

Exploring and Reorienting the Challenges and Reinventing Revitalized Strategies in Teaching English for Certificate-Level Students at the SLITHM Colombo Campus

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Abstract

Acquiring proficiency in the English language poses various difficulties for students enrolled in Certificate Level batch no.334 at the Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism and Hotel Management (SLITHM). The objectives of this research study were to identify the obstacles encountered by the students in their English language learning journey and explore effective strategies to overcome these challenges. A survey questionnaire was employed as part of a quantitative research design to ascertain the specific challenges faced by the students during the process of learning English. A total of 100 students, randomly selected from all five disciplines, with 20 students from each, were interviewed as part of a qualitative research design to determine the most successful learning strategies for overcoming the existing obstacles. Purposeful sampling was utilized to select five participants from each discipline who had achieved the highest grades in English at the G.C.E. (O/L) examination, with the aim of identifying the most efficient learning strategies to conquer the current challenges. The research findings revealed that the majority of students considered the influence of their mother tongue to be the most significant hurdle, followed by limited exposure to fluent English, inadequate resources, and a lack of self-motivation in learning the language. In comparison, a small percentage of students expressed that a restricted vocabulary, outdated teaching methods, and a negative attitude towards the subject also impeded their progress in learning the English language. The findings further indicated that a student-centered approach to learning, incorporating innovative teaching methodologies and the utilization of technology, would yield positive results. Additionally, the introduction of e-learning facilities was found to effectively address almost all of the current challenges faced by the students.

Keywords: Certificate-Level, Challenges, English, Strategies, Teaching

INTRODUCTION

Without a doubt, English has emerged as the global language of communication, embodying the diverse dynamics of our time such as globalization, networking, economic integration, the Internet, and its extensive usage, thereby making it a significant symbol of our era. It has been a topic of extensive debate and contention. According to Crystal (2001), English has been perceived as a threat to local dialects and traditions, while its widespread adoption has been viewed as a potential danger to the standardized form of the language. English is being embraced in various non-mainstream subcultures as well as in industries such as business and science, as a means to facilitate communication on a global level. The prominence of the English language as a global medium exerts a substantial impact on various aspects of Sri Lankan society, including international relations, economic matters, education, and more. A high level of proficiency in English is also a crucial requirement when seeking a desirable occupation. Nunan's work from 2005 can be paraphrased as follows: "As stated by Nunan in his publication in 2005, the English language

serves as a universally recognized medium of communication across different countries and cultures. Acquiring it can ensure access to opportunities for international trade, tourism, higher education, and an enhanced quality of life.

English is the most widely used language worldwide, commonly known as a "global language." It serves as a second language in many countries and is the common language of our current era. Due to the significant diversity in ethnicity and language in Sri Lanka, English is extensively utilized as both a means of communication and a connecting language for inter-state and intra-state cooperation. The Sri Lanka Institute of Tourism & Hotel Management (SLITHM), formerly known as the Ceylon Hotel School, is a leading institution in providing comprehensive training for the hospitality industry. They cater to various levels, such as vocational courses and advanced professional programs, to meet the needs of local and global markets. SLITHM has created a valuable environment that helps enhance the English language proficiency of its students. Undoubtedly, it

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has been challenging to develop a skilled workforce that can meet the demands of the expanding hospitality industry, which has experienced significant growth in recent decades. To enroll in a Certificate program in one of five areas of study (Food & Beverages, Professional Cookery, Pastry & Bakery, Housekeeping, and Front Office), students must possess a G. CE credential. To be eligible, candidates must have at least six O/L passes, including two S passes in English and Mathematics, achieved in no more than two sittings. Additionally, they must have three credit passes and another pass, or be at the Craft level at SLITHM. A one-year industrial training in the relevant field is required, but those who are already employed in the hotel industry with two years of industrial training may also apply. Candidates must be 18 years of age or older to be considered. Furthermore, English holds a fundamental place in the syllabus of the Certificate level. Despite the widespread use of English and its increasing importance in Sri Lanka, several students pursuing Certificate courses at SLITHM Colombo Campus face multiple challenges in learning the language. This indicates that despite receiving formal education in English for thirteen years, they are unable to make effective progress. The struggles faced by students at the Certificate level have made it difficult for them to acquire the necessary proficiency in English, which is crucial for practical applications, particularly in sectors such as tourism and hospitality. Achievements in language learning are not solely determined by the teaching and learning process but are also influenced by external factors such as interference from the mother tongue, the learning environment, and the English language education system. In today's interconnected world, the ability to communicate effectively in English is essential for students pursuing a Certificate.

(i) To investigate and realign obstacles the students at the Certificate Level encounter in acquiring and perfecting their English skills.

(ii) To innovate and revamp approaches to enhance the pedagogy for bettering the learning and mastery of English by students at the Certificate Level.

Given the considerable number of students enrolled in Certificate Level programs at SLITHM's provincial colleges, it is crucial to prioritize the exploration and realignment of the current challenges faced by these students in order to develop fresh strategies for teaching English that will benefit them.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature on the topics of this study is reviewed in this section. The assessments cover topics and factors that influence English language teaching and learning. Previous researchers have considered a variety of factors and come up with a comprehensive understanding of the challenges in teaching English as follows.

Ahmed (2015) argues that motivation is needed to learn English. Motivation is very important when learning English. Whatever they study, students with a strong desire to learn English will succeed. As Suryasa, Prayoga, and Werdistira (2017) have pointed out, there are two sources of inspiration that influence English language learning, namely integrated specific inspiration and instrumental inspiration. Integrated inspiration is our desire to learn English to speak with people from different cultures communicating in a similar language. In contrast, tool inspiration is the need to learn a language for obvious goals, such as finding a new line

of work and completing a review. Besides inspiration, learning English also requires self-efficacy and self-regulation, especially from teachers. This aspect will help teachers become more proficient in teaching English to students.

To learn English, three elements are especially important to support the four English skills:

pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar. The term "micro-skills of English skills" refers to these three aspects. These skills are difficult for students to acquire. Students discovered a number of factors that negatively affected their pronunciation skills. Poor pronunciation, according to Soleh and Muhaji (2015), is due to the following factors;

- (i) strong influence from the mother tongue;
- (ii) difficulty to sound consonants and vowels properly;
- (iii) difficulty to identify homographs and homophones, and
- (iv) difficulty to pronounce the vocab well.

Besides students, negative factors also come from teachers. The following are the negative effects of a teacher:

- (i) Teachers ignore to correct students' pronunciation;
- (ii) Teachers are too lazy to correct students' pronunciation whether the students' pronunciation is right or wrong; and
- (iii) Teachers are not aware that pronunciation is essential in English communication

Learning English also incorporates vocabulary as one of its difficulties. Students lack the vocabulary to write an essay. Since students like to build their ideas with "Google Translate", teachers are faced with many unstructured sentences. Teachers still find many grammatical errors in students' writing, as well as pronunciation and vocabulary errors. Sometimes students are not aware of the purpose of tenses. They don't know how to use them properly, such as how to use simple tense and simple continuous tense properly (Lubis, 2017).

In reading, students find pronunciation a typical problem when reading aloud. Sholeh and Muhaji (2015) argue that students have difficulty pronouncing some words because their mother tongue is strongly influenced by and familiar with the English environment. Another challenge students face in acquiring reading skills is comprehension. Students have difficulty listening due to a lack of understanding and difficulty controlling the rate at which speakers convey their message through their pronunciation. Students with this disorder have poor listening skills because they cannot ask the reader to repeat what they have just read in a listening passage. This statement is consistent with Megawati (2016), who stated that difficulties in learning English are due to ignorance and difficulty controlling the speaking speed of words.

Students with poor writing skills often lack knowledge of vocabulary and grammar, so they struggle with grammar and vocabulary problems. According to Prihatmi (2017), good sentence structure is essential for writing. Students' limited knowledge of the topic they want to write about makes it difficult for them to connect one sentence to another, which is another problem for their writing skills. Prihatmi says that students get confused when they say a phrase to others because they don't have enough understanding of the title.

According to Sholeh and Muhaji (2015), students struggle with pronunciation, vocabulary, and grammar when it comes to their speaking skills. Speaking is supported by

these three micro-skills. In addition, the literature review outlines four main problems faced by English teachers, including students' language skills, appropriate teaching strategies, and insufficient resources (Garcia, 2020). Similarly, Bradford (2016) identified four types of challenges encountered in English language teaching, namely linguistic difficulties, cultural challenges, structural challenges and institutional challenges. Language challenges are the challenges faced by teachers and students involved in the teaching-learning process as a result of language challenges. Non-native speakers often encounter these problems because they find it difficult to understand the English accented by native teachers (Ammon & McConnell, 2002) and the content of lessons taught in English in general (Ammon & McConnell, 2002; Hellekjær, 2010). On the other hand, students face many difficulties in teaching English because they do not have enough English proficiency to understand academic materials published in English. According to Wilkinson (2013), this refers to Dutch students who have difficulty in the English curriculum at Maastricht University due to their lack of English proficiency. In general, the English language teaching literature is concerned that students are not proficient in English, often related to self-perception or touching on basic assumptions (Huang, 2015). On the other hand, English teachers are concerned about the language barrier posed by differences in students' skill levels, and teachers' ability to deal with this diversity in addition to their language levels.

According to Bradford (2016), the cultural challenge is the mismatch between the characteristics and expectations of domestic and foreign students. The experience of English teachers has a significant impact on cultural challenges. For example, a British lecturer may be familiar with a highly interactive teaching style; however, this style is not considered to be primarily active in Thai university classrooms, where students prefer to learn passively (King, 2013).

Structural challenges in teaching English relate to the overall consistency of the program and include issues related to insufficient numbers of English classes and support staff not being able to work with them. different population groups. (Bradford, 2016:4). According to Byun et al (2011), several studies indicate that potential English teachers show reluctance due to a lack of confidence related to a lack of training or financial incentives.

The (institutional) identity challenge concerns the way the English language is viewed from the outside and the identity of the English curriculum, English teachers' teaching, and student enrollment (Bradford, 2016). According to Knight (2015), a growing concern of higher education institutions desiring internationalization is the identity of the institution, especially concern about how it is perceived by the rest of the world, such as in the global rankings (Knight, 2015).

There are strategies to overcome barriers to learning English. Teachers and students can use a variety of methods to overcome difficulties in learning English. To address pronunciation challenges, students and teachers can use songs as a pronunciation aid, as noted by Farmand and Pourgharib (2020). Songs can also be used to improve listening skills. Students may be asked to listen to songs to complete an incomplete lyric taught by the teacher. According to Safranji (2015), in addition to songs, watching movies in English can help improve listening skills.

Flashcards can help students and teachers improve their vocabulary. Hung (2015) says flashcards can help you update your vocabulary. According to Abbasian and Ghorbanpour, the method of reading can also be used to emphasize and control vocabulary. According to Walters and Bozkurt (2009), vocabulary notes can also be used to learn vocabulary. Reading methods can also be used to improve reading skills, as this activity allows students to read, read, and read. According to Day (2012), the reading method allows students to read many times, especially extended reading. In other words, when students read reading material aloud, it also trains their pronunciation skills. Because it allows students to read and read, reading magazines or articles in English can be included in extended reading. In any case, broad reading is used not only to understand possibilities but also to control punctuation according to Lee (2015). Mai and Tuan (2015) also suggest that teachers can help students improve their writing and speaking skills by providing feedback on their writing and speaking practices. Therefore, it can be summed up that the challenges in teaching English are an important aspect with no academic consequences if the solutions are not addressed in further research.

MATERIALS & METHODS

Since this research combines both scientific and quantitative methods and humanistic qualitative methods to achieve the objectives, this study is a blend of the philosophies of positivism and interpretation. Since this study included a mixed approach used in this research paper, the above philosophies were adopted. Because this study included exploratory questionnaire questions and affirmative interview questions, a mixed approach was used. The data were obtained by both inductive and deductive methods.

The research strategies used in this study were an online quantitative survey including questionnaires and a qualitative interview consisting of semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire reached a significantly higher number of participants (100) and collected a larger amount of data needed for this study. In addition, the qualitative interview provides access to rich information from five respondents selected from each Certificate major. Both quantitative and qualitative research designs are used in this research study. A good way to get firsthand information from Certificate level students at the Colombo Campus of SLITHM is to use a questionnaire. Meanwhile, Creswell (2012) says that interviews are ideal for interviewing participants who are comfortable sharing ideas, are articulate, and do not hesitate to speak up.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the challenges that Certificate level students encountered and how these challenges affected how well they learned English. The objective was to identify these challenges and gain insights from Certificate level students regarding the kinds of motivations that motivated them to learn English and the effects of mother tongue interference on English language acquisition. This study included 100 Colombo Campus, SLITHM participants. The instructions of the questionnaire helped participants comprehend the purpose of the research, the research questions, and how to complete the questionnaire. Moreover, the interview questions assisted the 05 selected respondents from the 05 disciplines of the Certificate level classes who had already obtained 'A' grades in the G.C.E (O/L) for the English language to provide their

views to beat the challenges of learning and mastering English.

Since this study included both qualitative and quantitative methods, mixed methods were used in the study. The time frame is a horizontal one as the course length of the Certificate students is 5 months. Thus, data were collected from questionnaires and interviews in the third month of their 5-month course. As a result, data is only collected at one point in time due to the short duration of the certification course.

A questionnaire for an online survey was used to collect data. 100 respondents from the Colombo Certification Facility, SLITHM participated in this study using simple random sampling for data collection. Random sampling simply means that everyone has an equal chance of being selected (Fang, 2013). For 05 interviewees, a purposeful sampling method was used.

Step 1: Rate the percentage of each sentence in sections B, C, D, E, and F.

2nd step: Use descriptive statistics to describe the data and display the data as a graph in each section.

(i) Perceptions of Certificate level students about barriers to learning English, such as motivation and barriers to mother tongue, have been summarized in Section B.

(ii) Section C summarizes the reason and intention to learn English, for example to pass exams or to enjoy movies or music in English.

(iii) Section D summarizes whether teaching methods play a central role in the English language learning of Certificate level students, such as the method of teaching interpreting that limits and affects English skills. English communication of Certificate level students. (iv) Section E summarizes the time that the certificate student spends learning English each day.

(v) Section F summarizes the problems that hinder the mother tongue in learning English, such as negative syntactic transfer.

Step 3: Explain the solutions participants like to use to overcome challenges.

The questionnaire used in this study has six parts. All questions are open. Respondent's personal details, such as gender, year of English study, and English proficiency, are covered in Part A. From the respondent's point of view, the purpose of Part B is to investigate challenges that prevent them from learning English. Section C aims to learn more about the motivations that influence English learners at the certificate level and the respondents' reasons and intentions to learn English. Learners answer questions about the effectiveness of teaching methods in Part D. Part E includes details about how long it takes to learn English. Part F investigates interference from the mother tongue while for Part F, students must rate each survey on a five-point Likert scale as strongly agree (5), agree (4), or neutral (3), disagree (2) and strongly disagree (1). This questionnaire is robust and reliable because the questions have been modified from several types of published studies. Reasons and intentions for learning English are revised by Wong (2011), part of the teaching methods is modified by Julius (2013) and part of interference from the mother tongue is modified by Dong (2014). The questionnaire provides data on the challenges as well as the reasons and motivations for learning English from the perspectives of different Certificate students.

Interviews were conducted with 05 people selected from 05 subjects of the certificate classes, who scored "A" in the G.C.E (O/L) English exam and got high marks in the test. Check out their tips for tackling the challenges of learning and mastering English. Each interview was conducted individually in a conversational manner after the implementation of the questionnaire. The interviews were conducted in a non-threatening and stress-free environment to help respondents express their feelings about learning English. Respondents were asked to answer four questions. Each student has to give suggestions for four questions. The first question, "How will you overcome your low motivation to learn English?" has been modified from Qi (2014). The second question, modified by Kumar and Sailaja (2015), is "How do you think English teachers should change the way they teach?" The third question "How do you avoid and overcome Chinese interference in English?" has been modified. The last question "How will you overcome the problem of not having enough time to study English in university?" has been modified since Sundqvist (2008).

The probability sampling method and non-probability sampling method were used in this study. The randomly selected 100 respondents from the Colombo Certificate level discipline, SLITHM were selected using simple random sampling for data collection which is a probability sampling method. Random sampling was used to collect respondents' personal information, to investigate the challenges preventing them from learning English, and to learn more about the motivations that influence English learners at the high school level. The level of certification and the reasons as well as the intention of the respondents to learn English, investigate the influence of teaching methods, and investigate the mother tongue interference. A stratified sampling method was utilized. For 05 participants from 05 interview subjects, the purposeful sampling method used is the non-probability sampling method. Purposeful sampling was used to collect the views of Certificate students on addressing the challenges of learning and mastering English.

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Research

Question 1

Research Question 1: What are the challenges faced by Certificate level students in learning the English language?

- What is the challenge that is most frequently faced by Certificate level students in learning the English language?
- What is the challenge that is least frequently faced by Certificate level students in learning the English language?

There are mainly 4 types of challenges that Certificate students face, such as native language interference, self-motivation, time allotted, and teaching strategies and techniques. Forty-two percent of respondents said native language interference is the most important challenge for English language certification students. In contrast, only 17% of respondents indicated that the teaching strategies and techniques used were a challenge for them. About 21% of respondents said that self-motivation affects learning English. 20% of respondents believe that time allocation affects English learning. Ellis (1999) believes that a first language will hinder the acquisition of a second language by

Certificate level students because of the difference between the two languages.

Motivation for English Learning: Regarding the motivation to learn English certificate students, 40.2% of respondents explained that the purpose of learning English is to migrate to an English-speaking country in the first world, accounting high percentage best. In addition, 25% of respondents mentioned learning English to get a promising job in the hospitality industry, which is the second highest percentage. Another relatively high percentage (13%) of respondents learn English because they think it will one day be useful for them to get promoted. About 10 people think it will help them when they travel abroad to experience a foreign culture or take part in the international English language testing system (IELTS) exam abroad. Very few respondents (3%) said they learn English because they want to understand the British way of life and culture, 4.5% said they learn English for social purposes and 2.3% said they learn English due to the persuasion of their parents. According to Hill (2003), motivation plays an important and decisive role in learning English at the university level. Seda and Zahitjan (2016) also show that students will be more successful in learning English if they are more motivated.

Attitude toward Teaching Method: As noted, more than a quarter of the respondents (27%) believe that English teachers do not create a favorable English learning environment and opportunities to communicate with English speakers in the classroom, and this is confirmed. Determination is the biggest challenge for English teachers. teaching techniques. On the other hand, only 10% of respondents mentioned inappropriate teaching as a challenge. Meanwhile, 1/5 of the respondents (20%) said they experienced flexible teaching methods and rich classroom activities when learning in a student-centered learning environment. This is consistent with the results obtained by Yang and Yuen (2014).

According to the results of the research conducted, 65% of the respondents commented that the negative evaluations of English teachers' teaching such as boring English lessons, do not attract students' interest. them, there is no positive learning atmosphere and the teaching is not effective. flexible enough. Comments by Li (2009) agree with this result. Hughes (1989) calls this the negative washout effect. This type of teaching poses a challenge and explains why English classes are not engaging while university students do not have the opportunity to interact with English speakers.

Time Allocation for Learning English: 40% of respondents have only one hour to study English per day while 27% of respondents said they do not have time to learn English because they have to work part-time to earn a living. However, 10% of respondents expressed interest in learning English which can last two hours a day, and 19% of respondents have more than two hours to study English per day. Interestingly, two-thirds (67%) of the respondents do not have at least two hours a day to study English. According to Pearson (2004), learning a language takes time. Due to the limited time available for language learning, very little is learned in terms of knowledge and practice. As a result, students have more time to learn English. Extra lessons outside of class time will help students improve their English proficiency more than those who do not (Sylvén, 2004:2006).

Attitude towards Interference of Mother Tongue: 35% of respondents "agree" that Sri Lankan thinking patterns influence foreign language learning and 30% of respondents

"strongly agree" that Sri Lankan thinking patterns influence foreign language learning. Since Sri Lankan thought uses indirect expressions to avoid refuting others, the British way of thinking is more direct because they prefer to express their feelings directly by speaking frankly. "no" to others without hurting other people's values (Jin and He, 2013). This is a major contributing factor related to mother tongue interference. Interestingly, an equal number of respondents (30%) disagreed with this factor. The rest (20%) did not know if their English learning was influenced by the Sri Lankan way of thinking. Around 34% of respondents 'strongly agree' that their Sinhalese pronunciation has influenced their English pronunciation and 39% of respondents 'agree' with this. This is consistent with Zhang and Yin (2009) that the pronunciation of a second language is influenced by the mother tongue. A small number of respondents (17%) noted that English pronunciation was unrelated to Sinhala pronunciation, while 18% were 'unlikely'.

In addition, it is interesting that 40% of the respondents "strongly agree" that the pronunciation of the Sri Lankan dialect has influenced the pronunciation of the English language, and 30% also "d'OK". This is consistent with research by Luo (2014), where only 12% of respondents "disagree" while 6% of respondents are uncertain.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of Research Question 2

Research Question 2: What are the strategies to overcome the challenges in learning English among Certificate level students? In view of the data gathered from the interviews, coming up next is a portion of the strategies proposed to beat the challenges in learning the English language.

How would you overcome the low motivation in learning the English language?

Professional Cookery Certificate 1 student proposes to form an English study group. Studying with peers will make all participants in this study feel comfortable and happy. For Certificate 1 students, Certificate students who lack motivation and motivation to learn English will readily accept encouragement and support. Therefore, Trainee 1 believes that this strategy of forming study groups will improve English language learning for Certificate level students. According to student 1, when they study English together, they can encourage and support each other, which is very beneficial for the whole group because it creates interest in learning English students. At the same time, Gao and Cheng (2003) suggest that the key factors for dealing with the loss of motivation are the availability of opportunities and ongoing encouragement and support.

Students with a Level 2 Certificate of Food and Beverage Discipline suggest that the reason for learning English should be reconsidered and that taking different types of English tests is a possible method to overcome the situation. lack of inspiration. Learning English should not be done just to progress academically. It's important to remember that a person's worth cannot be measured by scores. Test scores and certificates should not be used as general evidence of university students' language proficiency. After careful consideration, you should try to change your impression of learning English and the reason or goal of taking the English test, find ways to reduce stress and anxiety, and nurture the energy and English learning inspiration. This is consistent with the views of Liu and Jackson (2008). This shows that assuming the stress of the test is low, the ability to learn English will be better. This is consistent with Krashen's (1988) speculation about the affective filter hypothesis

channel, in which Krashen asserts that students with high inspiration, fearlessness, mental self-portrait, and irritability low and extroverted would be better language. Conversely, low motivation, low self-esteem, anxiety, introversion, and inhibition can increase affective filtering, resulting in a "mental block" that prevents language acquisition from possible input understand. Certificate students in Pastry and Pastry majors believe that Certificate students need to actively participate in classroom activities to overcome their lack of motivation to learn English. This is supported by Wang (2014). Therefore, student number three agrees that the most effective strategy to increase the number of opportunities for Certificate students to interact with their classmates and exchange ideas in class is to interact with their classmates in English. Acquiring the skills to develop independent study habits is an important technique for persuading students at the English Language Certificate level.

How do you think the English lecturer should change the way he/she teaches?

Regarding the problem of mother tongue interference, student 4 of the Certificate Housekeeping discipline came up with the idea to conduct a contrast analysis between English and Sinhalese to help the students of the Certificate class understand the difference. In the usage of the two languages. Odlin (1989) states that collation analysis remains the most effective method for predicting mother tongue interference. Certificate students mention that unraveling issues of similarities and differences between two completely different languages will allow certificate students to see potential mistakes and focus more on avoiding these errors.

Certificate Level Front Office Discipline Level student 5 was motivated to develop essential information on vocabulary/terms, grammar rules, and syntactic structures for Certificate-level students to identify Sinhalese language interference. In general, students with certificates were more likely to use repetitive mnemonics while taking the test, which did not affect them as deeply and was not difficult to take for granted. (Richard, 2001). For example, Certificate level students argue that emphasizing understanding the vocabulary and grammar rules of a language associated with real-life situations helps Certificate level students remember all the rules. grammar and word choice in different contexts more efficiently and accurately. In addition, students of Course 5 are suggested to pay attention to intonation, pronunciation, and standard English listening as much as possible. For example, instead of following the traditional listening practice that requires Certificate level students to answer questions or choose the right or wrong option during the listening process, engage in more activities like pairing words with sounds. , which is a useful strategy for Certification. students with serious dialects to modify their pronunciation.

How would you overcome the problem of lack of sufficient time to study English at the Colombo Campus?

Two suggestions were given to solve the challenge of lack of time to learn English. To begin with, student 4 from Housekeeping discipline emphasized the importance of practicing English pronunciation by listening to more English songs and English news on TV. According to the students, it is not important to grasp the importance of the word/phrase/clause/sentence. According to this student, watching movies in English is another way to learn more common English phrases and expressions. This will be

helpful for Certificate students to apply the language and information rules they learned in class to relate to the real world. Office Discipline Certificate 5 students that Long-range Interpersonal Communication is an important approach to learning English when we need more learning opportunities. Today, technology will help in their research. Even if you don't understand English very well, you can still self-study English on the Internet by browsing foreign websites (Mohammad, 2011). This can spread classroom knowledge outside of the classroom. Therefore, virtual environments are often considered a useful and interesting solution to the problem of lack of time to improve English skills (Higgins, 2009).

CONCLUSION

This study identified four challenges that certificate students face at SLITHM, the Colombo campus, in learning English. It is motivation, mother tongue interference, lack of time, and teaching methods. Most of the respondents felt that the challenge of mother tongue interference had the most impact on Certificate students while the teaching methods used in teaching English had the least impact on learning. Certificate student. In this scenario, it is clear that the native language of the Certificate student has a significant influence on the rules of grammar, vocabulary, morphology, phonology, semantics, phonology, and thought patterns. , English spelling, and syntax. The strategy to overcome the mother tongue interference is to equip the basic knowledge of vocabulary and grammar rules to connect with real experience related to the hospitality and tourism industry. It's about getting over incorrect word choices and grammatical structures. For English pronunciation, the strategy is to keep practicing and focus on pronunciation, intonation, and eliminating stereotypes about the mother tongue.

Establishing study groups to learn, discuss and exchange information is a strategy to overcome the lack of motivation to learn English. Motivation can be enhanced by getting support and encouragement from others. Furthermore, these Certificate students should embrace the motivation to learn English and change their negative views about the English language and the English test. Students at the certificate level should actively participate in English course activities to stimulate their interests and avoid becoming too dependent on their English teachers. Using social media to gather new information in English or to consolidate information obtained on the Internet and foreign websites is essential for Certificate students who are short on time. Certificate students can easily access and download English songs and movies to increase their exposure to spoken English and become familiar with the language. In addition, English teachers should adopt a student-centered teaching approach so that Certificate level students enjoy and benefit from participating in a variety of activities designed to encourage them to learn. English.

The cultivation of grade-specific skill-based routines, such as group discussions and appropriate language training at home, in a supportive environment with the active and willing cooperation of parents, can promote the cause and effect of English teaching and learning. Most of the time should be spent practicing English. Certificate students must strive to understand the subtleties of the cycle, including language progression, so they must develop, coordinate, and foster their own speaking and writing skills, with self-control. certain guidance when appropriate. Self-education

and language practice are irreplaceable independent activities. At the same time, it's equally important to remember to never be too picky about your tongue. Pronunciation is something that is established in metabolism, so it doesn't have to be the same as that of a native speaker. After all, the human element of initiative and individual effort must be given the highest priority; Then, advanced technology and innovation can help uncover and redirect challenges and reinvent new strategies in teaching English to certificate-qualified students at the SLITHM Colombo Campus.

This study is designed to meet the needs of Certificate level students who have difficulty learning English. It is recommended that further studies be conducted on a large number of Certificate students from the other eight SLITHM schools in the region to alleviate limitations due to the small number of participants not being able to form a basis for further study. a general conclusion. In addition, further studies used full samples of different levels of SLITHM such as manual level, management level, intermediate level and senior level, as well as direct observations and Test survey, can identify problems in learning English accurately and widely. The results of this study show important practical implications for certificate students as well as English language teachers. This study has demonstrated that motivation, mother tongue interference, time allocation and teaching methods are the main factors influencing English language learning at SLITHM. In addition, this research also makes English teachers and certificate students aware of the importance of learning English. First of all, it helps Certificate students understand that the purpose of learning English at SLITHM is not just to get a job or get a degree/certificate. Students at the certificate level should change their perception of learning English. Second, language learning must take into account the language learning context. To help Certificate level students improve their academic performance, attention should be paid to the content of English language instruction, including curriculum, textbooks, activities, and learning tasks for Certificate level students. find learning English personally meaningful and building relationships with the globalized world as English speakers. In addition, through this study, English teachers should note that certificate students need to focus on cultivating a positive interest and attitude toward learning English using teaching methods. better teaching, such as cooperative learning or communicative language teaching. In addition, English teachers can provide certificate-level students with more opportunities to immerse themselves in the English environment by promoting meaningful interactions in English and making the classroom environment more favorable for language learning. In addition, student-centered learning with innovative teaching methods and the use of technologies such as smart classrooms, smart boards, Google classrooms, zoom platform, and Teams to teach English will yield positive results. In addition, it has been revealed that the introduction of e-learning facilities will help overcome the challenges faced by certificate students. Additionally, the introduction of Self-Action Centers (SACs) will help certificate-qualified students improve their listening and speaking skills on a more personal level. Tan, et al. (2016) also pointed out that language learning activities carried out in a safe, conducive, and stress-free learning environment will help remove fear when learning English.

No doubt, Certificate students trying to learn English as a second language face challenges that combine low

proficiency, lack of correspondence, and improvement in grammar and vocabulary. , lack of inspiration and stress at work. They do not understand important structures of the language, which impairs their communication skills and makes them less likely to participate in international education and employment programs. To begin with, educators need a solid understanding of the underlying issues that can contribute to low morale and skepticism toward English. For example, special English programs can be developed taking into account some of the issues that arise when students are just starting to learn English as well as their family circumstances. High-achieving Certificate students should be rewarded and motivated to participate in programs that raise morale for low-achieving Certificate students. Supplemental lessons can be applied to students who are weak at the certificate level after school to help them further improve their English skills. As a result, there will be less gap with their first language counterparts and a smoother transition.

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