

# **An Analysis of the Undergraduates' Perspectives on Anxiety in Speaking English as a Second Language: University of Kelaniya**

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The English Language is widely accepted as the dominant medium in which people all over the globe communicate, regardless of their existing cultural and language diversities. Despite the endeavours of English as a Second Language (ESL) learners to excel in the course of their English language learning, they are impeded by certain affective factors, including anxiety in speaking. Accordingly, it is vital to investigate the students' perspectives on the causes for Second Language Speaking Anxiety. Through the preliminary investigations, it was noticed that almost all the participants in the sample had experienced anxiety in speaking English as a Second Language. Therefore, the main objective of this study is to investigate the possible causes of speaking anxiety from the learners' perspective. Accordingly, 50 undergraduates, who follow English for Humanities at the University of Kelaniya, Sri Lanka, were randomly selected as the participants of this study. The data gathered through questionnaires, and semi-structured interviews were analyzed through a mixed approach. The findings reveal that the students' previous experiences in unsuccessful speech activities have negatively impacted their present perceptions. It was also highlighted that speaking anxiety has occurred due to the fear of being mocked by others for making errors. Additionally, some other major causes of Second Language speaking anxiety was identified. They lacked self-confidence, support and guidance from the teacher, a stressful classroom environment, and difficulty in vocabulary, grammar and pronunciation. Hence, in the light of their perspectives, this study emphasizes the need for effective and efficient teachers' dedication to create stimulated ESL classrooms in which the students' self-confidence and relevant speaking skills can be enhanced explicitly and implicitly with the required guidance and support.

**Keywords:** Anxiety In Speaking, English As A Second Language (ESL), Undergraduates