FIRST LANGUAGE BASED BILINGUAL EDUCATION, SRI LANKA

NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
For Widening Horizons of the World of Work through Bilingual Education

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The Mode Available and the Mode Desirable

Influential Facts behind Sri Lankan Bilingual Education (SLBE)

History of SLBE

Objectives of SLBE

What has been done

Major linguistic Achievements expected through SLBE

School based BE Development Program

Sri Lanka Friendly BE Curricular Model

In terms of using languages as media of instruction

BE & BE Curriculum

ME & ME Curriculum

According to the statistics of 2012
- 937 schools
- Teacher-population: 3495 (Grade 6-11: 2802, Grade 12-13: 693)
- Learner-population: 63,514 representing 2.71%

Government school system

Private Education

Government Assisted Private Schools
English (Phillipson 2008):
- Lingua academica:
- Lingua bellica (military conquest)
- Lingua cultura: cultural factors in exploration
- Lingua economica: the globalization imperative
- Lingua emotiva: (film industry, advertising and music)

Fallacies behind English medium education reflecting linguistic imperialism in postcolonial education policies (Philipson, Linguistic Imperialism – 1992)
- The monolingual fallacy
- The native speaker fallacy
- The early start fallacy
- The maximum exposure fallacy
- The subtractive fallacy

(LINGUA TYRANNOSAURA: Linguistic cannibalism & Linguistic genocide)
- Any monolingual (even in English) education widens the gap between global ‘Haves’ and ‘Never-to-Haves’
- Monolingualism alone: inadequate today in any politically powerful language in any context
- Necessity:
  i. ability to address one’s local linguistic capital and global linguistic capital
  ii. without being blotting sheets of the west

English today
- Global in terms of Global English Paradigm: with assimilationist perspectives through monolingual orientation for subtractive purposes
- International in terms World Englishes Paradigm: with additive aspects through multilingual or bilingual orientation with a high prestige for local languages

National identity:
“One of the fundamental reasons for the economic failure of post colonial Africa South of the Arabic Zone is the fact that, with a few important exceptions, mother tongue (home language) education is not practised in any of the independent African states.”

(Neville Alexander, at the University of Cape Town)
'As children abandon their native language, important links to family and other members of the social infrastructure are gradually weakened and lost altogether. Parents are hampered in their ability to pass on family values and cultural traditions to their children. As the nation struggles to reverse an increase in the incidence of family dissolution, schools must do more to establish or strengthen the family as a unit. Encouraging the preservation of the first language is a step in that direction.'

(Wong Fillmore, 1991)

...The [Students'] ability in their native language [Sinhala/ Tamil] must be nurtured. ...Aside from its linguistic value, the child's first language is critical to his/her identity. ...

(Gustavo Gonzalez & Lento F. Maez, 1995, Advance in Research in Bilingual Education p.1-2)

**National Objectives in Sri Lanka:**

- To develop social harmony & social cohesion in a pluralistic society using English as a link language in global & local contexts
- To provide opportunity for all students, irrespective of socioeconomic & regional disparities, to acquire proficiency of both the first and English without devaluation of national and official languages, Sinhala & Tamil.
- To enable students to use English as a source and means to reach knowledge society through information literacy
- To link academic aspects with socioeconomic political and cultural aspects of the world of work through national languages & the link language at local & global level.
“Bilingualism should be promoted by using English as the medium of instruction in selected subjects such as Mathematics, Science, Technology including Computer literacy, Social Science in secondary grades, year by year from Grade 6, depending on the availability of teachers. It is expected that students will reach an acceptable level of proficiency in English at the end of junior secondary education without jettisoning Sinhala and Tamil which will continue to be the medium of instruction in selected subjects.”

- Overall language focused objective: Balanced Bilingualism cum Functional Bilingualism for Instrumental purposes with Balanced Biliteracy.

- Additive purpose (adding a second language and cultural affiliation to students’ repertoires & assimilative purpose) to empower students not subtractive by replacing students’ primary language and cultures in the process of assimilating them to the culture of the English.
National Objectives in Sri Lanka

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General Objectives of the Project in BE at the NIE:

- To upgrade and update quality of BE.
- To enhance quality of learning material available on BE.
- To develop quality of continuing teacher education of the teachers of BE.
- To motivate learners towards a bilingual learning culture.
- To adapt learners for a self-directed learning culture within BE.
- To create interest in bilingual culture and value of bilingualism/multilingualism.
- To promote vocational interests and economic perspectives in global society through BE.
- To gain feedback for design and development of BE.

More or less suitable definitions on BE for Sri Lanka:

"BE refers to an educational programme in which both a native language & a second language are taught as subject matter & used as media of instruction for academic subjects/s."

(Encyclopaedia)

"...any system of school education in which, at a given moment in time and for a varying amount of time, simultaneously or consecutively, instruction is planned and given in at least two languages [Sinhala/Tamil English] ...yet L2 teaching may be a part of a BE program."

(Josiane F. Hamers & Michel H.A. Blanc, Bilingualism & Bilinguality – P. 189)
Worries of Bilingual Education Teachers (2007)

- Their poor awareness of the target discipline, BE
- Shortage of competent teachers for sharing experience
- Their request for professional development in continuous teacher development programmes
- The support they expect from administration, planners and community, especially from parents
- Poor motivation of their learners
- Large classes with short periods and lengthy syllabi
- Need of having their professional development monitored and observed
- Facilities in terms of space, libraries, labs, classroom conditions.
- Tired of their job, restless mentally and less professional satisfaction.
- Haphazard teacher transfers
- Loaded timetables; individualization of learning.
- Certain myths due to lack of knowledge.
Conceptual Framework of Teacher Empowerment in BE:

- To explain BE in its global and local perspectives;
- To examine the characteristics of prospective BE co-learners and the learning process with regard to BE;
- To examine the characteristics and needs of the teachers of BE;
- To develop a methodology for teaching through BE;
- To develop a research culture in relation to BE in the BE teacher community in Sri Lanka;
- To develop an appropriate assessment and evaluation culture for BE in the country;
- To create a sense of pride in the Sri Lankan identity while valuing English as a global and local language;

Conceptual Framework of Learner Empowerment in BE:

- To develop language for day-to-day communication (BICS);
- To develop Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency Skills (CALPS);
- To demonstrate self-directed learning skills;
- To promote and cater to individual learning styles;
- To encourage the spirit of working together;
- To inculcate interdisciplinary thinking;
- To create a sense of pride in the Sri Lankan identity while valuing English as a global and local language.
Sri Lankan CLIL Framework: 2012/13

Vision

Goals

Objectives

Policy Aspects (NEC)

Curricular Aspects (NIE)

Implementation Aspects (MOE)
Major Components of the proposed competency and constructivism based curriculum

- Learner, learning and Learning material
- Measurement and Evaluation
- Teaching, Teacher and its material development

World of Learning

World of Work

Competency Model
New Approach to Curriculum Development on Competency based nature and Constructivism (Using both functional and conceptual perspectives)

A (5Cs + S)

A: Learner, learning and learning material
B: Teacher, Teaching and teaching material
C: Measurement and evaluation
Outcomes expected through the proposed Sri Lankan BE Curricular Architecture
View of CLIL:- As Methodology/ Pedagogical approach to instructional design in BE

- Subject specific pedagogy
- Applied Linguistics
- General Methodology

Path for thinking (cognition)+Agent of communication

Knowledge skills attitudes

- Content(Subject/Syllabi)
- Edu: Philosophy
- Edu: Psychology
- Sociology
- Measurement and evaluation

Source and resource

- Linguistics
- Language planning
- Psycholinguistics
- Neurolinguistics
- Sociolinguistics
- Evaluation
To identify a core-cadre
To address remote areas
To develop information networks through intra and inter school cohesion
To establish a strong team of mentors on BE
To create collective awareness
To decentralize instruction in a collaborative and cooperative manner
To minimize discrepancies
To develop on-site and off-site career development
To develop links with the NIE with continuous, constructive, critical dialogue
To ensure teacher development by minimizing drawbacks in the cascade
To address quality improvement of BE teachers
To strengthen professionalism through reflective practice and action research
To enhance plurilingual competencies through BE
To institutionalize school as a model of ongoing professionalism
To ensure individuals as models of excellence and potential leaders
To encourage BE teachers to work as a team with ME teachers
Teacher development

2013 first round: 151 resource persons with its core team at national level (25)

Awareness raising: Teacher Centre Managers, Directors, Provincial, Zonal and others in the school Community

Both theoretical rationale and practical application implicitly combined with language development

Activities for extension of the learned

Expanding resource pool with new members, principal-awareness program

Application sessions

Linking programs

Whole class Discussions

Planning CLIL Learning situations

Discussions in groups using the new model

Corrections and Feedback

Monitoring & Evaluation

Observation using observation sheets

Preparing reports and assignments

Producing Video for achieving multifaceted objectives
Research culture on BE

Awareness of BE

Newsletters

Teacher development packages (3)

Survey at the NCoEs for developing teacher development curriculum on BE

Research journal

Action Researches on CLIL: April, 2014 onwards
Required further improvements

- Networking human and physical resources
- A well-documented policy on BE
- To investigate the preservice teacher development curriculum
- Cadre of officers
- Strong awareness for administrative and managerial sectors
- Our own way (Sri Lankan) for going ahead creatively
- To share experience and support each other
- Network for mutual support through linking programs