



## MOTHER TONGUE-BASED INSTRUCTION ON TEACHERS' INSTRUCTIONAL DELIVERY: AN ASSESSMENT

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**Abstract** – *This study was conducted to provide a point of reference to language educators in establishing an improved mother tongue-based instruction through assessing its effectivity in language learning and classroom instruction particularly in class participation, pen and paper tests and individual subjects. The respondents were nine hundred fifty six (956) grades 1-3 and one hundred seventeen (117) teachers of selected elementary schools and central schools in the municipality of Lingayen, Pangasinan selected via random stratified sampling. Questionnaires were used to gather the data and statistically treated with the use of frequency counts and percentage, mean, standard deviation and chi square test.*

*It was revealed in the study that the mother tongue Pangasinan was favored and found useful by both teachers and students in Lingayen, Pangasinan in the grade levels 1, 2 and 3. The students' class participation, paper and pen test results, and general performance in the individual subjects were self-assessed to be better when the language used in instruction was Pangasinan. On the part of the students, their school district, age, grade level and their preferred language of instruction which is Pangasinan were significant in relation to their assessment of the MTB instructional delivery. On the part of the teachers, the variables of type of school (either central school or elementary school), school district, and their preferred language of instruction were found to have statistically significant relation with their assessment of the MTB instructional delivery.*

**Keywords:** *Assessment of instructional delivery, Language Learning, Mother Tongue Multilingual Education*

### INTRODUCTION

Mother Tongue Education (MTE) is also known as first language or Mother Tongue Instruction. In the teaching-learning process it is very imperative to consider the language used in instruction and communication because this will provide a good environment and better communication between the teachers and pupils, and further, promote a lifelong learning as they feel comfortable to express themselves in a language they are familiar with and understand best.

"For UNESCO, every mother tongue is vital to the acquisition of literacy and numeracy skills especially during the first years of schooling, and therefore every mother tongue deserves to be known, recognized and given greater prominence in all sphere of public life". Philippines is in support of this UNESCO philosophy because in 2009, the Department of Education (DepEd) challenged the Bilingual Education Policy by issuing an order which instituted a change -- from grade one through grade three with Filipino and English being taught as separate subjects (Department Order no. 74, s.

2009). Another order was issued in 2012 that offered more specific guidelines for MTB-MLE and embedded the reform in the newly adopted-K-12 basic Education Program II (Department order No. 16, s 2012). This order shifted from the original mother tongue approach by specifying twelve major regional languages or lingua franca to be used as the languages of instruction and offered as a learning area. Under this order, teachers are provided government-issued materials in their original languages but are expected to adapt them to reflect the students' first languages. Until recently, the MTB-MLE policy resided solely within DepEd.

Finally, In January 2013, Congress officially supported this effort by passing the Enhanced Basic Education Act. In addition to shifting toward a K to 12 educational structure, this legislation requires instruction, teaching materials, and assessments to be in the regional or native language of the learners from kindergarten through grade three with a mother language transition program from grades four through six. Gradual implementation started with grade one students in 2012, followed by grades two and three in 2013 and 2014



respectively. This shift in language policy is part of a growing trend around the world to support mother tongue instruction in the early years of a child's education.

In the study of Cabansag (2016) as cited in the study of De Guzman (2018) explored the stakeholders' perspective on the implementation of MTB-MLE as a pedagogical approach. The stakeholders' perspectives were explored through the results of the different focus group discussions among teachers, pupils, parents, local school board, parents-teachers and community association, non-government organization and local government unit. Results of this study indicated four main benefits of MTB-MLE, namely: expressing better ideas, building self-confidence, better retention, and promoting friendly environment. Meanwhile, the challenges which hinder the implementation of MTB-MLE are grouped into four significant themes, i.e. multilingual environment, difficulty in translation inadequacy of instructional materials, and mandatory compliance to the Department of Education (DepEd) order.

Zergani (2016) revealed in his study "Effects of Using and Teaching with Mother Tongue Language in Primary School" that teaching mother tongue alongside the second language allows the sounds and structures of the language to be transferred more easily. The child builds on what is really known and understood. As the language development progresses, concepts already understood in the first language are more easily transferred into the second language. The research conclusively established that simultaneous mother tongue language and second language learners have enhanced linguistic and educational development. They develop a deeper understanding and are able to compare, contrast and use multiple linguistic systems, giving greater depth of understanding. Further, the learners with strong first language foundation performed better in second language exams and education.

People have differing opinions, attitudes, and beliefs regarding the Philippines' policies on language, especially the ones concerning the medium of instruction (MOI) With the emerging empirical studies and the more recent educational policy in favor of a mother tongue-based instruction, there seems to be a more positive atmosphere towards the Philippines language heritage. Thus, the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), an educational policy which uses more than one language in literacy and instruction, was mandated.

Six years after the implementation of the mother tongue-based instruction, there is considerable assessment that can be studied already at least from the perspective of teachers who used the local language in the Grades 1 to 3, and from the grades 4 to 6 teachers who absorbed the students who went through the mother tongue-based grade levels. For purposes of this research, Pangasinan language is the medium under study.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper is an assessment of the instructional delivery of teachers in using the vernacular Pangasinan as medium of instruction in selected elementary schools and central schools in the municipality of Lingayen, Pangasinan as part of the mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) of the K-12 curriculum. It is descriptive in nature featuring the self-assessment of students and teachers on the effect of the use of Pangasinan in the teaching learning situations of the selected schools in the elementary level.

Questionnaires were floated to the respondents to gather the needed data on the demographic variables of the respondents and their assessment of the use of Pangasinan as medium of instruction Data gathered were treated statistically using simple frequency count and percentage for the demographic variables, mean and standard deviation for the self-assessment, and chi-square test of independence for the relationship between the demographic variables and the results of the self-assessment. A 5-point Likert scale was used for the respondents to rate their answers to the questions. The scale is as follows 1 strongly agree, 2-agree, 3-undecided, 4-disagree, and 5-strongly disagree

The respondents of the study were classified into two: students and teachers. The student-respondents were randomly selected from the Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3 levels, and they were guided during the data gathering process by translating the questions in the questionnaire in Pangasinan language for them to give accurate and objective responses as far as possible. The teacher-respondents who simply accomplished the questionnaires were the Grade 1, Grade 2, and Grade 3 teachers of the selected schools. The municipality of Lingayen has three educational districts namely: Lingayen 1, Lingayen 2 and Lingayen 3. The central school in each district was automatically chosen and five other schools of each district were selected for the study. The school year coverage of this study was school year 2017-2018.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **A. Student-Respondents Demographic Profile**

The district of Lingayen I had a total of 321 student respondents distributed in the following: Lingayen Central School had 74 respondents (23.05%), Dulag Elementary School, 48 respondents (14.95%), Libsong Elementary School, 50 respondents (15.58%), Matalava Elementary School, 49 respondents (15.26%), Naguelguel Elementary School, 50 respondents (15.58%), and Tonton Elementary School (ES) had 50 respondents (15.58%).

The district of Lingayen 2 had a total of 319 student respondents. Padilla Central School had a total of 75 respondents (23.51%), Balangobong ES, 48 respondents (15.05%). Capandanan ES, 50 respondents (15.67%), Domanlandan Center ES, 49 respondent (15.36%), Estanza ES, 50 respondents (15.67%), and Guesang ES had 47 respondents (14.73%).

The district of Lingayen 3 had a total of 316 respondents in the following distribution: Poblacion Central School had 73 respondents (23.10%), Aplaya ES, 48 respondents (15.19%), Bantayan ES, 50 respondents (15.82%), Malawa ES, 49 respondents (15.51%), Pangapisan ES, 48 respondents (15.19%), and Rosario ES had 48 respondents (15.19%).

The demographic profile of the student-respondents. In terms of age, most of the respondents are aged eight (8) years old or 30.23%. In sex, the grades 1, 2, and 3, the female pupils (555 or 58.05%) outnumber the male pupils (401 or 41.95%). It has been noted that the population of the female pupils is higher than that of their male counterpart. This is confirmed by the Philippine Commission on Women in its May 13, 2014 report which shows that there is higher school attendance among females at 64% aged 5 to 24 years old (PWC, 2014). In terms of grade level, the respondents were purposely selected to have close to equal distribution across the three grade levels. This is explained by the percentages of 32.64%, 33.16% and 34.21% respectively for grades 1 to 3. With regards to the preferred language of instruction, it is expected that Pangasinan would have the highest frequency since Pangasinan language is the mother tongue in Lingayen, and this is shown by the 72.91% (697) choosers of the language.

### **B. Teacher-Respondents Demographic Profile**

There were a total of 117 teacher-respondents with 27 (23%) coming from the three central schools in

Lingayen and the other 90 respondents from the 15 selected schools, 3 schools from each of Lingayen 1, Lingayen 2 and Lingayen 3. The table also shows the equal number of teacher-respondents for each district at 39 teachers. In terms of age, nine (8%) teachers were under 30 years old, 26 (22%) were 30 to 39 years old, 50 (43%) were 40 to 49 years old, 29 (25%) were 50 to 59 years old, and 3 (3%) were 50 years old and older. In terms of sex, females dominate at 103 to only 14 for males.

There was an equal number of teacher-respondents per grade level at 39 each for Grade 1, Grade 2 and Grade 3. Pangasinan is the preferred language of instruction for the great majority of 105 respondents. Filipino/Tagalog was preferred by only 12 respondents. In terms of the number of years in teaching, 12 (10%) had been teaching for five years or shorter, 19 (16%) had been teaching for six to 10 years, 30 (26%) had been teaching for 11 to 15 years, 20 (17%) had been teaching for 16 to 20 years, and 36 (31%) had been in the service for 21 years or more. Seventy-two (62%) of the respondents had bachelor's degree as their highest educational attainment, 43 (37%) had master's degrees, and only 2 (2%) had doctorate degrees.

### **C. Assessment of the mother-tongue based instructional delivery**

With regards to the assessment of the grades 1-3 in Class Participation, the Indicator statements CP1, CP2, CP3, CP4 and CP7 registered the response strongly agree based on mean results of 1.24, 1.25, 1.45, 1.49 and 1.47 respectively. Indicator statements CPS and CP6 received the response agree based on the mean results of 1.64 and 1.63 respectively. The average mean for class participation is 1.45 with descriptive equivalent of strongly agree. This implies that the respondents can best learn their lessons when the content is delivered through their mother tongue, Pangasinan. They could also perform better in class participation as they confidently answer the questions because they could easily create ideas and concepts and able to comprehend knowledge in a language they are familiar with. This is supported in the study of Caguioa (2013) that she observed an improved participation among her pupils where they could readily relate the lesson to their own experiences, prior-knowledge and other socio-cultural background. Further, children learned faster and better since they are adept in their mother tongue.

On the other hand, the student- respondents are strongly agree to the Indicator statements PP1, PP2 and PP3 having mean results of 1.46, 1.39 and 1.45 respectively. Indicator statements PP4 and PP5 have mean results of 1.51 and 1.581 with descriptive equivalent of agree. The mean average for paper and pen tests is 1.48 with descriptive equivalent of strongly agree. This implies that the respondents excel in their written test when Pangasinan language is used in their quizzes and exams. It can be noted also that the respondents could easily grasp difficult concepts with the use of Pangasinan language in their paper and pen tests.

The results in the assessment of the respondents on the mother tongue based instructional delivery in terms of individual subjects, indicator statements IS1, IS2, IS3, IS4, IS5 and IS6, checked strongly agree with mean results of 1.31, 1.43, 1.44, 1.44, 1.48 and 1.50 respectively. The respondents checked agree for IS7 with a mean result of 1.81 The average mean result for individual subjects is 1.49 with a descriptive equivalent of strongly agree. This means that the respondents are easier to learn different subjects though the use of Pangasinan language since they are exposed to their mother tongue in their early schooling They further understand and learn better in English and Filipino subjects when taught together with Pangasinan Language From this point of view, even though the subjects are Filipino and English, the learners preferred their teachers translate new concepts and ideas into their mother tongue for them to actively participate in their discussions. Cummins (2005) reiterates that conceptual knowledge in L1 and L2 is interdependent; thus concepts, academic and learning strategies transfer across languages. This is therefore to encourage the use of mother tongue in learning the individual subjects.

The respondents reported an agreement to indicator statement 1 (M=1.57, SD=0.771), to indicator statement 2 (M=1.74, SD=0.750), and to indicator statement 3 (M=1.89, SD=0.913) These results imply that the teacher respondents used the mother tongue Pangasinan as their medium for instructional delivery. The respondents also were in agreement as to the availability and utilization of teaching aids and materials to enhance their mother tongue based instructional delivery as evidenced by the averages for indicator statement 4 (M=1.62, SD=0.817), indicator statement 5 (M=1.92, SD=0.932), and indicator statement 6 (M=1.92, SD=0.955). There were available and usable enhancements to their mother tongue-based instructional

delivery. The respondents also agreed to the usefulness of trainings on mother tongue-based instructional delivery shown by the results for indicator statement 7 (M=1.65, SD=0.861) and indicator statement 8 (M=1.73, SD=1.028) Lastly, the respondents confirmed and were in agreement that the academic performance of their students who were taught in the mother tongue was better than their students who were not taught in the mother tongue as shown by the means for indicator statement 9 (M=1.84, SD=1.037), for indicator statement 10 (M=1.98, SD=1.078), and for indicator statement 11 (M=2.05, SD=1.198). The overall result of M=1.79, SD=0.940 implies that the teacher-respondents had a high preference for the mother tongue Pangasinan as medium of instructional delivery.

The results from the teacher-respondents show a congruence to the results from the student-respondents. Therefore, for both students and teachers, the mother tongue-based instructional delivery was favorably assessed as beneficial to teaching and learning

#### **4. Significant relationship between the profile variables of the student-respondents and their assessment of the mother tongue-based instructional delivery**

Using the chi-square test of independence, the researchers determined assessment of the teacher-respondents was influenced by their profile variables. Table 14 shows the influence of the type of school that they respondents had on their assessment of their instructional delivery. Six of the 11 indicator statements recorded statistically significant results. Indicator Statement 4 (IS4) had results of  $\chi^2(2, N=117) = 8.380, p < 0.05$ , ISS had results of  $\chi^2(3, N=117) = 7.820, p < 0.05$ , IS6 had results of  $\chi^2(4, N=117) = 12.397, p < 0.05$ , IS10 had results of  $\chi^2(3, N=117) = 7.820, p < 0.05$ , and IS11 had results of  $\chi^2(3, N=117) = 7.820, p < 0.05$ , all showing p value of less than the alpha level of 0.05. Therefore, in terms school district the null hypothesis was rejected.

Table 15 presents the relation between the school district of the respondents and their assessment of the mother tongue-based instructional delivery. The relation of the two variables was significant on two of the 11 indicator statements. Indicator Statement 8 (ISS) had results of  $\chi^2(8, N=117) = 16.208, p < 0.05$ , and IS11 had results of  $\chi^2(8, N=117) = 27.383, p < 0.05$ . The null hypothesis for the variables was rejected.





Tables 16, 17, and 18 reveal no statistically significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of the mother tongue-based instructional delivery and the variables of age, sex, and grade level being handled, respectively. The null hypothesis on those variables was rejected.

Table 19 shows the relation between the respondents' assessment and their preferred language of instruction. The relation between the variables was significant on three of the 11 indicator statements. Indicator statement I (IS1) had results of  $X(3, N=117) = 24.584, p < 0.05$ , IS2 had results of  $X(2, N=117) = 7.297, p < 0.05$ , and IS6 had results of  $X(4, N=117) = 24.191, p < 0.05$ . The null hypothesis on these variables was, therefore, rejected. Tables 20 and 21 show no statistically significant relationship between the respondents' assessment of the mother tongue-based instructional delivery and the variables of number of years in teaching and educational attainment, respectively. The null hypothesis on those variables was rejected.

#### CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

In the light of the findings of this study the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Majority of the student-respondents were within the expected ages of 6, 7 and 8 years old corresponding to the levels of Grade 1, 2 and 3, mostly females, and they preferred Pangasinan the language of instructional delivery and majority of the teacher-respondents were within the age bracket of 40-49 years old, mostly females, 21 years or longer in the teaching service, bachelor's degree holders, and they preferred Pangasinan their language of instruction.

2. The student-respondents' assessment of the Mother Tongue-Based instructional delivery showed that they strongly agree in the use of Pangasinan as language of instruction in terms of class participation, paper and pen tests, and individual subjects.

On the part of the students, their school district, age, grade level and their preferred language of instruction which is Pangasinan were significant in relation to their assessment of the MTB instructional delivery. On the part of the teachers, the variables of type of school (either central school or elementary school), school district, and their preferred language of instruction were found to have statistically significant relation with their assessment of the MTB instructional delivery.

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