

The Influence of First Language on English as a Second Language Writing of Undergraduates in a South Asian University

B.A.Ajantha Niroshani

Western Sydney University, Australia

Abstract.

The particular research examines the influence of mother tongue over learning English as a Second Language. In this era of globalization, learning English is a great requirement and it is expected learners to be mastered in oral and written communication in the target language.

Learners in the ESL context are confronted with complex grammatical forms, and in that situation, they always try to compare L2 or the target language with L1, thus causing incorrect syntactic formation, particularly in their writing and morphological errors.

Teachers, in general, would like to enhance the flawless writing of their students. The same scenario is also applicable for ESL teachers regarding his or her students. However, correcting the same mistakes repeatedly and teaching grammar rules taught to the students months back when doing a lesson has become frustrating for teachers.

Case study has been chosen as the approach for this research. As a pilot study of the research, only the data related to the survey has been used here. A 5-point Likert scale (1=strongly disagree; 5= strongly agree) (Gao et al, 2007) has been used in the survey. Descriptive statistical analysis measures have been used here to analyze data.

The results indicate that the students have a clear understanding about the importance of English language and its role in different forums. Students admit that resources and infrastructure available in the classrooms is good while the majority acknowledges that the teaching methodology and in class activities are either very good or good.

Keywords: ESL; Language 1; Morphology; Syntax; Writing