

The Development of English Speaking Skills in Students in  
Government Schools: A Case Study on the Ibbagamuwa Educational  
Zone

Submitted By

W. D. A. L. Wijesinghe

(FGS/04/02/04/2011/08)



A Thesis Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies, University of Kelaniya

in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the degree of

Master of Philosophy in Linguistics

ප්‍රවේශ අංකය:	1217
වර්ග අංකය:	



July 2014

## ABSTRACT

Every enthusiast of English Language teaching in Sri Lanka was interested in the new initiative "English as a Life Skill" launched by the Ministry of Education and the Presidential Secretariat Unit to develop speaking skills in the learners. The programme being new to the field of English language teaching, the feasibility of the course contents needed to be studied. This research was conducted (1) to evaluate how far the speaking activities in English as a Life Skill programme help to develop speaking skills of the learners, (2) to find out the factors that affect their development of speaking skills and (3) to find out up to what extent the development occurs, which were the three thesis objectives based on what this thesis was conducted. Several theoretical implications were reviewed with special reference to factors that affect the development of speaking skills in second language learners. A survey using the structured interviews and individual presentations of the participants was conducted procedurally. Both structured interview and the individual presentations were conducted as pre test and post test. The post tests were conducted after six months of implementation of activities with the target groups. Triangulating the data collected, the findings were analyzed based on the criteria designed for evaluation. As the findings, several sounds which were difficult to be pronounced were found well pronounced at the post test. By developing the size of the vocabulary, majority of the participants had used the words in collocationally positioned grammatically correct sentences. Further, they had developed meaningful use of sentences with confidence. Identifying which linguistic areas had developed and not developed, as the final step a set of suggestions were made with the expectation of seeing successful development of speaking skills in the students of government schools through the programme 'English as a Life Skill'.

Key words:

Speaking skills, communicative development, interviews, presentations, life skills