

1.35 AN ANALYSIS OF GRAMMARTICAL ERRORS MADE BY SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNERS OF ENGLISH WHOSE FIRST LANGUAGE IS SINHALA, WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO USE OF PRESENT TENSE

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ABSTRACT

Linguists who study about second Language acquisition have been studying about learner errors related to various grammar components and parameter settings. One such area which gets more attention is studying why learners of this kind make errors while using their second language. Various theorizing has been done in this regard and one is 'error analysis'.

In this forthcoming research titled 'an analysis of grammatical errors made by second language learners of English whose first language is sinhala, with special reference to use of Present tense', it would outline what the common errors that the learners do in the acquisition of Present Tense, what the possible reasons for those errors are, what the most contributing factor for the errors they make in this regard is and seeing whether there is a correlation between learner errors and their level of proficiency. The main hypothesis in this research is that **the acquisition of Simple Present Tense is difficult for the second language learners whose first language is Sinhala mainly due to L1 interference (Interlingual errors)**. Therefore it basically attempts to see the most contributing factor which makes it difficult for the L2 learners whose first language is Sinhala in the acquisition of the Present Tense of English. With reference to the errors analyzed, the researcher would claim that the learners' first language which has less complicated tense patterns than English, do not provide similar surface structure models to tenses thus ,would affect the acquisition of tenses fully. accordingly the discussion in the literature review would draw theories in 'Error Analysis' .and 'UG Theory' of N. Chomsky in order to explain why Sinhalese speakers find it hard to acquire certain grammatical areas such as tenses. The group of participants who are in Grade, 10, 11 and Grade12 from two different backgrounds provide evidence for the research. Further a comparison of students' errors related to the use of Present Tense would be done with the proficiency level of each. Finally pedagogical implications based on the findings will be given and by which researcher would explain the importance of providing much 'exposure' of English as the main second language of Sinhalese learners during their critical periods.

Key words: error analysis, UG Theory, critical period, intralingual errors