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### **Translation Errors Made by Sinhalese Students Learning Japanese as a Foreign Language**

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This study aims to clarify the translation errors made by Sinhalese students learning Japanese as a foreign language. Japanese is said to be one of the easy-to-learn languages for the Sri Lankan learners since there are so many similarities such as grammar, word order and pronunciations between Sinhalese and Japanese. However, due to those similarities, learning difficulties occur in some cases. An attempt has been made in this study to clarify the translation errors made by Sinhalese students learning Japanese in the JFL environment. This study examines the kinds of errors found in translations, by analysing four articles (Japanese to Sinhalese and Sinhalese to Japanese) translated by sixteen students learning Japanese as a foreign language at university level. The results show that not only first language of the learners, which is Sinhalese, Sri Lankan culture also has an impact towards their translation errors. Relationship between culture and language plays a major role in translation since a translator should not disturb the taste of the target language readers. In this case, without sufficient knowledge on the Japanese culture, using natural expressions become an impossible task. In the case of Sri Lankan learners, when they fail to find the exact terms during translation, they use some unnatural expressions which can mislead the target language readers. The first language influence can be seen in Sinhalese to Japanese translations rather than in Japanese to Sinhalese translations. Thus, sufficient knowledge in both Japanese language and Japanese culture is required. Therefore, it is necessary for teachers to take this factor into account when they teach translation methods to Sinhalese students learning Japanese in the foreign language environment.

**Key words:** cultural effects, first Language, foreign language environment, Japanese culture, Sri Lankan culture