

Tartu University

Faculty of Social Sciences

Narva College

Study Programme “Languages and Multilingualism in School”

Semjon Letov

**EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER PROSPECTS OF ESTONIAN YOUTH IN  
RELATION TO SELF-ASSESSED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY**

Bachelor’s thesis

Supervisor: A. Golubeva, PhD

NARVA 2026

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

14.01.2026

Semjon Letov

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

Mina, Semjon Letov,

1. annan Tartu Ülikoolile tasuta loa (lihtlitsentsi) minu loodud teose “Eesti Noorte Haridus- ja Karjääriväljavaated Seoses Enesehinnangulise Inglise Keele Oskusega”, mille juhendaja on Anna Golubeva, 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 Commonsi 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.

Semjon Letov

14.01.2026

## **PREFACE**

In the 21st century, English finally established itself as the leading language for international communication and has become an important tool for global interaction (Bruthiaux, 2003). It is not limited to everyday speech, but also has a strong impact on educational and career prospects, touching on various aspects of life (Niyozova, 2020).

Young people in Estonia and other countries can benefit both academically and professionally due to their proficiency in English, which opens doors to studying abroad and working for international companies (Niyozova, 2020). However, the influence of young people's self-evaluation of their English abilities on their ambitions and aims remains a topic of ongoing discussion. While it is important to have English language proficiency, it is equally important to understand how subjective perceptions of language proficiency impact choices related to one's education and careers (Rose et al., 2019).

The research problem the given study aims to solve is that despite the recognized importance of English for professional development, its impact of young people's self-assessment on their choice of career and educational paths has not been investigated. The question arises as to what extent young people's subjective assessment of their language skills limits or, on the contrary, stimulates their aspirations for international career goals.

The present Bachelor's thesis consists of the Introduction, Chapter I, Chapter II and the Conclusion. The introduction reviews the impact of globalization on the role of languages, the attitudes towards different languages in Estonia, and the impact of language proficiency on academic and career prospects in Estonia, in particular. Chapter I "Education, Career and English: Prospects for Young People in Estonia" focuses on the role of English in the context of education for young people in Estonia, examining self-assessment of their English proficiency and its role in the manifestation of professional ambitions related to the English language in Estonia. Chapter II "Estonian Youth Survey: English as a Factor in Professional and Academic Success" is dedicated to practical research, which will use questionnaires and interviews with young people in Estonia to identify the relationship between self-assessment of their English language proficiency and their prospects for studying and achieving professional goals in the country. The Conclusion summarizes the results of the research and comments on the hypothesis.

<b>PREFACE</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>INTRODUCTION</b>	<b>6</b>
Globalization and its Impact on Languages	6
Language Proficiency in Estonia and its Effect on Educational and Career Paths	10
<b>CHAPTER I EDUCATION, CAREER AND ENGLISH: PROSPECTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN ESTONIA</b>	<b>12</b>
1.1 Globalization and the Role of English in International Communication	12
1.2 The Impact of English Language Proficiency on Educational and Career Prospects	13
1.3 Employment Prospects in Estonia for Young People with a High Level of English Proficiency	15
1.4 Problems of Subjective and Objective Assessment of Language Proficiency: Impact on Professional and Educational Decisions	17
1.5 Self-assessment of Language Skills and its Impact on Personal and Professional Ambitions	19
1.6 Conclusions of Chapter I	20
<b>CHAPTER II ESTONIAN YOUTH SURVEY: ENGLISH AS A FACTOR IN PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS</b>	<b>22</b>
2.1 Justification of Survey Design and Choice of Questions	22
2.1.1 Demographic Block	22
2.1.2 Self-assessment of the Level of English Proficiency	22
2.1.3 Motivation, Goals and Barriers in Learning English Among Young People	22
2.1.4 Peculiarities of the Linguistic Context of Estonia	23
2.2 Analysis of Survey Results: The Relationship between Language Self-esteem and Educational and Career Goals	24
2.2.1 Demographic Portrait of Respondents	24
2.2.2 English Language Level Assessment	24
2.2.3 English and Education	26
2.2.4 English and Career	27
2.2.5 Comparative Analysis of Respondents' Attitudes Depending on Their Level of English Proficiency	29
<b>CONCLUSION</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN</b>	<b>33</b>
<b>REFERENCES</b>	<b>35</b>

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **Globalization and its Impact on Languages**

Globalization is the process by which regional economies, cultures, communities and organizations integrate with other more global entities through international trade, modern communications, population migration, and the dissemination of culture through media. In the last century, the term globalization was mainly used by people who studied economics and sociology, but with the constant development in the world, the view of globalization has changed and is now considered a more widely used term (Lim & Ansaldo, 2015). Currently, the course of globalization is almost impossible to stop due to the systematic nature of this process, which has already been implemented in all necessary aspects of life, from the economy to education and the use of technology. Most developed countries are interdependent with each other through economic and social ties that guarantee them progress and profit. The rupture of these ties would lead many countries to economic decline, causing great damage to the world economy in particular (Fairclough, 2009).

In the context of globalization, linguistics has undergone many different changes and has the potential for further innovations in the future (Steger, 2013). Sociolinguists are already documenting the enormous diversity of “linguistic landscapes” that are present on a huge scale in large cities. These landscapes are visible both in the written language, pointing to the various store signs, billboards, road signs, graffiti and other forms of visual art, and in the verbal use of language, focusing on the multinational population of cities (Blommaert, 2012). Walking in cities such as Sydney and Tokyo, one can repeatedly hear representatives of different nationalities speaking. In such cities, the linguistic environment is subject to change due to globalization, which brings people from other countries through migration (Simon, 2016).

Globalization also has a huge impact on the field of education. The results of this impact can be seen at almost every level of education (Blommaert, 2012). In the context of globalization, many schools and universities have begun to realize the importance of multilingualism, so they have started to develop models of full and partial language immersion. These models are a way to quickly and effectively master a second language, which subsequently makes students more competitive in a globalized world (Block, 2010). One of the main features of multilingual education is the CLIL (Content and Language Integrated Learning) approach, which involves the simultaneous study of a language and a major subject. CLIL allows

students to be immersed in a language environment, developing both language skills and subject knowledge (Gorris et al., 2019). In today's fast-paced world, learning foreign languages is becoming a necessity, while various language immersion models not only allow one to effectively learn the chosen language, but also make the student more aware of cultural nuances that are often missed in traditional learning models (Block, 2010). An important function of using CLIL and other bilingual teaching methods is to develop the student's intercultural communication skills, which in the future may play a decisive role in employment in the foreign labor market (Gorris et al., 2019).

Changes in the language policy resulting from globalization can also have negative consequences, when the "cultural dominance" and loss of identity emerge in society. The spread of the so-called "global" languages, such as English, Chinese and Spanish, often comes at the expense of local languages. In such a situation, young people become more interested in learning languages that will be more profitable in economic terms. This trend can lead to a gradual decline in proficiency in native languages and, as a result, to cultural assimilation (Moseley, 2010).

One of the results of globalization has also been the mixing of languages and cultures. This has led to the creation of hybrid forms such as Spanglish and Hinglish. Such hybrid languages begin to form in societies where two (or more) languages actively interact with each other, which can most often be seen in migrant communities. Hybrid languages allow people to adapt and communicate in a multilingual environment more easily, but also when using them, the features of the original languages disappear, which leads to simplification of vocabulary and grammar (Canagarajah, 2017).

To summarize, globalization has become an important factor in changing the linguistic landscape of the world, creating new opportunities for international communication, but at the same time threatening the disappearance of many local languages. The spread of global languages such as English leads to an increase in the number of multilingual people, but at the same time contributes to the disappearance of some cultural and linguistic traditions. As a result of globalization, young people are increasingly focused on learning languages that can provide economic advantages, which can lead to weakening ties with their native language and cultural identity. At the same time, the mixing of languages observed in cities with high migration activity can lead to the formation of hybrid forms, which also affects linguistic diversity.

## **Languages and Attitudes to Languages in Estonia**

Estonia is one of the smallest countries in Europe, but even with a population of 1.3 million, there is a huge diversity of languages that are actively used in society. This is largely due to the combination of the official Estonian language and the languages of national minorities, which are mainly native speakers of Russian and English (Zabrodskaia et al., 2023). The state language in the country is Estonian, spoken by more than 68% of the population, but a huge portion of residents, mainly in large cities, use Russian as the language of communication. Based on the fact that about 22% of the population are Russian-speaking, the Russian language is quite widespread in public life and the media. In the context of globalization, the interest towards learning English among Estonian youth has also increased significantly, offering young people more opportunities for international communication and business (Rahvaarv | Statistikaamet, n.d.).

Although the Russian language has a long history in Estonia, and most Russian speakers have lived in Estonia for most of their lives, the official Estonian language is currently the dominant and most in-demand language in the country in all areas. Based on this, one of the requirements for applying for citizenship is successfully passing the Estonian language exam (Zabrodskaia et al., 2023). After Estonia left the USSR and gained independence, preserving and strengthening the position of the Estonian language became one of the main tasks of the Estonian authorities. The government actively supports the Estonian language through education, media and other state initiatives, which is aimed at bolstering its role as the main language. For many residents, the Estonian language has become a symbol of the country's independence and unification. As a result, proficiency in Estonian has become not only a formal requirement, but also a condition for full participation in the social and cultural life of the country and the key to interaction with the majority of Estonia's residents (Richardson, 2022). The government also creates opportunities for people abroad to study Estonian. Now Estonian is taught in more than 100 countries around the world. Initiatives to conceive programs teaching Estonian help strengthen the bonds between Estonians and people who are interested in it in different countries (Klaas-Lang et al., 2023).

The results of the research conducted in 2023 show that the changes aimed at integrating people with a different native language into Estonian society have had a positive effect, increasing the number of people who speak Estonian at a good level. At the same time, the percentage of people who do not speak Estonian at all has decreased almost fivefold. By

virtue of knowledge of the country's official language, most residents began to feel a positive connection with Estonia and an increase in their professional opportunities (Kultuuriministeerium, 2023).

Russian remains the second most spoken language in Estonia. Approximately a quarter of the country's population speaks Russian. This is largely due to the fact that during the time when Estonia was part of the Soviet Union, Russian was the means of interethnic communication. Most Russian-speaking Estonians live in large cities such as Tallinn and Narva. Even with the current changes, Russian retains its importance among the older generation and the Russian-speaking population of the country. However, the current changes are leading to a part of the Russian-speaking population facing issues of cultural integration. This may be especially true for young people who, while studying Estonian in schools, sometimes lose interest and opportunities for in-depth study of their native language. At the same time, many Estonians are predisposed to perceive Russian as a "minority language", which sometimes affects its status in the socio-cultural context (Richardson, 2022).

English is also a very important communication tool in Estonia. It is most often learned at an early age and is perceived by the population as a language necessary for professional growth and competitiveness in the labor market. English is seen by young people as a key language for their future careers and international communications, especially in the field of information technology, where Estonia occupies a significant position not only in Europe but also in the world. However, many Estonians have concerns about the potential loss of the role of Estonian and other national languages, even if proficiency in English is important and has many advantages. Many residents believe that young people may lose interest in local cultural traditions and linguistic traits (Russian-language identity) if they focus primarily on learning English (Hankewitz, 2022).

In summary, the language situation in Estonia is a multi-layered and dynamic picture, in which the influence of globalization and national linguistic traditions are intertwined. The Estonian language plays a key role as a symbol of national identity and an instrument of integration, while Russian retains its significance for a big part of the population, while facing the challenges of cultural assimilation. English serves as a means of professional growth and international communication, attracting increasing attention from young people. Thus, language policy in Estonia is forced to take into account both the need to maintain the Estonian language and the need to adapt to a multilingual and globalized reality.

## **Language Proficiency in Estonia and its Effect on Educational and Career Paths**

Based on the fact that Estonian is the official language of the country and the main language of education, proficiency in it is the key to successful studying in both public schools and universities. In schools where the learning process is conducted exclusively in Estonian, students with a high level of language proficiency show higher academic achievement. Possession of such a skill as proficiency in Estonian opens more opportunities for continuing education and professional development in the country (Richardson, 2022). Analyzing these data, the Estonian Ministry of Education decided to transition all levels of education in the country to Estonian (Ministry of Education and Research, 2024). It is expected that the complete transition of the education system in Estonia to the Estonian language of studying, which is supported by the vast majority of Estonians and residents of other nationalities, will significantly contribute to reducing inequality in the labor market and to the cultural integration of the Russian-speaking population (Kultuuriministeerium, 2023). Achieving this goal will require increasing the amount of teaching in Estonian at all levels of education and ensuring the availability of teachers with the necessary language skills. To implement the transition to fully Estonian-language education, the Estonian Education Strategy will invest 300 million euros over four years from the state budget. The expected result of this transition to Estonian-language education is the providing of high-quality education in Estonian to all children in Estonia, regardless of their native language. This transition will also allow many people who have learned Estonian at a good level to increase the number of career opportunities when looking for employment (Ministry of Education and Research, 2024).

Despite the large number of changes at the state level aimed at strengthening the position of the Estonian language, the Russian language retains its significance as a language of interethnic communication for the big Russian-speaking community. In cities such as Tallinn and Narva, it still plays an important cultural and social role. This should be taken into account in the context of the integration of Russian-speaking students into the Estonian educational system. It is worth recognizing that in most places on the labor market, knowledge of Estonian is a mandatory requirement for a job applicant. However, knowledge of Russian is also valued and gives an advantage in many areas of customer service and retail (Dikan, 2024).

Although proficiency in English is not strictly necessary, it creates opportunities for working in international companies and studying abroad. English is frequently regarded as a major

advantage in the business and IT employment market, particularly for young people thinking about working for multinational corporations. Additionally, applicants may be given the opportunity to study in English in Estonian universities, enabling them to leverage their proficiency in the English language to advance their education (Universities in Estonia | Study in Estonia, n.d.).

To summarize, the creation of an educational environment that ensures integration without losing the cultural identity of minorities remains a pressing task for Estonia. The issues of integrating Russian-speaking students and encouraging the study of Estonian among young people play an important role in maintaining social harmony and improving opportunities in the labor market.

The research problem is that despite the recognized importance of English for professional development, the impact of young people's self-assessment on their choice of career and educational paths has not been sufficiently investigated. The question arises as to what extent the subjective assessment of their language skills limits or, on the contrary, stimulates their aspirations for international career goals.

Considering the available information, it can be hypothesized that young people in Estonia who rate their English language skills lower may experience limitations in their educational and career ambitions, avoiding more challenging opportunities that require a high level of language proficiency. Whereas those who rate their English level highly tend to choose more ambitious educational programs and career paths related to the international field.

## **CHAPTER I EDUCATION, CAREER AND ENGLISH: PROSPECTS FOR YOUNG PEOPLE IN ESTONIA**

### **1.1 Globalization and the Role of English in International Communication**

The process of globalization covers such aspects of human life as economics, politics and culture. At the same time, globalization has a huge impact on the language environment. In the conditions of modern reality, English, due to its status as “lingua franca”, has become one of the main means of international communication. This language is widely used in diplomacy, science and business, which makes it an indispensable tool for interaction in the global community (Todorova, 2018).

The historical spread of English is linked to the colonial policies of the British Empire. English became the official language in countries under British influence and continues to be important there. In the 20th century, the role of English was strengthened by the United States, which became the dominant force in the global economy and culture. This cemented the position of American English as a global standard, especially in the context of media, the Internet and popular culture (Gonçalves et al., 2018).

English is one of the most important factors changing the modern international economy. It opens access to new markets and increases competitiveness on a global level. In countries such as China and India, proficiency in English has become a prerequisite for getting a high-paying job or successfully doing business in the international arena (Alfarhan, 2016). English also serves as the primary language for learning, development, and communication in technology industries. All these factors make it a must-have for professional use (Alfarhan, 2016).

English maintains its dominant position in the process of knowledge exchange, as most scientific conferences, publications and research are conducted in English. This fact gives a tangible advantage to native speakers and experts. International companies such as the UN, the World Bank also prefer to use English, emphasizing its role as an official language (Alfarhan, 2016).

The most important role of the English language is the process of cultural exchange that occurs between representatives of different countries and nations. English supports cooperation and mutual understanding, thus being the most effective means of dialogue (Singhania, 2023). But despite the positive aspects of English as a language that unites, it can

have negative consequences. In many countries where English is a second language, there is a process in which it often displaces local languages from everyday life. Cultural identity components may be lost as an outcome (Mohammed & Abdalla, 2020). “Cultural imperialism” is the term used to describe the occurrence where English becomes the dominant language in society. The term refers to a situation in which minorities and their cultural traditions are marginalized as a result of one language’s supremacy over others. According to research, this process can both increase the probability of local languages dying out and increase social inequality. The globalization of the English language has a huge social and cultural impact, increasing the gap between native English speakers and native speakers of other languages. The loss of cultural diversity may be one of the effects of this mismatch on a global level (Todorova, 2018). The widespread use of English has drawn criticism from academics and activists who fear that it may homogenize cultural identity. Interest in local languages, customs, and cultural practices is decreasing as a result of English becoming the main language of education and business. Young people are progressively being disconnected from their ancestors’ practices which is particularly apparent in countries with significant cultural legacies (Singhania, 2023).

In conclusion, English remains an important tool for globalization, providing people with opportunities for international interaction, economic growth, and cultural exchange. In many cases, the use of English as the primary language of education and business results in a diminishing interest in local languages, traditions, and cultural practices. This is most often seen in countries with a rich cultural heritage, where young people are gradually losing touch with their ancestral traditions (Singhania, 2023).

## **1.2 The Impact of English Language Proficiency on Educational and Career Prospects**

In the context of globalization, English language proficiency has become a huge influence on success in both education and career development. The useful functions of English include not only facilitating communication between people from different countries, but also open access to a huge number of educational programs and career opportunities around the world. A high level of English proficiency can help improve academic results and add advantages in the employment process (Arkoudis et al., 2009).

English is one of the key elements that allows people to succeed in the academic field. The world’s most highly ranked educational centers such as Harvard, Cambridge and Oxford use English as the primary language of instruction for students. It follows from this fact that one

of the most important skills for admission to these educational institutions is a high level of English proficiency. Prestigious study programs mainly offer study plans in English and in order to make it easier for an applicant to enroll in them, it is necessary to have a certificate of passing the IELTS, TOEFL or CAMBRIDGE exam with a high score in their portfolio. For international students who wish to receive a quality education abroad, English serves as a universal tool that allows them to explore various aspects of their curriculum such as research papers and articles. Proficiency in English also allows students to communicate with teachers and conduct a dialogue with other students from different countries (Prasetya, 2023).

Proficiency in English provides students with access to an unlimited library of knowledge that they can gain during their studies. English is the universal language of science and education. A huge number of modern studies and scientific articles in the fields of engineering, information technology, medicine and pedagogy are published only in English. Moreover, the authors of these articles are not only native English speakers, but also those who have achieved a high level of English for writing high-quality academic papers. All these factors emphasize the importance of English as one of the most important tools for building a successful academic career. According to research, students who have a high level of English are more likely to be published in international journals and attract the attention of employers and research funds. Having a high level of English, students also have the opportunity to participate in scientific conferences, the knowledge gained from which can positively affect their further academic and career future (Malokani et al., 2023).

At the same time, insufficient proficiency in English can become an obstacle for students wishing to obtain an education. Elements such as academic terminology, work with writing assignments such as essays, participation in international projects and communication with teachers and classmates can reduce the student's motivation and desire to achieve high results in learning (Malokani et al., 2023).

In addition to academic prospects, English can also be an important element in the job search and career advancement process. One of the main requirements of multinational companies is proficiency in English, which opens access to the international labor market. Proficiency in English helps employees successfully cope with tasks related to international projects, as well as participate in negotiations with partners and clients from different countries (Pearson, 2024). Professional success can also enhance the status of employees and be an important factor in increasing their salary. Based on this, a certificate of English proficiency can

increase the chances of strengthening the team of employees in a prestigious job (Prasetya, 2023).

Despite all the obvious advantages of English, like any element of globalization, it also has some disadvantages. These include situations in which employees from countries where English is not the native language often experience problems with accent, lack of vocabulary and cultural differences. These barriers can create difficulties in the professional environment, reducing their competitiveness at the international level (Arkoudis et al., 2009). Lack of fluency in English can be perceived as a lack of professional qualities, which creates additional pressure on such people. This, in turn, can reduce their confidence and motivation for further development. These problems highlight the need to realize that English language proficiency is not only a matter of educational standards, but also a socio-cultural challenge that requires a comprehensive approach to solve (Pearson, 2024).

To summarize, it is important to recognize that English has a huge impact on people's academic and professional prospects. It opens up access to international educational programmes, improves employability and promotes career advancement. However, it is important to remember that barriers such as accent and lack of practice need to be overcome. Support from educational institutions and employers, including specialised courses and training, can help staff and students realise their full potential.

### **1.3 Employment Prospects in Estonia for Young People with a High Level of English Proficiency**

English is one of the most popular languages in Estonia. It is most widely used in such areas as tourism, information technology, economics and education. Knowledge of foreign languages, including English, can significantly affect an employee's salary. With a certificate of successful completion of a language exam, an employer can increase not only the salary, but also the role of the employee in the team. Every year, more and more companies appear in Estonia that seek to enter the global market in order to cooperate with representatives of companies from other countries, as well as have access to opening their enterprises outside of Estonia. Some of the main companies in Estonia that have become in demand on the international market are Skype and Bolt, using English as the main tool of communication when doing business with partners from other countries, thereby increasing the area of application of their product. Based on these facts, proficiency in English is a must-have skill

for a person who wants to work for an international company in Estonia (Haridus- ja Teadusministeerium, 2018).

According to experts, the importance of English for employees is growing every year. This is especially noticeable in the areas of high technology and project management. The scope of work of companies in these areas is often not limited to Estonia. In order to increase their income, such companies prefer to cooperate with companies abroad, as well as integrate into the economy of these countries. Based on this, employers of these companies strive to find employees who speak foreign languages to successfully interact with foreign clients and colleagues (Cedefop, 2021).

In the Estonian financial sector, English plays a similarly important role. Working with foreign partners and access to international operations require employees to have high English language skills. For example, Estonian banks and insurance companies require their employees to have sufficient proficiency in English to prepare reports, negotiate with other companies and participate in international meetings. The need to be proficient in English is especially important for people working in international branches and cross-border projects (Cedefop, 2021).

For young Estonians looking for a lucrative job, English has long been one of the keys to a successful career. Young people actively use English in their everyday work and also consider it an important skill for professional development. In recent years, English has become an integral part of the education and training of young professionals (Vihman et al., 2022).

Young Estonian specialists often focus on finding jobs in the fields of programming and business analytics. These industries use English as the main language of communication. Therefore, employees with a high knowledge of English are potentially more suitable for participation in international projects and have a high chance of taking a prestigious position in multinational companies (Cedefop, 2021).

Proficiency in English can be a key to international integration for young Estonians. With sufficient qualifications and proficiency in English, young people have the opportunity to participate in international exchange programs such as Erasmus+. Work in foreign companies and participation in international projects are also available to those people with a high level

of English. The international experience gained not only expands the amount of knowledge but also broadens the horizon of career prospects (Praagli et al., 2020).

Despite the obvious advantages of English skills, the process of acquiring a high level of proficiency is often associated with challenges for young Estonians. Comparing the level of English proficiency in urban and rural areas, it can be seen that people in cities have much better access to learning foreign languages than people in rural areas. This factor can create inequality in employment opportunities (Praagli et al., 2020). Also, for many young people, learning English can be an additional burden, especially for those who need to have a high level of proficiency in the state language (Estonian), while their main language is Russian. The multilingual approach can cause difficulties and stress for students and young workers (Vihman et al., 2022).

To summarize, proficiency in English plays a key role in the career development of young people in Estonia. This skill opens up access to high-paying jobs, international projects, and educational programs. However, it is important to consider existing challenges, such as the gap in access to education between regions and the need to learn several languages. Addressing these issues can help distribute opportunities more evenly and ensure the professional success of young employees in Estonia.

#### **1.4 Problems of Subjective and Objective Assessment of Language Proficiency: Impact on Professional and Educational Decisions**

Language proficiency assessment plays a vital role in educational and professional settings, serving as a key tool in making decisions such as admission to colleges and universities, choosing career paths, and evaluating employees in the workplace. However, there is a huge difference between subjective assessment of one's language skills and objective test results, which can significantly affect academic and professional outcomes (Hržica et al., 2024).

Subjective assessment of language skills is primarily based on the self-assessment of the language learner and is quite common in the educational environment. Subjective assessment has several advantages, as it can help the learner better understand their strengths and weaknesses, which can be useful when choosing learning goals and adjusting curricula. Despite some positive aspects of this type of assessment, subjective assessment has its limitations. For example, it is subject to cognitive biases, such as underestimation or overestimation of one's own language skills. Often, many students who consider their level of

language proficiency to be high experience difficulties in passing control tests, which are an objective assessment of language competence. This method of assessment can negatively affect professional and academic decisions, creating an imbalance between the student's self-assessment and their actual knowledge (Aydoğan & Akbarov, 2018).

Objective language assessment methods such as the TOEFL, IELTS and Cambridge exams are a very important tool for accurately measuring language skills. The results of these exams are almost always required when applying for jobs in international companies, as well as in universities where instruction is predominantly in English. However, despite their accuracy and quality, this method of assessment can also have problems due to which the real level of language proficiency can be incorrectly revealed. Language exams often focus on such aspects of the language as grammar and vocabulary, not always focusing on contextual skills such as the ability to negotiate or solve complex problems in specific situations. Moreover, this type of assessment can be a source of stress for students, which subsequently affects the test results, lowering the exam result and thus not showing the real skill (Prasetya, 2023).

Subjective and objective assessment of language skills can complement each other in some situations, but in most cases they still have differences. Although subjective self-assessment can be a useful indicator of language proficiency, it is only in combination with subjective assessment. Very often, students who assess their level of language proficiency highly tend to achieve high results in learning. However, there is a certain line that separates fair self-assessment from unreasonably high self-assessment. In cases of high self-assessment, students often receive grades that are much lower and do not meet their expectations. At the same time, the opposite process of self-assessment can occur, when a student greatly underestimates his or her abilities and language skills. In such cases, students with low self-assessment tend to avoid applying to international university programs and are hesitant about working in multinational companies where one of the requirements for starting work is a high level of foreign language proficiency (Gullifer et al., 2021).

Assessing the level of language proficiency has a huge impact on a person's confidence and their willingness to make serious decisions related to their professional prospects. Subjective assessment shapes a person's career ambitions, while objective assessment serves as a certain corrector, allowing a person to better understand their real level and more accurately navigate the academic field and job selection (Peiris & De Silva, 2019). An important element of subjective assessment is also the work of teachers. Often, subjective theories of teachers

about the proficiency of a particular student can influence their final grade. Some teachers may be inclined to overestimate or, on the contrary, underestimate the assessments of different students, focusing on their own expectations and impressions of the students. This type of assessment can negatively affect the self-esteem of students and their academic results (Seden et al., 2018).

In conclusion, determining language proficiency is a difficult and varied procedure that affects choices about education and employment. Although both subjective and objective evaluation techniques have benefits and drawbacks, combining them can yield a more comprehensive picture of language proficiency. In order to assist people make better judgments, it is critical to take into account both objective evidence and self-evaluation.

### **1.5 Self-assessment of Language Skills and its Impact on Personal and Professional Ambitions**

Correct self-assessment of one's language skills can enable students and employees to be aware of their current capabilities and create a realistic plan of action for the future. People with high self-esteem tend to successfully achieve high-level goals. In the context of study, such students often choose more ambitious tasks, such as participating in international projects or studying at foreign universities (Wicaksono et al., 2023). At the same time, students with low self-esteem of their own language skills tend to limit themselves in choosing highly ranked educational institutions for continuing their education (Papajoanu et al., 2021). In a professional context, high self-esteem of one's own language skills can be associated with the performance of responsible tasks, such as negotiating with foreign partners or delivering a presentation in a foreign language. These aspects are very important for professionals working in a multilingual environment, where proficiency in foreign languages makes them more competitive (Ritonga et al., 2023).

Gender differences can also influence the formation of self-assessment of language skills. Very often, women assess their skills lower than men. This happens even in situations where there is an objective indicator. This feature is largely associated with cultural and psychological factors that affect self-confidence. This fact implies the need for a gender-sensitive approach in the development of training programs and assessment of language skills (Papajoanu et al., 2021).

Self-assessment of language skills is an important tool for personal and professional growth. It helps to shape ambitions, develop self-regulation and critical thinking skills, and increase self-confidence. However, to achieve maximum effectiveness, it is important to consider its limitations and combine self-assessment with objective methods of verification. In this way, self-assessment can be a powerful tool for achieving educational and career goals.

## **1.6 Conclusions of Chapter I**

### **Summary of Chapter I**

The first chapter of the thesis examined key aspects related to the role of English in the educational and career prospects of Estonian youth. Global processes, such as the impact of globalization on the status of English as an international means of communication and its significance for the educational and professional environment in Estonia, were analyzed. Particular attention was paid to self-assessment of language skills and how it affects the formation of ambitions and the choice of educational and career paths.

This chapter examined how a high level of English proficiency provides young people with access to quality education, opens up prospects for work in international companies and increases competitiveness in the labor market. The problems related to subjective and objective assessment of language skills and their impact on educational and professional decisions were also highlighted. An important aspect was the study of how self-esteem affects self-confidence and readiness to achieve ambitious goals.

### **Research Methodology**

The research methodology outlined in the second chapter directly continues the discussion started in the first chapter. The theoretical part of the study, based on the literature review, formed the basis for further analysis, in particular for the practical part - a survey among Estonian young people aged 16 to 25. The survey focuses on their self-assessment of their English language proficiency, as well as their educational and career aspirations. The questions will concern the level of English, the role of language in their ambitions and professional goals.

The connection between Chapter I and Chapter II is that the first chapter forms the theoretical context, which serves as the basis for developing the research instruments and interpreting its results. The practical part will confirm or refute the hypothesis that subjective self-assessment

of language can both limit and stimulate the ambitions of young people in Estonia. Thus, the study not only consolidates the findings of the theoretical chapter, but also contributes to a deeper understanding of the topic.

## **CHAPTER II ESTONIAN YOUTH SURVEY: ENGLISH AS A FACTOR IN PROFESSIONAL AND ACADEMIC SUCCESS**

### **2.1 Justification of Survey Design and Choice of Questions**

The development of a questionnaire as the main instrument of empirical research requires a clear correspondence between the set goals, hypothesis and the format of the questions asked (*Research Methods in Applied Linguistics*, n.d.). The main objective of this study is to identify the relationship between subjective self-assessment of English language proficiency and academic/professional aspirations of Estonian youth. The questions included in the questionnaire were formulated in such a way as to reflect not only the level of language competence, but also psychological, sociocultural and motivational aspects influencing educational and professional self-determination. The questionnaire includes several logically connected blocks, each of which is aimed at measuring a specific aspect of the phenomenon under study.

#### **2.1.1 Demographic Block**

The main purpose of this section is to obtain basic information about the respondent: age, place of residence (city/village), level of education, native language. This data is necessary for subsequent analysis, allowing to identify regional differences, as well as the influence of the native language on linguistic identity and the perception of English as a promotion tool.

#### **2.1.2 Self-assessment of the Level of English Proficiency**

This block contains questions about self-assessment of the level of English proficiency, as well as questions about the frequency of using English in everyday life and confidence in using English in conversation on professional topics. Using these questions allows to assess subjective language competence. This is a recognized tool, actively used in international practice (Gullifer et al., 2021).

#### **2.1.3 Motivation, Goals and Barriers in Learning English Among Young People**

This block addresses questions concerning attitudes towards learning English, sources of motivation (internal and external), and the perception of language as a resource, necessity, or barrier. The basis for including these questions was research demonstrating that students' motivation directly influences both their level of language proficiency and their subsequent choice of educational and professional trajectory (Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011; Lamb, 2012).

This section also aims to identify respondents' aspirations to continue their education abroad, enroll in English-language universities, work for international companies, or participate in projects that require English. The questions also allow to record whether they consider knowledge of English necessary to achieve these goals. This makes it possible to establish a direct link between self-assessment of the language and real intentions and ambitions (Peiris & De Silva, 2019; Prasetya, 2023).

In addition to all of the above, the questions in this block are devoted to identifying the difficulties that young people face when learning a language: lack of access to learning resources, quality of teaching, language anxiety. These factors often affect the real effectiveness of language learning and help explain the discrepancy between subjective assessment and objective results (Horwitz, 2001; Mercer, 2011).

#### **2.1.4 Peculiarities of the Linguistic Context of Estonia**

The choice of the research topic and the structure of the questionnaire are directly related to the specific features of the sociolinguistic context of Estonia, in which English is becoming increasingly important in education and career (Vihman et al., 2022). In the context of multilingualism and high levels of globalization, English is becoming not only an important tool for professional growth, but also a factor influencing the self-esteem, ambitions, and life strategies of young people (Peiris & De Silva, 2019; Dörnyei & Ushioda, 2011).

The questions included in the questionnaire were formulated taking into account present language situation and aimed to identify how the subjective assessment of English language proficiency relates to the educational and career goals of young people in Estonia (Ross, 1998). The next step will present an analysis of the collected data, allowing for a deeper understanding of how the role of English is perceived and to what extent it influences the respondents' self-determination.

To summarize, the choice of questionnaire format and question content was driven by the need to obtain valid, representative and comparable data reflecting both the respondents' personal attitudes and the influence of the external language environment. This modular approach provides a structured and multidimensional measurement of the influence of English on the academic and professional self-determination of young people. It also allows subjective self-assessment data to be related to the broader sociolinguistic context characteristic of Estonia. Further quantitative and qualitative analysis will help determine

how the level of subjective confidence in English language proficiency may be related to the choice of educational strategies and career goals.

## **2.2 Analysis of Survey Results: The Relationship between Language Self-esteem and Educational and Career Goals**

### **2.2.1 Demographic Portrait of Respondents**

To understand the context and validity of the findings, it is important to analyze the demographic characteristics of the study participants. The survey involved 98 respondents aged 16 to 25. The average age was 21, which corresponds to the target group of the study – young people at the stage of making key educational and career decisions.

The geography of respondents is represented mainly by large and regional cities of Estonia. The largest number of respondents were from these cities: Tallinn - 41, Narva - 27, Jõhvi - 9, Tartu - 6. The remaining respondents indicated smaller settlements, such as Kohtla-Järve, Rakvere, Viljandi, Põlva and others. One respondent indicated a place of residence outside of Estonia - Chamonix, France, which may show a temporary or permanent move for work. In general, the respondents cover both the capital region and eastern Estonia.

The language profile of the participants demonstrates a high level of multilingualism. In the open question about the native language and other known languages, Estonian, Russian and English were most often mentioned. Spanish, Finnish and Ukrainian were also mentioned in the answers. In many responses, English is indicated as one of the additional languages learned, which reflects its relevance in the modern educational and professional environment. It is characteristic that some participants speak three or more languages at once, which can affect the level of confidence in international communication and the ambitiousness of goals.

In summary, based on the demographic data, it can be concluded that the majority of respondents are young people aged 18–24, living mainly in large cities in Estonia, such as Tallinn and Narva. Most of the participants speak two or more languages, with Russian, Estonian and English being the most common. These characteristics provide a favourable basis for analysing how English proficiency relates to the educational and professional aspirations of young people in Estonia.

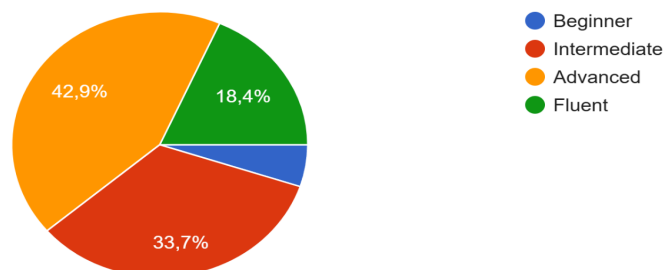
### **2.2.2 English Language Level Assessment**

Respondents had the opportunity to independently choose their level of English proficiency.

The distribution was as follows:

6) How would you rate your overall English proficiency?

98 ответов



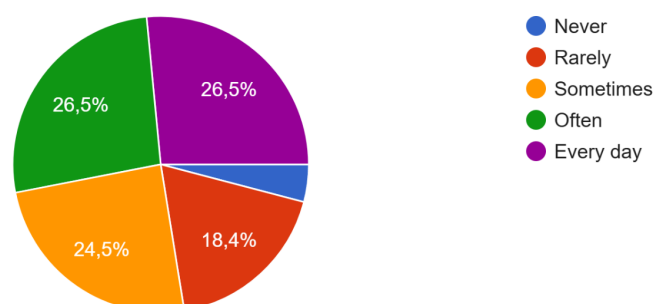
The vast majority of respondents - more than 95% - assess their level as intermediate to advanced, and almost every fifth person believes that they speak English fluently. This indicates a fairly high level of confidence in their language skills in the sample.

Confidence in using English in the professional sphere was assessed separately. The results were distributed as follows: Somewhat confident - 39 people; Confident - 25; Very confident - 19; Not confident - 15. The majority of respondents (almost 85%) felt at least moderately confident, and only 15 people admitted to lacking confidence when using English in a professional context. This indicator is important, as it directly affects career and educational ambitions related to international activities.

The survey participants were also asked to select the frequency of using English in their daily lives:

8) How often do you use English in your daily life?

98 ответов



More than half of the survey participants use English daily or frequently, and only 4 respondents do not use it at all. This suggests that English is actively integrated into the daily

lives of a significant portion of young people in Estonia – both in communication and, possibly, in studies, work, or the digital space.

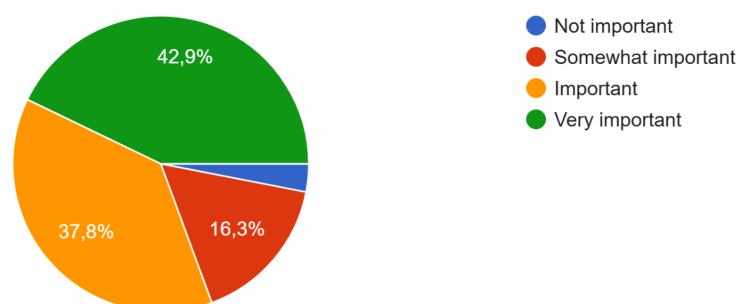
The analysis showed that most respondents rated their English level as intermediate or higher, with one in five considering themselves fluent. More than 80% of participants felt confident or quite confident when using English in their professional sphere. English is actively used in everyday life: more than half of the respondents use it daily or often, which indicates its important role in the lives of modern Estonian youth.

### 2.2.3 English and Education

People with different levels of education took part in the survey: High school - 54 people, Bachelor's degree - 27, Vocational school - 8, Master's degree - 4, Other - 5. About half of the participants (50 people) indicated that they are only studying, another 40 people are combining both studying and working, and only 8 people are only working. This fact once again confirms that the main audience of the study is young people who are active in their studies.

When asked how important knowledge of English is for achieving educational goals, respondents answered as follows:

9) How important do you think English proficiency is for achieving your educational goals?  
98 ответов



Thus, almost 95% of the participants recognized English as an important or extremely important factor in their education, which emphasizes its key role in the educational sphere.

Of the 78 respondents who answered the question about difficulties, 43 people (i.e. 55%) admitted that they had experienced some difficulties related to their level of English

proficiency. These could be problems with professional terminology, academic writing or understanding materials. This suggests that even with a high level of language proficiency in general, barriers are still present, especially in specialized areas.

Of the 83 respondents who answered the question about their plans to study abroad, 20 people directly indicated that English was a decisive factor in their decision or had already played an important role. Many mentioned that without a good level of English, studying abroad is either impossible or extremely difficult. This once again underlines the connection between language training and international academic mobility.

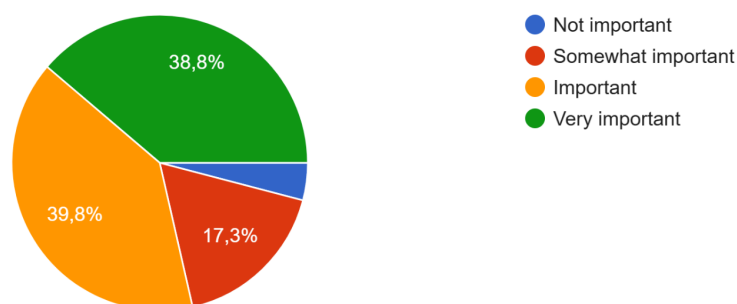
Most respondents are continuing their education and have completed high school to undergraduate studies. Almost 95% of participants believe that knowledge of English is important or very important to achieve their educational goals. More than half (about 55%) noted that they had encountered difficulties in their studies related to their level of English proficiency - most often this concerned professional vocabulary or academic requirements. In addition, many participants are considering studying abroad, where English is considered a prerequisite.

#### 2.2.4 English and Career

When asked about the importance of English for career growth, respondents answered as follows:

12) How important do you think English proficiency is for your career success?

98 ОТВЕТОВ



Thus, almost 80% of respondents believe that knowledge of English plays an important or decisive role in building a successful career. This confirms the high value of the language in

the professional environment, especially in the context of globalization and the growing number of international companies in the Estonian labor market.

A total of 98 people answered the open-ended question about the impact of English on wages in Estonia. Of these, 51 respondents directly mentioned English as a factor that helps them get a higher-paid job or expands their employment opportunities. The arguments included: the opportunity to work for international companies, access to higher-paying vacancies, communication with clients and partners abroad, professional growth and career advancement that require English proficiency. Based on this fact, more than half of the participants see a direct link between knowledge of English and financial prospects.

When asked about their professional and life plans, respondents most often gave the following answers:

#### 14) What plans do you have for future?

98 ОТВЕТОВ



Although most respondents plan to stay and work in Estonia, a significant proportion of respondents express interest in an international career. This coincides with previous observations about the high importance of English for career ambitions and supports the hypothesis that English opens doors to more ambitious opportunities.

To summarize, the analysis showed that the majority of respondents consider English proficiency to be an important factor for achieving career success. Around 80% of participants noted that English plays a significant or key role in their professional ambitions. More than half of respondents indicated that knowledge of English can have a positive impact on salary levels and expand career opportunities, especially in an international environment. At the same time, a significant portion of respondents expressed a desire to work in Estonia,

but there is also interest in employment abroad, which once again emphasizes the relevance of English proficiency as a tool for career mobility.

### **2.2.5 Comparative Analysis of Respondents' Attitudes Depending on Their Level of English Proficiency**

In order to test the hypothesis, respondents were divided into two groups depending on their self-assessed level of English proficiency: a high level group (Advanced and Fluent) and a low level group (Beginner and Intermediate). Comparison of these groups allows to assess how the level of English correlates with the educational and professional attitudes of young people.

The educational level was comparable in both groups: most respondents are studying or already have a high school or bachelor's degree. However, in the high level group, the proportion of those continuing their studies to a master's degree is slightly higher (5% versus 2.6%), which may indicate greater academic potential or aspirations to obtain a higher qualification.

Significant differences were found in confidence in using English in a professional environment. Among respondents with a high level of English proficiency, almost two thirds (63%) feel confident or very confident when using the language in a work context. At the same time, in the low group there were less than 16% of such people, and the proportion of those who were unsure was almost seven times higher than in the High group (31.6% versus 5%).

Interesting results were obtained from the analysis of the perception of the importance of English for education and career. In the High group, none of the respondents noted that English is not important for education, while in the Low group this figure was almost 8%. More than half of the High group representatives (51.7%) consider English to be extremely important for educational purposes, while in the Low group this figure is lower - 28.9%. A similar trend is observed in assessing the influence of English on a career: in the group with a high level of language, 81.6% of participants note the high importance of English for career growth, while in the group with a low level - 73.7%. Moreover, almost five times more often, representatives of the Low group say that English is not important for building a career.

When analyzing the answers to open-ended questions about future plans, a connection is also traced between the level of English and international orientation. Of the respondents in the

High group, 8 people directly indicated a desire to move abroad, while in the Low group there were only 4 people, despite the smaller overall size of the group.

The comparative analysis confirms that high self-assessment of English language proficiency is closely related to greater academic and professional ambition. Such respondents are more likely to seek further education, demonstrate confidence in professional communication, and consider international career paths. In turn, participants with low self-assessment of English language proficiency are more likely to show uncertainty and limit their plans to the national context. These data support the main hypothesis of the study and emphasize the importance of language training as a factor in broadening the horizons of young people in Estonia.

## CONCLUSION

This bachelor's thesis was devoted to the study of the relationship between self-assessment of English language proficiency and educational and career aspirations of young people in Estonia. In the process of the work, both theoretical and practical components of this topic were considered, including the impact of globalization, the peculiarities of the language situation in Estonia, as well as the perception of English as a resource for professional and personal growth.

The first chapter of the work examined the theoretical context related to the global status of English as a lingua franca and its importance in the fields of education and employment. Special attention was paid to the problem of subjective and objective assessment of language competence and its influence on the formation of life goals. It is emphasized that a high level of English proficiency provides access to prestigious education, international internships and opportunities for professional growth.

The second chapter presented the results of an empirical study based on a survey of 98 respondents aged 16 to 25. The data obtained allowed to identify significant trends in the perception of English as a tool for achieving academic and career goals. Most participants rated their level of English as intermediate and above, with more than half using English in everyday life. English was considered important or extremely important for education (almost 95% of participants) and for building a career (about 80%).

More than half of the respondents noted that they encountered difficulties in learning related to their level of English - most often this concerned professional vocabulary or academic requirements. A significant portion of respondents also considered the possibility of studying abroad, where English was considered a prerequisite.

Of particular value is the comparative analysis of two groups of respondents - with high and low self-assessment of their level of English. Participants with higher self-esteem demonstrated greater confidence in professional communication, more often associated English with achieving goals, and showed an international orientation in their plans. In turn, participants with low language self-esteem were more likely to feel insecure, less likely to rate English as necessary, and less likely to be oriented toward an international academic or professional environment.

At the beginning of the study, a hypothesis was put forward that young people in Estonia who assess their English proficiency as low are more likely to limit their educational and career aspirations, avoiding more challenging opportunities that require a high level of language proficiency. At the same time, those who assess their English as high tend to choose more ambitious academic and professional paths, including in the international sphere.

Based on the analysis, this hypothesis is confirmed. The survey demonstrated a clear relationship between the subjective assessment of the level of English and the level of educational and professional ambitions. The higher the self-assessment of language competence, the higher the confidence, the desire to study abroad and the choice of professions with an international focus. Thus, in the perception of Estonian youth, English is becoming not only a communication tool, but also a symbol of expanding personal and professional horizons.

The results of the study indicate the need to support the language training of young people in Estonia, especially among those who lack confidence in their knowledge. It is necessary to develop programs that not only objectively improve the level of English, but also build self-confidence. This will allow more young people to realize themselves in the international academic and professional environment without limiting their ambitions due to subjective insecurity.

## SUMMARY IN ESTONIAN

Bakalaureusetöö “Eesti Noorte Haridus- ja Karjääriväljavaated Seoses Enesehinnangulise Inglise Keele Oskusega” on pühendatud uuringule, mis käsitleb inglise keele oskuse enesehindamise mõju Eesti noorte haridus- ja tööalastele püüdlustele. Globaliseerumise kontekstis muutub inglise keele oskus akadeemilises ja tööelus üha olulisemaks, mis on eriti oluline noorte jaoks, kes on oluliste eluotsuste tegemise etapis. Samal ajal on subjektiivse enesehinnangu mõju oma keeleoskusele haridustee ja karjäärivalikule veel vähe uuritud.

Käesoleva töö eesmärk on välja selgitada, kuidas noorte arusaamad oma inglise keele oskuse kohta mõjutavad nende haridusplaane ja karjäärieesmärke. Teoreetilises osas arutletakse globaliseerumise, keelepoliitika, mitmekeelsuse ja inglise keele rolli kohta rahvusvahelises suhtluses. Erilist tähelepanu pööratakse Eesti kontekstile, kus inglise keel eksisteerib aktiivselt koos riigikeele eesti keele ja laialdaselt kasutatava vene keelega.

Praktilises osas viidi läbi sotsiolingvistiline küsitlus 98 vastajaga vanuses 16-25 aastat. Küsimustik sisaldas nii suletud kui ka avatud küsimusi, mis võimaldas koguda nii kvantitatiivseid kui ka kvalitatiivseid andmeid. Vastuste analüüs näitas, et enamik osalejatest valdab inglise keelt keskmisel või kõrgel tasemel ja kasutab seda oma igapäevaelus regulaarselt. Samal ajal peab peaaegu 95 protsenti vastanutest inglise keelt oluliseks või väga oluliseks hariduseesmärkide saavutamisel ja umbes 80 protsenti peab seda oluliseks eduka karjääri tegemisel.

Analüüsis pööratakse erilist tähelepanu kahe vastajarühma võrdlemisele: need, kes hindavad inglise keele oskust enda hinnangul kõrgelt ja madalalt. Kõrgema enesehinnanguga osalejad näitavad oluliselt suuremat enesekindlust ametialases suhtlemises, kaaluvad tõenäolisemalt välismaal õppimist ja näitavad huvi rahvusvahelise karjääri vastu. Samas kui madala keelealase enesehinnanguga osalejad piirduvad suurema tõenäosusega kohalike eesmärkidega, näitavad üles ebakindlust ja väldivad keerulisemaid, kuid paljulubavaid radu, mis hõlmavad inglise keele kasutamist.

Uuringu tulemused kinnitavad püstitatud hüpoteesi: subjektiivne hinnang inglise keele tasemele mõjutab oluliselt noorte haridus- ja kutsestrateegiaid. Kõrge enesehinnang aitab kaasa ambitsioonikate eesmärkide püstitamisele, avardab silmaringi ja suurendab usaldust oma võimete suhtes. Madal enesehinnang võib seevastu olla psühholoogiliseks takistuseks,

mis piirab valikuid ja vähendab püüdlusi osaleda rahvusvahelistes projektides ja programmides.

Töös rõhutatakse, kui oluline on arendada noorte seas keelelist enesekindlust, samuti vajadust haridusasutuste ja riigi igakülgse toetuse järele, et tagada võrdne juurdepääs kvaliteetsele keeleõppele. Tulemused võivad olla kasulikud õpetajatele, teadlastele, haridusspetsialistidele ning keele- ja noorsoopoliitika kujundajatele Eestis.

## REFERENCES

Alfarhan, I. (2016). English as a global language and the effects on culture and identity. *American Research Journal of English and Literature*, 1, 1-6.

*Analüüs: võõrkeelte oskus aitab leida tööd ja saada suuremat palka.* (2018). Haridus- Ja Teadusministeerium.

[https://www.hm.ee/uudised/analuus-voorkeelte-oskus-aitab-leida-tood-ja-saada-suuremat-palka?utm\\_source=](https://www.hm.ee/uudised/analuus-voorkeelte-oskus-aitab-leida-tood-ja-saada-suuremat-palka?utm_source=)

Arkoudis, S., Hawthorne, L., Baik, C., Hawthorne, G., O'Loughlin, K., Leach, D., & Bexley, E. (2009). The impact of English language proficiency and workplace readiness on the employment outcomes of tertiary international students (Full report).

Aydogan, H., & Akbarov, A. (2018). Subjective vs. Objective Measures of English Proficiency in a Sample of Turkish Students. *Acta Didactica Napocensia*, 11(2), 135-142.

Blommaert, J. (2012). Chronicles of complexity: Ethnography, superdiversity, and linguistic landscapes. *Tilburg Papers in Culture Studies*, 29.

<https://research.tilburguniversity.edu/en/publications/chronicles-of-complexity-ethnography-superdiversity-and-linguistics>

Canagarajah, S. (Ed.). (2017). *The Routledge handbook of migration and language*. Taylor & Francis.

Dikan, K. (2024, November 17). Addressing interethnic communication between Russian and Estonian speakers in Narva. *Medium*.

<https://medium.com/%40karina.dikan/addressing-interethnic-communication-between-russian-and-estonian-speakers-in-narva-c27779dfce9e>

Dörnyei, Z., & Ushioda, E. (2011). *Teaching and Researching: Motivation* (2nd ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315833750>

*Estonia: Skills forecasts up to 2025.* (2021, June 17). CEDEFOP.

[https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/country-reports/estonia-skills-forecasts-2025?utm\\_source=](https://www.cedefop.europa.eu/en/country-reports/estonia-skills-forecasts-2025?utm_source=)

Fairclough, N. (2009). Language and globalization. *Semiotica*, 2009(173), 317-342. <https://doi.org/10.1515/SEMI.2009.014>

- Gonçalves, B., Loureiro-Porto, L., Ramasco, J. J., & Sánchez, D. (2018). Mapping the Americanization of English in space and time. *PloS one*, *13*(5), e0197741.
- Goris, J., Denessen, E., & Verhoeven, L. (2019). Effects of content and language integrated learning in Europe A systematic review of longitudinal experimental studies. *European Educational Research Journal*, *18*(6), 675-698. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474904119872426>
- Gullifer, J. W., Kousaie, S., Gilbert, A. C., Grant, A., Giroud, N., Coulter, K., ... Titone, D. (2021). Bilingual language experience as a multidimensional spectrum: Associations with objective and subjective language proficiency. *Applied Psycholinguistics*, *42*(2), 245–278. doi:10.1017/S0142716420000521
- Hankewitz, S. (2022, December 12). *Over three quarters of Estonians speak a foreign language*. Estonian World. [https://estonianworld.com/knowledge/over-three-quarters-of-estonians-speak-a-foreign-language/?utm\\_source](https://estonianworld.com/knowledge/over-three-quarters-of-estonians-speak-a-foreign-language/?utm_source)
- Horwitz, E. (2001). Language anxiety and achievement. *Annual Review of Applied Linguistics*, *21*, 112–126. doi:10.1017/S0267190501000071
- Hržica, G., Košutar, S., & Jeletić, N. P. (2024). The relationship between self-assessment of language proficiency and measures of lexical diversity and syntactic complexity: evidence from bilingual speakers of Italian in Croatia. *Frontiers in Communication*, *9*. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fcomm.2024.1371126>
- Klaas-Lang, B., Mõttus, M., & Adamson, A. How to support the visibility of Estonia and the Estonian language in the world.
- Lamb, M. (2012). A self system perspective on young adolescents' motivation to learn English in urban and rural settings. *Language Learning*, *62*(4), 997–1023. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-9922.2012.00719.x>
- Lim, L., & Ansaldo, U. (2015). Contact and globalisation. In *Languages in Contact* (pp. 159–186). chapter, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Malokani, D. K. A. K., Kazi, S., Chandio, S. P., Mumtaz, S. N., Darazi, M. A., & Farooqui, N. S. (2023). The correlation between English language proficiency and perceived career opportunities'. Empirical analysis. *Remittances Review*, *8*(4), 4818-4827.

- Mercer, S. (2011). Towards an understanding of language learner Self-Concept. In *Educational linguistics*. <https://doi.org/10.1007/978-90-481-9569-5>
- Mohammed, M. A. A., & Abdalla, M. (2020). English language and globalization. *International Journal of Novel Research in Education and Learning*, 7(1), 5-11.
- Moseley, C. (Ed.). (2010). *Atlas of the World's Languages in Danger*. Unesco.
- Papajoanu, O., Vonkova, H., & Stipek, J. (2021). Examining the Differences in Student Self-Assessment of Their Skills in English as a Foreign Language: A Pilot Study Comparing Male and Female Lower Secondary Students. *Bulgarian Comparative Education Society*.
- Peiris, J. M. P. M., & De Silva, G. H. B. A. (2019). The Impact of Perceived English Language Proficiency & Socio-Demographic Factors on Career Decision Self-Efficacy: An Exploratory Study among Graduate Trainees.
- Plc, P. (2024, March 12). English skills have life-changing impact, are seen as the key to unlocking higher pay, wider job opportunities, and better friendships. *Pearson Plc*. [https://plc.pearson.com/en-GB/news-and-insights/news/english-skills-have-life-changing-imp-act-are-seen-key-unlocking-higher-pay?utm\\_source=](https://plc.pearson.com/en-GB/news-and-insights/news/english-skills-have-life-changing-imp-act-are-seen-key-unlocking-higher-pay?utm_source=)
- Praakli, K., & Koreinik, K. (2020). Keelemuutus vs. sotsiolingvistiline muutus: Eesti keele sotsioperioodid re-revisited. *Language & Literature/Keel ja Kirjandus*, (11).
- Prasetya, R. E. (2023). Assessing the Impact of English Language Skills and TOEIC Performance on Career Development. *Scripta: English Department Journal*, 10(2), 281-294.
- Rahvaarv | Statistikaamet. (n.d.). <https://www.stat.ee/et/avasta-statistikat/valdkonnad/rahvastik/rahvaarv>
- Republic of Estonia Ministry of Education and Research (2024, August 9). *Transition to Estonian-language education*. <https://www.hm.ee/en/node/234>
- Research methods in applied Linguistics*. (n.d.). Zoltan Dörnyei - Oxford University Press. <https://global.oup.com/academic/product/research-methods-in-applied-linguistics-9780194422581?lang=en&cc=cn>
- Richardson, C. E. (2022). English, language policies, and their roles in russophone identity formation in Estonia.

Ritonga, M., Shaban, A. A., Al-Rashidi, A. H., & Chilani, N. (2023). Engagement in on-line language assessment: Are test-taking skills, self-assessment, resilience, and autonomy critical?. *Language Testing in Asia*, 13(1), 25.

Seden, K., & Svaricek, R. (2018). Teacher subjectivity regarding assessment: Exploring English as a foreign language teachers' conceptions of assessment theories that influence student learning. *CEPS Journal*, 8(3), 119-139.

Simon, S. (2016). Pennycook, Alastair and Otsuji, Emi (2015): Metrolingualism. Language in the City. Routledge: London/New York, 205 pages. *Meta Journal Des Traducteurs*, 61, 178. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1038693ar>

Singhania, P. (2023). Identity and Language: Exploring the Role of English in Globalization. *Journal of International English Research Studies (JIERS)*, ISSN: 3048-5231, 1(1), 16-21.

Steger, M. B. (2013). Globalization a very short introduction.

The Handbook of Language and Globalization. (2010). In *Wiley eBooks*. <https://doi.org/10.1002/9781444324068>

Todorova, N., & Todorova, A. (2018). Globalization and the Role of the English Language. *Міжнародні зв'язки України: наукові пошуки і знахідки*, (27).

*Universities in Estonia | Study in Estonia*. (n.d.). [https://www.studyinestonia.ee/study/universities?utm\\_source](https://www.studyinestonia.ee/study/universities?utm_source)

Vihman, V. A., Praakli, K., Pilvik, M. L., & Korkus, M. L. (2022). Kas noored on inglise keelega 'obsessed'? Millest räägivad korpusandmed?. *Philologia Estonica Tallinnensis*, (7), 292-321.

Wicaksono, B. H., Ismail, S. M., Sultanova, S. A., & Abeba, D. (2023). I like language assessment: EFL learners' voices about self-assessment, self-efficacy, grit tendencies, academic resilience, and academic demotivation in online instruction. *Language Testing in Asia*, 13(1), 37.

Zabrodskaja, A., Meir, N., Karpava, S., Ringblom, N., & Ritter, A. (2023). Family Language Policies of Multilingual Families during the COVID-19 Pandemic: Evidence from Cyprus, Estonia, Germany, Israel, and Sweden. *Languages*, 8(4), 263.

### **Non-exclusive licence to reproduce thesis and make thesis public**

I, Semjon Letov (date of birth: 13.10.2003), herewith grant the University of Tartu a free permit (non-exclusive licence) to:

121.1. reproduce, for the purpose of preservation and making available to the public, including for addition to the DSpace digital archives until expiry of the term of validity of the copyright, and

121.2. make available to the public via the web environment of the University of Tartu, including via the DSpace digital archives until expiry of the term of validity of the copyright,

EDUCATIONAL AND CAREER PROSPECTS OF ESTONIAN YOUTH IN RELATION  
TO SELF-ASSESSED ENGLISH LANGUAGE PROFICIENCY

supervised by Lect. Anna Golubeva PhD,

2. I am aware of the fact that the author retains these rights.

3. I certify that granting the non-exclusive licence does not infringe the intellectual property rights or rights arising from the Personal Data Protection Act.

Narva 14.01.2026