

Factors Affecting Low Proficiency of English Speech in Ordinary Level Students in Colombo District

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Proficiency of English language includes writing, speaking, listening, and reading skills, of which the former two are productive skills and the latter two are receptive skills. In the Sri Lankan context, English is taught as a second language in the country's mainstream education (government schools) from grade three to eleven; approximately for eight years. Within these eight years of English language studies, the lowest scores have been recorded for productive skills, and it is noticeable that the speaking skills marked the lowest mean scale score of 4.9, according to the findings of a previous research. Therefore, in this context, the study aims to trace the reasons behind the aforementioned low proficiency in speaking skills. The mix methodology will be used to evaluate the influence of the psychological and social factors that hinder the students' ability to use English in spoken settings. The study will be conducted with a sample of hundred students of Grade eleven in a number of schools varying from Type 1AB to Type 2 in Colombo District. English is being taught as the second language by the selected sample of students preparing for the national examination of General Certificate of Education Ordinary Level. The process of data collection will comprise a google form or a printed questionnaire followed by classroom observations, and will proceed towards one - on- one interview with students. The proficiency of the students will be measured and defined through Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). The applicability of the predetermined factors such as the excessive dependence on mother tongue, reluctance to speak in English due to pressure from social circumstances, and the lack of confidence will be assessed during this study.

Key words: English as a Second Language, Influencing factors, Productive skills, Reluctancy of speech in English, Social circumstances

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