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THE INFLUENCE OF LANGUAGE FACTOR ON STUDENT PERFORMANCE ON  
SOLVING WORD PROBLEMS AMONG BILINGUAL LEARNERS IN JUNIOR  
SECONDARY LEVEL

A PROJECT REPORT PRESENTED BY

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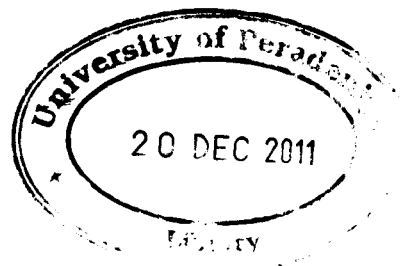
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**ABSTRACT**

Mathematics is regarded as a subject which many have unpleasant learning experiences. Complex terminology and abstract nature are some of the facts which cause this problem. This report presents the outcome of a study that attempted to figure out how the language factor would affect mathematics performance on solving problems presented in words among bilingual learners in junior secondary level.

A total of two hundred and twenty bilingual students of grade eight, comprising 93 girls and 127 boys in Kandy, Kegalle and Kurunegala districts were selected as the sample for the study. A test paper of seven word problems, which were quoted from the grade seven supplementary book of mathematics, was constructed. Another paper with parallel items, in which the linguistic complexity has been reduced, was constructed so that the mathematical skills of the above remained unchanged. The marks of the two tests were subjected to paired t-test, while the correlation between the mathematics performance and English language performance was calculated using the marks obtained for the last term test of the year 2008. Questionnaires were administered among the students sample and fifty teachers in order to figure out their views and suggestions on learning mathematics in English medium.

The findings of the research reveal that the performance on the linguistic complexity reduced paper is much higher than the other paper, while the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient between mathematics performance and English language performance suggests that there is a positive, but comparatively small correlation between them. Therefore if attention is paid to the development of the mathematical terminology as well as English language skills of the bilingual learners, it would definitely, bring about a positive development in the field of bilingual education in Sri Lanka.