

M.A. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS

**THE INTERFERENCE OF SINHALA
LANGUAGE IN LEARNING ENGLISH
LANGUAGE WITH REFERENCE TO SIMPLE
SENTENCES**

[WITH REFERENCE TO SIMPLE SENTENCES IN GRADE
NINE AND TWELVE STUDENTS IN GALAHITIYAWA
CENTRAL COLLEGE – GAMPAHA]

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ABSTRACT

The study supports the assumption that the first language interference in second language learning process is a major problem the students encounter. So the study involves the concept of language interference as a component that involves one of the main difficulties that Sinhala students of English as a second language have in the process of learning due to the influence of the native language. When students are learning English language as the second language they tend to relate the target language using Sinhala language in the way that features of first language are perceived in the second language production. The study focuses on the problematic areas in syntactic features that the second language learners tend to follow producing sentences in English. So the study focuses on the word order pattern of English in simple sentences that seem to be the contrastingly different from those of Sinhala and relatively difficult to acquire when learning English as a second language. Such the problematic aspects in the location of placing the elements of a sentence accurately and the problematic instances that the students encounter due to the word order difference in Sinhala language and English language are discussed in detail as the second language learners' errors are a result of applying the previously gained knowledge on grammar rules of the first language, Sinhala.

Key words; first language interference , word order difference , syntactic features