

**IMPLEMENTING MOTHER TONGUE BASED-MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION
IN AN AREA OF ARMED CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES:
A CASE STUDY**

GHEA RAMONA MANLA TENCHAVEZ

**Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education
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The thesis attached hereto, entitled **“IMPLEMENTING MOTHER TONGUE BASED-MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION IN AN AREA OF ARMED CONFLICT IN SOUTHERN PHILIPPINES: A CASE STUDY”** prepared and submitted by **GHEA RAMONA M. TENCHAVEZ**, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education (Language and Literacy Education), is hereby accepted.

MA. THERESA L. DE VILLA, Ph.D.
Adviser

ROMYLYN A. METILA, Ph.D.
Reader/Critic

PORTIA P. PADILLA, MA. Ed.
Member

Accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Education (Language and Literacy Education).

PATRICIA B. ARINTO, Ed.D.
Dean, Faculty of Education

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DEDICATION

Heartily dedicated

to

**God the Merciful
Homer
Eoin
Arwen**

&

the peoples of Mindanao

ABSTRACT

The use of the mother tongue in the classroom to learn concepts has been practiced by many of the countries that garnered the highest points in international assessments as shown in the 2015 report of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). Several studies have also shown the benefits of using the mother tongue in learning and this has been recognized by the Philippines through Republic Act 10533, "An Act Enhancing the Philippine Basic Education System by Strengthening its Curriculum and Increasing the Number of Years for Basic Education."

With Philippine schools adopting the use of mother tongue as the medium of instruction from Kindergarten to Grade 3, this study looked into how Mother Tongue Based- Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) was implemented in an area of armed conflict.

The current study specifically answered the following questions: 1) How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as subject, medium of instruction, and auxiliary language; 2) How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum, instructional materials, and strategies.

A public elementary school located in Maguindanao where MTB-MLE has been implemented for the past years was selected for the final study. As a qualitative research, it used the instrumental case study design involving two Grade 1 classes, and one class each in Grades 2 and 3.

Classroom observations were conducted during the Mother Tongue, Math, English, Filipino, and Araling Panlipunan subjects in Grade 1. Two separate classes in Grades 2

and 3 were observed during the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) subject. The study focused on how Maguindanaon, the mother tongue of the students, was used during the Mother Tongue subject; as a medium of instruction during Math and Araling Panlipunan subjects; and as an auxiliary language in English, Filipino and ALIVE subjects. The study further explored how Maguindanaon was integrated in peace education in the Grades 1 to 3 classes.

Participants were local education officials, teachers, parents, local AFP officials, and Grades 1 to 3 students. Data were gathered through classroom observations, Focus Group Discussions (FGD), Key Informant Interviews (KII), analysis of available textbooks, daily lesson logs, MTB-MLE materials and other references, and survey questionnaire.

Results of the study on the implementation of MTB-MLE in an area of armed conflict reveal the following: Maguindanaon as a Mother Tongue subject was taught in Grade 1 with the teacher using both Maguindanaon and Filipino as media of instruction; Maguindanaon was used as medium of instruction in Math, Araling Panlipunan and ALIVE classes with a mix of Filipino and English languages; and Maguindanaon as an auxiliary language has not been established in the study as teachers, students and school officials consider Filipino as the auxiliary language.

For the second question, the study explored how Maguindanaon integrates peace education in their school curriculum in general and in the ALIVE curriculum. Results show that the school indirectly and informally integrates peace education using Maguindanaon through the teaching of values education and in the ALIVE classes. However, there is no direct mention of peace, unity and harmony in the lessons observed.

It was noted that the instructional materials were in Arabic and English. The *ustadz* translated the terms and concepts to Maguindanaon in order for the students to understand the lesson.

The last question explored how Maguindanaon was integrated in peace education through the teaching strategies. Results of the class observation and interview reveal that the teaching strategies were very limited as the subject teacher used the story telling approach while the ALIVE teacher depended a lot on the translation method and experiential learning activity.

Based on the findings of this study, it is recommended that additional MTB-MLE trainings be conducted for teachers to make them competent and confident in using pure Maguindanaon during the Mother Tongue subject and in using it as a medium of instruction in other learning areas. Teaching guides, instructional materials and textbooks in Maguindanaon should be locally developed and produced to reflect the Maguindanaon culture and identity. Further, peace education should be integrated in the different subject areas and strengthened through the use of Maguindanaon; hence, armed conflict could be avoided in the future.

Future research to be conducted in other areas of armed conflict over a longer period of time is also recommended to validate the results of this study and give local MTB-MLE coordinators and teachers sufficient materials in improving the language policy.

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CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter discusses the background of the study, the research problem, the significance of the study, and the scope and delimitation of the whole research.

Background of the Study

On May 15, 2013, President Benigno S. Aquino approved Republic Act No. 10533 or “An Act Enhancing the Philippine Basic Education System by strengthening its Curriculum and Increasing the Number of Years for Basic Education, Appropriating Funds Therefor and for Other Purposes.”

The Act stipulates that classes in Kindergarten to Grade 3 will implement the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in both formal and non-formal education. It aims to increase the quality of education of the country and make its graduates at par with those abroad. It also recognizes the importance of the mother tongue despite attempts of various sectors to give more focus in using English in the academe.

The issue of using English and Filipino has been debated by different sectors over the years. One is that of Soriano (2011), then a senior student at Ateneo de Manila, who expressed in an essay the notion that Filipino or any other local language in the country is for the ignorant and uneducated.

According to Soriano, the Filipino language may identify the citizens of the country, yet it does not have the prestige of being spoken by educated people, as it is the language commonly heard on the sidewalks and the streets.

Sadly, there are also various instances of Filipinos denying their identity abroad when immigrants meet in some places. According to David (2009), some Filipinos living in the United States will not admit that they are Filipinos. He says “a few would vehemently deny being a Filipino.... at other times, they would just keep on speaking English even if you start talking to them in Filipino” (David, 2009: xv)

De Leon, Jr. (2011) also notes that call centers have developed a notion that English proficiency makes one literate and confident. Even schools espousing the “use of English only create a culture of hostility on the use of Filipino” within the school, he adds.

On the other hand, the majority of student teachers in two Manila universities put value on English highly because it was related to the socio-economic status of the speaker and his/her intelligence (Vizconde, 2006).

Putting value on a foreign language instead of on the mother tongue is also real in other countries such as in urban areas of Nigeria where parents interact in English with their children instead of in their mother tongue (Abidogun & Abedule, 2013).

“A child who is not able to speak English language fluently is regarded as a failure and a disgrace to the family, as such every parent wants to belong to this class of elites,” the paper states. Maduewesi (1999) looks down on this practice as children have been curtailed of their rights to feel and think in their own language (Abidogun & Abedule, 2013: 270).

Results of studies here and abroad give the impression that English and anything related to the West such as music, entertainment, fashion, and anything shown in the

mass media are more important than one's own language and culture, the valuable currency in the hierarchy of social acceptance.

However, this attitude and perception toward the use of the mother tongue and the role it plays in the learning process and lives of Filipino learners are expected to take an interesting turn with the Mother Tongue Based-Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) program.

This move to integrate officially the local language in the school curriculum started in 2009. At that time, the Department of Education (DepEd) issued Department Order No. 74, which institutionalizes the Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). The Order recognized the "superiority of the use of the learner's mother tongue or first language in improving learning outcomes and promoting Education for All (EFA)" (DepEd Order No. 74, 2009: 1).

As an educational policy, DepEd requires the MTB-MLE implementation in formal education including kindergarten and in the Alternative Learning System (ALS).

Enclosure No. 1 to DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2009 clarifies that MTB-MLE is "not merely changing the medium of instruction, code switching or translation of materials." Based on the MLE Framework enclosed in the DepEd Order, the mother tongue (MT) or First Language (L1) will be used as the primary medium of instruction (MOI) from pre-school until at least Grade 3. The mother tongue will be used as "the main vehicle to teach understanding and mastery of all subject areas like Math, Science, Makabayan, and language subjects like Filipino and English" (DepEd No. 74 Enclosure 1, 2009:1).

Aside from teaching mother tongue as a subject, the DepEd Enclosure also mandates that the mother tongue should be used as a language of teaching and learning for conceptual understanding from Kindergarten to Grade 3.

More than three years later, this DepEd language policy was integrated in a national law through RA 10533 which recognizes the importance of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in Basic Education.

The Act stipulates that the curriculum in both formal and non-formal education should use the mother tongue and the local languages in the classroom.

In the Implementing Guidelines of Grades 1 to 10 Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum (Enclosure No. 1, DepEd Order No. 31, s. 2012), the mother tongue will be used as medium of instruction in Math, Science, Araling Panlipunan, MAPEH (Music, Arts, Physical Education & Health), and Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao. On the other hand, the English subject will use the English language and the Filipino subject will use the Filipino language.

The Primer on Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MLE) and other Issues on Language and Learning in the Philippines identifies 21 reasons why Filipino children learn better in their mother tongue (Nolasco, 2009). The said primer explains how MLE could produce learners who are “multi-literate, multi-lingual and multi-cultural.” This means that learners will be capable to read and write in their local language, the national language and a language of wider communication such as English. With this capability, learners can use various languages in different situations and develop their ability to live and work with people of different cultural backgrounds and in various learning environment.

The Enhanced Basic Education Act 2013 (RA 10533) further states “it is the policy of the state to make education learner-oriented and responsive to the needs, cognitive and cultural capacity, the circumstances and diversity of learners, schools and communities through the appropriate languages of teaching and learning” (RA 10533, 2013: 2).

Section 5 of RA 10157 otherwise known as “An Act Institutionalizing the Kindergarten Education into the Basic Education System and Appropriating Funds Therefor,” further adopts the MTB-MLE program. The law approved by President Aquino in March 2013 specifically states that the mother tongue of the kindergarten pupils shall be the primary medium of instruction for teaching and learning.

It identifies the use of MTB-MLE teaching strategies like the two-track method consisting of “meaning” and “accuracy” tracks. The Meaning Track includes shared reading, experience story, listening story and library time, and creative writing. On the other hand, the Accuracy Track involves picture and key word, sentence-making and spelling and handwriting (Malone & Malone in Stringer & Faracias, 2001).

Aside from these legal statutes, “Ten Ways to Fix Philippine Basic Education” was presented by then Senator now President Aquino during the 2010 National Elections as groundwork for education reforms in the country. Among his education agenda is the use of mother tongue in teaching and learning specifically by making the country trilingual. Aquino stated that Filipinos should “learn English well and connect with the world; learn Filipino well and connect with our country; and retain (your) dialect and connect with your heritage.” Aquino also identified the prioritization of Madaris education to “make Education for All (EFA) available to all Muslim Filipino children anywhere in the country” (EFA 2015 National Review Report: Philippines, 2015:10).

The Muslim Mindanao Autonomy (MMA) Act No. 303, s. 2012 or “Strengthened Basic Education Act in ARMM” states that the ARMM regional government is tasked to “promote a culture of peace in the Basic Educational System of the region by infusing the principles of peace education in the curriculum which shall bring about a peaceful integration of learners and thereby achieving values of discipline, respect, principles of multiculturalism and citizenship education in general” (MMA Act 303, 2012: 4).

At the same time, schools in the ARMM are required to implement the MTB-MLE in Kindergarten to Grade 3. All Muslim learners are also required to learn Arabic as a subject. The MMA Act further recognizes the importance of education in fostering peace and development in the Bangsamoro area. In case of interruption of classes due to armed conflicts, natural disasters and pandemics, the DepEd-ARMM is tasked to formulate and implement an Emergency Education Preparedness and Response Plan (MMA Act 303, 2012: 10).

According to Fabris (2011) schools play an important role in molding the students’ identity and social perception, as well as teaching them the value of tolerance to various cultures.

Moreover, academic groups claim that MTB-MLE help “retain the linguistic and cultural identities of marginalized communities as they engage with dominant wider cultures. Moreover, real learning and better language skills mean more access to job opportunities and more peaceful communities” (Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group [MLE WG], 2013: 6).

With the current implementation of MTB-MLE in ARMM, this specific case study attempts to offer a snapshot of how peace education is integrated in the curriculum. It

also shows how the current language policy is being implemented in an area regularly besieged with armed conflict due to its peoples' "aspiration to chart their political future through a democratic process that will secure their identity and posterity and allow for meaningful self-governance (Draft BBL 2014, Art. 1, Sec. 3).

The proposed Bangsamoro Basic Law of 2014 was drafted after numerous negotiations between the MILF and GPH in order to "establish an enduring peace on the basis of justice in our communities and a justly balanced society, and asserting our right to conserve and develop our patrimony" (Draft BBL, 2014:1). With the presence of terrorism in Muslim areas, the BBL has been identified to address the demands of these armed groups, who claimed that they have been neglected by the government.

Under the same law, the Bangsamoro government is also empowered to supervise and regulate its own Bangsamoro education system and conduct its own qualifying exam of *madaris* teachers.

To date, the BBL has undergone reviews and revisions as a result of the Mamasapano Encounter, which happened in January 2015. The armed encounter occurred when some 300 Police Special Action Force (SAF) conducted an operation to arrest two international terrorists in Mamasapano, Maguindanao. The operation led to the death of one of the terrorists and the wounding of the other; however, due to lack of coordination with the local military and the MILF, it also resulted in the death of 44 SAF members, 18 MILF soldiers and four civilians. Thirteen schools were also closed in the area and the nearby barangays and an estimated 1,500 individuals were displaced due to the encounter (Alim, 2015).

In the aftermath of the Mamasapano Encounter, Congress decided to delay the passage of the BBL in order to study further the proposed bill. As of February 2016, Philippine Congress has archived the bill as it takes a break in preparation for the presidential polls in May 2016.

With the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) asking for autonomy with respect to power-sharing, as well as wealth and revenue-sharing, its breakaway group, the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF), has also been in regular clashes with government troops. The BIFF leadership has publicly expressed its support for the international terrorist organization, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), making it an enemy not only of the state but also of other countries which are fighting against banditry and terrorism (Manlupig, 2014).

Thus, government schools in Maguindanao have not been spared of the disturbance and damage caused by armed conflict in the area. Based on a news report, there are “heavy fighting along the highway with soldiers using artillery and armor support as they advanced into more hostile areas to dismantle illegal checkpoints of the MILF” (Unson, 2000: 1).

The constant presence of government and rebel checkpoints along the highways that are just a few kilometers apart has become part of the daily lives of Maguindanaoans. It is a constant reminder to residents and visitors of the danger of bombings and armed encounters as they go on with their normal lives.

It is with this scenario of armed conflict and the desire of the Bangsamoro people to have their own political entity that this current study is conducted. It is the intention of

the study to find out how the mother tongue is used in the classroom and in integrating peace education in the curriculum, if done at all.

Statement of the Research Problem

As guide for this case study, the following research questions were formulated:

1. How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as:

- a. subject
- b. medium of instruction
- c. auxiliary language

2. How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the:

- a. curriculum
- b. instructional materials
- c. teaching strategies

Significance of the Study

The results of this case study would hopefully offer a glimpse of how the MTB-MLE program is being implemented vis-à-vis the presence of armed conflict.

This study further looks into the integration of peace education in the school curriculum, as schools are agents of change, wherein the education provided could either promote peace or trigger conflict.

It would specifically be of significance to the various stakeholders specifically the students, teachers, parents, linguists and lexicographers, local and national educational officials, curriculum developers and instructional material writers, Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), researchers, and armed groups like the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Students

For the Kindergarten to Grade 3 students, they will hopefully become the beneficiaries of a sound, practical, and contextualized language program after teachers and local education officials would be able to determine what teaching strategies that are practiced in the area are suitable to their learning needs. With an outsider looking into the school's MTB-MLE implementation, there is available information that could be used to further strengthen the program.

Teachers

On the part of the teachers, it would hopefully allow them to identify the areas of teaching they need to improve and how to integrate peace education in their lessons.

School administrators, local and national education officials

In the case of school administrators, local and national education officials, an analysis of the MTB-MLE implementation from an independent researcher could offer insights on how to improve the teaching strategies of teachers through training. It could be a basis in identifying areas for improvement such as contextualization of curriculum, instructional materials, the learning environment, and the integration of peace education

into the curriculum. MTB-MLE regional and district coordinators would hopefully gain a new perspective on how to strengthen the implementation of MTB-MLE in Maguindanao and other areas of armed conflict.

Parents

Through this study, parents could see what benefits MTB-MLE offers to their children. Such knowledge could encourage them to assist in the implementation of MTB-MLE policy by becoming rich, local sources of Maguindanaon folktales, poetry and songs that could be used in classroom teaching and learning, thus, be involved in contextualizing the curriculum.

Curriculum Developers and Instructional Material Writers

Curriculum developers could contextualize the curriculum content to make it relevant based on socio-cultural and bio-geographical contexts with special focus on peace education. Consequently, instructional material writers would be able to develop instructional materials that are sensitive to the local culture and situation of the learners in the Maguindanao area.

Officials of Department of Education (DepEd)

Results of the study could offer insights to DepEd in conducting trainings to teacher-applicants on the use of MTB-MLE, and in hiring and deploying them to areas of armed conflict.

Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs)

Based on the results of this study, TEIs located in Mindanao might find useful the feedback of teachers interviewed on the implementation of MTB-MLE. TEIs could include in their pre-service teacher curriculum the necessary subjects and topics on peace education that are needed for the future teachers to be competent in handling MTB-MLE classes, as well as being ready to be deployed in different schools most especially in areas of armed conflict.

Researchers

Researchers who are interested in the use of mother tongue and peace education in areas of armed conflict would be able to explore further the relationship between the use of the mother tongue in integrating peace education in the school curriculum.

Other stakeholders

Stakeholders who could benefit from the study include linguists who could analyze the MTB-MLE learning materials and translate these to Maguindanaon. Lexicographers could help in compiling, writing and editing Maguindanaon dictionaries that would be helpful to teachers. As a government agency, the Professional Regulation Commission (PRC) would be able to regulate and supervise the teachers based on the current knowledge and practice of MTB-MLE.

The GPH, AFP and MILF could also indirectly benefit from the study as the school breeds a new generation of Maguindanaoans who are proud of their own language and culture. By putting value on the use of Maguindanaon as a subject, medium of

instruction and auxiliary language, the school would be able instrumental in evolving a culture of peace that could influence the community.

Thus, this study explored how the MTB-MLE national policy is implemented in one public school in Maguindanao where armed conflict exists. With the peace and order problem, the peoples are also hoping for the establishment of the Bangsamoro that they believe will bring them peace and development.

Scope and Delimitation

This study was limited to the implementation of the MTB-MLE in one of the schools located in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), which is currently lobbying for the establishment of the Bangsamoro. The new school was chosen to replace the original school visited in April 2014, where a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) and survey among lower primary teachers were conducted in preparation for the final fieldwork.

However, by the time the researcher needed to go back for the fieldwork, the area was considered unsafe by the local armed forces due to the assault of the Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) against the military. Both government soldiers and civilians, including students were possible targets by the rebels.

The volatile peace and order situation during the fieldwork and the school holiday placed a limit on the duration of the data gathering activities of the study. Four different classes were observed during the second to third weeks of December 2014. Twelve instructional materials for Grades 1 to 3 were gathered for analysis with the help of the school-designated translator and two *ustadz*.

The lack of a similar study on the use of the mother tongue in an area of armed conflict contributed to the absence of experts' validation of the data-gathering tools. However, research studies that discuss the implementation of MTB-MLE in the Philippines were used as references in the construction of data-gathering tools.

Finally, the results of this study were limited to areas with armed conflict in Mindanao and cannot be generalized for all public and private schools that use the MTB-MLE in the ARMM and other places that support the possible realization of the Bangsamoro.

CHAPTER 2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter discusses the development of the language policy in the Philippines up to the present time when the Mother Tongue-Based Multi-lingual Education (MTB-MLE) has been implemented. It also presents a background on the benefits of using the child's mother tongue at all times regardless of the peace and order situation.

The first part is a narrative of the evolution of the Philippine language policy and the Enhanced Basic Education Curriculum 2012; the MTB-MLE policies and practices in the national and international level; importance of MTB-MLE to teaching and learning; MTB-MLE implementation in the Philippine setting and the Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum (REMC), specifically the ALIVE Program.

The other part of the discussion is about how language especially the mother tongue could unite or divide a community or country. It also briefly discusses peace education in the curriculum. For this case study, the use of Maguindanaon, as the mother tongue of Maguindanao pupils would be highlighted to give an idea on how MTB-MLE is implemented in an area of armed conflict. Maguindanaon is the lingua franca of Maguindanao and Cotabato, including some areas of Sultan Kudarat, North Cotabato and South Cotabato.

Background on the Language Policy of the Philippine Education System

Educators and researchers have long studied the issue of what language should be used in formal and informal education in order to provide the best method of learning. No

less than the 1990 U.N. Convention on the Rights of the Child mandates that children must be educated in a language that they use to interact with their family at home.

Yet the use of the mother tongue as a medium of instruction was not instituted for several decades as various language policies had been passed prioritizing the use of English and Filipino.

One was the Philippine Bilingual Education Policy (BEP) defined operationally as the separate use of Filipino and English as media of instruction in specific subject areas. It was formulated through the Department of Education and Culture (DEC) Order No. 25, s. 1974. The policy mandates the use of English as medium of instruction in Math, Science and English and the use of Filipino in Araling Panlipunan, and the other subjects to achieve the goals of bilingual competence. The regional languages shall be used as auxiliary media of instruction and as initial language for literacy.

This bilingual policy was reiterated in the Department of Education, Culture and Sports (DECS) Order No. 52, s. 1987. The policy requires the use of both English and Filipino were to be used as media of instruction at all levels. The regional languages would be used as auxiliary languages in Grades 1 and 2. By learning Filipino, all citizens could perform their functions and duties, while proficiency in English would allow the country to participate in international affairs with other nations.

In 2000 the use of mother tongue was given recognition in a national law - Republic Act 8980, otherwise known as the Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) Act of 2000. The Act provides a clear policy on children's development from conception to age six regardless of their individual needs and socio-cultural background. Among its services are health care, nutrition, sanitation, cultural activities, and early

childhood education. It mandates that the child's first language is the medium of instruction (ECCD Act, 2000).

However, the use of English was still given priority in formal education through the issuance of Executive Order 210, "Establishing the Policy to Strengthen the Use of the English Language as a Medium of Instruction in the Educational System." Former President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo issued the decree on May 17, 2003. The declaration was designed to increase the employment of fresh graduates in the Call Center industry or Business Process Outsourcing (BPOs) industry.

The promotion of English as medium of instruction was further continued by the issuance of the implementing rules and regulations of Arroyo's EO 210 on August 22, 2006.

The DepEd Order 36 (2006) specifies that:

a) English will be taught as a second language in Grade 1; b) English will be used as medium of instruction for Science and Health, Math and English in Grade 3; c) English will be the primary medium of instruction in secondary level; and d) 70 percent of all their learning time will be in English. (p.1)

Providing legal support in promoting English was then District Representative Eduardo Gullas, an educator and owner of one of the biggest universities in Cebu. He proposed House Bill (HB) No. 4701, also known as "Strengthening and Enhancing the Use of English as the Medium of Instruction in Philippine Schools."

Over 200 congressional representatives supported the bill, which proposed the use of English from Grade 3 onwards while Filipino will be taught as a subject. This was intended to improve the English proficiency of the students and even of the teachers,

whose “proficiency is said to be at third grade level.” This means that teachers themselves have low competence in using and teaching English. However, due to lack of quorum and other reasons, the bill was shelved.

Subsequently, Gullas re-filed his proposed bill as HB No. 93 or “An Act to Strengthen and Enhance the Use of English as the Medium of Instruction in Philippine Schools” in the 15th Congress.

As counter proposal, Representative Magtanggol Gunigundo filed HB No. 3719 or “An Act Establishing a Multilingual Education and Literacy Program,” supporting the use of the mother tongue from Grades 1 to 6. He then re-filed his proposal as HB No. 162 or “The Multi-Lingual Education and Literacy Act of 2010.” The said bill stipulates that the learner’s first language will be the primary medium of instruction from pre-school to Grade 6.

Meanwhile, the Department of Education (DepEd) implemented the Basic Education Sector Reform Agenda (BESRA) for 2006-2010. It was a package of policy reforms that pursued the creation of a basic education sector geared towards the attainment of Education for All by 2015. Among its objectives was the Universal Adult Functional Literacy wherein “all persons beyond school age, regardless of their levels of schooling, should acquire the essential competence to be considered functionally literate in their native tongue, in Filipino or in English (BESRA, 2005).

Another objective was the mobilization of the community’s social, political, cultural and economic resources in order to support the universal attainment of basic education competencies in Filipino and English.

Similar conflicting opinions on the use of English and Filipino instead of the learner's mother tongue were discussed in the Human Development Network Research Monograph, "When Reforms Don't Transform" (Bautista, Bernardo & Ocampo, 2010). It notes that the debate on the language of learning and instruction dates back to the 1920s. Teachers consistently reported the difficulties of the learners inside the classroom. However, politicians remained deaf to the arguments of the teachers who had firsthand experience of the realities in their classrooms.

The monograph observes that situations got worse from the 1950s to 2009 as the linguistic landscape of the Philippines, and the role of language in literacy and learning were not given much emphasis.

To underscore the importance of the learner's first language, the Roadmap to Philippine Multi-literacy suggests that "for the country to become highly literate, teachers should speak the languages of the child especially in the lower levels" (Ocampo, 2009: 38). Moreover, Ocampo recommends that instructional materials should also be in the designated languages of learning specifically by using the mother tongue in Reading, Math, and Science in Kindergarten to Grade 3 while Makabayan subject which covers social studies, music, physical education, art, and values education should be in the mother tongue for Grades 1 and 2 students.

Despite the bilingual policy, department orders, acts and proposed bills supporting English or Filipino, and at other times, the mother tongue, a groundbreaking development happened in 2009 when the Department of Education issued DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2009, known as, "Institutionalizing Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education (MLE)."

This was the second significant milestone recorded in favor of the mother tongue as the first one was in 1957 when the Revised Philippine Education Program, based on a UNESCO research, implemented the use of the local languages for Grades 1 and 2 while English was taught as a subject.

The 2009 DepEd Order paved the way for the development of learning materials and storybooks in local languages. Trainings were conducted to help equip the teachers, education officials and other stakeholders like parents in ensuring that the Filipino children would finally have a multilingual and multicultural education (UNESCO, 2009).

By 2013, the K to 12 Law was passed. It specifically mandates the use of the mother tongue (MT) as the medium of instruction (MOI) from Kindergarten to Grade 3, aside from being taught as a subject from Grades 1 to 3. After Grade 3, only English and Filipino are to be used, which are already part of the learning areas from Grade 1 to Grade 10.

Mother Tongue as a subject (MT) has a time allotment of 50 minutes from Grades 1-3. Filipino as a subject is allotted 30 minutes in Grade 1 and this is increased to 50 minutes from Grades 2 to 6. Four hours is allotted every week for learning Filipino in Grades 7-10.

English as a subject is introduced only at the second semester of Grade 1 with a 30-minute time allotment. This increases to 50 minutes in Grades 2-6. Students separately learn English and Filipino subjects for four hours in Grades 7-10.

However, even before the approval of the K to 12 Law, several schools had implemented the use of mother tongue in the classroom. An example is the Lubuagan Kalinga First Language Experiment involving three (3) experimental class schools using

MLE and another three (3) control class schools using the bilingual curriculum – English and Filipino. Results of the achievement tests show that the class using MLE had 80% mastery of the curriculum compared to the control class, which just had over 50%. The same study proved that using MLE “strengthens the learning of English and Filipino and does not hinder the learning of content” (Walter, Dekker & Duguiang in Nolasco, 2009: 6).

To emphasize the benefits of MTB-MLE, the “Double Exposure in Mathematics: A Glimpse of Mother Tongue First”, a study by Lim and Giron conducted in Calabarzon in school years 2004-2005 and 2006-2007, had Grades 1 to 3 students learn their Math lessons in two exposures. The method of using double exposure requires teachers to present the lesson first in the students’ mother tongue then in another language such as English.

For Lim and Giron’s study (2009), the students learned the key competencies using their mother tongue first, but technical terms such as *plus*, *quotients* and *fractions* were not translated. In the second exposure, English language was used. Only one (1) lesson plan written in English was prepared for both exposures; however, the set of activities for the first exposure was written in the students’ mother tongue.

The study involved 24 schools in Romblon, Palawan, Occidental Mindoro, Oriental Mindoro, Marinduque, Calapan City, and Puerto Princesa City and used the Regional Achievement Test in Mathematics for Grades 1 to 3 as an instrument to measure the level of improvement in the students’ scores after implementing the experiment.

As hypothesized by the researchers, results of the achievement test show a significant relationship between the use of Double Exposure in Mathematics and students' academic achievement as students in Grades 1 to 3 performed better after learning the math concepts in their mother tongue first, and then in English. The same study concludes that the poor performance of students in Math was due to the use of English only as medium of instruction.

The idea of double exposure has long been practiced in Thailand specifically in bilingual schools with students learning their core subjects in both Thai and English. Suwanarak (2014) studied the bilingual program in one private elementary school with Grade 3 students exposed to Thai and English languages in Reading, Writing, Math, Social Studies, and Science subjects.

Results show marked improvement in the core subjects taught in Thai and in English. Time percentage exposure to Thai and English was 50:50 in the core subjects except in the English subject, which was taught only by native English speaking teachers.

The study concludes that “the more bilingual experience and the more balanced exposure to both of their languages the students have, the more advantages they gain for promoting their learning success” (Suwanarak, 2014: 69).

This was supported by a separate study of Genesee et al. in Suwanarak (2014):

As concepts were taught in both English and Thai, memory for these concepts may be especially strong, as encoding in two different contexts may lead to deeper encoding and more retrieval routes. (p. 66).

Despite the expected positive effect of the implementation of MTB-MLE on the dismal performance of public schools, academicians have expressed their dissatisfaction

with the current language policy. In an article entitled, "Castrated MTB-MLE," published in the *Philippine Daily Inquirer* on September 13, 2013, Nolasco criticized the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA 10533 otherwise known as "K-to-12 Law." He asserts that the use of MTB-MLE is directed to Grades 1 to 3 classes only as English and Filipino are introduced in Grades 4 to 6. This means that the government's language-in-education policy is "MTB-MLE in name but L2 bilingual education in practice." According to him, what the Philippine Education System needs is an MTB-MLE policy that ensures the use of the mother tongue from basic to higher education.

Expressing the same criticism is Santiago (2013), who identifies two major weaknesses in the MTB-MLE of DepEd. First is that mother tongue is only used in Grades 1-3; this he considers detrimental than helpful as an interruption in the use of L1 after Grade 3 will impede the cognitive and academic development of the child.

The second weakness is the 19 languages identified as MOI. Tagalog, Kapampangan, Pangasinense, Iloko, Bicol, Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Waray, Tausug, Maguindanaoan, and Chabacano are the first 12 languages chosen as MOI. Seven other languages namely Ybanag, Ivatan, Sambal, Aklanon, Kinaray-a, Yakan, and Surigaonon have been added (DepEd Order No. 28, s. 2013).

Santiago (2013) notes that the language policy is neglecting more than 150 other languages in the country, thus, it will continue to marginalize 16.3% or about 15 million Filipinos who do not speak any of the listed official mother tongues. Some provinces have more than five (5) languages spoken. An example is Nueva Vizcaya with more or less 16 languages spoken but Iloko, the L2 of the place has been used as the medium of instruction.

The case study done in one elementary school in Kayapa, Nueva Vizcaya has shown that the students do not understand Iloko, but are more enthusiastic and cooperative when the materials used are in their mother tongue – Kalangoya (Santiago, 2013).

With these developments on the implementation of the MTB-MLE policy nationwide, research studies and other forms of feedback coming from various areas and sectors are expected to improve the country's language policy in schools.

A UNESCO 2015 news report on MTB-MLE in Asia entitled, "Having Their Say: State of Mother Tongue-Based Education in the Region," states that the "localization and indigenization of the curricula" has encouraged non-government organizations (NGOs), university extension offices and local teachers' initiatives to help produce instructional materials.

The same news report notes that about 50 Philippine languages have been used for the text of instructional materials. But despite these developments, an aspect that needs to be addressed is the lack of teacher trainings on how to implement MTB-MLE. It was recommended that MTB-MLE should be included in the pre-service teacher education curriculum and to come up with an MTB-MLE model that would train teachers to use multiple languages considering that "most Filipino students are simultaneous bilinguals, bringing three to four languages to the classroom" (UNESCO News Report, 2015).

Role and Importance of Mother Tongue in Education

In 1996, the World Commission on Culture and Development reported to UNESCO that there were about 20,000 languages spoken. Each language is unique by itself as it reflects a different pattern of thought and culture. Yet, the pressure to have a common language for all endangers the existence of the other languages. Language experts suggest that about 90 percent of these languages now will vanish in the next century.

To achieve a balance between maintaining a common language understandable by majority of the population in a globalized and digitized economy, while at the same time recognizing the linguistic rights of the minority, UNESCO spearheaded conferences, dialogues, discussions, and studies in order to come up with guidelines and principles on language policy and education.

After decades of meetings among language experts, policy makers, educators, and other stakeholders, guidelines and principles were given to member countries. These were compiled in a UNESCO Education Position Paper: “Education in a Multilingual World”, (2003) that summarizes the frameworks for education policy particularly on the choice of language of instruction while taking into account the concerns of various sectors on the implication of using a specific language vis-à-vis identity, nationhood and power.

The UNESCO Basic Principles emphasize that mother tongue instruction improves educational quality; bilingual and/or multilingual education at all levels promote social and gender equality; and language encourages understanding and respect among different peoples.

Recognizing the framework on language and education, countries including the Philippines started to implement the use of mother tongue in the teaching and learning process.

Historically, the Philippines had its first brush with the early version of MTB-MLE as early as the 1940s. Jose D. Aguilar pioneered the use of mother tongue, in this case Hiligaynon, as medium of instruction in Grades 1 and 2 in the First Iloilo Experiment in 1948-1954. Test scores show Hiligaynon-taught children outperforming English-taught children in Reading, Math and the Social Studies. The study not only shows L1 students being able to transfer the knowledge learned in their L1 to English but also reveals the L1 students catching up with the L2 students in their knowledge of English within six (6) months after being exposed to English as medium of instructions (Nolasco, 2008: 7).

Another experiment cited by Nolasco (2008) was the 1999 Regional Lingua Franca (RLF) Pilot Project spearheaded by then Department of Education Secretary Andrew Gonzales. The project covered 16 regions, which used the three largest *lingua francas* of the country – Tagalog, Cebuano and Ilocano to teach Grades 1 and 2 students. By third grade, students were mainstreamed into the regular bilingual program.

Results of the experiment show that using the mother tongue effectively helped children adjust to the school setting and in reading and writing, solving math problems, understanding science concepts and principles, and even learning English as a second language.

However, Nolasco (2008) points out that the mother tongue policy is not enough as there must be a good curriculum that is cognitively demanding; good teachers who are

competent in the required language, content and method, good teaching materials that are error-free; and a community that will provide support and empowerment.

It is not only the academicians and teacher-researchers that recognize the importance of mother tongue in developing and enriching one's knowledge. This was shown in a study in May 2008 involving interpreters from Italy's National Research Council. A team of scientists studied the brain activity of 15 interpreters for more than a year by showing words in their mother tongue language and in other languages they spoke. The interpreters were Italians working for the European Union and translating in English and Italian. As interpreters, they were extremely fluent when they switch from one language to another ("Brain Activity Reveals Mother Tongue," 2008).

In the same report, Proverbio, a professor of cognitive electrophysiology in Milano-Bicocca University in Milan, said the findings illustrate how differently the brain absorbs and recalls languages learned in childhood and adulthood.

The researchers recorded a peak in electrical activity on the left side of the brain, which recognizes letters as part of words before their meaning is interpreted. It was shown that the brain waves had much higher amplitude when the word was in Italian, the language of the interpreters before age five. The results of the study show that proficiency in the mother tongue at an early age has long term effect until adulthood (Brain Activity, 2008).

These studies and information on using the mother tongue offer an overview of the benefits and limitations of using the mother tongue. These will be discussed further in the next section.

Advantages and Disadvantages of Mother Tongue-based Education

According to Ocampo (2006), the child's first language should be the language of learning so that children will find meaning in their school experiences. At a Sentrong Wikang Filipino (SWF) forum, she emphasized that developing literacy in the child's language would provide the foundation for learning other languages such as Filipino and English.

The Human Development Network Research Monograph, which published the article, "When Reforms Don't Transform" cites several works "asserting that good language abilities will broker good learning – since systems that are already in place in the child's cognitive make-up mediate the learning of a subject matter" (Bautista, Bernardo & Ocampo, 2010: 34).

This is supported by the study of Cummins (2000) proving that a child's cognitive academic language proficiency should be acquired first before it can be used as a medium of instruction.

The results of the National Achievement Test (NAT) in Math, English and Science from 2002 to 2005 were used to validate the importance of the mother tongue as a language of learning and instruction. Students had higher scores in Math and Science than in English because the language used to teach the subjects was not consistently in English. The same observation was noted in another study using BEAM's Regional Assessment of Math and Science, wherein teachers used the local language in explaining concepts that required higher order thinking skills.

Other scientific and modern learning principles and studies prove that a child learns faster in the native tongue as the 1960's Iloilo experiment had shown. The same results were seen in Kalinga in 2006 when students topped the National Achievement

Test in English and Filipino. Teachers in Kalinga schools used the mother tongue as medium of instruction.

On a wider scale, the use of English does not guarantee success in education. In a recent report published by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on Global School Rankings, all top five (5) countries were not from the English-speaking countries but from Asia. On top is Singapore followed by Hong Kong, South Korea and a tie between Japan and Taiwan. The findings was presented at the World Education Forum in South Korea in May 2015 where the United Nations convened a conference on targets for raising global education by 2030 (Coughlan, 2015).

The report written by Eric Hanushek from Stanford University and Ludger Woessmann from Munich University argues that the standard of education is a “powerful predictor of the wealth that the countries will produce in the long run. Accordingly, poor education policies and practices leave many countries in what amounts to a permanent state of economic recession” (Coughlan, 2015, para. 21-22).

Similarly, in the Third International Math and Science Survey (TIMSS) 2003, some non-English speaking countries that use their native tongues as medium of instruction are in the top rung. These are Singapore, South Korea, Czech Republic, Japan, Bulgaria, Netherlands, Hungary, Austria and Belgium. The United States, an English-speaking country placed 17th in Science and 28th in Mathematics (Melencio, 2006).

Time and again, studies worldwide have proven the advantages of using the mother tongue in the classroom. According to Benson (2004) in her study commissioned for EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005, the use of mother tongue-based bilingual education is beneficial to the students. The study proposes that in teaching beginning

reading and writing skills, the learner's first language, the L1, should be used. For learners to transfer their linguistic skills, the second or foreign language, the L2, should be taught systematically. To do the opposite of using a foreign language instead of the mother tongue is referred to in the study as "submersion," as it is analogous to holding learners under water without teaching them how to swim (Benson, 2004).

The 2005 EFA Global Monitoring Report cites the natural process of learning when the mother tongue is used as the learner is not forced to memorize. As the student is familiar with the language used, comprehension is faster and so is the understanding of sound-symbol or meaning-symbol correspondence.

Benson (2004) further notes the myths surrounding the use of the mother tongue such as the "one nation-one language myth." The belief that one language would unite all is disproven in countries like Somalia, Burundi and Rwanda where instability exists. On the myth that modern concepts could not be explained in local languages, this was disproven as well by Leopold Senghor, who translated Einstein's Theory of Relativity into Wolof, a lingua franca in Senegal. Other myths like the confusion caused by bilingualism are not true as studies show that the more developed the first language skills are, the better the results in the second language.

Mother Tongue-based bilingual programs in developing countries have been considered successful by researchers as shown in the 1973 study of Modiano in the Chiapas highlands of Mexico where indigenous children efficiently transferred literacy skills from the L1 to the L2. They out-performed monolingual Spanish speakers. Another study is the Six-Year Yoruba Medium Primary Project conducted in Nigeria that shows better academic performance by the students who had six (6) years of primary education

in their mother tongue compared to their counterpart who had all-English schooling (Benson, 2004: 12).

Similarly, a study by Gonzales and Sibayan (1988) on Filipino-English bilingual schooling in the Philippines found a positive relationship between achievements in the two languages. Even the lack of materials was not a deterrent in the development of materials in the mother tongue as proven by the Rivers Readers Project in Nigeria. Communities provided support in producing over 40 publications in 15 languages with the help of competent native speakers (1991).

Aside from bilingual education, another alternative in promoting the mother tongue is the trilingual schooling policy implemented in India. It involves a regional/state language, a national language (Hindi) and English, as the international language. Other examples of the implementation of the trilingual policy were those done in “African contexts with schools using the mother tongue, a lingua franca or regional language, and an international language – and according to how each is used – as the language of literacy, studied as a subject, and used as a medium of instruction” (Benson, 2004: 15).

However, an international research shows that at least some five (5) years of instruction in the first language – but preferably throughout the education system – is required to provide a solid foundation for further studies. A learner must be very proficient in the mother tongue for second language acquisition and successful transfer of the literacy skills from the first to the second language (Kosonen, Young & Malone, 2007).

This was supported by the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005 which shows that mother tongue-based bilingual education not only increases access to skills but also raises

the quality of basic education through classroom interaction and integration of students' background knowledge and experiences to what they are currently learning.

The same idea is endorsed by Ball (2010) in a UNESCO analytical review on mother tongue-based bilingual or multilingual education in the early years. She recommends that the linguistic rights of the minority groups in learning be recognized.

The review further underscores the fact that language is a fundamental attribute of cultural identity and empowerment aside from helping ensure peaceful cohabitation among the peoples. At the same time, linguistic rights must be recognized in situations of political change and evolution.

Young (2003) also notes that by protecting and developing minority languages through inclusion in the education system, the government ensures equal opportunities for each cultural group in the nation and provides the best opportunity for cognitive and affective development and the retention of cultural identity.

In a separate study, Young (2002) concludes that a curriculum that recognizes the mother tongue and local culture raises the self-esteem and motivation of the students; thus encouraging regular school attendance. It also promotes interaction and critical appraisal of all aspects of the curriculum content. When children and the community experience the use of the mother tongue in the classroom, they feel that their language is valued and validated. This is important as the attitude of students, parents, and other stakeholders to their language and culture has an effect on the implementation of a localized curriculum.

This limitation is also noted in the UNESCO Report (2010) which points out that in implementing multilingual education programs, speakers of ethno-linguistic minority

languages need attitudinal change. This means that respect for linguistic diversity in any country and educational planning must be based on existing facts. UNESCO suggests that Asian countries conduct comprehensive language surveys to gather and analyze data on multilingualism, as well as on the society's proficiencies in and uses of different languages.

Despite the positive effects of MTB-MLE in the Philippines, it also has its share of criticisms especially in urban areas that use Filipino and English. The study of Mondez (2013) reveals that students in the National Capital Region and the Tagalog Region (Cavite, Laguna, Batangas, Rizal, Quezon and Bulacan) utilize English and Filipino, such that implementing MTB-MLE in the Tagalog areas is not necessary. It was recommended that those in the Tagalog Region should stick to the old Bilingual Policy, as it has been effective for many years (Mondez, 2013: 619).

The same study recommends that Congress authorizes DepEd Regional Directors to implement whatever language of instruction is considered the best in their area. Moreover, private schools should be given the academic freedom to choose their language of instruction in order to give parents options (Mondez, 2013).

A comprehensive report prepared by Pouezevara et al. (2014) for USAID-Philippines on the implementation of MTB-MLE in the ARMM, Ilocos, Western Visayas, and Central Visayas shows that many teachers indicated that they were not sufficiently trained for mother tongue instruction and more than 70% stated they lacked materials and resources for teaching reading.

This finding is related to that of another study by Fillmore (2014), which shows that the learning materials were not contextualized to the local setting due to the

assumption that learning materials from Cebu could be used in Cebuano-speaking areas in Mindanao. Although using the same materials saves time and cost, the teachers and students felt they had been shortchanged by this set-up.

Although studies have shown that most teachers are native speakers of the mother tongue and that they are familiar with its grammar, phonemes, spelling, and pronunciation, they are still focused on using teacher-centered, whole class instruction. In teaching reading with the use of the mother tongue, the teachers mostly ask and answer questions; wait for pupils to respond; and explain or lecture about the subject matter. There is little individual or group work and in the case of ARMM, students spend more time copying from the board (Pouzevara et al., 2014).

The lack of teacher training and appropriate learning materials in the local language is also among the most important challenges faced by the teachers in implementing MTB-MLE that needs to be addressed in order to make the language policy a success.

The next section presents a quick look into the current implementation of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the Philippines.

Snapshot of MTB-MLE Implementation in the Philippines

Since the issuance of DepEd Order No. 74 “Institutionalizing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MLE)” on 14 July 2009 and the passage of RA 10533 in 2013, studies have been conducted in relation to the implementation of MTB-MLE.

One study is that of Burton (2013) entitled, “Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in the Philippines: Studying Top-Down Policy Implementation from the Bottom Up.” The case study discusses how the national level has implemented the MTB-

MLE policy without considering the perspectives of those at the local level particularly the teachers and parents. Consequently, the DepEd policy has generally remained as an “ideological discourse” as it runs contrary to what is practiced by the teachers in the classroom. Parents have also been excluded in terms of gathering their opinions and attitudes; they were just informed of the new language policy affecting their children.

The said study conducted in Bicol points out how the national level implemented the MTB-MLE training through five-day training sessions among teachers; however, they were not considered effective due to lack of collaboration at the local level. It was suggested that instead of relying on expert knowledge alone, the DepEd Central Office should have taken into account local knowledge in implementing the MTB-MLE.

Burton (2013) notes that despite the implementation of MTB-MLE and the teachers’ compliance in using the mother tongue, both teachers and parents still believe that English is more important than the Bicol language due to its global status and economic value. The study concludes that a singular top-down approach to MTB-MLE is ineffective unless local knowledge and stakeholders such as parents and teachers in the area are included in the decision-making and implementation of the language policy.

Doubts on the effectiveness of a language policy are expected as previous policies like the bilingual policy could have created long-held beliefs among parents and teachers. This is similar to the findings of previous studies that English proficiency makes one literate and confident (De Leon, Jr., 2011) or that English could improve one’s socio-economic status (Vizconde, 2006).

Moreover, language policy and planning are sometimes done by government officials who have non-linguistic agenda, thus unintended outcomes may result and

implementation may either be incomplete or inappropriate. When the language policy and planning is evaluated it could be either good or bad (Rubin in Hornberger & Ricento, 1996: 404).

Another study entitled, “An Exploration of the Responses of Stakeholders to a Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) Programme Being Implemented in Pilot Schools in Mindanao, Philippines,” presents the effects of using the mother tongue in classes (Skoropinski, 2013).

The study used classroom observations and the Most Significant Change (MSC) methodology wherein participatory monitoring and evaluation were done. Teacher-participants in Bagumbayan used the Hiligaynon language; Lake Sebu teachers used the T’boli language; and those in Lutayan used Maguindanaon language. Results show that teachers and parents were found to have a positive attitude toward using the mother tongue in the classroom. Skoropinski considers this to be a reflection of the positive attitude of the learners themselves, who became more active and participative in class by using their mother tongue.

He observed that parents had become hopeful with the MTB-MLE as their children were noticeably enjoying their learning experiences. The use of the mother tongue also gave the parents a chance to assist their children at home with their lessons. As a whole, the use of the mother tongue in the three areas of study developed the teachers’ self-confidence and feeling of success because of the increased attendance, classroom participation and academic success.

Another study focusing on teachers’ knowledge and attitude toward MTB-MLE was conducted before, during and after an MTB-MLE teacher training. The study

involved 15 Grade 1 teachers and 15 school principals, who came from the T'boli, Ilonggo (Hiligaynon) and Maguindanaoan language groups. It was noted that after training, the participants had confidence in using the mother tongue when they wrote, taught literacy, and facilitated classes. The teacher participants also gained a better understanding of how difficult it is for children to learn in a foreign language, as well as how to develop and use their own mother tongue language literacy materials (Stone, 2012).

On the other hand, the same study presented the “incomplete attitude change of some participants,” which despite undergoing the MTB-MLE training understood MTB-MLE as translation when teaching a second language (Stone, 2012: 183). They also raised some concerns such as the use of mother-tongue in other learning areas; confusion about the country's education policy; and fear of the parents' reactions towards using the mother tongue in their classes.

For this study, a modified version of Hornberger and Ricento's a layered “onion” in language planning and policy is utilized.

Like an onion, language planning and policy have several layers with the outermost part represented by broad language policy objectives enacted by legislative or executive bodies at the national level. The next layer is represented by institutions, agencies, business or government offices that interpret the policy for dissemination to the next level, which is the core of the onion. It is expected that as the policy goes down to the core, “it could be interpreted and modified as individuals from diverse backgrounds, experiences and communities interact with each other.” (Hornberger & Ricento, 1996: 409).

What makes the “onion model” applicable to this current study is that there is an assumption that the different “layers of the onion” would affect each other. Thus, from outside to inside of the onion, the actors representing each layer would interact with each other. This aptly describes the “top-down” and “bottom-up” approach in implementing a successful MTB-MLE policy.

The “bottom-up” approach is intended to gather feedback from the main implementers and in some cases help “revitalize threatened and non-dominant languages in language planning and policy” (Hornberger and Ricento, 1996: 405). On the other hand, the “top-down” approach allows the national level to operationalize the policy through executive orders, legislations, guidelines, and regulations.

MTB-MLE Teaching Strategies

In the MTB-MLE implementation, RA 10157 or Kindergarten Education Act identifies interactive strategies, use of manipulative games, and experiential, small group discussions and total physical response (TPR) as MTB-MLE teaching strategies. Learning development materials would consist at the minimum of the following: listening story, small books, big books, experience story, primer lessons, and teaching exemplars.

According to Kolb in Smith (2010), experiential learning exists when “students who are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting (para. 8).

A study by Gorio et al. (2014) in Baguio and Benguet identifies the translation method and the use of local songs, poems and stories as the most common strategies in

implementing MTB-MLE. Field trips and film viewing could sometimes be utilized but not as often as interactive discussions and role-plays.

Another study on MTB-MLE implementation in Baguio reveals that teachers used several teaching strategies that included: translation of target language to mother tongue; utilization of multilingual teaching; utilization of *lingua- franca*; improvisation of instructional materials written in mother tongue; use of literary pieces written in mother tongue as motivation; and remediation of instruction (Lartec et al., 2014: 9-10).

In the same study, the teacher used Ilocano as medium of instruction then proceeded to the language used by a minority of students who could not fully understand Ilocano. Yet, there were several instances when the teacher resorted to multilingual teaching to accommodate the many languages in the classroom.

As Ilocano is the *lingua franca* of Baguio, the teacher used it as medium of instruction as most students understand it. However, both students and teachers could easily shift to other local languages like Kankanaey. Instructional materials were also written in Ilocano to motivate students to participate in class discussions and other learning activities. Ilocano literary pieces were also used as springboard to teach lessons because teachers considered them as valuable authentic materials; for cultural and language enrichment; and personal involvement. However, when students continued to have difficulty in learning, a remedial class was offered after regular class hours that was conducted in Ilocano (Lartec et al., 2014).

Other MTB-MLE strategies identified for speaking and listening include the use of Conversation, Talk in “Situations”, Talk in Drama, Reading Aloud, Choral Speaking, and Oral stories in the mother tongue. These strategies encourage the students especially

the very young ones to be confident in their listening and speaking skills. Developing these skills is made easy when the language used is one that is familiar to them (Dekker, et al., 2010).

The other MTB-MLE strategies available especially for classes without books written in their mother tongue include the use of local songs, poetry riddles, wise sayings; Life Stories, Guess our Story, Class Story; Listening and Responding to Stories; field trip such as community or group walk; Shared Reading; Big Books, Series Pictures, Experience Stories; and Total Physical Response (TPR) with body, objects or pictures (Malone, 2007b).

Relationship of Education and Armed Conflict

According to the Education for All (EFA) Global Monitoring Report (2011), historical evidence confirms that episodes of armed conflict can disrupt or reverse education gains made over many years.

This is reiterated in the EFA 2015 National Review Report: Philippines, which identifies armed conflict as another challenge in the realization of providing education to all Filipino children. One example cited was the fighting between government troops and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), west of Zamboanga City in 2013. It affected 23,794 families or 118,819 individuals, damaged 10,160 houses and over 200 million pesos worth of properties and infrastructures. Students were also affected by the conflict as schools were either damaged or used as temporary shelters. Those students who became *bakwits* (evacuees) were also bullied in school adding to the woes of families affected by the armed conflict.

An analysis of this issue shows that reconstructing the education system during or after an armed conflict is not all about the infrastructures, human resources and educational materials needed to reopen the school. Instead, the right type of education is one of the best conflict prevention strategies available to society in order to avoid prejudice, intolerance and stereotyping (EFA Global Monitoring Report, 2011).

Sporadic and short episodes of armed conflict can even dash the hopes and dreams of the young generation. The cycle of violence, poverty and educational disadvantage continues unless the government and aid donors prioritize education instead of more and additional ammunition as part of national security goals. Giving priority to arms will shatter the future of both young and old.

“When classrooms are used not to nurture young minds by teaching children to think critically in a spirit of tolerance and mutual understanding, but to poison those minds with prejudice, intolerance and a distorted view of history, they can become a breeding ground for violence” (EFA Report 2011:131).

The EFA 2011 Report summarizes the severe effect of armed conflict to the goal of granting children access to education. In a study conducted among 35 countries affected by armed conflict from 1999-2008, the EFA Report 2011, identifies 28 million children of primary school age that are out of school, or 42% of the total out-of-school population worldwide.

In the Philippines, the non-attendance rate is four (4) times more than the national average in the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), while, in the Eastern Shan of Myanmar, about 50% of children aged 7 to 16 are not attending school. Moreover, girls are also less likely to enroll especially in the secondary level considering

the danger of being recruited, harassed or abused while on their way to or back from school (EFA Report 2011: 134).

Part of the salient points of the EFA 2011 Global Report is the discussion on how armed conflict disrupts and destroys the right of a child to gain access to education that is just, safe, multi-cultural and multi-lingual.

Sadly, studies cited here reveal how school children, teachers and schools become targets of violence as part of a military strategy. The academic institutions are seen as representatives of the current state authority, thus, insurgent groups oppose the type of education promoted by the government in order to destabilize areas and disrupt communities.

Examples include that of Afghanistan, where 74 children were killed in the first half of 2010 as part of suicide attacks and of the deliberate attempt of hurting children on their way to school. Aside from bomb attacks, rebels poisoned water supplies at girls' schools in Kunduz province. Meanwhile, 95 girls were injured as they left school in Pakistan's Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (EFA Report 2011:143).

In Southern Thailand, schools were burned and 63 students and 24 teachers and education personnel were killed or injured in 2008 and 2009. The destruction of education facilities has also been considered as a long-standing practice in armed conflict and this was prevalent in Sierra Leone after the civil war with at least 60% of primary schools still requiring rehabilitation three years after the end of conflict. In the Democratic Republic of Congo, schools and other basic service facilities were routinely

destroyed; while in Afghanistan, girls' schools were being targeted more often than boys' schools especially those schools identified with the government (EFA Report 2011: 143).

This situation is also real in the ARMM area that is currently lobbying in Congress for the establishment of the Bangsamoro. On November 16, 2014, a bomb exploded in front of a pilot elementary school in Kabacan killing one and wounding 16 others. Two improvised explosive devices were also found in the area. Two days earlier, two people including a girl were killed when the breakaway Bangsamoro Islamic Freedom Fighters (BIFF) fired mortar shells at soldiers and police who were conducting military operations in nearby Pikit, North Cotabato (Cabrera, 2014).

During a personal interview of school officials and teachers from Datu Gumban Piang Central Elementary School, they narrated their hardships at the height of the 2008 war. Some 41,000 *bakwits* or internally displaced persons (IDPs) sought refuge in public buildings including their schools after the botched signing of the Memorandum of Agreement on Ancestral Domain (MOA-AD) between the Philippine Government of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF). The IDPs stayed in the evacuation areas for several months and even years due to the sporadic outbreak of armed hostilities in Maguindanao and the neighbouring towns of Midsayap and North Cotabato (U. Panegas, personal communication, April 22, 2014).

The effects of armed conflict on education are widespread, such as in the case of Cambodia, where activities were brought to a virtual standstill in the 1970s because the Khmer Rouge destroyed the entire educational system. Boyden and Ryden (1996) cite how education is sometimes used for explicitly military purposes. During the Khmer Rouge rule (1975 to 1979) in Cambodia, children from middle and upper class urban

families were forcibly separated from their parents and sent for re-education in special camps where they learned how to praise the sacrifices of revolutionary fighters, exalted the national cause and ideological vigilance and incited people to class vengeance.

Boyden and Ryder (1996) further report that children who were lucky to keep their schools face a different problem of being detained, tortured, killed, conscripted, or suspended. Parents were afraid to send their children to schools for even teachers became prime targets by opposing groups. The state itself is crippled when armed conflict ensues as basic education requires consistent funding, complex administrative systems and close collaboration between policy-making and funding bodies at the national, regional and local levels.

Another effect of armed conflict on education is its abuse by political authorities by taking control of the curriculum, as what happened in Turkey, South Africa, Namibia, Chile, and Palestine. Consequently, even those schools that had not been involved in clashes with the authorities suffered as much as those that had (Boyden and Ryder, 1996).

Despite this grim scenario of how armed conflict destabilizes the education process, there are inspirational cases that illustrate how a united group of people can maintain a sense of normalcy so children can continue with their studies.

In Sarajevo, Bosnia, a survey in one school district showed that over 80% of children had direct experience of sniper fire during the Civil War. However, this life-threatening experience did not hinder the parents and the community to create classrooms in homes, cafes, garages and basements. It was by moving the school out of danger that the community kept their faith in the saving power of education to take them out of poverty and break the cycle of violence (Boyden & Ryder, 1996).

Ways of Promoting Peace Education

With various factors threatening the right to education of children, a study was presented as part of the EFA 2011 Global Report, which identifies the possible solutions to attain peace in an area of armed conflict.

Smith (2010) in his background paper for EFA 2011 Global Report identifies education as either “a driver of conflict or a contributor towards conflict transformation and peace building.” In his paper, he notes that there must be appropriate curriculum content, pedagogy and learning resources to build peace. This means that the type of curriculum must be responsive to the needs of society instead of using it to promote particular political ideologies, religious practices or cultural values and traditions (Smith, 2010: 1).

The paper also advises that how history is taught should be taken seriously in order to present multiple perspective approaches instead of single narrative histories. In addition, textbooks should be carefully written and biases in favor or against a specific group should be avoided. This was the case in Sri Lanka, where single textbooks for different linguistic communities were produced. The teachers found inaccuracies in the translated versions and claimed that there was cultural bias in terms of illustrations and content matter (Smith, 2010).

Nolasco (2011) enumerates some cases of suppression of local languages that led to violent conflicts, disunity and dissension. For example, in Bangladesh where war erupted against Pakistan over the issue of language, and in Lithuania the people fought the mandatory use of Russian in schools. The people of Catalonia demanded that Spanish and Catalan be declared as official languages in the autonomous region of Catalonia.

It is assumed that conflict is the result of learned attitudes and learned behavior. With educational interventions, there is a possibility that the attitudes and behavior would change. Thus, it is recommended that peace education be integrated in the curriculum with or without existing conflicts in the area (Dugan in Boyden and Ryder, 1996).

To avoid violent behaviors, another recommendation is the inclusion of multicultural and inter-faith tolerance in lessons. Activities on conflict resolution, mediation, negotiation, problem identification and problem solving could develop the students' self-esteem and confidence, as well as promoting diversity and universal values (Boyden and Ryder, 1996).

Taking cognizance of the importance of creating a culture of peace, the DepEd issued Memo No. 469, s. 2008 also known as "Institutionalizing Peace Education in the Basic Education Curriculum."

The said memorandum is based on Executive Order No. 570, "Institutionalizing Peace Education in Basic and Teacher Education." The legislation aims to "ensure that education contributes to the attainment of a culture of peace in the country" (DepEd Memo, 2008: 1).

In the case of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM), no less than then Senator and now President Aquino identified in his Ten-Point Education Agenda the importance of *madaris* education in order to "make the full basic EFA available to all Muslim Filipino children anywhere in the country" (EFA 2015 National Review Report: Philippine, 2015). The *madaris* recognize the linguistic and cultural heritage of the Muslims and give them full access to education that is contextualized to their beliefs, language and culture.

A clear statement on the promotion and integration of peace education is found in a regional legislative act, the Muslim Mindanao Autonomy (MMA) Act No. 303 or “Strengthened Basic Education Act in ARMM of 2012.”

Three paragraphs under MMA Act 303, Section 5 are explicit on the integration of peace in the curriculum of schools in the ARMM area. One paragraph clearly posits this goal of teaching peace to the students.

“Promote a culture of peace in the Basic Educational System of the region by infusing the principles of peace education in the curriculum which shall bring about a peaceful integration of learners and thereby achieving values of discipline, respect, principles of multiculturalism and citizenship education in general” (MMA Act 303, 2012: 4).

The other stipulations are on “respecting the identities of other people’s ethnic identity and cultural heritage to achieve national unity and harmony, as well as having a safe and secure learning environment free from violence, conflict and environmental hazards” (MMA Act 303, 2012: 3-4). The Act further recognizes that education in ARMM must be responsive to the needs of peace and development in the Bangsamoro area.

In the ALIVE curriculum, the integration of peace education is also mentioned. This is stated in the learning area of Islamic Values Education. Its goal is “for students to acquire the derived Islamic values that would guide learners to be *maka-Diyos, makabayan, makakalikasan, at makatao* (For God, Country, Nature and People); thereby making them agents in advocating and promoting brotherhood, peace and unity, and justice and equality” (DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2011: 15).

On the other hand, the goal of teaching Arabic Language is “to develop functional literacy in the Arabic language to enable learners to read and understand the Holy Qur’an and Ahadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) as well as equip them with communication skills needed to achieve the vision for elementary education graduates in preparation for secondary education” (ALIVE curriculum, 2011: 9).

One of the learning expectations also stated in the ALIVE curriculum is for students to read in Arabic so they could understand the teachings of Islam and apply the values they have learned in their daily lives.

The 2006 Comprehensive Road Map for Upgrading Muslim Basic Education prepared by DepEd is another policy that promotes peace education. The rationale of the non-legislated policy states that “Muslims as Filipino citizens shall ensure sustained and permanent peace through access to Islamic-friendly educational curriculum and quality basic education comparable to the rest of the Filipino people” (Road Map for Upgrading Muslim Basic Education in Policy Research on Access to Quality Basic Education for Muslim Learners, 2007: 120).

The same policy further describes a progressive Muslim as peace-loving and patriotic and that the peace process could be improved when Muslims are educated in Islamic-friendly schools that would lead to the eradication of separatist sentiments in the minds of the students.

In addition to this, the GPH and the MILF signed the Comprehensive Agreement on the Bangsamoro (CAB) in 2014 that led to the drafting of the Bangsamoro Basic Law (BBL). The BBL would grant the Bangsamoro people’s aspiration for self-determination as it gives them the legal right to establish their own parliamentary form of government

and consequently repeal RA 9054 or “An Act to Strengthen and Expand the Organic Act for the Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao.”

Consequently, the passage of the BBL is envisioned to put a stop to the armed conflict between the government forces and the MILF. However, the BIFF, Abu Sayyaf and other insurgents are not party to the peace agreement between the GPH and the MILF as they are considered terrorists by the government. Still, the BBL is considered a big step towards achieving peace in Mindanao.

Aside from the peace process, “the education department is also promoting peace by establishing schools as ‘zones of peace.’ The Department is pushing for this as students are the first to be affected by armed conflict due to cancellation of classes and disruption of the learning process” (EFA 2015 National Review Report: Philippines, 2015: 76).

The declaration to free the schools from any form of armed conflict is enshrined in DepEd Order No. 44, series of 2005 also known as “Declaration of Schools as Zones of Peace.”

Another statute protecting children against armed conflict is RA 7610, otherwise known as the “Special Protection of Children Against Child Abuse, Exploitation and Discrimination Act.”

Article X, Sec. 22 specifically states that ... “Children are hereby declared as Zones of Peace. It shall be the responsibility of the State and all other sectors concerned to resolve armed conflicts in order to promote the goal of children as ‘zones of peace’.” This means that children should not be objects of attacks or be exposed to any form of danger at all times.

The idea of children being “zones of peace” is also promoted in Nepal where “Children as Zones of Peace” has become a movement that advocates children’s basic right to survival, development, protection especially during conflicts” (National Coalition for Children as Zones of Peace, 2003).

By recognizing that children should be protected and their schools should be free from any form of armed conflict, the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) adheres to its own Guidelines in the Conduct of AFP Activities inside or within the premises of a School or Hospital. It states that “Force protection unit soldiers who are armed and acting as security for the AFP personnel and for the activity itself must only be in the proximity of the school and not inside the school” (AFP Letter Directive No. 25, 2013: 5).

However, when the AFP force protection unit is required inside the school campus, they must avoid mingling with children, teachers, health professionals and health workers.

In the midst of armed conflict, education is seen as a promoter of understanding and respect between and among various ethnic groups. It is important that schools recognize the cultural and religious practices of the Muslim minority and to offer students opportunities to practice their culture and religion (Fabris, 2011).

In the qualitative and comparative study of Fabris (2011) in two Mindanao schools, it points out that when schools neglect the minorities’ histories and languages, it has the two-fold outcome of either frustrating minority identities or promulgating social biases and intolerance on the other. Using social constructivism, Fabris concludes that as societal tensions increase due to lack of recognition of one’s history and language, conflict would develop and allow groups to de-legitimize or dehumanize one another.

To attain long-lasting peace, there must be a “culture of peace” and understanding of one’s culture, identity and history. This must start within the school where children are taught about tolerance and understanding. It would even be easier and effective when these lessons are taught in their own mother tongue instead of using a Westernized education (R. Layson, personal communication, April 22, 2014). He explained that the mother tongue of the students and local names, places and situations should be used in class discussions instead of examples taken from a foreign setting.

As coordinator of the Inter-Religious Dialogue Ministry that helps identify “peace zones” in various municipalities of Maguindanao and North Cotabato and having witnessed four armed conflicts that brought havoc and untold sufferings for many years, R. Layson points out that education has an important role in instilling peace in Mindanao. After all, when armed conflict exists, schools are also affected as schooling stops and classrooms are turned into evacuation centers (personal communication, April 22, 2014).

Boyden and Ryder (1996) note that in areas of armed conflict, the learners’ first language should be used and learning takes place through active participation in discussions and debates, group work, individual project work and experiential work. With this approach, children are allowed to practice and learn on their own terms, using their own language, concepts and understandings, thereby building their confidence. Creativity through role-play and drama are encouraged. By drawing on the pupil’s personal experience and applying the acquired knowledge and skills to practical situations, full reinforcement is given to the learning process as a tool useful and relevant in all aspects of life.

As a whole, education is considered as a channel of peace for the community and the nation, in which students, parents and the rest of the members of the community are given a chance to rebuild their lives. Not only will the children develop their cognitive and personal skills, but also psychosocial and physical welfare as well. For the parents and elders, it gives them a reason to take part in peace building and in protecting the right of their children to remain in school for a better future.

The implementation of MTB-MLE in areas of armed conflict is another opportunity for education officials, teachers, parents and other stakeholders like the military to integrate peace education in the curriculum. As the learners' mother tongue is a language close to their heart and mind, the lessons and values shared with them are easily understood thereby creating a culture of peace and tolerance among peoples.

The HDN Research Monograph (2010) has extensively discussed the impact of language use on the affective side of learning wherein children who are made to read in an unfamiliar language are marginalized.

The UNESCO Report entitled, "Promoting Multilingual Education: Including the Excluded," published in 2007, reiterates that the use of the mother tongue in the classroom is important to develop the confidence and self-identity of the learners without feeling ashamed of their own language and culture. It points out that raising the awareness in the communities is important too.

The Report posits that when minority language communities experience many years of discrimination and neglect, they feel that their language and culture are of no value. They often believe that the best thing they can do for their children is to get them

into the 'language of power' as quickly as possible in order for them to have greater chances of finding a job.

According to Mohagher Iqbal, Chairman of the Bangsamoro Transition Commission, the BBL is "a critical component in the over-all peace process between the GPH and MILF," as the establishment of a Bangsamoro political entity will address the historical grievances of the Moro people for being neglected (Primer on the Proposed BBL, 2015: iii).

Relationship of Language and Armed Conflict

That there is the existence of a relationship between language and armed conflict has long been established in studies as shown in the cases of Bangladesh, Pakistan, Myanmar and Sri Lanka whose governments failed to accept ethno-linguistic diversity.

Smith (2010) presents in his study how language policies can cause conflict such as the case in Spain where the use of mother tongue languages was repressed, and how particular groups used language policies (like in India, Pakistan and Sri Lanka) as a means of dominating access to education.

The EFA 2011 Global Report also concludes how the wrong type of education can fuel armed conflict as schools play a critical role not just in equipping children with knowledge and skills, but also in transmitting values and creating a sense of identity. The Report adds that it is in school where children learn to show mutual respect, share interests and common values, and help underpin social cohesion in culturally diverse societies. On the other hand, schools can also promote ideas and practices that weaken cohesion by being unresponsive to the social, cultural and linguistic concerns of the society especially those of the indigenous or ethnic minorities.

The book, “Opportunities for Change: Education innovation and reform during and after conflict,” published by UNESCO in 2009 asserts that ethnic and language divisions can contribute or serve as an excuse for tension and conflict. This happened in Kosovo, where Albanians had struggled to receive an education in their native tongue since the days of the Ottoman Empire. Over time, national identity and education in the Albanian language have become interlinked, with symbolic equality established between education in mother tongue and the demands for a national state.

In Guatemala, the imposition of Spanish in schools helped fuel the civil war. Only after the reinstatement and teaching of Mayan languages was peace achieved. The 36-year civil war left 200,000 dead and shut down many rural schools. In the end, those who survived the armed conflict realized that they needed an education that was consistent with their real-life situation and needs (Fernandez in EFA 2011 Global Monitoring Report).

Documentations and studies presented here show how an inappropriate or unresponsive language policy could cause disagreements and therefore, should serve as a reminder to modern society that schools should serve as catalyst for peace. Instead of becoming a vehicle for social division, schools should inculcate good values among children to be sensitive to the culture of others. Moreover, the learners’ mother tongue should be used as a tool in achieving these goals.

The 2011 Global Report cautions governments to consider the minority groups when identifying a specific language as a ‘national language.’ The latter might consider the chosen language as inappropriate and see it as a vehicle for cultural domination. It

emphasizes that schools are considered as channels that transmit attitudes, ideas and beliefs, so the government should deliver the right type of education.

The Report also deems it important that the academic curricula be sensitive to the diverse cultures and groups that exist in the schools to avoid developing negative attitudes that children will carry up to their adult life. Even history lessons should be free from biases that will be used by a certain group to promote their propaganda or ideology. Textbook contents must present a fair and just narrative of concepts and events to avoid poisoning the minds of young children.

In the Philippine setting, this kind of bias is addressed through the Madrasah Program and the Indigenous Peoples (IP) Education Program that take into consideration the students' languages, history, culture and practices (RA 10533 Implementing Rules and Regulations, 2013).

In light of the implementation of MTB-MLE in the Philippines, there must be community participation in order to make it valid and meaningful to the teachers and students.

“Writing systems need to be acceptable to the language speakers and other stakeholders, and a participatory process centering around the language community is crucial to ensuring appreciation, acceptability, accuracy and ownership.” This was so in ARMM where representatives from non-dominant language communities participated in orthography development, which encouraged community involvement in the implementation of MTB-MLE (Asia-Pacific Multilingual Education Working Group, 2013: 7).

Fabris (2011) emphasizes that language and communication skills have a strong relationship with individual identities. In a research that she conducted in a public school and a private *madari* in Mindanao, Muslim students in one school used Tagalog more often than their native language – Maguindanaon aside from Visayan. In the other school, students often used their native language Maranao although they could speak Tagalog, English, Arabic and Visayan.

The findings show that the attachment of children to their own languages has led to the development of their own identities and would later on influence their political stands (Fabris, 2011).

All these data reveal that the government, educators, parents and other concerned groups should help ensure that schools will be a place for children to respect one another's language, culture, religion, history, and ethnic background in order to promote peace and harmony in the community.

To prove how future conflicts could be prevented, Boyden and Ryder (1996) propose that peace education should be incorporated into the curriculum prior to, during and after conflict. Thus, there is a need to promote multicultural and inter-faith respect and tolerance in the schools, as conflicts are believed to be the product of one's attitude and behavior.

For this current study, the Arabic Language and Islamic Values (ALIVE) Program were taken into account during the class observation, focus group discussion (FGD) and interviews. The ALIVE Program was based on the Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum (REMC) of 2011 (DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2011), which amended the

previous Standard Curriculum for Elementary Public Schools and Private Madaris of 2004, (DepEd Order No. 51, s. 2004).

The refined Curriculum aims “to establish a smooth transfer of Muslim pupils from recipient private Madrasah to public schools with ALIVE Program or vice versa; unify the long history of dichotomy of education among Muslims; and promote the Filipino national identity at the same time preserve the Filipino Muslim’s cultural heritage” (DepEd Order No. 40, S. 2011: 2).

Finally, as schools serve as a concrete sign of an area’s recovery from conflict, government and non-government organizations have to prioritize the reconstruction of classrooms and buildings after the cessation of hostilities. The presence of schools reassures the children and parents that their community is going to be peaceful again and they would be able to start a new and productive life.

The Mindanao Conflict

According to the research of Lara and Champain (2009) entitled, “Inclusive Peace in Muslim Mindanao: Revisiting the Dynamics of Conflict and Exclusion,” there are two kinds of conflict in Mindanao. The first one is the separatist or rebellion-related conflict that challenges the structure of the state; the second one is non-separatist that exists among families, clans, and tribes.

The first type of conflict is an armed confrontation between the government and the MILF and the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF). The other type is an armed confrontation between tribes or clans with *rido* as the most popular form. *Rido* is a

Meranao term referring to clan feuds that benefit the families, clans and tribes; whereas, the rebellion-related violence benefits the national or sub-national states.

Although the ARMM was created in 1987 to address the grievances of the Bangsamoro people against the national government, still there were members who were dissatisfied with the set-up. The MILF in particular broke away from the less conservative MNLF triggering intense fighting in 1997, 2000, and 2001 after Former President Joseph Estrada ordered an attack against the MILF camps. In 2003 and 2008 under the administration of then President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, armed conflict erupted once again causing hundreds of fatalities and displacing about 250,000 people.

Critics of the ARMM point out that the autonomous government was not effective as it is weak that it has failed to deliver basic programs and services in key areas such as health care and education. There are also rampant issues of graft and corruption as tax and revenue-generating power has been inadequate. The problem with *rido* and local conflicts remains unresolved, as the ARMM has no effective command over the local police and armed forces (Lara & Champain, 2009).

The lack of peace in the area has been identified in researches as among the factors that hamper the development of the area including the educational achievement of the students.

The study by Coletta (2011) entitled, "The Search for Durable Solutions: Armed Conflict and Forced Displacement in Mindanao, Philippines" tries to understand the underlying structural causes, cyclical nature, scale, and impact of involuntary internal displacement due to armed conflict, as well as to identify development options and actions to solve the issue of IDPs.

The study focuses on how interested parties such as the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) has forced internal displacement as a way to control a territory considered strategic as well as influence the movement and loyalties of the affected community (Coletta, 2011).

Area of Armed Conflict: Maguindanao, Southern Philippines

Maguindanao means "people of the flooded plains." Mindanao itself was derived from the word *danao*, which means "inundation of a river, lake or sea."

Since the early 70's, Maguindanao has been the home base of the MILF and MNLF.

Nur Misuari, a Tausug and lecturer of the University of the Philippines founded the MNLF in 1971. The members believe that the Moro people constitute a distinct *bangsa* (nation) with its own Islamic historical and cultural identity; the *bangsamoro* (Islamic Nation) has a legitimate right to self-determination; and the MNLF has a duty and obligation to wage a *jihad* (holy war) against the Philippine State. In 1996, peace talks between the Government and the MNLF resulted in the creation of the ARMM, with Misuari as the first governor.

However, not all were happy with the turn of events in Southern Mindanao causing the division of the MNLF. The breakaway group led by Hashim Salamat formed the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) in 1980. This new group wants to promote Islamic ideals and the *Shari'a* (Islamic Law) in their own Islamic State. They believe that these are attainable through *da'wa* (Islamic preaching) and *jihad* (holy war).

The human and social toll of the conflict in Southern Mindanao has continued throughout the years. Millions of people have been displaced throughout the different cities and towns, as well as in nearby Sabah, Malaysia, leading to the deportation of the illegal Muslim migrants back to the country. The incidence of poverty dramatically increased with 14 of the 20 poorest provinces in the Philippines found in Mindanao (Schiavo-Campo & Judd, 2005).

Consequently, kidnap-for-ransom activities, drug trafficking and crimes against persons and property have compounded the peace and order problem in the southern territory of the country.

Although the area is rich in natural resources and a good place for agricultural activities, the ensuing conflict in the area simply negates any hope of progress and development unless peace and order will be permanently established. The realization of attaining peace in the country will gradually happen if there exists a "rule of law" to be observed by all the stakeholders (Schiavo-Campo & Judd, 2005).

In understanding the armed struggle in Mindanao, one has to go back through history as to why Muslim Filipinos are currently lobbying for the Bangsamoro, which is envisioned to replace the existing ARMM set-up. The struggle started when Spain established public education and Muslim Filipinos aggressively opposed it as it was secularized and in contradiction to their religious beliefs. After the Spanish colonization, the United States invaded the country and implemented their own style of colonization by emphasizing that the lack of education was a sign of ignorance and backwardness, thus, the need to educate everyone including those who adhered to Islam.

Milligan (2004) observes that the strategy of the United States was reminiscent of the same approach employed among African-Americans and Native-Americans. The new colonial power presented “civilization” in the form of a Christian culture while “savagery” was epitomized by the Muslim Filipinos practicing Islam. He believes that the Americans implemented policies such as imposing English as a medium of instruction in schools and integrating Muslim Filipinos into an emerging Philippine state without taking into consideration their history, experiences, customs and religion.

As a result, armed resistance to establish an independent Islamic State has been waged since the early 1970s in Mindanao despite efforts of some Mindanao schools to pattern their educational system after the Arab models. It has been observed that graduates from these institutions are still at a disadvantage compared to non-Muslims, who follow the regular curriculum offered by the government.

With the hope of maintaining their Islamic identity, Muslim Filipinos attended school seven days a week and learn as many as five separate languages in their effort to secure a future as both Filipino citizens and Muslims. However, improvements were noted when private *madaris* integrated both Islamic and government curricula by the 1980s. The set up allowed students to gain access to secular public education, as well as government universities established in the region (Milligan, 2004).

When Corazon Aquino became the president, ARMM was created in 1990 and it was charged with the authority to establish and maintain a public educational system that would teach “the rights and duties of citizenship and the cultures of the Muslims, Christians and tribal peoples in the region to develop, promote and enhance unity in diversity.” Muslim students were required to learn Arabic to instill their own ethnic

identity, while educators were allowed to determine the content and direction of their education (RA 6734, 2009: 25)

With the power to develop their own curriculum, Muslim Filipino educators *islamize* education in the ARMM by infusing Islamic values in both formal values education program and in the curricula of other subjects. Learning materials such as textbooks depict Muslims and Islam favorably and accurately reflect their values. The use of Arabic allows Muslim children to interact with the rest of the Muslim world and to enable them to read the Koran, which is the traditional purpose of Arabic instruction in the *madaris* (Milligan, 2004).

Graduates of *madaris* are now better equipped in pursuing a college education and in finding work afterwards because of the integration of Islamic curriculum with that of the public schools. However, the full realization of the Muslim Filipinos' struggle for educational equity remains at the level of policy statements due to security issues brought about by the Muslim secessionist movement in Mindanao.

On a positive note, the use of MTB-MLE in promoting peace education offers a glimmer of hope for those who work towards the realization of long-term peace and prosperity in Mindanao.

Summary. The Review of Literature offers insights on how language policies in the country have changed over time until the passage of RA 10533 or the K-12 Law, which mandates the use of MTB-MLE in Kindergarten to Grade 3. It also discussed the benefits of using the mother tongue in learning, as well as a medium of instruction in integrating peace education in schools located in areas of armed conflict.

Conceptual Framework

In conducting the present study, a modified framework that merges the theory espoused by Malone (2007a), which describes successful MTB-MLE as “top-down and bottom-up” was used. This means that learning competencies are developed at the national level and local knowledge and experiences through the incorporation of songs, stories, traditions, and skills are incorporated. Whether the program becomes successful or not will depend on the local education officials implementing the policy, the teachers using the MTB-MLE, and the support and cooperation of parents and other stakeholders in the local community.

A misalignment on policy intentions between the local level and the national level could occur when teachers implement the mother tongue policy through mere translation due to lack of knowledge on pedagogical approaches and lack of understanding on the rationale of MTB-MLE (Burton, 2013).

Contextualization of the curriculum and production of instructional materials could also hamper the implementation of MTB-MLE policy when these remain at the national level; thus, local participation is necessary (Fillmore, 2014).

At the same time, the study was also guided by Hornberger & Ricento’s (1996) language planning and policy model that likened the policy dissemination and implementation of an MTB-MLE program to that of a layered onion. Similar to the onion, the outermost layer represents the national language policy; the inner layers are composed of local DepEd officials, non-government organizations, parents, and other stakeholders. At the innermost part of the onion are the teachers who implement the language policy and peace education in their classes through the curriculum, instructional

materials and teaching strategies. This theory of language policy dissemination recognizes the possibility that the MTB-MLE policy is open to modification done by local education officials and teachers as it moves toward the inner core (Fillmore, 2014: 9).

Finally, for a policy to be successful, other stakeholders in the community should also support MTB-MLE as posited by Dekker and Young (2005). Even the minority language speakers should also be included and convinced that the program will benefit all learners in the community

Presented in Figure 1 is the framework of the current study showing how the national MTB-MLE policy is implemented from “top-down” and then a “bottom-up” approach in incorporating local knowledge and experiences. The GPH President, Congress, and DepEd national officials represent the outer core of the onion as they are responsible for passing and enacting DO No. 74, RA 10533, and RA 10157 that mandate the use of MTB-MLE in teaching and learning. The second layer is composed of the local DepEd officials, school teachers, parents, AFP, MILF, and other stakeholders in the community, who support the use of the mother tongue to achieve peace and order in the area. Finally, the inner core encapsulates two roles of the mother tongue as a subject, medium of instruction and as an auxiliary language, as well as in integrating peace education in the curriculum, instructional materials and teaching strategies.

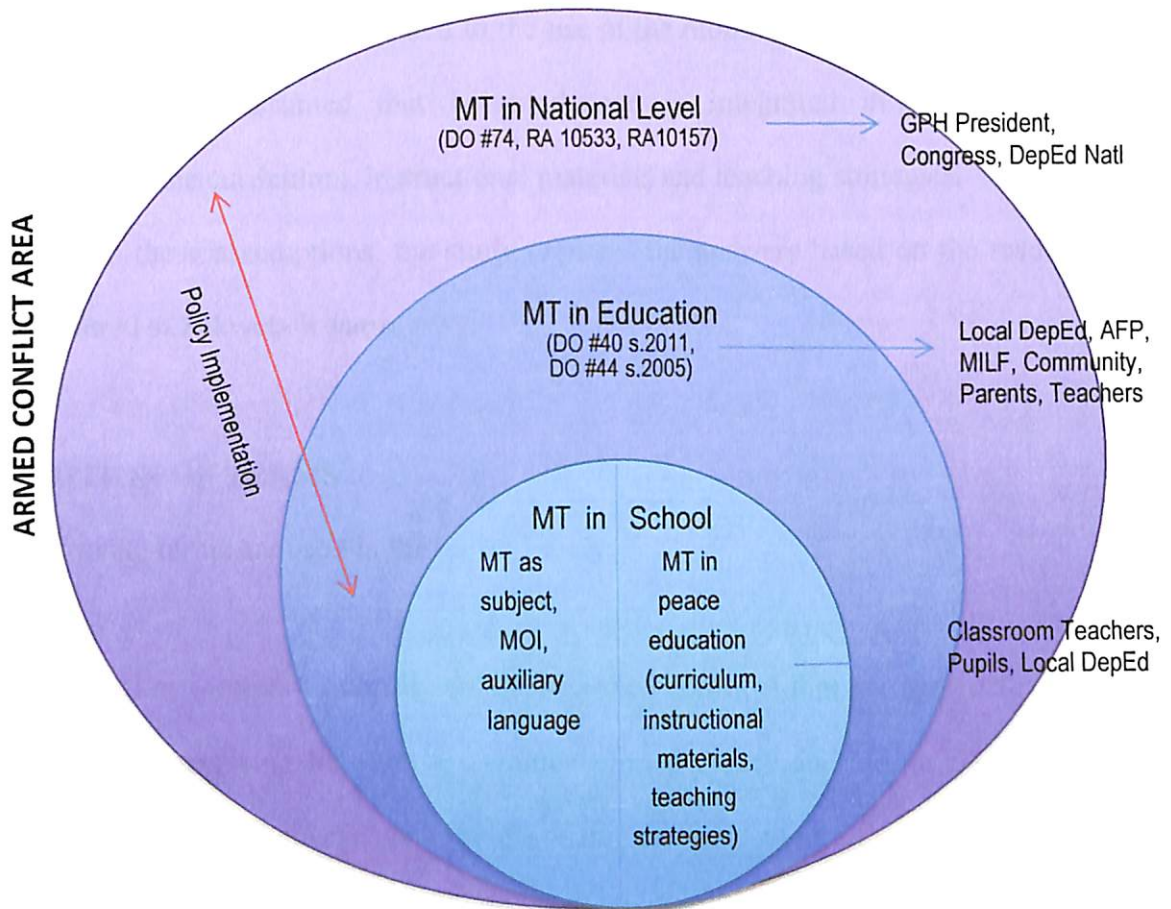


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework on MTB-MLE policy implementation using the “top-down” and “bottom-up” approaches

ASSUMPTIONS

Several assumptions are made in relation to this case study. First, it is assumed that the MTB-MLE policy has been implemented in Eskwela Kwatro to replace the bilingual policy and that Maguindanaon, the mother tongue of Maguindanao is offered as a Mother Tongue subject. Second, it is assumed that Maguindanaon is used as a medium of instruction in the different subjects like Math and Araling Panlipunan. Third, it is assumed that Maguindanaon is used as an auxiliary language in teaching and learning.

Another assumption is related to the use of the mother tongue in peace education. Specifically, it is assumed that Maguindanaon is integrated in peace education particularly in the curriculum, instructional materials and teaching strategies.

With these assumptions, the study explores the answers based on the results and data gathered at Eskwela Kwatro.

DEFINITION OF TERMS

The following terms are used in the current study:

Armed conflict – refers to non-international armed conflicts that are *protracted armed confrontations* occurring between government armed forces and the forces of one or more armed groups, or between such groups arising on the territory of a State [party to the Geneva Conventions]. The armed confrontation must reach *a minimum level of intensity* and the parties involved in the conflict must show *a minimum of organisation* (UNESCO, 2007). In this study, armed groups refer to the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP), the Communist Party of the Philippines-New Peoples Army (CPP-NPA) and the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF), as well as its breakaway group, the Bangsamoro Islamic Liberation Fighters (BIFF) linked with the Southeast Asian terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah and the militant international Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS).

Auxiliary Language: one used for internal communication in a multilingual society (Brutt-Griffler, 2002). In this study, it refers to Maguindanaon as an auxiliary language to explain concepts in either English or Arabic to students in ALIVE classes.

Curriculum: In the simplest terms, 'curriculum' is a description of what, why and how students should learn. The curriculum is therefore not an end in itself. The objective of the curriculum is to provide learners with the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes to be successful in their lives (UNESCO IBE, 2011). For this study, it focuses on the MTB-MLE curriculum used by the Grades 1 - 3 teachers at the area of study but limited to the class timetable, textbooks, teacher's guides, daily lesson log, instructional materials and strategies used by teachers in using Maguindanaon.

Daily Lesson Log: It is an outline of the day's lesson and should contain the following entries:

- 1) **Lesson** as cited in the TG/TM reference materials with the page/s number;
- 2) **Learners' Material** used such as Activity Sheets, Modules, other materials with the page number reference;
- 3) **Remarks** indicating number of learners within mastery level; number of learners needing enrichment/refinement lessons; and
- 4) **Other activities** include the interventions given to the pupils/ students who did not master the lesson(s) in the previous day (DepEd, 2012). Teachers who have been in the service for more than two years, private school experience included, shall not be required to prepare detailed lesson plans (DLPs).

Hidden Curriculum: This term has various interpretations but in general it refers to unofficial norms, behaviors and values that students learn at school and which are not necessarily a product of conscious intention. The hidden curriculum acknowledges that schooling takes place in a broad social and cultural environment that has an influence on

learning. Increasingly referred to as 'school-related factors,' (UNESCO IBE, 2011). In this study's setting, the hidden curriculum is found in school practices, cultural beliefs, moral values and classroom discussions.

Instructional Materials: At the very least, they consist of the following: listening story, small books, big books, experience story, primer lessons, and lesson exemplars (RA 10157, 2011). For the present study, this refers to the big books, teacher-made resources, teacher guides, visual aids, and textbooks.

Integration of Mother Tongue (MT) in peace education: In this study, Maguindanaon which is the mother tongue of students, is used as medium of instruction in integrating peace education in different subjects like Math, Araling Panlipunan and ALIVE.

Learners: Grades 1-3 students of a pilot elementary school in Maguindanao who use Maguindanaon to scaffold learning in all subject areas.

Learning Environment: Classrooms and immediate surroundings in Maguindanao with adequate desks, chairs, textbooks, and other school materials. It also includes the home and other adjacent areas of the school that will ensure the health and security of the students (UNESCO, 2007). The learning environment of the students in this study is set

in an area of armed conflict and located in a fourth class municipality of Maguindanao with an annual income between three million to five million pesos (NSO Census, 2010).

Peace Education: The process of promoting the knowledge, skills, attitudes and values needed to bring about behavior changes that will enable children, youth and adults to prevent conflict and violence, both overt and structural; to resolve conflict peacefully; and to create the conditions conducive to peace, whether at an intrapersonal, interpersonal, intergroup, national or international level (UNICEF, 1999).

Teaching Strategies: The unique features of MTB-MLE which shall include, but not limited to the following: the two-track method strategies (storytelling and reading, listening, oral communication activities); interactive strategies; use of manipulative games; and experiential, small group discussions and total physical response (TPR) among others (RA 10157, 2011).

CHAPTER 3 METHODOLOGY

This chapter discusses the research design, sampling and locale of study, tools and data gathering methods of the study.

Research Design

The present study utilized the qualitative approach as it is flexible and the research design comes out based on the real world as the research moves on (Robson, 2011).

Moreover, the study made use of social constructionism in the analysis and interpretation of data considering the topic and respondents. According to Schwandt (2003), in social constructionism, concepts, models, and schemes are created to make sense of experience, and to test it continuously then later modify these constructions based on new experience where there are shared understandings, practices, and languages.

This particular study focused on how the MTB-MLE program was implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of using Maguindanaon as a subject, then as a medium of instruction in other learning areas, and also as an auxiliary language in specific subjects like English and ALIVE classes, where Arabic was the medium of instruction.

At the same time, it looked into how Maguindanaon was used in promoting peace education by integrating it in the curriculum, instructional materials, and teaching strategies.

In cases of educational reforms, social constructionism expects changes to occur within the institutions and with the direct participation of students, teachers, administrators, and the community. On the part of teachers, they become active researchers as well and bring about improvement in the teaching and learning instead of simply depending on experts' accounts and dispensing authoritative knowledge (Beyer & Apple in Gergen, n.d.).

For this particular study, the uses of Maguindanaon in the classrooms as a subject, medium of instruction and auxiliary language were observed. It was also an opportunity to observe the use of Maguindanaon in the learning environment such as in the class posters, decorations, and available instructional materials. During formal and informal talks with the teachers, school administrators, parents, and other stakeholders in the community, various approaches, strategies and sentiments in implementing the MTB-MLE program were noted. The discussions were used to check and validate what were seen during class observations and the interpretations were made.

As a qualitative research, the Instrumental Case Study Design was used "... to accomplish something other than understanding a particular situation. It provides insight into an issue or helps refine a theory" (Stake in Baxter & Jack, 2008: 149).

This design was deemed appropriate because the case is "often looked in depth, its contexts scrutinized, its ordinary activities detailed, and it helps the researcher pursue the external interest," (Stake in Baxter & Jack, 2008: 149).

The case study design also allowed the integration of the quantitative survey data generated from a survey questionnaire given to teachers to improve data credibility.

Locale and Sample of Study

Locale

The location of the case study was chosen based on the following criteria. First, the area must be considered by the Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) to have armed conflict as stated in the definition of terms. In this case, the presence of MILF and BIFF in the area and existence of violence involving local politicians, rebels, and government troops has reached a minimum level of intensity, thus, the locale met the first criterion. Second, the school included in the case study should have been implementing the MTB-MLE program since its inception, and third is that the major composition of the student population should be Muslims.

Although prior identification of the locale was done on April 2014, a change in school locale was made due to the risky and high level of armed conflict in the area, which compromised this researcher's safety and security.

A real-time assessment of the peace and order situation by the local AFP along with the researcher's personal assessment of the school and its population led to the identification of the new school for the case study.

Upon arrival in the area of study, a courtesy call on the Brigade Commander, whose camp was located in Tacurong, Sultan Kudarat was done. A request for clearance and possible assistance prior to entering the Maguindanao area was also made. An MNLF integree currently connected with the Brigade, along with three other soldiers, accompanied the researcher in locating a relatively safe school in Maguindanao, as the previous school was abandoned due to existing armed hostilities in the town.

The area chosen was a fourth class municipality with an average annual income between P3 million to P5 million pesos and is the new capital town of Maguindanao and hometown of the incumbent governor, whose wife, relatives, lawyers, and supporters, as well as journalists covering the planned filing of his candidacy, were allegedly massacred by their political rivals. After the 2010 elections, the former capital – Shariff Aguak was abandoned by the new administration. Thus, with a population of 38,106 and 4,955 households (NSO Census, 2010) the town became the new capital. However, the legislative building is located in Sultan Kudarat.

After complying with the first criterion, another school was selected. It was code-named Eskwela Kwatro.

After several inquiries on the location of a big primary public school, the researcher and guides were directed to Eskwela Kwatro. Upon arrival, the security escorts cleared the area prior to the researcher's disembarkation from the vehicle. An initial inquiry on the background of the school officials and community were gathered to ensure safety during the course of field study. The security escorts were briefed ahead of time that the case study was purely academic in nature and that the policies and guidelines stated in the DepEd Memo No. 221, s. 2013, "Guidelines on the Protection of Children during Armed Conflict," would be observed so as not to taint the objectivity and quality of the case study.

However, the researcher did agree that safety and security protocols by the escorts would be conducted during the study. This was to prevent any similar case of kidnapping and threat to life that involved a national TV crew who conducted an investigative report in an area controlled by a terrorist group, the Abu Sayyaf (Ressa, 2012).

Sample

The participants in the case study were the students, teachers, parents, school officials, local education officials, and a local high-ranking AFP officer in charge of the Maguindanao area.

Students

The student participants included in the study were from two Grade 1 classes, one class from Grade 2 and another class from Grade 3. The cohort size of each class ranged from 42 to 93 students. A total of four classes were observed and seven students from Grade 1 were randomly chosen by the teachers to participate in the Focus Group Discussion.

The school principal chose the Grade 1 classes, as he noted that the homeroom teacher of one of the Grade 1 classes served as the MTB-MLE Lead Teacher of the school. The other Grade 1 class observed was taught by a non-licensed teacher, who had 16 years of teaching experience. This was intended to have another perspective of MTB-MLE implementation. Two ALIVE classes in Grades 2 and 3 were chosen by the ALIVE teachers themselves. The choice of these classes would provide the study a wider perspective of MTB-MLE implementation since the Guidelines on the Implementation of the Refined Elementary Madrasah Curriculum of 2011 state that Arabic Language should be taught to students in order for them to gain functional literacy (Enclosure to DepEd Order No. 40, 2011: 9).

The guideline did not directly state the medium of instruction for Islamic Values Education, but the textbooks used by the *ustadz* were all in English and Arabic.

The *ustadz* explained that they used Maguindanaon in translating the English and Arabic texts.

Teachers

An invitation to join the Focus Group Discussion (FGD) was disseminated by the MTB-MLE Lead Teacher, who was earlier assigned by the school principal to help in the conduct of the study. Of the 24 teachers in Grades 1 to 3, ten teachers accepted the invitation with six from Grade 1, three from Grade 2 and one from Grade 3. All Grades 1 to 3 teachers were female.

Two male ALIVE teachers out of four were interviewed separately for the study. The school had a total of 37 teachers excluding the ALIVE teachers who handled 2,542 students from Grades 1 to 6.

Administrator

The school principal was a source of information on how the school has implemented the MTB-MLE program. As a former MNLF member, he always emphasized the importance of education and the need to improve programs. In order for this research to gather realistic and valuable information, he assigned the MTB-MLE Lead Teacher as translator and liaison, as she had undergone the most number of MTB-MLE trainings. The translator and liaison also assisted in inviting students, parents and teachers for the Focus Group Discussion (FGD).

Parents

Due to the random choice of the study locale and limited time for the study, parents who were included in the FGD were informed through verbal invitations. The MTB-MLE Lead Teacher who served as translator and liaison invited the parents.

Seven mothers volunteered to join after it was explained to them that a study on MTB-MLE was being conducted.

Key Informants

This sample was composed of the DepEd district supervisor and a local high-ranking AFP official. Two school officials of a nearby school who happened to visit Eskwela Kwatro during the interview schedule were included as they were possible sources of information that could help in the study. The interviewees offered their insights on the challenges of implementing MTB-MLE in their local schools and the benefits of using mother tongue not only in the learning of the students, but also to peace education.

At the beginning of all the FGDs, students, teachers and parents were informed that their participation was voluntary and they could decline to join. They were also free to leave if they felt uncomfortable during the whole process. Meanwhile, the teacher-translator explained to the students the nature of the study and were informed similarly of the voluntary nature of the activity.

Instruments

In conducting the research, tools and interview schedules for KIIs and FGD were used. Due to the absence of a similar study, tools were designed based on previous

studies on MTB-MLE implementation. The survey questionnaire was validated in another school located in an area of armed conflict.

The actual tools and interview schedules are included in the appendices. Analysis of data gathered is integrated in the discussion and analysis of the research questions and answers.

Classroom Observation Protocol

This tool (see Appendix A) is an open-ended observation protocol that focused on five areas: language usage by teachers and students, teachers and students' level of comfort, students' responsiveness, cultural relevance of instructional materials, and integration of peace education in the lesson. Notes on some relevant observations that were deemed important in the study were done. This tool was used during the class observations in Grades 1, 2 and 3 and it created a sense of purpose for observing instead of doing it aimlessly (Wragg & Wragg in Burton, 2013).

Teachers' Focus Group Discussion Protocol

This tool (see Appendix B) has four main questions that delved on the teachers' initial reactions at the beginning of the MTB-MLE implementation, immediate concerns with MTB-MLE, response to the MTB-MLE implementation in terms of teaching, problems and challenges encountered and how it was resolved, and the role of mother tongue in addressing the peace and order problem in the area. The tool was tested and validated with a group of eight teachers located at an area with high-intensity conflict last

April 2014. Changes were made on questions that needed improvement for clarity and understanding.

Parents' Focus Group Discussion Protocol

This tool (see Appendix C) has four main questions centering on the following: initial reactions toward MTB-MLE implementation, response and reaction of the child/children during the start of MTB-MLE implementation, perceived MTB-MLE advantages and disadvantages, and the role of the mother tongue in addressing the peace and order problem in the area. It was patterned similarly after the Teachers' Focus Group Discussion Protocol.

Students' Focus Group Discussion Protocol

This tool (see Appendix D) has four main questions that inquired into the feelings and perceptions of the student when the mother tongue is used in their lessons. It also asked about the people involved in their learning at home and their own understanding of peace and order.

Key Informants' Interview Protocol

This set (see Appendix E) is composed of seven questions about the interviewee's opinion on the MTB-MLE implementation and perceived advantages, disadvantages, challenges and solutions on MTB-MLE implementation. It also inquired about the role of mother tongue in integrating peace education into the curriculum and its effect on the peace and order situation of the area.

Criteria for Analysis of MTB-MLE Materials and Strategies

This tool (see Appendix F) based on readings about a sound MTB-MLE policy (UNESCO, 2007) was used to analyze the instructional materials in the classes observed. It has five components that focused on: use of mother tongue, other languages used in the material, localization of concept/topic, respect for local culture, promotion of peace education.

Survey Questionnaire

This tool (see Appendix G) contains questions related to the respondents' basic demographic characteristics, trainings attended and challenges encountered with MTB-MLE, and use of the mother tongue, Filipino and English in the school and the community. It also gathered information about the teachers' attitudes and understanding of the role of the mother tongue in attaining peace in Mindanao.

Data Collection and Analysis

This section presents the main data gathering activities for the current study. A chronological order is followed although there were scheduled activities that overlapped with each other. Information on how the data is analyzed is also included.

Class Observations

Class observations during Mother Tongue, Math, Filipino, Araling Panlipunan, and English subjects were conducted in one Grade 1 class. An observation during a Math class was conducted in another Grade 1 class. For the ALIVE subject, two separate

classes were observed in Grades 2 and 3. Table 1 presents the schedule of conducted class observations for selected classes.

The fieldwork was done on the second and third weeks of December 2014. The timetable of the teachers included in the study was followed during the classroom observations and interviews. However, there were some instances when a swap of schedule with another Grade 1 class was requested in order to observe the same subjects in the other class. The class was just adjacent to the other Grade 1 class observed most of the time. The same request was done for the ALIVE classes observed as the said subject was scheduled at the same time in the afternoon every day. The timetable of students from Grades 1 to 3 were similar, thus the request was necessary.

Table 1. Class Observations in Grades 1 to 3

Date	Time	Grade & Section	Subject
Dec. 10, 2014	7:40 – 8:30	Gr. 1A	Mother Tongue
	8:30 – 9:20		English
	10:05 – 10:45		Araling Panlipunan
	1:00 – 1:50		Mathematics
	1:50 – 2:40		Filipino
Dec. 11, 2014	7:40 – 8:30	Gr. 1A	Mother Tongue
	8:30 – 9:20		English
	10:05 – 10:45	Gr. 1A	Araling Panlipunan
	1:00 – 1:50		Math
	1:50 – 2:40		Filipino
	2:40 – 3:20		Gr. 1B
Dec. 14, 2014	7:40 – 8:30	Gr. 1A	Mother Tongue
	8:30 – 9:20		English
	1:00 – 1:50	Gr. 1A	Math
	1:50 – 2:40	Gr. 1B	Math
Dec. 15, 2014	10:05 – 10:45	Gr. 2A	ALIVE
	2:40 – 3:20	Gr. 3A	ALIVE

During the class observation, the researcher stayed at the back of the classroom. A research assistant took videos and pictures in order for the researcher to focus on the observation. Initially, students were conscious of the presence of the researcher but gradually paid full attention to the teacher. To help translate the Maguindanaon language, the teacher also served as translator to the researcher after the lesson although in most instances, the lesson discussion was understood as the teacher used a mix of Maguindanaon and Filipino.

To capture the real situation in the classrooms, the teachers involved in the class observation were informed ahead not to make any special preparation. Despite this information, it was observed in the following days of observation that some new instructional materials out of old election campaign materials and manila paper were prepared for the lessons. These were also shared with the adjacent Grade 1 class, whose class was observed during the Math subject.

Permission to take photos and videos was granted by the school principal and teachers so the media documentation could be reviewed later on during the analysis.

The open-ended observation protocol that focused on five areas: language usage by teachers and students, teachers and students' level of comfort, students' responsiveness, cultural relevance of instructional materials, and integration of peace education in the lesson were used to document the lessons. Post-conferences were done during breaktime, lunch time or during the convenient time of the teachers.

The data gathered were analyzed and classified by its corresponding area so they could be used in finding similar answers to the research question. The results of the class observations answered Research Question 1: How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area

of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as a subject, medium of instruction and auxiliary language. Data gathered from the class observation were also used to answer Research Question 2: How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum, instructional materials and teaching strategies.

Survey questionnaire

The survey questionnaire was administered to all 24 lower primary teachers through the help of the school-designated translator and liaison officer during the first day of the data gathering schedule. Sixteen of these questionnaires were answered and returned before the end of the fieldwork. The researcher went over some of the answers prior to conducting the FGD, to have an idea of the perceptions and opinions of the lower primary teachers.

In analyzing the answers to the survey questionnaire, a simple frequency count was done and tabulated in a table. Answers to open-ended questions were summarized and categorized to identify patterns and answers that responded to Research Question 1: How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as a subject and as a medium of instruction. Results of the survey questionnaire also answered Research Question 2: How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum.

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs)

Focus Group Discussions among teachers, parents and students were conducted for at least 20 to 40 minutes inside one of the Grade 1 classrooms during lunch break. A Focus Group Discussion Protocol, which consists of general questions and specific ones, were used. Each question had probing sub-questions related to the main questions in order to get a comprehensive answer from the FGD participants. The questions were also based on the survey questionnaires earlier field tested with the school principal and primary teachers at another central elementary school located in an armed conflict area.

The focus group discussion method was selected because it allows for discovery of a range of opinions over several groups. The FGD allows a more natural environment than that of an individual interview because participants are influencing and influenced by others (Krueger & Casey in Burton, 2013).

All data gathered during the FGDs were summarized and categorized according to the different protocol components. Similar patterns on the answers were identified to answer Research Question 1: How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as a subject and as a medium of instruction. Answers from the FGDs were also used to answer Research Question 2: How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum and in the instructional materials.

Key Informant Interviews

Key Informant Interviews (KII) were conducted using a KII protocol consisting of seven questions. The interview lasted from 30 minutes to almost one hour inside the

school premises; specifically, under a mango tree with a dilapidated metal swing located across the principal's and administration offices. The school buildings were mostly made of concrete materials with very old, rusty GI sheets. Some classrooms had leaking roofs and bats residing in the ceiling. The whole school did not have any electricity, thus the school principal preferred to conduct his business under the shade of the mango tree. Interviewees were the local education officials, military officials and other stakeholders as active contributors to peace and order. The interview of the principal and those of the local DepEd supervisor and other officials from a nearby school were conducted on different occasions when no class observations were scheduled.

For the local AFP official, this was done inside a military camp on a Saturday when there were no classes. A courtesy call was first done and a request for an interview was verbalized directly to the regiment commander. Although there were several military officers in the camp who could be interviewed, the highest official was chosen in observance of the military chain of command.

All data gathered during the KIIs were summarized and categorized according to the different protocol components. Similar patterns on the answers were identified to answer Research Question 1: How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as a subject, medium of instruction and auxiliary language. Data gathered from the class observation were also used to answer Research Question 2: How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum, instructional materials and teaching strategies.

Note that during the course of data gathering, the school-designated translator's task was limited to liaising with other teachers and inviting the parents and students. This researcher's familiarity with most of the languages spoken in the area and the participants' use of the Maguindanao variant of Tagalog and Ilonggo did not see any need for a translator.

Analysis of instructional materials

Analysis of documents such as textbooks, daily lesson logs, MTB-MLE materials and other references used by the teachers (ARMM) was done using a set of criteria developed specifically for this study (See Appendix F). These materials were developed and published by DepEd.

The instructional materials listed in Table 2 were analyzed based on their contents specifically on mother tongue, other languages, localization of concept/topic, respect of culture, and promotion of peace education. The school-designated translator helped in the analysis at the end of the day when she was done with her homeroom duties. The ALIVE instructional materials were analyzed with the two *ustadz* as these have Arabic contents. Most of the materials were then borrowed and brought home for further analysis during the third and fourth day of the visit which fell on Friday and Saturday, the weekend for Maguindanao. Islam followers worship on Fridays.

The school principal was also generous enough to give some copies of the textbooks and MTB-MLE references to the researcher such as the Mother Tongue and ALIVE books, so they could be analyzed even after the fieldwork.

As the class observations involved mostly the Grade 1 classes, many of the instructional materials analyzed were from this level. The teacher observed was only able to give Teaching Guides for the first two quarters, as these were the only instructional materials available for the level.

Results of the analysis were summarized and compared in order to identify the common contents found in the instructional materials. These results were used to answer the first question: How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as a subject. The same set of analysis of the instructional materials was also used to answer the second question: How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum and instructional materials.

Table 2. List of Instructional Materials Used by Teachers

Grade Level	Instructional Material
Grade 1	Maguindanaon Ortograpiya
	Pagadil sa Kagkategel: Lekat a Penggalbekan
	Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao Learner's Materials Units 1-2
	Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao Teaching Guide Qtr 1-2
	Mathematics Teaching Guide Qtr 1-2
	Filipino Teaching Guide Qtr 1-2
	Music Teaching Guide Qtr 1-2
Grade 2	Physical Education Qtr 1-2
	Islamic Values 2
Grade 3	Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: Kagamitan ng Mag-aaral Maguindanaon 2
	Arabic Language 3
	Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: Kagamitan ng Mag-aaral Maguindanaon 3

Research Procedure

In conducting the research, an archival research was first conducted and the tools were developed to gather data. During the fieldwork, data gathering began with the class observations and administration of the questionnaire which was immediately given to the teachers in order to give them ample time to answer the questions. The instruments were returned and read before the end of the fieldwork in order to verify the answers and use it during FGDs and KIIs. In between the class observations, Focus Group Discussions were conducted during lunch break. The Key Informant Interviews were conducted when there were also no class observations scheduled and there was no conflict with the FGD schedule.

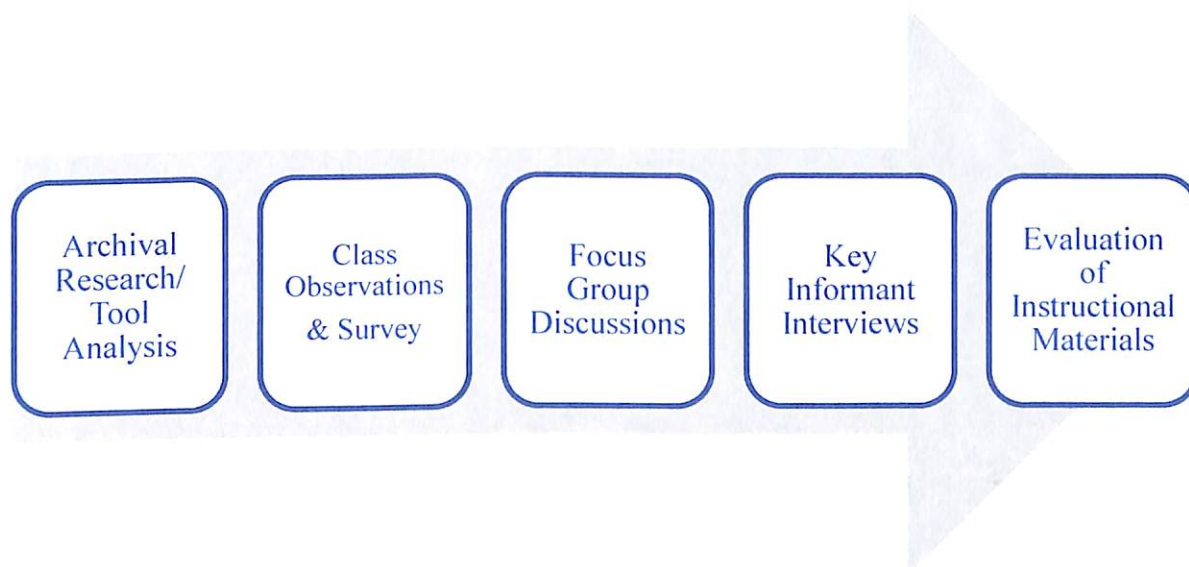


Figure 2. Procedure for Answering the Research Questions

It has to be noted that some of the research activities overlapped due to the limited time spent in the area. The safety and security and the Christmas vacation were also taken into consideration in the scheduling of the research activities.

Multiple data sources were gathered and triangulation was done during the analysis to uncover alignments and misalignments in the findings. In a case study, multiple data sources provide opportunities to understand the situation from various angles (Merriam & Stake in Burton, 2013).

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA

This chapter presents and discussed the gathered data. Organization is based on the research questions to allow readers to be active participants in the research, and in the process find out if the findings are applicable to their own situation (Jack & Baxter, 2008).

A background of the school chosen for the study is first presented followed by the presentation of each question and its corresponding answers. The research results are immediately analysed and interpreted based on social constructionism. A summary is given after the discussion of each sub-question to identify the key points derived from the results.

School Profile

The area of study was a public primary school code-named Eskwela Kwatro located in Maguindanao, which is part of the Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) and is currently lobbying for the establishment of the Bangsamoro. It has 2,542 students and 37 teachers. The smallest number of students in a class is 42, which is in Grade 1 while the biggest number is 93, which is in Grade 5. The breakdown of classes per grade level is as follows: Grade 1 = 12 sections; Grade 2 = 6 sections; Grade 3 = 6 sections; Grade 4 = 6 sections; Grade 5 = 4 sections; and Grade 6 = 4 sections.

According to the school principal, more than 95% of the school population are Muslims, thus classes are conducted from Sundays to Thursdays. Friday is a day of worship in Islam, thus there are no classes until Saturday.

It was gathered during key informant interviews (KIIs) that the large number of students in Grade 1 is due to student repeaters, former dropouts, and new students coming from different barangays. The school principal explained they are not allowed to refuse any student to enroll, thus the number of students swell every year. Students dropping out by Grade 2 also contributed to the lower number of students in the succeeding grade levels. This fourth class municipality had over 6,000 primary students and almost half were enrolled at Eskwela Kwatro in the school year 2014-2015.

It was also noted that student attendance was higher in the morning as almost half of the students did not return for their afternoon classes specifically those in the lower primary levels. The number of student attendees was also lower on Sundays unlike on Mondays to Thursdays. Friday and Saturday are the weekends in Maguindanao with majority of the population practicing Islam.

The teachers explained that the students had to be dismissed at 10:45am so they could go home for lunch; however, many students would not return for the afternoon session, which would end at 4:00pm. They found the weather hot and the walk back to school tiring. It should be noted though that some students might be afraid to come back in the afternoon, as the area was considered unsafe for travelers after 4:00pm. Students live as far as more than a kilometer from the school and walking the distance proved to be tiring and possibly dangerous for some students especially the younger ones. Local stories and radio news reported that armed confrontations between the government and rebel groups could happen anytime in the nearby rice fields and coconut plantations.

“Kelangan natin sabihin sa mga estudyante na bumalik sa hapon. Karamihan kasi sa kanila inaantok at pagod. Inuumpisahan namin ang klase ng kanta at kwento

para magising lang sila,” explained a Grade 1 teacher. (We have to encourage students to come back in the afternoon. Many of them are sleepy and tired. We start the classes with songs and stories to keep them awake.)

The school had no electricity and teachers devised their own strategies to keep lessons interesting inside the crowded, hot and dilapidated classrooms.

During the study, 24 lower primary teachers were identified to take part in answering the survey questionnaire. Some 16 teachers returned the questionnaires before the end of the study.

Out of 16 respondents, 12 were Maguindanaoan, three were Ilocano and one was Ilonggo.

All respondents, except one considered Maguindanaon as their mother tongue. As the respondents were allowed to check more than one mother tongue due to the linguistic landscape and presence of inter-ethnic marriages in Maguindanao and its adjacent provinces, nine of them also listed Tagalog as their mother tongue, two indicated Ilonggo, two Ilocano, and one Bisaya. The answers of five teachers who considered English as their mother tongue were invalidated. The teachers could have chosen English as their mother tongue based on their understanding that knowledge of English is a basis to consider it as a mother tongue. Their answers were not included in the tabulation of answers.

On the use of the mother tongue in different places, Maguindanaon topped the list, as it was most often used in the school, the marketplace, the home, the neighborhood, and in various religious places. This was closely followed by Filipino, which was commonly used in school, in their neighborhood, then the marketplace, at home, and in

various religious places. English was the third language commonly used. Other languages such as Ilonggo, Ilocano, and Bisaya were less commonly used.

Table 3. Most common languages used by teachers at home, school, marketplace, neighborhood, and religious places

Language	Frequency
Maguindanaon	15
Filipino	9
English	5
Ilonggo	2
Ilocano	2
Bisaya	1

With the given profile of the school and information on teachers, the succeeding paragraphs will discuss the results, analysis, interpretation, and summary of the main points. The sub-questions are used as guides in organizing the flow of discussion based on the class observations, survey questionnaire, key informant interviews, and FGDs.

Research Questions and Answers

Research Question 1: How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as:

a. subject

Maguindanaon was taught as a mother tongue subject to Grades 1-3 students in Eskwela Kwatro. The school has practiced this since 2012 during the first year of MTB-MLE implementation.

During the series of class observations in one Grade 1 class, the teacher discussed the Maguindanaon Alphabet, “Manga Batang sa Magindanawn.” It consists of 17 letters with four (4) vowels and 13 consonants. Figure 3 shows some of the Maguindanaon letters.



Figure 3. Some Maguindanaon Alphabet letters and their corresponding examples

The Mother Tongue teacher taught Letters “Ll and Pp” using Maguindanaon, but switched to Filipino language most of the time when emphasizing a specific term.

The students did not show any apparent confusion when the teacher switched from one language to the other. She introduced her lesson by first tapping the students’ prior knowledge.

“*Sa batang nga Ll. Anong halimbawa?*” asked the teacher. (What example starts with Ll?)

“*Lansuk, ma'am,*” replied one student.

“*Tama. Lansuk o kandila sa Filipino at candle sa English,*” the teacher explained. (Correct. It is *lansuk* in Maguidanaon and *kandila* in Filipino. It is candle in English.)

During a post-observation discussion, she said that using Filipino was natural for her as this was the previous set-up in the school before the MTB-MLE implementation. This teaching approach develops the meta-linguistic skills of the students as they simultaneously learn concepts in two languages.

Based on the data gathered during the class observation, the use of mother tongue as a subject was observed in the contextualization of lessons in the local setting; however, teachers expressed their difficulty in preparing lessons in Maguidanaon. It was observed that teachers still often used Filipino language even during the Mother Tongue subject. Teachers and school administrators admitted that there are not enough instructional materials written in Maguidanaon as well as the lack of local consultation in the preparation and making of these materials.

Contextualization of lesson to local setting

In one of her lessons, the teacher introduced the topic by first identifying students whose name started with letter “L.” Some students identified “*Lani Bai*” and “*Luisa Bai.*” (Bai is a respectful way to refer to a Muslim girl or woman.) She proceeded by asking students to name objects that they see that begin with the same letter being discussed in class. Then she continued with the target vocabulary words in

Maguindanaon. Students took turns in illustrating the vocabulary word on the board. While a student was making the drawing, the teacher introduced the Filipino equivalent of the word. Students were then asked to repeat the Maguindanaon word and then the Filipino word.

"Lamesan, ma'am," volunteered one student who drew it on the board.

"Tama, lamesan o lamesa sa Filipino." (Lamesan refers to table in English.)

"Ano pa? Yung nasa likod naman," encouraged the teacher. (What else? How about those at the back.)

"Ako, ma'am. Lampay," answered a smiling boy.

"Tama yan. Lampay o tinatawag na plato," replied the teacher. (That is correct. *lampay* or what we call plate.)

After the students had finished with the boardwork, the teacher instructed the students to read the Maguindanaon words – *lansuk, lima, lamesan, lampay, lata, lollipop* (candle, five, table, plate, can, lollipop). The last word is a borrowed English word.

To expand the vocabulary of students based on the words given, the teacher modeled the pronunciation of words in Filipino language and then asked them to repeat.

In other Mother Tongue lessons that the same Homeroom teacher prepared, she also communicated with the students in Maguindanaon and Filipino. Students always eagerly participated in this subject in contrast to their participation in other classes. They recited confidently even if their answers were sometimes wrong. During the lesson, students interacted happily with the teacher. All of them spoke in Maguindanaon for the whole duration of the class. Although the teacher spontaneously spoke in Maguindanaon, it was observed that after each vocabulary word, the teacher mentioned the Filipino

equivalent of the word. An example was the Maguindanaon word *pat*, which the students easily guessed when she raised four fingers.

“*Apat*,” chorused the students. (*Apat* is four in English.)

As shown in Figure 4, the teacher used an old election campaign material to present the vocabulary words for letter “P.” These were *palitan*, *pan*, *pito*, *pat*, *pantalon*, *payong*, *pusong*, *Pablo*, *pagalungan*, and *pinsil*. When I inquired about the last word – *pinsil* seemed to be English, she said that it was in their Maguindanaon list of vocabulary words. No other reasons were given. When the Maguindanaon orthography was checked, the Maguindanaon term for pencil was either *pinsil* or *pansum*. *Pinsil* is an English borrowed word with Filipino spelling.



Figure 4. Teaching Maguindanaon Alphabet – Letter Pp

Teachers' difficulty in preparing Maguindanaon lessons

After using the bilingual policy for at least one to two decades, teachers admitted their difficulty in implementing the new language policy. This was shared by the teachers

during the FGD and echoed by the two Mother Tongue teachers whose classes were also observed.

One of the Mother Tongue teachers admitted that she still prepared a lot for the Mother Tongue (Maguindanaon) subject because of some unfamiliar words. Without a dictionary, she usually consulted the principal or older teachers. There were several instances when she had to ask some help from her father-in-law, a local DepEd official, she said.

“Nasanay na kasi kami ma'am na Filipino ang gamit namin. Tapos ngayon nag-adjust kami talaga,” the teacher admitted. (We got used to using Filipino and now we are really adjusting.)

Other teachers also echoed this sentiment during their FGD, but the most vocal in expressing their difficulty in handling the Mother Tongue subject were the Christians. Of the 13 female teachers who showed up for the discussion, three were Christians who used Maguindanaon, Ilonggo and Ilocano at home, school and marketplace. For these non-Muslim teachers, the MTB-MLE implementation was a daunting task even if they had served as primary teachers for more than 20 years. They had to adjust with the new policy and learn new teaching strategies in order to implement this program.

“Para sa akin, nahirapan talaga ako kasi I am a Christian. For almost 29 years na nag-service ako, I am using Filipino sa mga bata. Nung time na inimplement na yung mother tongue, talagang nahirapan ako gamitin (sa pagturo),” an Ilonggo teacher shared despite the fact that she also speaks the language having lived with the Muslims for most of her life. (For me, I find it difficult because I am a Christian. I have served for almost 29 years and I used Filipino in teaching the students.

By the time the mother tongue was implemented, I found it difficult to use for teaching.)

The Maguindanaoan teachers also agreed that they themselves consider it a daily challenge to teach Maguindanaon as a subject. They felt that Filipino was easier as they got used to it. They admitted that they had been comfortable with the old system and that after many years of using the bilingual program, they had to adjust again because of the MTB-MLE program.

“Noong first na binabasa ko yung aklat nasa tabi ko yung asawa ko kasi may mga words doon na mahirap kasi lumaki ako sa Christian area. Malalalim na Maguindanaon ang nasa aklat at hindi ko maintindihan,” shared another Muslim teacher. She explained that she depended a lot on her spouse, who was much older in age, to translate the difficult Maguindanaon words. (When I first read the book, my spouse was beside me because there were difficult words I could not understand having grown in a Christian area. The Maguindanaon words used in the books were too difficult and I could not understand them.)

In a separate Focus Group Discussion (FGD) with some lower primary teachers, they expressed their own difficulties in teaching their own native language after using Filipino and English for at least 10 years. All 11 FGD participants of the 24 lower primary teachers openly expressed their difficulty in teaching Maguindanaon as a subject. Sentiments varied from first being proud that their own language had been included in the curriculum, yet frustrated at times when they themselves were grappling with the meanings of the words.

“Yung ginagamit na salita sa books kahit kaming mga guro nahihirapan kasi malalim na words ang gamit nila (authors). Nung wala pa ang mother tongue nakakaintindi rin yung mga bata kasi language natin (yang) Filipino, so okay lang na kahit walang mother tongue,” a Grade 1 teacher said. (The words used in the books are difficult even for us teachers because they (authors) used uncommon words. Even when there was no mother tongue before, students could still understand in Filipino because that is also their language.)

Other teachers admitted they seek help from each other specifically in understanding the Maguindanaon words used in the book. They also ask the help of older family members who are more familiar with Maguindanaon words that are no longer commonly used in their daily lives.

“Kahit ako ma’am na lead teacher ng MTB-MLE, humihingi din ako ng tulong sa father-in-law ko na DepEd supervisor kasi mas alam man nya ang ibig sabihin ng mga malalim na Maguindanaon na salita,” said the school appointed translator-liaison. (Even if I am the lead teacher for MTB-MLE, I ask the help of my father-in-law who is a DepEd supervisor because he knows the difficult Maguindanaon words.)

These difficulties in implementing the MTB-MLE were earlier identified by Nolasco (2008), who said that a mother tongue policy is not enough. What are needed are good curriculum, competent teachers in the required language, and community support as expressed by the teachers in the FGD, the last two suggested requirements are lacking.

Use of Filipino in teaching Mother Tongue subject

To find out further how often teachers used the different languages in the area in their Mother Tongue subject, the results of the survey were tabulated as shown in Table 4. The same data show the frequency of using these other languages in other subject areas.

The statement on “languages often used to teach the lessons” drew interesting answers as 13 of the respondents listed Filipino language first, then English (12 of 16) and Maguindanaon (11 of 16) though it was identified as the mother tongue in the area. This shows that teachers have gotten used to the bilingual policy of using Filipino and English as media of instruction. This was admitted by the teachers during the FGD.

Table 4. Languages and frequency of use in Mother Tongue class and other subjects like Math, English, Araling Panlipunan, and ALIVE

Language	Frequency
Filipino	13
English	12
Maguindanaon	11
Ilonggo	1
Ilocano	1
Bisaya	1

Using these survey results, the perceptions and feelings of the teachers during the FGDs and informal interviews after the day’s lessons were further explored as they talked about the challenges and areas to improve on in implementing MTB-MLE. Mixed

feelings were prevalent among the lower primary teachers, as they expressed their difficulty with the new policy. Yet, they expressed their willingness to learn provided there would be continuous and comprehensive support from the Regional DepEd Office.

“Para sa amin na teachers, kailangan ng sipag at tiyaga talaga,” a Grade 1 teacher said. (For us teachers, we just need to be diligent and determined.)

“Nahihirapan lang naman kami, Ma’am kasi wala kaming guide. Yan talaga ang problema namin,” expressed another teacher. (We only had difficulty because we had no guide. That is our main problem.)

Due to the lack of lesson guides, the teacher observed said that Daily Lesson Logs were not regularly done. She said they only received the 1st and 2nd Quarter Curriculum Guides, such that they had to rely on the textbooks given to them for their daily lessons. However, she was quick to explain that these lesson logs would be completed prior to the visit and inspection of the Regional DepEd official.

The frustrations on teaching Maguindanaon as a mother tongue subject and using it as medium of instruction were expressed by the FGD participants. The teachers explained that for many years they had been used to explaining lessons in Filipino mixed with Maguindanaon.

“Nabudlayan gid ako sa pagtudlo. Kung pwede ibalhin na lang ako sa iban nga grade,” expressed one Christian teacher. (I find it very difficult already. If possible, I prefer to be transferred to another grade level.)

Based on the results of the survey and the FGD, the teachers expressed more confidence and ease in using Filipino rather than Maguindanaon language.

Lack of materials in Maguindanaon

Another key observation during the study was the lack of materials in Maguindanaon for the Mother Tongue subject and for other subjects.

According to the school principal of Eskwela Kwatro, he supported the teaching of Maguindanaon; however, he pointed out the need for a dictionary to be used as a reference material by the teachers in finding the word meaning of extremely difficult words not commonly used anymore. He also hoped that there would be more trainings given to their teachers to make them more confident and effective in class as they felt that previous trainings were not comprehensive enough to make them fully understand how to implement the MTB-MLE.

Compounding the problem was the lack of curriculum guide in some subjects like Mother Tongue, Math, English, and Araling Panlipunan for that second semester. All Grade 1 teachers complained that unlike the Grades 2 and 3 teachers, they did not have teachers guides for all the subjects and that the Maguindanaon references were incomplete and the number of mother tongue textbooks was not enough for the students.

Aside from the lack of teaching materials, there were also inconsistencies noted in the learning materials provided by DepEd. Some teachers expressed their concern that the guide given to them during their MTB-MLE seminar did not match the textbooks to be used by the teachers.

This inconsistency in the learning material and guide was noted in one of the class observations. The Mother Tongue teacher had to change her lesson from letter “O” to “P” because the textbook provided had letter “O” but the Maguindanaon alphabet has none. The Maguindanaon alphabet posted on the classroom wall had no letter “O”.

“Mga bata, pag-aralan natin ang batang nga ‘O.’ O sige hanapin daw,” the teacher pointed to a wall with alphabet as she started the lesson. (Children, we will learn the letter “O”. Please look for it.)

“Wala ma’am,” shouted the students. (There is none, ma’am.)

The teacher had to check herself and then apologetically explained to the students and to me that there was a discrepancy in the book she was using and the Maguindanaon alphabet.

“Nagkataon meron sa libro pero sa aming alpabeto wala namang letter ‘O,’” the teacher explained. (It just happened that in our (teacher’s) book, there is but in our alphabet there is no letter “O.”)

It could be noted that either the teacher lacked mastery of the Maguindanaon alphabet despite being a Maguindanaoan or there was lack of preparation for the lessons. At any rate, the most telling observation is that the textbook provided was erroneous.

Lack of local consultation in Instructional Material (IM) Development

Aside from the insufficient supply of instructional materials, the lack of local consultation among school officials, parents, elders, and other stakeholders added to the challenges in implementing MTB-MLE.

The school principal pointed out that the contents of some of their books for Mother Tongue subject and other subjects had Meranao words, which are different from the Maguindanao language.

“Dapat magkuha sila ng Maguindanaoan talaga sa paggawa ng libro kasi ibaman ang Meranao na language sa Maguindanaon,” the school principal said. (They

should get a Maguindanaoan to help make the book because Meranao language is different from Maguindanaon.)

The DepEd superintendent of Buluan District also pointed out that minimal consultation happened in the development of the teaching materials for the Mother Tongue subject and other subjects to be taught in Maguindanaon.

“Noong nagkaroon ng aklat, nagpadala sila nang gumawa ng aklat pero hindi kami kasama. Yung iba Meranao, eh nahahalo yung salita nang Meranao sa Magindanaon which is hindi rin namin alam kung ano pala ito,” the local education official said. (When the books were written, they sent someone but we were not included. Some were Meranao and there are Meranao words that were mixed in Maguindanaon that we do not know.)

This lack of local consultation by the national and regional education office was also identified by Burton (2013) as a problem in MTB-MLE implementation. The case study notes that the DepEd national office should consider the perspectives of teachers and parents in the community.

Moreover, problems on mixing different varieties of a local language in the instructional materials were identified by Fillmore (2014) when learning materials from Cebu were used in Cebuano-speaking areas in Mindanao.

It was found that Cebuano instructional materials were not all contextualized in Mindanao due to the variations of Cebuano in Cebu and Mindanao.

In Maguindanao, the issue of confusion and frustration on the learning materials was resolved by the school through peer consultation and knowledge sharing.

If the Muslim teachers admitted their difficulty in using their mother tongue as a subject and medium of instruction, the burden was more so for Christian teachers who had been using Filipino and English in their classes.

“Sa kadugayon nga 3 years nga gin-implement ang Mother Tongue (policy), nabudlayan gid ako kay 29 years na ako sa service mas maayo pa itudlo ang Filipino kag English sa ila (estudyante) kay ang iban nga mga words nga indi ko gid maintindihan, may mga hindi common nga words sa Maguindanao kag naga pamangkot na lang ako,” an Ilonggo teacher shared with the group. (During the three-year implementation of Mother Tongue policy, I experienced a lot of difficulties because I have been in service for 29 years and I find it easier to teach in Filipino and English to the students because there are a lot of Maguindanaon words that I cannot understand. There are unfamiliar Maguindanaon words so I have to ask others for the meaning.) She added that she was like a student herself as she sometimes ended up asking the meaning of unfamiliar Maguindanaon words from her students.

During separate interviews, the DepEd Division Superintendent, the school principal and other head teachers presented their plan of reshuffling the teachers in academic year 2014-2015, but decided to postpone it to the next academic year in order to give teachers ample time to prepare. Only Muslim teachers would be assigned to teach in the lower primary and non-Muslims in the higher primary level.

When this reshuffling was raised during one of the trainings given by the Regional Office, the teachers were encouraged to take the challenges positively and to find a way to equip themselves so they could implement the Mother Tongue policy. Yet for the teachers and local school officials, it is more difficult to encourage Christian

teachers to teach a language that is not their own mother tongue considering their age and the number of years in service. They would rather reshuffle the Muslim and Christian teachers' assignments instead of causing more confusion and frustration during the early stages of the program.

Although the teachers, school officials and parents admitted the positive effect of the use of their mother tongue in nurturing their language and culture, many of the teachers in the FGD expressed their apprehension on the benefits of using Maguindanaon in their classes. They identified the lack of teachers, lack of curriculum guides and teaching materials as the main factors that could affect the success level of the Mother Tongue policy.

Majority of the FGD participants believed that the Mother Tongue policy is not relevant, as graduates and professionals were produced even with the old language policy.

Summary. The teachers observed during the Mother Tongue subject used Maguindanaon in discussing the lesson. However, teachers also used other languages in the Mother Tongue subject and other subjects especially the Christian teachers, who are non-native speakers of Maguindanaon. It was apparent that teachers worked hard in implementing the MTB-MLE policy, but their familiarity and ease in using the bilingual policy for over a long period of time made them resort to switching and transcoding to the Filipino language even during the mother tongue subject. The lack of curriculum guides, instructional materials and trainings were among the challenges encountered by the lower primary teachers handling the Mother Tongue subjects. These findings

demonstrate how teachers have to adjust everytime there are new policies implemented by the national level. In this case, they have to study and learn again how to implement the MTB-MLE policy in an area of armed conflict.

b. medium of instruction

Information gathered during the classroom observations, FGDs and KIIs show that Maguindanaon was used as medium of instruction in Math, Araling Panlipunan, and in ALIVE subject as students could not understand Arabic.

The two Grade 1 teachers observed in the Math and Araling Panlipunan classes used Maguindanaon from motivation to introduction of topic, during discussion, and during assessment.

Results of the survey questionnaire also show the teachers' perceived ability to use Maguindanaon, Filipino and English in teaching and explaining lessons in various subjects including the Mother Tongue subject. Results are shown in Table 5.

Table 5. Teachers' perceived ability to use English, Filipino and Maguindanaon as MOI

Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1. I can teach the lesson well in English.	8	7		1	
2. I can explain the lesson well in English.	8	6	2		
3. I can teach the lesson well in Filipino.	10	5	1		
4. I can explain the lesson well in Filipino.	10	5	1		
5. I can teach the lesson well in the MT.	7	5	2	2	
6. I can explain the lesson well in the MT.	7	4	4	1	

The table shows that more teachers admitted that they are capable of using Filipino when teaching and explaining their lessons. Ten teachers *strongly agreed* and

another five teachers *agreed* that they could teach and explain well in Filipino. Nobody *disagreed* about her ability to teach in the national language, although one teacher was *undecided*. These data further support the teachers' assertion that they had been used to the bilingual policy implementation. Moreover, it should be noted that these teachers were graduates of TEIs whose curricula included teaching and using English and Filipino as media of instruction. The teachers' responses to Statements 1, 2, 3 and 4 are also a reflection of this academic preparation.

Eight teachers *strongly agreed* and seven *agreed* with the statement, "I can teach the lesson well in English." Only one *disagreed*. In terms of the ability to explain well in the foreign language, eight *strongly agreed* and six *agreed* with two *undecided*. During the FGD, teachers also said they had been used to the bilingual program which had been implemented for years.

Moreover, the feelings of teachers in using Maguindanaon during their class are also shown in Table 6 as gathered from the survey results.

Table 6. Teachers' feelings toward the use of Maguindanaon in school

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
7. I feel confident when I use the MT in the classroom.	6	6	3	1	
8. I feel safe and secure in school when I talk using the MT.	6	5	4	1	
9. I feel proud when I teach using the MT.	7	5	3	1	
10. I believe that using the MT will help students understand the lessons more.	10	2	4		

The table shows that 12 out of 16 teachers are confident in using it in class. They also feel safe and secure in school aside from being proud that Maguindanaon is used as one of the media of instruction. Moreover, 12 out of 16 teachers also believed that students gain better understanding of the lesson when they teach using Maguindanaon.

These responses are another strong argument among Maguindanaoans that as peoples they are proud of their language and culture, and perhaps, given the chance would want their mother tongue to be used extensively in teaching.

However, it was observed that aside from using Maguindanaon as medium of instruction, Filipino was also used throughout the lesson.

This was clear from how the teacher motivated the class through Total Physical Response (TPR) along with the singing of a song in their mother tongue. The mother tongue version, which is in Maguindanaon, was followed by the Filipino version. As shown in the lyrics here, students sang both versions during their class.

Title: Ako ay May Lobo

Maguindanaon:

Aden sakembot ku, limedtu sa langit

Di ko den gailay, membetu den besen

Sayang su kulta, pinamasa sa sakambut

Filipino:

Ako ay may lobo, lumipad sa langit

Di ko na makita, pumutok na pala

Sayang ang pera ko, binili ng lobo

When the students sang the song, it was noticed that students sang the Filipino version fluently and confidently. When asked about this observation, both teachers

pointed out that prior to attending Grade 1, students were already familiar with the Filipino version at home, as this had been used over the years. Older siblings and parents themselves taught the Filipino version, the teachers added.

Use of Filipino as MOI

During the formal discussion of the lesson, the teacher often mixed Maguindanaon with Filipino and students were allowed to answer in either of the two languages.

At the FGD, teachers admitted that although they were native speakers of Maguindanaon, they were more confident in using Filipino when teaching the students because they had spent at least a decade or two implementing the bilingual program. Thus, it is hardly surprising that in the classroom, students could switch between Maguindanaon and Filipino, as the teacher continuously explained and raised questions every now and then.

However, the class concluded with a short summary of what had been taught using Filipino.

“*Ano ang natutunan nyo?*” asked the teacher at the end of the lesson. (What have you learned?)

“*Wag kunin pag hindi sa 'yo ang bagay, ma'am,*” answered one student. (Don't get any belonging that is not yours, ma'am.)

“*Tama. Ang batang Muslim ay mabait. Naintindihan nyo?*” the teacher said. (Correct. A Muslim child is good. Do you understand?)

In the Grade 1 Math class, the teachers also used some songs or a story to motivate the students. One teacher used a big book written in Maguindanaon to encourage students to listen and stay awake. Every now and then, she code switched to Filipino to ask some questions related to the story, after which, she would localize it to the situation and environment of the students for better comprehension.



Figure 5. Math lessons with a big book

“San ang mga bata naglalakad?” asked the teacher. (Where are the students walking?)

“Sa may palayan, ma’am,” students replied. (In the rice field, ma’am.)

“Tama. Parang dito din sa atin. Presko ang hangin at may mga hayop. Ano ang nakikita nyo na prutas?” the teacher continued. (Right. It’s similar to our place. The air is fresh and there are animals. What fruit do you see?)

“Kapaya, ma’am,” the students chorused.

“Kapaya o papaya. May mga bunga. Bilangin natin... isa, duwa, telu, pat, lime,

nem. Marami 'to," she said. (Kapaya o papaya. There are fruits. Let us count them...one, two, three, four, five, six. There are a lot.)

In another Grade 1 Math class observed, the other teacher developed a story based on the drawing illustrated on manila paper. With the use of Filipino language, she encouraged students to guess and develop the story along with her.

"Isang araw may pamilya ng mga pato ang pumunta sa may sapa. Ilang pato ang nakikita nyo?" the teacher asked. (One day, there was a family of ducks that went to the stream. How many ducks do you see?)

Students raised their hands and answered the teacher. She continued to tell the story while occasionally raising some questions to the students in Filipino and a mix of some Maguindanaon words.

The teacher also used Maguindanaon and Filipino in explaining the lessons in all the other Grade 1 subjects. It was noted though that the two teachers observed often used English mathematical terms like *add, addend, sum, subtract, minuend, subtrahend, and difference*, aside from Maguindanaon and Filipino.

"Ano ang tawag kung magdagdag ka ng numero?" asked the teacher. (What is the term used for adding numbers?)

"Ma'am, addition," one girl answered correctly.

"Kung ang sampu bawasan ko ng lima, ilan ang natira? Ano ang tawag dito?" the teacher asked. (If you subtract five from ten, how many is left? What do you call this?)

"Subtraction, ma'am," answered most children.

For the first Math teacher, she encouraged students to use a plastic drinking straw

when they added or subtracted. This made the students count and give answers faster. Realia was used in this case. It would have been better though if the teacher used the objects in the classroom like books, chairs, tables, or pencils.

Use of English as auxiliary language

Both teachers also asked their students to count off in English, to which the students did fluently and spontaneously without the guidance of the teachers compared to counting in Maguindanaon. They later explained during a post observation interview that students could recite the numbers in English faster due to their familiarity with it. They also admitted that they are still used to the bilingual policy of using English in mathematics.

The Maguindanaon version of numbers one to twenty (1-20) was counted off slowly by the students - *isa, duwa, telu, pat, lima, nem, pitu, walu, siyaw, sapulu, sapulu endu isa, sapulu endu duwa, sapulu endu telu, sapulu endu pat, sapulu endu lima, sapulu endu nem, sapulu endu pitu, sapulu endu walu, sapulu endu siyaw, duwa pulu.*

It is possible that the students had more ease in using English as the Maguindanaon math terms contain more words and syllables unlike English, which has numbers in one or two syllables. As a result, students recited the English numbers from one to twenty quickly and loudly.

Both teachers said they encouraged students to be familiar with numbers in Maguindanaon, Filipino and English.

“Nasanay naman na kasi yan sila ma’am na magbilang sa English o Filipino kasi mas matagal man sa Maguindanaon,” one teacher explained. (They are used to counting

in English and Filipino because doing so in Maguindanaon takes some time.) She added that when going to the market, students are exposed to both Maguindanaon and Filipino as there were also other non-Maguindanaon speakers in the area.

According to the teachers during the FGD, using Maguindanaon as medium of instruction in teaching the other subjects was a challenge as well.

“Ang expectation kasi namin noon na sa Mother Tongue (subject) lang ang specific na Maguindanaon. Pero pagdating ng mga textbooks, lahat pala. English at Filipino (textbooks) lang ang hindi,” shared one teacher. (We expected that Maguindanaon will be used during the Mother Tongue subject only, but when the textbooks arrived, all are in Maguindanaon. Only English and Filipino subjects are not.)

Although seven teachers *strongly agreed* and five *agreed* out of 16 teachers that they were proud that Maguindanaon was integrated in the school curriculum, they did not deny the difficulty that they had faced for the past three years since the MTB-MLE was implemented.

Use of Maguindanaon as MOI in ALIVE classes

The difficulty of using Maguindanaon as a medium of instruction was non-existent; however, in ALIVE classes as teaching materials and textbooks used in Eskwela Kwatro were either in Arabic or English.

ALIVE teachers admitted that using Maguindanaon as a medium of instruction was beneficial to the students who were not fluent in either Arabic or English.

The *ustadz* shared that there are also other instances when Maguindanaon is more effective when teaching the lessons.

“Kahit yung mga sinusulat namin sa pisara na mga Arabic ay tina-transfer namin sa lengwahe namin. Hindi pwedeng direct na Arabic dahil mahihirapan sila,” explained another *ustad* in a separate interview. (We also translate the Arabic that we wrote on the board into our own language, otherwise they (students) would find it difficult.)

Seven parents with children in the lower primary years who were included in the FGD agreed that Maguindanaon should be used in teaching Arabic, but not as a medium of instruction for the other subjects like Math, Araling Panlipunan and Makabayan.

“Sana hindi na lang gamitin ang mother tongue kasi kahit sa bahay mother tongue at dito (school) mother tongue na naman. Parang ginagamit halos na sa lahat. Syempre pag magpunta ka kahit saan (like) Tacurong, Tagalog ang gamit...alam na ng mga bata yan (mother tongue) kahit hindi na tinuturo sa kanila,” lamented a mother whose children were in Grades 1, 3 and 4. (I wish mother tongue would not be used anymore because it is used at home and now here in school.

It’s almost used everywhere. Of course, if we go to Tacurong (about 15kms away), Tagalog is used. The children know that (mother tongue) already even if it is not taught to them.)

Another parent complained that students might get confused in spelling words, as Maguindanaon orthography is different from that of Filipino and English. She pointed out that many adults like parents have difficulty in explaining Maguindanaon terms to their children when they help with the homework or even in ordinary situations. They themselves grew up learning Filipino and English in school, while using Maguindanaon at home and in their community.

Most parents interviewed were strongly against the use of Maguindanaon as a medium of instruction and as a subject, but they suggested that teachers should use it instead in Arabic classes. They pointed out that Maguindanaon was used at home and in the community so that it was unnecessary to keep using the Maguindanaon language in school.

The school had four (4) *ustadz* (a male teacher teaching Arabic and Islam) and they taught for 40 minutes during the ALIVE (Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education) subject. At the time of the field work, the ALIVE program was offered only to the Grades 2 and 3 levels due to the limited number of teachers.



Figure 6. Parents discussing the use of Maguindanaon in ALIVE classes

Summary. Maguindanaon was used as medium of instruction in Math, Araling Panlipunan and ALIVE classes. However, results of the class observations, interviews

and FGDs reveal that teachers would still regularly switch to Filipino when lessons needed explanations. Students had also exhibited familiarity with the Filipino words compared to their mother tongue. Both teachers and students were at ease in switching between Maguindanao and Filipino. In some instances, teachers used the English terms in math while students were also at ease in using the English version of some math terms for counting and basic mathematical operations.

Despite the continued use of Filipino and English in subjects that should use the mother tongue as medium of instruction, both teachers and students had shown their willingness to follow the MTB-MLE language policy. Those who showed a strong resistance to the use of Maguindanao as medium of instruction were the parents. Their long-held view of the supremacy of English for their children to be competitive with other graduates was apparent. Although they admitted that they felt proud of the inclusion of Maguindanao in the school curriculum, they preferred to limit its use in ALIVE classes.

c. auxiliary language

The DepEd national office specified in its Implementing Guidelines for K-12 Basic Education Curriculum that the Filipino and English languages are the media of instruction for Filipino and English subjects respectively. The mother tongue of the students could then be used as auxiliary language.

In the case of Eskwela Kwatro, Maguindanao did not serve as an auxiliary language in English, Filipino and ALIVE classes because majority of the school population spoke and used Maguindanao language. Filipino was instead used as

auxiliary language in Math and Araling Panlipunan subjects especially in the presence of non-Maguindanaoans in class.

In the two Grade 1 English and Filipino classes observed, both teachers used Maguindanaon in explaining further the lesson on sentence construction using pictures as prompts. But the teachers admitted that they were comfortable in mixing Filipino and Maguindanaon in the two subjects as students themselves had inadequate vocabulary especially in English. Although they focused on oral fluency, they said it was impractical to completely use English or Filipino in their lessons as students were bound to get confused and inattentive.

In one of the Grade 1 Filipino class observed, the teacher occasionally explained the term in Maguindanaon. She discussed the Filipino vocabulary words: *buwaya*, *papaya*, *gaya*, *mapayapa*, *kabayo*, *soya* (crocodile, papaya, similar, peaceful, horse and soya) and asked questions regarding the words in Maguindanaon to check comprehension.

"Sino nakakita ng buwaya sa inyo? Ano ang buwaya sa Maguindanaon?" the teacher inquired. (Who has seen a crocodile? How do you say crocodile in Maguindanaon?)

For her first question, some students excitedly raised their hands while the boys boasted of seeing big crocodiles. For her second question, almost the whole class chorused.

"Buaya ma'am," the students answered loudly. The Maguindanaon term has a sound similar to its Filipino counterpart but is different in spelling only.

The teacher continued with other vocabulary words, which were mostly common to the students.

On the other hand, students were less confident during the oral exercises in English subject despite several repetitions and guidance from the teacher. Majority of the students were quiet and hesitant in raising their hands to recite. The teacher had to encourage most of the students to come in front of the class and say their own simple sentences based on the picture prompts handed out.

In one of the English classes observed, the teacher called at least two students to try the exercises before the other students took their turn to recite. To facilitate comprehension, the teacher translated to Maguindanaon the English instructions given earlier. When students did not respond to the teacher's question, she repeated it in both Maguindanaon and Filipino. Though the whole procedure was filmed, the texts were not transcribed the texts as the exchange between the teacher and the class was spontaneous and was unintelligible as recorded.

Figure 7 shows a shirtless boy attempting to construct his own English sentences after the teacher had explained the instructions in Maguindanaon. Note that the shirtless boy was using his hands to point at the picture while constructing his sentences. This was his way of remembering how to construct a short and simple sentence in English as taught by the teacher.

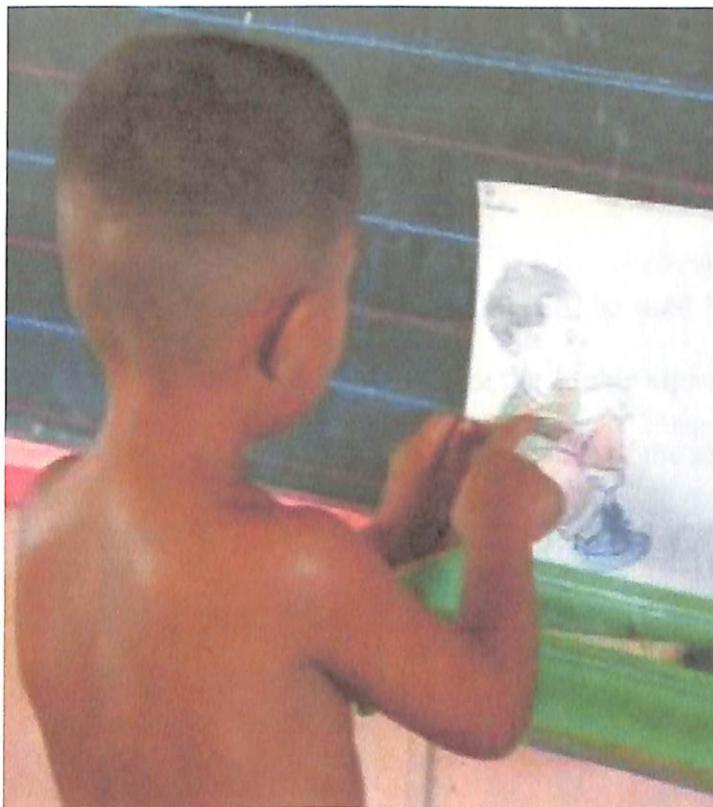


Figure 7. Student constructing English sentences

Thus, in Filipino and English subjects, Maguindanaon was used minimally as an auxiliary language in translating and explaining the lesson.

In the case of using Maguindanaon during ALIVE classes, it was observed that the *ustadz* used it all the time in explaining the lessons instead of the prescribed Arabic language. Although the class was filmed, the discussion was difficult to transcribe as students sometimes answered in unison while the teacher asked questions and explained immediately.

During a post conference after observing his class, the *ustadz* stressed that it would be useless to teach Islamic Values Education in Arabic as students in Grades 2 and 3 have very limited Arabic vocabulary.

“Pag tinuturo ko ang aliph o bah, o letter A at B sa English, hindi rin ng mga bata maintindihan kasi Maguindanaon ang mother tongue nila,” the *ustadz* said. (When I teach aliph o bah or letter A and B in English, the students do not understand it because their mother tongue is Maguindanaon.)

He said that even during Arabic Language classes, he used Maguindanaon most of the time and eventually let the students memorize the Arabic alphabet. Figure 8 shows a student practicing how to write in Arabic with the guidance of the *ustadz*.

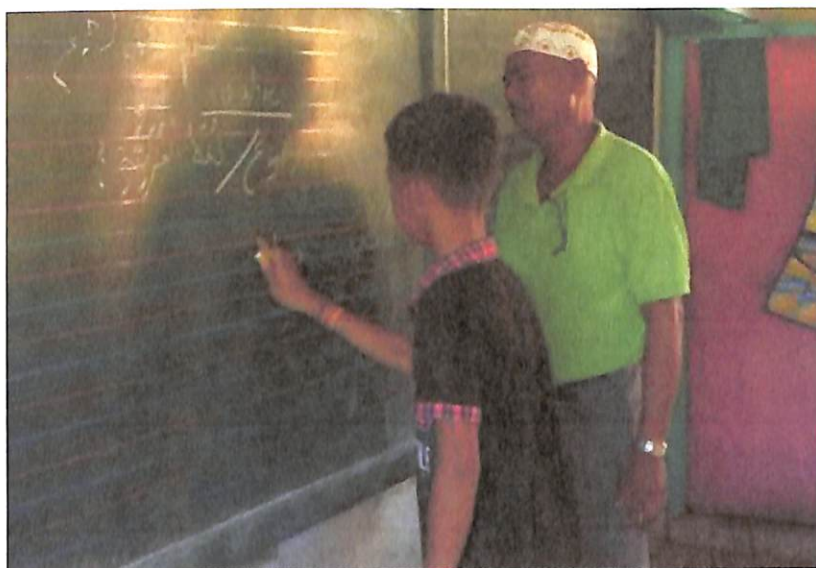


Figure 8. *Ustadz* guiding a student in writing an Arabic alphabet letter

During the ALIVE classes, the classroom atmosphere was very quiet as students paid full attention to their teacher. They also actively participated in the discussion especially in doing the boardwork during the lesson on Arabic alphabet. The teacher explained the whole process in Maguindanaon.

“Marunong ang mga bata ng Arabic alphabet pero kailangan laging magpractice dahil hindi naman nila laging ginagamit. Pero importante ito para matuto silang

magbasa ng Koran,” he added. (The students know Arabic alphabet but they have to practice because they do not use it always. However, this is very important so they could learn how to read the Qur’an.)

Two *ustadz* assigned as ALIVE teachers in the school shared about their experiences in teaching using Maguindanaon. They explained that the Islamic values are taught in Maguindanaon for children to fully comprehend the lessons. They said that students participated more in ALIVE classes when the lesson was translated and explained in the local language.

“Pag dinirect mo na Arabic, hindi maintindihan ng bata yan. Katulad din yan sya from English to Filipino na pag di mo itranslate yan sa Maguindanaon, hindi rin maintindihan ng mga bata,” one *ustadz* explained. (If you teach directly in Arabic, the students will not understand. This is similar to English to Filipino such that if it will not be translated to Maguindanaon, the students would not really understand.)

In a separate interview with the local DepEd Supervisor, he admitted that Maguindanaon should be the medium of instruction in Arabic classes.

“Pagkabasa ng mga guro ng leksyon, sinasalin nila sa Maguindanaon. Mahirap kung hindi kasi di mo maintindihan,” the local education official said. (When the teacher reads the lesson, this is translated to Maguindanaon. It is difficult if not translated because you cannot understand it.)

He pointed out that in Maguindanao, not even 50 percent of the population understands Arabic. He admitted that he could not also read Arabic.

Summary. Maguindanaon did not serve as an auxiliary language in English, Filipino and ALIVE classes considering the composition of the class. Majority of the

students are Maguindanaoans who speak the Maguindanaon language. It was gathered during the class observations, interviews and FGDs that Filipino served as auxiliary language in Math, English, and Araling Panlipunan subjects. In the presence of Muslim and non-Muslims, speakers would automatically use Filipino language in order to communicate.

Research Question 2: How is the mother tongue used in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the:

a. curriculum

Results of the data gathered show that there is very minimal and indirect integration of peace education in the school curriculum. Teachers did not follow a specific curriculum on peace education but took the opportunity to share universal values like honesty, respect, self-discipline, and tolerance among others. It was also observed that there was limited use of Maguindanaon which was mixed with Filipino words most of the time in some lessons observed and during the daily morning assembly.

According to Boyden and Ryder (1996), it is important that schools integrate multi-cultural and interfaith tolerance to avoid conflicts, which are after all the result of learned attitudes and behavior.

This was observed during the Math lessons in Grade 1 with the teacher using Maguindanaon with a mix of Filipino words to narrate the story and discuss its main points. Her story was about two friends walking along a neighborhood and with one of them wishing to get a fruit in one backyard. The teacher narrated the story and asked

questions every now and then to check students' comprehension. As the story progressed, the teacher asked about the propriety of taking another person's property without asking permission. The teacher emphasized the value of honesty and respect.

Despite the absence of school lessons directly stating the importance of peace education, the school principal shared in an interview the significance of Islamic teaching and using Maguindanaon to explain these values in order to become good and responsible citizens.

"Kailangan magdasal muna bago mag-umpisa ang lahat dito," he said during an observation of the morning assembly where all the students from Kindergarten to Grade 6 were gathered. (There must be prayer before starting anything here.)

The school principal pointed out that Islamic values are being inculcated among Muslim children so they would become responsible and good. This becomes more effective, he said, when Islamic values are taught in the mother tongue for better understanding.

"Ginagawa natin yang (pagturo ng disiplina) kahit sa flag ceremony. Nireremind natin sila na dapat makatapos ng pag-aaral at pinapaalam sa kanila ang mga example," the school principal said. (We teach discipline even during the flag ceremony. We remind them that it is important to finish their studies and show them examples.)

In Figure 9, teachers and students gathered together to say their morning prayer in Arabic before singing the national anthem and saying their pledge of allegiance to the Philippine flag in Filipino. Except for the prayer in Arabic and pledge in Filipino, the *ustadz* who was in-charge of the assembly was speaking in Maguindanaon while addressing the students and teachers for the whole duration of the morning assembly.



Figure 9. Students and teachers at the flag ceremony

The school principal, who shared in a separate interview that he was a former MNLF soldier himself, said that he always reminded the students of the importance of education. He also identified the importance of the *ustadz* in character development so students become respectful and disciplined.

This unique role of teaching Islamic values was recognized by the two *ustadz* interviewed.

“Tinuturuan natin ng values ang mga bata para hindi sila makagawa ng mali,” one *ustadz* said. (We teach the children values so they could not make any mistakes.)

“Kailangan ang bata na maging mabait at may control sa sarili at hindi yung libre nyang gawin ang gusto nya kahit mali,” explained another *ustadz*. (The child must be disciplined and has self-control so as not to do anything he desires.)

The concept of teaching good values, peace education concepts and skills to create a culture of peace and harmony is based on DepEd Memo No. 469 (2008),

“Institutionalizing Peace Education in the Basic Education Curriculum.” It specifically mandates that peace education instructional, learning, and advocacy materials are developed and used. However, Eskwela Kwatro had very limited instructional materials and the inclusion of values education was observed only in the Math subject and ALIVE classes.

Under the ALIVE program, the DepEd mandates that the Arabic Language should be offered three (3) times a week at 40 minutes each session and the Islamic Values Education, twice a week at 40 minutes each session in all public schools. The mandate is intended to “unify the long history of dichotomy of education among Muslims and promote the Filipino national identity at the same time preserve the Filipino Muslims’ cultural heritage” (DepED Order No. 40, 2011: 2).

Eskwela Kwatro implemented the ALIVE curriculum in Grades 2 and 3 except in Grade 1. According to the school principal, they prioritized the upper grade levels, as there were only four *ustadz* in the school with 2,542 students. The ALIVE classes were conducted in the afternoon for 40 minutes every day (See Table 7).

To explore further the implementation of ALIVE curriculum, two separate class observations in Grades 2 and 3 were conducted. It was noted that the focus of the lessons was more on the acquisition of Arabic language in order to read the Qur’an and inculcate Muslim values such as being a responsible and respectful child.

This is in consonance with the goal of teaching Arabic Language which is “to develop functional literacy in the Arabic language to enable learners to read and understand the Holy Qur’an and Ahadith (sayings of the Prophet Muhammad) as well as

equip them with communication skills needed to achieve the vision for elementary education graduates in preparation for secondary education” (ALIVE curriculum, 2011: 9).

Table 7. Grades 1 to 3 Class Schedules for Eskwela Kwatro (SY 2014-2015)

Time	Learning Areas for Grade 1	Learning Areas for Grade 2	Learning Areas for Grade 3	Time Allotment
7:15-7:30	Flag Raising Ceremony	Flag Raising Ceremony	Flag Raising Ceremony	15 mins
7:30-7:40	Home Guidance	Home Guidance	Home Guidance	10 mins
7:40-8:30	Mother Tongue	Mother Tongue	Mother Tongue	50 mins
8:30-9:20	English	English	English	50 mins
9:20-9:35	Recess	Recess	Recess	15 mins
9:35-10:05	Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao	Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao	Edukasyon sa Pagpapakatao	30 mins
10:05-10:45	Araling Panlipunan	Araling Panlipunan	Araling Panlipunan	40 mins
10:45-1:00	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	Lunch Break	2hrs15mins
1:00-1:50	Mathematics	Mathematics	Mathematics	50 mins
1:50-2:40	Filipino	Filipino	Filipino	30 mins
2:40-3:20	MAPEH	MAPEH	MAPEH	40 mins
3:20-4:00	Remediation/ Reinforcement Activities	Remediation/ Reinforcement Activities/ALIVE	Remediation/ Reinforcement Activities/ALIVE	40 mins
4:00-4:10	Flag Retreat	Flag Retreat	Flag Retreat	10 mins

Part of the learning expectations stated in the ALIVE curriculum is for students to read in Arabic so they could understand the teachings of Islam and apply the values they have learned in their daily lives.

A solution to avoid misunderstanding between the peoples of Mindanao is also presented in a DepEd policy. Its rationale states that “a progressive Muslim is peace-loving and patriotic and that the peace process could be improved when Muslims are educated in Islamic-friendly schools that would lead to the eradication of separatist sentiments in the minds of the students” (Road Map for Upgrading Muslim Basic Education in Policy Research on Access to Quality Basic Education for Muslim Learners, 2007: 120).

Islamic Values as a means to achieve peace

According to the school principal and lower primary teachers, there was no direct mention of peace education in their lessons. However, it was implied that these Islamic values could lead towards the attainment of peace. These values could also be appreciated and understood by the students when taught and explained in the mother tongue instead of in English or Arabic.

As one *ustadz* explained, the knowledge of Arabic allows students to read the Qur’an so they could fully live up to what a real Muslim is instead of causing terror, one *ustadz* said.

“Kapag yung bata hindi marunong bumasa ng Arabic especially sa Holy Qur’an, hindi sya masyadong mapagkatiwalaan na isang Muslim,” one of the *ustadz* said. (If the child does not know how to read Arabic especially the Holy Qur’an, he could not be fully trusted as a Muslim.) He explained that as Muslims, students should practice Islamic values, which could be learned from their holy scripture.

Explaining further the inculcation of Islamic values, the local DepEd Supervisor encouraged teachers to support the integration of lessons or activities that promote peace.

“Ang mga kabataan ay sangkap ng kapayaan. Kailangan ipakita natin sa kanila na mga lawless elements ang senyales na kailangan paunlarin ang Bangsamoro,” the local Deped Supervisor said. (The youth are elements of peace. We have to show to the lawless elements the signs that we need to develop the Bangsamoro.)

The AFP commander in Maguindanao also expressed the importance of integrating ALIVE in the school curriculum as this indirectly benefits the attainment of peace.

“Noong panahon ng martial law pag may nakitang Arabic school, ang nasa isip agad ng kasundaluhan ay sumusuporta doon sa kabila (rebelde). Yun ang negative na paniniwala,” he said. (During the martial law years when there is an Arabic school, it is assumed by the military that it is supporting the rebel side.)

He said that such negative thinking and biases against the teaching of Arabic hindered the development of the Arabic program. This affected the attitude and behavior of the students who did not learn Islamic values in the school, he added.

In a separate interview with the school principal, he said that children should keep in mind their responsibilities to be good citizens as emphasized in the ALIVE classes that were taught in Maguindanaon. He noted that when children could easily understand what were imparted to them, they would grow up as peaceful and productive members of the community.

“Dapat lang na ganun (may kapayapaan) kung ilagay sa isip nila ang pinag-aralan nila at lahat ng tinuro naming, malamang wala ng barumbado. Kasi lahat ng

tinuturo naming galing yan sa Qur'an," the *ustadz* added. (There should be peace if they would bear in mind our teachings and most probably there would be no troublemaker. It is because everything we teach is from the Qur'an.)

The local district supervisor shared in a separate interview that peace and harmony could be fully realized with the establishment of the Bangsamoro. The Muslim government would have more control on the education of the students including the implementation of the use of mother tongue in the classroom. He added that when language, culture and Islamic values are given importance, students and community members will feel valued and respected, thus gradually resulting in peaceful coexistence with other ethnic groups.

He narrated that activities such as the flying of "Kites for Peace" in the ARMM last November 2014, was a good opportunity for students to understand the importance of peace. At the same time, it sends a message to the lawless elements and armed sector that the children are also affected during armed conflict.

"Instead na 105mm ang paliparian, indirectly na sinasabihan sila (lawless elements) na itigil ang laban ng sa ganun ang mga kabataan mapatuwid at mapaganda ang kanila pag-aaral," the DepEd official explained. (Instead of flying 105mm projectiles, (the kite flying) is an indirect message to stop the fighting, so that the children will follow a straight path and continue their education.) When armed conflict would cease, schooling would continue without being disrupted because families need not evacuate to safer places, he added.

Possible Areas for Integration of Peace Education

The result of the survey questionnaire on using mother tongue in peace education further validates the sentiments of the teachers, parents and school officials.

Of the 16 respondents, seven strongly agreed and five agreed with the statement, "I believe that using the mother tongue will help Mindanao achieve peace." There were three who were undecided and only one disagreed. Moreover, nine of the respondents strongly agreed and five agreed with the statement, "I believe that schools have a role in helping Mindanao achieve peace." There were two who were undecided.

Table 8. Belief of teachers on importance of mother tongue and school in achieving peace

Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
11. I believe that using the mother tongue will help Mindanao achieve peace.	7	5	3	1	
12. I believe that schools have a role in helping Mindanao achieve peace.	9	5	2		

As teachers implied during interviews and group discussions that by learning Islamic values, students would gradually help to promote peace, they integrated values education in their lessons as demonstrated in one of the Grade 1 math classes observed.

In discussing addition, the teacher made use of a big book to teach students how to count and add. During the discussion in a mix of Maguindanaon and Filipino, she asked the students to count the number of fruits in a neighbor's *papaya* plant while

emphasizing that if a thing belongs to another, this should not be taken away. She reminded students of the Islamic value of honesty and respect. By candidly mentioning about being honest and respectful of the property of others, the teacher indirectly develops the character of the students to live in peace with other members of the community. Consequently, this will lead to a harmonious relationship among the community members.

On the other hand, all parents during the FGD agreed that Maguindanaon language plays a vital role in the achievement of peace in Mindanao. As one parent said, Maguindanaoans need not use another language to express their sentiments on matters affecting their lives including the peace problem in the area.

“Nai-express mo yung niloloob mo (in Magindanawn) kay sa Tagalog o Ingles. (Kapag) in your own language kasi nga Bangsamoro na, mas madaling ma express yung mga hinanaing mo sa sariling wika and most of them (Bangsamoro officials) are Muslims,” a parent explained. (You can express your feelings in Magindanawn than in Tagalog or English. If expressed in your own language and because it’s now Bangsamoro, you can easily express our sentiments, as most of the Bangsamoro officials are Muslims.)

The integration of ALIVE in public primary schools is considered by local education officials, teachers, and parents as an effective way to promote peace and order in Maguindanao. Even in other core subjects like Math, English and Mother Tongue, the teacher could use stories that recognize the diversity of the students regardless of religious beliefs. For example in English, the teacher could encourage students to construct sentences about their local culture, dance and tradition. By sharing their

heritage in class, it builds their confidence and pride. Its usefulness is felt more when ALIVE teachers use Maguindanaon in explaining the lessons.

Use of Filipino as national language in Maguindanao

When recognizing the importance of using the mother tongue as medium of instruction, it does not mean that other languages such as Filipino has no role to play in attaining peace and order.

According to the school principal, the use of a common language aside from Maguindanaon among the peoples living in the province and nearby towns could help restore peace in Mindanao.

"Ang mother tongue (Maguindanaon) purely sa netibo (sic) lang magamit. Filipino talaga ang magagamit para magkaintindihan ang Kristiyano at Muslim. Mixed tribe man tayo dito," the principal explained. (The mother tongue is purely for the natives to use. Christians and Muslims should use Filipino to understand each other. It is because we are mixed tribes here.)

He pointed out that Muslims and Christians could use Filipino to better understand each other while respecting each people's language and culture. However, he acknowledged that because this research locale in Maguindanao is mostly composed of Muslims, the few Christians living in the area who are products of mixed marriages use Maguindanaon. For as long as there is respect for one's culture and belief, peace and harmony in the area can be achieved, he concluded.

"Kailangan pa rin natin ang pambansang wika para magkaintindihan tayo. Ginagawa din natin ang pagturo ng pagrespeto ng kultura ng ibang mga tao gaya ng

mga Ilokano. Sa Values Education (subject) natin ginagawa,” the school official said. (We still need a national language so we will understand each other. We also teach children how to respect the culture of other peoples like the Ilokano. We do that during the Values Education subject.)

On the part of the local Armed Forces of the Philippines, the 601st brigade commander of the Maguindanao area recognizes the importance of education to eradicate the concept of injustice and being marginalized. An Army Literacy Program is being implemented in the area to help those people who have no chance to have proper education for several reasons such as poverty, lack of schools, and even armed conflicts.

The military official admitted that using the mother tongue to promote unity and harmony is important. However, due to cultural and linguistic differences, he said the religious leaders and primarily the *ustadz*, are more effective in instilling good values among students and the community. The role of the local AFP is to secure that the area is safe for students to continue learning, he added.

He agreed that the use of mother tongue could encourage students to learn more and strive to become productive members of the community instead of supporting or becoming a member of any armed group due to lack of education.

However, he agreed with the sentiment of the school principal that a common language such as Filipino would connect the different peoples in Maguindanao and Mindanao as a whole.

“Kailangan pa rin natin gamitin as common language ang Tagalog kasi in some areas hindi natin alam ang local dialect,” the official said. (We still need to use Tagalog as a common language because in some areas, we do not know their local dialect.)

“The New Challenge of the Mother Tongues: The Future of Philippine Post-Colonial Language Politics” by Tupas (2011) discusses the role of Filipino as a common language in areas like Mindanao.

The article stated that, “the status of Filipino as the national language has changed through the years, especially because its role as the country’s *inter-national lingua franca* is increasingly becoming an undeniable fact to many, if not most Filipinos (Tupas, 2011: 114).

Thus, in the case of Maguindanao where Muslims, Christians and other ethnic people co-exist, Filipino that is Tagalog-based could continue to be the country’s national language to “foster national unity and nationalist consciousness” (Tupas, 2011: 117).

Summary. Peace Education in Eskwela Kwatro is not distinctly integrated in the school curriculum and is focused more on the teaching of values education that would create a culture of peace, love and harmony among the students. The task of teaching values education is more visible in the ALIVE lessons and textbooks. Moreover, Maguindanaon language has been consistently and predominantly used in teaching these values.

Teachers, parents, school officials, and the AFP official have also acknowledged the importance of implementing the ALIVE curriculum to attain peace. However, the concept of building peace and harmony among Muslims, Christians and other indigenous peoples through the integration of peace education in the curriculum and with the use of Maguindanaon in its implementation still needs to be strengthened.

b. instructional materials

The ALIVE teachers used as reference the Arabic and English-Arabic textbooks printed and provided by the local DepEd office and financed by Libya. In these instructional materials, there was no direct mention of peace education. Its emphasis was more on the importance of respecting one's culture and belief. Although textbooks are in English and Arabic, the *ustadz* used Maguindanaon language to explain the contents and illustrations in the book.

The contents of the Islamic Values textbook include topics on how to practice Islam strictly and that Islam is a religion of love, harmony, and forgiveness.

According to the two *ustadz* interviewed, these instructional materials served as their guide and references in implementing the ALIVE curriculum.

One *ustadz* explained that it would be useless to use English or even Arabic in teaching the students, as they could not understand any of the two languages. Only a few people study Arabic and Islam and become teachers because it takes patience and perseverance, one *ustad* said. He emphasized that the language of the home is the best medium of instruction to promote peace.

"Bale sa Values Education na libro, ang gamit doon ay Arabic at English, parang bilingual din. Mas mabuti na-ittransfer ito sa Maguindanaon para madaling maintindihan ng bata" one of the *ustadz* said. (Such as in the Values Education textbook, Arabic and English are used like it is bilingual.

It is better to transfer (sic) the contents to Maguindanaon so students could understand it easily.)

As implied in other interviews with the school principal, teachers and *ustadz*, peace education is not directly mentioned in the textbooks. However, they explained that by practicing the Islamic values such as those shown in Figure 10, there would be peace as people become tolerant and respectful of others. It is through mutual respect that brotherhood and sisterhood are developed and gradually result in peace and unity in the community and the nation.

Islam also teaches us to greet other people all the time. A greeting has a great effect to anyone. The greeting of Islam is what our Great Prophet ﷺ taught us:

“السلام عليكم ورحمة الله وبركاته”
**Assalamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullāhi
 Wa Barakātuhu**



Figure 10. Sample of Islamic values in an ALIVE textbook

Other values shown in the textbook were on saving instead of being wasteful and greedy, as well as being helpful to others as shown in Figure 11. These values emphasize the importance of being considerate of others and not wasteful of the resources, which create harmonious co-existence with other ethnic groups.

The values presented in the textbook are in line with the goals of Islamic Values Education for students to “acquire the desired Islamic values that would guide learners to

be *Maka-Diyos, makabayan, makakalikasan at makatao* (For God, Country, Nature and People); thereby making them agents in advocating and promoting brotherhood, peace and unity, and justice and equality” (DepEd Order No. 40 s. 2011: 15).

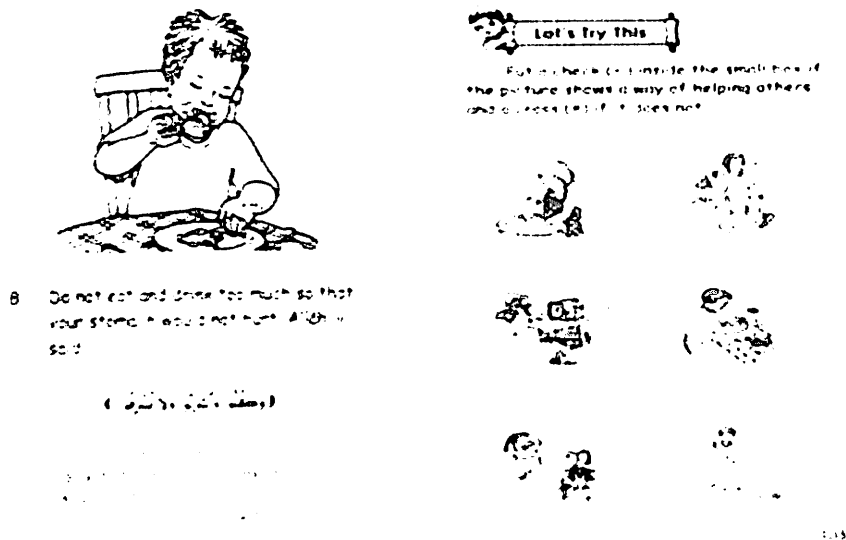


Figure 11. Book illustration on Islamic values of being frugal and helpful

During the FGD, some parents also expressed their satisfaction in integrating ALIVE classes in the school curriculum. Using Maguindanaon in these classes is effective, too, as children can easily understand the values taught to them, the parents added.

“Mas nadagdagan yung pinag-aralan mo kasi mas madaling na-explain at naintindihan because you are a native of the language,” a parent said. (It can add to your knowledge and it could be easily explained and understood because you are a native of the language.)

They agreed that with a Bangsamoro government, more resources and support such as textbooks and teachers could be given to the schools because Muslim lawmakers

could provide support for their area and prioritize projects for human development like education and health.

Summary. Analysis of the two ALIVE instructional materials showed no direct mention of peace education. It was focused on respecting one's culture and belief. The two materials were in Arabic and English. However, the *ustadz* used Maguindanaon as the medium of instruction in teaching the Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education. This was considered very effective by the *ustadz* and parents who recognized that students could easily emulate the Islamic Values taught to them when the language of the home is used.

c. teaching strategies

In exploring how Maguindanaon was used in the integration of peace education through the teaching strategies, it was observed that limited teaching strategies were used and peace education was not distinctly and formally taught in the lessons. However, Maguindanaon language was predominantly used in these few occasions of teaching values education to achieve peace.

For the teacher in math class, she used story telling and she switched between Maguindanaon and Filipino when she narrated the story and checked for comprehension. On the other hand, the *ustadz* used mostly Maguindanaon and a bit of Arabic during an experiential learning activity.

According to Kolb in Smith (2010), experiential learning exists when "students who are given a chance to acquire and apply knowledge, skills and feelings in an immediate and relevant setting."

This strategy was observed when the *ustadz* started with an Islamic greeting, “*Assalamu Alaykum Wa Rahmatullahi Wa Barakatuhu.*” For non-Muslims, this gesture may be considered ordinary, but as explained by the *ustadz*, the right Islamic greeting should be done by Muslims.

He pointed out that this greeting is written in the Qur’an and part of Islamic values, thus as an ALIVE teacher, he should always set good examples to his students for them to emulate.

Other than this strategy, the *ustadz* used translation; he was dependent on translating the Arabic and English content of the textbooks into Maguindanaon. The students were all quiet during the class observation but they were responsive when asked to recite by the teacher. They answered in Maguindanaon.

It was also noticed during the two ALIVE class observations that the focus was more on giving writing drills. Students spent most of their time practicing on the blackboard or in their own notebooks as shown in Figure 12.



Figure 12. *Ustadz* assisting a Grade 3 student in writing properly the Arabic letters

To make the ALIVE classes more interesting, the *ustadz* could have made use of local songs, poems or stories as a springboard for discussion. According to Dekker et. al. (2010), reading aloud, choral speaking, oral stories, and Talk in Drama are among the MTB-MLE strategies that could develop further the speaking and listening skills of the students.

It would also be beneficial to make use of big books with stories about peace as practiced by the Grade 1 teachers, as students were more eager to join in the discussion. By using every possible opportunity to integrate peace education using Maguindanaon, teachers would be able to instill in the hearts and minds of students the importance of achieving peace and order in Maguindanao and Mindanao as a whole. After all, listening and responding to stories is an effective teaching strategy among young students who have no books written in their mother tongue (Malone, 2007b).

These limitations on the use of MTB-MLE teaching strategies were acknowledged by the two *ustadz* interviewed. One *ustadz* said that the MTB-MLE trainings were conducted among lower primary homeroom teachers who were teaching the Mother Tongue subject and using mother tongue as medium of instruction.

“Hindi pa namin na engkwentro talaga ano ang paggamit ng mother tongue sa klase dahil sa mga class advisers at mother tongue teachers yan,” the *ustadz* explained. (We have not really encountered the use of mother tongue in class as class advisers and mother tongue teachers have used it more.)

Despite the difficulty of students in learning Arabic Language, the *ustadz* commented that students’ interest in the lesson was high.

“Karamihan talaga ay willing na mag participate at matuto nang Arabic

language at saka yung values education,” one of the *ustadz* shared. (Most of them are willing to participate and learn the Arabic language and values education.) He added that the level of understanding of the students was slow due to their limited vocabulary in Arabic, but this was mediated with the use of Maguindanaon in class.

Summary: The use of mother tongue in peace education was very limited and so were the use of teaching and learning strategies. The strategy of the math teacher and *ustadz* could be improved to make learning more interesting. Given that only one math class in Grade 1 and two ALIVE classes in Grades 2 and 3 were observed, it is possible that there are other teaching strategies used by the teachers in other ALIVE classes.

The results presented in this chapter offer a snapshot of how Eskwela Kwatro used Maguindanaon in the Mother Tongue subject and how Maguindanaon is used as MOI and auxiliary language. The data gathered show that teachers encountered difficulty in implementing the MTB-MLE due to their lack of training, lack of teaching guides, difficulty in transitioning from bilingual policy to MTB-MLE policy, lack of instructional materials in Maguindanaon, and lack of consultation in the development of local instructional materials.

There was also very limited integration of peace education in the school curriculum and the use of Maguindanaon in teaching peace education was minimal.

CHAPTER 5 SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter presents the summary, conclusion and recommendations of the case study on the implementation of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in an area of armed conflict.

The main findings are given in the summary followed by the major implications of the study in the implementation of the policy from the national to the local and vice versa. Finally, the limitations of the study are addressed and opportunities for future research are presented.

Summary

The intent of this case study was to examine the implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in an area of armed conflict. It specifically answered the following questions:

- 1) How is MTB-MLE implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as subject, medium of instruction, and auxiliary language;
- 2) How is the mother tongue integrated in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum, instructional materials, and teaching strategies.

In answering the questions, a public elementary school that has implemented the MTB-MLE and located in an area of armed conflict was chosen. Class observations in Grade 1 were conducted during the Mother Tongue, English, Math, Filipino and Araling Panlipunan subjects. Two separate classes in Grade 2 and 3 were observed during their ALIVE subjects to answer the questions relating to peace education. Key Informant

Interviews (KIIs) and Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were conducted to validate the observations made in the classes, as well as to gather further information to answer the questions. A survey questionnaire was also administered to the lower primary teachers to assess their confidence level and perceived ability in using the mother tongue, Filipino and English in their classes.

The result for the first question reveals that the teachers observed during the Mother Tongue subject use Maguindanaon in discussing the lesson. However, their familiarity and ease in implementing the bilingual policy for over a long period of time made them resort to the Filipino language even during the Mother Tongue subject. The lack of curriculum guides, instructional materials and trainings are among the challenges encountered by the lower primary teachers.

On the use of Maguindanaon as medium of instruction in Math, Araling Panlipunan and ALIVE classes, results of the class observations, interviews and FGDs reveal that teachers would still regularly switch to Filipino when explaining the lessons. English is also used in some instances for convenience and spontaneity of discussion in the classroom. The teachers have identified familiarity and ease in code switching between Maguindanao, Filipino and English as a reason for their continued use of the other languages in their classes. Unlike the apparent willingness of the teachers and students in using Maguindanaon as medium of instruction despite the challenges they have encountered, parents have strongly expressed their resistance to the new language policy. Their apprehensions toward the MTB-MLE outweigh their feeling of pride that Maguindanaon is used as medium of instruction.

For them, the old bilingual policy would make their children at par with graduates from other schools.

Meanwhile, Maguindanaon as an auxiliary language has not been established in the study as teachers, students and school officials consider Filipino as the auxiliary language. In the presence of Muslim and non-Muslims, speakers would automatically use Filipino language in order to communicate.

For the second question, the study has explored how Maguindanaon integrates peace education in their school curriculum and ALIVE curriculum. Results of class observations, interviews and FGDs show that the school indirectly and informally integrates peace education using Maguindanaon through the teaching of values education in various learning areas inside and outside the classroom. Although there was no direct and formal mention of peace, unity and harmony in the lessons observed, emphasis was given on how students should behave in the school, at home and in their community.

In answering the question on the use of Maguindanaon in peace education particularly in the instructional materials, the other textbooks and references analyzed do not directly contain any integration of peace education. The two ALIVE textbooks shown by the *ustadz* for analysis were focused on values formation and the Arabic Language. These instructional materials were in Arabic and English. The *ustadz* translated the terms and concepts to Maguindanaon language in order for the students to understand the lesson.

The last question explored how Maguindanaon is integrated in peace education through the teaching strategies. Results of the class observation and interview reveal that the teaching strategies are very limited. In one of the classes observed during the math

class, the teacher used story telling to inculcate values education, while the ALIVE teacher depended a lot on the translation method and experiential learning. It is possible though that as very limited classes have been observed, there could be more teaching strategies in informally integrating peace education in the lessons with the use of Maguindanaon language in other classes.

Conclusion

Results from this study suggest that the implementation of a national policy requires a “top-down and “bottom-up” approach. As illustrated by the problems encountered by the teachers such as lack of curriculum guides and lack of training, there should have been local consultations and trainings conducted by the national and regional levels. Conceptualization, planning, and preparation are activities that have to be shared at all levels prior to an implementation of a policy.

As posited by Ricento and Hornberger (1996) in the onion model, there are interactions and negotiations within and between levels in order for a policy to be successfully implemented.

The succeeding conclusions are based on the results of this study.

Lack of training, curriculum guides and instructional materials hamper MTB-MLE implementation

The teachers identified lack of training, curriculum guides and instructional materials as factors that hinder the successful implementation of the MTB-MLE program. Class observations, interviews, focus group discussions, and analysis of instructional

materials support the claims of the school officials and teachers. The lack of preparation in terms of conducting training, development of curriculum guides and instructional materials prior to the implementation of MTB-MLE nationwide placed the local schools and teachers in a daily struggle. Even the use of the local language, which is Maguindanaon, is not an assurance of immediate success in implementing MTB-MLE.

Due to the use of bilingual policy for several decades, both native speakers of Maguindanaon and non-native speakers such as the Christian teachers, face a challenging task of teaching Maguindanaon as a subject and using it as medium of instruction and auxiliary language. With regular training and development of curriculum guides and instructional materials, teachers could slowly adjust to the MTB-MLE program.

As pointed out by Burton (2013) in a case study on the implementation of MTB-MLE in the Philippines, there is a possibility of a misalignment on policy intentions between the local level and national level when teachers resort to mere translation due to lack of knowledge on pedagogical approaches and understanding of the rationale of MTB-MLE.

Thus, Eskwela Kwatro and its teachers need additional support from the regional and national DepEd office in order to fully implement the MTB-MLE program. At the same time, the regional and national education offices should gather feedback from the local level in order for them to identify specifically what is needed to improve the program.

Lack of peace education using Maguindanaon

The school for this study is faced with the challenge of being located in an area of armed conflict, yet the ideals and plans in integrating peace education using Maguindanaon by the school officials, teachers, parents, and other stakeholders are yet to be implemented.

This is despite of the presence of a national mandate on institutionalizing peace education in the Basic Education Curriculum (DepEd Memo no. 469, s. 2008), and the agreement among the parents, teachers, school officials and AFP official during interviews and discussions of the importance of peace education.

Moreover, other laws and policies like the MMA Act. 303 s. 2012, which enhances the Basic Education Act in ARMM and the 2006 Road Map for Upgrading Muslim Basic Education are clear indications of the national and regional governments' intention to infuse peace education in the curriculum.

However, the national and regional education offices should actively and faithfully implement these laws and policies on peace education. Local school officials, teachers and other stakeholders should also take the initiative to integrate peace education in the curriculum and take advantage of using the mother tongue in integrating peace education in the different class subjects. In the process of implementation, feedback on training and financial support for the integration of peace education vis-à-vis MTB-MLE implementation could be brought up to the national level that comprised of the GPH President, Congress and national DepEd Office. This would give legislators a clear and realistic picture of the current situation of peace education and MTB-MLE in a school located in an area of armed conflict.

Use of Filipino as a common language to promote understanding among the peoples

The harmonious co-existence in Maguindanao of Muslims, Christians and indigenous people despite their different beliefs and culture could be fully achieved through the use of a common language that all parties could understand.

Teachers, school officials and AFP official recognized that while Maguindanaon language could help in peace education, a language common to all is needed to avoid misunderstanding and conflict. In the case of Maguindanao, the Filipino language could serve this purpose because of the existence of different languages such as Maguindanaon, Ilocano, Ilonggo, and Bisaya. Tupas (2011) noted that Filipino as the national language has become the country's "inter-national lingua franca." This means that among the peoples from different tribes and ethnicity residing in Maguindanao, Filipino has become a common language for all.

Recommendations

Based on the results of the case study, several recommendations are presented to address the challenges encountered by the teachers, parents, students, school administrators, local and national education officials, curriculum developers and instructional material writers, researchers, Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs), and other stakeholders.

Regular and comprehensive trainings for those involved in MTB-MLE implementation

A regular and comprehensive MTB-MLE training should be given to the teachers, administrators and ALIVE teachers. This could be conducted by the DepEd Regional

Office as they are familiar with the context and situation of the teachers especially those located in areas of armed conflict. The *ustadz* interviewed expressed that as they also used the mother tongue in teaching Arabic Language and Islamic Values Education (ALIVE) from Grades 1 to 6, they would find it beneficial to learn more about the MTB-MLE particularly about the teaching strategies.

Teacher Education Institutions (TEIs) should include MTB-MLE and peace education in their pre-teacher training to fully prepare future teachers who will be deployed in areas of armed conflict.

Implementation of Peace Education using Maguindanaon

In the light of the implementation of the rationalization plan, there should be a more conscious effort on the part of the regional education office to implement the integration of peace education at the primary level where the mother tongue is taught as a subject and used as medium of instruction.

Provision of relevant teaching guide, instructional materials and teaching exemplars

The curriculum and teaching resources provided by curriculum developers and instructional material writers should be contextualized to the local setting in order to help teachers in implementing the MTB-MLE program. It would also be beneficial if a Maguindanaon dictionary is developed and provided to the teachers.

A Peace Education Teaching Exemplar using the mother tongue should also be provided considering that the school is located in an area of armed conflict.

The contextualization of the curriculum will make the lessons relevant to the students as it is also explained in the students' mother tongue. It is also imperative that local participation is included in the planning, development and evaluation of these teaching and learning resources. According to Fillmore (2014), when the development of curriculum and production of instructional materials remain at the national level, it could hamper the implementation of MTB-MLE policy.

Local consultation among implementers should be conducted

Legislative and non-legislative policies should be drafted after the ideas, concerns and suggestions of those at the forefront of implementing the policy have been gathered and summarized. This is necessary to ensure that the policy drafted by national education officials, the Congress and the cabinet officials would provide solutions instead of causing additional difficulties and challenges to the main implementers.

Dekker and Young (2005) pointed out that a policy like MTB-MLE could be successfully implemented when other stakeholders in the community support it.

Local support for the MTB-MLE program

Any program will be successful when there exists local support. The MTB-MLE coordinators should encourage and include the teachers and community members in planning and developing teaching and learning materials. Moreover, local language experts, scholars and elders could be tapped to help develop these materials.

Teachers who have expressed their difficulty in implementing MTB-MLE should be encouraged and supported by co-teachers, school officials and local education

officials. A support system that would include local elders, scholars, and language experts who would be available for consultation and mentoring could be provided to assist MTB-MLE teachers in the implementation of the policy.

Parents should also be encouraged to join fora and discussions on MTB-MLE policy implementation to fully understand the rationale and advantages of using Maguindanaon in the children's classes. When there is a strong campaign and information dissemination about the language policy, parents would be less apprehensive of the future of their children under this new language policy.

Promotion of local culture, literature, art, and music to support MTB-MLE

Students should be motivated to appreciate Maguindanao literature, music, art, and culture to enrich and promote the use of Maguindanao language. When there exists a sound, practical, and contextualized language program, students would be more motivated to attend classes regularly and consequently minimize the drop-out rate.

Eskwela Kwatro case study as basis for future research

Researchers who would like to conduct studies on the use of the mother tongue in areas of armed conflict could make further studies on a similar topic at a wider scale and longer time in order to provide a more comprehensive result.

Keeping schools safe and protecting students and teachers

The GPH, AFP and MILF leadership should continue to dialogue and work together in promoting and maintaining peace and order in Maguindanao. They should

continue to consider schools as “zones of peace” and ensure that the students and teachers are safe from harm. It must be their utmost priority to maintain peace and order by bringing into the negotiating table any legitimate grievances and concerns, so as not to disrupt the classes.

Future Research

Studying the implementation of MTB-MLE in one of the areas of conflict is not enough, as this only presents a single snapshot of how a national policy is carried out down to the school level by teachers, who have inadequate training and resources. Thus, it is recommended that a similar study be conducted in other ARMM areas besieged with conflict over a longer period of time. This will give readers a broader and a comprehensive discussion on the implementation of the mother tongue policy.

Furthermore, as local education officials, teachers and parents are currently adjusting to the new language policy, it will be interesting and significant to repeat the same case study on how MTB-MLE is implemented after three years. This will offer readers a new level of understanding how the implementation of MTB-MLE has evolved through the years. The study will focus on how MTB-MLE is implemented in an area of armed conflict in terms of the use of mother tongue as medium of instruction/ language of instruction; subject; and auxiliary language.

It should further delve into the use of mother tongue in peace education in an area of armed conflict particularly in the curriculum; instructional materials; and strategies.

By studying the implementation of MTB-MLE in different areas of the country especially those outside the city, the national government will have a bigger picture of the

benefits of MTB-MLE and strengthen whatever weaknesses will be gathered from the main implementers – the teachers.

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APPENDIX A
Classroom Observation Protocol

School: _____

Class: _____

Date: _____

Time began: _____

Time ended: _____

Components	Observations	Interpretations
Teachers' Language Usage		
Students' Language Usage		
Teachers' Comfort Level		
Students' Comfort Level		
Students' Responsiveness		
Cultural Relevance of Materials		
Integration in Peace Education		
Others		

APPENDIX B
Teachers' Focus Group Discussion Protocol

Greetings and other amenities expressing gratitude for their participation. Inform teachers that their participation is voluntary and they are free to leave. The interview will be recorded and all responses will be kept confidential. The questions were translated to Tagalog.

School: _____

Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

Position: Grade 1 _____ Grade 2 _____ Grade 3 _____

1. What were your initial reactions when MTB-MLE was implemented?

Probes: How do you feel? Are you worried? Happy? Confident? Any cultural implications?

2. What were the immediate concerns encountered upon receipt of the initial MTB-MLE materials?

Probes: As a new program, what were your immediate worries?

3. What have you done to implement MTB-MLE since it was started?

Probes: Have you used 100% Maguindanaon in the MT subject? How about in other subject areas?

4. What are the common challenges encountered in the daily implementation of MTB-MLE?

Probes: What problems have you encountered? What other difficulties do you foresee?

5. How did you address these challenges?

Probes: In your own way, what initiatives have you undertaken? What actions have you taken to counter these challenges?

6. How could mother tongue address the peace and order problem in the area?

Probes: Do you believe that using Maguindanaon could lead to peace and order in the area? How could mother tongue be used to promote peace education?

APPENDIX C
Parents' Focus Group Discussion Protocol

Greetings and other amenities expressing gratitude for their participation. Inform parents that their participation is voluntary and they are free to leave. The interview will be recorded and all responses will be kept confidential. Questions were translated in Tagalog.

School: _____

Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

Grade level of children: Grade 1 _____ Grade 2 _____ Grade 3 _____ Others _____

1. What were your initial reactions when MTB-MLE was implemented?

Probes: What came into your mind when it was announced that MTB-MLE was implemented? Were you excited? Were you worried?

2. How did your child/children respond to the use of the mother tongue?

Probes: What were the initial reaction of your child/children when they have started using Maguindanaon in their classes? Were they happy about it? How did they perform in making their homework?

3. What are your perceived MTB-MLE advantages and disadvantages?

Probes: What benefits could your children get from MTB-MLE? Do you see any negative effects?

4. How could mother tongue address the peace and order problem in the area?

Probes: Do you believe that using Maguindanaon could lead to peace and order in the area? How could mother tongue be used to promote peace education?

APPENDIX D
Students' Focus Group Discussion Protocol

Greetings and other amenities expressing gratitude for their participation. Inform students that their participation is voluntary and they are free to leave. The interview will be recorded and all responses will be kept confidential. Questions were translated to Tagalog but the school-assigned translator will bridge any gap when students have difficulty expressing themselves in Tagalog.

School: _____

Gender: _____ Male _____ Female

Grade level of students: Grade 1 _____ Grade 2 _____ Grade 3 _____ Others _____

1. How do you feel when Maguindanaon was used in class?

Probes: Are you sad? Happy?

2. How did you respond in class when Maguindanaon was used by the teacher?

Probes: Are you proud of Maguindanaon? Are you confident when participating in class discussions?

3. Who helped you in your homework? Do they use Maguindanaon, Tagalog or English in helping you?

Probes: What languages are used at home by family? Do you find it easy to answer the homework?

4. Do you feel safe when you use Maguindanaon? Is there peace and order problem in the area?

Probes: When going to school and back home or playing in the neighborhood, do you use Maguindanaon? How do you feel when you use it with friends and playmates? Have you heard of peace and order problem in your area? What do you do?

APPENDIX E
Key Informant's Interview Protocol

Greetings and other amenities expressing gratitude for their participation. Inform interviewees that their participation is voluntary and they are free to stop the interview when they feel uncomfortable with the questions. The interview will be recorded and all responses will be kept confidential. Questions were in English but translated when necessary. The interviewees are free to answer in English or Tagalog.

Name: _____

Designation: _____

1. What are your opinions about the implementation of MTB-MLE?
2. What are the advantages and disadvantages that you see?
3. What challenges are being encountered?
4. What are the actions taken to address these challenges?
5. What are the possible effects of using the mother tongue or Maguindanaon in peace education?
6. Could the use of the mother tongue lead to peace in armed conflict areas?
7. How could mother tongue be instrumental in building peace and order?

APPENDIX F
Criteria for Analysis of MTB-MLE Materials
(Limited to textbook/instructional Materials Analysis)

Material analyzed: _____

Content Description: _____

Components	Observations	Interpretations
Use of Mother Tongue		
Other languages used in the material		
Localization of Concept/Topic		
Respect for local culture		
Promotion of Peace Education		
Other observations		

APPENDIX G
Survey Questionnaire

Mga Mahal na Guro:

Ako po si Ghea RM Tenchavez, isang guro sa elementarya at nag-aaral ng Masters in Education major in Language and Literacy sa Unibersidad ng Pilipinas. Ako ay kasalukuyang gumagawa ng pag-aaral tungkol sa mga benepisyo at problema sa paggamit ng Mother Tongue-based Multilingual Education. Gusto ko ring malaman kung ang paggamit ng sariling wika ay makakatulong para makamit ang kapayapaan sa Mindanao. Lubos akong nagpapasalamat sa inyong pagsagot sa mga sumusunod na katanungan.

Edad: _____ Kasarian: _____ Tribu: _____ Ilang taon na nagtuturo:

Direksyun: Walang tama at maling sagot sa mga katanungan. Piliin ang sagot sa kahon.

1. Anong wika ang ginagamit mo sa mga sumusunod na lugar?

Bahay ____ Paaralan ____ Palengke ____ Barangay ____ Lugar ng pananampalataya

2. Ano ang iyong sariling wika o mother tongue? (Pwedeng higit sa isa ang isulat)

3. Ano ang ginagamit mong wika sa pagturo sa mga mag-aaral?

4. Ano ang ginagamit na wika ng mga mag-aaral para magpaliwanag ng sagot?

5. Gumagamit ka ba ng ibang libro o sanggunian maliban sa librong ginagamit sa paaralan?

Oo _____ Hindi _____ Sa anong wika? _____

6. Gumagawa ka ba ng sarili mong materyales para sa pagtuturo?

Oo _____ Hindi _____ Sa anong wika? _____

7. Dumaan ka ba sa pagsasanay kung paano magturo gamit ang sariling wika o mother tongue?

Oo _____ Hindi _____ Sa anong wika ang pagsasanay? _____

8. Ano ang pangalan ng pagsasanay?

9. Sino ang nagbigay ng pagsasanay?

10. Ano ang mga paksa na iyong tinuturo?

11. Ano sa tingin mo ang benepisyo ng paggamit ng sariling wika sa pagtuturo?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

12. Ano ang mga suliranin o problema sa paggamit ng sariling wika sa pagtuturo?

a. _____

b. _____

c. _____

II.

Paki-tsck (/) ng iyong sagot. Pumili ng isang sagot lamang.

Mga Katanungan	Higit na sumasang-ayon	Sang-ayon	Hindi makapagnasiya	Di Sang-ayon	Higit na di sumasangayon
1. Kayang-kaya kong ituro ang leksyon sa English.					
2. Kayang-kaya kong ipaliwanag ang leksyon sa English.					
3. Kayang-kaya kong ituro ang leksyon sa Filipino.					
4. Kayang-kaya kong ipaliwanag ang leksyon sa Filipino.					
5. Kayang-kaya kong ituro ang leksyon sa aming sariling wika.					
6. Kayang-kaya kong ipaliwanag ang leksyon sa aking sariling wika.					
7. Malaki ang tiwala ko sa paggamit ng sariling wika habang nagtuturo.					
8. Ligtas ar may seguridad ang nararamdaman ko kapag gamit ko ang aking sariling wika.					
9. Maipagmamalaki ko ang aking sariling wika habang ginagamit sa pagtuturo.					
10. Naniniwala ako na ang paggamit ng sariling wika ay nakakatulong sa mga mag-aaral upang mas maintindihan ang leksyon.					
11. Malaki ang tiwala ko na ang paggamit ng sariling wika ay makakatulong upang makamantan ang kapayapaan sa Mindanao.					
12. Malaki ang tiwala ko na ang paaralan ay may malaking papel upang makamantan ang kapayapaan sa Mindanao.					

III.

1. Ano ang kailangan mo upang gumaling sa pagturo gamit ang sariling wika?

2. Paano makakatulong ang paggamit ng sariling wika upang makamtan ang kapayapaan sa Mindanao?

Maraming salamat po.

APPENDIX I MAP OF MINDANAO



APPENDIX J
LETTER REQUEST TO CONDUCT A STUDY

08 December 2014

To: _____

From: Ghea Ramona Manla Tenchavez
Candidate for MAEd-Language and Literacy Education
Faculty of Education, University of the Philippines Open University

Cc: Dr. Ma. Theresa de Villa
Thesis Adviser
University of the Philippines Open University

Subject: Request to Conduct Classroom Observations and FGDs

Dear _____:

Greetings.

I am Ghea Ramona Manla Tenchavez, a MAEd-LLE student currently doing my thesis on the implementation of MTB-MLE in an area of armed conflict and its role in peace education.

Since I am doing a case study, I am respectfully requesting that I be allowed to observe classes from Grades 1-3 for at least one week this December 2014, as well as conduct a Focus Group Discussion (FGD) among the teachers and students to know their viewpoints on the challenges and benefits of using the mother tongue in teaching, learning and peace education.

I hope for your kind approval.

Respectfully,

Ghea RM Tenchavez
MAEd-Language and Literacy

Noted:
Ma. Theresa L. de Villa
Thesis Adviser

Approved:
Designation:
Date: