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### **The Problems Encountered by English Teachers in Teaching English as a Second Language in Urban School Classrooms in Sri Lanka**

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This research focuses on the difficulties encountered by English teachers in teaching English as a second language in urban school classrooms in Sri Lanka. The eclectic method used in teaching consists of interactive sessions to improve different competencies of language. The Teaching of English is criticized in the present education scenario because the expected communication skills of children are not up to the standard. The objectives of this study are to examine the difficulties encountered by teachers in teaching English in urban school classrooms and the measures that should be taken to overcome the identified problems. Data was collected by administering questionnaires to 30 English teachers followed by semi structured interviews and classroom observations. The collected data were analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. The findings clearly show that the congested classrooms are not suitable because one teacher cannot cater to a large number of students with different competency levels and different socio economic groups. Students neglect speaking and listening skills because they are not tested at examinations. Time allocated for English Period is inadequate for effective interaction in classroom activities and less space for the teacher to use authentic materials because of the long syllabus. It was suggested to divide the class into small manageable, mixed ability groups and assign teaching assistants to enhance child centered interactive learning teaching process. Listening and speaking skills should be tested at examinations and teachers should be given freedom to select materials according to the needs of students in order to improve the effective teaching of English in urban classrooms.

**Key words:** Communication Difficulties, Interaction, Second Language, Teaching English, Urban School Classrooms