

**Sub theme:**

**The speaking and listening challenge**

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# **The Significance of Building Confidence to Speak English as a Teaching Methodology**

**by Dr Asantha U Attanayake**

## **Abstract**

In ‘The Significance of Building Confidence to Speak English as a Teaching Methodology’, Dr Asantha U Attanayake provides evidence of learners’ lack of confidence in speaking English in the region.

Despite having studied English as a compulsory subject for over a decade during their schooling, she argues that a large majority of Sri Lankan, Indian, Pakistani and Bangladeshi learners are unable to make a meaningful utterance in English. She attributes this to teachers ignoring the context-specific needs of learners in developing teaching methodologies. She sees a psychological barrier created by societal attitudes that manifests in learners with a low proficiency in English resulting in a lack of confidence to speak English. Language attitudes in society affect English language learners in post-colonial South Asia, which results in them suffering from Language Attitude Anxiety (LAA). In order to eliminate this special type of anxiety, LAA, she argues for context-specific teaching methodologies aimed at building confidence to speak English as a central concern in English language education.

Her course, “Building Confidence to Speak English” using a novel approach incorporating principles of habituation at the core of the teaching methodology is one solution to the current problem.