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## CHALLENGES OF TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE IN SRI LANKA

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### ABSTRACT

Teaching English as a Second language is obviously a challenging task and English teachers face many challenges when they teach English language. At present, English language has become an indispensable component of Sri Lankan school curriculum. In Sri Lankan context, teaching English as a Second Language grasps attention of many researchers and scholars especially when the issue is particularly related to the classroom scenarios. Though the current system of school education consists of good planning, curriculum, text books, qualified teachers and effective administration, the teaching of English language seems to be futile when the actual improvement of the students is concerned. This study was carried out with forty English teachers in the Extension Course in English at the University of Colombo through a structured questionnaire and a formal interview. These English teachers were selected as the sample of this study as they teach English as a Second Language for the students in the Extension Course in English at the University of Colombo. The challenges were identified by collecting information from a questionnaire distributed among forty teachers and by interviewing the same teachers. Despite all the facilities, still teaching English language is a challenging task and teachers are struggling to teach the language. The main challenge is that there is no environment that makes students familiar with the target language. In fact, students do not get an opportunity to use English language outside their classrooms. It is difficult to set impartial learning objectives where there is a heterogeneous population of students. Specially, learners' attitude towards English language is a challenge for the teacher as it is an essential component of second language learning pedagogy. Influence of mother tongue and lack of learner motivation can be considered as other challenges in teaching English as a Second Language. Overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources and insufficient time can negatively affect teaching English as a Second Language.

**Keywords:** Challenges, Teaching English, Second Language, Learners