

A Linguistic Analysis of Sri Lankan Advanced Level English Students' Writing in relation to Sri Lankan English Writing and Error Analysis

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The study incorporates an analysis of writing samples of young Sri Lankan English users (students who study English at A/L s) and semi-structured questionnaires. It aims to assess language errors done by young Sri Lankan English learners in writing, and to determine the feasibility of one-on-one feedback as an error analysis method in the classroom. The researchers identified three prominent sources of language errors in writing samples: negative transfer, overgeneralisation, and poor choice of words. The study shows that teachers work with the students with a common understanding that students who take English as a subject for General Certificate of Education Advanced Level have acquired language skills that of a native English speaker/writer. The findings of the research deconstruct this common understanding as the language errors identified in the content analysis clearly show that they belong to the category of ESL (English as a Second Language) students. The findings of this research do not justify the individual feedback as a successful method that helps students translate their ideas to grammatically correct sentences, since the participants who received feedback and did not receive feedback have made similar language errors. However, this study proves that the students alone cannot polish their writing since the errors identified in this study reflect the students' knowledge gaps which need to be rectified with the support of a teacher/mentor.

Keywords: Error analysis, Literature, English as a Second Language, Sri Lankan English learners, Writing skills