

**A STUDY ON COGNITIVE REACTIONS TOWARDS ENGLISH AS
A MEDIUM INSTRUCTION OF THE UNDERGRADUATES WHO
PURSUE A DEGREE IN SINHALA AT THE UNIVERSITY OF
RUHUNA.**

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Cognitive reactions towards language are evaluative attitudes that reside in the human mind with reference to a particular language. Those cognitive reactions are demonstrative and effective in understanding the attitudes of learners. Moreover, the mental reactions of humans to languages cannot be directly observed, yet recognizable through verbal or physical treatments of speakers of a particular language. Therefore, this study focuses on the cognitive reaction of the 4000-level undergraduates whose study medium is Sinhala at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Ruhuna towards English as a medium of study. This study's research methodology adopts qualitative and quantitative methods such as interviews and questionnaires. Thirty participants engaged in the data collection process. Accordingly, the study investigates why the students select Sinhala as the medium of study while those students have the opportunity to start the learning process in English in a context where English is taught as a mandatory second language in universities and the Sri Lankan education system. In accordance with research findings, the majority of the learners state that English is essential, yet poor knowledge obstacles them to choosing English as the medium. Furthermore, the informants demonstrate their desire to continue learning English and emphasize finding a possible way to exterminate hardships. According to the students' cognitive reactions and their nature on to the selection of study medium, it is clear that students have a positive attitude towards English a language yet those students have a negative attitude towards their own usage of English language skills. Thus, the researcher tries to suggest taking necessary initiatives and changes in the activities used in English as a second language classrooms by enabling them to follow degrees in English.

Keywords: Cognitive Reactions, English Language, Medium of Study, Sinhala, Undergraduates

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