

## **The Impact of L1 on L2 Writing Style**

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In a multi-lingual society, native speakers tend to learn second languages (L2). Phonological features of the first language (L1) affect the second language acquisition (James E Flege,1980 & Ucheoma Owhoeli,2011). Sri Lanka is a multi-lingual society with Sinhala and Tamil as the dominant languages and English as the linking language. Thus, Sinhala natives tend to learn Tamil language while the Tamil natives tend to learn Sinhala language as L2. This research investigated how the phonemic system of first language affects the writing style of a second language. The target languages were Tamil as the first language and Sinhala as the second language. Few qualitative and quantitative methods were used as the research methodology. In the first step, data were collected from 10 participants whose first language was Tamil while the second language was Sinhala. All the participants were studying Sinhala language as L2 in structured as well as in non-structured purposes. A structured paper with 30 sentences was prepared on the basis of phonemic systems of the above two languages and recommended the participants of the selected sample to translate the given sentences in Tamil language (L1) into Sinhala language (L2). In the second step, written compositions of the participants were the instrument for data collection. Finally, the data were analyzed with the phonemic system of the Sinhala language (L2). The findings of the data analysis yielded categories viz phonemic differences, insertion of vowels/consonants between word clusters and omission/wrong use of rules of concord. With the results of the research, it was revealed that the phonemic system of the first language directly affects for the writing style of the second language. Specially, the writing style differs according to the sounds available in the first language and it highly affects for the accuracy of the writing. Thus this opens up new research avenues to investigate the impact of the first language on the phonological structures of the second language on the basis of different languages.

**Keywords:** first language, second language, written language, phonemic system

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