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In Support of the Full Transfer Hypothesis: The realization of Direct Objects in the Sentence Production of Russian L2 Learners of English

ENG-3991 Master's Thesis in English Linguistics

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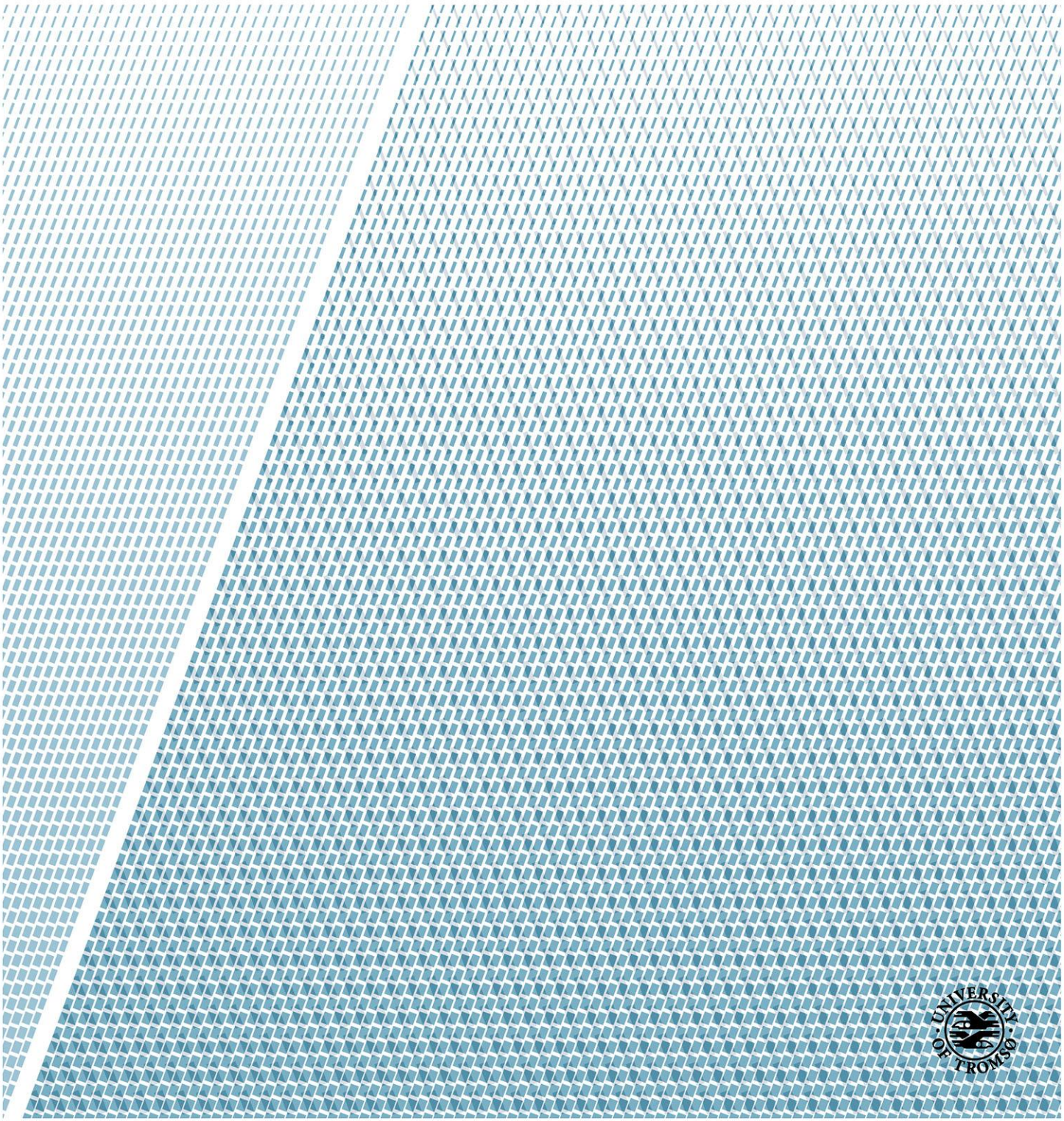

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CHAPTER I

Introduction

Second language acquisition is an independent discipline which has attracted a lot of interest from researchers. Second language acquisition focuses on matters such as, for example, adult second language acquisition, child second language acquisition, language transfer, language teaching and so on. Nowadays English is one of the most popular second languages acquired by learners from all over the world. In Russia English is the preferred second language and children usually start learning English at the age of seven.

As Russian L2 learners of English have to deal with a language which differs significantly from their L1, they can be expected to use transfer while acquiring, for instance word order. English and Russian use different strategies of marking definiteness/givenness. In the Russian language it is common that the sentence elements which represent given information move into preverbal position. The English language marks definiteness/givenness and indefiniteness by the use of articles and since Russian is an article-less language, L2 English learners do not have access to transfer and thus usually find the acquisition of article system very challenging.

Another possible strategy of marking givenness in Russian is through subject and object omissions, which are usually ungrammatical in English. Nevertheless, subject and object omission in Russian is not unrestricted and is used mostly with referents that have been previously mentioned and can be easily recovered from the context.

The objective of the present study is to investigate the realization of direct objects of Russian L2 English learners whose language competence is estimated as beginners. I will focus on both target and non-target ways of marking new and given direct objects. By non-target ways of marking definiteness/givenness I mean the transfer of SOV word order, known as direct object scrambling, and direct object omission from the learner's L1. By target marking of definiteness/givenness I mean correct article use, namely the use of the indefinite article with direct objects possessing [-definite] features and the definite article with direct objects possessing [+definite] features. However, L2 English learners are predicted to misuse articles

and overuse the indefinite article in definite context as well as overuse the definite article in the indefinite context (Ionin & Ko & Wexler: 2004, Tryzna: 2009).

The main working hypothesis is that while acquiring English as an L2, L1 Russian learners should use ways of marking direct objects as given and new that are appropriate in their L1. In other words, the learners are expected to exhibit SOV word order and direct object drop in their sentence production in English.

The present study is based on Mykhaylyk's experiment (2012, 2013) investigating object scrambling in child and adult Ukrainian. Mykhaylyk's study involved experimental work with children and was designed as a picture description task. Some changes were introduced to adjust the original experiment to administering it in English. Apart from scrambling the experiment was aimed to investigate direct object drop and the article use of the participants. The data consists of short dialogues between the experimenter and the participants who described pictures (see Appendix 2) organized into four groups according to four conditions: Condition A (definite), Condition B (partitive), Condition D (indefinite, specific) and Condition C (pronominal). The first three conditions were taken from Mykhaylyk's experiment and the last one was added to ensure that at least one condition required the use of pronominal objects instead of NPs. The learners were expected to mark direct objects as given in Condition A (definite), Condition B (partitive) and Condition C (pronominal). Condition B (partitive) differs from Condition C (pronominal) and Condition A (definite) as the referents are previously introduced and thus given, but partitives are not marked with the indefinite article in English.

The results of the study show that the participants do not have transfer from L1 as their main strategy of marking new and given direct objects, as the rate of direct object scrambling in Conditions A (definite), B (partitive) and C (pronominal) are 7,4%. At the same time, direct object drop, expected in Condition C (pronominal) is exhibited at the rate 15,6%. Condition B (partitive) was omitted from the results as it ended up being too difficult for the learners. All the cases of transfer of direct object scrambling and direct object omission were found only in Condition C (pronominal) and therefore the rate of scrambling and object drop in this condition is quite high 31,3%. However, this does not mean that the data gives the evidence that the learners have acquired the target-like contrast between indefiniteness and

definiteness, as the most common mistakes in article use are article omission and article misuse.

The present thesis is organized in the following way. In CHAPTER 2, I will present some syntactic background on Information Structure in Russian. I will describe the actual division of a sentence into new and given information, namely the *Rheme* and the *Theme*, applied by Russian linguists. I will compare the notions of the *Rheme* and the *Theme* to the notions applied by western linguists in order to describe informational asymmetry of a sentence: *Topic*, *Comment* and *Focus*. This will be followed by description of a specific way of marking given information, direct object omission in Slavonic languages such as Russian, Ukrainian and Polish and in English. I will argue that direct object omission occurs mostly in informal speech and in cases where the referent of the omitted object is easily restored from linguistic or situational context. The chapter ends with the discussion of the theories on transfer with the focus on the working hypothesis of the present thesis which is called *Full Transfer/Full Access* hypothesis.

CHAPTER 3 presents an overview of studies on the acquisition of articles. In this chapter I will outline the main assumptions concerning the notion of definiteness as well as hypotheses explaining the use of the definite article in various contexts. This will be followed by a description of definiteness and indefiniteness in English and a summary of studies on the acquisition of articles which either support or question a hypothesis on the acquisition of L2 articles referred to as the Fluctuation hypothesis (Ionin & Ko & Wexler 2004: 20). The chapter ends with a brief discussion of the acquisition of articles in child language.

CHAPTER 4 contains a description of Mykhaylyk's study (2012, 2013) on the phenomenon of direct object scrambling in child and adult Ukrainian. This chapter also presents my predictions on the realization of direct objects of Russian L2 learners of English. It was expected that alongside with the target way of marking direct objects as new and given, that participants can transfer direct object scrambling and direct object omission from their L1 as well as exhibit article omission and article misuse.

CHAPTER 5 introduces the results of the present experiment considering three phenomena: article use of the participants, rates of direct object scrambling and direct object omission. An overview of individual results is also included in this chapter. In CHAPTER 6 I will discuss

the results and the factors contributing to the participants' use of non-target like ways of marking given and new direct objects and discuss the most common mistakes in article use of the participants. In addition, I will describe the participants' realization of direct objects and discuss why they preferred to use NPs instead of pronominal objects in the contexts where the pronouns were more appropriate.

Finally the thesis ends with a brief summary and conclusion in CHAPTER 7.

CHAPTER 2

Information Structure

Russian is well known as a "free word order" language, nevertheless, there are some word orders that native speakers produce more often and find more acceptable. They are: SVO, OVS and SOV. This is in contrast to word orders that are produced very rarely, such as VSO, VOS and OSV (Kallestinova 2007: 13). The underlying order in Russian is SVO (Hawlins, 1983, Tomlin 1986, Bailyn 2001, Dyakonova 2005). In English only two word orders can be found – SVO and OSV, the latter is known as Topicalization (Bailyn 2012: 237). Many researchers have claimed that word order is determined by information structure. In this chapter I will consider different approaches to division of the Information Structure. Russian school of linguistics tends to single out Theme and Rheme, while western linguists use such notions as Topic, Focus, and Contrast. In section 2.3 I will characterize object omission as a way of marking given information.

2.1 Theme and Rheme

In this section we will give an overview of the theory of division sentences into *Theme* and *Rheme* applied by Russian linguists.

Word order freedom in Russian depends on information structure. Shvedova (1980) writes that word order in the Russian language is determined by communicative objective or in other words, the expression of the communicative importance of a word (Sirotinina 1980: 124). The two notions *Theme* and *Rheme* are introduced to explain that depending on the communicative objective, a sentence can be divided into two parts – the starting point, or the object of message or given information, and what is reported about, or new information (Shvedova 1980, Sirotinina 1980, Zolotova 1982, 1998, Vallduvi 1993). The starting point of a message is called the *Theme* and what is reported about the theme is referred to as the *Rheme*. The *Rheme* is the main communicative part of a sentence, as it introduces the new information. The way sentence members are organized reflect their communicative importance – in SVO word order each word gets equal communicative importance, but if a word is moved to the initial position (*Theme*) or to the final (*Rheme*), then their communicative importance is emphasized (Sirotinina 1980: 128).

Dividing a sentence into *Theme* and *Rheme* is referred to as *actual division* (Shvedova 1980, Sirotinina 1980, Zolotova 1973, 1982, Zolotova & Onipenko & Sidorova 1998). There are also other names for actual division – *functional perspective, communicative division, semantic division, and communicative-semantic division* (Zolotova 1982, Zolotova et al 1998). As illustrated in (1a), (1b) and (1c) one and the same sentence can have different actual divisions depending on situational context (Shvedova 1980: 91):

(1) a. *Oteč prishel s raboty.*
Father came from work.
b. *S raboty prishel / oteč*
From work came / father.
c. *Prishel oteč / s raboty.*
Came father / from work.

The part to the left of the slash represents *Theme* and the elements to the right represent *Rheme*. The actual division of a sentence is expressed through word order and intonation and establishes the *communicative paradigm* of a sentence (Shvedova 1980: 91). As the information in a text develops from given (from the point of view of the speaker) to new, sentence components fall into the two poles: the *Theme* and the *Rheme*. This division can be represented both by movement of sentence components or by intonation.

In Russian, if the rhematic stress is given to the sentence components that represent the new information, the word order can be preserved unchanged. In the examples (2 a, b, c) components in bold are those that receive rhematic stress (Zolotova et al 1998: 379), and since the word order is unchanged, the intonation is responsible for the actual division of the sentence into the *Theme* and the *Rheme*.

(2) a. **Na drugoj den'** Nikita vypustil vorobja v sadu.
Next day Nikita set free sparrow(Gen) in garden.
***The next day** Nikita set the sparrow free in the garden.*

b. Nikita **vypustil** vorobja v sadu.
Nikita set fee sparrow(Gen) in garden.

*Nikita **set** the sparrow **free** in the garden.*

c. Nikita vypustil vorobja **v sadu**.
Nikita set free sparrow(Gen) in garden.
*Nikita set the sparrow free **in the garden**.*

Zolotova et al (1998) suggest two types of linking sentences in a narration according to the *Theme* and *Rheme* division. They are parallel linking and successive linking. The first type of linking is illustrated in the sentences in (3) and the second one – in the sentences in (4) (Zolotova et al 1998: 385):

(3) *Oteč hodit bystro <…>. Inogda on saditsya <…>. Potom on nasvistyvajet, smotrja v okno. Father goes fast <…>. Sometimes he sits down <…> Then he whistles looking at the window.*

In sentence (3), we see that the *Theme*-subject is the same for all the sentences and their construction is parallel. In the sentences in (4) the *Rheme* of the preceding sentence becomes the theme of the next one making the linking of the sentences in the narration successive (Zolotova et al 1998: 385):

(4) *On vozvrashajetsja / s dorogoj, krasivoj igrushkoj. Eto / bolshoj slon <…>. Na slone / sedlo <…>.*
He returns / with an expensive beautiful toy. This is / a big grey elephant <…>. On the elephant / there is a red saddle <…>.

As we have already mentioned, the *Rheme* occurs to the right of the slash and the *Theme* – to the left. We can see how the *Rhemes* "*expensive beautiful toy",* and *"a big grey elephant"* become the *Themes* "*this is" and "the elephant".*

In stylistically neutral literary language, the *Theme* comes before the *Rheme*, and the center of intonation construction, emphasizing the *Rheme* is located at the end of the sentence. In emotionally coloured speech a change in word order occurs when the *Rheme*, being the intonation centre, moves from the final position to the initial or the central one. Such a

movement does not alter the actual division of the sentence, but gives it an emotional colouring (Shvedova 1980: 91-92).

Depending on the communicative objective, which is determined by the speaker one and the same sentence can have different meanings. The communicative objective – is the intention of the speaker to underline a certain aspect of the sentence that is considered important in a given context and in a given speech situation. For example, in sentence in (5a) the communicative objective explains what the brother has done (*bought a book*) (Shvedova 1980: 190).

(5) a. *Brat kupil knigu.*
Brother bought a book (Acc).

The meaning of this sentence can be changed if a speaker has another communicative objective – to report what the brother bought like in (5b). The words written with spacing represent the components which get rhematic stress:

b. *Brat kupil knigu.*
Brother bought b o o k (Acc).
c. *Knigu kupil brat.*
Book (Acc) bought b r o t h e r.
d. *Brat knigu kupil.*
Brother book(Acc) b o u g h t.

The communicative objective in (5b) presupposes that the hearers know that brother bought something, but they do not know what exactly. Another possible communicative objective is – to report who bought a book. This is illustrated in (5c). The communicative objective can also be to communicate how brother got the book, in which case sentence in (5d) would be a preferred word order. So, depending on what the concrete communicative objective of the sentence is, it is divided into two parts. The first part consists of the elements that represent a starting point of the message, what is reported about. The starting point of the message often (but not always) can be known to hearers and can be presupposed by the situation or context. The second part reports something about the first part and has the main communicative

content of a sentence, what is reported; more often the second part contains something new, and is not known to the reader or the hearer.

The new information, i.e. the *Rheme* which is the purpose of the sentence can be singled out by the question test. For example, in the example in (6a), any component can represent the *Rheme*, if we ask questions about them as it is demonstrated in sentences *b, c, d, e, f* in (6). The components in bold that are left to the slash represent the *Rheme* (Zolotova & Onipenko & Sidorova 1998: 378-379):

(6) a. Na drugoj den' Nikita vypustil vorobja v sadu.
Next day Nikita set free sparrow (Acc) in garden.
The next day Nikita set a sparrow free in the garden.

b. Chto sdelal Nikita? – Nikita / **vypustil vorobja**.
What did Nikita? – Nikita / set free sparrow (Acc).
What did Nikita do? – Nikita /set the sparrow free.

c. Kogo vypustil Nikita? – Nikita vypustil / **vorobja**.
What set free Nikita? – Nikita set free / sparrow (Acc).
What did Nikita set free? – Nikita set a sparrow free.

d. Gde Nikita vypustil vorobja? – Nikita vypustil vorobja / **v sadu**.
Where Nikita set free sparrow? – Nikita set free sparrow (Acc) / in garden.
Where did Nikita set the sparrow free? – Nikita set the sparrow free in the garden.

e. Kto vypustil vorobja? – Vypustil vorobja / **Nikita**.
Who set free sparrow? – Set free sparrow (Acc) / Nikita (Nom).
Who set the sparrow free? – Nikita set the sparrow free.

f. Kogda Nikita vypustil vorobja? – Nikita vypustil vorobja / **na drugoj den'**.
When Nikita set free sparrow? – Nikita set free sparrow (Acc) / next day.
When did Nikita set free the sparrow? – Nikita set free the sparrow the next day.

2.2 Topic, Comment and Focus

In order to describe the division of a sentence according to the information structure, other terms similar to the *Theme* and the *Rheme* can be used.

To explain the encoding of pragmatic distinctions in Russian and English, Dyakonova uses the term "informational asymmetry", borrowed from Prince (1981) (Dyakonova 2005: 91). The informational asymmetry is reflected in sentence division into *Topic* and *Focus* (Dyakonova 2005, Prince 1981, Zdorenko 2005, Bailyn 2012). The *Topic* is what sentence is about (Prince 1981) and may be referred to as "old information" (Bailyn 2012, Dyakonova 2005, 2009, Kallestinova 2007, Westergaard 2009). The initial position in a sentence is typically associated with the *Topic*, and this sentence-initial position, which contains any preposed "topicalized" elements or the subject, is called the "topic slot" (Vallduvi 1993: 40). *Focus* refers to what the speaker in the particular situation regards as unknown to the hearer, i.e. the informative part of the utterance (Bailyn 2012, Dyakonova 2005, 2009, Kallestinova 2007). Even though *Topics* typically occur in the initial position, this is not necessary always the case, as any referential phrase may be considered the *Topic* as it depends on interpretation (Vallduvi 1993, Reinhart 1982, Davison 1984, Gundel 1988). We can consider sentence (7) (Vallduvi 1993: 40, taken from Reinhart 1982, ex. (24)):

(7) *Rosa is standing near Felix.*

In this case, both *Rosa* and *Felix* can be interpreted as *Topic*. The interpretation depends on the context. If we ask "Where is Rosa?" and get the answer "*Rosa is standing near Felix",* then "*Rosa*" becomes the *Topic* in the sentence (7). If we ask "Have you seen Felix?" and get the answer "*Rosa is standing near Felix",* then "*Felix*" becomes the *Topic* (Vallduvi 1993: 40).

The division of the sentence according to the Information structure can also be described in terms of *Topic* and *Comment* (Vallduvi 1993). The *Topic* here is "old information" while what we say about it is called *Comment*. Vallduvi (1993: 38) gives an example from Hockett (1958) to illustrate the notion of *Topic-Comment*. In sentence (8) *John* is the Topic and *ran away* is the Comment Vallduvi (1993: 38, ex. (29)).

(8) *John / ran away.*

Topic and *Focus* influence the order in which elements are organized in a sentence. Such features as [+Foc] and [-Foc] and [+Top] and [-Top] cause elements to scramble (Westergaard 2009).

It is interesting to mention that even though the dichotomy the *Topic* and the *Focus* seems identical to the distinction between the *Theme* and the *Rheme*, there are some differences. The *Theme-Rheme* division is binary, whereas the *Topic* and the *Focus* still allow the possibility that a sentence can have a discourse neutral material which does not belong to Topic or Focus (Bailyn 2012: 266-267). The universal pattern of Information Structure looks like this: Tpoic > (Discourse Neutral Material (DNM)) > Focus (Dyakonova 2009: 55). In addition, as we have seen in example (8), none of the sentence components can be marked as the *Focus*, while the *Topic* and the *Comment* can be singled out.

The *Focus* bears the main prosodic prominence of the sentence (Chomsky 1971). It is common to distinguish between Information and Identificational Focus (Kiss 1998). When a DP denoting an entity already mentioned in the previous discourse appears as the *Focus* in the sentence, it is called the Identificational Focus (Dyakonova 2005: 91). The difference between Information and Indentificational Focus lies in the fact that Identificational Focus involves movement while Information Focus does not (Reinhart 1995, Kiss 1998, Meinunger 2000, Dyakonova 2005: 91-92). The Identificational Focus can be found in a preverbal position or in a sentence initial position, and it is marked by emphatic stress. The Informational Focus receives a falling or sentential stress (Reinhart 1995, Dyakonova 2005: 91).

Sometimes the *Focus* is referred to as Focus-presupposition or Focus-open proposition. Both presupposition and open proposition refer to the knowledge shared by speaker and hearer (Vallduni 1990: 47, Jackendoff 1972: 230, Prince 1981). This shared knowledge is also called background knowledge (Vallduni 1990: 47, Chafe 1976). Now let us combine the terms mentioned above: the *Topic*, the *Focus*, the *Background* and the *Comment* and illustrate how they interact in one example (Dyakonova 2009: 13, ex. (38)):

(9) A: *What are you going to give your parents for their anniversary?*
B: *I / bought them / a beautiful Swarovski picture frame.*

In example (9) "*I"* is the *Topic* since it is given information and "*a beautiful Svarovski picture frame"* is the *Focus*, or new information and the informative part of this sentence. Then, *"bought them a beautiful Swarovski picture frame"* is the Comment, since it adds information about the *Topic* "*I".* Finally, "*I bought them"* is the Background because we can see from the dialogue that Speaker A knows that Speaker B gives something to his/her parents for anniversary and can suppose that he/she is going to buy something, which makes this shared knowledge between the hearer and the speaker.

One more notion that should be considered when we speak about the *Focus* and the *Topic* is the notion of the *Contrast*. Unlike the Comment and the Background, the *Contrast* exists independent from the *Topic* and the *Focus*. Dyakonova defines the *Contrast* as the "generation of a membership set which includes semantically comparable elements" (Dyakonova 2009: 17). What is remarkable about the *Contrast* is that it can apply both to the *Topic* and the *Focus*, and there can be more than one contrastive element in a sentence. Then, the *Contrast* has a degree, i.e. elements can be more or less contrastive. This depends on three factors: if the alternative set is explicit or implicit, if it is open or closed, and the size of the contrastive constituent (Dyakonova 2009: 17-18 ex. (48)).

(10) (Context: Who is going where for vacations?)

We will go to SPAIN, *Nelly* is leaving for CYPRUS, and *Sergey* is going to CROATIA.

In (10) the *Topics* are given in italics and the *Foci* are given in capital letters. The *Topics "We"*, "*Nelly"* and "*Sergey"* are contrasted to each other as well as the *Foci* SPAIN, CYPRUS and CROATIA.

Unlike the *Topic* and the *Focus*, the *Contrast* is a discourse level henomenon, not a sentence-level one, as it does not arise without a preceding context (Dyakonova 2009: 18). Thus, it does not cause scrambling. Dyakonova (2009) considers the *Contrast* a conversational implicature inside the *Topic* and the *Focus*. Inside the *Topic* the Contrast hints on some other relevant alternatives while inside the *Focus*, it hints on the irrelevant alternatives (Dyakonova 2009: 18, ex. (50)). Let us consider example (11):

(11) *Mary* sent Daniel a birthday card.

implicature: there were other people who congratulated him. **cancellation:** in fact, she was the only one who happened to remember about his birthday.

In (11) *"Mary"* is the *Topic* of the sentence, and according to the implicature there can be several contrasting *Topics* as there are other people who congratulated Daniel. But, the *Contrast* in either the *Focus* or the *Topic* can be easily cancelled (Dyakonova 2009, Potts 2007). So, as we see in cancellation there are no contrastive *Topics* to the *Topic* of the sentence (11).

All in all, a sentence can be analyzed in terms of a binary division into the *Theme* and the *Rheme* or the *Topic* and the *Focus*. All these terms reflect the discourse relationships and indicate whether the information is new or given. In Russian the Information Structure influences the word order and the thematic or topicalized elements can often be moved. Such movement is usually the property of "communicative" or, in other words, marked and non-neutral word order.

2.3 Object Omission

In this section we will focus on the null object phenomenon, or, in other words, on direct object omission as another strategy of marking given information. We will characterize direct object omission in Slavic languages, such as Russian, Ukrainian and compare it to direct object omission in English.

2.3.1 Object Omission in Russian, Ukrainian and Polish

In Slavic languages such as Russian, Ukrainian and Polish specified/anaphoric contexts can trigger the use of the tree direct object types: full noun phrases, pronominal elements and null objects.

Russian is referred to as a *pro-drop* language as it allows omission of many referential subjects and direct objects in main finite clauses. Such empty categories are called *silent* or *null* elements.

Russian can also be treated as a "mixed" null subject language as it on the one hand, exhibits use of null expletives, but, on the other hand, requires theta-marked subjects to be lexically filled in stylistically neutral contexts (Franks 1995: 300, ex. (28a), (29a)). In sentence (12) the null subject is marked with "*" which means that the omission is ungrammatical while in (13) null subject is grammatical:

(12) Ivan/on/**ø*** kupil gazetu
"Ivan/he(nom)/ **ø*** bought a newspaper"

(13) **Ø** temneet
"(it) is getting dark

It is believed that some languages permit subject drop because they possess a rich subject-verb agreement inflection and thus it is possible to identify some features of the subject (Franks 1995: 287-289). Russian fits into this "feature identification hypothesis" since it has verbal agreement morphology, but at the same time this does not explain why direct objects can be omitted in Russian as there is no verb-object agreement. In addition, there are languages, such as, for example, Chinese and Japanese, that allow null subjects despite the fact that they lack subject-verb agreement morphology (Diakonova 2003: 31, Franks 1995: 289, Gordishevsky & Avrutin 2004: 187).

Diakonova (2003) follows Rizzi (1986) and suggests that null subjects can, like null objects, be described in terms of empty pronominals or *pro*. Franks (1995) characterizes *pro* as a category which represents thematically independent null pronouns and possesses features [+pronominal - anaphoric] (Franks 1995: 288). Diakonova (2003) arguments that null objects belong to *pro* by arguing that null objects alongside with pronouns are free in their governing category. Example (14a) demonstrates that the object cannot be omitted as it is not coindexed with the subject. In example (14b), however, null object can be coindexed with the subject in the main clause and being free in its governing domain, it can be omitted (Diakonova 2003: 28-29, ex (40a), (40b)):

(14) a. *Maria videla **ø**
Maria saw ø
"Maria saw her"

b. Maria skazala, chto Boris **ø** udaril
Maria said that Boris ø hit
“Maria said that Boris hit her”

We have described the notion of null subject and null object and we should now give a characteristic to the contexts in which the units can be omitted. It is quite common when items that are recoverable from the context can be omitted on the surface (Franks 1995: 307). In this section we will primarily characterize object omission as it is more relevant to our thesis.

First of all, it is important to mention that subject and direct object omission are usually the properties of colloquial Russian (Gordishevsky & Avrutin 2003, 2004). Examples (15a) and (15b) illustrate the omission of both subjects and objects in Russian (Gordishevsky & Avrutin 2003: 5-6, ex. (7a, b)). We will only comment upon direct object omission since it is more relevant to our study. In (15a) and (15b) the direct objects “*jabloko*” (an apple) and “*banan*” (a banana) when mentioned for the first time by Speaker A represent new information and possess *Focus* features. Speaker B subsequently omits these direct objects as for him/her they represent given information. They have been previously mentioned in the context and thus became topicalized. This makes it possible to recover the direct objects in utterances by Speaker B, and the sentences are grammatical with or without the direct objects.

(15)

a. A: Xochesh jabloko?
want-2sg apple
“Do (you) want an apple?
B: Xochu **ø**.
want – 1sg
”Yes, I want (it)”.

b. A: Xochu banan.
want – 1sg banana
”(I) want a banana”
B: Idi voz`mi **ø**.
go take
”Go take (it)”.

There are several possible contexts which allow direct object omissions in colloquial adult Russian. We give a short description to each of them. The first possible context is linguistic context. In other words, the direct object missing was verbally/linguistically established in the preceding sentence/discourse and thus represents old information. This is illustrated in examples (15a) and (15b) mentioned before and in example (16) (Gordishevsky & Avrutin 2003: 5-6, ex. (7c), 2004).

(16)

A: Kto smotrel **etot film**?
'Who saw this movie?'

B: Ja smotrela **ø**.
'I saw (it).'

Secondly, the referent of the omitted direct object can be also recovered from situational context. This is possible when the referent of the omitted object is present in the scene and when the speaker or the hearer, or a third party, establishes the reference only with the help of strong non-linguistic cues provided by the speaker, such as pointing, nodding, etc. Situational context is illustrated in examples (17a) and (17b) (Gordishevsky & Avrutin 2003: 5-6 ex. (9a), (11c), 2004). In (17a) the omitted object is referring to the hearer and in (17b) it can be a third party or a thing.

(17)

a. Idi suda, poceluju **ø**.
'Come here, (I) will kiss (you).'

b. *Pointing at something /someone*
Videli **ø**?!
'Did (you) see (it/him/them)?!'

The difference between linguistic and situational contexts is that the latter depends more on different contextual circumstances and the time of the event should take place in the immediate past or in the nearest future (Gordishevsky & Avrutin, 2003: 8). So, for object

omission to be grammatical, some conditions should be met. These are the reference to an ongoing event, as in (17b), or to a state as shown in (15a,b), or to events that either took place in the immedite past or are going to take place in the near future as in example (17a) (Gordishevsky & Avrutin, 2003: 8).

Linguistic and situational contexts can be called referential contexts, as the referents of the omitted objects are present in the previous contexts. In some cases, null objects in Russian can be arbitrary which means that they do not have fixed referents as demonstrated in example (18) (Diakonova 2003: 30-31, ex. (50a)):

(18) Podobnye obstojatel'stva ochen' rasstraivajut **ø.**
such circumstances very much upset **ø**
"Such circumstances upset you (one) very much"

Direct object ellipsis can be found in Russian coordinate constructions. Examples (19a), (19b) and (19c) illustrate optional and obligatory object omissions in coordinate clauses. The objects marked with "*" are obligatorily omitted. In case of (19a) and (19b) the pronominal objects have NPs "*ptitzy*" (bird) and "*rebenka*" (baby) as antecedents, so their omission is optional. However, in (19c) and in case of the second pronominal object in (19b), their antecedents are pronouns, so these objects should be obligatory omitted (Diakonova 2003: 32, ex (51a-c)):

(19) a. Masha vypustila ptitzu a Zhenia (ee) poimala.
Masha let out the bird and Zhenia (it) caught
"Masha let the bird out and Zhenia caught it"

b. Olga vykupala rebenka, nakormila (ego) i polozhila (*ego) spat.
Olga bathed baby fed (him) and put (*him) to bed
"Olga bathed the baby, fed him and put him to sleep"

c. Zhenia ego vzjala i (*ego) vybrosila.
Zhenia it took and (*it) threw away.
"Zhenia took it and threw it away"

After we have discussed direct object omission in Russian, we can briefly characterize direct object omission in two other Slavic languages - Ukrainian and Polish. Standard Polish allows the use of clitics in anaphoric contexts and full pronouns in contexts with animate/human contrastive referents (Mykhalyk & Sopata 2013 a ,b). Standard Ukrainian always triggers the use of full pronouns in such contexts. At the same time, it is also grammatical if any element is omitted in cases where it was given in the previous discourse (Mykhalyk & Sopata 2013 a, b).

Mykhaylyk & Sopata (2013 a, b) conducted a study that investigated the use of direct objects in specified/anaphoric contexts in Polish and Ukrainian. Both children and adults participated in the study. In the group of Polish L1 speakers there were 48 children aged 3,1-6,9 and 33 adults. In the group of Ukrainian L1 speakers there were 31 children aged from 3,2-6,7 and 22 adults. The experiment was administrated in the form of a picture description task. Examples (20 a-d) and (12 e-h) demonstrate the target answers for L1 Polish speakers and L1 Ukrainian speakers. In the examples below, the Ukrainian, Polish and English glosses provided by the authors are used. As we can see from the answers in (20) and (21), as the direct object "*cat*" is present in the context, it can be realized in the answers as either personal pronouns "*go*" (him) and "*joho*" (him) in Polish and Ukrainian respectively, or it can be omitted. In cases of omission, the referent of the omitted direct object can be easily recovered from the context discourse (Mykhalyk & Sopata 2013b: 2, ex. (1)):

(20) What did Peter do to/with the cat?

<u>Polish</u>

a. On **go** umyl.
   He him washed

b. On umyl **go**.
   He washed him

c. Umyl **go**.
   Washed him

d. Umyl **ø**.
   Washed
   "He washed him".

(21) What did Peter do to/with the cat?

Ukrainian

e. Vin **joho** pomyv.
he him washed

f. Vin pomyv **joho**.
He washed him

g. Pomyv **joho**.
Washed him

h. Pomyv **ø**.
Washed
”He washed him”.

The results of the experiment demonstrated all the the three realizations of direct objects: NPs, null objects and personal pronouns. In the present section we will present the adult results only as they are more relevant to our study. In Ukrainian and Polish the highest rates of pronominal objects were detected in pronominal animate contexts – 55% and 71% respectively, while in inanimate contexts the results were 42% and 44%. The second most used realization of direct objects were NPs at a rate of 39% in inanimate context and 32% in animate context for Ukrainian and 32% and 39% for Polish in the same contexts. Finally, omitted direct objects are also acceptable in adult speech, especially as reallization of inanimate referents: at the rate of 25% and 13% for inanimate and animate objects in the data of Polish L1 adult speakers. For L1 Ukrainian adult speakers the rates are 19% and 13% for inanimate and animate objects. (Mykhaylyk & Sopata 2013b: 2, Figure 1, Table 1).

To sum up, Russian, Ukrainian and Polish allow discourse related omissions of direct objects. Null objects are not ungrammatical in these languages and such direct object realizations are limited to certain contexts. In the next section we will discuss subject and direct object omission in English which is a non pro-drop language.

2.3.2 Subject and Object Omission in English

Unlike Russian, English is not a pro-drop language, or, in other words, it does not permit subject and object omission. In English, even non-theta marked subjects should be lexically

filled as shown in examples (22a) and (22b). Ungrammatical realization of subjects is marked with "*" (Franks 1995: 299, ex (25a), (25b)):

(22) a. **It/ø*** is getting dark.
b. **It/ ø*** was very nice at your place

While omissions have been studied in English, most of them have focused on subject omissions (Haegeman 2000, Haegeman 2013, Rizzi 2000, Brombeg & Wexler 1995, Rendell 1994, to mention a few). As we have mentioned above, English is a non pro-drop language, but in some cases L1 English speakers use null subject. First of all, null subjects can be found in informal spoken English as illustrated in examples (23a), (23b) and (23c). The examples in (23a) demonstrate first person subject omission, the examples in (23b) illustrate third person referential subject omission and the examples in (23c) show third person non-referential subject omission (Haegeman 2000: 132-233, ex. (7a), (7b), (7c)).

(23) a. Beg your pardon.
Told you so.
b. Doesn't look too well.
Serves you right.
c. Looks like rain.
Appears to be a big crowd in the hall.

Secondly, subjects can be dropped if they are the *Topic*, as in rejoinders. Example (24) demonstrates such a case of subject drop in adult speech (Haegeman 2000: 130, ex (4a)):

(24)
- What happened to Mary?
- **ø** went away for a while.

Thirdly, subject omissions can be noticed in diary writing, such as in (25) (Haegeman 2000: 130, ex. (3a), from Sylvia Plath, 10.1.1959, p.288):

(25) Cried yesterday morning: as if there were an hour for keening: why is crying so pleasurable.

Also, null subjects are quite common in speech of children acquiring English as an L1. This is shown in (26 a) and (26 b) (Rizzi 2000: 270, 274, ex. (1a), (1b)), but in this case, null subjects become substituted by target overt subjects quite early on.

(26) a. **ø** was a green one (Eve 1;10: Brown 1973)
b. **ø** have to drink grape juice first (Eve1;10)

Like subject omission, object omission in child English is typically reported at very early stages in development and occurs only very infrequently (e.g., Valian 1991, Wang et al. 1992 Gruter 2007: 102). Gruter (2007) administered an experiment in a form of truth value judgment task in order to investigate the use of a referential null objects child's speech (Gruter 2007: 111). There were two groups of participants: nine monolingual French chilsren and ten monolingual English children whose mean age was 4, 4 and 4,6 respectively (Gruter 2007: 106). The results showed that monolingual English children rejected referential null objects at a rate 90% and monolingual French children rejected null objects at a rate at 85,7% (Gruter 2007: 106-107, Table 2, Table 3).

In adult English, unlike in Russian, direct objects cannot be omitted even if they are contextually recoverable. Examples (27a) and (27b) illustrate grammatical and ungrammatical variants of one and the same sentence respectively (Haegeman 2013: 88, ex. (2a), (2b)). If these sentences were in Russian, then both variants would be grammatical as the referent of the omitted object would be recoverable from the situational context.

(27) a. You should bake the chicken for an hour.
b. *You should bake **ø** for an hour.

Interestingly, despite the fact that null objects are ungrammatical in Eglish, they can be allowed in instructional type of writing, such as recepies as shown in example (28) (Haegeman 2013: 88, ex. (5)):

(28) Put the prepared potato chunks into a large saucepan with enough salted water to take the pasta later, and bring **ø** to the boil.

It is important to mention that though direct objects can be omitted in instructional writing, the omission can be applied only to the clauses lacking overt subjects such as imperatives or non-finite clauses. This explains why direct object omission is grammatical in (28) but ungrammatical in (29). The sentence in (29) has an overt subject which represents a NP "*saucepan*", so as the NP subject and the object "*it*" are in the same clause, the latter cannot be omitted (Haegeman 2013: 90, ex. (9)):

(29) Remove the saucepan from the heat before you drain *(it) of pasta and potatoes.

To sum up, Russian and English demonstrate significant differences regarding direct object omission. Though some researches question the fact that Russian is a pro-drop language, direct object omission is considered to be grammatical. However, we should point out that it is not unrestricted and occurs mostly in referential contexts and in informal speech. Similarly, direct object movement into preverbal position (direct object scrambling) is also usually found in colloquial Russian and in cases when the object represents given information. In English direct object omission is ungrammatical in most cases in adult speech apart from such contexts as instructions. In the next chapter we will discuss the target-like marking of information as new and given in English by the use of the article system.

2.4 Transfer in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

In this section we are going to present the core issues of the working hypothesis of the present thesis, that is, the *Full Transfer/Full Access* hypothesis. We will also outline the main ideas of the hypotheses on syntactic transfer which are relevant to our study as we investigate, in particular, if Russian learners of English transfer topic-driven direct object scrambling and direct object omission with referential objects.

The phenomenon of cross-linguistic influence can be referred to as *language transfer, linguistic interference, the role of the mother tongue, native language influence*, and *language mixing* (Odlin 2003: 436). Some researchers prefer to use the terms *language transfer* and *cross-linguistic influence* or *native language influence* interchangeably (Odlin 1989, 2003, Sharwood Smith 1994).

The definition of term *transfer* is also problematic. Selinker (1992: 2008) defines *transfer* as a cover term for a "number of behaviors which intersect with input from the target language and with universal properties of human language". Sharwood Smith (1994: 13) considers *transfer* "the influence of the mother tongue (L1) on the learner's performance in and/or development of a given target language". Odlin provides a slightly different definition in the sense that he does not only take the L1 and the target language into account, but also other languages that the speaker might know as possible sources of transfer (Odlin 1989: 27):

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

Thus, while the notion of *native language influence* traditionally has been used as a synonym to *transfer*, Odlin (1989) acknowledges that knowledge of languages other than the native language may also be a source of influence. This idea is reflected in the definition cited above. The author explains that the knowledge of L1 provides the basis for transfer in most of the cases, and thus *transfer* can have the term *native language influence* as a synonym (Odlin 1989: 27).

The age factor is also widely discussed in relation to *transfer* and second language acquisition. Patkowski (1980) investigated the existence of a sensitive period for the L2 syntax. By *sensitive period* the author understands the age limitation on L2 acquisition which has 15 years as the critical turning point. The notion derives from the *critical period* hypothesis proposed by Lenneberg (1967). Patkowski argues that though it is possible to acquire L2 after the sensitive period, the L2 learners are not likely to achieve native-like proficiency (Patkowski 1980: 449). The data presented in the research demonstrated that the group of L2 English learners who arrived to the US before the critical age was more accurate in their acquisition of syntax than the group of L2 English learners who arrived to the US after the critical age (Patkowski 1980: 453-454)

The initial state of L2 and resetting the parameters of Universal Grammar (UG) in second language acquisition have been frequently discussed in the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) literature. The terms that are related to this discussion are *interlanguage* and *fossilization*. Before we discuss these concepts, we will introduce some approaches describing

the involvement of the L1 grammar in L2 acquisition and the degree of access to Universal Grammar (UG) by L2 learners.

White (2000) identifies five different perspectives on the initial state of L2 grammar. They are Full Transfer/Partial Access, No Transfer/Full Access, Full Transfer/Full Access, Partial Transfer/Full Access and Partial Transfer/Partial Access. The working hypothesis of the thesis is *Full Transfer/Full Access* model, so we discuss it in more detail later in this section and comment briefly on each of the four other perspectives.

The first approach is called *Full Transfer/Partial Access.* It implies that learners rely on their knowledge of the L1 in analyzing the L2 input and if the specific properties of UG are not represented in the learners' L1, they are not available to them (White 2000: 134). The second approach, *No Transfer/Full Access*, implies that the learner's L1 does not influence the L2 grammar and the UG principles and parameters are accessed directly from L2 input (Camacho 1999: 130, White 2000: 135). The *Partial Transfer/Full Access* approach implies that initially the L2 learner relies on both the L1 and UG, or, in other words, both the L1 grammar and UG are present in the L2 grammar at the same time (White 2000: 137). Finally, the *Partial Transfer/Partial Access* approach states that certain functional features become permanently impaired and the L2 learner never attains native-like L2 acquisition (White 2000: 138).

The *Full Transfer/Full Access* approach assumes that both the learner's L1 and the L2 input influence the acquisition of the second language. At first, the learner uses the L1 grammar, but as it proves to be inadequate (incompatible with the input), the learner accesses UG to restructure the parameter settings, functional categories and feature values in order to achieve an analysis appropriate for the L2 input (White 2000: 136-137). In other words, the Ll grammar is the initial state of L2, with the exception of phonetic matrices of lexical or phonological items. While the process of restructuring continues, the learners use an intermediate system which is called *interlanguage* (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996: 41). If non-target structures are present in the *interlanguage* of non-native speakers for quite a long time, then we can say that this is the case of *fossilization* (Selinker & Lakshamanan 2000: 137). In other words, the term *fossilization* refers to the erroneous parameters which were set by L2 speakers and are not likely to be successfully reset.

Schwartz & Sprouse (1996) present two auxiliary claims concerning the concept of *interlanguage*. The first one is suggested by Bley-Vroman (1983) and states that *interlanguage* should be analyzed separately from the target language and even if some particular phenomena of the *interlanguage* match with a target-language phenomenon, they still should be analyzed in a different way (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996: 42). The second one is related to the idea that learnability factors influence L2 acquisition. In cases where L2 learners do not have access to data to restructure the *interlanguage* parameters in order to achieve the parameter settings of the target language grammar, they will never be able to arrive at the target language grammar (Schwartz & Sprouse 1996: 42). This might happen, for example, because the data are highly obscure, very complex and/or very rare (Schwartz & Sprouce 1996: 42). In such cases, the interlanguage parameter-settings will become permanent and the speaker's L2 will fossilize. This claim is related to the concept of *fossilization* mentioned earlier as it implies that non-target structures can remain in the learners' *interlanguage* for a long time.

The acquisition of word order is one of the issues investigated in the present thesis; we are asking whether Russian L2 learners of English transfer the phenomena of direct object scrambling and direct object omission from their L1. Russian and English have SVO as their basic word order, but they vary in terms of rigidity as English has a rigid word order while Russian has a flexible one (Odlin 2003: 86). The flexibility of Russian word order is illustrated in examples (5 a, b, c, d) in section 2.1. In the present study we assume that the L2 learners of English may use several word orders, SOV order, in particular, despite the fact that English word order is rigid.

Word-order transfer has always been a controversial topic in SLA of syntax. Some researchers (e. g. Muysken, Zobl) argue against word-order transfer. There are some arguments supporting this assumption. One argument is that movement of sentence elements are rather topic-related discourse manipulations that a case of transfer. Another argument is that there are some UG constraints that block word-order transfer (Odlin 2003: 92). Discussing discourse strategies, Odlin (2003) gave an example of OSV word order used for the purposes of contrast in the sentences produced by native speakers of English: *The soup we ordered, the salad we did not*. In case L2 English learners used zero anaphora which is common on the early stages of language acquisition, the same sentence can sound the

following: *The soup ordered*. Thus, it is possible to argue that L2 English learners use OV word order for the purposes of contrast (Odlin 2003: 92).

Zobl (1986) argued that word-order transfer may not happen at the early stage of L2 acquisition. The researcher suggested that word order in *interlanguage* is influenced by traits that are central and peripheral to a language type of L1 and L2. In case L1 and L2 are of the same word order type, the L1 word order can influence the *interlanguage* word order only where a central attribute of the L2 departs from the shared order. In case a central trait of the L1 departs from the shared order, the *interlanguage* word order is not influenced. If L1 and L2 belong to opposide word order types, that there should be no word order influence from the L1 on the *interlanguage* as neither L1 nor L2 has a more highly valued grammar (Zobl 1986: 168-169).

However, there are studies that show evidences of basic word-order transfer. Camacho (1999) investigated a case of sentential word-order transfer similar to the one investigated in the present study: null object and focus-triggered movement of constituents in Southern Quechua L1 speakers who acquire Spanish as their L2. The researcher argues that the data provided in the paper support *Full transfer/Full Access* hypothesis. First, there was evidence of transfer of the two parameters from the L1: the possibility of null objects with definite/specific antecedents and and focus-triggered direct object movement. Second, the convergence to the target language parameters was not achieved as the null objects compatible with the L1grammar and OV word order where objects are interpreted as *Focus* are found in even the data of advanced learners. The author suggests that focus-driven scrambling is the parameter can be successfully reset. Quechua L2 learners of Spanish will realize that object scrambling is related to topicalization in the target language as opposed to their L1 where object scrambling is used with the objects with *Focus* features. In additions, learners' L1 marks *Topic* morphologically while L2 marks it by movement. Thus the learners will understand that there is nothing they can transfer from their L1 to mark *Topic* and start to use object scrambling to mark *Topic*, but not *Focus* (Camacho 1999: 129). The null pronominals parameter can be more difficult for Quechua L2 learners of Spanish as in the learners' L1 pronominal objects with both definite and indefinite antecedents can be omitted while Spanish allows null pronominals only with indefinite antecedents. Null object feature specifications can be presented in the following way (Camacho 1999: 126-127, ex. (23)):

(30) a. Quechua [± definite, ±specific], pronominal
a. Spanish [- definite, - specific], variable.

Consequently, the value (a) of Quechua is transferred to the target language and is difficult to be reset to value (b) of Spanish as (a) is a subset of (b) (Camacho 1999: 127).

To sum up, we have two contradicting point of view on the existence of word-order in *interlaguage* which we are going to test in the present thesis. On the one hand, we will refer to the *Full Transfer/Full Access* hypothesis, and investigate if the initial state of the learners' L2 (English) coincides with the initial state of the learners' L1 (Russian) regarding direct object placement and direct object realization in definite and indefinite contexts. On the other hand, we will also test the relevance of Zobl's hypothesis on word order transfer in the learners' *interlanguage.* We can assume that if English is an SVO language and Russian is also underlyingly SVO (see section 2.1), then the languages can be considered as having the same word order type. As a result, following Zobl (1986) we would expect that word-order transfer is not going to be exhibited in the learners' *interlanguage* as the OV trait of L1 departs from the word order shared by L1 and L2.

CHAPTER III

Acquisition of Articles

The correct and erroneous article choice tells us a lot about how L2 English learners divide information into new and given. In this Chapter, we will present the concept of definiteness and indefiniteness, and give a general description of native-like article use in English. This will be followed by the overview of different theories and studies on article acquisition.

3.1 Definiteness

By definite and indefinite noun phrases researchers understand noun phrases with *the* and noun phrases with *a* and their semantic or near-semantic equivalents. Lyons (1999) uses the term "article" informally, referring to any linguistic form which encodes [±Def]. Encoding definiteness is not universal and though not all languages have the definite and the indefinite article, all of them have demonstratives and personal pronouns that can be claimed to mark [±Def] (Lyons 47-48: 1999).

The languages that distinguish definiteness and indefiniteness can be divided into three groups: languages that mark definiteness only, languages that mark indefiniteness only and languages that mark both definiteness and indefiniteness. Languages that belong to the first group are, for example, Irish and Classical Greek, languages of the second group are Turkish and Mam, and finally, Danish, English, Standard Arabic and Lakhota belong to the third group. The examples (1a, b), (2a, b) and (3a, b) illustrate all the three possibilities (Lyons 1999: 50, ex. (1), (3) (Lewis 1967, ex. (5)):

(1) Irish

a. an bord "the table"
b. bord "a table"

(2) Turkish

a. ev "house", "the house"

b. bir ev "a house"

(3) Danish

a. bogen (book+ Def) “the book”

b. en bog “a bok”

In English definiteness is expressed with the help of the definite article *the*. In example (4), the indefinite article *a* is used with “*cat*” as it is mentioned for the first time which means that we do not have a reason to suppose that this is the unique object. When the same cat is mentioned for the second time, we can suppose that this is the unique object and thus we use the definite article (Ionin et al 2004: 7, ex. (5)):

(4) I saw a cat. I gave the cat some milk.

To explain the felicitous use of the definite article, a number of accounts of how definiteness is licensed were developed and discussed by Christophersen (1939), Hawkins (1978) and Lyons (1999). These are: familiarity, situational use, associative use, general knowledge, anaphoric *the*, identifiability, uniqueness and inclusiveness. We will characterize each of them and single out those that seem more reliable in justifying the use of *the*.

3.1.1 Situational use, associative use and general knowledge accounts of definiteness licensing

Sometimes the use of definiteness is licensed in the context even though it does not fit general explanation of being known to the hearer. Examples (5) and (6) illustrate *situational use of the.* We can see that “*the shelf*” is familiar to both participants of the conversation while “*the bathroom*” may not be present in the immediate context, but the hearer is likely to associate it with the bathroom in that particular house (Lyons 1999: 4, ex. (3), (4)):

(5) Just give **the shelf** the quick wipe, will you, before I put this vase on it.

(6) Put these clean towels in **the bathroom** please.

In some cases familiarity of the referent to the speaker and the hearer is based on *general knowledge* as, for example in (7) where we can say that “*the moon*’ is a unique entity associated with the moon of this particular planet (Lyons 1999: 4, ex. (6)):

(7) **The moon** was very bright last night.

Bridging cross-reference or *associative uses* can be understood as a combination of the anaphoric *the* and familiarity based on general knowledge. Example (8) demonstrates that though the driver has not been mentioned before, we still associate taxies with drivers and thus use the definite article (Lyons 1999: 4, ex (8)):

(8) I had to get a taxi from the station. On the way **the driver** told me there was a bus strike.

3.1.2 Familiarity, Identifiability, Uniqueness and Inclusiveness hypotheses.

The familiarity hypothesis is based on the assumption that if the information is shared by the speaker and the hearer, the definite article is used, but if familiarity is not shared, the indefinite article is used. This can be demonstrated on examples (9) and (10) (Lyons 1999: 2-3, ex. (1), (2), Christophersen: 1939, Hawkins: 1978). When the speaker says "*the car*" in example (10) it means, that that both the speaker and the hearer know which car he or she refers to. In example (9) the indefinite noun phrase "a car" signals that only the speaker knows what car he is talking about.

(9) I bought **a car** this morning.

(10) I bought **the car** this morning.

Familiarity, however, is not a necessary condition for the use of the definite article as the definite article can be used with the noun phrases that have not been previously mentioned in the context or with the noun phrases that cannot be inferred from the context. Examples (11) and (12) prove this statement. In (11) the noun phrase is not familiar to the hearer, but yet it is unique, as there is only one notion that can be denoted by this noun phrase. In (12) the referent is not familiar to the hearer, but since according to the speaker there is only one bag of chips, the noun phrase become uniquely identifiable (Birner & Ward 93-94: 1994, ex. (1a), (1b)):

(11) In her talk, Baldwin introduced **the notion that syntactic structure is derivable from pragmatic principles.**

(12) If you're going into the bedroom, would you mind to bring back **the bag of potato chips that I left on the bed?**

Lyons (1999) suggests two ways of licensing definiteness – *identifiability* and *inclusiveness* which can explain the meaning of a larger variety of cases when the definite article is used. By *identifiability* we understand that the speaker uses the definite article with the noun phrase because the hearer is in position to identify it. In other words, the hearer either knows the referent or can work it out. Examples (13) and (14) demonstrate the use of the definite article explained by *identifiability* hypothesis. In sentence (13) the speaker uses "*the president*" as the hearer can assume that Ghana probably has a president and identify the reference with this individual. In (14) we can take as a starting point the fact that the hearer doesn't know that there is a hammer in the room, but he is able to find it if he looks around (Lyons 1999: 6-7, ex (10), (14)):

(13) **The president of Ghana** is visiting tomorrow.

(14) Pass me **the hammer**, will you?

Though the *identifiability* is quite effective in explaining the use of the definite article, there are some cases when it proves to be not convincing. Let us consider example (15). If the hearer was not present at the wedding or does not know who the bride was, he or she cannot identify her as a particular person. The use of the definite article cannot be explained by the associate use: though the hearer knows that weddings involve brides, he or she is still not expected to find the referent to the definite noun phrase (Lyons 1999: 7-8, ex (15)):

(15) I've just been to a wedding. **The bride** wore blue.

The suitable explanation of definiteness in (15) can be expressed by the idea of *uniqueness*: there is just one entity which satisfies the description used. In example (15) the hearer is able to assume that there is one bride at the wedding and classify the referent as unique (Lyons 1999: 8, Birner & Ward: 1994: 93).

Birner and Ward (1994) suggest that familiarity and indentifiability are not equivalent as the entity may not be familiar, but uniquely identifiable. In addition, familiarity is neither a necessary nor a sufficient condition for the use of the definite article while unique identifiability is sufficient though not always necessary. The authors conclude that definite articles often are used with uniquely identifiable referents, but there are still cases when the definite article is used with non-unique referents which also cannot be differentiated from some other referents denoted by the noun phrase. Such referents can be plural or mass nouns

which refer to the totality of the set or some subset of the mass or group. Sentence in (16) illustrates this (Birner & Ward 1994: 100, ex. (12)):

(16) When I was traveling through Switzerland last year, I took a beautiful photograph of **the mountains.**

The same is true about singular noun phrases used to refer to locations, for example, "to the hospital", "in the park", "at the bank" (Birner & Ward 1994: 98-101, ex. (15a)):

(17) This afternoon I went **to the park**.

Uniqueness can also be applied in cases where the referent is hypothetical. For example, the referents in (18) and (19) are potential, but the hearer is likely to think that in (18) the competition will have only one winner; and in (19) only one man is implied (Lyons 1999: 9, ex. (21), (22)):

(18) **The winner of this competition** will get a week in the Bahamas for two.

(19) **The man who comes with me** will not regret it.

On the other hand, *uniqueness* is also not a necessary condition for the use of the definite article. In examples (20) and (21) the objects are familiar, but they are not unique (Birner & Ward 1994: 95, ex. (2a), (2b)):

(20) [To spouse in a room with three equally salient windows] It's hot in here. Could you please open **the window**?

(21) [Hotel concierge to guest, in a lobby with four elevators] You're in Room 611. Take **the elevator** to the sixth floor and turn left.

In many cases *familiarity* means that the referent is definite as it is familiar in a given discourse and usually uniquely identifiable to the hearer. However, there are examples where the use of definite NPs is felicitous, but the information is new to the hearer. Consider (22). Here "the possibility of an extended school year" is used felicitously with the definite article though the information is new to the hearer. The use of the article is justified as the description provided helps the hearer to uniquely identify the nominal phrase (Birner & Ward 1994: 96, ex. (8)):

(22) Repeated school cancellations due to the recent snowstorms have given rise to **the possibility of an extended school year.**

The uniqueness hypothesis meets one more challenge – it is impossible to find a unique referent to plural and mass nouns. In such cases *inclusiveness* (Hawkins 1978) explanation is applied. In example (23a) the definiteness refers to all the prizes and in (23b) – to all the beer served in the pub (Lyons 1999: 10-11, ex. (28 a, b), (38a,b)). *The* often becomes a quantifier similar to *all* like in (24)

(23) a. We've just been to see John race. The Queen gave out **the prizes**.

b. We went to the local pub this lunch time. They've started chilling **the beer**.

(24) a. I've washed the dishes.

b. I've washed all the dishes.

Finally, superlatives, such as *first, same, only* and *next*, cataphoric references and deictics are incompatible with the indefinite article even if they represent the information which is new to the hearer (Birner & Ward 1994: 96-97, ex. (9a,b,c), Lyons 1999: 9):

(25) a. **The best student in my history class** went to the party last night.

b. I propose the **following explanation** to account for these data …

c. **The example underneath it here** [pointing to overhead] shows that …

To sum up, according to Lyons, there might be two types of licensing definiteness – *identifiability* and *inclusiveness*. It is possible to single out two hypotheses as there are usage types that can be explained either only by *identifiability* or only by the *inclusiveness*. If a noun phrase is characterized by any of these properties, it should be definite (Lyons 1999: 14-15).

3.2 Definiteness and Indefiniteness in English

We have already discussed the notion of definiteness in general, and now we can characterize definiteness and indefiniteness in English. It is known that English possesses an article system and belongs to the group of languages that mark both definiteness and indefiniteness.

The indefinite article *a* and the zero article are used when an NP is not present in the discourse, while when an NP can be identified from the discourse, speakers tend to use the definite article *the* (Hawkins 2009: 233-234). The differences between the distributional properties of the articles can be expressed in terms of binary features: [± specific referent] and [±hearer knowledge]. [±specific referent] means that the article refers either to a specific or to a non-specific entity while [±hearer knowledge] means that the article associated with the NP is known or not know to the hearer or reader (Bickerton 1981, Hawkins 2009). So, in relation to the features, the NPs that have a [+specific referent] and [+hearer knowledge] get article *the*, NPs that have features [+specific referent] and [- hearer knowledge] or [- specific referent] and [- hearer knowledge] are associated with the articles *a/an* or zero article. Finally, NPs that have features [- specific referent] and [+hearer knowledge] can be associated with all three articles *a/the/zero article*. This is the case of generic interpretation (Hawkins 2009: 243-235).

In other words, noun phrase reference can be categorized into four types (Gass 1994: 43):

Category I

+ specific reference

+ hearer's knowledge

Category II

- specific reference

+ hearer's knowledge

Category III

- specific reference

- hearer's knowledge

Category IV

+ specific reference

- hearer's knowledge

The examples below illustrate the article use in the four categories: (Hawkins 2009: 233-235, ex. (7a), (8), (6), (5)):

Category I

Speaker A: How will you get a ticket for the England match?

Speaker B: I have a contact.

Speaker A: Is that **the contact** who failed to get you for Wimbledon?

Category II

Speaker A: I saw a rabbit eating my carrots yesterday.

Speaker B: **The rabbit** can cause problems for **the gardener**.

A rabbit can cause problems for **a gardener**.

Rabbits can cause problems for gardeners.

Category III

Speaker A: What does she want to do when she's married?

Speaker B: Have **a baby**/Have babies.

Category IV

Speaker A: How will you get a ticket for the England-France match?
Speaker B: I have **a contact**/I have contacts.

3.3 Fluctuation Hypothesis

A number of studies of English L2 learners have shown that they tend to omit or misuse articles. Ionin et al (2004: 16) suggested that learners' behavior can be captured by the *Fluctuation Hypothesis*, which says that L2 learners have full access to Universal Grammar and fluctuate between different parameter settings until the input makes it possible to set the parameter correctly (Zdorenko & Paradis 2007: 230, Ionin et al 2004: 20).

When L2 English learners chose whether they mark definiteness or specificity, they fluctuate between the two settings of *the Article Choice Parameter*. In other words, the article choice of L2 English learners is expected to fluctuate between [+ definite –specific] and [– definite + specific] (Ionin et al 2004: 2).

Considering the parameters, it is important to explain the distinction between definiteness and specificity. The articles in English are marked with either [+definiteness] or [-definiteness], though the conditions of specificity can be satisfied or not satisfied in both definite and indefinite contexts. Examples (26), (27a) and (27b) illustrate specificity combined with indefiniteness and definiteness in English. In (26) the demonstrative *this* is used for indefinite referential use as a marker of specificity in spoken English. In (27a) the speaker refers to a particular individual i.e. his friend, while in (27b) the speaker refers to a particular individual, but he does not know what specific person it is (Ionin et al 2004: 8,10, ex. (8a), (9a), (9b)). So, example (26) has features [- specific, - definite] and examples (27a) and (27b) have features [+definite, +specific] and [+definite, - specific] respectively.

(26) John has **a/this weird purple telephone**.

(27) a. I'd like to talk to the winner of today's race – she's my best friend!

b. I'd like to talk to **the winner of today's race** – whoever that is, I'm writing a story about this race for the newspaper.

The English language does not mark specificity, but there are some languages that also have a specificity distinction. They are: Samoan, Modern Hebrew and Sissala. Modern Hebrew, for example, has three articles – a definite, a specific and a null article. Examples (28a) and (28b) demonstrate the contrast in use of a modifier "*exad*" "one" and a specificity marker which is a clitic (Borer 2005, ch.5) (Ionin 2006: 219, ex. (65 a,b)).

(28) a. baxura **axat**
young woman one
one young woman

b. baxura.**xət**

"a certain young woman"

The Sissala language, in its turn has non-deictic determining particles: *rɛ* "non-specific", *nɛ* "specific" and *na* "definite". In (29a) the referent is non-specific and indicates just a type of place the person went to while in (29b) the market is specific and the use of the particle *nɛ* makes it possible to refer subsequently to the place (Blass 1990, Ch.6) (Ionin 2006: 221, ex. (68a,b)). No glosses were provided in the literature:

(29) a. v mʊ yɔwɔ rɜ

"He went to a market" (non-specific)

b. v mʊ yɔwɔ nɜ
"He went to a market" (specific)

All in all, L2 English learners might show a tendency to erroneously mark specificity instead of definiteness with indefinite noun phrases and by this overuse the definite article. Ionin (2006) writes that the use of the definite article in [-definite +specific] contexts is not uncommon. The author reports that Russian L2 learners of English used the definite article in 36% of such contexts as illustrated in example (30) (Ionin 2006: 227-228, Table 3, ex. (74)). The target article in this example is *a:*

(30) *Specific indefinite*
(Meeting on a street.)
Roberta: Hi, William! It's nice to see you again. I didn't know that you were in Boston.
William: I am here for a week. I am visiting (**a**, the, —) friend from college – his name is Sam Brown, and he lives in Cambridge now.

3.4 Studies Supporting the Fluctuation Hypothesis

There are two tendencies in article use according to the Fluctuation Hypothesis: either transfer can override fluctuation or fluctuation can override transfer. The results of the experiments discussed in this section demonstrate both tendencies.

Ionin et al (2004) examined the article choice of L1 speakers of Russian and Korean. Both L1 Russian and Korean speakers do not have access to L1 transfer because their L1 are article-less.

There were 30 L1 Russian adult speakers and 40 L1 Korean adult speakers who took part in the experiment. Most of them were monolingual; only eight Russian speakers were bilingual in other languages, such as Tatar, Ukrainian, Armenian, Turkmen, Azeri and Buriat with Russian as the dominant language. The level of language competence was intermediate and proficient, only 4 L1 Russian speakers and one L1 Korean speaker were beginners. The experiment was administered in a form of a forced-choice elicitation task. In the choice elicitation task the learners had to choose between the definite, the indefinite and the null article (Ionin et al 2004: 25).

The predictions for article choice were the correct use of *the* in [+definite +specific] context and the correct use of *a* in [-definite –specific] context. At the same time, the participants were expected to overuse *a* in [+definite –specific] context where the target article was *the* and to overuse *the* in [-definite +specific] context where the target article was *a* (Ionin et al 2004: 23). We are going to present the general results of the research and then we give a more detailed description of the article choice by L2 English learners whose level of language competence was estimated as beginner as it is more relevant to our present study.

Both Russian and Korean L1 speakers overused *the* in [-definite +specific] context more than in [-definite –specific] context. The authors mention that the level of proficiency interacts with definiteness and specificity. Intermediate learners use the definite article more in indefinite contexts than advanced learners. Then, in [+definite –specific] contexts advanced learners used mostly *the,* while in [-definite +specific] contexts they used *a*. Intermediate learners were generally less accurate with articles, but they did not fluctuate a lot in the contexts named above and their results did not differ significantly from the results of the advanced learners (Ionin et al 2004: 37-38).

The beginner learners were less accurate in their article choice in all contexts. In [+definite +specific] contexts, 65 % of learners used definite articles and 20 % of learners indefinite articles while in [+definite –specific] contexts the numbers were 50 % and 45 % for the definite and the indefinite article respectively. The indefinite context exhibits less accuracy. In [-definite + specific] context the overuse of the definite article was 70 % and the use of the target indefinite article was 20 %. Then, in [-definite –specific] contexts 35% of learners used the definite article and 35 % of learners used the indefinite article (Ionin et al 2004: 43, Table 20).

As we can see from the results, all the learners, irrespective of their level of language proficiency overuse the definite article *the* in [-definite +specific] context. Russian speakers tend to overuse articles more than Korean speakers in all contexts. The overuse of the indefinite article is quite high in [+definite – specific] context. The general results for this context were 33 % of the article *a* for the Russian speakers and 14 % for Korean speakers (Ionin et al 2004: 47, Table 17).

For L1 Russian and Korean learners fluctuation overrides transfer, but if the learners of English have an L1 that possesses article system, then another tendency can be taken into consideration, namely transfer, which should override fluctuation, and learners whose L1 has an article system should be able to transfer the article semantics from their L2 to L2 (Ionin et al 2008: 560).

Maria del Pilar Garcia Mayo studied the article choice of Spanish L1 learners of English and the effects of directionality. The Spanish language has articles encoding definiteness, so the Spanish learners are not predicted to fluctuate between [±definite] and [±specific] features and are expected to use definite and indefinite articles correctly without influence of specificity (Garcia Mayo 2009: 23). The differences in article choice are expected to be found with participants of different proficiency levels. Finally, Spanish learners were expected to be more accurate in their use of the definite article in the definite context than the use of the indefinite article in the indefinite contexts. This is explained by the fact that definite articles in English are featurally less complex than indefinite articles as they, for example, do not account for number and count/mass distinction (Lardiere 2004: 335) (Garcia Mayo 2009: 22, 24).

There were 60 adult L1 Spanish speakers who participated in the study, 30 of them had their English proficiency estimated as low-intermediate and the other half were advanced English learners. The results for the low intermediate group were the following: the participants used the definite article in [-definite +specific] context and [-definite –specific] context, but the percentage of erroneous use was very low, only five participants used non-target articles. Overall, low intermediate learners use *the* correctly with both specific and non-specific definiteness. 100 % of the learners used the correct article in [+definite +specific] and [+definite – specific] contexts while 93,75 % and 98,75 % used the target article in [-definite +specific] and [-definite – specific] contexts respectively (Garcia Mayo 2009: 27-28).

As expected, the advanced group showed high accuracy. The definite article in [+definite +specific] and [+definite –specific] contexts at 99,2% and 97,5% respectedly. At the same time, all the participants used the indefinite article correctly in [-definite –specific] context and 98,4% used the indefinite article in [-definite +specific] context. As we can see, the two groups with different proficiency levels do not exhibit a great difference in the results, which means that the transfer of the semantics of articles in L1 helped the participants to use the articles correctly in the L2 (Garcia Mayo 2009: 28, 32).

Hawkins refers to Parrish's study (1987) where the researcher collected data on the use of the definite article *the* by a Japanese L2 learner of English. The subject was 19 years old and had received 6 years of English instruction. The results show that out of 193 contexts with [+definite, +specific] the informant used the article the in 67,9% of cases, and in the remaining per cent of cases no article was used (Hawkins 2009: 236).

Then, in [- definite, +specific] context where native speakers would use the indefinite article, the informant still uses the definite article in 9,4 % of cases (13 cases out of 138) (Hawkins 2009: 237). Hawkins concludes that the definite article was used with NPs with specific reference and which are known to the hearer, while the indefinite article *a* is used with NPs that are not known to the hearer. Overall, the use of *a* is lower than the use of *the*. This reflects the fact that the indefinite article emerges later than the definite one. The zero article, in its turn, is overgeneralized and appears in all contexts (Hawkins 2009: 238).

3.5 Studies Questioning the Fluctuation Hypothesis

Despite the fact that the studies overviewed in the previous section illustrate tendency to fluctuate, there was conducted some research that questions the validity of the Fluctuation hypothesis. Tryzna (2009) tested the article use of L2 English learners who had Polish and Mandarin Chinese as their L1 and concluded that in some cases article use cannot be explained by fluctuation.

The author refers to the research by Ionin et al (2003) where the article use of 37 L1 Russian speakers and 37 L1 Korean speakers was tested. The results showed that the participants overused *the* in [-definite +specific] contexts more than in [-definite –specific] ones. In addition, article omission was not significant, but the participants tended to omit the article more with plural DPs with singular ones. But Tryzna (2009) argues against the conclusion of Ionin et al (2003) that the mistakes could be explained by Fluctuation Hypothesis. The author writes that 27% of the Russian L1 speakers and 12 % of the Korean L1 speakers adopt unpredictable patterns such as high use of *the* in all indefinite contexts or optional use of *the* with the definite contexts, which cannot be explained either by the *Fluctuation Hypothesis* or the *Article Choice Parameter* (Tryzna 2009: 74-75).

Tryzna (2009) explains that if the *Fluctuation Hypothesis* and the *Article Choice Parameter* regulated the L2 English learners article choice, then the learners should have only two options, namely they can mark either definiteness or specificity. Specificity is not marked in English, but L2 English learners may erroneously use the definite article in [-definite +specific] context. However, L2 English learners use *the* in [-definite –specific] contexts and optionally use of the definite article with definite DPs does not agree with the idea suggested by the *Article Choice Parameter*. Such variability of article use cannot be explained by the two hypothesis mentioned above (Tryzna 2009: 75).

To test the validity of the Fluctuation hypothesis, Tryzna examines data collected through a forced choice elicitation task. The participants were divided into two groups – advanced L2 English learners and intermediate L2 English learners. The first group had 19 L1 Polish and 17 L1 Mandarin Chinese native speakers who had had naturalistic exposure to the language for at least 12 months. The intermediate group included 19 L1 Polish speakers who had no naturalistic exposure to the English language (Tryzna 2009: 76). The results of the advanced group of L1 Chinese speakers were more accurate than the results of the advanced L1 Polish

speakers. The overall results show that L1 Chinese speakers used target articles in the definite and the indefinite contexts at 95 %; while the number of L1 Polish speakers who used the correct articles is also high – 80 %. Both L1 Polish and L1 Chinese speakers omit the articles, but L1 Polish speakers omit articles more especially in [-definite –specific] and [-definite +specific] contexts. All in all, omission rates reach 4% and the overuse of *the* in the indefinite context is also not high – 25 % (Tryzna 2009: 77-78, Figure 4).

It is interesting to mention that the overuse of the definite article in non-specific singular indefinite contexts by Chinese L1 speakers was lower than the overuse of the definite article with non-specific plural indefinite ones. The Polish L1 speakers did not have a statistically significant difference in the overuse of the definite article in indefinite context, so the author concludes that fluctuation was not confirmed in the L1 Polish group (Tryzna 2009: 78-79).

Then we can compare the results of the L1 Polish advanced group and L1 Polish intermediate group. As expected, the advanced group was more accurate in their choice of articles, and there is no significant difference for both groups in the correct article use with plural DPs in definite and indefinite contexts. The lowest percentage of correct article use for the intermediate group belongs to [-definite – specific] singular context, while for the advanced group the lowest number is in [-definite –specific] plural context (Tryzna 2009: 79). The results for article omission are low for both intermediate and advanced learners, though intermediate learners have higher number of article omission in definite plural context. In addition, the overuse of the definite article by the intermediate group did not give any significant difference across all the contexts while the advanced learners overused most in [-definite – specific] singular context (over 20%) and least in [-definite –specific] plural context (less than 10%). The absence of difference in the results of the intermediate learners speaks against the Fluctuation Hypothesis (Tryzna 2009: 80-81, Figure 8).

The author concludes that the difference in the results between L1 Chinese speakers and L1 Polish speakers can be explained by how definiteness is encoded in their L1. It is possible that the L1 Chinese speakers transferred the semantics of the quasi-indefinite article *yi* into their acquisition of indefiniteness in English. In Polish, on the other hand, definiteness and indefiniteness is achieved by such means as prosody, discourse linking and word order. Also, the advanced groups of L2 English learners fluctuated in their article choice while the intermediate group did not (Tryzna 2009: 83).

Tryzna (2009) suggests that the erroneous article use in L2 English originates from the fact that the L2 English speakers failed to acquire the native-like contrast and accept both grammatical and ungrammatical options. The Article Choice Parameter hypothesis says that definiteness is the native-like pattern while specificity is not. L2 English learners may fail to get the target setting of the definiteness parameter, as they lack transfer from their L1 and thus they end up with an indeterminate grammar. The intermediate L1 Polish learners did not reset their parameters correctly because it is possible that they had not got enough naturalistic language input and their parameter setting was triggered mostly by the classroom input (Tryzna 2009: 85).

As the proficiency level of L2 English speakers and the naturalistic input of the language are significant in setting the article choice parameters, it is interesting to investigate how the L2 English learners who have had quite little exposure to the language and classroom instruction set the parameters in the process of acquisition.

Though it has been proven by a number of studies that learners whose L1 is article-less still use articles in their speech, there is some research that shows that at least some L2 learners of English start without a representation of articles. The study by Klein and Perdue (1992: 61-83) gives a description of the article use by two informants whose L1 was Punjabi. The informants had little instruction in English and had lived in the UK for 20 and 13 months (Klein, Perdue 83: 1992). The first informant who had lived in England for 20 months, studied English as a foreign language at school for one year. The data was collected by story retelling and the informant used 45 different nouns, 53 verbs and 9 adjectives. No definite articles were used in his retelling and, as the authors state, bare nouns are the most frequently used referential devices (Klein, Perdue 1992: 67-68, 83). The second informant had two years of English at school, and at a time when he had lived in the UK for 13 months, his English skills were rated as "very poor". In his story retelling he used 16 different nouns, 20 different verbs and 5 different adjectives. Among determiners, the authors single out *the* and *this* (Klein, Perdue 1992: 83). It was observed that the informant was very economical with determiners, for example, the definite article was used with a NP only for the first mention of a referent the definiteness of which can be licensed by association (Klein, Perdue 1992: 87).

3.6 Child Acquisition of Articles

Finally, the acquisition of articles by successively bilingual children whose L1 have or have no article system are also worth mentioning. If L1 of a child who acquires English as L2 possesses the article system, then he/she is more successful in using articles in a target-like way than a child whose L1 is article-less.

Zobl (1982) studied the acquisition of English articles by a five-year-old Chinese speaking boy. The examples for his study were taken from Joseph Huang's (1971) research. Zobl concluded that the child tended to use the determiner *this* in the most of the cases while his use of the definite article *the* is used in cases of echo-imitation (Zobl 1982: 176 ex. (2), (7), (9), (3)). Article omission is also an option.

(31) *Model Quasi-spontaneous answer*
Experimenter: Put it on the chair.
Child: Chair? This one?

(32) *Model Quasi-spontaneous answer*
Experimenter: What are you going to do with the paper?
Child: I want this paper school

(33) *Model Quasi-spontaneous answer*
Experimenter: Ask Jim if he can play with the ball.
Child: Jim, can you play the ball?

(34) *Model Quasi-spontaneous answer*
Experimenter: Ask Jim "Where's the turtle?"
Child: Jim, where's turtle?

Zobl compares the data produced by the Chinese speaking child with the data from a three-year-old Spanish-speaking child. The data was taken from Hernindez-Chivez's (1977) research.

The child uses both the determiner *this* and the definite article and after 3 months of exposure the determiner *this* was substituted by the definite article *the*. Examples (35), (36) and (37) below demonstrate this phenomenon in the spontaneous speech (Zobl 1982: 177 Table 2):

(35) *Month 3.*

Child: Hey hey this. Here the toy.

(36) *Month 6.*

Child: Lookit this. Lookit this cowboy.

(37) *Month 8.*

Child: Shut the door.

As we can see, the child prefers to use the definite article rather than a demonstrative determiner. The examples from quasi-spontaneous speech confirm this tendency (Zobl 1982: 177 Table 3):

(38) *Month 3. Model Quasi-spontaneous utterance*

Child: Look. Lookit the little house.

(39) *Month 4.*

Experimenter: Guero, she wanna know what are you making?

Child: I make. I make-it the blue.

(40) *Month 7.*

Experimenter: Now close the door.

Child: I close the car, hey.

Based on the comparison of the two L2 English learners, the author makes the conclusion that the learner whose L1 did not have an article system was likely to use the deictic determiner systematically. Zobl (1982) writes that the deictic form is more transparent as it possesses the

pointing function to an entity in a reference situation (Zobl 1982: 177-178). Spanish L2 learner of English demonstrated a tendency to use the definite article in a native-like way.

Zdorenko & Paradis (2007) analyzed the use of articles in the speech of 17 children of age 4-6 who were L2 learners of English. The children had recently moved to Canada and as they were from monolingual families, they had little exposure to English. Seven children had an L1 with articles, for example, Arabic and Spanish, and ten children had an article-less L1, for example, Mandarin Chinese or Japanese. The results showed that the children who had an article-less L1 demonstrated lower rates of correct use of the article *a* in indefinite context than the rates of correct use of the article *the* in definite context (Zdorenko & Paradis 2007: 235).

The researchers singled out the four possible types of errors: *the* in indefinite context, *a* in definite context, null article in indefinite context, and null article in definite context (Zdorenko & Paradis 2007: 242). Article misuse was the most common error for both the children who had a [+article] and a [- article] L1. Then, erroneous use of null articles was more frequent with [-article] group of children, but as the experiment was carried out over a six month period of time, the errors associated with null article misuse became less frequent for this group of children (Zdorenko & Paradis 2007: 242).

All in all, *the* misuse was common error in all [+ article] L1 learners and in eight out of nine [- article] L1 learners while article omission was a common error in the [- article] L1 group, but not in the [+ article] L1 group (Zdorenko & Paradis 2007: 243).

To sum up, the primary goal of the study is to test how direct objects are realized in the sentence production of Russian L2 learners of English as well as investigate such cases of transfer as direct object scrambling and direct object omission. At the same time, it is interesting to see how Russian L2 learners of English use articles when they use English word order. As discussed earlier, Russian is an article-less language and thus acquiring English article system can be challenging for L2 English learners especially at an early stage of language acquisition.

CHAPTER IV

Methodology

The present study investigates the realization of direct objects in the sentence production of L1 Russian speakers who study English as a L2. As we have already mentioned in CHAPTER II **Information Structure**, the direct object in Russian can take the preverbal position if it possesses *Topic* features. The English language marks given and new information by the use of articles. In the present study the target answers of the participants should be the answers that involve articles. At the same time, Russian L2 learners of English with language competence estimated as a beginner's level may produce sentences exhibiting article misuse, or transfer direct object scrambling and direct object omission from L1 in order to mark given information.

In the present chapter I will describe the methodology of the study that was conducted with Ukrainian adults and children by Mykhalyk (2012, 2013) and was used as a model for the present study. I will also introduce the changes made to the procedure of the experiment in the present study due to the fact that it was administered in English.

4.1 Mykhaylyk (2012, 2013)

The aim of the experiment was to test the use of objects in the L2 English of L1 Russian speakers. To check this, a picture description task was administered to the participants. The task was designed by Mykhaylyk (2012, 2013) for monolingual Ukrainian children and adults. In the original study there were 41 children aged 2,7-6,0 and 20 adults. The group of children was defined as monoligulal, but, actually, 12 of them spoke the Ukrainian-Russian sociolect *Surzhyk*. Since the experiment was administered in the Ukrainian language, however, these speakers were also included in the study (Mykhaulyk 2012: 559). The task consisted of 18-20 pictures which represented the following conditions: Definite-Specific, Partitive, Indefinite-Specific and Indefinite-Nonspecific (Mykhaylyk 2013). The items were organized in a PowerPoint presentation. *Table 1* provides an overview of the items organized according to the conditions.

Table 1 Overview of items used in the definite, partitive, specific indefinite and non-specific indefinite conditions

Definite	**Partitive**	**Specific**	**Non-specific**
visible single object	**visible one/two of 3 objects**	**invisible to hearer one object**	**invisible**
A1. catch the butterfly	B1. catch one butterfly	D1. catch a butterfly	C1. catch
A2. cut out the flower	B2. cut out one flower	D2. cut out a flower	C2. cut out
A3. draw the cat	B3. draw one cat	D3. draw a cat	C3. draw
A4. eat the cookie	B4. eat one cookie	D4. eat a cookie	C4. eat
A5. wash the plate	B5. wash one plate	D5. wash a plate	C5. wash
A6. read the book	B6. read one book	D6. read a book	C6. read
A7. color the leaf	B7. color one leaf	D7. color a leaf	C7. color
A8. fix the car	B8. fix one car	D8. fix a car	C8. fix

There were 32 verb-object combinations in the stumuli in total, but each participant was tested on two items from each condition. Both children and adults followed the same procedure: they had a conversation with the experimenter and with a puppet Tigger. While looking at a picture the puppet would get confused and the experimenter would ask the participant to help the puppet. The participant would describe the picture that was designed in such a way that he or she had to use a transitive verb with a direct object (Mykhaylyk 2012: 559). Examples (1)-(4) demonstrate the short conversations and the target answers involved in the different conditions (Mykhaylyk 2013: 109-110 ex. (7), (8), (9), (10)). The examples were originally in Ukrainian. In the examples below, the English glosses that were provided are used, except in the target utterance in which both the Ukrainian and the English glosses are given.

(1) Condition A (definite, specific, visible, single object)

Exp: Look, Tigger, what is this, in the picture?

Tigger: A leaf

Exp: And who do you see in this picture?

Tigger: Winnie the Pooh

Exp: What did he do with this leaf?

Tigger: I don't know.

Exp (the the child): Can you help?

Predicted response: *Vin joho / cej listok zafarbuval*

He him / this leaf has coloured

(2) Condition B (partitive, visible, one of several objects)

Exp: Look, Tigger, what is this, in the picture?

Tigger: Leaves.

Exp: And who do you see in this picture?

Tigger: Winnie the Pooh.

Exp: What did he do with these leaves?

Tigger: I don't know.

Exp (to the child) Can you help?

Predicted response: *Vin (odnoho) lystka zafarbuvav.*

He one leaf has coloured

(3) Condition D (indefinite specific; invisible to the hearer; single object)

Tiger left.

Exp (to the child): What is this?

Child: a leaf.

Exp: And who do you see in this picture?

Child: Winnie the Pooh.

Exp: What does he do with this leaf?

Child: he is colouring the leaf/it.

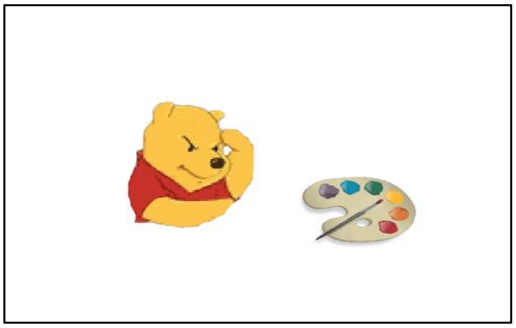
Tigger is coming back and says: Here I am! What did I miss?

Exp (to the child): Tell Tiger what you have seen.

Predicted response: *Vini Pux zafarbovuvav lystok.*

Winnie the Pooh was colouring a leaf.

(4) Condition C (indefinite, nonspecific; invisible)



Exp: Look, Tigger, what is this, in the picture?

Tigger: A painting set.

Exp: And who is this?

Tigger: Winnie the Pooh

Exp: And what does he do?

Tigger: He wonders what to colour.

Exp: So, what will/can he colour?

Tigger: I don't know.

Exp (to the child): Can you help?

Predicted response: *Vin moze zafarbuvaty (jakus') kvitku.*

He can colour (some) flower.

Inappropriate response: #*Vin (jakus') kvitku moze zafarbuvaty.*

He (some) flower can colour.

The Mykhalyk's (2013) main predictions were that the participants would be likely to scramble in Condition A (definite) and Condition B (partitive), while objects in Condition D (indefinite specific) and Condition C (indefinite non-specific) should not undergo syntactic movement. As discussed in Chapter II, scrambling is usually associated with definiteness, givenness and specificity. This explains why one should expect scrambling in Condition A (definite) in the Ukrainian language. In addition, since the experimenter used the word "*leaf*" in the question in (1), the participants were expected to use a pronoun instead of an NP in their answers. Condition B (partitive) was expected to trigger scrambling because the object was one of several objects previously presented in the discourse and the use of "*one leaf*" *(odnoho lystka)* or "*one of them*" (*odyn z nyx*) in the participant's answer was likely to produce scrambling in Ukrainian. However, non-scrambled answers were also considered to be pragmatically felicitous options in these Conditions. Nevertheless, only answers with NPs were predicted to occur in both scrambled and non-scrambled positions, while pronouns were expected to appear only in the scrambled position.

Tables 2 and *3* display the predicted answers for Conditions A (definite) and B (partitive) respectively (Mykhaylyk 2012: 563 Tables 3, 4). The pragmatically inappropriate answers are marked with "#".

Table 2 Possible answers in Condition A (definite)

Direct Object	NP	Pronoun
Scrambled	(1) Vin (cej) lystocˇok zafarbovuje. he this leaf is colouring	(3) Vin joho zafarbovuje. he him is colouring
Non-scrambled	(2) Vin zafarbovuje (cej) lystocˇok. he is colouring this leaf 'He is colouring the/this leaf. '	(4) #Vin zafarbovuje joho. he is colouring him 'He is colouring it.'

Table 3 Possible answers in Condition B (partitive)

Direct Object	NP	Pronoun
Scrambled	(1) Vin odyn lystocˇok zafarbovuje. he one leaf is colouring	(3) Vin odyn z nyx zafarbovuje. he one of them is colouring
Non-scrambled	(2) Vin zafarbovuje odyn lystocˇok. he is colouring one leaf 'He is colouring a leaf. '	(4) # Vin zafarbovuje odyn z nyx. he is colouring one of them 'He is colouring one of them.'

Condition D (indefinite, specific) should not trigger scrambling at all, and this is why the scrambled answer is marked by "?" in *Table 4* below. In addition, answers with pronouns are considered to be unacceptable in general because the experimenter's question did not include the object, consequently, there is only one appropriate alternative in this condition (Mykhaylyk 2012: 564 Table 5). This is shown in *Table 4*.

Table 4 Possible answers in Condition D (indefinite, specific)

Direct Object	NP	Pronoun
Scrambled	(1) ? Vini Pux lystocˇok zafarbovuvav. Winnie leaf coloured	(3) # Vini Pux joho zafarbovuvav. Winnie him coloured
Non-scrambled	(2) Vini Pux zafarbovuvav lystocˇok. Winnie coloured leaf 'Winnie the Pooh coloured a leaf.	(4) # Vini Pux zafarbovuvav joho. Winnie coloured him 'Winnie the Pooh coloured it. '

The last condition, Condition C (indefinite, nonspecific) is different from the other conditions because no object was introduced in the experimental set up, and the participants had to think of an appropriate direct object. Consequently, possible answers with pronominal objects are not expected and nor is scrambling (Mykhaylyk 2012: 566, Table 6). Possible answers are provided in *Table 5*.

Table 5 Possible answers in Condition C (indefinite, nonspecific)

Direct Object	NP	Pronoun
Scrambled	(1) # Vini Pux (jakus') kvitku zafarbuje. Winnie some flower will colour	(3) # Vini Pux jiji zafarbuje. Winnie her will colour
Non-scrambled	(2) Vini Pux zafarbuje jakus' kvitku Winnie will colour some flower 'Winnie will colour a flower.'	(4) # Vini Pux zafarbuje jiji Winnie will colour her 'Winnie will colour it'

The results of Mykhaylyk's experiment (2012) present what percentage of scrambling the conditions trigger. Mykhaylyk (2012) gives the results for both child and adult scrambling. The age of the children who participated in Mykhaylyk's experiment ranges from 2,7 to 6,0 (Mykhalyk 2012: 560) and they are still in a process of acquiring their L1. The participants of the present study are 11 and 12 years old and they have already finished the acquisition of their L1. Because of this we are going to account only for the adult results presented in Mykhaylyk's paper (2012). In addition, the data collected from the adult participants will help us to make predictions on the results for the present study.

First, let us consider the use of NPs. Overall, the percentage of the answers with NPs was higher than the ones with pronouns: 81% of answers given by adults contained NP and only 19% contained pronouns (Mykhaylyk 2012: 567).

If we have a look at the total scrambling rate per condition, we will see that the highest rate can be found in the Condition A (definite) at 60% while Condition B (partitive) also exhibits high levels of scrambling – 50% of answers exhibit scrambling. These two conditions can be contrasted with Conditions D (indefinite, specific) and C (indefinite, nonspecific, invisible).

The two latter conditions exhibit lower scrambling rates, 13% and 5% respectively (Mykhaylyk 2012: 568, Figure 1).

Another interesting phenomenon is the use of pronouns and NPs in scrambled positions. The results show that adults have high rates of pronominal scrambling: from 92% in Condition A (definite) to 100% in Conditions B (partitive) and D (indefinite, specific). In Condition C (indefinite, nonspecific, invisible) no pronouns were produced. The contexts in Condition D (indefinite, specific) demonstrate surprising results. It was predicted that Condition D was not supposed to trigger the use of personal pronouns, since the objects were familiar only to the speaker and not to the hearer and thus should have been classified as specific-indefinite (Mykhaylyk 2012: 564, 569-570, Figure 9).

These results give us a reason to expect that the participants of the present study will be more likely to use NPs than pronouns in their answers as well as that Conditions A (definite) and B (partitive) might trigger higher rates of scrambling than in Conditions C (indefinite, nonspecific, invisible) and D (indefinite, specific). Finally, Conditions C (indefinite, nonspecific, invisible) and D (indefinite, specific) which yielded quite low percentage of scrambling in the answers of Ukrainian adult speakers are also expected to exhibit low scrambling rates in the answers of Russian L2 learners of English.

4.2 Introducing the Present Study

Participants for this experimental study were recruited and tested in January 2014 in the city of Arkhangelsk, Russia. The participants were 16 monolingual Russian schoolchildren who had been studying English at school for 4,5 years. There were nine girls and seven boys. All the participants go to the same school – Comprehensive School № 52 in Arkhangelsk, Russia. They attend the 5^{th} form and started to learn English at the age of 7. According to the school program the pupils have two English lessons per week.

The experiment that was carried out at school in Arkhangelsk followed a similar procedure to the one developed by Roksolana Mykhaylyk. The experiment was administered in English, but the same pictures and the same conditions were used with an exception of Condition C (invisible, nonspecific). This condition was left out because the participants had to answer questions that contained either a modal verb “can”, for example “*What can he do with the*

flower?" or the Future Simple as *"What will he do with* the *flower?"* and they have not covered this material at this age. The results of the experiment are expected to be similar to those of the experiment developed by Mykhaylyk as the contexts that cause scrambling in Russian and Ukrainian are quite similar, and both languages demonstrate movement of elements according to Information Structure. At the same time, the participants were tested in English and thus the scrambling rates might be lower in the L2, which does not allow this, than they would be in the L1 which does. Furthermore, in Chapter II, section 2.3.2 we discussed that direct object omissions can also be a felicitous way of marking givenness in Russian and Ukrainian. Mykhaylyk (2012, 2013) did not test the direct object omission, but we can expect to get this phenomenon. Then, we can expect that the participants, when tested in English, will prefer to use NPs but not personal pronouns. Finally, the experimenter did not use the puppet rather the experiment was administered just in a form of dialogues between a participant and the experimenter.

The items from the four lists in *Table 1* were jumbled in order not to overuse one and the same object and not to create the impression of definiteness in indefinite contexts. The items marked with A correspond to the Definite, Visible, Single Object Condition, items marked with B – to the Partitive, Visible, One of Several objects, and items marked with D – to the Specific, Invisible to the hearer Condition. One extra condition was added to the original study – the Definite, Specific, Visible, Single Object, Pronominal condition or the Pronominal condition. This condition is marked with C in the table. The questions in the Pronominal Condition were formed with NPs, for example: "*What is he doing to the cat?*". The purpose of adding the Pronominal Condition is to get the participants to use pronouns instead of NPs. This was done because the highest rates of scrambling were found in the answers with pronominal objects of the adult speakers described in Mykhaylyk's study (2012). *Table 6* shows the order in which the items were presented to the participants.

Table 6 Overview of the items sets per list

List 1	List 2	List 3	List 4
A1. catch the butterfly	B3. draw one of the cats	D2. cut out a flower	B1. catch one of the butterflies
B2. cut out one of the flowers	A4. eat the cookie	A3. draw the cat	C7 fix the car
D4. eat a cookie	D1. catch a butterfly	B4. eat one of the cookies	A2. Cut out the flower
A5. wash the plate	C3 fix the car	B7. color one leaf	D3. Draw a cat
B6. read one of the books	A7. color the leaf	C5 catch the butterfly	B8. Fix one of the cars
	A6. read the book	A6. read the book	A7. color the leaf
C1 color the leaf			
D8 fix a car	B5. Wash one of the plates	A8. fix the car	D5. wash a plate
C2 draw the cat	C4 cut out the flower	C6 wash the plate	C8 read the book

4.3 Procedure

Before the experiment was administered to each participant individually, the experimenter used a part of the lesson to introduce the words to the schoolchildren. The participants were recruited from two groups where English was taught by the same teacher, and the experimenter used 10 minutes from one lesson to introduce the words and then talked to each participant individually. There were fifteen students in each group and eight students from each group participated in the individual conversation. The participants who were recruited were estimated to have language competence which satisfied the basic requirements of the course. All the schoolchildren were monolinguals and had studied English for 4,5 years. The age of the participants was 11-12 years at the time of testing.

The words were introduced in the form of a quiz that was called *"What is this?"*. The words that were introduced were: a) transitive verbs: *to catch, to cut out, to wash, to eat, to draw, to paint, to read, to fix;* and b) nouns*: a butterfly, a cookie, a leaf, a car, a plate, a book, a cat, Winnie the Pooh, Piglet, and Kangaroo.* The quiz was carried out in the following way. On the blackboard there were pictures organized into three columns: *Easy, Medium* and *Difficult*. The words were divided into three groups based on the experimenter's knowledge of the study plan on the subject. The words in the category marked with *Easy* were ones that the participants were sure to know, for example, *a car* or *a cat*. The *Medium* group consisted of slightly more difficult words that were likely to have been acquired after primary school, for example *to colour* or *a leaf.* Finally, the group named *Difficult* had the words that the participants might not know, for example, *to fix* or *to draw* (see *Table 7*). Each category was subdivided into three subcategories: *Animals*, *Activities* and *Things*. Each participant was allowed to choose a category and a subcategory, and then the experimenter asked the question "*What is this?*". If he or she did not know the word that corresponded to the picture, the experimenter asked the class. For each correct answer participants got a small reward. It took about 5 minutes to solve the quiz and the participants enjoyed the task. This quiz was aimed to revise the words that the participants would need in the conversation with the experimenter as well as the question "*What is this?*". Different pictures were used for the quiz and for the experiment.

Table 7 Quiz items

	Easy	**Medium**	**Difficult**
Animals/Insects	Kangaroo Winnie the Pooh Cat	butterfly	Piglet
Activities	read wash eat	paint colour	cut fix draw
Things	car flower plate book	cookie leaf	

After the quiz each participant was invited to have an individual conversation with the experimenter. Each participant got pictures from one list, and to avoid any confusion or misunderstanding they was also given a "Help List" with the words that they needed to describe the pictures (See Appendix 1).

As mentioned earlier, the pictures were organized according to the following conditions: Condition A (definite), Condition C (pronominal), Condition B (partitive) and the Condition D (indefinite, specific). Examples of these contexts and expected responses are given below with both the target response and non-target responses involving scrambling and object omissions:

(5) **Condition A (definite)**

E: What is this?

P: a plate

E: And who is this?

P: Piget

E: What is he doing?

P: *He is washing **the plate** / He **the plate** is washing/ He is washing **ø***

(6) **Condition C (pronominal)**

E: What is this?

P: a picture of a leaf

E: who is this?

P: Winnie the Pooh

E: What is he doing with the leaf?

P: *He is coloring **it** / He **it** is colouring/ He is colouring **ø***

(7) **Condition B (partitive)**

E: What are these?

P: books

E: Who is this?

P: Kangaroo

E: What is he doing?

P: *He is reading **one of the books***

(8) **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**

E: What or who is it in the picture?

P: kangaroo

E: what is he doing?
P: *he is fixing **a car***

To sum up, the main predictions for the experimental study with L1 Russian learners of English as a second language concern a contrast between Condition A (definite), Condition C (pronominal) and Condition B (partitive) on the one hand, and Condition D (indefinite, specific) on the other. It is predicted that object scrambling is possible in Condition A (definite) and in Conditions B (partitive) and C (pronominal) as the participants may transfer the word order from their mother tongue into English. It is also expected that in Condition C (pronominal) where the question was formed with an NP, the participants would use a pronoun in their answer rather than an NP. In addition, the participants are not expected to scramble at 100% rate, as the results presented in Mykhaylyk's research showed the participants gave non-scrambled answers even in the contexts where the scrambling was expected. This can be explained by the fact that scrambling with full NPs is optional while pronominal scrambling is not. The participants used NPs 81% of the anwers and pronouns in 19% of the answers (Mykhaylyk 2012: 567, Table 7). The rates of pronominal scrambling contrasted with NP scrabling demonstrate that the adults preferred the latter. In Condition A (definite) the participants scrambled 13% of the NPs they used and 92% of the pronouns they used. In Condition B (partitive) the rates of the NPs and the personal pronouns in a scrambled position were 44% and 100% respectively. In Condition D (indefinite, specific, invisible) the participants scrambled 8% of the NPs they used and 100% of the pronouns they used (Mykhaylyk 2012: 570).

Furthermore, the participants are also predicted to use the definite and the indefinite article to mark given and new information. The target way of marking direct objects is to use the definite article with the objects that are given and the indefinite article – with the objects that are new. The studies discussed in CHAPTER III **Acquisition of Articles** show that Russian L2 learners of English tend to misuse the articles in both definite and indefinite contexts. Specifically, Russian L2 learners of English showed a tendency to erroneously use the indefinite article in definite contexts and the definite erticle in indefinite contexts (Ionin et al: 2004). The same tendensy is expected to be found in the article use of the participants of the present study.

CHAPTER V
Results

5.1 Introduction

In the present chapter we give the overview of the experiment results. In section 5.2 we are going to discuss the participants' article use and analyze how accurate they were in marking given and new information in a target way. In section 5.3 we will discuss cases of transfer, namely, transfer of direct object scrambling and direct object omission. Finally, in section 5.4 there will be presented a detailed overview of the individual results, considering the phenomena named above.

As pointed out, we have several phenomena to look at while discussing the results: article use, direct object scrambling, and direct object omission. The article use can tell us how the participants marked definiteness and indefiniteness considering the fact that the participants' L1 does not have an article system and they have no acess to transfer. The articles are the target in L2 and the most expected answers are those where the participants mark the direct objects with the definite article when they are [+definite] and with the indefinite article when they are [-definite].

Direct object scrambling and direct object omission represent cases of transfer which the participants can be expected to use in order to mark the direct object as *Topic*. The direct object omission is another predicted way of marking the object as Topic. It is expected to appear in Condition C (pronominal) where the experimenter asked questions that contained direct objects. As we discussed in CHAPTER II section 2.3.1, in Russian, direct objects can be omitted if they were mentioned in the preceeding sentence and thus can be recovered from the linguistic context.

The total number of verb-object combinations administered to the participants was 32 where ten combinations occur in the contexts of Condition A (definite), and eight combinations occur in the contexts of Condition C (pronominal). Then, there were six verb-object combinations occurring in the contexts of Condition D (specific, invisible) and eight occurring in the context of Condition B (partitive). Four participants were tested on each of the four lists. The participants who were tested on Lists 1, 3 and 4 gave four answers that might potentially contain scrambling while the participants tested on List 2 gave five answers

that might potentially contain scrambling. The total number of potentially scrambled answers is 100, where 36 of them belong to Condition A (definite) and 32 to Condition C (pronominal), and 32 to Condition B (partitive). Finally, 24 relevant answers were provided in Condition D (indefinite, specific). *Table 1* demonstrates the total number of responses in each condition that could potentially involve scrambling or object omission. The total number of responses in which article use expected is higher, and is not included in *Table 1*. This is going to be discussed later in section 5.2 **Article Use**. Thus, the total numbers correspond to the number of answers to the questions "*What is he doing*?" or, for example, "*What is he doing to the cat?*":

Table 1 Total number of responses in each condition

Condition A (definite)	**Condition B (partitive)**	**Condition C (pronominal)**	**Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
36	32	32	24

The partitive condition, Condition B, provides us no interesting results: there are no scrambled answers or answers with direct object omissions. In addition, none of the participants used the target phrase "*one of the ...*" which means that the answers tell us nothing about the article use of the learners. Thus, we exclude this condition from the further calculations of the results.

Condition B (partitive) did not trigger transfer of scrambling, though in the results presented by Mykhalyk (2012), the rate of scrambling was quite high. Mykhaylyk (2012) argues the high rate of scrambling suggests that though a participant does not know which of the previously shown several objects is being manipulated now, it was still present in the discourse and thus becomes *Topic*. Furthermore, if a participant uses the constituent "*one of the ...*" (*odyn iz …*), it is more likely for him/her to scramble the object (Mykhalyk 2012: 563). As mentioned in CHAPTER IV, the results presented by Mykhaylyk (2012) demonstrate that adults exhibited the highest rates of scrambled responses, 60% and 50% in Condition A (definite) and Condition B (partitive) respectively (Mykhaylyk 2012: 568). The Russian learners of English did not use the target expression "*one of the ...*". This might be because they didn't have enough language competence in English to do so. Rather the participants tended to reply with a bare noun (Dialogue 9) or a noun in the indefinite form (Dialogue 10). Dialogues (1) and (2) illustrate how the participants described the pictures that illustrated Condition B (partitive):

(1) **Condition B (partitive)**

Experimenter: Look! What are these?
Participant 3: books
Experimenter: yes, who is this?
Participant 3: Kangaroo
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 3: *He read book*

(2)
Experimenter: Look! What are these?
Participant 8: cats
Experimenter: Right, who is this?
Participant 8: Kangaroo
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 8: *he drawing a cat*

5.2 Article Use

The participants' use of articles can tell us a lot about how they divided information into *Topic* and *Focus*. We expect the participants to use a definite article with direct objects if they represent given information and possess such a feature as [+hearer knowledge]. In other words, direct objects should be familiar to the hearer or to the speaker, or to both of them. When direct objects represent new information and can be marked with the feature [-hearer knowledge], or, in other words, they are not known to the hearer or to the reader, an indefinite article is expected to be used by the participants. Recall from CHAPTER III that the most common mistakes in article use are article omission alongside with the use of the definite article in indefinite contexts and the use of the indefinite article in definite contexts.

In our investigation of the article use of the participants regarding in definite and indefinite contexts all the responses in the three conditions that contained a context requiring articles were counted. This means that the total number of contexts is much higher than the number we are going to use to investigate direct object scrambling and direct object omission. Recall that in *Table1* in section 5.1 we saw that Condition A (definite) contained a total of 36 target

contexts (two in List 1, List 3 and list 4 and three in List 2). In addition to the contexts which require the definite article in English, Condition A (definite) also contains contexts for indefinite noun phrases. These are the contexts where the participants name direct objects for the first time in each dialogue. Dialogue (3) demonstrates the use of the direct object "*flower*" in the indefinite and definite contexts in Condition A (definite). In the first answers the participant mentions the direct object for the first time and thus it carries *Focus* features. In the last answer the participant mentions the object for the second time, and as the direct object has become *Topic*, the definite article is used with it:

(3) **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look at the picture. What is this?
Participant 16: a flower
Experimenter: Good. And who is this?
Participant 16: Piglet
Experimenter: Right, what is he doing?
Participant 16: *He cut the flower*

This means that the target contexts for Condition A (definite) have doubled and the total number of answers where articles are expected in this condition is 72, where 36 answers should demonstrate the definite article *the* and 36 the indefinite article *a/an*.

Similarly, in Condition C (pronominal) the total number of target contexts is 32, namely two in each List, and the same number of indefinite contexts. This means that while discussing article use in this condition, we will consider 64 answers where 32 answers should demonstrate the definite article and 32 answers should demonstrate the indefinite article. Dialogue (4) demonstrates how the participant uses the indefinite and the definite article with the direct object "*car*". As in dialogue (3) the direct object when mentioned for the first time in the first answer possesses *Focus* features, but when it is mentioned for the second time in the last participant's answer, it becomes *Topic* and the participant uses the definite article.

(4) **Condition C (pronominal)**

Experimenter: Look at the picture. What is this?
Participant 16: a car
Experimenter: Good. And who is this?
Participant 16: Kangaroo

Experimenter: Right, what is he doing?
Participant 16: *He fix the car*

Finally, Condition D (indefinite, specific) has 24 target contexts which require only the indefinite article as in this condition direct objects are known to the speaker, but not known to the hearer, so the participants are expected to mark the objects as *Focus*. In List 1 and List 2 there are two target contexts which occur in Condition D (indefinite, specific) while in List 2 and List 3 there is one target context for this condition. Dialogue (5) illustrates that the participant marks the direct object "*cat*" as new information and uses the indefinite article as the experimenter does not see the picture.

(5) **Condition D (specific, invisible)**

Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in the picture?
Participant 14: Kangaroo
Experimenter: Good. And what is he doing?
Participant 14: He draw *a cat*

The total number of indefinite contexts is 92, this includes 36 answers with the indefinite objects in Condition A (definite), 32 answers in Condition C (pronominal) and 24 answers in Condition D (specific, invisible). The total number of definite contexts is 68 where 36 answers occur in Condition A (definite) and 32 answers occur in Condition C (pronominal). Despite the fact that the participants were expected to use pronominal objects in their target answers in Condition C (pronominal), all of them used NPs which in this case, should be in the definite form.

Table 2 provides an overview of the article use of the participants of the study. The answers provided by the participants in the contexts described as indefinite occur in the column entitled *Indefinite Contexts,* and if the participants erroneously use the definite article in the indefinite context or omit the article, such answers go in the column *the* and* the column *article omission.* Target answers are found in the column *a*. The answers provided by the participants described as definite are found in the column *the*. If the participants erroneously use the indefinite article in the definite context or omit the article, the answers go in the column *a** and the column *article omission*. The answers with object omissions are also included in the table in order to make sure that the total numbers add up.

Table 2 Article use per participant

Participants	**Definite Contexts**					**Indefinite Contexts**			
	*a**	*the*	*article omission*	*Obj Omission*	*N Total*	*a*	*the**	*article omission*	*N Total*
1.	0	1	3	0	16	1	1	4	24
2.	2	1	1	0		3	0	3	
3.	3	0	1	0		3	1	2	
4.	1	0	3	0		1	0	5	
5.	3	1	1	0	20	0	0	6	24
6.	0	0	5	0		0	1	5	
7.	3	0	2	0		0	0	6	
8.	1	1	3	0		0	0	6	
9.	1	2	1	0	16	1	0	4	20
10.	3	0	0	1		0	0	5	
11.	0	0	2	2		1	0	4	
12.	1	3	0	0		1	0	4	
13.	0	0	4	0	16	2	0	4	24
14.	0	3	1	0		1	0	5	
15.	2	0	0	2		0	0	6	
16.	0	4	0	0		4	0	2	
Total	20	16	27	5	68	18	3	71	92
Percentage	29,4%	23,5%	39,7%	7,4%	-	19,6%	3,2%	77,2%	-

Out of 68 possible answers with the definite article in the definite context 16 (23,5%) showed the correct article use and 20 (29,4%) the erroneous use of the indefinite article. In addition 27 (39,7%) answers demonstrated article omission and five (7,4%) answers involved object omission. Based on this we can conclude that the most common error in the definite contexts is article omission and the second most common error is article misuse. Eight out of 16 participants used the definite article correctly at least once. When it comes to indefinite contexts, out of 92 total answers the correct use of the indefinite article is found in 18 (19,6%) answers while three answers (3,2%) show erroneous use of the definite article in indefinite contexts. The highest number of article omissions are found in the indefinite context – 71 answers (77,2%). As we can see, the most common error with indefinite articles is article omission. Ten out of 16 participants used correct article in the indefinite context at least once while only three participants used the definite article instead of the definite one. The results illustrate that the participants perform better in definite contexts when it comes to article omission as the percentages of omitted articles in definite contexts are lower as compared to indefinite ones. Then, the rates at which the participants use articles correctly in

both contexts do not differ significantly while article misuse is definitely higher in definite contexts than in indefinite ones.

If we consider individual results, we can see that four out of sixteen participants used the article *the* correctly only once and four participants used the definite article correctly more than once. In addition, 12 out of 16 participants (75%) dropped articles from 1 to 5 times. In indefinite contexts five out of sixteen participants (31,3%) never use the article *a* and the rest of the participants use it from 1 to 4 times. Four participants (25%) erroneously use the definite article in the indefinite context. The high numbers of the erroneous article use are also found in article omission and range from 2 to 6. A more detailed description of individual results will be given in section 5.4

All in all, article omission is the most common mistake that can be found in the answers of the participants. This can be explained by the fact that they have little access to the language and are at an early stage of L2 acquisition. If we analyze the misuse of articles in definite and indefinite context, we can see that more learners preferred to use the indefinite article in definite context (29,4%) than the other way around (3,2%) which may be a sign that they still try to mark the NP as definite, but just use the wrong marker. As discussed in CHAPTER III Russian L2 English learners who have no access to transfer from their L1 can overuse the indefinite article in the definite context (Ionin et al: 2004). At the same time, a common mistake of L2 English learners who have L1 that doesn't possess an article system is the definite article misuse in indefinite contexts (Tryzna: 2009). But we do not find high rates of such a misuse in our data. There are only three participants who used the definite article erroneously in definite contexts and thus we cannot conclude that this is a common mistake. The indefinite article drop is very high (77,2%) which indicates that the participants generally did not try to mark the NPs as *Focus* in a target way. According to Zdorenko & Paradis (2007) article omission is quite common for L2 beginner English learners who have article less L1. However, Tryzna (2009) writes that intermediate and advanced learners do not exhibit high rates of article omission even though their L1 is article less. The learners tend to omit articles in [- definite] contexts, but the omission rate if quite low (4%) (Tryzna 2009).

Table 3 demonstrates the results for the two definite conditions separately. We can see that the participants used the definite article from 1 to 2 times in both conditions. Then, three out of the 16 participants (18,7%) have 100% article omission in Condition A (definite) and five participants (31,3%) have 100% article omission Condition C (pronominal). Eight out of 36

answers (22,2%) in Condition A (definite) show the correct use of the definite article while eight out of 32 answers (25%) in Condition C (pronominal) demonstrate the correct use of the definite article. Article misuse is higher in Condition A (definite) (44,4%) than in Condition C (pronominal) (12,5%). Finally, article omission rates do not differ significantly in both conditions: 33,3% and 46,8% for Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal). The most common mistake in article use in Condition A (definite) is the erroneous use of the indefinite article in definite contexts. Since Russian L2 English learners have not acquired native-like contrast between definiteness and indefiniteness, they can mark the direct object as *Focus* despite the fact that it was mentioned earlier. However, in Condition C (pronominal) article misuse is significantly lower (12,5%). This can be explained by the fact that direct objects were mentioned in the preceding question and it was easier for the participants to determine that they have *Topic* features. The most common mistake in Condition C (pronominal) is article omission which can be explained by the fact that the participants are beginners and have not acquired the target way of marking new and given information.

Table 3 Article use per participant in Conditions A and C. Definite context

Participants	**Condition A (definite)**					**Condition C (pronominal)**				
	*a**	*the*	*article omission*	*obj omission*	*N Total*	*a**	*the*	*article omission*	*obj omission*	*N Total*
1.	0	1	1	0	8	0	0	2	0	8
2.	1	0	1	0		1	1	0	0	
3.	2	0	0	0		1	0	1	0	
4.	1	0	1	0		0	0	2	0	
5.	3	0	0	0	12	0	1	1	0	8
6.	0	0	3	0		0	0	2	0	
7.	2	0	1	0		1	0	1	0	
8.	1	1	1	0		0	0	2	0	
9.	1	1	0	0	8	0	1	1	0	8
10.	2	0	0	0		1	0	0	1	
11.	0	0	2	0		0	0	0	2	
12.	1	1	0	0		0	2	0	0	
13.	0	0	2	0	8	0	0	2	0	8
14.	0	2	0	0		0	1	1	0	
15.	2	0	0	0		0	0	0	2	
16.	0	2	0	0		0	2	0	0	
Total	16	8	12	0	36	4	8	15	5	32
Percentage	44,4%	22,2%	33,3%	-		12,5%	25%	46,8%	15,6%	

Table 4 includes the numbers of the answers with definite and indefinite articles as well as with the article omissions in indefinite context. We did not only include indefiniteness form Condition D (specific, invisible) in the table, but also indefinite contexts occurring in

Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal). As expected, there is no 100% correct article use and the most common mistake is article omission. Article misuse is less common, only two participants (12,5%) used the definite article in indefinite condition, and one person (6,3%) used the definite article with an indefinite NP in the Condition A (definite). The highest rate of the article omission is found in the pronominal condition – 15 out of the 16 participants (93,7%) omitted the article at least once. As discussed earlier in this section, the most common mistake in indefinite context is article omission: in Condition A (definite) it is 77,8%, in Condition C (pronominal) 84,4% and in Condition D (indefinite specific) 62,5%. We also mentioned that though it is common for L2 English learners to overuse the definite article in indefinite contexts, the number of erroneously used definite articles in the data is quite low: 2,8% in Condition A (definite) and 8,3% in Condition D (indefinite, specific). None of the participants overused the definite article in Condition C (pronominal). Speaking about the target use of the indefinite article, we can notice that only two participants out of the 16 (12,5%) used the target article in all the three contexts at least once, three participants (18,7 %) used the target article in two contexts at least once in each, and five participants (31,3%) used the indefinite article correctly in one of the contexts at least once. The highest rate of correct indefinite article use occurs in Condition D (indefinite, specific) 29,2% while Conditions C (pronominal) and A(definite) exhibit lower rates: 15,6% and 19,4 % respectively.

Table 4 Article use per participant in Conditions A, C and D. Indefinite context

Participants	**Indefinite Context**											
	Condition A (definite)				**Condition C (pronominal)**				**Condition D (indefinite, specific)**			
	a	**the*	*article omission*	*N*	*a*	**the*	*article omission*	*N*	*a*	**the*	*article omission*	*N*
P1	0	0	2	8	0	0	2	8	1	1	0	8
P2	2	0	0		0	0	2		1	0	1	
P3	1	1	0		1	0	1		1	0	1	
P4	1	0	1		0	0	2		1	0	1	
P5	0	0	3	12	0	0	2	8	0	0	1	4
P6	0	0	3		0	0	2		0	1	0	
P7	0	0	3		0	0	2		0	0	1	
P8	0	0	3		0	0	2		0	0	1	
P9	0	0	2	8	1	0	1	8	0	0	1	4
P10	0	0	2		0	0	2		0	0	1	
P11	0	0	2		0	0	2		1	0	0	
P12	1	0	1		0	0	2		0	0	1	
P13	1	0	1	8	1	0	1	8	0	0	2	4
P14	0	0	2		0	0	2		1	0	1	
P15	0	0	2		0	0	2		0	0	2	
P16	1	0	1		2	0	0		1	0	1	
Total	7	1	28	36	5	0	27	32	7	2	15	24
Percentage	19,4 %	2,8%	77,8%	-	15,6%	-	84,4%	-	29,2%	8,3%	62,5%	-

The dialogues (6), (7) and (8) illustrate the three mistakes that occurred in the article use: the indefinite article in the definite context, the definite article in the indefinite context and the omission of the articles in definite and indefinite contexts:

(6) **Condition A** (**definite)**

Experimenter: Look! What is this?

Participant 4: plate

Experimenter: And who is this?

Participant 4: Piglet

Experimenter: What is he doing?

P: *He wash a plate*

(7) **Condition D** (**indefinite, specific)**

Experimenter: what or who is it in this picture?

Participant 6 :Winnie the Pooh

Experimenter: what is he doing?

Participant 6: *He catch the butterfly*

(8) **Condition A** (**definite)**
Experimenter: Who is this?
Participant 8: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: yes, and what is this?
Participant 8: cookie
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 8: *he eat cookie*

Dialogues (9) and (10) show us the correct article use in the definite and indefinite contexts:

(9) **Condition A** (**definite)**
Experimenter: Look, who is this?
Participant 12: cat
Experimenter: and who is this?
Participant 12: kangaroo
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 12: *he paint the cat*

(10) **Condition D** (**indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter: Who or what is it in this picture?
Participant 11: Piglet
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 11: *he cut a flower*

5.3 Transfer of Direct Object Scrambling and Direct Object Omission in the Pronominal Condition

We have just discussed how successful Russian L2 English learners are at marking given and new objects in the target way by using articles. In the present study we started out considering the possibility of transfer of ways of marking information division into given and new from learner's L1 into English. Specifically, we asked whether the learners would transfer direct object scrambling and direct object omission to mark the objects as given rather than use the definite article which is the target behavior in L2. We have found examples of both direct

object scrambling and direct object omission in the data. Mykhaylyk (2012, 2013) did not investigate the phenomenon of object omission. According to Mykhaylyk's study (2012, 2013) direct object scrambling is expected to be found in definite and partitive conditions, but in the present study cases of direct object omission are limited only to the contexts occurring in the Pronominal Condition. Recall that the Pronominal Condition was not presented in Mykhaylyk's experiment, but was added in the present study.

5.3.1 Transfer of Direct Object Scrambling in the Pronominal Condition

Turning to remaining three conditions, let us start by illustrating the elicitation of the relevant structures and the expected responses in (11), (12) and (13):

(11) Condition A (Definite)

E: What is this?

P: a plate

E: And who is this?

P: Piglet

E: What is he doing?

P: *He is washing **the plate** / He **the plate** is washing*

(12) Condition C (pronominal)

E: Look, who is this?

P: kangaroo

E: And who is this?

P: a cat

E: Yes, and what is he doing to the cat?

P: *He is drawing **it**/ he **it** is drawing/ He is drawing*

(13) **Condition D (specific, invisible)**

E: Look, who or what is in the picture?

P: Piglet

E: What is he doing?

P: *he is cutting a flower*

In each of the dialogues in (11), (12) and (13), both target and non-target responses are presented. In Conditions A (definite) and D (specific, invisible) the target answer is the one exhibiting full non-scrambled NP as the direct object is not mentioned in the preceding question. In Condition C (pronominal), where the direct object is established in the preceding sentence, the use of the non-scrambled pronoun "*it*" is appropriate in the participant's answer. However, Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) can trigger scrambling in Russian and we can expect Russian L2 learners of English to transfer scrambling of direct objects from their L1 in these contexts. Table 5 below demonstrates to which extent the participants scramble in the three conditions. We should clarify that the answers included to *Table 5* represent only the target utterances, or, in other words, those utterances where the participants named the direct object for the second time in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal), but for the first time in Condition D (specific, indefinite). Please, note that the numbers correspond to those in *Table 1*.

Table 5 Total scrambled and non-scrambled objects

Condition A (definite)			**Condition C (pronominal)**		**Condition D (specific, invisisble)**	
Scrambled Non-scrambled			Scrambled	Non-scrambled	Scrambled	Non-scrambled
	0	36	5	27	0	24
Percentage	0%	100%	15,6%	84,4%	0%	100%

Table 6 shows the number of NP scrambling and pronominal scrambling among all the participants. As we can see, all scrambled answers occurred in the Pronominal Condition. In addition, it is important to mention that though such questions should trigger the use of pronouns, none of the participants used pronouns in their answers. Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) are the conditions where transfer of direct object scrambling might happen since the object gets *Topic* features.

Table 6 NP scrambling vs pronominal scrambling, all the participants

Condition A (definite)			**Condition C (pronominal)**	
NP		Pronoun	NP	Pronoun
	0	0	5	0
Percentage	0%	0%	15,6%	0%

In *Table 7* we can see individual scrambling results. Only one participant scrambled twice in one and the same condition, the rest of scrambled answers occur only once per a participant. To mark out the participants who scrambled we used light shading.

Table 7 NP scrambling vs pronominal scrambling, individual participants

Participants	**Condition A (definite)**		**Condition C (pronominal)**		**Condition D (specific, invisible)**	
	NP	Pronoun	NP	Pronoun	NP	Pronoun
P1	0	0	1	0	0	0
P2	0	0	0	0	0	0
P3	0	0	0	0	0	0
P4	0	0	0	0	0	0
P5	0	0	0	0	0	0
P6	0	0	2	0	0	0
P7	0	0	0	0	0	0
P8	0	0	1	0	0	0
P9	0	0	0	0	0	0
P10	0	0	0	0	0	0
P11	0	0	0	0	0	0
P12	0	0	0	0	0	0
P13	0	0	0	0	0	0
P14	0	0	1	0	0	0
P15	0	0	0	0	0	0
P16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	-	-	5	-	-	-
Percentage	-	-	15,6%	-	-	-

As we can see, it total the participants scrambled in five (15,6%) out of 32 contexts which might potentially trigger transfer of direct object scrambling. Participant 1 was tested on List 1 where two contexts which might trigger scrambling occurred in Condition A (definite) and two contexts occurred in Condition C (pronominal), so the rate of scrambled answers is 25%. Participant 14 was tested on List 4 and had the same amount of contexts which might trigger direct object scrambling as in List 1, also had 25 % of scrambled answers. Then, Participant 6 and Participant 8 got the task with the items from List 3. In this list there were five contexts where L1 Russian learners could scramble, three of the contexts occurred in Condition A (definite) and two of the contexts occurred in Condition C (pronominal).Participant 6 who scrambled twice demonstrated the highest rates of scrambling – 40% while Participant 8 scrambled only once and had scrambling rate at 20%. Some examples of the dialogues between the experimenter and a participant where the answers contain NP scrambling are provided in (14)-(16):

(14) **Condition C (pronominal):**

Experimenter: Look! What is this?
Participant 1: leaf
Experimenter: yes, and who is this?
Participant 1: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: What is he doing with the leaf?
P: *He leaf colouring*

(15)
Experimenter: Look! Who is this?
Participant 6: Kangaroo
Experimenter: Right, and what is this?
Participant 6: car
Experimenter: Yes, right. What is he doing to the car?
Participant 6: *he car fix*

(16)
Experimenter: Look! Who is this?
Participant 6: Piglet
Experimenter: Good, and what is this?
Participant 6: flower
Experimenter: Yes, and what is he doing with the flower?
Participant 6: *He flower cut*

None of the participants used direct object scrambling in Condition A (definite) and what is remarkable, the questions that were formed without NPs, for example: "What is he doing?" did not trigger scrambled answers. The dialogues (17) and (18) illustrate the participants' answers in these contexts. In both cases there was only one direct object presented in the scene: "*the cookie*" and "*the flower*" and they were named by the participants before, but none of them placed the direct objects before the verbs.

(17) **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, what is this?
Participant 7: cookie
Experimenter: yes, and who is this?
Participant 7: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 7: *he eat cookie*

(18)
Experimenter: Look at the picture. What is this?
Participant 16: a flower
Experimenter: Good. And who is this?
Participant 16: Piglet
Experimenter: Right, what is he doing?
Participant 16: *He cut the flower*

As expected, Condition D (specific, invisible) did not trigger scrambling. The experimenter did not see the object and the participants treated it as unknown to the hearer and thus it got *Focus* features. The conversations in (19) and (20) illustrate how the participants answered to the experimenter's questions:

(19) **Condition D (specific, invisible)**
Experimenter: Who or what is it in this picture?
Participant 9: Piglet
Experimenter: What is he doing?
Participant 9: *he cut flower*

(20)
Experimenter: Look! Who or what is it on this picture?
Participant 14: Kangaroo
Experimenter: okay, and what is he doing?
Participant 14: *he draw a cat*

5.3.2 Transfer of Direct Object Omission in the Pronominal Condition

As we have just seen, there are relatively few examples of scrambled objects in the data: the participants scrambled NP objects in the Pronominal Condition at 15,6% (five responses out of 32). Nevertheless, there are still some other phenomena which L1 Russian learners transfer into English in order to mark the information as given and new. Direct object scrambling is not the only way to mark objects as given in Russian, another such phenomenon is direct object omission. As discussed in CHAPTER II, section 2.3.1, it is quite common for objects carrying Topic features can to be dropped in Russian.

Again, Condition C (pronominal) triggered non-target behavior in the form of transfer of markers of information structure from Russian to English. Recall that the four participants, Participant 1, Participant 6, Participant 8 and Participant 14 gave scrambled answers in this condition. The participants who scrambled direct object did not omit them and vice versa. There were three participants who omitted objects in the Pronominal condition; Participant 11 and Participant 15 omitted the objects twice while Participant 10 used direct object omission only once. Thus, in total objects were omitted in 15,6 % of cases (five contexts out of 32). *Table 8* shows individual direct object omission results. Light shading is used to mark out the participants who omitted direct objects:

Table 8 Direct object omission per participant

	Definite, Specific		Definite, Specific (NP)		Specific, Invisible	
	NP	Pronoun	NP	Pronoun	NP	Pronoun
P1	0	0	0	0	0	0
P2	0	0	0	0	0	0
P3	0	0	0	0	0	0
P4	0	0	0	0	0	0
P5	0	0	0	0	0	0
P6	0	0	0	0	0	0
P7	0	0	0	0	0	0
P8	0	0	0	0	0	0
P9	0	0	0	0	0	0
P10	0	0	1	0	0	0
P11	0	0	2	0	0	0
P12	0	0	0	0	0	0
P13	0	0	0	0	0	0
P14	0	0	0	0	0	0
P15	0	0	2	0	0	0
P16	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	-	-	5	-	-	-
Percentage	-	-	15,6%	-	-	-

Below in (21)-(23) we see examples of dialogues with the direct object omission:

(21) **Condition C (pronominal)**
Experimenter: Look! Who is this?
Participant 11: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: Okay, what is he doing with the butterfly?
Participant 11: *He catch*
Experimenter: What is he catching?
Participant 11: butterfly

(22) **Condition C (pronominal)**
Experimenter: Look! What is this?
Participant 11: plate
Experimenter: Yes, and who is this?
Participant 11: Piglet
Experimenter: What is he doing to the plate?
Participant 11: *he wash*
Experimenter: What is he washing?
Participant 11: plate

(23) **Condition C (pronominal)**
Experimenter: Look! Who is this?
Participant 15: Kangaroo
Experimenter: And what is this?
Participant 15: Car
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing to the car?
Participant 15: *He fix*
Experimenter: What is he fixing?
Participant: car

What is remarkable about dialogues (21), (22) and (23) is that the experimenter had to ask additional questions that were not planned in the experimenter to make the participants name the objects. This happened despite the fact that all the participants were asked to give full answers to the questions and they followed the instructions with the exception of such cases.

The participants were very comfortable with omitting the objects as they were already presented in the experimenter's questions.

To sum up, the two instances of transfer, direct object scrambling and direct object omission are found only on the Pronominal Context. In total direct object scrambling and direct object omission occur in 31,3%, that is 10 out of 32 contexts where these phenomena were expected. Furthermore, 43,7% of participants (7 participants out of 16) exhibit non-target behavior all or some of the time to mark direct objects as given. Thus, the study shows that Russian L2 learners of English also transfer information structure into their L2.

5.4 Individual Results

A closer look at individual results shows us some interesting tendencies. As mentioned earlier, Participants 1, 6, 8 and 14 used NP scrambling while Participants 10, 11 and 15 omitted the direct objects. There were no participants who used both scrambling and object omission as the marker of definiteness/givenness. Both phenomena were found only in Condition C (Pronominal). In addition, in the answers with scrambling, the participants did not use articles; and the participants who omitted the direct objects and were asked to give answers to some additional questions, for example, "*What is he washing*?" never used the articles with the objects either. Nevertheless, it would not be correct to say that these participants use only object scrambling or object omission to show that the object possesses *Topic* features. The participants also used articles though the overall results demonstrate that the number of cases when the articles were used correctly is quite low.

First, we consider the article use in definite and indefinite contexts of the participants who scrambled. Participants 1 and 14 used the definite article correctly in one context out of four and in three contexts out of four respectively; and omitted the definite article in the rest of the contexts. Dialogues (24 a, b) and (25 a, b) illustrate correct and erroneous use of articles or article omissions in definite context by Participant 1 and Participant 14. Dialogues in (*a*) illustrate the participants' responses with target article while dialogues in (*b*) give examples of participant's responses demonstrating non-target behavior:

(24) a. **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, who is this?
Participant 1: Winnie the Pooh

Experimenter: Right, and what is this?

Participant 1: butterfly

Experimenter: What is he doing?

Participant 1: *he catch the butterfly*

b. **Condition C (Pronominal)**

Experimenter: Look, who is this?

Participant 1: cat

Experimenter: Good, and who is this?

Participant 1: Kangaroo

Experimenter: What is he doing to the cat?

Participant 1: *he drawing cat*

(25) a. **Condition C (pronominal)**

Experimenter: Look, what is this?

Participant 14: car

Experimenter: Right, and who is this?

Participant 14: Kangaroo

Experimenter: And what is he doing with the car?

Participant 14: *he fix the car*

b. **Condition C (proniminal)**

Experimenter: Look, what is this?

Participant 14: book

Experimenter: Right, and who is this?

Participant 14: Kangaroo

Experimenter: And what is he doing with the book?

Participant 14: *he book read*

Participant 8 used the definite article correctly only in one definite context out of five, omitted the definite article three times and once used erroneously the indefinite article in the definite context. Dialogues (26 a,b,c) demonstrate the correct use of the target article, article omission and article misuse:

(26) a. **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, what is this?

Participant 8: leaf

Experimenter: Right, and who is this?

Participant 8: Winnie the Pooh

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?

Participant 8: *he paint the leaf*

b. **Condition C (pronominal)**

Experimenter: Look, who is this?

Participant 8: Piglet

Experimenter: Right, and what is this?

Participant 8: flower

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing with the flower?

Participant 8: *he cut flower*

c. **Condition A (definite)**

Experimenter: Look, what is this?

Participant 8: book

Experimenter: Right, and who is this?

Participant 8: Kangaroo

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?

Participant 8: *he read a book*

Participant 6 never demonstrated the target way of marking givenness and omitted articles in all the five definite contexts. Dialogue (27) illustrates how the participant omits the definite article with the direct object "*cookie*" in the definite context:

(27) **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, what is this?

Participant 6: cookie

Experimenter: And who is this?

Participant 6: Winnie the Pooh

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?

Participant 6: *he eat cookie*

When it comes to the indefinite context, Participants 6 and 8 had six indefinite contexts occurring in Condition A (definite), Condition C (pronominal) and Condition D (indefinite, specific) where they never used the indefinite article, but omitted it instead. Participant 6 erroneously used the article *the* once in Condition D (indefinite, specific) and omitted the articles in the rest of the contexts. The dialogue (28) shows us article omission and definite article misuse in Condition D (indefinite, specific) by Participant 6 while the dialogue (29 a, b) shows us indefinite article omission by Participant 8 in Condition A (definite) and Condition D (indefinite, specific):

(28) **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 6: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: Right, and what is he doing?
Participant 6: *he catch the butterfly*

(29) a. **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, what is this?
Participant 8: cookie
Experimenter: And who is this?
Participant 8: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 8: *he eat cookie*

b. **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 8: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 8: *he catch the butterfly*

Participants 1 and 14 used the indefinite article correctly only in one context out of six each. Participant 1 used the non-target definite article in indefinite context once while Participant 14 omitted the articles in the rest of the cases. The dialogues in (30 a, b, c) illustrates how Participant 1 uses the indefinite article correctly in Condition D (indefinite specific) and omits

the indefinite article in indefinite context occurring in Condition A (definite) as well as misuses the definite article in the indefinite context occurring in Condition D (indefinite, specific):

(30) a. **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 1: Kangaroo
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 1: *he fix a car*

b. **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, what is this?
Participant 1: butterfly
Experimenter: And who is this?
Participant 1: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 1: *he catch the butterfly*

c. **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 1: Winnie the Pooh
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 1: *he eat the cookie*

Out of all participants who gave answers with direct object scrambling, Participant 14 seems to be the most accurate in marking definiteness as he used the target article in three out of four definite contexts (75%). Participants 1 and 8 exhibit target behavior in definite contexts in 25% and 20% of their answers respectively while Participant 6 omitted definite articles in five responses out of five. When it comes to indefiniteness, it is difficult to single out a participant who uses the indefinite article correctly, all the participants considered exhibit the erroneous use of the indefinite article at rates higher than 60 %. Participant 1 was a little bit more accurate as she used indefinite articles in one out of six target contexts (16,6%) while Participants 1, 6 and 8 omitted the indefinite articles in all the six indefinite contexts.

Participants 10, 11 and 15 who omitted the direct objects were also not that accurate in the use of the indefinite article. Participant 10 and Participant 15 omitted indefinite articles in five out of five contexts and in six out of six contexts respectively. Dialogues (31) and (32) demonstrate indefinite article omissions in the answers produced by Participants 10 and 15:

(31) **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 10: Piglet
Experimenter: Ok, and what is he doing?
Participant 10: *he cut flower*

(32) **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 15: Piglet
Experimenter: And what is he doing?
Participant 15: *he wash plate*

Participant 11 used the indefinite article correctly only once (20 %) in the context occurring in Condition D (indefinite, specific) and in four other contexts, two indefinite contexts in Condition A (definite) and two indefinite contexts in Condition C (pronominal) the articles were omitted. This is shown in the dialogues 33 (a, b, c):

(33) a. **Condition D (indefinite, specific)**
Experimenter (*doesn't see the picture*): Look, who or what is in this picture?
Participant 11: Piglet
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 11: *he cut a flower*

b. **Condition A (definite)**
Experimenter: Look, who is this?
Participant 11: Kangaroo
Experimenter: And what is this?
Participant 11: book
Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?
Participant 11: *he read book*

c. **Condition C (pronominal)**

Experimenter: Look, who is this?

Participant 11: Winnie the Pooh

Experimenter: And what is this?

Participant 11: butterfly

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing to the butterfly?

Participant 11: *he catch*

Experimenter: What is he cathing?

Participant 11: butterfly

These participants had four contexts where they were supposed to use the definite article. Participants 11 and 15 omitted the objects in 50% of cases and did not exhibit any correct article use: Participant 11 omitted the definite articles in two other contexts and Participant 15 used the indefinite article in the rest of the contexts. As discussed earlier, the direct objects were omitted only in Condition C (pronominal). The dialogues (34) and (35) demonstrate definite article omission by Participant 11 in the contexts occurring in Condition A (definite) and the erroneous use of the indefinite article in the same contexts by Participant 15.

(34) **Condition A (definite)**

Experimenter: Look, who is this?

Participant 11: Kangaroo

Experimenter: And who is this?

Participant 11: cat

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?

Participant 11: *he draw cat*

(35) **Condition A (definite)**

Experimenter: Look, who is this?

Participant 15: Piglet

Experimenter: And what is this?

Participant 15: flower

Experimenter: Okay, and what is he doing?

Participant 15: *he cut a flower*

Participant 10 omitted the direct object only once and in three other cases the indefinite article was erroneously used as illustrated in the dialogue (36):

(36) **Condition C (pronominal)**
Experimenter: Look, who is this?

Participant 10: Winnie the Pooh

Experimenter: And what is this?

Participant 10: butterfly

Experimenter: Good, and what is he doing?

Participant 10: *he catch a butterfly*

Table 9 and *Table 10* show a more detailed picture of the article use of both of the group of participants who scrambled and the group of participants who omitted direct objects, in the definite conditions, namely Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal). Light shading is used to mark out the answers with the target article.

As we can see from *Table 9*, the participants tend to omit the target article *the* less in Condition A (definite) than in Condition C (pronominal) where they used NP scrambling. Only Participant 6 didn't use any articles in all the answers, while other participants used the target article at least once.

Table 9. The definite article use of participants who gave scrambled answers. Conditions A (definite) and C (pronominal)

Participants	**Condition A (definite)**					**Condition C (pronominal)**				
	*a**	*the*	*article omission*	*Obj omission*	*N Total*	*a**	*the*	*Article omission*	*Obj omission*	*N Total*
P1	0	1	1	0	2	0	0	2	0	2
P6	0	0	3	0	3	0	0	2	0	2
P8	1	1	1	0	3	0	0	2	0	2
P14	0	2	0	0	2	0	1	1	0	2
Total	1	4	5	0	10	0	1	7	0	8
Percentage	10%	40%	50%	-		-	12,5%	87,5%	-	

The participants who omitted the direct objects in their answers show lower results in the correct article use in the definite contexts: they have no target article in their answers, and in some cases they erroneously used non-target articles.

Table 10. The definite article use of participants who omitted direct objects. Conditions A (definite) and C (pronominal)

Participants	**Condition A (definite)**					**Condition C (pronominal)**				
	*a**	*the*	*article omission*	*Obj omission*	*N Total*	*a**	*the*	*article omission*	*Obj omission*	*N Total*
P10	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	2
P11	0	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
P15	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	2
Total	4	0	2	0	6	1	0	0	5	6
Percentage	66,7%	-	33,3%	-		16,7%			83,3%	

When it comes to indefiniteness, both groups of the participants demonstrate a high rate of article omission. The objects that possess *Focus* features did not get the indefiniteness marker and the word order in the answers remained neutral as expected. *Tables 11* and *12* demonstrate the use of the article in the indefinite contexts in Conditions A (definite), Condition C (pronominal) and Condition D (indefinite, specific). Though the two first conditions were designed to get answers with the definite article in the final answer, these contexts were preceded by indefinite contexts in which the participants named the object for the first time and thus were expected to use the indefinite article.

Table 11. Indefinite article use of the participants who gave scrambled answers. Conditions A (definite), C (pronominal) and D (indefinite, specific).

Participants	**Indefinite Context**											
	Condition A (definite)				**Condition C (pronominal)**				**Condition D (indefinite, specific)**			
	a	*the	article omission	N Total	a	*the	article omission	N Total	a	*the	article omission	N Total
P1	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	2
P6	0	0	3	3	0	0	2	2	0	1	0	1
P8	0	0	3	3	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1
P14	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	1	2
Total	-	-	10	10	-	-	8	8	2	2	2	6
Percentage	-	-	100%		-	-	100%		33,3%	33,3%	33,3%	

Table 12. The indefinite article use of participants who omitted direct objects. Conditions A(definite) C (pronominal) and D (indefinite, specific).

Participants	**Indefinite Context**											
	Condition A (definite)				**Condition C (pronominal)**				**Condition D (indefinite, specific)**			
	a	*the	article omission	N Total	a	*the	article omission	N Total	a	*the	article omission	N Total
P10	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	1	1
P11	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	1	0	0	1
P15	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2	0	0	2	2
Total	-	-	6	6	-	-	6	6	1	-	3	4
Percentage	-	-	100%		-	-	100%		25%	-	75%	

Out of the first group of participants who gave answers with object scrambling and the second group of the participants who gave answers with object omission, the first group was more accurate with the definite article than the second one. The participants who scrambled had in total used the definite article correctly in 40% of the answers in Condition A (definite) and in 12,5% of the answers in Condition C (pronominal) while the participants who omitted direct objects never used the target article correctly in these conditions. Both groups of participants used the indefinite article only in the contexts occurring in Condition D (indefinite, specific). The Participants who scrambled had higher rates of answers with the target article in these contexts 33,3% while the participants who omitted direct objects had 25% answers with the target article in the same contexts.

Participant 14 had the best results in the definite article use, he used the target article correctly in 100% of the contexts in Condition A (definite) and in 50% of the contexts in Condition C (pronominal). The least accurate results regarding the definite article use are found in the answers of Participants 6 and 11 who omitted the target article in 100 % of cases.

Considering this overview of the results of the participants who could be shown to transfer scrambling and object omission, we can see that the most common mistake of first the group of participants in indefinite contexts is article omission: 100% of omissions in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) and 33,3% of omissions in Condition D (indefinite, specific). Then, the most common mistake in definite contexts of this group of participants is also article omission which ranges from 50% in Condition A (definite) to 85,7% in Condition C (pronominal). The second group of participants had the same type of common mistake in

indefinite contexts as the first one, the participants omitted indefinite articles at rate 100% in the contexts occurring in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) and at a rate 75 % in the contexts occurring in Condition D (indefinite, specific). In definite contexts, the most common mistakes for this group were article misuse in Condition A (definite) 66, 7%.

If we consider all of the sixteen participants, then, Participant 12 and Participant 16 were quite accurate in their article use. Participant 12 used the definite article correctly in three out of four cases (75%), but was less accurate with the indefinite article – only one correct answer out of five (20%). Participant 16 had the target definite article in four out of four contexts and exhibited target indefinite articles in four (66,7%) out of six indefinite contexts.

Participants 3, 4, 6, 7, 10, 11, 13 and 15 called the ones with the lowest rate of the correct article use – they either misused or omitted the definite and the indefinite articles in 100 % of the contexts.

To sum up, the results exhibited no distinct patters of object scrambling and object omission. These two phenomena were never used by one and the same participants and were combined with articles. In addition, we cannot state that the participants used transfers as their main strategy of marking definiteness – out of 68 answers that could potentially contain transfer of direct object scrambling and direct object omission only ten (14,7%) exhibited these phenomena. The percentage of answers with direct object scrambling is 7,4%.

Then, if we compare the results of the present experiment to the results of the experiment developed by Mykhaylyk (2012, 2013) we can notice that in our case only one condition, Condition C (pronominal), triggered scrambling. This condition was not included into Mykhaylyk's experiment where the highest rates of scrambling were observed in Condition A (definite) (60%) and Condition B (partitive) (70%) while our results exhibit no scrambling at all in these two conditions and scrambling rates are lower – 7,4% if we count all the contexts where object scrambling was expected, and 15,6% in the contexts occurring only in Condition C (pronominal) . Most of the scrambled answers (from 92% to 100%) that were given during Mykhalyk's (2012, 2013) experiment contained pronouns, but not NPs while in the present study all out of five scrambled answers exhibited NPs. In the data described by Mykhaylyk (2012) 81% of the answers contained NPs and in the present experiment this percentage is higher 94,6%. Recall that the rest 5,4% are not pronominal objects, but omitted direct objects.

As discussed earlier, Mykhaylyk (2012, 2013) did not investigate direct object omission in her study. In our data we can find five cases (15,6%) of direct object omission out of 32 potential contexts occurring in Condition C (pronominal) which again supports our assumption that the participants did not choose transfer from their L1 as the main strategy in order to mark given information.

Finally, the most common mistake in article use by the participants was omission of both definite and indefinite articles: 75% of the participants omitted the definite article at least once and 100% of the participants omitted the indefinite article at least once. The misuse of the indefinite article is quite high as well: 62,5% of the participants used the indefinite article in the definite context while only 18,7% of the participants erroneously used the definite article in the indefinite context.

CHAPTER VI

Discussion

In the present study we have tested the realization of direct objects in the L2 English of Russian learners. We have focused on both target and non-target ways of marking direct objects as given and new. We have found that to mark direct objects as given, Russian L2 learners of English used both transfer, namely direct object scrambling and direct object omission, and articles in their sentence production. Most of the learners demonstrated high rates of article misuse or article omission while the rates of correct article use were quite low. In addition, all the learners preferred to use full NPs instead of direct pronominal objects even in the contexts where full NPs were inappropriate.

6.1 Article Use

The results of the present experiment can be discussed with reference to various studies on the acquisition of the English articles by learners whose L1 is article-less. In addition, the most common mistakes of the participants will be commented on in this section.

Before we begin the discussion of the article use of the participants, we should comment on the relevance of the Fluctuation Hypothesis to the experiment. Recall that according to Fluctuation Hypothesis L2 learners of English are expected to fluctuate between the two parameters definiteness and specificity until they gain enough knowledge to set the parameters correctly (Ionin et al: 2004). Languages may mark specificity or definiteness and the learners have to learn which of the parameters is marked in the language they are acquiring. English marks only definiteness, but since specificity is a property of both [-definite] and [+definite], L2 English learners may erroneously use the definite article with [-definite +specific] contexts. Specifically, some studies on the acquisition of articles by Russian L2 learners of English show that they sometimes misuse the indefinite article in [+definite +specific] contexts and the definite article in [-definite - specific] contexts (Ionin et al 2004: 43). In addition, the speakers whose L1 has no article system, such as Polish or Chinese, may omit articles in [-definite –specific] and [-definite +specific] contexts (Tryzna 2009: 77-78). The results of the present experiment cannot be discussed in terms of the Fluctuation Hypothesis because all the direct objects elicited in the experimental study

[+specific], which makes it impossible for the learners to fluctuate between definiteness and specificity.

The direct objects, occurring in the contexts of Conditions A (definite) and C (pronominal) can be classified as [+definite +specific] while the direct objects occurring in the contexts of Condition D (indefinite, specific) can be classified as [-definite +specific]. Condition B (partitive) was eliminated from the calculation of results early on, so in this chapter we are going to discuss only Conditions A (definite), C (pronominal) and D (indefinite, specific).

As mentioned earlier, the Russian language does not have obligatory lexical elements to mark NP-related semantics the way the English article system does. So, it is predictable that apart from the transfer of the native-like ways of marking new and given information, the participants of the present experiment demonstrated article omission and article misuse. Article omission occurs at rate of 39,7% in definite contexts and 77,2% in indefinite contexts. The article misuse has rates 29,4% in definite contexts and 3,2% in indefinite contexts (see CHAPTER V, section 5.2, *Table 2*). The responses in the target contexts in the definite conditions show that Condition A (definite) exhibits a rate of definite article misuse which is nearly 3,5 times higher than in the responses in the contexts of Condition C (pronominal): 44,4% vs 12,5%. At the same time the rate of article omission is higher in Condition C (pronominal) 46,8% as compared to 33,3% in Condition A (definite).

When it comes to the indefinite context in all the three conditions, the rate of omission is the highest in Condition C (pronominal) 84,4% and the rate of article misuse is the highest in Condition D (indefinite, specific), 8,3% (see section 5.2, *Table 4*).

As we can see from the results, the highest rate of non-target article use in definite contexts is found in Condition A (definite) where the erroneous use of the indefinite article is found at a rate of 33,3%. In indefinite contexts the highest rate of non-target article use is found in the contexts occurring in Condition C (pronominal) where the target article was omitted at a rate of 84,4%.

This can be explained by several factors. First of all, the participants are at a beginners level and their access to the English language is limited to the classroom input, that is, two lessons per week. Secondly, the absence of an article system in the L1 makes it difficult for the

participants to understand the semantic contribution of articles and to acquire the native-like contrast in the use of the definite and the indefinite article.

6.2 Transfer of Direct Object Scrambling and Direct Object Omission

The present study has shown that some Russian learners transfer direct object scrambling into their English. However, even for these speakers object scrambling has proved to be optional; we can see that even in carefully constructed contexts, such as in Condition C (pronominal), the scrambling rate was not very high – at 15,6%. In the data presented in Mykhaylyk's study (2012) the highest scrambling rates in adult responses were 60 % in the definite and 50 % in partitive Conditions (Mykhaylyk 2012: 568, Figure 1). At the same time, relatively low rates of scrambling could be explained by the fact that there were relatively few answers with pronouns (19%) in the data, because pronouns appear in scrambled positions more often than NPs. If we consider the percentage of pronouns in scrambled positions, we will see that it ranges from 100% to 92% in Condition A (definite), Condition B (partitive) and Condition C (indefinite, specific) (Mykhaylyk 2012: 570, Table 9).

Participants of the present study did not use pronominal objects in any of the contexts. This might explain why there the rate of scrambled answers in the data is not very high. Even in the target contexts in Condition C (pronominal) no answers with pronominal objects were given, though this would have been natural both in Russian and in English, as the direct objects were mentioned in the preceding question by the experimenter. The fact that the participants did not give answers with pronominal objects might be one of the factors that explain the low scrambling rates, as it is more natural for Russian L1 speakers to scramble pronouns rather than NPs. Scrambling was also expected to be found in the contexts occurring in Condition A (definite). The direct objects were previously mentioned in the linguistic context, but they were not mentioned in the preceding question by the experimenter, and the participants never exhibited transfer of OV word order from their L1 to the L2 in these contexts. However, given that scrambling rates were low with NP objects in general in the adult Russian speakers in Mykhaylyk's study, it is perhaps not surprising that scrambling is transferred in the pronominal but not in the definite condition.

As expected, the target contexts in Condition D (indefinite, specific), which triggered low rates of scrambling in Mykhaylyk's study at 13% (Mykhaylyk 2012: 568, Figure 1), do not

exhibit any scrambled answers in the present study. The direct objects were not defined by the previous contexts and were treated by the participants as new information and were not moved to preverbal position. Recall that Condition B (partitive) was excluded from the calculation of the results early on and thus we are not going to discuss it in the present section.

Mykhaylyk (2012) discusses two constraints which regulate direct object scrambling. The first of them is "do not scramble indefinite, non-specific direct objects". The second one is "if the object has not been mentioned in the context it should not be scrambled" (Mykhaylyk 2012: 573-574). These constrains do not seem to be applicable to the results of the present study as out of 68 direct objects, 36 of which occur in condition A (definite) and 32 in Condition C (pronominal), only five (7,4%) were scrambled despite the fact that these direct objects were [+definite +specific] and mentioned in the previous context. The direct objects occurring in Condition D (indefinite, specific) have not been mentioned in the previous contexts and thus were not scrambled as expected. At the same time, as the direct objects occurring in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) satisfy both constraints but as discussed earlier, direct objects occurring in Condition A (definite) did not appear in scrambled positions and direct objects occurring in Condition C (pronominal) were scrambled at a quite low rate.

The other case of transfer found in the data is direct object omission. This phenomenon was also found only in Condition C (pronominal) at a quite low rate 15,6%. The contexts in Condition C (pronominal) can be described as referential. Direct object omission in English is usually not grammatical with the exception of direct objects occurring in instructional type of writing (such as recipes) as discussed in CHAPTER II, section 2. 3. In the participants' L1 such referential contexts would allow direct object omission given the fact that the direct objects were mentioned in the preceding sentence and represent given information. In addition, the omitted objects have referents that can easily be recovered from the contexts.

All in all, the cases of transfer present in the data occur at a low rate, 14,7%. The majority of the participants preferred to use the native-like word order.

6.3 Realization of Direct Objects

Direct object type is an important factor, and one that we should consider while discussing the realization of objects. It was predicted that direct objects should be realized as pronominal in Condition C (pronominal) and as full NPs in Condition A (definite) and in Condition D (indefinite, specific).

As mentioned above, there are only full NPs in the data. This finding is not unexpected as in the data presented by Mykhaylyk (2012) the rate of answers with NPs was 81% (Mykhaylyk 2012: 567, Table 7). As our experiment was conducted in English, it was more challenging for the participants to use pronominal objects even in the contexts where it was natural. As has been shown in studies on the realization of pronouns in adult L1 English speakers who acquire French as their L2, L2 learners tend to use full NPs inappropriately (Gundel et al 1984: 221). All the participants had received 1-2 years of language instruction. The participants used full NPs inappropriately in 45% of the contexts though the objects erroneously realized as full NPs were previously established either by the speaker or by the interviewer (Gundel et al 1984: 220-221).

In the present study there are 68 contexts, in 32 of them occurring in Condition C (pronominal), the direct objects were obligatorily pronominal as they have already been established in the preceding question and thus should be treated as *Topics* by the participants. In the contexts in Condition A (definite), the direct pronominal objects were appropriate but not obligatory, as even though the objects were given in the linguistic context by the participants, they were not mentioned in the preceding question.

Summing up, we can discuss the results of the experiment by referring to the working hypothesis on transfer. If we assume that the participants started out with the assumption that L1 = L2, as the *Full Transfer/Full Access* hypothesis suggests, then the majority of examples in the data should reveal that the participants use pronominal direct objects with the direct objects marked as [+Topic] and thus move them to preverbal position and drop the direct objects with definite antecedents. At the same time, the learners have been exposed to English for 4, 5 years at the time of data collection, albeit with relatively limited input, and may have already restructured their *interlanguage* in order to match the input of the L2 and achieve native-like grammar. As shown by the data collected and analyzed in the present study, most

of the English L2 learners have successfully acquired the native-like word order, which is SVO. When it comes to direct object omission, most of the participants have also realized that English does not allow null objects even if they are referential. However, for some of the speakers, it seems that either object scrambling or object omission still is permissible in the *interlanguage*.

Even though only a subset of the learners still transfer object scrambling and object omission at the time of data collection, all the speakers inappropriately use full NPs in 100% (32/32) of the contexts where pronominal objects are obligatory, as well as in the (definite) contexts, where the pronominal objects can be used optionally (36/36). As we have shown, this dispreference for pronominal referents seems to be a developmental trait in acquisition in general. However, the use articles with NPs represented a great difficulty for the participants, even for those speakers who exclusively use this type of structure. The reason for this is probably that Russian is an article-less language and thus the learners have no access to transfer. However, if they, at the time of data collection, assume that English grammar matches Russian grammar, they should prefer to omit the articles. The results confirm this, as the most common mistake of the participants is article omission. This is not surprising, as a development in which the learner first transfers his/her native L1 object realization using object scrambling and omission to mark objects as given to the L2; and subsequently learns the target L2 way of doing this, namely by using definite articles. Considering the fact that the learners get only classroom input and receive only two academic hours of language instruction a week, we can imagine different developmental paths for the L2 learners. For some, article use might sometime in the future become fully acquired with increased exposure, while for others, the non-target like structures involving articles in the learners' *interlanguage* might undergo *fossilization* and thus remain at an *interlanguage* stage.

CHAPTER VII

Conclusion

In this thesis we have investigated the realization of direct objects in the L2 English of Russian learners. The main goal of the study was to determine to what extent the Russian learners of English rely on transfer from L1 in their realization of direct objects in definite and indefinite contexts. We predicted that the learners might transfer direct object scrambling and direct object omission from Russian in order to mark objects as given rather than use the article system of the target language. We also investigated how the learners marked new and given direct objects in cases where expressions of givenness were not transferred from the L1 and thus were expressed in their base position (as the complement of the verb). In this case, the question was to what extent the object noun phrases were correctly marked as definite or indefinite.

The choice of languages was determined by the differences between English and Russian in marking given information. As discussed in CHAPTER II, Russian is usually referred to as an SVO language, like English, but at the same time it allows word-order variations and omission of sentence elements driven by the information structure. English does not usually allow restructuring or omission of sentence elements, and uses articles to mark [±definiteness]. Thus the main issue under consideration was how the L2 English learners would deal with such significant differences with respect to syntactic structure and how successfully they use the target like marking of [±definiteness].

The study was carried out on the basis of an experiment conducted at school in the city of Arkhangelsk, Russia. The participants had beginners level of language proficiency and had received 4,5 years of instruction in English.

First of all, we presented a description of Information Structure in Russian and in English and discussed such phenomena as direct object omission and transfer. In our discussion of transfer, we presented the working hypothesis referred to as the *Full Transfer/Full Access* model, which was used for the data analysis in the present study. On the basis of the facts concerning Information Structure in the two languages and the directionality of transfer we made the predictions mentioned earlier.

56,3% of the participants exhibited target-like word order in all of their answers (68/68) occurring both in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal). The rest of the participants exhibited non-target word order at a rate ranging from 20% to 50%. Despite the fact that the rate of scrambled answers and answers with null objects in the Conditions where these phenomena were expected, namely in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) is quite low 14,7%, the number of participants who transferred word order structures from their L1 is relatively high 43,7% (7/16). If we analyze this data with the help of the *Full Transfer/Full Access* hypothesis, we can assume that the L2 English learners who demonstrated non-target syntactic behavior are continuing to restructure the settings of their *interlanguage* to satisfy the setting of the target language. We suggest that these word order settings of the learners are approaching the target-setting, as the learners exhibit target-like word order at a rate ranging from 50% to 80%.

In this thesis, we have also presented an overview of studies on article use in L2 English. Article use is the only phenomenon investigated in the present thesis that excludes the possibility of transfer, as Russian, unlike English, is an article-less language. Furthermore, if the initial state of the L2 grammar coincides with the final state of the L1 grammar (Full Transfer), the participants should omit the articles regardless of whether context is definite or indefinite. This statement is found to be partly true as article omissions are extensively manifested in all the contexts occurring in the three conditions considered in the study. At the same time, none of the participants exhibit 100% rate of article omission in his/her responses. From the results we can see that the highest rate of article omissions is found in indefinite contexts (77,2%) while in definite contexts it is lower – 39,7% (see section 5.2, *Table 2*). Recall that the number of definite and indefinite contexts is not equal, there are 68 definite contexts which are found in both Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal), while there are 92 indefinite contexts which are found in all the three conditions considered, Condition A (definite), Condition C (pronominal) and Condition D (indefinite, specific) (see section 5.2, Table 2). Such a high rate of omission in indefinite contexts can be explained by the fact that in Russian new/indefinite objects are not usually marked while given/definite objects have certain markers such as movement to the preverbal position, object drop, the use of the demonstrative determiners such as "*tot*"/"*etot*" (this/that) or intonation.

The target use of articles in indefinite contexts is a little bit lower than in definite ones 19,6% and 23,5% respectively[1]. Examples of erroneous article use are also found in the data, demonstrating a significant difference in the rates of misuse: in definite contexts the use of non-target indefinite articles is as high as 29,4% while in indefinite contexts, definite articles are used illegitimately at a rate of 3,2%. The results on the participants' article use present another piece of evidence for the conclusion that the L2 English learners are in the process of restructuring their *interlanguage*. We can assume this development is slower when it comes to the article system than the word order and object omission patterns, as none of the participants have achieved a native-like system of marking given and new information by using articles. This is not surprising as the learners should first get rid of OV and null object systems of marking givenness in order to learn a new system, namely, the use of articles. However, some of the participants are more successful than the others in resetting the parameters of article use; for example, Participant 16 uses articles correctly in 100% of definite and in 66,6% of indefinite contexts.

The predictions on article use of the participants were made on the basis of the predictions formulated in the studies of Tryzna (2009) and Ionin et al (2004). According to predictions suggested in Ionin's et al study (2004), the L2 learners of English whose L1 is article-less, may erroneously use the definite article in [-definite +specific] contexts. Tryzna (2009) also argued that L2 English learners may use the definite article in indefinite contexts; the author made predictions that the learners' use of the definite article may be optional in definite contexts and that they may misuse the indefinite article in definite contexts (Tryzna 2009: 78, 82). These predictions were partly proved in the present study. As discussed earlier, indefinite articles were found in [+definite + specific] contexts at a rate 19,4% in Condition A (definite) and 15,6% in Condition C (pronominal) while the overuse of the definite article in [-definite +specific] contexts in Condition D (indefinite, specific) was found at rate 8,3% (2/24). However, high rates of definite article misuse in indefinite contexts were not present in the data, the rates were only 3,2% in all the indefinite contexts, and 8,3% in the contexts occurring in Condition D (indefinite, specific); while the use of the definite article in the definite contexts occurring in Condition A (definite) and Condition C (pronominal) can be called optional as they are observed at a rate 22,2% and 25% respectively (see section 5.2, *Table 2*, *Table 3*, *Table 4*).

[1] Recall that direct object omission in definite contexts is found at a rate 7,4%

As discussed in CHAPTER VI, the participants did not use the direct pronominal objects even in the contexts where it was appropriate both in L1 and in L2. Direct pronominal objects were expected to be obligatorily used in the target contexts in Condition C (pronominal) and be optionally used in Condition A (definite). On the one hand, as pronominal objects are used to refer to given/definite referents in both Russian and English, the learners do not have to restructure the *interalanguage* grammar in order to achieve target-like realization of pronominal objects. The fact that all the participants used full NPs in all the contexts where a native speaker would likely pronominalize is not unexpected as we have some empirical evidence from other research which demonstrates that erroneous use of NPs in the contexts where pronouns are expected is not uncommon in L2 English (Gundel & Stenson 1984). On the other hand, in English a natural answer to the question "*What is he doing with the car*?" is "*He is washing **it***". The learners were expected to use the pronoun "it" with inanimate objects in the target answers if the object was established in the preceding question. In Russian, the direct pronominal object "it" in the same context is expressed by pronouns "*ejo"/"ego*" (her/him, Accusative) regardless of whether the object is animate or not. If we assume that at this stage of L2 acquisition, the learners hypothesize that the system of pronouns in English is the same as in Russian, and then they will decide that they should use the pronouns in the forms corresponding to Russian. This would be challenging for the participants as they have not acquired the native-like system of pronoun declination. Such a conclusion, if made by the participants, would be erroneous and they should restructure their *interlanguage* in order to match the input of the L2 .

To sum up, the main finding of the present study is that target-like and non-target-like ways of marking new and given information can coexist in the sentence production of Russian L2 English learners. However, it is important to mention that one and the same learners do not use both direct object scrambling and direct object omission in their sentence production; they either scramble or omit given objects. However, the combination of native-like and non-native-like word order is found in the data produced by one and the same L2 learner. After 4,5 years of language instruction, nearly half of the participants have acquired a native-like word order and seem to realize that direct object omission is disallowed in English. As the study on article use revealed, there are no participants who demonstrate a target-like pattern of marking new and given information in most part of their answers. At the same time, the present study provided some evidence for the idea that L2 English learners at a beginners' level are aware of the properties of the article system and are gradually restructuring their *interlanguage* in order to achieve a more native-like performance.

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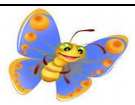
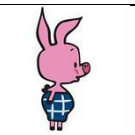
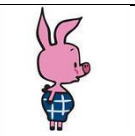
APPENDIX 1

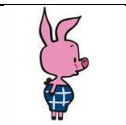
Help List 1

	**Butterfly**
	**Winnie the Pooh**
	**Cookie**
	**Plate**
	**Piglet**
	**Book**
	**Leaf**
	**Flower**
	**Kangaroo**
Рисовать	**Draw**
Поймать	**Catch**
Мыть	**Wash**
Раскрашивать	**Colour**

HELP LIST 2

	**Butterfly**
	**Winnie the Pooh**
	**Cookie**
	**Kangaroo**
	**Leaf**
	**Plate**
	**Flower**
	**Piglet**
Поймать	**Catch**
Вырезать	**Cut**
Раскрашивать	**Colour**
Чинить	**Fix**

HELP LIST 3

	**Flower**
	**Piglet**
	**Kangaroo**
	**Book**
	**Cookie**
	**Butterfly**
	**Leaf**
	**Winnie the Pooh**
	**Plate**
Мыть	**Wash**
Рисовать	**Draw**
Вырезать	**Cut**
Чинить	**Fix**
Поймать	**Catch**

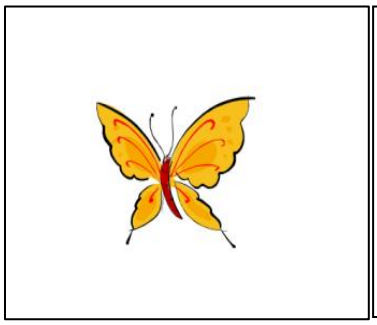
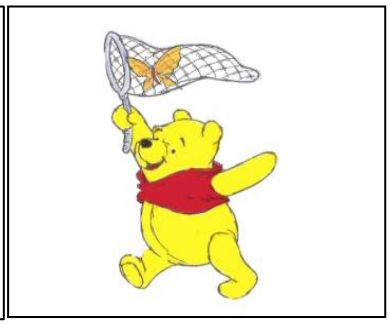
HELP LIST 4

	**Kangaroo**
	**Flower**
	**Piglet**
	**Leaf**
	**Butterfly**
	**Winnie the Pooh**
	**Plate**
Раскрашивать	**Colour**
Мыть	**Wash**
Чинить	**Fix**
Рисовать	**Draw**
Вырезать	**Cut**

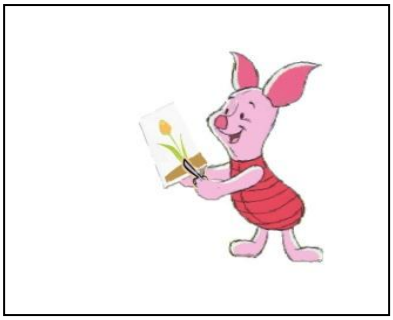
APPENDIX 2

Experiment Items

List 1

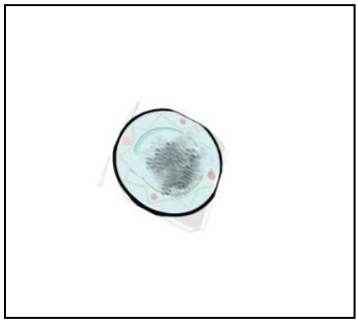
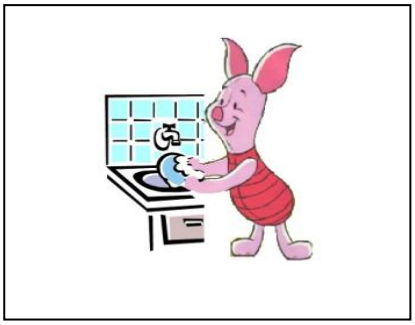



Condition A (definite)

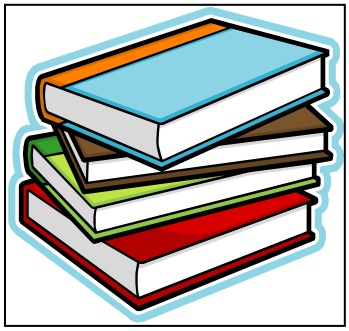
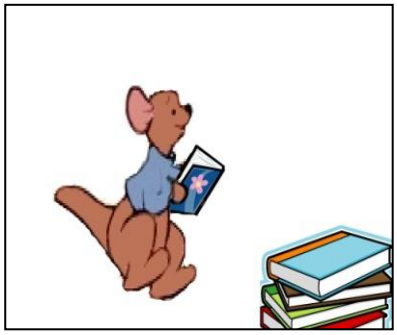
Condition B (partitive)

Condition D (indefinite, specific)

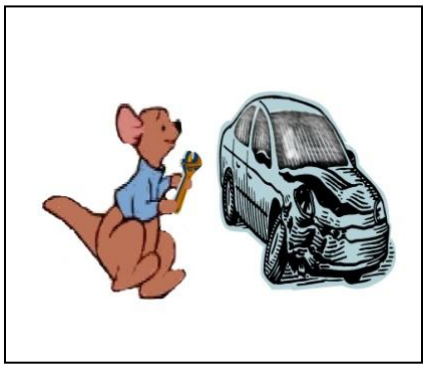
Condition A (definite)

List 1

Condition B (partitive)


Condition C (pronominal)



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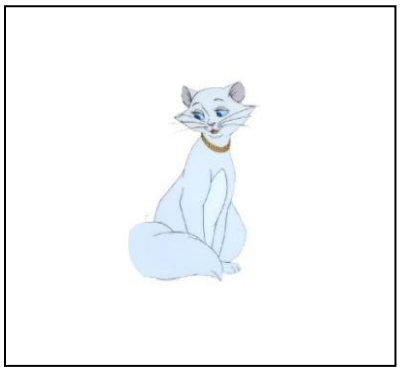
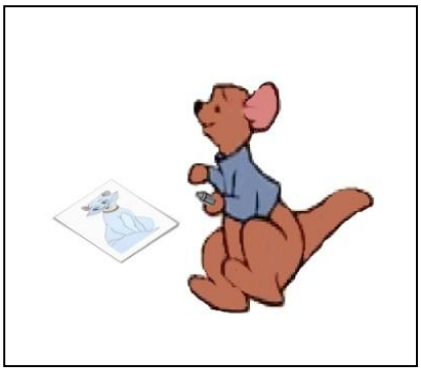
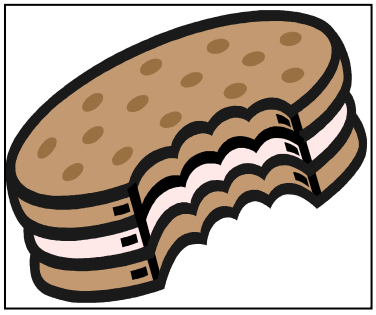



Condition C (pronominal)

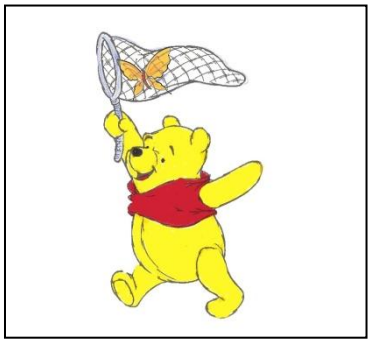
List 2

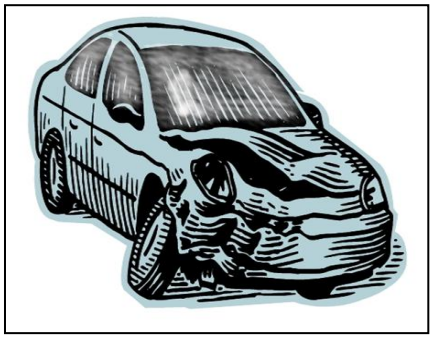
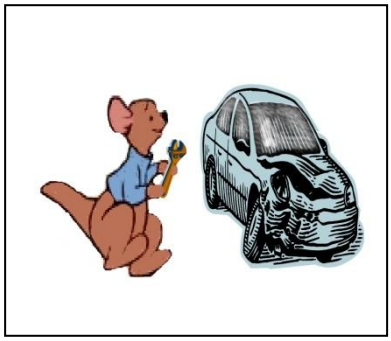


Condition B (partitive)



Condition A (definite)

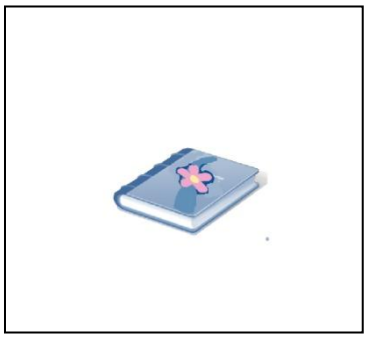

Condition D (indefinite, specific)



Condition C (pronominal)

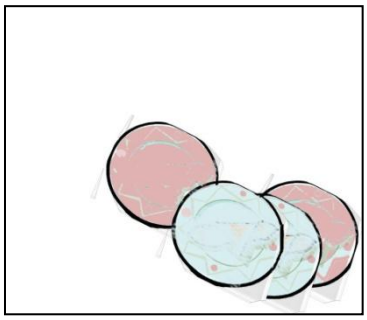
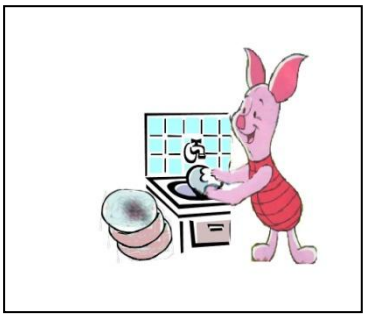
List 2

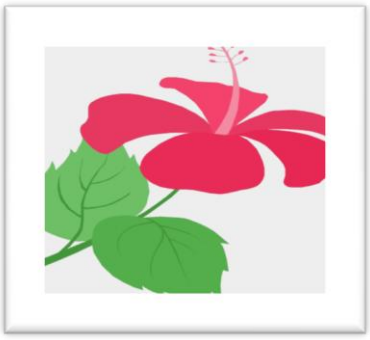
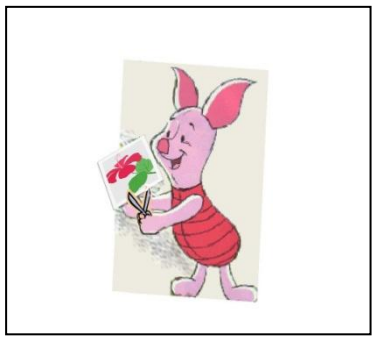


Condition A (definite)

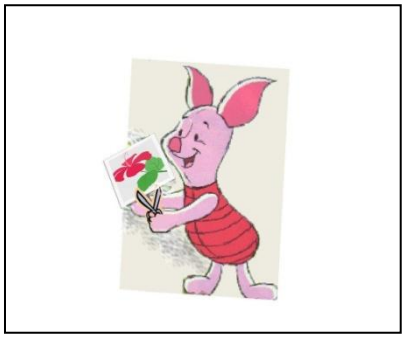


Condition A (definite)

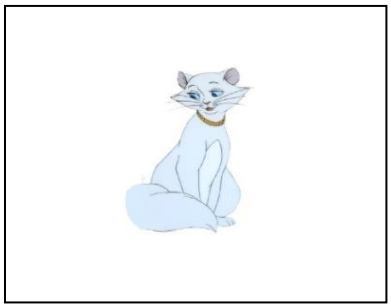


Condition B (partitive)

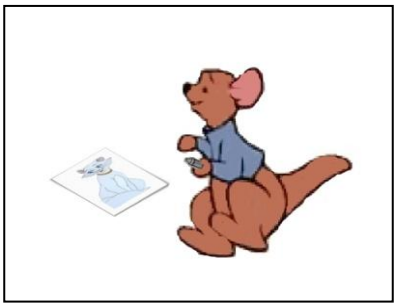


Condition C (pronominal)

List 3

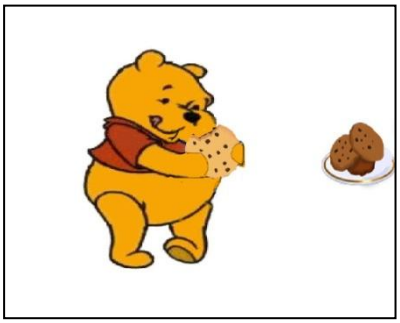


Condition D (indefinite, specific)





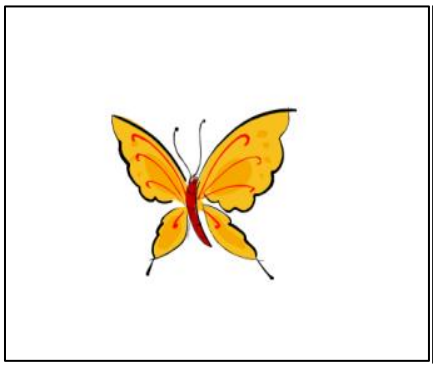
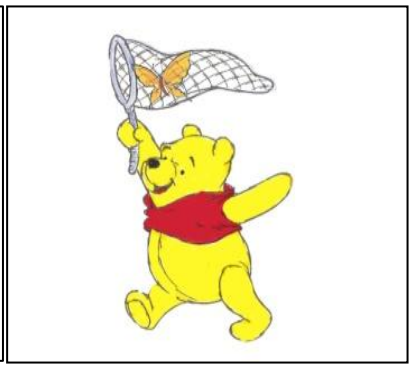
Condition A (definite)

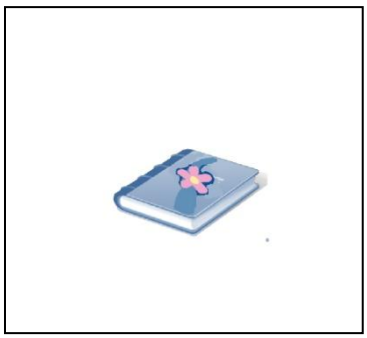
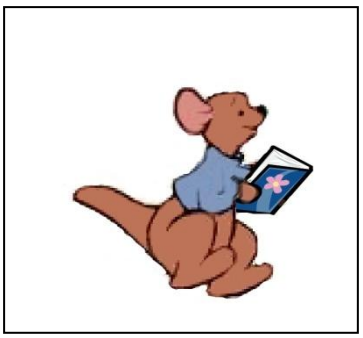


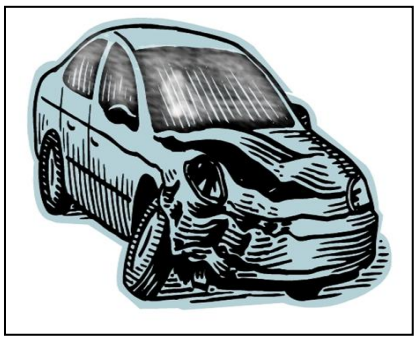
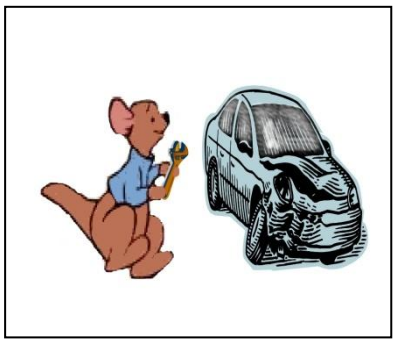
Condition B (partitive)

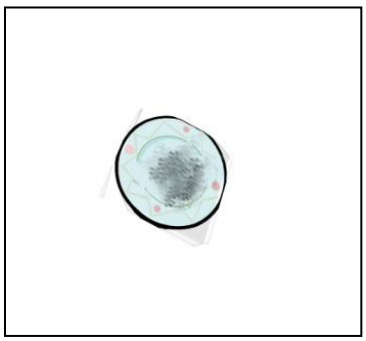
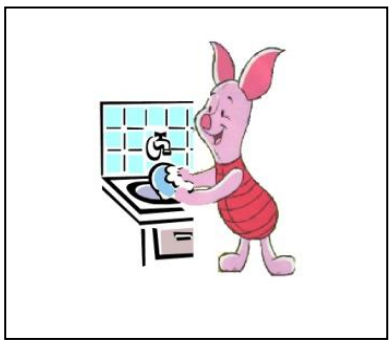
Condition B (partitive)

List 3



Condition C (pronominal)

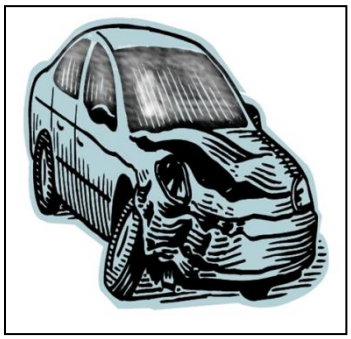
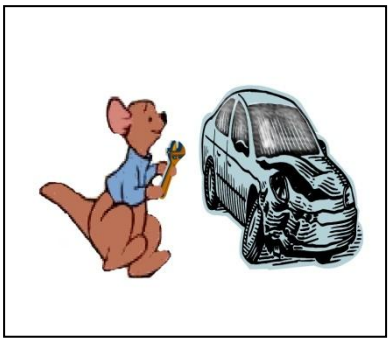


Condition A (definite)

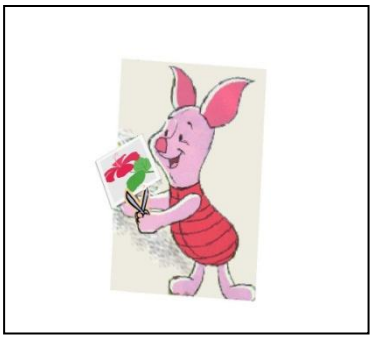


Condition A (definite)

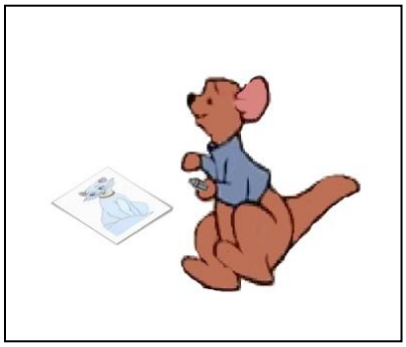


Condition C (pronominal)

List 4

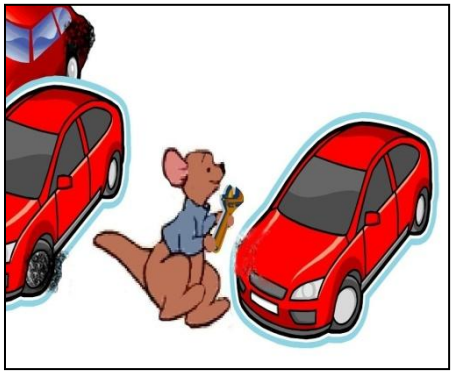
 Condition B (partitive)

  Condition C (pronominal

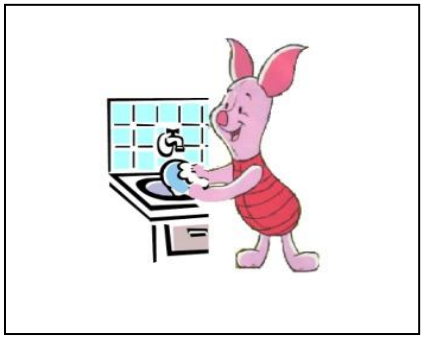
  Condition A (definite)

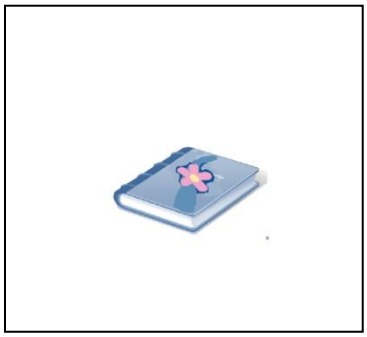
 Condition D (indefinite, specific)

List 4

 Condition B (partitive)


 Condition A (definite)

 Condition D (indefinite, specific)


 Condition C (pronominal)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