

## **Conceptual Framework for the Proposed Teacher Empowerment Programme on Bilingual Education**

### **Introduction, Background and Rationale:**

Bilingual Education has been practised in Sri Lanka from shortly after the introduction of 'English medium education' to the science stream of GCE (A/L) classes in a few selected schools in 2001, yet both practices have been targeted on promoting English as a second language for instrumental purposes within the Sri Lankan social milieu. Though it has different meanings to different people, it involves learning a second language.

"Educators who see their role as adding a second language and cultural affiliation to students' repertoires are likely to empower students more than those who see their role as replacing or subtracting students' primary language and cultures in the process of assimilating them to the [ culture of the target language second language] (Cummins 1989 p. 60)"

(Elsevier Science Ltd, 1998, Education: *The Complete Encyclopaedia: Bilingual Education: Anthropological Perspectives* P. 1)

Out of the recent educational policies, bilingualism and practices of bilingual education has been first proposed by the National Education Commission in its report published in 2003.

"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."

(NEC Report on the Proposals, 2003, p.116-117)

After this policy document, no clear policy level statement has been introduced, other than the two circulars which have been issued under the numbers 2002/12 and 2007/5 and then in March, 2007. The former is relevant to the policy and the latter is not. Thus it is clear, at present, there is no clear policy regarding bilingual education in the Sri Lankan school system irrespective of the practices of bilingual education itself under the common term, 'English medium education'. (If it had been English medium education, it could have been another monolingual education and even the mother tongue and all the subjects are to be studied in English: not two or more in English and the rest in the mother tongue.)

"However, in settings where children's native languages are not esteemed or widely used, this approach ...is likely to contribute to the loss of those languages."

(Elsevier Science Ltd, 1998, Education: *The Complete Encyclopaedia: Bilingual Education: Anthropological Perspectives* P. 1)

Therefore this practice of ‘English medium education’ and/ or bilingual education must be discussed at policy level soon considering the expected achievements and the possible , both negative and positive, consequences regarding that as either bilingual education or the English medium at school level. Concerning the goal, Sri Lanka is in the correct line, but not with regard to the path to achieve that goal under bilingual education. Research findings of various countries have already shown the risk of losing national identity and regard for the family as the basic and the most important agent of socialization due to wrong practices of bilingual education.

‘When the school does not support maintenance of the first language, the impact on the child’s life away from school can be profound. 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)

...Their [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)

Anyway the practice of bilingual education has been introduced to the school system without much planning and critical thinking on it. Hence so many deficiencies are now visible in every facet of it in terms of implementation, instructional design, study materials, evaluation, continuation, eradication of risks in losing and harming the national identity and informal socialization process.

“However, educators and policy makers need to have access to more than a handful of fully developed ethnographies of bilingual education if they are going to identify accurately and predict ultimately the conditions and processes that shape its different forms and consequences.”

(Elsevier Science Ltd, 1998, Education: *The Complete Encyclopaedia: Bilingual Education: Anthropological Perspectives* P. 4)

One important area which is to be paid attention to with regard to the current situation of the bilingual education in the country is teacher empowerment and making others of the system aware of what is to be done through empowering teachers. The Needs Survey on bilingual education conducted by the Unit of Language Coordination at the National Institute of Education shows the importance of teacher empowerment in relation to bilingual education. This has been vividly proven through triangulation of the data collected through the data collection techniques practiced in the Needs Survey. Parents, principals, learners, In-service advisors and teachers themselves have expressed in various ways.

The major challenging areas regarding the target teachers are the following:

- their awareness of the target discipline, bilingual education
- their linguistic skills as individuals who have to use English
- their linguistic skills in line with the methodological aspects of bilingual education (ie: Using English as a second language in the classroom learning-teaching process in bilingual education for communication and providing learners with comprehensible input in a certain learning environment- BICS & CALPS)
- shortage of competent teachers for sharing experiences
- their need of text books, teachers' guides in English, additional materials and supplementary materials for their learners
- their request of their 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 of time
- learners' enthusiasm and interest in continuation in bilingual education
- the need of being monitored and observed their professional development

In the Needs Survey, it was also found out that there has not been any teacher education programme conducted in line with bilingual education and teachers have been made aware of only the syllabi under New Reforms on education and the 5-E model which cannot be accepted as **the** model for teaching all subjects in the curriculum addressing all the requirements of the learning process (Recommending one method/ approach in instructional design even for one subject is impractical in achieving expected outcomes especially when addressing self-directedness and individualization of learning under constructivism)

“Unless teachers are knowledgeable about current theories of second language acquisition, about the relationship between the first and second language, about the role of the first language in second-language acquisition, about bilingual education and second language instruction, characteristics of instruction that promote language learning

for bilingual students, they will be unable to provide appropriate instruction to these students.

... Instruction in English as a second language should be a part of students' individualized educational plans and both regular and special educators must become familiar with current practices and research on second language teaching.”  
(Elsevier Science Ltd, 1998, Education: *The Complete Encyclopaedia: Language Disorders among Bilingual Studies* P. 5)

The Needs Survey has revealed that the text books introduced to the Grade 6 and 10 classes are not suitable for promoting effectiveness and quality in teaching and learning because they are, not in line with a competency-based approach and unsuitable for a learner of bilingual education because they consist of direct translations with over-comprehensible input in terms of target language and quantity of input.

The Advisory Board of the Unit of language coordination which met on the 03<sup>rd</sup>, April 2007 highlighted the need of teacher development in relation to bilingual education and it was decided to develop a concept paper on this.

In addition, it was decided to develop a trainers' manual on teacher development of bilingual education and to start training programmes as soon as possible. The content of the target trainer manual was requested to be distributed among the Board members before the next meeting of the Advisory Board.

### **General Objectives of the Target Teacher Development Programme:**

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

### **Specific Objectives:**

In line with the above general objectives the following were identified as the Specific Objectives under each respective general objective:

<b>General Objectives</b>	<b>Specific Objectives</b>
<p>1. To explain bilingual education in its global and local perspectives</p>	<p>i. To examine critically different policies of bilingual education experiences of other countries</p> <p>ii. To study different practices and their consequences under different types of bilingualism in different socio-political contexts</p> <p>iii. To explain differences between various uses of languages under various terms given according to political power of various languages</p> <p>iv. To examine the present situation regarding bilingual education in Sri Lanka</p> <p>v. To examine the consequences of the present initiatives regarding bilingual education impact on students, parents, teachers, general public and so on</p> <p>vi. To suggest a suitable national policy on bilingual education for Sri Lanka</p>
<p>2. To examine the characteristics of prospective bilingual co-learners and learning processes with regard to bilingual education</p>	<p>i. To examine first language transfer skills from primary to secondary classes in Sri Lankan context for optimizing learning capacities in bilingual education</p> <p>ii. To use research findings regarding co-learners in bilingual education and identify their characteristics in diverse linguistic and socio-economic contexts.</p> <p>iii. To examine the link between cognitive demands of learning in bilingual education and use them appropriately in learning-teaching process.</p> <p>iv. To study the link between linguistic demands of learning in bilingual education and use them appropriately in learning-teaching process.</p> <p>v. To identify co-learners' attitudes at present with regard to bilingual education and propose a set of values suitable for learners of bilingual education in the Sri Lankan context</p>

<p>3. To examine the characteristics and needs of the teachers of bilingual teachers</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To study needs and characteristics of teachers of bilingual education in Sri Lankan context</li> <li>ii. To display the expected role of a teacher in bilingual education</li> </ul>
<p>4. To develop a methodology for teaching through bilingual education</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To use language for proper communication by practising language appropriacy and phatic communion</li> <li>ii. To display necessary skills of code switching for facilitating the learning process in the bilingual classroom.</li> <li>iii. To demonstrate effective classroom management skills by using 'teacherese' (teacher talk)</li> <li>iv. To use linguistic skills necessary for addressing CALPS (like describing, explaining, note-taking, repetition, paraphrasing, summarizing)</li> <li>v. Demonstrate skills of self-directed learning for teacher-empowerment</li> <li>vi. To use additional materials effectively and appropriately in learning-teaching processes of bilingual classroom</li> <li>vii. To use visualization technique minimizing linguistic interference in bilingual classroom</li> <li>viii. To employ proper motivation techniques in bilingual classroom</li> <li>ix. To display how to create interest through instructional designs in bilingual classroom</li> <li>x. To demonstrate skills of self-directed learning for teacher-empowerment</li> <li>xi. To promote strategies of self-directed learning among learners of bilingual education</li> </ul>
<p>5. To develop a research culture in relation to bilingual education in teacher community in Sri Lanka</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>i. To explain what research is and importance of researches</li> <li>ii. To explain the uses of reflection as a regular practice for a teacher of bilingual education</li> <li>iii. To maintain a reflective journal for professional development</li> <li>iv. To use different data collection techniques appropriate for action research</li> <li>v. To write reports on action research</li> <li>v. To use action research as a practically useful tool for developing quality of bilingual education</li> <li>v To demonstrate ethics of research when</li> </ul>

	engaging in action research vi. To make the teachers of bilingual education members of action research associations for developing their professionalism
6.To develop an appropriate assessment and evaluation culture for bilingual education in the country	i. To demonstrate awareness of techniques and methods of assessment and evaluation in bilingual education ii. To display the necessary competencies required to enable learners to sit for national level evaluation pattern iii. To use learner-friendly assessment and evaluation tools in bilingual classes addressing School Based Assessment as well
7. To create a sense of pride in the Sri Lankan identity while valuing English as a global and local language	This aspect will be addressed as a value rather than studying about it separately by incorporating the input in the other six general objectives.

In the course of developing teacher development manuals, some more specific objectives can be identified.

### **Developing Materials for Teacher Empowerment:**

The target teacher development programme consists of a series of teacher training workshops based on a series of Teacher development manuals designed for the teachers of the target discipline. Each workshop will run under a manual developed according to a set of selected specific objectives identified above.

The instructional design of the target teacher development manuals will be participatory, learner-centred, activity based and adult-friendly. Thus the learning environments developed with different activities and learning contexts will address androgogical principles.

When developing the trainer manuals, the Unit will seek special help at consultancy level from psycholinguists, sociolinguists, applied linguists, educational philosophers, TESOL experts and others who are able to represent the system of education from various levels and institutes in relation to the target discipline.

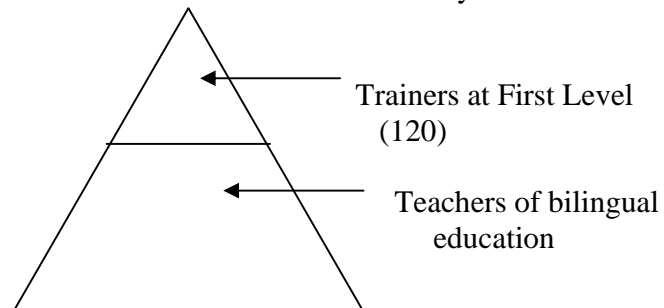
In 2007, according to the annual plan, the first of the series of the manuals has to be developed and the following have been already identified as the specific objectives of it:

<b>General Objectives</b>	<b>Specific Objectives</b>
1. To explain bilingual education in its global and local perspectives	i. To examine critically different policies of bilingual education experiences of other countries ii. To study different practices and their consequences under different types of bilingualism in different socio-political contexts iii. To examine the present situation regarding bilingual education in Sri Lanka
2. To examine the characteristics of prospective bilingual co-learners and learning process with regard to bilingual education	i. To use research findings regarding co-learners in bilingual education and identify their characteristics in diverse linguistic, social economic and political contexts. ii. To identify co-learners' attitudes at present with regard to bilingual education and propose a set of values which are suitable for learners in the system of bilingual education in Sri Lankan context
3. To examine the characteristics and needs of the teachers of bilingual teachers	i. To study needs and characteristics of teachers of bilingual education in Sri Lankan context ii. To display the expected role of a teacher in bilingual education in Sri Lanka
4. To develop a methodology for teaching through bilingual education	i. To display necessary skills of code switching for facilitating the learning process in bilingual classroom ii. Demonstrate skills of self-directed learning for teacher-empowerment
5. To develop a research culture in relation to bilingual education in teacher community in Sri Lanka	i. To maintain a reflective journal for professional development
7. To create a sense of pride in the Sri Lankan identity while valuing English as a global and local language	This aspect will be addressed as a value rather than studying about it separately by incorporating the input in the other six general objectives.

The first trainer manual will consist of ten learning environments (lessons).

## **Implementation of Teacher Development Programmes:**

Training programmes will be implemented in workshop style in a cascade system. The workshops conducted on the first manual will be limited to three days and residential.



The cascade consists of two layers and the trainers who are identified at national level will facilitate the first level participants who are in return supposed to conduct workshops for the second level which consists of teachers of bilingual education from schools. The NIE will identify the national level trainers. The first level training would be conducted under the direct supervision of the NIE and the NIE's involvement in the second level training would be limited mostly to monitoring and advisory.

As this programme is supposed to be introduced to the National Colleges of Education (NCOEs) where prospective teachers are trained for bilingual education, the same training pattern will be applied to the teacher educators of the target discipline in the NCOE s and they are supposed to use the manual in their NCOEs as well.

The trainers of the first level are required to be provided with the manual at the end of their workshops. Therefore the manual should be available in an ample number of copies to be distributed among the first level participants in the cascade. In addition, there should be opportunity for the trainers of any level to distribute the necessary handouts, especially for the school teachers.

The Ministry of Education and provincial Ministries have to be informed about this training programmes in advance so that they will be able to make the necessary financial allocations in their budget in 2008.

The Ministry of Education is expected to make the provincial directors and the respective principals aware of the target training programmes and to ensure participation of their provincial coordinators, and the district level representatives who are of the first level and the teachers in the second level. In addition, the NIE will also inform them only in writing about the target activities.

**The target number of participants in the first level is as follows:**

<b>Province</b>	<b>District</b>	<b>No:</b>
Western	Colombo	05
	Gampaha	05
	Kaluthara	05
Southers	Matara	05
	Hambanthota	03
	Galle	05
Central	Kandy	05
	Matale	05
	N-Eliya	03
Northern	Jaffna	05
	Mannar	03
	Vauniya	03
	Mulathiv	03
Eastern	Batticaloa	03
	Tricomalee	03
	Ampara	05
Uva	Badulla	05
	Monaragala	05
Sabaragamuwa	Rathnapuraya	05
	Kegalle	05
North-western	Kurunegala	05
	Puttalama	05
Provincial Coordinators		09
Teacher educators		20
<b>Total</b>		<b>120</b>

### **Monitoring and Evaluation:**

There are special sections for monitoring and evaluation at the MOE and NIE. They are expected to conduct their monitoring and evaluation at a formal level.

Yet the Unit of Language Coordination will also implement an informal monitoring process in two terms:

- to monitor workshop performances; This will be done by the moderators of each level by forwarding pre-workshop questions and post-workshop questions which are open ended. The responses for the questions collected from workshop - participants are analyzed and the output is supposed to be used for focusing attention of participants on the workshop and collecting feed back depending on the pre-workshop ideas respectively.
- To monitor the output of teachers' performance at the classroom level: reflective journals are introduced and reports are expected to be collected monthly by the first level trainers in collaboration with principals and zonal directors.

These reports are to be sent to the NIE (and to the MOE if necessary through the NIE) under their principals' signature and moderator. Active contribution of Provincial coordinators is expected in this regard.

Prepared by G.H. Asoka, the Head of the Unit of Language Coordination, NIE on the 04<sup>th</sup>, June 2007

### **References:**

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National Education Commission Report, 2003

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