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## **Effectiveness of Communicative Language Teaching Approach at HSC Level**

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### **Abstract**

Because of its international demand and recognition as a world language, English has always been a part of our education system from Class 1-12. After getting independence, the use of English language has been increasing in administration, education and other sectors in Bangladesh. Bangladeshi government has always been active to undertake various ventures to improve the learners' competence in English. In 2001, the Government adopted CLT approach to develop the learners' English at HSC level. CLT is very effective to teach communicative and functional English because it gives importance to four skills (reading, writing, listening and speaking) in English. After 10 years of its launch, it has been noticed that the learners' proficiency in English is not up to the mark as was expected. They have developed only reading and writing skills and other two skills (listening and speaking) are neglected. They can not interact properly in different circumstances. Also many teachers of HSC level are still confused about this approach. They do not know how to apply this approach in classroom. This research attempts to focus on the results of practicing English language teaching-learning through CLT approach by interviewing teachers and students, observing classes in some selective colleges of urban, semi-urban and rural areas in Dhaka. Also this research tries to provide some ways to get the maximum result by using this Approach

### **Introduction**

English was introduced to this part of the world nearly 200 years ago when the British Merchants established their colonial settlement in the Indian sub-continent. They exported many things here alone with their mother tongue. They encouraged the people of Indian sub-continent to learn English language. The learning perspectives of English of that period are not same as it is today. The status of English during British regime is irrelevant with the present status of English in an independent country like Bangladesh. Even after the birth of Bangladesh as a free nation, the status of English has been shaped and reshaped a lot. During the British rule in Indian subcontinent, English had become a school subject in secondary level. During Pakistan era, English was considered as second language. Right after getting independence, the use of English was reduced but gradually the use of this language has been increasing in administration, education and other sectors in Bangladesh. For this reason, English is introduced as a compulsory subject from Grade 1 to 12. Bangladeshi people need to listen (understand), speak, read, and write in English to do business, to do diplomatic jobs, for higher studies etc. But it is a matter of great

sorrow that most of the students of Bangladesh are unable to use English effectively in different circumstances. Grammar-Translation method was proved as an unsuccessful method in teaching English language. Though the learners of this method had some knowledge of target language, they failed to use it according to their necessity. Therefore, attempt to replace this method was taken and the Audio-lingual method appeared in 1982. It concentrated on teaching sentence structure and vocabulary through repetition and drill. It included the development of reading and writing skills. It also included literature and poetry. However, this method failed as well and finally in 1995, Communicative Language Teaching (CLT) was introduced. The situation has not

changed with the change of these methods and students are still failing to acquire the four skills of English language (Zaman, 2008).

### **Data Analysis Procedure**

After collecting data, they were transcribed and tabulated. The identities of the respondents were hidden. Then the researcher mixed up the data (questionnaire and recorded version) to analyze the responses of the teachers and students. The researcher analyzed the data qualitatively keeping in touch with the research questions.

Classes were observed with careful consideration. In most cases, the lessons of the class were taught in Bangla. Only 3 teachers taught in English but only 1 teacher always delivered his lecture in English. It is true that he had to discuss some critical and sophisticated lessons in Bangla. In personal interviews, 4 students of other 2 teachers said 'Our English teachers deliver lecture in English only when they are observed by any outsider'. Students hardly talked in English. They only tried to utter their memorized lessons. Teachers did not use any teaching aids or handout other than the textbook or the guidebook. Likhon Biswas (not the real name), a teacher of Islampur Govt. College (not the real name), asked his students to bring guidebook in his class and he taught with the guidebook. Most interesting thing was that, though the teaching method was supposed to be in CLT, in most cases, the teachers using GTM however, occasionally tried to apply CLT according to the direction of the textbook. All teachers took their classes traditionally. The classrooms were teacher dominated. There were no interaction between teachers and students in the colleges of rural and semi-urban areas. It is true that the situations of urban areas are different from rural and semi-urban areas. The students of Dhaka Model College (not the real name), had gone to the principal to inform him about their problem when they found that one of their English teacher had less ability to make them understand the lessons. Also the teachers gave them opportunity to ask questions. Four skills (listening, speaking, reading and writing) in English were emphasized in the syllabus of each college. It is a matter of great sorrow that the classroom activities were based on reading and writing. No pair or group work was observed in any college. Also teachers' pronunciation in 40 Bangla and English were not good and these were full of local dialect in the colleges of rural and semi-urban areas. Teachers did not use any authentic materials. They did not link classroom language learning with language activation outside classroom except Mr. Bishwajit Das (not the real name). He talked interesting story related to his lesson to increase the learners' motivation. Also frequently he made fun and gave advice to motivate them to speak in English. Some teachers of rural and semi-urban areas were teaching the students privately sitting in the classroom. For this reason, many students did not take part in English class. When they had taught the students privately, they gave hand note, suggestion and made them bound to exercise grammar. There were large classes in 10 colleges and 90-330 students sat in each class. When the teacher had delivered lecture, the students of last few branches could not hear that. Only Islampur Govt. College (not the real name), had loud speaker facility but it was depended on the presence of electricity. Teachers could not check the scripts of all students in English classes. It was not possible for them to check 90-330 scripts within 45 minutes. They checked only 5-8 scripts and asked the other students to copy those scripts. Also it was not possible for them to give feedback each student. They gave feedback to good students and asked them to help the weak students. The teacher had no interest to give them

home work because they did not have enough time to check huge number of scripts. Only one teacher gave home work but he did not check the scripts. He just gave the answers and did not

receive other students' answers. Free-hand writing was discouraged in rural and semi-urban areas and the students were habituated with grammar exercise. They do the precommunicative activities. Only the students of urban areas do pre-communicative and communicative activities. Teachers did not give them time for review class. The students of Dhaka Model College (not the real name), wanted a review class but the teacher did not agree because class time was limited and he would have to finish other lessons

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