NOSE BLEED!

by:
Roleta A. Garcia

Do you really believe that Filipino students in Public School can speak English fluently?

“Nose Bleed”. Frequent words you always hear from other people when you speak English. Why do you think some students in public schools are afraid in communicating using the language? Since English Language is the medium of some television commercials, prescription in the medicine, ingredient in some label of canned goods, junk foods, and any other products. Filipinos, young and adult, are very fond of singing English songs in Videoke.

Nowadays, internet plays an important role in English language. In one click, you can travel around the world; meet different people from all walks of life. The medium of communication is English, so why Filipino students keep on saying “Nose Bleed”? Is it an expression? But the truth is; students are hesitant in speaking using the language.

When I was a child, I was happy and excited whenever I see a foreigner. I was very anxious talking to them, even though; I used the so called “English Carabao”. What is “English Carabao”? Today it is now the so called “Pinoy English, grammatically wrong or sometimes Taglish-the mixing of Tagalog language and English language. I can
communicate and have guts to use the language at my young age. But is that enough? The English speaking and writing of our students is not good.

I took units in Master of Arts in Education major in Language (MAED). We discussed, why there is such Pinoy English, some cannot speak English fluently, grammatically wrong, incorrect enunciation. The f enunciate as p, and v as b. There are more than seventy languages and dialects in our country. Some dialects enunciate the words so hard and others so soft, even the teachers in different regions. Maybe that is the reason why it is difficult for Filipino students to speak English fluently. And we also have the so-called American language and English language. They are very different in diction.

If our objective is to produce globally competitive citizen, we must pursue the English Language as the medium of instruction from pre-elementary, elementary, junior high school, senior high school to college. It is a DepEd Order 2006, Implementing rules and regulation, EO no.210. Establishing the Policy to strengthen the use of English Language as the Medium of Instruction, that all the subject areas except Filipino, Edukasyon sa Pagkatao, and Aralin Panlipunan, must use English as the medium of instruction (with modification in public schools). It will open their minds and broaden their horizon to other available solutions to the problems (poverty) in our country, at the same time give them the edge to the future. But let us face the reality; students have difficulty in speaking using the language because of the influence of Cellphone, creating messages in shorten statement or words, thus causing misspelling and wrong grammar. Some teachers are using the Bilingual language in teaching for the teacher teaches the students in vernacular language so the students can easily comprehend. (Deped Order no. 52,S 1987, Policy on Bilingual Education).
Filipino women are working abroad as domestic helpers, professionals or non-professionals. It is because of poverty, an honest way of earning for a living. I remember one article I read, about a nanny who worked in Hong Kong. She was a teacher here in the Philippines but ended up as a nanny abroad. She was treated badly by the parents of other children. She was bullied, and ordered not to speak with them. They said that her English language is bad, as they said; she is not good in communicating. She is not allowed to mingle with them. They told that some Filipinos are speaking English badly. It is so demoralizing.

But why in private schools? One requirement in private schools (International School), when you apply for a teaching job is you are fluent in speaking English. For you cannot give what you do not have. One rule in the pre-elementary private schools; the students are not allowed to speak Tagalog everywhere, inside or outside the room. They are not allowed to watch Tagalog Films. Students need to communicate in English, as the rule says, “Whatever you hear, you will speak”. If you frequent hear English language, it will register to your brain and your mouth will speak up the language. For instance is my grandchild. He is only five years old, but he speaks English fluently. Why and how? That is the influence of watching English films, Cartoon Network and internet. Nowadays children can easily learn with the use of media.

This is very difficult in public schools, mostly those who are living in remote areas; parents who have no formal schooling. Student arrives at home, from school, but there is no one with whom he can speak in English. It is one of the problems of some English Teachers in public schools. However they tried to mold the tongue of the students in speaking English, the scenario seems to be that when the student stepped out of school,
there is no place for him to practice the language. It is difficult; frequently you will “nose bleed”.

Let English be the medium of instruction not only in school but as well as in our home. I remember my former instructor in college. He said, “Train the child at the early age, the mind of the child is like dry cotton that easily absorbs the water”. It is simply a Tabula rasa method. You start speaking English at the early age, then they will speak the language as if their second language. And you will not hear the famous line “nose bleed”. For all we know, speaking English will make the student reach out the career path they wanted; it will give them a light margin of advantage in competing around the world.

References:
DepEd Order. 206
Implementing Rules and Regulations EO no. 210

DepEd Order. 52,S 1987
The 1987 Policy on Bilingual Education