

The Role of Text Book and Digital media in ESL Classrooms: An Analysis of Grade 11 Text Book and Its Impact on Teaching and Learning

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In post-war Sri Lanka teaching and learning English is given more importance than other subjects. Having realized the importance of learning English as a Second Language to survive in the global village, the government of Sri Lanka has taken several measures to improve the English language competency even in the rural areas of Sri Lanka. Colourful text books have been designed and issued to the school children. Since present generation is interested in digital media and as a part of the digital world, the usage of digital media is thoughtfully incorporated in the text books. Even though the text books contain activities dealing with digital media, and the government spends a lot of money on designing and distribution of the textbooks, only a limited number of students pass English in public examinations like O/L and A/L. This lack of performance of the students in the examinations, despite the introduction of digital media, poses the following questions. Is there any mismatch between the textbook and the way of its utility by the teachers as well as the students? How the digital media is used in ESL classes? Having these questions in mind this study is endeavoured to analyze whether the usage of text book and the digital media has an impact on the O/L results of the students. This research study was carried out in a rural school situated in Jaffna district. Participants for the data collection of this study were thirty Grade-11 students from a particular school and ten teachers who teach English for O/L students in different schools. Two questionnaires; one for the teachers and the other for the students and an observation protocol were used as research instruments. The result revealed that even though all the students are issued with text books, hardly anyone brings it to the school, as the teachers hardly use the text books especially in the O/L class. The classes are exam oriented. The students like to do activities using digital media, but the teachers focus mainly on activities which are expected in the exam paper. On the whole the usage of text book and digital media is neglected in the O/L classes. As language learning cannot be accomplished by memorizing, exam oriented teaching fails to improve the performance of the students in the O/L examination.

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