

## ABSTRACT

Kotelawala Defence University (KDU) is one of the higher education institutions in Sri Lanka which offers Degree courses in the English medium. Generally, it is believed that the academic performance of the first year students of KDU is comparatively poor and many believe that it is due to their inadequate competence in the English. The objective of this study was to examine whether English Language Proficiency has an impact on the Academic performances of the students in the Department of Nursing in the Faculty of Allied Health Sciences of KDU. This longitudinal study was conducted using both qualitative and quantitative. Conforming to the longitudinal study method, the researcher conducted teaching sessions for 18 hours using a self-prepared English language module, a pre-test and a post-test. The study sample consisted of 30 second year students from Intake 33. Primary data were collected with a questionnaire and face to face interviews. Secondary data were collected from the records of the Examination Department of the FAHS of KDU, books, research, papers and internet blog reports. The Logit method of data analysis in the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) data analysis software package was employed to analyze statistical data. The results revealed that a positive relationship exists between the students' English language proficiency with the academic proficiency and the pass rate accelerated with the improvement of the English language proficiency. Even though English language proficiency has a major impact on the students' academic performances, the researcher also found that other factors such as lack of knowledge on subject related terminology, faults in the study method, difficulties in orientating to the new environment and examination stress have an impact on students' academic performance. To improve the English language proficiency the researcher suggests to develop English language module to bridge the gap between General English and Academic English.