

A Study into the Implementation Related Problems of Bilingual Education in Sri Lanka

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Bilingual Education (BE) started in Sri Lanka in 2001 is still in its infancy. The percentage of Bilingual schools in Sri Lanka is 17.5 and this indicates that its progress is slow. Reasons for this slow progress are worth studying. BE is a new initiative in Sri Lanka and therefore teachers face many problems when it is put into implementation in classroom environments. Some of these problems cannot be solved by teachers or the school itself. They need effective supportive mechanism to help them to solve the problem. This research is an attempt to understand the problems faced by the teachers and the problems encountered by the supportive management network in the country, in order to support in effective implementation of BEP. In depth interviews with 16 BE teachers who teach Science and three top level educational managers responsible for the implementation of BE were carried out. The data gathered were analyzed making use of qualitative data analyzing techniques. Findings revealed that the major problems teachers face were: a) unavailability of curricular materials on time, b) lack of training on CLIL, C) lack of quality teaching materials.

Analysis of data related to top level educational managers revealed that there were lack of communication among different institutions, absence of written policy for bilingual education and in adequacies in qualified professionals to conduct teacher training programs.

It is recommended that introduction of a written policy document is a necessity with proper communication and coordination in the implementation, recruitment of qualified professionals and keeping them in a proper carder are essential for the upliftment of BE in Sri Lanka. Formalizing the distribution procedure of the textbooks, organize the training programs for teachers to introduce CLIL teaching strategies and provision of reference materials are the recommendations to address problems of teachers of Bilingual Education.

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