

Assessing the Effects of Second Language as a Medium of Instruction in Teaching Preschool Children

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KEYWORDS Second Language. Mother Tongue. Preschool Institution. Preschool Learners. Medium of Instruction. Language

ABSTRACT The issue of appropriate and useful medium of instruction in teaching learners remains a very contentious issue in education. As such, preschool teachers are pressurised by parents and guardians who expect their children to be fluent in English by the time they enter Grade 1. The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of second language (English) as a medium of instruction in preschools. This was a qualitative study which was underpinned by interpretivist paradigm. The study adopted a qualitative case study design. A purposive sample of eight preschool teachers participated in the study. Data was collected through interviews, observation and document analysis. Semi-structured interviews were used as a method of generating data from the, teachers and parents. Four preschools were selected in this study. Data was analysed through content analysis as the responses from the participants were categorised and then coded according to the emerging themes. The findings of the study showed that maintaining the first language did not interfere with the learning of the second language. When preschoolers continued to develop their abilities in the languages throughout their preschool years, they gained a deeper understanding of language. It is recommended that preschool teachers be well equipped so that they are equal to the challenges. The study have significant implications for the teachers and other stakeholders who are directly and indirectly involved in early childhood education.