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The Logical Relationship between the Writing Errors and the Acquisition Order of the English Grammatical Morphemes

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The study of the acquisition of the grammatical morphemes seems to be a key concern of this study in terms of the order of acquisition. Acquisition order is very much inter-related with the process of second language learning and acquisition. The grammatical morpheme like third person singular –‘s’ is acquired later than the other morphemes such as the plural-‘s’ and the past tense –‘ed’. The research problem is however, the teachers deal with the learners making errors in such morphemes repetitively. The objective is to investigate the logical relationship between the acquisition order and the errors. The first year students of the Faculty of Business Studies of Vavuniya Campus were selected as the sample. The convenient sampling method was used. The data were collected by conducting tests based on the nine grammatical morphemes. The findings reveal that the use of some morphemes the copula-‘be’, the auxiliary-‘be’, the possessive –‘s’, and the irregular past are used less than the plural –‘s’, the past tense –‘ed’, and the progressive –‘ing’. The reasons for less or no errors in the use of the morphemes can be attributed to the non-attempt nature and a strategy of the respondents to avoid using any forms difficult to be used correctly. There is a logical relationship between the findings of the ranking order of the morphemes based on the results of the closed test and the findings of their use in the creative writing assignment. The morphemes of the lower ranks in the closed-test are used less or not used at all in the creative writing.

Key words: acquisition, acquisition order, errors, grammatical morphemes, learning