

Abstract 100

The Impact of Motivation to Learn a Second Language on Academic Performance of the Students: A Case Study on the Undergraduates of Faculty of Science, University of Peradeniya

Suvini M. Swarnasinghe

University of Peradeniya
suvinimangani@gmail.com

As the medium of instruction at the faculty is English, the majority of students who enter the faculty are obliged to change their medium of instruction from their first language to English. However, these students do not identify the importance of improving their English language proficiency. As it is observed, they show a lack of motivation to learn English, as they have given English a secondary position. Thus, the aim of this study is to examine how lack of motivation leads to low level of language competence and how that affects the final GPA (Grade Point Average). The mixed methodology is used to conduct the research. Qualitative data contains data from semi structured interviews. The quantitative data includes English grades for O/L, A/L, first year English course, and GPA and questionnaire data. The sample consists of 116 second-year undergraduates. According to the results, it is found that motivation has an impact on improving second language proficiency and motivated students have achieved high English grades and at the end a high GPA. For instance, the students who have got A, for A/L are the students who were motivated to learn English even after O/L. For instance, 91% of these students have A for EN 100 and at the end a high GPA i.e. an average of 3.43. On contrary, the students who were less motivated have performed less than those who were motivated. For example 71% of students who have got F for A/L have got C and a less GPA i.e. an average of 2.68. It is also revealed that they get de-motivated to learn English due to difficulties they face because of the medium of instruction. Thus, they lose confidence on learning English. Furthermore, it is observed that it is important to establish intrinsic motivation among students rather than extrinsic motivation as latter forces the students to learn the second language.

Key words: Academic Performance, Extrinsic Motivation, Intrinsic Motivation, Medium of Instruction, Undergraduates