

## **Attitude of Officer Cadets at SLMA towards English Language Acquisition**

N.G.J.P. Bandara<sup>1</sup>

Second Language Acquisition (SLA) of the trainee Officer Cadets at Sri Lanka Military Academy (SLMA) has become rather a challenging task as they are expected to involve in language learning process while undergoing their military training which has been designed to produce military commanders. The study mainly focused on investigating attitude of the Officer Cadets who follow the Bachelors Science Degree in Military Studies at SLMA. The quantitative and qualitative investigation gathered the required data through a self administrated questionnaire distributing among 50 participants, conducting unstructured interviews with the target group, respective academic and military staff while incorporating researcher's own experiences and observations. The data presentation has been graphically displayed in percentage. The study analyzed cadets' attitude towards English by using ABCs (Affective, Behavioral, Cognitive) components and discussed key areas like use of English, students' mental preparedness, English difficulty level, confidence, intrinsic motivation, support of military training environment, orientation and their perception on the role of English and its significance in military domain having incorporated educational theories such as Knowles' Adults Learning (Andragogy), Krashen's Second Language Acquisition and the concept of Culture Shock. The findings revealed that though the Cadets were intrinsically motivated to learn English at the initial stage of their training. However, their interest seemed to gradually diminish due to some extrinsic and intrinsic reasons such as restlessness, physical exhaustion and health issues (physical), ESL teaching methods and evaluation methods (methodological), culture shock, military command and control system, (environmental), language phobia, anxiety, low self-esteem, linguistic problems, prioritization of military and routine activities, self biased schema, personal backgrounds and perception towards English learning (cognitive). In order to uplift their attitudinal state, the study suggests to implement some improvements/adjustments to the ongoing teaching and learning process, cognitive development of the Officer Cadets and to the military environment.

Keywords: "Type your keywords here, separated by semicolons ; no more than five key word items."

<sup>1</sup> Academic Wing, Sri Lanka Military Academy, Diyatalawa, Sri Lanka