BRIDGING LANGUAGE FOR UNDERSTANDING THE LESSON

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Language is one of the most important aspect in communicating with others. It builds the understanding and interpretation of things. Mutual agreement, opinions, feelings and even individual differences are bind from or through language. Language is defined as the system and feelings of human language that are used and understood by a particular group of people.

Teachers use the English language as a medium of instruction in teaching English, Mathematics, and Science. Sometimes, they do not allow the pupils to answer in “tagalog” if the question is English. That is why it gives struggle for the learners to understand the lesson. Although sometimes they do understand the lesson but they hesitate to answer thinking that their answer might be wrong or they could not express it in purely English, so instead of answering or expressing their opinions about the lesson they just keep quiet and forget what are they trying to say.

But that is from the old book or traditional history of teaching. Most of the time now, teachers allow their pupils to speak or answer their question according to the language they want to use in answering as long that they do understand the lesson very well and they can express themselves. Teachers find it more effective because what’s important is the knowledge that they impart in the learners as long as the communication is well understood. Teachers believe that communication with the learners will be easier through the use the language that can be understood by everyone. It is possible to achieve the goal if they can express themselves using their preferred language.
During Pedagogical Retooling in Mathematics, Language, and Science (PRIMALS) Seminar, one of the speakers discussed the importance of bridging language. According to the speaker, bridging language is letting the learners speak or talk using the language they know or they want to use in the way that they can express their knowledge about the certain situation or questioned that the teacher asked them. The speaker also implied that the teacher should allow the learners to answer using their Mother Tongue language and it should be guided by the teacher to interpret it in English if the subject is English language as medium of instruction. The speaker also categorized the uses of language in the classroom setting; first language is the mother tongue language defends on the place or group they are belong like for example is Kapampangan they used it teaching and learning process in Pampanga and most of the learners are Kapampangan, second language is Filipino or the Tagalog most of the learners use Tagalog as Mother Tongue and as second language too, third language is English if the subject is being taught as English. The speaker believed that achieving goals in teacher and learning process will be effective and easy using those categories of language.

With the goal of progress and achieving global competitiveness the Philippine educational system has adopted the K-12 Program and one of the major features is to include the Mother – Tongue Based Multilingual Education which highlights the idea that learning has been proven to be greater when introduced through the concepts and ideas existing the mother-tongue. Our educational system now believes that the learners can perform better in the school if they can speak and listen with the use of Mother Tongue. That’s why from Grades 1-3, there is Mother tongue subject aside from the Filipino subject.

As teachers, we should understand and face the reality that not all our learners can easily speak English. We are here to educate, guide, support and give them opportunity to express their knowledge. Let us enhance those knowledge by letting them speak according to language they want to use. According to Randolf G. Catungal, the chances of keeping children
in school then are significantly improved if they can understand and learn productively in the language in the classroom. Children who cannot understand the language used in the classroom are unable to demonstrate what they know, ask questions, and participate.

References:

“Implication of MT-Based Multilingual Education Teaching to the English Proficiency Programs”, Randolf G. Catungal retrieved from The Modern Teacher Vol. 64 August 2015 no. 3 Edition page 85.

“Bridging Language” retrieved from Pedagogical Retooling in Mathematics, Language, and Science (PRIMALS) Seminar. October 22-24 2018