

Evaluation of the Department of Education (DepEd) Instructional Materials Used in Teaching Meranaw Language in Grade 1

ASNAIDAH A. MACADATAR

<https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3038-4634>

asnaidahali@gmail.com

Mindanao State University – Main Campus

Marawi City, Mindanao, Philippines

ABSTRACT

Instructional materials are a valuable aid in the language learning of the students. This study was undertaken to evaluate the Department of Education (DepEd) instructional materials used in teaching Meranaw language in Grade 1. The result gives benefits to the teachers on how to make necessary adjustments in the materials to suit the needs and interests of the pupils and to maximize its use in the classroom. The seventy-nine participants were all Grade 1 teachers in Marawi City. This research used the descriptive-evaluative design and utilized a researcher-made questionnaire. The data gathered were statistically treated and interviews were also conducted. The overall evaluation verdict-moderately agreed. One can conclude that something must still be lacking; the materials are not irreproachable; they could stand more refinement and enrichment in some parts. The researcher recommends that there should be more training programs, enlist the cooperation of experts or scholars from different fields such as folklore and literature, and proper monitoring, evaluation and documentation of the MTB-MLE program.

KEYWORDS

Education, instructional material evaluation, mother tongue, Meranaw, descriptive, Philippines, Asia

INTRODUCTION

Philippine education is a product of a long history of struggle. Changes introduced over time did not seem to match the high hopes of the Filipino people. The magical words that would open the door and provide the answer or panacea to bridge the gap between aspirations and reality remain elusive. Hence, the quest for the secret formula continues. Presently, the Philippine educational system is besieged by several issues. It needs to be addressed in order to improve the delivery of education to the most significant number of the population. To provide high quality education to its clientele is the most important mission of every educational institution.

A very recent innovation in the school system is the implementation of K to 12 curriculum launched by the Department of Education last 2012. The curriculum restructures the primary education system with kindergarten now a general requirement, six years in elementary (Grade 1-6), four years of junior high school (Grade 7-10) and two years of senior high school (Grades 11-12) (Burton, 2013). Students can choose an area of specialization in the final two years, whether in the performing arts, vocational training, sports or agriculture. The K to 12, touted as the centerpiece of the Educational Reform Program, is an extended overdue response that the same scheme has been in implementation in most countries in the world (Burton, 2013).

However, the course of the implementation of K to 12 poses enormous challenges to teachers as any new curriculum does. Although guidelines for implementing the K to 12 primary education curriculum may not be that radically different from those employed in the old curriculum, it is clear these have raised more questions than answers. One of the significant features of the K to 12 Curriculum is the use of Mother Tongue-Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) from Preschool to Grade 3. Teachers will teach pupils from preschool to Grade 3 in their mother tongue or the first language they learned from birth. Education officials were convinced that this new policy would facilitate effective learning since young children proficient in their mother tongue will be less hesitant to speak up in class. (Burton, 2013).

MTB-MLE may solve the language problem or deficiency that hinders active participation in class and accounts in considerable measure for the achievement gap between groups of students. The achievement gap has grown wide enough “to engulf whole communities and populations of students” (Albakrawi, 2013). In the United States, the most severely affected are those who speak minority languages, the “poor whites,” “the children of color,” and children of immigrants or recent *arriviste* (Fitzpatrick, 2011). In the Philippines, the groups most affected are the children of the poor, the children of minority groups particularly, the Lumads or Indigenous Peoples of Mindanao, and those who speak minority languages, in their words, non-Filipino and non-English speaking groups. As stipulated in the Bilingual Education Policy (BEP), the two official mediums of instruction are Pilipino (now spelled Filipino) and English. However, 1974 DECS Order No. 25, there is a provision that mandates the use of vocabularies in the locality or place where the school is located “as an auxiliary medium of instruction” in the early years of schooling, specifically, Grades I and II (Nolasco, 2012).

Furthermore, language barriers can cause intense frustration because a person may feel inadequate, fearful of shame, and sad for not being able to understand and share simple ideas. People who cannot speak the native language may grow frustrated at the missed opportunities, embarrassing mistakes, serious consequences, and negative attitudes from others (Mertens, 2012).

Thus after much brain-racking search for a solution to the problem, the Department of Education (DepEd) resolved to make a “leap of faith,” a crucial shift making mother tongue a medium of instruction and a subject in the first three years of schooling. This action was under DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2009. DepEd Order No.16, s.2012, otherwise known as Guidelines on the implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), stipulated the implementation of MTB-MLE in all public schools, specifically in Kindergarten, Grades 1, 2, and 3 as a component of the K to 12 Basic Education Program. The MTB-MLE shall support the “Every Child a Reader and a Writer by Grade 1” goal. The order also authorized the implementation in two modes: as a learning/subject area and as a medium of instruction. The mother tongue as a subject will focus on developing of beginning reading and fluency from Grade 1 to 3. The learner’s mother tongue (L_1) shall be the medium of instruction (MOI) in all domains/learning areas from Kindergarten through Grade 3, except Filipino (L_2) and English (L_3) (Burton, 2013).

A news article in Philippine Daily Inquirer by Calleja (2012) reported that some Grades 1 and 7 teachers saw the lack of materials help them cope with that proponent of the K to 12 system called a “spiraling approach” to learning as the great challenge ahead for the program. Immelda Paddayunan, a Grade 1 teacher at Toro Hills Elementary School in Project 8, Quezon City, disclosed she was still confused about teaching her subjects, describing a training program she attended from May 28 to June 1 as “hastily done.” “We are not yet ready” is her fearless opinion aired and published in the Philippine Daily Inquirer. These teachers are among the 150,000 who will be working the year-round on the curriculum for Grades 1-2 and Grade 7 and 8 as part of the DepEd’s gradual implementation of the K to 12 education program, replacing the old 10-year system. They teach the new curriculum to these pupils this school year even if they were not trained only for the lessons in the first and second quarters (Calleja, 2012).

The researchers heard many other complaints from elementary teachers, particularly non-Meranaw teachers, in implementing mother-tongue (MTB-MLE), which is the Meranaw language. By their admission, they ended up not using the instructional materials released by DepEd simply because they could not understand and speak the Meranaw language. These were the cues needed by the researchers to elicit more feedback from teachers in Grade 1 from different schools regarding the impact of these localized materials provided by DepEd. Their evaluation and assessment based on the performance of their pupils would be a significant contribution to the national agenda of designing nativized materials tailored to the needs of these pupils under the MTB-MLE scheme to ensure its appropriateness for the success of the K to 12 curriculum.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study used the descriptive research design to lay or set the ground for an evaluation. Data gathered were both include quantitative and qualitative data that are considered as salient points on the evaluation of the instructional materials used by Grade 1 teachers in DepEd.

Respondents

The respondents of the study were the Grade 1 teachers in selected public schools deployed in Marawi City who are handling Mother Tongue

(Meranaw) as the subject. These particular participants form the first phalanx – the frontline mentors of the youth in their formative years - and have a wealth of firsthand experiences in terms of transmitting basic knowledge to their fresh minds.

Instrument

The researcher used of a questionnaire adapted and modified based on different sources containing the criteria in the evaluation of instructional materials.

Procedures

Before developing the questionnaire items, the researcher reviewed the literature on material evaluation and other related topics, conflated or put together different principles and criteria for evaluating instructional materials formulated by various authorities in the field. Letters requesting official permission from the school principals to research their respective schools were prepared and delivered personally.

Questionnaire administration is preceded by a kind of orientation – a brief explanation of the purpose and significance of the study and the importance of their involvement in the undertaking. Interview with the teacher respondents followed after the retrieval of the questionnaires to clarify some information, confirm their responses and find out and probe the problems they have encountered in the use of DepEd materials.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Summary of the Teacher Respondents Profile

Profile		Frequency	Percentage
Age	30 years and below	26	32.91
Educational Attainment	Bachelor of Elementary Education	55	69.62
Field of Specialization	General Education	34	43.04
Teaching Experience	1-5 years	39	49.38
MTB-MLE Training Programs Attended	Local Trainings	38	48.10

Table 1 shows that many (26 of 79 respondents or 32.91%) of the teacher respondents were 30 years and below. The result implies that a more significant number of the teacher respondents were young, energetic, and new to the teaching profession; some of this number are novices in the work or service, but as children of their time, brimming with fresh or innovative ideas. The findings also show that the majority (55 of 79 respondents or 69.62%) of the respondents are Bachelor of Elementary Education (BEEd). This finding implies that the teachers assigned to teach in Grade 1 in public schools have met the minimum requirement to teach at the primary level. It is immediately apparent that a considerable number (34 of 79 respondents or 43.04%) of the respondents have General Education as their field of specialization; they are thus generalists. This result suggests that most of the teachers involved in this study may be presumed to be sufficiently competent to teach primary level pupils with different subject areas, considering that they have undergone pre-service training in their baccalaureate courses. Since the General Education course is new in colleges and universities, this implies that they are adequately competent or skilled to handle MTB subjects as part of the K to 12 Curriculum.

Overall, the teaching experience reveals congruence or consistency with data on age and highest educational attainment. Almost half (39 of 79 respondents or 49.38%) of the teachers have only 1-5 years in service, which implies that they are still relatively new in the profession. The finding suggests that they should go after opportunities to accumulate rich and varied experiences and make the most of chances to upgrade essential competencies to develop a greater sense of self-efficacy and more effectively handle the teaching-learning process. In addition, 38 or 48.10% have joined local training programs, that is, at the division and school levels. The finding implies that very few professionals have had the opportunity to attend seminars at different levels, specifically the national and international levels. **The implication** is understandable as the respondents are public school teachers at the lowest rung of the school bureaucracy.

Table 2. Summary of the Teacher Respondents on the Criteria in the Evaluation of Instructional Materials

Rank	Indicator	Mean	Standard Deviation	Descriptive Rating
1	Assessment	4.11	0.9598	Moderately Agree
2	Organization and Presentation	4.05	0.9874	Moderately Agree
3	General Satisfaction	4.02	0.8317	Moderately Agree
4	Efficiency	4.00	0.8512	Moderately Agree
5	Content	3.99	1.0004	Moderately Agree
6	Effectiveness	3.98	0.9780	Moderately Agree
7	Appeal	3.97	1.0104	Moderately Agree
8	Equity and Accessibility	3.59	1.0975	Moderately Agree
AVERAGE		3.96	0.9805	MODERATELY AGREE

Table 2 exhibits the summary of the teacher respondents on the criteria in the evaluation of instructional materials. The implication from the results is, among the aspects or features of instructional materials in teaching mother tongue language considered in this study, the teacher respondents perceived its assessment methods as the most significant since they are appropriate and suited to the learning objectives, that is, test and examinations suit the goals and pupils ability and efficiently assess the learning. On the other hand, they perceived equity and accessibility as the lowest aspect. There an absence of instructional materials for MTB-MLE use which is a severe setback. It supports the work done by Malone (2011). Malone (2011) recommends that preliminary research on the educational situation of the schoolchildren in the community should precede MTB-MLE implementation. To be critically examined are the percentage of learners' access to school, number of teachers trained in the language of instruction (LOI), use of the medium of instruction (MOI), availability of MTB reading materials, and assessment tools.

Table 3. Interviews with the Grade 1 Teacher Respondents

Questions	Summary of Answers
1. How do you find the instructional materials used in teaching Mother Tongue (Meranaw) language? Do you find it valuable and beneficial in your teaching? Why?	Majority of them affirmed that the Meranaw instructional material is valuable and beneficial in their teaching. The material is helpful because it serves as their reference and guide in teaching the subject. It is valuable because it naturally arouses the pupils' interest since they could grasp the idea right away by just listening.
2. Are all your Grade 1 pupils using Meranaw as their mother tongue? What are the language preferences of your pupils? How does the instructional material work in your class with different language preferences?	Twenty-eight teachers has non-Meranaw pupils and 12 respondents admitted that they have Meranaw pupils but whose mother tongue is not Meranaw. Multilingual education, bilingual education and translation method become a necessity in the remediation effort in this kind of situation.
3. Are there problems you encountered in using the localized instructional materials produced by DepEd? What are those problems? What can you suggest to remedy the issues encountered?	Almost all the respondents have the same responses on the issues encountered namely orthography, vocabulary, shortage of materials, the vagueness of some images, different language preferences of the pupils, unchallenging task, and lack of other references to support the lesson.
4. How do you compare the materials in Meranaw that you use now with the other textbooks you used before?	All of them acknowledged the significant difference between the other language textbook they used before and the Meranaw material they are using now.
5. Generally speaking, how do you assess the instructional materials? How does it affect the performance of the pupils?	Some respondents expressed their dissatisfaction with the materials due to the problems they encountered. On the other hand, many of them expressed their satisfaction because they find it compelling. For them this is the best practice way in teaching.

Regarding the problems encountered in using the localized (Meranaw) instructional materials, almost all the respondents have the same responses. The main problem disclosed or shared by the teacher respondents interviewed was the spelling of words or orthography. This problem is a function of the lack of standardized orthography for Meranaw. This kind of situation inevitably causes difficulty to the pupils in their reading activities. Another problem identified is the depth or complexity of some words, or the vocabulary. Both teachers and pupils complained that there are words or lexical items they do not understand. These must include residue from classical Meranaw or archaic terms that have fallen into disuse. The 'depth'

or ‘rarity’ of the words used in the materials creates a challenge to everyone using the material; this constitutes another complication.

The limited supply of material to the schools was also a problem faced by the teachers. Not all teachers, especially in big schools with many sections, were given a copy of the material. Indeed, learners lack with the learning material. There was no way they could purchase it because it is not for sale in the bookstores. Another problem is the vagueness of some images. Some pictures in the material can no longer be identified due to blurredness. The respondents hope that images be more transparent and attractive so that no one will not have difficulty identifying some pictures. As mentioned earlier, some teachers were revealed to have Meranaw pupils whose mother tongue is not Meranaw and some pupils who are non-Meranaw. According to them, they help these students cope by resorting to translation techniques as in the Concurrent Method popularly used in bilingual and multilingual classrooms in the United States, but eventually, these pupils find it hard to perform better and get higher grades. Teacher respondents said that some of the lessons and activities in the material are not suitable to the ability level of the pupils. Some activities in the material are straightforward.

All of the respondents acknowledge the great difference between the reading textbooks used in other subject language areas such as English and Filipino which they used before, and the Meranaw material they are using now. The English and Filipino textbooks are very presentable, durable, available, and complete with all the glossary, index, and the like, but difficult to deliver and discuss. Teachers have to employ different techniques, strategies and methods to attract the attention of the pupils and to motivate them to be participative.

On the other hand, with the Meranaw instructional material, one does not have to exert extra effort to have an interactive class because there are no barriers. The material deals with context which is closer or familiar to the pupils. They can identify themselves with the characters given in the lessons. They can relate and understand what is being talked. However, this flow of lively discussion is limited to speaking. They struggle when it comes to reading and writing Meranaw. The teacher respondents noticed that the pupils prefer to read and write Filipino.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the preceding findings, it can be concluded that the teacher respondents are not well informed regarding the MTB-MLE for lack of adequate orientation and preparation. Successful implementation of the program demands some conditions or essentials: teachers trained in MTB-MLE, proficiency in the language of instruction, knowledge of the languages of other learners, proper monitoring and evaluation, supportive learning environment to which parents and the entire community contribute, and instructional materials inadequate supply and the teaching skills, methods, and strategies that go with the use of these materials.

The problems met by most of the respondents can somehow show be attributed to their young age and little experience in teaching and inadequate training in MTB education. Adult teachers might have more minor problems with difficult Meranaw words and sounds than the younger generations have. Ironically, the latter themselves betray their alienation from their culture. Their problem with Meranaw vocabulary and phonology is elementary. MTB-MLE must be adopted with conviction, commitment, and sincerity. Each MTB-MLE teacher must believe or have a full appreciation of the nobility of the endeavor.

LITERATURE CITED

- Albakrawi, Hussein Theeb M. (2013). Needs Analysis of the English Language Secondary Hotel Students in Jordan. *International Journal of English Language Teaching*, Vol. 1, No. 1. European Centre for Research Training and Development, UK. Retrieved on February 10, 2014 from <https://www.eajournals.org/wp-content/uploads/NEEDS-ANALYSIS-OF-THE-ENGLISH-LANGUAGE-SECONDARY-HOTEL-STUDENTS-IN-JORDAN.pdf>
- Burton, Lisa Ann (2013). Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in the Philippines: Studying Top-Down Policy Implementation from Bottom Up. Retrieved on November 7, 2013 from https://conservancy.umn.edu/bitstream/handle/11299/152603/Burton_umn_0130E_13632.pdf
- Calleja, Nina (2012). K to 12 System: Grades 1 and 7 Teachers Face Challenge. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved on June 5, 2015 from <https://newsinfo.>

inquirer.net/206733/k-to-12-system-grades-1-and-7-teachers-face-challenge

Fitzpatrick, J., Sanders, J., & Worthen, B. (2011). *Program Evaluation Alternative Approaches and Practical Guidelines* (No. 379.154097 F5). Retrieved from March 10, 2012 from http://www.sidalc.net/cgi-bin/wxis.exe/?IsisScript=sibe01.xis&method_post&formato=2&cantidad=1&expression-mfn-033595

Malone, S. And Paraide, P. (2011). Mother Tongue Based Bilingual Education in Papua New Guinea. *Springer Science + Business Media B.V.*, Published Online. Int Rev 57:705-720. Retrieved on January 17, 2012 from <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1007/s11159-011-9256-2>

Mertens, D., & Wilson, A. (2012). *Program Evaluation Theory and Practice: A Comprehensive Guide*. New York: Guilford Press. Retrieved on April 25, 2013 from <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=ED530598>

Nolasco, Ricardo (2012). Cognitive Development and Language Development. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved on March 18, 2012 from <https://mlephil.wordpress.com/tag/ricardo-nolasco/>

Gunning Fog Index: 14.02
Flesch Reading Ease: 38.39
Grammar Checking: 93/100
Plagiarism: 0%