

Obstacles to introducing English as the sole medium instruction in Social Sciences

Prathibha Nirmani Gardihewa

Temporary Lecturer, English Language Teaching Unit, University of Kelaniya
nirmani01@gmail.com

This study was an attempt to explore the obstacles in introducing English as the sole medium of instruction in Social Sciences. For this retrospective study, primary data was collected through interviews and questionnaires selecting Colombo and Sabaragamuwa Universities. Interviews were conducted with 8 selected academia and questionnaires were given to 100 undergraduates from Sinhala, English and Tamil medium. The study revealed that the attitudinal change is the utmost important. Basically in regional areas the environment does not support to learn English and students are unable to understand the importance of English since they are less exposed to English. Overall most of the students are indeed generally in favour of using English exclusively in this setting, and their preference is positively related to their own English proficiency. Even if English-medium instruction on the learning of subject content remains unclear, it was evident that English instruction will help them improve their English language proficiency, especially in terms of listening. Further, it revealed that the English Language courses ought to concentrate on providing English for Academic Purposes rather than general purposes.

Keywords: Hindrance, English medium Instruction, English for Academic Purposes