



**MAKERERE**

**UNIVERSITY**

**COLLEGE OF HUMANITIES AND SOCIAL SCIENCES (CHUSS)  
SCHOOL OF LITERATURE, LANGUAGES AND COMMUNICATION  
DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS, ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES AND  
COMMUNICATION SKILLS**

**STUDENTS' ATTITUDES TOWARDS ENGLISH LANGUAGE STUDIES  
AT MAKERERE UNIVERSITY**

**BY  
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**RESEARCH SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF LITERATURE, LANGUAGES  
AND COMMUNICATION IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS  
FOR THE AWARD OF A BACHELORS' OF ARTS IN ARTS DEGREE.**

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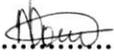
## DECLARATION

### DECLARATION

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I, MWEBAZA LORNA, Reg No: 16/U/7910/PS hereby do that this research is my original work and that to the best of my knowledge and belief, it has not been previously, in its entirety or in part, been submitted to any other university for a degree, diploma or masters. Other works cited or referenced are accordingly acknowledged.

**MWEBAZA LORNA**

  
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**SUPERVISOR APPROVAL**  
**SUPERVISOR APPROVAL**

This research dissertation has been submitted for examination with my approval as a University supervisor.

**SUPERVISOR'S NAME**..... Sarah Nankjoha (PhD)

**SIGNED**.....  ..... **Date**..... 21/0ct/2019 .....

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Above all, I express my profound gratitude to God for His guidance and provision throughout this journey.

I sincerely thank my parents, Dr. and Mrs. Wagaba and my brother Lenny Muwanguzi for tirelessly supporting and encouraging me .

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## **LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

<b>ELS:</b>	English Language Studies
<b>CHUSS:</b>	College of Humanities and Social Sciences
<b>SLLC:</b>	School of Literature, Languages and Communication
<b>CSK:</b>	Communication Skills

## **ABSTRACT**

This work outlines the results of the investigations carried out to examine the attitudes students have towards studying ELS in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Makerere University. The overall purpose of this research was to examine the attitudes students have towards ELS. It was also aimed at describing the nature of the subject-related difficulties that the students offering ELS face at Makerere University which lead to their failure of the subject and suggesting solutions that help to reduce the rate at which students fail. The topic of study came up from the fact that ELS as a subject taught in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences is not popular among the students yet English is an International language of communication.

The basic design of the research was qualitative in nature, where the data collected was reported and explained in detail. It was carried out by use of an interview guide with 3 sections. (15 questions) and using a sample size of twenty respondents with in the college of Humanities and Social Sciences.

The research study revealed that the students do have a negative attitude towards studying ELS and is attributed to reasons such as the influence of their mother tongue, the availability of the teaching resources, the time available to teach the students as well as the big size of the class rooms compared to the number of number of lecturers for the courses.

One of the outstanding conclusions the research made was that more emphasis be put on orientation at the beginning of their study to enable them stay motivated during the 3 year course. A copy of the interview guide used by the respondents is appended at the end of this report.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### **General Introduction**

This study examines the attitudes that students have towards English in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences at Makerere University. It aims to evaluate the most outstanding attitudes and perceptions students have towards studying ELS, which subject-related difficulties lead to the students' failure of the subject and feasible suggestions that can be made to reduce their failures, in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. In this chapter, I present the background of the study, the core objective that the study is aimed at which is explaining the reasons why students' attitudes towards English exist as well as the key factors that influenced my interest in this topic of study. I also present the scope of the study, the questions that the research is aimed at answering and the significance of the study.

### **1.2 Background to the Study**

English Language Studies is one of the subjects taught at Makerere University in the courses: Bachelor of Arts in Arts (BARS) and in Bachelor of Arts with Education (for the students studying to teach English and Literature). Bachelor of Arts students that offer this course have three subjects in first year and when they proceed to second year, they are at liberty to maintain just two of their choice. The first subject that the student chooses to specialize in is known as a major and this becomes the main subject for their degree course which are also known as cores. (The student studies four course units of this every semester) The second choice subject of the student becomes what is termed as the minor. (The student studies only two course units every semester. English Language Studies (ELS) is studied from first year in combination with subjects like Communication skills (CSK), Organizational Studies (OGS), Psychology (PSY), Literature (LIT) and Linguistics (LIN).

ELS is also offered under the course Bachelor of Arts with Education, for the students aspiring to be teachers of English and Literature. For these students, the curriculum requires that they offer English Language Studies as a minor and Literature as their major. Each course unit has a minimum of three contact hours (teaching hours per week) and a maximum of 4 contact hours per week for the semester in which it is taught. In summary, the following courses are taught

under ELS of which a BARS student takes 20 ELS courses by the end of three years and an Education student takes 6 ELS courses by the end of the three years.

**Table showing the courses taught in ELS from Year 1 to Year 3**

<b>YEAR 1, (Semester 1)</b>	ELS 1101 – Introduction to the study of languages
	ELS 1105 – Remedial English Grammar( BARS Students)
	ELS 1106 – Receptive skills in English (for those offering bachelors of arts with education
<b>YEAR 1 (Semester 2)</b>	ELS 1205- Textual analysis and comprehension
	ELS 1207- Contemporary English
<b>YEAR 2 (Semester 1)</b>	ELS 2110- English Morphology
	ELS 2111- English Phonetics
	ELS 2112- Translation and Interpretation in English
	ELS 2113- Pragmatics and discourse Analysis in English
<b>YEAR 2 (Semester 2)</b>	ELS 2210-English Phonology
	ELS 2214 –Aspects of English Syntax
	ELS 2211- Language acquisition and learning
	ELS 2212- Research methods
<b>YEAR 3 (Semester 1)</b>	ELS 3114- Advanced English syntax
	ELS 3117- English Semantics
	ELS 3119- Materials development and Evaluation
	ELS 3113 – Research project
<b>YEAR 3 (Semester 3)</b>	ELS 3204- Editing and Publishing in English
	ELS 3212- Analysis of English Stylistics
	ELS 3213- English Socio linguistics
	ELS 3210- Lexicology and lexicography

As a third year student of ELS, I have been disturbed by the fact that many students are registered for ELS in first year but by second year, the numbers of students majoring and minoring in ELS do not even make a classroom of 20 students Right from first year in my class, had a negative attitude towards the subject and the perception that English was hard existed and

at the time of registration in first year, some of the continuing students that I would come across encouraged me to drop the subject as soon as possible. Students that were not offering the subject also had been influenced by the voices of those that said the subject was difficult. Among the dominant comments and questions asked to me included; “But isn’t that subject too hard?” “Aren’t you scared that you will fail that subject?” ‘Do you think that you will be able to get a job after doing a subject like this?’ ‘Will new thing will you learn from studying this subject?’

In first year, lecturers of subjects like Organizational Studies(OGS) talk to us as a class putting emphasis on the fact that we should not waste time opting for subjects like English Language Studies because they would not get us anywhere in life or let alone get us credible jobs. Students also had the perception that since English has been taught from the Primary School there was nothing new to learn and that it was merely a waste of time and money. I studied with students in 2016 whose registration numbers were as old as 2011 doing the course units they failed as retakes. Much as the results on the notice board showed that some students fail the course miserably, they also showed that quite a number that had pass. These perceptions and voices motivated me to carry out a research study and investigate why the students thought negatively towards the subject and if there was any evidence to support their reasons for this type of thinking.

### **1.3 Statement of the Problem**

English Language Studies (ELS) has been taught at Makerere University for the past 55 years.

(as got off the Makerere University Historical background website:

<https://www.mak.ac.ug/about-makerere/historical-background> ) Although the course content is designed to equip the students with relevant knowledge and skills for the job market, the subject does not appear to be popular among the students that offer it from year one and can opt to drop it thereafter, unlike the Literature/English education students that have to do it as a compulsory subject minor in their course. Basing on my experience as a student of ELS, conversations with both students that study ELS in Makerere University and those that do not have shown ELS to be perceived as “a difficult subject to pass”. The cause of these perceptions and how they inform research about the possible interventions to change the student’s attitudes are some of the pertinent issues the study is to focus on.

## **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The following are the objectives around which this research study is centered.

### **General Objective**

The overarching objective of this study is to examine the attitudes students have towards ELS.

### **Specific Objectives**

To describe the nature of the subject-related difficulties that the students offering ELS face at Makerere University which lead to their failure of the subject

To explain the core reasons as to why the attitudes students have towards English exist.

To suggest solutions that help to reduce the rate at which students fail ELS.

## **1.5 Research Questions**

The study aims at answering the following research questions:

1. What is the nature of the subject related difficulties that lead to the failure of ELS by students?
2. What are the most outstanding attitudes and perceptions students have towards studying ELS as a subject at Makerere University?
3. What feasible suggestions can be made in order to help reduce the rate of failure of ELS among the students?

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The research focuses on the attitudes that students in Makerere University have towards studying ELS as a subject in Makerere University. The study will use samples of students in Makerere University, College of Humanities and Social Sciences who offer Bachelor of Arts in Arts across the years of study as well as students that offer Bachelor of Arts with Education.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This particular chapter presents a literature review on what has been researched/ established in the domain of ELS as a subject taught in the University. Specifically, I highlight scholarly views on the specific objectives of the study.

#### **2.2 Students' attitudes towards ELS a Subject**

One of the core objectives of this research study is explain the existence of the attitudes students have towards ELS exist. Some of the views given by scholars on what the causes could be and how they affect the students are discussed in this section. In as far as the matters concerning the study of ELS, the notion "attitude" has been described in various ways. Arnold (2005) as the mental readiness that exert the same general or consistent influence on a fairly large class of evaluate responses usually directed towards a person or event.

Ewen (2003), on the other hand defines attitude as a mental and neutral state of readiness organized through experience, exerting a directive dynamic influence upon the individuals response to all objects or situations with which it is related.

According to Viet (2017), in a case study of undergraduate students, effective learning of a language is as a result of many factors among which attitude has been identified as an important one. English is a language of international communication, a language of business, banking and finance, science and technology, cultural exchange and international world wide relations. Studies have shown that people are interested in a particular second language so as to achieve a high economic status and also satisfy one's life values. The learners' attitude is crucial factor that determines whether a student will pass or fail English.

According to Latchanna, and Dagneu, (2009), attitude is defined as a mental state which includes beliefs and feelings. Lennartson, (2008), argues that belief is an important factor in determining achievement in language learning. If learners believe that they cannot do well, that belief will become a major obstacle to hinder their learning. Negative attitudes can hinder learning, however, they can be changed into positive attitudes which result into a positive outcome and also make learning more effective. A positive attitude is considered one of the most

important things toward language learning and is a good starting point to necessitate a student studying English.

Attitude goes hand in hand with another key factor in learning known as Motivation. Motivation is the driving force of attitude and an attitude towards learning is either driven by motivation or demotivation. Avello (2010) defines motivation as a key factor in foreign language learning. Gardner (1985) supports these studies that foreign languages are learnt by motivation. He goes ahead to define it as the extent to which the individual works or strives to learn the language because of a desire to do so and the satisfaction experienced in this activity. Studies have showed that different types of students perform differently as a result of their performance and motivation. Many people feel more interested in learning the language than others.

Dörynei and Otto (1998), Motivation is defined as the dynamic changing cumulative arousal in a person that initiates, directs, coordinates, amplifies, terminates and evaluates the cognitive and motor processes whereby the initial wishes and desires are selected, made priority and acted out. The definition includes the many possibilities to be analyzed concerning the students attitudes towards learning English. According to these scholars, if a student wants to improve their use of the particular language that they are learning, it is necessary for them to feel encouraged and take the initiative, direction and coordination of their actions in regard to the language learning process.

Lennartsson (2008) discusses that the beliefs that students have towards studying English exist as a result of the attitudes that students have towards studying the language. Some other underlying factors stem from the attitude factors such as lack of confidence, as well as fear to fail. Negative attitude has been observed to manifest as a result of the lack of motivation to study the language and therefore it has been made conclusive that motivation plays a key role in the way the English language is learnt by the students. Where motivation has been successful, there has been proof and evidence that English has been understood better by the students than where there has been no motivation, as it has proved to be one of the key factors that has built confidence among students.

### **2.3 Nature of the difficulties students face while studying ELS**

This objective is meant to unpack the nature of challenges students face while they study such as not understanding the content, as well as failing examinations.

Ado (2018), suggests that learning / studying a second language is never easy and that studying English in particular is even more difficult especially due to the influence of mother tongue. Mother tongue is defined as one's native language (Merriam Webster Dictionary).he suggests that the nature of challenges students face include;

The unqualified teachers who create confusion and fail to properly teach the content to the students. The English language is one that needs to be carefully taught to second language learners as there is a lot of influence from their knowledge of the first language/ mother tongue. If a teacher or instructor does not take precaution, many of his/ her learners will end up with different perceptions of the language as translated from their mother tongue.

Limited learning Environments also pose to be a difficulty that students face as they learn the language. Learning environments are the platforms through which the students can put into practice what they have learnt about the language. Outside the classroom, there are limited resources such as the fact that many speakers resort to the use of their native languages as opposed to what they have learnt in class. There are also rather few credible sources of reading materials from which students can read or get exercises and tests to practice the content that they are learning.

The fact that students do not take their studies seriously is also one that cannot be overlooked or ignored. Many university students have been seen to fail or not do so well in school because of the fact that their attention is divided. This makes it even more difficult for the students to learn the language because it needs focus in order to grasp the content.

The existence of more dominant or vocal students in the class makes it difficult for the others to learn effectively. When a student is naturally quieter and more reserved, they almost never get a chance to put the language in use in the classroom because of the presence students that always speak quicker than he/she do. This also makes such students fail to have the confidence in themselves because they have the assumptions that the more vocal students have the most correct answers.

In conclusion, the challenges students face have a great impact on what they learn and the way that they learn. When a challenge is not properly or severely addressed, a student may fail to learn the language by the end of the course.

## **2.4 Solutions to the problems that students face when studying English**

The studies have shown that students face challenges while they study English. Below are the views of scholars that have studied to see the possibility of solving the challenges that these students do encounter in the course of their study.

The scholars have attempted to solve these challenges by use of strategies. Zare (2012) says employment of strategies help less successful language learners improve their performance. Strategies employed include speaking slower for example, using fewer words, giving many examples and illustrations. For clarification, visual illustrations may also be incorporated and also the instructor or teacher needs to build the next class on knowledge from the previous class so as to enable the students follow properly and fully understand the classes. For smaller classes, team building activities can be incorporated so as to help learners understand better. Tests and exercises given also help and trigger the students thinking and also help them train their memories

Breen (2001) suggests that the causes and impact of the attitudes that have to be dealt with in order to help the students study English better. The method and practice of teaching has the capacity to provide the opportunities and conditions within which the learners' characteristics are found to have a positive effect upon learning and may help them be more fully engaged.

Yang (1999) argues that learning strategies as a method of helping language learners to increase their efficiency. Language learning strategies help to build the students confidence and love for the language. This also builds their understanding about that particular concept of the language that was taught using these strategies. A positive attitude is a tool that can be fostered enthusiasm, promotes self esteem, and creates an atmosphere conducive to learning. When a positive attitude is nurtured, it makes it easy for students to study English better.

In conclusion, attitude adjustments, creative ways of teaching the content, paying attention to the weaknesses of the students and teaching the content that they find difficulty slower and with more emphasis can help to overcome the challenges students face while they study ELS.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter describes, the methods to be used in research, it includes the research design, sampling techniques, instrumentation and data analysis techniques. It gives description of what will be done and how it will be done.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

This research was qualitative in nature, where the data collected was reported and explained in detail.

#### **3.2 Population study**

**The research used a sample size of 20 participants. They were divided into 5 categories as follows;**

Continuing students minoring in ELS. They gave research a platform of exposure to the things students are currently experiencing because they still have a direct exposure to ELS.

Continuing students who studied ELS in year 1 and dropped it. These helped to give research the perspective of what caused these students to drop the subject.

Students that have never studied ELS but have had direct contact with those who have. These students gave the research platform to be informed about the voices and perceptions of ELS to those that do not study it directly.

Students that offer ELS as a compulsory minor (Bachelor of Arts with Education). Due to the fact that it is a compulsory subject, students had a diversity in their opinions about the subject.

Lecturers that teach ELS is another category the research interviewed. This category helped capture the view of the people that teach and deliver the subject material to the students.

#### **3.3 Sampling**

Students and lecturers were carefully selected to do interviews to answer the questions of the research study. A copy of the interview guide is appended.

#### **3.4 Research Instruments**

The data was be collected by use of interview guide. Primary sources of data employ the access to first hand information that is not manipulated by others well as secondary sources of data

includes the already collected data by other academicians inform of research papers, newspapers and other documents.

### **3.5 Quality Control**

A process to ensure that the results of the study were not comprised. A copy of the consent form was appended.

### **3.6 Data Collection Techniques**

The study used one on one interviews and focus groups, where respondents were gathered to give their views according to the interview guide questions

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS**

#### **4.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, findings from the various respondents are presented, analyzed and interpreted. The findings are presented according to the three objectives of study in the following order.

#### **4.1 Overview of the Results**

The research was able to capture the fact that all the participants have been exposed to studying English at one point or another in their lives ; either in Kindergarten, Primary school, Secondary school or a Tertiary institution.

70% of the respondents believe that the subject is relevant to them when studied.

20% are neutral towards the relevance or irrelevance of studying ELS to them.

10% of the respondents do not consider the subject as relevant to their study.

#### **4.2 Reasons for the existence of students' attitudes towards English**

The first objective of this study was to explain the core reasons as to why the attitudes students have towards English exist. The reasons that the respondents gave with regards to the questions asked in the interview where as follows;

##### **Influence of the mother tongue.**

According to the data given by the respondents in the interview guide, 80% of the respondents say that the influence of the mother tongue has affected the way in which they learn ELS. This interference has created a negative attitude towards the language for learners that have failed to strike a balance between the disciplines and rules of their mother tongue vis-à-vis those of ELS.

20% believe that mother tongue is not the major factor that affects the way in which ELS is learnt but instead their determination to learn can help them conquer the influence of their mother tongue. This group of respondents believe that if the students are positive that their mother tongue will not affect the way they learn ELS, they will work tirelessly by consulting

lecturers, constantly putting into practice what they have studied as well as reading to expand their wealth of knowledge on the topics taught in the course.

### **Interest towards the Language content.**

60% of the respondents find ELS interesting and look forward to learning or teaching the language opportunity they get.

15% suggested that ELS is not interesting and there for not easy because course units like semantics, aspects of syntax, advanced syntax and phonetics are some of the course units that have made ELS more difficult for them in the course of their study.

15% suggest that there is nothing different learnt in ELS at the University compared to what is taught in primary or secondary schools and therefore do find any thing new to learn.

### **Conduciveness of the environment where ELS is taught.**

The respondents were also asked whether they thought the environment in which ELS is taught at Makerere University is conducive.

70 % of the respondents believed the environment was not conducive because of things like the over populated classes vis-à-vis a few lecturers and tutors that teach the subject, the scarcity of reading materials as well as the fact that the teaching hours given to the subject are relatively few.

30% of the respondents thought the environment was conducive.

### **Method/ style of Content Delivery.**

60% of the respondents believe that the tutors/ lecturers are the determinants of whether the content delivered to the learners is understood or not. These respondents believe that if the tutor of the course is dull, it contributes to the attitudes that the learners will have towards the subject. These respondents also said that the best place to understand the content taught is the classroom and outside that it becomes more difficult.

30% believe that it is a balance of both what is learnt in class and what is taught by the available materials. These respondents said that in addition to what is taught in class, further research in the library and off the internet helps learners to understand the content much better.

10 % of the respondents believe that a balance of both the tutors and the additional materials help the students effectively learn the language.

### **Comparison with other subjects taught.**

60% of the respondents say that when ELS is compared to other subjects it is seemingly more difficult because there are a lot of rules follow as well as the fact that the subject matter cannot be crammed but instead understood creating a negative attitude.

40% believe that the content taught in ELS is easy to learn and can be mastered if students put their minds to it.

### **4.3 Challenges students face as they learn ELS**

The second objective of research was to capture the difficulties students face while studying ELS. Research was able to capture the following challenges;

#### **The influence of the Mother tongue:**

According to the respondents, in the study, ELS is a second language to the students in the College of Humanities at Makerere University. These respondents say that learners get affected in course units like phonetics where pronunciation of certain words such as those with the syllables ‘r’ and ‘l’ becomes difficult as a result of their influence of the mother tongue. Similarly, learners also tend to directly translate words or sentences from their mother tongue to English which most times turns out to be ungrammatical. For example a learner with their mother tongue as Luganda may think saying “You’re going where?” is correct because it is directly translated from the way it’s said in Luganda “Ogenda wa?. It will be very likely that this student will find a challenge when they are taught that in syntax WH phrases begin the questions asked. These respondents said that if learners are determined, they are able to fully learn, understand and properly master the content taught in ELS. These respondents believe that the learners determination is driven by their love for the subject and their willingness to learn it.

#### **The mode of delivery of the ELS content.**

In the study, it was revealed that the focus is mainly given to written skills in the ELS classes taught and tested at Makerere University. To a small extent, the speaking skill is taught in pronunciation in Phonetics and phonology however the other 95% of the course is taught in theory. Research also captured that the 5% of pronunciation it is not tested in the exams.

Similarly, the reading skill is only taught and tested in textual analysis and comprehension during the examinations. This greatly affects how students learn the subject because less emphasis is put on perfecting other skills for the three years the students learn the language since it is majorly the writing skill that is taught. This often becomes a challenge when students complete the course and are tasked to go into the professional environment where they find a challenge expressing themselves in English. Listening skills are however not tested.

### **The time factor**

Every course unit of ELS taught has a total teaching time of 3 credit hours a week. As a result of timetable clashes, students and lecturers are forced to fix their teaching time into a period of three hours on one day. This means that the students only get to have classroom time with those lecturers only on one day every week. Students therefore have to wait an entire week to consult the lecturer in an event that their timetable does not favor the lecturers' time set aside for students to consult or get helped. Similarly, as a result of the clashes, research was informed that students sometimes tend to come to class late because they are trying to balance the attendance for course units which they offer but are taught at the same time. This also forces students to opt for studying some course units in the day session and in the evening session which is rather tiresome.

The study also revealed that many ELS course units are timetabled to be taught in the afternoon. Respondents said that teaching course units like Syntax, morphology, semantics and phonetics in the afternoon would make understanding the content quite difficult because in the afternoon concentration span is relatively lower.

### **The availability of teaching materials for the course.**

The study revealed that the students are taught by way of classroom notes, the lecture method where notes are made by the student as the lecturer explains the topic in class, tests and coursework, tutors, as well as textbooks got from the library. The study however showed that resources like textbooks are not readily available to all the students as the resources are rather few. It was discovered that students sometimes have to share the books or wait to use them in turns. When an assignment is given and students are supposed to use a particular book from the library, others that may not get a chance to find a copy of the book either opt to photocopy the

notes from the required pages or use their smart phones to take pictures of the pages. This has greatly affected the way students learn the language. Similarly, the respondents informed research that when tests and course work are given, the scripts are sometimes never returned to the students to do corrections for where they may have gone wrong. It especially happens for the larger classes and when it does, students fail to correct their mistakes and therefore carry them to the exams.

### **Number of students in the classrooms.**

The research also revealed that the student- lecturer ratio can be as small as 2-1 for the small classes, yet also as big as 300-1 for the larger classes. In this big classes, it was discovered that it is not easy for the all the students to properly hear the lecturers speak, especially those that do not project their voices as well as also to see what is written on the black/ white boards. Similarly, the lecturers find it difficult to supervise these classes effectively especially when it comes to giving tests and exams.

### **Missing marks for the exams.**

The respondents reported that every time results for a particular course units are released, there are always students that report their marks to have gone missing. The process of recovering the marks was also proven to be difficult especially for the larger classes and respondents also reported that students had been victims of missing their graduation year because of this reason. As much as the lecturers agree that the students complain of missing marks time and again, they are also left wondering why it keeps on happening due to the fact that at the time of submission of results, they do so for all the students. I have personally fallen victim to the challenge of missing marks and I am still in the process of having them recovered.

### **Solutions to the challenges that lead to the failure of the ELS**

The respondents that participated in the research suggested the following as the solutions to the challenges that lead to the failure of ELS by the students.

### **Strategizing to control the number of students per ELS class taught.**

The respondents suggested that matters of improving on the effectiveness of teaching the subject, students that are in big classes should be divided into streams or groups with different teaching

times to ease the teaching process for the lecturers and also to help the students be able to get more contact time with the lecturers.

### **Revising the Curriculum**

The respondents also suggested that the curriculum needs to be revised so that more attention can be given to training the other language skills like reading and speaking better, as well as to also incorporate a platform where the students' listening skills can effectively be tested. Doing this will help the language to be fully understood and explored by the students.

### **Teaching materials for the course.**

The research revealed a challenge of few teaching materials available in the library. The respondents suggested that this can be improved by the initiative of the head of department to the University library to ask for the textbooks that are needed for the course to be stocked fully. It can also be done by suggesting to joining students on their admission requirements and in their orientation week which books they will be using for the course so that each individual can get the books that they will use. Doing this will also increase the curiosity of the students and encourage them to read ahead of what the lecturers have taught. .

### **Motivation**

Research revealed that students come with their own attitudes towards English as a result of things like comparison of ELS to other subjects, the lack of interest in the language and constantly thinking that the subject is difficult. Students attitudes can be influenced positively by doing proper orientation. Lecturers should tell the students the necessity and importance of the subject. They should also inform students about the opportunities that will be available for them to take on when they do this course. Proper orientation and persuasion will boost the morale of the students and encourage them to study hard.

### **Creativity in mode of delivery.**

The research showed that ELS is taught in-classroom and this monotony has affected the attitudes students have toward it. Making the course more practical will help students understand better and improve their attitudes through things like team building activities such as debates, and even quizzes on the topics taught in class. Students can also be taught practical language use skills like public speaking as well as how to use language in a professional environment for

example in an interview. These activities help students enjoy as well as practice what they have learnt, thus positively impacting on their attitudes.

**Setting up a system to upload marks in the Faculty.**

By ensuring that each faculty has access to the system that is used to update the marks, it will make the process of recovery of the marks for the students much easier than it has previously been. Decentralization of this work will help ease things for the administrators and coordinators as well as help students get their marks displayed in time.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

### **Conclusion**

The research topic was to examine the attitudes students have towards ELS. It was aimed at evaluating the most outstanding attitudes and perceptions students have towards studying ELS, which subject- related difficulties led to the students failure of the subject and feasible suggestions to reduce these failures.

The study used a sample size of twenty respondents that is to say both lecturers and students with in the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. This was done by means of an interview guide that was appended.

The research revealed that the students attitudes exist as a result of factors like lack of interest toward the subject, influence of their mother tongue, as well as challenges like comparison of ELS to other subjects, the sizes of the classes, the time available to teach in class and the reading materials available.

### **Recommendations**

#### **To the students;**

1. The students should do the course with an open mind right from the beginning in year 1. Many students come with the belief that they will not learn anything new from studying ELS since they already had been learning English from Primary school. An open mind will enable them to treat every topic and course unit as something that will help sharpen their skill of the language.
2. They should also take the initiative to consult the lecturers where they have not fully understood so that they can be able to perform better in their tests and examinations. By taking the initiative to do the corrections for tests, students will avoid repeating the same mistakes make them fail the subject.
3. Constant follow up for missing marks. When a student realizes that they have a missing mark for a particular subject they should follow it up as often as possible. This will help them recover their marks faster.

**To the Lecturers;**

1. More remedial lesson time should be set apart to help the weaker students to catch up with those that are good in class. However, if the lecturers are not able to constantly have the remedial they should avail adequate time that the students can use to come and consult them.
2. Lecturers should also encourage these students from year 1 and tell them the benefits of studying ELS at the university and the available opportunities that come with learning this language. This will help the students be more eager about studying the language.

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX 1

#### CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH STUDY

My name is Mwebaza Lorna a third student in Makerere University in majoring in English language studies. I am working on a research topic entitled an investigation of the attitudes students have towards studying English.

The overarching objective of this study is to find out the attitudes that students have towards learning English.

This study is going to focus on finding out the possible interventions towards these perceptions, attitudes and misconceptions towards the study of the English Language that affect the students.

This form is to request you to participate in this study and ask for your permission to use the information given in the interview. This will help me to collect the adequate information for the study so as to target the aim of the research.

Please take note that all information given will be confidential and will be used anonymously. Your participation in this study will not be harmful to you in any way.

Name of respondent.....

Date.....

Signature.....

For any inquiries or further information please contact me on:

0772558059 or [mwebazalorna@gmail.com](mailto:mwebazalorna@gmail.com)

### APPENDIX 2

#### INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR LECTURERS

##### Section 1

##### Basic questions on teaching and learning English

1. Have you ever taught or studied English at Makerere University?
2. Did you/ do you enjoy teaching English? If yes, why? If no, why?
3. Is the environment in Makerere University conducive for students to learn English effectively?

4. Are there any academic challenges you have found while teaching the course? Briefly explain

## **Section 2**

**This section will basically focus on the English content**

4. Do you find the English content that you teach or study interesting?
5. If yes, what strategies do you use in order to teach the English content effectively?
6. What specific disciplines (course units) do you find most interesting to teach in English?
7. Is there any topic you find less interesting within the content taught in English?
8. Do you think the English exams are harder for students to pass in comparison with other subjects taught such as CSK, OGS or Literature? explain your response
9. Do you think that all the information taught in the English language is relevant?
10. Why? Comment on a scale of 1 to 10

## **Section 3**

**Attitudes towards the English Language**

11. Do you feel motivated when an opportunity to teach English for example to a group of foreign students) arises? briefly explain
12. Do you think that teaching English is not as easy as teaching other course like CSK, OGS or Literature? Briefly explain your response.
13. What motivates you to teach English?
14. What attitudes do students have towards learning English and what causes them?
15. What can be done to change the negative attitude students have towards studying English?

\*\*\*\*Thank you for your participation\*\*\*\*

## **APPENDIX 3**

### **INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR STUDENTS**

#### **Section 1**

**Basic questions on learning English**

1. Have you ever studied English at Makerere University?
2. Did you/ do you enjoy studying English? If yes, why? If no, why?
3. Is the environment in Makerere University conducive for students to learn English effectively?

4. Are there any academic challenges you have found while studying the course? Briefly explain

## **Section 2**

**This section will basically focus on the English content**

5. Do you find the English content that you study interesting?
6. If yes, what strategies do you use in order to understand the English content effectively?
7. What specific disciplines (course units) do you find most interesting to study in English?
8. Is there any topic you find less interesting within the content you learn in English?
9. Do you think the English exams are harder to pass in comparison with other subjects such as CSK, OGS or Literature? explain your response
10. Do you think that all the information taught in the English language is relevant?
11. Why? Comment on a scale of 1 to 10.

## **Section 3**

**Attitudes towards the English Language**

12. Do you feel motivated when an opportunity to study English for example an additional English classes outside University arises? briefly explain
13. Do you think that studying English is not as easy as other course like CSK, OGS or Literature? Briefly explain your response.
14. What motivates you to study English?
15. What attitudes do students have towards learning English and what causes them?
16. What can be done to change the negative attitude students have towards studying English?

\*\*\*\*Thank you for your participation\*\*\*\*