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## Learners' Perspective on the Challenges Faced in Learning English as a Second Language: How it Affects Learning Efficiency

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**Abstracts** - In the 21st century, English is considered as the most spoken and widely used language in communication. English as a Second Language (ESL) is inseparable and unavoidable in the Sri Lankan education system. Thus, this study is an analysis of the challenges faced by ESL learners of a state school in Galle district. The purpose of the study was to determine the difficulties undergone by the learners in acquiring their target language and to examine how it affects their learning efficiency. The sample comprised forty; ESL learners of grade 10 whose first language is Sinhala. The methodology employed a mixed approach. Quantitative and qualitative data that was gathered through a questionnaire and semi structured interview were used to identify challenges faced by the learners in acquiring the language while a written test based on paragraph writing and an oral test were used to examine how the identified difficulties affect the efficiency of learning. The data were analyzed using quantitative and qualitative methods. The findings of the present study perceived that lack of exposure to the target language, lack of motivation to learn English, deficiency in teaching methodologies and high frequency of using the first language in target language teaching were major the challenges faced by students. Furthermore, the findings of the written paper and the oral test revealed that inadequate vocabulary in the target language, using direct translation in writing and speaking as a result of the influence of the first language and lack of knowledge on grammar rules affect the efficiency in acquiring the target language. Eventually, recommendations in the light of findings are also discussed in the study which enable the students to overcome the identified challenges.

**Keywords:** ESL, challenges, efficiency, acquiring English, first language.