

FACTORS LEADING TO THE INCOMPETENCE OF GCE (O/L) STUDENTS' WRITING SKILLS

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At present, English is learnt as a second language (l2) in schools in Sri Lanka. However, it seems that learning and teaching process of English in schools is extremely unsatisfactory when analysing the results of the GCE O/L Examination. The average percentage of the failure of the English language during the period in 2018, 2019 and 2020 is 49.88%. This is really a national issue that has to be addressed immediately. It has been found that there exists a solid bond between l2 and the interlanguage (il), which gradually develops into l2 during the learning process. In the present study, it is hypothesised that il does not get strong enough during its development stage due to some linguistic factors, ignorance of teachers regarding the errors made by the students, teachers' poor methodology and the poor quality of the textbooks. The research problem of the present study is, therefore, what these linguistic factors and other reasons are for the above failure. The objective of the study is to ascertain those factors and the other reasons and, remedy the situation and bring a tangible and effective solution to the existing problem. As far as the above examination is concerned, it is assumed that l2 learners' incompetency in writing skill results in the failure of the English language as writing skill plays a substantial role there. The deductive research method and the combination of qualitative and quantitative research methods were applied in the present study. The entire research was based on the theories of second language acquisition, il and error analysis introduced by stephan krashen, lydia white, larry selinker and pit corder, respectively. At the end of the research, it was found that the poor teaching methodology, the teachers' poor performance, their negligence and the poor quality of the school text books were the main reasons for the incompetence of the writing skills of the l2 learners, which ultimately leads to the failure of the English language at the GCE O/L Examination.

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