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ABSTRACT

English language proficiency is a pre requisite to join the armed forces in Sri Lanka and the English language is used by many armed forces across the globe including the forces taking part in United Nation peace keeping missions. The fact that, Army personnel receive more opportunities to work with foreign Armies which makes, it is necessary to have English skills as an essential requirement. Thus, each soldier can be exposed to various situations where they are required to have good English language skills in order to communicate effectively. The purpose of this study was to analyze the English language skills of the Other Ranks within the Gemunu Watch of Sri Lanka Army. 312 personnel from the Other Ranks of the Gemunu Watch were selected as the sample population for the study. The researcher also investigated as to where the Other Ranks needed to use their English Language skills and their perceptions of their own use of the language. A comprehensive statistical analysis was performed to test the hypotheses and to validate results obtained. In addition, this study reveals according to the findings, that most of them belong to the weak category. Only very few were found to be able to manage the language and be fluent in the language. This findings show a necessity of English knowledge improvement in the respondents. Therefore, the study recommends the creation of an environment where everybody tries to speak in English even through errors. Apart from that, basic English courses should be arranged at the Battalion level under the instructions of Regimental Centre, which would be much beneficial for Other Ranks to develop their English knowledge and skills.