

# **A Study on the Use of Communicative Language Teaching Approach to Teach English in Schools in Rathnapura District, Sri Lanka**

MA Muditha Lakmali Manathunga

*Graduate in TESL from University of Kelaniya, Tutor in Education and Training in a UK based*

*Education institute*

<Mudithalakmali78@gmail.com>

**Abstract** - Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) approach is meant for communication. The Sri Lankan Government has adopted the communicative approach to teach English in government schools (National Institute of Education, 2001) in order to give more opportunities for students to communicate among themselves and with the teacher. However, the English Language Teaching (ELT) in Sri Lanka has not been able to achieve its intended objectives (Wijsekara, 2011). Though English teachers of Sri Lankan government schools use many teaching methodologies some of them have been proved less effective (Farshana 2015). Accordingly, the purpose of this study is to investigate whether the Communicative Language Teaching approach used in the schools of Rathnapura district is effective in classroom teaching. The Sample of this study involved 240 students from grade 10 and 6 teachers from four schools who teach English for grade 10 students. A mixed method research framework was used in this study. Direct observations, semi-structured interviews with the teachers and questionnaires for both students and teachers were used to collect data. The qualitative data were analysed through Thematic Analysis and the quantitative data were analysed through Statistical Package of the Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study proved that most of the schools use CLT approach instead of traditional approaches but only one school has implemented the CLT approach in a satisfactory level. Using CLT approach enhances student engagement and their active participation in classroom activities. Thus, CLT is a more effective way of teaching English language, which enables the learners to communicate using the language rather than learning a set of grammar rules alone.

**Keywords:** Communicative approach, English language teaching, four language skills