A study on the issue of changing the medium of instruction to English and the problems related to the learning material at Junior Secondary Level

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DECLARTION

"I certify that this theses does not incorporate with out acknowledgement, any material previously submitted for a Degree or Diploma in any University and to the best of my knowledge and belief, it does not contain any materials previously published or written by another person expect where due reference is made in the text."

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

ABSTRACT

Various committee reports suggested that the teaching of English in Sri Lanka is not satisfactory and does not meet the needs of the majority of the students. To fill this vacuum, different types of course books were introduced. The textbooks did not fulfill the needs of the students. Finally, Bilingual Education was introduced to the Sri-Lanka Education system in order to promote language proficiency of the students.

Little or no research has been conducted on learning materials at Junior Secondary Level since the implementation of the bilingual policy in 2004.

The purpose of the present study, therefore, was to guide, monitor, motivate and find solutions to the problems related to learning materials as learning materials have now become a serious issue.

For the purpose of the data collection questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules were used. The information identified through literature survey and interviews with the parents and teachers was used to prepare the questionnaires.

The students' version of the questionnaire was administered to hundred students in Colombo and Kegalle districts. The teachers' questionnaire was administered to ten teachers and the parents' questionnaire was also administered to ten parents. Two teachers and two parents were interviewed and three classes were observed in order to understand the teacher-learner interaction. The students studying at Junior Secondary Level, the teachers and parents were selected randomly.

This study reveals the numerous problems the learners at Junior Secondary Level faced and the problems of distribution of learning materials(textbooks). In addition, this study reveals the problems teachers faced in the process of teaching. Moreover, this also discusses the problems the learners face from the point of view of their parents.

The descriptive data collected were analyzed mainly using percentages. The results were further clarified using charts, graphs and tables.

The conclusions and recommendations were suggested in relation to each objective. However, it is suggested that future researches are needed in order to analyze the problems related to learning materials.

There is a contradiction between the aims and the objectives of the state, students and parents with regard to English medium education. All the relevant parties should be made aware of these contradictions. Only some aspects of the textbooks have reached the satisfactory level and, therefore, more attention should be paid to the weaker aspects of the textbooks. With regard to the suitability of the textbooks, the teachers should adopt and adapt the learning materials to suit the standard of the students and, moreover, the textbooks should be made more attractive and interesting. The process of preparing learning materials needs improvement and more innovative steps should be taken by both teachers and the State to promote the standard of the learning materials. Both teachers and learners encounter many problems in relation to learning materials and, therefore, many aspects with regard to this should be improved.

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Chapter One

1.0   Introduction

The available literature suggests that the teaching of English in Sri Lanka is not satisfactory and does not meet the needs of the majority of the Students. (De Lanarolle Committee Report, 1973; Jayasuriya, 1969; The Report of the Presidential Commission on Youth, 1990; SF. de Silva Committee Report, 1960)

To overcome this problem, 'bilingual policy' was introduced to Sri Lankan education system in 2003 (National Education Commission Report, 2003). With the introduction of bilingual education, both teachers and students encountered a set of new problems. . In the practical teaching – learning process, teachers did not have solutions to these problems. Teachers in particular face many types of new problems in handling learning material (textbooks) at operational level.

The 'bilingual policy' in Sri Lanka has relatively a short history and a little or no research has been conducted in this field. To develop this field in Sri Lanka, it is essential to conduct further researches and study the researches conducted in other countries.

In this study, the researcher examines the issues raised due to changing the medium of instruction with special reference to problems related to the learning materials at Junior Secondary Level.

1.1.   Background to the Study.

In 2003, bilingual education was introduced to Junior Secondary Level under General Policy Framework on General Education to provide an enabling environment to ensure that all the students have the opportunity to acquire a level of English proficiency adequate for higher education and career advancement. (National Education Commission Report, 2003pxvii).The Junior Secondary Level represents classes from grade 6 to grade 9.

The historical background up to the introduction of the bilingual policy could be studied under three major headings.

1.1.1   Teaching of English Prior to Independence

1)   Sri Lanka's (then Ceylon) introduction to English language was linked with colonization. As a British colony English became the dominant language used for administrative purposes and all areas of business and trade. Then a need arose to

establish English medium schools. With the establishment of the English medium schools, two types of schools evolved, "English schools" where the medium of instruction was English and the "Vernacular schools" in which the medium of instruction was the indigenous language, Sinhala and Tamil. The "English schools" in spite of being subsidized by the state, were fee leving and as a result were available only to the affluent class. On the other hand, "Vernacular schools" were meant for the children of the masses and the education provided was free, but the quality of that education provided was very low. (Jayasuriya ,1969)

The need of making English the medium of instruction in Sri Lanka has been proposed by various commission reports.

Due to the nationalistic ideas growing in the early part of the 19th century, the government at that time had to appoint a committee to investigate into the language policy with the following characteristics in it.

- Medium of instruction should be vernacular to all at the beginning of school life.
- Introduction of second language should be done in a carefully graded or progressive manner.
- Changing the medium of instruction from first language to a second language should not be abrupt.

In 1943, first step in making English available to the masses was taken in the form of introducing English as a second language but not as the medium of instruction.

1.1.2. Teaching of English after Independence

With the decision to teach English in all schools from grade four(4), a heavy responsibility fell on the state to provide necessary facilities. Although the government embarked on this new policy, it seems to have done so without the full realization of the problems involved. No concrete proposals were made as how to teach English as a second language. (De Lanerolle Committee Report , 1973 p. 34)

With the new policy, English had to be made available in all the schools. Yet, the number of competent teachers available was not sufficient to cater to this demand. Consequently, English classes were started when teachers with the least qualifications were available. This created a new problem namely the supply of teachers. (De Lanerolle Committee Report,1973).

One of the chief causes identified for the deterioration of the standards was that it was not taught by specially trained teachers. (S.F. de Silva Committee Report ,1960). Jayasuriya(1969) too notices the problem related to teacher training. 'Reasons for deterioration of the standard of English in our schools is that subject is not taught by specially trained teachers (p.19).

Although a specialist training college was established, it was not sufficient to cater to the needs indicated by De Lanerolle Committee Report and the White Paper in 1981. The reports continue to mention that teacher training was inadequate.

There were enough teachers in the former English medium classes. Due to the nationalization of the schools, the former English medium schools were now available to masses and this led to the problem of heterogeneity. Even today, the problem of student heterogeneity makes a significant problem to any language teacher in any classroom. The worst of this could be noticed in village the schools.

Perusingha (1969) tracing the evolution of English medium education points out competent knowledge of English Language should however be required in the principal functionaries throughout the island. (p. 473)

However, the civil war situation in Sri Lanka reshaped the bilingual policy in the field of education. The introduction of National AMITY Project attempted to establish unity and harmony among different ethnic groups in Sri Lanka.

> …..It would be easier to foster National unity among children than among adults. Also it is easier to develop new attitudes in younger people than in the older ones. Amity School's idea as a strategy to build national unity was conceived by Her Excellency the President in 2001 (Final Report, National AMITY Project 2004, p.01)

When the expected results were not achieved, various committees were appointed by the successive governments. As a result, various curriculum reforms were proposed and were put in to effect by various governments.

1.1.3. Curriculum Reforms and Learning Materials.

The first measures to address the issue of how to teach English as a second language were undertaken in 1953. A syllabus was prepared for the teaching of English for Primary school students. It was based on "Literature on the teaching of English to immigrant in Australia".

Then a committee appointed in 1957 suggested that a group of experts be appointed to prepare syllabuses. The committee also noted that there were no satisfactory series of English textbooks available for the primary and post primary classes. It was recommended that textbooks should be produced to suit our country. (S.F. de Silva Committee Report, 1960)

In 1965, a new set of textbooks, "An English Course" prepared by the Ministry of Education was the standard for all the schools in the country.

In 1982, it was decided to produce a new set of textbooks, English Everyday (EED) based on Communicative Language Teaching. Then under the General Education Reforms a new set of books was introduced. Then the eclectic approach in 1999 and the Activity Based Oral English in 2001 were introduced. However,the introduction of English medium education has been abrupt.

Although the curriculum was revised by successive governments, no significant change in the teaching field has taken place. Therefore, a bilingual policy under proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri Lanka (National Education commission) was introduced in 2003. However, the Ministry of Education decided to implement the "bilingual policy' throughout the island. It is important to study the circulars issued with regard to the implementation of the English medium education. (refer to the appendix - ix and x)

Under the proposals the following are given in relation to Bilingual Education at Junior Secondary Level.(Proposal for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri Lanka. (2003) p, xvii)

Junior Secondary Education (Grade 6-9)

(a) A bilingual policy should be introduced in Junior Secondary classes to provide an enabling environment to ensure that all students, irrespective of socio- economic and or regional disparities, have the opportunity to acquire a level of English proficiency adequate for higher education & career advancement. The teaching of Science,

Mathematics, IT, Health and Physical Education, Environmental Studies, and Social Studies have been introduced already in grades 6 & 7 in schools that have opted to do but should be extended to all schools through a five year phased programme in 2004 to 2008. Some subjects should continue to be taught in Sinhala/Tamil.

(b) In view of lack of an adequate number of teachers proficient in English in 2004, teachers from at least one school in each division (the proposed National -(all island) schools and provincial centers of excellence) should be selected initially for the training programmes. In pursuance of equity and excellence, preference should be given to grade V scholars in admission to these schools.

(c) The number of schools in each zone/division should be increased each year to cover all schools by 2008.

(d) Physical facilities available in National College of Education and former Teacher Training Colleges (presently underutilized) should be used for large-scale programmes during vacations. Teachers' centers should be used for continuing education in English throughout the year.

(e) English should be continued to be taught as a compulsory subject in the curriculum. (proposals for the National Policy Framework On General Education 2003, p. xvii)

The main intention of the English medium education that has recently been introduced by the Ministry of Education is to teach English language through English medium subjects. The learners here are conscious of the fact that they study the subject but not language. This could be interpreted in relation to Content Based Instruction (CBI). Content based instruction has its own principles. It is stated that people learn second languages more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information rather than as an end in itself. (Richards and Rodgers, 2003, p.209). This emphasizes the importance of context in learning a second language.

However, the introduction of National AMITY Project turned into subject - oriented English medium education. This was an abrupt introduction. The abrupt introduction of English medium education made some new problems especially with regard to the teacher training and learning materials mainly the textbooks. The textbooks required were not prepared and piloted in advance.

1.2. Practical Importance of the Study.

During the last few decades Ministry of Education has taken different measures to raise the standard of English education in Sri Lanka by changing the methodology. Since 1950s Ministry of Education used many methods such as Grammar Translation method, Direct Method, Audio Lingual method, Communicative approach and Eclectic approach in 2001. In addition, Activity Based Oral English was introduced in 1999 to Sri Lanka Education system.

Before 1956, many school used English as the medium of instruction. The subjects were taught in English. Therefore, English knowledge of both teachers and students was better than present time. In the present systems, most of the English tethers were selected considering their credit pass for English subject at ordinary level. Thus, at that time the system had better qualified teachers

However, in the recent times the authorities have taken steps to change the medium without studying the context properly. Although the field of linguistics and other related fields have gained a lot of theoretical backing, the advantages of these improvements have not been properly exploited in preparing learning materials because it seems that material writers do not seem to have an in depth knowledge in this process.

In view of the above statement, the material writers have to think deeply whether the characteristics of good learning materials really embody in our text book. (refer to pp.12,13)

The Language proficiency of most of the English teachers is not satisfactory. At the same time the knowledge of English of the subject teacher is not satisfactory. The subject knowledge of the English teacher is also not adequate to handle the context. Therefore, it is difficult to expect a good standard of teaching if the learning materials are also poor in quality. This emphasizes the necessity of working together of the English teacher and the subject teacher in close contact.

So far, the problematic area of bilingual education was not criticized because the field was not studied in adequate depth. This study would lead to identify the problems teachers and learners would encounter and suggest measures to improve the quality of the textbooks in order to facilitate the learning teaching process.

On the whole, this survey would throw some light not only on teachers and learners but on both material writers and the relevant authorities as the survey is going to discuss the problems learners and teachers have faced with regard to the textbooks.

1.3. Objectives of the Study.

This study has six major objectives. They are to:

a) Identify the reasons for changing the medium of instructions from Sinhala to English.
b) Examine the criteria used to prepare the effective language learning materials.

c) Examine the suitability of existing learning materials in relation to the characteristics identified in (b).

d) Examine the process of preparing the learning materials in English at Junior Secondary Level.

e) Identify the problems the teachers and learners encounter in relation to learning materials.

f) Suggest measures to improve the existing learning materials to facilitate the learning teaching process.

1.4. Methodology of the Study.

The methodology of this study includes administration of questionnaires, conducting interviews and using observation schedules. Three different kinds of questionnaires will be given to students, teachers and parents. Interviews will be conducted with teachers, ISAs, Directors of English and the officials responsible for translating and the publication of the textbooks. Three classes at Junior Secondary Level will be observed for three time table periods.

1.5. Outline of the thesis.

The first chapter of this thesis deals with the introduction to the problem, that is the study of changing the medium of instruction to English and the problems related to the learning materials at Junior Secondary Level. In addition, the importance of studying the background, the practical importance, the objectives of the study, the methodology used ,and the limitation of the study will be discussed.

The second chapter would be limited to the review of the related literature. In this chapter the different aspects of the problems related to learning material are discussed in relation to the theoretical aspects of bilingualism. Krashen's Theory of Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), The Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985) and the Interactional Hypothesis (Long, 1996) are mainly discussed to provide the theoretical background. In addition to these theories, Content Based Instruction (CBI) and

Theory of Language will also be discussed. Finally the researcher is going to analyse how different aspects of the major problem under study have been attended to in previous research studies and how they have been discussed in the other research documents.

In the chapter three the researcher would discuss the methodology used in the study. This would be a survey using questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules.

The analysis of the data based on the objectives of the studies will be presented in chapter four. The researcher mainly uses descriptive data and percentages. The findings will be presented using graphic forms such as charts, graphs and tables. The important tendencies will also be highlighted in the analysis.

The last chapter deals with the conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study. The conclusions will be given in relation to the findings revealed by the analysis. The recommendations will be based on the conclusions.

1.6. Limitations of the Study.

Due to the practical difficulties the researcher has not been able to collect data to represent all the distracts in the island. The researcher collected the data only from the two districts namely Colombo and Kegalle. In other words this study is limited only to two (2)districts in our country.

The students were not always selected in random order because the student population at Junior Secondary Level is relatively low. Although students' questionnaire was given to 160 students, finally only hundred(100) students were selected as some questionnaires were not completed properly. This sample of hundred students may not represent all the students who study at Junior Secondary level English medium classes. The teachers and parents selected for the administration of questionnaires and for the interviews were also selected only from Colombo and Kegalle districts. They were selected from the available samples. The classroom observations were also limited to three classes for three time table periods.

Chapter Two

2.0   Theoretical Foundation and Review of related Literature.

2.1.   Introduction.

As a developing country, Sri Lanka could not resist the changes occurred in the fields of trade, commerce and the communication fields in particular. However, English language again became a strongly felt need in Sri Lanka. Many factors compelled the policy planners and syllabus designers to introduce English medium education in Sri Lanka in the reforms laid down in the fifth sessional paper in 1997. Therefore, the Literature review investigates the theoretical basis of Content Based Education.

As the discussion in chapter one indicates, various committee reports clearly indicate that teaching of English in Sri Lanka is not satisfactory and does not cater to the needs of the students. So far, little or no research has been conducted to determine the problems related to the learning materials at Junior Secondary Level.

As learning materials (textbooks) play an important role, this analysis is basically based on two areas. First, the notion of CBI that refers to an approach to second language learning in which teaching is organized around content rather than the linguistic information. The other area of the theoretical framework will be based on theory of Comprehensible Input (Krashen, 1982), the Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) and the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain, 1985). The combined frameworks of the above three theories in the light of CBI and theory of language are used to explain and analyze the problems related to learning materials.

2.1.1. Overview.

As Sri – Lanka plunged into the 'bilinguality' or studying some subjects in English medium in 2003 without much preparation, both students and teachers face difficulties regarding different aspects of the so called bilingual policy. One such difficulty is the problems related to learning materials. It is true that learning materials play the most important role on the part of the learners. The absence of good learning materials brings about the problems as teachers find it difficult to find proper resource materials. Also, they will not be able to exploit learning materials to suit the standard of the learner. This problem also affects the learners as learners are without any other resources of reference.

On the other hand, learning materials act as carriers of decisions made by an expert, that is the people who are involved in deciding the content of the materials. Both above views are based on the assumption that decisions with this regard are best taken by those with the relevant expertise. But only a few researches had been conducted in Sri Lanka to see whether the learning materials at Junior Secondary level are the best materials in the field.

Figure I should help reinforce the point, with its circularity and overlapping segments indicating the dynamic interrelationships involved. After a decision has been taken to use a particular textbook for a particular course, it is necessary to provide an adequate quantity of the books to the classroom before the decision can be fully implemented. The use of the textbook, for a sensible review to be possible, has then to be monitored to permit evaluation of its use and effectiveness, and the result can then be forwarded to inform subsequent decisions.

Figure 2.1

Decision, Action, Review
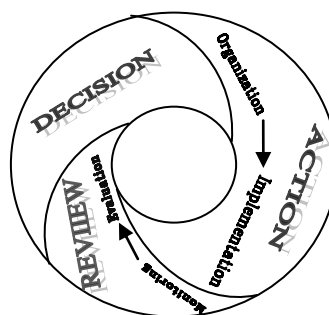
In addition, it seems necessary to take a preliminary look at two different approaches to the question of the role of learning materials. On the one hand there is the DEFICIENCY view. (Allwright, 1990). According to this view,

> we need teaching materials to save learners from our deficiencies as teachers, to make sure, as far as possible, that the syllabus is properly covered and that exercises are well thought out, for example. This way of thinking might lead, at one extreme, to the idea that the 'best' teachers would neither want nor need published teachings materials. At the other extreme we would have 'teacher-proof' materials that no teacher, however deficient, would be able to teach badly with.(P.132)

On the other hand, there is the DIFFERENCE view, (Allwright, 1990) According to this view,

> We need teaching material as 'carriers' of decisions best made by some one other than the classroom teachers, not because the classroom teacher is deficient, as a classroom teacher, but because the expertise required of materials writers is importantly different from that required of classroom teachers the people who have to have the interpersonal skills to make classrooms good place to learn it. (p.134)

Both the DEFICIENCY and the DIFERENCE views can be accepted as worth holding in mind simultaneously as we move toward a management analysis. Both views are based on the assumption that decisions are best taken (and 'acted upon', and 'reviewed') by those with relevant expertise. Although this must, at first sight at least, seem entirely reasonable, it does ignore the important possibility that, at least in some not very improbable circumstances, that question of who takes the decision, etc., might be more important than the question of whether or not the 'best' decision is always taken.

2.1.2. Rationale for good Learning material.

Different studies have been conducted in other countries to determine the rationale for good learning materials.

The following aspects have been identified in preparing good learning materials.

1. Framework of the syllabus.
2. Syllabus of the text.
3. Convenience and practicality.
4. Guidance.
5. Objectives/ rationale.
6. Approach.

7. Layout/ print/ organization etc.

8. Visual materials.

9. Interesting and varied topics, tasks and activities.

10. Content,

         (a)Suitability to grade and level.

         (b)Relevance to needs and learning

           contexts.

         (c)Relevance and usefulness.

11. Authentic language.

12. Vocabulary, technical words and registers.

13. Adequate guidance to learners and teachers.

14. Teacher and learner support materials.

15. Develop learners' potentialities.

16. Linguistic features of the input.

17. Provide opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes.

18. Cater to learners' heterogeneity and different learning styles.

[Flowerdew, I. and M.Peocok (2001) Leung, C (2001), David, C (1990) Stryker, S. and B.Lever (1993) Lightbown and Spada, N (2002)].

In the light of the characteristics identified in the good language learning materials, it is important to analyze the learning materials prepared for the Sri Lankan context at Junior Secondary Level. If one carefully analyzes the textbooks one would find that the quality of the textbooks could be improved to a considerable extent.

2.2. Content Based Instruction (CBI).

2.2.1. Background.

Content Based Instruction basically refers to an approach to second language teaching in which teaching is organized around content or various disciplines.

Krahnke(1987) commenting on the CBI states that it is an approach where the language being learned with little or no direct or explicit effort to teach the language itself separately from the content being taught. (p.65)

Other educational initiatives also emphasize the principles of acquiring content through language rather than the study of language for its own sake. This includes language immersion education, Immigrant On – Arrival Programmes, Programmers for students with Limited English Proficiency and Language for specific purposes. (Krahnke, 1987, p.65).

2.2.2. Approach.

Content Based instruction is based on the following two principles.

(a)   People learn a second language more successfully when they use the language as a means of acquiring information rather than as an end itself.

(b)   Content Based Instructions better reflects learners' need for learning a second language. (Stryker and Learner, 1993, p.62)

The first principle reflects the fact that it leads to more effective language learning and the second principle reflects the fact that many content based programmes serve to prepare ESL students for academic studies or for mainstreaming. Therefore, the content based instruction should become a central priority, as the main purpose of the introduction of English medium at junior secondary level in Sri – Lankan context is to promote language proficiency for higher education and better job prospects. (National Education Commission Report, 2003 P.xvii)

Flowerdew and Peacock (2001) state the precepts upon which CBI are based.

1.   Language Learning should be related to the eventual uses to which learner will put the language.

2. The use of information context leads to increase motivation of the learners.

3. Effective teaching should focus on contextualized language use rather than on sentence level usage.

4. Effective teaching requires attention to prior knowledge, exciting knowledge, the total academic environment and the linguistic proficiency of the learner.

5. Language learning is promoted by a focus on significant and relevant content from which learners can derive the cognitive structures that facilitate the acquisition of vocabulary and syntax as well as written and oral production. (pp.181-2)

However to better understand the approach let us examine the following three definitions of CBI.

(1)   A content − based curriculum is simply one in which the basic organizational unit is a theme or topic, rather than the more customary grammatical patterns or language functions. The goal of this is to provide meaningful context for language learning instead of focusing on language as an objective of study. At the foundation of this approach is the Krashenesque notion that acquisition is best promoted when language is presented in comprehensible and interesting communicative contexts. However, we diverge from Krashen and side with recent first language trends in reading and writing across the curriculum in the belief that instruction in higher level language and study skills is warranted … and that such intervention can make a difference.(Bycina,1986, p.13)

(2) …….. We define content-based instruction as the integration of particular content with language-teaching aims. More specifically … it refers to the concurrent teaching of academic subject matter and second language skills. The language curriculum is based directly on the academic needs of the students and generally follows the sequence determined by a particular subject matter in dealing with the language problems which students encounter. The focus for students is on acquiring information via the second language and, in the process, developing their academic language skills.(Brintion, Snow and Wesche, 1989, p.02)

(3)   Discipline-based language instruction, and the broader 'content-based' approach to which it belongs, are part of a trend and all education levels aiming at the development of use-oriented second and foreign language skills. Content-based language teaching is distinguished first or all by the concurrent learning of a specific content and related language use skills in a 'content driven' curriculum , i, e., with the selection and sequence of language elements determined by the content … Essential to all content-based language teaching is a view of language acquisition which emphasizes the incidental internalization of new knowledge by the learner from rich target language data, while focusing on the meaning being communicated …. In content-based language teaching, the claim in a sense is that students get 'two for one'-both content knowledge and increased language proficiency. (Wesche, 1993, pp. 57-8)

There are interesting similarities in the above definitions, which can be summarized as follows:

1. The goal of CBI is to provide a meaningful context for language teaching to occur.
2. The organization of a CBI course centers around content.
3. Content drives the curriculum, it is the starting point for decisions about what is taught.
4. Language and content are taught concurrently.
5. Comprehensible input, provided through the content materials, leads to language acquisition.

As noted above, all three definitions agree that comprehensible input, presented in the from of authentic content, fosters acquisition. That notion of comprehensible input could be further analyzed in relation to Comprehensible Input Hypothesis.

Moreover, these findings should be observed in relation to English medium education in Sri-Lanka. The English medium subjects include Social Studies, Science and Technology, Mathematics and Health and Physical Education. Social Studies at Grade 7 is further divided into three subjects. The rest of the subjects are taught in the mother tongue. Richards and Rodgers (2003, p.216) call this approach Sheltered Content Instructions. There are following salient characteristics in this approach.

- Content courses are taught in the second language by subject specialists.
- Students in these classes are not in a class together with native speakers.
- Instructors present the content in a comprehensible way.

The teachers are advised to adapt and adopt the textbooks to suit the standard of the students. Therefore, the teacher's competency with this regard is very important.

2.3. Theoretical aspects of Bilingualism.

Krashen's theory of Comprehensible Input Hypothesis comprises of five hypotheses. (Krashen, 1982, p.01). But in this survey the researcher pays a special attention to only the Input Hypothesis.

2.3.1. Comprehensible Input Hypothesis.

Krashen's theory of Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982, p.01) comprises of five hypotheses namely Acquisition/learning hypothesis, Monitor hypothesis,

Natural Order hypothesis, The Input hypothesis, and The Affective Filter hypothesis. But in this survey the researcher pays attention only to the Input hypothesis.

2.3.2 The Input Hypothesis.

This is the most important part in our content. According to Krashen, language is acquired only by receiving "Comprehensible input" That is, input that contains forms and structures just beyond the learner's current level of competence in the language.

2.3.3 The Comprehensible Output Hypothesis.

Swain (1985) claims that language acquisition is promoted not only by receiving comprehensible input, but also through the opportunities provided to produce the language.

The inability of the students to gain full grammatical competence, according to Swain might be because they did not have enough opportunity to talk or were not "pushed" in the output they produced. She described learners as being "pushed" into developing their linguistic abilities when they participate in meaningful instruction. Further, for learners to actually produce the language, they must attend to both meaning of what they say and the form of how to say it.

2.3.4. The Interaction Hypothesis.

The interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) also acknowledges the importance of comprehensible input in language acquisition. However, Long emphasizes the need for the learners to interact with the speaker (teacher) in order for the input to be made comprehensible.

Based on studies with native speakers talking to non native speakers, he hypothesized that during such conversations there were breakdowns in communication as the non native speakers were unable to understand the native speakers. According to him, those who **"negotiate for meaning"** by asking questions to clarify meaning resulted in gaining more comprehensible input.

In the earlier version of his Interaction Hypothesis, Long (1983, 1985) did not emphasize the importance of focusing on grammar. However, in his later version (1996) he emphasizes the importance of interaction as a way of focusing on "form". He made a distinction between **"form"** and **"forms"**. By form he meant teaching grammar in context and "forms" referred to the teaching of grammar in isolation. He emphasized the need to focus on "form" and believed that instruction provides the learners with such opportunities. In the later version, he also explained the need to produce language in order for learners to notice the language forms in the input.

When all three theories are put together, one would get the following diagram:

Figure 2.2

Combination of three theories
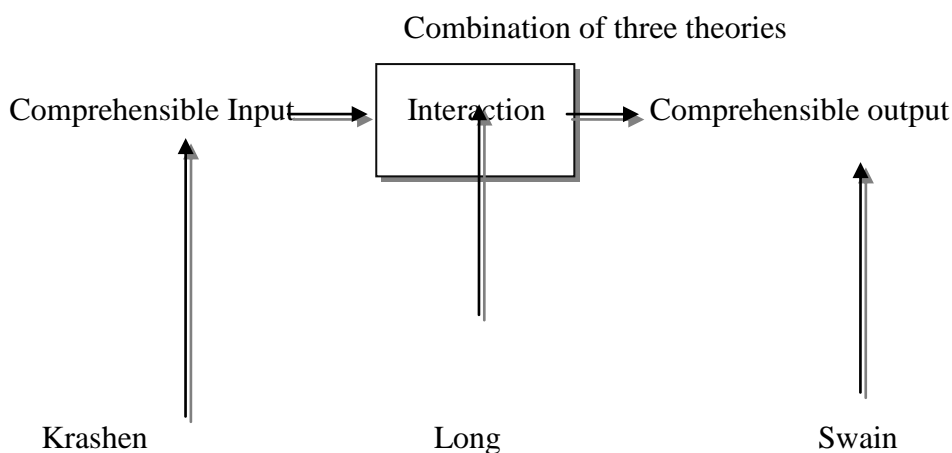
According to the diagram there are three assumptions on which language acquisition is based. But the quality of the acquisition also depends on the number of following variables.

➢ Access to modified input.
➢ Variety of language and discourse type.
➢ Metalinguistic comments.
➢ Exposure to error free language.

The type of interaction depends on,

➢ High ratio of native competent speaker to learner.
➢ Error correction.
➢ Display question / Genuine question.
➢ Negotiation of meaning.

The output will be decided mainly on the pressure to speak and the time available for learning. Moreover, the types of scaffolding (Vigotsky / Bruner) also play a critical role in the process of learning a second language.

Bruner (1990) emphasizes the significance of familiarity of the content to the learner. His argument is that anything can be presented to the learner when the content is familiar to the learner. There should be a wide availability of variety of learning materials to the teacher and the learner.

Vigotsky (1987) emphasizes the importance of the zone of proximal development. There is a potential level where each learner can individually reach. But a learner work with an 'able peer', the learner can reach the maximum potential level.

However, a number of assumptions about the nature of language underline Content Based Instructions.

The aspects of the check list (p. 12,13) could be interpreted in the light of the three theories, namely input hypothesis (Krashen), Interaction (Long) and comprehensible (Swain). However many of the given aspects have direct relevance to input and interaction. Only a few aspects have been given in relation to output.

The syllabus of the text and the framework of the syllabus decide the framework within which the teacher has to handle the text. Adaptability is another aspect of the textbooks. The convenience and the practicality of the textbooks would help the teacher to adapt and adopt teaching materials.

The print, layout, organization and the visual material make a textbook visually attractive. However, the content plays a decisive role with regard to input, interaction and output. The content should be suitable to the grade and level of the students. It should have a direct relevance to the needs and the learning context of the learners. Moreover, the content should be useful for them.

The English medium textbooks should not be the direct translation of the Sinhala textbooks. They should use an authentic language rich with useful vocabulary, technical words and registers. In other words, linguistic features of the textbooks should carefully be considered in preparing the textbooks. Moreover, the input should cater to learners' heterogeneity and different learning styles. If the textbook producers cater to those needs the learners are able to develop their own potentialities. On the whole, the above factors are very decisive in determining the input of the learning materials.

With regard to the interaction, guidance to both teachers and learners would decide the way the interactions should take place.

The objectives / rationale and the approach teachers should handle the textbooks are mainly decided by the textbook writers and policy makers. But it is the teacher who acts as an intermediate group in carrying out the decisions taken by syllabus designer and material writers. Teachers do this in the form of interaction with students and textbooks. Therefore, teachers should use authentic language rich with technical words and registers. When teacher uses these, the learners can develop their hidden potentialities. The teacher's ability to adapt and adopt the materials again plays a decisive role because it is the teacher who has to cater to the learner's heterogeneity and different learning styles at operational level.

The success of the textbooks is decided on the output produced through the interaction. The purpose of reintroduction of English is to acquire a level of English proficiency adequate for higher education and career advancement. (refer to p.05) the 17th aspect of the rationale for good learning materials clearly states that good learning materials should provide opportunities to use the target language to achieve communicative purposes.

Basically communication refers to both oral and written communication. If the students are able 'achieve communicative purposes' they have reached the proficiency expected by the state. Therefore, there is a harmony between the objectives of the state and the overall output of the good leaning materials.

In order to produce a comprehensible output, there should be many good aspects of the input as discussed earlier. This input should have a meaningful interaction. Many agents like teachers, students, advisers and policy makers play a major role in bridging the input and the comprehensible output.

The researcher would analyze the approaching of the existing learning materials in relation to the many aspects discussed under rationale for good learning materials.

2.4. Theory of Language.

(a) Language Is Text And Discourse – Based

CBI addresses the role of language as a vehicle for learning content. This emphasizes the centrality of linguistic entities longer than single sentence because the focus of teaching is how meaning and information are communicated and constructed through texts and discourse. The linguistic units that are central are not limited to the level of sentence and subsistential units.

(b) Language Use Draws on Integrated Skills.

CBI involves learning several skills together. The students might read and take notes, listen and write summary. The use of language in connected discourse brings together knowledge, language and thinking skills.

(c) Language is Purposeful.

Language is used for specific purposes. The purpose may be academic, social, vocational or recreational. For learners to receive maximum benefit from CBI, they need to be clearly in relation to its purposes and the language codes that signal and link the expressions of purpose.

Under the theoretical aspects we have discussed the contribution of Krashen, Long and Swain to the bilingual education or the Content Based Instruction. Based on this theoretical background, one could analyze the present Sri-Lanka bilingual educational context with reference to bilingual policy.

2.5. Approaches In relation to Input, Interaction and Output.

From research on teaching and learning in Second Language classroom (Skutnabb Kangas, 1981, Krashen, 1982) there is evidence to say that:

➢ Learner needs input in the target language at a level that can be understood; learning efficiency is improved as the strength of affiliative motivation (joining respected group) increases.

➢ Low level of anxiety, supportive learning environment and non authoritarian teaching would help 'input' to be more comprehensible.

➢ Input needs to be just ahead of the learners' stage of rule development for it to support or disconfirm inter language rules that they already possess.

➢ Teacher led activities may be superior in providing input that is extensive and needs a high level of accuracy.

In relation to this, Leung (2001) presents the following questions.

(a) Do the pupils have the necessary background content and language knowledge and skill to understand and engage with the task?

(b) Are the learning activities involved familiar to the pupils?

(c) Are the learning activities appropriately presented and organized?

(d) Does the language use required to perform the task contribute to the pupil's future language development(p.190)

There has often been an assumption that the mainstream classroom is in many ways an ideal situation for second language pupils because it offers them the opportunity to use a language for purposeful communication. But research evidence shows that nearly 70% of talking is done by the teacher. Furthermore, as Harklau observes the input received by second language pupils in a mainstream classroom suffers from a major drawback. Harklau (1994) reports that,

> . . . mainstream high school classroom teachers seldom adjusted input in order to make it comprehensible to L2 pupils . . . Pupils had particular difficulty understanding teacher talk which contained puns or was sarcastic or ironic. Pupils were also frustrated with teachers who habitually spoke very fast, who used frequent asides, or who were prone to sudden departures from the instructional topic at hand. (p.249)

Long (1996) speaks about the importance of instruction. The learners should negotiate for the meaning whenever the communication breaks down. Teachers may be able to provide greater language using opportunities by making speech adjustments coming down to the level of the students. Chaudron (1988) provides a list of such adjustment:

➢ Repetition: an exact repeating of a previous string of speech (either partial or full, and either a self- or other- repetition).

➢ Expansion: a partial or full repetition which modifies some portion of a previous string of speech by adding syntactic or semantic information.

➢ Clarification request: a request for future information from an interlocutor about a previous utterance.

➢ Comprehension check: the speakers' query of the interlocutor (s) as to whether or not they have understood the previous speaker utterance (s).

➢ Confirmation check: the speakers' query as to whether or not the speaker's (expressed) understanding of the interlocutor's meaning is correct.

➢ Repair: an attempt by a speaker to alter or rectify a previous utterance which was in some way lacking in clarity or correctness (either self-or-other-directed).

➢ Model: a type of prompt by a speaker (usually a teacher) intended to elicit an exact imitation or to serve as an exemplary response to an elicitation. (p.45)

The opportunity in the mainstream classroom for pupils to engage in meaningful language use with teacher seems to be limited. One way of increasing interaction is to promote collaborative group work. Group work involves a lot of interaction and as McDonell (1992) argues, the pupils will receive:

➢ More comprehensible input through peer interaction;

➢ Opportunity to develop better listening skills as a result of responding to and acting on what has been said;

➢ Instant response from others to their output;

➢ Longer conversational turns than in a whole-class teaching situation;

➢ Opportunity to initiate their own question, articulate their need and interest;

➢ Opportunity to develop an awareness of audience, purpose and social context;

➢ Access to more varied and complex use of language;

➢ Continual comprehension checks and clarification requests;

➢ Opportunity to use communication strategies and paralinguistic support such as facial expression, drawing and diagrams to enhance understanding and expression of meaning; (p.51)

2.6. Scaffolding of Tasks.

The learners try to relate new information to prior knowledge and make meaningful association to information presented. This observation is consistent with the Vygotskyan views of the pupils as an active participant in the learning process. McDonell (1992) argues that,

> (The pupils) . . . actively construct knowledge for themselves as they search for meaning. In order to construct this knowledge, pupils draw on what they already know. Learning does not occur in a vacuum. Drawing on prior knowledge, pupils generate hypotheses about the new, which they test out, alter, or refine on the basis of their experiences. (p.57)

From the language processing point of view this general position is consistent with the view expressed by many researchers. Carrell and Eisterhold (1987,) state that,

> . . . a text only provides directions for listeners as to how they should retrieve or construct meaning for their own, previously acquired knowledge, . . . comprehending a text is an interactive process between the reader's background knowledge and the text. Efficient comprehension requires the ability to relate the textual material to one's own knowledge. (p.95)

With regard to evaluating context and cognitive demand Cummins (1992) proposes a formal conceptual framework to distinguish two types of language, namely Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP). It is hypothesized that BICS typically occur in a context-rich environment where the communication involves a relatively high level of cognitive demand. These two dimensions are shown diagrammatically in the following figure.

Figure 2.3.

BICS and CALP.
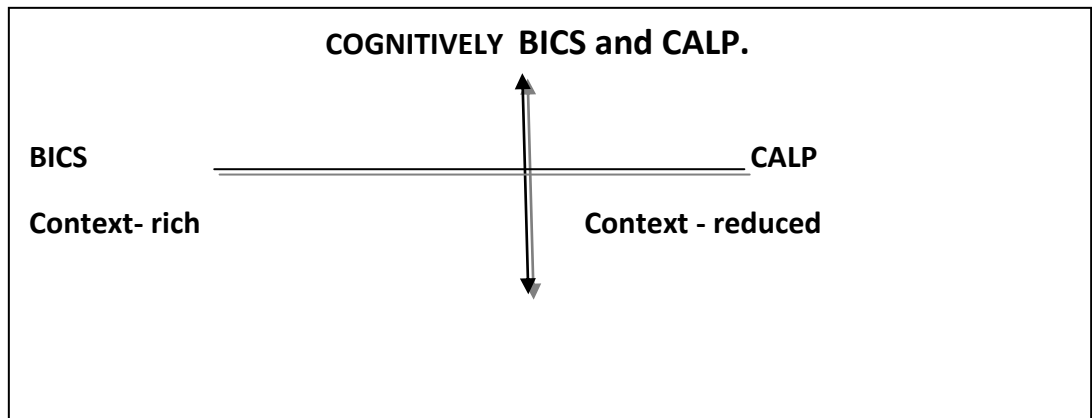
Cummins (1992:21) argues that more context embedded in the initial second language input the more comprehensible it is likely to be; However Mohan and Hemler (1988: 275) who examined young second language learners state that one way of providing contextual support in the learning activities is to use graphic representation of the key information in the learning task or materials.

The type of scaffolding offered to pupils will depend on pupils need. This has to be Judged on case – by – case basis. From the evaluation point of view, the following table indicates some of the areas of scaffolding where problems may be raised.

2.6.1. Areas of Scaffolding.

Issue	Scaffolds
Background Knowledge	• Is there use of pupils' L1 to unlock relevant previous knowledge and to facilitate L1-L2 transfer?
	• Does the teacher use realia and other contextual clues to help make connections with previous learning and current knowledge?
Familiarity with Learning activities	• Does the teacher show pupils the taken – for – granted learning ingredients of classroom activities? (For instance, reading may involve discussion.) Does the teacher make explicit the components of a task? (Often a task is made up of a number of activities. It may be helpful to show, by example and by task organization, how the various parts are related to form as a whole.)
Presentation and Organization of tasks	• Does the teacher use graphics to show key knowledge structures and language embedded in the content materials?
	• In a group task situation, does the teacher ensure that the second language pupils have an active role to play, e.g. as a holder of key information for task completion, and that only one joint task outcome is allowed in order to increase the probability of discussion and exchange of views?
Further language development	• Does the teacher provide adequate opportunity for pupils to improve language forms involved in doing task?
	•

Does the teacher adjust the use of language when interacting with pupils to achieve greater comprehension of meaning and to provide language models?

Swain (1985) claims that language acquisition is promoted not only by receiving comprehensible input but also through the opportunities provided to learners to produce the language. He also claims that meaningful interaction helps to produce comprehensible output.

On the final analysis it is clear that 'input' 'interaction' and 'output' are necessary to learn a second language. The learner undergoes a complex process and a lot of interaction is being exercised in order to produce comprehensible output from the comprehensible input.

2.7.   The Issues Raised By Bilinguality and Bilingualism.

First of all it is important to understand the key words, bilinguality and bilingualism. According to Hammer and Blang's 'Psychological Approaches to the Development of Bilinguality' (1980, P.06), the distinction is as follows:

> "Bilinguality is the psychological state of an individual who has access to more than one linguistic code as a means of social communication. The degree of access will vary along a number of dimensions which are Psychological, Cognitive, Psycholinguistic, socio-cultural and linguistic. The Concept of Bilingualism on the other hand, includes that of bilingulity but refers equally to the state of a linguistic community in which two languages are in contact with the result that two codes can be used in the same interaction and that a number of individuals are bilingual."

But the term Bilingulisam is an intrinsically relative notion. It has different meanings to different people and different contexts. However, it involves learning of a second language.

2.7.1. Types of Bilingualism.

Balanced Bilingualism – is used to describe individuals who possess about the same fluency in two defferent languages.

Semilingualism – refers to those who have deficiencies in both languages compared with monolinguals. These deficiencies could be in a reduced vocabulary, incorrect grammar or inability to express emotions in one language etc.

Dominant Bilingualism – Few people are truly balanced bilinguals in both languages in all situations. One language is usually dominant. This dominance may be different for listening and speaking or for reading and writing and usually change over time.

Additive Bilingualism – learners whose L1 is dominant and prestigious, add the second language to their repertoire of skills without any danger to their L1. Such learning is referred to as additive bilingualism.

Subtractive Bilingualism – ethnic minority group who because of national educational policies and social pressure of various sorts are forced to put aside their ethnic language for a second language.

Learning a second language however should not have a negative impact on the first language. In Sri Lanka English Language plays a very important role. English is essential for us for variety of purposes. Therefore, in the learning teaching context, the promotion of bilingualism is much desired in Sri - Lanka.

2.7.2. Stage of Bilinguistic Development.

Brown (1988) in his pioneering work in developmental psycholinguistics has identified successive stages in a child's linguistic development. These different roles play a major part in bilingualistic development.

(a)   The Role of Linguistic context.

The assumption is that separate contexts will enhance bilingual acquisition whereas a mixed context will hinder acquisition and induce confusion and interference.

(b)   The Role of Social Context.

The linguistic environment in which both languages are acquired varies as a function of the social roles of the adults around the child.

(c)   Neuropsychological Development.

Evidence from the Neurophysiology of language suggests that bilinguals develop different Neurological strategies of information processing according to their history and context of acquisition of both languages. Cerebral control of language behaviour is characterized by functional asymmetry which is a product of Neuropsychological maturation.

2.7.3 Age of Acquisition of Bilinguality.

The age of acquisition of bilinguality or of L2 appears to be a relevant factor in the development of laterality which will also determine the relative role of the two hemispheres in verbal information processing. "Generally speaking cerebral dominance is more precocious when the child experiences enriching early stimulation" (Bever, 1970, p.39)

The above factors are responsible for some of the most important issues raised by Bilingualism or Bilinguality. These factors together with numerous other factors hold the responsibility for making a successful bilingual.

2.7.4. Issues Raised by Bilingualism in Relation to Learning Materials.

The learners at Junior Secondary Level and also the teachers who work in bilingual classes face the difficulty of finding suitable learning materials. Although some learning materials are available they are quite inadequate to meet the demand of the learners: Translating of learning materials or importing materials designed in a foreign country may not help the learning population. More often, materials are presented in the form of course books.

It is very important for the teacher and the student to know how to use course books, and what course book can and cannot offer them. The teachers must plan lessons with their learners in mind adapting and supplementing the book as appropriate.

2.8. Ways of Using Course Book.

Most teachers use course books in different ways. The factors affecting how teachers see and use a course book include:

- ➤ *Experience and training.* More experience and training usually mean less dependence on the book.
- ➤ *Workload.* Teacher with a heavy schedule and a variety of levels tend to depend on the book more than those with a light schedule.
- ➤ *Institutional policy.* Teachers tend to use a book more when supervisors insist on it and tests are closely based on it.
- ➤ *The quality of the course book.* Teachers naturally tend to use a book they like more than one they do not.

There are three main ways teachers actually use course books.

1. As a course.
2. As a syllabus and main source materials.
3. As one small element in the course.

2.8.1. What Course Book Can Offer

The main aim of bilingual policy in Sri-Lanka is the development of language proficiency which will lead to better job prospectives. It is timely important to study whether the aim is being achieved through the introduction of English medium education.

Davis and Pearse (2000) discuss the following areas in relation to learning materials.

(a)   The syllabus

The table of content, course book materials and Teacher's Guide can offer a clear programme of work. In other words, what to teach and in what order to teach.

(b)   Language presentation materials.

(c)   Language practice materials.

(d)   Skill development materials.

(e)   Additional materials. (p.133)

2.8.2. What Course Book Cannot Provide.

The learners at Junior Secondary Level face a lot of difficulties with regard to suitable learning materials. Although the relevant themes could be found in the course books, they cannot be directly connected to specific needs. Davies and Pearse (2000) say that:

> Most course books for adults, and some for children, are written for international distribution. The authors probably do not know your country or your language, let alone your teaching institution and learner. Even locally produced course books are probably written by authors who do not know your specific school or learners. The book can provide you with all the useful resources mentioned above, but only you, the teacher, can respond fully to your specific teaching conditions and your specific learners' interest and personalities. Only you, the teacher, can bring course book materials to life and make it work in your class room. This usually means adapting and supplementing the book to some extent. And a course book cannot have a personal relationship with the learners. Only you, the teacher, can project enthusiasm, respond sensitively to learners, and make language learning a personal, enjoyable, and satisfying activity. (p.139)

Preparing a course book involves much difficulty because the authors should address the above issues. In preparing a course book, it is very important to look at the following aspects.

> ➢ Syllabus (objectives, content, sequence, lesson or unit division)
> ➢ The layout (typical organization of each lesson or unit, format and presentation of main types of materials).
> ➢ The proposed methodology.
> ➢ Supplementary materials including work books, charts, audio cassettes etc.

Do course books at the junior secondary level cater to the needs of these specific areas? When one refers to the textbooks critically, he or she may feel whether the textbooks really cater to the needs of the students. To determine the quality of the course book following questions should be raised even if the book looks very good on the surface. (Davis and Pearse, 2000)

a) Is the syllabus practical?
b) Is the level appropriate for the learners?
c) Is there an appropriate balance between language and skill work?
d) Is the presentation and practice material clear and realistic?
e) Are the context and topics all appropriate for the level of the learner?
f) Is the methodology suggested suitable for the level of the linear? (p.132)

So far, the researcher discussed some important issues related to learning materials in relation to bilingualism. However, in considering students and their course of instruction, there are certain steps which need to be followed (Hadge 2000, p.342). It is necessary to note that these steps should be considered as cyclical and not linear.

Figure 2.4

Cycle of Instruction

```
                    Consider the
                  Learners  ①
   Evaluate  7  ○                        Consider the learning
                                              Context  ②
Teach the material  6  ○
                                          Establish goals  ③
   Design the material  ⑤

              Plan the curriculum  ④
```
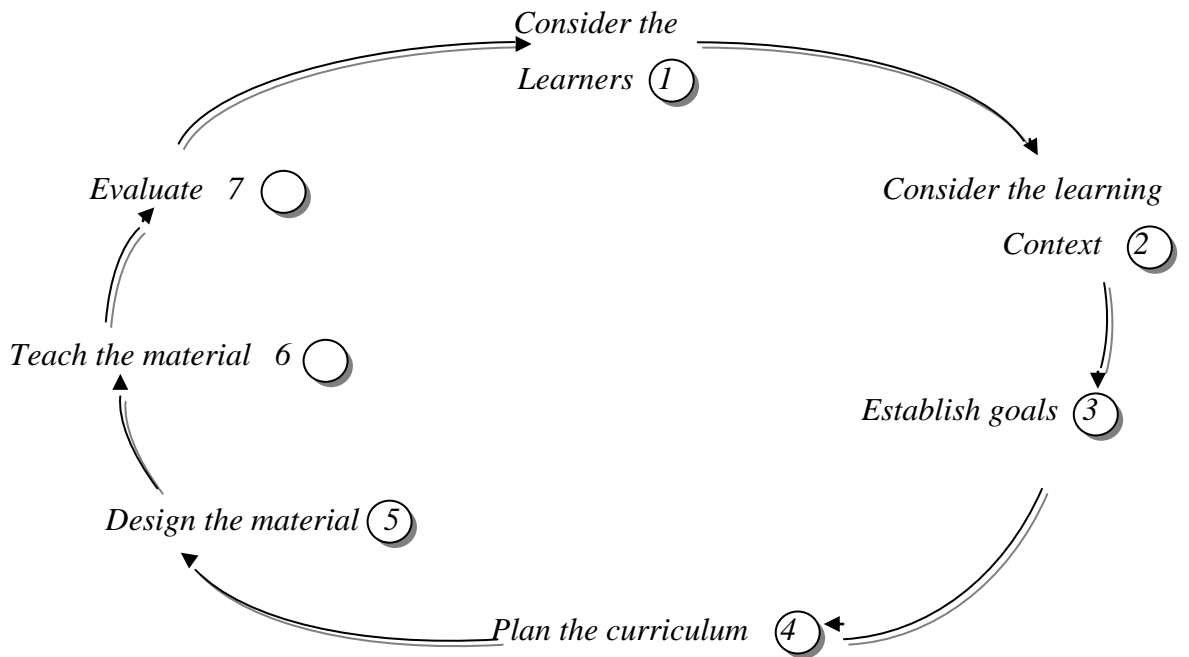
2.8.3. Learner.

The age of a learner at Junior Secondary Level in Sri-Lankan context ranged from 12 - 15. The learner is still in the concrete operational age. There is a considerable gap in the leaning materials between grade five and six. The learners are still unable to conceptualize certain abstract concepts even they are taught in their mother tongue. The instruction in English would put the learner into further difficulties. Studies (Filmore 1983, Cummins 1981) indicate that for most children it can take four to six years to acquire a second language to a level of proficiency adequate for dealing with ordinary classroom activities.

The Proposals for a National Policy Framework (2003) states (pg xvii: 56-b) 'In pursuance of equity and excellence preference should be given to Grade V scholars in admission to these schools' (English medium school).

It is clearly stated that the aim of the programme is to promote language based on equity and excellence. But the schools that offer English medium education hold a special

English test to select students and those scholars who come from village schools fail the test merely due to their poor English knowledge. Then what is the plight of the very intelligent scholars?

2.8.4. Learner Context.

The learning context of Anuradhapura is very different from that of Colombo. A learner in Colombo may have a good exposure to English environment and only the concepts could drive him into difficulties. But many students are unable to participate in mainstream classes due to lack of language proficiency due to social isolation. The absence of acquisition rich environment would act as a barrier. A good socio-economic and educational background may scaffold the child. But what is the plight of the learners in a remote school in Anuradhapura. In some schools there is a grave shortage of teachers. In addition, it is essential to consider the mentality of the children who live in border villages under the constant fear and tension of L.T.T.E. What is the mentality of a child in the boarder village? Under these circumstances, it is highly impossible to provide English medium education to all the schools by 2008 as expected by National Education Commission Report- 2003.

Therefore, the educationalists and policy makers who decide the contents of the textbooks should think about the learner population who reside outside the major cities. The researcher feels that the content should be simple, clear and specially it should address to the needs of the majority of the students who live away from the major cities. In brief, the learning materials should address the learner context, the language level of the students and the learners' heterogeneity. As textbooks play a very important role, the textbooks themselves could demotivate these students.

2.8.5. Establish Goals.

One would raise the question as to what could be the goal of bilingual education in Sri-Lanka. The National Education Commission Report (2003: xvii) indicates:

> 'To provide an enabling environment to ensure that all students, irrespective of socio-economic and / or regional disparities have the opportunity to acquire a level of proficiency adequate for higher education and career advancement'.

In the proposals (56-II-C) it is suggested 'The number of schools in each zone / division should be increased each year to cover all schools by 2008'. This suggestion seems highly impractical without a long term programme to develop various aspects of the

English medium education. How can we achieve this without promoting the level of English at primary level?

2.9. Design and Teach the Material.

First of all there should be enough teachers to man the system. The materials should not be prepared to cater to the need of a specific target group. The assumption is that each group is so unique that its need cannot possibly be met by material developed to meet the needs of any other group.

Sri-Lanka finds it difficult to find adequately qualified teachers to run the system. The teachers who have English competence do not know the subject matters well and subject teachers' knowledge of English language is not adequate to the level expected at bilingual classes. Derewianka (1991) proposes that all teachers should have:

- ➢ An understanding of the process of first and second language development, including an understanding of the factors which will affect second language development.
- ➢ A knowledge of how to adjust classroom practices (curriculum, methodology, materials, organization, etc.)
- ➢ An awareness of the characteristics of non English speaking background learners.
- ➢ An understanding of the implications of bilingualism and role of bilingual education.
- ➢ An awareness of the nature of and significance of attitudinal and affective factors in language learning. (p.55)

In addition,the researcher learned that in Sri-Lanka many teachers are not prepared to undergo new training or simply they do not like to change. Moreover, there are no enough qualified teacher trainers in the field of English.

The study of Learning English through Bilingual Instruction shows that four major instructional factors were significant on the part of the teachers (Chamot, 1988).

- ➢ High quality teaching, including clear lesson organization, directions and explanations, appropriate aids, attention to higher level skills, and opportunities for oral activities;

- High quality instructional language, including clarity, coherence, use of contexts, paraphrasing, responding to students feedback, and discussion of grammar and vocabulary;
- Effective classroom management with stress on academic rather than on non-academic activities;
- Provision of equal opportunities for the practice of English; (p.11)

In view of the lack of adequate number of teachers proficient in the subject, the National Policy Framework(2003) suggests 'teacher from at least one school in each division should be selected initially for the training programme.' Moreover, it suggests that the teachers' centres should be used for continuing education in English throughout the year. But there is no suggestion as to how the adequately qualified teacher trainers could be recruited. (refer to p.5)

2.10   Conclusion

To bridge the gap between the existing learning materials and the quality learning materials , it is very important to consider the theoretical basis of second language learning in preparing the future learning materials. The various issues raised by bilingualism and bilinguality should be analyzed in relation to the learning theories mentioned in the literature review.

In the next chapter the researcher would discuss the methodology used in this survey to study the problems related to the English medium learning materials

Chapter three

3.0 Methodology.

3.1 Introduction.

The previous chapter dealt with the review of the literature related to the learning materials. In that chapter the researcher discussed the way the problem under study has been studied using various techniques. This chapter discusses the methodology adapted to gather data.

3.2 Sample of the study.

The populations under study are the students studying at Junior secondary level classes. The sample in this research included a small group of subjects from the overall population in such a way that the sub-group is representative of the larger population.

The sample included hundred students, twelve teachers and ten parents. Three classes also were observed. Because of the practical difficulties hundred students from Colombo and Kegalle districts were selected. Moreover, ISAs, officials from the field of English language teaching and the officials from the department of education publication were also interviewed. The breakdown of the population are as follows:

A questionnaire was administered to 160 students from both Colombo and Kegalle districts. As there were uncompleted ones finally fifty questionnaires were selected from each district.

Table 3.1

Classification of students according to districts

District	Number of Students
Colombo	50
Kegalle	50

The grade six students have relatively a short period of time in the English medium classes. They have not been exposed to English medium education for a considerable period of time. Therefore, only five students from each district were selected for grade six because they were relatively new to the classes. But from other grades fifteen students were selected from each district.

Table 3.2

Classification of grade and number of the stuteits

Grade	Number of the students
Grade six	10
Grade seven	30
Grade eight	30
Grade nine	30

Ten parents were given a separate questionnaire in order to gather date to understand their point of view about the English Medium Education. The parents were selected from the available sample.

Table 3.3

Classification of parents according to the districts

District	Number of parents
Colombo	5
Kegalle	5

Ten teachers working in the English medium classes were given the teachers' questionnaire and the way the teachers was selected is as follows:

Table 3.4

Classification of teachers according to the districts

District	Number of teachers
Colombo	5
Kegalle	5

Table 3.5

Classification of parents according to the grades of their children

Representing grade	Number of parents
Grade six	2
Grade seven	2
Grade eight	3
Grade nine	3

Two teachers and two English speaking parents from each district were interviewed to get information to understand the views of the parents in relation to the English medium education.

In addition three classes representing grade 7, 8 and 9 were observed for a period of three time table periods. Grade seven and eight classes were selected from the Kegalle district and grade 9 class was selected from the Colombo district.

The data gathering techniques of this research involved questionnaires, interviews and observation schedules.

The prepared questionnaires were pre-tested with the subjects and then were again standardized. They were brought to the notice of the supervisor before giving them to the students, teachers and parents. The observation schedule was also presented and

standardized. The checklist of the characteristics of good learning materials was prepared using books mainly on Bilingual Education and its related field.

3.3   Research Questions.

Three kinds of questionnaires were given to the following categories.

(a) Students at Junior Secondary Level.

(b) Teachers teaching at Junior secondary classes.

(c) Parents whose children are studying in English medium classes.

3.4   The first objective of the Study.

The first objective was to find out the reasons for changing the medium of instruction. The researcher considered the views of the following groups to analyses this objective.

a) On the part of the students who change the medium.

b) On the part of the policy / state that is responsible for re-introducing the English medium.

Parents, teachers and students were given different questionnaires to find out the reasons for changing the medium of study from Sinhala to English.

3.4.1 Questionnaires.

Table 3.6

Classification of questions related to objective one

Type of questionnaire	Relevant question Number
Students' questionnaire	01
Parents' questionnaire	06, 15
Teachers' questionnaire	12

In addition, the researcher used oral interviews with the teachers and the parents.

3.5   Objective Two.

Objective two is to identify the criteria used to prepare good language learning materials. This objective has been achieved through the review of literature. That is to identify the criteria used to prepare good language learning materials has been achieved through the review of literature.

3.6   Objective three.

The study of the suitability of existing learning materials in relation to the criteria used to prepare good language learning materials was examined through:

       (a)   Questionnaires.

       (b)   A checklist.

       (c)   Oral interviews.

3.6.1 Questionnaires:

The following are the types of questionnaires and the question numbers relevant to the each qestionnaire.

Table 3.7

Classification of questions related to objective three

Type of the questionnaire	Relevant question
Students' questionnaire	7, 17,18,19,20,21
Teachers' questionnaire	13,16,18, 25,26
Parents' questionnaire	11, 18

The check list on the page 12 and 13 was used to identify the characteristic of good learning materials. The textbooks at Junior Secondary level were checked on the basis of that check list.

3.6.2 Interviews:

Teachers, sectional heads in charge of English medium schools, ISAs and directors of English were interviewed to have their impressions on the suitability of the existing learning materials, especially about the textbooks.

3.7 Objective Four.

The forth objective is to examine the process of preparing the learning materials in English at junior secondary level. This was achieved though:

(a)   Interviews.

(b)   Questionnaires.

(c)   Observation Schedules.

3.7.1   Interviews:

First, interviews were conducted with the officials in the Educational Publication Department to decide on the process of preparing language materials on the part of the Department of Educational Publication.

Then interviews were conducted with ISAs and sectional heads of the schools and the teachers. The main purpose of these interviews is to see whether learners and teachers adopt and adapt the prescribed textbooks at individual levels for more effective teaching and learning.

3.7.2   Questionnaires:

The relevant questions of each questionnaire are as follows.

Table 3.8

Classification of questions related to objective four

Type of the questionnaire	Number of the questions
Students' questionnaire	9,11,16
Parents' questionnaire	-

Teachers' questionnaire	17,22

3.7.3 Observation Schedules:

Three different classes were observed for three time table periods.

3.8 Objective Five.

The fifth objective is to identify the problems the teachers and the students have in relation to the learning materials. This objective was met through:

a) Interviews.
b) Questionnaires.
c) Observation Schedules.

This objective was examined in detail as this has become very important as almost no research has been done to identify the problems related to the English medium learning materials because bilingual education is relatively new to our country.

Interviews:

Two teachers from Colombo and Kegalle districts were interviewed to understand the problems both they and their students have. question on many aspects of the problem were closely examined. Parents' views were also taken into consideration to analyze the problems in detail.

Questionnaires:

Questionnaires were given to students, teachers and the parents to determine the types of problems they have. The categorization of questionnaires and the relevant question numbers were as follows:

Table 3.9

Classification of questions related to objective five

Type of the questionnaire	Number of the questions
Students' questionnaire	2,3,4,5,6,10,12,13,14,15,22.
Parents' questionnaire	7,8,9,10,12,13,14,16,17.
Teachers' questionnaire	8,9,11, 14,15,20,21'22'23.

The education background of the teachers and parents has been a strong bearing to the education of the students. Therefore, the researcher examined the education and professional qualification of both the teachers and the parents. In addition, teachers were questioned about the training programmes they have followed. The following questions were focused on this field.

Table 3.10

Classification of questions related to trainings and qualifications

Type of the questionnaire	Number of the questions
Teachers' questionnaire	3, 4, 5, 6, 7,
Parents' questionnaire	1, 2, 3, 4, 5,

Observation Schedules:

Three different classes representing grade 7,8 and 9 were observed for three time table periods.

The observation schedule (appendix vii) was designed and implemented to achieve the following objectives.

- To cross check the responses given by the teachers in the interviews and questionnaires.

- To assess whether the check list of rationale for good learning materials (p.12,13) is practically implemented at operational level.

- To investigate whether the aims and objectives of the new education reforms of the state (refer p.05) are achieved at operational level.

- To investigate the problems related to learning materials at practical classroom level.

This observation is in keeping with the 4th and 5th objectives of the study. They are:

- To examine the process of preparing the learning materials in English at Junior Secondary Level.

Three different classes representing grade 7,8 and 9 were observed for three time table periods. Grade 7 and 8 classes were selected from Kegalle district and the grade 9 class was selected from Colombo district. The classroom teaching activities were observed using the 12 characteristics in the checklist. (appendix Vii).

The data was gathered in three ways. First three types of questionnaires were administered to students, teachers and parents. Then interviews were held with the parents and the personnels related to the English medium education at administrative level and operational levels, finally three classes were observed using observation schedule. The data gathered was analyzed using:

(a)   Descriptive data.
(b)   Percentages.
(c)   Charts, Graphs and tables.

3.9   Limitations

On some occasions students have not properly completed their questionnaires and therefore,the researcher had to explain using mother tongue. In addition, there were many contradictory instances when the researcher cross-checked the same issue with different groups, they gave contradictory views.

In the next chapter the researcher would present findings made in the chapter three.

Chapter Four

4.0   Introduction.

In the previous chapter the methodology related to the research study was discussed. In that chapter the ways in which data collected were discussed in detail. In this chapter the analysis of data collected is presented. The data is presented with tables, different types of graphs and charts. The important tendencies of the findings are highlighted in this analysis.

The objectives of this chapter are two fold.

(A)   Presentation of data.

(B)   Analysis of data.

The data analysis was done in relation to each objective.

4.1.   Presentation and analysis of data.

4.1.1. Presentation of data in relation to objective one.

-To identify reasons for changing the medium of instruction.

Objective one is to identify the reasons for changing the medium of instruction from Sinhala to English. It is very important to consider the views of the following parties who are actively engaged in the field of English medium education. .

(a)   The State.
(b)   Students.
(c)   Parents.
(d)   Teachers.

First an in-depth interview was conducted with the national consultant to identify the reasons for changing the medium on the part of the state. According to the national consultant, two of the major objectives are to achieve national integrity and better communication among different ethnic groups through the use of English as a medium of communication.

According to the national consultant on AMITY School Project final report, the background information for reintroduction English medium is given as a follows:

> With the introduction of Mother Tongue as the medium of instruction in late 1950s, children of different ethnic communities got segregated to Sinhala and Tamil streams in schools. They were all one community of school children. With the school getting segregated as Sinhala and Tamil medium schools and also with the instruction of Sinhala and Tamil streams in some schools, the children of the three communities got isolated and with no common medium to communicate with each other, they began to start thinking each other as competitors for education facilities, jobs and other benefits as citizens of the country and hence become suspicious of each other. Over the years the different ethnic communities started to think of their own communities and not as members of a United Nation. This led to communal uprising leading to heavy losses of lives and property. Towards the end of 1990's the need to build national unity was felt very strongly by all.
> (National Consultancy on AMITY school Project Final Report: P.01).

The Report Further states:

> It was felt that because children are very receptive to new ideas and have no vested interests, it would be easier to foster National Unity among children than among adults. Also it is easier to develop new attitudes in younger people than in the older ones. Amity school idea as a strategy to build national unity was conceived by Her Excellency the president Chandrika Bandaranayake Kumarathunga in 2001. This concept was made a reality by Dr. Tara de Mel when she assumed duties as the

secretary to the Minister of Education in 2001.
(National Consultancy on AMITY school Project Final Report: P.01).

Meanwhile, although curriculum was revised by successive governments, no significant change in the teaching field has taken place. Therefore, a bilingual policy under the proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri-Lanka was introduced.

Under the proposals the following is given as the reason for introducing English medium at Junior Secondary Level. (Proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education- 2003)

 "A bilingual policy should be introduced in Junior Secondary classes to provide an enabling environment to ensure that all students, irrespective of Socio- economics and or regional disparities have the opportunity to acquire level of English Proficiency adequate for higher Education and career development" (Proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri Lanka- 2003, p.xvii).

However, it is important to study the academic and professional qualification of the teachers and parents before analyzing the data in relation to each objective.

Table 4.1

Classification of academic qualifications of the teachers.

Number of teachers selected	10
Medium of education – Sinhala	10
Medium of education – English	00
Highest education qualification A/L	07
Highest education qualification BA	02
Highest education qualification B.Sc (Science)	01
Medium of university education - Sinhala	03
Medium of university education - English	01

Table 4.2

Classification of professional qualifications of the teachers

Post graduate qualifications	03
Master degree	00

Master Degree (TESOL)	00

Table 4.3

Classification of training programmes teachers followed

Number of teachers who followed programmes pertaining to English medium education	10
Number of teachers who followed programmes pertaining to English improvement programmes	10
Number of teachers who followed training programmes in NIE	06
Number of teachers who followed training programmes in Universities	00
Number of teachers who followed training programmes in any other institution	05

Table 4.4

Classification of duration of the courses teachers followed.

Less than 3 months	09
Between 3-6 months	00
More than 6 months	00
More than 1 year	00

Table 4.5

Medium of academic qualification of the parents

medium	No of parents
Medium of school education - Sinhala	10
Medium of university education - Sinhala	02
Medium of university education - English	01

Table 4.6

Classification of English proficiency of the parents (Number of parents)

Skill	Very good	Good	Fair	Weak
Reading		2	6	2
Writing		2	6	2
Listening		1	4	5
Speaking	1	2	3	4

The above tables (table 4.1 to 4.6) indicate academic and professional education backgrounds of both the teachers and parents. Moreover, the researcher examined the kind of trainings teachers followed pertaining to the English medium education and English language improvement programmes.

The researcher examined the above aspects because the education background of both the teachers and parents may have a strong effect on the students.

Moreover, the education qualification of the teachers determine the quality of the teaching in the English medium classes.

On balance, the researcher is not satisfied with the education and professional qualification or the training programmes the teachers have followed. In a way, the level of the student could be judged against level of education of the parents. Then one can draw a conclusion as to whether the above factors have a direct effect on the studies of the students.

To understand the reasons behind the reintroduction of the Bilingual Education, following methods were used with students and parents.

4.1.2 Interviews.

Two parents were interviewed as to why they want their children to study in the English medium. Both parents have identical answers and their responses will be discussed later.

4.1.3 Presentation of Questionnaire data

Table 4.7

Students' reasons for selecting to study in English medium.

Statement	Percentage
01. For a better future	96%
02. To improve the standard of English	42%
03. For higher recognition	38%
04. Parents forced me to do	16%
05. My friends are studying in the English medium	16%
06. It is easier than studying in the mother tongue	10%

Most of the students are aware of the role English language will play in the future. Moreover, they also understand the importance of improving the standard of the language. However, it is interesting to find out that some students find it easier to study in English medium than in the mother tongue.

Table 4.8

Parents' reasons for selecting English medium.

	Order of preference	percentage
01. For higher Education	01	70%
	02	30%
02. For better future	01	30%
	02	30%
	03	30%
	04	-
	05	10%
03. To improve English knowledge	01	-
	02	40%
	03	50%
	04	10%
	05	-
04. For higher recognition	01	-
	02	-
	03	10%
	04	60%
	05	30%
05. His / Her friends follow English Medium	01	-
	02	-
	03	10%
	04	30%
	05	60%

However, there is a strong contradiction between the goals of the stat, parents and teachers. The final report of the AMITY school project clearly indicates that the main aim of the English medium education is to bring ethnic harmony among different nations. The proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education (2003) states that the introduction of English medium education is to give the opportunity to acquire a level of English proficiency adequate for higher education and career development. But the aim of the parents and students is quite contradictory to the goals of the state. (refer to p.05, 48)

Table 4.9

Parental view of the language competency of their children.

Satisfied	80%
Not satisfied	20%

According to the parents, the reasons for not having adequate language competency are the poor exposure and the English not being the mother tongue.

It is believed that the system does not have enough qualified teachers to handle the English medium classes. The following are the reasons for teachers to become English medium teachers.

Table 4.10

Reasons for becoming an English medium teacher.

The following point scale shows the number of responses to each statement.

	Not very Important				Extremely Important
(a) There aren't any other teacher	4	5	1	-	-
(b) Principal asked me to teach	2	3	-	-	5
(c) I preferred to teach in English medium	-	-	2	5	3
(d) I did science at A/L classes.	2	-	-	4	4
(e) It is a challenge.	6	-	-	2	2
(f) Others respect English medium teachers.	7	2	-	1	-
(g) To help students	2	1	3	2	2
(h) To facilitate curriculum reforms.	1	3	-	4	2

4.1.4 Analysis.

The above presentation of the data clearly indicates that both students and parents opted to change the medium for a better future and prospects of higher education. Of the students 96% stated that the change is for better future and 42% stated that the change is for the improvement of knowledge of English. Another 38% stated that it was for social recognition and16% of students were forced by their parents to change the medium and only 10% of the sample stated that English medium is easier than the mother tongue.

In the interviews both parents gave identical answers and their responses are as follows:

(1)   In the future higher education would be limited to English medium and therefore, the parents want their children to prepare in advance.

(2)   To access to different field through use of English as a medium, especially the internet.

(3)   To improve their knowledge of English.

(4)   They believe that it is a good investment for a better future.

(5)   For higher social recognition.

But none of them wanted their children to follow English culture. They want to preserve their own culture. They want the language as a tool to get their things done in the future.

The aim of the objective one is to identify the reasons for changing the medium of instruction from Sinhala to English. For this, the views of the state, students, parents,ISAs and teachers were considered.

When the researcher analyzed the teachers' decision to become medium teachers, it is clearly shown that the most important factor was that they were requested to handle the classes by the principal. Then, teachers are of the view that doing science subjects at the advance level classes as an important factor. However, majority of the teachers do not believe that helping the students and facilitating the curriculum reforms as important factors.

Requesting by the principal and doing science subjects at advance level classes should not be the most important criteria for becoming a medium teacher. English medium education is centered around the notion of CBI and this notion is relatively new to the field of education in Sri – Lanka. But most of the teachers have not taken teaching in the English medium as a challenge. Although the teachers do not seem to have an in depth knowledge of CBI, most of the teachers prefer to teach in English medium.

The final analysis shows that almost all the teachers do not have a clear idea or an in depth knowledge of English medium education

The goals of the state are to bring ethnic harmony and teach English language through different subjects (refer to p.48). The goals of the parents and their children are similar to the State to a certain extent. The teacher changed the medium mainly because they were asked by the principal or they have followed science subject in the advanced level classes. However, on final analysis, there are strong contradictions among the students, state, teachers and parents. Each group has changed the medium for entirely different reasons and there is no agreement among the four groups.

4.2.0 Objective Two.

To identify criteria used to prepare good language materials.

This objective was achieved through Review of Literature.

In this chapter, the researcher discussed two views namely Deficiency view and Difference view. Then the importance of CBI was discussed and various definitions related to CBI was given.

Then the combinations of three theories was used to discuss the theoretical aspects of bilingualism, Comprehensible Input Hypothesis (Krashen, 1982), Interaction Hypothesis, (Long,1996) and Comprehensible Output Hypothesis (Swain,1985) were used for this purpose. The approaches in relation to Input, Interaction and Output are analyzed. The types of bilingualism were given with a special emphasis on the type of bilinguals who should be produced for the Sri Lankan context.

4.3.0 Objective Three.

To examine the suitability of existing learning materials.

The researcher examines the following types of questionnaires.

(a)   Students' questionnaire

(b)   Teachers' questionnaire

(c)   Parents' questionnaire

4.3.1 Presentation and analysis of questionnaires

Table 4.11

Students' confidence in four skills at present

The skill improved	Percentage
Writing	68%
Reading	54%
Speaking	50%
Listening	36%

Table 4.11 shows us an interesting tendency in our school education. Almost all the school examinations in Sri Lanka are reading and writing oriented and not speaking and listening oriented. Therefore, the students tend to have more confidence in reading and writing.

Although the print and activities are not attractive in compared to the international standard textbooks, most of students accept the textbooks to be attractive and interesting. The students agree with the gradient and the usefulness of the subject area to the day to day life.

One of the objectives of the reintroduction of English medium is to have more effective communication with others. Most of the students believe that the textbooks help effective communication.

At operational level, teachers are a rich source to determine the suitability of the learning materials. Therefore, it is also very important to consider the judgment of the teachers with this regard.

Table 4.12

Classification of student responses in relation to the suitability of the text books.

Statements	Good	Not good
Attraction of the print of the textbooks	64	36
Students' interest of the activities of the text books.	74	26
Grading of the activities according to difficulties	71	29
Usefulness of the subject areas to day to day life	92	8
helping for effective communication with others	73	27

The analysis of the responses shows that most of the students are satisfied with the standard of the textbooks

It is important to examine the suitability of the learning materials on the part of the teachers, and how teachers receive the textbooks. Teacher's questionnaire presents their views on the English medium textbooks.

Table 4.13

Classification of teachers' responses in relation to the suitability of the text books

Statements	Yes	No
Suitability of the standard of learning material to the majority of the class	70	30
Use of teachers' remedial measures to help less able students.	100	00
Suitability of starting English medium in grade six	100	00
Adapting the learning material to suit the students	100	00

All the teachers are of the view that the learning materials could be adapted to suit the standard of the students. The figure 4.1 on page 60 shows us the way teachers adapt the learning materials.

Teachers seem to have used many ways to adapt learning materials to suit to the heterogeneous classes.

Most of the teachers (70%) use additional materials to give an additional dimension to certain parts. Of them, most of the teachers use addition or replacement with more suitable materials to make their lesson a success. Modification and rewriting of certain materials are done by some of teachers and parts are left by nearly one third of them. Reordering and omission are done only by one fifth of the teachers.

Figure 4.1

The ways the teachers adapt the learning materials
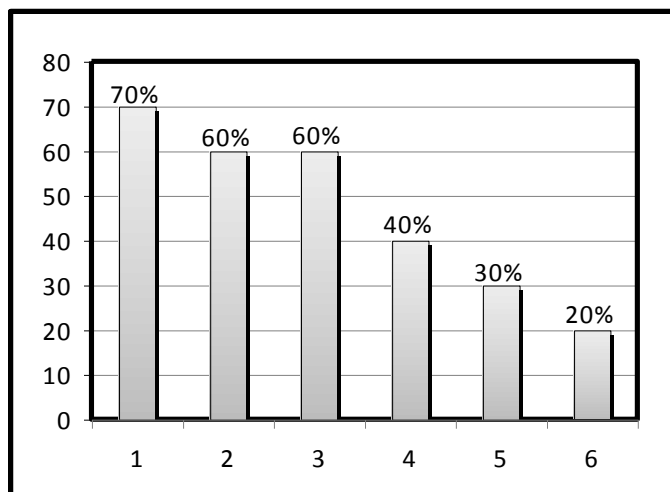
Statements

01. extension of certain parts to give an additional dimension
02. Addition to have more coverage
03. Replacing with more suitable materials

04.	Rewriting / modification of certain parts

05.	Reduction of certain parts

06.	Reordering the materials

07.	Omission of inappropriate parts

Table 4.14

Teachers' point of view of the suitability of different aspects of the textbooks

Excellent	V. Good	Good	Satisfactory	Not V. Good
-	10%	60%	20%	10%
-	20%	80%	-	-
10%	30%	50%	10%	-
-	-	40%	30%	30%
-	-	30%	30%	40%
-	10%	50%	40%	-
-	10%	50%	30%	10%
-	10%	40%	30%	20%
-	10%	40%	50%	-
-	10%	30%	50%	10%
-	50%	50%	-	-
-	10%	40%	40%	10%

1. Layout / organization
2. Print
3. Visual materials

4. Physical appearance
   of the book
5. Level of language
6. Relevance to the age
   of the students
7. Relevance to the need
   of the Students
8. Range of tasks / activities
9. Practicability of use
10. Cater to the context
11. Cater to the heterogeneity,
    different learning styles
12. Adaptability
13. Coverage of important points
14. Coverage of varied topics
    / Variety
15. Attractive presentation
16. Appealing context
17. Maximize learning
    potentialities of the students
18. Overall finish of the text
19. Guidance to teachers
20. Translations of the text
21. Achievement of
    communication through text
22. Cater to diverse interest

-	20%	50%	30%	-
-	40%	30%	30%	-
-	20%	50%	20%	10%
-	10%	40%	10%	40%
-	-	60%	20%	20%
-	-	80%	10%	10%
-	20%	30%	20%	30%
-	20%	30%	30%	20%
-	-	60%	30%	10%
-	10%	50%	20%	20%

Number of Total Responses	**11**	**31**	**104**	**55**	**29**

Table 4.15

Parental view of the suitability of the learning materials to the level of the child.

Suitable	10

Not suitable	0

It is equally important to analyze the parental view of the textbooks. The responses to the following two questions discuss their views.

Table 4. 16

Parental point of view of the suitability of different aspects of the textbooks.

Item	Strongly Agree				Strongly Disagree
a) Physical appearance is attractive	90%	10%	-	-	-
b) Print is very good	70%	20%	10%	-	-
c) Visuals (picture etc.) are attractive	60%	-	30%	-	10%
d) Child can understand the language quite easily	30%	-	20%	30%	20%
e) Child uses English language quite confidently	30%	40%	40%	-	20%
f) Child has problems in understanding some concepts	30%	30%	-	20%	20%
g) Child likes English medium subjects better than other subjects	50%	20%	10%	10%	10%
h) Child uses extra learning materials	30%	20%	10%	20%	20%
i) Child complains about certain lessons	40%	20%	10%	10%	20%
j) Subject matter is suitable to the child's level	60%	-	30%	-	10%
k) English medium text books maximize language competency	70%	-	20%	-	10%
l) Child is very interested in finding More information about the subjects	40%	20%	20%	-	20%

To determine the suitability of the learning materials on the part of the teachers the table 4.14 (p.61) is very important. The question consists of 22 parts and each of which is assessed by teachers using five major headings.

On analyzing the 22 aspects of the table on page 61, it is clearly seen that only one teacher only on one occasion has agreed that the visual materials are excellent. Apart from that no one thinks any other aspects to be excellent.

The ten teachers on 22 occasions have given (10x22)220 responses as in the table 1.14 on page 61.

Almost similar numbers of responses, 31 and 29 respectively, have been given for very good and not very good. In other words, 14.0% responses have been given in favour of very good and 13.2% responses have been given in favour of not very good. The most number of responses that is 104 (47.2%) have been given for the good category. The results show that the learning materials to be satisfactory.

Table 4.17

Teachers' view of different aspects of textbook

	Excellent	**V.good**	**Good**	**Satisfactory**	**Not very good**
Number of responses	1	31	104	55	29
Percentage	0.45%	14.0%	47.2%	25%	13.5%

On the whole 72.2% (47.2+25) of responses have been given in favour of good and satisfactory. The following bar chart show this figures in graphic form.

Figure 4.2

Suitability of the textbooks in percentages (Teachers' Opinion)
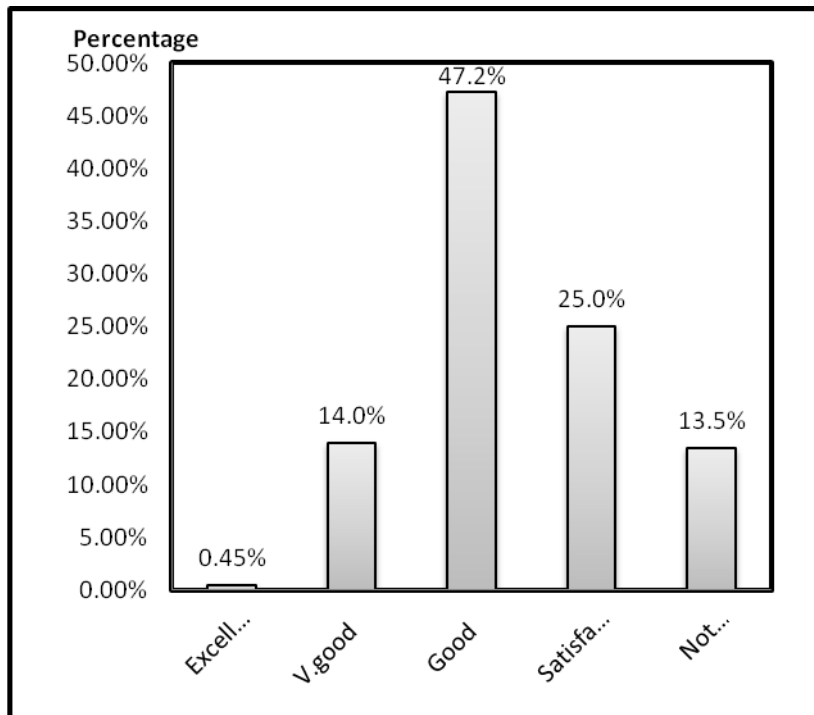
The views of the parents are also a rich source to determine the suitability of learning material

Asked whether the learning materials are suitable to the level of the children, 100% of the parents agree that they are suitable to the level of their children.

The analysis of question on page 4.16 (p .62) shows the degree of agreement of the parents.

There are 12 statements and five ratings in the point scale. Parents were asked to mark their choice in the point scale.

Half the amount of parents (50%) strongly agree with the given twelve aspects (from a to l above) of the learning materials. Only a few strongly disagree with given twelve statements. However, majority of parents have accepted that the learning materials are suitable to their children.

On analyzing three types of questionnaires, one may come into conclusion that the majority of the students, teachers and parents in general believe that the learning materials are suitable to the students.

But in the interviews, when teachers and parents were cross checked they gave some contradictory opinion about learning materials. However, when the textbooks are checked against the checklist on page 12, 13 most of the aspects that students, teachers and parents agreed with are really not visible in the textbooks.

4.4.0 Objective four

4.4. 1   Presentation and analysis of data relation to objective Four.

To examine the process of preparing the learning materials at Junior Secondary level.

The process of preparing learning materials would be analyzed from two points of view, namely how the authorities at the department level prepare the learning materials and the way teachers at operational levels adopt and adapt them to suit the standards of the students.

To find out the process of preparing learning materials, in particular the text books, the following methods were used.

(1)   Questionnaires.
(2)   Interviews.
(3)   0bservation Schedule.
(4)

4.4.2. Presentation and Analysis of Questionnaire.

Although students are not directly responsible for the preparation of learning materials two students in the students' questionnaire were focused on this objective.

Only two questions were focused on this objective.

Table 4.18

Teachers' Organizing co-curricular activities

Yes	94%
No	06%

The following is the way teachers organize co - curriculum activities (in percentages)

Table 4.19

The way teachers organize co-curricular activities

(a)	English Literary Association	32%
(a)	English Speaking Club	0%
(b)	English Societies	14%
(c)	English Camps	30%
(d)	Days such an English Day	88%

Table 4.20

Teachers explanation in English

Very good	21%
good	57%
Satisfactory	22%
Weak	0%

The results show us that most of the teachers organize co - curricular activities with regard to the improvement of English Language. Only a few teachers (06%) do not organize co- curricular activities. The English day seems to be very popular among the English teachers. The English day is usually held annually. The next popular co - curricular activity is the English Literary Association. It is clear that most of the teachers do not like to deviate from traditional path. They do not launch new ideas like societies and clubs that could be continued relatively at ease without too much intervention of the teachers. However, English camps are gaining ground. None of the teachers has organized English speaking clubs.

Table 4.20 shows us that the teacher's explanations in English is in a satisfactory level. All the students (100%) are happy about their teachers' explanations.

The objective of the questions given to teachers is to see how they prepare the learning materials at operational level.

Table 4.21

Teachers' view of ongoing teacher training programme for teaching in English medium.

Should have	100%
Should not have	0%

It is very constructive that all the teachers have understood value of the teacher training. Teaching and learning are two sides of the same coin. Therefore continuous training is an integral part of the teaching.

Table 4.22

Remedial measures taken by the teachers with regard to the less able students

Order of reference and number of choices

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
a	2	2	-	6	-
b	6	3	1	-	-
c	-	3	1	1	5
d	1	1	4	1	3
e	1	2	5	2	-
F	1	-	-	-	-

(a) Conduct extra classes for the whole class
(b) Conduct extra classes for the weak students
(c) Recommend extra tuition
(d) Inform their parents

(e) Discuss with the English teacher

(f) Any other (Please specify)

Of the teachers 60% agreed with the statement (b) as the best remedial measure for the less able students and 30% of them have chosen it as the second best option. Of all the teachers, 90% (60% + 30%) have agreed with the statement (b) as a good solution to cope with the less able students. Then 20% of them have agreed that the conducting extra – classes for the whole classes as the best solution. One has recommended extra tuition but 10% have agreed informing the parents and discussing with the English teacher as the best possible solution. 50% of them agreed with the statement (e) as the third best solution. Recommending extra tuition is the least popular of them. However, only one teacher expressed that discussing with the students may bring good result as the discussion could reveal the practical difficulties of the students.

It is vital to pay special attention to the less able students. Conducting extra classes for them is one of the remedies for them. However, teachers need not conduct extra classes for the whole class. Teachers should find a permanent solution to handle the problem of the less able students. English medium teachers need to talk to the English subject teachers and parents to negotiate with them to find out a good solution to this problem. There should be a good mechanism to motivate the students.

Table 4.23

Getting the textbooks on time during the last few years

Yes	0%
No	100%

The results show us that the textbooks have not been given on time for many years. This would open an interesting discussion as to how teachers prepare lesson plans in the beginning of the year.

Table 4.24

Teachers' view with regard to the problems they face in handling the textbooks.

Order of the importance.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
a	1	1	4	-	-	1	-	2	-	1	-
b	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	2	2	2
c	2	1	-	-	3	1	-	-	-	2	1
d	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	2	2	-	-
e	1	2	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	2	-
f	1	1	-	-	3	1	2	1	-	-	1
g	2	-	1	1	1	3	-	-	1	-	1
h	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	3	1	-
i	-	1	-	4	-	-	1	1	-	-	3
j	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	1	1	2	1
k	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	3	1	1	1

Number of the choice.

(a)   Students' subject proficiency is poor.

(b)   The time allocated is not enough to cover the syllabus.

(c)   Students do not read extra materials.

(d)   Students depend too much on the teacher.

(e)   The level of the language in textbooks is too high for the students.

(f)   Teachers do not get the TG on time.

(g)   Students have problem with technical words.

(h)   Problems with conceptualization of certain ideas.

(i)   Students have problems with grammar.

(j)   Students have problems with reading and writing.

(k)   Students analytical knowledge is poor

This table shows the number of the choices each statement has against the order of importance

The way teachers have answered shows that the complexity and the heterogeneity of the language proficiency of the students. The chart clearly indicates the differences at individual level. Only two teachers have chosen statement number (c), the effect of time factor and not having Teacher's Guide on time as their first choice. Apart from these, there is no uniformity of the choices. The necessity of individualized teaching and the heterogeneity of the English medium classes are clearly visible again.

4.4.3 Interviews.

The teachers interviewed (refer to the appendix v) were very concerned about not getting the textbooks and teaching guides on time. They told the researcher that they did not get the textbooks on time during the last few years.

In response to the question as to how did they cope with the situation, they told the researcher that they referred to the Sinhala textbooks of the previous year and manage to do the teaching. As the first term of the year is 'loaded with' co - curricular activities the teachers have some relief regarding the non-availability of the textbooks. But the first group who initiated English medium education was in great difficulty because this group had to depend entirely on the new textbooks. The reason for this is that they cannot depend on previous year textbooks as they are the first group to follow the English medium. They have to wait until the authorities send the English edition of the textbooks. Under these circumstances, teachers faced great difficulties in preparing learning materials. They told the researcher that on many occasions they took the assistance of the Sinhala medium textbooks which are freely available in the school.

The two parents interviewed were very satisfied with the textbooks. The researcher asked many questions for more clarification. At the end, they expressed that the process of preparing learning materials could be further promoted. At the same time they admitted their lack of knowledge with regard to the learning materials. (refer to the appendix vi)

In an interview with the official of Education Publication Department, the researcher learnt that the textbooks are originally written in Sinhala and then they are translated into English. There is a subject officer for each subject. The translaters together with subject. officers do the translation. The English, version of the book is produced only after the Sinhala textbook is written. This is the basic procedure of preparing learning materials at departmental level. (refer to the appendix viii)

4.4.4 Observation Schedule

The researcher selected two classes form Kegalle district and one from the Colombo district for the observation schedule. The researcher observed how the teachers prepare learning materials at classroom level. The format in appendix vii was used.

Teachers in both districts basically catered to the syllabus. They were well aware of the framework within which they have to teach.

The materials teachers prepared did not fully cater to provide opportunities to students to acquire higher proficiency. Teachers just explained the lessons without checking whether the Students comprehended the lesson. Teachers could have given the students opportunities to express themselves in both oral and written form.

At junior secondary level, visual materials play a very important role. Although the visual materials are not very attractive the teachers did not exploit them at all. The teachers hardly mentioned about them. However, no teacher presented the students with better visual material in place of the visual materials in the textbooks. If the teachers had exploited the visual materials in a meaningful way they could have maintained the interest of the students.

Teachers did not pay good attention to use authentic language in presenting the lessons. Although they are not very successful in expressing themselves they use the technical words and regislers without any difficulty.

The teachers could have used mother tongue to explain concepts that are difficult to conceptualize. Many students found it difficult to comprehend some scientific ideas and mathematical concepts even in the mother tongue. Therefore, teachers could have used mother tongue when and where necessary. On the whole ,teachers did not use mother tongue in a meaningful way in presenting their lessons.

In conclusion, guidance given by teachers is in a satisfactory level. Teachers played a very supportive role and worked hard to explain the lessons.

The researcher did not notice the use of learner support materials other than the textbooks. Learner support materials could have been used to maximum exploitation of the lesson.

There was a close relationship between the textbooks and the content the teachers taught. Teachers stuck to the textbooks and did not deviate from the theme of the lesson. However, teachers tried hard to make the students understand the lessons.

In reply to a question in the questionnaire teachers mentioned that they adapt the learning materials. But the researcher did not notice that in practical teaching – learning situation in the classroom.

Teachers did not address the heterogeneity of the students. They were not aware of the importance of individualized teaching. Although researcher found a greater degree of heterogeneity in the classroom, teachers did stick to the textbooks. However they tried hard to explain the lesson bringing down the level of the language to the level of the students. However, it is very important to address all the level of the students. Therefore, the idea of individualized teaching may be very helpful for this kind of context.

Most of the time Teachers were able to cover almost all the important points in the lesson. They adopt and adapt the lesson in the form of ignoring some less important parts and teaching the more important points in the lesson.

4.5.0 Objective five

4.5.1 Presentation and analysis of data in relation to objective five.

- To Identity the problems the teachers and the learners encounter.

The objective five is to identify the problems the teachers and the learners encounter in relation to learning materials.

This is the most important objective of the research and to identify problems the researcher used

       (a)   Questionnaire.
       (b)   Interviews with teachers.
       (c)   Interviews with parents.
       (d)   Observation schedule.

Three types of Questionnaires were administered. They were

       (a)   Students' questionnaire.
       (b)   Teachers' questionnaire.
       (c)   Parents' questionnaire.

In fact majority of the questions of all the questionnaires were focused on the problems related to the learning materials.

4.5.2.   Presentation and analysis of questionnaires.

Thirteen questions out of the total of 23 questions in the student questionnaire were focused on the problems related to the learning materials.

Figure 4.3

Holding a placement test to select students to the English medium classes
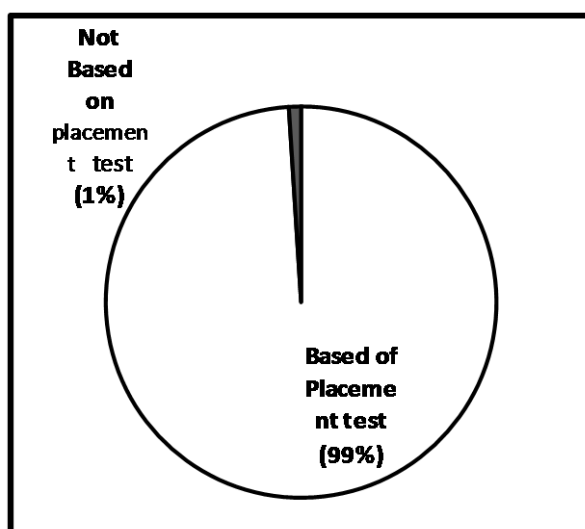
It is specifically mentioned in the new education reforms that the intelligent students from rural areas who get higher marks in grade five scholarship exams should be given opportunities to follow in the English medium. This is one of the main objectives of reintroducing the English medium. More often those students do not have a good English knowledge, although they are intelligent. When the school holds a special test to select students for the English medium classes these students often get low marks and therefore the chances of getting selected to medium classes are low. Often this test consists of test items to measure only the English knowledge. In other words, most of the schools select students only on the basis of English language competency to follow English medium education.

Another important factor is that when the new Scholarship holders entered popular schools, a good part of the studies is completed, and the newcomers feel that they are left behind.

In brief, most of the rural intelligent students do not get this opportunity because they are not very familiar with the learning materials in the English medium.

Table 4.25

Students' knowledge of English at primary level.

(a)	Very good	18%
(b)	Good	70%
(c)	Fair	12%

Knowledge of the student at primary level plays a significant role to pursue studies in English medium. The findings show that most of the medium students were good in English when they were in the Primary classes. The medium classes help them to further develop their English competency.

Most of the students (80%) admitted that the better knowledge is due to four factors.

    (1)   Use English at home.
    (2)   Good English knowledge of the parents.
    (3)   English speaking environment.
    (4)   Reading English books.

All the students (100%) who admitted that their English knowledge is poor accepted above four factors as deciding factors for the poor English knowledge.

Figure 4.4

The order of the difficulty for four subjects
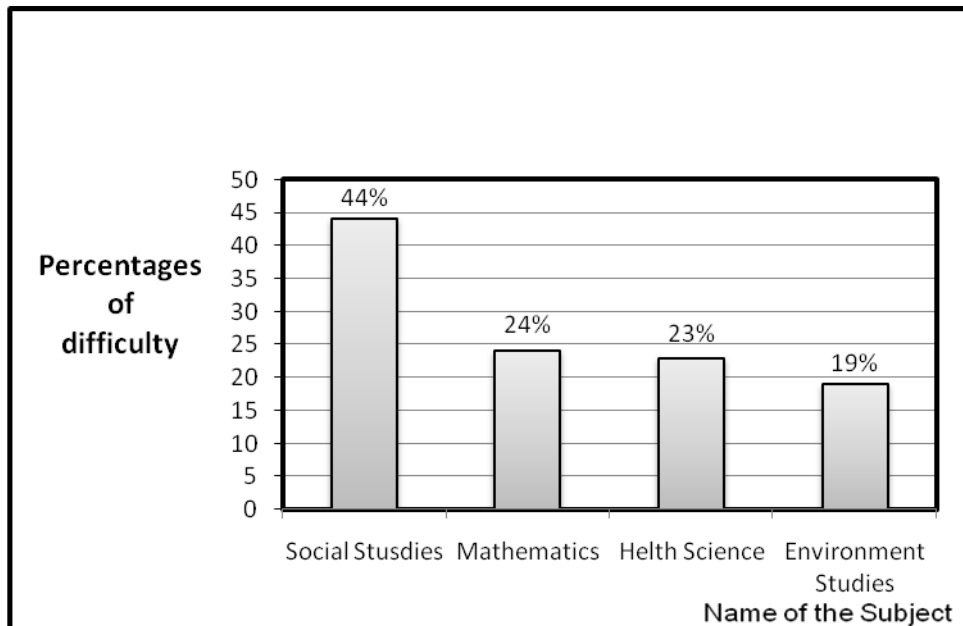
The researcher immediately checked the above results against the Sinhala medium students. Most of the students (80%) expressed that the most difficult subject is Mathematics. But for the English medium students the most difficult subject is Social Studies. This is a contradiction and therefore, it is very impotent to pay special attention to this factor.

The analysis shows us that the most difficult subject is social studies and other three subjects are relatively less difficult. The least difficult subject is environmental studies.

Table 4.26

Reasons for learning difficulties.

Subject Matter	38
Language	22
Both	10
No difficulties	30

With regard to the learning difficulties at Junior Secondary level the most difficult area is the subject matter. The language used in the text-books is not difficult. For 30 of the students both subjects matter and language are not difficult. But for 10 of the students both areas are difficult.

Figure 4.5

Attending tuition classes.
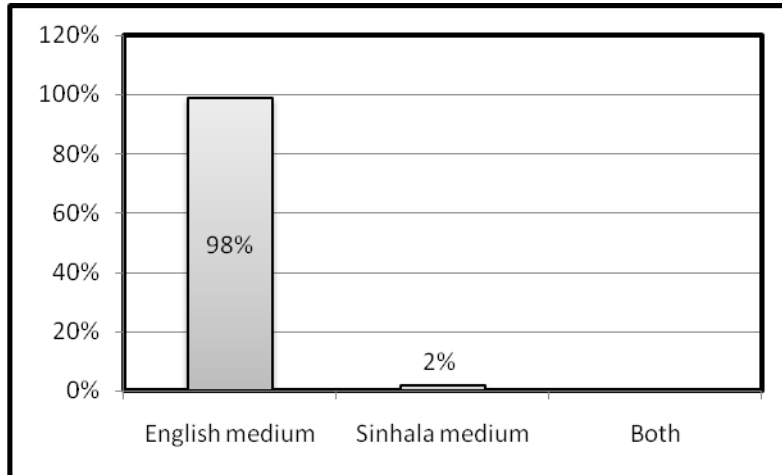
This is a good eye opener to both the teachers and the schools where English medium classes are conducted. All the students believe that attending tuition classes is beneficial. Two students of the sample of hundred students attend Sinhala medium tuition.

Table 4.27

Students' rank /position in the primary classes

Very good	71%
Good	29%
Not vary Good	0%

The students studying in the English medium classes were better at studies even when they were in primary classes.

Figure 4.6

Reading supplementary materials
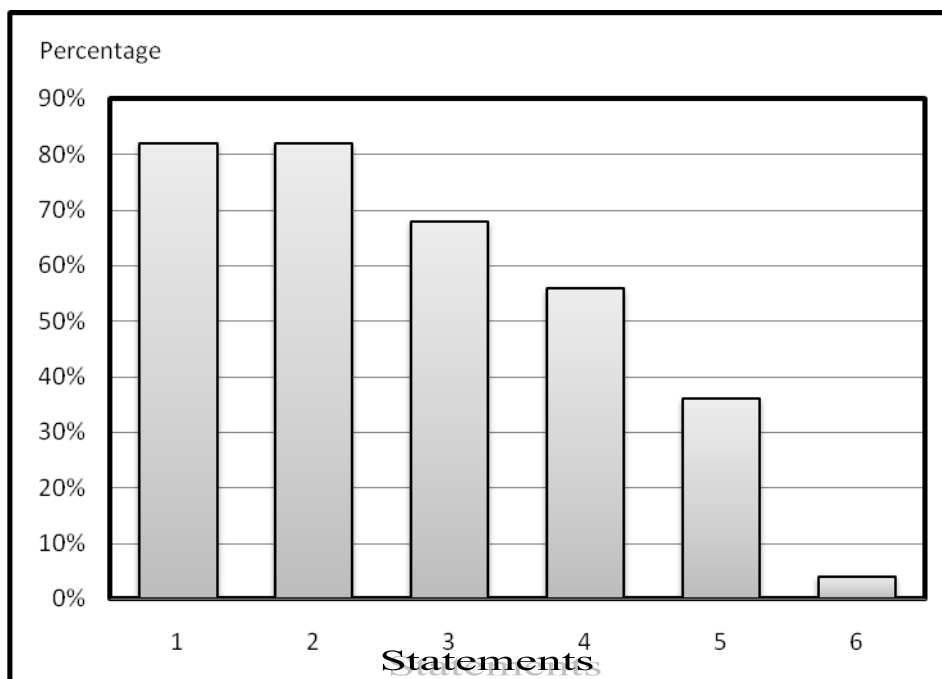
Statements.

     (1)   Go to the Library   (82%)

     (2)   From newspapers   (82%)

     (3)   Parents give them   (68%)

     (4)   Friends give them   (56%)

     (5)   Teachers give them   (36%)

     (6)   Through internet   (04%)

The students still seem to follow the traditional methods like going to the library and reading newspapers. Although students can easily access Internet only a few students take the advantages. The teachers should motivate the students to use modern technology in their studies.

Table 4.28

Following textbooks in English medium.

Easy	92
difficult	8

Most of the students do not have problems with the textbook. However, all the students attend the tuition classes.

Table 4.29

Classification of students' responses regarding the receipt and completion of textbooks.

	Yes	No
Getting the textbook on time	62	38
Completing all the lessons during last year	07	93

There is a strong relationship between getting the textbooks on time and the completion of the textbooks. The distribution of the textbooks should be made more efficient to solve this problem.

Table 4.30

The problems students face when following the textbooks.

Number of preferences / Order of preferences

Statement	1	2	3	4	5	6
a	44	20	06	12	08	10
b	32	22	18	09	10	09
c	30	19	08	12	15	16
d	22	23	10	16	16	13
e	40	21	08	14	06	11
f	37	20	14	09	07	13

Statements

(a)   Problems with technical words

(b)   General comprehension

(c)   Grammar and language

(d)   Reading

(e)   Conceptualization of ideas

(f)   Subject matter

For the students, the most difficult area seems to be the problem of technical words and the conceptualization of certain ideas is the second most difficult area. The third area of difficulty is the subject matter, not the language. The next difficult area is the general comprehension of the text. The forth difficulty is the grammar and the least difficult area for the student is the reading.

Table 4.31

Students' judgment of how the teachers handle the textbooks.

(a)	Teachers do only the text books.	26%
(b)	Sometimes teachers do not teach some areas.	60%
(c)	Sometimes teachers use new materials in place of the text books.	66%
(d)	Sometimes teachers give more information on some area.	81%

It is good to see that most of the teachers adopt and adapt the textbooks to suit the level of the students. Even the Teacher's guide advise the teachers to adopt and adapt the learning materials. Therefore, the way teachers handle the textbooks is satisfactory. However 26% of the teachers tend to depend only on the textbooks. The principals and section heads of these schools need to take measures to change this situation. Around 60% of teachers adopt and adapt learning materials to suit to the level of the students. Of them 60% do not teach some area and 66% teachers use new materials in place of the lesson in the text books. Majority of the teachers (81%) give more information on certain areas. Therefore, the way teachers handle the problems of the textbooks is in a satisfactory level.

Teachers are a rich source to decide the problems of learning materials at operational level. In the following section, the researcher analyzes the problems related to the learning materials from the point of view of the teacher.

Table 4.32

Classification of teacher responses to the questions.

	Yes	No
Following teacher training programmes pertaining to English medium education.	09	01
Following English improvement programme	09	01
Satisfy with language competency	10	0
Holding consultation sessions with other teachers	09	01

Teacher training and language improvement are two important factors for the English medium teachers in particular as this field is relatively new to Sri-Lanka. Majority of the teachers have followed teacher training programmes and English language improvement programmes. Moreover, they work in close collaboration with other teachers.

All the teachers believe that they have a good language competency. However, the researcher feels these teachers need to continue more quality training with regard to both fields.

Majority of the teachers have followed English Language improvement programmes or training pertaining to English medium education.

All the teachers seem to have problems with subject matter, and therefore, they discuss the subject matter with their colleagues. They work in collaboration with others in the following ways.

Table 4.33

Discussing with the subject teachers.

(a) To prepare lesson plans	60%
(b) To clarify problems	70%
(c) To prepare assessments	50%
(d) To prepare assignments	50%

It is good to learn that all the teachers seem to have worked in close intimacy with others to overcome the difficulties they face. Most of the English medium teachers discuss with the subject teachers in preparing lesson plans, assessment and assignments. Majority of the teachers work together to clarify problems.

The following question analyzes six problematic aspects teachers face in handling the textbooks and classroom activities. This is the way teachers have answered the point scale. The findings are given in percentages.

Table 4.34

Problematic aspects teachers face in handling the textbooks and classroom activities.

	Not Very important		important		Very important
(a) Teachers should participate in more training programmes	-	-	-	20%	80%
(b) Teachers of the area should get together and discuss the problems	-	10%	-	20%	70%
(c) Only text-books are enough	50%	50%	-	-	-
(d) Consultation programmes should be conducted with resource persons	-	-	-	40%	60%
(e) Additional reading materials should be provided to the teachers	-	-	-	30%	70%
(f) TG. and text-books should be provided on time	-	-	-	30%	70%

Table 4.34 shows us that all the teachers seem to have a very good knowledge about learning materials at operational level.

Almost all the teachers (90%) admit that their students' language competency is adequate to handle the textbooks. At the same time,. they give following reasons for the poor language competency of the student.

Table 4.35

Teachers' view of the reasons for poor language competency of the students.

	Order of preference /Number of preferences				
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
(a) The wide language gap between grade 5 and grade 6	40	40	-	20	-
(b) Home environment	60	40	-	-	-
(c) School environment is not acquisition rich	-	20	40	40	-
(d) Contents add additional language problems	-	-	60	40	-
(e) Students are not "mentally ready" for the medium	-	-	20	40	40

There is a wide language gap between the grade five and six. Most of the students in grade five are more interested in grade five scholarship examinations than the improvement of their standard of English language. Therefore, there should be a procedure to bridge this wide language gap as the teacher cannot change the home environment. Most of the teachers believe that the students in garade six are mentally ready to follow the English medium education. It is a good indicator about the future of English medium education in Sri-Lanka.

Table 4.36

Getting Teacher's Guide and textbooks on time.

	Yes	No
Getting T.G.s on time	0	10
Getting textbooks on time	0	10

Teachers face a lot of problems if they do not get the textbooks on time. However 62% of students admitted that they got their textbooks on time (refer to p.78). But all the teachers admitted that they did not get their textbooks on time. Questioning on this issue teachers expressed that most of the students do not 'feel' this because the first term is loaded with extra – curricular and co-curricular activities. However, this shows us the inefficiency of the textbook distribution. The findings show us that the texbook distribution should be made very efficient.

The following question analyzes the problems the teachers face in handling the text books. There are eleven problematic aspects of the question. They are asked to number the cage according to the order of difficulties, the most difficult aspect being the number one.

The following grid shows the way ten teachers chose their order of difficulties for the following eleven statements.

Table 4.37

The problems teachers face in handing the textbooks.

Number of preference / order of the difficulty

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
A	1	1	4	-	-	1	-	2	-	1	-
b	1	-	1	-	-	1	1	-	2	2	-
C	2	1	-	1	3	1	-	-	-	1	1
D	-	-	-	1	3	1	1	2	2	-	-
E	1	2	2	1	-	2	-	-	-	2	-
F	1	1	-	-	3	1	2	1	-	-	1

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G	2	-	1	1	1	3	-	-	1	-	1
H	1	1	1	1	-	-	2	-	3	1	-
I	1	1	-	4	-	-	1	-	-	-	3
J	-	1	1	-	-	-	3	1	1	2	1
K	1	2	-	1	-	-	-	3	1	1	1

(a)   Students' language proficiency is poor.

(b)   Students' subject proficiency is poor.

(c)   The time allocated is not enough to cover the syllabus.

(d)   Students do not read extra materials.

(e)   Students depend too much on the teachers.

(f)   The level of the language in text-books is too high for students.

(g)   Teachers do not get the T.G. on time.

(h)   Students have problems with technical words.

(i)   Problems with conceptualization of certain ideas.

(j)   Students have problems with grammar.

(k)   Students have problems with reading and writing.

Although teachers are asked to give the order of preference, the findings show the complexity of the problem. Majority of the teachers have not agreed upon a single statement as the most difficult one. Likewise, with regard to the rest of the statements, different teachers have agreed with different statements in their order of choice. The results again show us the heterogeneity of the problem. The degree of the difficulty also depends on the society and economic background of the students. Therefore, it is important to cater to the individual differences of the students.

Parents have a very intimate relationship with their children. Therefore, they are a good source to identify the problems their children encounter in relation to the learning materials.

Table 4.38

Classification of parents' responses to the questions

	Yes	No
Helping the children with homework	10	00
Parental satisfaction with the test mark	09	01
Children attending tuition	09	01
Getting textbooks on time	01	09

All the parents seem to be educated parents. They are in a position help their children with English homework. However, all the students admitted that they attend tuition classes but all the parents did not admit that their children attend the tuition classes. This is a contradiction.

Parents' questionnaire aimed at analyzing problems of the students from the point of view of their parents. Almost all the parents have expressed that they help them to comprehend the text and answer the difficult questions. Majority of the parents have admitted that they help them to conceptualize certain scientific ideas.

In this question parents were given seven options to give the order of the difficulty.

Table 4.39

Parental view of the poor test marks for the English medium subjects

(No. 1 for most important one)

(a)   The child does not speak in English at home

(b)   The child does not read in English at home

(c)   The child does not watch English programms on T.V.

(d)   The child does not have English speaking background

(e)   The school teachers are not very good

(f)   The child doesn't go for tuition.

(g)   Mother / Father does not have English knowledge

Only two out of ten (20 %) have answered this question the rest (80%) of them have not answered because they may not have any problem with any of the statements given. Two of their answers are almost identical and the first four reasons for not having very good knowledge to follow English medium were:

(1)   The child does not have an English speaking background / doesn't read English books.

(2)   The school teachers are not very good.

(3)   Mother / father does not have very good English knowledge.

(4)   The child does not watch English programmes on T.V.

Table 4.40

Areas of difficulties from the parental view

Number of preferences for each statement

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
a		1	6	1			1	1
b		2	2		2		1	3
c	4	1		2	2	1		
d	1			2		6		1
e				2			8	
f				1	2	2		5
g	2	2	2		3	1		
h	3	4		2	1			

Statement (row axis label)

(a)   Subject matter

(b)   General Vocabulary

(c)   Technical Words

(d)   Grammar

(e)   Writing

(f)   Reading

(g)   General Comprehension

(h)   Conceptualization of certain ideas

According to the table, four out of the sample (40%) have expressed that statement (c) as their first choice. In other words, technical or the special group of words which are used within a particular subject area seem to have caused much difficulties. At the same time, 3 of the parents have accepted difficulties in conceptualization of certain ideas. Some scientific ideas are totally alien to the students even in their mother tongue. Then conceptualization of certain ideas in English adds further difficulties.

The second most difficult statement is the conceptualization of certain ideas. Of the sample, 4 of the parents have agreed it as the second most difficult statement. Of them, 7 of the parents have agreed with the statement (h) that is the conceptualization of ideas as the most or the second most difficult choices of all. In other words, the most difficult problem for the students is the conceptualization of the ideas.

The third most difficult reason is the subject matter. Of them 60% have agreed on that and therefore, teachers should pay more attention to the subject matter.

Reading is the least difficult area for the students. Writing and grammar also seem to have caused less difficulties. The areas of general vocabulary and the general comprehension are neither very easy nor very difficult.

Table 4.41

Reasons for attending tuition classes

Order of preferences and the number of responses are given below

Number of preferences for each statement.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8

a		1	6	1			1	1
b		2	2		2		1	3
c	4	1		2	2	1		
d	1			2		6		1
e				2			8	
f				1	2	2		5
g	2	2	2		3	1		
h	3	4		2	1			

(a)   Students need extra knowledge

(b)   School cannot cover the whole syllabus

(c)   It helps to have an additional exposure

(d)   Tuition teachers are better

(e)   Parents force them to go

(f)   To keep engaged in studies

The most obvious reasons for going for tuition classes seem to be the statement number (a) and (b). They are:

(a) Students need extra knowledge.

(b) School teachers cannot cover the whole syllabus.

Of the parents, 40% have agreed with the statement (a) to be the most obvious reason and 30% have agreed with the statement (b). On balance, 70% of the parents have agreed with the statement (a) and (b) as the most obvious reasons for attending the tuition classes.

The second most obvious reason is the belief that the tuition classes help to have an additional exposure. Half of the parents (50%) believe it to be second most important reason for attending tuition classes.

Most of the parents (70%) still believe that the teachers of the schools are better than the tuition teachers, and that is the least important reason for sending their children for extra- tuition. The statement (e) and (f) namely force of the parents and the keeping the students engaged in their studies do not have considerable effect on extra tuition. On the part of the parents, they do not seem to force their children to engage in the studies.

Asked whether their children got the textbooks on time, majority of parents said that they got while the rest expressed that they didn't get on time.

Table 4.42

Parental view of problems with the textbooks.

Order of preference and number of choices

		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Statement	a		1	6	1			1	1
	b		2	2		2		1	3
	c	4	1		2	2	1		
	d	1			2		6		1
	e				2			8	
	f				1	2	2		5
	g	2	2	2		3	1		
	h	3	4		2	1			

(a) Text- books are not sent on time

(b) Child's subject knowledge is poor

(c) The time allocated for the subjects is not enough

(d)   Child does not read extra materials

(e)   Child too much depends on the textbooks

(f)   Child too much depends on the teachers

(g)   Teachers do not pay special attention

(h)   The level of the language in textbooks is too high for child

Most parents have identified that not getting the textbooks on time as the most problematic area with regard to the textbooks. However ,20% of the parents agreed that the level of the textbooks is too high for the child.

Only 19% have accepted that too much dependency on the teacher as the most problematic area.

There is no visible second most important problem but 30% have accepted not reading extra materials as an important reason. The third most important reason is the time allocated for the subject is not enough. Of them, 40% have agreed on this. The least important reason may seem the attention of the teachers. Of the sample, 60% have agreed that the teachers pay enough attention to their children.

But when one analyses the result, it is clear about the heterogeneity of the problem. Different parents have different problems in their order of importance. Thus, the overall aspects of teaching should be improved in Sri-Lankan English medium class-rooms.

4.5.3 Interview with teachers and parents

Two teachers and two parents were interviewed in the interview schedules. The main purpose of this is to cross check the answers they have given in the questionnaires. One teacher and one parent from each district were selected.

In the teachers' interview schedule, (Refer to appendix v) they were questioned about the problems they have with the learning materials. Basically, the answers given in

the interview have a co-relation with the answers given in the questionnaire. However, on certain occasions some contradictions cropped up. The teachers do not seem to have an in depth knowledge about the way they should adapt and adopt textbooks. Moreover, they are not aware of the heterogeneity and the ways that they could adapt and adopt to handle 'less able' students.

Two parents were interviewed to cross check the information (Refer to appendix vi). There was a considerable contradiction between the way parents answered in the questionnaire and the way they answered in the interview. After in-depth questioning they understood that there are more problems with regard to learning materials. In addition, they admitted their lack of knowledge about the textbooks to determine the quality of the textbooks.

4.5.4 Observation Schedule.

The same format (appendix vii) was used to observe the classes for the fifth objective – that is the problems related to the learning materials.

Although teachers basically catered to the framework of the syllabus, they do not seem to have an in-depth knowledge of the lesson. The teachers did not mention any interesting fact or source of information to the students.

Both schools did not fully cater to provide opportunities to acquire higher proficiency of the English language. Teachers explained the subject matter without difficulties, but on random checking of the students' writing books. The researcher understood that the level of proficiency of the students is not very satisfactory. On some occasions, the students did not even fully comprehend the question. Therefore, overall development of the language skills should be promoted to a considerable extent. However, the situation in Colombo is better than that of Kegalle.

The visual materials in the textbooks are not very attractive. The print of the pictures is also not satisfactory. Moreover, more pictures could have been included in grade six and seven for better effect. The attention and the interest of the students could have been maintained if the teachers presented the pictures in a striking way.

The teachers seem to have problems with the use of authentic language in the classrooms. Both teachers and students were good at using technical words and the

researcher understood that the students' answers are centred around the keywords, technical words and registers and not around the use of authentic language.

Most of the time, the teachers have not comprehended the role plays by mother tongue. Many problems of the students with this regard could have been solved if the teachers used mother tongue in a meaningful way.

Both teachers and students did not have problems with regard to the guidance given by the teachers. There was a good rapport between teachers and students. Moreover, students clearly understood and followed the guidance given by the teachers.

Both students and teachers were not well aware of the learner support materials. They certainly had problems with learner support materials. They relied entirely on the textbooks that are not adequate to gain sound knowledge of the subject.

Teachers had a lot of difficulties with regard to the adaptation and adoption of learning materials. In real classroom context, teachers were not aware of the idea of adaptation and adoption. Teachers have freedom to adapt and adopt the teaching materials. All the teachers are strongly attached to the textbooks. They could adapt and adopt the subject matter in the form of addition, extension, replacing, modifying reduction, reordering or omission of certain parts.

Heterogeneity is a problem for both teachers and learners. This condition is clearly visible in the English medium classes. Those who have a rich exposure could understand the lesson, but the researcher noticed some blank faces in the classrooms. They may not have understood the lesson. In the 2003 education reforms, it was clearly stated that rural intelligent children should be given more opportunities to learn in the English medium classes. But teachers do not prepare the lesson to cater to the needs of the children who come to national schools after the grade five scholarship exam. If the subject teachers work with the English teacher in close contact, these students could be better educated in the English medium classes. Sometimes, teachers used chunks of words with the key words or registers to come to the level of the students.

Teachers had problems in explaining the lessons in greater detail. They did not pay much attention to minute details. However, the coverage of the important points were done at the expense of the less important' points.

The researcher used an observation schedule to study the process of preparing learning materials at operational level. On observing the classes, the researcher learnt that teachers do not adopt and adapt learning materials to suit the students. Teachers are not well aware of the way they should adopt and adapt learning materials.

Chapter 05

5.0   Conclusions and Recommendations.

The conclusions based on the findings revealed through the analysis of obtained data will be discussed in this chapter. The recommendations are related to the conclusions and they are in keeping with each objective.

5.1   Objective One.

The first objective, that is to find the reasons for changing the medium of instruction into English could be analyzed in the light of the following points of view.

(1)   Different circulars and documents issued by the state.
(2)   The proposals made by National Education Commission-2003.

5.1.1 Conclusions.

The above documents clearly state three main reasons. First is to achieve peace among different nations. Second reason is to give opportunity to acquire a level of proficiency adequate for higher education. The final one is to give preference to grade V scholars who are admitted to English medium schools from rural areas.

The reasons behind the reintroduction of English medium should go beyond these three reasons. In Sri-Lanka, during the last few decades, the level of English knowledge of the students has deteriorated due to many reasons. Lack of well qualified teachers and teacher educators and even the lack of good books stand prominent. However, with the dawn of new millennium majority of the students, the rural students in particular, did not have a good English knowledge. Many students cannot cope with the advanced English as they did not have the basic English knowledge. However, providing good quality English should now be considered as a timely important social issue.

On the part of the students, the most obvious reasons for changing the medium are,

(a)   For a better future.

(b)   To improve the standard of English language competency. (p.52)

Most of the students are aware of the role English language would play in the future. They are aware that they need to have a good standard of English in order to have a good education. The parents also share the same ideas as the children do. They are confident that the level of English knowledge is adequate to follow the English medium education.

On the part of the teachers, the following are the reasons for changing the medium and becoming an English medium teacher.

(a)   Teachers preferred English medium.

(b)   Teachers did science subject at A/L.

(c)   Teachers like to facilitate curriculum reforms.

(d)   Teachers were asked to teach in the English medium classes by the principal.

There is a considerable contradiction between the state, parents and the learners regarding the English medium education. According to the AMITY report (refer to p.48) the purpose of the bilingual education is to strengthen the ethnic harmony among different nations living in Sri Lanka. But according to the proposals for a National Policy Framework on General Education in Sri-Lanka 2003, the main purposes of the reintroduction of English medium were to acquire adequate for higher education and career advancement. (refer to p.5) and give a good English learning opportunity for Grade V scholars who came from the rural background.

But the objectives of the state are different from those of the students and the parents. The students opted to follow English medium for a better future because the improved standard of English language offer better educational opportunities and higher social and academic recognition. The parents allowed their children to follow English medium education mainly for higher education, a better future and to improve the standard of English.

5.1.2 Recommendations.

To achieve peace among the different nations is a timely important issue. English could play the role of the link language. But still there is a segregation of the students according to their nationalities and religions.

Although the state intends to provide English education for all irrespective of socio-economic and or regional disparities, the idea seems to be far from the reality at operational levels. The luxury of English education is so far enjoyed by the students of schools in towns. Almost all those students who follow English medium education are from good economic backgrounds. National Education Commission Report clearly states that grade V scholars who come from rural background should be given a preference in the English medium classes. But almost all the schools hold a special English language test to select the students for English medium classes. This is a pathetic condition for the rural scholars who often fail at this placement test.

The state should grant better facilities for English education in the rural areas. The rural areas should also be equipped with better man power and physical facilities. Special attention should be paid for the English medium education.

With regard to the grade V scholars who come from rural backgrounds, the schools should follow a different criteria to select students. The selection should not be based on the language competency in grade V. In the course of learning they can catch up the language because they are intelligent. As they are intelligent they could be easily trained in any direction.

In addition, a special committee should be appointed to look into the short-comings at operational levels. The committee should look into the reasons as to why peace cannot be achieved through this and also why English education cannot be promoted irrespective of socio-economic and regional disparities.

With regard to the recommendations on the part of students, teachers and students, the students should be made more aware of the instrumental value of the language. The parents also should be made aware of the real depth of textbooks. Then they can have a better measurement with regard to their children's knowledge.

5.2   Objective Two.

The second objective, the criteria used to prepare good learning materials were achieved through the review of literature.

The researcher has stated nearly 20 criteria (pp. 12,13) used to consider in preparing good learning materials. When these criteria are checked against the textbooks, only some of the criteria could be seen in the present textbook series.

5.2.1 Conclusions and Recommendations.

Most of the aspects of the Sri-Lanka textbooks need to be improved in different degrees. On the whole, some aspects of the textbooks have reached a satisfactory level, but still most of the aspects need to be improved.

The textbooks are prepared in such a way that they have a framework and a syllabus. Teachers are expected to teach the syllabus within the given framework. With regard to convenience, facility and practicality, the teacher needs to involve a lot as the textbooks do not satisfactorily provide these aspects. The textbooks do not provide enough guidance to the teachers and students. The survey revealed that most of the teachers have not got the teacher's guide on time. The teacher's guide provides the guidance to the teachers. In the absence of the teacher's guide, they will have to us their own discretion or Sinhala teacher's guides in planning their lessons.

Although most of the teachers, parents, and students expressed their ideas in favor of layout, print, organization and visual materials, these aspects need to be further improved. More attractive visual materials could have been added. The number of visual materials, specially in grade six, could have been increased for more effect.

On the whole, there is not a remarkable variety of the tasks and activities. The activities do not seem very interesting in relation to the criteria mentioned in pp.12-13.. At the same time, the tasks and activities are not addressed to learners' heterogeneity and

different learning styles. The activities are not graded to address the heterogeneity and different learning styles. There is not much variety in the topics, although many textbooks are loaded with a lot of information. Although this 'load' of knowledge could be dealt in the mother tongue, it does not seem to be easy for the English medium students who have to deal with both knowledge factor and the linguistic factor.

The content and the organization of the textbooks follow the same order of the Sinhala medium textbooks. They are organized methodically using topics and sub-topics. But the English textbooks are direct translations of the Sinhala medium books. The researcher is not satisfied with the translation and the linguistic aspects of the books. The books seem far from the use of authentic language. The deep analysis of the answers given by the students, parents, and teachers clearly indicates the degree of difficulty with regard to vocabulary, technical words and registers. The analysis shows that one of the most difficult problems the students have is the problems caused by the vocabulary, technical words and registers. This causes an extra difficulty for the grade V scholars who come to medium schools in cities from the village schools.

The guidance for both students and teachers should be improved to a great extent. There seems to be a vacuum with this regard. Many teachers made complaints with regard to non-availability of the teacher's guide. On inquiring the teachers about the training and guidance given on the part of the Department of Education, they complained that the role plays by the department is very poor. The non-availability of ISAs who could express themselves in English is the critical problems for the teachers in Kegalle district in particular. The teachers have not bean provided with regular trainings. In the absence of such facilities, they said that they participate in the Sinhala medium seminars. Under this context, even the teachers face the difficulty with regard the vocabulary, technical words and register.

But when the teachers' questionnaire is analyzed, majority of the teachers have expressed that they have had teacher training programmes pertaining to the English medium education and English language improvement sessions.

This is quite contradictory to what they have expressed in their questionnaires. When the researcher questioned about this, many teachers have expressed that they did not properly understand the depth of teacher training.

When Sri Lankan textbooks are judged against the international standard textbooks, especially in the light of learning theories, the researcher is not satisfied with the textbooks

in general. However, most of the teachers and students agree that the learning materials are suitable to the grade and level. Moreover, they further agreed that textbooks cater to the learning context and are relevant to the needs of the students. Most of the facts in the textbooks have a relevance in some ways to the life and therefore, the knowledge in the textbooks is useful to the students' life.

There is some degree of difficulty on the part of the students with regard to facilitate learners' self investment. Many students find it difficult to follow the textbooks on their own mainly due to the difficulties caused by vocabulary and the conceptualization of certain scientific ideas.

It is obvious that the linguistic features of the input were not considered in preparing the textbooks as the English medium textbooks are the direct translations of the English medium textbooks. However, in an indirect manner, the textbooks may help to improve language competency especially reading and writing skills. In the present context, the researcher noticed that more and more students in medium classes try to have oral communication in their classes.

All the textbooks do not cater to heterogeneity and different learning styles. The textbooks do not have those facilities.

The researcher understood that the textbook writers have not paid enough attention to the above identified characteristics. Although most of the characteristics are found to a varying degree, the researcher is not satisfied when these characteristics are tested against the English medium textbooks.

However, strong contradictions arise when the same questions are directed to students, teachers and parents. Most of the students agreed that the textbooks are very good in many respects. Almost all the parents strongly agreed that the textbooks are of excellent level.

5.2.2 The oral interviews.

But when the same question is raised in the interviews with some clarification and cross-checking questions, both parents and teachers admitted that the textbooks are not of excellent level. This is a strong contradiction. However, majority of the teachers said that they could work with the textbooks.

When the interviews and the questionnaire of the teachers are confronted, strong contradictions aroused. This contradiction shows the lack of knowledge of the teachers about the English medium textbooks and the overall knowledge of the learning materials.

5.3 Objective Three.

Objective three is to examine the suitability of existing learning materials in relation to the criteria used to prepare the good language learning materials.

5.3.1 Conclusions.

On analyzing the students' questionnaire, it is clear that their writing and reading skills have developed. The students are satisfied with the print interesting nature, the way the activities are graded and the way the textbooks help for effective communication.

The majority of the teachers believe that the learning materials are suitable to the age and grade. All the teachers accepted that they use remedial measures to help less able students and adapt learning materials to suit the students. The main ways of adapting materials are as follows.

    (a)   Extension of certain parts.

    (b)   Addition to have more coverage.

    (c)   Replacing with more suitable materials.

The teachers were requested to respond to the 22 characteristics that should contain in the learning materials. The way teachers responded is given in page number 61. Of the sample 50% or more agreed with "Very good" or "Good" with all the statements except the statement number 4, 5 and 10. In other words, the teachers have accepted that the textbooks to be very good. Out of the 220 responses, 135 responses expressed that the quality of the textbooks is good. In other words, 61.3% teachers believed the aspects given are good or very good. Only 13.1% teachers believe them to be "Not very good".

The parents are of the view that the standards of the textbooks are suitable to the level of the child. Asked to comment on the twelve aspects of textbooks, 50% or more agreed or strongly agreed with all the statements except statement number. (d) (refer to page number 62).

The chart in the page number 62 shows more than 50% of the parents strongly agreed with the given statements. Only 13.3% parents have strongly disagreed with the statements.

The teachers, sectional heads and directors in the interviews expressed that the textbooks need some improvement. Nevertheless, on the whole, they are of the opinion that they could handle the textbooks without serious problems. Some expressed that direct translation of the textbooks help them the smooth functioning of the medium classes.

5.3.2 Recommendations.

The textbooks should be made more attractive interesting and appealing to the students.

Majority of the teachers (Table 4.13 and 4.14) expressed that the textbooks are of excellent quality. But 60% of the teachers replace the lessons with good learning materials. If the textbooks are very good it is not necessary to replace 60% of the materials. This is a strong contradiction. However, adopting and adapting of learning materials should be continued for the betterment of the students.

However, when the researcher checked the learning materials against characteristics of good learning materials, researcher feels that both teachers and parents need in depth knowledge about the quality of the learning materials.

5.3.3 Observation Schedule.

The researcher used observation schedule to study the process of preparing learning materials at operational level. On observing the classes, the researcher learnt that teachers do not adopt and adapt learning materials to suit the students. Teachers are not well aware of the way they should adopt and adapt learning materials.

5.4 Objective four.

The objective four of the study is the examination of the process of preparing the learning materials in English at junior secondary level.

5.4.1 Conclusion.

In an interview with an assistant commissioner of the Education Publication Department, the researcher learnt the Publication Department is mainly responsible for the distribution of the books.

After proof reading, the register of forward copies is made. This is approved only if certain conditions like colour balancing of the pictures, correct numbering of the pages, words, correct space between words are fulfilled.

The books are printed in large numbers. The publishers do not supply the books to the stores at one time. Instead, they supply books in small lots. There are 730 centres for distribution. The publication departments supply the books to the centres when they get the books from the publishers and this takes time. With regard to the teaching guides, they are printed at last and the publishers are not very enthusiastic of this because number of copies is lesser than the number of the textbooks. Moreover, every school uses a special form to order the books. This form is sent to the Zonal Education Office. In this form, nothing is mentioned about the teaching guide. In other words, no space is provided for the principals to mention the number of teacher guides they need. This also paves the way for the lack of availability of the teacher's guide. (refer to appendix xi)

The textbooks are originally written in Sinhala and they are translated into English. The officer in charge of translation gets experienced personnel from outside because it is difficult to find good translators at the departmental level. There is a subject officer for each subject. The translators together with the subject officer do the translation.

The translators and the subject officer have to wait until the Sinhala books are written. This delays the production of the English version.

According to a consultant in the Education Publication Department, production and distribution of the textbooks involve a lot of difficulties. So far, the publication is done by the private sector. But owing to many problems, a policy decision has been taken to produce textbooks by the department itself.

In the coming years, a larger panel to write and edit each subject will be established. Moreover, parallel panels to prepare both Sinhala and English medium textbooks will be established. This would enable the production of English and Sinhala

textbooks simultaneously. During the last few years the production of Sinhala books was followed by the production of English medium textbooks.

On analyzing, the student's questionnaire on this objective, the researcher learned that the majority of the teachers organize co-curricular activities (P. 66). But teachers seem to follow the traditional ways of organizing activities. The most popular is the English day (88%) which is held annually. The English literary association is held by 32% of the schools. No school has organized English speaking clubs and only a few schools have English societies.

Most of the students are happy with their teachers' explanations in English. 21% of the students feel their teachers' explanation is very good and 57% of them think that it is good. The rest (22%) think the explanations in English is satisfactory. Therefore, the teachers should continue the way they explain their subjects.

Majority of the students (63%) are not satisfied with the visual materials in their text books. Therefore, more attractive visual materials could be included in the text books.

All the teachers(100%) feel that there should be an ongoing teacher training programme for the English medium teachers. The non availability of such a programme affect the teachers in adopting and adapting textbook materials. Therefore, such programmes should immediately be introduced to the system.

From the teachers' point of view, preparing learning materials for the less able students plays an important part because these students should be facilitated in a special way.

Majority of the teachers feel conducting extra classes for the less able students is the remedy.

Teachers were asked to comment on the problematic aspects they face in handing the textbooks. The teachers have agreed with different statements and the way they agreed shows the degree of the heterogeneity of the problem in the Sri-Lankan context. The problems seem to be individualized and the solutions to these problems should be dealt at individual levels. (Refer to p. 84)

Three classes from grade 7, 8, and 9 were observed for three time table periods. The teachers did not adopt or adapt the lesson at all. There was not a very noticeable difference between the textbooks lessons and the way the teachers taught in the classes.

Parents' opinions of the textbooks (p.62) show that most of the parents have generally agreed or strongly agreed with the given twelve aspects of the textbooks.

5.4.2 Recommendations.

The schools should take steps to use more innovative activities that facilitate the use of text-books. Teachers must not depend on the traditional types of activities like English days and literary associations. Schools should organize societies, clubs and camps at regular intervals so that students could get involve in learning English throughout the year. This is also a way of preparing learning materials because learning does not involve only the printed materials. The way teachers organize the activities outside the textbooks in a way limit the learners' potentialities.

The teachers have to make plans in the beginning of the school year to complete the text within the given framework of time. The textbooks should be adopted in such a way that the teachers could finish the textbooks within the year. Otherwise, the cumulative effect taking place on the part of the inefficiency and bad planning of the teacher would make the students less knowledgeable in the long run.

Preparing learning materials for the less able students is an important issue to be concerned. Teachers are not well aware whether the extra classes would help them. Instead teachers should have long term plans through which the less able students can stand by themselves. The subject teachers could work more closely with the language teachers and teachers can have consultation sessions with them in order to find out the specific problems of the students. Teachers should lead the students in such a way that they use their brains in an efficient way. The students should not be programmed or trained but be led for independent learning.

The teachers seem to have different problems with regard to the different students. In other words, the problems seem to be individualized. Therefore, the measures to promote the level of English language, the following steps should be taken at departmental level. The state could appoint a special committee to look in to these aspects. The problem is more severe in the areas away from Colombo. Therefore, these aspects should be addressed paying special importance to them. Overall promotion of these aspects is expected.

(a)   Language proficiency.

(b)   Subject proficiency.

(c)   Time factor to cover syllabus.

(d)   Extra learning materials.

(e)   Students' dependency on teachers.

(f)   The high level of some textbooks.

(g)   The problems with teacher's guide.

(h)   Problems with technical words.

(i)   Problems with conceptualization.

(j)   Problems with grammar, reading and writing.

On analyzing the parents' questionnaire in depth, almost all the parents are of the view that there is no need for special changes. Only a few responses are given in favour of 'strongly disagree'. When the researchers examine the education qualifications of those parents he learnt that they are better academically qualified and have more exposure into the field of education.

However, in the interview with the parents they were cross-checked and backed up questions were raised. Then parents' final comments are quite contradictory to the comments given in the parents' questionnaire. On the whole, they arrived at the conclusion that;

(a)   Physical appearance could be made more attractive.

(b)   Print could be promoted using bigger letters, proper letter spacing and using attractive pictures in between paragraphs.

(c)   Some concepts could be made more easy so that the child could understand them easily.

On the part of the Education publication Department, it is essential to implement the steps taken for efficient writing, editing and distribution of the textbooks. The implementation of parallel panels would definitely help to produce English medium textbooks simultaneously with the Sinhala textbooks. The department should also consider to produce and distribute the teacher's guide in a very efficient manner.

5.4.3 Observation Schedule.

With regard to the observation schedule, the researcher would like to make the following recommendations:

First, teachers should prepare learning materials to provide opportunities for the student to acquire higher proficiency. Teachers should adopt and adapt materials to meet the above requirements as this is specially mentioned in the new education reforms – 2003. In grade six and seven in particular, visual materials should be exploited for maximum effect and more attractive pictures should be used in the place of the textbook pictures.

Teachers should try to use authentic language and they should not forget the important role plays by the mother tongue.

The use of the learner support material is another aspect to be concerned. If teachers use meaningful learner support materials they could address the problem of heterogeneity.

Teaching should be well organised as the heterogeneity is a major problem in any English medium class.

Several interviews were held with different people involved in the field of English medium education at the operational level. (refer to appendix v, vi, vii) The ideas expressed by them agree with the ideas expressed in the questionnaires. However, their conclusion and recommendations could be summarized as follows:

(1)   There are too many difficult words and the introduction of these words could be done gradually.

(2)   Conceptualization is a problem and the mother tongue could be used when conceptualization becomes difficult for the child. The lesson could not be carried out successfully in the absence of conceptualization.

(3)   In some textbooks the size of the letters and letter spacing should be made more appealing.

(4)   Sometimes translation sounds artificial.

(5)   Age factor of the students and the time factor also should be taken into consideration when preparing the textbooks.

(6)   In the lower grade classes, it is very important to bring down the   subject matter and language level so that everybody could   understand.

(7)   Sometimes the students need mother tongue explanation.

(8)   More and more interesting activities should be added to the textbooks.

(9)   There should be a gradual gradient to the activities.

(10)   Linguistic factor also should be taken into consideration when preparing English   medium textbooks. Then textbooks can help effective communication.

5.5   Objective Five.

The objective five of this study is to identify the problems the teachers and learners encounter in relation to learning materials.

5.5.1 Conclusions.

The problems with the learning materials seem to be multifaceted for both the learners and teachers. The learners with good basic English knowledge at primary levels seem to cope with the subject well. The most difficult subject for the grade six students is the subject Social Studies. (Refer to the page number 75) The most difficult area is the subject matter, not the language. Of the sample, everybody attends tuition class to fill the vacuum taking place on the part of the school education. Both schools and tuition classes do not offer adequate knowledge for the students. Therefore, all the students read supplementary materials. The researcher is satisfied that most of the teacher adopt and adapt the learning materials. However, most of the students have not completed their text books during the school year. On analyzing the teachers' questionnaire, they also seem to have many problems of which some teachers are not aware of. However, majority of the teachers have participated in the training programmes, language improvement programmes and consultation sessions.

Compartmentalization of knowledge is another problem they have. The teachers' language proficiency is not adequate to express themselves in their English medium subjects. Most of the teachers (90%) admit that their students' language competency is enough to handle the textbooks. But when cross-checked and discussed with the students, the researcher found out that many students do not seem to have the language competency. From the teachers' point of view the learners' difficulties arise from the wide gap between the grade five and six, home environment and not having acquisition rich school environment. Most of the teachers believe that the content does not add a considerable degree of difficulty, but when questioned, students admitted that the content itself leads

them into difficulties. For instance, some scientific concepts seem to make problems even in the mother tongue.

All the teachers admit that they did not get their teacher's guide and textbooks on time. 62% students admit that they got their textbooks on time. On inquiring about this contradiction, teachers said that the students are not well aware of this factor as they have a lot of extra-curricular activities in the first term.

Given an opportunity to mention the order of the difficulty in the teachers' questionnaire, majority of the teachers do not agree upon a single statement. This shows the complexity and heterogeneity of the problem. (Refer to p. 84).

On analyzing the parents' questionnaire the researcher found out that all the students have difficulties in handling the problems of their own. Therefore, all the parents help their children. Most of the parents are happy with the test marks. Almost all the parents (90%) admitted that their children did not get their English medium textbooks on time during the last few years.

The lack the of acquisition rich environment, the short-coming of the teachers, lack of language knowledge of the parents and not watching English programmes on T.V are the most obvious reasons for the weak performances of the students. (refer to pp.88, 89)

Nearly half of the parents (40%) feel that the technical words put their children into difficulties. In addition, conceptualization of certain ideas is also a problem. Majority of the students go for tuition. The parents encourage tuition for extra knowledge and additional exposure because they believe that the school cannot cover the whole syllabus.

During the observation sessions the researcher learnt that teachers have many problems with regard to the textbooks at operational level. Teachers do not have an in depth knowledge about the subjects.

It is a timely important factor to provide opportunities for the student to acquire higher proficiency of English. The proficiency in English of both teachers and learners in Colombo is better than that of Kegalle.

Almost all the teachers did not pay due attention to the pictures. Pictures provide a rich source of information.

Teachers have not fully understood the importance of using mother tongue when and where necessary.

The students are not aware of the learner support materials other than the textbooks.

Teachers are expected to adopt and adapt learning materials but researcher noticed most of the teachers are not aware of these aspects and they simply followed the textbook. If teachers adopt and adapt textbooks they can handle the problem of heterogeneity to a considerable extent.

5.5.2 Recommendations.

In order to enhance English medium education at Junior Secondary Level the pre-requisite is the Primary English Education. The language gap between grade five and six should be bridged. A good primary English education should be enforced on the primary children and the state should take steps to provide them with facilities like qualified teachers and better physical resources.

The level of the textbooks in grade six should cater to the language competency of the children. The level of the subject Social Studies in grade six in particular should be made simple in order to make the subject more interesting. The level of the subject matter also should be brought to a level that could be dealt with ease for the grade six students who are relatively new for the subject.

The school should provide quality input for the learners which could stop them attending the tuition classes. However, both students and parents are not satisfied with the work of the schools and tuition classes. Students need supplementary materials for further knowledge. Therefore, the Education Publication Department has to take step to publish more and more quality learning materials in addition to the textbooks. In the meantime it is good if the state encourages the private publishers to print good quality learning materials. Moreover, the schools also suffer from the problem of not completing the textbook by the end of the year. This problem arises partly due to the inefficiency taking place in the process of the distribution of textbooks.

Teacher training, language improvement programmes and consultation sessions with the subject teachers should be made to continue at school level and zonal level. The state also should look into the problem of the non-availability of adequate number of resource persons particularly in the areas away from Colombo. Moreover, the teacher training programmes should enhance both the language proficiency and subject knowledge.

The teachers do not seem to have in depth knowledge about the problems students encounter with regard to learning materials. Therefore, the teachers should be introduced a system of testing and evaluation by which the student's real knowledge could be tested.

Better education for both teachers and parents would make homes and schools better acquisition rich environments. This, in turn, helps the students. However, parental education is totally a different issue for which the state cannot hold the responsibility.

Many teachers do not believe that the content is a problem for the learners. But the majority of the students believe that content makes more problems than language. This is a strong contradiction. Therefore, teachers have to talk to the students and should have their judgments on   lessons. Tests could be held at regular intervals to test the students' knowledge. Counseling sessions could be arranged so that students can talk to their teachers with regard to the problems arising from the learning materials.

The teachers should cater to the heterogeneity of the students. The individualized teaching is very important to deal with the heterogeneous classes. In teacher trainings, the teacher trainers should cater to this and in turn teachers should be more vigilant to the problems at individual levels.

The parental views show that the learners need consultant help from outside. Many of the learners unnecessarily depend on outside sources. Therefore, both the school and home should take steps to promote independent learning.

Those who have low test scores need to be involved in language learning for better future performance.

Both the use of technical words and conceptualization of certain ideas are problematic areas for the children. There should be a special way to deal with technical words. It is better if the teacher could deal with the technical words separately. In grade six books, the teacher could use the mother tongue to deal with the technical words. In the mean time, special workshops could be arranged to deal with the problematic areas of conceptualization. In these workshops subject teachers could work with the English language teacher. When necessary the mother tongue could be used to explain difficult areas.

The parents encourage tuition mainly because most of the schools cannot complete the textbooks. Therefore, all the schools should find ways to complete the textbooks. The

schools should put pressure on the Education Publications Department and other relevant authorities to send the textbooks to the schools on time.

Teachers should be given an in depth knowledge of the subject matter in order to teach the subject in a better manner. The school should provide more opportunities for the students to promote their proficiency of the English language. Both teachers and students away from Colombo should understand that their knowledge is not as good as that of Colombo.

Teachers should understand the importance of the illustrating and the pictures should be exploited in grade six and seven in particular. It is important to replace the pictures in the textbooks with better pictures.

In explaining some scientific ideas and mathematical concepts, use of mother tongue plays a significant role. Therefore, the teacher could use the mother tongue to conceptualize difficult areas in mathematics and science in particular.

Teachers have to make the students aware of the learner support materials. Students should at least learn to use Internet for more learner support materials.

The textbooks should be adapted at classroom level in order to suit them to read classroom context. Teacher could adopt and adapt in the from of reduction, reordering or omission of certain parts. Through adaptation, the teacher can handle the problem of heterogeneity to a certain extent. However, the teachers should learn the ways to handle this problem because heterogeneity is one of the most difficult problems in the real classroom context.

However the analysis of table 4.1 to 4.6 (pp 47-48) shows us that the teachers knowledge factor also should be improved. Generally the academic qualifications of the teachers are not enough to handle the classes in an effective manner. Moreover, the parent with good academic background could help their children

5.5.3 Suggestions for future research

Data analysis reveals that the quality of learning materials (textbooks) at Junior Secondary Level could be further developed. Due to various constraints the present set of English medium textbooks at Junior Secondary Level has many shortcomings. Moreover, there exists a dearth of human and physical resources in handling the prescribed English medium textbooks.

An alternative approach to improve the standard of the textbook could be suggested. The authorities should consider the rationale for good learners in the process of preparing textbooks.(refer to pp.12, 13). Instead of translating Sinhala textbooks into English textbooks, parallel panels could be employed to write textbooks. In brief, the following factors could be considered when designing the future textbooks.

1. The rationale behind preparing the textbooks should improve language skills through other disciplines.
2. The textbooks should be appealing to the age and the interest of the target group.
3. The Sri Lankan English medium textbooks should address the heterogeneity of the target group.
4. Content pertaining to other disciplines should not be highly subject specific.
5. Teaching methodologies and suggested activities should facilitate language improvement of the learners.
6. The aims and objectives of the state, learners and also the parents should be considered in preparing textbooks.

The proposed project should initially be piloted under the supervision of the experts. The standard of the textbooks and teaching methodologies could be improved faced on the feedback collected from the pilot project. However, further researches are needed to analyze the problems related to learning materials at Junior Secondary Level in Sri Lanka.

Conclusion

However, the problems continue to take place even if all those precautions have been taken. In 2008, a special letter was issued by Education Publication Department mentioning the problems and promising not to permit the above mentioned problems (refer to appendix xii)

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Appendix I

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Appendix II

STUDENT'S QUESTIONNAIRE

General Information.

    a) Class.

    b) Gender (male/ female).

    c) School.

(1)   Why did you select to study in the English medium? Tick the relevant box/boxes.

a) It is easier than studying in the Mother tongue.

b) For higher recognition.

c) My parents forced me to do so.

d) My best friends are studying in the English medium.

e) For a better future.

f) To improve the standard of English.

(2) Was there a placement test to select the students?

Yes / No

If 'No', how were you selected?

a) Oral test   b)   Based on the previous year end term test   c)   Based on SBA

(3) My knowledge of English at Primary level,

a)   Very good   b)   Good   c)   Fair   d)   Satisfactory   e)   Weak

If 'Very good / Good', number the reasons according to the order of preference.