Policies, Practices and Prospects in MTB-MLE: Synergies for Sustainable and Inclusive Basic Education in the Philippines

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• Background
• Framework/Approach
• Principles (Revisiting Literatures)
• Policy Evolution
• Practices (Synergies)
• Challenges
• Outcomes
• Contribution
• Prospects
• Conclusions
• Next Steps...
• The Study
  • Implementation synergies of language and core provisions in Sections 4 and 5 (beyond the classroom)
  • One-year (+/-) study spanning 7 areas in selected regions
    • **Regions I** (Ilocos Sur); **CAR** (Baguio City); **Region V** (Bicol); **Region VI** (Western Visayas); **Region VIII** (Eastern Visayas); **Region X** (Northern Mindanao); **Region XII** (Cotabato)
    • Policy prescription against practice (multilingual or bilingual?)
  • Issues and challenges
  • Some outcomes
• Study areas
• Core provision
  
  • Section 4

Basic education shall be delivered in **languages understood by the learners** as the language plays a strategic role in shaping the formative years of learners.

For kindergarten and the **first three years** of elementary education, **instruction, teaching materials and assessment shall be in the regional or native language of the learners**. The Department of Education (DepED) shall formulate a mother language **transition program from Grade 4 to Grade 6** so that Filipino and English shall be gradually introduced as **languages of instruction** until such time when these two languages can become the primary languages of instruction at the secondary level.
• Core provision
  • Section 5

Par 2: . . . the DepED shall undertake consultations with other national government agencies and other stakeholders including, but not limited to, the DOLE, the PRC, the private and public schools associations, the national student organizations, the national teacher organizations, the parents-teachers associations and the chambers of commerce on matters affecting the concerned stakeholders (see also Sec. 6, Curriculum Consultative Committee and Sec 12, HEI partnerships)

(c) The curriculum shall be culture-sensitive;
(d) The curriculum shall be contextualized and global;
(f) The curriculum shall adhere to the principles and framework of Mother-Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) which starts from where the learners are and from what they already know proceeding from the known to the unknown; instructional materials and capable teachers to implement the MTB-MLE curriculum shall be available
Framework

**Principles**
- Synergy (Harris 1981)
- Components (Malone 2003)
- Experiments (Aguilar, Walker and Dekker)
- Failed policy (Bernardo, Bautista, Ocampo 2010)
- Collaborative governance (Lucas and Tolentino 2006; Ansell and Gash 2008; Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh 2011)
- Inclusion process (Johnston et al 2010)
- CSOs (Dodge 2014)

**Policies**
- DepEd Order No. 74 s. 2009: MTB-MLE
  - Shift from BEP to MTB-MLE
  - RA 10533 (Sections 4 and 5)
  - Relevant Policies/Issuances from DepEd

**Practices**
- Localization/contextualization (materials)
- Basic research
- Orthography development
- Teachers learning the learners’ language(s)
- Local/sectoral champions (in lieu of ‘ideal synergies’)
- Mobilization of non-DepEd resources
• Synergy as a consortium (Harris 1981)
• Presence of critical components (Malone 2003)
• Experiments outcomes/evidence (Aguilar 1961; Walker and Dekker 2011)
• Failed language policy (Bernardo, Bautista, Ocampo 2010)
• Collaborative governance (Lucas and Tolentino 2006; Ansell and Gash 2008; Emerson, Nabatchi and Balogh 2011)
• Guarding the inclusion process (Johnston et al 2010)
• Role of CSOs (Dodge 2014)
• Community-based orthography development (Bow 2012)
• Community-based implementation (Kosonen and Unesco)
• Collaborative planning (Margerum)
• Evolution of Language-in-Education Policy
  • 1899 Malolos Constitution: Spanish
  • Commonwealth: English
  • Commonwealth (Quezon)
    • Commonwealth Act 184: creation of National Language Institute (NLI)
    • EO 134 (Dec. 30, 1937): Tagalog as the basis of the National Language (NL)
  • 1973 Constitution
    • development and formal adoption of a common NL (Filipino)
    • Issuance of DECS Order No. 25 s. 1974
    • Implementing Guidelines for the Policy of Bilingual Education
    • BEP: Achievement of competence in Filipino and English at the national level
• 1987 Constitution: continuation of the BEP
  • Further strengthens the Filipino
  • Article 14, Section 9: regional languages as auxiliary official languages ... auxiliary MoI for promotion, research, development, propagation, and preservation of Filipino and other languages
  • Executive Order No. 335 (Aquino I): use of Filipino language in official transactions, communications and correspondence in government offices
  • RA 7104: creation of Komisyan sa Wikang Filipino (the national language commission)
  • promote researches for the development, propagation and preservation of Filipino and other Philippine languages
  • RA 7722: creation of CHED
  • CHED MO No. 59 s. 1996: English and Filipino as MoI in higher education
• DepEd Order No. 74 s. 2009: MTB-MLE
  • Shift from Bilingual Education Policy to MTB-MLE
  • dismal performance and poor mastery of reading and writing skills in Filipino and English of students under the 1987 BEP (ADB and WB 1987)
    • Language policy did not pay attention to research evidence (Bautista, Bernardo, Ocampo)

• RA 10533 (Sections 4 and 5)
  • DepEd Order No. 16 s. 2012 (12 languages)
  • DepEd Order No. 28 s. 2013 (7 additional languages)
• Legal Basis: Section 5, RA 10533
  • Consultations with other NGAs and other stakeholders including, but not limited to, the DOLE, PRC, the private and public schools associations, the national student organizations, the national teacher organizations, the parents-teachers associations and the chambers of commerce on matters affecting the concerned stakeholders.

• Theoretical Basis
  • The confluence and convergence of varying interests unified by a common goal to ensure effective policy implementation. It capitalizes on the strengths, expertise, and specialization of each part in dealing with specific tasks, issues, or concerns that affect the whole as in a consortium (Harris 1981)
• Macro-level Synergies

COMPONENTS
1 Preliminary Research
2 Awareness Raising and Mobilization
3 Recruitment and Training
4 Orthography Development
5 Local Development of Materials
6 Teacher Training
7 Availability of Graded Learning Materials
8 Monitoring and Evaluation
9 Funding Availability and Accessibility
10 Supportive Policy Environment

Malone 2003
• Micro-level Synergies (School community)

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¹More of action research
²Mostly involved trainers from outside the area
• MTB-MLE Entanglement in a ‘Language War’

• Lack of Materials and Funding Inaccessibility
  • Avoidance of accountability (liquidations issues among school principals with the audit body, the Commission on Audit)
  • Lack of planning and ‘imagination’ in mobilizing non-DepEd funding sources

• Gaps in Policy and Practice
  • Funding as ‘provided for’ vs. ‘made available’
  • Materials development approval (provision vs. practice)

• Ambiguous Stakeholder Synergies and Relationships of Institutions Involved
• Disjointed Policy (RA vs IRR)
  • Section 4, RA 10533 vs Rule II, No. 10.4, IRR

  “. . . The Department of Education (DepED) shall formulate a mother language transition program from Grade 4 to Grade 6 so that Filipino and English shall be gradually introduced as languages of instruction until such time when these two (2) languages can become the primary languages of instruction at the secondary level.”

  “The curriculum shall develop proficiency in Filipino and English, provided that the first and dominant language of the learners shall serve as the fundamental language of education.”

  – Retains [bilingualism]
• Disjointed Policy (RA vs IRR)
  • Section 5 (h), RA 10533 vs Sec. 10.3, IRR

“. . . The production and development of locally produced teaching materials shall be encouraged and approval of these materials shall devolve to the regional and division education units.”

“The production and development of locally produced teaching and learning materials shall be encouraged. The approval of these materials shall be devolved to the regional and division education unit in accordance with national policies and standards.”
• ‘Imperfect’ synergies (unlinked key stakeholders)
  • Nevertheless, produce positive results (Q3) when any of the following champions the policy:
    • RD in the case of a Region
    • SDS in the case of a Division
    • Provincial governor or provincial level political leader(s), and CSOs
    • Principal at the school level
    • City/Municipal Mayor or city/municipality level political leader and CSOs
• Too few policy champions outside DepEd
  • Some DepEd leaders are, in fact, ‘reluctant’ policy champions
• Educational Outcomes
  • Increase in class participation and sense of belongingness (for quantification next phase)
  • Sustained interest (favorite subjects); tend to stay in school longer
  • Pupils less inhibited in class discussions
  • Feeling of a sense of **reclaimed identity**

• Empathic Relationship with Other Groups
  • Pupils mindful of their commonalities rather their differences (in varying degrees)

• Expression of Favor/Support from Stakeholders (esp. RXII)
  • LGUs, local NGOs, CSOs, even religious organizations (esp. in Central Mindanao)
    • Fosters inclusiveness and greater understanding and appreciation for diversity and multiculturalism
• Enrichment of local literature on MTB-MLE policy implementation
• (Greater and clearer) understanding on the state of language-in-education policy
• Determination of issues whether policy or operational in nature
• Provide the framework for theorizing MTB-MLE policies and practices, as well as possibilities
• Further Studies and Theory-building
  • Framework for understanding the interplay of principles/theories, policies and practices and on language, education and development

- national, regional and global goals
- aid and conditionalities
- market and other forces
- principles
- policies
- practices

PROSPECTS
• Further Studies and Theory-building
  • Deeper research in understanding the following questions
    • How much policy intervention is demanded to make practices hew closely to theories and principles?
    • How progressively theories recognize emerging/emergent practices?
    • How initiatives at the community level actually influence policy making at different levels?
  • Quantitative studies in measuring general outcomes and policy gains; impact assessment/evaluation
    • Provides argument for sustaining/scrapping the policy (especially during transitions)
• Semblance of correspondence in principles, policies and practices in the implementation
• DepEd’s unprecedented support for local languages, and in teachers training and materials development
• Limited awareness-raising and stakeholder mobilization, hence poor buy-in
• ‘Popcorn’ approaches and initiatives (LGUs, HEI/TEI, NGO, etc); less- to loosely- to uncoordinated action
• More HEI/TEI involvement is desirable
  • Documentation/evidence gathering
  • Action research especially in diverse classrooms
• Success and Sustainability Hinged on:
  • Broader and better understanding and appreciation of collaborative/participatory governance in education
    • Collective decision making (formal, consensus-oriented and deliberative) and collaborative planning
    • Dynamic interactions between government, business, and civil society organizations in the formulation of state policies, implementation of government programs, . . . and in ensuring government **transparency, accountability** and **citizen’s participation** (Lucas and Tolentino)
  • Commitments to stated and **fully contextualized** national, regional and global goals in education
    • Political will
    • Sustainable resource allocation
• Amendatory policy clarification
• Continuous and regular dialogue among key stakeholders to clarify their roles (especially LGUs, TEIs) to fully operationalize localization and contextualization
  • For shared social accountability
• Strengthening of program/policy monitoring and evaluation
• Capacity building for school administrators on financial risk management
• Active involvement of the academe for more evidence-based policy making
Thank you!

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