Regional Study on the Use of Languages in Classrooms in Ethnolinguistic Communities

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Rationale

- Quality learning at the heart of new education agenda
- Quality education is one which is relevant, meaningful and is delivered in the language spoken at home
- 221 million children are estimated to speak a different language at home from the language of instruction in school (GEFI, 2014)
- As much as 40% of the global population does not have access to an education in a language they speak or understand (Walter and Benson, 2012)
- 57% of the world’s out of school children live in communities where the language of instruction is different from the language used at home
- 75% of the 60 million out-of-school girls are from ethnic, religious, cultural or linguistic minorities (Lockheed and Lewis 2007)
Most international tests (PIRLS, PISA, TIMSS, PASEC), large scale surveys (DHS), and national assessments and sample studies (Nepal, Turkey, Viet Nam, Spain, Honduras, Iran, Peru, India, Guatemala, Benin, Côte d’ivoire) show poor academic performance for children who speak a different language at home from the language of instruction in school.

Studies show that to be taught in a language other than one’s own has a negative effect on learning (GMR 2016).

When home and school languages differ there is an adverse effect on test scores (World Inequality Database on Education).

Abundance of research confirms that using home language as language of instruction has a positive impact on learning and has multiple benefits (cognitive, non-cognitive/soft skills, social/cultural).
Ethnic minority children’s experiences in school classrooms is characterized as painful, torturous and humiliating - leading to dropout, failure, repetition, exclusion.

No systematic studies to examine the dynamics of language use in classrooms and to document children’s classroom experiences.

How does children’s learning experience differ in two settings?

How do different aspects/processes of school organization, including education policies, practices and pedagogies come into play in classrooms?

Gather evidence for a shift – advocacy for school enrollment to advocacy for improved learning outcomes.
Main Objective of the Study

- Document the dynamics of language use in school classrooms in ethnolinguistic communities and examine its implications for minority children’s participation in learning and their achievement.
Key Research Questions

- What are the **characteristics of communities** (geographical, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, economic, and social) of communities where MTB MLE is in use or not in use?

- What are the **physical, educational, and instructional conditions of schools** using MTB MLE teaching? What languages are used in school? What materials are used by teachers and learners?

- What are the **specific characteristics of MTB-MLE teachers** and how do they contrast with teachers in regular schools? Does teacher policy promote recruitment of local teachers? How are teachers trained, supported, and supervised for MTB-MLE teaching? What are the **working conditions of teachers**?

- What **MTB-MLE teaching arrangements/approaches** are being employed in different contexts? What instructional strategies and tools are in use and how effective are these strategies in facilitating teaching and learning in schools? How are curricula and syllabi adapted to the local contexts?
Key Research Questions (cont’d)

- What are teachers’ coping strategies if they do not speak the children’s language(s)?
- What are the perceptions and attitudes of different stakeholders towards MTB-MLE teaching?
- What are the social and educational impacts of MTB-MLE teaching on learners and local communities?
- What examples of innovative approaches and promising practices related to MTB-MLE teaching exist in the country?
- What are the impacts/implications of MLE policies on children’s education? What are the gaps in current policies?
- What are the ethnic minority children’s coping strategies to adjust in a learning environment that uses a different language?
- What are challenges experienced by teachers, learners, and administrators?
**Research Design/Approach**

- Exploratory in nature
- A generic research framework provided by UNESCO Bangkok, but allowing each country to make necessary modifications within the country context
- Uses a combination of policy analysis, quantitative survey and qualitative case study methods
- A macro-micro analysis of MTB-MLE
- Uses a **With** (MTB-MLE) and **Without** (MTB-MLE) design
- Research instruments designed through a participatory process
- Questionnaires for various individual and institutional respondents, checklists, interview/FGD guides, classroom observations tools, etc.
- Both qualitative and quantitative data collected from primary and secondary sources
Participating Countries

**Intended mix of countries**
- That have introduced MLE policies and have piloted and implemented MLE programs
- That are moving towards MLE policy
- That are yet to formulate and implement MLE policy.

**Participants:** Nepal, Philippines, Thailand and Viet Nam
Methodology: Instruments

- School survey form
- Questionnaire for head teachers
- Questionnaire for teachers
- FGDs with teachers
- FGDs with policymakers
- Interview guide for NGOs and international development agencies
- Interview guide for parents and community members
- Interview guide for teacher education institutions
- Interview guide for supervisors/resource persons
- Interview guide for School Management Committee Members
## Methodology: Sample Size

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>Nepal</th>
<th>Philippines</th>
<th>Thailand</th>
<th>Viet Nam</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of sample schools with MTB-MLE</td>
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<td>25</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of schools without MTB-MLE</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>No. of school heads completing the questionnaire</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>14</td>
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<td>11</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of teachers completing the questionnaire</td>
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<tr>
<td>No. of officials (supervisors, district officials etc.) completing the questionnaire</td>
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<td>FGDs with teachers</td>
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<td>FGDs with students</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<td>Viet Nam</td>
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<td>No. of classrooms observed</td>
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Next Steps

- A regional synthesis based on country case studies
- Policy briefs discussing the policy implications for advocacy
Thank you!