

THE PERCEIVED EFFECT OF THE ABOLITION OF MOTHER TONGUE-BASED EDUCATION IN THE MATATAG CURRICULUM

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Abstract— This study looks into how the abolition of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) under the MATATAG Curriculum affects pupils, teachers, and parents at St. Louis College of Bulanao (SLCB) Elementary School. It explores how this change in policy affects students' learning, use of language, and connection to their culture. The research also examines the possible benefits and problems that come with the removal of mother tongue as a subject in the early years of education. A qualitative method was used, where the researchers interviewed 15 people including teachers, pupils, and parents. Their answers were grouped and studied using thematic analysis to find common ideas about understanding lessons, teaching methods, cultural identity, and academic development. The results showed mixed opinions. Some people said the change helps pupils focus on learning English early, which can help them in the future. Others were worried that it may cause students to understand less and lose touch with their culture. Teachers also pointed out difficulties in teaching students with different language backgrounds. The study suggests using both English and local languages in class, training teachers better, and using different ways of teaching to help students adjust. Future research should look at the long-term effects of this change on students' learning and how parents and communities can support children as they learn new languages.

Keywords— *Matatag Curriculum, Language Policy Change, Students Learning Outcomes, Cultural Identity, Learning Challenges, Cultural Identity, Learning Challenge, Bilingual Education, Parental Perception*

I. INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education's (DepEd) MATATAG Curriculum, or other known as the Republic Act No. 12027, passed by the Philippine government in 2024, ended the use of the mother tongue as the primary language of teaching for students in Kindergarten through Grade 3 which eliminates mother tongue as a topic to improve educational achievements and streamline the curriculum, is in line with the legislative amendment. Nonetheless, schools will continue to use the mother tongue as a teaching language. This study intends to investigate how this policy change is seen to affect students, teachers, and the educational system as a whole, offering insights into how it may affect early childhood teaching and learning.

Language is key to education and cultural identity as well as to being an instrument of communication. It forms the foundation for cognitive development and knowledge learning, influencing how people interact with society and connect to their ancestry. Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) has become more common around the world as a result of becoming aware that language is essential for improving learning results and maintaining cultural diversity.

MTB-MLE is a method of instruction, particularly during the early years of schooling, uses the mother tongue or first language of the learners as the primary medium of teaching. This approach encourages multilingualism by

introducing new languages slowly. By offering teaching in a language that students are familiar with, MTB-MLE has been shown to greatly improve their academic achievement, understanding, and participation (Chiatoh and Chiatoh, 2021).

Additionally, it is important for the preservation of indigenous languages and cultural history, ensuring that pupils stay deeply connected to their heritage. Research like those conducted by Angelo et al. (2019) and Facullo et al. (2022) shows how MTB-MLE helps learners build both cultural pride and inclusion.

Republic Act 10533, also referred to as the "Enhanced Basic Education Act of 2013," requires all public schools in the Philippines to teach students in their mother tongue from Kindergarten through Grade 3, covering 19 officially recognized regional languages. This law mandates the implementation of MTB-MLE. In line with global developments in education, the Department of Education is implementing the MTB-MLE with the goal of improving literacy, numeracy, and basic educational outcomes by taking into consideration the country's unique cultural and linguistic diversity (Draper, 2019). Another claim made by Canlas et al. (2021) is that Filipinos' four other macro skills speaking, listening, reading, and writing will continue to improve from Grades 2 through 6. The purpose of a multilingual education program is to assist children in developing the cognitive and reasoning skills required to communicate well in multiple languages, starting with their mother tongue.

MTB-MLE has shown possibility, even though it is not without challenges. Along with limited opportunities for professional growth, educators are often unable to find teaching materials and tools in regional languages (Facullo et al., 2022). Parents and community members who value English or Filipino for claimed advantages in social and economic advancement are opposed in some places. There are also challenges for both teachers and students when moving from mother tongue instruction to secondary language education. The effectiveness of the current system is reportedly weakened by operational shortcomings and poor monitoring, according to critics (Chin, 2021; Draper, 2019). To ensure the program's success, these problems highlight the importance of more research and changes to the policy.

In Kalinga, Cosmiano et al. (2023) conducted a seminar-workshop on Kalinga Linguistics and Multi-lingual Education to explore the complexities of the Kalinga language and address contemporary challenges in its teaching. The event emphasized the importance of incorporating a multilingual, multicultural, and multidisciplinary approach to Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). Dr. Elizabeth Calinawagan, an expert in Philippine linguistics, highlighted how the MTB-MLE framework supports language preservation and education, particularly through culturally responsive teaching methods. These efforts align with the broader goals of MTB-MLE to enhance learning outcomes

while fostering cultural identity, making them a relevant context for this study.

In an effort to improve educational outcomes and streamline the curriculum, the Philippines recently passed Republic Act No. 12027 in 2024, which ended the use of the mother tongue as the primary medium of instruction for Kindergarten through Grade 3. This policy change has important implications for early childhood education, specifically in relation to language development, cultural identity, and academic performance. Research shows that Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) has been instrumental in improving students' comprehension and engagement by using familiar languages in instruction. However, discontinuing mother tongue instruction may present challenges, such as possible declines in learning efficacy and the loss of cultural heritage. In order to ensure that the goals of educational improvement are fulfilled without risking the linguistic and cultural roots that enable overall student development, it is important that the effects of this policy change be carefully assessed.

Although previous research has demonstrated the advantages of MTB-MLE in improving learning results and maintaining cultural identity, little is known about how its termination affects different educational system stakeholders. Empirical research is specifically needed to evaluate how eliminating mother tongue instruction affects students' academic achievement, teachers' teaching methods, and the educational environment as a whole. Furthermore, there hasn't been any research done on how parents, teachers, and students feel about this policy change. To make evidence-based decisions and guarantee that educational innovations take into account the varied language and cultural settings of learners, these gaps must be filled.

II. METHODS

In order to investigate the experiences and viewpoints of pupils, teachers, parents, engaged in the abolition of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in the Philippines, this study employed a qualitative research design with structured interviews serving as the main data collection tool. Open-ended questions and answer used in structured interviews to elicit information about the effects abolition of MTB-MLE on language development, cultural identity, and academic accomplishment as well as the difficulties of its abolishment. Thematic analysis used to examine the responses in order to find and identify recurrent themes and patterns. This method guarantees a thorough yet consistent investigation of participants' perspectives, providing insightful knowledge of the advantages and disadvantages of MTB-MLE in various educational contexts.

Table 1. Distribution of the Respondents of the Study

Participants Group	n	%
Parents	5	35
Teachers	5	35

Pupils	5	30
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In order to conduct a thorough assessment of the discontinuation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) program at SLCB Elementary School. The participants include teachers, parents, pupils, future researchers, and the researchers themselves. Teachers shared their experiences and challenges in adapting to the policy change, providing a frontier view of its impact on instruction. Parents discussed their perceptions of how the abolition has affected their children's learning and cultural ties. Pupils from different grade levels chosen to share their firsthand experiences and reactions to the transition. Researchers interact with all of these groups to collect detailed information, guaranteeing a comprehensive understanding of the impact of the policy change on the school community. Future researchers may be consulted to offer an outside viewpoint on the study's design and possible implications.

Finally, depending on their experiences, participants was asked to offer suggestions for enhancing the MTB-MLE program. To guarantee ethical compliance, a letter of authorization from the school administration be sought prior to conducting the interviews. Face-to-face interviews enable an interesting conversation with participants. With permission, every session was videotaped in order to enable exact data gathering and analysis. To find important trends and visions relating to the application of MTB-MLE, the recorded data then be recorded and subjected to thematic analysis.

III. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Significant Opportunities Arise from the Abolition of Mother Tongue-Based Language as a Subject in Educational System

Theme 1: Enhanced Focus on English Languages

The respondents view the abolition of mother tongue instruction as an opportunity to prioritize English language learning. They see English proficiency as a key skill for effective communication in a globalized world, for accessing higher education, and for enhancing career prospects. The focus shifts from maintaining the mother tongue within the school curriculum to strengthening English language skills, with the belief that this will provide students with a competitive advantage in various aspects of their lives. For example, as an BA English we are confident to talk to various people using English because we focused on learning and speaking the language.

R1: English translation: For me, it is better that the mother tongue subject was removed because not all students are from Kalinga. This has a big impact, and children also experience stress when learning a language that is not their own.

R4: English translation: For me, the removal of the mother tongue is okay. It is even better that it was removed because when we go home, we naturally use our own mother tongue when talking with family and peers. It doesn't need to be added to the curriculum. The advantage of removing it is that students can now focus more on learning English, which they will use in the future. We won't be using the mother tongue when we reach higher levels of education.

Respondent7: Students may be better prepared for global opportunities as they will likely focus on wildy spoken language like English.

This view is strengthened by the strong social focus on English proficiency and its perceived importance. As detail by Mohamed and Lobo (2019), their study suggests that effective English language instruction improves comprehension and engagement, aligning with the wide trends in English language teaching within the education system.

Removing mother tongue-based language instruction from the curriculum brings both benefits and challenges. On one hand, students and teachers see this as an opportunity to focus more on learning English, which is widely used in education, business, and global communication. Many believe that stronger English skills will help students succeed in higher education and future careers. However, this change also creates challenges. Teachers need better training to effectively teach in English, and students may struggle with the transition, especially those who are more comfortable learning in their mother tongue. Some also worry that removing the mother tongue from schools may weaken cultural identity and limit students' ability to stand out fully. To make this shift successful, schools must provide proper support, such as teacher training, engaging learning materials, and strategies to help students adjust. Future research should explore how this change affects students' academic performance and language development over time

Theme 2: Making Learning Simpler and More Engaging

Respondents suggest that abolishing mother tongue instruction can make learning simpler and more focused. The presence of multiple languages in a classroom can create challenges for both teachers and students. For teachers, it can complicate instruction and resource allocation. By reducing the focus on multiple languages, it is argued that the learning environment becomes less complex, allowing for more direct instruction and potentially greater student engagement with the core subject matter. In educational settings, here in our province Kalinga that has several languages, classrooms are often multilingual, with students speaking various mother tongues. For example, a mathematics subject that is being explain in Ilocano, it it not easy to explain mathematics subject using mother tongue because there is math terminology of words that does not translated in Ilocano as well as science.

R2: One opportunity is for children from rural areas who move to the city. If they do not understand English or Ilocano and have no one to interpret for them, they will struggle.

R6: Teachers can devote more time and resources to other essential subjects like math, science, English and etc. By emphasizing a specific mother tongue, students from linguistic background can engage more easily with each cultural exchange and understanding.

R9: It's just the same because it depends on the teacher whether they will use the mother tongue. We have to consider the differences in students' languages. For example, if the mother tongue of these eight pupils is English, then when we have a Filipino subject, I will also use English. So, the opportunities remain the same—it just depends on the teacher and the learners. We need to adjust even if the mother tongue is removed because students will just be confused if you don't translate.

The respondents' belief that removing mother tongue instruction can simplify the learning environment. The respondents suggest that the presence of multiple languages poses challenges for teachers and students, potentially clogging effective instruction. This view aligns with the difficulties in MTB-MLE implementation attributed to linguistic diversity and resource restraint, as supported by Perez (2019).

Respondents believe that removing mother tongue instruction can simplify the learning process, making it more direct and engaging. They argue that having multiple languages in the classroom can be confusing for both teachers and students, particularly in subjects like mathematics and science, where certain terms do not have direct translations. By focusing on a common language, students from different linguistic backgrounds may find it easier to learn and adapt, especially when transitioning to urban schools where the dominant language of instruction is different from their native tongue. This perspective aligns with Perez (2019), who highlighted that linguistic diversity and limited resources pose challenges to the effective implementation of MTB-MLE. The respondents' statements suggest that streamlining language instruction can help teachers allocate more time and resources to core academic subjects, ultimately improving overall learning outcomes.

Theme 3: Facilitating Early English Exposure

Respondents perceive that removing mother tongue instruction allows for earlier and more intensive English language exposure. They believe that this early immersion in English gives students a significant advantage in developing strong English language skills. This is seen as important because English proficiency is often linked to better academic performance, increased access to higher education, and improved employability in a globalized world. Early exposure

is thought to make students more comfortable and fluent in English over time, benefiting them in educational and professional settings. Comparing a pupil that is fluent in English, pupil that is fluent make him/her easier to understand English based instructions, participating in class discussions and writing essays. Pupil who are not is perceived to struggle with these tasks leading to potential frustration and lower academic performance.

Respondent3: Children become even more skilled in English speaking. Even at daycare or as early as three years old, they are already speaking in English, which is better.

Respondent5: It is the learning of the other language such as English and especially the Filipino language

Respondent10: Learners will be more exposed to English or national language, which many improve communication and be globally competitive.

This study supports the idea that early exposure to a language improves overall learning outcomes. It emphasizes that learning in a familiar language is essential for effective education, but also acknowledges that structured immersion in a second language like English can be beneficial for global competitiveness. Respondents believe that eliminating mother tongue instruction allows for earlier and more immersive exposure to English, giving students a head start in developing strong language skills. They argue that early fluency in English benefits students academically by making it easier to understand lessons, participate in discussions, and complete written tasks. In contrast, those with limited English proficiency may struggle with these activities, leading to frustration and lower academic performance. This perspective aligns with UNESCO (2022), which acknowledges that early exposure to a second language, when properly structured, can enhance overall learning outcomes and global competitiveness. While the study also stresses the importance of learning in a familiar language, it recognizes the benefits of systematic English immersion for students aiming for higher education and career opportunities in an increasingly interconnected world.

Challenges Educators Might Encounter by The Abolition of Mother Tongue-Based Language Education

Theme 1: Difficulties in Language Comprehension

The abolition of mother tongue-based education can create real challenges for students in comprehending the curriculum, and this is reflected in the personal experiences and observations of the respondents. When students are taught in a language they haven't fully mastered, it can lead to difficulties in understanding instructions, grasping complex ideas, and participating effectively in class discussions. This, in turn, can result in decreased academic performance, reduced

engagement, and frustration among students, as seen in the respondents' record.

R2: Young children do not always have the ability to determine whether they understood what was taught or not).

R5: One is language barrier, students may struggle to understand instructions and curriculum content delivered in a language they're not familiar with.

R7: Research shows that children learn best in their mother tongue, especially in the early years. Without it, students may struggle to grasp basic concepts, heading to poor academic performances.

Arevalo (2022) found that schools using Cebuano or Binisaya as their primary language often struggle due to a lack of teaching resources, making comprehension difficult for students and this support the respondents. Oda & Vizconde (2021) also discovered that students preferred Filipino over Kapampangan despite MTB-MLE, indicating a struggle with the formal use of their native language in academic settings. The removal of mother tongue-based education poses challenges for students in understanding their lessons. Respondents express concerns that students who are not yet proficient in the language of instruction may struggle with grasping complex ideas, following instructions, and actively participating in class discussions. This difficulty can lead to poor academic performance, decreased engagement, and increased frustration among learners. Arevalo (2022) supports this concern by highlighting that schools using Cebuano or Binisaya often face comprehension difficulties due to a lack of teaching resources. Similarly, Oda & Vizconde (2021) found that students preferred Filipino over Kapampangan despite MTB-MLE implementation, suggesting that some learners struggle with the formal use of their native language in academic settings. These studies reinforce the respondents' belief that language barriers can hinder effective learning when the medium of instruction is not well understood by students.

Theme 2: Cultural Identity Crisis

Mother tongue plays an important role in preserving cultural heritage, traditions and sense of belonging, when mother tongue education is abolished and replaced it English it can lead to a weaker connection with one's native culture. Students may have less exposure to their heritage language leading to less fluency and less engagement with cultural practices tied to that language. Example, a pupil from a particular community here in our province and its mother tongue is English, he/she might feel confused about who is he/she "I am part of this culture or I am not"? they won't be able to understand community's culture if he doesn't understand its language.

R6: Student from diverse linguistic backgrounds might struggle to understand and communicate in the dominant language used in the school. Lead to a disconnection from student's cultural heritage and identity.

R8: Loss of cultural and contextual relevance and Loss of identity.

R10: Difficulty in teaching complex subjects to early learners who struggles with non-native language. Loss of cultural identity.

Nishanti (2020) emphasizes that the mother tongue plays a crucial role in shaping personal and cultural identity, as it helps individuals understand their heritage, surroundings, and history. Similarly, Students are empowered when MTB-MLE is implemented into the educational system because it ensures that instruction is fair and aligns with their cultural identity (DepEd, 2019). The removal of mother tongue-based education can lead to a weakened connection to cultural heritage, traditions, and personal identity. Respondents express concerns that replacing mother tongue instruction with English may result in students losing fluency in their native language, reducing their ability to engage with cultural practices tied to that language. This disconnection can create identity confusion, especially for students from diverse linguistic backgrounds who may struggle to understand the cultural context of their communities. Nishanti (2020) supports this concern by emphasizing that the mother tongue is essential for shaping personal and cultural identity, helping individuals connect with their heritage and history. Similarly, the Department of Education (2019) highlights that MTB-MLE empowers students by ensuring that instruction is culturally relevant and aligned with their identity. These studies reinforce the respondents' belief that language is a key factor in preserving cultural identity, and its removal from the curriculum could lead to a loss of cultural awareness and belonging.

Theme 3: Difficulties in teaching lessons using multi-language

The transition away from MTB-MLE, especially in diverse classrooms where students possess varying linguistic backgrounds, introduces significant pedagogical, logistical, and communicative challenges for teachers. This theme examines the increased burden and complexity of their role in such contexts. Teachers must then develop and implement new pedagogical approaches to cater to students with diverse linguistic needs. Developing and utilizing bilingual or multilingual teaching materials and resources, employing differentiated instruction techniques, Incorporating translanguaging strategies. Think about a classroom, children speak in different languages, a teacher needs to translate the lesson in many languages in order for the kids to understand the lesson.

R1: Every pupil has their own dialect, which makes it difficult for educators, especially those who are not from Kalinga. It is a big challenge for teachers who are not from the region, so it is better that it was abolished.

R4: My child experienced stress because they couldn't understand the mother tongue subject, which wasn't even their first language.

R9: Of course, when using the mother tongue, teaching feels more comfortable. When it was removed, it became more challenging because English is now the medium of instruction. Since we are now focused on English and Filipino, explaining lessons has become more difficult.

Arevalo (2022) found that schools using Cebuano or Binisaya as their primary language often struggle due to a lack of textbooks and teaching resources, forcing teachers to rely on alternative strategies like writing lessons on the board, which can be time-consuming and ineffective. Similarly, Sibanda (2019) highlighted that in South Africa, students' diverse linguistic backgrounds created learning obstacles, making it challenging for teachers to bridge comprehension gaps. Both studies emphasize how insufficient resources and multilingual classroom settings contribute to the difficulties educators face in delivering effective instruction.

The removal of mother tongue-based education presents significant challenges for teachers, particularly in linguistically diverse classrooms where students speak different dialects. Without a shared mother tongue, educators must develop new strategies such as multilingual teaching materials, differentiated instruction, and translanguaging techniques to bridge comprehension gaps. This shift increases their workload and complicates lesson delivery, as highlighted by respondents who note that teachers struggle to explain lessons effectively in English and Filipino. Parents also express concerns about their children's difficulties in understanding subjects not taught in their first language. Studies by Arevalo (2022) and Sibanda (2019) support these concerns, showing that linguistic diversity and insufficient resources create additional learning barriers, making it harder for teachers to deliver effective instruction.

How Parents, Pupils, And Teachers Perceive the Abolition of Mother Tongue-Based Languages as Subjects in School

Theme 1: Concerns About Learning and Comprehension

The difficulties and worries related to student's understanding of their lessons; it's about how students might struggle when they are not being taught in their native language. Imagine a pupil who speaks one language at home but is taught in a different language at school, they might not understand or comprehend what is being taught and this make them harder to learn it can lead to them not doing well in school. It is also challenges to teachers for they will face difficulties when they

are trying to teach students who are struggling with the language.

R2: Young children do not always have the ability to determine whether they understood what was taught or not.

R4: My child experienced stress because they couldn't understand the mother tongue subject, which wasn't even their first language.

R5: One is language barrier, students may struggle to understand instructions and curriculum content delivered in a language they're not familiar with.

Oda and Vizconde (2021) found that students preferred Filipino over their native Kapampangan despite the implementation of MTB-MLE, suggesting difficulties in fully grasping academic content in their designated mother tongue. Similarly, Gumalal and Vilbar (2019) observed that teachers encountered challenges in using the mother tongue for subjects like science due to students' limited proficiency in its formal academic use. These studies highlight how language barriers in education can hinder students' comprehension and overall learning experience, reinforcing concerns about their ability to fully understand lessons when instructed in an unfamiliar language.

Parents, pupils, and teachers express concerns about the impact of abolishing mother tongue-based education on student comprehension and learning outcomes. Many fear that young learners may struggle to grasp lessons when taught in an unfamiliar language, leading to stress and academic difficulties. Teachers also face challenges in effectively delivering instruction when students have limited proficiency in the language of instruction. Parents, like one respondent, note that their children find it difficult to understand lessons that are not in their first language. Studies by Oda and Vizconde (2021) and Gumalal and Vilbar (2019) support these concerns, highlighting how language barriers can hinder learning, especially in subjects requiring technical vocabulary. This perception underscores the importance of using language students are comfortable with to facilitate better understanding and engagement in the classroom.

Theme 2: Acknowledgment of Potential Benefits

There are possible advantages in shifting language instruction. Some stakeholders see benefits such as improved English proficiency, better career opportunities, and enhanced global communication skills. They believe that early exposure to English can help students adapt more easily to academic and professional environments. Despite concerns about cultural identity and learning challenges, supporters view this shift as a way to equip students with essential skills for the future. As students, I do agree that there are advantages of shifting to

English for it cannot only help us to be fluency with the said language but it has so many benefits like a better comprehension in English especially in so many issues that we saw on social media and in any platform that is need and reading comprehension." Despite concerns about cultural identity and learning challenges, supporters view this shift as a way to equip students with essential skills for the future.

R3: Children become even more skilled in English speaking. Even at daycare or as early as three years old, they are already speaking in English, which is better.

R6: Parents, pupils and teachers generally support mother tongue-based education recognizing its benefits improving student understanding participation and academic performance. However, some concern exists about the potential impact on English proficiency and future opportunities.

R10: Learners will be more exposed to English or national language, which many improve communication and be globally competitive.

Early exposure to English is believed to help students adapt more easily to academic and professional environments, equipping them with essential skills for the future. Arevalo (2022) emphasized that English proficiency can enhance students' career prospects and global competitiveness. Some parents and teachers recognize potential benefits in shifting language instruction from the mother tongue to English. They believe that early exposure to English enhances students' proficiency, improves comprehension, and prepares them for better career opportunities and global communication. Some respondents argue that young children who start learning English early become more fluent and adaptable to academic and professional settings. While concerns about cultural identity and learning challenges persist, supporters see this shift as equipping students with essential skills for future success. Arevalo (2022) highlights that English proficiency plays a crucial role in enhancing students' competitiveness in the global workforce, reinforcing the belief that an early focus on English can provide long-term advantages.

Theme 3: Adaptation of new Instructional Strategies

When mother tongue-based education is abolished, teachers often need to change how to teach, they are no longer rely on the methods they used before. Teachers have to find ways to teach pupils who have different levels of proficiency in the language of instruction, this means they need to adjust their teaching to meet the needs of all pupils. These changes can make a teacher's job more difficult, and it can increase their workload and create challenges in teaching effectively. Let's think about this if we abolished mother tongue, teachers must be fluent in English or Tagalog, using simple English words and instruction pupils will be able to comprehend the lesson.

R1: Every pupil has their own dialect, which makes it difficult for educators, especially those who are not from Kalinga. It is a big challenge for teachers who are not from the region, so it is better that it was abolished.

R7: Provide intensive training for teachers to improve their fluency in the new language instruction.

Sibanda (2021) emphasized the increased workload and the necessity for continuous learning among educators. These adaptations create additional challenges for teachers, as they must develop innovative methods to effectively deliver lessons while ensuring that students understand the content. The abolition of mother tongue-based education requires teachers to adapt their instructional strategies to meet the diverse linguistic needs of students. Teachers must adjust their teaching methods, simplify language use, and ensure that all pupils can comprehend lessons, which increases their workload and creates additional challenges. Fluency in English or Filipino becomes essential, requiring educators to continuously improve their language skills and instructional techniques. Some respondents suggest that intensive teacher training is necessary to ease this transition. Sibanda (2021) highlights that such adjustments place added pressure on teachers, making it crucial to provide them with adequate support to ensure effective teaching and learning.

Perceived Benefits of The Abolition of Mother Tongue-Based Education Over Other Language Instruction Models

Theme 1: Prioritizing English Instruction

Prioritizing English instruction can enhance students' language skills, preparing them for academic and professional opportunities. Respondents view English proficiency as essential for global communication, higher education, and career advancement. They argue that early exposure and consistent use of English in education can improve fluency and confidence, giving students a competitive edge in a globalized world. English is often seen as primary for employment. For example, being able to speak English can open doors to working abroad, in business, and it facilitates communication with both national and international clients. Many companies require English as the primary language for these reasons, making it important to prioritize English instruction.

R1: For me, it is better that the mother tongue subject was removed because not all students are from Kalinga.

R4: For me, the removal of the mother tongue is okay. It is even better that it was removed because when we go home, we naturally use our own mother tongue when talking with family and peers. It doesn't need to be added to the curriculum. The advantage of removing it is that students can now focus more on learning English, which

they will use in the future. We won't be using the mother tongue when we reach higher levels of education.

Respondent 6: Abandoning mother tongue-based education can lead to improve English proficiency and better academic performance.

Oda & Vizconde (2021) found that students preferred Filipino over their local language in academic settings, indicating a shift in linguistic preference toward a more widely spoken language. This supports the idea that prioritizing English instruction may help students adapt to a globalized world. Prioritizing English instruction is seen as beneficial for students' academic and professional success, as it enhances their language skills and prepares them for opportunities in a globalized world. Respondents argue that early exposure to English improves fluency, confidence, and communication skills, which are essential for higher education and employment. Many believe that since students naturally use their mother tongue at home, focusing on English in school allows them to develop proficiency in a language that offers broader career prospects. Oda & Vizconde (2021) support this view, noting that students often prefer widely spoken languages like Filipino over their local mother tongue in academic settings, reinforcing the argument for emphasizing English instruction.

Theme 2: Preparation for Future Opportunities

The respondents said that speaking English can prepare pupils for future opportunities, for higher education, for employment, for global communication and enhanced adaptability. when I stepped in tertiary, I am not confident to speak with teachers and classmate for I don't know how to speak English fluently and I rarely join activities at school for I am afraid that I might make mistake when speaking English. Nowadays, English proficiency is one requirement for many jobs, employers seek individuals who communicate effectively in English and English is global language and we will be able to connect and collaborate with other countries when we know how to speak the English.

R7: Students may be better prepared for global opportunities as they will likely focus on widely spoken language like English."

R10: Learners will be more exposed to English or national language, which many improve communication and be globally competitive.

Abrea et al. (2020) studied the importance of transitioning from the mother tongue to English for improved comprehension and academic performance. It emphasizes that English proficiency helps students develop essential skills for higher education and employment in the future. Emphasizing English instruction is seen as a way to prepare students for

future academic and career opportunities. Respondents believe that fluency in English enhances adaptability, confidence, and global communication skills, which are essential for higher education and employment. Many students struggle with English when they enter tertiary education, limiting their participation and confidence in academic settings. Since English proficiency is often a job requirement, focusing on English early on can give students a competitive edge in the workforce. Abrea et al. (2020) highlight that transitioning from the mother tongue to English improves comprehension and academic performance, reinforcing its long-term benefits.

Theme 3: Focused Language Improvement

The argument that a focused approach to language education, particularly on a primary language like English, can streamline the learning process and enhance language development. Respondents argue that when educational systems shift away from multilingual approaches and concentrate on a primary language, it can create a more focused environment for language learning. This is because learning other languages becomes more efficient when students are not dividing their attention and cognitive resources among multiple languages. For example, in a BA English program, a focused approach on English instruction simplifies the learning process. If we, as BA English students, used only English, it would simplify lessons, eliminating the need to switch between languages like Tagalog. This focused environment allows for greater development of our ability to speak and write English fluently.

R2: One opportunity is for children from rural areas who move to the city. If they do not understand English or Ilocano and have no one to interpret for them, they will struggle.

R5: Since, we always talk mother tongue in home and outside school, the abolition of mother tongue makes students learn other language such as the English and our own Filipino language. They have more time to engage in learning other language aside from our mother tongue.

Their study highlights how transitioning from the mother tongue to English enhances comprehension and language proficiency. They argue that a focused approach to English instruction allows students to develop stronger skills in communication and academic writing (Abrea et al., 2020). A focused approach to language education, particularly in English, is seen as beneficial in streamlining the learning process and improving language proficiency. Respondents argue that concentrating on a primary language allows students to develop stronger communication and writing skills without the cognitive burden of managing multiple languages. This shift is particularly useful for students from rural areas who may struggle with language adaptation in urban settings. Additionally, since students already use their mother tongue at

home and in their communities, dedicating school time to learning English and Filipino provides more opportunities for fluency. Abrea et al. (2020) emphasize that transitioning from mother tongue instruction to English enhances comprehension and overall language proficiency, making students better prepared for academic and professional success.

Strategies Be Employed to Overcome the Obstacles of Abolishing the Implementation of Mother Tongue-Based Education

Theme 1: Utilizing Bilingual or Multilingual Approaches

This addresses the idea that instead of focusing solely on one language (like English), educators can use a combination of languages to help students learn more effectively. It emphasizes the potential benefits of bilingual or multilingual strategies in the classroom. Using only English would not be able to understand by other children who are not English speaking. During first year college, when we our conducting online class i don't understand what our instructor is talking because for its too fast when explaining the lesson and I am not use to listen using English language even I am listening attentively, when she used to both Ilocano ang English I finally understand. So, employing bilingual mode of instruction would help children that is English speaking and children who don't

R2: A bilingual strategy, Tagalog and Kalinga. Teachers should continue teaching, but if a student does not fully understand the lesson, they need to be taught or have the question interpreted for them. For example, if a question is in English or Tagalog, it should be translated into Ilocano for better comprehension.

R6: To overcome the obstacles of abolishing mother tongue-based education schools can employ strategies such as bilinguals or multilingual education programs, language support services and culturally responsive teaching methods.

R10: Use bilingual in teaching learners to ease them in learning the second language.

Lang-ay & Sannadan (2020) argue that multilingual education provides a bridge for students transitioning to second-language learning by reinforcing their understanding through familiar linguistic structures. Utilizing bilingual or multilingual approaches can help ease the transition from mother tongue-based instruction to an English or Filipino-focused curriculum. Respondents emphasize that using a combination of languages in teaching can aid comprehension, particularly for students who are not yet proficient in English. For instance, incorporating the mother tongue alongside English in early education can help students gradually adapt to a new language without hindering their learning. Additionally, bilingual instruction allows teachers to clarify complex

concepts and ensure that students grasp lessons effectively. Lang-ay & Sannadan (2020) highlight that multilingual education serves as a bridge for students, reinforcing their understanding through familiar linguistic structures, which can support their gradual transition to a second language.

Theme 2: Enhancing Teacher Training and Support

Enhancing support and training for teacher would make them learn and acquire more or new ideas and techniques, developing strategies for teaching vocabulary, grammar, and pronunciation in multiple languages, how to effectively transition from a mother tongue-based instruction, to a second language-based instruction. The abolition of mother tongue would make switch them to other techniques that would be suitable for the children.

R6: Additionally, providing teachers with training and resources or language instruction and cultural diversity can help.

R7: Provide intensive training for teachers to improve their fluency in the new language instruction.

Enhancing teacher training and support is crucial in ensuring a smooth transition from mother tongue-based instruction to English or Filipino as the primary language of instruction. Respondents emphasize that teachers need intensive training to improve their fluency, develop effective instructional strategies, and adapt their teaching methods to support students in learning a second language. Providing teachers with resources, professional development programs, and cultural competency training can help them effectively navigate this shift. Cruz (2019) highlights that while many teachers create their own materials to address students' learning needs, this approach is unsustainable without proper institutional support. Investing in teacher training ensures that educators are well-equipped to teach language skills, facilitate student comprehension, and maintain instructional quality despite changes in language policy.

Theme 3: Utilizing Varied Instructional Techniques and Resources

Students learn in different ways. Some students are visual learners, others are auditory, and some are kinesthetic (learn by doing). To effectively teach language, educators need to use a variety of techniques and resources that appeal to these different learning styles. Using flashcards with pictures to teach new words, showing videos with subtitles to improve listening comprehension, or creating mind maps to organize ideas. Teachers need to create differentiated activities that help the students who are still having a hard time with the second language, by using more visual aids, and contextual learning.

R7: Use visual aids, storytelling and digital tools to make learning in the second language more engaging.

R8: Curriculum adaptation and inclusive Parental and community engagement Teachers training and support

Gumalal & Vilbar (2019) observed that many multilingual students have difficulty with the "pure" form of their mother tongue, making it challenging for teachers to use it in academic subjects like science. Ramos (2019) emphasized that educators have urged policymakers to examine the long-term impacts of MTB-MLE and develop solutions to address structural challenges, such as educational inconsistencies and limited resources. These challenges impact the ability of teachers to use varied instructional techniques that cater to different learning styles. Ensuring that educators receive adequate training and support, along with sufficient materials like visual aids, digital tools, and differentiated instruction strategies, is necessary to maximize students' learning experiences.

Utilizing varied instructional techniques and resources is essential in overcoming the challenges of abolishing mother tongue-based education. Since students have different learning styles visual, auditory, and kinesthetic teachers need to employ diverse strategies such as PowerPoint presentations, visual aids, storytelling, and digital tools to enhance language comprehension and engagement. Gumalal & Vilbar (2019) note that many multilingual students struggle with the "pure" form of their mother tongue, making it difficult for teachers to use it in academic subjects, while Ramos (2019) highlights structural challenges like inconsistent implementation and limited resources that hinder effective teaching. To address these issues, schools must provide teachers with adequate materials and training in differentiated instruction strategies, ensuring access to tools like videos, mind maps, and interactive learning methods to help students develop stronger language skills and transition more effectively to English or Filipino-based instruction.

Ways On How the Abolition of Mother Tongue Language Education Strengthen Students' Academic Development

Theme 1: Increased Focus on English Proficiency

The respondents' statements reveal a clear shift in educational priorities, where English is positioned as a fundamental tool for future success. This perspective emphasizes the practical benefits of English proficiency, extending beyond mere linguistic ability to encompass academic and professional advantages. Social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram are used by people from all over the world, and English is often the common language. For example, young people who are fluent in English can connect with people from different countries, share ideas, and participate in global conversations.

R1: It is better that the mother tongue was removed because we should prioritize English and Tagalog.

R3: Children become even more skilled in English speaking. Even at daycare or as early as three years old, which is better.

R4: English is the language that is mostly used now, I use my mother tongue but I also learned English from my children and I am confident in communicating with my clients because of it.

The shift toward prioritizing English proficiency in education is seen as a means to enhance students' academic and professional opportunities. Respondents emphasize that mastering English early on enables better communication in global platforms such as social media and professional interactions. Additionally, early exposure to English can build confidence and fluency, which are essential for engaging in higher education and competitive careers. Lopez et al. (2019) found that elementary school teachers tend to use less academic vocabulary in subjects like science and mathematics when teaching in the mother tongue, suggesting that an English-focused curriculum may better equip students with the technical language needed for academic success. By strengthening students' exposure to English, the abolition of mother tongue-based education is perceived as a way to improve their ability to comprehend complex subjects, participate in global discussions, and prepare for future employment.

Theme 2: Develop cognitive skills

Respondents argue that learning multiple languages is not just a communication tool, but a powerful way to enhance your brain's cognitive abilities, leading to better learning and thinking skills. One student speaks English and Tagalog fluently, when the student faced with difficult math problem, he's able to approach it from different angles, drawing on his experience with different languages structure. He's able also able to remember complex formulas more easily because his memory has been strengthened by learning two languages. When the student writes an essay, he's able to use creative language and express himself in a unique way.

R6: Students have shown that immersing in the target language can enhance language acquisition and cognitive, ultimately benefiting student's future academic and professional pursuits.

R7: Abolishing mother tongue-based education can help pupils in several ways such as better skills global languages, improve thinking and problem solving and easier access to higher education.

R10: Learners may develop better proficiency in national or global language potentially benefiting career opportunities.

This is supported by Omar and Sa-id (2023) study at Mindanao State University, examining students' cognitive attitudes toward English as a Medium of Instruction (EMI). Their findings revealed that most respondents believe English should be the primary language of instruction due to its role in enhancing cognitive abilities and academic performance. The study showed that students demonstrated a strong agreement with the idea that learning subjects in English facilitates language proficiency and higher-order thinking skills. These findings support the argument that exposure to a second language strengthens students' ability to analyze, reason, and solve problems effectively, making them more adept in academic and professional settings.

Theme 3: More Time for Other Academic Subjects

The belief that multilingual instruction, particularly when incorporating mother tongue-based education alongside other languages, creates a time and cognitive burden for both students and teachers. Respondents argue that this burden can detract from the focus and time needed for subjects like mathematics, science, and social studies. Imagine your school day. You have math, science, history, and language arts. Now, imagine you have to learn some of those subjects in two or three different languages. This theme is about how some people think getting rid of the extra languages in school would actually help you learn all your subjects better.

R3: Instead of having a mother tongue subject, why not extend the time for English, Mathematics, and Science? The time spent on mother tongue could be better used for developing children's cognitive skills.

R6: Teachers can devote more time and resources to other essential subjects like math, science, English and etc.

Jami & Keturah (2022) argued that multilingual education can create challenges in policy implementation, making it difficult to standardize educational approaches. Similarly, Sibanda (2019) observed that students in South Africa faced difficulties in learning due to the diversity of languages used in instruction. These studies suggest that making easier the language of instruction can reduce cognitive load and allow students and teachers to focus more on essential academic subjects such as mathematics, science, and social studies. By reducing the number of languages used in the curriculum, schools can allocate more time to strengthening students' comprehension and proficiency in critical disciplines.

The argument for dedicating more time to other academic subjects suggests that multilingual instruction, including mother tongue-based education, creates an additional cognitive

burden for both students and teachers, potentially limiting their ability to focus on core subjects like mathematics, science, and social studies. Respondents believe that removing the mother tongue subject would allow for expanded instructional time in critical areas, leading to better cognitive development. Jami & Keturah (2022) highlight challenges in policy implementation related to multilingual education, while Sibanda (2019) observed that students in South Africa struggled with learning due to the diversity of languages used in instruction. These studies suggest that simplifying the language of instruction can reduce cognitive overload and help students and teachers concentrate more on essential subjects, ultimately improving overall academic performance.

V.CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The abolition of mother tongue-based language education presents both opportunities and challenges that impact students, educators, and the overall learning process. It provides significant opportunities such as enhanced focus on English languages, making learning simpler and more engaging, and facilitating early English exposure. Educators encounter challenges of shifting from mother tongue including difficulties in language comprehension, cultural identity crisis, and difficulties in teaching lessons using multi-Language. Parents, pupils, and teachers have mixed perceptions about this change. Some express concerns about learning and comprehension, while others recognize Acknowledgment of Potential Benefits and work toward adaptation of new instructional strategies to adjust to the evolving curriculum. Research highlights the advantages of this transition, emphasizing prioritizing English instruction, preparation for future opportunities, and focused language improvement, which contribute to long-term educational and career growth. To address the challenges posed by this shift, several strategies can be implemented, such as utilizing bilingual or multilingual approaches, enhancing teacher training and support, and utilizing varied instructional techniques and resources to ensure that both students and educators can effectively navigate the new learning environment. The abolition of mother tongue-based education strengthens students' academic development through increased focus on English proficiency, developing cognitive skills, and more time for other academic subjects. While this transition requires adjustments, with proper support and strategies, it has the potential to enhance language acquisition, cognitive abilities, and academic success.

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