

M.A. IN LINGUISTICS

**ATTITUDES OF THE
UNDERGRADUATES TOWARDS THE
TESL DEGREE PROGRAM**

PUNSISI PAVANI ALAHAKOON

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Department of Linguistics

University of Kelaniya

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ABSTRACT

Realizing the great demand for trained English teachers, the approach of Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL) was introduced and it is vital to note that this is relatively an innovation in the Sri Lankan University system to implement TESL as an undergraduate degree program.

The English Language Teaching Unit (ELTU) of the University of Kelaniya is the only ELTU that offers this undergraduate degree program. According to the *Guidelines for conducting evaluations of academic programs*, (July, 2002) published by the University of Pittsburgh, new programs should be reviewed within five years of its implementation. Thus this program has to be evaluated and therefore as the first step, this research was carried out in order to better understand and measure undergraduates' attitudes towards the TESL Degree Program offered by the ELTU of the University of Kelaniya. This research focused on student perception of four key areas: curriculum, teaching methods/lecturers, assessment and classroom management and facilities.

This study presents the results of the students of both Special and General Degrees in TESL of all the three years. The data were gathered through a questionnaire and the interviews conducted with 10 undergraduates of the Special degree and 5 final year undergraduates of the General degree program. The data from the questionnaires were presented in percentages in tables and charts using SPSS while the data obtained from interviews were analyzed using qualitative techniques.

The research findings revealed the issues such as the practical sessions allocated in the syllabus are not sufficient, too many assignments stress the students and reduce their interest in learning and the students' needs are not particularly addressed. In addition, the students were satisfied with the role of the lecturers and the technology used and the facilities provided in the lecture halls.