

## Stakeholders Forum

### *Successful Strategies in MTB-MLE in the Philippines*

NIMBB, National Science Complex, UP Diliman

20 July 2015

The second Stakeholders Forum for the study, Understanding Best Practices in MTB-MLE (Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education) in the Philippines, presented the results and findings for the second and third phase of the study to representatives of various national and international institutions such as the Department of Education, Commission on Higher Education, Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, Department of Social Welfare and Development, Early Childhood Care and Development Council, UP College of Education, Australian Government (DFAT), Cardno, USAid, UNICEF, Summer Institute of Linguistics, and Save the Children, among others. The forum involved engaging stakeholders in a focus group discussion by dividing the participants into groups representing the four dimensions of the study (language, instruction, materials and program). The group discussions provided an opportunity to learn about different perspectives in understanding the varying contexts and positions in Philippine MTB-MLE. It should be noted, however, that the points or opinions presented below are solely those of the participants, are not research-based, and are not necessarily endorsed by ACTRC.

### **FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE LANGUAGE GROUP**

#### **Focus 1: Imbalance of strategies and challenges**

<b>Question 1</b>	Why do you think there are a high number of language challenges and a low number of language strategies?
<p>The high number of challenges could be due to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Presence of diverse languages in some classrooms and schools</li> <li>- Absence of approved orthography</li> <li>- Lack of mother tongue (MT) literature</li> <li>- Most MTs as spoken languages, not written ones</li> </ul> <p>The low number of strategies could be due to the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- We are still in the adjustment period</li> <li>- Mismatch between the MT of learners and the MT of teachers</li> </ul>	
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the strategies presented be used to help schools better meet these challenges?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having an approved orthography can help standardize a language</li> <li>- Elevate the use of the language and increase awareness on the local literature and cultural identity.</li> </ul>	

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE LANGUAGE GROUP**

**Focus 2: Common orthographies**

<b>Question 1</b>	What can be done to further mother tongue standardization at the school level? community level? national level?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers must present common findings in spelling errors in a school level workshop to establish spelling rules</li> <li>- Share these findings and rules to the district, then recommend to the division and then to the regional office</li> <li>- Involve community members such as media/local writers, religious, academe/Teacher Education Institutes (TEIs), local government units (LGUs) in school/district/division writeshops</li> <li>- Have a colloquium (presentation of established spelling rules vis-à-vis the working orthography)</li> <li>- Submit to Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino (KWF) for validation</li> </ul>
<b>Question 2</b>	What do the presented strategies tell us about how we can improve mother tongue orthographies?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Having MT print-rich classrooms and schools is a venue to standardize the MT. There should be consistency of usage/spelling in the activities done by the schools, on the display of materials/prints and contests on spelling, slogan and poem writing.</li> <li>- Material writers and contextualizers should be oriented about the orthography and spelling rules. So that there is consistency of usage in the contextualization/localization of Teacher's Guides (TGs) and Learner's Materials (LMs).</li> </ul>

**Focus 3: Extent to which MTB-MLE takes account of multilingualism and multilingual practices**

<b>Question 1</b>	How can MTB-MLE best prepare children for the multilingual way of life in the Philippines?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The MTB-MLE classes cater to different language groups and the unique cultures are incorporated in the instructional materials.</li> <li>- The choice of the mother tongue used as medium of instruction (MT MOI) in the linguistically diverse context (LDC) is very crucial. The content of LMs should be considered in the instructional tools.</li> </ul>
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the presented strategies be used to help schools prepare children to their present and future multilingual way of life?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Dictionaries should come in trilingual form for better understanding.</li> <li>- Involvement of teachers, community and other stakeholders in the standardization of the language with a duly accepted orthography. Standardization should be done with proper guidance and consultation with the academic community, concerned government agencies and language researchers.</li> </ul>

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE INSTRUCTION GROUP**

**Focus 1: Maximizing use of MT in the MT MOI classroom**

<b>Question 1</b>	How can MT use be maximized in the MT classroom?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Use of the MT MOI in all subject areas except in English and Filipino subjects which translates to complete immersion in the MT</li> <li>- Develop locally generated materials to augment authentic MT materials</li> <li>- Learning Action Cell (LAC) sessions can be a way for teachers to share strategies and best practices</li> <li>- Enrichment of TGs in the MT for it to be consistent to the use of the MT in the classroom</li> </ul>
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the presented strategies be used to help schools better achieve this goal?
	The presented strategies can produce a solid foundation of strategies for MT teaching.

**Focus 2: Code-switching and translation in the MT classroom**

<b>Question 1</b>	When and why should languages other than the MT be used in the MT classroom?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- When a concept is not understood or not familiar such as technical terms in math and science, then there could be code-switching and translation</li> <li>- If there are learners in class who speak a different MT other than the MT MOI</li> </ul>
	Reason: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Doing so would facilitate better understanding of thoughts and ideas.</li> </ul>
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the presented strategies be used to help schools and MT teachers know when it is best to code-switch and translate, and when other strategies should be used?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Teachers need to have a very clear understanding of MT so that they would know when it is best to code-switch. Bridging and translanguaging should be given emphasis however, their nature should be thoroughly understood for teachers to know when to use these strategies.</li> <li>- Also, localization and contextualization could help schools.</li> </ul>

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE INSTRUCTION GROUP**

**Focus 3: Localization and building on the child’s experience**

<b>Question 1</b>	What are the challenges and benefits of localization for teaching MT?
<p>Challenges:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Not addressing the MLE concept in K-3 is a question of implementation</li> <li>- Difficulties with management of localization of materials in linguistically diverse contexts</li> <li>- Mismatch in the language of teachers and the language of learners</li> <li>- The Curriculum Guide (CG) is in English, which poses difficulty among teachers to localize the curriculum. Also, the Kindergarten curriculum is in English that there is not enough time and ability to translate it from the guide to the classroom setting</li> <li>- Transfer of children and teachers to schools implementing MT MOI that is not the same as their MT</li> </ul> <p>Benefits:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children find meaning in going to school because lessons are delivered in the MT</li> <li>- Localization makes lessons relevant and through this there is greater awareness in the diversity of cultures</li> <li>- Celebration of local languages - observation of languages and heritage</li> <li>- Use of local resources as beneficial to the community</li> </ul>	
<b>Question 2</b>	From the presented strategies, what are the potentially most powerful strategies for localizing and building on the child’s experience?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Learning resources from the Learning Resource Management and Development System (LRMDS) portal but should include the possible development of K-12 capability building strategies for materials in terms of providing templates for the development of local materials in different subject areas, as well as developing capability on how these generic templates can be used in the local setting</li> <li>- Localization of the curriculum</li> <li>- Teaching as learner-centered</li> </ul>	

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE MATERIALS GROUP**

**Focus 1: Standardization and localization of materials**

<b>Question 1</b>	To what extent should materials present the local form of the language, and more widely recognized forms of the language?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It depends on the grade level. The younger the children should use the local form of the language but as they progress to higher grades, they should learn more about widely recognized forms.</li> <li>• If there are no available materials in the local form, find another language that is linguistically and culturally similar to the local form.</li> </ul>
Reason: The principle of learning from known to unknown	
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the presented strategies be used to help schools select and produce materials for the MT classroom?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There should be an information dissemination about best practices involving the LGU, TEIs, businesses, non-government organizations (NGOs), funders</li> <li>• Develop systems at division level to facilitate inventory, storage and borrowing of materials</li> <li>• Dissemination of information through the use of division/regional websites and to publish titles of materials produced</li> </ul>

**Focus 2: Access to MT materials**

<b>Question 1</b>	What can be done to help schools procure instructional materials efficiently and promptly?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To avoid delays in the delivery of instructional materials, the Central Office should schedule the writing of materials, editing, review, and hopefully piloting of materials in an earlier time</li> <li>• While waiting for the hard copies, the soft copies should be uploaded to the LRMS portal and other social media sites</li> <li>• Locally produced materials should be planned properly.</li> </ul>

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE MATERIALS GROUP**

**Focus 3: Localized or centralized materials**

<b>Question 1</b>	What are the advantages and disadvantages of locally produced and centrally produced materials for MT instruction?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Locally produced materials will support School-based Management (SBM) and principal empowerment. It can also generate LGU and community support. It is cheapest to support and is aligned with real learning contexts.</li> <li>While centrally produced materials are faster in terms of fiscal planning and budget allocation but are usually good only for large language contexts.</li> </ul>
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the presented strategies be used to help schools select from locally or centrally produced materials?
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The strategies present realistic leads for schools, communities and LGUs, preferring local development production of materials especially for small language context. There seems to be no strong arguments to favor centralized development and production of materials especially for small language context.</li> <li>Locally produced materials guarantee economy, expediency, pedagogical efficiency, cultural sensitivity and proper learning contexts</li> </ul>

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE PROGRAM GROUP**

**Focus 1: Different program models**

<b>Question 1</b>	What are the strengths and weaknesses of the varying program models that schools have developed?
	<p>Strengths: Drop Everything and Read (DEAR), Learning Action Cell (LAC)</p> <p>Weaknesses: Having non-Chavacano speakers, schedule of children in school, funding</p>
	<p>Reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effective reading interpretation using the Early Grade Reading Assessment (EGRA) tools</li> <li>Strengthens implementation of MTB-MLE through demo teaching, materials development and remedial reading instructions. Schools as not dependent on the arrival of materials from the Department of Education (DepEd).</li> </ul>
<b>Question 2</b>	How can the presented strategies be used to help schools design their MTB-MLE program?
	The presented strategies helped by raising awareness and commitment among the internal and external stakeholders.
	<p>Reasons:</p> <p>Empowerment of internal and external stakeholders - collaborative effort and commitment among stakeholders are important in MTB-MLE implementation</p>

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE PROGRAM GROUP**

**Focus 2: Three crucial decisions of program planning**

<b>Question 1</b>	<p>What are the guiding principles that schools can use for the following?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Which MT(s) to use as MOI</li> <li>b. Teacher selection</li> <li>c. Allocation of pupils to MT classes</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Which MT(s) to use as MOI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Language proficiency of students and teachers as determined through class and school level language mapping</li> <li>- Taking into account the sociocultural context, which would include the use of language beyond communication – language as tied to identity, politics, etc.</li> <li>- Availability of materials in the school, home and community <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ If there are no materials, we need to develop the capacity of teachers and community in materials development and this shouldn't be a hindrance in the long run</li> </ul> </li> </ul> </li> <li>b. Teacher selection <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- For new teachers, selection and deployment should be dependent on the language mapping results</li> <li>- For permanent teachers, volunteers in handling MTB-MLE classes should be sought and they should be transferred to schools where they are needed most</li> <li>- Purposive or deliberate recruitment for certain minority languages that need more support</li> <li>- Teachers should teach in the language they are confident/competent in.</li> </ul> </li> <li>c. Allocation of pupils to MT classes <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- There are no issues for homogenous contexts</li> <li>- Schools do not have to be limited to the use of one MT as MOI especially in large schools</li> <li>- During the pre-registration, parents should inform the school about the pupils' MT so that schools can plan for it</li> <li>- In linguistically diverse contexts, sectioning can be done. Also, for schools that are close to each other, a division-level plan can be made such as assigning one MT per school</li> <li>- Mobile teaching can also be explored for teachers to go to students who belong to minority groups</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<b>Question 2</b>	<p>How can the presented strategies be used to help schools make these decisions?</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Build presented strategies in DepEd trainings/capacity building</li> <li>- Build into LAC sessions</li> <li>- Materials developed in LAC sessions that exemplify these strategies need to be developed</li> <li>- Show concrete examples on how these can be done</li> </ul>	
<p>Reasons: There is a need to build capacity to operationalize these strategies. Schools should have access to teaching resources or the capacity to meet these concerns.</p>	

**FOCUS GROUP DISCUSSION OUTPUT OF THE PROGRAM GROUP**  
**Focus 3: Linguistically Diverse Contexts**

<b>Question 1</b>	What are the advantages of the following? a. Using several MTs as MOI b. Adopting a lingua franca as MOI
a. Using several MTs as MOI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Multilingual children are developed</li> <li>- Individualized instruction based on the MT</li> <li>- Cultural continuity is ensured</li> <li>- More space for parents and community to contribute</li> <li>- Addresses diversity</li> </ul> b. Adopting a lingua franca as MOI <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Enhances one’s cultural identity</li> <li>- Easier for the teacher because MT MOI is most likely to be their MT</li> <li>- Strengthens the community language or lingua franca</li> </ul>	
<b>Question 2</b>	What should be done for non-MT speaking pupils in the school?
Answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Let them learn the lingua franca</li> <li>- Have multiple sections for different language class</li> <li>- Have specialist MTB-MLE classrooms</li> <li>- Peer teaching, pairing native speakers with non-native speakers of the language</li> <li>- Having parent volunteers in the classroom</li> <li>- After-school program for the community</li> <li>- Explicit teaching to non-native speakers of the language</li> <li>- Code-switching/translanguaging</li> <li>- Develop materials for the particular language</li> <li>- Re-assign children to schools with different special language classes</li> </ul>	