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The attitudes of Sri Lankan Urban and Rural Advanced Level students towards spoken English.

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Proficiency in a language instruments both writing skills and speaking ability. Though the second language learners exert much time and effort in learning English, mastering the language is quite challenging. It varies according to the language community, social background, pedagogy used to teach and some other aspects such as socio-linguistic factors. This study attempts to focus on the attitudes of Sri Lankan urban and rural Advanced Level students towards spoken English. The study was carried out through a combination of both qualitative and quantitative methodologies which is known as “triangulation”. This was used to compare and contrast the attitudes of the research participants who represent rural and urban social backgrounds in Sri Lanka. The cluster sampling and convenience sampling were appropriate as this research was conducted in two major schools that represented the urban and rural areas in Sri Lanka. The findings of the research study suggests that unlike the students in urban schools, the majority of the students in rural schools encounter challenges in speaking English which includes fluency and subject knowledge such as grammar and vocabulary. Nevertheless, this study points out that the majority of the participants have the attitude that English is a basic qualification that should be fulfilled to acquire a better career.

Key words: attitudes, language proficiency, rural school students, spoken English, urban school students