

M. A. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS

**DIFFICULTIES ENCOUNTERED BY
SRI LANKAN STUDENTS WHEN
LEARNING FRENCH AS A
FOREIGN LANGUAGE**

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ABSTRACT

This research is based on the difficulties that Sri Lankan students face when learning French as a foreign language in Sri Lanka. One major difference between Sinhalese and French languages is the difference of sentence structures. The students need quite a lot of time to get adjusted to French sentence structure as there are many new elements which do not exist in both Sinhalese and English languages. This research was done to find out the solutions to overcome the difficulties that French learning students have in common.

The above selected twenty students were given four small essays to write in Sinhalese, French and English. Then they were given a general questionnaire on French language to fill. For each activity they were given fifteen minutes

While doing this research, I found out that students are weak in selecting the relevant articles / prepositions. They tend to omit articles and replace English words for French words. Concerning verbs, they use wrong conjugations / they use wrong words / pronouns and verbs. They also mix plurals with singulars regarding adjectives and nouns. Students are reluctant to conjugate verbs when they come across unknown verbs. So they try to write verbs without conjugating them.

To improve the weak areas of students, they should do regular grammar exercises. When they do translations from English to French, they should pay more attention to set phrases of French, use of prepositions of French, without doing word to word direct translations.