THE ROLE OF LANGUAGE IN MATHEMATICS

by:
GERALD P. PANGON
Teacher I, Bataan School of Fisheries

Mathematics is really a hard subject for some students. There are some who really curse the subject matter; however, despite the fact that they ignore and hate it, Math will always be there and will always be a subject for learning. Apart from this, teaching Mathematics is not just by the mere showing and exposing of different methods, symbols, and equations. It requires genuine and accurate communication between a teacher and a student to understand thoroughly the subject matter being employed.

According to Halliday (2010), learning language involves learning the way to mean, meaning, the language of Mathematics involves learning the way to make and share mathematical meanings using language appropriate to the context. It is more than acknowledging to words in isolation. Language has a very crucial role in learning Mathematics, and of course the teachers must see to it that they have a clear communication with their students to understand fully the problems, equations and other symbols being taught. The teachers need to be aware also of the language that they will use. They have to ensure that it is suitable for the cognitive abilities of the learners concerned.

Basically, the function of language in teaching Mathematics is to enable both the teacher and therefore the learner to speak mathematical knowledge with precision, and to explain accurately the symbols and equations of Mathematics to avoid misinterpretation. In addition, to fully understand the objectives of Mathematics, the textbooks as well as the writers or authors have to be aware in terms of the structure, meaning, vocabulary, and technical use of the language. They have to ensure the suitability of the language being used. Lastly, having a proper communication in teaching
and explaining Mathematics concept might leverage the performance of the students in Mathematics class.

References:

Mulwa, Ednah. “The Role of the Language of Mathematics” International Journal of Humanities and Social Science