

Enhancing Speaking Skills in Adult ELT Classrooms: A Research Conducted at the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya

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The study was set out to enhance the oral communication skills in adult English Language Teaching (ELT) classrooms. The survey was conducted at the Faculty of Arts, University of Peradeniya. For the purpose of this study 20 undergraduates were randomly chosen from the first year batch belonging to the basic level group. The study involved both qualitative and quantitative methods of data collection. The main questions focused on the tasks used by these undergraduates in developing their speaking skills, how they overcame the weaknesses related to speaking and thereby created a sense of motivation and influenced students in an attitude change. These selected students were presented with questionnaires and on the basis of the data collected, the findings were categorized. The collected data were analyzed and the findings were discussed. The study revealed that students who learn English as a Second Language (ESL) face many problems related to speaking, i.e. confusion and embarrassment; students did not learn speaking correctly at school and face difficulty in pronouncing certain words. The results also represented that limited amount of vocabulary was a major problem among students while the least common problem was depicted as difficulty in understanding questions. Based on the findings this research showed some appropriate solutions to overcome weaknesses related to speaking English as a foreign language (FL).

Keywords: English language teaching, English as a second language, foreign language