Abstract 12

An Attitudinal Study of English Undergraduates at the University of Kelaniya towards "Spell Checker" and "Auto-Correct".

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The present research is aimed at studying the attitudinal variations of undergraduates studying English at the University of Kelaniya towards 'spell checker' and 'auto-correct' in relation to their spelling skills. Existing studies mainly deal with more pragmatic aspects, such as studying the possible impact of these two programmes on the ability to spell and/or the memory of English language users. Data for the current study is gathered through an online survey participated by undergraduates of the University of Kelaniya who are reading English for their degree. The study explores participants' attitudes relating to several aspects of the two programmes including the main functions, usages, and possible impacts on spellings. The research thus examines how undergraduates in a local university react towards these two systems as second language users of English and attempts to discover possible trends and patterns in attitudinal responses. The results of the study reveal that participants have a more positive attitude towards the SC than AC. There is a tendency to over-rely on the two functions due to which a possibility looms for undergraduates' level of confidence to erode in terms of their spelling skills.

Key Words: Spell checker, Auto correct, Attitude, Spellings, ESL