English Word Order in Written Production of Swedish Students

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Abstract

This study investigates English word order errors in the written production of Swedish junior high school students. It analyzes 24 essays written by the 9th-grade students in a junior high school in Sweden in the spring semester of 2022. The research questions are to find the most frequent word order errors among this group, find answers to the main reasons for these errors, and find some helpful pedagogical hints for improving students’ writing output. In the light of previous research in this area, this study intends to find, analyze, classify, and discuss all the writing errors in word order area according to the related theories. It is a mixed-methods research design, quantitative and qualitative, to answer the research questions. The analysis of the students’ papers showed that the adverbial mid-position errors were the most frequent errors among these students, regardless of their grades. In teaching grammar, teachers need to work on grammatical analysis and structure for their students at school and the way of teaching English sentence structures plays an important role to outline student grammatical errors and show them how to avoid grammatical mistakes and errors by using different teaching methods and techniques. For this reason, teaching the grammar rules is needed – both implicitly and explicitly.

Keywords: Error Analysis (EA), Contrastive Analysis (CA), Second Language Acquisition (SLA), EFL learners, word order
# Contents

1 INTRODUCTION ......................................................................................................................... 1

1.1 BACKGROUND .......................................................................................................................... 2

1.2 AIM & RESEARCH QUESTIONS ............................................................................................... 5

1.3 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND .............................................................................................. 6

1.3.1 Second Language Acquisition and Learning ................................................................. 6

1.3.2 Approaches to Grammar Teaching .................................................................................. 8

1.3.3 Error Analysis .................................................................................................................. 11

1.3.3.1 Description of Errors ................................................................................................. 14

1.3.3.2 Explanation of Errors ................................................................................................. 16

1.3.4 English Word Order ....................................................................................................... 16

1.3.4.1 Subject-verb order .................................................................................................... 19

1.3.4.2 Adverbial position .................................................................................................... 20

1.4 PREVIOUS RESEARCH ON WORD ORDER ERRORS .......................................................... 24

1.5 METHOD ................................................................................................................................ 28

1.5.1 Rationale for choosing type of method ........................................................................... 28

1.5.2 Participants ...................................................................................................................... 29

1.5.3 Data collection and analysis .......................................................................................... 30

2 RESULTS .................................................................................................................................... 32

2.1 SUBJECT-VERB ORDER ....................................................................................................... 33

2.2 ADVERBIAL POSITION ......................................................................................................... 33

3 DISCUSSION ............................................................................................................................. 34

4 CONCLUSION AND PEDAGOGICAL IMPLICATIONS ............................................................. 37

REFERENCES ............................................................................................................................. 40

APPENDIX .................................................................................................................................... 1
1 Introduction

According to the “Curriculum (Lgr22) for the compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educare” (Skolverket, 2022, p.36) of Swedish National Agency for Education, students start learning English from the first year of their education at school. Thus, teaching English plays an important role in education in Sweden. To learn English, one needs to understand, recognize, and master grammatical rules to produce meaningful communication; therefore, we should teach grammar. One of the crucial grammatical rules is word order.

As Swedish and English belong to the Germanic language, one of the subcategories of Indo-European languages, they have some similarities in vocabularies and structures. Swedish language, like English, has the same subject–verb–object basic word order rules. However, these rules are not identical in both languages. Therefore, this is one of the most problematic areas for Swedish students when learning English. Independent clause and dependent clause have different word orders, so recognition of these rules is not easy for all learners. Sometimes, the learner's mother tongue (L1) might impact the target language (L2), i.e., L1 negative transfer. This process is also called interlingual transfer – the effect of one language (usually the first) on another (usually the second) (Brown, 2007, p. 326). Overgeneralization is one example of intralingual transfer (Brown, 2015, p.70).

Error Analysis is one of the most important fields of second language acquisition because it examines errors made by L2 learners and explains some procedures to identify, describe, and explain learners' errors; consequently, it is the study and analysis of the errors of second language learners (Ellis and Barkhuizen, 2005). Studying word order errors in students' written production is one of the essential fields of error analysis. Therefore, word order rules are crucial in writing tasks for language learners to produce appropriate written production with correct grammar. On the other hand, knowing the areas of these Swedish
students' errors in word order for English teachers may be a great tool to help their EFL learners; therefore, this study focuses on this area.

Although there were few studies in error analysis focusing on the written production of students at various levels of Swedish schools, such as junior high schools and high schools, there were very few studies on word order errors in Sweden. Most of these word order investigations conducted by previous researchers either have been done many years ago or are limited in scope, meaning that word order study is only one chapter of their papers. As a result, I decided to do a narrow and updated screening in this area to contribute a better illustration with more efficient findings. Furthermore, I hope this version may assist English teachers in providing feedback to their Swedish EFL students.

As a teacher in junior high school, I decided to review some of the writing production of my students for this study. Then, I decided to give a writing task to my students in grade nine because the writing assignments for seventh and eighth graders consist of single paragraphs rather than comprehensive texts or essays.

According to the Swedish National Agency for Education, entrance requirements for high school programs vary between programs, all of them demand students to have passing grades in Swedish, English and mathematics from their final year of compulsory schooling (Rydman, 2000, p. 8). Therefore, English is one of the three core subjects at this level and if students in grade 9 receive better marks in English, they can get into better programs in high schools. Consequently, this made me choose grade 9 for this study because the findings of this research may apply to future educational implications.

1.1 Background

English has been taught as the first foreign language at schools in Sweden since 1946, and it became one of the compulsory subjects like the Swedish language and mathematics by
1994-1995 (Lainio, 2001, p.42). It is one of the core subjects at schools due to its influence in the world as an international language. Besides, the “Curriculum (Lgr22) for the compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educare” of Swedish National Agency for Education has declared the importance of the English subject at school as follows:

Language is the human’s first tool for thinking, communicating, and learning. Having a knowledge of several languages can provide new perspectives on the surrounding world, enhanced opportunities to create contacts and greater understanding of different ways of living. The English language surrounds us in our daily lives and is used in such diverse areas as politics, education, and economics. Knowledge of English thus increases the individual’s opportunities to participate in different social and cultural contexts, as well as in international studies and working life. (Skolverket, 2022, p. 35, my translation)

Swedes have the best non-native English skills globally, based on the eighth edition of the EF English Proficiency Index (Nikel, 2019). Many Swedish students may find oral communication skills easier than writing tasks in English. This might be because they have access to digital devices, such as computers and mobile phones connected to the high-speed Internet. They use different social media platforms, different applications on smartphones, video streaming services, YouTube channels, and internet-based games, often exposed to the English language. Although these students have access to these facilities and smart gadgets in Sweden, it is what they do with them that allows them to improve their language skills, not just the learning equipment. They should undoubtedly read books, learn grammatical rules, write different texts in different contexts, and discuss numerous topics to improve their command of English in all skills. One of the challenging tasks for most students is writing activities. If students know English grammar rules and have excellent vocabulary proficiency and sentence structures, it will help them write good texts and essays.
According to the “Curriculum (Lgr22) for the compulsory school, preschool class and school-age educare”, teaching English should help students develop thoughtful communication capacities (Skolverket, 2022, p. 35, my translation). This ability means understanding spoken and written English, being able to formulate one's thinking and interact with others in speech and writing, and adapting their language to different situations, purposes, and recipients. The communicative ability also includes linguistic skills and using different strategies to support communication and solve problems when language skills are insufficient.

During the last two decades of teaching English, I have noticed that my students do not show much interest in writing tasks, especially in writing different types of essays and passages or summarizing long texts. Besides, when they use Swedish word order rules and structures in their English texts, this may lead to negative transfer in their English writing tasks, both semantically and syntactically. Word order is one of the essential knowledge areas in writing tasks because word order rules help the writer write grammatically correct sentences. Consequently, if students know word order rules, it will help them reduce their errors in this area in their writing, so this is why this study focuses on English word order errors in students’ written production.

Although there is a great deal of research on second language acquisition and learning as it is of interest to a wide range of second language teachers, there are not many on the word order error areas among researchers who have done it in Sweden. That is to say, the word order area is either one chapter of their research questions, or it is hardly possible to find an article that is exclusively dedicated to this area. Köhlmyr (2003), Taher (2011), Krokström (2012), and Jonsson (2015) have studied the written production of Swedish students in the 9th grade in Sweden in different areas of error analysis. Moreover, Pavic (2013) has studied word order errors in Croatian EFL learners’ written production. These papers have been reviewed
and their results have been compared with the present study. However, among these researchers, Köhlmyr's study is more comprehensive and detailed than others in this area.

Consequently, I tried to present an updated version in the word order area and investigate the 24 essays written by the 9th-grade students in a Swedish junior high school during the spring semester of 2022. Students were asked to write an English essay on a specific topic. This research aims to identify all word order errors in these students' texts, then evaluate, categorize, and compare these errors using relevant ideas in the area. Furthermore, the goal of this study is to discover the causes of these errors as well as some helpful pedagogical hints for improving students' writing output.

1.2 Aim & Research Questions

This research aims to identify the influential factors that lead to word order errors in the English writing of Swedish students. Furthermore, it tries to demonstrate how word order rules affect their writing tasks and writing skills while also attempting to identify and classify the types and reasons for these errors and find some helpful pedagogical hints to reduce them in their written production.

The focus of this research is on the word order errors that these language learners have and to find why those errors happen and how to prevent them by paying more attention when teaching those challenging areas of the language. If teachers know the most problematic areas of writing for students, they can adjust the assignments to meet all students' requirements and tailor instruction according to their interests and demands.

The present study aims to answer the following questions:

1. RQ1: What are the most frequent grammatical errors that the students make in their English writing performance in word order areas?

2. RQ2: What factors lead to these students’ written production errors in English?
1.3 Theoretical background

This chapter will define the key terms used in this study, such as Second Language Acquisition (SLA) and learning, approaches to grammar teaching, error analysis, and English word order. In addition, it will present a brief overview of some previous research and related theories as they apply to this study in the word order area. These explanations aim to clarify the importance of error analysis in EFL teaching based on these theories and illustrate how effective teaching helps EFL learners to achieve their English knowledge according to Skolverket's knowledge requirements.

1.3.1 Second Language Acquisition and Learning

Second Language Acquisition (SLA), sometimes known as second language learning, is the process by which people learn a second language in addition to their native language(s). The additional language is also called a second language (L2), although it may be the third, fourth, or tenth to be acquired (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 2). The differences between language acquisition and language learning could be defined such that language acquisition is the subconscious development of language that takes place because of interactions and input – an unintentional process, but language learning is the result of direct instruction in the rules, structures, or lexis of the language – often an intentional process.

The following are some of the findings in SLA and English language learning. First, humans possess separate implicit or procedural and explicit or declarative memory systems. Second, the way children learn their first language and the way adults and older children learn a second language are vastly different. This is partly because a child's brain develops more than any other time in life. This is not to say that naturalistic learning i.e., learning without formal instruction cannot happen. It is feasible, but as teachers, we must be aware of these
differences to properly help our students. Third, it might be helpful to pair explicit instruction, often in school settings, with implicit or subconscious learning activities to accelerate language development. Moreover, the explicit knowledge derived from explicit instruction can help the gradual development of implicit knowledge by facilitating noticing and noticing-the-gap when the learner subsequently experiences input (Ellis, 2015, p. 330).

According to Saville-Troike (2012), there are two types of SLA – Formal, often known as directed learning, and informal, or naturalistic learning. Formal learning involves learning from an educator who teaches the L2 through teaching and classroom courses. Informal learning, on the other hand, occurs in a genuine setting, such as when someone visiting or residing in a nation and learns their language, is immersed in the culture in order to communicate with people.

SLA research has changed considerably over the years. Many grammatical errors have been investigated by researchers in the early years of SLA studies. There are still different views on whether SLA research can be helpful for second language teachers to teach better or not. Some scholars like Krashen (1981) criticized SLA research and argued that grammar instruction played no role in language acquisition (Ellis, 2006, p. 85); however, Ellis believes grammar instruction can provide teachers with helpful information on what to teach.

Empirical studies designed by some researchers like Pica (1983), Long (1983), and White, Spada, Lightbown, and Ranta (1991) cited in Ellis (2006) showed that, by and large, instructed learners progressed more rapidly and achieved higher levels of proficiency; moreover, by investigating and learning and having more focus on students’ grammar knowledge, a teacher will help students in learning L2 faster (Ellis, 2006, p. 85). In line with this, “language acquisition can be speeded by explicit instruction” (Ellis, 2015, pp. 286, 330). So, being excellent in grammar is one pivotal factor for English language teachers.
1.3.2 Approaches to Grammar Teaching

Without knowing grammatical rules in writing, words join and tangle together without any correct meaning or sense. Sufficient grammar knowledge is necessary to convey what is intended in writing. To have appropriate knowledge in writing as a student involves mastery of the writing system, and EFL teachers need to have good skills in grammatical rules for teaching grammar in schools. Therefore, knowing the rules of grammar helps the learner to learn L2 accurately. Despite different opinions about whether teaching grammar is required or not in language teaching, recent studies showed that learning L2 through grammar instructions becomes faster and has better performance in language (Ellis, 2006, p. 85).

Krashen (1981), as cited in Ellis (2006, p. 85) and Tornberg (2020, pp. 151-153), argued that grammar instruction played no role in acquisition as long as learners will acquire grammatical structures naturally and automatically. This argument, known as Krashen’s Monitor Model, attracted the attention of psychologists, linguists, and teachers. Krashen distinguished between learning and acquisition, assuming that the conscious process of acquiring grammar rules does not always result in improved language ability (Ellis, p. 85). This model has been extensively criticized for not providing enough data or empirical studies and for underplaying the impact of language output and grammar teaching. Subsequently, according to Ellis (2006, p. 85), several empirical studies conducted by some researchers to (a) compare the order of acquisition of instructed and naturalistic learners (e.g., Pica, 1983), (b) compare the achievement of instructed and naturalistic learners (Long, 1983), and (c) investigate whether efforts to teach specific grammatical structures lead to their acquisition (e.g., White, Spada, Lightbown, & Ranta, 1991), illustrated that the acquisition processes of instructed and naturalistic learning were identical, but that instructed learners progressed faster and attained higher levels of proficiency.
Moreover, Ellis (2006) explains what kind of grammar teachers should base teaching on and which grammatical features teachers should teach (p.86). Krashen (1982) claims that “grammar teaching should be limited to a few simple and portable rules such as 3rd person-s and past tense-ed that can be used to monitor output from the acquired system”, but Krashen’s claim was not warranted due to ample evidence that many learners are capable of mastering a wide range of explicit grammar rules (Ellis, 2006, pp. 87-88). Another factor that is difficult to recognize is how to distinguish two different senses of learning difficulty – the difficulty learners have in understanding a grammatical feature, i.e., implicit knowledge and the difficulty they have in internalizing a grammatical feature so that they can apply it appropriately in communication, i.e., explicit knowledge (Ellis, 2006, p.88). Ellis, later on, considered two approaches in this area, a) teaching those forms that are different from learner’s L1, b) teaching marked forms (basic, frequent and natural grammatical structures), rather than unmarked forms (infrequent, unusual and deviant from a regular pattern) (p. 88).

Ellis (2006) has also classified two approaches for teaching grammar – intensive grammar teaching and extensive grammar teaching. Intensive grammar teaching refers to teaching on a single grammatical structure or, maybe, a pair of contrasting structures. For instance, when a teacher teaches past continuous grammar rules during a session. Extensive teaching grammar refers to teaching a wide range of structures in a session, with a little amount of attention on each structure (p. 93).

According to Ellis (2005, p. 5) there are two main approaches to teaching grammar – the deductive and the inductive approaches. A deductive method is when the rule is supplied, and the language is generated based on the rule. (The teacher gives the rule). An inductive approach is when the rule is inferred through some form of guided discovery. (The teacher gives the students a means to discover the rule for themselves).
There are two types of linguistic knowledge – *implicit* (procedural) and *explicit* (declarative). *Implicit knowledge* is unconscious awareness of minor and major schemas and *explicit knowledge* is conscious awareness of minor and major schemas. *Implicit instruction*, moreover, aims to teach language rules to students unconsciously. *Explicit instruction* means that learners are made aware of language rules during the language learning process (Ellis, 2005, pp.4–5).

Language learning theory and language teaching can benefit from the feedback of error analysis. Ellis (2006, p.99) clearly delineates *implicit* and *explicit feedback*. Grammar teaching can be done with *corrective feedback* (CF) on learners’ errors when these errors occur in the performance of specific communication tasks (Ellis, 2006, p. 84). Teachers use corrective feedback in both form-focused and meaning-focused lessons – feedback in form-focused lessons focuses on the structure targeted by the lesson but feedback in meaning-focused lessons focuses on any errors learners happen to make (Ellis, 2006, p. 94). According to Ellis (2015) feedback can be positive or negative. Positive feedback is important in pedagogical concept because it gives affective support to the learner and motivates to continue learning. Negative feedback indicates that the learner’s utterance lacks accuracy or is linguistically incorrect (p.236). Consequently, feedback – especially corrective feedback – plays an important role in the effect that explicit instruction has on learning (Ellis, 2015, p. 287).

Ellis (2012) indicates that all types of grammatical instructions, whether explicit or implicit and various forms of corrective feedback – explicit or implicit – can help students attain more accuracy after reviewing other research on L2 learning. The most compelling evidence, however, is that some grammatical patterns are more difficult to master – to be understood and/or to be internalized. Additionally, the learnability of some particular
structures is dependent on the learners' prior knowledge or language development stage (Ellis, 2012).

In the core content of the Swedish National Curriculum Lgr22 (Skolverket, 2022, p.35, my translation) for English 7–9, it is stated that students should develop their communicative ability in English language both in receptive language (input; listening and reading) and expressive language (output; writing and speaking). Moreover, in the core content, it is written that teaching should also provide students with opportunities to develop knowledge about “linguistic phenomena, including pronunciation, words and fixed linguistic expressions, grammatical structures, and sentence structures as well as spelling in students' own production and interaction” (Skolverket, 2022, p. 35, my translation). Therefore, all these credentials need a thorough understanding of language grammar and good knowledge of structure in learning L2. For decades, the Swedish Curriculum adopted a grammar-focused approach to teaching English (Tornberg, 2020, pp. 152-153). Additionally, the core contents for the English subject in Skolverket still emphasize the importance of learning grammar and sentence structures; hence, knowing grammatical and sentence structures helps students learn and understand the target language effectively.

1.3.3 Error Analysis

Before delving into Error Analysis (EA), in order to analyze learner language in an appropriate perspective, it is important to make a distinction between mistakes and errors. According to researchers in language learning like Brown (2007), Gass & Selinker (2008), and Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005), mistakes and errors are different. These researchers have used Corder’s (1967) view to describe the distinction between mistakes and errors.

According to Brown (2007, p. 226), a mistake is defined as a performance error that is either a random guess or a “slip,” seeing as a failure to use a known system correctly; while
an error is a noteworthy deviation from the adult grammar of a native speaker that indicates the learner's competency. Mistakes must be identified carefully from errors made by a second language learner (p. 226). According to Gass & Selinker (2008, p. 102), ‘errors’ caused by gaps in learners’ L2 knowledge and ‘mistakes’ caused by lapses in concentration. Similarly, according to Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005, p. 62), ‘mistakes’ arise because of gaps in learners’ L2 knowledge, and ‘errors’ occur because of the difficulty of processing forms that are not yet fully mastered.

All people make mistakes, in both native and second language situations (Brown, 2007, p. 226); native speakers are typically capable of identifying and correcting such "lapses" or mistakes, which are the result of a brief breakdown or imperfection in the process of creating speech rather than a lack of skill. Brown concluded that these hesitations, slips of the tongue, random ungrammaticalities, and other performance flaws that occur in native-speaker production occur in second language speech as well. Mistakes can be self-corrected when attention is drawn to them (p. 226).

Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005) believe and assert that the difference between errors and mistakes is not always clear and easy, and it will only become somewhat apparent when a teacher has spent more time teaching a group of learners. Even though distinguishing between errors and mistakes is possible, the difficulty remains when it comes to correction: when an oral error/mistake happens, teachers will have to decide in the moment and may not have time to analyze the case, which is why mistakes are sometimes classified as errors (p. 6).

As the above researchers and scholars in language learning have stated regarding the distinctions between errors and mistakes, EA is not always an easy task. It is sometimes difficult to discern the rationale behind the students' sentence structures when they produce semantically and syntactically incomprehensible sentence structures. Sometimes, spelling
errors can be identified as grammatical errors, for instance, if spelling errors happen in verb ending while the researcher is looking for errors regarding tense and/or conjugation.

EA is described as “a set of procedures for identifying, describing and explaining learners’ errors” (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 51). By contrast, it is mainly necessary to point out that EA is not only about identifying and detecting errors but also actually trying to clarify the reasons and why they are made. According to Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005), the best method of investigating second language acquisition is collecting samples of the learner’s productive English. The written production reveals the learner’s grammatical knowledge and provides evidence of how much the learner really knows, which makes essays a perfect sample.

Moreover, in EA, several elements, like subject-verb agreement, verb form, and the lack of auxiliary verbs, play essential roles in making a sentence grammatically inaccurate. But in some cases, the context is what decides whether an error has occurred or not. Therefore, the context plays a significant role in EA to find different errors in, for instance, word order.

According to Brown (2007, pp.257-259), one of the core principles of EA is that “Learning is fundamentally a process that involves the making of mistakes, ... [and] these mistakes can be observed, analyzed, and classified to reveal something of the systems operating within the learner”. As a result, EA puts emphasis on “the significance of errors in the interlanguage system of learners” (Brown, 2007, p. 204). EA intensifies learners’ “creative ability to construct language” (Saville-Troike, 2012, p. 40).

Language acquisition is a cognitive process according to the theories of EA and the feedback gained from the errors made by learners give insights as to what is already acquired and what is not. In the past, the learners’ errors were considered as problems that needed to be eliminated and they were merely considered as the product of flawed learning or as the
interference of the L1 (Lightbown & Spada, 2013). With EA, the errors “are to be considered as indications of a learner’s attempt to figure out some system to impose regularity on the language that the learner is exposed to. As such, they are evidence of an underlying rule-governed system” (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 102). Therefore, by analyzing the data, a teacher can understand how to teach effectively and receive feedback on the learners' language use.

The process of EA comprises collection, identification, description, explanation, and evaluation (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 57). In this process, after collecting and identifying samples, the data will be described, explained, and evaluated based on the purpose of the study. “Error evaluation studies were popular in the 1970s and 1980s” (Ellis & Barkhuizen 2005, p. 67), but not after that because of inconclusive findings that made forecasting error gravity difficult. Therefore, in the following, just the description of errors and the explanation of errors are addressed.

1.3.3.1 Description of Errors

According to Corder (1974), cited in Ellis & Barkhuizen (2005, p. 60), “the description of errors is essentially a comparative process, the data being the original erroneous utterances and the reconstructed utterance.” Dulay, Burt, and Krashen’s (1982, as cited in Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 61) surface structure taxonomy is based on “the ways surface structures are changed” in incorrect utterances/sentences. They suggested that there are four principal ways in which learners modify target forms:

1. Errors of omission: when a word has been left out, e.g., “*My sister very pretty.” [My sister is very pretty.] In this example the verb is missing.

2. Errors of addition: when the presence of a form does not appear in a well-formed utterance. This part sub-categorized into three sections. a) Regularization (e.g., eated for ate),
b) Double-marking (e.g., *He didn’t came*), c) Simple additions (i.e. additions not describe as regularizations or as double-markings).

3. **Error of Misinformation**: when the wrong form of the morpheme or structure is used. It has three sub-categories: a) Regularization (for instance, *Do they be happy?*) [Are you happy?] b) Archi-forms (for instance, the learner uses me as both a subject and object pronoun) c) Alternating forms (for instance, *Don’t + v and No + v*), *I no work. I don’t work.* This is grammatically incorrect, and it is caused by the learners’ vocabulary and grammar development.

4. **Error of Misordering**: when a word or morpheme is incorrectly placed in a grammatical construction such as the word order, e.g., *She fights all the time her brother.* [She fights her brother all the time]. The error is misordering or mid-position error of the adverbial *all the time*.

James (1974, as cited in Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 60) suggested one further category:

5. **Blends**: when a learner is uncertain of which word to use and blends two different phrases. This can cause over-inclusion, for instance, “*The only one thing I want.*” Which is a combination of “The only thing I want.” and “The one thing I want.”

Even if these categories seem clear and easy to use, it is sometimes very difficult to distinguish which type of error has occurred. Sometimes, for example, a sentence can be so unclear that it can have two different reconstructions and therefore two different types of errors. The type of error, therefore, depends on the researchers’ reconstruction of the sentence (Ellis, 2012).
1.3.3.2 Explanation of Errors

It is necessary, at this stage, to clearly delineate and identify why errors were made. This is the main part of EA since it really describes which factor has affected the learner to make such an error. Besides, when researchers try to explain second language (L2) learners’ errors they often use different factors to classify the different types of errors (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 60). Here are two factors that Ellis has illustrated for explanation of errors:

1. Transfer error – this factor includes all errors where the L2 learner has used his/her L1 to create a sentence which has led to the error. It can also occur with other languages the learner knows and uses in L2. This error is also called negative transfer from L1 to L2.

2. Overgeneralization error – when a learner overuses or applies the same grammatical rule or structure in a wrong way in writing, e.g., when a student may write “foots” instead of “feet”.

1.3.4 English Word Order

In the grammar of sentences, the way words are organized in different languages, and even different types of sentences within the same language, is referred to as word order. It is crucial to know the grammatical order of words in every language since it helps build and understand the simplest and the most complex sentences in the language. Therefore, knowing the word order rules in English and Swedish is important before diagnosing and analyzing the word order errors in this study.

There are three elements that we look at when we define the basic word order of a language: (S) the subject word, (O) the object word, and (V) the verb. Once we identify a subject, a verb, and an object, we can consider their arrangement. Several languages have the
basic word order, i.e., SVO. To put it another way, the subject comes first, followed by a verb, and the verb is followed by its object.

Even though English and Swedish languages are both related to the Germanic language (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.45) and their grammatical principles are very similar, there are many differences between the grammatical rules of these two languages. The basic word order rule in English, subject-verb-object (SVO), is to some extent rigid and described as a relatively fixed word-order language. Swedish has the same basic word order as English: Subject + Verb + Object.

Word Order in English and Swedish language may cause errors due to the differences in the grammatical rules of these two languages. However, both follow the basic word order rule, i.e., subject-verb-object (SVO). For example, in Swedish, a sentence can start with other sentence elements than the subject to form a sentence, and the real subject has to be placed after the verb in this sentence structure. But in English, not only adverbs/advl can come at the beginning of a sentence, and several other clause elements can also be fronted - and thus, be placed initially, e.g., This, I like! (=fronted obj), in context: I found ... of these, 38 were blue... (fronted postmodifier), or yada yada, .... Most pleasant of all is the enthusiasm. (=fronted subj compliment). A common mistake is like “That have I not seen” (Swan and Smith, 2001, p. 26). In addition, the position of adverbs may cause problems in English writing due to the misplacement of adverbs in sentences written by students because the mid-sentence adverbs, in Swedish, are typically placed after the finite verbs: *Children leave often home nowadays [Barn lämnar ofta hemmet nuförtiden] (Swan and Smith, 2001, p. 27). In Swedish, however, adverbs come before finite verbs in subordinate clauses. This causes errors in English sentences using complex verb phrases: “*... that children often will leave home nowadays”. This is common with very long adverbials: “*He said that they in the northern part if Jutland speak a special dialect” (Swan and Smith, 2001, p. 27).
A sentence consists of one or more clauses ("satser") that convey different messages to the reader of the sentence. Every clause is made up of clause elements ("satsdelar") (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p. 55). A clause element describes the relationships between the different words and phrases in a clause. According to Estling Vannestål (2015, p.71), clause elements also consist of five different types: Subject, Verb, Object, Adverbial, Predicative. The subject and the object are the two most important elements in a clause (p. 81). The subject-verb word order ("rak ordföljd") is used predominantly in English, i.e., in most cases, the subject comes first, then the verb, and then the object (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p. 81).

One of the clause elements is adverbial clause, from which we get information about the situation, for example when, where, how often or why something happens (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p. 78). There are three different positions for the adverbial in a clause: initial position, mid-position and end-position (p. 295). The word order in English and Swedish is usually different when a clause starts with an adverbial (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p. 296). While English keeps the subject-verb word order which is so typical of the language, Swedish language puts the finite verb before the subject which is called inverted word order ("omvänd ordföljd").

Both English and Swedish typically have a basic word order in ordinary statement sentences, i.e., the subject precedes the predicate verb, which stands before any object or predicate filling: Sally left the party. "Sally lämnade festen" (Ljung & Ohlander, 1999, p.284).

According to Ljung & Ohlander (1999, p.291), in basic word order, the subject comes first, i.e., before the predicate in the sentence in both English and Swedish. Example: Lisa comes on Saturday. "Lisa anländer på lördag". However, in inverted word order, when the adverbial or object comes first, in Swedish, the verb comes directly after it, because the verb is always in second place. Still, in English, the subject comes after the adverbial or the object,
and then comes the verb of the sentence. Example: Tomorrow, Lisa arrives. "Imorgon anländer lisa".

1.3.4.1 Subject-verb order

The subject or the doer of an action typically comes before the first verb in a statement and after the first verb in a question, for instance, “The rain fell in torrents.”, or "Are you reading your book?" (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.72). Four types of subject categories are a noun phrase, e.g., “The winner takes it all.”, a dependent clause introduced by a wh-word (as where, which, who), how or that, e.g., “Where we are now is always the present moment.”, a dependent clause began by a verb in the -ing form, e.g., “Going in undetected would not be easy.”, and a dependent clause began by a verb in the infinitive, e.g., “To love someone that much is amazing.” (Estling Vannesstål, 2015, p. 73).

The rules for basic subject-verb order are simple, but there are some special cases where partial or full inversion happens. In the first type, the subject comes between the auxiliary and the main verb (i.e., aux+S+V), as in “Have your mother and father arrived.” (Swan, 2016). In the second type, the subject follows its verb phrase (i.e., V+S), for instance, in reporting “I love you, whispered Jess.” (Swan, 2016). V-S is frequent but not a fixed rule, basic S-V is common too, especially when the S is an unstressed pronoun, or if the V is a complex VP (i.e., aux + main V) so there is more to it than one simple rule (Estling Vannesstål, 2015, p. 296). In English, on the other hand, only adverbs precede a clause, and rarely subject-verb inversion occurs. For instance, “Tomorrow [adverb], we [subject] will [finite verb] be killed”. The verb usually comes after the adverbial, if the subject is stressed and the main verb is an intransitive verb (i.e., taking no object) like come, go, fall, rise or stand. For instance, “Here [adverbial] comes [verb] my girl [subject] (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.296).
Inversion in embedded questions is another problem for EFL learners. Hinkel (2004), as cited in Pavic (2013, p. 22), claims that word order in embedded questions is another issue for EFL students. The verb comes before the subject in a direct question, whereas the subject comes before the verb in an indirect question. To change direct questions into indirect questions, they must be transformed into statements with S (first) V (second) word order, as is necessary in all English statements. Also, all wh-words must be kept, and the auxiliary verbs do, does, and did must be avoided: *Would you mind telling me how can I make tea? [telling me how I can make tea?]. This kind of error also called overgeneralization of inversion. For instance: *I don’t know why can’t he go out. [why he can’t go out] (Gass & Selinker, 2008, p. 35).

1.3.4.2 Adverbial position

An adverb is a word that modifies (describes) or gives more information about a verb (he speaks loudly), an adjective (too short), another adverb (work too fast), or even an entire sentence (Finally, I will finish my thesis). They usually end in -ly (badly), but there are some exceptions that are called irregular adverbs (late or well). Adverbs and adverb phrases are used to make sentences more descriptive. Most adverbs may be used in multiple places of a sentence without affecting its meaning. The placements of some adverbs, on the other hand, alter the meaning of statements. Furthermore, various positions might highlight distinct aspects.

The difference between adverbs and adverbials: An adverb is a term that refers to members of a specific word class, or a category of words that share certain characteristics about their form and function. An adverbial, on the other hand, is a clause element, or a grammatical function in a clause. Therefore, an adverbial is not something you can look up in a dictionary, but rather something that exists only in the context of a spoken or written text (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p. 288).
According to the Cambridge dictionary “maybe” and “perhaps” are adverbs that can be used interchangeably. They are used when something is feasible but not guaranteed. Maybe used mostly in front or end position while perhaps is used in front, mid and end position: Example: “Maybe you left your key at work”. “These shoes are too high perhaps”.

There are a few cases where corresponding one-word adverbials are placed differently in Swedish and English (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.298). They are as follows. First, adverbs of indefinite frequency or time, e.g., always (100%), usually (90%), generally/normally (80%), often/frequently (70%), sometimes (50%), occasionally (30%), seldom (10%), rarely/hardly (5%), never (0%), and adverbs of indefinite time, e.g., formerly, lately, recently, regularly, presently, just, once, now nowadays, still, suddenly, soon, still, already, immediately, consistently, and suddenly. Second, adverbs of degree (amplifying), e.g., almost, completely, entirely, hardly, just, merely, nearly, only, quite, really, scarcely, and simply. Third, adverbs of modal, such as, maybe, perhaps, actually, probably, certainly, frankly, in fact, naturally, obviously, possibly, really, unfortunately, and seriously. They are also called adverbs of certainty.

Modal adverbials (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.291) are a sort of adverbial that comments on the entire clause rather than on a specific clause element. They usually occur first in a clause and are separated from it by a comma, although they can also come between the subject and the verb or at the conclusion. These adverbials describe things as probability or the speaker's attitude.

These adverbials are usually used within the clause rather than at the beginning or end of a sentence. For instance, “David Beckham never talks in public and that is for a reason”, but this adverb of indefinite frequency comes after the verb in Swedish word order (i.e., ‘talar aldrig”) (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.298). Here is another incorrect sentence: *I joined even Greenpeace myself (Correct form: I even joined Greenpeace …). There are two exceptions:
when the verb phrase consists of the verb be or include one of the auxiliary verbs (such as can, will, have), the adverb usually comes after the finite verb. For instance, “The Beatles are hardly death metal.”, or “I will always love you.” Here is an incorrect example: *In this square there also is a famous statue of Filipe II (Correct form: … there is also …).

However, with auxiliaries, the adverbials are occasionally put before the auxiliary to give the adverbial more importance. For example, “But the agency’s influence sometimes has been greater than its size” (Estling Vannestål, 2015, p.299).

Also, as well and too have similar definitions, but they do not go in the same position in clauses. Also usually places in mid-position with the verb; as well and too usually comes at the end of a clause. As well is less common in American English.

An adverbial has three positions (Ljung & Ohlander, 1999, p.284):

a) At the front of the sentence before the subject (usually this is adverbial of time). For example: “In the afternoon she was watching a movie”;

b) At the end of the sentence after the object (any kind of adverb or adverbial phrase can be placed here). For example: “She was watching a movie in the kitchen”;

c) Mid-position, i.e., the adverbial is placed before the main verb in the clause except with be, and, if there is an auxiliary, the adverbial usually goes between the auxiliary and the main verb.

- before the verb (He usually studies the book during the lessons.),
- after the verb (He swims quickly.)
- between auxiliary and main verb (She has already watched this movie).

The adverbial position is a complicated area in writing compared to other clause elements and their fixed word order since the structural realization, semantic function, position, and grammatical function of adverbial interact (Köhlmyr, 2003, p.197). One source of problem is that whereas English has the same rules for adverbial placement in both main
and subordinate clauses, Swedish has distinct rules depending on the sentence. The adverbials are placed after the finite verbs in the main clauses, but they are placed before the finite verbs in the subordinate clauses. This causes errors in English sentences including one-word verbs.

Adverbials are usually placed before not depending on whether they emphasize the negation or the verb – negative scope. Thus, the internal adverb order depends on the emphasis on this matter. Some adverbials can be used in both positions, but the meanings are generally different (Swan, 2016). For instance, “I don’t really like her” (mild dislike). “I really don’t like her” (strong dislike).

Adverbials may also appear before the first auxiliary verb when they come before not; they always come before do, e.g., “I probably will not be there.” OR “I will probably not be there.” OR “He probably does not know,” NOT “He does probably not know.”

Adverbials of manner, place and time usually come in the end position, often in that order (Swan, 2016). Some of the adverbials of manner are angrily, happily, fast, slowly, well, badly, nicely, noisily, quietly, hard, softly. They describe how something happens or is done. For instance, “You speak English well.” OR “Jack works really hard.” When adverbials end in -ly, they can go in mid-position provided that the adverb is not the main focus of the message. For instance, “She angrily tore up the letter.” OR “I slowly began to feel better again.” Mid-position (after all auxiliary verbs) is especially common with passive verbs, e.g., “The driver has been seriously injured.”

Adverbials of place are like (upstairs, around, here, to bed, in London, out of the window). For instance, “The children are playing upstairs.” OR “Don’t throw orange peel out of the window.” Front position can also be acceptable, especially in literary writing and provided that the adverbial is not the main focus of the sentence. The verb frequently precedes the subject in this case, e.g., “On the grass sat an enormous frog.” OR “Down came the rain.” (Swan. 2016). The word here and there often come at the beginning of clauses. Note the word
order in Here/There is, e.g., “Here comes your bus”. (not Here your bus comes). Pronoun subjects directly placed after here and there. Here it comes, (not Here comes it.) OR “There she is” (not There is she).

Adverbials of time and definite frequency are like: (today, afterward, in June, last year, finally, before, eventually, already, soon, still, last, daily, weekly, every year), e.g., “I'm going to London today” OR “What did you do afterward?” If the adverbial is not the main focus of the message, front position is also common, e.g., “Today I'm going to London.” Finally, eventually, already, soon, and last can come in mid-position (Swan, 2016).

1.4 Previous research on word order errors

A bulk of previous studies conducted on error analysis in different contexts are reviewed throughout this work. It is difficult to compare the studies since they do not contain the same information and results, e.g., regarding percentage and types of word order errors. In case of Swedish learners of English, Köhlmyr (2003) has conducted a study on grammatical errors in written productions of 16-year-old students in Sweden. This study was based on a corpus of 383 randomly selected written productions from the Swedish National Assessment Programs carried out in 1992 and 1995. In this study, Köhlmyr identified the most common grammatical errors among these students. This study aimed to distinguish and analyze the errors committed by the students and to find the causes of these errors and recommend teaching methods that are applicable for English teachers to prevent these grammatical errors by teaching these areas more clearly. Overgeneralization and L1 interference as the two main factors of errors, among other errors, were the outcomes of Köhlmyr's study. In her discussion section, she asserts the benefits of giving helpful feedback to the students to help them progress in their learning. Giving feedback is not easy because it may discourage students rather than encourage them.
In this study, Köhlmyr found 123 word order errors (3.5% of all errors found in Köhlmyr’s study). The most frequent type was subject-verb order, among which primary verbs and modals created most problems, mainly be and can. This type of word order problem accounted for 51% of the case, followed by adverbial position errors, which accounted for 37%. Minor word order categories accounted for the remaining 12% of the total.

In addition, Taher (2011) has analyzed the grammar knowledge of a group of Swedish junior high school students based on their written productions. Using the EA method, Taher studied students’ most frequent errors in writing. This study considered two types of written texts from these targeted students (free and controlled), and then these texts were compared. Students were asked to choose their own topics for the first text, and for another, they were given a specific subject with a limited time to write about. Taher’s study focused on: a) The most frequent grammatical errors in the students' production, b) The reasons for the errors, c) Differences between two forms of writing situations. The free and controlled written productions showed a lack of grammatical knowledge and L1 interference concerning students' errors and frequency.

In Taher's study, 5% of the grammatical errors were connected to word order (5% of total 77 errors). Taher claimed that these errors might be due to a transfer from Swedish to English when the students translate sentences, i.e., a negative transfer from L1. Sometimes translating a statement from the first language might help in writing, but it can also lead to errors. The word order SVO, for example, is used in both English and Swedish (Subject-verb-object). In addition, Taher stated that fronted adverbial is one of the problematic areas for Swedish L2 learners due to the differences between Swedish and English grammatical rules in this area. For instance, the Swedish sentence uses the form AVSO (Adverbial-Verb-Subject-Object), whereas the English sentence is incorrect and should be (ASVO).
Furthermore, Krokström (2012) conducted a survey and analyzed the errors in the written production of Swedish pupils in the 9th grade. In 2010, 36 essays were chosen randomly from the National Assessment Program in English. When analyzing the corpus, all mistakes from six distinct categories were identified and quantified. Word order, plural nouns, nouns/articles, adjectives/adverbs, verbs/concord faults, and prepositions were the categories. The study's objectives were to look at the prevalence of errors in the selected categories, explain how certain frequent errors might be understood and explained using so-called negative transfer.

Second language acquisition has been one of the research areas of Krokström’s study, including Error Analysis (EA) and Contrastive Analysis (CA). Most errors were found when L1 and L2 differed, indicating (negative) transfer, as predicted. In the students' L2 acquisition, there was some evidence of the mother tongue's effect. The findings of this study may provide insight into what aspects of grammar should be prioritized when assisting students. As stated in the article, specific grammar instruction and qualified teachers will aid students in improving their language abilities.

In this study, a total number of 24 word-order errors were found (24 (9%) of total 271 errors): subject-verb order 6 (25%), adverbial position 13 (54%), and other word-order issues 5 (21%). Five errors were related to the determiners both and whole. Although the number of subject-verb order errors in this essay was low (approximately 25%), it was analogous to Köhlmyr's comparison (2003, p. 207). The adverbial position, on the other hand, was more troublesome; it was related to 54 percent of the word order problems. Most errors referred to using one-word adverbials, negative transfer from L1 and the determiners both and whole in this study.

Additionally, Jonsson (2015) conducted a survey about grammatical mistakes and errors in the 40 English written production of Swedish secondary school pupils in grade 9 to
study the phenomenon of frequently occurring errors and their causes. Of the 515 errors in this study, 35 were related to word order errors (7% of total 515 errors). Of the 35 errors, 13 (37%) errors referred to S-V-O word order errors, 19 (54%) errors referred to adverbial position errors, and 3 (8.5%) errors referred to other word order errors. In this study, the two errors in the word order area, i.e., subject-verb-object errors and adverbial position errors were due to incorrect ordering of adverbial elements coincided with the results of Köhlmur’s study. This study, moreover, illustrated that the L1 transfer and intralingual errors, or faulty learning, the fact that a structure has not yet been learned, were the two primary causes of these errors.

Moreover, Pavic’s (2013) study, which is about the word order errors in Croatian EFL learners’ written production, has been reviewed. These learners were 18-year-old high school students. The analysis involves 298 graded high school learners’ essays. A total of 196 word order errors (total number of errors in this study) are found in 298 essays, among which 56 errors refer to inversion retained in embedded questions. These word order errors are classified into 7 categories: inversion retained in embedded questions (56 out of 196, 28.57%), no SV inversion in questions (18 out of 196, 9.18%), VS word order (SV inversion) (23 out of 196, 11.73%), OVS word order (9 out of 196, 4.59%), wrong placement of adverbials (26 out of 196, 13.27%), other cases (9 out of 196, 4.59%), and marginal cases (54 out of 196, 27.55%). According to Pavic, the source of inversion retained in embedded questions and Errors in the form of questions classified as L1 or L2 (overgeneralization errors); and source of VS word order, OVS word order, wrong placement of adverbials, marginal cases, and some errors of other cases considered as L1 errors.

Although several researchers have shown interest in error analysis and undertaken research into the written production of Swedish students at different educational levels like junior high schools and high schools, there are still few studies on the issue of word order. So
far, the majority of the word order research conducted by these experts has been either obsolete or relatively restricted, implying that word order study is only one chapter of their research papers. So, I decided to do a recent and updated study in this field to contribute to the word order area of error analysis. Besides, this newer version may help English teachers give feedback to their Swedish EFL learners.

1.5 Method

This chapter comprises the rationale for choosing type of method, participants, and data collection and analysis in which word order errors are discussed in two areas: subject-verb order and adverbial position. Other word order issues, such as problems with clause structure, placement of adjectives, and objects in complex or compound sentences, were not found in the students' essays since they generally wrote simple sentences and did not generate many compound sentences in their written production.

1.5.1 Rationale for choosing type of method

A qualitative dominating mixed-methods design was used in this study. Additionally, a quantitative simple tabulated count is used to show the most frequent categories of word order errors that appeared in students’ writing. At the same time, the research is qualitative in nature because it tries to investigate the causes of errors through EA. This study tries to analyze 24 compositions written by one class of 9-grade students at a junior high school in Sweden. This empirical investigation will provide a useful analysis of the students’ current language skills to be able to answer the research questions and determine which domains pose more problems for the students. Through the qualitative method, the grammatical word order errors in the students' essays were analyzed. The written production of these students, one
essay by each student, were reviewed, and errors were mainly categorized according to word order rules.

The choice of methodology is determined by the objectives of the study and the theoretical framework. The best method to investigate second language acquisition is by collecting samples of learner language. Additionally, what learners know is best expressed through their comprehension of input and the language they produce; therefore, student essays are an excellent resource for demonstrating a student's grammatical understanding and providing evidence of a student's level of comprehension (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005, p. 21). Consequently, a good deal of the method of this research is qualitative. The qualitative analysis method in this study could help find the reasons behind these grammatical word order errors. This method points to strategies for selecting and tailoring practical aspects and techniques for pedagogy. Although the main benefit of using quantitative methods is that they allow for generalizations beyond the study sample to a group of similar individuals (Woodrow, 2014, p. 37), my sample is too small to allow for broader generalizations and the results of this study may only be used as feedback for this group of students, while also identifying word-order tendencies and placing them in a comparative context of previous research.

1.5.2 Participants

Participants in this study were a group of 24 students in grade 9 in one of the Swedish schools. Ninth graders were selected for this study because the educational achievement of these students at this level is a decisive predictor of future educational performance. In Sweden, final compulsory school grades determine admission to high school. Therefore, getting good grades in ninth grade has a more decisive role than previous grades in junior high school for students to get into better programs at high schools, so these factors led to the
selection of ninth graders. Moreover, grade 9 has a didactic implication and a decisive role for teachers that their students receive better results in this final grade of Swedish compulsory schooling.

As ethical considerations for the study on the participants’ essays, under the supervision of the school principal, I sent emails to the students’ guardians and parents of the 9-graders since they were under 18 years old to have a formal request for permission to study and analyze their written productions. One participant refused to take part in this investigation; therefore, the total number of students participating in this study became 24 students. The participants were also informed about the entire study procedure two weeks before the due date. Furthermore, I assured the participants that their essays and personal information would be treated confidentially and used exclusively for this survey and that their papers would not be assessed to alleviate their stress. Consequently, no one had access to read or review the participants' essays.

1.5.3 Data collection and analysis

To collect data, the participants were asked to write an essay on a specific topic. They wrote their essays using DigiExam on their own laptops. This platform provides an independent and lockdown environment for all applicants so that everyone has equal opportunities – no access to spell checking, no dictionaries, and no browser access. They wrote their essays during an hour of the lesson. A specific topic was given to the students, and they were asked to write their essays based on that topic. The purpose of this was to validate the results of this research. Another feature that validated and made the study's findings more reliable was the fact that all the participants were non-native English speakers. Some of the weaknesses of this study are that it focuses only on one written production of these students, is small-scale, and is conducted only in one Swedish school.
The students’ papers were randomly coded S1-S24. The word order errors were marked on all students' essays and then they were categorized based on the types of error categories, i.e., *subject-verb order, adverbial position*. However, *other word order errors* mentioned in the method chapter were ignored in the data collection process since they were not found in the written production of students. So, this part has been omitted in the following chapters. Afterward, the students’ essays were meticulously reviewed multiple times to analyze the data. In the results and analysis chapter, these errors have been categorized and analyzed in the right sections. Students' phrases with detected word order problems are italicized between quote marks, with asterisks (*) in front of them. They are listed verbatim from the pupils' writings. The underlined words in square brackets are improper parts or misplaced words or phrases based on the word order rules in the students' sentences. The correct versions of these mistakes are provided in square brackets before these sentences, followed by the described grammatical rules and justifications. Only proper forms of errors are shown in square brackets.

The grammar resources used in this study were “*Gleerups Engelska Grammatik*” (Second edition) written by Ljung & Ohlander (1999), “*A University Grammar of English: with a Swedish Perspective*” (Second edition) written by Estling Vannestål (2015), and some errors reviewed by Michael Swan’s “*Practical English Usage*” (Forth edition) (2016). I applied the same procedures and subcategories that Köhlmyr (2003), Taher (2011), Krokström (2012), and Jonsson (2015) in Sweden used to collect and analyze the data in the word order area. Then, this study was compared with Pavic’s (2013) study, which is about the word order errors in Croatian EFL learners' written production. Therefore, word order errors are discussed as follows: subject-verb errors, adverbia position, and other word order errors.

Two approaches were employed in this study – Error Analysis (EA) and Contrastive Analysis (CA). EA to provide an account of writing errors of these students’ essays in word
order areas, and CA to identify the errors and compare them with each other in this area. Word order error is one of the common errors and challenging areas among the English learners.

2 Results

This section demonstrates and discusses the findings of this investigation in the order stated in chapter 1.5, i.e., method chapter. In this research, there were no other word order errors in the students' texts; thus, this section was ignored here. Therefore, types of word-order errors were categorized into two sections: subject-verb errors and adverbial position errors. Each type of error is explained and supported by some examples from the students’ sentences. The method chapter has previously provided a detailed description of how the material was evaluated and collected.

The result of this study shows that the total number of word-order errors found was 10, among which adverbial position errors (8 out of 10, 80 %) were the most frequently occurring types of errors, which was followed by subject-verb errors (2 out of 10, 20 %). Table 1 below shows the number of errors and percentage of them.

Table 1

Types of word-order errors

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Types of Errors</th>
<th>Number of Errors</th>
<th>Percentage of the errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Subject-verb order</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adverbial Position</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2.1 Subject-verb order

In this section, there were two errors as following.

S 14.2 “*I want discuss with them about who they are, wish country are they from, …” [which country they are from]. It is a subject-verb order error. It is an inversion in embedded question or overgeneralization of inversion according to Gass & Selinker (2008, p. 35).

S 14.3 “*I think that In future would the camp lead to that people know other countries” [in the future, the camp would lead to] It is a subject-verb order error. It seems to be due to L1 transfer, i.e., (Jag tror att i framtiden skulle kampen leda till att människor …).

2.2 Adverbial position

In this section, there were eight errors as below.

S 2. “*A third suggestion I have is to during some time at the camp sit with each other and ...” [to sit with each other during some time at the camp] It is an adverbial position error. In this part of the sentence, “during some time at the camp” is misplaced and it should be placed at the end of this sentence. This can be identified with L1 transfer, i.e., this sentence is translated from: (Ett tredje förslag som jag har är att under en tid på lägret sitta med varandra).

S 4. “*I want also go to the camp, because ....” [I also want to go] It is an adverbial position error (mid-position error). This sentence is translated from: (Jag vill också gå), i.e., this is also identified as L1 transfer.

S 7. “*… because it going maby to changing lives.” [it is maybe going to change] It is an adverbial position error (mid-position error). This, again, is due to L1 transfer, i.e., (… eftersom det kanske kommer att förändra liv).
S 10. “*... and maybe find some long term friends that maybe will be there ...” [will maybe be there] It is an adverbial position error (mid-position error). L1 transfer can be identified here because it is translated from (… och kanske hitta några långvariga vänner som kanske kommer att vara där).

S 13. “*We can after the camp spread the valuable news and ...” [After the camp, we can spread...] It is an adverbial position error. Adverbial of time after the camp misplaced. It can be in front position or at the end of this sentence. This is also related to L1 transfer, i.e., (Vi kan efter lägret sprida de värdefulla nyheterna och ...).

S 14. “*I have two best freind and maybe they want also come to the camp.” [maybe they also want to come] It is an adverbial position error (mid-position error). L1 transfer occurs even in this example as the main cause of error, i.e., (Jag har två bästa vänner och kanske vill de också komma till lägret.).

S 16. “*I would to discuss that becuase we maybe can do differnce.” [because maybe we can]. It is an adverbial position error (mid-position error) that can be associated with L1 transfer, i.e., (Jag skulle diskutera det eftersom vi kanske kan göra skillnad.).

S 21. “*I live currently in Sweden, ...” [I currently live in]. This is also an adverbial position error that is due to L1 transfer difficulties, i.e., (Jag bor just nu i Sverige...).

3 Discussion

In this chapter, the identified word order errors in the students' texts were reviewed and compared with the five previous studies that were explained in chapter 1.4. Subsequently, an analysis of the obstacles experienced by these students is presented and discussed.

In the students’ essays in this study, a total number of 10 word-order errors have been found – nine transfer errors and one overgeneralization. Two errors refer to subject-verb
order, and eight errors refer to adverbial position. There is one overgeneralization in S14.2 and there are nine transfer errors in the following papers: S14.3, S2, S4, S7, S10, S13, S14.1, S16, and S21 (see the result chapter for more). Detailed information and clarification of every case were explained in the result chapter. The results showed that the student who had one overgeneralization error had also two transfer errors, i.e., all these students had, at least, one transfer error in their essays. Therefore, L1 transfer was the primary cause of errors.

Nonetheless, according to the data and statistics obtained in chapter 1.4, i.e., the previous research chapter on word order, the results of previous studies were not exactly analogous to this study. For example, subject-verb order errors in the study of Köhlmyr's, Krokström's, Jonsson's, Pavic's, and this study were 63 (51%), 6 (25%), 13 (37%), 74 (37.75%), and 2 (20%), respectively. Additionally, adverbial position errors in the study of Köhlmyr's, Krokström's, Jonsson's, Pavic's, and this study were 45 (37%), 13 (54%), 19 (54%), 26 (13.27%), and 8 (80%), respectively. In Taher’s study, however, the number of errors in subject-verb order and adverbial position was not clearly indicated, but Taher claimed that of all the grammatical errors that were found 5% were errors of word order.

However, they were all almost unanimous in claiming that overgeneralization and L1 interference were the two main factors of errors, among others. For instance, in Köhlmyr's (2003) study, overgeneralization and L1 interference were the two main factors of errors, among others. Subject-verb order, primary verbs, and modals created most problems, mainly be and can. Taher claimed that these errors might be due to L1 interference and fronted adverbial rules in English and Swedish are the most problematic word order areas for students in Sweden. Furthermore, in Krokström’s (2012) study, although the number of subject-verb order errors was low (approximately 25%), it corresponded with Köhlmyr's assessment (2003, p. 207). In Jonsson's (2015) study, these two errors were declared due to incorrect order of adverbial elements coincided with the results of Köhlmyr’s study. This
study, moreover, illustrated that the *L1 transfer* and *intralingual errors* were the two major problems in the students’ essays.

Pavic's study showed that participants in this study often ignored English word order rules and that L1 transfer is the primary source of word order errors for Croatian EFL learners. In other words, they employ their L1 grammatical rules instead of English word order rules. Furthermore, *inversion retained in embedded questions* accounts for more than 25% of all word order errors (see Pavic, 2013, for more). However, Pavic pointed out that after learning the rule for creating simple questions (SV inversion), Croatian EFL learners may *overgeneralize* the rule and apply it to *embedded questions* as well.

Table 2 below briefly shows the frequency of errors in the categories of *subject-verb order* and *adverbial position* in the reviewed studies.

**Table 2**

*The frequency of errors in the categories of subject-verb order and adverbial position in the reviewed studies*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Researcher</th>
<th>Total Number of Subject-Verb Order Errors</th>
<th>Total Number of Adverbial Position Errors</th>
<th>Total Number of Errors in Word Order</th>
<th>Primary Causes of the Errors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Köhlmyr (2003)</td>
<td>63 (51%)</td>
<td>45 (37%)</td>
<td>123 (3.5%) of all errors found</td>
<td>L1 transfer &amp; Overgeneralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Taher (2010)</td>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>Not indicated</td>
<td>5% of total 77 errors</td>
<td>L1 transfer &amp; Lack of Grammatical Knowledge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Errors</td>
<td>Percentage of Errors</td>
<td>Total of Errors</td>
<td>Error Type</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>--------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kroksström (2012)</td>
<td>271</td>
<td>24 (9%)</td>
<td>6 (25%)</td>
<td>L1 transfer &amp; Adverbial Position</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jonsson (2015)</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>35 (7%)</td>
<td>13 (37%)</td>
<td>L1 transfer &amp; Intralingual Errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pavic (2013)</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>26 (13.27%)</td>
<td>56 +18 = 74</td>
<td>L1 transfer &amp; Overgeneralization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This Study (2022)</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>8 (80%)</td>
<td>2 (20%)</td>
<td>L1 Transfer &amp; Overgeneralization</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

According to Brown (2015), the Transfer Principle is crucial in learning a second language. Overgeneralization, also known as intralingual transfer (within the L2), became a hot topic in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in identifying reasons for error in learners' output and describing interlanguage of learners (p.70). The outcomes of the result and discussion chapter revealed that these issues, i.e., overgeneralization and L1 transfer, play an essential role in EFL teaching and learning; therefore, EFL teachers should clarify them for students throughout instruction.

4 Conclusion and Pedagogical Implications

To conclude, the present study showed which areas cause the most errors in English word order for these students in Sweden. The research questions were to find the most frequent word order errors among this group and to find answers to the causes for these errors. Finding ten word-order errors in students’ texts and then analyzing them showed that adverbial mid-position errors in word order rules are the most frequent ones. Two errors
referred to subject-verb order, and eight referred to adverbial position errors. According to the results of this study, the main parts of these errors referred to utilizing L1 to create L2 sentences since the Swedish sentence structures (L1) are different from English sentence structures (L2). In this study, LI transfer errors and overgeneralization were the primary causes of all errors.

The results of this study, when compared to four previous studies on Swedish students (as local students) and Croatian students (as global students), revealed that the primary causes of these students' errors in English word order were the differences between L1 and L2 grammatical rules, which often lead to overgeneralization and transfer errors. Additionally, comparing the results of the study with the findings of previous research in the same area illustrated that the most common word order errors in students’ written production were adverbial position errors and (negative) transfer from L1 to L2, notwithstanding differences in their grades, age. This results comparison may aid in determining the fundamental causes of errors.

Investigations on pedagogical aspects showed that teachers help students learn L2 faster by examining, learning, and focusing on students’ grammar knowledge. Hence, being excellent in grammar is a pivotal factor for EFL teachers (Ellis, 2006). Therefore, analyzing word order errors may serve as a good strategy to know students’ weaknesses in managing sentence structure which is very essential in improving text fluency. Additionally, it can help teachers to adjust their teaching material in order to have more focus on the aspects that students need to work on.

A good form of exercise that can be used to practice word order are scrambled sentences, in which students should put the words in correct order. In every session of this exercise, the teacher can focus on different word classes and ask students to find the best place for the adverb, adjective, or other word classes. As a result, task-based teaching allows
for a focus-on-form: learners are motivated to pay attention to specific language forms when communicating (Ellis, 2015, p. 330). The study of explicit and implicit instruction has not only improved our understanding of L2 acquisition but has also strengthened language pedagogy (p. 331). This teaching method makes students more aware of grammatical structures and sentence patterns in English, which is one necessary part of the knowledge that Skolverket also demands from students in Sweden.

In Sweden, few researchers have investigated the learning of word order and different sorts of word order errors in EFL learners' writing; thus, it could still be a relatively interesting area for further research. Some of this study's weaknesses are that it focuses only on one of these students' written production, is small-scale, and is conducted only in one Swedish school. These grammatical errors, however, may be grammatical mistakes that may occur due to exam stress, lack of time, or any other reasons by these students, so that is why perhaps a large-scale and broader study in this field could be attempted. Finally, potential research in the word-order area, as well as any educational research related to this project, may be interesting to investigate, and I hope this study will provide helpful feedback for English language learners and teachers.
References


https://www.skolverket.se/getFile?file=9718


Appendix

Here is the text of the email that has been sent to the students’ guardians and parents to have formal permission to examine their students’ written productions for this study:

Hej alla vårdnadshavare i klass 9A,

Jag heter Mohammad Taherinasab och är lärare i engelska för ditt barn i klass 9A. Just nu skriver jag på ett examensarbete om engelska språket för att färdigställa min Lärarexamen vid Göteborgs universitet. För att kunna göra detta samlar jag in uppsatser som vi skrivit i klassen och ska sedan analysera språket i dem.

Elevernas deltagande kommer givetvis inte att påverka deras betyg och att alla kommer att vara anonyma eftersom inga kopplingar kommer att göras till enskilda elever. Mitt intresse är helt fokuserat på grammatiska strukturer i skriven engelska i årskurs 9.

Om du trots detta inte vill att jag använder ditt barns uppsats ber jag dig att säga till mig genom att bara skicka tillbaka detta med vändande email

Stort tack på förhand.

Med vänliga hälsningar

Mohammad Taherinasab