

# **A study on the effectiveness of communicative language teaching approach in schools in Rathnapura District- Sri Lanka**

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## **Abstract**

Communicative language teaching (CLT) approach is learning to communicate. The Sri Lankan Government has adopted the communicative approach to teaching English in the government schools (National Institute of Education, 2001). However, the English Language Teaching (ELT) in Sri Lanka has not been able to achieve its intended objectives (Wijesekara, 2011). The English teachers of Sri Lankan government schools are using many teaching methodologies and some of the traditional methods are being proved less satisfactory (Farshana 2015). Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether the communicative language teaching approach is being used in selected four schools in Rathnapura district and the effectiveness of using CLT approach in classroom teaching. The four schools were selected through the categorization of schools by functional grade. Accordingly, all four schools belong to “1 AB type” (schools with G.C.E. Advanced Level). 200 students from grade 10 and 6 teachers who are teaching English for grade 10 were selected from the four schools as the sample. A mixed method research framework was used in this study and therefore, the gathered data were analyzed through qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. Direct observations, semi-structured interviews with the teachers and questionnaires for both students and the teachers were used to collect data for this study. The qualitative data were analyzed through Thematic Analysis and the quantitative data were analyzed through Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS). Through the preliminary findings, it is clear that among the selected four schools, three schools are using the communicative approach and the other school is using the traditional approaches. The English teachers of the first three schools are using authentic materials when teaching the lesson, integrating pair work and group work. The teacher monitors and offers advice if needed, and also the target language is used mostly in the classroom. Thus, CLT is a more effective way to teach English language, which enables the learners to communicate using the language rather than learning only a set of grammatical rules.

**Keywords** - Communicative approach, English language teaching, four language skills, government schools, communication