

Investigating the Challenges Faced by the Business Faculty Students in Their Writing Performance in the Summative Assessment

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Abstract –The English Language has four integrated skills like reading, writing, listening and speaking. Writing is, in general, considered a complex activity compared to the rest of the skills because ESL writing needs cognitive ability and higher order of thinking to produce a good piece of writing. Therefore, students feel writing is problematic and challenging. This study investigates the challenges the students of the Faculty of Business studies of Vavuniya Campus encounter when answering the writing proficiency paper in the summative assessment. Though they do the course in the English medium, they find it hard to write essays, paragraphs, picture descriptions and letters. The sample consists of 25 undergraduate students from the second year of Business Management. A convenient sampling method was applied, and the data were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. Perception and opinion of students and staff were considered. The questionnaire was designed based on the Likert Scale method and administered among the students as the data source. In addition, three of the lecturers who conduct the writing session were interviewed personally. Data Analysis shows facing many difficulties and stress in answering the summative assessment paper. The problem is distinguishing between formal and informal English, outlining writing a draft, inability to incorporate the learned grammar in writing, lack of vocabulary, not having sound knowledge in clauses and phrases and identifying the skills needed for successful writing, avoiding redundancy and cliché. The study recommends taking the students to the higher order of thinking skill, conscious and incidental vocabulary teaching, increasing the reading skill by applying SQ4R technique, giving continuous, systematic writing practice to reduce the anxiety to overcome writing difficulties.

Keywords: Academic writing, Difficulty, ESL, cliché