

**An Investigation into English Medium Education**

**in  
Sri Lanka  
with**

Special reference to  
**Content Based Instruction**  
at  
**Junior Secondary Level.**

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirement  
for the degree of Master of Education in TESOL.

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## Abstract

The aim of this study is to examine recently re introduced English medium education at junior secondary level. The teaching learning process in English medium education and teacher education programmes implemented to this effect are investigated into in this study.

The title of this research; an investigation into English Medium Education at Junior Secondary Level with special reference to Content Based Instruction (CBI) was specially selected as the statement of problem, due to two reasons .

1. To study the classroom practice in English medium education.
2. To suggest recommendations to improve the teaching learning process in English medium education at junior secondary level.

The abrupt introduction of English medium education, lack of competent teachers in schools to teach the prescribed subjects in English medium, the absence of a proper on going and post supervision scheme for evaluation too were other reasons that compelled the researcher to select the topic.

The study was carried out in relation to four objectives.

Content Based Instruction (CBI) is one of the approaches used widely in teaching English as a second language in different parts of the world. Hence selected methodologies and approaches in teaching English as a Second language in different context were surveyed in the literature review. One of the objectives of the literature review was to explore possibilities of such second language teaching methods and approaches in teaching Content Based Instructions at Junior Secondary level. The sample of this study was ten schools where English Medium Education was implemented. Twenty questionnaires were administered to twenty teachers and out of them fifteen questions were selected for analysis.

Following data gathering instruments were used in collecting data.

- Two questionnaires.
- Two observation Schedules.
- Two written classroom Scenarios
- Analysis of syllabus documents prescribed for National Colleges of Education where teacher training course for English medium is available.
- Analysis of follow up activities of selected textbooks prescribed for English medium education

One questionnaire was administered to a sample of fifteen teachers in service. The questionnaire had four sections; section one collected data on teachers' language competency

and their professional skills. Sections ii and iii investigated into the present teaching & learning process in English Medium Education.

The same questionnaire with slight alternations was administered to the novice teachers of the College of Education where teacher training course in English Medium Education has been implemented. Third instrument was two recorded classroom scenarios.

One scenario illustrated the existing classroom practice and the other one illustrated the proposed classroom practice based on findings and research evidence in literature review. These two scenarios were given to a sample of fifteen teachers and were instructed to select the best teaching approach suitable for Content Based Instruction and then, to justify the choice.

Classroom practice in English Medium classes was examined in relation to an observation schedule. The objective of this observation schedule is to identify the approaches and methods adopted by the teachers in English Medium classes and then to suggest recommendations to improve the standard of classroom practice. Theories and research evidence presented in the survey of literature were incorporated into the observation schedule.

Syllabi for general methodology, teaching of English as a second language and Educational Psychology implemented in National Colleges of Education were examined. The objective of this observation was to examine if the prospective teachers who are to teach prescribed subjects were educated about the psychosocial aspects of teaching English as a second language

Follow up activities of selected text books were examined in relation to a check list. The objective of this analysis was to examine if there are strategies in the text books to promote interactive learning and thereby learner autonomy

The last chapter of the study includes conclusions and recommendations based on the analysis of data collected. Suggestions and recommendations are made under following areas.

1. Teacher Education in CBI.
  2. Classroom Practice in CBI.
  3. Instructional Materials.
  4. On going and post supervision in English Medium Education.
- Curriculum developers, material writers, and the teachers who are involved in English medium education have not been educated about objectives of reintroducing English medium education.
  - There is a dearth of teachers to teach the prescribed subjects in English medium.
  - Teachers who are presently involved in teaching are incompetent in using English as the medium of instruction.
  - Teachers lack required professional skills in teaching CBI.

- Lecture mode has been the frequently used teaching strategy in the classes observed.
- Ensuring learner autonomy through interactive learning takes place to a lesser degree in the teaching learning process in English medium education.
- Layout, presentation of course content and follow up activities of text books are not in keeping with the aims of English medium education.
- There has not been a partnership between the teachers of English and the subject teachers in designing curriculum, preparing instructional materials, designing teaching approaches & strategies in teaching.
- There is not a proper mechanism to monitor and evaluate the present teaching learning process in English medium education.
- Teacher education programmes implemented need restructuring.

Following recommendations were made based on the findings presented

- All those who are involved in English medium education should be educated about aims and objectives of reintroducing English medium education.
- Course components of teacher education programmes for English medium education should be restructured incorporating selected second language teaching theories and approaches. (These approaches are surveyed in the survey of literature).
- Interactive learning through pair work, group work, projects and assignments should be introduced to the classroom instead of lecture method which is frequently used.
- Opportunities should be provided for the learner to use language while learning subject matter.
- Subject teachers should be educated about theories and approaches in Teaching English as a Second Language and teaching English as a Foreign Language.
- Text books should be rewritten to suit the aims of reintroducing English medium education; to facilitate improving language skills through other subjects
- A partnership should be developed between teachers of English and the Subject teachers.
- Opportunities should be provided for the teachers to share teaching experience.
- A proper evaluation mechanism to assess the present teaching learning procedure in English medium education should be introduced to the system.
- Infrastructural facilities like decentralizing teacher education programmes, printing and distributing books on time, providing supplementary materials for teachers and pupils are also essential.

These issues will be dealt with in detail in the forthcoming chapters.