

M. A. THESIS IN LINGUISTICS

**A STUDY ON THE ACQUISITION OF  
ENGLISH AS SECOND LANGUAGE AT  
THE CRITICAL AGE**

**K. H. LIYANAGE**

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**Department of Linguistics**

**University of Kelaniya**

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## **Abstract**

This research studied about how a child acquires the second language (hereinafter referred to as L2) when he/she exposed to the L2 at a critical age. Critical age plays a crucial role in Language Acquisition. When a child is exposed at the critical period the child has more tendencies to acquire the L2 in a native like fluency. The competence and performance shows a significant difference between the children exposed to L2 in the critical period and children who exposed after the critical age.

A sample of 100 subjects was selected for data collection. Out of them 50 were exposed to English as their L2 at the period of critical age. The other 50 were exposed to English as their L2 at the period after critical age. Both groups were examined at a similar stage. A writing test and a listening test were given to the subjects to see their performance. ANOVA was computed to see the difference between critical age group and non-critical group in listening and writing.

The results clearly revealed that the subjects who were fallen under the category of critical age showed better performance and the subjects who were fallen under the category of non- critical age showed poor performance. The results were categorized as poor, below average, average, good and excellent. The critical age group showed performance varied from poor, below average, average, good and excellent in listening, writing skills so in average. The non-critical age group showed performance as poor in both writing, listening so in average performance as well.