The Challenges Faced in Learning English as a Second Language in Sri Lanka: A Case Study of Ordinary Level Students in Kurunegala District

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Abstract : Undoubtedly, learning English as a second language (ESL) is considered a challenging task. It is more difficult for students in far-away districts when compared with the students in the capital cities, where learning resources are easily available and where the environment is conducive to learning. Thus, this study is an analysis of the challenges faced by learners in learning English as the second language within kurunegala district in Sri Lanka. Even though various efforts have been taken by the Sri Lankan Educationalists for improving the situation of English language teaching for the past few decades, a disappointing situation still exist in the achievements of English learning among Sri Lankan students. So, it is necessary to explore real reasons behind the poor achievements of the students in the English Language. It is also an attempt to highlight what can be done to improve the situation significantly. Kurunegala is far away from the capital city of Sri Lanka and is a densely populated district. In the year 2020, state university admission was 45.87% from the Kurunegala district (Department of Examinations). The researcher strived to examine some of the likely challenges faced when teaching English in secondary schools in Kurunegala. The data was collected using a questionnaire from 35 students from schools within the Kurunegala education division. The result of the study reveals that students were highly motivated to learn English for their prospects and expectations such as local and international communication, academic advancement, and employment prospects.