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### Preferences on Learning English as a Second Language

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English occupies the place of a Second Language (ESL) in primary, secondary and tertiary levels playing an inevitable role in the Sri Lankan education arena. Moreover, the necessity of English as a medium of instruction is realised by the government and steps have been taken to elevate the competency in English among students in Island's education system. However, much attention has not been paid to the favorite learning methods and styles of ESL learners even though methods and styles create enormous impact in acquiring language competency. Hence, the present study intends to explore ESL learners' preferences on learning English. Therefore, the research problems were formulated as the ways in which ESL learners wish to pursue English, their favorite methods of learning, learning styles and strategies preferred by the learners. In order to acquire the research objectives, a sample of 50 respondents from Uva Wellassa University was selected using stratified sampling technique. Further, a designed questionnaire was utilised to collect primary data while implementing graphs and charts for graphical depiction of the result. According to the results, most of the respondents (43%) are with the view that they need to improve their speaking skill further and secondly, one fifth of the respondents require enhancing their writing skill. When considering the ESL learners' favorite method of learning English, the method of conducting presentations has acquired the highest number of preferences by the undergraduates. However, lectures and videos both are placed at second with equal percentages. Moreover, more than fifty percent of the respondents wish to apply visual learning style while nearly one third of the respondents prefer to use a combination of visual, auditory and kinesthetic styles in order to pursue English. Thus, the results are beneficial for the teachers, the syllabus designers and the researchers to uplift the ESL learners' proficiency levels while highlighting the importance of recognising the learners' preferences in ESL teaching process.

**Key words:** English, learning, methods, preference, style