

# CONFLUX

## JOURNAL OF EDUCATION

VOLUME 5, ISSUE 1, JUNE 2017

A PEER REVIEWED JOURNAL

### Indexed / Listed In





# A STUDY OF THE ATTITUDES OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS TOWARDS COMMUNICATIVE APPROACH TO TEACHING ENGLISH IN RANGA REDDY DISTRICT

Dr. B.J. Sujani<sup>1</sup>

## Abstract

*Communicative Approach is considered as the latest approach in the long run of methods and approaches employed to teach English. It is an approach which can equip the students with necessary Communicative Competence. Today many states of our country and many other places of the world have adopted Communicative Approach as the major approach to teach English language. Attitude towards the use of communicative approach plays a significant role in determining the extent to which it is practiced or would be accepted or rejected in English Language Teaching. Therefore, the study aimed at investigating the attitudes of teachers towards the Communicative Approach and measuring their readiness to accept it to teach English. The study also aimed at exploring the teachers' familiarity with the concept of Communicative Approach. For this purpose, a Questionnaire and an attitude scale was administered to a sample of 300 teachers working in rural, semi-urban and urban areas of Ranga Reddy District. The study employed a mixed-method design, which combines both qualitative and quantitative data. The data was analyzed using statistical techniques like preferential order, frequency, percentages, mean scores, and ANOVA. The results of the study indicated that majority of the teachers are not completely familiar with the basic tenets of the Communicative Approach. Also, the results demonstrated that majority of the teachers held moderately favourable attitude towards Communicative Approach but faced various problems which come in the way of successful implementation of it. Based on the findings of the study certain policy implications are made which might enable to improve English Language Teaching. This study also points out to some of the lacunae in the pre and in-service teacher training programmes which need to be rectified.*

## INTRODUCTION

India is one of the most rapidly developing countries in the world. Today it has been realized that English is useful or even essential for the development of the country. English is the language which offers vast opportunities in developing countries like ours. The changing times have witnessed the growing importance of English in all walks of life. Moreover, there is a widespread recognition that global citizens in the 21<sup>st</sup> century need to have proficiency in English language for communication in a variety of contexts. Therefore, there is an urgent need for the schools to rear up and supply sufficient number of young people with the kind of command of English who can contribute for the development of the country.

English Language Teaching in India has undergone a dramatic change from time to time. Especially, the 20<sup>th</sup> century has seen the rise and fall of many approaches to language teaching. The inadequacies of various approaches and methods of teaching have prompted the Linguists and the Educationists to come out with new and innovative methods for teaching of English from time to time. But none of the methods was found to be successful in satisfying the long felt need of the learners to communicate effectively in English. The need to develop a working command of English among the learners, led to the development of Communicative Approach which is considered the latest approach in the long run of methods of teaching English in our country. The methodological principles underlying Communicative Approach are based on the

<sup>1</sup> Institute of Advanced Study in Education, Osmania University, Hyderabad.



recognition that learners need to communicate effectively outside the classroom in contexts that they are most likely to encounter i.e., in the work place, in further education etc. This has resulted in a switch over from the teacher-centered approach to learner-centered approach and designing need-based syllabuses. Since the early 1990s, therefore, the Communicative Approach has quickly gained popularity all over the world. It is an approach to the teaching of second and foreign languages that emphasizes interaction as both the means and the ultimate goal of learning a language. It places great importance on helping students use the target language in a variety of contexts and on learning language functions.

Communicative Approach to teaching a second language, especially in teaching English in Indian schools is almost a recent phenomenon. It is assumed that, in the present day English Language Teaching, CLT classrooms are so rare and inadequate in the Government secondary schools due to various factors. With this state of affairs, a question arises whether the Communicative Approach has had any appreciable impact on the teaching of English in our schools. With this background, the present research made an attempt to explore the familiarity and attitudes of the teachers towards the concept of Communicative Approach, whereby their readiness to accept it for language teaching can be assessed and the actual factors which either facilitate or inhibit the use of Communicative Approach in the classroom can be closely examined. Moreover, the research also tried to explore the actual practices adopted by the teachers in order to foster reflection in them. In the process of such reflection, it is assumed that they become aware of their own beliefs and attitudes and the impact of these on their teaching. The findings of this research will be helpful not only to the teachers, but also curricular framers.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To investigate the practices adopted by the teachers to teach English.
2. To explore teachers' familiarity with the concept of Communicative Approach.
3. To measure teachers' readiness to accept Communicative Approach to teaching English.
4. To assess teachers' attitude towards Communicative Approach.

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Are the practices adopted by the secondary school teachers to teach English, in tune with the accepted principles of Communicative Approach?
2. Do the teachers exhibit a familiarity with the concept of Communicative Approach?
3. What is the teachers' attitude towards Communicative Approach in terms of its implementation?

## SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. The present study is confined to the secondary school English teachers only.
2. The study is confined only to the teachers working in Government schools.
3. The study is confined only to the Ranga Reddy District of Telangana State.

## METHODOLOGY

The present study has employed the Descriptive Survey method and is a mixed-method design, which combines both qualitative and quantitative data. The basic instruments used for the present study includes Questionnaire and Attitude scale. The data collected with a questionnaire has been analyzed both as quantitative and qualitative data. The data from the attitude scale is analyzed as quantitative data.

**Population:** The population of the study includes 750 English teachers working in Government schools of Ranga Reddy district.



**Sample Design and Sampling Technique:** Stratified Random sampling technique was employed to select the sample from the population. After stratifying the population which includes 750 teachers, Simple Random sampling technique was employed to select the sample proportionately from each stratum. Lottery method was used to draw a simple random sample. Therefore in the present study, the sample consists of 300 English teachers working in secondary schools of Ranga Reddy district.

### **Variables:**

The following independent and dependent variables were identified for the study.

1. Independent variables: i) Age ii) Gender iii) Educational qualification iv) Teaching experience v) Location of school
2. Dependent variable: Teachers' Attitude towards Communicative Approach.

### **Tools Used:**

The following tools were employed in order to collect information for the present study.

1. Questionnaire developed by the researcher.
2. Attitude scale to investigate teacher's attitudes to the Communicative Approach developed by Karavas E. D (1996).

A pilot study was conducted to establish validity and reliability of the tools. The tools were validated by experts in the field. The reliability of the Questionnaire was found to be 0.84 (Spearman Brown co-efficient method) and the reliability of the attitude scale was found to be 0.80 (Chronbach's Alpha split-half method). This indicates that the tools are highly reliable.

### **Statistical Techniques Employed:**

The Questionnaire consists of ranking items, check lists and closed ended questions. The responses were analyzed using SPSS package, version 13 and 16.

1. Ranking items: the sum of ranks for each option in the questions was calculated, based on which rank was accorded.
2. Check lists: frequencies, percentages.
3. Closed ended questions: chi- square test
4. Attitude scale:
  - > Sum of scores in the attitude scale
  - > Sum and mean scores for each statement was computed.
  - > Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to find if there is any significant difference among the teachers in their attitudes towards Communicative Approach.

### **MAJOR FINDINGS**

The major findings of the study are as follows.

1. The teachers are not completely aware of all the activities (LSRW) that can be conducted to develop communicative competence among the learners.
2. The teachers are not well aware of the latest technology in teaching English. Most of the schools are not properly equipped with the various resources and Audio-visual aids.



3. Majority of the teachers claimed to adopt Communicative Approach to teach English, which is considered a learner- centered approach. But the findings reveal that the teachers are not completely aware of the basic tenets and principles of Communicative Approach. This was also confirmed by the analysis of the attitude scale items.
4. The teachers expressed that they need proper training in Communicative Approach, so that they can implement it successfully in their classrooms.
5. Most of the teachers are trained in Communicative Approach through in- service training programmes, but expressed their dissatisfaction towards the kind of training they received.

Table 1. Teacher's Opinion on the Adequacy of the Training Received in Communicative Approach

Sl. No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	92	31%
2	No	208	69%

Table 1 shows that 69% of teachers (208/ 300) claimed that they have not received adequate training in Communicative Approach, whereas only 31% of teachers (92/ 300) claimed to have received adequate training in Communicative Approach. The results of the above table show that majority of teachers are not satisfied with the training they have received in Communicative Approach and view that the training was not adequate.

6. Findings reveal that the training focuses more on theory rather than CLT methodology and practical application.
7. The pre-service training which is given to the teachers is not adequate.
8. Majority of teachers have positive attitude towards Communicative Approach, and are ready to accept it as a method of teaching.

Table 2. Teacher's Response towards the Implementation of CLT

Sl. No.	Options	Frequency	Percentage
1	Yes	176	59%
2	No	124	41%

Table 2 shows that 59% of teachers feel that the Communicative Approach can be successfully implemented in their classrooms. On the other hand, 41% of the teachers viewed that the Communicative Approach cannot be successfully implemented in their classrooms.

9. The teachers who were found to be unwilling to accept and implement Communicative Approach in their classrooms expressed the following problems.
  - > Over-crowded classrooms
  - > Lack of resources
  - > Disinterested students
  - > Non- conducive school/ classroom environment
  - > Overloaded curriculum content
  - > Pressure of examinations leaving no time for creative teaching





- > Inadequate time for teaching Language skills
  - > Lack of training to the teachers
  - > Pattern of examination/ evaluation
10. The teachers viewed that the CA can be successfully implemented by
- > Reducing the class size
  - > Changing the textbooks
  - > Changing the training methods
11. Majority of teachers seemed to hold moderately favorable to highly favorable attitude towards the Communicative Approach. Thus, it can be concluded that on the whole, teachers hold favorable attitude towards the Communicative Approach.
12. The sum of the attitude scale obtained on the sample of 300 teachers was computed. Based on the sum obtained by them, the teachers were categorized into three different groups as follows.

Table 3. Attitude of teachers towards Communicative Approach

Sl. No.	Attitude scale	Attitude	Frequency	Percentage
1	0- 40	Unfavorable	0	0%
2	41- 80	Moderately favorable	207	69%
3	81- 120	Highly favorable	93	31%

Table 3 shows that 69% of teachers (207/ 300) have moderately favorable attitude towards Communicative Approach; 31% of teachers (93/ 300) have highly favorable attitude. Interestingly it was found that no teacher had unfavorable attitude towards Communicative Approach.

The results of the above analysis show that the vast majority of teachers seem to hold moderately favorable to highly favorable attitude towards the communicative approach. Thus, it can be concluded that on the whole, teachers hold favorable attitude towards the Communicative Approach.

13. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to see if there is any significant difference in the attitudes of teachers with respect to independent variables like age, gender, educational qualification, teaching experience and location of school. The results of the analysis are as follows

- i. There is no significant difference in the attitudes of teachers towards Communicative Approach with respect to age group.
- ii. There is no significant difference in the attitudes of teachers towards Communicative Approach with respect to gender.
- iii. There is no significant difference in the attitudes of teachers towards Communicative Approach with respect to educational qualification.
- iv. There is no significant difference in the attitudes of teachers towards Communicative Approach with respect to teaching experience.
- v. There is significant difference in the attitudes of teachers towards Communicative Approach with respect to location of the school. The teachers working in urban areas seemed to hold highly favorable attitudes towards Communicative Approach when compared to teachers working in semi- urban and rural areas. Factors such as overcrowded classrooms, lack of resources, uninterested students who come from



disadvantaged strata of society, non- conducive school environment in the rural and semi- urban areas might be the major reasons for such type of attitude. On the other hand the schools in urban areas have better access to different resources for teaching English. Moreover the school environment is conducive to teach English language to the students. These factors motivate the teachers working in urban areas to adopt Communicative Approach to teach English language.

### IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

1. There should be regular in- service programmes to upgrade the teachers with the latest development in pedagogy.
2. The present in-service programmes should focus not only to acquaint the teachers with latest methodology but also should enable the teachers to develop their linguistic ability.
3. Provision should be made to conduct more number of workshops, seminars and intervention programmes on Communicative Approach.
4. There is a need to reorient the present training programmes and give extensive training in the practical implementation of Communicative Approach.
5. Emphasis should be given on providing clear understanding of the theoretical assumptions/ implications behind an approach/method.
6. Equal emphasis to be given to the theoretical and practical components of Communicative Approach.
7. The teachers should be made aware of the importance and the procedure of conducting various tasks and activities to develop communicative competence among the learners.
8. The training programmes should address the challenges that affect the implementation of Communicative Approach, especially in rural settings.
9. The programme should enable the teachers to understand the essence of Communicative Approach, so that they can be motivated to overcome the constraints associated with it.
10. There is a need to modify the English language textbooks in line with the principles of Communicative Approach, so that the teachers find it easy to implement it.
11. In addition, the textbooks should include a variety of tasks and activities that focus on involving the students in purposeful and meaningful tasks that are related to the real world outside the classroom.
12. Provision should be made to make the contents of the examination in line with the syllabus designed.
13. Teachers should be made aware of the use of authentic material in teaching English which are considered suitable for exposing students to the authentic use of English for communication.
14. It is recommended that the schools should have access to various English Language Teaching Journals like Education Guardian TEFL, The English Language Teaching Journal, English today, ELT spectrum etc., so that the teachers can be abreast of the latest developments in English Language Teaching.
15. Though the Government has introduced English from class I, there is a need to introduce CLT techniques right from the primary level. In addition, separate well trained teachers should be recruited to teach English at the primary level.
16. It is recommended that the schools should be properly equipped with various resources like supplementary material and Audio- Visual aids etc. In addition, teachers should be properly trained as to how to use this material effectively in the classrooms.
17. It is recommended that Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) lessons, which provide interactive language learning should be introduced in the schools and should be used as remediation to help learners with limited language proficiency.



18. The number of students in each classroom should be reduced to a number that enables the teachers not only to organize various activities, but also to monitor their performance.

## CONCLUSION

Teaching is a complex process which involves various actions and behaviour in the classroom, which in turn are shaped by the long held beliefs and attitudes of the teachers. There is a strong likelihood that the teachers can effectively implement the Communicative Approach to teach English, if they have a positive attitude towards it. Then only the teachers would be able to mediate between what the theory calls for and the demands of the actual classroom situations. Therefore, an attempt has been made by the researcher to gauge the secondary school teachers' attitudes towards the Communicative Approach, based on which certain policy implications have been made.

## REFERENCES

- Anderson, J. (1993). Is a Communicative Approach practical for teaching English in China? Pros and Cons. *System*. 21(4): 471-480.
- Bax, S. (2003). The end of CLT: a context approach to language teaching. *ELT Journal* 57(3): 278-286.
- Breen, M. P., & Candlin C. N. (1980). The Essentials of communicative curriculum in Language teaching, *Applied Linguistics*, 1(2): 89-112.
- Canale, M., & M. Swain (1980). Theoretical bases of Communicative Approaches to Second Language Teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, 1(1), 1-40.
- Deckert, G. (2004). The Communicative Approach: Addressing frequent failure, *English Teaching forum*, 40(2), 12-17.
- Ellis, G. (1996). How culturally appropriate is the Communicative Approach. *ELT Journal* 50(3): 213-218.
- Festag, E. (1990). Preparation- A Vital component of Communicative activities. *English Teaching Forum*, XXVIII (3): 41-4.
- Gardener, R.C. (1985). *Social psychology and Second Language Learning-The Role of Attitudes and Motivation*. London: Edward Arnold.
- Gupta, D. (2006). *Communicative Language Teaching-Then and Now*, New Delhi: Book plus.
- Halliday, M.A.K (1970). Language Structure and language function. In John Lyons (ed), *New Horizons in Linguistics*. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books
- Hymes, D. (1972). *On Communicative Competence*, In J. Pride, & A. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics*. New York: Penguin.
- Johnson, K., & Morrow, K. (Eds.). (1980). *Communication in the Classroom- Applications and Methods for a Communicative Approach*, UK: Longman.
- Johnson, K. (1982). *Communicative Syllabus Design and Methodology*. Oxford: Pergamon Press.
- Karavas, E.D. (1996). Using attitude scales to investigate teacher's attitudes to the Communicative Approach. *ELT Journal*, 50(3):187-198.





- Littlewood, W. (1981). *Communicative Language Teaching- An Introduction*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Medgyes, P. (1986). Queries from a communicative teacher. *ELT Journal* ,40(2), 107-112.
- Nunan, D. (1987b). *Designing Tasks for the Communicative to classroom*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Pham, H.H. (2007). Communicative Language Teaching: unity within diversity. *ELT Journal*, 61(3):193-201.
- Richards, J. C (1983). Communicative needs in foreign language learning. *ELT Journal*, 37(2):111-119.
- Savignon, S.J. (1983). *Communicative Competence- Theory and Classroom Practice*. Massachusetts: Addison Wesley Publishing Company.
- Thompson, G. (1996). Some Misconceptions about Communicative language Teaching. *ELT Journal* 50(1):9-15.

CJOE



---

Note: Page numbers given in the downloaded file may not be same as the page numbers in the hard copy of the journal.

The author of this article is responsible to answer the queries on the originality of the article.

Though the editorial/review team have made maximum attempt to find out the plagiarisms in the article(s), if plagiarisms are noticed at a later stage, the publisher will remove the article from the volume of the journal without any intimation.

\*\*\*

---

