MOTHER TONGUE: BRIDGING THE GAP

by:

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The educational system of the Philippines today is now based on K-12 curriculum, pupils at their early age have to undergo basic education so as to learn basic knowledge and competencies in the DepEd program. K-12 curriculum focus on the skills for the preparation of the future. However, the power of language is essential in the way we express and communicate with one another. People grew up surrounded by different dialects, and culture and traditions. One of the challenges under the Basic Education Curriculum is the use of mother tongue in teaching the subjects for Grades 1 to 3 so as to achieve its main purpose which is to value the cultural and language heritage, or the preservation of dialects.

According to DepEd order No. 31 s. 2013 issued on July 16, 2013, Mother Tongue is used as a medium of instruction for teaching various subjects such as Mathematics, Araling Panlipunan, MAPEH and EsP. Mother Tongue refers to the language that a person has grown up speaking from early childhood. Mother Tongue use by a child depends on the place was he/she grew up. Since our country is an archipelago with 7,107 islands, we have several languages or dialects to be spoken. With regards to DepEd order No. 16 s. 2012, states Mother Tongues shall be implemented in all public school especially in Grades III as part of K-12 Basic Education Program.

The eight (8) major languages in the country are Tagalog, Kapampangan, Pangasinense, Iloko, Bikol, Cebuano, Hiligaynon and Waray while the other 4 are Tausug, Maguindanasan, Maranao and Chabacano. In addition, as stated in DepEd order No. 28 series of 2013, the seven additional languages which will be used in
specified regions and divisions starting S.Y 2013-2014 are Ybanay for region II (Tuguegarao City, Cagayan and Isabela); Ivatan also for region II (Batanes group of Islands) Akianon and Kinaraya for region VI (Capiz and Aklan); Yakan for Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Basilan Province); and Surigaonon for Caraga (Surigao City and Provinces). Mother Tongue helps the students to easily understand the topic and cope up with the lessons. DepEd Order no. 74 s. 2009 institutionalizing the use of the Mother Tongue as a Medium of Instruction in Teaching Mathematics in all schools both private and public. There are schools that are in places having more than one (1) dialects being use. That’s why DepEd Order No. 16 model two (2) states that in schools were there are three (3) or more Mother Tongues without an approved orthography spoken by the pupils, the Lingua Franca in that area shall be used as the means of instruction.

Besides increasing the number of years in school, the K to 12 programs of the DepEd has introduced another change in the country’s schooling system – using the Mother Tongue as medium of instruction. It is applied to the preschool pupils up to the Grade III pupils for them to easily understand their lessons. More than improving the comprehension skills of pupils, the mother language education also aims to address another long-standing problem in the country’s educational system – the increasing dropout rate among the youth.

Mother Tongue is the language that a person has grown up speaking from early childhood. It is interpreted by some as the cultural language, but others as the language taught from birth, regardless of whether it is part of traditional heritage. The reluctance of educators and administrators does not necessarily mean resistance. Communication is arguably the most essential and power full part of everyday life. People need to communicate to get new and innovative ideas across, to state opinion, to sort our argument and most importantly the better understand things around us.
There are many ways in discussing mother tongue that affects human’s life. The power of language can evoke an emotion, a visual image, a complex idea, or a simple truth. It used in our daily lives and therefore place a significant role in shaping our identity. It depicts the variations of the English language and the nature of talk. In mother tongue not only how language affects the development of one identity but also the role has in the way one is perceived by society.

References:
