



INVESTIGATING PARENTS' EXPERIENCES AND PERSPECTIVES ON TEACHING ENGLISH AS A SECOND LANGUAGE (ESL) ON DIGITAL PLATFORMS DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC IN SRI LANKA

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The COVID-19 global pandemic has resulted in many countries' moving from face-to-face to online learning at all levels of education. This transition caused learners to change their learning styles and teachers to adopt new teaching methods in order to redefine learning in a virtual platform where traditional teaching methods are being supplanted. The previous studies revealed the perspectives of teachers and learners on emergency online teaching. The current study investigates parents' experiences and perspectives on teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) on digital platforms during the COVID-19 pandemic in Sri Lanka. A designed questionnaire with thirteen items was distributed to seventy-five parents who have at least one child (from primary, middle, or secondary school) who attended a physical learning classroom before school closure and started online learning during the pandemic in Sri Lanka. The results demonstrated that learning ESL on digital platforms has been challenging for both students and parents. It is found that parents are concerned about their children's decline in language skills and their lack of interest, motivation, and interaction in engaging in online classroom activities. Parents further revealed that poor internet connection, technical problems, lack of learning materials and digital literacy, social isolation, increased screen time and unfamiliarity with new learning platforms cause the decline in language skills in online learning. On the contrary, the parents stated that their children acquired self-regulated learning skills, collaborative learning skills, and digital socialization during online language learning. The findings of this study provide implications for the professionalism of ESL teachers' in adopting new methods and techniques to address the needs of ESL learners on digital platforms

Keywords: Emergency remote teaching, Learning English as a Second Language, Online learning, Parents' experiences and perspectives, COVID-19 pandemic

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