

An Investigation of Motivation for English Language Learning among First Year Undergraduates of Social Sciences after Following the English for Social Sciences Course at the University of Kelaniya

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Abstract

Motivation plays a significant role in English language learning process as it drives learners to learn the language. According to Gardner (1985), motivation has long been identified as one of the main factors affecting English language learning. The objective of this study is to identify the level and the type (instrumental or integrative) of motivation for English language learning among the Social Sciences undergraduates after following the English for Social Sciences course in the first semester. A quantitative study was carried out among 40 first year undergraduates selected from the Faculty of Social Sciences at the University of Kelaniya. The primary data for the study was collected using a modified motivational questionnaire, which was designed based on the format of Gardner's Attitude Motivation Test Battery (AMTB). Data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using a five – point Likert scale to find out the level and type of motivation of the Social Sciences undergraduates. The findings of the study reveal that out of the 40 students about 75% of the students are motivated after following the English for Social Sciences course. Moreover, it was also found that the undergraduates are more “instrumentally” motivated to learn English. This study will assist in recommending some useful motivational learning implications to accelerate the motivation for English language learning.

Keywords - motivation, English for Social Sciences, instrumental motivation, integrative motivation, first year undergraduates.