

## **A Study on Issues in Learning English Language through Short Courses in Sri Lanka**

K.P. Manmi Pabasara Senarathne <sup>1</sup> and S.A.H.M. Sandarapperuma <sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> *Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka,* <sup>2</sup>

*University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka*

*manmipabasara@gmail.com*

According to Kachru's Concentric Circle Model of English, Sri Lanka is recognised as an outer circle country, where English is used as a second language in the teaching/learning process. The government and non-governmental institutions in Sri Lanka have taken various steps to improve the English language skills of the students, among which is the introduction of certificate and diploma courses that can be followed after G.C.E.O/L and G.C.E.A/L examinations. Emerging from this context, the present study investigates the effectiveness of such courses conducted by the private institutes to identify the salient issues associated with them, while interrogating the students' perceptions of such short courses. Data for the study was gathered by distributing a questionnaire among 20 students, and by conducting informal discussions with 5 lecturers/teachers who work in private institutions. The researchers have used the simple random sampling technique to select the research sample for their study. The results of the study revealed that most of the English courses are primarily conducted with a financial intent, and the teachers/lecturers fail to fulfill the students' expectations of following such courses. It was also observed that, the use of target language in the classroom remains low during those courses, while little to no individualised attention was paid for the students who required the teachers' assistance the most. The study has also highlighted that 85% of the total respondents held the opinion that these courses are fruitless as they fail to provide any aid for real world language needs. Therefore, this study concludes that there should be more organised and transparent strategies when continuing these courses, while hiring more skillful and talented teachers with enough pedagogic knowledge who should be provided with a training to cater their teaching practices to the language needs of the students.

**Keywords:** English language learning, Short courses, Issues in Sri Lankan English education, Private Institutions, English teachers/lecturers