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DIPLOMARBEIT

Titel der Diplomarbeit

*If I would practice more, the my English would be better! A study of mother tongue influence on the L2 writing of Hungarian learners of English

Verfasserin

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Angestrebter akademischer Grad

Magistra der Philosophie (Mag. phil.)

Wien, 2010

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EMPIRICAL PART

Acknowledgements

Having arrived at the end of my studies I would like to take a moment to thank all those people who have supported me during this phase of my life and without whom I would not have been able to write this thesis.

First of all I would like to convey my gratitude to my supervisor Prof. Christiane Dalton-Puffer who provided me with inspiring thoughts, fundamental advice and constructive criticism. I am deeply indebted to her for guiding me throughout this work and for her patience, encouragement and useful suggestions.

I would also like to thank the teachers and students of the Hungarian Krúdy Gyula secondary grammar school who allowed me to carry out the research and provided me with the data. I also want to thank Dr. Márta Nábrádi for looking at the final version of the thesis for English style and grammar, both correcting and offering suggestions for improvement.

My warmest gratefulness goes to my parents, Katalin and István, who enabled me the free choice of career and provided me with the possibility of learning foreign languages from an early age. I cannot thank them enough for giving me all the opportunities in life and always believing in me.

My final words of thanks are devoted to my husband, Gerhard, whose support enabled me to complete this work.

1.   Introduction

The focus of my study is interference regarding the languages Hungarian and English. I would like to identify the features of the Hungarian language that are likely to be transferred into the learner language of Hungarian learners of English. The error analysis I intend to carry out aims at identifying those areas of the English language that constitute the major problems for learners of English as a target language with Hungarian mother tongue. I would like to find answers to the following questions: Which structural differences lead to first language influence? Which grammatical categories are relevant in the discussion of language transfer? To what extent does the interlanguage system draw on the first language of the learner? What proportion of errors reflects mother tongue influence?

As a language learner I have struggled with several features of different foreign languages whereby I only paid attention to their possible causes but not to their nature. It was only during my work as a language teacher that I realised the systematic character of errors at certain stages of development. I have always been fascinated by the outcome of the interrelations of the three languages I speak - Hungarian (L1), German (L2) and English (L3) - and always tried to find explanations to the errors I made. The most exciting period of my language learning history was undoubtedly the year that I spent in England and realised traces of my second language, German in my English utterances. Being a Hungarian student of English at the University of Vienna makes it inescapable for me to use all three languages on a day to day basis. Therefore borrowing, code-switching and even literal translations belong to my everyday language usage. Facing the problem of the negative influence of one language on another helped me to define the topic of my research, which enables me to immerse myself in this field of interference studies.

In my research I intend to focus only on a segment of English grammar; namely verb tense and article usage. The reason for my choice is multiple: according to my own experience and also the course books and error glossaries these subcategories raise the most problems for language learners. I intend to investigate the errors occurring in these categories from the point of view of

language transfer. I collected written compositions from Hungarian secondary school students of English and carried out the analysis of the data relying on the guidelines of error analysis. First I identified the erroneous expressions, than corrected them to be able to contrast the errors with their target language equivalents. As I am focusing on the influence of the mother tongue on the target language in the third step I translated the sentence in which the error occurred into Hungarian. This transparency made it possible to determine whether the given error can be considered as a transfer error or not.

This paper is divided into two major parts. The first part offers a theoretical framework for the empirical part, which consists of an error analysis of written performances of Hungarian students of English and an evaluation of the percentage of transfer errors. In Chapter 2, I will review the past and present situation of foreign language teaching in Hungary, the attitude towards English throughout the past decades and wishes for the future. Chapter 3, on the one hand, provides a general overview on second language teaching and, on the other hand, it narrows down the focus to the segments of applied linguistics which serve as the basis of my research: important features of learner language and language transfer will be outlined. Chapter 4 deals with the rise and fall of contrastive analysis and discusses the pedagogical concerns of this method. In Chapter 5 the focus shifts towards the Hungarian linguistics scene, an overview about the most important works is provided. Beside a basic structural description of the Hungarian language, a brief repertoire of the typical errors of Hungarian learners of English will be given. The last chapter of the theoretical part examines target language errors and the methods of error analysis.

In the empirical part I will carry out an error analysis to see which percentage of errors reflect first language influence. I aim to identify the categories of grammar that are highly affected by interference from the mother tongue and those categories where the inhibiting role of the mother tongue is rather evanescent. A discussion on the findings and the comparison of the results with that of the literature will complete this section. I will conclude the paper with some thoughts on the practical application of contrastive methods in error analysis projects.

I. THEORETICAL PART

2. Function and Role of English in Hungary

2. 1. Reasons for learning English in Hungary

One of the most fundamental criteria for Hungary to integrate in the European Community is the possession of adequate foreign language knowledge. The experience of previous years clearly shows that success rests on high level professional skills and foreign language knowledge. In present days, knowledge, especially that of foreign languages, is highly valued, more and more people recognise the necessity of being able to communicate with foreigners. This phenomenon can be observed in both private and societal contexts. On the one hand, the number of parents enrolling their children in schools with language education at early stages of education is constantly increasing, and, on the other hand, more and more language schools with highly qualified teaching staff open their doors. The services of the rapidly developing language teaching industry makes it possible to fill the broad gap of foreign language knowledge in Hungarian society. Traditional language schools, which intend to solve the majority of the problems, are supported by foreign institutes like the British Council or programmes of the European Community like Socrates. There is a growing number of specialised language institutions that aim to eliminate a special segment of foreign language problems, e.g. translation agencies. As the services of the above mentioned institutions are only available for a limited group of people, the ultimate solution is the extension of teaching foreign languages to the entire population.

2. 2. The history of English in Hungary

The intensity of teaching English in Hungary was adapted to its worldwide importance only during the last two decades. Historically, the Hungarian-English relations go back to the 17th century; several Hungarian students undertook

journeys to England and Scotland at that time to gain intellectual experience from the developed western countries. It was also in that century that the first English course book appeared in Hungary, though English was taught in Latin. The first English grammar book written in Hungarian appeared in 1853 and the first English faculty at the University of Budapest was established in 1886. In the 18th century, the Counter-Reformation suppressed the teaching of English, but after the end of Absolutism several Hungarian scholars studied the English curriculum to introduce and adopt it into the Hungarian disciplines of science, trade or education. Until World War II two foreign languages were taught at secondary level, Latin as the first and German as the second foreign language. In a traditional secondary school, Latin and Greek enjoyed highest priority, followed by German. It was only in 1924 that English changed its status from an exceptional to a proper subject and became accessible for a greater number of people.

Due to the altered political situation after World War II, its rise did not last long: this aspect of the educational policy had undergone a complete change. Russian was established as a compulsory subject at all levels. The root of the problem that we face today, namely the lack of foreign language knowledge in the population, results from the following measure: the teaching of all other languages was nipped in the bud. It took almost two decades till the teaching of modern foreign languages returned to the curriculum. The exclusiveness of Russian gradually started to fade away, from the end of the 1960s the possibility to learn another foreign language as a second foreign language arose. The repertoire consisted of German, English, French and the minority languages: Czech, Slovak, Polish and Croatian. Although learning these languages was allowed, due to the pervasiveness of Russian in everyday life, the interest in learning these languages was not widespread. In the 1970s the political situation became more liberal and the western languages eventually gained ground. According to the statistics of the Ministry of Education, the number of state examinations taken in German and English started to outrun the number of language exams taken in Russian. In the 1980s, several declarations came into existence that supported the learning of the English language, moreover the first Hungarian-English dual school was founded at the end of the decade. The population of Hungary had to wait for the abolition

of Russian as a compulsory school subject until 1989. The primacy of the Russian language was replaced by a curriculum prescribing the teaching of one of the following foreign languages: English or German. (Bognár 2008)

2. 3. The status of English in Hungary

Since the Fall of Communism, the number of students and teachers being engaged in German or English teaching and learning respectively has risen rapidly. The compulsory character of language learning, which disgusted many people throughout the decades, disappeared. Its place was taken over by an optimistic attitude as people thought learning a foreign language made sense and it was in their best interest. It became customary to teach only one foreign language, English or German, and the absolute winner of this competition was German. At the beginning of the 1990s there was unanimous assent for the preference for this language among the population, which had many reasons. One of them was certainly the geographical position of the two neighbouring countries who still call each other 'brother-in-law'. The second reason results from the first one: because of the evanescent distance between the two countries, the usefulness of German was much higher than that of English. Additionally, if we turn our attention to history it becomes clear that Hungarian people have always had some sort of relationship with the Austrians.

Due to political, economic and technological changes both in Hungary and in the world, the rank in the popularity of foreign languages changed. From the second half of the 1990s English became the most desired foreign language. The reason for this change can be found in the altered attitude of the population: people started to realise how much profit one can make from knowing English. Its usefulness became enormous as gradually western companies set foot in Hungary and people realized that they had much better opportunities on the employment market if they spoke English. A myth that described the attitude of previous generations to this language ended: 'English is only useful for understanding Beatles songs', and at the same time a new myth was born: 'English opens doors'.

2. 4.   Foreign language teaching in Hungary

It is of enormous interest for Hungarians to learn a foreign language because Hungarian is spoken almost exclusively in Hungary by 15 Million people, therefore if Hungarians want to take part and play a role in international relations they have to learn foreign languages. Nowadays the importance and necessity of speaking English is beyond discussion as English gradually becomes omnipresent in our everyday life. In an attempt to keep up with the expectations of the rapidly changing world, more and more people realize the need for learning English.

As a consequence of the rise of English in Hungary, the proportion among the languages changed, the government had to act fast by reacting to these changes. It did not take long to recognise the urgent need for qualified teaching staff, modern teaching techniques and teacher education. At the end of the 20th century, one of the central issues of Hungarian educational policy became foreign language teaching. The new educational system had to be built from the ruins of the communist system. The government had to master a situation with many complicated problems like the lack of teaching materials, few numbers of lessons in the curriculum, inefficient teaching methods and teachers without proper qualifications. As there were no teacher training programmes for the new European languages the former Russian teachers were given a short re-training and started working as English or German language teachers. The quality of this training, just like the future teachers' knowledge of the language, left a lot to be desired. (Bognár 2008)

However, the new political system had also several positive effects on the educational policy which grew in number as time passed by. At the end of the 20th century, bilingual schools opened their doors and gave the opportunity for students to attend a German-, English-, French-, Italian- or Spanish-Hungarian bilingual secondary grammar school. A number of measures were introduced in order to increase the number of students learning a foreign language either by motivating or by obliging them to it. An example for the latter measure is the one that makes it impossible to earn a degree without having a foreign language state examination.

As Hungary joined the European educational processes, the situation developed significantly. The teaching methodology was renewed, access to better educational materials was granted, well-trained teachers left the teacher training colleges, language schools appeared in almost every big city, opportunities occurred to take part in foreign scholarships and student exchange programmes and the number of native speaking lectors has also risen recently. Thanks to the work of the British Council and the Know-How Fund, many people discovered their love of the English language and the teaching profession. Hungarian educational policy has gone a long way towards improvement, which would have been less successful without the help of these European establishments and programmes. Concerning the orientation of future language teaching methodology I would like to quote Corder's words (1981: 77):

> Efficient language teaching must work with, rather than against, natural processes, facilitate and expediate rather than impede learning. Teachers and teaching materials must adopt to the learner rather than vice versa […]. What has been discovered so far suggests that the nearer we can approximate language teaching to the learning of second languages in an informal setting the more successful we shall be.

In the last part of this chapter I will introduce the present situation of language education in Hungarian public schools and provide a brief overview how the language preference of Hungarian students changed from the school year 1989/1990, the first year of free choice in foreign language learning, until 2008/2009.[1] Here I will limit my discussion to the English, German and Russian languages and only to those students who are engaged in primary education as this is the only compulsory standard level. Traditionally, primary school children in Hungary start school at the age of 6 and leave school for a higher level of education or a vocational school at 14. As opposed to higher levels of education, the social background of the family or the literacy level of the parents has the least influence on the educational choice of the students on the primary level. Notwithstanding, it is worth looking at the data from the other levels as well; I would only call attention to the almost identical number of students learning

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[1] Data collected from the *Statistical yearbook of Education 2008/2009* of the Hungarian Ministry of Education.

English and Russian in tertiary levels of education in the school year 1989/1990 and the divergent development of the trend in the subsequent years. An elaborate discussion of the possible reasons for preference is out of scope of this paper.

Nowadays it is customary to start teaching the first foreign language to primary school students in the third or fourth grade and the second foreign language in the fifth grade. The repertoire usually consists of English, German and French. According to the National Core Curriculum, academic secondary school students are obliged to learn two foreign languages, students can choose normally among English, German, French, Italian, Spanish and very rarely -only in the capital city- Latin. It must be mentioned that only schools in bigger cities are able to offer such a wide range of foreign languages, in rural areas it is usual that only German and English are available. Students who are educated in vocational secondary schools are obliged to learn only one foreign language – the offer again depends on the size and location of the school. In trade schools students are very rarely offered foreign language education but in universities almost all languages can be chosen either as a bachelor or as a master study.

In the next part I will investigate how the number of students learning foreign languages at primary school has changed within the last 20 years. Looking at the figure below[2], the first point to mention is the number of students learning English and Russian in the school year 1989/1990: the number of students learning Russian, more than 655000, was almost twenty times higher than that of learning English, which was more than 33000. The data also shows that this time German was a more popular subject than English, although the difference between the two languages is not really significant. The new political situation brought a sudden change in the educational scene: the number of students learning modern European languages changed dramatically in the first year of the new educational system. The number of students learning English rose from 33120 to 130663, which is an increase of 400%, while the number of German students became 4, 4 times more: the number of students desiring to learn German rose from 41889 to 171772.

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[2] This figure is only an extract, for more detailed statistics see Appendix 1. (p. 150).

At the same time there was only a gradual decrease in the number of students choosing Russian. A possible explanation could be that students who were already enrolled in the teaching programme continued learning Russian and did not stop it in favour of another language. By the middle of the 1990s, the tendency for the desire of learning western languages boomed and the number of students learning English and German doubled once more. By this time the number of students learning English was 8 times higher, that of German 8,5 times higher than it was in the school year of 1989/1990. In the case of Russian students the number had fallen dramatically within 5 years. 5 to 10 years after the Fall of Communism, the popularity of western European languages endures whereas in the willingness of learning Russian a radical change can be observed: at the turn of the century only 5000 students learned this language, which is a decrease of 92% in comparison to the number from the school year 1989/1990. During the following years German gradually lost its leading position to English. In the school year of 2001/2002 the number of students learning English outran the number of students learning German for the first time. In 2004/2005 the Russian language acknowledged a further loss of almost 1/4 in comparison to the statistics made five years earlier. Although only a moderate increase can be observed in the number of students learning English during the last five years, this language still continues to gain ground, whereas German becomes less and less popular among primary school students. As opposed to the data from 1999/2000 a decrease of 50% can be observed. The Russian language slowly continues to loose ground among Hungarian students in primary schools.
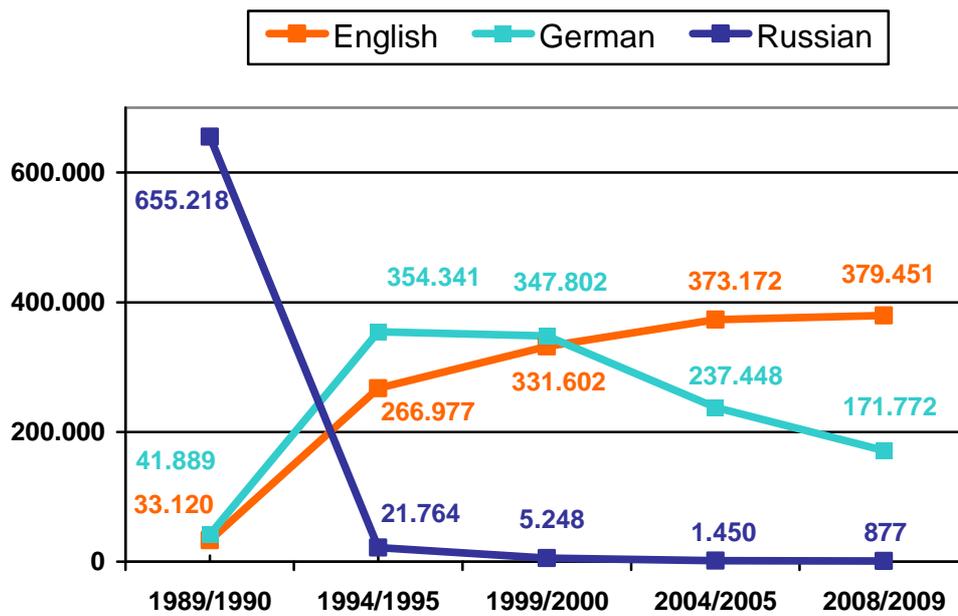
Figure 1: Number of English, German and Russian foreign language learners in Hungarian primary schools (1989/1990 - 2008/2009)

3.   Learner Language in Second Language Acquisition

3. 1.   Introduction

In the broadest sense, foreign or second language acquisition research aims at the description and explanation of the underlying processes of the learner's linguistic competence, the description of its development and the analysis of the process of acquisition. Researchers are interested in the knowledge learners possess and investigate, therefore, learner languages which provide evidence of what learners know about a foreign language. The term second language acquisition (hence SLA) refers to the conscious or unconscious process by which a language other than the mother tongue is acquired inside or outside a classroom (Ellis 1997). The major goals of SLA research, as Ellis (1997) concludes are to describe the process of L2 acquisition, to identify the external and internal factors that determine the way how learners acquire an L2 and to explain how the learner's knowledge develops throughout the stages of acquisition. Researchers can gain valuable insight into the process of language acquisition by investigating samples of learner language. There are several possible areas of enquiry, just to mention a few: linguists might focus on the nature of errors language learners produce, on how errors change over time, or linguists might identify developmental patterns in the different stages of acquisition.

In spite of earlier debates, the distinction between 'acquisition' and 'learning' has become generally accepted and widely used to indicate the difference between the subconscious process of acquisition and the conscious process of learning via instruction (see Krashen's Monitor Model: Krashen 1977). Throughout this work there is no reason to make this distinction and therefore the two terms will be used interchangeably. In both cases the linguistic outcome of the language performance is the subject of investigation, therefore it is of marginal importance under which circumstances the L2 learner learns and performs his cognitive activities in the non-native language.

The understanding of the process of SLA is primarily beneficiary for language learning and teaching but it may also prove helpful for disciplines that are not related to language pedagogy. Larsen-Freeman and Long (1991) offer an overview about areas for which the findings of SLA research might be of great interest. They claim that with the results of SLA, research linguists can test their claims about linguistic universals and psychologists their observations on individual learning style differences. Anthropologists may profit from the findings by the exploration of cultural universals, while sociologists by their study of the effect of group membership on task achievement. For psycholinguists SLA research evidence might help answer questions concerning the cognitive development of humans. For sociolinguists it might serve as a fertile ground for expanding their understanding of the speech-style preferences of speakers. Neurolinguists could use SLA research findings to supplement their knowledge on human biological development. Taking the manifold benefits of SLA research into consideration it is not surprising that such extensive research has been carried out and that the interest continues to flourish.

Although several attempts have been made at describing and explaining the processes of SLA there are still many open questions about the nature of learner language. Furthermore many basic questions concerning its composition, emergence or structure still cannot be answered without controversy. Further empirical research is needed; the present findings of this discipline must always be united with knowledge gained from related disciplines like psychology or psycholinguistics. Though the central theme of this paper is not L2 learning, in the discussion of the learning process or the product the following question cannot be left out of consideration: in how far is L2 learning identical with and different from L1 learning? The acquisition of the mother tongue and the learning of the target language are highly complex processes which feature similarities and differences at the same time. In the course of this paper we will see that L2 learning cannot be handled in isolation as previous linguistic knowledge and experience leaves its mark on the learning of the L2.

3. 2.   The nature of learner language

During the last decades, increasing interest has been shown in research into the nature of LL, the oral or written language production of the learner is the primary scope of researchers with the aim of gaining insights into the process of L2 acquisition. This special system has long been mistaken for a deviant product of the L2 learner's attempts to communicate in the target language. It was primarily seen as a repertoire of errors, an unpleasant stage in the development that has to be passed by as soon as possible. Errors were only seen as disturbing elements, troublesome fragments in the system, therefore the primary aim was to erase them. No attention was paid to their causes or to the methods how they could be prevented until research proved that "the making of errors, […] is seen as an inevitable, indeed a necessary part of the learning process" (Corder 1981: 66).

LL today is considered as a language system in its own right with its own rules and structures (see Selinker 1972 and also Section 3.3. below). The nature of learner language changes with the increasing proficiency of the learner: the proportion of similarity to L1 and L2 changes as learning proceeds: on the one hand, structures become more similar to the target language structures and on the other hand, the occurrence of erroneous elements mirroring first language structures decreases. On the long way of becoming native-like in proficiency, one cannot escape making errors, which is regarded as a natural and necessary stage of development. Errors provide, according to Corder (1981: 66), "useful evidence how the learner is setting about the task of learning, what 'sense' he is making of the target language data to which he is exposed and being required to respond". In other words, analysing linguistic production data provides us with valid information about the competence and performance of language learners.

For the language learner's language different terms have been proposed by researchers: Nemser (1971) calls it "approximative system" defining it as "the deviant linguistic system actually employed by the learner attempting to utilize the target language" (Nemser 1971 [1974]: 55). These systems vary in character; the variation is affected by different factors like the level of proficiency, learning experience, communicational function and personal learning characteristics.

Corder (1971a [1981]: 15) uses the term "idiosyncratic dialect" which in his application is an umbrella term for the learner language of second language learners, the child's language and other special systems like the language of poems or of people suffering from aphasia. James (1969) offered the term "interlingua" which he describes as a "functionally reduced dialect of the target language" (1980: 160) which are "[…] approximative systems occupying points on a continuum between L1 and L2" (1980: 162). Selinker (1972) coined the term "interlanguage" for the description of the learner's language. For him, the learner's attempts to express himself in the target language make up a linguistic system which is not identical with the hypothesized set of utterances a native speaker would have produced if he wanted to express the same ideas as the learner. Based on the differences between the two systems, Selinker (1972 [1974]: 35) claims that "one would be completely justified in hypothetizing, perhaps even compelled to hypothetize, the existence of a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from the learner's attempted production of a TL norm."

The latter term, interlanguage, is the most widely accepted one and used in the works of other scholars. Each of these terms describes the repertoire of the versions a language learner produces of the target language, the difference between them, as Corder (1981: 67) points out, is that each of them emphasises another characteristic of the learner's language: the terms *interlanguage* and *interlingua* suggest its systematic constitution, the term *approximative system* stresses its developing nature.

3. 3.   Interlanguage and Interlanguage Theory

Interlanguage is a term coined by Selinker (1969, 1972) which refers to a language produced by non-native speakers during the process of language learning. It contains features of the first language, the second language and non-standard elements, and is determined by the learner's mother tongue. It is the language the L2 learner uses until the full mastery of the foreign language. Interlanguage refers to a mental grammar that a learner constructs at a specific

stage in the learning process. Selinker (1972: 35) provided following definition for interlanguage:

> Since we can observe that these two sets of utterances [that of the language learner and the native speaker] are not identical, […], one would be […] compelled to hypothesize, the existence of a separate linguistic system based on the observable output which results from a learner's attempted production of a TL norm. This linguistic system we will call 'interlanguage'.

The assumption underlying the Interlanguage Hypothesis proposed by Selinker (1972) is that interlanguage is a linguistic system in its own right. This suggests that in order to characterise the language learner's linguistic competence, interlanguage must be analysed on its own terms. Selinker described five principal cognitive processes underlying interlanguage: *language transfer, transfer of training, strategies of L2 learning, strategies of L2 communication* and *overgeneralization of TL linguistic material.* These five processes constitute the way in which the learner tries to internalize the L2 system. Selinker looked at interlanguage from a mentalist view and described three fundamental characteristics of it: LL is permeable, that means that the learner's knowledge is not fixed, it evolves gradually and is open to correction and change. LL is also dynamic: it is unstable and changing, open to revision and extension. The last trait Selinker observed about LL is its systematic character: throughout the developmental stages in the process of acquisition LL does not develop randomly but follows a predictable order.

Interlanguage theory is primarily concerned with the learners' implicit L2 knowledge and the strategies that contribute to its development. Its assigned goal it the answering of the following central questions: What processes are responsible for interlanguage construction? What is the nature of the interlanguage continuum? and What explanation is there for the fact that most learners do not achieve full target language competence? Many later theories such as Tarone's variability models or Ellis' Variable Competence Model were developments of the Interglanguage Theory, which was the first attempt to provide an explanation of L2 acquisition. (Ellis 1997)

Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005 based on Ellis 1990) identified eight premises about L2 acquisition that the concept of interlanguage involves. Although many of them were lent support by the results of errors analyses, some of the premises continue to be disputed by researchers.

1. A learner's interlanguage consists primarily of implicit linguistic knowledge, the learner is not aware of the rules that comprise an interlanguage.

2. During the process of language learning the learner constructs a system of abstract linguistic rules which underlies comprehension and production of the L2. This system, referred to as 'interlanguage', constitutes a system in the same sense that a native speaker's grammar is a system. The system accounts for the regularities that are apparent in the learner's use of the L2.

3. The learner's grammar is permeable, because it is incomplete and unstable, it is open to influence from the in- and outside.

4. The learner's interlanguage is transitional. Throughout the development learners tend to restructure their knowledge of the target language and construct different systems. As the complexity of the foreign language knowledge increases, these mental grammars display an IL continuum while the learner passes through a series of stages.

5. The learner's interlanguage system is variable. At the different stages of development the learner employs different forms for the same grammatical structure. This variability may be random in part but is claimed to be systematic in nature.

6. A learner's interlanguage is the product of general learning strategies, which learners employ to develop their mental grammars of the target language. In their attempts to convey the meaning in the same forms a native speaker would do learners often fall back on learning strategies. These strategies can be traced back in the errors learners produce or in the absence of certain structures they do not produce. In order to succeed in communication, learners often avoid rules or ignore grammatical features that they are not yet ready to process. Such strategy might be intralingual, for example over-generalisation or simplification, or interlingual like L1 transfer.

7. Interlanguages may be supplemented by communication strategies to compensate for gaps in the language learner's knowledge or in cases the learner experiences difficulty in accessing L2 knowledge while performing.

8. The last premise of interlanguage theory concerns fossilization. Selinker (1972) suggested that the learner's grammar is likely to fossilize as only about five per cent of learners develop a native-like mental grammar. The majority of the learners stop progressing after they achieved a satisfactory mastery of the target language and thus fail to achieve a full native speaker grammar. Selinker (1972: 49) observed a regular reappearance of fossilizable structures in IL performance even when they were seemingly eradicated:

> Fossilization, […], underlies surface linguistic material which speakers will tend to keep in their IL productive performance, no matter what the age of the learner or the amount of instruction he receives in the TL.

3. 4. The influence of L1 on L2

As early as 1883 Bogorodicki started to investigate the disturbing effect of the mother tongue on the subsequent learning of other languages. His investigations of L2 errors began when he discussed the processes of this problem in some smaller articles. In the field of psychology we encounter the concept of interference, for example by Bergstorm (1882) who applies it to the description of disturbances by existent associations. Ranschburg (1928) employs the concept of interference to those errors that are emerging from homogeneous inhibition. Beginning around the time of World War I many researchers carried out pedagogic and pedagogic-psychological oriented empirical research in this topic, however among the first works on interference one also finds medical writings dealing mostly with cases of aphasia (Bychowski 1919 and Pick 1920). The first linguistic-psychological writings arose in the USA after World War II by reason of extensive immigration. Weinreich`s seminal work, Languages in Contact, which will be discussed later, is of great importance for the emergence and development of interference studies. Besides the American scene, publications of Soviet researchers like Rosenzweig (1963) or Rodova-Scucina (1965) must also be mentioned for working out excellent methods of investigating interference from the 1960s onwards. (Juhász 1970)

Ringbom (1986) points out that language distance[3] is a key concept in the determination of the role transfer plays in SLA. The relevance of a learner's prior linguistic knowledge –knowledge of any languages not only of the mother tongue- to the learning of another language largely depends on the perceived distance between L1 and L2. The smaller the distance, the more relevant the prior knowledge is, and so the more occurrence of transfer can be expected. Inexperienced language learners are often of the belief that although there are different lexical items, the foreign language functions in the same way as L1, and language learning consists of learning the vocabulary items and substituting with them the mother tongue items. At the early stages of acquisition cognates and identical grammatical patterns might verify the learner's hypothesis. If there is small distance between L1 and L2 the learner will detect what easy task language learning might seem to be. In such a case where the two languages are closely-related the automatized L1 knowledge can be extended to L2 use. Because the basic linguistic categories are the same linguistic patterns can be successfully transferred to the target language without restructuring intuitive L1 knowledge. Similarities between L1 and L2 can help the learner profit from his mother tongue to understand the system of the target language. (Ringbom 1986)

By learning a new foreign language adult learners try to establish connections between the new L2 items and the L1 items in order to internalize them. After encountering examples of false friends or instances of negative transfer the learner will notice that formal similarity does not guarantee semantic identity, and will come to the recognition that language learning is not a one to one correspondence task, it is not enough to memorize the lexical items or the grammatical rules. The target language as a new system has to be stored in the mind; the right application of the rules is the key to success. Results of contrastive research assist both language learners and language teachers to internalize the rules.

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[3] For further information on language distance, see Kellerman 1977 or Sharwood Smith 1979.

3. 5.   Language Transfer

In the following sections I will provide an overview on the development of transfer research, define the notion of transfer and classify its types. Furthermore I will also shortly elaborate on the reasons why language learners transfer features of one language into another and present the outcomes of this linguistic phenomenon.

3.5.1.   Historical development

Although the study of transfer has a long history - discussions often begin with the work of American linguists in the 1940s and 1950s - considerable progress has only been made during the years since World War II. The roots of research on transfer lay in 19th century historical linguistics focusing on the study of language classification and language change. Serious thinking about cross-linguistic influences, according to Odlin (1989), dates back to a controversy among scholars about language contact and language mixing. In language contact situations the characteristics of two or more languages often merge and result in a mixed variety of the participating languages. Gradually native language influence, which is only one of the possible forms language mixing can take, code-switching or borrowing became a central concern of 19th century linguists. As they became aware of the significant measure language mixing takes, the interest in the importance of language contact and mixing intensified. The accumulation of different languages of the world reflected the diversity of human languages and invited scholars to their classification. Finally, the debate on language mixing affected two interrelated issues: language classification and language change. Many scholars rose to the challenge of classifying languages being persuaded of the belief that the uniqueness of some grammatical subsystems serves as an ideal basis for categorisation. They presumed that in spite of internal change the grammar of each language preserves linguistic subsystems which are unaffected by language contact and "thus a key to distinguish any language" (Odlin 1989:8). Besides showing distinctive features, languages in a long-term contact situation also display features of mutual influence. The massive evidence of the effects of

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language contact can probably be best seen in the case of the Balkan languages. However, it was clear that not all contact led to transfer but this was the most likely explanation scholars found for the features of pidgins and creoles in the 19th century. Schuchardt, for example, viewed the characteristics of contact languages as probable or at least possible instances of transfer (Schuchardt 1883a, b in Odlin 1989: 11).

Language transfer has long been a controversial issue, but most recent studies support the view that cross-linguistic influence plays a significant role in the process of SLA. Nowadays the claim is generally accepted that while attempting to communicate in the second language, learners often transfer elements of the first language into their utterances in the target language. Research on language transfer has been a central issue in the different subdisciplines of linguistics dealing with language acquisition. The wide recognition of its important role in SLA was not always the case. At the beginning of research in the 1950s, transfer was listed among the most important factors in SLA and language teaching theories. During the next decade its importance in L2 learning was reevaluated to the negative: researchers found alternative explanations for errors which became dominant throughout the 1960s. Some researchers doubted the existence of transfer and turned their attention to universalist explanations for learners' errors. The concept of transfer originated within behaviourist learning theories, and has more recently been incorporated into a cognitive psychological framework. This change in the psychological orientation towards language learning instigated many discussions and is still partially responsible for confusion and a number of debates on this subject. As research progressed it gradually became an established fact that transfer plays a role in the second language learning process. This balanced perspective has intensified as more and more evidence was found for its justification. Today scepticism about its significance has diminished; it is seen to interact with multiple factors in ways we not yet fully understand. Although the growing interest in this topic holds out a promise to put an end to the controversy there is still no consensus among scholars about the nature and significance of language transfer. Consequently, due to controversies and uncertainties in research, Odlin (1989) points out, the findings of transfer research must be interpreted cautiously. (Odlin 1989: 1-24)

3.5.2.   *Definitions of transfer*

The notion of interference derives from skill research[4] in psychology, in which one of the central questions is under what conditions the learning of new skills is facilitated by skills already learned. As nearly all new skills are learned on the basis of existing skills, Van Els et al. (1984) affirm that skill research has always shown great interest in the phenomenon of transfer. The concept of transfer originated within behaviourist learning theories and is therefore often associated with habit formation. Sajavaara (1986: 69) provides a definition of transfer:

> In psychology the term transfer is employed to refer to the phenomenon of previous knowledge being extended to the area of new knowledge; i.e. the influence which the learning or remembering of one thing has on the learning or remembering of another thing.

Van Els et al. (1984: 49) provide the following definition of the two types, positive and negative transfer:

> Positive transfer, or facilitation, is transfer of a skill X which facilitates the learning or has a positive command of a skill Y because of similarities between both skills. Negative transfer, or interference, is transfer of a skill X which impedes the learning or has a negative influence on the command of a skill Y because of differences between both skills.

With the present knowledge we have about language acquisition it seems obvious that the behaviouristic explanation cannot be satisfactory, the complex process of language learning and language transfer cannot be accounted for in terms of habit extension alone. Ellis (1994) complements this claim with the fact that transfer is not simply a matter of interference or of the learner's falling back on the native language. Transfer is not only a question of the influence of the learner's native language as other previously learned languages may also play a part in this process. These considerations suggest that the term *L1 transfer* is inadequate and made researchers look for alternative descriptions of this phenomenon. Sharwood

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[4] For more information on skill research, see Bilodeau 1966 and Johnson 1996.

Smith (1983) dismisses the use of the term transfer because of its connotation to behaviouristic psychology and puts forward another term: cross-linguistic influence. With his colleague Kellerman (1986: 1) he argues that it is more accurate and felicitous for being theory neutral and more broadly applicable:

> […] the term 'crosslinguistic influence'[…] is theory-neutral, allowing one to subsume under one heading such phenomena as 'transfer', 'interference', 'avoidance', 'borrowing' and L2–related aspects of language loss and thus permitting discussion of the similarities and differences between these phenomena.

It took some time till the notion of interference entered linguistics, so it is difficult to determine precisely when, but Weinreich's *Languages in contact* from 1953 played an important role in the development of this concept. He defines language transfer - or interference as he called this two-way process - as "those instances of deviation from the norms of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language" (1953:1).

For Odlin (1989) transfer is a general cover term for a number of different kinds of influences from languages other than the L2 and is far removed from its use in behaviourist learning theories. He offers the following working definition (1989: 27):

> Transfer is the influence resulting from the similarities and differences between the target language and any other language that has been previously (and perhaps imperfectly) acquired.

Odlin (1989) presents a comprehensive overview on the nature and presence of transfer, his summary of the findings of transfer research is supplemented by the following conclusions:

1. On the contrary to earlier beliefs transfer occurs in all linguistic subsystems: much of the scepticism about transfer has been with regard to cross-linguistic influences involving morphology and syntax as opposed to influences involving phonetics, phonology and lexical semantics.

2. Transfer occurs in both formal and informal contexts: the evidence of transfer has not only been observed in instructed SLA settings but also in naturalistic learning environments.

3. Transfer occurs among children as well as among adults: empirical studies show that on the contrary to earlier claims adults and children are equally susceptible to transfer- the exact relation between age and transfer is still far from clear.

4. Language distance is a factor that affects transfer: apart from a few exceptions, similarity between languages facilitates learning in making the task easier and in reducing the length of time required for the acquisition.

5. Typological factors can affect the likelihood of transfer: those patterns that are typologically common increase the likelihood and persistence of transfer.

6. Transfer can sometimes involve unusual structures: native language influences can also involve structures that are not typologically common.

7. And finally, even non-structural factors can affect the likelihood of transfer: some individual differences such as linguistic awareness or proficiency can also increase or decrease the probability of transfer.

Now that we have defined the most rudimentary concepts we can elaborate the discussion on transfer and can go in detail concerning its manifestations.

3.5.3. Types of transfer

In the literature on the influence of prior language knowledge a distinction between positive and negative transfer is commonly made. We talk about positive transfer, or facilitation, if L2 learners apply their L1 knowledge to a foreign language and the linguistic production does not break the rules of the L2. In many cases, especially if the languages are historically or linguistically related, the learner can make use of his L1 knowledge. The precondition of successful application is the similarity of the relevant unit or structure in both languages, otherwise linguistic interference will probably result in incorrect language use.

However, in linguistic research the majority of attention is given to the incorrect forms, or the errors, therefore manifestations of negative transfer are more often discussed. In case of negative transfer (also known as interference) the unit or structure in the source language is different from that of the target language which results in erroneous language performance. The L2 learner - consciously or

unconsciously - engages in the process of applying rules or choosing vocabulary items on the schema of the native language instead of using that of the target language. Errors made this way are also called interference errors.

A classifying summary on the possible outcomes of language transfer is provided by Odlin (1989). He argues that similarities between the native and target language will promote acquisition on all syntactic levels: on the lexical level, for example, the effects of *positive transfer* are observable on the reduced time the foreign language learner needs to memorise the vocabulary items and to develop his comprehension skills.

Negative transfer manifests itself in deviant language performance; the utterances of the learner involve divergences from norms in the target language. Odlin identified four major phenomena that have to be considered in the discussion on negative transfer: i) underproduction, ii) overproduction, iii) production errors and iv) misinterpretation.

i) Underproduction

We talk about *underproduction* (1989: 36) when learners produce fewer examples of a structure than is required in the target language norm. A possible reason for underproduction might be conscious avoidance, typically observable where language distance exists. Foreign language learners might try to avoid making mistakes by not using structures that are very differently realised in the native and the target language.

ii) Overproduction

The other possible outcome of negative transfer, *overproduction* (1989: 37), is sometimes simply a consequence of underproduction. The avoided structures must be substituted with other structures, which a native speaker would not use in the given linguistic situation. However, there can be another explanation for this phenomenon: learners might produce utterances relying on their native language rules and do not adapt their expressions to the target language norms or they use

some structures more than necessary, owing to the influence of their mother tongue.

iii) Production errors

In addition, Odlin identifies *production errors* (1989: 37) as possible manifestations of negative transfer. Among them there are three types of errors which are especially likely to arise from similarities and differences in the native and target languages: substitution, calques and alteration of structures (1989: 37). *Substitution*, the use a native language forms in the target language, and *calques*, the use of native language structure in the target language, are errors characteristic to the interlanguage of bilinguals. These errors serve as evidence for the lively correspondence between the native and the target language in the foreign language learner's mind. Some of the most important cases of cross-linguistic influences manifest in *alteration of structures*. Although they do not always reflect any direct influence from the native language they are still relevant in this discussion. One such outcome of cross-linguistic influence is *hypercorrection*: effects that result when the foreign language learner has learned a rule but does not yet know in which situations it applies therefore he uses it everywhere; accordingly the automatic overriding of that rule must be mastered.

iv) Misinterpretation

A further effect of negative transfer can be recognised in *misinterpretation* of the intended message. Due to reliance on their native language structures foreign language learners might fail to construe the words of a target language speaker correctly if they experience difficulty in the interpretation of the message.

Besides the positive and negative effect of language transfer, Odlin also lists a third consideration, namely *differing length of acquisition* (1989: 38). We have already seen earlier that positive transfer has a facilitating and negative transfer an inhibitory effect on language learning. In learning situations with a large extent of positive transfer a relatively rapid progress in the learner's development can be expected, while in situations where negative transfer dominates we can expect the

learner to struggle with the mastery of the target language. The common belief that some languages are easy to learn and others are difficult, is based on, according to Odlin, the cumulative effect of cross-linguistic similarities and differences.

3.5.4.   Reasons for the reliance on the mother tongue

In our attempts to communicate in a foreign language we often get into situations where we are confronted with the fact that some contents are expressed in one way in our mother tongue but in another way in the target language. Especially beginners, who don't possess the necessary linguistic devices to express their thoughts, modelling the target language utterances on the structures of the mother tongue might prove a fruitful survival technique. The different aspects of this phenomenon have been investigated by several linguists trying to find the reasons for the influential character of the mother tongue. The following features have been proposed to be favourable to transfer: language distance and language specificity of structures (Kellerman 1977 and 1979), markedness (Rutherford 1982) and underlying logical structures (Gass 1979).

Sajavaara (1986) provides other possible reasons for reliance on the mother tongue: the L2 element has not been acquired as a result of non-existent or insufficient input, or as a result of insufficient capacity the L2 element has been learnt but the speaker is unable to recover it. The deficiency of the learner's knowledge might be due to the fact that the rules taught are insufficient and therefore during language production the learner has to rely on his mother tongue. A further possible explanation put forward by Sajavaara also concerns the rules of the target language: there are features of the L2 which can only be acquired because the rules governing their behaviour can only be approximated. A further reason has a practical background: learners might consciously fall back to their mother tongues and make use of their implicit knowledge as a problem solving operation. If L1 strings are translated into L2 strings the mother tongue serves as a performance initiator. This claim is in accordance with the view of transfer within the cognitivist paradigm, which defines it as a problem solving procedure

whereby the learner adapts his L1 knowledge to solve a learning or communication problem in the L2. Transfer is characterised by consciousness and intentionality and is seen as "a decision-making procedure, rather than an automatic process" (Fearch and Kasper, 1986: 49).

Sajavaara's résumé (1986: 67) is worth being quoted in his own words:

> What is reflected at the surface as items transferred from one language to another may actually be due to several different phenomena which relate to the processing of linguistic and non-linguistic information in the human mind, the interaction between controlled and automatic processes, gaps in the information stored in the memory […].

4.   Contrastive linguistics

4. 1.   Definition and historical development

Contrastive linguistics is a subdiscipline of linguistics, a practice-oriented approach which is concerned with "the comparison of two languages in order to explore the similarities and differences between them" (Fisiak 1981:1). James argues that contrastive analysis (hence CA) is a "hybrid drawing on the sciences of linguistics and psychology" (1980: 11) by claiming that its goal belongs to psychology while its means are derived from linguistics. On the one hand, the concept of language transfer originated in the tenets of behaviourist learning theory and the central concern of CA is the learning process, therefore its study belongs to psychology. On the other hand, languages are studied within the framework of linguistics; descriptive accounts of the two languages were derived from linguistics and were founded on structuralism, therefore CA also belongs to linguistics. James (1980: 151) also provides a definition of CA:

> A CA specifies those features of L2 which are different from the corresponding features of the L1, and, by implication, those which are identical.

Contrastive studies have a long history; the roots of this linguistic phenomenon lay in the turn of the 20th century. The first studies were theoretically oriented (Grandgent 1892; Passy 1912 or Bogorodickij 1915 in Fisiak 1981: 3), throughout the subsequent decades salient studies were carried out by the linguists of the Prague School until the 1960s (V. Mathesius and his followers in Fisiak 1981: 4). The USA showed increasing interest in foreign language teaching by the time of the Second World War, which triggered a number of pedagogically oriented publications. The linguistic scene was characterised by a huge readiness to invest in research trying to elaborate the most effective teaching methods. During this time the contributions of linguists were focusing almost entirely on applied objectives. Fries (1945) supported the view that the scientific description of the target language should go hand in hand with the comparison of the native language. As a result of the appearance of series of contrastive theses and monographs and the growing interest in the application of the findings contrastive linguistics became recognised as an important methodology of foreign language teaching. The publication of the *Contrastive Studies Series* between 1962 and 1965 can be regarded a milestone in the development of contrastive studies. It was started by the Centre for Applied Linguistics in Washington and designed to help the language teacher: within this project English was compared with major European languages taught in American schools. Concerning its theoretical basis the volumes reflect the shift from pure structuralism to transformational grammar. (Fisiak 1981)

The European linguistic scene was determined by the work of the Prague linguists, in addition to their works theoretically as well as pedagogically oriented analyses were produced by individual scholars. Earlier contrastive studies were theoretically motivated, languages were compared in order to identify the linguistic universals and to establish the typological classification of languages. However, over time contrastive linguistics has been more strongly associated with language teaching. By identifying the problem areas in foreign language learning teachers can focus on solutions to avoid or minimize the errors that the L2 learner will probably make. CA gradually spread from the USA to the other parts of the world; in many European countries CA centres were established. Between 1965 and 1975 many organised projects comparing European native languages to

English were carried out: German-English, Polish-English, Romanian-English, Hungarian-English etc. *The Hungarian-English Contrastive Linguistics Project* was carried out under the auspices of Nemser and Tamas in the 1970s, the findings of the studies were reported in the Working Papers series.[5] These studies are of varying relevance for my own research and will be discussed later in Section 5. 4.

Some linguists, for example Sridhar (1981), regard Fries's (1945) revolutionary thoughts about the methodology of foreign language teaching as the starting point of CA and believe that Fries may be said to have "issued the charter for modern contrastive analysis" (Sridhar 1981: 209). Other linguists, for example James (1980), consider the works of Weinreich and Lado as the beginning of this discipline. Therefore it can be said that the prime movers of CA are Charles Fries and Robert Lado. Probably the most influential and inspiring works of modern CA are the studies of Weinreich (1953) and Haugen (1956) on the linguistic integration of immigrants to the USA. These studies of immigrant bilinguals prompted Lado to create his famous work *Linguistics across Cultures* (1957), which is of immense importance for the evolution and development of contrastive research. Lado believed that the comparison of two languages would enable linguists to predict areas of difficulty in foreign language learning. Lado (1957: vii) defines the objective for comparing languages as follows:

> […] the comparison of any two languages and cultures to discover and describe the problems that the speaker of one of the languages will have in learning the other.

The most fundamental question of SLA research was put forward by Lado as early as 1957: How to teach a foreign language? According to him, professionally trained teachers need to be able to diagnose the problems a student is struggling with. Contrasting languages can help teachers by predicting patterns that will cause difficulty in learning the foreign language. Whether it is easy or difficult to acquire a feature depends on the degree of similarity or difference the target language shows to the native language. Similarity implies ease of learning and difference in difficulty. The linguist also exemplified this on the lexical level:

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[5] See, for example, the European studies listed in Fig. 4.3. in Van Els et al. 1984: 45.

vocabulary items which are formally identical with or resemble native language words can be learned and internalized easily, without the necessity of later reinforcement. The exception of so called 'false friends' (pairs of words in two languages that are formally similar but differ in meaning) or "deceptive cognates" (Lado 1957: 83) proves the rule. If the language unit functions in the target language similarly as it does in the source language, there is no need for structural retraining because facilitation is expected. Lado (1964: 40) claimed that transfer is the extension of a source-language habit into the target language, with or without the awareness of the learner:

> If the expression, content, and association are functionally the same in the native and the new languages, there is maximum facilitation. Actually, no learning takes place since the student already knows the unit or pattern and merely transfers it.

4. 2.   Objectives of contrastive linguistics

Contrastive analysis, one of the prevailing methods of SLA research in the 1960s and 1970s, aims at the explanation of different aspects of L2 learning, with the emphasis on the question why some features of the target language are easy and others difficult to learn. The study of Van Els et al. (1984) yields valuable insights into the aims of contrastive research by identifying its fundamental and applied objectives:

Contrastive analysis can provide insights into similarities and differences between languages. This first objective can be regarded as an attempt at establishing linguistic universals and language-specific characteristics of languages. Originally contrastive research was carried out within the historical linguistic tradition: in 1789 William Jones compared Greek and Latin with Sanskrit and discovered systematic differences between the languages. Notable comparative linguistic studies appeared in the 19th century, concentrating mainly on phonological relations. Another important achievement of the time was the drawing up of the first family trees. The rise of the Prague School brought an end to the search for historical relationships between languages; the Praguer linguists believed that the

systematic analysis of languages can only be achieved on a synchronic basis. (Van Els et al.1984)

Explanation and prediction of problems in L2 learning has been identified as another aim of contrastive analyses. At the early stages of research it was a prevalent misbelief that linguistic difference equates learning problem. Many contrastive studies, Van Els et al. (1984) report, were carried out based on this assumption. Uriel Weinreich, who studied language behaviour in bilingual communities, is credited with the recognition of the phenomena of interlanguage. Weinreich (1953: 1) provided in his 1953 work *Languages in Contact* the classic definition of interference and laid the ground for modern contrastive analysis:

> Those instances of deviation from the norm of either language which occur in the speech of bilinguals as a result of their familiarity with more than one language, i.e. as a result of language contact will be referred to as interference phenomena.

Weinreich (1953) was the first who recognised the proportionality between the difference of the language systems and the potential degree of learning problem. He laid down the assumption that "the greater the difference between the two systems, […], the greater is the learning problem and the potential area of interference" (1953: 1). This thesis has become generally accepted as a principle of explanation of L2 learning. The primary concern of CA is how the influence of the native language affects the L2 learner's increasing knowledge of the foreign language. Its theoretical foundations were formulated in Lado's *Linguistics across Cultures*. The comparison aimed at the prediction of learning difficulty by stating that where languages are similar learning will be facilitated and where they are different learning will be hindered. It was Lado (1957) who recognised that the problems resulting from differences between the two language systems must be checked against empirical data. The findings of contrastive analyses without empirical research, according to Lado, can only be considered as "a list of hypothetical problems until final validation is achieved by checking it against the actual speech of students" (1957: 72).

The third objective of contrastive analysis had purely pedagogical considerations: Developing course materials for language teaching. It is based on the assumption that descriptive data from contrastive analysis can be converted into teaching programmes. This objective was first stated by Fries (1945: 9) when he claimed that:

> The most effective materials (for teaching an L2) are those that are based upon a scientific description of the language to be learned, carefully compared with a parallel description of the native language of the learner.

This objective has been dismissed for numerous reasons: although teaching materials were designed with conformity of the results of contrastive research, the outcomes of teaching with the new teaching principle have never been investigated. Similarly, the effectiveness of contrastive analysis based teaching materials has not been explored due to the absence of comparison of the results with previously used course materials. However, by realizing that linguistic difference cannot be equated with learning problems it allowed subsequent research to go a new and more promising way.

James (1980) identifies three traditional applications CA can be used for: Besides its *predicting* and *diagnostic value,* the results of CA can also be used in *designing testing instruments*. As I have already stated before, the largest benefit of contrastive research is in the prediction of types of errors that the L2 language learner will make in learning the foreign language. The predictions are based on the differences between the two languages: it is expected that differences in the formal devices used in the two languages to express the same meaning will result in learning difficulty. If a certain grammatical feature is realised in one language in one way and in another in the other language the foreign language learner will probably experience difficulty in using this structure correctly. Consequently, contrastivists claim that learners will experience little difficulty in using structures of the target language that are similarly constructed in the source language.

4. 3.　　　Learning Theories

After World War II the dominant psychological theory was behaviouristic learning theory. General learning theories, in the field of language learning as well as of language teaching, were governed by behaviourist views, which were propounded by psychologists such as Watson (1924), Thorndike (1932), and Skinner (1957).

According to behaviourists, every mental activity can be explained in terms of stimulus and response, built up through conditioning. The tenet of behaviourism which is relevant to language learning is that language learning involves habit formation. Habits are formed when learners respond to stimuli in the environment and subsequently have their responses reinforced so that they are remembered. Learning takes place when learners have the opportunity to practice making the correct response to a given stimulus. Habits are constructed through the repeated associations between stimulus and response; if they are positively reinforced they became bounded. As a result of the obvious inadequacies of behaviourist explanations of L2 acquisition more and more scholars emphasized the need for a more appropriate theoretical framework.

The early second half of the 20th century witnessed a major shift in thinking in psychology and linguistics; as a result mentalist theories of language acquisition emerged. The focus of attention shifted from the environmental factors to the human mind, the central question concerned how innate properties of the human mind shape learning. As a result of these changes behaviourism was disproved by cognitive psychology by the 1970s. This turning point concerning the theories of language learning is marked by Chomsky's review of Skinner's *Verbal Behaviour* (1957). Due to Chomsky's revolutionary ideas on language acquisition (innateness, UG, LAD, etc.) language learning became seen as a product of rule formation and not that of habit formation. It means that humans do not simply become conditioned to making responses but form hypotheses, apply rules and create language while they are exposed to it. Observations have shown that learners frequently do not produce output that simply reproduces the input but they construct their own rules and produce a unique linguistic entity. The

systematic nature of learner's errors explicitly indicates the occurrence of this transformation (Ellis 1997).

4. 4.   Steps of Contrastive Studies

Although I am not carrying out a contrastive analysis of the Hungarian and English languages the following section is important from the methodological point of view: error analysis, just like contrastive analysis, is based on three vital steps: description, juxtaposition and comparison of the examined grammatical structures. To support this claim I would like to quote Katona (1960: 1 cf. also Fries' quote from page 26.):

> Any modern method of English language teaching must be based on a careful analysis on the differences between the grammatical structure of the English language and of the mother tongue of the foreigner who sets himself the task of learning English.

Lado (1957) provided guidelines for carrying out a contrastive analysis by describing the general procedure in comparing two grammatical structures: the researcher has to begin with the analysis of the foreign language and compare it structure by structure with the native language. Then the focus has to move on to the native language: For each structure under discussion the researcher has to look at whether there is a corresponding structure in the native language. It must be detected whether the foreign language structure is expressed by the same formal device in the native language and whether it has the same meaning and finally whether the structure is similarly distributed in the system of that language or not.

Krzeszowski in his seminal work *Contrasting Languages* from 1990 determined three crucial but not always clearly distinguishable steps of classical (not generative) contrastive studies: description, juxtaposition and comparison. Since the precondition for comparison is description, contrastive works must begin with the independent descriptions of the relevant items of the languages under comparison. The description should be made within the same theoretical

framework so that the results are compatible and comparable. After the individual characteristics of the languages have been unfolded the elements must be juxtaposed. The second step must comprise the principles about the decisions of what should be compared to what and why. In classical contrastive studies bilingual informants made these decisions based on their intuitive knowledge about the two languages. It was believed that if the two elements are equivalent they are comparable. In the process of carrying out scientific analysis intuitive judgements of laymen cannot be trusted blindly, similarity cannot be presupposed before the results of comparison have proved it. Juxtaposition cannot be based on formal similarity or semantic equivalence alone, the linguistic items and structures have to share a tertium comparationis - "an abstract linguistic model which can be used as a basis for indicating how a general linguistic category should be presented in Li and Lj [i.e. L1 and L2]" a definition provided by Van Els et al. (1984: 41). The last step in a contrastive analysis is comparison proper. Krzeszowski (1990) identified three basic areas of comparison: i) Comparison of various equivalent systems and subsystems across languages, for example articles and nasals in phonology, ii) Comparison of equivalent constructions like negative or interrogative and iii) Comparison of equivalent rules, for example the rules of passivization in the two languages.

4. 5.   Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis

The Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis (hence CAH) claims that difficulties in language learning derive from the differences between L1 and L2 and that errors can be predicted by the use of a contrastive analysis. Its theoretical foundations were formulated in Lado's *Linguistics across Cultures* (1957), with the conviction that degree of linguistic difference between the source and the target language could be used to predict learning difficulty:

> Those structures that are similar will be easy to learn because they will be transferred and may function satisfactorily in the foreign language. Those structures that are different will be difficult because when transferred they will not function satisfactorily in the foreign language. (Lado 1957: 59)

Weinreich (1953: 1) stated the same idea in a similar way:

> The greater the difference between the systems, i.e. the more numerous the mutually exclusive forms and patterns in each, the greater is the learning problem and the potential area of interference.

The question to which extent the L1 structure is the cause of the L2 errors has attracted considerable attention among linguists. Wardhaugh (1970) proposed a distinction between a strong and a weak version of the CAH. The strong version aimed at predicting learners' errors based upon a priori contrastive analysis of the L1 and L2. The weak version concerns the errors language learners have committed and tries to explain them by making reference to the similarities and differences between the native and the target languages. Ellis concluded that although CAH did not prove to be useful *a priori*, it was still claimed to possess *a posteriori* explanatory power. (Ellis 1991)

The strong version of CAH

The strong version is based on the assumption that by contrasting languages one can reveal the differences and similarities, which makes it possible to foretell and predict errors. The strong form, or the assumptions it was based on, were clearly formulated by Lee (1968: 186 in Sridhar 1981: 211):

1. Lee claims that the prime cause of error in foreign language learning is interference coming from the learner's native language.

2. Lee argues for the validity of the strong version by claiming that difficulties are principally due to the differences between the two languages and the degree of the difference accounts for the nature of the learning problem.

3. Resulting from the previous point, the greater the difference the more acute the learning difficulty will be.

4. Lee also emphasises the importance of carrying out contrastive analyses since the results of the comparison are needed to predict the errors which will occur in the learning process.

5. His last assumption on which CAH is based is of pedagogical interest: what teachers have to teach equals the differences found by the comparison of the two languages.

However, it must be mentioned that Lee's version is not the standard version of CAH, not all scholars agree with him on the point of how big a role should be assigned to the influence of interlingual interference. Nevertheless, a similar version of the above stated qualifications is assumed by most practitioners of contrastive analysis. (Sridhar 1981)

Theoreticians and practitioners of contrastive analysis who approve of the strong version of CAH claim that the erroneous utterances of the learner are the direct result of the transfer of L1 structures into the L2. For the supporters of the strong claim contrastive analysis is a means of explaining, and a technique for predicting them. The results of a contrastive analysis can be of great importance for language teachers: those who advocated the strong claim believed that if a teacher is armed with a contrastive analysis of the languages involved he is able to identify the problem areas even before the learner has started to learn. In this way teachers can devise drills that will practice errors away and thereby avoiding that they will be internalised in the learner's knowledge. Its usefulness in the classroom environment is due to its highly predictive character.

The weak version of CAH

The weak position, or as it is also called the explanatory view of CAH, became part of error analysis after the failure of the predictive contrastive analysis. According to the weak version of CAH, Van Els et al. (1984) claim, the structure of the L1 provides only a partial explanation of the phenomena involved in L2 learning, only some of the observed learning problems can be explained on the basis of structural differences between L1 and L2. The structure of the L1 is only one of the many influences that play a role in the learning process. Therefore contrastive analysis may be of some value in explanation of errors but cannot have a strong predictive value. Van Els et al. (1984: 50) conclude that "A hypothesis without predictive power is, in fact, a contradiction in terms".

Wardhaugh (1970) reveals that the strong version, although claimed to be used by the majority of linguists in their works, is "quite unrealistic and impracticable" (1970: 124). He claims that the hypothesis is only valid regarding its predictable value, for its original purpose, the strong version of the contrastive analysis hypothesis did not prove to be workable. In the weak version, the focus is placed on the error itself, researchers start with studying learner errors and try to explain them. The weak form is only diagnostic; errors, or at least a subset of them, can be explained but not predicted through the differences in the structures of the mother tongue and the target language. As the literature failed to offer a definition of the weak version, Wardhaugh (1970: 126) created his own:

> The weak version requires of the linguists only that he use the best linguistic knowledge available to him in order to account for observed difficulties in second language learning […].

In the discussion of language teaching and language learning, just like in the evaluation of learner languages, only marginal attention is given to the reasons of correct language production. The obvious reason why a foreign language learner succeeds in correct language use is that he or she internalized the rules of the target language and mastered their limitations; consequently the learner has the same knowledge of the grammar of the target language as a native speaker. Another possible explanation for error free language production might be that the L1: L2 identities will not have to be learned by the L2 learner since he knows them already by virtue of his L1 knowledge and the linguistic universals. On the basis of this assumption James (1980: 152) argues as follows:

> The learner must be allowed, indeed encouraged, to transfer this 'suitable' L1 knowledge to L2 usage. This means that those L2 structures that match L1 structures must constitute part of the materials, since materials do not only teach what is 'new' and unknown, but provide confirmation of interlingual identities.

Wardhaugh (1970) expresses the same idea by claiming that learners can profit a great deal from their overall linguistic knowledge as all natural languages have many features in common. Every language learner with any previous language

learning experience already has a considerably amount of knowledge about the target language he must learn, may it be his second, third or fourth foreign language.

4. 6.   Contrastive Analysis: Critique and Advocacy

Until the late 1960s CA enjoyed a rather influential status among linguists and language professionals, which has undergone a change as the behaviourist view on language learning was gradually rejected in favour of the mentalist approach. Apart from the psychological underpinnings, the linguistic basis of CA also changed, as we have seen earlier, structuralism was rejected for transformational grammar, which resulted in serious consequences for CA: more and more scholars were ready to dismiss CA (Odlin 1989: 17-19, Stern 1983: 168).

The usefulness of contrastive studies has long been debated mostly because of a number of misinterpretations concerning the aims of theoretical and applied studies and their relationship to linguistic theories. Criticism against contrastive studies was directed at three aspects of CAH: its ability to predict errors, its theoretical foundation and its practical usefulness. The underlying assumption that errors would occur exclusively at the contrasting points between the two language systems has been proven wrong. The argument, that the results of contrastive studies have no immediate use in the classroom, has been raised without distinction between theoretical and applied studies – as it was declared by Fisiak (1981: 7) on the defence of CA. Obviously only the research results of the applied branch have any relevance for the classroom situation.

> Theoretical contrastive studies as part of comparative linguistics, are totally neutral with respect to this problem [the predictability of interference], since their aim is to provide linguistic information concerning two grammars, i.e. to discover what underlies linguistic competence, and not to predict what will happen when competence is converted into performance.

Criticism against CA in Europe followed the American attitude of the 1950s and 1960s. The downturn of contrastive research in the USA began with the 1968 Georgetown Roundtable[6], a conference devoted to CA. Sajavaara (1980) identified the primary points of criticism: the problems can be found in the history of CA, in the heterogeneous nature of criticism itself, in the theoretical and methodological problems of CA, and finally in the general issues of linguistic theory. Due to the effect of severe criticism, claiming that CA fails to predict interference and errors, the interest in CL has diminished.

Empirical research showed that many predicted errors did not occur and many unpredicted did occur. Predictions regarding difficulty in learning should aim at the creation of efficient teaching materials and should not concern the errors themselves. The ultimate aim of comparing two languages - from the pedagogical point of view - should be the design of appropriate, language specific teaching material which can ease the task of language learning. This claim is strongly connected to the other application of CA, namely the design of testing instruments. Lado argued that testing would be more informative and effective if the focus was predominantly put on the predictions of CA. Thus, the results of contrastive studies not only provide teachers with important guidelines about what to concentrate on but suggest what to test and to which degree to test (Lado 1957: 4-5, James 1980: 149). The findings of CA were supposed to influence the practice and not the process of teaching, meaning that they have no direct influence on classroom procedures. Hence, its pedagogical applications were "prepedagogical" (James 1980: 145). To sum up, as Stern (1983: 159) points out:

> Contrastive Analysis was not intended to offer a new method of teaching; but it was a form of language description across two languages which was particularly applicable to curriculum development, the preparation and evaluation of teaching materials, to the diagnosis of learning problems, and to testing.

Lado (1957) not only claimed that some L2 learning problems can be predicted on the basis of linguistic differences between L1 and L2 but also observed that L2 learning problems can be explained on the basis of linguistic differences between

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[6] For more information, see Alatis 1986. *Contrastive linguistics and its pedagogical implication.*

the native and the target language. If the target language structure has an equivalent structure in the mother tongue, as we saw earlier, it was expected that positive transfer will take place by which learning will be facilitated. If the target language structure corresponds to a different structure in the mother tongue negative transfer is excepted to occur, which will hinder learning. It would be wrong, however, to think that contrastive analysis is the ultimate answer to the solving of foreign language learners' problems. Empirical research (see, for example Alatis 1979 in Ellis 1991) showed that CA predicts L2 learning problems which do not occur and sometimes fails to predict problems which do occur. On the one hand, CA predicted some errors but it clearly did not anticipate all, i.e. it underpredicted (e.g. Hyltenstam 1977 in Ellis 1991) and on the other hand, some errors it did predict failed to materialise, i.e. it overpredicted (e.g. Dulay and Burt 1974 in Ellis 1991). As a result researchers had to accept that predictions made on the basis of contrastive analyses did not deliver reliable information about the actual learning problem.

To conclude, we can state that linguistic differences between the native and target language do not automatically lead to L2 learning problems and not all learning problems can be retraced to linguistic differences between L1 and L2. Therefore contrastive analyses became limited to providing hypotheses, predictions and explanations. Their value is declared by Kzreszowski (1974: 281) as follows:

> The pedagogical value of contrastive analysis is becoming less and less obvious and the solutions therein more and more removed to a remote area near the horizon […]. The best that contrastive analysis can do is to predict areas of potential mistakes without making any claims as to whether or not in what circumstances they are likely to occur in actual performance.

Today it is no longer under discussion how much language teachers can profit from contrastive studies: they provide information about the potential areas of interference, be it positive or negative, and determine the structures in using which L2 learners are probable to experience difficulty. The meaningful insights that contrastive analyses provide can be of great importance not only for language teachers but also for textbook writers and language learners. (Fisiak 1981)

After introducing the most important features of the Hungarian language and giving an overview of the academic research in the Hungarian linguistic scene, Chapter Five addresses the topic of contrastive linguistics in Hungary. After the presentation of the most important works those will be discussed in greater details which are relevant for the empirical research of this paper.

5.   Hungarian Contrastive Linguistics

5. 1.   Characteristics of the Hungarian Language[7]

In this chapter I am going to provide a typologically-based description of Hungarian showing the individual characteristics of this language. I am dispensing with the elaborative description of the grammar of the English language as it is known by all of the readers of this paper.

Hungarian, or *magyar*, as it is called in Hungarian, is a Finno-Ugric language belonging to the Ugric branch of the Uralic language family. It has been separated from its most closely related languages Mansi and Khanty of western Siberia for about 2500 years. The nearest European linguistic relatives of Hungarian are Finnish and Estonian, otherwise Hungarian is a linguistic island, sorrounded by Indo-European languages which are not at all or only distantly related to it. Hungarian is spoken in Central-Europe, it is the state language in Hungary and the native language of language minorities in the neighbouring countries. There are about 14.5 million native speakers of Hungarian, of whom approximately 10 million live in modern-day Hungary. About 2 million speakers live outside Hungary in areas which belonged to the Kingdom of Hungary before the Treaty of Trianon was signed. Of these, the largest group of about 1,4 million Hungarians live in Romania, others in Slovakia, Serbia, Ukraine, Croatia, Austria and Slovenia.

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[7] This section is based on Kiss 2002 and Törkenczy 2005.

The Lexicon of Hungarian

An estimation of the total word count is difficult since it is hard to define what to call a word in agglutinative languages because of the productive process of affixation and the high number of compound words. The lexicon of Hungarian is estimated to comprise 60 000 to 100 000 word, the largest dictionaries from Hungarian to other languages contain 120 000 words and phrases. In Hungarian words are built around so called word-bushes, eg: *kör-körös-köröz-körötte-kerit-kering-kerge* meaning circle-round-circulate-around-get-revolve-mad: all of these words are originally related to „circle". There are a wide-range of compounds, derivations and word formations from a single root.

Hungarian Grammar and Syntax

The placement of stress is regular, it is always on the first syllable and the remaining syllables all receive an equal, lesser stress. In Hungarian all syllables are pronounced clearly and evenly, even at the end of the sentence.

Hungarian is an agglutinative language type: most grammatical information is given through affixes including suffixes, prefixes and a circumfix. Hungarian is a very richly inflected language with complex noun and verb forms. There are two types of articles: definite *a, az* and indefinite *egy*. Nouns in Hungarian are formed by stems followed by 5 "inflectional slots" (Törkenczy 2005: 19), i.e. positions where inflectional suffixes can occur. These are in order inflectional suffix indicating number, possession or person, nominal possessive, nominal possessive number and finally case. For example: *barát-ai-m-é-i-t* /friend-possessive 3rd person singular- possessive 1st person singular – possessive 3rd person plural – plural – accusative/ meaning *those of my friends*.

There are 18 cases in Hungarian: nominative, accusative, dative, illative, inessive, elative, allative, adessive, ablative, sublative, superessive, delative, instrumental, causal-final, terminative, temporal, translative and –*féle* (kinds of). Some of them are primarily grammatical and mark the relations of subject, direct object and indirect object, others are locative and express various spatial distinctions, still others express temporal connections. As opposed to English, Hungarian does not

have a genitive case, the dative is used instead. All cases are lexically selected, there are no grammatical function changing transformations like passivization. In Hungarian possessive constructions the possessed object is modified, not the possessor as in English.

Verbs developed a complex conjugation system: every Hungarian verb has two conjugations (definite and indefinite), two tenses (past and present), three moods (indicative, conditional, imperative), two numbers (singular and plural) and three persons (first, second and third). In Hungarian different verb forms are used depending on whether the object of the verb is definite or indefinite, consequently there is a definite and an indefinite conjugation. The indefinite verb form is used if the verb is intransitive or if it has an indefinite direct object, and the definite form of the verb is used if the verb has a definite direct object. The stem of Hungarian conjugated verbs is followed by two positions where inflectional suffixes can occur: the first indicates tense and mood, the second person and number. Present tense is unmarked, Past tense is marked with the suffix –t or sometimes –tt which appear after the stem and might be followed by a definite or indefinite person or number suffix. The Past Tense can refer to any action or state that took place sometime in the past – as there is only one type of past tense there are no restrictions concerning its use. Future time is not expressed by a separate suffix but by lexical and syntactic means: in cases when the sentence also defines the time of the future event futurity is expressed by the present tense, in other cases by using the infinitive and the auxiliary word *fog* - which means *will* - or by other complex forms.

Further dissimilarities between Hungarian and English grammar can be found in many areas: prepositional meanings found in English are expressed in Hungarian either by noun suffixes or by postpositions. In this respect postpositions are like case endings, they supplement the case system. Adjectives precede nouns and have three degrees including base, comparative and superalative. If the noun takes the plural or a case, the attributively used adjective does not agree with it. The adjective must only agree with the noun if it is used in a predicative sense. Adjectives also take cases when they are used without nouns. Multiple negation is possible and common: double or multiple negation is grammatically required in sentences with negative pronouns. Negation might be expressed in the following

ways: with the use of a negative particle *nem /*no/, se-phrases /no-phrases/ like *nobody, nothing* or *nowhere* or by using the negative existential verb. The rules for question formation in Hungarian are also different from the English ones: Yes/No questions and their corresponding indicative sentences are syntactically and morphologically identical, the difference is expressed only by intonation. Furthermore, infinitive appears with personal endings and can take preverbs. In Hungarian there is no gender distinction in either nouns or pronouns. Personal pronouns in the nominative and accusative cases are ommitted unless the pronoun is emphasised, contrasted or referred to specifically. As they do not require the use of a personal pronoun Hungarian sentences might be ambigous.

Hungarian is classified as an SVO language, since it is a null subject language, the subject does not have to be explicitly stated. Hungarian is a free word order language: grammatical functions are not linked to structural positions in the sentence as Hungarian word order is more semantic than syntactic. Because of the marking of the sentence elements it is not necessary for example to place the subject before the verb or the object after it as in English. There is a symmetry of structural relations: subject and object behave in a parallel way in many areas of syntax. Hungarian has a discourse-driven syntax, the order of the constituents in a sentence is determined by pragmatic rather than by syntactic roles. In the Hungarian sentence there is agreement in several areas of grammar: for example, the verb agrees with the subject and with the definite object. Sentences usually consist of four parts: topic, focus, verb and the rest. The focus of the sentence is placed immediately before the finite verb, and if the verb itself is focused on it is placed at the beginning of the sentence.

5. 2.   Academic research in English Linguistics in Hungary

The scientifically based teaching of English in Hungary could not develop as rapidly as desired because its prerequisite, contrastive research on English and Hungarian was in its infancy in the 1960s. The Hungarian linguistic scene was plagued by the following weaknesses: lack of specialists in English linguistics and in the teaching of English as a foreign language, shortage of literature on English and general linguistics and acoustic equipment for utilization in phonetic research

on English and Hungarian. Older scholars and administrators responsible for the development of the English language resources in Hungary felt the immediate need to put the Hungarian academic research into operation. As their efforts were also supported by the younger generation of future linguists and teachers the situation could go through a radical change. In the middle of the 1960s these deficiencies could be overcome with the help of Prof. John Lotz, director of the Center for Applied Linguistics in Washington: he not only obtained funds, provided books and acoustic research equipment to Hungarian institutions but also, and more importantly, he began to evolve plans for a large-scale international project for the contrastive analysis of Hungarian and English, *The Hungarian-English Contrastive Linguistics Project*[8], which came into being in the 1970s. Another undoubted merit of Prof. John Lotz was his initiation of the two most remarkable series *Working Papers* and *Current Trends in the Language Sciences*. The latter volume on contrastive linguistics, which was edited by Nemser, and to which Hungarian project researchers also contributed, included the studies by László Dezső on language typology and contrastive linguistics and by József Csapó on the derivation of adjectives in English and Hungarian. (Dezsö and Nemser 1980*)*

5. 3. Contrastive Studies of Hungarian Scholars[9]

The pioneering scholar of Hungarian contrastive linguistics was certainly János Sylvester who contrasted Hungarian with Latin for educational purposes.

> John Sylvester's *Grammatica Hungaro-Latina*, written in 1536 and first published in 1539, was a pioneering contribution to contrastive linguistics. […] Although the explicit intent of this grammar was to teach the Latin language, the implicit significance of this work for Hungarian linguistics derives from the author's procedure, which was to compare and contrast, in passing as it were, a rich array of linguistic data from Hungarian with the facts of Latin. (Thomas A. Sebeok: Johannes Sylvester, Foreword In: Budai 1979: 47)

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[8] The project will be discussed in more detail in Section 5.4.
[9] The present chapter is based on Budai 1979.

The need for the comparison of languages is present in the Hungarian grammar books from the middle of the 19th century: in his 1853 work, Gyula Lajos Dallos discusses the use of English in comparison to the use of Hungarian. In 1939 András Csorba compares Latin and German with his mother tongue, Hungarian, while József Willer contrasts English with Hungarian. Although Fries, Haugen, Weinreich and Lado are regarded the prime movers of contrastive linguistics, the 1943 monograph of the Hungarian scholar John Lotz preceded their works. His article is the earliest significant work on English and Hungarian contrastive linguistics in the American literature.

Although contrastive linguistic analyses were carried out in growing number abroad as well as in Hungary from the 1970s the Hungarian linguistic scene could not progress rapidly. Due to lack of means and financial support, Hungarian scholars carried out their research in America. Nemser's 1972 *Contrastive Research on Hungarian and English in the United States*, an article in the Hungarian-English Contrastive Linguistics Project series, offers an overview of the contribution of American scholars to contrastive research on Hungarian and English. This survey, which was published in the Working Papers Series, includes reviews of both contrastive and experimental works. The articles include Lotz's studies of 1943, 1966 and 1969 on number category in Hungarian noun declension and comparisons of English and Hungarian morphophonemics, Nemser and Juhász analysis of 1964 for teaching either language to the speakers of the other. Other articles in the series are the 1966 study of Bálint (*Time indication and sentences in Hungarian and English*) about ways of indication of time in the two languages and the extensive contrastive study of the grammars of the two languages by Orosz (n.d.) for pedagogical purposes. An important experimental study was written by Nemser (1961) on the prediction and explication of interference, another by Madarasz (1968), whose monograph concerned contrastive analysis and error analysis.

As mentioned earlier, Hungarian contrastive linguistic research was not very vivid, milestones on the long way Hungarian contrastive research has gone in the second half of the 20th century, are the 1971 conference in Pécs and the publications of the Hungarian-English Contrastive Linguistics Project. Apart from a few MA theses and candidate dissertations, small studies in methodological

journals and a small number of independent volumes were published. Some of these studies argued for the necessity of contrastive analysis of the given foreign language with the mother tongue. They discussed principles of general linguistics (Mikóné 1963), methods of contrasting language systems (Temesi 1972), relations between language typology and contrastive linguistics (Dezső-Nemser 1972) or the effects of homogenous inhibition in language contact (Juhász 1970). Other studies analyse and contrast certain sections of the mother tongue and of some international language. The pioneering contrastive studies of the 1970s laid the foundation of further contrastive research. The works include the candidate dissertation of Korponay (1973) about the comparison of English and Hungarian verbal structures, Hegedűs' 1972 study about singular and plural forms of English and Hungarian nouns and their meanings, problems of Hungarian questions (Nádasdy 1973), comparison of English textbooks used in Britain and in Hungary (Stephanides 1972), aspects of sentence prosody (Varga 1975) or the contrastive analysis of English prepositions and Hungarian postpositions (Keresztes 1975).

Budai (1979: 51-52) offers a summary of the merits of the 1970s which for him are the established close relationship between contrastive analysis and foreign language teaching and the deeper analysis of MT influence. Besides stating some problems of the time, from which the most important is that the unity of linguistic analyses and methodology only theoretically exists, he also specifies future tasks of Hungarian linguists. These include the need for a clear distinction between general linguistic and language teaching methodological research and the development of the methods of contrastive analyses so that the research results can be used more effectively in language teaching.

5. 4.   The Hungarian-English Contrastive Linguistics Project

The Hungarian-English Contrastive Linguistics Project was one in a series of four contrastive projects in East-Europe cosponsored by national scientific institutions and the Ford Foundation. Prof. Lotz obtained American support and achieved that the project was jointly administered by the Hungarian Academy of Sciences and the Centre for Applied Linguistics of Washington, D.C. This project was designed

both to contribute to English research in Hungary and to produce research results of theoretical interest and practical utility. The second and third phases of the project were sponsored by the Hungarian Ministry of Education and were administered by the English department of the Eötvös Lóránd University. The project was concerned with the investigation of the similarities and differences between the English and Hungarian languages with implications for second language acquisition. The objectives of the research were complex: 1) contrastive description of salient aspects of English and Hungarian phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics, 2) hypotheses regarding the implications of the cited structural differences and similarities for the acquisition of English by Hungarians, 3) verification of the hypotheses through reference to an extensive error corpus and 4) identification and exemplification of pedagogical strategies suggested by the research findings. The research results of the project that started in 1972 appeared in the periodical *Working Papers* and in the volumes of *Studies in English and Hungarian Contrastive Linguistics* published by the Academy Press. The extensive results of project research have also been published in other Central European journals.

5.4.1.   Working Papers No. 1

Two Papers on English-Hungarian Contrastive Phonology

Lotz's article on contrastive phonology consists of two papers; the first one is a contrastive study of the morphophonemics of obstruent clusters in English and Hungarian while the second one compares the glides in the two languages with the purpose "to draw inferences from the comparison for the language learning situation in both directions" (1972a: 8).

5.4.2.   Working Papers No. 2

Script, Grammar and the Hungarian Writing System

This 1972 paper of Lotz also consists of two parts: the first one deals with the Hungarian writing system and concerns, on the one hand, the relationship between script and grammatical theory and, on the other hand, how script is significant for the description of a language. A select biography on script and language is also included in this work. The second part of the paper considers Hungarian script in terms of graphemes and "outlines a systematic treatment for the graphematic study of a language considering grapheme inventory, signal formation in words and texts, and pragmatic aspects of script" (Lotz 1972b: Abstract). The conversion of script to speech and the imperative are the other central topics discussed in the author's work.

5.4.3.   Working Papers No. 3

Contrastive Research on Hungarian and English in the United States

Nemser's 1972 paper not only provides detailed information on the nature of structural differences and similarities between English and Hungarian but also offers important insights to the field of contrastive linguistics and foreign language acquisition. As this paper has already been mentioned earlier (see p. 42-43), I forbear from presenting it in detail. The focus of the discussion is narrowed down to those articles that are relevant to my empirical research.

5.4.4.   Working Papers No. 4

Four Papers of the Pécs Conference on Contrastive Linguistics (Pécs, 14-16 October, 1971)
This collection was edited by Dezső and Nemser in 1973 and consists of the following conference papers:

The first paper, *Language Typology and Contrastive Linguistics,* written by László Dezső and William Nemser, clarifies the task of typology and its relationship to linguistic theory. The subjects of typology and language acquisition as well as that of typology and contrastive linguistics are outlined. In the closing section of the paper the authors try to find an answer to the question

how research results can be applied to the development of future language programmes.

The author of the second paper entitled *Contrastive Aspects of British and American English with Implications for Hungarian Learners of English,* Ėva Diósdy-Stephanides, contrasts the sound systems of American and British English in order to make Hungarian English learners aware of the differences between the two varieties. In the juxtaposition, qualitative and distributional differences as well as stress and rhythm are considered. Afterwards the contrastive features of English and Hungarian are presented to highlight the similarities and differences between the two sound systems.

The third paper, *Interrogative Sentences in English: A language-teaching problem for Hungarians,* addresses first of all language teachers. The author, Ádám Nádasdy, describes and compares the two basic question types -Yes-No questions and Question-word questions- in English and Hungarian and makes suggestions about the most efficient ways of teaching English interrogative sentences to Hungarians.

A Contrastive Analysis of English and Hungarian Textbooks of English by Ėva A. Stephanides contrasts "the pedagogically graded presentation of English grammar" (Stephanides 1973: 51) in Hungarian and English textbooks. The study consists of five sections, they contain general descriptions of the textbooks analysed, describe the texts, compare presentations of English phonology in English and Hungarian texts, other sections deal with English nominal and verbal categories. The final section consists of a description of the order of presentation of English tense and aspect and a discussion on the treatment of sentence word order, clauses, gerunds and participles.

5.4.5.   Working Papers No. 5

A Contrastive Study of the English and Hungarian Article

The goal of this contrastive analysis of Éva Stephanides from 1974 is to identify similarities and differences in the use of determiners. Its practical objective is to

decrease interference of the mother tongue and decrease its facilitation by the use of articles for both Hungarian learners of English and English learners of Hungarian. The study consists of two parts. The first part presents a theoretical framework for the research, it deals with the question of how determination is expressed in the two languages. Determiners are described and defined, which is followed by the classification of the system of English nouns contrasted with the Hungarian noun system. Part one ends with the presentation of the relation of determiners to nouns in noun phrases. The second part of the study presents the contrastive analysis of the use of articles in English and Hungarian. Patterns for article usage are described; differences and similarities between the two languages are stated explicitly. Each statement is illustrated with examples and the identified similarities and differences serve as basis to form predictions about learning difficulty for learners of each language. The collected data is used for verification of the predictions.

5.4.6.   Working Papers No. 6

A Contrastive Analysis of English and Hungarian Sentence Prosody

László Varga's 1975 monograph is a contrastive analysis of British English, American English and Hungarian sentence prosody. The objectives of this study are to confront the formal features of prosodic devices and their functional distribution in the two languages. Furthermore, it tries to predict prosodic errors in both directions, i.e. probable errors made by Hungarian learners of English and by English learners of Hungarian. The study serves primarily applied purposes; it was carried out to provide a basis for the improvement of teaching materials and teaching methods but it is also designated for curriculum planners, textbook writers and language teachers. The author hopes that the contrastive analysis will yield a "fairly detailed and reliable map of where the learner of the target language is likely to experience interference (or facilitation) from his base language" (1975: 12).

5.4.7.   Working Papers No. 7

Hungarian Postpositions vs. English Prepositions: A Contrastive study

Kálmán Keresztes' 1975 study of English prepositions and their Hungarian equivalents aims at determining interlingual congruences and contrasts between the two languages for use in language teaching. The objective of the study was to "find and collocate the semantically equivalent form patterns of the English and Hungarian relation-making systems by contrasting the use of the individual relational morphemes" (1975: Abstract). The focus of the investigation was the relation between Hungarian postpositions and their equivalents in English: prepositions. Subjects of investigation were spatial relation-words[10] of the directional type, spatial relation-words of the non-directional type, temporal relation-words and abstract relation-words. Throughout the contrastive discussion of semantic patterns interference predictions are formulated which have relevance for language instruction programmes.

5. 5.   Hungarian Learner Language

Falling back on one's previously acquired knowledge - be it that of the mother tongue or any other foreign language - is a well-known and broadly applied method for compensating for the gaps in the learner's knowledge. Hungarian learners of English experience great difficulty with many English structures due to either their non-existence in Hungarian or to the fact that a given structure is realised differently in Hungarian as in English. Beside Tense and Aspect further problematic areas for Hungarian learners of English are Word order, Negation and Articles. Rules concerning word order in English and Hungarian are considerably different as the languages belong to different language families. Although it constitutes a major problem, word order does not belong to the topics that are devoted special attention in the classroom. English and Hungarian arrange

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[10] The term "relation-word" is employed by Keresztes when both postpositions and prepositions are meant.

the sentence constituents differently: the former has a relatively restricted word order, where the basic word order is SVO; the latter is a free word order language, i.e. having a very flexible sentence structure which is possible because grammatical information is given through inflectional endings and not by the order of the constituents like in English. In present day English, case is only relevant for personal pronouns, the position of the constituents is fixed: subject - predicate - objects(s) - adverbial(s). An object, for example, in an English sentence is marked by its position in the sentence, in Hungarian it is marked by the accusative case and the indirect object by the dative case. Therefore teachers of English to Hungarians should point out these differences explicitly and provide learners with explanations and examples based on contrastive considerations.

In the following sections I will provide an outline of the likely problem areas in the L2 writings of Hungarian learners: Voice, Tense and Article usage. I have chosen these three foci for detailed discussion because, according to my experience, these constitute the greatest difficulty for EFL learners with Hungarian mother tongue. The analysis of the grammatical means employed in the two languages to express the same structure yields valuable insights into the problems Hungarians are confronted with while learning English. This is especially true in case of the Passive voice and the use of Present Perfect because they are non-existent categories in Hungarian. By studying the corresponding structures in the two languages it should be possible to tell where students will encounter difficulties and where learning will be facilitated. The large extent of dissimilarity within the two grammars, especially in the above mentioned three areas, leads to the assumption that the percentage of transfer errors would be relatively high in these categories. The actual rate of L1 interference is given in Chapter 11, where the major results of the analysis will be discussed.

5.5.1. *Hungarian Means for Expressing Passive Meaning*

One of the most remarkable points of discussion is surely the use of the Passive Voice. This verbal category, according to Kepecs (1986), is worth investigating because there are deviating views about its formal characteristics, its functions

and its meaning. For Hungarian learners of English it is of great importance because Hungarian has no comparable category. In English the Passive Voice is used when the focus is on the action and it is not important or not known who performed the action. Therefore in a passive structure the subject is the undergoer of an action, not the initiator. Passive voice is traditionally related to transitive verbal predicates, however, there is no one-to-one relation between voice and the distinction of transitive and intransitive verbs. Depending on the context, many verbs can be both transitive and intransitive.

Hungarian, on the contrary, uses active forms not only in the active sense but also to express the passive. The most frequently used verbal construction is the 3rd person past plural active form as in *Megírták a levelet* /perf. prefix wrote-3rd person plural the letter-accusative/ which literally means *They wrote the letter*. However, there are some passive verbs in Hungarian which indicate that the action affects the subject and is done or initiated by someone else, but their use is very restricted and they occur mostly in set phrases. Such verbs can be formed with the following non-productive formants: *-at* or *-et, -tat* or *-tet* (the choice of the suffix depends on the vowel of the stem, i.e. words with front vowels get front vowel suffixes, words with back vowels get back vowel suffixes)[11] and the indefinite *-ik*. Passive meaning in Hungarian might be expressed with one of the following three alternatives: i) medio-passive verbs, ii) verbadverbial with the suffix *-va* or *-ve* combined with the existential verb be and iii) participle forms with the suffixes *-t, -tt,* or *-andó* or *-endő*.

i) Medio-passive verbs have certain passive features but the action they express is conceived as either an independent one initiated by itself, for example *felhalmozódik - it gets accumulated,* or an action where an agent is implied as in *bemocskolódik - it gets dirty.*[12]
ii) Verbadverbial with the suffix *-va* or *-ve* in combination with the existential verb *be* express the state of as the result of the action. For example: *The door is closed* translated as *Az ajtó be van csukva /the door in is close-adverbial suffix -va/.*

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[11] On Hungarian phonetics, see for example, Kornai 1986 *Hungarian Vowel Harmony.*
[12] The examples in this section are taken from Kepecs 1986.

iii) Participle forms with the suffixes *-t, -tt* or with *-andó* or *-endő* are used mostly in instructions and rules, for example *The rule is to be strictly followed,* in Hungarian *A szabály szigorúan betartandó* /the rule strictly follow-present participle with -andó suffix/.

As the above mentioned means - except for ii) - sound strange to the Hungarian ear and are therefore very rarely used, Hungarian has alternative ways for constructing passive sentences. These include grammatical, syntactic and lexical structures and forms which are employed instead of the previously discussed forms. Alternative morphological means might be the use of definite conjugation of transitive verbs and the selection of verbal prefixes which imply a certain perfective meaning in the equivalent Hungarian verbal structure. Syntactic means to express passive voice in Hungarian concern the word-order arrangement, i.e. topic-focus rules and the application of split verbal prefixes. Finally, there are lexical means which include a wide range of miscellaneous phenomena, just to mention a few: modifying words or adverbs of manner. Kepecs (1986) calls our attention to the fact that these elements always coordinate because none of them can on its own correspond to an English passive clause.

Following predictions can be made about the use of the passive voice by Hungarian learners of English:

Prediction One: Learners will fail to recognise the need for the use of a passive structure in those clauses where the Subject in Hungarian is in Focus position, which will lead to an underuse of the passive voice. For example:

(1)   …mathematical methods were first employed by George Boole about 100 years ago.

Hungarian learners of English will tend to use an active clause and produce – depending on the level of proficiency - sentences like *First George Boole employed mathematical devices...* or *It was George Boole who first employed mathematical devices...* These sentences mirror the syntax of the corresponding Hungarian sentence: *Először George Boole alkalmazott matematikai módszereket…*/First George Boole employed mathematical devices-accusative…/.

The underuse of the passive voice in similar contexts roots in the deviating sentence structure rules.

Prediction Two: Hungarian learners of English will fail to recognise the need for the use of the passive voice when the logical subject of the first finite verb coincides with the logical object of the second verb. For example:

(2)   I arrived and I was taken to the hotel

translated into Hungarian as *Megérkeztem és elvittek a azállodába* /perfective prefix-arrived-1st person singular and perfective prefix-take-3rd person plural past the hotel-in-accusative/. Instead of using the right voice Hungarian learners of English will tend to translate the utterance literally and by doing so they will preserve the active voice and the use of the 3rd person plural form of the verb, resulting in something like *I arrived and they took me to the hotel.* According to Kepecs (1986), this is an instance of the underuse of the passive "stemming from the hiatus in the knowledge of the target language" (1986: 58).

Prediction Three: Another significant difference concern ditransitive verbs in the two languages which leads to learning difficulty. Hungarian learners of English will tend to encounter significant problems by employing IO topicalisation, preferring an active structure instead. In Hungarian it is very rarely that all three participants of the action (DO, IO, by-agent) are explicit, mostly because the definite conjugation of the verb makes the DO superfluous. Moreover, the omission of the IO is possible with those verbs that require the accusative for the IO like *ask, inform, tell,* etc. For example:

(3)   I was asked to do it

is translated to Hungarian as *Megkértek, hogy csináljam meg* /prefix-ask-3rd person plural past me that do-imperative 1st person singular prefix/ which literally means *They asked (me) to do it*. Hungarian learners of English, Kepecs (1986) argues, are not aware of the possibility of IO topicalisation to an adequate degree and, consequently, this negative interference phenomenon becomes the source of the underuse of the passive with ditransitive verbs. (Kepecs, 1986)

5.5.2. Equivalents of the Present Perfect

In the next part I will analyse the Hungarian equivalents of the English Perfect and start the analysis with some recapitulatory thoughts on the basic peculiarities of the Hungarian tense system. For most foreign language learners this part of grammar is the most difficult one to acquire but, for which the reason might be the striking difference between the structures of the two languages under discussion: English grammar differentiates between time and tense whereas Hungarian grammar does not. However, there are some exceptions where, for example, a present tense verb expresses future time as in *Majd megcsinálom* /later perfective prefix-do-1st person present singular/ meaning *I will do it later.* On the whole we can say that because of the simplicity of the Hungarian verbal system adverbials play an important role in expressing time. There are twelve tenses in English and only two in Hungarian, namely past and "non-past" (Papp, 1986: 99). The Past is used if the speaker refers to past events viewed from the point of view of the speech event for both single happening or repeated past events, the Non-Past is used "to express timeless reference or generally valid or habitually repeated events" (Papp, 1986: 124). This single past tense corresponds to all English past tense verbal forms, for example: *mentem* /go-1st person singular past/ corresponds to *I went, I have gone, I have been going, I was going, I had gone* and *I had been going.* The verbal predicate in Hungarian expresses i) verbal character, ii) time, iii) mood, as well as iv) the subject of the verb and v) whether the verb has a definite object complement or not.

Generally speaking we can say that the underuse of a certain tense always yields the result of overusing another tense. Wherever the Hungarian learner fails to use the correct English tense he or she chooses another from the multitude of alternatives as opposed to the common belief that following the rules of their mother tongue Hungarian foreign language learners will only use Present Simple, Past Simple and Simple Future. Based on Papp (1986), I will elaborate on the Hungarian equivalents of the English Present Perfect and show why a clear understanding of its meaning is so problematic for Hungarians. Papp begins his discussion with the much suggestive statement that "The proper use of the English verbal forms has long been a mystery to Hungarian learners of English"

(1986: 88) which prepares us for envisaging great difficulties in this part of English grammar.

English Present Perfect and Hungarian Present

The verbal meaning that these two tenses express and their relationship is defined by Papp (1986: 128) in the following way:

> The English Present Perfect corresponds to Present in Hungarian if the Perfect refers to an action/state which began in the past and is still going on at the moment of speaking, that is, if the action/state is not an accomplished fact at the point now.

The example below illustrates this claim:

(4)   He has lived in Budapest since 1990.

1990 óta Budapesten él /1990 since Budapest-locative live-ø-ø/.

For the discussion, let us compare the above sentence with the following example, which demonstrates the elementary usage of the Present Tense:

(5)   He lives in Budapest.

Budapesten él /Budapest-locative live-ø-ø/.

As we can see the Hungarian equivalents of the above English sentences are identical, the difference between them cannot be expressed by the verb. The Hungarian Present is only concerned with the fact that the action/state is still continuing at the moment of speaking and disregards the fact that it began in the past which explains why Hungarian learners of English use the Present tense in such contexts. This necessarily implies the underuse of the Present Perfect in the TL speech and writing of Hungarian English learners.

English Present Perfect and Hungarian Non-Present

Papp (1986: 137) describes the correspondence between these two tenses as follows:

> The English Present Prefect corresponds to Non-Present in Hungarian if it indicates the occurrence of an action or existence of a state in or for a period of time extending from some time in the past till the moment of speaking provided the state does not exists –the action does not continue- at the moment of speaking.

The example below illustrates this:

(6)   He has lived in Budapest for twenty years. (Now, he may be living elsewhere)

Húsz évig élt Budapesten /Twenty years lived-3rd person singular Budapest-locative/.

Another difficulty arises here where the English Present Perfect tense has another Hungarian equivalent besides Present Simple: The meaning of the sentence implies the fact that the action does not continue at the moment of speaking and therefore the past tense of the verb is used in Hungarian. If learners disregard the hint that *for* or *since* respectively provide, an error can easily occur as the meaning of the sentence suggests the use of the Past Simple.

The English Present Perfect corresponds to Non-Present in Hungarian if it expresses an indefinite past action or state. For example:

(7)   He has already been to Budapest.

Már volt Budapesten /Already was-ø-ø Budapest-locative/.

This usage of the English Present Perfect is the probably most difficult one to acquire: we can predict that Hungarian learners of English will fail to use Present Perfect and overuse Past Simple in the places where according to the rules of English grammar Present Perfect has to be used. This most frequent type of error is probably due to the inappropriate application of the TL rules. Instead of sticking to the rules learners take the Hungarian verb form of the intended message as a basis and translate it into English. In Hungarian, as we have seen

earlier, there is only one tense to refer to actions/states before the moment of speaking therefore it is used to indicate actions/states both in the definite and indefinite past. The equivalents of the following two English sentences are identical in Hungarian: *Olvastam ezt a könyvet* /read-1st person singular-past this the book-accusative/:

(8)   I read this book yesterday.
(9)   I have read this book.

Papp (1986) concludes that further difficulty arises when there is no adverbial in the sentence, or, when there is one that can refer to both definite and indefinite past. In such cases the function of the verb should be examined in a wider context to find out what past it refers to.

Other frequent errors concern the English tenses with or without any existing relationship to Hungarian. One of them can be found in the use of the Present Continuous for Present Perfect in sentences like

(10)   I am learning English for three years.
         Három éve tanulok angolul /Three years since learn-1st person singular English/.

The right tense, Present Perfect Simple, expresses an action that still goes on or has stopped recently, but has an influence on the present. Because of the continuity of the action learners tend to forget that this tense is used to put an emphasis on the result of the action and not on the action itself. Although an evergreen example like *'I have cut my finger – it is bleeding'* is presented in almost every EFL classroom to demonstrate the difference, most students struggle with the use of this tense. Not so often as the Past Simple the Past Perfect is used instead of the Present Perfect, for which Papp (1986: 89) provides following example: **Cinema had been invented already, and they are very useful for us*. This error can not be traced back to mother tongue influence but to the inability of the learner to take apart the different English tenses corresponding to Hungarian past tense. Mixing up tenses is a frequent error among Hungarian learners of English.

5.5.3. Article usage in Hungarian

Next, following Stephanides (1974) we will have a look at the rules governing article usage in the two languages with special emphasis laid on the Hungarian rules. In order to identify similarities and differences in the use of articles I will give a definition of determiners and provide a brief description of the characteristics of the different articles.

One could assume that in a language where nouns have no gender, the rules concerning the use of articles is easy, compared to German or French, but as we will see this is not the case. Both in Hungarian and English there is a closed set of grammatical words which are used to express degrees of definiteness. These function words, or determiners, can modify the noun from different positions, but in this section I am only dealing with a small set of predeterminers: articles. In both languages there are three articles: definite, indefinite and zero.

The Hungarian definite article has two versions *a* and *az*, depending whether the word following the article begins with a consonant or a vowel we use *a* or *az* respectively. The definite article in both languages may occur before singular as well as plural forms. Generally speaking a definite article is indicating that the noun in question is already known by the speaker (or writer) and the hearer (or reader). Its name also refers to the fact that the being or object in question has already been defined or is clear to the speech participants from a situational basis.

Contrarily, the indefinite article introduces an unknown object or being, which has not been mentioned by the speaker in the discourse previously. In addition it indicates that the word it precedes denotes an individual member of the class, but does not specify which member. In English the indefinite article can also express genericness. It is used with singular countable nouns in both languages. The indefinite article in Hungarian is *egy*, which coincides with the numeral *one*; therefore obviously there is no plural indefinite article. In Hungarian the presence of the definite article is closely related to the selection of the conjugation of the verb. There are two sets of personal inflectional suffixes, one for the indefinite conjugation and one for the definite conjugation. When the noun in object position is preceded by the definite article the verb is used in the definite

conjugation. For learners of Hungarian as a target language this is probably one of the most difficult features of the Hungarian language. For example[13]:

(11)   Péter szeret egy csinos lányt /Peter love-zero morpheme for 3rd person singular indefinite conjugation one pretty girl-accusative/
Peter loves a pretty girl

compared to the sentence with a definite object

(12)   Péter *szereti a csinos lányt* /Péter love-zero morpheme for 3rd person singular definite conjugation, the pretty girl-accusative/
Peter loves the pretty girl

Zero article was generally neglected earlier, still it is important to know when and why we have to omit an article. The absence of the article, according to Stephanides (1974: 24), "does not always indicate that a noun (1) has lost its nominal function, […], (2) is not used as a phrase head, […], (3) is not determined, […]". In literature on modern linguistics the zero article has received growing attention and has become an important part in contrasting the use of Hungarian and English articles. Most nominal constructions in both languages contain one of these articles.

There are countless rules regulating the use of the article which are fairly different in Hungarian and English but I restrict my discussion only on those cases which are interesting from the point of language transfer. The occurrence of the instances of negative transfer is expected to be relatively high as in the case of articles we are talking about separate units: if learners have not acquired the rules concerning article usage completely they will fall back on their native language patterns and so they will make errors. A further confusion might result from the formal similarity between the Hungarian definite article and the English indefinite article.

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[13] The examples are taken from Stephanides 1974: 22.

6. Error Analysis

6. 1. What is Error Analysis?

At the beginning of the 1970s the credibility of CA was seriously damaged and it finally lost the influential role it once held in language pedagogy. As we have seen it has been attacked from numerous sides: the criticism concerned its theoretical foundations, its linguistic basis as well as its practical usefulness. Many of the predictions of TL learning difficulty formulated on the basis of CA turned out to be, to use James' (1998: 4) words, "either uninformative (…) or inaccurate". The fall of CAH was inevitable as its claims were too extreme. The paradigm that replaced CA was Error Analysis: a process that involved the independent and objective description of the learner's interlanguage and the target language itself and the comparison of the two in order to locate mismatches. James (1998) describes the alternative paradigm as follows:

> The novelty of EA, distinguishing it from CA, was that the mother tongue was not supposed to enter the picture. The claim was made that errors could be fully described in terms of the TL, without the need to refer to the L1 of the learners. (James 1998: 5)

The study of errors is carried out by means of Error Analysis (EA), which consists of a set of procedures for identifying, describing and explaining learners' errors. Error analysis, the approach aiming at the understanding the process of SLA, saw its heyday in the 1970s. Error analysts were interested in conducting empirical research into the nature and cause of deviation from the target language norms. Error analysis, according to James (1998), is "the study of linguistic ignorance, the investigation of what people do not know and how they attempt to cope with their ignorance" (1998: 62). EA can be summarized as a process of compiling a corpus containing deviations from the L2 norm; classifying the errors by type and looking for possible sources that explain their occurrence. In other words most linguists doing EA divide the process into three stages: recognition, classification and explanation. Although recognising an error is not difficult for most researchers it is still not straightforward in all situations what is regarded as an

error and what is acceptable. The criteria of acceptability might vary according to the situation in which the learner is engaged while performing in the foreign language and on variable factors like age, motivation, ability or type of activity.

6. 2.   The importance of errors

The most influential linguist in the field of EA is undoubtedly S. P. Corder, whose seminal article *The Significance of Learner Errors* (1967) introduced significant concepts into SLA research. Corder was the first who advocated the importance of errors in the foreign language learning process and argued for a shift of focus from the learning process to the learner. Ellis (1994) claimed that "it was not until the 1970s that EA became a recognised part of applied linguistics, a development that owed much to the work of Corder" (Ellis 1994: 48). One of his important contributions is the recognition in which ways learner's errors are important for students, teachers and researchers. Corder assigns besides the traditional - pedagogical - role new roles to EA which offer deeper insights in the process of language acquisition. Corder (1967) identified three ways in which errors are significant: Firstly, based on a systematic analysis errors can tell teachers how much the learner has already learned and what it is that he or she has to acquire in order to reach proficiency in the target language. Secondly, errors are significant for researchers as they provide evidence about the process of language learning and offer insights into the diversity of procedures and strategies learners employ in their discovery of the language. Finally, errors are also important for language learners as Corder (1967) argues, making errors can be regarded as a device the learner uses in order to learn. By making errors learners test their hypotheses about the nature or the target language.

6. 3.   Attitude towards errors

Before 1960s the behaviouristic view of language learning prevailed, learner errors were regarded as "regrettable by-products of L2 learning" (Van Els et al. 1984: 49) and were not given much attention. In the eyes of structuralist linguists,

learning was regarded as changing habits. For the adherents of this school, an error was a failure to respond automatically to a stimulus. In their view, as we have seen in Section 4.3, the occurrence of errors was expected when new habits had to be acquired or when the L1 and L2 features displayed differences. They also claimed that problems would arise when the learner failed to respond with the correct response to a particular stimulus. The only concern about errors related to the efforts of their avoidance and correction respectively. From the behaviourist perspective an error equalled wrong response to the stimulus therefore it had to be corrected immediately so that its reinforcement could follow.

As behaviourism was severely challenged it gave way to cognitive psychology which brought about a shift of thinking in SLA research and pedagogy: the attitude towards errors underwent a considerable change. The acceptance of cognitive psychology as an explanation of language acquisition had immediate implications on the treatment of errors. While learning the target language - in the post-structuralist view - the learner makes assumptions about the structure of the language. On the basis of these assumptions he forms hypotheses about the structure of the language and tests them on the language production of native speakers. Wherever the learner formed an incorrect hypothesis an error would appear. The analysis of learner language allows teachers and researchers to collect information about the learning process and the development of the learner's knowledge. The incorrect hypotheses about the target language also pinpoint the areas that have to be revised and elaborated. Errors, their types and causes were paid growing attention which led to a flourishing of research in the 1970s and 1980s. (Van Els et al. 1984)

6. 4. Treatment of errors

A comprehensive overview on the topic of error correction and error treatment in general is given by Krumm (1990). He proposes a positive attitude towards errors in the classroom and also in research, emphasising how important it is that learners are not discouraged to speak and to practice. Errors provide us with

indispensable information about what goes on in the learner's mind, about the strength and weaknesses in the learning process. The primary concern, of course, is the learner and his development, therefore we have to make the learners understand how important it is to identify and correct errors. Students have to change their view from regarding errors - using Krumm's word - as "Leistungsversagen" (meaning failure of achievement, 1990: 99) and see them as necessary and encourage them to seek their correction through self-monitoring and/or through the teacher. If learners regard errors as a necessary step towards full mastery of a language they will be more motivated and less self-critical. It is important to note that errors are not only indicators of the learner's level of proficiency but also a tool for teachers to get feedback from the development in the learning process. Errors determine the areas of grammar on which teachers have to put special emphasis by explanation and practice. By concerning the fact that there is still no consensus about the most efficient method of language teaching it becomes obvious how important it is to gain as much insight as possible not only from designed research situations but also from the everyday classroom situation. In spite of the fact that teachers mainly focus on errors in the language production of their learners, which leads to negative connotations in the pupils' minds, error correction must be seen as a process which has a positive influence on language learning.

Another interesting point in error treatment is the question of comprehensibility and accuracy: language learners are encouraged to concentrate primarily on the meaning of the message and not on the grammatical accuracy of their foreign language production. Communication oriented teaching, which continues to be popular in Europe, emphasises that the aim of language teaching is the establishment of communicative competence and claims that focus should be shifted from form to meaning in the foreign language classroom. This consideration creates a link to an interesting observation of Norrish (1983): in order to avoid appearing as a fool for the teacher and the classmates students tailor their intended message to the available set of tools they have at their disposal to express themselves in the target language. In case of most language learners the fear of making mistakes is so big that they either do not say anything or if they do the correctness of the message becomes more important than the

actual content the learner wanted to communicate. Norrish (1983: 2) states it very plainly:

> The learner is not so much concerned with attempting to express what he would like to say, […], as rather with saying what he thinks he can without making mistakes. The actual substance of the message is relegated to second place while the learner concentrates on the 'correct' form of what he is trying to say.

Such an attitude must be avoided; students must be encouraged to experiment and to look for alternative ways of expressing their ideas.

6. 5.   Contrastive Analysis and Error Analysis

From the historical point of view, as I have already stated earlier, EA can be regarded as the descendant of CA. The naïve assumption that errors will only occur at the points of divergence between the languages was soon proven wrong after the claims were tested against empirical data. EA succeeded in supplanting CA because the latter was not a research tool for investigating how learners acquire a foreign language but a means of analysing language with a double purpose: on the one hand, it provided an explanation for why learners make errors and, on the other hand, a tool for identifying those structural areas of the target language that were believed to be problematic for the foreign language learner in learning the target language. Whereas CA looked at only the learner's native language and the target language, EA provided a methodology for investigating learner language. For this reason EA constitutes an appropriate starting point for the study of learner language and L2 acquisition. EA was not a new development; the analysis of learner errors has long been a part of language pedagogy. French (1949 in Ellis 1994), for example, provides a comprehensive account of common learner errors.[14] Such traditional analyses lacked both a rigorous methodology and a theoretical framework for explaining the role played by errors in the process of

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[14] For more information see, for example, French 1949 or Lee 1957.

L2 acquisition. It was not until the 1970s that EA became a recognised part of applied linguistics. (Ellis 1994)

Sridhar (1981) summarises the arguments why EA could succeed in taking over the place of CA in SLA research: error analysis did not exclusively deal with interlingual transfer thereby it made allowance to other possible error sources like overgeneralization, faulty teaching and learning strategies as well. EA was a more adequate pedagogical tool as it did not suffer from the inherent limitations of CA, which dwelt mostly on theoretical problems. Contrarily, EA was more suitable for pedagogical purposes as it provided data on actual, attested problems. EA was more directly connected with language usage whereas CA concerned primarily the study of competence. Finally, by the end of 1970s the linguistic scene (among others Banathy and Madarasz 1969; Richards 1971b; Schachter 1974) agreed upon an auxiliary relationship between CA and EA, in which EA has its main importance in testing the predictions of CA and in supplementing its results. Madarasz (1968 in Nemser 1972) claims that neither contrastive analysis nor error analysis alone can serve the purposes of foreign language pedagogy: the former approach is needed to lend structure to the investigation of the learning problems identified by the latter approach.

> While error analysis seems to be a more efficient tool for predicting the learning difficulties accurately and the only means of predicting the degree of difficulty, contrastive linguistic analysis is indispensable in the process of evaluating the predicted difficulties. Thus, these two approaches supplement each other in such a way that employment of both is required in the process of writing a pedagogical grammar. (Madarasz 1968: 234 quoted in Nemser 1972: 40)

The claim of assigning EA a supplementary role is also supported by other linguists, for example Fisiak (1981: 7):

> Psychological and pedagogical, as well as other extralinguistic factors contribute to the formation of errors; therefore error analysis as part of applied linguistics cannot replace contrastive studies but only supplement them. Contrastive studies predict errors, error analysis verifies contrastive predictions, *a* explaining deviations from the predictions.

6. 6.   Classification of errors

6.6.1.   *The error/mistake dichotomy and supplementary categories*

During the second half of the 1970s which was the heyday of EA, numerous attempts were made at classifying second language errors, i.e. assigning them to various linguistic systems or categorising them according to their assumed causes. Errors can be classified in numerous ways, just to mention a few according to linguistic levels (grammar or pronunciation), to form (omission or insertion) or according to types (competence or performance errors), etc. The best known publications on the causes of errors can be found in readers edited by Nickel (1972a), Oller and Richards (1973), Svartvik (1973), Richards (1974) and Schumann and Stenson (1975) (in Van Els et al. 1984: 52). Before we open a discussion on error analysis, it is indispensable to clarify some basic terms and categorise errors.

A crucial distinction, which was put forward by Pit Corder (1967a)**,** has to be made between systematic and non-systematic errors. Corder originally drew a distinction between three types of deviations from the target language form: he labelled the grammatically incorrect form *error*, the socially inappropriate form *mistake* and called the slip of the tongue *lapse*. A lapse is a wrong usage of a certain form, as Norrish (1983) lays down, it bears little relation to whether the given form has or has not yet been acquired or whether it is in the process of being learnt. A lapse can happen to anyone at any time, which is probably the reason why this triple distinction did not become common. The generally accepted classification consists of the terms error and mistake.

A *mistake* is an "inconsistent deviation" (Norrish 1983: 8) from a linguistic item of both, an L1 and an L2. Based on the fact that mistakes are performance errors Corder (1967a) claims that they are of no significance to the process of language learning. Making mistakes frequently happens due to memory lapses, tiredness, and stress or in situations when the speaker suffers from strong emotions like indecision. Corder (1967a) defines mistakes as "adventitious artefacts of linguistic performance and [which] do not reflect a defect in our knowledge of our

own language" (1967: 24). James (1998: 78) describes a mistake as being an instance of language that is "either intentionally or unintentionally deviant and self-corrigible". Speakers are normally immediately aware of these errors and are able to correct them without any help. What has been said is true not only for L2 speakers of a target language but also for speakers of their first language. It is important to emphasize that the rule is known by the speaker but for some reason he or she fails to utilize it correctly. Therefore mistakes in the learning process are of no interest for language teachers and educational researchers.

Unlike mistakes, *errors* indicate "faulty knowledge of the grammar of the L2" (Van Els et al. 1984: 172). An error is a grammatically incorrect form which violates the rules of the given language and therefore signals that the speaker has not learned the rule of the target language yet. Errors, which reflect deficiencies in the learner's knowledge of the target language, can only be found in the language usage of non-native speakers (Van Els et al. 1984). Errors provide evidence of the state of the learner's interlanguage and reflect the learner's interlanguage competence. Mistakes are characteristically unsystematic, i.e. they cannot be classified and do not follow any rule or, while errors of competence are systematic: they reveal the learner's underlying knowledge of the language, what Corder as called "his transitional competence" (1967: 25).

Besides the distinction presented above other classifications were also set up by other linguists. Edge (1989 in James 1998), for example, divided deviances which he puts under the cover term *mistakes* into three types: slips, errors and attempts. *Slips* are caused by carelessness or processing problems, which could be self-corrected by the learners. *Errors* indicate a lack in the student's knowledge; therefore they cannot be self-corrected even if they are pointed out by the teacher. Edge labels those strings of words *attempts* that are almost incomprehensible and lead to the breakdown of communication. Hammerly (1991 in James 1998) identifies two main categories of deviance: distortions and faults. *Distortions*, Hammerly believes, are unavoidable and necessary and should be ignored by the teacher. Distortions reflect whether or not a TL form has or has not been taught. *Faults*, on the contrary, occur with known TL items during the learner's attempt to express his ideas freely with foreign language structures that he has not learned yet. A typical example of faults is overextension, either of the side of the learner

or of the teacher. A further classification of deviance is offered by James (1998) who differentiates among four types of performance failures: slips (or alternatively lapses), mistakes, errors and solecisms. James' terminology of *slips*, *mistakes* and *errors* corresponds to that of Corder and will therefore not be described again. James defines the fourth category, *solecisms*, as follows: "Solecisms are breaches of the rules of correctness as laid down by purists and usually taught in schools" (1998: 83). James argues that foreign language learners - "due to heavy exposure to correctness-based instruction" (1998: 84) - tend to offend less against purism than native speakers do whose intuitions often conflict with solecisms. Such breaches of the rules are, for example, split infinitives or dangling participles. (James 1998)

The crucial question is how to decide whether a particular deviation from the norm is an error or a mistake. One way is to determine whether the learner alternates between the erroneous form and the correct form. If so we can assume that the erroneous forms are mistakes rather than errors as the use of the correct forms suggests that the learner has already mastered the rules of the target language but he is not yet capable of applying them with the same degree of accuracy as a native speaker. If the learner produces a deviant form consistently we can assume that there is a clear gap in the learner's L2 knowledge which is the cause of making errors. However, it would require the learner to use the same lexical item at least once correctly and once incorrectly in the same act of speech or written performance. Otherwise it is almost impossible to detect whether the learner in fact mastered the correct form and the limitations concerning its use. A more reliable solution to this problem could be offered by self-monitoring and self-correction of the students. If the student is able to correct the erroneous utterance it means that he is aware of the rules but he failed to apply them correctly. On the whole, in many of the cases, one cannot tell for sure whether a student has not yet fully acquired a certain linguistic item or whether the deviant construction is just due to lack of concentration. In some context he/she might use a linguistic item appropriately while in another context he/she might fail to use this particular structure (Ellis 1997: 17):

Errors reflects gaps in a learner's knowledge; they occur because the learner does not know what is correct. Mistakes reflect occasional lapses in performance; they occur because, in particular instance, the learner is unable to perform what he or she knows.

6.6.2. Interlingual versus intralingual errors

Within an EA framework the basic distinction is made between the two main error types: interlingual and intralingual. First I will introduce this basic categorization and than have a closer look at the classifications put forward by Richards (1971) and by Dulay and Burt (1974b).

Interlingual errors are native language dependent; the learning problem is caused by the structure of the L1 and can be tracked back to linguistic difference between the source and the target language. Interlingual errors, according to Van Els et al. (1984: 51), "are traditionally interpreted as interference problems" and are those deviations that result from transfer from the native language. As discussed in Section 4.4., the Contrastive Analysis Hypothesis accounts for all errors in this way. *Intralingual errors*, on the contrary, only concern the target language structure: the learning problem relates to the target language - notably an overgeneralization of the TL rules - and manifests as universal phenomena. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 65) conclude that "intralingual errors reflect the operation of learning strategies that are universal, i.e. evident in all learners irrespective of their L1". The definition provided by Gass and Selinker (2008) is similar to the former one, in their view "intralingual errors as those that are due to the language being learned, independent of the NL [native language]" (2008: 103). They conclude that one would expect speakers of a wide variety of first languages to produce similar intralingual errors. Consequently, intralingual errors are not predictable on the basis of CA. According to the cognitivist view intralingual errors are a consequence of the development of the interlanguage.

Richards (1971) suggested the distinction between interlanguage errors, intralingual and developmental errors on the basis of his belief that interference errors occur as a result of the use of elements from one language while speaking

another. Intralingual and developmental errors are regardless of the learner's language background. Richards (1971: 173) described them as follows:

> Rather than reflecting the learner's inability to separate two languages, intralingual and developmental errors reflect the learner's competence at a particular stage, and illustrate some of the general characteristics of language acquisition.

Richards (1971) is one of the first who attempts at describing L2 learning problems on a non-contrastive basis. He differentiated between intralingual and developmental errors and provided the following descriptions of the two kinds of errors: "Intralingual errors are those which reflect the general characteristics of rule learning, such as faulty generalization, incomplete application of rules and failure to learn conditions under which rules apply" (1971: 174). Developmental errors "illustrate the learner attempting to build up hypotheses about the English language from his limited experience of it in the classroom or textbook" (1971: 174). In his 1971 article he claimed that these errors are typical of systematic errors in using English as an L2 and the origin of these errors is found within the structure of English itself. Using data collected by others, Richards studied L2 errors of students from various L1 backgrounds and noted error types which were present in the learner language of most students. On the basis of these error types he set up subcategories of common errors which he labelled (i) overgeneralization, (ii) ignorance of rule restriction, (iii) incomplete application of rules and (iv) false concepts hypothesized.

(i) *Overgeneralization* involves the creation of a grammatically incorrect structure by merging two grammatically correct structures. By Richards' definition it "covers instances where the learner creates a deviant structure on the basis of his experience of other structures of the target language" (1971: 174). Examples of overgeneralization are *he can sings* (which can be seen as the combination of the regular structures *he can sing* and *he sings*) or *yesterday I go to the university*. The latter example illustrates an instance of overgeneralization in association with 'redundancy reduction' (Richards 1971): the failure of applying the *-ed* marker. It is left out because it does not carry significant contrast for the learner - past tense is more obviously indicated, namely lexically.

(ii) *Ignorance of rule restrictions*, according to Richards definition, "is failure to observe the restrictions of existing structures, that is, the application of rules to contexts where they do not apply" (1971: 175). This type of error is closely related to the generalization of deviant structures and is a type of transfer as the learner is making use of previously acquired rules. Some rule restriction errors occur because the learner draws analogy between two situations and by ignoring the limitations he might violate a structure and commits an error. Ignorance of rule restriction is a major cause of errors in the use of prepositions: the learner encounters a particular type of preposition with one verb and is attempted to use it by analogy with similar verbs. Some examples are *he said to me* leads to **he asked to me* or *go with him* produces **follow with him*. However, these errors could also be analysed as overgeneralization of target language rules.

(iii) *Incomplete application of rules* labels "the occurrences of structures whose deviancy represents the degree of development of the rules required to produce acceptable utterances" (1971: 177). One systematic difficulty that can be observed among L2 learners is the use of questions. L2 learners can succeed in communication without having mastered the rules of question formation which is presumably the reason why they are not motivated in putting efforts in the production of grammatically correct sentences.

(iv) Errors belonging to the category *False concepts hypothesized* are "developmental errors which derive from faulty comprehension of distinctions in the target language" (1971: 178). Typical examples concern tense and aspect: the form *was* may be interpreted as a marker of the past tense (**one day it was happened*) or may be understood by L2 learners as a marker of present tense, resulting in utterances like **He is speaks French*. Such errors, Richards concludes, might be due to faulty rule learning or poor gradation of teaching items.

The other famous categorisation of L2 errors is linked to the names of Heidi C. Dulay and Marina K. Burt. Dulay and Burt (1974) studied the erroneous English utterances of Spanish speaking children and drew a distinction among four categories: (i) interference errors, (ii) developmental errors, (iii) ambiguous errors and (iv) unique errors. The categorisation framework will be presented by using Dulay and Burt's own terms and definitions:

(i) *Interference-like Goofs* (1974: 115) are those errors that reflect native language structure, and are not found in L1 acquisition data of the TL. Dulay and Burt's example is **hers pajamas,* the expression, which was produced by a Spanish child, reflects Spanish culture, and was not produced by the other children.

(ii) *L1 Developmental Goofs* (1974: 115) are those errors that do not reflect native language structure, but are found in L1 acquisition data of the TL. The erroneous structure **He took her teeths off* produced by a Spanish child does not reflect mother tongue influence but an overgeneralisation typically produced by children acquiring English as their L1.

(iii) *Ambigous Goofs* (1974: 115) are those errors that can be categorized as either Interference-like Goofs or L1 Developmental Goofs. The next example might belong to either of the first categories: **Terina not can go* is a typical example that reflects Spanish L1 structure but also a typical error American children make by learning English as their native language.

(iv) *Unique Goofs* (1974: 115) are those errors that do not reflect L1 structure, and are also not found in L1 acquisition data of the TL. The error **Her name is Victor* produced by a Spanish child neither reflects influence of the Spanish structure nor is it found in the language acquisition data of monolingual children of English.

Today most researchers make a straight-forward distinction between errors that concern the use of only one language and those that of two languages and consequently apply the categories 'intralingual errors' and 'transfer errors'. Just to mention a few names, Ellis (1990), James (1998) and Gass and Selinker (2008) - the latter has been quoted in Section 6.6.2.

6.6.3.   *Global and local errors*

Burt and Kiparsky (1972) put forward a distinction of errors relating comprehensibility of the sentence containing the error. They suggested two types of errors, global and local, depending on their impact: errors that affect the interpretation of the whole sentence are called *global errors*, while errors that affect only a part of the sentence, a clause or a phrase, are called *local errors*.

Global mistakes are those that violate the overall structure of a sentence, they typically confuse the relationship among clauses, such as the use of connectors, distinctions between coordinate and relative clause constructions. Local errors concern a clause of a sentence and they cause trouble in a particular constituent, for example errors in agreement, articles, noun phrase formations and so on. To illustrate the process of error categorisation I would like to quote the example of Burt and Kiparsky (1972: 6): *Since the harvest was good, was rain a lot last year. There are three 'goofs' in this sentence: i) since is attached to the wrong clause, ii) subject it is missing and iii) the form of the verb rain is wrong. The misplacing of the conjunction is a global error, as it affects both clauses and causes therefore difficulty in the comprehensibility of the sentence. This is the error that has to be corrected first, because the right placement of the conjunction adds the most to the meaning of the sentence as a whole. After correction we arrive at The harvest was good since it was rain last year, which is a more comprehensible sentence. In the next step, after the elimination of the global errors, the minor goofs - local errors - should be corrected.

This classification is based on the concept of 'hierarchy of errors'; Burt and Kiparsky (1972) view errors on a hierarchy claiming that global errors are more important because they constitute a more serious offence against the grammaticality of a sentence than local ones. They claim that global errors should be corrected prior to other errors in the L2 classroom because they significantly impair communication. According to their view "The worst mistakes are those that interfere most with comprehension and communication, while unimportant mistakes do not greatly interfere with communication" (1972: 5). To illustrate the answer to the question what should be corrected first, let us consider the example of Burt and Kiparsky (1972: 5): *English language use much people. This sentence contains three errors: i) the definite article is missing before English language, ii) the much/many distinction is not observed and iii) word order in the whole sentence is wrong. From the above discussion it is clear that word order outweighs correct noun phrase formation and therefore it has to be corrected first. As a result we get Much people use English language, a sentence that is comprehensible, gets the message across without changing the student's original

sentence drastically (compared to a passive construction). Further steps involve the correction of *much* and the insertion of the article.

The error/mistake distinction is not applicable to the present research for two reasons: first, I did not have the possibility to ask the informants to self-correct their utterances because the collected data has not been written for the purposes of this study and second, the students could have corrected their mistakes if they wanted to, and, what is more important, if they would have been able to. Based on the second argument I decided to treat all grammatically incorrect forms that appear in the corpus as they were errors. The verification of this decision might be found in the fact that all students had the opportunity to go through their papers for errors before handing it to the teacher. However, when drawing conclusions from the results we have to keep in mind that several of the errors are probably mistakes.

6. 7.   Conducting an Error Analysis

Based on the discussion of Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 56-71) I will describe the procedure of conducting an error analysis and provide an overview of the steps Corder (1974) suggests for EA research (compare Nickel 1973: 11-15).

The very first step must be the clear definition of the notion 'error' followed by the decision about the criteria what counts for an error: grammaticality or acceptability? If grammaticality serves as a criterion by defining ill-formed items, an error can be defined as a "breach of the rule of the code" (Corder 1971 quoted in Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 56). If the criterion is acceptability for defining errors the formulation of an adequate definition is much more problematic: an utterance might be erroneous in one situation and totally acceptable in another. Consequently, judgements about the acceptability of an utterance are mostly stylistic rather than grammatical, and, therefore, Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) argue, also likely to be less reliable. In the error analysis I am going to carry out in the next chapter grammaticality will serve as a criterion for identification of

errors. Lennon's definition of error (1991: 182 quoted in Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 56) will provide the basis for performing the error analysis:

> A linguistic form or combination of forms, which in the same context and under similar conditions of production, would, in all likelihood, not be produced by the speaker's native speaker counterparts.

Following Corder (1974), conducting an EA should consist of the following five steps: 1) collecting a sample of LL, 2) identification of errors, 3) description of errors, 4) explanation of errors and 5) error evaluation.

Step 1: Collecting a sample of learner language

If we are going to conduct research on learners' errors we have to formulate criteria which define the corpus. We have to decide what samples of learner language we want to use and how we will collect the samples. Without precise formulation of the parameters like medium, proficiency level or setting, results are difficult to interpret and almost impossible to replicate. Only well-defined samples, Ellis (1994) points out, allow making clear statements regarding what kind of errors learners produce and under what conditions they occur. Thus the nature of the sample, the learner and also the production factors may influence the nature and distribution of the errors observed. Researchers might collect a narrowly specified sample, mostly preferred by analyses where the researcher wants to examine a certain grammatical feature of the language or a certain kind of language production, or a broad sample to observe errors more generally. In this case, the sample reflects different learners, different types of language and different production conditions. For my analysis I decided to investigate learners' errors in general and collected therefore a broad sample.

Step 2: Identification of errors

After we have collected a sample we have to identify the errors. Here again clearly defined guidelines must be stated in order to decide what constitutes an error and to establish a procedure for recognizing them. According to the

definition stated above, researchers have to compare the utterances produced by the learners with the utterances native speakers would produce in the same context. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) define the procedure of error identification in three steps: 1) The analyst has to reconstruct the sample in a way that it would have been produced by the learner's native speaker counterpart. It is not always an easy task as not knowing the learner's intended message an "authoritative reconstruction" (Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 59) is not always possible. Still, the analyst has to try to identify the construction the learner attempted to use and take it as a basis for investigation. 2) After a comparison of the two variants, the utterances produced by the learner with that of a native speaker, the analyst has to eliminate those sentences that are identical, i.e. well-formed. The remaining utterances are ill-formed and form the subject of investigation. 3) Finally the analyst has to identify which parts of each learner utterance differs from the reconstructed version.

Step 3: Description of errors

The third stage of the analysis constitutes of the description of errors, it can be regarded as a reconstruction of the learner's utterances with the correct target language equivalents. As it has been previously stated, the researchers' task is the comparison of the learner's actual language production with the hypothetical linguistic data that the foreign language learner's native speaker counterpart would have produced in the same situation. The comparison concerns the surface structure properties of the learners' utterances. The description of errors involves specifying how the erroneous utterances differ from the well-formed utterances. For that purpose besides developing a set of descriptive categories for coding the errors that have been identified in the sample the analyst also has to record the frequency of the errors in each category. For the development of descriptive categories, following James (1998), two criteria can be established: the taxonomy must be on the one hand 'well-developed' and 'elaborated' and on the other hand simple and self-explanatory. Two kinds of taxonomy have been used: 1) *linguistic taxonomy* and 2) *surface structure taxonomy*.

A linguistic taxonomy is usually based on categories drawn from a descriptive grammar of the target language and includes general categories of the grammar relating to basic sentence structure, the verb phrase, the noun phrase, adjuncts or sentence connection. Each of the categories can be subdivided into more delicate categories according to the needs of the inquiry. The categories chosen for the analysis has to be data driven and the errors should be classified in term of the target language categories that have been violated by the learner. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 61) state the advantage of using linguistic taxonomies in an analysis by claiming that "it [a descriptive taxonomy] utilises well-established grammatical categories and thereby maximizes the practical applications (for example, to teaching)." The disadvantage of such taxonomy (for example, Quirk et al.'s (1985) grammar of English) is that it fails to acknowledge that interlanguages are unique grammars in their own right.[15]

Surface structure taxonomy (Dulay, Burt, and Krashen 1982: 150) is based on the ways how language learners modify the surface structures of the target forms in their erroneous utterances. Dulay, Burt and Krashen suggest four principal ways of alteration: i) omission, ii) addition, iii) misformation and iv) misordering.

i) Errors which arouse because of the absence of an element that would appear in a well-formed utterance belong to the first group. A very common error is, for example, the omission of the copula be.

ii) Utterances where a form is present that would not appear in a well-formed utterance are classified under the group of addition. This group is subdivided into three error categories: a) Regularization, b) Double-marking and c) simple additions.

iii) Misformation means the use of the wrong form of the morpheme or structure and is subdivided into a) Regularization, b) Archi-forms and c) Alternating forms.

iv) Misordering is the category of errors where the learner failed to place a morpheme or a group of morphemes in an utterance correctly.

A further category is added by James (1998) to this taxonomy: *Blends* are errors that reflect the learner's uncertainty as to which of two forms are required and

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[15] On comparative fallacy, see Bley-Vroman 1983. *The comparative fallacy in interlanguage studies.*

result often in over-inclusion, i.e. using both of the alternative forms. He describes the process of blending by explaining the definition provided by Dechert and Lennon (1989 in James 1998: 111):

> This means that the speaker or writer has activated two structures that are semantically related, either of which could serve his present purpose. But they fail to make a clear choice, and instead combine a part of each to produce a structure with characteristics of both.

Step 4: Explanation of errors

The fourth step is the most important stage for SLA research. As Ellis (1994) points out, an explanation of errors involves an attempt to establish the processes responsible for L2 acquisition. Explanation is concerned with determining the source of the error, in order to account for why it was made. Therefore the main concern of the analyst is the psycholinguistic sources of error; investigating "those [sources] relating to the processing mechanisms involved in L2 use and to the nature of the L2 knowledge system" (Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 62).

One obvious reason why learners make errors is that they experience difficulty in accessing their L2 knowledge while trying to communicate. Forms that have not yet been automatized require controlled processing, which - if constantly employed - requires a vivid information-processing activity from the learner. As an alternative to this procedure, while trying to express their ideas learners substitute these forms by non-standard forms that have already been acquired and are automatized. To explain errors, Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005) conclude, we need to ask what processes learners activate when they do not know the target-language form. In such situations one of the two major processes are usually applied: one strategy is to transfer or borrow elements from the mother tongue into the target language, the other is to employ universal learning strategies to fill the gap in the learner's knowledge and overcome the difficulties in communication. The negative outcomes of transfer and borrowing are interlingual errors, those of the application of learning strategies are called intralingual errors. Interlingual errors are caused by the interference of two (or

more) languages whereas intralingual errors result as a consequence of the development of the learner's interlanguage system irrespective of the learner's L1. Such a classification of errors is a rather easy task in comparison to the identification of the sources of L2 errors. There are many factors that contribute to the production of deviant forms and consequently there are many possible sources to which an error can be traced back. As many errors are likely to be explicable to multiple sources, analysts need to be careful with the complex task of identifying the source of a particular error. Taking these findings into consideration, Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 66) point out that "An error itself can only provide a hint of its source with the result that many errors are ambiguous".

Step 5: Error evaluation

The final stage in an EA is the evaluation of errors which can also be regarded as a procedure for applying the results of an EA. It is during this stage when the gravity of the errors is determined and decided how much attention a particular error should receive in the course of instruction. Ellis and Barkhuizen (2005: 67) list four steps which a planning for an error evaluation study involves: 1) Selection of errors to be evaluated, 2) Determination of the criteria on which the errors are to be judged, 3) Preparation of the error evaluation instrument and 4) Selection of the judges. Errors might be presented in complete sentences or in a continuous text and are most commonly characterized by the criterion of seriousness. The instrument for the evaluation of errors consists of a set of instructions, the erroneous sentences or text, and a method for evaluating them. Choosing more than one judge is advisable as "this increases the reliability and generalizability of the results" (Ellis and Barkhuizen 2005: 67). Explanation of errors is a far more difficult task than their recognition and description as it consists of hypothesising about the processes in the learner's mind which have caused the fault to occur. Van Els et al. (1984) claim that we will never be able to give more than plausible suggestions as explanations of the facts. In order to understand why the learner committed a certain error we have to be able to answer the question of how people learn languages.

II.   EMPIRICAL PART

7.   Aim of research

The intention of this paper is to identify, based on research done on the data and the context in which errors occur, a broad spectrum of difficulties in learning English as a foreign language by Hungarian secondary school students acquiring English as an L2. The error analysis I intend to carry out aims at identifying the areas of the English grammar that concern the major problems for learners of English as a target language with Hungarian as a mother tongue. A further aim is to draw conclusions from the observations concerning the different degrees of difficulty learners face in acquiring the various parts of English grammar. The ultimate goal of the analysis is the determination of the proportionality of transfer errors to all errors made by Hungarian English learners, with special attention paid to the two most problematic areas, i.e. verb and article usage.

In the first part of the paper, the theoretical framework for the research has been presented and now, in the empirical part, I will conduct an error analysis of the corpus. Through the extensive analysis of a large number of English compositions written by Hungarian secondary school children, I will investigate what general characteristics can be found in the interlanguage of these students. My aim was not providing merely a catalogue of error but to study the influence of the mother tongue on the L2 writing of Hungarian learners of English. From the findings, I seek to account for the linguistic origin of errors concerning language transfer.

8.   Hypotheses: Focus of the Analysis

I set up the categories for my investigation so that I can test the following seven hypotheses and based on the results I can answer the research questions about the proportionality of transfer errors within all errors in the compositions.

Hypothesis One

Hungarian learners of English encounter great difficulty with the use of the right English *Tense*. This hypothesis is based on the consideration about differing concepts about time and aspect in the two languages.

Hypothesis Two

Category *Article* is one of the most erroneous category; the major source of error is MT influence. Due to the complex rules governing article usage in English, I predict a great number of errors in this category.

Hypothesis Three

Hungarian learners of English are not expected to experience significant difficulty with the singular and plural forms of English *Nouns*.

Hypothesis Four

Pronouns probably constitute a major problem for Hungarian foreign language learners mostly because of the lack of gender distinction in Hungarian.

Hypothesis Five

Despite fundamental differences between English *Prepositions* and Hungarian postpositions, there is little interference to expect.

Hypothesis Six

Category *Word order* is not highly erroneous; according to my prediction, mother tongue influence plays a minor role.

Hypothesis Seven

L1 influence plays an important role in case of lexical errors, which is presumably the most frequent error type in category *Other*. Based on my own experience, language transfer often serves as a communication strategy if learners cannot express their ideas in the target language.

9.   Design and Implementation

I collected the data for the research at the Krúdy Gyula Secondary Grammar School in Győr, Hungary. Students at this school have a choice among several educational programmes; the school offers, amongst others, a Hungarian - English bilingual class, a specialized language class where the focus is placed on foreign language learning, a science class and different vocational classes. In order to grant the representativeness of the study I collected guided compositions written by students from all study programmes (not only specialized language classes) at all classes from 1 to 5, which means from students at the age between 14 and 19.[16] The diversity of the informants made it possible to gather a corpus from learners who have different language learning backgrounds and therefore different proficiency levels in English. The writing activities were accomplished between 2006 and 2008. The corpus consists of 184 pieces of EFL writings in 24 different topics. The diversity of the tasks and topics made it possible to get an overview of the L2 knowledge of Hungarian learners of English. Thus, I believe that to a considerable extent, the findings of the analysis should have a general validity for secondary school students learning English in Hungary as an L2.

The data corpus contains exclusively written material of different tasks: there are considerable differences not only in the methods of checking learners' progress but also in the circumstances learners performed the activities. The corpus contains in-class as well as out-of class writing activities, with or without the possibility to prepare for the task and to use a dictionary. In some of the assignments, students had to write a composition about a general theme, for example students had to tell about their childhood or their last holiday. Other activities were guided compositions to which learners received instructions concerning the content. These compositions required the learners to argue why "Fame is undesirable" or to express their thoughts about "Cruel Zoos" and "Ambition". Still other activities aimed at testing how prepared students come to class: they consisted of a re-telling of an article read in class the previous day, for example "Lost Years" or "A Night Out". Further tasks concerned letter writing:

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[16] The length of program in a regular Hungarian secondary school is 4 years; age level is from 14 to 18. The length of a bilingual educational program is 5 years; age level is from 14 to 19.

students were asked to write formal and informal letters about different topics, for example, they had to write a letter of complaint as homework and in class a letter of application for a job. Letters to a friend included different tasks, for example accepting an invitation, giving an account on one's stay at hospital or giving advice to a desperate teenager. Some letters to a friend and other free compositions aimed at testing students' abilities to writing coherently about a given topic ("Introduce your home town!" or "Tell an imaginary fairy tale!").

My analysis is carried out based on Corder's framework (1967b), which has been outlined in Section 6.7. This procedure of conducting an error analysis grants a structured and logical account and is commonly used in second language acquisition research. This methodology of analysing errors consists of three stages: recognition, description and explanation.

In this second part of the empirical section, I will examine and categorise errors in order to corroborate the hypotheses set up in Chapter 8. Before beginning with the analysis I would like to state that classifying errors proved to be a demanding task since a large proportion of errors may be attributed to more than one linguistic class, and what is more important in my case, it cannot be determined with certainty that a particular error was committed because the learner was influenced by the grammar of his mother tongue. The differentiation between errors of transfer and developmental errors, with which this paper is concerned, is a difficult task, since there are errors that can be ascribed to both types, inter- and intralingual. Many errors that resemble first language influence can also be explained in terms of developmental processes, i.e. it can be argued that they are developmentally determined. As I mentioned earlier, I identified the errors though comparison of the erroneous sentence with the reconstructed version and with its Hungarian translation and did my best to identify the most probable source of error. Besides I have to mention that there are also examples of deviant sentences found in the corpus that are difficult to attribute to either class of erroneous sentences, interlingual or intralingual.

Throughout my analysis, I focused on some subcategories of the English grammar, which I consider the most interesting for a contrastive error analysis: *Verb, Article, Noun, Pronoun*, *Preposition, Word order* and *Other*. In my opinion,

these categories reveal the most about the two language systems and about the difficulties learners of English with a Hungarian mother tongue face while acquiring English as a foreign language in an institutional setting. My analysis follows a linguistic taxonomy, i.e. it is based on categories drawn from a descriptive grammar of the target language. In accordance with Ellis' premise, errors are "classified in terms of the target language categories that have been violated rather than the linguistic categories used by the learner" (2005: 60). I have devised a schema in the form of a table for analysing my examples[17]: I set up the above-mentioned seven main categories and divided the categories *Verb* and *Article* into subcategories; these are, on the one hand, *Form*, *Tense*, *Aspect* and *Auxiliary/Copula* and, on the other hand, *Definite*, *Indefinite* and *Zero article*. Such a division allowed me to mark multiple errors within a single category. I set up these categories to be able to investigate the erroneous utterances thoroughly so that after having isolated and categorised them, I can make general statements about the frequency of their occurrence and the possible causes of errors.

I used the sign *X* for non-transfer errors and the sign *H* (the abbreviation stands for transfer from Hungarian) for errors that can be attributed to the learners' mother tongue. In its most general aim the present paper can be viewed as an attempt to explore the role of the mother tongue influence in committing errors by Hungarian learners of English. I have designed the following scheme for categorising the examples: I set up a table containing the list of the categories in the horizontal axis and the number of the example sentences in the vertical axis. Let us see an example: a sign *x* in the third column in the second raw indicates that there is a developmentally determined aspect error in the second sentences. A sign *H* in the seventh column in the fifth row signals an error concerning the use of the zero article in sentence seven. As opposed to the previous error, the sign *H* indicates that this error is a transfer error. The example sentences are listed separately in Appendix 2 (p. 151-162).[18] In the data analysis, I discussed the major findings concerning each category whereby I structured the analysis in the following way: firstly, I looked at those errors that are independent from the learner's mother tongue and tried to categorize them, secondly, I analyzed the

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[17] Some of the tables are listed in Appendix 3.
[18] There are 814 erroneous sentences in the corpus but only those are listed in Appendix 2 that serve as examples and are therefore discussed in the analysis in Chapter 10.

transfer errors and tried to find explanations why they were made. In the latter case the Hungarian translation of the correct English sentence is provided, which allows a transparent comparison. Both procedures are carried out with examples taken from the corpus to illustrate the points in question. At the end of the analysis, based on the findings, I made an effort to confirm my hypotheses (see Chapter 8).

10.   Data Analysis

10.1.   Errors within the Category Verb

Within the main category Verb I paid special attention to the subcategories Form, Tense, Aspect and Auxiliary and Copula respectively. I assumed that the error percentage in this category was so high that it would be worth looking at these grammatical units on theirs own. Splitting up the main category also allowed for making more specific statements about the problem areas. Consequently, these topics will be discussed separately in the following sections.

10.1.1. Form

Those errors are ranked under this category which show that the learner has acquired - to some extent - the basic rules of the verbal system of English, he knows which tense or construction is to be used but he is NOT ABLE TO PRODUCE THE CORRECT FORM, which is in most cases the right combination of an auxiliary and a main verb. These so-called 'form-errors' are not listed under the category Tense because if I had done so, the results would have been misleading: Tense errors indicate the learner's inability to decide which tense should be used and to use the right tense of the verb. Errors concerning the form of the verb are morphological errors or those that can not be classified into any existing category.

Sentences (5) and (314) present examples of deviant sentences which can be attributed to the failure of applying correct target language rules: the modal verb

have to is used to express objective obligation and requires a bare infinitive, whereas the main verb *try* must be followed by an infinitive. Although the learners in these examples put the verbs *use* and *find* in the past tense, it is clear from the main verb in the present tense that they aimed at making a sentence in present tense.

(5)   *I think you *have to used* other chemicals in my office…
(314)   *They *try to found* solutions.

Other errors belonging to this category include deviations regarding SUBJECT– VERB AGREEMENT, which requires the learner to use a singular verb after a subject in the singular and a plural verb after subjects in the plural form. (16) and (336) present examples of deviant sentences because the learners failed to match subjects and verbs according to number correctly. The most frequent agreement error concerns the third person singular *-s* morpheme, it is either omitted or added to non-third person singular verbs. Learners sometimes employ a third person singular *-s* where it is not required as in (262). The reason for failure of applying the obligatory third person singular suffix *-s* in (811) seems to be an overgeneralization of the rule that English verbs (apart from the third person singular in the present tense) do not take inflectional endings.

(16)   *I don't know which chemicals *was* used…
(336)   *Is* the English teenagers similar to the Hungarian teenagers?

(262)   *…but I *doesn't* loved him like a boyfriend…
(811)   *Money *make* you happy...

I also categorised the instances of NON-EXISTENT PAST TENSE FORMS under the error category Form because these errors show that the learner knows that in the given context the past tense of the verb should be used but he fails to produce it correctly. In English, past tense is regularly formed by the suffixation of the allomorph of the regular past tense morpheme *-ed*. This basic rule accounts for the majority of verbs and is, therefore, often overgeneralized. However, many verbs show irregularities of various kinds so their past tense formation involves

altered forms where the past tense relates to the stem in some other way. Some irregular past tense forms differ entirely from their stems like *go - went*, others are identical like *hit - hit*, and still others involve some kind of alteration in the vowel of the stem, like *know - knew*.

(71)   *He just *buyed* that new safe.

(177)   *…the prince was very fast and *catched* her.

(599)   *Than he found a ladder and *broken* the window with them.

Sentences (71) and (177) are instances of regularisation of irregular forms. The tendency of extending regular grammatical patterns to irregular words can be seen here: the learner has internalised the rule for regular past tense formation and applies it systematically in all cases where a past tense verb is required. The error in (599), on the contrary, cannot be accounted for in terms of generalisation because in that case the learner would have probably produced **breaked* or **broked*. It can be argued that this error is a result of mixing up existing forms as b*roken* is the past participle form of the verb *break*.

Other subgroups of Form errors consist of the INCOMPLETE FORM OF THE INFINITIVE and the DOUBLE MARKING of the past tense. In (54) and (328), the students used the infinitive without the particle *to*, which results in a bare infinitive as opposed to the required full infinitive. The difference between the two is not relevant here and the learners certainly have not heard about these two variants, the bare infinitive is the dictionary form of the verb and it is the one that is overwhelmingly present in most English sentences as the main verb. This consideration leads to the assumption that these errors are also cases of overgeneralisation. The double marking of a semantic feature, which is illustrated in (85) and (680), is frequently found in second language development. The examples below illustrate the learners' failure to differentiate which verb of the construction modal verb - main verb and auxiliary - main verb, respectively, has to be marked for the past tense.

(54)   *…and we *need show* the short film in the commercial television
             programme…

(328)   *Secondly, *tell* you the truth I am extremely angry your newspaper.

(85)   *At the end of the day I was absolutely tired but I *couldn't slept*.

(680)   *She *didn't found* his home.

10.1.2. Verb tense[19]

Verb tenses are frequently called tools that English speakers use to express time in their language. In accordance with real time, we differentiate present, past and future tense. According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973) "Time is a universal, non-linguistic concept with three divisions: past, present and future; by tense we understand the correspondence between the form of the verb and our concept of time" (1973: 40). Tense is the area of English grammar that has proved particularly troublesome for learners of EFL and is therefore frequently subject to error. In my research, I am interested in Hungarian students' ability of knowing which English tense should be used in a particular environment and context and whether they succeed in applying the right tenses.

There is a lack of consensus among linguists as to the question of how many tenses there are in English: past, present and future or past and non-past. The crucial question emerges at this point concerning the treatment of present perfect. According to the first categorisation, it belongs to the present tense but according to the second, it belongs to the non-past, which is not necessarily identical with the present tense. According to Declerck (1991), some linguists (e.g. Palmer, 1988) claim that the present perfect is a combination of the present tense with perfect aspect, others (e.g. Comrie, 1985) claim that "the present perfect realises the same temporal schema as the preterit and differs from the latter only in that it also expresses perfect aspect" (Declerck, 1991: 12). Let us consider a classic example: For speakers of many languages, the sentence 'I have cut my finger' is a non-present sentence as the action took place before the moment of speaking,

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[19] On English verbs and the verb phrase see, for example, Quirk and Greenbaum 1973, Chapter 3.

consequently the sentence is in the past tense. For native speakers of English, the result of this past action is more significant than the action itself and so they regard it as present tense. Declerck (1991: 12) claims, "the present perfect realises a temporal schema on its own and should therefore be considered a tense of its own". As I am focusing on manifestations of language transfer resulting from the typological differences between English and Hungarian, I have also dealt with present perfect as a separate tense. In my analysis, I will first discuss examples of intralingual errors made with the different tenses as a result of the wrong application of the target language rules and then I will examine instances of interlingual errors and provide a possible explanation with the help of the Hungarian translation.

10.1.2.1. Intralingual errors

The errors in (47) and (282) are classified as belonging to the category PRESENT SIMPLE INSTEAD OF PAST SIMPLE. In these cases, and in all cases below, the learner interchanged two English tenses and made an error. In (173) and (456), we can witness an error made in the opposite direction: the learner used PAST SIMPLE INSTEAD OF PRESENT SIMPLE. It would be interesting to investigate whether these learners would have been able to self-correct their utterances, but unfortunately, the investigation of this aspect of SLA study is out of scope of my research. I would like to add that some examples, like (456), might also be grammatically correct and are erroneous only in the original context.

(47)   *We had a guide who *know* everything…
(282)   *And they *live* happily ever after.

(173)   *Just *took* a train and you'll find it.
(456)   *Young usually have extra lesson after school so they *were* very tired.

We also find numerous examples for the OVERUSE OF PRESENT PERFECT, which shows that these students have not acquired the rules of English tenses yet. They

use Present Perfect in clauses where a Present Simple verb is required, as in (109) and (806), or in other sentences, they use Present Perfect instead of Past Simple, as in (221) and (642). I would like to point out again that (806) is a grammatically correct sentence, it is the context that makes it incorrect: the student used Present Perfect instead of Present Simple to describe the mentality of Hungarians in general. It is important to note that although these two tenses correspond to the Present Perfect in Hungarian; we cannot account for these errors in terms of language transfer. Interestingly, these sentences would have been formulated correctly if the learners had fallen back on the rules of their mother tongue.

(109)   *…I've been extremely busy recently and I've *been* ill now.
(806)   *We *have taken* every opportunity to eat something.

(221)   *We *have done* a lot of stupid things but these were really funny.
(642)   *He climbed up and tried to get in, but there *have* already *been* somebody.

Past Perfect is considered as a separate tense as it differs from Past Simple in its function: it is used to refer to an action that has been completed before another past action. Because the second event is itself a past event and a past tense (Past Simple) is used to refer to it, the Past Perfect is needed to differentiate between the two and to make it clear which event took place earlier in the past. Errors with this tense might show that the learners either have not learned the rules yet or they are not able to apply them, and use therefore PAST SIMPLE INSTEAD OF PAST PERFECT or the other way round, PAST PERFECT in cases where the context requires a verb in PAST SIMPLE. In (547) and (631) the learners should have put the verbs *give* and *lose* in past perfect to signal anteriority, even if in (631) the learner used a passive instead of an active voice. (402) clearly shows that the learner does not know what Past Perfect is used for and makes a sentence which grammatically indicates that the subject first lost his memory and had an accident afterwards. Unlike (402), the order of happenings is correct in (760) but the learner disregards the basic rule of story telling, namely the past simple is used to express actions that follow each other. Present Simple is used for actions that were completed at a definite time in the past, and time in (760) is clearly defined

by the adverbial *yesterday*. All students at the very beginning of foreign language acquisition learn these elementary rules of English tenses, and therefore it is very surprising that such an error is made by a fourth-year student who has been learning English for at least four years.

(547)   *I knew it was just a little problem, and after he *gave* me some
           medicine, I didn't feel anything.
(631)   *When he arrived he didn't find her key, because the key *lost*.
(402)   *Pam had a car accident and *had lost* her memory.
(760)   *I *had seen* a terrible film yesterday than I had a nightmare.

10.1.2.2. Interlingual errors

Present Perfect has the function of linking past with present and has different uses. One of them is to say that an action happened at an unspecific time before the moment of speaking where the time is not important. Another use of this tense is for expressing duration; to show that something started in the past and continued up to the moment of speaking. In (239), the learner used the tense that the Hungarian equivalent sentence requires because he has not learned the rules concerning the use of Present Perfect. English Present Perfect can be translated, depending on the context, with a present or a past verb into Hungarian. Let us consider first the erroneous use of a PRESENT SIMPLE INSTEAD OF PRESENT PERFECT. In (239a), for Hungarians the meaning of the sentence requires a verb in the present tense because the sentence expresses a fact that is true for the present situation. Time specification is given extra weight by a prepositional phrase, which is another reason why Hungarian learners of English feel no need to express the duration of the action or state by the verb form. In (348a), the learner put the verb in the present tense because according to the content of the sentence this is the most straightforward choice for the right tense. The Hungarian equivalent sentence (348b) contains a present tense verb; the fact that the writer is not only now, but has also earlier, been busy is expressed by the adverb of time at the end of the sentence. This internal coherence of English sentences is new for

Hungarian learners and must therefore be specially emphasised and carefully taught. We have to keep in mind that there is no equivalent of Present Perfect in Hungarian, and therefore in the choice of the verb tense, L1 rules might play a highly influential role. As a result, learners often translate their Hungarian sentences (which can only be in past, present or future tense - as discussed in Section 5.5.2.) into English.

(239) a)   *I *know* him for many years and...

    b)   Évek óta ismerem /lit. years since know-1st pers. sing./

(348) a)   *...I'*m* terrible busy recently.

    b)   ...borzasztóan elfoglalt vagyok /lit. terribly busy am/

Based on the above consideration it does not take us by surprise that learners form English present tense sentences from Hungarian sentences containing verbs in the Present Tense and similarly, look for English past tense equivalents for their Hungarian sentences in the past tense. This takes us to deviant sentences in which learners made an error by using the PAST SIMPLE INSTEAD OF THE PRESENT PERFECT. The sentence in (517a) contains a tense error showing the negative influence of the mother tongue by constructing the English sentence. The Hungarian equivalent sentence in (517b) contains a past tense verb because the addressee sees the action of enclosing a document as a finished action from the viewpoint of reading the letter. The verb *enclose* therefore, can obviously not be in the present tense but, in the absence of any other alternatives, only in the past tense. In 695a, the Hungarian sentence requires a verb in the past tense because at the moment of speaking the action (the theft) was already finished. These sentences, thus, may be regarded as translations of the Hungarian sentences (517b) and (695b) respectively.

(517) a)   *I *enclosed* my CV.

    b)   Csatoltam az önéletrajzomat. /lit. enclosed-1st pers. sing. the CV-1st pers. sing.   possessive suffix-acc./

(695) a)   *You should give back all the things, what she *stole*.

       b)   Vissza kéne adnod mindent, amit ellopott. /lit. ...that/what stole-3rd

          pers. sing./

The most frequent errors with verbs - beside those concerning the use of the Present Perfect - occur with SEQUENCE OF VERB TENSES. The learner in (564a) and (657a) disregarded the rule that in English complex sentences, the verb of a subordinate clause must adapt to the main verb in the main clause if this is in past tense. As there is no such restriction in Hungarian, learners made these sentences following the patterns of their mother tongue, which allows the presence of a past tense verb beside a future tense verb. Consequently, Hungarian learners of English have to learn to backshift non-past tense verbs in the past in clauses that are embedded under a head clause in the past tense.

(564) a)   *But I didn't know what *will* happen next.

       b)   De nem tudtam, hogy mi fog történni azután. /lit. but no knew-1st pers.

          sing., that what will happen-inf. next/

(657) a)   *…and he broke the window about he thought that *is* his window.

       b)   …és betört vele egy ablakot, amiről azt hitte, hogy az övé. /lit. and

          broke-3rd pers. sing. it-instrumental one window, it-delative it-acc.

          thought-3rd pers. sing., that the his/her./

Another frequent error concerns reported speech. In order to give information on what people say we can either quote or report their words. When using indirect speech, the tense of the original sentence changes to the past as we are usually talking about a time in the past. In practice, it means, following Declerck (1991: 4) that we have to put the verb of the embedded clause in the past tense if we report the content of a sentence in present tense in the form of an indirect speech clause embedded under a verb in the past tense. In Hungarian, on the contrary, the tense of the embedded verb is independent of the tense of the matrix verb. This distinctive feature of Hungarian, the lack of sequence of tenses, allows it that the tense of the original sentence is always maintained in reported sentences. This can be seen in the erroneous sentences (6a) and (123a). Although these sentences

resemble the Hungarian translations, one can not leave out of consideration the possibility that the learners simply have not learned these rules yet, which might be the reason for deviation.

(6) a)   * I said to you last week, you *can come* on Friday…

b)   Múlt héten azt mondtam neked, hogy jöhetsz pénteken és te beleegyeztél... /lit. last week-superessive it-acc. said-1st pers. sing. you-dative, that come-can-2nd pers. sing. Friday-superessive and you agreed-2nd pers. sing./

(123) a)   *...I visited my doctor and he told me that I *have* pneumonia.

b)   ....elmentem az orvoshoz és közölte velem hogy tüdőgyulladásom van. /lit. pref.went-1st pers. sing. the doctor-allative and told-3rd pers. sing. I-instrumental that pneumonia-1st pers. sing. possessive suffix is/

The last subcategory of this group deals with grammatical VOICE. Active or passive voice describes the relationship between a state or action that the verb expresses and its participants identified by its arguments. In sentence (60a), the learner failed to realize the need for the use of a passive voice and created an active sentence according to Hungarian rules. If he considered that 'they' are the undergoer of the action and it is not important who carries out this action ('we'), he would have made a passive sentence. The same argument is valid for (781a). Although there is no passive voice in Hungarian, (781b), the natural translation of (781a), is not an active sentence in the ordinary sense but I would like to emphasise that this is my own translation. The writer of the English sentence might have translated the same sentence with an indefinite actor *man,* as it can be found in (781c). In either case, the negative influence of the mother tongue is responsible for the deviations the learners made in these sentences. The traditional English passive voice is unknown to Hungarians and acquiring the contexts where it should be used, demands from many students a mental effort.

(60) a)   *We accomodated them* in Rába Hotel...

b)   A Rába Hotelben szállásoltuk el őket. /lit. the Rába Hotel-inessive accomodated-3rd pers.pl perf.prefix them/

(781) a)   *The world wealth *can the people define* in many ways.

   b)   A gazdagság szót többféleképpen lehet meghatározni. /lit. the wealth
        word-acc in many ways can define-inf./

   c)   Az ember többféleképpen meghatározhatja a gazdaság szót. /lit. the
        man in many ways deifne-can-3rd pers. sing. the wealth word/

10.1.3. *Aspect*[20]

Grammatical aspect is seen throughout the present paper from the viewpoint of
the presence or absence of the temporal flow in the described action or state,
therefore under the category Aspect, only simple and progressive aspects are
subjects of investigation. Although Tense and Aspect in English are separated
formally, the concept of perfective aspect is so difficult to grasp for Hungarian
learners that I decided to treat it separately. Present Perfect and Past Perfect
respectively, are dealt with in this paper under the category Tense, based on the
following considerations: Firstly, the fact that a learner fails to use Present Perfect
in a required context shows us that he or she does not understand the meaning of
Present perfect as a separate Tense. Using Past Simple instead of Present Perfect
indicates that the learner is not aware of the rule that in English actions or states,
which began in the past, might also be expressed in Present Tense. Secondly, the
situation is similar in the case of the Past Perfect: Hungarian learners of English
have to understand and acquire the rules that this tense requires, namely that it
expresses the idea that something occurred before another action in the past.
Finally, if I had dealt with errors concerning the perfective aspect under the same
category as errors concerning the progressive aspect, the overall results would
have been misleading because they would not show the learner's inability to
distinguish between continuous and simple actions. To sum up, Tense errors
concern those errors where the student failed to use the right tense (Present
Simple, Present Perfect, Past Simple or Past Perfect) and Aspect errors concern
those where the learner used the progressive aspect instead of the simple aspect or
vice versa.

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[20] On English aspect see, for example, Quirk and Greenbaum 1973, 3.26 - 3.36.

10.1.3.1. Intralingual errors

There are two possibilities for errors regarding aspect as it is treated throughout this research: firstly, the learner USES THE PROGRESSIVE ASPECT in contexts where the simple aspect should be used and secondly, the other way round. Some errors, like the one in (169), can be explained by the lack of knowledge of the target language rules. In this sentence, the verb must be used in its continuous form, not because it expresses an ongoing action but because of the displeasure or complaint of the speaker. The writer of this sentence has probably not yet learnt that such additional contents might be expressed by grammatical alterations of verbs. Other errors concerning the simple aspect cannot be explained in such a straightforward way. The deviation in (389) might have multiple reasons but the most probable is that the learner failed to apply the correct target language rules by disregarding the basic usage of present simple continuous, namely expressing an ongoing action in contrast to an action happening at the moment of speaking or writing. One might argue that this error can be explained by the influence of the learner's mother tongue but in my opinion, it is not a valid argument. If it were, we could claim all errors that concern non-existent Hungarian structures transfer errors and this would certainly not be true. Claiming that this error is of intralingual origin is only speculative; it cannot be stated with a high percentage of certainty that the learner used the simple aspect because he followed the rules of his L1. This argumentation is valid for the whole discussion.

(169)   *Why *do* you always *cry*?

(389)   *She was taken to a hospital where her family *waited* her.

The deviations in sentences (458) and (598) present examples of using the PROGRESSIVE ASPECT INSTEAD OF THE SIMPLE ASPECT of the verb. The use of the progressive aspect in the sentences below is ungrammatical because they do not refer to ongoing actions at the time of speaking or writing and they do not describe continuous actions in the past, either. The verbs in (458) describe a habitual action and must therefore be in Present Simple. The verb in (598) describes a single action that happened at a concrete point of time in the past and

does not refer to an ongoing action that would require the continuous aspect. These errors can be ascribed to faulty knowledge of the target language rules.

(458)   *They *going* to the pubs or disco and they *drinking* a lot of alcohols.

(598)   *When he arrived home he *was not finding* his key.

10.1.3.2. Interlingual errors

The error corpus did not contain any examples of deviant usage concerning simple and progressive aspect, which can be traced back to the influence of the mother tongue. The possible explanation for that might be found in the distinctive feature of Hungarian that verbs in this language are not inflected for aspect. Due to the absence of progressive aspect in Hungarian, this property of verbs cannot be transferred from the first language to the second. One could, however, argue that all aspect errors are interlingual. Aiming at the highest possible accuracy, I decided not to do so and labelled only those errors interlingual which are obvious instances of language transfer.

10.1.4. Auxiliary / Copula

In English, every clause has a finite verb that consists of a full verb and optionally one or more auxiliary verbs. Auxiliaries are verbs whose function is to give further semantic or syntactic information about the main verb following them; they make different contributions to the verb phrase. They alter the main verb by giving extra information and fulfil one of the following functions: passive, progressive, perfect, modal or dummy. We differentiate between primary verbs *be*, *have* and *do* and the *modal verbs*. Quirk *et al.* (1985) provide an explanation to this label: "The modal auxiliaries are so called because of their contribution of meanings in the area known as modality (including such concepts as volition, probability, and obligation); but such verbs have a broader semantic role than this label suggests". They argue that *do* is a semantically empty syntactic component

having a function in negation and interrogation, *be* contributes to aspect and voice, and *have* contributes to aspect. In the case of *have* and *be*, which can function both as auxiliaries and main verbs, it is sometimes ambiguous which function the given word takes in a sentence.[21]

10.1.4.1. Intralingual errors

To this category belong errors with MODAL AUXILIARIES concerning mainly their usage in the past tense. Modals only exist in their auxiliary function; they cannot act alone in a sentence as the main verb. They do not take inflections and are always followed by the base form of the main verb. The English modal auxiliary *can* is used to express ability, possibility or to ask for permission. The negation of *can* is the single word *cannot*, occasionally written as two words *can not,* or the contraction *can't*. In (188), the learner treated the modal as if it was a main verb and applied the wrong rules to make a negative sentence, namely inserting an auxiliary with the negative particle *not* in the positive sentence. The student has not yet learned or failed to apply the rule that states that the modal *can*, being an auxiliary itself, does not require the presence of an auxiliary and takes the negative particle, *not* itself. In (562), the deviation concerns the past tense form of modal auxiliaries: the learner failed to use the correct past tense form of a verbal construction with the modal *must*. He has probably not yet learned the rule that the modal verb *must* behaves irregularly in the past and by analogy he erroneously put the verb *have* in its past tense form and created so *must had been sitting*. This error is very likely due to overgeneralisation, as constructions with the auxiliary *have* form their past tense forms with the past tense form of the auxiliary. The learner overextended this rule and applied it inappropriately to a verb phrase containing a modal verb.

(188)   *He was little and curious, but he *didn't can* fly.

(562)   *I *must had been sitting* next to my bike for half an hour when...

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[21] For more information on verbs in auxiliary function, see, for example Quirk and Greenbaum 1985, 3.21 - 3.45.

Other errors show the inability of the learner to USE THE RIGHT AUXILIARY dummy *do,* which is added to a sentence when negating it or formulating a question. This auxiliary has to be inserted if the speaker wants to formulate a question or a negative sentence from an affirmative statement containing only a full verb. Although (66a) and (311a) can be regarded as translations of the equivalent Hungarian sentences (66b) and (311b), these deviant sentences cannot be attributed to interference from the first language rules but to the failure of applying correct target language rules.

(66) a)   *How many rooms the flat has?

   b)   Hány szobás a lakás? /lit. How many roomed the flat?/

(311) a)   *Why think as you does?

    b)   Miért gondolkodsz úgy ahogy? /lit. Why think-2nd pers. sing. so as?/

In (52) and (100), the learners failed to produce correct sentences because of their lack of knowledge of the target language rules about forming negations. According to these rules they had to insert the dummy *do* and add the negative particle *not* after it resulting in *doesn't have* in (52) and *don't earn* in (100), respectively.

(52)   *... the baby elephant *has not* too big tunk.

(100)   *The nurses and the doctors ... *not earn* a lot.

Other errors include OMITTING AUXILIARIES in sentences in the CONTINOUS ASPECT and MIXING UP AUXULIARIES. The continuous aspect in English is expressed with the regularly conjugated form of *to be* with the present participle of the main verb. In (23) and (200) the auxiliary for forming the continuous aspect is left out but the the main verb signals that the learner intended to form a sentence with a continuous verb form. (78) is an example of the inability to distinguish auxiliaries for their functions, the learner does not know which auxiliary fulfils the function of forming negative sentences and fails therefore to use the correct one, *do*. It can also be argued that verb phrase of the first clause

(*was broken*) influenced the learner and prompted him to use the same structure by analogy in the second clause.

(23)   *We looking forward to your answer.

(200)   *The bird just singing.

(78)   *The door was broken and the alarm system *was* not work.

10.1.4.2. Interlingual errors

A copula in English acts as a connector between the subject of a sentence and some sort of modifier and is therefore called a linking verb. In most cases, it serves to link the subject of the sentence with the predicate. The verb *to be* can serve as a full verb meaning existence and also as a linking verb connecting the subject to the complement. Although this duality of most linking verbs often creates confusion, here only the linking function of the verb *to be* is concerned because of the following Hungarian rule: the copula is omitted in third person singular and plural present tense. In these grammatical contexts, the copula only reappears for stating location and time. Sentences (130) and (430) are produced according to the rules of the mother tongue, which do not require the presence of a copula. The errors in these sentences, the omission of the copula, clearly originate from mother tongue influence.

(130) a)   *All of them stupid!

      b)   Mindegyik hülye! /lit. each stupid/

(430) a)   *Teenagers don't know decide what the good, and what the bad.

      b)   A tinédzserek nem tudják eldönteni, hogy mi a jó és mi a rossz. /lit.
             the teenagers no can/know-3rd pers. pl. decide that what the good and
             what the bad./

10.2.   Errors within the Category Article[22]

10.2.1. Intralingual errors

a) Definite article

An article or a determiner always precedes single, countable nouns in English. We use the definite article to make general things specific. We use the definite article for adjectives referring to a particular class of people. The definite article is used if we are talking about somebody or something that has already been mentioned or is already known by the speaker and the listener, the writer and the reader respectively. We use the definite article in sentences or clauses where we define or identify a particular person or object.

Both due to differing structures - which will be analysed in detail under transfer errors – and due to the complexity of rules governing the usage of English articles, a frequent error is made with using POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS. In sentence (1) the learner used the indefinite article in place of the definite article twice in a single possessive construction. Articles in expressions of TIME SPECIFICATION with *week*, *weekend* or *seasons* are also often erroneous. Learners of English as a foreign language have to learn in which contexts the use of an article is necessary and in which contexts it has to be omitted. According to English rules we use the definite article. In (440) the omission of the article cannot be explained by the influence of the learner's first language as in Hungarian, in the same context, the definite article is used. This error can be regarded as an intralingual error since it reflects target language structures such as 'at 3 o'clock' and therefore it can be argued that the learner constructed it in analogy to other target language structures. Another example of erroneous article usage concerns GROUPS OF PEOPLE, which can be found in (453). Nominalised adjectives such as 'the young' can denote both singular and plural entities but in either case, they always occur with the definite article. The learner disregarded this rule and constructed an erroneous sentence.

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[22] This chapter is based on Stephanides 1974.

(1)   *I am *a* director of *a* company which is employed...

(440)   *Children generally go to a party at *weekend*...

(453)   *The trouble with *young* in Hungary is...

b) Indefinite article

In discussing the use of articles, it is important to make a distinction between specific and generic reference: the reference is specific if we want to talk about a specific specimen of a class, and it is generic if we want to talk about the class without special reference to specific specimens. The indefinite article introduces someone or something new that has not yet been mentioned in the conversation. Besides its introductory and individualising function in specified noun phrases, the indefinite article can also express genericness in English. The most common type of error concerns the mixing up of articles: learners often use a definite article in places where an indefinite or a zero article should be used and vice versa. Example (79) in isolation is a grammatically correct sentence; it is the context that makes it erroneous. The *dark figure* has not been mentioned previously in the composition, it requires the use of the indefinite article because it has not yet been defined by the writer. Sentence (104) is a very good example of deviant article usage presenting how much difficulty learners find in choosing the correct articles in English. This sentence contains four article errors, three of them concern the use of the indefinite article and the first one the use of the zero article. Under the present heading, only the second and third errors are taken into consideration, as the first and the third error are transfer errors. The use of the definite article in (809) is erroneous because the student who wrote this sentence was telling the reader about general habits of Hungarians and he was not talking about a specific meal. In the latter case, the use of the definite article would have been correct.

(79)   *And he saw *the* dark figure.

(104)   *The friendship isn't *opinion*, but it is *feeling*, one beautiful feeling.

(809)   *During *the* meal we talk about…

c) Zero article

We usually do not use an article when we are talking about something in general or about plural or uncountable nouns. In the examples below the utterances are not constructed according to target language rules and are therefore erroneous. In (292), the zero article should be used because the student does not write about some specific girls but about any girls other than 'they'. The same argument is valid for (432): writing about things in general, we do not use an article before the noun. In (432), the student had to use the zero article because he did not write about some specific alcohol or cigarettes. If the learner had constructed the English sentences following the rules of his or her L1, he or she would have made correct sentences. Therefore, we can argue that the errors in these two sentences are not transfer errors.

(292)   *…they don't come good with *the* another girls.

(432)   *Like drinking *the* alcohol and smoking *the* cigarettes.

Sometimes the presence or the absence of the article has a meaning differentiation function: some INSTITUTIONAL BUILDINGS do not have an article if you visit them for the reason these buildings exist. But if these building are used for another reason, the definite article must be used. Students who have not learnt this peculiarity of English grammar often make errors by using the definite article because they are not aware of the difference between the two usages and form the sentences according to general article rules. They learned that English common nouns require the use of an article and overgeneralise this rule and insert an article even in expressions where it should be omitted. Examples for these specific cases can be found in (11) and (688).

(11)   *I was seven years old when I went to *the* primary school.

(688)   *He was taken to *the* hospital.

10.2.2. Interlingual errors

a) Definite article

The rules governing the use of the definite article are different in English and Hungarian, which leads to a multitude of possible errors. An example of wrong article usage concerns sentences with MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS: in Hungarian, the zero article is used before the names of musical instruments in contrast to English where a definite article is required. The error in (213a) can be explained in terms of negative influence from the learner's first language, which explains why the learner omitted the article.

(213) a)   *...we started to play *guitar* together.

      b)   ...együtt kezdtünk gitározni. /lit. together began-3rd pers. pl. playing-the-guitar/

Another example for language transfer can be found in errors with POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS: in both English and Hungarian, a possessive construction contains at least two nouns, the grammatical possessor and the grammatical possession. In English, one of the ways of forming a possessional relational phrase is to apply the prepositional phrase with *of* after the possession. In Hungarian, possessiveness is expressed by a set of possessive suffixes, which are attached to the grammatical possession. There are differences between English and Hungarian concerning the articles and the sequence of elements in a possessive phrase: in English, the possession must always be preceded by the definite article and is followed by the possessor introduced by the preposition *of*. In Hungarian, the possessor normally precedes the possession but variation is permitted, and it is the possessor - and not the possession - that is preceded by the definite article. In (773b), the absence of the definite article is due to the variation that the possessor is a proper noun and it only takes an article in spoken Hungarian. If it were a common noun, the insertion of a definite article would be obligatory.

(773) a)   *...under *rule* of Batista.

   b)   ...Batista uralkodása alatt. /lit. Batista rule-3rd pers. sing. possessive suffix under/

b) Indefinite article

The interference in (154a) is probably due to the formal identity between the Hungarian numeral *one* and the indefinite article *egy* /lit. one/. The missing article in (508a) can be attributed to the fact that Hungarian uses a zero article and therefore the English sentence can be seen as the translation of (508b). However, we have to keep in mind that the missing article is a typical characteristic of the language production of beginners and, thus, one could argue that the error in this sentence is due to insufficient TL knowledge.

(154) a)   *...he got *one* message...

   b)   ...kapott egy üzenetet... /lit. got-3rd pers. sing. a/one message/

(508) a)   *I don't have *family*...

   b)   Nincs családom... /lit. no family-1st pers. sing. possessive suffix/

Another difference between article usage in English and Hungarian concerns PROFESSIONS: in Hungarian the zero article is used for professions but in English we use the indefinite article. In the English sentences (523a) and (771a), where someone's profession is named, the learner omitted the indefinite article *a* before the name of the profession and thus made an error which reflects the structure of the learner's first language. These sentences may be regarded as translations of the corresponding Hungarian sentences (523b) and (771b).

(523) a)   *I worked like *teacher*...

   b)   Tanárként dolgoztam... /lit. teacher-as worked-1st pers. sing./

(771) a)   *...I'm working as *marriage counsellor*.

   b)   ...házassági tanácsadóként dolgozom. /lit. marriage counsellor-as work-1st pers. sing./

c) Zero article

Errors of this subcategory are characterised by the overuse of the definite article. Since the use of the definite article is more frequent in Hungarian, students often overuse the definite article and apply it to inappropriate contexts. When an UNCOUNTABLE NOUN FUNCTIONING AS THE SUBJECT REFERS TO AN ABSTRACT NOTION, it co-occurs with the zero article in English but with a definite article in Hungarian. This pattern was transferred to the English sentences (99a) and (788a) and resulted in erroneous utterances.

(99) a)   *I think in Hungary *the* health care is not very good.

    b)   Szerintem Magyarországon az egészségügy nem túl jó. /lit. Hungary-superessive the health care/

(788) a)   *...*the* wealth do just mischief.

    b)   ...a vagyon csak bajt okoz. /lit. the wealth only mischief-acc. cause-3rd pers. sing./

The use of articles in case of PLURAL NOUNS FUNCTIONING AS THE SUBJECT WITH GENERIC MEANING: in accordance with the usage in Hungarian learners often produce sentences in which the nouns are preceded by the definite article. This is probably the most common error Hungarian learners make with English articles: not only is the negative influence of the mother tongue very strong, but the already learnt target language rules also prompt the learner to use an article.

(146) a)   *The* women liked him...

    b)   Kedvelték a nők... /lit. liked-3rd pers. pl. the women-nom./

(711) a)   *...*the* parents are very helpful...

    b)   A szülők...nagyon segitőkészek... /lit. the parents very helpful-3rd pers.pl./

ADVERBS OF TIME like *last* and *next* combined with *week*, *month*, *year* or the names of days, months, or seasons co-occur with the with zero article in English, but with the definite article in Hungarian. (15a) and (95a) present examples of wrong article usage. The corresponding Hungarian constructions contain a definite article, thus, it is likely that the errors in (15a) and (95a) are interlingual errors caused by the use of Hungarian rules to generate English sentences. Another indication for the argument that transfer may account for these errors is the presence of the preposition in (15a): in English, as opposed to Hungarian, we do not use prepositions with time expressions.

(15) a)   *In *the* last month...

b)   A múlt hónapban... /lit. the last month-inessive/

(95) a)   **The* next day...[23]

b)   A következő nap... /lit. the next day/

In the last example the use of the article is ungrammatical since in English we generally do not use an article before GEOGRAPHICAL NAMES. The use of the definite article clearly reflects Hungarian rules, according to which with the names of individual mountains, lakes or islands the definite article has to be used.

(812) a)   *...lives now at *the* lake Balaton.

b)   ...most a Balatonon lakik. /lit. now the Balaton-superessive live-3rd pers. sing./

10.3.   Errors within the Category Noun

Concerning the errors listed under this category I concentrated on the singular and plural forms of nouns. In both languages, English and Hungarian, we differentiate proper nouns, representing unique entities, and common nouns that describe a

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[23] Depending on the context, this construction could be grammatical also in English.

class of entities. Furthermore, we differentiate in both languages collective nouns, abstract nouns and countable and uncountable nouns. Many English uncountable nouns, for example *furniture*, *advice* or *information*, are countable in Hungarian and take a plural and an indefinite article.

10.3.1. Intralingual errors

In English, just like in Hungarian, nouns are inflected for grammatical number - that is singular or plural. The striking difference between the two languages is that Hungarian plurals are always regular whereas in English there is a variety of ways in which plurals are formed. In the corpus there were several examples of using SINGULAR NOUNS IN PLACES WHERE PLURAL NOUNS ARE REQUIRED for which I did not find a logical explanation. In (112), the learner used a singular noun but a plural predicate before making a list of symptoms. In (527), the learner correctly used the demonstrative pronoun in the plural but failed to apply the right number of the noun, which he would probably be able to self-correct if his attention were drawn to it. These circumstances lead to the assumption that the errors in the first two sentences below are rather mistakes than grammatical errors indicating lack of appropriate knowledge.

(112)   *My *symptom* were extremely headache, lungache, ...

(527)   *I will never forget those *feeling* I had in the car...

Another common mistake concerning English nouns is the WRONG FORM OF THEIR PLURALS. This mainly concerns foreign plurals and irregular forms, which we mostly find by words stemming from older forms by borrowing from foreign languages. An example of the irregular plural from Latin can be found in (57), where the learner – being unaware that *data* is a plural form - put it in plural. We must admit that it is a special case as on the one hand, data is now usually treated as a singular mass noun, and on the other hand, learning that *data* is the plural form of *datum* is far beyond the expectations of secondary school students learning English as a second or third foreign language. This argument is contrary to the example in (275), which is a very frequent mistake among elementary level

students. In case of ablaut plurals, the plural is simply formed by changing the vowel sound in the singular. This alteration is restricted to a few nouns that have to be memorised by learners. Until this has taken place learners are likely to form incorrect plural forms like *mans* and *womans* which is due to overgeneralisation or rules for regular plural formation.

(57)   *The director was satisfied the delivered *datas*...

(275)   *...true friendship between famous *mans* and *womans*, ...

Using a PLURAL NOUN INSTEAD OF A SINGULAR NOUN is also a frequent error in L2 writings of Hungarian learners of English. In (183), the learner was not aware of the fact that the common noun *person* has an irregular plural (*people*) which is formally a singular noun and applied this form instead of the singular. This error might be explained by the confusion created by the lack of the regular plural marker -*s*. In (457), the learner disregarded the rule that uncountable nouns do not have plural forms and made an error by putting the uncountable noun *homework* in the plural form. An explanation for this error might be found in overgeneralization of the rule that we can use the quantifier *a lot of* with plural countable nouns. This error can not be an interlingual one for another reason: the Hungarian equivalent of 'homework' is not pluralizable.

(183)   *He met an old *people* and asked him.

(457)   *They have a lot of *homeworks*.

10.3.2.   *Interlingual errors*

A frequent error among learners of English as a foreign language occurs with countable and uncountable nouns. Concerning the influence of the mother tongue an error is expected to occur if nouns have the same meaning in the two languages, but the noun is countable in one of the languages and uncountable in the other. This is the case in (16a) and (492a) where the Hungarian students

applied the rules of their mother tongue and used *furniture* and *advice*, which are uncountable nouns in English, in the plural form. These words are countable in Hungarian; their plurals are formed regularly by adding the suffix *-k* to the stems. Hungarian learners of English have to learn which nouns are uncountable in English and have to acquire the rules according to which they are used in context.

(16) a)   *I don't know which chemicals was used because *the furnitures* and the appointments spoiled.

b)   ...de *a bútorokat és a felszerelést tönkretették.* /lit. but the furnitures-acc. and the equipments-acc. destoyed-3rd pers. pl./

(492) a)   *…so they leave *advices*, and…

b)   ...ezért nem fogadják meg a tanácsokat... /lit. therefore no take-3rd pers. pl. perf. prefix the advices-acc./

Another peculiarity which Hungarian learners of English have to bear in mind is the use of the PLURAL AFTER NUMERALS AND QUANTIFIERS like *some*, *a lot of* and *all*. In Hungarian quantifiers and numerals themselves are sufficient as markers for plurality and therefore in these contexts a singular noun is used. Hungarian learners of English have to learn that in English, nouns combined with quantifiers or numerals are still marked overtly for plurality. In (28a), (74a) and (669a) the learner has not learned this rule yet and failed to put the noun in the plural and constructed the English sentences according to the rules of Hungarian grammar. In these contexts the negative influence of the first language is very strong; it requires special attention and targeted practice to formulate such expressions correctly. In (28a) and (669a) learners translated the Hungarian sentences and followed the Hungarian logic for the construction of the English sentences. As a result they used the nouns *problem* and *pocket* in the singular. The most obvious examle is (74a): however strongly first language rules influences the learners' thinking, even beginners had to recognise the need for a plural noun after the numeral *two*.

(28) a)   *...I discovered some essential *problem*.

   b)   ...felfedeztem néhány lényeges problémát. /lit. discovered-1st pers. sing. some essential problem-acc./

(74) a)   *After two *day* the incident...

   b)   Két nappal az eset után... /lit. two day-instrumental the incident after.../

(669) a)   *He searched all his *pocket*...

   b)   Átkutatta az összes zsebét... /lit. searched-3rd pers. sing. the all pocket-3rd pers. sing. possessive suffix/

Another example of an error due to the differences between Hungarian and English grammar rules can be seen in phrases like *'one of the...'*. In English if we talk about an entity that is one out of more, the plural form of the noun should be used but the same context in Hungarian requires the use of a singular noun. This segment of grammar is not emphatically taught in school and is therefore prone to the influence of the mother tongue, which is in this case negative. According to the Hungarian point of view we talk about one *picture* in (3a) and about one single *adventure* in (220a) and therefore putting these nouns in the plural would not make any sense.

(3) a)   *...broke one of my more expensive *picture*.

   b)   ...eltörte az egyik legdrágább képemet. /lit. broke the one most expensive picture-1st pers. sing. possessixe suffix-acc./

(220) a)   *One of my best *adventure*, what I remember...

   b)   Az egyik legjobb kalandom... /lit. the one best adventure-1st pers. sing possessive suffix/

This point is a good example for illustrating the fact that speakers of one language might see things from a different perspective as speakers of other languages. In order to speak a foreign language at an advanced level students have to acquire the rules of the target language and have to learn how to apply them correctly. In

English we need to use the nouns *picture* and *adventure* in their plural forms as we are talking about one out of more pictures and adventures, respectively.

10.4.   Errors within the Category Pronoun

10.4.1. Intralingual errors

English pronouns have numerous subclasses and constitute a heterogeneous class of items. Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 100) summarises the features that distinguish them from nouns: pronouns do not admit determiners, they often have objective cases, personal distinctions and overt gender contrast, and singular and plural forms are often not morphologically related. Pronouns usually refer to already mentioned things or individuals in a sentence and serve the function of avoiding repetition of the noun to which they refer. Unlike nouns, pronouns change form according to their various uses in a sentence, that is, the case of the pronoun reflects its role in the sentence. Like nouns, most pronouns have only two cases: common and genitive, but some pronouns have an objective case as well. The fact, that there is identity and partial overlap between some of the forms of the pronouns in different cases makes it not easier for EFL learners to acquire their correct use.

As we have seen earlier, English pronouns can have subjective, objective and possessive forms. In the following examples, we can see that students are often unable to differentiate between them and mix them up: NOMINATIVE FORMS ARE USED FOR ACCUSATIVE AND POSSESSIVE FORMS. The writer of sentence (15) used a third person plural personal pronoun instead of a third person plural possessive pronoun, which might be explained by the formal similarity between *they* and *their*. The same argument is probably true for (297), where the learner made an error by using the nominative form of the third person plural personal pronoun *they* instead of the accusative form, *them*. In this sentence, the personal pronoun takes the syntactic function of a direct object in the sentence. In (417), the deviation concerns the subjective and objective forms of the third person

singular pronoun. This error cannot be explained in the same way as the previous two. The student in this sentence failed to realize that the nominative pronoun *she* takes a subject role but in this sentence the context requires the pronoun to take the indirect object role, and consequently, he has to apply the object pronoun *her*.

(15)   *…I employed your workers and I'm not pleased with *they* work.

(297)   *I don't love *they*.

(417)   *Her husband and her family help *she*, to remember...

Students of English as an FL often experience difficulties with the PRONOUNS IN THE POSSESSIVE ROLE: learners seem to treat the subject case pronoun like a regular noun and make possessive constructions by adding possessive -*s* for the possessive role. To indicate ownership possessive pronouns have to be used, not personal pronouns with apostrophe. Learners of English commonly confuse these forms and end up creating sentences like the examples in (38) and (75):

(38)   *She's* email adress is.., *he's* email adress is...

(75)   *He's* life is changed total wrong.

10.4.2. *Interlingual errors*

As there is no GENDER MARKING in Hungarian, there is only one personal pronoun in third person singular for *he* and *she*. Learners experience great difficulty with the gendered pronouns in English and even advanced students confuse them. Although this problem only concerns the productive skills of the learner, teachers of English must lay great emphasis on this segment of grammar because it can seriously effect the reception of the intended message. I have chosen two self-explanatory examples for the purpose of illustration which can be found in (145a) and (680a). In (145b) the Hungarian personal pronoun *ő* /he or she/ is present which does not change whether it refers to a masculine or to a

feminine subject. In (680b) the personal pronoun is omitted due to the presence of a conjugated verb, which tells the hearer or reader the person and number of the subject. In both sentences relying on the message even beginners should have been able to realize and correct the wrong pronouns.

(145) a)   *_Her_ name was William.
      b)   Az ő neve William volt. /lit. the he/she name-3rd pers. sing. possessive suffix William was./

(680) a)   *_She_ didn't found his home.
      b)   Nem találta az otthonát. /lit. no found-3rd person sing. the home-3rd pers. sing. possessive suffix/

As we have seen in Section 5.1. in the theoretical part, Hungarian sentences do not require the use of the personal pronoun in the nominative and accusative cases unless the pronoun is emphasised or contrasted. Personal pronouns can be omitted as the conjugation of the Hungarian verb reflects the person and number of the subject. Because in some grammatical contexts the subject in Hngarian is not explicitly stated, Hungarian learners of English tend TO OMIT THE SUBJECT in the same grammatical contexts in English. The errors in (141a) and (199a) represent clear instances of language transfer: although the presence of a subject is compulsory in English, learners formed these sentences according to Hungarian rules and omitted the subjects.

(141) a)   *Went went on the field...
      b)   Ment, ment a mezőn... /lit. went-3rd pesron sing., went-3rd pers. sing. the field-superessive/

(199) a)   *And then went to the youngest prince.
      b)   És azután a legfiatalabb herceghez fordult. /lit. and then the youngest prince-allative turned-3rd pers. sing./

RELATIVE PRONOUNS in Hungarian decline exactly as their corresponding interrogative pronouns. The fact that the English interrogative pronoun _who_

stands for the Hungarian relative pronoun *aki* (lit. the one who...) and also for the interrogative pronoun *ki* (lit. Who?) causes much trouble for Hungarian learners of English. In (274) the learner put an interrogative pronoun at the beginning of a declarative sentence probably because he is not aware of the fact that *who* is a question word in English and cannot serve the function of a subject in a declarative sentence. The pronoun *whoever* is likely not part of the learner's vocabulary and he has not yet learned the rules about its usage. After the learner has acquired the restrictions about the use of question words and relative pronouns he will be able to determine in which context which pronoun should be used. The deviation in sentence (568) also attests the learner's inability to use the appropriate relative pronoun in a relative sentence. The problem for Hungarians arises from the peculiarity of their mother tongue that the English relative pronouns *what*, *that* and *which* have only one corresponding form in Hungarian, namely *ami*[24]. The distinction between these pronouns is therefore of great difficulty and can only be overcome by intensive practice. When used as a relative pronoun *that* can either refer to persons or things and is generally used in defining relative clauses. On the contrary, *which* used as a relative pronoun can refer only to things and is used in either defining or non-defining relative clauses. The relative pronoun *what* is normally used without antecedents and in a relative clause it has the meaning of 'the thing' or 'things that'. It does not refer to a previously mentioned word or phrase but introduces a noun clause. If the learner had known these rules, he would not have interchanged the relative pronouns *that* and *what* and in (568a) he would not have made the error. However, the kind of usage of the relative pronoun found in (568) is widespread in non-standard varieties of English.

(274) a) **Who* thinks, that is impossible: ..., that was never in true love.

 b) Aki úgy gondolja, hogy.... /lit. who so think-3rd pers. sing, that.../

(568) a) **I did everything *what* the stewardess said.

 b) Mindent megtettem amit a légiutas kisérő mondott. /lit. everything-acc. done-1st pers. sing that/what the stewardess said-3rd pers. sing./

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[24] The corresponding accusative form of the Hungarian nominative relative pronoun *ami* is *amit*, as it can be found in 568b.

10.5. Errors within the Category Preposition

10.5.1. Intralingual errors

"In the most general terms, a preposition expresses a relation between two entities, one being that represented by the prepositional complement […]. A prepositional phrase consists of a preposition followed by a prepositional complement, which is characteristically a noun phrase or a *wh*-clause or V-*ing* clause." (Quirk and Greenbaum 1973: 143). As we have seen in 5.1., there are considerable differences between the means used in English and Hungarian to express prepositional meaning. However, even if the prepositional phrase is constructed according to the same logic in both languages, Hungarian learners of English often encounter difficulty in deciding which preposition they have to use in a certain context. First, we will look at some examples in which the error can not be attributed to the negative influence of the mother tongue and in 10.5.2., we will look at some instances of typical transfer errors.

Because of the economical nature of grammar, a single preposition can express several different things and can be used in various contexts to express different meanings. The preposition *in*, for example, can be used for expressing spatial relations, indicating time or telling under what condition something happened. Regardless of their mother tongue, students soon discover that prepositions are troublesome in their usage: to designate place, for example, the following prepositions can be used: *in*, *on* and *at*. The correct usage of prepositions presupposes close attention and intensive practice. A frequent error due to overgeneralization may be accounted for in terms of analogy.

In the examples below the learner used previously acquired target language rules to generate new utterances. As the meaning of 'visiting a place' is usually expressed by the preposition *to*, the learner also inserted this preposition to a phrase where it should not be used. The expression 'going home' must be memorised by the learner in isolation and cannot be used by analogy to expressions like 'going to school' or 'going to the cinema'. The same argument is valid for (692): the learner formed his utterance by making analogy to the

expression 'to read something', for example a book or newspaper, in which no preposition is used. In (155) and (692) learners applied a target language rule to contexts where the application is incorrect and, thus, produced deviant utterances.

(155)   *William went *to* home.

(692)   *When I was reading your problem, I feel sympathy.

The IDIOMATIC USE OF PREPOSITINS may prove difficult; a given word may be followed by different prepositions whereby the choice depends on the context. Most idioms have a metaphorical meaning, which explains why they cannot be understood from the individual meaning of their elements. Idioms and fixed expressions with prepositions have to be learnt by heart because they cannot be meaningfully constructed word for word. In (339) and (407), the learner involved has not acquired the correct English expressions that phrase his ideas and failed to use the appropriate fixed string of words 'to my mind' and 'to be in someone else's shoes', respectively.

(339)   **In* my mind the Hungarian teenagers are...

(407)   *If I were her/his shoes...

10.5.2. Interlingual errors

The influence of the mother tongue plays an important role in the use of English prepositions. PREPOSITIONS OF PLACE AND DIRECTION are often different in the two languages which inevitably leads to errors when learners translate their mother tongue utterances to English. The challenge for the English teacher is it to teach students to leave the logic of their first language behind and start to think in English. Even advanced learners struggle with the use of prepositions because one preposition might have several translations and several corresponding equivalents in another language. English sentences containing a prepositional phrase defining a movement to a certain location are formulated in Hungarian with the preposition

in as places where we go to or which we can visit (cities, countries, buildings or institutions) are seen as three-dimensional and enclosed location in Hungarian. This explains the error in (509a): in Hungarian, we say 'someone has been in a country' and not 'to a country' and falling back on his mother tongue, the learner employed the wrong preposition in English. The deviant use of the preposition *on* in (601a) is also due to semantic difference between the two languages. The learner transferred the meaning of the Hungarian postpositional phrase into English and disregarded the relevant rules of the target language. The corresponding Hungarian sentence (601b) requires the preposition *on* because the street where somebody is walking is seen as a surface. Due to the lack of sufficient target language knowledge the learner translated the Hungarian structure which manifested in an erroneous English utterance.

(509) a)   *...I have been *in* lots of countries...

   b)   ...sok országban voltam... /lit. many countries-inessive was-1st pers. sing/

(601) a)   *...he was going home *on* an empty street...

   b)   ...hazafelé tartott az üres utcán... /lit. homewards kept-3rd pers. sing. the empty street-superessive/

PHRASAL VERBS, which are particularly frequent in spoken English, have their special difficulties for learners of English as a second language. These multi-word verbs consist of two or more words which form one semantic unit. The meaning of a phrasal verb, similarly to idioms, is often very different from the meaning of the two words taken separately. Moreover, the word-by-word translation of a phrasal verb is only very rarely identical with the equivalent structure in another language. Considering all these, we can predict a high ratio of error by Hungarian students using phrasal verbs in their compositions. Sentences (131a) and (438a) prove this assumption and are examples of deviation due to interference from the mother tongue. In (131a) the learner constructed the English sentence in accordance with the Hungarian sentence structure and applied the wrong preposition to the verb. If something occurs to somebody or it affects something as a result of an action, we use the preposition *with* in Hungarian but *to* in

English. As long as the learner does not learn this phrasal verb, he will say that 'something happened with somebody', as it is said in Hungarian, and will not be able to make a correct sentence. The error in (438a) is also caused by the negative influence of the mother tongue: the learner translated the Hungarian sentences and used the wrong preposition. The idea of 'coming to the end of one's life' is expressed in English - depending on the situation - by the phrasal verb 'to die of something' or 'to die from something'. In Hungarian, the equivalent morpheme of the preposition *in* is used in both cases.

(131) a)   *...it could *happen with* him.
        b)   ...ez történt vele. /lit. this happened-3rd pers. sing. he/she-
                instrumental/

(438) a)   *...they *died in* drug-abuse.
        b)   ...kábitószertúladagolásban meghaltak. /lit. drug-abuse-inessive pref.-
                died-3rd pers. pl./

10.6.   Errors within the Category Word Order

10.6.1. Intralingual errors

As we have seen in Section 5.1, grammatical functions in Hungarian are not linked to structural positions in the sentence which allows for a flexible sentence structure. English is an SVO word order language; changes in word order occur due to topicalization or question formation. As we have seen earlier, questions require the presence of an auxiliary word, which precedes the main verb and the other phrases in the sentence. In (83), the learner put the main verb at the end of the sentence. The sentence structure of (185a) reflects the structure of the German translation (185b) and therefore it can be argued that it was probably the learner's second language that influenced him in the formation of a sentence in his third language. As I do not have any precise information about the learner's language learning background this is only an assumption and consequently the error is not listed among transfer errors.

(83)   *Does it a garage and a balcony have?

(185) a)   *When he arrived, he would like his father saw.

      b)   Als er ankam, wollte er seinen Vater sehen.

The errors in the examples below might be regarded as CHUNKS as the erroneous group of words in these sentences are set expressions. The learner knows the meaning of these fixed sets of words but not the correct usage. In (349) the student learned the meaning of the correlative conjunction *not only ... but also* and he also knows when it should be used to idicate the relationship between the ideas expressed in different parts of a sentence. What he does not know is the application of the right word order in the second clause. By failing to separate the collocation *but also* he breaks a grammatical rule. Students of English learn phrasal verbs in their dictionary form, *to calm down*, which can be seen in (574). The deviation in this sentence is due to the failure of the student to insert the direct object between the verb and the preposition. It can be explained by the assumption of the student that phrasal verbs are complete semantic units which cannot be separated within the sentence.

(349)   *Not only is it surprising to me, *but also I am* incredibly happy for it.

(574)   *My sister started to cry and we were not able *to calm down* her.

10.6.2. Interlingual errors

The SVO word order is common in Hungarian if the object is preceded by an article. The sentence structure of Hungarian is highly flexible; however, a high degree of morphological marking prevents the ambiguity of the roles of the arguments. In the citation below, Rounds describes the role of Hungarian word order in determining grammatical function in a very straightforward manner:

In Hungarian, the extensive case system clearly marks the grammatical function, i.e. part of speech, of nouns and noun phrases. Because subjects and objects are easily distinguished by their case markings, Hungarian need not rely on word order to determine grammatical function. Therefore Hungarian allows a freedom of word order unknown in English. (Rounds, 2001: 253)

As we have seen previously, the word order of Hungarian sentences is different from the word order in English sentences. The fixed English word order, which follows a strict rule, is strange to Hungarians and therefore using the right word order in English is a challenging task for most of the students. Topicalization in English, however, allows for variation in word order. In Hungarian there is more than one single correct word order, and depending on what we want to emphasise, the words of the sentence can be rearranged. In general, the emphatic elements of the sentence are put in front of the verb or at the very beginning of the sentence. The students in (20a) and (770a) followed this rule and formed deviant sentences in the target language. Even if there is EMPHASIS ON A CONSTITUENT like *immediately* in (770a) it has a strictly defined place in the English sentence and by putting it at the beginning of the sentence we commit an error.

(20) a)   *All of the furnitures we had to through out.*

     b)   Az összes bútort ki kellett dobni. /lit. the all furnitures-acc. particle-must have throw-infinitive/

(770) a)   *Immediately I opened the door...*

      b)   Hirtelen kinyitottam az ajtót... /lit. immediately particle-opened-1st pers. sing. the door-acc./

ENOUGH AS AN ADVERB meaning 'to the necessay degree' goes after adjectives in English but before adjectives in Hungarian. The examples in (82) and (253) are clear cases of language transfer as the learner transferred the grammatical pattern of his mother tongue to his target language expressions: the learner put the adverb *enough* before the adjectives *big* (82) and *intelligent* (253) like it is required in Hungarian.

(82) a)   *...a flat which is *enough big*...

  b)   ...olyan lakást ami elég nagy... /lit. such flat-accusative

         that/what/which enough big/

(253) a)   *The people who *enough intelligent* are...

  b)   Azok az emberek, akik elég értelmesek... /lit. those the people, who

         enough intelligent-3rd pers. pl./

In English INDIRECT QUESTIONS, the word order is the same as in an affirmative statement, the wh-word does not imply the habitual subject verb inversion that is obligatory in direct wh-questions. In Hungarian, on the contrary, there is no difference between the word order of a direct and an indirect question. (231a) and (374a) are formed according to first language rules, namely the word order of the indirect question is identical with the word order of the direct question: a wh word introduces the subordinate clause, it is followed by the verb and the other constituents of the sentence.

(231) a)   *I am curious *what is* your opinion.

  b)   Kiváncsi vagyok, hogy mi a véleményed. /lit. curious am, that what

         the opnion-2nd pers. sing. possessive suffix/

(374) a)   *The biggest problem is that, I dont know *where is* Fodor utca.

  b)   ...nem tudom hol van a Fodor utca. /lit. no know-1st pers. sing. where

         is the Fodor street/

Hungarian learners of English often make errors with QUESTION FORMATION because they literally translate the equivalent Hungarian sentences. In Hungarian, questions have the same word order as declarative sentences, as I have mentioned in the theoretical part, the only destinctive feature of questions is intonation. In written language the function of intonation is taken over by punctuation. (375b) with a rising intonation is a question, with falling intonation it is a declarative sentence. In case of question formation the negative influence of the mother tongue is so pervasive that many learners ignore the already known rules of the target language and form English questions in analogy to mother tongue patterns. The literal translation of (377b) is *this huge matter*, standing for *It is a huge*

matter and also for *Is it a huge matter?* The word order does not change when forming a question from this Hungarian declarative sentence. The personal pronoun and the copula, which change position in English declarative sentences and questions, are omitted in Hungarian. The deviation in (377a) could be attributed to interference from first language rules which prompted the learner to create an English question identical with the English declarative sentence.

(375) a)   *David will be able* to get a lunch?

b)   David fog tudni ebédelni? /lit. David will-3[rs] pers. sing. can-inf. eat-inf./

(377) a)   *It is* a huge matter?

b)   Ez nagy dolog? /lit. this huge matter/

Concerning word order, great care must be taken with sentences including ADVERBS OF MANNER. The difficulty for Hungarians lies in the Hungarian grammar rule according to which the adverb which tells us how an action is performed, precedes the verb. As adverbs of manner in English follow the verb and occupy most often the end position of a clause, Hungarian learners of English have to overcome their habit of putting the adverb before the verb. As we see in (409b) the adverb 'lassan' /slowly/ precedes the verb it modifies and this pattern is transferred to its English translation in (409a).

(409) a)   *...the memory *slowly was returning*.

b)   ...az emlékezete lassan visszatért. /lit. the memory-3rd pers. sing. possessive slowly returned-3rd pers. sing/

10.7.   Errors within the Category Other

10.7.1. Intralingual errors

There are several errors that cannot be enrolled under the above listed categories so they are classified under the category Other. These errors include lexical and syntactic errors and are either of developmental or intralingual origin. The error in (125) can be attributed to the category of lexical errors since it represents the wrong choice of word, *please* instead of *ask*. It is questionable whether the learner knows the meaning of the verb *to please*, it is more probable that he used *please* as an interjection in the place of a verb. It is likely that he was influenced by the common polite way of making a request or giving an order, which is expressed by inserting *please* at the beginning or the end of a sentence. The error in (524) is probably an example of an error by analogy constructed on the pattern 'to feel good' or 'to feel bad'. The adjective *afraid* in (524) means 'feeling fear' or 'being frightened' and is only used predicatively, on the contrary to the adjectives *good* and *bad*. The distinction between attributive and predicative adjectives is probably unknown to secondary grammar schools students; therefore, the above explanation of the error is persuasive.

(125)   *...the hospital food is terrible but if I *please* the nurses, they will get me some food from the store.

(524)   *Mum *felt afraid* and...

10.7.2. Interlingual errors

Frequently, when learners do not know the right expressions in the target language they translate their message element-by-element from their first language. By such LOAN TRANSLATIONS, the semantic components of a given term are literally translated into their equivalents in the other language.

(190) a)   *When I am here, *I walk one.*

      b)   Ha itt vagyok, sétálok egyet. /lit. if here am, walk-1st pers. sing. one-acc./

(279) a)   *First they *fell in doubts...*

      b)   Először kétségbe estek... /lit. first doubt-illative fell-3rd pers. pl./

I listed also those errors under the category Other where the students used HUNGARIAN GRAMMATICAL PATTERNS TO FORM ENGLISH SENTENCES. A frequent error arises concerning negation. For Hungarian students it is a demanding task to learn how to form negative sentences correctly. In some parts of grammar, they have to master rules which are contradictory to the rules of their first language and for them they might seem to be illogical. This is the case with the preposition *till/until*, which requires a positive verb in the non-future tense in English. In Hungarian, there are no restrictions and prepositions of time might be followed by either positive or negative verbs, in all three tenses, past, present and future. This rule explains why Hungarian learners of English create sentences like (240a), where the subordinate clause beginning with a subordinate conjunction contains a negative verb. Here, the student translated the Hungarian sentence word-by-word to English and did not apply the relevant target language rules. Instead of translating the meaning of his message, the learner substituted the elements of the Hungarian sentence with English words. If he hadn't disregarded the grammatical constraints of *till*, he would not have made an error in the English sentence by negating the verb.

(240) a)   *...*till I didn't know* who he loves.

      b)   ...amíg meg nem tudtam, hogy kit szeret. /lit. till perf.prefix no knew-1st pers. sing., that whom loves-3rd pers. sing./

Sentence (652) is a very interesting example because it represents a case of LANGUAGE TRANSFER not from the first but FROM THE SECOND LANGUAGE INTO THE THIRD LANGUAGE of the learner. The Hungarian translation of this sentence (652b) is grammatically different to such a high degree from the English sentence that it is justifiable to assume that it had no influence on the errors in (652a). On

the contrary to it, the English sentence resembles to such a high degree the German sentence structure (652c) that we can argue that the learner costructed the sentence relying on the rules of German syntax.[25]

(652) a)   *He broke the window in.
       b)   Betörte vele az ablakot. /lit. pref. broke-3rd pers. sing it-instrumental the window-acc./
       c)   Er schlug das Fenster ein. /lit. he broke the window in/

Lexical differences between two languages might lead to serious problems while communicating in a target language. With the next few sentences I would like to explain and exemplify some errors belonging to the category of LEXICAL ERRORS. These errors concern polysemic Hungarian words and the learners' wrong choice of their equivalents in English. Learners in the examples below fell back on their mother tongue lexicon and transferred the meaning of the words in question to English. This is a normal way of creating sentences at the beginner level, one might argue, but a problem arises when it comes to polysemous words, i.e. words which share the same spelling but have different meanings in one language and are represented by two separate words in the other language. In such cases the interlingual divergence is extremely high as the negative influence of the mother tongue may manifest significantly. The Hungarian translation of the verb in italics in (250a) has two meanings: on one hand, it stands for the main verb *to know*, and on the other hand, for the modal verb *can*. The learner has failed to realise that the two different semantic meanings are expressed in English by two distinct words. It would be interesting to investigate whether the learner succeeded in the right application of the verb *know* in places where it is required or he uses these two words interchangeably.

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[25] I would like to emphasise that I have no detailed information about the language learning background of the students who took part in this survey; however, the teacher described them all as speakers of Hungarian as a mother tongue. Still it cannot be left out of consideration that the writer of sentence 652 might be a Hungarian - German bilingual or a migrant child with German mother tongue. In either case, he shall not be excluded from the pool of informants as he has at least proficient skills in Hungarian.

(250) a)   *Please write me as soon as you *know*.

      b)   Kérlek irj olyan hamar amilyen hamar csak tudsz. /lit. please write-2nd

           pers. sing. imperative such soon as soon only can/know-2nd pers. sing./

In (445a) we find two examples on the negative effect of lexical transfer: the Hungarian translation of the words *do* and *make* are identical, which leads to frequent errors by Hungarian students if phrases with *do* and *make* have to be used. Phrases like 'to do harm to somebody or something' are fixed expressions, they have to be memorised in their form because there is not always a logical explantion why the one and not the other verb should be used. Concerning the other deviation in sentence (445a), in order to elicit the reason for the error we have to know that in Hungarian, the same noun, *szervezet,* is used for all four English words 'body', 'institution', 'organisation' and 'organism'. The same accounts for the deviation in (686a): the Hungarian word *rossz* is represented by *bad* and *wrong* in English. The learner who produced (686a), failed to apply the correct corresponding English word.

(445) a)   *However they *make* just wrong to their *organization*.

      b)   Viszont ezek károsítják a szervezetüket. /lit. however these harm-3rd

           pers. pl. the body/organisation-3rd pers. pl. possessive suffix-acc./

(686) a)   *...he went in a *bad* room.

      b)   ...rossz szobába ment be. /lit. wrong/bad room-illative went-3rd pers.

           sing. illative particle/

11. Discussion of the Major results

In the following section, the quantitative analysis of the research results will be presented. I will analyse each category in detail with specifications to the percentage of transfer errors in relation to all errors in the category. Moreover, the number of errors in each category will be compared to the total number of errors in the whole corpus as well as within the single category.
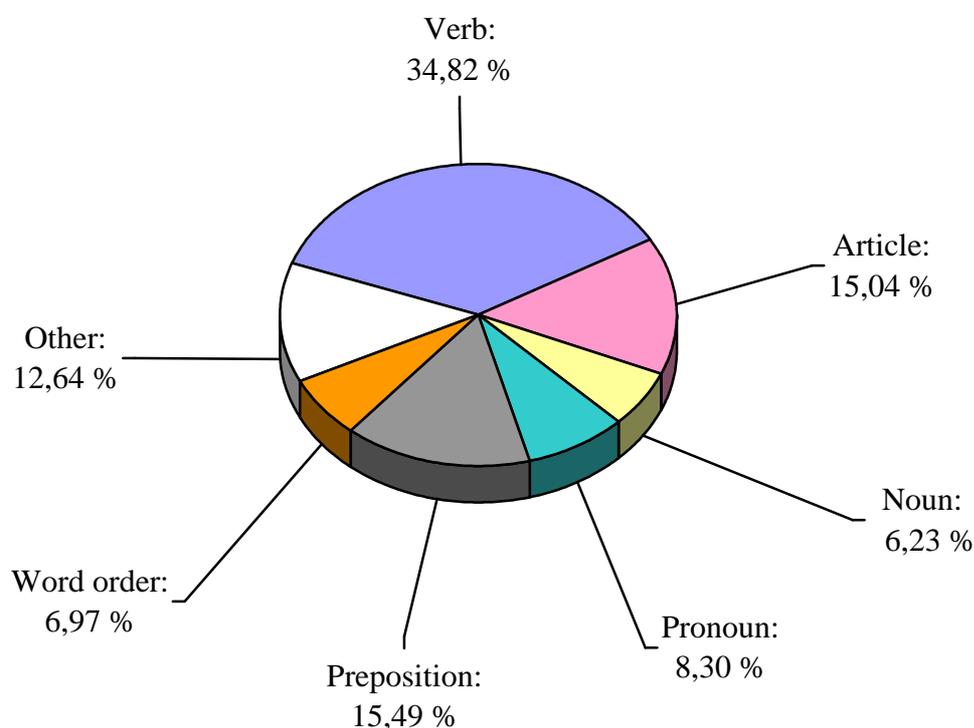
Figure 2: Percentage of errors in the corpus

Table 1. summarizes the overall results of the study. Under 'Total number of errors' the number of occurrences in the corpus is given, the label 'Transfer errors' stands for those errors which are of MT origin and 'Transfer %' indicates the percentage of errors they comprise within the subcategories. To make it clear I would like to explain how to read the table with the first of the seven categories under discussion: there are 544 errors in the corpus that belong to the category Verb, out of these 74 instances can be traced back to the negative influence of the learner's mother tongue ('Transfer errors'). This mean that 13,60% of all Verb errors are transfer errors ('Transfer %').

	Verb	Article	Noun	Pronoun	Preposition	Word Order	Other
Total number of errors	544	235	99	132	242	109	201
Transfer errors	74	104	33	53	62	40	112
Transfer %	13,6	44,25	33,33	40,15	25,62	36,69	55,72

Table 1. Results of the analysis: number and percentage of transfer errors

11. 1.　Verb

Figure 3. below provides a graphic illustration of the comparison of non-transfer and transfer errors within the category Verb. The error corpus consists of a total number of 1562 errors. 544 errors in all the 184 compositions concern the category Verb. Verb errors make 34,82 % of all errors. Out of these, 74 errors can be traced back to the negative influence of the mother tongue. This makes a proportion of 13,60%. Let us now look at the results of the subcategories within the main category Verb: All of the 169 errors I enrolled under the category Form are non-transfer errors; in this regard, L1 influence does not play any role. The reason for these errors might be found in Chomsky's famous concept of competence - performance duality: the learners have acquired the rules of the target language but are not yet able to apply their knowledge in actual performance. Within the category Verb, there are 168 instances of Tense errors. The fact that all errors made with the use of Present Perfect are classified under the category Tense explains the high percentage: 54 of the 168 Tense errors can be attributed to the negative influence of the mother tongue. This means that 32,14% of tense errors are transfer errors, which is the highest rate within the category Verb. The subcategory Aspect is not highly erroneous; there are only 53 errors none of which are transfer errors. I would like to emphasise again that this result is due to the specific definition of Aspect in this paper (see 10.1.3.). I found

154 instances of errors concerning the use of Auxiliaries and the Copula, out of these the majority is due to insufficient knowledge of target language rules. Only 18 errors reflect L1 structures which makes 11,69%. An explanation for transfer errors concerning the deviant use of auxiliaries might be found in the differing rules, which govern negation and question formation in the two languages. These findings, with emphasis on the results of language transfer, are summarized in Table 2.:

	Form	Tense	Aspect	Auxiliary / Copula
Total number of errors	169	168	53	154
Transfer errors	0	54	0	18
Transfer %	0	32,14	0	11,69

Table 2. Number and percentage of transfer errors within the category Verb

Based on my own language learning experience and on my experience in language teaching, I predicted a great number of erroneous utterances, especially in cases when a past tense verb should be used. The fact that there is no elaborate past tense system in Hungarian foretells significant problems. The results of the analysis, according to which more than one third of all errors concern the category Verb, prove my hypothesis (see Hypothesis One in Chapter 8.). An interesting point concerns self-correction: it would be worth investigating whether learners were able to self-correct their utterances and, if they could, what kind of alteration would emerge within the results. The question of error/mistake distinction emerges because even students at upper-intermediate level made errors concerning elementary rules in a free composition task. Because of the limited size of this study such an extension of focus was not possible; therefore, unfortunately, far-reaching conclusions cannot be drawn from this analysis.
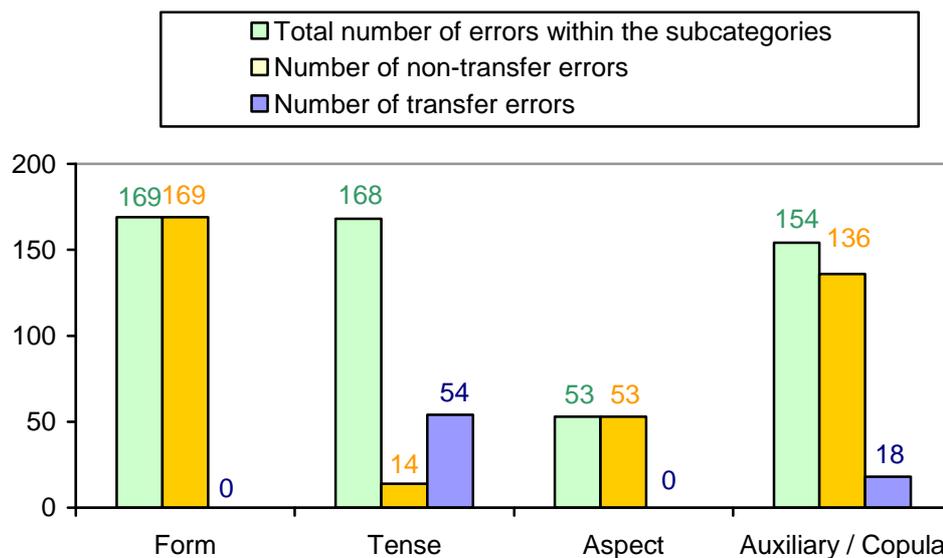
Figure 3: Comparison of non-transfer and transfer errors within the category Verb

11. 2.   Article

The ratio of errors in the misuse of articles is very high compared to other types of errors, such as the use of plural nouns or word order. In all of the compositions examined, a total of 1562 errors were committed, 235 concerned the erroneous use of articles, which constitutes 15,04%. These instances of deviant article use can be categorised into omission, superfluous use, substitution of one article for another, etc. The information about the significance of mother tongue influence within this category is provided in Table 3.:

	Definite article	Indefinite article	Zero article
Total number of errors	72	56	107
Transfer errors	8	20	76
Transfer %	11,11	35,71	71,20

Table 3. Number and percentage of transfer errors within the category Article

There are only 72 instances of deviant usage of the English definite article in all 184 compositions, which is a surprisingly low number. The vast majority of errors concerning the use of the definite article is developmentally determined; only eight errors can be attributed to the negative influence of the learners' mother tongue. In case of Indefinite articles, more than one third of the errors reflect mother tongue structures. Expressed in numbers, 20 out of 56 indefinite article errors can be ascribed to language transfer, which makes 35,71%. The influence of L1 prevails most strongly in case of Zero article usage. I found 76 interlingual errors belonging to the category zero article, which is, compared to the total number of 107 errors in this subcategory, a very high percentage. 71,02% of all zero article errors are likely to result from transfer from Hungarian. In short, concerning language transfer there are 104 instances of erroneous article usage in the compositions, regarding all 235 article errors this quantity constitutes 44,25%. This result confirms my hypothesis, which was first stated in Chapter 8., about the high number of both intra- and interlingual article errors. Figure 4. illustrates the findings graphically, for the results calculated in percentage please go to Table 1. (p. 133).
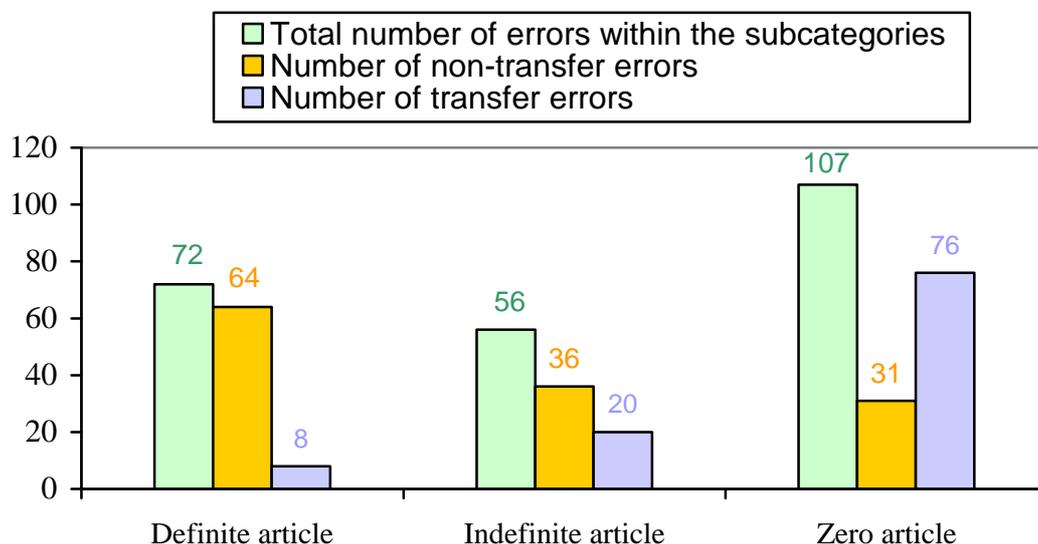
Figure 4: Comparison of non-transfer and transfer errors within the category Article

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11. 3.   Noun

I found only 99 examples out of 1562 errors for deviant usage of singular and plural forms of nouns. This low percentage, 6,23%, might be explained by the self-evident rules which determine the use of the singular or the plural form of a noun in a given context. Apart from some special cases, which have been discussed in 10.3.2., there are no characteristic differences concerning number in the two languages' grammars. However, these differences are grave enough to generate a transfer effect. 33,33% of these errors are made because the learner fell back on the rules of his or her L1 while constructing the corresponding noun phrases in English. My hypothesis, according to which there is no significant difficulty to expect due to L1 influence, can be regarded as verified because if learners had great difficulty with the use of the plural form of nouns they would have made much more errors than 33.

11. 4.   Pronoun

As we have seen earlier (see Chapter 5.1. and 10.4.1.), there are fundamental differences concerning the use of pronouns between the two languages, which might be the reason for a relatively high percentage of transfer errors. The vast majority of interlingual errors concerns the gender distinction of pronouns, which can be regarded as the 'Achilles heel' of many Hungarian students learning English as a foreign language. The results support my hypothesis that predicted difficulty with using the right English pronoun even though the absolute number of errors in this area is unexpectedly low.

Turning to the results in absolute numbers, there are 132 occurrences of pronoun errors in the entire corpus, which constitutes 8,3% of all errors. Compared to other error categories, the use of English pronouns does not seem to create considerable difficulty for Hungarians. If we investigate the role mother tongue influence plays in the errors committed, we receive a completely different picture: 53 out of the 132 errors are transfer errors, which provides 40,15%. Figure 5. represents the results graphically. Considering this result, I am obliged to

somewhat alter my previous statement: apparently, in the pronoun difficulties Hungarian students of English encounter, the influence of L1 plays an important role. However, we have to keep in mind that the error - mistake distinction is not applied to the data in this research. The fact that English pronouns are learned at elementary level and their use is governed by narrowly defined rules supports the assumption that the majority of pronoun errors are in fact mistakes.
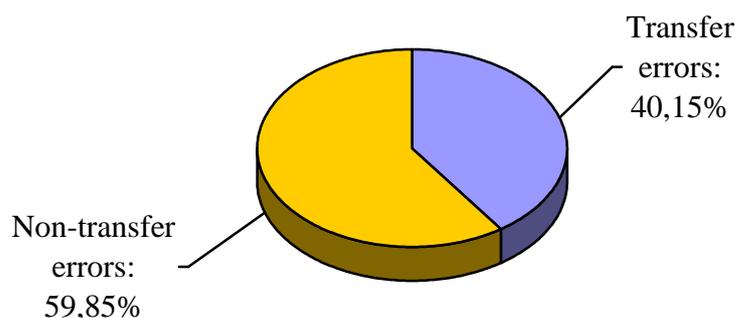
Figure 5. Relation of transfer and non-transfer errors within the category Pronoun

11. 5.   Preposition

According to the results, the correct use of English prepositions constitutes a problem for Hungarians: 15,49% of all errors concern the incorrect use of prepositions. The occurrence of 242 deviant usages of prepositions suggests the need for putting great stress upon teaching and exercising their use. A preposition itself is rather meaningless; its meaning can hardly be defined in mere words. Therefore, it is no wonder that prepositions create such a great difficulty for students who learn English as a foreign language. While speaking or writing in a foreign language we mostly think instinctively, and do not take into account that native speakers of another language might express the same content by using different grammatical constructions and different underlying conceptualizations. This might be one of the reasons why prepositional phrases are affected by language transfer in the learner language of Hungarian students of English. Although the structure of prepositional phrases is simple, the use of English prepositions is very complex, and, what is more important in our case, a great deal

different from Hungarian postpositions. Out of 242 preposition errors, 62 instances can be attributed to the negative influence of the mother tongue, which means that more than every fourth deviant preposition usage (25,62%) is likely to be the result of negative transfer. I would like to call attention to the fact that the data does not reveal occurrences of positive transfer; we do not know in how many cases students were positively influenced by the structures of their L1. My hypothesis about the errors concerning the use of Prepositions (see Chapter 8.) was based on the following consideration: Hungarian learners have to understand and learn that the same meanings that are expressed in their mother tongue with the use of postpositions and other morphological devices are expressed in English with the help of prepositions. I did expect a relatively high number of errors but assumed that most of them are developmentally determined. According to my own experience, the increase of target language knowledge grants a decrease for errors made with prepositions. As there is no one-to-one correspondence between single prepositions and the meanings they can express, the key to success lies in practice and in the consequential development of target language skills. Therefore, I can conclude that - except for beginners - mother tongue influence does not play a crucial role in deviant constructions of English prepositional phrases.

11. 6.   Word order

The quantity of word order errors in the whole corpus is relatively low; there are only 109 instances of incorrect order of sentence constituents, which composes a small segment of errors in the whole corpus. 109 out of 1562 errors provides 6,97%, from which it follows that 93,14% of all errors made by Hungarian student using English as a target language belong to a category other than Word order. In contrast, the percentage of transfer errors within this category is relatively high: 40 out of 109 errors can be attributed to the negative influence of the learner's mother tongue. According to the results of the analysis, as illustrated in Figure 6. below, 36,69% of all word order errors are transfer errors. This result contradicts my hypothesis according to which Hungarian learners of English do not experience difficulty in constructing sentences with correct word order.

According to the present findings, teachers should devote more time and attention to the teaching of English word order with exercises based on the results of contrastive analyses.
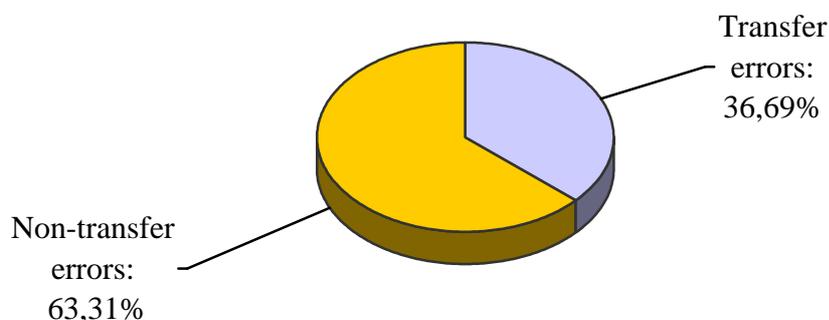
Figure 6. Relation of transfer and non-transfer errors within the category Word order

11. 7.   Other

Category Other embraces many different errors but the limitations of this paper do not allow a comprehensive discussion beyond the few illustrative types analysed in Section 10.7. The whole error corpus exhibits 201 occurrences of errors that are relevant to the present syntactic analysis and cannot be subsumed under the first six categories. More than the half of these, 112 errors, can be ascribed to the category of interlingual errors since these either reflect L1 structures or can be regarded as translations from the learner's mother tongue. Taking a close look at the involved errors, one can find a possible explanation of this intensive transfer phenomenon: the majority of these errors concern lexical transfer and serve as communication strategy. While speaking or writing in a foreign language, students often lack the necessary lexical means for expressing their ideas in the target language. In such cases, they frequently fall back on the vocabulary of their mother tongue and translate items into the foreign language so that the elements fit the context. Especially beginners are willing to transfer items

from their L1 to the target language probably because of the limited size of their vocabulary and the positive experiences they have made with cognates, i.e. words in one language that have close similarity in form and meaning to words in another language. In the case of more advanced learners, language transfer might be a conscious tool for solving problems that emerge while communicating in a foreign language. The results show that 55,72% of the examined errors categorised under Other errors are transfer errors (see Figure 7. below or Table 4. in Appendix 2.). This finding supports my prediction (see Chapter 8.) and verifies the assumption that L1 influence serves as a communication strategy and plays an important role in the language learning process.
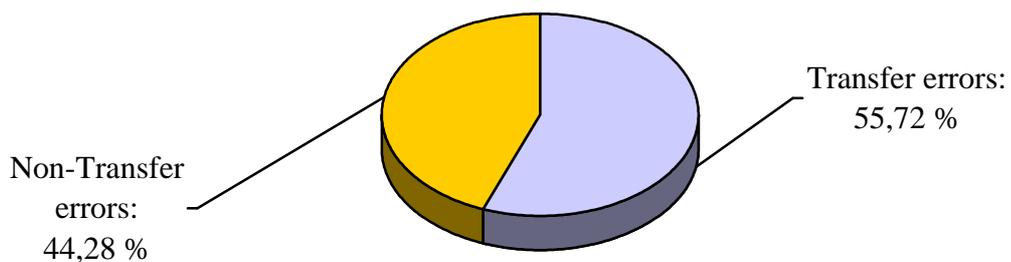
Figure 7: Relation of transfer to non-transfer errors in the category Other

III.   CONCLUSION

I have chosen as the topic for this thesis the investigation of what structures learners are struggling with the most in the long process of becoming native-like in proficiency. As the present writing concerns two generically non-related languages I devoted a chapter to Contrastive Analysis and a chapter to the Hungarian language as part of the theoretical framework. Although I am not doing Contrastive Analysis, it is inevitable to compare the structures of the languages in question in order to make valid statements about the errors that result from mother tongue influence. As we have seen earlier, the claims of Contrastive Analysis were proven wrong after they had been tested against empirical data, and finally Error Analysis could gain ground. Error Analysis is now the primary means of conducting research into SLA, which is one of the reasons why I have chosen this method to learn about the learner language of Hungarian learners of English.

The theoretical part of the present paper consists of six chapters that aim at providing a theoretical framework for the error analysis I carried out in the empirical part. After introducing the function and role of English in the Hungarian community, an overview on learner language and language transfer in general was provided. The subsequent discussion on contrastive linguistics was followed by the analysis of the most important work on Hungarian - English contrastive linguistics. In the last chapter, I elaborated on error analysis as a means of conducting research on errors in foreign language writing. The empirical part then embraces five chapters, which include the analysis of the data, the hypotheses I formulated about the findings and the discussion of the major results with a view to the validity of the hypotheses. The analysis itself is carried out according to the following guidelines: errors that occurred in compositions of Hungarian speaking students acquiring English as a second language in an institutional setting were identified and classified into linguistic categories. The sentences in which the 1562 errors occur are given in a separate list (see Appendix 2.); each sentence from the learner language is supplemented by the correct English version and the Hungarian translation. As a final step of the analysis, the errors were compared to

their Hungarian equivalents in order to examine whether or not language transfer is a possible source of the error. Consequently, I distinguished intra- and interlingual errors. The tables containing the results of this categorization can be found in Appendix 3. (p. 163-165). In the analysis, I examined each linguistic category and provided a detailed explanation of the most frequent error types. The discussion on the analysis is illustrated by examples taken from the error corpus. Some errors mirror the structure of the first language to such an extent that they can even be regarded as literal translations from the corresponding Hungarian sentences, in the case of other errors, we can only assume that L1 influence is the most likely source of error. Other errors resemble existing target language structures and show no resemblance to native language structures and are, therefore, classified as intralingual errors. In case of numerous errors, however, the reason for deviant language production might be found in language transfer or in different strategies that are part of the learner's developmental process. In many cases, a deeper analysis and a close look at the learner's competence would have been necessary to decide to which class the given error is most likely to be attributed.

It must be added that the present study has a number of shortcomings that prevent the drawing of a more comprehensive picture of Hungarian students' problems in learning English. These include the type of task that has been analysed, the number of participants, the variety of topics and the depth of analysis. Still, it can be concluded that the research succeeded in answering the research questions and therefore fulfilled the aim of the present study. The comprehensive view that emerges from the analysis of the learner language of Hungarian learners of English shows that almost 30% of errors reflect mother tongue influence. Another research objective was the identification of linguistic categories that are the most erroneous and the least erroneous with and without regard of language transfer. The most errors can be found within the category Verb, however, language transfer does not play a crucial role. The most errors are developmental errors, which call for the need for thorough explanations and intensive practice at school. The least erroneous category is Noun, however the percentage of transfer errors is not negligible. The greatest influence of the mother tongue is found - besides the miscellaneous category Other - in the categories Article and Pronoun.

The investigation of the learner language is of utmost importance because neither from the investigation of the target language nor from that of the native language can we get an accurate picture about the competence of the language learner. Its exploration is important because, as we have seen in the theoretical part, the interlanguage provides insights into the learner's mind and shows us where the learner stands on the acquisition path and at which points he or she needs the teacher's assistance. Nowadays, it is a widely acknowledged fact that a wide range of benefits can be gained from the analysis of learner language and experiences of language teachers through their observations in the classroom. Therefore, we should direct our attention to the learner, the key figure of the frequently asked question 'How are foreign languages learned?'. As a final thought I would like to conclude the present paper by arguing for the necessity of future error analyses with a quotation by Legenhausen (1975: 13):

> Als Rückkopplungsdaten bilden Fehler die wichtigste Grundlage für die Bewertung der Lernmaßnahmen und des Lehrmaterials. Indem Fehler Lernprobleme identifizieren helfen und die Vorkommenshäufigkeit eines Fehlers mit der Intensität einer Lernschwierigkeit korreliert, liefert eine Fehleranalyse (FA) sowohl wichtige Daten für kurzfristige Korrektivmaßnahmen des Lehrers (*remedial teaching*) als auch - langfristig gesehen - Korrektiv- und Ergänzungsdaten für die Graduierung des Lehr- und Lernmaterials.

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Appendix 1. Number of students learning English, German and Russian in full-time education in Hungary between 1989 and 2009.

Table 1. Number of foreign language learners at primary school

School year	English	German	Russian
1989/1990	33 120	41 655	655 218
1990/1991	130 663	186 017	485 002
1994/1995	266 977	354 341	21 764
1999/2000	331 602	347 802	5 248
2004/2005	373 172	237 448	1 450
2008/2009	379 451	171 772	877

Table 2. Number of foreign language learners at secondary school

School year	English	German	Russian
1989/1990	96 758	88 475	230 783
1990/1991	124 388	113 951	75 891
1994/1995	203 014	194 596	26 611
1999/2000	274 762	249 095	6 031
2004/2005	354 741	273 652	3 332
2008/2009	378 907	253 716	3 038

Table 3. Number of foreign language learners at tertiary levels of education

School year	English	German	Russian
1989/1990	18 889	10 153	17 241
1990/1991	23 922	13 977	7 275
1994/1995	41 263	23 951	5 043
1999/2000	42 895	24 692	2 275
2004/2005	52 845	28 000	1 750
2008/2009	40 357	16 784	1 770

Appendix 2. Sentences containing the errors under discussion

3. Example, on the last week your employee broke one of my more expensive picture.

   For example last week your employee broke one of my most expensive pictures.

   A múlt héten, például, az alkalmazottjuk eltörte az egyik legdrágább képemet.

5. I think you have to used other chemicals in my office because your chemical killed all flowers in my office because I think it is toxic.

   I think you have to use other chemicals in my office because your chemical killed all the flowers hence I think it is toxic.

   Úgy gondolom, hogy más vegyszereket kellene használniuk az irodámban, mert a szer tönkre tette a virágokat, igy szerintem mérgező.

6. I said to you last week, you can come on Friday and you say ok, but you weren't come on Friday, you came on Sunday.

   I said to you last week you could come on Friday and you said ok, but you didn't come on Friday but on Sunday.

   Múlt héten azt mondtam neked, hogy jöhetsz pénteken és te beleegyeztél, de pénteken nem jöttél, hanem csak vasárnap.

11. I was seven years old when I went to the primary school.

    I was seven years old when I went to primary school.

    Hét éves voltam amikor általános iskolába mentem..

15. In the last month I employed your workers and I'm not pleased with they work.

    Last month I employed your workers and I'm not pleased with their work.

    A múlt hónapban alkalmaztam a dolgozóit és a munkájukkal nem vagyok megelégedve.

16. I don't know which chemicals was used because the furnitures and the appointments spoiled.

    I don't know which chemicals were used but the furniture and the equipment are destroyed.

    Nem tudom, hogy milyen vegyszereket használtak, de a bútorokat és a felszerelést tönkretették.

20. All of the furnitures we had to through out.

    We had to throw away all the furniture.

    Az összes bútort ki kellett dobni.

23. We looking forward to your answer.

    We are looking forward to hearing from you.

    Várjuk szives válaszát.

28. The following day I discovered some essential problem.

The following day I discovered some essencial problems.

A rákövetkező napon felfedeztem néhány lényeges problémát.

38. She's email address is..., he's email address is...

Her e-mail address is..., his e-mail address is...

Az ő e-mail cime..., az ő e-mail cime...

47. We had a guide who know everything and he showed interesting places.

We had a guide who knew everything and he showed us interesting places.

Egy olyan idegenvezetőnk volt, aki mindent tudott és érdekes helyeket mutatott nekünk.

52. Dorothy has illness, and the baby elephant has not too big tunk.

Dorothy is ill and the baby elephant doesn't have a very big trunk.

Dorothy beteg és a kiselefántnak nincs túl nagy ormánya.

54. We need put ten thousand giant poster in the city, and we need show the short film in the commercial television programme least five times a day.

We need to pin up ten thousand giant posters in the city and we need to show the short film in the commercial television programme at least five times a day.

Tizezer óriásposztert kell kiragasztanunk a városban és naponta legalább ötször le kell adni a rövidfilmet a kereskedelmi televizióban.

57. The director was satisfied the delivered datas, and results, and he will wait the same success in this year.

The director has been satisfied with the delivered data and results and he expects the same success this year.

Az igazgató elégedett volt a leadott adatokkal és eredményekkel, ebben az évben is hasonló sikert vár el.

60. We accomodated them in Rába Hotel in the city center.

They were accommodated in the Rába Hotel in the city center.

A belvárosi Rába Hotelben szállásoltuk el őket.

66. How many rooms the flat has?

How many rooms does the flat have?

Hány szobás a lakás?

71. He just buyed that new safe.

He has just bought that new safe.

Nemrég vette azt az új széfet.

74. After two day the incident the police did not know any new information about the breaking.

Two days after the incident the police did not have any new information about the burglary.

Két nappal az eset után a rendőrségnek nem volt új információja a betörésről.

75. He's life is changed total wrong.

His life has changed totally badly.

Az élete teljesen rossz irányba változott.

78. The door was broken and the alarm system was not work.

The door was broken and the alarm system did not work.

At ajtót betörték és a riasztó nem működött.

79. And he saw the dark figure.

And he saw a dark figure.

És egy sötét alakot látott.

82. My friend and I need a flat which is enough big for us.

My friend and I need a flat which is big enough for us.

A barátom és én egy olyan lakást keresünk ami elég nagy nekünk.

83. Does it a garage and a balcony have?

Does it have a garage and a balcony?

Van garázsa és erkélye?

85. The end of the day I was absolutely tired but I couldn't slept.

At the end of the day I was absolutely tired but I couldn't sleep.

A nap végén nagyon fáradt voltam de mégsem tudtam elaludni.

95. The next day - it was Wednesday – my laboratory evidence was made.

Next day – on Wednesday – my laboratory evidence was available.

Másnap – szerdán – készen volt a laboreredményem.

99. I think in Hungary the health care is not very good.

I think health care in Hungary is not very good.

Szerintem az egészségügy Magyarországon nem túl jó.

100. I'm writing the letter, in the hospital, because I've been there one week ago.

I'm writing the letter in the hospital because I've been here for a week.

A kórházban irom a levelet mert itt vagyok egy hete.

104. The friendship isn't opinion, but it is feeling, one beautiful feeling.

Friendship is not an opinion but a feeling, a beautiful feeling.

A barátság nem vélemény, hanem egy érzés, egy gyönyörű érzés.

109. Sorry for writing back that late, but unfortunately I've been extremely busy recently and I've been ill now.

Sorry for writing back so late but unfortunately I've been extremely busy recently and I'm ill now.

Sajnálom, hogy csak ilyen későn válaszolok, de nagyon elfoglalt voltam mostanában most meg beteg vagyok.

112. My symptom were extremely headache, lungache, my diarthrosis pain, and I have got fever.

My symptoms were extreme headache, pain in my lungs, arthritis and fever.

Rendkivüli fejfájás, tüdőfájás, izületi fájdalmak és láz voltak a tüneteim.

123. Let see the beginning I visited my doctor and he told me that I have pneumonia.

Let us see the beginning: I saw my doctor and he told me that I had pneumonia.

Kezdjük az elején: elmentem az orvoshoz és közölte velem hogy tüdőgyulladásom van.

125. They always bring me some delicious food because the hospital food is terrible but if I please the nurses, they will get me some food from the store.

They always bring me some delicious food because the hospital food is terrible but if I ask the nurses they bring me some food from the store.

Mindig hoznak nekem valamilyen finom ételt mert a kórházi koszt szörnyű. De ha megkérem a nővéreket hoznak nekem ételt a boltból.

130. All of them stupid!

All of them are stupid!

Hülye az összes!

131. He could not believe it could happen with him.

He could not believe it had happened to him.

Nem tudta elhinni hogy ez történt vele.

141. Went went on the field then he saw a brickhouse with pigsmell.

He was going in the field when he saw a house of brick with a pig.

Ment, ment a mezőn amikor meglátott egy téglaházat kismalaccal.

145. Her name was William.

His name was William.

Az ő neve William volt.

146. The women liked him, but he didn't have a lover, because he was foppish, pedantic and he thought the women are just things.

Women liked him but he didn't have a lover because he was foppish, pedantic and he thought women were just objects.

Kedvelték a nők, de nem volt kedvese, mert hiú és pedáns volt és úgy gondolta, hogy a nők csak tárgyak.

145. One day he got one message: when he doesn't skalp, Elizabeth will die.

One day he got a message: if he doesn't hurry Elizabeth will die.

Egy nap kapott egy üzenetet: ha nem siet Elizabeth meg fog halni.

154. William went to home.

William went home.

William hazament.

169. Why do you always cry?

Why are you always crying?

Miért sirsz állandóan?

173. Just took a train and you'll find it.

Just take a train and you will find it.

Csak szállj fel egy vonatra és meg fogod találni.

177. The girl wanted to run back to the house but the prince was very fast and catched her.

The girl wanted to run back to the house but the prince was very fast and caught her.

A lány vissza akart futni a házba de a herceg nagyon gyors volt és elkapta.

183. He met an old people and asked him.

He met an old person and asked him.

Találkozott egy öreg alakkal és megkérdezte őt.

185. When he arrived, he would like his father saw.

When he arrived he wanted to see his father.

Amikor megérkezett az apját akarta látni.

188. He was little and curious, but he didn't can fly.

He was little and curious and he couldn't fly.

Kicsi volt és kiváncsi és nem tudott repülni.

190. When I am here, I walk one.

If I am here I go for a walk.

Ha itt vagyok sétálok egyet.

199. And then went to the youngest prince.

And then he turned to the youngest prince.

És azután a legfiatalabb herceghez fordult.

200. The bird just singing.

The bird was just singing.

A madár csak énekelt.

213. So we sometimes went to the cinema and we watched a good film or with my best friend we started to play guitar together.

Sometimes we went to the cinema and watched a good film or we started to play the guitar at the same time.

Néha moziba mentünk és megnéztünk egy jó filmet vagy együtt kezdtünk gitározni tanulni.

220. One of my best adventure, what I remember from my childhood, was when...

One of my best adventures that I remember from my childhood was when...

Az egyik legjobb kaland, amire gyerekkoromból emlékszem az az, amikor...

221. We have done a lot of stupid things but these were really funny.

We did a lot of stupid but funny things.

Sok butaságot csináltunk, de ezek viccesek voltak.

231. I'm curious what is your opinion.

I'm curious about your opinion /I would like to know what your opinion is.

Kiváncsi vagyok a véleményedre / Kíváncsi vagyok, hogy mi a véleményed.

239. I know him for many years and he said me a week ago that he is in love.

I've known him for many years and he said to me a week ago that he was in love.

Évek óta ismerem és azt mondta nekem egy héttel ezelőtt hogy szerelmes.

240. I was glad of this thing till I didn't know who he loves.

I was glad about this till I got to know who he loved.

Örültem neki addig, amig meg nem tudtam hogy kit szeret.

250. Please write me as soon as you know.

Please write (to) me as soon as you can.

Kérlek irj olyan hamar amilyen hamar csak tudsz.

253. The people who enough intelligent are can discuss this problem with each other.

People who are intelligent enough can discuss this problem.

Azok az emberek, akik elég értelmesek, meg tudják vitatni ezt a problémát.

262. Yes, there was so, that I thought, that he is a very nice man but I doesn't loved him like a boyfriend, also there is love, but not love.

Yes, it was like I thought, namely he is a very nice man whom I like but not love as a boyfriend, so there is liking but still no love.

Igen, úgy volt, ahogy gondoltam, tudniillik ő egy nagyon kedves ember, kedvelem őt de nem szeretem szerelemből, igy szeretet van, de szerelem az nincs.

274. Who thinks, that is impossible: be true love between a boy and a girl, that was never in true love.

Whoever thinks true friendship between a girl and a boy is possible he or she has not been trully in love yet.

Aki úgy gondolja, hogy létezhet igaz barátság lány és fiú között, az még nem volt igazán szerelmes.

275. In the world history were and are true friendship between famous mans and womans, boys and girls.

In the world's history there were and are examples of true friendship between famous women and men, girls and boys.

A világ történelmében volt és van is példa hires nők és férfiak, fiúk és lányok közti barátságra.

279. First they fell in doubts, but after they found solution.

First they raised doubts but later they found a solution.

Először kétségbe estek de később találtak megoldást.

282. And they live happily ever after.

And they lived happily ever after.

Boldogan éltek míg meg nem haltak.

292. And find girls, who have just boyfriends, because they don't come good with the another girls.

There are some girls who have only boyfriends because they don't get on well with other girls.

Vannak lányok, akiknek csak fiú barátaik vannak, mert ők nem jönnek ki jól más lányokkal.

297. I don't love they.

I don't love them.

Nem szeretem őket.

311. Why think as you does?

Why do you think as you do?

Miért gondolja úgy? / Miért gondolja azt amit?

314. They try to found solutions.

They try to find solutions.

Megpróbálnak megoldásokat találni.

328. Secondly, tell you the truth I am extremely angry your newspaper.

Secondly, to tell you the truth, I am extremely angry with your newspaper.

Másodsorban, az igazat megvallva nagyon mérges vagyok az újságra.

336. Is the English teenagers similar to the Hungarian teenagers?

Are English teenagers similar to Hungarian teenagers?

Hasonlitanak az angol fiatalok a magyarokra?

339. To tell you the truth, I can't imagine that, how can be it.

To tell you the truth I can't imagine how it could be.

Az igazat megvallva nem tudom elképzelni hogy milyen lehet.

348. Unfortunately I am terribly busy currently.

Unfortunately I've been terribly busy recently.

Sajnos borzasztóan elfoglalt vagyok mostanában.

349. Not only is it surprising to me, but also I am incredibly happy for it.

Not only is it surprising to me but I am also incredibly happy about it.

157

Nem csak meglepő a számomra, hanem hihetetlenül örülök is neki.

374. The biggest problem is that, I do not know where is Fodor utca.

The biggest problem is that I do not know where Fodor utca is.

A legnagyobb baj az, hogy nem tudom hol van a Fodor utca.

375. David will be able to get a lunch?

Will David be able to eat lunch?

David fog tudni ebédelni?

377. It is a huge matter?

Is it a huge matter?

Ez hatalmas dolog?

389. She was taken to a hospital where her family waited her.

She was taken to hospital and there her family was waiting for her.

Kórházba szállitották ahol a családja várt rá.

402. Pam had a car accident and had lost her memory.

Pam had a car accident and lost her memory.

Pamnek autóbalesete volt és emlékezetkiesésben szenved.

407. If I were her/his shoes I don't know what I do in this circumstances.

If I were in her shoes I wouldn't know what to do in this situation.

Ha az ő helyében lennék nem tudnám hogy mi tévő legyek ebben a helyzetben.

409. The time was passing and the memory slowly was returning.

Time was passing by and her memory returned slowly.

Múlt az idő és az emlékezete lassan visszatért.

417. Her husband and her family help she, to remember her past in precise details.

Her husband and family help her to remember her past in precise details.

A férje és a családja segiteneki neki abban, hogy részletesen emlékezzen a múltjára.

430. Teenagers don't know decide what the good, and what the bad.

Teenagers can't decide what is good and what is bad.

A fiatalok nem tudják eldönteni, hogy mi a jó és mi a rossz.

432. Like drinking the alcohol and smoking the cigarettes.

They like drinking alcohol and smoking cigarettes.

Szeretnek alkoholt inni és dohányozni.

438. Later children don't feel in control and they died in drug-abuse.

Later children lose control and die of drug-abuse.

Később elvesztik az uralmat és kábitószertúladagolásban meghalnak.

440. Children generally go to a party at weekend and they can there drink, because the barman serve them.

Children generally go to a party at the weekend where they can drink alcohol because the barman serves them.

A gyerekek általában buliba mennek a hétvégén ahol alkoholt fogyaszthatanak, mert a pultos kiszolgálja őket.

445. However they make just wrong for their organization.

However they do harm to their organism.

Viszont ezek károsítják a szervezetüket.

453. The trouble with young in Hungary is that: drugs and alcohol.

The problem with the young in Hungary is drug and alcohol consumption.

A magyarországi fiatalokkal a kábitószer és az alkohol fogyasztása a probléma.

456. Young usually have extra lesson after school so they were very tired.

The young usually have extra lessons after school so they are very tired.

A fiataloknak általában különórájuk van az iskola után, igy nagyon fáradtak.

457. They have a lot of homeworks.

They have a lot of homework.

Sok leckét kapnak.

458. They going to the pubs or disco and they drinking a lot of alcohols.

They go to pubs and discos and drink a lot of alcohol.

Kocsmába és diszkóba mennek és sok alkoholt isznak.

492. Students want to be independent from everything, so they leave advices, and want to make decisions alone.

Students want to be independent so they ignore advice and make decisions for themselves.

A diákok önállóak akarnak lenni ezért nem fogadják meg a tanácsokat hanem maguk hozzák a döntéseket.

508. I don't have family, so my time is very flexible.

I don't have a family so my timetable is very flexible.

Nincs családom, igy az isőbeosztásom nagyon rugalmas.

509. In my life I have been in lots of countries and I know lots of kind of traditions.

In my life I have been to many countries and got to know lots of different traditions.

Az életemben sok országban voltam és sok különböző hagyományt ismertem meg.

517. I enclosed my CV.

I have enclosed my CV.

Csatoltam az önéletrajzomat.

523. I worked like teacher in a small school for 3 months in Hungary.

I have worked as a teacher in a small school for three months in Hungary.

524. Mum felt afraid and she tried to panic, but dad didn't let her to do it in front of us.

Mum was afraid and she started to panic but dad didn't let her do it in front of us.

Anya félt és kétségbe kezdett esni, de apa nem engedte hogy előttünk ezt tegye.

Három hónapig tanitottam Magyarországon egy kis iskolában.

527.I will never forget those feeling I had in the car, I was so nervous I couldn't move.

I will never forget those feelings I had in the car: I was so nervous that I could hardly move.

Sosem fogom elfelejteni azt amit a kocsiban éreztem, annyira ideges voltam hogy alig tudtam mozdulni.

547.I knew it was just a little problem, and after he gave me some medicine, I didn't feel anything.

I knew it was just a little problem and after he had given me some medicine I didn't feel anything.

Tudtam, hogy csak kicsi volt a probléma, és miután adott nekem gyógyszert már nem is éreztem semmit sem.

562.I must had been sitting next to my bike for half an hour when I figured out that my mobile phone was with me all the time!

I must have been sitting next to my bike for half an hour when I figured out that my mobile phone was with me all the time!

Vagy fél órája ülhettem a kerékpárom mellett amikor rájöttem, hogy a telefonom egész idő alatt nálam volt.

564.But I didn't know what will happen next.

But I didn't know what would happen next.

De nem tudtam, hogy mi fog történni azután.

568.I did everything what the stewardess said.

I did everything (that) the stewardess said.

Mindent megtettem amit a légiutas kisérő mondott.

574.My sister started to cry and we were not able to calm down her.

My sister started to cry and we were not able to calm her down.

A testvérem sirni kezdett és nem birtuk megnyugtatni.

598.When he arrived home he was not finding his key.

When he arrived home he didn't find his key.

Mikor hazaért nem találta a kulcsát.

599.Than he found a ladder and broken the window with them.

Then he found a ladder and broke the window with it.

Aztán talált egy létrát és betörte vele az ablakot.

601.While he was going home on an empty street, he had lost his key.

While he was going home in an empty street he lost his key.

Mialatt hazafelé tartott az üres utcán elvesztette a kulcsát.

631. When he arrived, he didn't find her key, because the key lost.

When he arrived he didn't find his key because he had lost it.

Amikor megérkezett nem találta a kulcsát, mivel elveszítette azt.

642. He climbed up and tried to to get in, but there have already been somebody.

He climbed up and tried to to get in but there was already somebody.

Felmászott és be akart jutni, de már ott volt valaki.

652. He broke the window in.

He broke the window.

Betörte az ablakot.

657. Than he found a ladder and he broke a window about he tought that is his window.

Then he found a ladder and broke a window which he thought was his window.

Aztán talált egy létrát és betört vele egy ablakot, amiről azt hitte, hogy az övé.

669. He searched all his pocket, but he don't found.

He searched all his pockets but didn't find it.

Átkutatta az összes zsebét, de nem találta meg.

680. She didn't found his home.

He didn't find his home.

Nem találta az otthonát.

686. The man climbed up on the ladder, but he went in a bad room.

The man climbed up the ladder but he arrived at the wrong room.

A férfi felmászott a létrán de a rossz szobába ment be.

688. He was taken to the hospital.

He was taken to hospital.

Bevitték a kórházba.

692. When I was reading your problem, I feel sympathy.

When I read about your problem I felt sympathy.

Amikor a problémádról olvastam együttéreztem veled.

695. You should give back all the things, what she stole.

You should give back all the things (that) she has stolen.

Vissza kéne adnod mindent, amit ellopott.

711. Usually, the parents are very helpful, because they love their childrens.

Parents are usually very helpful because they love their children.

A szülők általában nagyon segitőkészek, mert szeretik a gyerekeiket.

724. I've read your problem in the internet forum „Teen Advice Online".

I've read about your problem on the Internet forum 'Teen Advice Online'.

A Teen Advice Online internetes fórumon olvastam a problémádról.

760.I had seen a terrible film yesterday than I had a nightmare.

I saw a terrible film yesterday and then I had a nightmare.

Tegnap egy szörnyű filmet láttam és utána rémálmom volt.

770.Immediately I opened the door and wanted to knocked down him but I don't remember, what was happening because I woke up.

I opened the door immediately and wanted to knock him down but I don't remember what happened next because I woke up.

Hirtelen kinyitottam az ajtót és le akartam ütni, de nem emlékszem, hogy azután mi történt, mert felébredtem.

771.I changed my job and I'm working as marriage counsellor at the moment.

I've changed my job and I'm working as a marriage counsellor at the moment.

Hivatást váltottam és jelenleg házassági tanácsadóként dolgozom.

773.The story is set in Cuba under rule of Batista.

The story is set in Cuba under the rule of Batista.

A film Kubában játszódik, Batista uralkodása alatt.

781. The word wealth can the people define in many ways.

The word 'wealth' can be defined in many ways.

A gazdagság szót többféleképpen lehet meghatározni.

788.As for their part the wealth do just mischief.

As for their part wealth makes only mischief.

Szerintük a vagyon csak bajt okoz.

806.We have taken every opportunity to eat something.

We take every opportunity to eat something.

Minden alaklmat megragadunk hogy ehessünk valamit.

809.During the meal we talk about family, job satisfaction, private life and money worries too.

During a meal we talk about family, job satisfaction, private life and financial worries, too.

Étkezés közben családról, munkahelyi megelégedettségről, magánéletről és anyagi gondokról is beszélgetünk.

811.Money make you happy and if you are rich you haven't got any problems.

Money makes you happy and if you are rich, you haven't got any problems.

A pénz boldoggá tesz és ha gazdag vagy nincsenek problémáid.

812.I have an older sister but she has been already married and lives now at the lake Balaton.

I have an older sister but she is married and lives now at lake Balaton.

Van egy idősebb testvére, de ő már férjhez ment és a Balatonon lakik.

	VERB				ARTICLE			NOUN Sg/Pl	PR	PREP	WO	OTHER
	Form	Tense	Aspect	Aux./Copula	Def.	Indef.	Zero					
3							H	H		x H		
5	x				x							x
6		H x		x								
11							x					
15							H		x	H		
16	x			x				x				
20								x		x	H	
23				x								H
28								H				
38									x x			
47	x	x							x			
52				x								
54	x x							H		x		
57		H x						x		x H		H
60				H	x							
66				x								
71	x	H										
74								H				x
75		x							x			
78				x								
79						x						
82											H	
83											x	
85	x									x		
95						x						
99						H					x	
100				x			H H					
104						HxH	H					
109		x										
112								x				H
123		H							x			H
125												x
130				H								
141			x						H			H
145									H			
146		H					H H					
154						H						
155										x		
169			x									
173		x										
177	x											
183									x			
185	x	x									x	x
188				x								

	VERB				ARTICLE			NOUN Sg/Pl	PR	PREP	WO	OTHER
	Form	Tense	Aspect	Aux. /Copula	Def.	Indef.	Zero					
190												H
199									H			
200				x								
213					x							
220								H	H			
221		x										
231											H	
239		H H								x		
240		H								x		H
250												H
253							H				H x	
262	x								x			
274	x								H			
275								x x				x x
279						H						H
282		x										
292							x					H
297									x			
311	x			x								
314	x											
328	x									x		
336	x						HH					
339							HH			x		
348		H										
349										x	x	
374											H	
375							x				H	
377											H	
389	x		x				x			x		
402		x										
407		x		x						x		
409			x				H			x	H	
417									x			
430				H H H								HHH
432						x x			H			
438		x								H		
440	x				x						x	
445										x		x H
453					x							
456		x			x			H				
457								x				
458			x x				x	x				
492								x				
508						H						
509										H		
517		H										
523		x	x				H					
524	x											x

	VERB				ARTICLE			NOUN Sg/Pl	PR	PREP	WO	OTHER
	Form	Tense	Aspect	Aux / Copula	Def.	Indef.	Zero					
527								x				
547		x										
562		x										
564		x H										
568									H			
574											x	
598			x	x								
599	x								x			
601		x								H		
631		x							H			H
642	x	x										
652												H
657		H										H
669		x							H	H		
680	x								H			
686					x							H H
688							x					
695		H							H			
711							H	x				
724										x x		
760		x										
770	x		x								H	
771		H				H						
773					H							
781				x								
788	x						H					x
806		x										
809						x						
811	x											
812		x					H					

Appendix 4. Abstracts

Abstract

The present paper deals with the influence of the mother tongue on the written language production of Hungarian learners of English. The theoretical part serves as an introduction by providing an overview among others about the characteristics of the learner language, contrastive linguistics and error analysis. The comparison of certain structures of the Hungarian and English grammar allows for making assumptions about the areas where the most errors are expected to occur. The second part of the study comprises the empirical investigation, which is based on the error analysis of English texts written by Hungarian secondary school students. The data analysis, which is carried out through the discussion of the most typical errors, aims at the verification of my hypotheses about the frequency of errors.

The primary aim of this study was to analyze and categorize errors occurring in the corpus in order to make valid statements about the quantity of interference errors within the single categories and also about their frequency in relation to the total number of errors. Another aim of the study was to show to what extent differences between the structures of English and Hungarian affect the learners' language accuracy.

In addition to the identification of the most erroneous areas of English grammar, another important result of the analysis is the confirmation of the assumption that the mother tongue plays a non-negligible role in foreign language production. The study reveals that also advanced learners are prone to transfer structures and, thus, make grammatical as well as lexical errors.

In conclusion, the available evidence warrants the belief that transfer is an important factor in SLA. There is certainly a need for further academic research into target language acquisition in order to find suitable methods of language teaching for the specific needs of EFL learners with Hungarian mother tongue.

Zusammenfassung

Die vorliegende Arbeit beschäftigt sich vorwiegend mit dem negativen Einfluss der Muttersprache auf die fremdsprachlichen Äußerungen der ungarischen Englischlernenden. Die Arbeit beginnt mit einem theoretischen Teil, welcher unter anderem einen Überblick über die Merkmale der Lernersprache, die kontrastive Linguistik und die Fehleranalyse gibt. Im empirischen Teil erfolgt eine Studie, die auf einer Analyse der Interferenzfehler ungarischer Englisch-LernerInnen basiert. Die Gegenüberstellung einzelner Kapitel der englischen und ungarischen Grammatik gibt Aufschluss darüber, wo man annimmt, dass die meisten Fehler auftreten und hilft die möglichen Fälle von Sprachtransfer darzustellen. Die Auswertung der Daten, welche auf die Analyse der typischen Fehler basiert, dient zur Verifizierung meiner Hypothesen über die Häufigkeit der Fehler.

Das Ziel dieser Studie war, die begangenen Fehler der gesammelten Texte analytisch zu dokumentieren und zu kategorisieren. Damit sollten konkrete Ergebnisse über die Häufung von Interferenzfehler in bestimmten Kategorien erlangt werden. Weiters sollte der Anteil der Fehler im Vergleich zur Gesamtfehlermenge dargestellt werden. In weiterer Folge soll die empirische Analyse zeigen wie sehr die Differenz zwischen den Strukturen der englischen und ungarischen Sprache die Sprachrichtigkeit beeinflusst.

Neben der Identifizierung der am meisten von Fehlern betroffenen Gebiete der englischen Grammatik, war ein wichtiges Resultat der Nachweis, dass das Zurückgreifen auf Strukturen der Muttersprache im alltäglichen Gebrauch von Englisch als Fremdsprache von ungarischen Schülern durchaus Anwendung findet. Die Studie gibt uns Einblick darauf, dass nicht nur Anfänger sondern auch Fortgeschrittene immer wieder sprachliche Strukturen transferieren und daraus resultierend sowohl grammatikalische als auch lexikalische Fehler machen.

Zusammenfassend lässt sich feststellen, dass Sprachtransfer in Spracherwerb eine wichtige Rolle spielt und dass es deshalb noch umfangreicher wissenschaftlicher Studien bedarf, um Methoden der Fremdsprachenlehren, die speziell auf die Bedürfnisse ungarischer Englisch-LernerInnen zugeschnitten sind, zu erforschen.

Appendix 5. Curriculum vitae

Europass
Curriculum Vitae

Personal information

Surname(s) / First name(s)	**Száki-Schwarz Linda**
Address	Kühgasse 3/9/15. 1110 Vienna
Mobile	0699 1900 6513
E-mail(s)	schwarz-szaki@tele2.at
Nationality	Hungarian
Date of birth	28 May 1982

Work experience

Dates	May 2008 →
Occupation or position held	**Teamleader (Language Competence Center)**
Main activities and responsibilities	Managing, monitoring and coaching team members, assigning workload, reporting
Name and address of employer	Mondial Assistance GmbH Vienna
Type of business or sector	Travel insurance and assistance services
Dates	Mar 2006 - May 2008
Occupation or position held	Waitress
Name and address of employer	Mayer am Pfarrplatz Vienna
Dates	Sep 2003 - Mar 2005
Occupation or position held	**Private teacher (German and English)**
Main activities and responsibilities	Improvement of language skills for academic, professional or personal purposes, preparation for university entrance exams
Name and address of employer	Pécs (Hungary)

Education and training

Dates	Mar 2005 →
Principal subjects / occupational skills covered	**Department of British and American Studies** Language of instruction: English Specialization: Linguistics
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	University of Vienna Vienna

Dates	Sep 2003 - Mar 2005
Principal subjects / occupational skills covered	**Teacher training programme** Language of instruction: Hungarian
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	University of Pécs (Faculty of Humanities - Department of Teacher Training) Pécs (Hungary)
Dates	Sep 2001 - Mar 2005
Principal subjects / occupational skills covered	**Department of British and American Studies** Language of instruction: English Specialization: applied linguistics
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	University of Pécs Pécs (Hungary)
Dates	Sep 2000 - Jun 2001
Title of qualification awarded	GCSE
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	Lóczy Lajos Gimnázium és Szakközépiskola (Secondary grammar school) Balatonfüred (Hungary)
Dates	Sep 1999 - Aug 2000
Principal subjects / occupational skills covered	Improvement of oral and written language skills
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	**International Language School** Brighton (England)
Dates	Sep 1992 - Jun 1999
Principal subjects / occupational skills covered	**Hungarian - German Dual Language Programme** Language of instruction: Hungarian and German
Name and type of organisation providing education and training	Kossuth Lajos Gimnázium (Secondary grammar school) Mosonmagyaróvár (Hungary)

Personal skills and competences

Mother tongue(s) **Hungarian**

Other language(s)

Self-assessment	Understanding				Speaking				Writing	
European level (*)	Listening		Reading		Spoken interaction		Spoken production			
German	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user
English	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user	C2	Proficient user
Italian	A1	Basic User	A1	Basic User	A1	Basic User	A1	Basic User	A1	Basic User

(*) Common European Framework of Reference (CEF) level

Social skills and competences

INTERCULTURAL COMPETENCE

- acquired through working as an Au Pair in Germany (1998) and

- working as an Au Pair in England (2000)

- Austrian, Slovenian, Rumanian, Serbo-Croatian, Bulgarian and Hungarian colleagues at my present workplace

Organisational skills and competences	• Teamleader activities • Advanced training courses: Time Management, Organization and Self-Organisation, Teambuilding and Motivation, etc.
Computer skills and competences	Windows; Microsoft Office Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Photoshop
Other skills and competences	Photography