

HOW MOTHER TONGUE INFLUENCES INSTRUCTION

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The ability to read and comprehend a simple textbook is one of the most basic abilities a child can learn. Research shows that early and appropriate reading education is required for reading competency and, by extension, understanding of what is read. The Philippine government has prioritized education and is currently implementing a comprehensive reform plan that includes curricular reforms as well as the introduction of a Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) program with 19 official languages.

The Philippines is a multi-ethnic country with 181 recognized different languages. According to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, 24 of them are dying or becoming endangered, with four already extinct. National languages act as a unifying factor, a catalyst for nationalism, and a people's emblem. The Department of Education (DepEd) ordered in 2012 that all public schools implement mother tongue-based multilingual instruction, particularly in Grades 1-3. Tagalog, Iloko, Kapampangan, Bikol, Pangasinense, Hiligaynon, Cebuano, Tausug, Waray, Maguindanaoan, Chabacano, and Maranao are the primary languages.

However, seven new languages were added to the MTB-MLE in 2013, including Ivatan, Yakan, Ybanag, Sambal, Kinaray-a, Aklanon, and Surigaonon. The Philippines is the first South East Asian country to have enacted a public policy mandating MTB-MLE testing during primary school hours. As a result, the Philippines is held up as an example of MTB-MLE for the rest of the region, raising the idea of language policy in education as

a tough context for enforcing a language policy that will benefit the whole nation (Education South, 2021).

Before they may effectively learn new languages, students must first establish a firm foundation in their mother tongue. This is where the addition of Mother Tongue- Grounded Multilingual Education (MTB- MLE) as a component of the Expanded Basic Education Program helps the Department of Education (DepEd). It is allowing them to grasp basic concepts more easily in their own tongue.

DepEd underlined the importance of Four Developmental aspects of learning affected by the inclusion of the MTB-MLE program. It helps children acquire the cognitive and logical abilities needed to operate successfully in many languages, beginning with their mother tongue.

Four Aspects of Development

Language development. Scholars will develop a firm "foundation" for the academic language, and they will be prepared to use both/all of their languages for academic accomplishment and lifelong literacy.

Cognitive Development. In addition to the fundamental who, what, when, and where questions, school conditioning will urge children to think critically about any higher-order questions in their study language.

Academic advancement. Students will gain the abilities necessary in each subject area at the end of the program, and they will be well-equipped to succeed in the traditional educational system.

Social and cultural development. Students will be equipped to make a good contribution to their community and society as a whole. They will be proud of their ancestral language and culture, as well as appreciate other people's languages and communities. Pupils will also develop and learn holistically. When pupils are initially

instructed in the language they speak well, the finest "foundation" for learning another language is built. The benefits of being bilingual go beyond language ability. They are also useful for learning with increased rigor.

This clearly shows that language and learning are intertwined. Teachers must keep in mind that their primary goal is to let their students absorb the knowledge they are imparting regardless of the mode used. The MTB-MLE will help the teachers succeed in their goal to teach concepts to their respective students. Plus, it also increases their cultural awareness.

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