MTB-MLE teachers’ training program in Indonesia:
SEAMEO QITEP in Language’s project

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SEAMEO Regional Centre for Quality Improvement of Teachers and Education Personnel (QITEP) in Language initiated the project “Mother Tongue as Bridge Language of Instruction” in 2010 to be applied in four provinces, namely West Java, Yogyakarta, West Nusa Tenggara, and South Sulawesi. However, before applying it the Centre organized a needs analysis survey in West Java province (Garut and Bandung Regency) and Yogyakarta province (Bantul and Gunung Kidul Regency) in 2013. The result was a decision to apply mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in the area, i.e. using Sundanese and Javanese as the medium of instruction to deliver teaching materials to primary school students. To follow up, in April 2016 the Centre organized a Training on Improving Teachers’ Competency in Mother Tongue workshop, collaborating with the local education office in the area of West Java.

However, before conducting the program, the Centre needs to conduct research in order to optimize the training results for the teachers/participants. Thus, this paper seeks to discuss problems that will hinder Indonesian teachers in the local area from implementing MTB-MLE in their classes, namely: (1) lack of techniques in using mother tongue (L1) as language of instruction, (2) lack of knowledge of theories and good practices relating to children’s language acquisition, and (3) lack of teaching materials and lesson plans in the mother tongue. Finally, the paper lists solutions or strategies to solve the problems.