

Six years of MTB MLE: Revisiting Teachers' Language Attitude towards the Teaching of Chavacano

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Abstract - To gauge the success of the mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in the Philippines is tantamount to examining it in a milieu where its citizens speak a number of languages. Zamboanga City is credibly one of the cities in the country identified to be multilingual where its people speak about eight (8) languages, namely: Chavacano, Cebuano-Bisaya, Tausug, Sama, Yakan, Tagalog, Subanen, and Hiligaynon. This study surveys the MTB-MLE program in its sixth year of implementation. Specifically, it attempted to determine the general language attitude of the teacher-respondents in using Chavacano as a language of instruction, and the difficulties they faced in the classroom in using the mother tongue. The data were gathered through qualitative descriptive method using survey questionnaire and interview questions. A total of thirty-eight (38) teachers participated as respondents: thirty-two (32) answered the survey questionnaire, and six (6) partook in accomplishing the interview questions. The respondents all come from one of the biggest public primary school i.e. Don Gregorio Elementary Memorial School (DONGEMS), which is located at the heart of Zamboanga City where the implementation of MTB-MLE was seen to be much difficult since there are eight prevailing languages used by the people within the area. The findings revealed that teachers generally have negative attitude towards the use of Chavacano as language of instruction. Moreover, the respondents maintained that the problems in the initial implementation of the MTB-MLE policy have remained consistent with the difficulties they face at present. Specifically, these are the inadequate books/references written in mother tongue, lack or deficiency in vocabulary, and insufficient teacher training.

Keywords: MTB-MLE, Language of Instruction, Language Attitude, Ethnicity

INTRODUCTION

The issue on the success of the mother tongue-based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) in the country could conceivably best be answered by discussing it in one of the contexts or settings where a number of languages are spoken by people living right in the very heart of one city, such as the City of Zamboanga in Mindanao. *Chavacano, Cebuano-Bisaya, Tausug, Sama, Yakan, Tagalog, Subanen, and Hiligaynon* are the languages spoken by the people coming from different ethnic groups.

Given the multilingual setting in Zamboanga City, undertaking the first wave of the MTB-MLE was unquestionably an overwhelming endeavor, especially for teachers. In its first year of implementation, students/pupils in different public and private elementary schools were classified based on

ethnicity, e.g. the Tausugs were in one cluster, the Cebuanos/Visayans in another, the Chavacanos in one, etc.

Purposely, the Department of Education (DepEd), identified Chavacano as one of twelve provincial languages favored as language of instruction in public elementary schools in its first implementation of the MTB-MLE component in the K-12 program, [4]. Additionally, Cebuano-Bisaya and Tausug are the other two official languages in Zamboanga Peninsula, with Cebuano-Bisaya used by mmigrants from the Visayas and other parts of Mindanao, while the Tausug language is spoken by a number of city coastline inhabitants who originally come from Sulu and Tawi-Tawi.

Nevertheless, because of political implications (especially on issues of unification of Zamboanga as a city), Chavacano was

avored to be language of instruction for Kindergarten to grade three (3) in Zamboanga City. Accordingly, several non-Zamboangueño elementary pupils who were mostly Tausug and Cebuano-bisaya manifested difficulties in learning since they are unable to speak the chosen medium, and worst they are inept even in understanding the Chavacano language, which most teachers use as language of instruction in kindergarten, grades 1, 2 and 3 [4]. It has to be noted that the basic purpose of language as a language of instruction, promoting well-organized teaching and learning, has been the question engaging several researchers in the international community. Such issue on selection of a particular mother tongue to be language of instruction is prevalent in multilingual countries where a number of laws have been passed and amended through the years. However, despite the constant advances in language policies, disputes on the use of language, particularly in the field of education have persisted [5].

In relation to this, the Department of Education posited that the universal challenges faced in the preliminary implementation of the MTB-MLE encompassed two main predicaments: first, the struggle from teachers, who believe that they cannot properly deliver lessons using the mother tongue; and the insufficient or scarce resources, principally instructional materials [23].

Furthermore, in spite of the complications faced, the MTB-MLE has been perpetually implemented over the last six years. Department of Education representatives further argued that employing the mother tongue as language of instruction in the country is integral in the education sector. Consequently, enforcing the implementation of the use of mother tongue as language of instruction (DepEd order No. 74, series of 2009) [4].

Reasonably, the MTB-MLE is fundamental in the learning process. Several studies revealed that instruction using the mother tongue in the early stages enhances children's propensity to learn better when compared to the use of a second or foreign

language [22]. Also, in a study piloted in Nepal, it was found that children who were in a class instructed using languages dissimilar their first language, performed inadequately or poorly when it comes to cognitively related tasks, and most of them drop out from school [20].

Hence, in light of the prevailing pedagogical movements, teachers' attitudes regarding the use of the mother tongue have become a timely and essential concern. Likewise, due to the significant impact of MTBMLE on students' academic performance and the role of teachers in enforcing the policy in the grassroots level, the present study sought to answer the following:

1. What is the general language attitude of the teacher-respondents in using Chavacano as a language of instruction?
2. What are the difficulties faced by the teacher-respondents in the classroom in using the mother tongue?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study aimed at determining the general language attitudes and the difficulties or challenges encountered by teachers in using the mother tongue as language of instruction in the primary level.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

This study used the descriptive qualitative design of research to find out the language attitudes of teachers towards the use of Chavacano as language of instruction, and likewise to determine the challenges they encounter in teaching. In engaging in qualitative inquiry, researchers could probe into social, or socially fashioned phenomena over an in-depth analysis of entities or groups [2]. Moreover, qualitative research method aids in collecting data in a usual situation at the same time perceptive to the feelings and needs of individuals and/or communities under study. Similarly, it delves into data analyses, which is inductive thereby establishing patterns or themes. Subsequently, the researcher selected this particular method to achieve the objectives of the study at delving into the use of Chavacano

among Kindergarten and elementary teachers [2].

Purposely, the survey approach was employed to collect data in identifying the general language attitude of the respondents. A questionnaire of twelve (12) questions was used to pinpoint the Overall Language Attitude. This instrument was adapted from Burton’s (2013) study, which dealt with teachers and parents as respondents. However, the present study only focused on the teachers. This method complemented the intricacy of the interview, offering latitude of viewpoints from 38 teachers in the district from the target school [1]. Thus, the efficacy in which survey data could be collected is highlighted as a fundamental benefit of this method [6]. The teacher survey encompassed three parts: 1) demographics, 2) language learning, and 3) classroom instruction.

On the other hand, the language learning part of the survey adapted Ramos’ (2001) questionnaire that was intended to gauge teachers’ thoughts on the theory and practice of using native language instruction for language minority learners in the USA [21]. Purposely, this questionnaire was chosen since the items and the language used are closely related to the 2009 Department of Education order on MTB-MLE outcomes. Eight of the original twelve items were adapted to accommodate Philippine context. Four of the items were categorized under theory and the other four classified under practice [21]. The items describing practice were reverse coded. Overall the items were measured on a four point Likert scale with choices of strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree, which differed from Ramos’ seven-point Likert scale. The adaption was done intentionally to prevent confusion from respondents who were unfamiliar with this type of questioning. The classroom instruction part of the survey gauged the participants’ views on the significance of certain classroom practices in MTB-MLE. All respondents were asked to

specify which languages were currently used for instructional purposes in the classroom.

To identify the challenges met by teachers in using the mother tongue for instructions, the data were acquired mainly from interviews using semi-structure protocol [8]. The data were analyzed using qualitative content analysis that could be described as a research approach used for *‘the subjective interpretation of the content of text data across the methodical categorization process of coding and classifying themes or patterns’* (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005, p. 1278). The interview data analysis began with the transcription of the recorded interview. Recurrent reading of the transcripts was done followed by the coding, which was immediately followed with classifying provisional categories and subcategories. The Inductive method was used to establish the concepts that form the said categories as they emerged from the data. Similar method was constantly made and repeated in defining and redefining broad classifications or categories. Data belonging to the same category were grouped together.

Furthermore, the study used a purposive sampling. Mainly, inclusion criteria was set in determining whether the respondents were qualified to be part of the study, the criteria comprised the following: (1) The respondents should be public school elementary teachers; (2) The respondents’ teaching assignment should be either kinder, grade 1, 2 or 3; and lastly, (3) The respondent must have been teaching Mother Tongue as a subject not less than two (2) years.

A total of thirty-two (32) teachers participated as respondents to address research question one regarding the overall attitude towards the use of Chavacano as the language of instruction, and only six (6) respondents were interviewed to verify the challenges or difficulties teachers currently face despite the six year implementation of MTB-MLE for research question two.

Table 1. Teacher Participants by Ethnicity

First Language	Female	Male	Total	Percentage
Chavacano	11	4	15	46.88%
Tausug	5	4	9	28.13%

Sama	4	0	4	12.5%
Visaya/Cebuano	2	1	3	9.38%
Yakan	0	0	0	0.00%
Hiligaynon	0	1	1	3.13%
Total:	22 (68.75%)	10 (31.25%)	32	100%

Table 1 shows that among the thirty-two (32) respondents who answered the survey, the Chavacano group has the most number of participation with 11 female teachers, and four male teachers, averaging 46.88%. With 28.13%, the Tausug group ranked second with 5 female and 4 males teachers. There were only 4 female

teachers who participated, which placed them in third for the number of participation. There were only 3 respondents from the Cebuano group, and only 1 for Hiligaynon, which placed them in fourth and fifth ranks respectively. Unfortunately, there was no participation from the Yakan group.

Table 2. Teacher Demographics

Number of years Teaching	Total	Percentage
0-5	13	40.63%
6-10	8	25.00%
11-15	6	18.75%
16-20	2	6.25%
21-30	3	9.38%
31-35	0	0.00%

Table 2 shows the number of years in teaching. The highest number of respondents with an average of 40.63% comes from the teachers who have been teaching only within 5 years, which implies that generally most of teachers who handle Kindergarten to grade 3 have the average of 0-5 years in the teaching profession. 8 teachers, which accounts for 25.00% come from those who have taught for 6-10 years. There were only 6 teachers, 18.75% of the total respondents who belong to the group of teachers who have taught for 11-15 years. 3

teachers which 9.38% of the respondents have 21-30 years of teaching experience. 2 teachers, which is 6.25% have taught within 16-20 years.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Results in this study rationalize the attitudes and difficulties of Kindergarten to grade three teachers in using the mother tongue, i.e. Chavacano in their classrooms despite the implementation of the MTB-MLE for about six years.

Table 3. Teachers' knowledge of MTB-MLE policy and Perception on Language of Instruction to be used

First Language	Knowledge of Language of instruction				Perception on Language of Instruction to be used				
	N	Chavacano with English and Filipino as a subject	%	English and Filipino	%	Chavacano with English and Filipino as a subject	%	English and Filipino	%
Chavacano	15	14	93.33%	1	6.67%	10	66.67%	5	33.3%
Tausug	9	8	88.89%	1	11.1%	5	55.56%	4	44.4%

Sama	4	4	100 %	0	0.00	4	100 %	0	0.00%
Visaya/Cebuano	3	3	100 %	0	0.00	0	0.00	3	100 %
Hiligaynon	1	1	100 %	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	100 %
Total:	32	30		2		19		13	
		(93.75%)		(6.25)		(59.38%)		(40.63)	

Almost all of the respondents with an average of 93.75% claim that they are knowledgeable of Chavacano being used as the language of instruction. However, it can be seen in the table that not all agree that Chavacano should be the language of instruction, 40.63% of the respondents believe that English or Filipino should be used as LOI. It is crucial since teachers' perception on language use for instruction may affect the way they deliver. In

relation to this, arguably the aim of education is to foster indulgence and understanding in a classroom – to achieve communication and understanding among teachers and students. Likewise, the LOI used in classrooms is subsequently a fundamental tool in learners' scholastic and/or academic development. Hence, the question on which language(s) to use for instruction in schools is essential in bilingual and/or multilingual societies or settings [13].

Table 4. Teachers' view on the importance of culturally relevant lessons

How important do you think is it for teachers to...	First Language	n	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Create lessons related to life in Zamboanga City	Chabacano	15	2.47	Somewhat Important
	Tausug	9	2.56	Somewhat Important
	Sama	4	2.25	Somewhat Important
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	3.33	Important
	Ilonggo	1	2.00	Somewhat Important
Total mean:			2.52	Somewhat Important

Based on the 2.52 weighted mean, it appears that despite most of the respondents claim that they can speak and can understand Chavacano, they do not see it as very important or important but only somewhat important when it comes to culturally relevant lessons. This includes teachers with Chavacano as their first language. With teachers not 100% on board on the use of Chavacano as LOI as manifested in dealing with culturally relevant lessons, two of the goals of MTB-MLE, which are to foster the mother tongue an important means to fight linguistic discrimination, and to intellectualize the language, are defeated. Arguably, MTB-

MLE is a significant way to combat discrimination in terms of linguistics. Next, which is interrelated with the first as emphasized by Mohanty, MTB-MLE has been perceived as an effective approach of language maintenance as the use of previously marginalized mother tongues in classrooms [17]. In fact it aids in thwarting the weakening use of language in the grander social and communal zones of the society, foster its status and prestige in the particular community and, in evident occurrences, validate their usefulness as credible academic languages over the process of intellectualization [19].

Table 5. Teachers' beliefs about content-based understanding

Learning Language	Ethnicity	n	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Learning math and science in	Chabacano	15	2.01	Disagree

Chabacano helps children do better in those subjects.	Tausug	9	2.33	Disagree
	Sama	4	2.00	Disagree
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	1.5	Strongly Disagree
	Ilonggo	1	1.00	Strongly Disagree
Total mean:		1.78		Strongly Disagree

Table 5 shows the alarming response of all the respondents in terms of their belief in content-based understanding. Even the teachers whose first language is Chavacano along with the others, claim that using Chavacano in teaching mathematics and sciences in their case in DONGEMS does not help their pupils perform better. The question remains if the problem is the use of mother tongue in general

or simply because Chabacano is specifically chosen and not the other languages like Tausug, Sama, and Cebuano. However, based on studies on second language (L2) acquisition, when learners are well versed in the first language (L1), acquiring other languages is less stimulating particularly in listening, speaking, reading and writing (e.g. studies of Maclaughlin, 1987; Krashen, 1985; and, Cummins, 1981).

Table 6. Teachers' beliefs about effects of Chavacano literacy

Learning Language	First Language	n	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Pupils who can read and write in Chavacano will be able to learn English easier than pupils who cannot read and write in Chavacano	Chavacano	15	2.20	Disagree
	Tausug	9	2.22	Disagree
	Sama	4	2.00	Disagree
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.67	Agree
	Ilonggo	1	2.00	Disagree
Total mean:			2.22	Disagree
Pupils will do better in school if they learn to read and write in Chavacano first.	Chavacano	15	2.13	Disagree
	Tausug	9	2.00	Disagree
	Sama	4	1.75	Disagree
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.33	Strongly Disagree
	Ilonggo	1	1.00	Strongly Disagree
Total mean:			1.84	Disagree
When children learn to read and write in Chavacano, it is easier to learn to read and write in English later.	Chavacano	15	2.13	Disagree
	Tausug	9	2.56	Disagree
	Sama	4	2.00	Disagree
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.67	Strongly Disagree
	Ilonggo	1	1.00	Strongly Disagree
Total mean:		2.07		Disagree
Grand Mean:		2.04		Disagree

Table 6 shows the overwhelming and resounding disagreement of the respondents in terms of teachers' beliefs about effects of Chavacano literacy. When asked if they believe that pupils who can read and write in Chavacano will be able to learn English easier than pupils who cannot read and write in Chavacano, a total mean of 2.22 on disagreement was gathered,

which means that majority answered that they disagree, In fact the table shows only one teacher agreed. In the item that asked if they agree that pupils will do better in school if they learn to read and write in Chavacano first, all of the respondents disagreed. The same is true for the next two items in the survey (young learners would perform better in school if they learn to

read and write in Chavacano first. When children learn to read and write in Chavacano,(it follows that it is easier learning to read and write in English later), all the respondents answered they disagree that Chavacano is doing any help in learning the said items better. While several studies have previously revealed that instruction

using the mother tongue in the primary periods deepen learners’ aptitude in learning better compared to the use of a second language [22], the case in using Chavacano as LOI in one of the biggest elementary schools in the heart of the city states otherwise.

Table 7. Teachers’ view about the importance of Chavacano for Instruction

How important do you think is it for teachers to...	First Language	N	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Instruct in Chabacano?	Chavacano	15	2.40	Somewhat Important
	Tausug	9	2.15	Somewhat Important
	Sama	4	1.75	Not Important
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	1.75	Not Important
	Hiligaynon	1	1.00	Not Important
Total mean:			1.81	Somewhat Important

Table 7 shows that majority of the respondents, which is 2.40 %, manifests that instruction in Chavacano was somewhat important. This could be explained through teachers’ attitude on the target language or the language of instruction (LOI), which may influence learners’ success [10]. Additionally,

the LOI in classrooms is subsequently a rudimentary tool in a learners’ scholastic development. Thus, the question on preference of language(s) to use in schools as necessary in bilingual and multilingual cultures or milieus [14].

Table 8. Teachers’ beliefs about language of Instruction

Learning Language	First Language	n	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
Using Chavacano to teach children has negative effects for when they learn English.	Chavacano	15	2.40	Disagree
	Tausug	9	2.78	Agree
	Sama	4	2.75	Agree
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.33	Disagree
	Ilonggo	1	3.00	Agree
Total mean:			2.65	Agree
Children will learn English best if English is the only language spoken in their classroom.	Chavacano	15	2.73	Agree
	Tausug	9	2.89	Agree
	Sama	4	3.25	Agree
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.33	Disagree
	Ilonggo	1	2.00	Disagree
Total mean:			2.64	Agree
Grand Mean:			2.65	Agree

Table 8 shows the consistent response of the teachers when asked about their beliefs in using Chavacano to teach children has negative

effects for when they learn English, and children will learn English best if English is the only language spoken in their classroom. The grand

mean of 2.65 supports the previous answers that they do not believe that using the mother tongue help learners advance at all. Most of them agree that using English would better help enable learning in the classroom. It should be noted that

language is essential in the education process for of its distinctiveness individual quality that allows people to learn, to think cleverly and to change collectively [14b].

Table 9. Teachers' views on the importance of Chavacano literacy

How important do you think is it for kindergarten to grade 3 pupils to...	First Language	N	Weighted Mean	Descriptive Equivalent
To learn to read in Chabacano?	Chabacano	15	2.47	Somewhat Important
	Tausug	9	2.44	Somewhat Important
	Sama	4	1.75	Somewhat Important
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.33	Somewhat Important
	Ilonggo	1	1.00	Not Important
Total mean:		2.00	Somewhat Important	
To learn to write in Chabacano?	Chabacano	15	2.27	Somewhat Important
	Tausug	9	2.44	Somewhat Important
	Sama	4	2.00	Somewhat Important
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.33	Somewhat Important
	Hiligaynon	1	1.00	Not Important
Total mean:		2.01	Somewhat Important	
To speak in Chabacano?	Chabacano	15	2.47	Somewhat Important
	Tausug	9	2.33	Somewhat Important
	Sama	4	2.25	Somewhat Important
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	1.75	Not Important
	Hiligaynon	1	2.67	Important
Total mean:		2.00	Somewhat Important	
To listen to the teacher speak in Chabacano?	Chabacano	15	2.33	Somewhat Important
	Tausug	9	2.56	Somewhat Important
	Sama	4	2.00	Somewhat Important
	Visaya/Cebuano	3	2.67	Important
	Hiligaynon	1	2.00	Somewhat Important
Total mean:		2.31	Somewhat Important	
Grand mean:			2.08	Somewhat Important

The results shown in table 9 indicating that almost all the respondents answered somewhat important while there is an option of important in the likert scale, imply that teachers seem uncertain whether they believe that being able to read and write in Chavacano is valued, while they can see the benefit of using it verbally in the classroom to aid in meaning making. The teachers insinuated hesitation that much work was employed on reading and writing in a language, which is not spoken or

used outside their province. This perception diminished the usefulness of Chavacano but employed grander value on literacy in Filipino and English. As mentioned earlier, teachers' attitude concerning the target language or the language of instruction (LOI), creates impact on learners' success academically [10]. Moreover, as previously emphasized, the functional roles of teachers in the teaching and learning process are equally imperative [9].

Based on the responses of the six (6) teachers who participated in the study, the following difficulties were identified: Inadequate books/references written in mother tongue, lack or deficiency in vocabulary, and insufficient teacher training. An additional section on whether the respondents like or dislike the MTB MLE policy to continue is added in this discussion.

When talking about inadequacy of books or other references, it is tantamount to the circumstance of possessing no instructional materials especially textbooks or dictionaries written in the mother tongue, which appear indispensable in accommodating the needs of those learners having distinct mother tongues. All six (6) respondents gave similar answers on this.

Excerpts of some answers of the respondents:

- 1 *“Even if MTB-MLE is already in its fifth year, it is still difficult for us to teach because of lack of instructional materials particularly textbooks.”*
- 2 *“One major challenge is the lack of resources like textbooks and teacher’s guide. Because most of us are not fluent in Chavacano, it is difficult to prepare our own materials. We need books, real books!”*
- 3 *“We need more materials and other resources to make subjects taught in Chavacano more fun and understandable, such as textbooks and other resources like short stories using animated videos dubbed in Chavacano.*

Generally, all the respondents highlighted the necessity for textbooks or other resources written or prepared in the Chavacano language so that positive implementation of the use of mother tongue may transpire. The feedbacks from the respondents support the claim arguably [21] that no teacher could conceivably teach

competently underprivileged of appropriate resources that are created on two means: acknowledged government curriculum objectives and learners’ background knowledge, culture, and mores. As argued earlier in this paper, literacy or learning can only persist in the presence of appropriate and sufficient resources of reading facilities [15].

Another main problem in using the mother tongue for LOI is the absence of extensive collection of terms or expressions utilized in the discussion of lessons in the classrooms.

- 1 *Chavacano is not my first language. No matter how much I try I always end up short in vocabulary. Not to mention that not all students can speak or even understand Chavacano.*
- 2 *I am a Chavacano but I still have problems in translating terms from English or Filipino to Chavacano. At the end of the day, I end up teaching using either English or Filipino at least there are available dictionaries teachers and students alike can use.*
- 3 *My colleagues and I find time to meet and discuss how to go about our lessons, especially when supervisors come to observe us. But still even if we help each other prepare lessons, we simply run short of terms or words in Chavacano. Of course I am not talking about technical terms because it is given not to translate them.*

The feedbacks of the respondents explain that while teachers are residents of Zamboanga City, their knowledge on the diverse languages of the city is inadequate to enable them to teach using the mother tongue. The teachers have experienced difficulties in teaching their students since they do not know the vocabularies that are precisely the same as those vocabularies in the home language, placing them in circumstances that would only

exacerbate confusion among learners.

Conceivably, although teachers may exert so much effort in explaining lessons using mother tongue, the learners may still have difficulties interacting well in classroom discussions simply because they are not fluent in using the same mother tongues. Similarly, the accountability of teaching young learners appear to be more challenging since teachers are left with no choice but to handle diverse groups with multilingual background [18].

Next, although all the teacher-respondents in the present study disclosed that training for the MTB-MLE were given and are still provided from time to time, they believe that the trainings they get do not prepare or train them enough to handle classes using the mother tongue. Below are excerpt of transcripts taken from the interviews.

- 1 *Forgive me for saying this but I believe that most of the trainings provided by the Department of Education are more on theories and little focus is given in the preparation of learning plans. I guess DepEd should send experts to train us who are really good in what they do especially in teaching strategies using the mother tongue.*
- 2 *10 days of training they expect us to teach for the entire year?*
- 3 *In fairness, we are trained by experts on teaching strategies and lesson planning but in the contexts of the English and Filipino languages. They just expect us to imitate the process and use the mother tongue. I find this very wrong.*

Clearly, the respondents thought that training-workshops and seminars for teachers must be offered frequently and appropriately. They claim that there are trainings but they are not necessarily addressing the real problems, which essentially the use of mother tongues as the language of instruction. Academic

provisions from experts on numerous issues of mother tongue teaching are highly encouraged.

Teacher training endeavors are fundamental for teachers in handling multilingual learners since they need to be appropriately equipped and directed on how to handle lessons using the mother tongue. Supposedly, it is a prerequisite for teachers to be trained in using the mother tongue in classrooms and that the necessary resources e.g. instructional materials, should be suitable, accessible, and thought provoking for learners [7].

Categorically, this proposes training platforms for teachers to advance their competences and at the same time to deepen their knowledge concerning the implementation of mother tongue - based instruction and to expand their vocabulary with the mother tongue they are using.

Furthermore, in terms of the continuance of the MTB-MBLE, the respondents were asked if MTB-MLE should continue or would they prefer that the bilingual policy be reverted.

- 1 *MTB-MLE may continue provided that it will only be required as one subject and not to be used as medium/language of instruction. Life was les miserable back when we had the bilingual policy.*
- 2 *In DONGEMS, although it is supposed to be dominated by the Chabacanos, a good number of Tausugs and Visayans are present and that I believe that English and Filipino serve best as mediums. Let us go back to the bilingual policy.*
- 3 *I am a proud Chabacano but I say that the bilingual policy is much better than the current one.*

At least in the context of one of the biggest elementary schools in Zamboanga City, teachers find it difficult in many levels to continue the MTB-MLE programs.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

The aim of the study was to determine language attitudes and difficulties towards the MTB-MLE from teachers' standpoint. It attempted to unearth the ways in which teachers appreciate the language policy in one society in the Philippines.

Purposely, this study sought to answer the following questions: What is the overall language attitude of the teacher-respondents in using Chavacano as a medium of instruction? And, what are the difficulties faced by the teacher-respondents in the classroom in using the mother tongue?

The teachers' attitude on the MTB-MLE on the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction in the context of the setting and the respondents involved in this study is conclusive. Even the respondents who have Chavacano as their first language agreed that while there are potential advantages in using the mother tongue (e.g. for language maintenance, prevent linguistic discrimination, promote the local culture, etc.), Chavacano is not suited as language for instruction. They agree that instead have Chavacano as a subject. Results in this study explained the relatively negative attitudes and difficulties of Kindergarten to grade three teachers in using the mother tongue in their classrooms despite the implementation for five years now as mandated by the Department of Education.

Based on the findings of the study, it is clear that for MTB-MLE to be successful in multilingual contexts like in Zamboanga City, farther and serious preparation and teacher training essential to be done. Actually, this must have been done prior the establishment of the implementation of this policy. Moreover, studies should also reflect parameters of exploring having one mother tongue for language of instruction in a multilingual setting like the one in this study. The challenge would be the feasibility of employing such in consideration of budgetary allocations, manpower and instructional resources. Other vital studies are warranted on the interface happening as teachers deal with students from different linguistic

backgrounds. Studies on training and on the development of instructional materials are deemed essential.

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