

Relationship of the Use of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education to the English Learning Competencies of Pupils

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Abstract

This study was conducted to find the relationship of the Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) to the acquisition of the English learning competencies of the Grade 4 pupils. Specifically, it identified the level of acquisition of the English learning competencies as perceived by the teachers across the following domains: listening comprehension, oral language, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, study strategy, grammar, writing composition and attitude and its relationship across pupils profile variables. The descriptive type of research was used in this study and was anchored on the Second Language Acquisition (SLA) Theories. The data were gathered through the use of a questionnaire. The information gathered were tabulated and analyzed using the frequency counts, percentage, weighted mean, rank, chi-square statistics and Pearson r Correlation. The study found out that the Grade 4 pupils moderately acquired all the English learning competencies with regards to the given. Only oral reading fluency competencies are found to be related to age and with regards to pupils' sex vocabulary development, grammar and attitude learning competencies show significant relationship. It also disclosed that vocabulary development, grammar, writing composition and attitude learning competencies are related with the pupils' parents' monthly income. While there is significant relationship between listening comprehension and writing composition learning competencies and pupils' mother tongue. Lastly, results in this study showed that all the English competencies turned out to be highly related with the pupils' mother tongue grade. Hence, there is a dependence between the pupils' mother tongue grade and English competencies.

Keywords: English learning competencies , mother tongue, MTB-MLE

INTRODUCTION

Amidst the abrupt changes in the twenty-first century that brought demands and challenges to our education, the Philippines has undertaken educational reforms that transition and shift its 10-year basic education into a K-12 curriculum. Such initiatives aim to expand students' program of learning, improve access to quality education, form individuals, who can contribute to the wider community, and boost the global competitiveness of the Filipino workforce [1]. Many Filipino learners face various barriers in education and one of these barriers is that our learners begin their schooling in a language where they do not comprehend. They do not understand the language of education being used as a medium of instruction in the classroom [2].

The use of mother tongue enables the young learners to immediately construct and explain without fear of making mistakes, articulate their thoughts and add new concepts to that which they already knew. In turn, the teachers can more accurately assess what has been learned and identify the areas where they need help [3]. Now that mother tongue (first language) has been used as a medium of instruction in Kindergarten to Grade 3 for almost six years and with its negative and positive effects to the pupils' performances in various learning areas particularly English [4] a study on the relationship of the use of the mother-tongue based multilingual education in the acquisition of English learning competencies of the Grade 4 pupils will be a great help to improve the pupils performance in English particularly their reading, speaking, listening and writing skills as well as equipped teachers with understanding and knowledge to develop and enhanced their teaching performances.

This study determined the relationship of the use of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) to the acquisition of the English learning competencies of the Grade 4 pupils of Alaminos City Division. Specifically, this study identified the personal profile of the teachers in terms of age, sex, highest educational attainment, position and length in service and the personal profile of the pupils in terms of age, sex, parents' monthly income, mother tongue and Grade 3 mother tongue grade and pupils, the level of acquisition of the English learning competencies of the Grade 4 pupils as perceived by the teachers across the listening comprehension, oral language, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, study strategy, grammar, writing composition and attitude domains and the significant relationship

between the level of acquisition of English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils and their profile variables.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The descriptive type of research was used in this study. The descriptive research presents the existing conditions to be studied [15] [16][19-21]. The teacher respondents were chosen using complete enumeration and stratified random sampling were used in selecting the pupil respondents. The data were gathered through the use of a questionnaire which validated by different experts. The information gathered were tabulated and analyzed using the frequency counts, percentage, weighted mean, rank, chi-square statistics and Pearson r Correlation [17][18].

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Profile of the Teachers

Most of the Grade 4 teachers aged 46 years old and above as evidently shown by the frequency distribution of 14 or 24.1% of them. 10 or 17.2% of the them are aged 41 – 45 years old, 11 or 19.0 % are 36 – 40 years old, 8 or 13.80% are 31 – 35 years old, 8 or 13.80% aged are 26 – 30 and there are only 7 or 12.10% of them who are 25 years old and below. Grade 4 teachers were dominated by female teacher as evidently shown by the frequency of 46 or 79.30% of the respondents. There are only 12 or 20.70% who are male teachers. Out of 58 respondents there are 35 or 60.30% who have acquired units in the Master's degree. 13 or 22.40% of them who are Master's Degree graduates, 9 or 15.50% who are only have their bachelor's degree and there is only 1 or 1.70% who graduated his Doctorate degree. Out of the 58 teachers there are 26 or 44.80% who are already promoted to Teacher III. There are 24 or 41.40% who are still Teacher I. Moreover, 4 or 6.90% who are Master Teacher I and 4 or 6.90% who are Teacher II. It was found that there are 15 or 25.90% who have been teaching for more than 16 years. There are 14 of them or 24.10% who are in the service for 2- 5 years, 12 or 20.70% who have teaching for 6 – 10 years, 11 or 19.0% who are teaching for 11 – 15 years, and there are only 6 or 10.30% who are newly hired or in the service for a year and less.

Profile of the Pupils

Out of the 333 pupils, half of them are nine years old as shown with the frequency of 175 or 52.60%. There are 136 or 40.80% who are ten years old, 14 or 4.20% who are eleven years old, 7 or 2.10% who are eight years old and only 1 or 0.30% who is twelve years old. The pupils obtained the mean age 9:48. It was found that there are more female pupils as evidently shown by the frequency 178 or 53.50% of the pupils. There are 155 or 46.50% who are male. Out of 333 pupils 113 or 33.90% of the pupils have parents who are earning 1001 pesos – 5000 pesos mean. Kurtosis (-0.959) shows a platykurtic distribution and the values are wider spread around the mean. The aspect of language development education begins with the use of the first language of the learners, a language that they understand. School children will have a good language bridge to the next language which is needed to succeed in school and for lifelong learning. The first language that children master will provide a strong foundation [5].

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Listening Comprehension

Table 1 (found in the original article) shows that the pupils have moderately acquired the English Learning Competencies with regards to listening monthly. There are 88 or 26.40% whose parents' monthly income is 1000 pesos below, 78 or 23.40% whose parents are earning 5001 pesos – 10000 pesos monthly and 54 or 16.20% whose parents monthly income is 10 000 pesos and above. Majority of the pupils have Iloko as their mother tongue as shown by the frequency 255 or 76.60%. There are 54 or 16.20% whose mother tongue is Pangasinan and 24 or 7.20% whose mother tongue is Tagalog. There are 95 or 28.50% of the pupils have a grade of 85 – 89 (Very Satisfactory). There are 91 or 27.30% whose Grade 3 Mother Tongue grade is 90 – 100 (Outstanding), 91 or 27.30% pupils have a grade of 80 – 84 (Satisfactory) and 56 or 16.80% with grades of 75 – 79 (Fairly Satisfactory). It was revealed that the pupils has a mean grade of 85.43 which indicates that most of the pupils have a very satisfactory performance in their Grade 3 Mother Tongue subject.

Furthermore, it was disclosed that the pupils' grade has a variability of 5.586 which implies that their grades are widely disperse. The lowest grade obtained was 75 while 97 was said to be the highest. A positive skewness (Right Skewed) was observed in the pupils' performance as implied by the computed value 0.005 which means more values are

concentrated to the left of the mean, with extreme values to the right of the comprehension as shown by the overall mean 2.99. The competencies distinguish fact from opinion in informational text and tell whether an action or event is a reality or a fantasy were highly acquired by the pupils. While, the pupils have moderately acquired evaluate the likelihood that a story/event could really happen, draw conclusion in informational text heard, give conclusions to realistic fiction listened to, give one's reaction to an event or issue heard and identify cause-and-effect relationship. In listening, learners listen to understand and use what they hear [5].

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Oral Language

The data in Table 2 (found in the original article) revealed that the Grade 4 pupils moderately acquired all the English learning competencies with regards to oral language as shown by the overall mean of 2.98. The competencies state a fact and opinion about a particular topic (advertisements) and express whether an action or event is reality or fantasy have a high level of acquisition. While on the other hand, the pupils have moderately acquired state a fact and opinion about a particular topic (announcement), state conclusion to realistic fiction, state conclusion to informational text, state one's conclusion to realistic fiction listened to, express one's reaction to an event or issue and state the effects of a given cause.

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Vocabulary Development

As shown in Table 3 (found in the original article) the English learning competencies with regards to vocabulary development was acquired by the pupils moderately as evidently shown by an overall mean 3.01. The pupils showed high level acquisition in the competencies identify meaning of word with suffixes -ful and -less and identify meaning of words with suffixes -er and -or. While, they have acquired moderately use knowledge of context clues to find the meaning of unfamiliar words (synonyms), use knowledge of context clues to find the meaning of unfamiliar words (antonyms), identify the meaning of words with multiple meanings, identify meaning of words with prefixes un-, in-, im-, dis-, mis- and re-, identify meaning of words with

prefixes de- and dis-, identify meaning of words with suffixes -ly and -y and identify meaning of words with suffixes -able and -ible. Learners speak with understanding to communicate their thoughts and ideas clearly in speaking [5].

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Reading Comprehension

Table 4 showed that the English learning competencies with regards to reading comprehension as evidently shown by the overall mean 2.94 was acquired by the pupils moderately. Moreover, the competencies: distinguish fact from opinion in an informational text and distinguish reality from fantasy in stories read were highly acquired by the students. On the other hand, the pupils have moderately acquired make inferences and draw conclusions based on informational text, give conclusions to realistic fiction read, make generalizations and identify cause- and-effect relationship. Learning to read in the L1 develops skills that transfer to reading any other languages. Comprehension in reading other languages only occurs after oral proficiency has developed such that vocabulary. Proper sequencing strengthens learning [6].

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Oral Reading Fluency

Table 5 revealed that with regards to oral reading fluency competencies the level of acquisition of the Grade 4 pupils was moderate as clearly revealed by the overall mean of 2.98. Moreover, the competencies: read aloud grade four-level texts with accuracy rate of 95–100% and read grade-level texts with 118 words correct words per minute were acquired by the pupils moderately. In reading, learners read to understand, apply, analyze, critique and use information from printed or digital materials[6].

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Study Strategy

It can be gleaned in Table 5 that the level of acquisition of the pupils to the different English learning competencies with regards to study strategy domain was moderate as implied by the overall mean

2.96. Moreover, get information from an advertisement, get information from an announcement, use search engine, encyclopedia, almanac and other multimedia sources to get information, take down important information, interpret a map, use a glossary to get the meaning of words and use strategies in taking tests (A) before the test (B) during the test were moderately acquired by the pupils. On the other hand, the table also showed that only interpret bar and line graphs was highly acquired by the pupils.

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Grammar

The pupils acquired the different English learning competencies with regards to grammar domain moderately as revealed by the overall mean 3.02. the pupils have highly acquired Identify prepositions in sentences and use prepositions in sentences – among and between as shown in Table 6. While the competencies: use prepositions in sentences – to and from, use prepositions in, on, under, and above in sentences, use prepositional phrases in sentences, use simple sentence: simple subject and simple predicate, use simple sentence: Compound subject + simple predicate, use simple sentences: Simple subject and compound predicate and Use compound sentences were moderately acquired by the pupils.

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Writing Composition

Table 8 revealed that the overall mean 2.79 suggests that the English learning competencies under the writing composition domain is moderately acquired by the Grade 4 pupils. Moreover, outline a paragraph with explicitly given main idea, Write a 2-point sentence outline, Write a paragraph based on a 2-point outline, write 5–6 sentence paragraph about a given topic (Prewriting), write 5–6 sentence paragraph about a given topic (Writing) and write 5– 6 sentence paragraph about a given topic (Editing) were acquired by the pupils moderately. On the other hand, the pupils have slight acquisition towards the competencies write 5–6 sentence paragraph about a given topic (Rewriting/ Revising) and write 5–6 sentence paragraph about a given topic (Publishing). Learners write creatively to communicate thoughts and feelings clearly and accurately to others.

[6]

Level of Acquisition of the English Learning Competencies on Attitude

The level of acquisition of the pupils to the different English learning competencies with regards to attitude domain was moderate as implied by the average weighted mean 2.92. Moreover, it was also shown in the table that express interest in different texts by reading available print, express interest in text by reading available print, express interest in text by reading available print and browse and read books for learning or for pleasure were all acquired by the pupils moderately.

Summary of English Learning Competencies Acquisition Level of Grade Four Pupils

It was revealed that the pupils moderately acquired all the English learning competencies as indicated by the grand mean 2.95. The vocabulary development and grammar competencies received the highest weighted mean 3.02 that signified that it is the most learned English competencies of the pupils. On the other hand, the writing composition competencies obtained the lowest mean 2.79 that implied that it is the least learned competency among the English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils. It was found out that none of the English learning competencies was not acquired, slightly acquired and highly acquired by the pupils. This supported the findings in the Lingua Franca Project and Lubuagan First Component that (a) learners learn to read more quickly when in their first language (L1), (b) pupils who have learned to read and write in their first language learn to speak, read and write in second language (L2) and third language (L3) more quickly than those who are taught in a second or third language first; and (c) third, in terms of cognitive development and its effects in other academic areas, pupils taught to read and write in their first language acquire such competencies more quickly [7].

Significant Relationship between Age and English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils

It was unveiled that only oral reading fluency is related to age as expressed by its chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 43.476, p = .009$) that is considered to be significant as supported

by its p-value which is less than .05. Moreover, the strength of their relationship is expressed by the effect size of 0.172.. This is a small effect which can be hardly seen or observed. While other English Learning competencies show no dependence with age as implied by their chi-square values with p values that are greater than .05 [6].

The researcher can conclude that age and oral reading fluency are related. This support the assumptions of Language Acquisition device of Noam Chomsky that children in every language are able to learn to speak and understand language at very early age. The children are not just mimicking language patterns but actually producing meaningful utterances on their own. There is an innate ability or device for acquiring language in the human mind that allows all humans to learn and use language almost instinctively. This implies that language can be and is acquired in part because of the human condition, the nature of being human, regardless of the difficulty of the language and age [8].

Significant Relationship between Sex and English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils

It was revealed that vocabulary development, grammar and attitude learning competencies are related with the pupils' sex as expressed by their chi-square values that is considered to be significant as implied by their p-values which are less than .05 level of significance. Moreover, the effect size of vocabulary development and grammar shows the strength of their relationship and were considered as medium effect which means that the relationship would be perceptible to the naked eye of a reasonably sensitive observer. On the other hand, attitude learning competencies effect size shows the strength of their relationship and that effect is consider as small effect. While other English Learning competencies are not related to sex as expressed by the obtained chi-square values with p values that are greater than .05. The overall acquisition of the English learning competencies and sex were related as indicated by the obtained chi-square value ($\chi^2 = 397.864$, $p = .000$) which is said to be significant as supported by the p-value which is lower than the 0.05 level of significance. Furthermore, the strength of the relationship as expressed by the effect size 0.930, this is a large effect which is highly observed and seen.

These findings in the study are in contradictory to the findings of the research of Awopetu [6] that there was no significant difference in the learning abilities of boys and girls in the experimental group. The analysis of the t-test samples in her study indicated that both male and female participants in the experimental group showed a significant gain in their learning outcomes after being taught in their mother tongue. On the other hand, these findings supported the result of the study conducted by Olanipekun [10] that female students were better off in their performance in English language than the males.

Significant Relationship between Parents' Monthly Income and English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils

It was found that vocabulary development, grammar, writing composition and attitude learning competencies are related with the pupils' parents' monthly income as expressed by their chi-square values that is considered to be significant as implied by their p-values which are less than .05 level of significance. Moreover, the effect size of vocabulary development shows the strength of their relationship and was considered as medium or moderate relationship. On the other hand, grammar, writing composition and attitude learning competencies effect size shows the strength of their relationship and that effect is consider as low or small relationship. While other English Learning competencies are not related to pupils' parents' monthly income as expressed by the obtained chi-square values with p values that are greater than .05.

Parents who are earning a higher monthly income can provide their children enough materials to nurture their knowledge and are more knowledgeable to guide, teach and follow up their children's development and learning. Parents are more likely to participate in the children's learning [5].

Significant Relationship between Mother Tongue and English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils

It was unveiled that listening comprehension and writing composition learning competencies of the Grade 4 pupils are related to pupils' mother tongue as implied by their chi-square values that is considered to be significant as implied by their p-values which are less than .05 level of significance. Moreover, the effect size of listening comprehension shows the strength of their relationship and was considered as medium a low or small relationship. On the other hand, writing composition learning competencies effect size shows the strength of their relationship and that effect is consider as medium or moderate relationship. While other English Learning competencies and mother tongue obtained chi-square values with p values that are greater than .05 which were considered to insignificant. This means that all those other English Learning competencies show no relationship with mother tongue.

The teaching of Mother Tongue subject also enables the child to acquire knowledge of language structure. Knowledge of the language structure encompasses phonemes, morphemes, syntax and context, grammar, semantics, and pragmatics[11].

Mother tongue has no effect on students' academic performance in English language and that there is no correlation between students' academic performance in English and mother tongue language. Thus, English performance of many students could not have been plagued from mother tongue interference which some scholars have identified to be affecting academic performance in English language which has also extended to other school subjects [10].

The use of mother tongue had no negative influence in the performance of English. It emerged from the study that the use of mother tongue influences the way students write and pronounce in English, hence negatively influencing the performance of English in the examination [12].

Significant Relationship between Grade 3 Mother Tongue Grade and English learning competencies of Grade 4 pupils

The results show that all the English competencies turned out to be highly related with the Mother tongue grade as expressed by the Correlation values (r) with p-values that are less than .05 and .01. Moreover, the r - values indicates that there is a very high positive relationship between the mother tongue grade and the level of acquisition of the English learning competencies. Furthermore, the positive r - values implied that the higher the pupils' performance in their mother subject is the higher their level of the acquisition of the English learning competencies. Thus, it was found out that the level of acquisition of all the English competencies are related with the mother tongue grade.

These findings support the Common Underlying Proficiency or CUP Theory by Jim Cummins which states that proficiency in a learner's first language (L1), such as literacy skills, are universal in the sense that such skills can be applied, or transferred, to other languages (L2). Facility in the first language (L1) strengthens and supports the learning of other languages (L2). Acquisition of sets of skills and implicit metalinguistic knowledge in one language provides the base for the development of both the first language (L1) and the second language (L2). It follows that any expansion of CUP that takes place in one language will have a beneficial effect on the other language(s). This principle serves to explain why it becomes easier and easier to learn additional languages [13].

Language learning involves recognizing, accepting, valuing and building on students' existing language competence, including the use of non- standard forms of the language, and extending the range of language available to students. Through language learning, learners develop functional and critical literacy skills. They learn to control and understand the conventions of the target language that are valued and rewarded by society and to reflect on and critically analyze their own use of language and the language of others [13].

Pupils will more readily learn to read, write and communicate in a second or third language once they have mastered those skills in their first language, their mother tongue. Moreover, that MTB-MLE provides a good bridge to listening, speaking, reading and writing the L2s (L2, L3) of the classroom using sound educational principles for building fluency and confidence in using the other languages for lifelong learning [14].

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The Grade 4 pupils moderately acquired all the English learning competencies with regards to listening comprehension, oral language, vocabulary development, reading comprehension, oral reading fluency, study strategy, grammar, writing composition and attitude as perceived by their teachers.

Only oral reading fluency competencies are related to age and have small effect which can be hardly seen or observed. With to regards to pupils' sex only vocabulary development, grammar and attitude learning competencies show significant relationship. Vocabulary development and grammar shows medium effect while, attitude learning competencies shows small effect. Vocabulary development, grammar, writing composition and attitude learning competencies are related with the pupils' parents' monthly income. The effect size of vocabulary development was considered as medium or moderate relationship. While, writing composition and attitude learning competencies shows low or small relationship. In terms of mother tongue, listening comprehension and writing composition learning competencies are related to pupils' mother tongue. The listening comprehension shows a low or small relationship while, writing composition learning competencies shows medium or moderate relationship. The results show that all the English competencies turned out to be highly related with the Mother tongue grade. There is a very high positive relationship between the mother tongue grade and the level of acquisition of the English learning competencies. Hence, there is a dependence between the mother tongue grade and English competencies.

The Grade 4 teachers should continue a well- oriented bridging program for the transition from the mother/first language to the subsequent languages of the curriculum that is appropriate to the language capacity and needs of learners to enhance, develop and strengthen their skills and abilities that would helped them achieved a higher level of acquisition of the different learning competencies.

The educators should accept and embraced the challenge to face the new curriculum implemented and mandated by the Department of Education to secure the new trends, enhance and develop the curriculum locally for a better-quality education.

There should be a diligently monitoring using mother tongue-based instruction as the key in learning in securing appropriateness in the implementation of the curriculum. Parents should be encourage to continue providing interventions and follow up activities at home to help the teachers in developing their children’s knowledge, skills and abilities. The learners in kindergarten to Grade 3 should be encourage to master their mother tongue language for them to have a better acquisition of their second language (Filipino) and third language (English) respectively.

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