

Sub theme:

The speaking and listening challenge

Language Assessment Literacy of Teachers of English: Implications for assessing Listening and Speaking skills of students in the classroom

by Hasantha Kuruppu Munasinghe

Abstract

In 'Language Assessment Literacy of Teachers of English: Implications for assessing Listening and Speaking skills of students in the classroom', Hasantha Kuruppu Munasinghe explores the current topic of speaking and listening assessment in the classroom. She argues that Language Assessment Literacy (LAL) is essential for a teacher of English to diagnose students' strengths and weaknesses, to ensure that they are progressing while learning and also to see that the students show fair levels of achievement at the term end examination. Teaching, learning and assessing listening and speaking skills of students is carried out inadequately in the Sri Lankan classrooms due to gaps of LAL among teachers.

A quick intervention is needed to address this matter at policy level in order to produce teachers of English equipped with LAL through both pre-service and in-service teacher training programmes. In addition she argues that implementation of formative classroom assessment methods is a great need at present to help students acquire necessary language skills. Classroom assessment must take place as an ongoing process which is ideal to assess listening and speaking skills of students as they cannot be assessed through national level summative paper pencil test. Also, the teachers must have a precise understanding of the sub-skills of speaking and listening and how to teach and assess those sub skills. Effective feedback provided to students on their performances will support their ongoing learning process to master the skills of listening and speaking. An efficient monitoring mechanism is also needed for quality assurance in the proposed ongoing classroom assessment process.