

1.4 Students' attendance in English courses offered by English Language Teaching Units in Universities

Muditha Cooray

Department of Linguistics, University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya

ABSTRACT

Students' attendance in Proficiency Courses in English offered by English Language Teaching Units (ELTUs) in universities is claimed to be deteriorating in comparison to attendance in other lectures. This problem is common to a considerable number of universities such as university of Colombo, Sri-Jayawardanapura, Kelaniya and Ruhuna especially in the faculties of Arts, Management and Law. There is research to prove that absenteeism can be a demotivating factor, which can have a negative impact on administration, lecturers, instructors and the students who regularly participate in lectures. When the students get absent for English lessons the repercussions are severe as English is a language, which has to be acquired through lot of practice.

This study was an attempt to investigate the causes pertaining to poor attendance in English courses offered by ELTUs in universities. It was conducted with a special focus to the faculty of Management and Finance, University of Colombo. In conducting this research students attendance registers were analyzed. Questionnaires were administered. Interviews and group discussions were conducted. Chi-square test of independence was applied in relation to attendance and performance. At the end of the research inconvenient time tables, the load of work in the main subjects and the professional subjects, lack of interest, unsatisfactory classroom conditions, traditional teaching methods and outdated lesson materials are investigated as notable factors that affect attendance.