From English to MTB-MLE in mathematics: 
the good, the bad, and the exigent, the Philippines

By Charisse O. Joting-Quiman, Marvin C. Casalan, 
Marmon A. Pagunsan, and Levi E. Elipane

The Philippines’ Department of Education initiated various means to improve students’ achievement especially in science, mathematics, and English. Recently it implemented the mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in elementary school. This educational reform brought excitement, worries, and challenges to mathematics teachers due to shift of medium of instruction from English to the learners’ first language.

This paper will share the positive thoughts and excitement of teachers together with their worries, concerns, and challenges. These issues on teaching MTB-MLE were brought out through survey and interview and identification of common themes. Furthermore, the paper brings out teachers’ pedagogical strategies and techniques using the prescribed medium of instruction and emphasizes the role of the language in mathematics classroom instruction. The result of the study is deemed beneficial to inservice training for teachers. It emphasises the program of actions of the elementary schools and the universities that train elementary teachers should carry out to improve the teaching of mathematics.