



PROFICIENCY IN THE USE OF MOTHER TONGUE BY THE GRADE 1 TEACHERS AND THEIR LEARNERS IN LABRADOR DISTRICT

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This study used the descriptive method of research with the use of questionnaire as data gathering instrument in the assessment of the proficiency in the use of Mother Tongue of the Grade 1 teachers and the pupils in Labrador District, Division of Pangasinan I. The assessment included the professional profile of the Grade 1 Teachers in Labrador District in terms of their highest educational attainment, number of years of experience as Grade 1 teachers; relevant in-service trainings attended in Grade 1; level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue of Grade 1 teachers and their pupils in terms of the analysis of tapes recorded and interaction of Mother Tongue and the weaknesses of Grade 1 teachers and learners in the use of Mother Tongue as their instructional language. The output of this study is a proposed recommendation to address the weaknesses of Grade 1 teachers in Mother Tongue.

The thirty-seven (37) Grade 1 teachers served as respondents of the study and the fifty-three grade 1 learners who are learners of the research served as research subject of the study. Frequency, Percentage and Average weight mean were used to treat statistically the data needed.

Based on the analysis the following findings are majority of the Grade 1 Teachers are BSEED Academic requirements in MA 7 or 53.85 percent. Along their in-service trainings attended in Grade 1 they belonged to 0-5 years 10 or 76.92 percent. Majority of the Grade 1 teachers attended various in-service trainings in the Division and District level. Along level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue of Grade 1 Teachers and their pupils, majority of Grade 1 teachers' level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue was "Approved Proficiency", 0 or 76.92 percent while the Grade 1 learners 20 or 44.44 percent meaning "Developing". In two of their interaction of the Mother Tongue the Grade 1 Teachers proficiency level in the Mother Tongue is "Approaching proficiency" 10 or 76.92 percent while the Grade 1 learners belonged to "Approaching proficiency and proficient" 10 or 22.22 percent respectively. Along weaknesses of the Grade 1 Teachers and learners in the use of the Mother Tongue, majority of the Grade 1 teachers and learners identified weaknesses in the use of the Mother Tongue was "receptive skills" 38.46 percent while the Grade 1 learners is in "premonition skills" 20 or 44.44 percent. The proposed recommendations can really address the weaknesses of the Grade 1 teachers in Labrador District.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings the following conclusions were drawn: Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn: The professional profile of the Grade 1 teachers can still be improved. The proficiency level of both Grade 1 teachers and pupils should be monitored by the school administrators and the identified weaknesses of the teachers should be addressed properly by concern authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are hereby offered: The proposed recommendations should be forwarded to DepEd higher authorities for implementations; The Grade 1 teachers should be reoriented through in-service training programs and similar study be conducted in a wider scope to validate the findings of the study.

INTRODUCTION

The world gives a great importance to education because it believes in the old saying "Education is the key to success". True enough we can say many justifications from developed countries like Japan, China, Korea and other countries who give importance to education and they are on the top of international examinations.

The shift in language policy is part of the growing trend around the world to support mother tongue instruction in the early years of the child's education. In Southeast Asia, this is apparent in a rising number of educational programs that utilize a mother tongue approach. Examples can be found in Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Thailand, Timor L'Este and Vietnam (UNESCO, 2007). In all these cases, the programs are being piloted at the community level with support from international non-governmental agencies (NGOs).

As noted, the mother tongue education initiatives in Southeast Asia have been primarily implemented through community-based pilot programs. Similarly, this is true in other countries around the world where learners' first languages are utilized in classrooms as part of small-scale efforts rather than national reforms (e.g., Cameroon, India, Mali, Nepal, Papua New Guinea). A few countries have attempted to implement national multilingual education policies but have struggled with the enormity of the task (e.g., Bolivia, Ethiopia, Peru, South Africa). Scholars argue that top-down approaches do not consider the contextualized nature of language in communities.

While the use of non-dominant languages in education is allowed in each of these countries, the Philippines is the single country to institute a national policy requiring their inclusion in the early grades. As a result, the implementation of MTB in the Philippines is being looked at as an example for the rest of the region.

The move by DepEd and Congress to adopt Mother Tongue based on the outcomes of the previous quantitative, longitudinal studies that highlighted the benefits of the using the mother tongue as the language of instruction. Two studies in the United States (Ramirez, Yuen, and Ramey (1991), Thomas and Collier (1997) and one in the Philippines (Walter and Dekker, 2001) concluded the monitory language learners who gained literacy in their first language experienced higher academic achievement than learners who learned in a second or third language. They suggested that second and third languages can be acquired more easily if a foundation in a first language is established early. In addition, these studies pointed to the importance of the late-exit programs in which the mother tongue is utilized until grade six with other languages taught as separate subjects.

The self-assessment of Filipinos to speak and write in English and in Filipino may not be consistent with their actual proficiency in those languages.

K to 12 Curriculum introduces major damages in Philippine basic education. While these may be construed as a complete departure from the older system, it anchors itself on the recollection of the spirit of the Philippine government's constitutional mandate to provide quality education. Philippine government's constitutional to provide quality education. Nevertheless, the changes like all new policies are subject to opinions, discussions and interpretations that may not be in line with what the law seeks to impart.

The Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) is a formal or non-formal education, in which the child's mother tongue is used in the classrooms as the bridge in learning Filipino and English. Children begin their education in a language they understand, their tongue, and develop a strong foundation in their mother language. The purpose of the multilingual education program is to develop appropriate cognitive and reasoning skills enabling children to operate equally in different languages – starting with the mother tongue transition to Filipino then to English. It is a structured program of language learning and cognitive development which provides learners with the strong educational foundation in the first language (<http://www.depedro7.com.ph>).

The mother tongue in the region plays an important role in the Philippine educational system. We Filipinos have strong ethnic loyalty and pride in using our own native tongues in all occasions. We have the human rights and language rights to use, develop and preserve our mother tongues, especially the dialects in the brink of extinction. All these languages and dialects contribute to the development and enrichment of our evolving national language: Global Filipino. The growth, development and spread of global Filipino are unstoppable. It has been gaining acceptance and popularity, especially among language organizations, linguistic circles, and in the academes here and abroad.

3.3 Theoretical framework

The Theory of Constructivism is very helpful in providing theoretical support for teaching using the local language.

According to Piaget (1983) the cognitive view of constructivism posits that people develop universal form or structures of knowledge to experience reality. Knowledge as individually constructed (Bettencourt, 1993) and it is based on the learner's intellectual development as they experience reality while doing or engaging themselves in physical or social activity (Martin, 2001).

The constructivist viewed the learners as goal directed agents who actively seek knowledge and information taking active role in the development of their own ideas (Bliss, 1994). The learners construct meaningful learning as a result of sensory experiences with the world (Campo, 2003). He advocated that education should provide experiences that are relevant to the learners' daily life and prior knowledge or experiences. It is therefore necessary to use the local language or the mother tongue as the medium of instruction for teaching and learning especially in the primary grades.

Socio-cultural Theory of Learning by Lev Vygotsky, a Russian psychologist (1896-1943) believed that all knowledge is socially constructed, a product of dialogue and interaction between thought speech. His emphasis on the social nature of learning complements Piaget's theory of individual passing through stages cognitive development in a set sequence. He emphasized the role of Proximal Development. Based on his concepts, learning takes place when there is some knowledge, understanding or skill, beyond the grasp of the learner, which the learner is prepared to learn but cannot do so by herself. He needs an older or more knowledgeable or skilled person to assist the learner in understanding/doing the new concept/skill.

In using the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, the learners will be the portion to interact with the broader world. They can make connections between the new knowledge they acquire and prior knowledge to create learning more meaningful.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study assessed the proficiency in the use of the Mother Tongue by the Grade 1 teachers and their learners in Labrador District, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan during the school year 2023-2024. The assessment focused on the level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue of the Grade 1 teachers and their learners in terms of the analysis of the tape recorder and the interaction of the Mother Tongue; the strengths and weaknesses of the kinder teachers and learners in the use of Mother Tongue as their instructional language. The output of this study is a proposed recommendation to address the weaknesses of Grade 1 teachers in Mother Tongue.

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

The sources of data were the thirty (30) Grade 1 teachers teaching Grade 1 and implementing Mother Tongue as a subject and medium of instruction in the teaching of other subjects in the K-12 Curriculum. Table 1 presents the distribution of respondents.

Table 1
Distribution of Respondents
N=30

Schools	Number of Grade I Teachers
1. Bolo ES	3
2. Bongalon ES	3
3. Dulig ES	3
4. Kadampat ES	3
5. Labrador CS	6
6. Lawis ES	3
7. Ramon Magsaysay ES	3
8. Tobuan ES	3
9. Uyong ES	3
Total	30

3.3 Theoretical framework

Variables of the study contains dependent and independent variable. The study used pre-specified method for the selection This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of data gathered relative to the different sub-problems raised in the study.

Professional Profile of the Grade 1 Teachers In Labrador District

This section presents the professional profile of the Grade 1 teachers in Labrador District, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan. Table 2 presents the data gathered in answer to sub-problem 1.

Table 2
Professional Profile of Grade 1
Teachers in Labrador District
In Terms of Variables
N = 30

A. Highest Education Attainment	f	percent
BEED	20	66.67%
BEED with Academic Requirements in MAED	3	10%
BEED with units in MAEd	7	23.33%
Total	30	100 %
B. Number of Years of Expenses as Grade 1 Teacher		
0-5 years	20	66.67%
6-10 years	3	10%
11- above	7	23.33%
Total	30	100 %
C. Relevant In-Service Trainings Attended		
Regional Level	20	66.67%
Division Level	30	100%
District Level	30	100%

Note: Multiple responses

Table 2 presents the professional profile of the Grade 1 teachers in Labrador District, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan in terms of their highest educational attainment, number of years of experience as Grade 1 teachers, and relevant in-servings trainings attended. Scrutinizing the table majority of the Grade 1 teachers are BEED units in Master of Arts 7 or 23.33 percent. In terms of their number of years of experience as Grade 1 teachers they belonged 0-5 years of experience teaching Grade 1 20 or 66.67 percent. Along relevant in-service trainings attended in Grade 1, it must be noted that they attended Division and District level seminars/conferences in the Grade1 curriculum called for the higher authorities. This means that the Grade 1 teachers are still wanting to grow professional and likewise be more oriented in the implementation of Grade 1 curriculum for they are still young in the service.

Level of Proficiency in the Mother Tongue Of Grade 1 Teachers and their Learners

This section presents the level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue of the Grade 1 teachers and their learners in terms of the analyzing tape recorder and interaction of the Mother Tongue. Table 3 presents the data gathered in answer to sub-problem 2.

Table 3
Level of Proficiency In The Mother Tongue
Of Grade 1 Teachers and Their Learners
N₁ = 30 Teachers N₂ = 53 Learners

A. Level of Proficiency in the Mother Tongue	Teachers		Learners	
	f	percent	f	percent
Beginning				
Developing				
Approaching Proficiency	20	66.67%		
Proficient	3	10%		
Advanced	7	23.33%		
Total	30	99.99%	53	99.99%
B. Interaction of the Mother Tongue				
Beginning				
Developing				
Approaching Proficiency	20	66.67%		
Proficient	3	10%		
Advanced	7	23.33%		
Total	30	100%	53	99.99%

Legend:

Numerical Value

Beginning	74% - below
Developing	75% -79%
Approaching Proficiency	80% - 84%
Proficient	85% - 89%
Advanced	90% - above

Table 3 presents the level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue of the Grade 1 teachers in their learners in terms of the level of proficiency and their interaction in the Mother Tongue. It must be noted from the table that the Grade 1 Teachers got “Approaching Proficiency” in terms of their level of proficiency and interaction with the Mother Tongue 20 or 66.67percent. On the other hand the Grade 1 learners majority of them are still “Developing” 20 or 44.44 percent along their level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue while in terms of their interaction they belonged “Beginning” 13 or 28.89 percent. This means that the Grade 1 learners should be more oriented in the use of the Mother Tongue in Grade 1 than as a medium of instruction and as a subject in the K-12 curriculum.

Weaknesses of the Grade 1 Teachers And Learners In the Use of The Mother Tongue

This section presents the weaknesses of the Grade 1 teachers and learners in the use of the Mother Tongue in Labrador District , Schools Division Office I Pangasinan. Table 4 presents the data gathered in answer to sub-problem 3.

Table 4
Weaknesses of the Grade 1 Teachers And
Learners In The Use of Mother Tongue
N₁ = 30 Teachers N₂ = 53 Learners

A. Weaknesses in the Use of Mother Tongue	Teachers		Learners	
	F	percent	f	percent
1. Pronunciation Skills	3	10%		
2. Receptive Skills	7	23.33%		
3. Syllabication Skills	20	66.67%		
4. Intonation Skills				
5. Enunciation Skills				
Total	30	100%	53	100%

Table 4 presents the weaknesses of the Grade 1 teachers and learners in the use of Mother Tongue in Labrador District, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan. Looking at the table the Grade 1 teachers are “weak” in receptive and syllabication skills 20

or 66.67 percent while the Grade 1 learner's majority of them are "weak" in pronunciation skills 3 or 10 percent. This must be accorded that the first language of the Grade 1 learners was "Filipino" used both at home and in community.

Proposed Recommendations To Address The Weaknesses of the Grade 1 Teachers

This section presents the output of the study which is a proposed recommendation to address the weaknesses of the Grade 1 teachers. This is to answer sub-problem 4.

The proposed recommendation was based on the analysis of the findings made from the data gathered which was analyzed and tabulated. And with deeper analysis made by the researcher it was found out that the Grade 1 teachers that they should update their professional profile while it was true that they met the qualification as mandated by DepEd that they are also weak in some areas where they used Mother Tongue as a language of instruction and as a subject in K-12 curriculum. On the other hand their level of proficiency in the use of Mother Tongue was ranging 80-84 percent for teachers and for learners 74 percent and below and this must be addressed the soonest possible.

Proposed Recommendations To Address The Weaknesses of The Grade 1 Teachers

Areas of Concerns	Recommendations
A. Professional Profile of Grade 1 Teachers	A. The Grade 1 teachers should be encouraged to enroll in the graduate program - They should attend in-service trainings particularly in the national level based on their length of experience as they are still young.
B. Level of Proficiency of the Grade 1 Learners in the Use of Mother Tongue	B. The Grade 1 learners should be given more practical exercises in the Mother Tongue - They should be motivated to communicate through the Mother Tongue not only in school but particularly at home.
C. Weaknesses of the Grade 1 Learners/Teachers	C. The identified weaknesses for Grade 1 learners should be given possible solutions in order to turned out into strengthen. - The Grade 1 learners should be provided with homework for them to work on with the use of Mother Tongue.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This study used the descriptive method of research with the use of questionnaire as data gathering instrument in the assessment of the proficiency in the use of Mother Tongue of the Grade 1 teachers and the learners in Labrador District, Schools Division Office I Pangasinan. The assessment included the professional profile of the Grade 1 Teachers in Labrador District in terms of their highest educational attainment, number of years of experience as Grade 1 teachers; relevant in-service trainings attended in Grade 1; level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue of Grade 1 teachers and their learners in terms of the analysis of tapes recorded and interaction of Mother Tongue and the weaknesses of Grade 1 teachers and learners in the use of Mother Tongue as their instructional language. The output of this study is a proposed recommendation to address the weaknesses of Grade 1 teachers in Mother Tongue. The thirty (30) Grade 1 teachers served as respondents of the study and the fifty-three Grade 1 learners who are learners of the research served as research subject of the study. Frequency, Percentage and Average weight mean were used to treat statistically the data needed.

Findings;

- 1.0. Professional Profile of the Grade 1 Teachers In Labrador District.
 - 1.1 Majority of the Grade 1 Teachers are BEED Academic requirements in MA 7 or 23.33 percent.
 - 1.2 Along their in-service trainings attended in Grade 1 they belonged to 0-5 years 20 or 66.67 percent
 - 1.3. Majority of the Grade 1 teachers attended various in-service trainings in the Division and District level.
- 2.0. Level of Proficiency In The Mother Tongue of Grade 1 Teachers And Their Learner.
 - 2.1 Majority of Grade 1 teachers' level of proficiency in the Mother Tongue was "Approved Proficiency", 0 or 76.92 percent while the Grade 1 learners 20 or 44.44 percent meaning "Developing".
 - 2.2 In two of their interaction of the Mother Tongue the Grade 1 Teachers proficiency level in the Mother Tongue is "Approaching proficiency" 20 or 66.67 percent while the Grade 1 learners belonged to "Approaching proficiency and proficient" 7 or 23.33 percent respectively.
- 3.0. Weaknesses of the Grade 1 Teachers and Learners In The Use Of The Mother Tongue.
 - 3.1 Majority of the Grade 1 teachers and learners identified weaknesses in the use of the Mother Tongue was "receptive skills" 38.46 percent while the Grade 1 learner is in "premonition skills" 20 or 44.44 percent.
- 4.0. Proposed Recommendation To Address the Weaknesses of the Grade 1 Teachers.
 - 4.1 The proposed recommendations can really address the weaknesses of the Grade 1 teachers in Labrador District.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. The professional profile of the Grade 1 teachers can still be improved.
2. The proficiency level of both Grade 1 teachers and learners should be monitored by the school administrators.
3. The identified weaknesses of the teachers should be addressed properly by concern authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions drawn, the following recommendations are hereby offered:

1. The proposed recommendations should be forwarded to DepEd higher authorities for implementations.
2. The Grade 1 teachers should be reoriented through in-service training programs.
3. Similar study be conducted in a wider scope to validate the findings of the study.

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