



THE IMPACT OF ATTITUDES ON SECOND LANGUAGE LEARNING: A STUDY BASED ON THE 1ST YEAR UNDERGRADUATES AT THE FACULTY OF SCIENCE, UNIVERSITY OF PERADENIYA

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Attitudes are considered to be an individual difference which influence in the process of Second Language Learning. The main aim of the research is to identify the impact of the learner attitudes of the 1st year undergraduates at the Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya on Second Language learning and achievement. The sample for the research is 78 students from the Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya. The mixed method comprising of both the quantitative and qualitative data was collected from the self-directed questionnaires, unstructured interviews and the marks for English from the Dean's office at the Faculty of Science. The Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Microsoft Excel application are used in order to analyze the data. There is a positive correlation of $r=0.6$ between the attitudes of the language learners and their grades at the end of the English programme in the 1st year. Thus it is possible to identify a positive impact of learner attitudes on Second Language learning. In analyzing the data further it is observed that the students with positive attitudes have performed better than the students with neutral and negative attitudes. The "A" grade for English has been achieved only by the learners with positive attitudes towards learning English. 29.48% of the language learners with positive attitudes have obtained the "A" grade. Furthermore no student with positive attitudes has obtained a fail grade; C-, D or E. On the other hand no learner with negative attitudes has achieved "A" grades for English while "D" and "E" grades which are the lowest grades have been achieved only by the learners with negative attitudes. The learners with neutral attitudes have only achieved "C" grades and 33.33% of the learners with neutral attitudes have obtained fail grade; "C-" for English. In analyzing the results, it is possible to identify that the learners with positive attitudes learn the language more successfully than the students with negative and neutral attitudes. Thus, there is an impact of attitudes on Second Language Learning.

Keywords: *attitudes, second language, learning, impact, individual difference*