



EXPLORING DIFFICULTIES IN THE MOTHER TONGUE SUBJECT: THE LEARNER, PARENT, AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

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MOS

Abstract

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by

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With the implementation of the enhanced K-12 Basic Education Curriculum, in 2012, the department of education in the Philippines, incorporated the teaching of MTB-MLE as a language subject in the primary grades with the hope that children better understand the context of their home language and develop their critical thinking on learning concepts with the use of their mother tongue. This paper explored the difficulties in the Mother Tongue subject in the perspectives of grade one learners, parents and teachers at San Joaquin Central Elementary School. The study utilized the qualitative approach and data collection consisted of focus group discussions and in-depth interviews with the participants. The results of the interview were transcribed, translated, and coded to produce themes. As regards to learners' perspectives on the difficulties in the Mother Tongue subject, Issues related to Mother Tongue Performance, Mother Tongue Materials and Mother Tongue Recording were the themes. On the perspectives of the parents, the themes were the following: Issues related to Mother Tongue Skills and access to Mother Tongue Learning Resources. As to how teachers viewed Mother Tongue as a subject, these themes were created: Issues in the Delivery of MTB- MLE Curriculum and Provision of Mother Tongue Resources. Moreover, both parents and teachers have issues in the design and implementation of the MTB-MLE Program.

Keywords: Difficulty, Mother Tongue, Learner, Parent and Teacher Perspectives

Table of Contents

Title	Page
Title Page	1
Acknowledgement	2
Abstract	4
Table of Contents	5
Introduction of the Research	6
Literature Review	8
Research Questions	10
Scope and Limitation	10
Research Methodology	10
Sampling	11
Data Collection	11
Ethical Issues	12
Discussion of Results and Recommendation	13
Prevalent Difficulties of Grade One Learners in Learning Mother Tongue Subject	13
Prevalent Difficulties of Parents in Assisting their Children	15
Prevalent Difficulties of Teachers in Teaching Mother Tongue	18
Summary	22
Conclusion	23
Recommendations	24
Dissemination and Advocacy Plan	25
References	27
Appendices	28

Introduction of the Research

Mother Tongue as a learning subject is being taught in the primary grades with the hope that children understand concepts better in their mother tongue. However, the grade one pupils of San Joaquin Central Elementary School find difficulty in learning the subject. Poor performance in Mother Tongue observed based on the results of their scores, grades and other related learning activities.

Language education provides the children with the opportunity to learn in their mother tongue. Although children can learn a language other than their mother tongue, they learn best—especially in the early years—in an environment in which the language used to teach is also one they speak in their home, with their parents, their siblings, and friends. But reality speaks for itself, most of grade one pupils have problems in learning Mother Tongue.

As of this writing, the consolidated grades of grade one in San Joaquin Central Elementary School is between 75% and 80% in the Mother Tongue subject for the past four years. The learners' performance is alarming considering that the new grading system is transmuted and Mother Tongue is the core subject in Grade one. Also noted is the performance of children in quarterly assessments. The mean percentage scores of grade one since the first year of implementation is 76.18%, it is within the mastery level but not as high as expected mastery level for a Mother Tongue subject (SJCES Testing and Records Section).

Although, Lefebvre, (2012) revealed that students did not have an overwhelmingly negative attitude towards the use of mother tongue for instruction; however, their attitudes seemed to fall somewhere between their learned value for multilingualism and their lived experiences. On the other hand, the implementation of MTB-MLE brought about pedagogical challenges in the educational system and teachers encountered many problems in teaching the Mother Tongue subject.

So as Valerio (2015) stated in her study, Filipino teachers and learners from different linguistic backgrounds and from varied cultural communities of the country are continuously facing the challenges of mother tongue based education (MTBE) to keep in pace with the demands of education on both countrywide level and international level.

Additionally, Mother Tongue subject is still dilemma by which parents are facing for past five years (Pasco, 2016). Parents of San Joaquin Central Elementary School find hard to embrace the program easily which may affect the academic development of the children towards the subject.

The San Joaquin Central Elementary School envisions to produce competent learners not only with the use of mother tongue as L1 but also in the context of the language. Exploring the difficulties in learning Mother Tongue, how it should be taught, how to address the learning problems in the perspectives of learners, parents and teachers are the most concern of the researcher.

The information that derived from the study will be of value to grade one teachers in San Joaquin Central Elementary School and in the District of San Joaquin-North who are teaching Mother Tongue. The results allow teachers adapt new ideas/strategies to cater the needs of the learners for the better understanding of the learning content, learning standard and learning competencies of the subject. It will also help teachers to find new ways in making learning activities suitable to grade one learners. The findings of this study would also serve as a starting point in aiding parents with appropriate orientation about the Mother Tongue subject that could be beneficial in assisting their children. Lastly, it will help future researchers by providing them baseline data on pupils learning difficulties in Mother Tongue.

Literature Review

The Mother Tongue Based –Multilingual Education Policy was officially backed up by the Philippine Congress in January 2013 by passing the Enhanced Basic Education Act which aim to build up the K-12 Multi-lingual Education Program of the DepEd. Instructional approaches and strategies are typically spelled out in the Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTBMLE) curriculum. However, its implementation brought learning problems to the pupils-this scenario revealed in most of the results of the assessment both in verbal and non-verbal activity and, they have poor comprehension in the learning content of the subject.

Mother Tongue Based - Multilingual Education program determines the scope and sequencing of learning objectives. The goal of the curriculum is to build for teachers a comprehensive framework in which any particular learning objective is understood. Particularly in early years, the curriculum has to align itself with the still developing cognitive capabilities of pupils, their still limited experience, and with their interests. Walter & Dekker (2011) concluded in their study that children learn easily and achieve positive learning outcomes if they are taught in their home language.

But there are concerns that make Mother Tongue not effective tool for good learning outcomes considering the factors stated by Ong'uti, Aloka and Raburu,(2016) on the findings of their study that both teachers and learners had negative attitudes towards teaching and learning in mother tongue and poor attitude of teachers towards mother tongue and preference of foreign languages as a mode of communication, could be attributed to lack of proper training among the teachers and the unavailability of resources for teaching and learning in mother tongue, while learners' preference for English and Kiswahili could be attributed to their prominence as languages of education and greater communication.

On the other hand, Malone, D and Malone S. (2011) gave emphasis on the role of stakeholders in implementing the program. In a mother-tongue based education program, the stakeholders are the learners, their families, the community officials and other who are involved and are affected by the program. The result shows that the teachers are aware that the parents' active involvement is necessary to make the program successful. Stakeholders need to work together as partners.

In the findings of the study of Naom and Ambiyi (2014), parents were more concerned with the end product, but not the process that leads to it. Although other parents appreciate the fact that the children would show greater interest in learning if lessons were conducted in mother-tongue, they observed that factors such as lack of opportunities related to mother-tongue use would stand on the way to effective implementation. It is worth noting that parents are considered partners in the success of the MTB-MLE implementation.

In order to improve the learning outcomes in the mother tongue subject, it is important to know the pupils' difficulties in learning the subject and to find ways to help them develop comprehension skills and fluency in using the language. The role of this study is to help the present scenario in implementing MTB-MLE education. Skutnabb-Kangas (2000) elucidated that instruction through a language that learners do not speak has been called "submersion" because it is analogous to holding learners under water without teaching them how to swim.

Therefore, more favorable combination of circumstances with parents as valuable partners should be reckoned. For MTB-MLE to be successful there must be strong collaboration and support structures in place from key groups, the teachers and parents.

Research Questions

This study sought to determine the difficulties in learning Mother Tongue as a language subject in the perspectives of the learners, the parents, and the teachers of San Joaquin Central Elementary School in the school year 2017 - 2018.

Specifically, this study sought to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the prevalent difficulties of grade one pupils in learning Mother Tongue as a subject?
2. What are the prevalent difficulties of parents in assisting their children?
3. What are the prevalent difficulties of teachers in teaching Mother Tongue?

Scope and Limitation

This study was conducted in San Joaquin Central Elementary School during the school year 2017 – 2018. The participants were the 30 learners enrolled in Grade One taking Mother Tongue as a language subject, the 30 parents, and the four Grade One teachers.

This study was primarily focused and limited on the difficulties of the Grade One learners in learning Mother tongue as a subject, the parents' experience in assisting their children and the teachers' experience in teaching the subject.

The responses from the participants involved in the study were taken using a validated researcher-made questionnaire. An interview guide and focus group discussion guide were used respectively for the in-depth exploration of the themes manifested in the study.

Research Methodology

This section described the research methodology, sampling, data collection instruments used, data analysis, and ethical considerations employed in the

investigation. In this research, the qualitative method was employed. The researcher prepared interview guide questions for in-depth interview and focus group discussion. The teacher-made interview guide questionnaire used as the primary gathering tool for the data of this study.

Sampling

There were 64 respondents involved in this study. They were the 30 learners with low scores in their quarterly assessments and with difficulty in learning the subject, 30 parents who were having difficulty in assisting their children with their homeworks and other assigned tasks and 4 Grade One Mother Tongue teachers of San Joaquin Central Elementary School.

The 30 learner-participants and the four teacher-participants were subjected for in-depth interviews while the 30 parent-participants were engaged in a focus group discussion (FGD).

Data Collection

In the conduct of in-depth interview and focus group discussion sessions several ethical considerations were properly observed. The researcher followed the three principles of the Belmont Report, namely beneficence, respect for human dignity as well as justice (Polit, Beck, and Hungler, 2001).

Since rapport should be established, the participants were oriented about the details of the study, the role of the participants, and make them understand that everything will be done with utmost confidentiality. Then, the participants were asked to sign a written consent. After all preliminary activities were done, the in-depth interview and focus group discussion sessions were scheduled and conducted.

Data collected from interviews were audio recorded since audio recording could be a good support to improve the accuracy of the content shared in the focus group or

in-depth interview as well as the speaker's intonations with the participants in a private setting (InSites, 2007). This audio recorded data of the interview was transcribed verbatim. Confidentiality was observed in all sessions and with all participants (Bricki and Green, 2007).

To have a continuous flow during the in-depth interview, the researcher tasked open-ended research questions as indicated in the interview guide but also inform them that there could be additional questions not in the interview guide that might be necessary in providing helpful insights to the study. This also promotes trust and openness with the participants.

According to Parahoo (2006, p. 375), data analysis is an “integral part of research design”, and it is a means of making sense of data before presenting them in understandable manner. The qualitative questions were answered using the thematic data analysis. On this process, answer to these questions were read several times. Themes were identified and coded then after more readings, these codes will reclassified into fewer categories.. Raw data were analyzed through data reduction. Data reduction is the abstraction of data from transcriptions, deleting data which are not important and transforming it into a comprehensible material easily understood by many (Suter, 2012).

Ethical Issues

Ethical considerations relates to moral standards that the researcher consider in all research methods and stages of the research. The researcher followed the three principles of the Belmont Report, namely beneficence, respect for human dignity as well as justice (Polit, Beck, and Hungler. 2001).

The following was strictly followed: (1) Principle of beneficence which means “above all do no harm”, (2) Principle of human dignity which includes the right to self-

determination and full disclosure (Polit et al., 2001:77), (3) The principle of justice which includes participants' right to fair treatment and privacy.

In this connection, the researcher seek permission from the Schools District Supervisor and Schools Principal of the school then a Consent Form was signed by each learner, parent and teacher participants involved in the investigation. Ethical considerations in the consent form include the following: procedures of the study; risks and benefits of participating; plan for data analysis; voluntary participation and purpose of the study.

Discussion of Results and Recommendation

In view of the preparations made in the conduct of the study, the following are the salient findings of the present investigation divided as follows: Prevalent difficulties of grade one pupils in learning Mother Tongue as a subject; Prevalent difficulties of parents in assisting their children; Prevalent difficulties of teachers in teaching Mother Tongue. Also, recommendations are presented after the discussion of the results and findings.

Prevalent Difficulties of Grade One Learners in Learning Mother Tongue

Subject

To generate an embrative discussion for the above research problem, learner participants drew their feelings/emotions about the Mother Tongue subject then they were instructed to say something about their drawings. To gain more information, the following questions were asked during the in-depth interview: What mother tongue do you speak? What mother tongue do you used in your school? What can you say about your Mother Tongue subject? What are the things you learn in your Mother Tongue subject? What activities in Mother Tongue do you find it difficult to learn?

From the data collected on the perspectives of the learner-participants, three main themes emerged as presented in Table 1 (Appendix). These themes helped me determine the difficulties in Mother Tongue to report. These themes are *Issues Related to Mother Tongue Performance*; *Issues Related to Mother Tongue Materials*; and *Issues Related to Mother Tongue Recording*.

For the first theme, *Issues related to Mother Tongue Performance*, there are three sub-themes present. The sub-themes are: *Poor Mother Tongue Delivery*, *Poor Mother Tongue Vocabulary*, and *Poor Mother Tongue Reading*.

In fact, one learner-participant has this to say about *Poor Mother Tongue Delivery*:

“...indi gid takon maghambal sa tunga kay budlay...” (I will not speak in front because it is difficult.) It was seconded by two other participants saying:

“...kay budlay hambalon” (Because it is difficult to say it.)

“...budlay amon hambal.” (We have difficult statements to say.)

In addition to the sub-theme, *Poor Mother Tongue Vocabulary*, the following are the sample responses from the learner-participants:

“...ga sakit akon ulo mag-Mother Tongue.” (My head aches when it’s already Mother Tongue.)

“Ma’am, indi ako kamaan.” (Ma’am, I don’t know what to do.”

Lastly, for the sub-theme, *Poor Mother Tongue Reading*, the following are the sample responses from them:

“...nabudlayan ako kay indi ko ka balo magbasa.” (I find it difficult because I don’t know how to read.)

“...ginapabasa ako, budlay gid kay indi ako ka intindi.” (I am assisted when reading but it is still difficult because I don’t understand a thing.)

Meanwhile, for the second theme, *Issues Related to Mother Tongue Materials*, it is divided into two sub-themes, namely: *Non-Comprehension of Mother Tongue Reading Materials* and *Anxiety Over Mother Tongue Testing Materials*.

The following are the sample responses of the learner-participants in *Non-Comprehension of Mother Tongue Reading Materials*:

“...gahibi takon. Indi takon kamaan magsabat.” (I am crying. I don’t know how to answer.)

“...mga sarabtan sa libro...indi takon ka maan.” (The exercises in the book...I don’t know how to do it.”

For the *Anxiety Over Mother Tongue Testing Materials*, the following are the sample responses of the learner-participants:

“...indi takon gusto mag-test...ga sakit akon ulo.” (I don’t like to have a test... I suffer from headache.”

“..rako mga sarabtan...indi takon ka intindi.” (There are too many worksheets...I don’t understand.”

Finally, for the theme *Issues Related to Mother Tongue Recording*, it is also divided into two sub-themes namely: *Physical Discomfort Induced by Mother Tongue Writing* and *Psychological Discomfort Induced by Mother Tongue Writing*. The following are few of the responses for the first sub-theme:

“Indi takon magsulat kay naga balhas akon lima.” (I don’t want to write because my hand sweats so much.)

“Gasakit akon tiyan magsulat.” (My stomach aches when I write.)

Prevalent Difficulties of Parents in Assisting their Children

The following questions were asked during the focus group discussion to find out the difficulties of parents in assisting their children: 1. What does your child like about

school? What do you like about school? Are you satisfied with how often teacher-adviser communicates with you about your child? Why? Are you familiar with Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education? What is your perception towards MTB-MLE? Do you like it? Why or why not? Are you aware of the medium of instruction used in your child's school? Do you think that MTB-MLE helps your children to learn effectively? Why or why not? Do you interact with your children in Mother tongue in the family? How often? In what context/ situations? What is your child's perception towards Mother Tongue subject? Does he/ she like the subject? Have you seen any difference in your child's learning performance after the implementation of the K-12 Curriculum with Mother Tongue as a core subject in the primary grades? If Yes, How? In what way? In what aspect? If no, why do you think so? What are the difficulties you met in assisting your children during homework activity and study session at home?

From the data collected through the above questions, there were three main categories which emerged from the responses as shown on Table 2 (Appendix). *Parents' Issues and Difficulties with the Mother Tongue Subject; Issues in the Design and Implementation of the MTB-MLE Program; and Issues Over Access to Mother Tongue Learning Resources* respectively.

The first main category, *Issues related to Mother Tongue Skills*, it is divided into three sub-themes, namely: *Poor Mother Tongue Sentence Construction, Poor Mother Tongue Articulation, and Poor Mother Tongue Grammatical Sense*.

For the *Poor Mother Tongue Sentence Construction* sub-theme, a parent-participant has this to say about it:

"Okay tana Ma'am maghimo sang dinalan... okay tana rah... kauna gane Ma'am kay daw di gid ako kara ka intindi kuon ko kara ay... ano ang dinalan kadya haw... ga amo ako ka ra. HEHEHE." (It's okay to construct the sentence Ma'am. I can easily catch up. When I didn't know about it before, I asked what a "dinalan" is.)

In addition, for the *Poor Mother Tongue Articulation*, one parent-participant address a sentiment saying:

"Te kay daw nabudlayan ako mag start bala kara nga diretso mo sa mother tongue haw... amo rah akon nabudlayan." (Because I find it difficult to start directly with the use of mother tongue...that's one thing I find the most difficult.)

Lastly, for the third sub-theme, *Poor Mother Tongue Grammatical* sense, here's a transcription of the interview made:

"...Tapos daw wara ron te grammar kaisa Ma'am noh ang mother tongue." (Sometimes, mother tongue doesn't have a concrete grammar already.)

On the otherhand, for the second category, *Issues in the Design and Implemetation of the MTB-MLE Program*, there are two sub-themes, namely: *Innapropriate Selection of Hiligaynon as a Mother Tongue* and *Anachronistic Implementation of MTB-MLE Program*.

The following responses were noted to be under *Innapropriate Selection of Hiligaynon as a Mother Tongue*:

"...Mas hapos ang mag-intindi kang bata kung ang mother tongue nga ginagamit aton nga paghambal ridya [in San Joaquin], kay kung sundon ang sa libro daw kabudlay intindihon kang bata kay e-translate mo man gihapon either sa English or sa Kinaray-a." (It's easy to understand things for the child if the mother tongue that is used is the one that we have here in San Joaquin because if we follow strictly the once that we have by the book, it's difficult to understand on the child's part and you tend to translate still in either English or in Kinaray-a.)

"...Kauna garing kato Ma'am... Syempre direct sa Tagalog, direct sa English. Daw gadura bala kanda kara ang aton bala ka ra nga language." (Before, everything is done directly in Tagalog and English. The reason that they tend to forget our own local language.)

Furthermore, on the category of *Issues over Access to Mother Tongue Learning Resources*, sentences are present and certain aspects on the issue should be addressed deliberately. This category has two sub-themes, namely: *Lack of Access to Printed Learning Materials* and *Lack of Access to Online Learning Materials*.

For *Lack of Access to Printed Learning Materials*, the other houston has the following responses:

"Hapos man lang kung may basis may basehan kung kaisa bala kung sa bata kapin pa ang libro wara man daan ginadara." (It's easy if one has basis especially when we check for our children, but simply we can not bring the books home.)

Lastly, for the sub-theme *Lack of Access to Online Learning Materials*, a parent-participant said:

"...Wow! HAHAA. Amun ka ra, di gid tamon ka ra ka-search kay wara tamon internet, ridto tamon sa bukid... Te wara gid tamon may mahimo." (Wow! Hahaha! In our case, we can not go search because we do not have internet connection in the hinterlands. So, we can do nothing.)

Prevalent Difficulties of Teachers in Teaching Mother Tongue

In support to the research problem, the following questions were raised during the in-depth interview namely: What languages do you speak? Do you speak your pupils' mother tongue/local language? if yes/no. What is your pupils' mother tongue? What mother tongue do you teach? Do you use your pupils' mother tongue/local language in teaching Mother Tongue subject itself and other subjects? How do you understand the purpose of MTB-MLE in school? What is your perception towards MTB-MLE? Is this an appropriate program in your school? Why? Why not? What challenges do you face in teaching Mother Tongue subject? What are the difficulties in teaching Mother Tongue? What are the common difficulties of pupils in learning Mother Tongue?

Has the MOOE provided you with: a.) learning materials, b.) trainings, c.) and other required skills for Mother Tongue? If Yes, how do you use them? If No, what do you use instead? What differences have you noticed in pupils' learning performance after the implementation of Mother Tongue as a core subject in the K-12 Curriculum? Do you think the MTB-MLE policy/program is appropriate in San Joaquin Central Elementary School? Why or why not? How do you think DepEd can improve the MTB-MLE program?

From the data collected through the above questions, there were three main categories became apparent from the responses as shown on Table 3 (Appendix). *Issues in the Delivery of MTB-MLE Curriculum; Issues in the Design and Implementation of the MTB-MLE Program; and Issues Over Provision of Mother Tongue Resources.*

For the first category, *Issues and Difficulties with the Mother Tongue Subject*, there are three sub-themes present, namely: *Lack of Official Writing Standards for Mother Tongue* and *Lack of Formal Background in Mother Tongue*.

For the sub-theme *Lack of Official Writing Standards for Mother Tongue*, the teacher-respondents said:

"...spelling... Hapos lang tana hambalon mong, garing magsulat ikaw, confused ako... Kanakon lang tana, confused ako... ano spelling na ka dya man... amo ra bala." (Spelling...It's easier said but when I write, I am confused.)

"...confusing sanda sa "o" kag "u" amo ra bala tapos sa spelling kag lawid sya sulaton..." (It is confusing especially in distinguishing the difference between the use of "o" and "u". It is also too wordy to write.)

The issue was associated with the other sub-theme, *Lack of Formal Background in Mother Tongue*, as one of the teacher-respondents would say:

"Honestly, sa first year gid ka to nabudlayan gid ako, syempre sa tanan no... sa una pirme mabudlay gid man kay indi pa bala clear gid kon kon... ang sa curriculum kag

kon ano ra tapos like nga seminar ka to for a week then na-implement dayon pagtudlo daw indi pa gid bala ako ready wara ko pa that time na-embrace gid ang ginatawag nga magtudlo sa MT kay na-use ako nga kon ano nga subject ang ginatudluan mo, amo kara ang medium of instruction ang gamiton so at first wara ako na... nabudlayan gid ako." (Honestly, I find it difficult during the very first year of implementation...It is really difficult at first because everything seems to be unclear to me...with all the seminars and trainings during the implementation of the new curriculum that I attended, still I am not used to teach it because I am used to the one I am handling using the medium of instruction used to teach that subject.)

For the *Issues in the Design and Implementation of the MTB-MLE Program*, two sub-themes also manifested. *Inappropriate Selection of Hiligaynon as Mother Tongue* and *Forced Implementation of MTB-MLE Program*.

For the *Inappropriate Selection of Hiligaynon as Mother Tongue*, the teacher-respondents said:

"...sa libro bay naton Hiligaynon ang mostly nga ginagamit... pero gina-translate man sa Kinaray-a... sa aton dialect..." (In our book, it's Hiligaynon that we mostly use but it is also translated in Kinaray-a...our dialect.)

"...kinahanglan i-dig out gid tana ang dialect naton as in sa Kinaray-a gid naton." (We need to dig out our own dialect as the Kinaray-a that we use and have.)

"...I-translate mo pa gid ang Hiligaynon kay ang iban indi ka-intindi kon Hiligaynon gid nga terms so Karay-ahon mo pa gid." (We have to translate specific Hiligaynon terms if the pupils can't understand it. So, we have to translate it in Kinaray-a.)

In addition to this sub-theme, the teacher-respondents has similar insights in the sub-theme *Forced Implementation of the MTB-MLE Program* saying:

"...Thrusts kang K-12, back to the basics. Kag amo gid dya ang ana kang grade one, Mother Tongue. Whether you like it or not, itudlo mo; whether you love it or not, itudlo mo." (It is the K-12 curriculum's thrusts to go back to the basics. And this is what really is in Grade One, Mother Tongue. Whether you like it or not, you teach it; whether you love it or not, you teach it.)

Lastly, on the *Issues Over Provision of Mother Tongue Resources*, two sub-themes prevailed. It shows that there are *Lack of Actual Learning Materials* and *Lack of Budget for Learning Materials*.

The teacher-respondents has the following insights on the *Lack of Actual Learning Materials*:

"...ano lang tugruan lang gid [daad] kita kang LM kag mga mgamit naton sa pagtudlo kang MT kay wara sanda ga-provide LM." (Learning Materials should be provided for the teachers.)

"Siguro ang madugangan pa gid ang mga materials tapos ano bala ka ra... tapos ang mga books bala ka ra haw... reading materials kay wara kita gawa ka ra sa mga terms daad ang ma-intindihan kang bata kag anda gid ginahambal." (Reading materials should also be provided especially when we want to learn specific terms in Kianaray-a when teaching.)

"Amo lang gid ka ra pa-reproduce kag pa-photocopy lang gid kang... kay pirang nahot ginatugro kang DepEd so amo na lang ka ra para ang kada bata maka-ano... ang mga parents gina-inform... ginatawag ang parents pag-start kang klase nga kinahanglan nga ang kada bata may ana gid textbook o learning materials... [they] provided us with bondpapers, other than that one..." (Mass reproduction of the LMs should be done. DepEd gives a limited reading materials on the subject and so, we make sure that parents know about this so we can make an action on the matter; to reproduce copies of it so each pupil can have their own.)

In addition for that, the teacher-respondents also said something about the *Lack of Budget for Learning Materials*. The following are just some of the cries:

"...ang sa naman-an ko ang sa school ma lang to ang natugro nanda sa MOOE ka to ang sa ano ma lang... garamiton to ang sa Manila paper." (In my knowledge, what was provided is allotted in the MOOE. Things to buy like Manila Paper for the IMs.)

"May dyan man... kis-a may ano sanda nga ginatao bondpapers, reading materials, learning materials...wara gawa... nagapa-xerox kami... parents ang gagasto. Sa training tana amo ma lang to... ang K-12 amo lang to... Magluwas dyan, daw wara ron ko ti may madumduman." (There's a budget for that. Sometimes there are bondpapers given. As for the reading materials and learning materials, there is none I know. We photocopy and the budget comes from the parents' pockets. As for the trainings and seminars, I attended them all and there's nothing more I remember about the budget.)

Summary

This study was conducted to determine the difficulties in learning Mother Tongue as a language subject in the perspectives of the learners, the parents, and the teachers of San Joaquin Central Elementary School in the school year 2017 - 2018. From the results of the study based from the responses of participants in the in-depth interviews and focus group discussions, the following issues were identified:

First, the learner participants were having difficulty on learning activities particularly in areas that target vocabulary, concept development and language structure. Reading activity was the area where most learners were having a hard time and also writing activity as it brought physical and psychological discomfort to them.

Meanwhile, parent-participants were having problems on sentence construction, articulation and grammar sense hence created confusion in their manner of assisting

their children with their lessons. The transition of instruction and learning content into the Mother Tongue as a subject, the anachronistic implementation of the MTB-MLE program and the issue on the access of Mother Tongue resources made the subject even more difficult to understand by the parents.

On the other hand, teachers found troubles on writing standards for Mother Tongue especially with the correct spelling of the Hiligaynon Terms. Teachers did not fully understand the background of the MTBMLE program due to lack of teacher trainings on Mother Tongue subject and with the little knowledge of the language program, they had the feeling that they were forced to teach the subject. Insufficient budget allocation of school funds through MOOE, provision of learning materials add made teachers ineffective to teach the subject.

Conclusion

Based on the results of the study the following conclusions have been drawn:

Grade I learners have issues on their personal learning incapacibilities resulting to poor performance and poor recording skills. Addition to this, the learning materials provied by the DepEd are not based on the local or home language used or understand by the children.

Parents' negative feelings towardthe Mother Tongue subject, could be attributed to lack of communication skills in the language used in the Mother Tongue subject and inaccessibility of Mother Tongue resources. DepEd, in the local scene, failed to give concrete information on the language program specifically in the use of Hiligaynon instead of Kinaray-a in teaching the subject.

On the other hand , teachers viewed delivery of the MTBMLE curriculum and issues on provision of Mother Tongue Learning Resources as serious problems they encountered in the implementation of the K-12 Curriculum. With this, DepEd need to

engage teachers to relevant trainings in Mother Tongue subject and provide sufficient learning materials through local funds.

Moreover, both parents and teachers shared the same sentiments on the issues on design and implementation of the MTBMLE Program. DepEd has to review its program on MTB-MLE.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions, the following are recommended:

1. Since Mother Tongue is activity-based curriculum, each learner should be provided with learning materials to work on. Adequacy of learning materials should be prioritized by the policy makers.

2. For reading, program for remediation should be initiated properly and school should financially support the reading program.

3. The language of instruction and bookprints should be the language used and understand by the learners.

4. Teachers and parents need to be well-oriented, trained and supervised in the implementation of MTB-MLE program. The Mother Tongue language program should be fully understood by the teachers since they are the implementers of the program.

5. More seminars on Mother Tongue language awareness are encouraged to be in placed, to increase the knowledge of teachers on language development objective of the MTB-MLE curriculum.

6. More seminar workshops should be conducted on the improvisation of teaching and learning materials found in the locality. Moreover, the need to use contextualization in teaching the subject should be supported since its involve localization and indigenization.

7. All stakeholders need to be well-oriented and encouraged to be involved in the decision-making regarding implementation of the mother tongue based multilingual education, as well as which languages will be used and how they will be developed.

8. Primary needs of pupils and teachers, such as instructional materials , must be met for any revisions to be effective and learning to be achieved.

9. There is a need for further research on how to solve the present problem on the implementation of mother tongue program as a language subject.

Dissemination and Advocacy Plan

With the results and findings manifested in this investigation, I am delighted to share the results to my colleagues in the field. My dissemination and advocacy plan would involve reaching public school supervisors, principals, classroom teachers, and stakeholders in the field.

A table of the activities on the dissemination and advocacy is prepared below which includes the activities, target audience, timeline, resource requirements, and success indicators.

Dissemination and Advocacy Plan

Activities	Targets	Timeline	Resource Requirements	Success Indicators
Disseminate research findings to monthly Staff Meeting	Public Schools District Supervisor School Heads	August 2018	Photocopies of Research Bulletin	Disseminated research findings to monthly Staff Meeting
Deliver research findings during: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> LAC sessions District INSET 	Public Schools District Supervisor School Heads Teachers	September 2018 October 2018	PDF copy of Research and manuscript	Delivered research findings during LAC sessions and District INSET
Present the research findings in a colloquium	Public Schools District Supervisor School Heads Master Teachers Elementary Grade Teachers	June 2018	Powerpoint of Oral Presentation	Presented the research findings in a Colloquium
Publish completed Research output in the Division journal and UP publication	Schools Division of Iloilo Editorial Board UPV Publication Committee in-charge	July 2018 November 2018	Copy of completed research output Copy of completed research written output	Published completed research written output
Conduct information drive to the parents regarding the research findings	Parents of grade one pupils	July 2018	copy of research findings	Conducted information drive to the parents regarding the research findings

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Appendix A

Request for Permission to Conduct Research

Department of Education
Region VI – Western Visayas
Schools Division of Iloilo
Schools District of San Joaquin-North
SAN JOAQUIN CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
San Joaquin, Iloilo

NATIVIDAD T. FUENTESPINA

Schools District Supervisor
Schools District of San Joaquin-North
San Joaquin, Iloilo

Madam:

The undersigned is a Basic Education Research fund grantee of the Department of Education in Region VI. Presently, she is conducting an action research entitled “EXPLORING DIFFICULTIES IN THE MOTHER TONGUE SUBJECT: THE LEARNER, PARENT AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

In this regard, she is respectfully requesting permission to administer in-depth interviews and focus group discussions among grade one learners, teachers and parents in your district.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration and valued assistance.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) MARY ODESSA C. SANTILLANA
Researcher

Department of Education
Region VI – Western Visayas
Schools Division of Iloilo
Schools District of San Joaquin-North
SAN JOAQUIN CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL
San Joaquin, Iloilo

DR. MA. ROSARIO S. BILBAO

Schools District Supervisor
Schools District of San Joaquin-North
San Joaquin, Iloilo

Madam:

The undersigned is a Basic Education Research fund grantee of the Department of Education in Region VI. Presently, she is conducting an action research entitled "EXPLORING DIFFICULTIES IN THE MOTHER TONGUE SUBJECT: THE LEARNER, PARENT AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES

In this regard, she is respectfully requesting permission to administer in-depth interviews and focus group discussions among grade one learners, teachers and parents in your school.

Thank you very much for your kind consideration and valued assistance.

Very truly yours,

(Sgd.) MARY ODESSA C. SANTILLANA
Researcher

Appendix B

Consent Form

SAN JOAQUIN CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL PARENTAL PERMISSION FORM FOR CHILD'S RESEARCH PARTICIPATION

**ACTION RESEARCH TITLE: EXPLORING DIFFICULTIES IN THE MOTHER TONGUE SUBJECT:
THE LEARNER, PARENT AND TEACHER PERSPECTIVES**

Researcher: MARY ODESSA C. SANTILLANA

Your child is being asked to take part in a research study. This form has important information about the reason for doing this study, what I will ask your child to do, and the way I would like to use information about your child if you choose to allow your child to be in the study.

Why are you doing this study?

Your child is being asked to participate in a research study about the Exploring Difficulties in the Mother Tongue subject, the learner, parent and teacher perspectives. The purpose of the study is determine the difficulties of the learners in learning the Mother Tongue subject.

What will my child be asked to do if my child is in this study?

Your child will be asked to draw his/her feelings about the Mother Tongue Subject. Your child will be asked questions about his/her drawings and things related to the study.

There are no personal or sensitive questions will be asked.

Participation should take about 5- 20 minutes

I would like to audio record your child as he/she performs the tasks that will be recorded, to make sure that I remember accurately all the information.

(Note: The researcher will keep these records in her custody and they will only be used by the researcher.)

I will only audio record your child, if you and your child give me permission.

What are the possible risks or discomforts to my child?

To the best of my knowledge, the things your child would be doing in this study have no more risk of harm than the risks of everyday life.

Your child's participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to your child beyond that of everyday life.

In the case your child's participation in this study, he/she may experience emotional discomfort or upset,...

- Your child can rest/take a break at any time.
- Your child can tell the interviewer at any time if he/she wants to take a break or

stop the interview.

- Your child may be uncomfortable with some of the questions and topics I will ask about. If your child is uncomfortable, they are free to not answer or skip to the next question.

As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality of the information I collect about your child could be breached – I will take steps to minimize this risk, as discussed in more detail below in this form.

What are the possible benefits for my child or others?

Taking part in this research study may not benefit your child personally, but we may learn new things that will help others.

How will you protect the information you collect about my child, and how will that information be shared?

Results of this study may be used in publications and presentations but the confidentiality of the identity of your child will be protected.

Financial Information

Participation in this study will involve no cost to you or your child. Your child will not be paid for participating in this study but snacks will be provided

What are my child's rights as a research participant?

Participation in this study is voluntary. Your child may withdraw from this study at any time -- you and your child will not be penalized in any way or lose any sort of benefits for deciding to stop participation. If you and your child decide not to be in this study, this will not affect the relationship you and your child have with your child's school in any way. Your child's grades will not be affected if you choose not to let your child be in this study.

If your child decides to withdraw from this study, the researchers will ask if the information already collected from your child can be used

Who can I contact if I have questions or concerns about this research study?

If you or your child have any questions, you may contact the researcher

MARY ODESSA C. SANTILLANA
SAN JOAQUIN CENTRAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

Appendix C

Parental Permission for Child's Participation in Research

I have read this form and the research study has been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and my questions have been answered. If I have additional questions, I have been told whom to contact. I give permission for my child to participate in the research study described above and will receive a copy of this Parental Permission form after I sign it.

Consent to Quote from Interview

I may wish to quote from the interview with your child either in the presentations or articles resulting from this work.

A pseudonym (fake name) will be used in order to protect your child's identity.

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

_____ (initial) I agree to...

_____ (initial) I do not agree to...

Consent to Audio- Video Record Interview

Initial one of the following to indicate your choice:

_____ (initial) I agree to...

_____ (initial) I do not agree to...

Parent/Legal Guardian's Name (printed) and Signature

Date

Name of Person Obtaining Parental Permission

Date

Appendix D
Data Gathering Instruments

INTERVIEW GUIDE: LEARNER-PARTICIPANTS

1. What mother tongue do you speak?
2. What mother tongue do you used in your school?
3. What can you say about your Mother Tongue subject?
4. What are the things you learn in your Mother Tongue subject?
5. What activities in Mother Tongue do you find it difficult to learn?

INTERVIEW GUIDE: TEACHER-PARTICIPANTS

1. What languages do you speak?
2. Do you speak your pupils' mother tongue/local language?
if yes/no. What is your pupils' mother tongue?
3. What mother tongue do you teach?
4. Do you use your pupils' mother tongue/local language in teaching Mother Tongue subject itself and other subjects?
5. How do you understand the purpose of MTBMLE in school?
6. What is your perception towards MTBMLE?
Is this an appropriate program in your school? Why? Why not?
7. What challenges do you face in teaching Mother Tongue subject?
(e.g. teaching-learning process, classroom management, time management, linguistically class, etc.)
8. What are the difficulties in teaching Mother Tongue?
9. What are the common difficulties of pupils in learning Mother Tongue?
10. Has the MOOE provided you with:
 - a.) learning materials
 - b.) trainings
 - c.) and other required skills for Mother Tongue?If Yes, how do you use them?
If No, what do you use instead?
11. What differences have you noticed in pupils' learning performance after the implementation of Mother Tongue as a core subject in the K-12 Curriculum?
12. Do you think the MTBMLE policy/program is appropriate in San Joaquin Central Elementary School? Why or why not?
13. How do you think DepEd can improve the MTBMLE program?

FOCUS GROUP QUESTION GUIDE: PARENT-PARTICIPANTS

1. What does your child like about school?
What do you like about school?
2. Are you satisfied with how often teacher-adviser communicates with you about your child? Why?
3. Are you familiar with Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education?
4. What is your perception towards MTBMLE?
Do you like it? Why or why not?
5. Are you aware of the medium of instruction used in your child's school?
(e.g. Mother Tongue, Filipino, English or all)
6. Do you think that MTBMLE helps your children to learn effectively?
Why or why not?
7. Do you interact with your children in Mother tongue in the family?
How often? In what context/ situations?
8. What is your child's perception towards Mother Tongue subject?
Does he/ she like the subject?
9. Have you seen any difference in your child's learning performance after the implementation of the K-12 Curriculum with Mother Tongue as a core subject in the primary grades?
If Yes, How? In what way? In what aspect?
If no, why do you think so?
10. What are the difficulties you met in assisting your children during homework activity and study session at home?

Appendix E

Financial Report

Cost Estimates

QTY	UNIT	PARTICULARS	UNIT COST	TOTAL COST
6	Reams	Letter-Sized Bond Paper	170	1020.00
4	Bottles	Canon Black Ink	275	1100.00
4	Bottles	Canon Colored Ink	275	1100.00
35	pieces	Ballpens / Pencils	10	350.00
65	pax	Food (Participants)	50	3250.00
6		Transportation And Travel Expenses (For Seeking The SDO's Technical Assistance, Attending BERF-Related Meetings)	250	1500.00
1	Piece	Flash Disk 2gb (USB)	350	350.00
		Notarial Services Fee	200	200.00
4	Copies	Hard Bound Finished Study	300	1200.00
TOTAL				10,070.00

Prepared by:

MARY ODESSA C. SANTILLANA
Master Teacher II