the second task will show how student know the rules of the word order in the English language and how they make the sentences, following the rule. For the results of this task, I also made a diagram, which shows how many learners completed the task correctly, following the rules of word order.

## **2.2. The Target Group**

The survey was conducted among students of Form 8 in NarvaSoldinoSecondary School and Narva Estonian Secondary School. The survey was conducted among 30 students, 15 of which speak Russian and other 15 Estonian. This choice of schools was made, based on the fact that the first is a Russian-medium secondary school and the other is an Estonian-medium one. This choice of the form of the students was made based on the fact that in this form students had already learned the rules of word order in declarative sentence, interrogative sentence, exclamatory sentence, conditional sentence, and imperative sentence.

## **2.3. The Results of the Survey (NarvaSoldinoSecondary School)**

The main goal of task 1 was to translate sentences into the English language. From the diagram data (Diagram 1), the most significant items are as follows. Only 7 per cent (1 student) of questioned of NarvaSoldinoSecondary School translated all 5 sentences correctly, following the rules of the English word order. Most of the students (73%) translated only two sentences from Russian into the English language. They did not make mistakes in these sentences, because they had the S-V-O word order. The reason for mistakes is that the students translated the sentences word for word, without thinking and observing the rules of the word order in the English language. In addition, one student did only one sentence correctly and two students translated two sentences with the right word order.

**Diagram1**

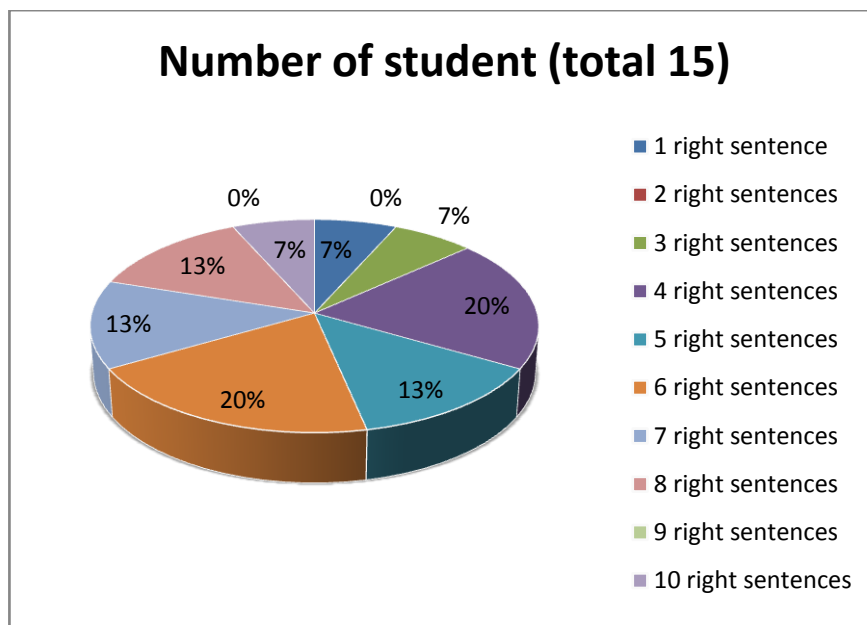
*Diagram1. The number of correct sentences by the students whose mother tongue is Russian. (Task 1)*

The purpose of the second exercise was to make the sentences using the given words in the English language. Diagram 2 shows that only one student (7 per cent) composed all the ten sentences correctly. A small proportion of the students (20 per cent) made six sentences with the right word order. The same percentage of the respondents made only four sentences correctly, following the rules. Twenty-six per cent of students (4) made more than half correctly: two students made seven sentences correctly and two students composed eight right sentences. Also, there was a handout, where was only one correct sentence.

It is important to mention that in this task included a sentence, which students had to make with the correct order of adjectives. Only one student did it correctly, other fourteen students made mistakes in this sentence. It shows that students either do not know in what order to write adjectives, or did not consider this rule while composing this sentence.

**Diagram 2**



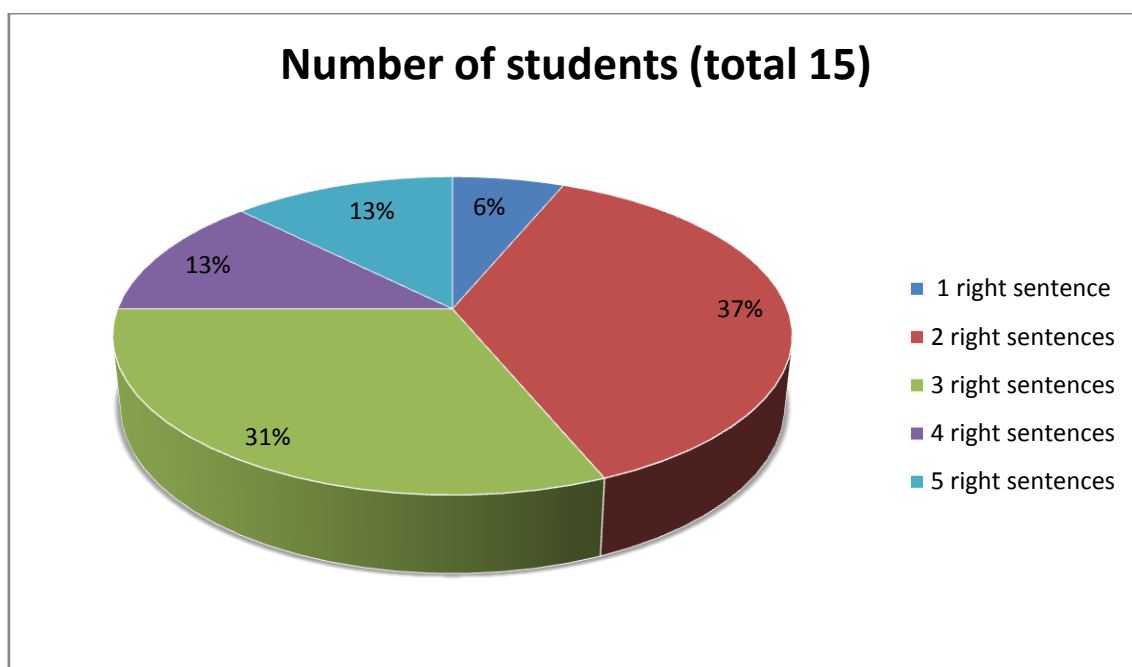


*Diagram2. The number of correct sentences composed by Russian-speaking students. (Task 2)*

#### **2.4.The Results of Survey (Narva Estonian Secondary School)**

Diagram 3 shows results of the task 1 of the respondents from Narva Estonian Secondary School. From the diagram data, the most significant items are as follows. Only 13 per cent (2 students) of the students translated all 5 sentences correctly, following the rules of the English word order. Based on the data of this diagram, it can be said the majority of students, as in Diagram 1, wrote 2 (37 per cent), or 3 (31 per cent) sentences correctly. They also did not make mistakes in these sentences, because they had the S-V-O word order. As it was written earlier, the reason for mistakes is that the students translated the sentences word for word, without thinking and following the rules of the word order in the English language.

#### **Diagram 3**



*Diagram3. The number of correct sentences by the students whose mother tongue is Estonian. (Task 1)*

The data of the Diagram 4 show the results of the second exercise, performed by pupils of Estonian Secondary School. The Diagram 4 shows that over one third of those questioned (37 per cent) made six sentences correctly. The same number of students (19 per cent) wrote eight, seven, or five right sentences. From the diagram data, it is important to mention, that no one of the students made all the sentences correctly. As was written above, in this task there was a sentence which students had to make with the correct word order of adjectives. In Estonian Secondary School nobody composed this sentence correctly.

#### **Diagram 4**

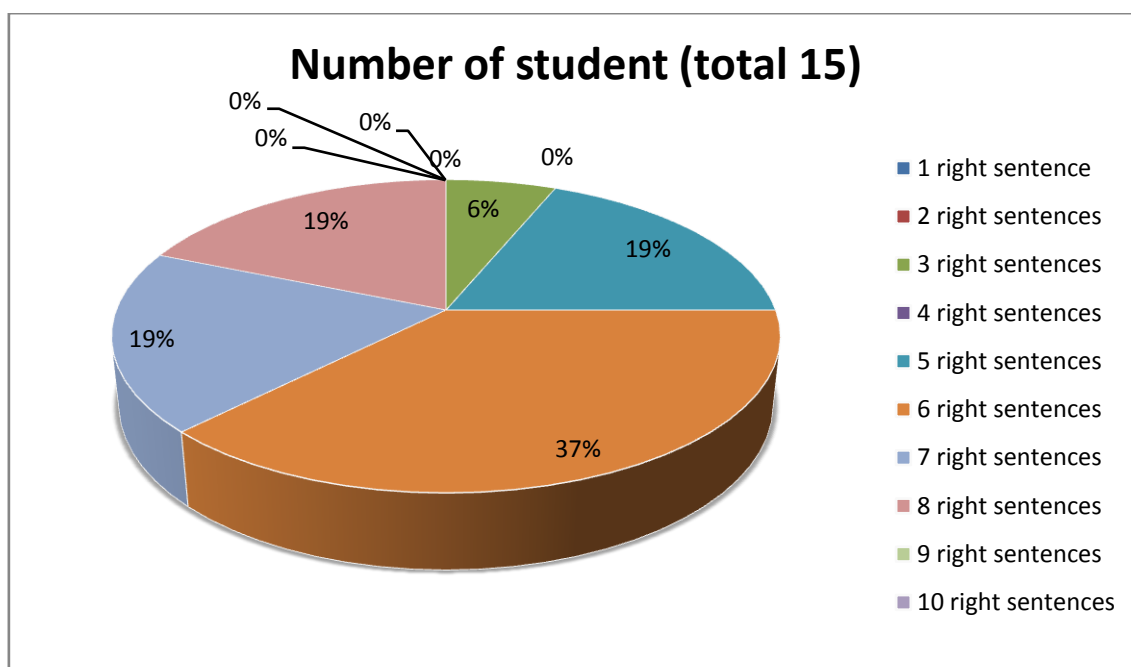


Diagram 4. . The number of composed by Estonian-speaking students. (Task 2)

## 2.5. Analysis of the Results

The diagrams were compiled on the basis of the research results. To compare results of the first task between student of NarvaSoldinoSecondarySchool and Narva Estonian Secondary School, it can be said that Estonian-speaking students did this exercise better than students of NarvaSoldinoSecondary School, because the total number of correct sentences more than the number of right sentences, which were written by Russian-speaking students.

The main reason for mistakes of word order in Task 1 is that mainly students translated sentences word for word, without thinking of the rule. In this task specially there were given sentences with different types of the word order. However, in Estonian and Russian there could be sentences with different combinations of subject, verb and object; in the English language it could not be so.

The second task students of Narva Estonian Secondary School did this exercise better as well: basically, the number of correct sentences ranged between 5 and 8 right sentences. While, the results of students of SoldinoSecondary School varied from one to ten correct sentences.

It is important to mention that only one of 30 students made correctly the sentence, where they had to put adjectives in the correct order. It shows that students either do not

know in what order to write adjectives, or did not consider this rule in the preparation of this proposal.

The main reason for mistakes in this exercise is that student made sentences the way they can say them in the Russian or Estonian language: they build speech according to the norms of the native language. However, the English language does not have such a free word order, like Russian and Estonian do.

## **2.6. Conclusion of the Practical Part**

The goals of the practical part were to study how English learners translate the sentences from their native language, and to see how they make the sentences using the word, which were given. In total there were 30 participants and every participant filled in the questionnaire.

The hypothesis of this paper was also proven: the native language influences mistakes in the word order in the English language. The cause of this is the phenomenon of interference. As it was described in Chapter I, the reason of origin of the interference is the fact that people build their speech according to the norms of the native language.

The results of survey also show that Estonian and Russian speakers build the sentences in the English language as they want to say them in their native language, and first of all, to say something they think about it in the mother language and then translate the sentences into the English language.

## CONCLUSION

Today the English language is one of the most spoken languages on the earth and most people would like to master this language. The second language learning or acquisition is the process, in which people learn a foreign language.

However, English is different from many languages, including Estonian and Russian. Therefore, Russian and Estonian speakers make mistakes when learning English. Most people make mistakes when studying a foreign language, and nothing is wrong with that. Making errors is the most natural thing in the world and all people do it.

In general, the present Bachelor's thesis provides a substantial amount of information connected to the topic and proves a number of facts; the first part is theoretical and the second one is practical.

First of all, the main difference between English, Russian and Estonian is that, there is a different word order. The English language has a strict word order, while in the Estonian and Russian is free word order. The word order in English is S-V-O, in Russian and Estonian the word order can be changed, for example, there can be S-V-O, O-V-S, V-S-O, S-O-V, O-S-V and VOS word order. Certainly, the S-V-O word order is basic. In the Estonian language the meaning of a sentence is conveyed through word endings rather than through the word order, in the Russian language the meaning of a sentence conveys largely through changes in the composition of words.

Secondly, such phenomenon, as interference plays a significant role in second language learning. The interference of the native language is the cause for mistakes in the use of prepositions, articles, word order and so on. The reason of origin of this phenomenon is the fact that people construct their speech in a foreign language according to the norms of the native language. It means that when Estonian or Russian speakers want to write or say something in English, primarily, they build the sentence in their mother language and then translate it into the English language. As the practical part of this thesis shows, students translate the sentences word for word. It is a large mistake. When they translate word for word, they do not think about rules of the word order in the English language and they do not take into consideration the differences between their mother language and the foreign language.

Thirdly, this thesis includes some methods and suggestions of how to correct mistakes and how to avoid making them. The rules, which are given in this thesis can help to learn a foreign language and minimize the number of errors. Certainly, students should

to want to study a foreign language, only in this case they achieve success. It is important to adhere to strict rules and not to search for analogies with the native language, such as Russian or Estonian.

Finally, to prove the hypothesis of this paper was carried out a research among students of NarvaSoldinoSecondary School and Narva Estonian Secondary School. A survey was conducted for this purpose. The aims of the questionnaire are to see how English learners translate the sentences from their mother language into the English language, and to see how student make sentences in English (word were given). As a result, the hypothesis of the paper – that on the basis of the native language learners can make mistakes in the word order in the English language. Differences in English, Russian and Estonian syntax can influence mistakes in the word order in English – was proved.

To summarize, the result of the research can be interpreted as follows: the mother language plays a significant role in foreign language learning. It influences the mistakes in the word order in the English language by English learners.

All in all, the goals of the paper were achieved and the hypothesis is also proved.

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## KOKKUVÕTE

Käesolevas töös on autori poolt kirjeldatud õppijate emakeele mõju vigadele ingliskeelsete sõnade järjestuses.

Sissejuhatuses räägitakse lühidalt sõnade järjekorrast Inglise, Eesti ja Vene keeles, kuidas sõnade järjekord Inglise keeles erineb sõnade järjekorrast Eesti ja Vene keeles.

Esimeses osas ehk teooria osas on kirjeldatud vigade tüüpid, nenede põhjused, miksõppijadteevadvead. Samuti sellesosasräägitakseellenähtumusest, nagusekkumine, on kirjutatud mis see on ja sellenähtumuse põhjused. Teooriaosas on ka veodenäidet, mis venelasedjaestlasedõppijadteevadsõnadejärjekorrasInglisekeeles.

Teine osa on praktiline, kusautoripoolt on tehtudküsimustik, mis oli jagatud ja uuris. Küsimustikoliviidud läbi NarvaSoldinoGümnaasiumiõpilastejaNarvaEestiGümnaasiumiõpilastevahel.

Lõppudelõpukskõikeesmärgid on saavutatudningkäesolevatööga on tõendatud, etõppijateemakeelmõjutabveolesõnadejärjekorrasInglisekeeles. Selletöönäitab, etõppijadtõlgivadlausedsõna-sõnalt.

## APPENDICES

### Appendix1. The questionnaire for Russian speakers

Dear students!

I am a third-year student of Narva College of the University of Tartu. The questionnaire is a part of my Bachelor's thesis. The topic of my thesis is "Influence of the learners' mother tongue on their mistakes in the word order in the English language".

The questionnaire is anonymous.

I would be very grateful if you could do the following tasks. Thank you!

#### Task 1

Translate the sentences given below into the English language

1. Вчера вечером они встречались в кафе.
2. Каждое лето, в августе, мы ездим на море
3. Мария очень хорошо говорит на английском
4. Каждый день, Анна ездит на машине на работу
5. Услышав новости, я сразу же позвонил Тому

#### Task 2

Please make the sentences using the words given below.

1. his      name,      after      a      few      minutes,      I,      remembered  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. a      letter      to      her      parents,      Ann,      writes,      every      week  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. some      interesting      books,      found,      we,      in      the      library  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. across      from      the      park,      they,      a      new      hotel,      are      building  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5. brightly, is, shining, sun, the

---

6. . always, at nine o'clock, out of the garage, in the morning, gets, his car, he

---

7. a parking place, near the shops, they, find, rarely

---

8. sometimes, in a garage, Mr Hodges, his car, parks

---

9. fly, with my parents, to Florida, sometimes, I, in winter

---

10. We, plastic, red, table, a, modern, bought

---

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## Appendix2. The questionnaire for Estonian speakers

Dear students!

I am a third-year student of Narva College of the University of Tartu. The questionnaire is a part of my Bachelor's thesis. The topic of my thesis is "Influence of the learners' mother tongue on their mistakes in the word order in the English language".

The questionnaire is anonymous.

I would be very grateful if you could do the following tasks. Thank you!

### Task 1

Translate the sentences given below into the English language

1. Igal õhtul nad kohtusivad kohvikus.
  
  
  
2. Mees tahtis noa võtta
  
  
  
3. Maria väga hästi räägib inglise keeles
  
  
  
4. IgapäevAnna autoga sõidab tööle
  
  
  
5. Kui mina kuulsin uudiseid, ma kohe helistasin Tomile

### Task 2

Please make the sentences using the words given below.

1. his      name,      after      a      few      minutes,      I,      remembered  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
  
2. a      letter      to      her      parents,      Ann,      writes,      every      week  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

3. some interesting books, found, we, in the library

---

4. across from the park, they, a new hotel, are building

---

5. brightly, is, shining, sun, the

---

6. always, at nine o'clock, out of the garage, in the morning, gets, his car, he

---

7. a parking place, near the shops, they, find, rarely

---

8. sometimes, in a garage, Mr Hodges, his car, parks

---

9. fly, with my parents, to Florida, sometimes, I, in winter

---

10. We, plastic, red, table, a, modern, bought

---

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