



MTB-MLE Classroom Interactions: A Pedagogical Analysis of Language Functions Among Meranaw Grade 1

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Abstract

This naturalistic research was undertaken with the intention of analyzing the pedagogical linguistic functions of actual classroom interaction settings among Grade 1 students. It aimed to observe how MTB-MLE is actually used in classroom interactions, specifically among the multilingual Grade 1 Maranao students in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur. Employing an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design, classroom interactions were recorded and analyzed using the UAM Corpus Tool and Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories. These are broadly classified into two groups in this study: 1) Teacher-related categories — teacher asks questions, the teacher gives direction, the teacher criticizes, the teacher gives a lecture, and the teacher repeats the pupil's answer verbatim, and 2) Pupil-related categories — pupil-talk response and pupil-talk initiation. Quantitative analysis revealed a prevalent teacher-dominated discourse, characterized by frequent questioning and directives, across both public and private schools. However, qualitative analysis revealed a stark contrast in MTB-MLE implementation: public schools predominantly used Meranaw, which fostered more student-initiated talk, while private schools heavily favored English. As these are both forms of positive reinforcement, which is the only popularly endorsed type of extrinsic motivation, the adequate attention or low valuation accorded them is deemed a loss for teachers who probably do not realize well enough the importance of motivation and the advantages accruing from the optimal use of this as a critical factor in the teaching-learning environment.

These findings suggest that while teacher questioning remains a key pedagogical strategy, its dominance may limit student-initiated discourse. Furthermore, the variable implementation of MTB-MLE highlights challenges to policy uniformity, which may impact students' linguistic development. The study underscores the potential of the mother tongue to foster engaging learning environments in public schools. Recommendations include a stronger mandate and support for the equitable implementation of MTB-MLE across all school types, comprehensive teacher training in multilingual pedagogy, the development of high-quality Meranaw-based resources, and the alignment of assessment practices with MTB-MLE principles. Further research is needed to explore the long-term impact on academic achievement and to investigate teacher language use patterns in more detail. This study contributes valuable insights into the micro-level dynamics of MTB-MLE implementation in a specific multilingual context, informing policy and practice for enhanced language education.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Philippines, a linguistically diverse nation, has embraced Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) for a decade in the implementation of the K to 12 curriculum in basic education system. This policy acknowledges the vital role of a child's first language in promoting early literacy, cognitive development, and overall academic achievement (DepEd Order No. 74, s. 2009). By utilizing the learners' mother tongue as the primary language of instruction in the early grades, MTB-MLE aims to create a more inclusive

and effective learning environment, particularly in classrooms where children from various language backgrounds converge. However, the effective implementation of MTB-MLE in such multilingual settings presents unique pedagogical and linguistic challenges.

A fundamental aspect of successful MTB-MLE implementation lies in understanding the dynamics of classroom interaction and the pedagogical language functions employed by teachers and students. In classrooms with a mix of linguistic proficiencies, establishing a common ground for instructional purposes necessitates careful consideration of language use, teacher training, and the development of culturally and linguistically appropriate materials. The linguistic landscape of these classrooms, particularly in regions with a dominant local language alongside national and global languages, requires a nuanced understanding of how language is actually used to facilitate learning.

Recent research has begun to explore the complexities of language use in multilingual Philippine classrooms operating under the MTB-MLE framework. Studies have examined the prevalence and impact of translanguaging practices (Morillo, 2023; De Los Reyes & Bagona, 2022), stakeholder perceptions of multilingual education (Sulaiman et al., 2024), and the broader challenges encountered in implementing the program (Anudin, 2018). These studies collectively highlight the dynamic interplay of languages within the classroom and underscore the need for pedagogies that capitalize on the linguistic resources of all learners (Kiramba, 2018).

While studies have explored translanguaging practices, attitudes towards MTB-MLE, and general challenges in implementation, there is a lack of in-depth naturalistic research that analyzes the specific linguistic functions (e.g., questioning, explaining, directing, scaffolding) employed by teachers and students in MTB-MLE classrooms with diverse language backgrounds. It utilizes detailed interaction analysis tools like the UAM Corpus Tool and Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC) to provide a granular description of the verbal interactions; it focuses on a specific mother tongue group (like Meranaw) within a multilingual classroom setting to understand the nuances of language use and its impact on children's language development in the context of MTB-MLE. Understanding the prevalent pedagogical language functions employed and how these patterns shape classroom interactions in specific mother tongue contexts, such as among Grade 1 Meranaw learners, specifically among the multilingual Meranaw in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur, where Meranaw is the most commonly spoken language, with spoken Filipino and Cebuano, as well as English and Arabic, and sometimes, other languages spoken by other language groups who are neighbors to the Meranaw, such as Iranun and Magindanaon.

This naturalistic research endeavors to address this gap by investigating pedagogical classroom interactions within a Grade 1 classroom in Marawi City, Lanao del Sur, where the majority of students are Meranaw speakers. Specifically, this study aims to analyze coded language interactions to identify prevalent pedagogical patterns and understand how these language patterns influence the dynamics of classroom interaction. By focusing on the actual linguistic exchanges during science instruction, this research aims to provide a detailed, empirically grounded understanding of how MTB-MLE is enacted at the classroom interaction level within a specific multilingual context. The findings of this study will contribute valuable insights into the pedagogical features and language functions that characterize effective MTB-MLE implementation in Meranaw Grade 1 classrooms, ultimately informing teacher training, materials development, and instructional strategies to better support the linguistic and academic development of multilingual learners.

1.1. Research Questions:

1. What are the prevalent pedagogical classroom interactions surfaced in the coded language interaction among Grade 1 Meranaw?
2. How do language patterns in pedagogical patterns influence classroom interactions in Meranaw Grade-1 classroom?

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The mortal blow to the infirmity afflicting many young Filipino learners is believed to have been dealt by an ingenious strategy known as Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE). Indeed, studies have shown that MTB-MLE develops the level of literacy and verbal proficiency required for academic achievement in school, develops reading and writing skills, and maintains cultural identity and cognitive and linguistic foundation (Benson, 2002; Dutcher, 2003).

On the long-festering issue of what language to use as a tool for developing initial literacy, Cummins' linguistic developmental interdependence hypothesis offers a solution. It highlights the need for our wisdom in using the mother tongue in developing what Cummins (1979, 1980, and 2001) refers to as the CUP, or Common Underlying Proficiency. The CUP as the hypothesis posits, serves as a foundation or springboard for facilitating the development of linguistic and cognitive skills from the I-I to L2 in beginning reading. In other words, knowledge and skills learned in I-I transfer naturally to L2. Thus, the proficiency of children in their native language has a strong influence on their acquisition of a second language and, consequently, their academic success.

Regarding the foregoing considerations, many researchers have highlighted the increasing interest in translanguaging in multilingual Philippine classrooms following the implementation of MTB-MLE. It identifies themes such as the impact of mother tongue and translanguaging on learning, the role of translanguaging in the classroom, and attitudes towards it as Morallo (2023) provides a broad overview of recent (2018-2023) Philippine classroom translanguaging studies. The review synthesizes findings across multiple studies, highlighting a significant trend towards recognizing and investigating the use of multiple languages within the classroom environment following the implementation of the Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) policy. Morallo identifies key themes emerging from the literature, including the positive impact of utilizing students' mother tongues and translanguaging practices on their learning outcomes and engagement. Furthermore, the review highlights the evolving understanding of language use in multilingual classrooms, shifting away from a strict separation of languages towards embracing the fluid and dynamic nature of translanguaging as a pedagogical resource. While Morallo's work offers a valuable macro-level perspective on the field, it points to the need for more in-depth, micro-level analyses of actual classroom interactions to understand how these translanguaging practices manifest and function pedagogically in diverse linguistic contexts. The review serves as a crucial foundation, indicating the growing scholarly attention on multilingual classroom dynamics in the Philippines and setting the stage for more focused investigations into specific linguistic functions at play.

De Los Reyes and Bagona's (2022) study directly examines translanguaging practices in multilingual elementary science classrooms in the Philippines. Their observational research provides empirical evidence of how both teachers and students strategically employ translanguaging to facilitate communication and understanding during science lessons. The study identifies various communicative functions served by translanguaging, suggesting its pedagogical value in making content accessible and fostering active participation among students with diverse linguistic backgrounds. By documenting instances of language mixing and code-switching, De Los Reyes and Bagona contribute to the growing body of literature that challenges monolingual instructional approaches in multilingual contexts. Their findings support the argument for legitimizing translanguaging as a valid and effective pedagogical strategy within the MTB-MLE framework. However, their study provides a general overview of translanguaging functions in science classrooms. Further research is needed to explore the specific types of linguistic functions employed within these translanguaging moments and their contributions to the development of both content knowledge and language proficiency, particularly within specific mother tongue communities. This study observed multilingual

elementary classrooms in the Philippines and found that teachers and students used translanguaging to accomplish communicative functions in science lessons. It argues for the legitimization of translanguaging as a pedagogically beneficial practice in multilingual settings.

Similarly, Sulaiman et al.'s (2024) research offers a valuable perspective by exploring the perceptions of parents and students regarding translanguaging in multilingual Philippine classrooms. Their findings reveal that students generally view translanguaging positively, recognizing its role in facilitating learning, fostering a sense of community within the classroom, and expanding their linguistic repertoire. This study emphasizes the importance of considering stakeholder perspectives in evaluating and refining the implementation of MTB-MLE. While the study provides insights into the perceived benefits and challenges of translanguaging, it does not directly analyze the specific pedagogical language functions employed in classroom interactions. Understanding how these perceived benefits translate into concrete linguistic interactions and the specific pedagogical strategies teachers use to leverage translanguaging remains an area requiring further investigation through direct classroom observation and interaction analysis.

Although Kiramba's (2018) study focuses on a multilingual classroom in Kenya, its insights into navigating authoritative discourses and leveraging students' linguistic repertoires hold significant relevance for the Philippine MTB-MLE context. Kiramba critiques restrictive language policies and advocates for pedagogical approaches that embrace the linguistic diversity of learners. The study emphasizes the importance of recognizing and valuing all the languages students bring to the classroom and utilizing them as resources for learning and literacy development. Kiramba's work highlights the importance of teachers being linguistically responsive and creating classroom environments that empower students to utilize their full linguistic repertoire. This perspective aligns with the principles of MTB-MLE and highlights the importance of analyzing classroom discourse to identify how teachers facilitate or hinder the use of students' various languages for pedagogical purposes. Further research in the Philippine context can build upon Kiramba's framework by specifically examining the linguistic functions employed by teachers in MTB-MLE classrooms to enact these linguistically responsive pedagogies.

While this study focuses on a Kenyan multilingual classroom, its analysis of classroom discourse and the call for leveraging multilingual learners' linguistic repertoires is highly relevant to the Philippine MTB-MLE context. It argues against restrictive language policies and advocates for pedagogies that embrace students' languages for better language learning and literacy development.

Furthermore, Anudin's (2018) study provides a critical analysis of the challenges affecting the implementation of the MTB-MLE program in the Philippines from the viewpoints of teachers, parents, and students. The identified challenges, including issues related to materials, teacher preparation, and curriculum content, indirectly impact the pedagogical features and language functions within the classroom. For instance, a lack of adequate mother tongue materials might lead teachers to rely more heavily on the lingua franca, potentially limiting the opportunities for students to fully engage with the curriculum in their first language. Similarly, teachers who lack sufficient training in multilingual pedagogy might struggle to effectively utilize the linguistic resources of their students. Anudin's study highlights the systemic factors that can influence classroom interactions and underscores the need for research that directly examines how these challenges manifest in the pedagogical language functions observed in MTB-MLE classrooms. Understanding the link between implementation challenges and actual classroom discourse is crucial for developing effective strategies to strengthen the program.

These scenarios argue for the need for a pedagogical analysis that can linguistically describe the classroom interaction and language function, by observing how the actual use of

MTB-MLE in classroom interaction observed and implemented by the pedagogical approaches of K to 12 teachers, specifically to describe the pedagogical analysis of language functions among the multilingual Meranaw classroom in Marawi City and Lanao del Sur, where Meranaw is the most commonly spoken language, with spoken Filipino and Cebuano, as well as English and Arabic, and sometimes, other languages spoken by other language groups who are neighbors to the Meranaw, such as Iranun and Magindanaon, using the interaction analysis adopted from Flanders (1967) system.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Design

This study employed an explanatory sequential research design, which utilizes a mixed-methods approach, comprising both qualitative and quantitative research methods to gather valid and reliable data. This research design is an approach that involves collecting and analyzing both qualitative and quantitative data within the same study (Shorten & Smith, 2017). A two-phase method where quantitative data is collected and analyzed first, followed by qualitative data. This aims to explore and explain what is being sought in the study, and to gain a better understanding of the underlying reasons for, causes of, and relationships between the variables in the study. Descriptive in purpose, concerned with describing the actual language use of the respondents in a classroom setting, through quantitative analysis using a corpus tool. The advantages of a corpus approach for this study include an emphasis on the representativeness of the text sample and the computational tools for investigating the distributional patterns of languages across classroom contexts. On the corpora thus created, the qualitative method of analysis will be employed, specifically interaction analysis as devised and categorized by Flanders (1967), to investigate the Communication patterns that occur in a classroom and ultimately determine what kind of classroom interaction best promotes Mother Tongue and second language learning.

Classroom observation recordings were also conducted to evaluate participants' language use and to describe the various language types used by the Grade 1 Meranaw students in their actual classroom interaction setting. As a distinct form of interaction, it has its own discursual features and conventions; it differs in form and function from casual conversation and other institutional varieties of talk which occur in different situations. Pedagogical considerations are involved, including classroom techniques and strategies. Thus, this study employed a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. In terms of purpose, it is both descriptive and ethnographic as it entailed classroom ethnography or participant observation. Through corpus-based analysis, it attempted to make important determinations about classroom interaction and language use patterns in four types of schools.

3.2. Research Locale

The locale of this present study is Lanao del Sur, specifically the selected public schools from the Division of Lanao del Sur-1, Department of Education, including both central elementary Schools and Secondary High Schools. Lanao del Sur is a province in the Philippines situated in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), occupying the Sulu Archipelago and the provinces of Lanao del Sur and Maguindanao in central Mindanao. Its capital is the City of Marawi.

These locales served as the research setting to ensure the data needed was obtained with a larger scope and number of participants. Additionally, the setting was chosen because of the easier access to gather data from the participants, as both researchers reside within Marawi City and Lanao del Sur, where these schools are located. Apart from that, most of the participants of the study were both multilingual teachers and students; hence, the setting would contribute to the investigation.

3.3. Research Participants

The participating schools were purposively selected based on certain criteria, foremost of which were offering primary grades and population. Four additional types of schools were presented in the inquiry: urban-public, urban-private, rural-public, and rural-private schools. The last of these, rural-private schools, was the first to implement the MTB-MLE as a medium of instruction.

This study employed purposive sampling at two levels. First, four types of schools (urban-public, urban-private, rural-public, and rural-private) in Lanao del Sur were strategically selected based on their offering of primary grades, population size, and experience with MTB-MLE implementation. This ensured the inclusion of diverse educational contexts for comparison. Second, within these selected schools, criterion sampling was used to identify the specific research participants. The inclusion criteria for teachers were being in-service and actively implementing the MTB-MLE program for the K to 12 curriculum. Grade 1 Meranao students enrolled in Science classes within these schools were also included. This targeted approach ensured that the participants directly experienced and were involved in the phenomenon under investigation: language use and classroom interaction within the MTB-MLE setting.

Hence, there is a criteria set for the research participants which are primarily based on the predetermined research objectives. The inclusion criteria includes: (1) In-service teachers currently employed and implementing the MTB-MLE programs of the K to 12 Curriculum under Department of Education, Division of Marawi City and Lanao del Sur; and (2) Grade-1 Students from the said participating schools under Science classes.

3.4. Research Instrument

To facilitate data analysis within an acceptable degree of confidence, this study used a voice recording in gathering actual classroom interaction that allowed the researcher to observe the actual language used and preserve the natural occurrence of their language use. The time units of audiotaping were limited to one regular class session in science, which covered only the activity task given as a controlled variable, that is the classroom interaction for which an imagined Zoo visit “trip to a Zoo activity” which took 30 minutes and more, was used as materials.

Then, from the recorded classroom interaction constitute a corpus; which was built or created for participating schools. Participants were directly contacted to obtain data of their actual language used through emic classroom observation.

Interview consisted of follow-up questions to the teachers who, as interlocutors in the observed and recorded classroom interaction, played a central role in the kind of language use/production of their pupils. To identify the prevalent or the dominant language used in the classroom interaction, this study used a statistical tool known as UAM Corpus Tool developed by Mick O'Donnell (2011). This is a set of tools for linguistic text annotation. The pedagogical analysis of language function was classified using the categories in the interaction analysis system developed by Ned Flanders (1967). The said system was developed as a means of collecting data describing the verbal dimensions of the classroom teaching—learning situation. The Flanders' system attempts to categorize all the verbal behavior found in the classroom. It has two main categories: teacher talk and pupils' talk. A third category covers other verbal behavior. i.e., silence or confusion (Ober, 1967). In this study. The researcher chose to focus on the indirect influence of teacher talk and student talk.

3.5. Data Gathering Procedure

To capture the language used by the respondents, the oral texts were transcribed and annotated, which were purposefully selected to determine the presence and quantity of language used in oral text production in classroom interactions to assess the pedagogical analysis of language among Meranao Grade-I pupils from both private and public schools in rural and urban areas. This approach is advantageous because it allows the study to examine

the dominant languages in play as a way of assessing their mother tongue, identity, and multilingualism. The categories are developed in reference to a specific classroom activity by providing classroom activity. In the 45-minute Science class, Pupils were involved in a task, an imagined "Trip to a Zoo." The pupils were drawn into the activity by first showing them a set of pictures that told a story, making the class to be more interactive. The class was grouped into three (3) groups and they were to describe, by turns, what they saw in the series of pictures. After the classroom conversational recording, transcription and analysis of observed data followed.

Classroom interaction was chosen as the setting and focus of interest for this analysis, as a distinct form of interaction that has its own discoursal features and conversations. Pedagogical considerations are involved, including classroom techniques and strategies. Thus, this study employed a combination of qualitative and quantitative methods. In terms of purpose, it is both descriptive and ethnographic as it entailed classroom ethnography or participant observation. Through corpus-based analysis, it attempted to make important determinations about classroom interaction and language use patterns in the four types of schools existing.

Since every observed class consisted of 25-38 pupils, the classroom could generate more noise than necessary as engagement and excitement increased. Many pupils responded simultaneously, possessed by their excitement of being exposed to the activity: A trip to a Zoo", as the controlled instrument used to find a way of reducing to the minimum the "hyper-involvement/performance" of the participants in the classroom interaction. Another approach was tried out, forming more manageable groups to avoid answering in unison.

3.6. Data Collection and Analysis.

With the corpus-based approach has been enjoying a vogue in recent times in the exploration and analysis of both written and spoken texts. This corpus tool is known as the UAM Corpus Tool Version 2.7, developed by Mick O'Donnell. The background of this tool is provided below, as given by the creator in his User Manual (February 2011): UAM Corpus Tool is a set of tools for the linguistic annotation of text. Core concepts include: (1) defining a project, which is a set of files, and a set of analyses for each of these files; (2) analyzing an annotation that coded documents (the text as a whole is assigned) and segments within a file, as shown below:

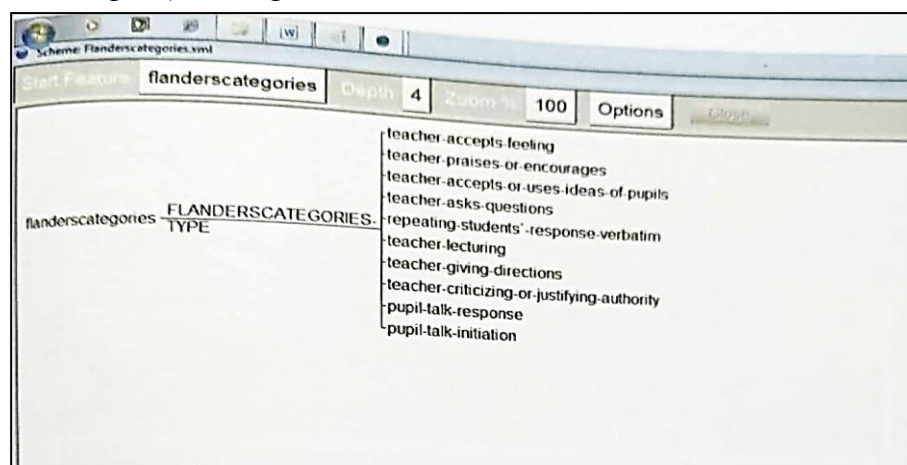


Figure 1 The Register Scheme edited as Flanders' Categories of Analysis

3.7. Ethical Considerations

The participants in this study were defined anonymously, allowing them to complete the survey without fear of being identified. Respondents' rights are increasingly defined, with the ability to withdraw and reject at any moment without judgment. The researcher sought the

consent of conducting the survey questionnaire from the principals of the selected elementary school in Division of Lanao del Sur-1, wherein the research permit provided the moral and legal justifications for asking respondents to freely complete survey questions and ensuring that the process was accurate.

This research prioritizes the ethical treatment of all participants, including school administrators, teachers, and Grade 1 Meranaw students. Informed consent will be obtained meticulously from all relevant parties, ensuring a clear understanding of the study's purpose, procedures (including classroom audio recordings and potential teacher interviews), duration, and the guarantees of anonymity and confidentiality. Participation will be entirely voluntary, with the explicit right to withdraw at any time without consequence. The study design aims to maximize benefits by providing insights into MTB-MLE classroom interactions while diligently minimizing any potential risks or disruptions to the learning environment.

Stringent measures will be implemented to safeguard the privacy and confidentiality of all participants. Audio recordings and transcriptions will be securely stored and used solely for research purposes, with anonymity maintained through the use of pseudonyms. The research team will be the only ones with access to the raw data. Respect for the autonomy and dignity of participants will be paramount throughout the study. Furthermore, the research will be conducted with cultural sensitivity appropriate to the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), and findings will be shared with participating schools and the wider educational community in an accessible manner.

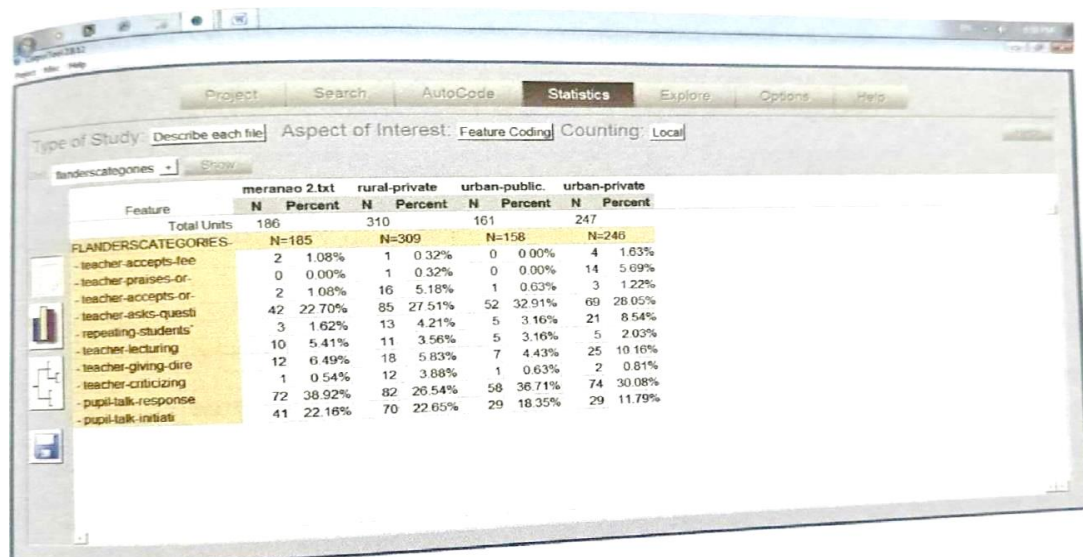
4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. What are the prevalent pedagogical classroom interaction surfaced in the coded language interaction among Grade 1 Meranaw ?

In this study, the influence of teacher talk was used to the minimum. The primary focus was on spontaneous interaction or talk among the students. The categories into which their language use/functions were grouped include the following:

1) Teacher accepts feeling; 2) Teacher praises or encourages (provides positive feedback); 3) Teacher accepts or uses ideas of Pupils for illustration; 4) Teacher asks questions; 5) Teacher lecturing; 6) Teacher repeats students answer or verbatim; 7) Teacher giving directions; 8) Teacher or asserting/exercising authority; 9) Pupil-talk response; and 10) Pupil talk Initiation as shown in figure 1 below.

Figure 1. Summary of the Coded Flanders* Categories of Analysis in Corpus



Feature	meranao 2.txt		rural-private		urban-public		urban-private	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
Total Units	186		310		161		247	
FLANDERSCATEGORIES	N=185		N=309		N=158		N=246	
-teacher-accepts-fee	2	1.08%	1	0.32%	0	0.00%	4	1.63%
-teacher-praises-or-	0	0.00%	1	0.32%	0	0.00%	14	5.69%
-teacher-accepts-or-	2	1.08%	16	5.18%	1	0.63%	3	1.22%
-teacher-asks-questi	42	22.70%	85	27.51%	52	32.91%	69	28.05%
-repeating-students'	3	1.62%	13	4.21%	5	3.16%	21	8.54%
-teacher-lecturing	10	5.41%	11	3.56%	5	3.16%	5	2.03%
-teacher-giving-dire	12	6.49%	18	5.83%	7	4.43%	25	10.16%
-teacher-criticizing	1	0.54%	12	3.88%	1	0.63%	2	0.81%
-pupil-talk-response	72	38.92%	82	26.54%	58	36.71%	74	30.08%
-pupil-talk-initiati	41	22.16%	70	22.65%	29	18.35%	29	11.79%

Table 1

The prevalence and percentage distribution of the pedagogical features in classroom interaction among Grade-1

	Rural-public (185)		Rural-private (309)		Urban-public (158)		Urban-Private (246)	
Pedagogical Features	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1. Teacher accepts feeling	2	1.08	1	0.323	0	0	4	1.619
2. Teacher praises or encourages	0	0	1	0.323	0	0	14	5.668
3. Teacher accepts or uses the ideas of the pupils	2	1.08	16	5.161	1	0.621	3	1.215
4. Teacher asks questions	42	22.6	85	27.42	52	32.3	69	27.94
4. Repeating pupils' response-verbatim	3	1.61	13	4.194	5	3.106	21	8.502
5. Teacher lecturing	10	5.38	11	3.548	5	3.106	5	2.024
6. The teacher gives directions	12	6.45	18	5.806	7	4.348	25	10.12
7. Teacher criticizing	1	0.54	12	3.871	1	0.621	5	2.024
8. Pupil talks response	72	38.7	82	26.45	58	36.02	74	29.96
9. Pupil talk initiation	41	22	70	22.58	29	18.01	29	11.74

The results of this study show how the prevalence of pedagogical features appeared in the corpus. The corpus tool analyzed a large body of texts to automatically describe the language used in classroom interactions through statistical features of the coded texts, based on descriptive texts derived from corpus analysis of the UAM Corpus Tool coding system. The presentation is organized according to the corpus scheme.

Analysis Of the interactions that occurred in the Grade 1 classes observed reveals a wide variety of categories or functions of language in the pedagogical features or patterns. These neatly fit into the categories named in Flanders' system of classroom interaction analysis. Even a cursory glance at the figures or frequency distribution of categories involving teachers, as presented in the above table, suffices to show the preponderance of the function of teachers asking questions for elicitation purposes or for topic initiation. This is more or less constant or true of all four types of school as the following frequency distribution illustrates: Rural-Public, 22.7%; Rural-Private, 27.5%; Urban-Public, 32.9%; and Urban-Private, 28.0%. Ranking second in terms of frequency is the teacher giving direction category: Rural-public, 6.5%; Rural-Private, 5.8%; Urban-Public, 4.4%; and Urban-Private, 10.2%. In third place is the teacher lecturing category as the following frequency distribution demonstrates: Rural-Public, 5.4%; Rural-Private, 3.6%; Urban-Public, 3.2%; and Urban-Private, 2.0%. Taking fourth place based on frequency is the category of repeating students' responses verbatim: Rural-Public, 1.6%; Rural-Private, 4.2%; Urban-Public, 3.2%; and Urban-Private, 8.5%.

Trailing behind the foregoing are the remaining categories: name teacher criticizing, teacher accepts feelings, and teacher praises and encourages, which may all be considered forms of feedback. The first is a kind of negative feedback, and the other two are viewed as positive feedback. The praising and critical functions show some usefulness based on evidence yielded by an analysis of the corpora. Teacher criticizing had the following

frequency distribution: Rural-Public, 0.5%; Rural-Private, 3-9%; Urban-Public 0.8%; and Urban-Private, 0.8%. The teacher praised or encouraged registered the following frequency distribution: Rural-Public, 0.0%; Rural-Private, 0.3%; Urban-Public, 0.0%; and Urban-Private, 5%. The frequency distribution for teachers' feelings was as follows: Rural-Public, 1.1%; Rural-Private, 0.5%; Urban-Public, 0.0%; and Urban-Private, 1.6%. Regarding the categories applicable to the pupils, the most prevalent category or type is pupil talk-response, as shown in the following frequency distribution: Rural-Public, 38.9%; Rural-Private, 26.5%; Urban-Public, 36.7%; and Urban-Private, 30.1%. Closely following is the category pupil talk initiation: Rural-Public, 22.2%; Rural-Private, 22.7%; Urban-Public, 18.4%; and Urban-Private, 11.8%.

The observed classroom interactions in Grade 1 Meranaw classrooms, as categorized by Flanders' system, reveal a teacher-dominated discourse pattern, particularly evident in the high frequency of "teacher asks questions" across all school types. This finding can be interpreted through the lens of Morallo's (2023) review, which highlighted the ongoing efforts in Philippine classrooms to leverage students' linguistic repertoires. While questioning can be a tool for elicitation, its overwhelming prevalence might inadvertently limit the space for the more spontaneous and varied language use advocated by translanguaging pedagogies (De Los Reyes & Bagona, 2022). The dominance of teacher-initiated questions could constrain opportunities for students to naturally employ their mother tongue (Meranaw) and other languages in ways that reflect their full linguistic competence, potentially hindering the development of translanguaging skills observed in other multilingual contexts.

The second most frequent teacher function, "giving directions," underscores the structured nature of classroom activities. While necessary for classroom management, an overemphasis on direct instruction may not fully align with Sulaiman et al.'s (2024) findings, which suggest that students perceive translanguaging as a facilitator of learning and a tool for creating a classroom culture. Excessive teacher direction could limit student agency and the organic integration of their diverse linguistic resources in meaning-making. Furthermore, the relatively low frequencies of positive feedback ("teacher praises or encourages") in some school types contrast with established pedagogical principles emphasizing the importance of positive reinforcement for student motivation and engagement (Bandura, 1977). This also resonates with Kiramba's (2018) call for pedagogies that value and affirm students' linguistic identities, as consistent positive feedback can contribute to a more supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Regarding student talk, the preponderance of "pupil talk-response" in reaction to teacher questions, coupled with the lower frequency of "pupil talk initiation," suggests a classroom dynamic where students primarily respond rather than initiate communication. This pattern might not fully capitalize on the potential benefits of leveraging the mother tongue as a resource for active learning and knowledge construction, as advocated by MTB-MLE principles. The lower rates of student-initiated talk, particularly in urban-private schools, could indicate a need for pedagogical shifts that encourage more student-led discussions and opportunities for them to express their ideas and questions in their own languages. This aligns with communicative language teaching theories that emphasize the importance of creating opportunities for meaningful and spontaneous communication (Littlewood, 1981).

4.2. How do language patterns in pedagogical patterns influence classroom interactions in Meranaw Grade-1 classroom in terms of :

3.2.1 Teacher-related categories — teacher asks questions, the teacher gives direction, teacher criticizes, the teacher gives lecture, and teacher repeats pupil answer verbatim.

It is understandable or expected that the teacher asking questions category should top the list of categories. Teachers employ questions for a number of purposes: to elicit or draw forth a desired answer/response, to test students' knowledge of the topic (schema), to stimulate or

arouse interest ("hook" or warm-up), to engage students, or to initiate interaction, and others. A question considered one of the most compelling and attention-riveting pedagogical strategies. Consider these extracts from the transcribed classroom interactions.

A. Urban-Private School (Excerpt # 1)

T. . -Ok, anu-ano yong mga nakikita natin sa pictures pag pumupunta tayo sa Zoo?

P: Mga animals. (chorus). Snake.

T: Ok, examples na makikita natin sa Zoo? P: Monkey. Zebra. (chorus).

T: Ok, first picture, ok unang picture, ano ito? P: Monkey. (chorus).

B. Rural-Private School (Excerpt # 2)

T: Gusto ko sabihin nyo ano nakikita nyo sa pictures. What can you say, see in the pictures? p: Horse. (chorus)

T: Anong ginagawa ng horse? P: Humiga.

T: Sino kaya nakatira dyan? p: Farm. Mga animals.

T: Ito, ito, ano Yong hawak niya?

P: Bola. Ball. (chorus)

T: Anong color ang yellow? P: Yong tuka.

C. urban-Public School (Excerpt # 3)

T. Poon tano, Ha! Let us start ha? Sino nakapunta sa inyo sa

P: Ah! So mga Rowan. So manga kowan a aden manga onggo y ron. (That's where there are monkeys). Elephant. Zebra. Aden a bowaya on

T: Antonaa pekailay niyo roo? Antonaa i bontal iyan?

P: Lagido kowan, hehe. Lagido pating kapekailay ko ron.

T: Antonaa pen ini? P: Zebra.

T: Ano ginagawa ni Monkey? P: Nag-tabid.

D. Rural-Public School (Excerpt # 4)

T: Antonaa i miyailay niyo sa Zoo, ago antonaa i pesowaan

p: Tomatabid. Tetambiteka.

T: Antonai bontal o Elephant? P: Matai ngari.

T: Antonai ngaran o manga Aso?

P: Dog. Wolf. Ago mga elephant

T: Antonai phesuwaan roo sa salida?

P: Di siran di magidaida. Madagascar.

Questions are a convenient starting point for classroom interaction, which is initiated by the teacher. As already mentioned, questions serve a variety of purposes, among which are to arouse and direct attention to a topic or lesson and to stimulate the interest of students, that is, engage them by appealing to their prior experiences. For example, the motive of the teacher for raising the question "Sino nakapunta sa inyo sa Manila Zoo? 'Yong may mga animals?" (Excerpt # 3) was obviously to make this connection. However, there may be overlaps of functions or uses. The same excerpt also functions as "hook" or warm-up

Questions are a time-honored means of testing students' knowledge as by the questions "Antonai bontal/ o Elephant?" and "Antonai ngaran o a so?"

" Excerpt # 4. Throughout the interactions recorded, questions as a discourse feature were used to sustain the long stretches of classroom interaction by goading or encouraging

students to actively participate in the exchange and elicit more information from them. The excerpt below from a Rural-public school interaction exemplifies this.

T: Antonai pesowan niran?
P: Miyakala siran.
T: Anda siran babaling?
P: Sa kalasan.
T: Sa kalasan siran babaling?
P: Oway, madake/ siran I kalaban.
T: Antonai kalaban iran?
P: Manga aso.
T: Anta oto i kalaban iran?
P: Manga lobo, ago wolf, ago tao a kalaban iran. MiyakadakeL
Gini na di iran di tebuon nape-targeten niran.
T: Anong ending?
P: Di siran di magidaida.

The effectiveness of questions in sustaining conversation or Teacher-students interaction is evident in this sample excerpt. Every question posed by the teacher drew an answer or reaction from the students. It is also shown here how the teacher, by his/her questions controlled the flow of the interaction. Another frequently occurring category is the teacher giving instructions. This can be considered essential, indispensable, or inherent in the teacher's role/function, as the following extracts illustrate:

A. Urban- Private School (Excerpt No. 5)

T: Intisar nasa zoo tayo, tapos may ipapakita ako sa inyong pictures, tapos e describe. Alam niyo ano 'yong edescribe? flarawan, ok? Sasabihin niyo Sasabihin niyo Ray teacher ano nakikita niyo na nasa picture, naintindihan?
P: Opos (chorus)
T: Ituturo muna ng teacher. OR elephant,
P: Lion. Elephant. (chorus)
T: Ok, monkey. Ang nakakita ng monkey says "yes, yes, yes, yes! f, 2. 3, go.
P: Yes, yes, yes. yes!
T: Ok, magbigay ng pangungusap or sentence about elephant. Ok, Joanne.
p: Animal is, ay..
T: Ok, palakasin mo. A zebra is like a. p: Horse.

B. Rural-Private School (Excerpt # 6)

T: Gusto ko sabihin n'yo ano nakikita n'yo sa pictures? . . . Sila lang munang lima, ok? Hindi muna kayo kasali. p: Horse. (chorus)
T: Gorilla? Ano pa? Yes! Lahat kayo nakakita nang zoo. Ok, dito naman, tell me what you can see here. P. Zebra. Tiger. Elephant. Giraffe.
T: sssst
P: Teacher, pitaro iyan na baboy. T: Isa isa lang, go!
p: Pig. (chorus)Kenaba Pig ka Lion, Eagle, Zebra, Snake, Hippo.

C. Urban-Public School (Excerpt # 7)

T: Ngayon pupunta tayo sa Manila Zoo. Kung ano nakikita niyo dito na petaroon niyo, owm?

p: pato.
 T: Ah, giyaya? So pekailay niyo na panarowa niyo.
 P: Elephant, zebra. (chorus)
 T: Giyoto pen? Antona a i manga ngaran aya. Pag-answer kano man, own?
 Langon kano!
 P: Bowaya!
 T: Anong mga alaga niya na nand ito? Sabihin mo nga sa akin.

The high frequency of "teacher asks questions" in the observed Grade 1 Meranaw classrooms, as the excerpt highlights, aligns with its recognized role as a fundamental pedagogical strategy for various purposes, including elicitation, knowledge assessment, engagement, and initiating interaction. This prevalence, as noted in the overall results, suggests a teacher-centered approach where questioning serves as a primary mechanism for guiding classroom discourse. While questioning is undeniably crucial for scaffolding learning and checking comprehension, an over-reliance on it might inadvertently shape the language patterns within the classroom in ways that could limit student-initiated contributions and the organic use of their full linguistic repertoire, including their mother tongue (Meranaw).

This dominant questioning pattern presents both opportunities and potential limitations for MTB-MLE implementation as argued by Morallo's (2023) review points to the growing recognition of translanguaging in Philippine classrooms. If teacher questions are strategically framed to encourage students to draw upon their diverse linguistic resources, including Meranaw, then this pattern could facilitate translanguaging as a pedagogical tool, aligning with De Los Reyes and Bagona's (2022) findings on its communicative functions in multilingual science classrooms. However, if the questioning primarily elicits short responses in the target language (Filipino or English), it might not fully encourage the kind of rich, extended language use in the mother tongue that supports deeper conceptual understanding and identity affirmation, as advocated by Kiramba (2018).

Furthermore, Sulaiman et al.'s (2024) study highlights students' positive perceptions of translanguaging as a means of facilitating learning and building classroom culture. If the prevalent questioning pattern restricts opportunities for students to express themselves and interact more freely using their various languages, it might not fully leverage this positive student attitude towards multilingualism. Pedagogically, while questioning aligns with constructivist approaches by prompting students to retrieve and apply knowledge (Bruner, 1961), an imbalance towards teacher-led questioning could potentially limit the development of student autonomy and their ability to initiate and sustain meaningful conversations, crucial aspects of communicative language teaching (Littlewood, 1981) and fostering deeper language proficiency in all their languages (Cummins, 2000). Therefore, while teacher questioning is a valuable pedagogical tool, its implementation within the MTB-MLE context in Meranaw Grade 1 classrooms should be carefully considered to ensure it promotes rather than hinders the active and meaningful use of students' diverse linguistic resources and fosters a more balanced and interactive classroom discourse

Become unruly and answer out of tune or all at the same time. When confronted with this kind of situation. the teacher asserts her authority by a gentle but firm reminder as in this excerpt (#6) from a Rural-private school interaction:

T: sssst
 : Teacher, pitaro iyan na baboy.
 T: Isa isa /ang, go!

This excerpt makes another fine example of instruction intended to impose order or admonish misbehaving students to be mindful of classroom rules, particularly discipline.

T: Ano pangalan — name — ng cat mo?

P: Kami na si. . .yong isa na si. . -Christy ang la/aki. Isa lang babae, tapos na tat/o ang /alaki. Yong babae na Michelle. Yong isang lalaki naman na naka/imutan ko.

T: Psssst. Hoy! "Wag kayong maingay. Ok! We're done. You may go now.

Giving instructions in a clear and detailed fashion is shown in the following excerpts:

T: Naman, pamakineg ako niyo daan, own? Pegilaya niyo angkaya

Tokdan Na pamikiran niyo a sii kano somiyong sa Zoo. Ok, so amay na, tawagen ami sekano by partners, tag-dowa, na panotola niyo so miyai/ay niyo. Ibarat na, "aydaw, giyai pangangayamen a miyailay aken sa Zoo. Giyaya, siya ken aya miyailay saZoo.. Saden sa mapiya / kapakataro iyan na aden a prize a imbegay ami ron. Siyabot ako niyo?

P: Oway. (chorus)

T: Intisar nasa Zoo tayo, tapos may ipapakita ako sa inyong Pictures, tapos e describe. Alam n'yo ano Yong edescribe? //arawan, ok? Sasabihin n'yo Ray teacher ano nakikita nyo na nasa picture, naintindihan?

P: Opo. (chorus)

T: How about this?

P: Mga hayop, kabayo.

D. Rural-Public School (Excerpt 8)

T: Panotula niyo raken antona i miyai/ay?

P: Miyailay aken na nipay.

T: Kagiya Rowan. Panotol angka den man.

P: Aden a plane a piyagdaan niran.

Aden a miyakowaon a Rowan, so inged a kiyasongowan iran. Miyakala siran.

T: Kapakay a somibay so by partners, ah.

P: Sekami ki Rehan.

T: Naman, pamakineg ako niyo daan, own? Pagilay niyo angkaya toladan Na pamikira niyo a sii kano somiyong sa Zoo. Ok, so amay na, tawagen ami sekano by partners, tag-dowa, na panotolan niyan so miyailay niyo. Ibarat na, "aydaw, giyai pangangayamen a miyailay aken sa Zoo. Giyaya, siya ken aya miyailay sa Zoo. . .Saden sa mapiya i kapakataro iyan na aden a prizes a imbegay ami ron.

Siyabot ako niyo?

P: Oway. (chorus)

The pedagogical objective achieved by the category under consideration, teacher giving instructions can be best summed up in the phrase classroom management. The teacher provides explicit instructions to establish and maintain order by, for example, establishing the context. The sample context used in the interactions recorded was an imagined zoo visit or tour, and as importantly, to secure student involvement or engagement by making sure they fully understand what is required of them in a given activity. To this end, instructions or ground rules are laid down; procedure must be explained. It is clear, detailed instructions that order is maintained.

In some instances, instructions take the form of admonition or warning as members of the class, carried away by their excitement or enthusiasm,

P: Ostrich, pato.

Duck. (chorus)

T: Hindi rin siya ostrich. Pwede rin siyang duck. Pero kapatid ng duck. Class, ang tawag dito is swan. Everybody, say swan.

p. Swan. (chorus)

T: Ok, mag give ka ng sentence about tiger, e describe ano ang Tiger, ok?

P: A tiger is an animal.

T: Give me a sentence about panda.

p: My favorite T: Ok, your favorite.

P: A panda. It eats a bamboo.

As the above examples show, language intended for instruction is usually in the form of imperatives, signaling either a request or a command.

Samples of the category repeating pupils' answer verbatim (word-for-word repetition) were also found in the corpora.

The following are illustrative:

T: Ok, very good. And how about this? P: Monkey. (chorus) T: Ok, monkey.

P: Teacher, ito rhino.

T: Ok, rhino. Ito?

P: Tiger, cheetah. (chorus)

T: How about this?

P: Alligator (Chorus)

T: Oh, alligator. Saan siya nakikita — sa lupa o sa tubig?

T: Ok, what's this?

P: Animals. (chorus)

From an Urban-Private school interaction were taken these excerpts.

T: Ok, ano yong zoo?

P: A zoo is where, ah? A zoo is full of animals.

T: Ok, a zoo is full of animals. Ok, what are the animals that you

See at the zoo?

T: They are. . ?

p: Naglalaro, naglalakad, nagdance. Dancing. They are happy. T: Yes, happy. They are happy. Ok, how about this one.

As deducible from an analysis of the sample texts, repetitions are not a whim or a kind of embellishment. Their use is deliberate, or by design, that is, for communicative purpose. They perform a real function in discourse. They naturally arise in the course of an interaction or conversation to express the teacher agreement, acceptance or approval of students' answers, unless they are spoken in a nuanced manner like a rising intonation accompanied by a facial expression that suggests otherwise.

Repetition in classroom interaction may also be used to signal a topic change or shift, a function demonstrated below.

P: Teacher, ito rhino.

T: Oh, rhino, Ito

P: Tiger. Cheetah. (chorus)

The other categories, specifically, teacher gives lecture, teacher criticizes, teacher accepts feelings, and teacher praises or encourages, are not as well represented in the corpora built for the four school sites. However, some samples could be found to model the critical intent or function.

T: Ano pa?

P: Ano 'yon?
Paras... para... para??? shute???
Parashute? Parasweet?
T: Parachute, hindi parasweet.
T: Anong ginagawa ng horse?
P: Humiga.
T: Humiga ba 'Yan?
P: Umupo. (chorus)
T: Ok, nakaupo. Ano ba na/O/Ota 090? What can you see?
T: What is the nma doing to the baby?
P: Nagtap, hinhawakan niya.
T: It's not tap. Ano?
P: Pat. (chorus)
T: Anong tawag doom. Yong taas, baba? It's a ssss.
P: Scissor.
T: It's a seesaw. .
T. Piya piya-i niyo, ha? Wahid, behave ka, Wahid, ha? Antonaa,
Nassif I miyailay ka?
P: Manga pangangayamen.
T: Ah, dingka katawan anan. Sa Meranaw na tig iran a 'aroy, "
P: Oway.
T: Oway, so antonaa aya papanok? Madake/ ron so papanok.
P: Hmmm. . .kowan ahhh. Di aken katawan.
T: Giyoto bo i mapetaro kaon. Wahid, antonaa mambo i miyailay ka sa reka anan?

The function of "repeating pupils' answer verbatim," while seemingly a simple act, carries pedagogical weight. As the excerpt suggests, these repetitions often serve to signal teacher agreement, acceptance, or approval. In the context of MTB-MLE, this can be a valuable tool for affirming students' contributions, regardless of the language they use, and creating a supportive learning environment, aligning with Kiramba's (2018) emphasis on valuing students' linguistic repertoires. Furthermore, repeating answers, especially when students respond in their mother tongue, can provide comprehensible input in the target language when the teacher follows up in Filipino or English, potentially facilitating language acquisition as suggested by Krashen (1985).

However, the prevalence and manner of these repetitions need careful consideration. If the teacher consistently repeats student answers without further elaboration, questioning, or encouraging students to build upon their responses, it might limit deeper engagement and the development of more complex language use. As Morallo's (2023) review indicates, the goal of multilingual education is not merely acknowledging different languages but actively using them as resources for learning. Therefore, while verbatim repetition can affirm and provide input, it should ideally be a stepping stone to more extended interaction that encourages students to elaborate, explain, and connect ideas in their own words and across languages, fostering translanguaging practices as highlighted by De Los Reyes and Bagona (2022).

In terms of pedagogical principles, while providing clear instructions aligns with effective classroom management, a balance is needed to foster student autonomy and initiative (Deci & Ryan, 2000). Similarly, while repeating student answers can be a form of positive reinforcement and input, it should be strategically used to promote further interaction and deeper processing of information. The findings suggest a need for teacher training that equips educators with strategies to move beyond simple question-response-repetition patterns towards more interactive and student-centered approaches that actively leverage the multilingual resources of their students, aligning with the principles of communicative language teaching and translanguaging pedagogy.

If language use for giving instruction usually comes in the form of Imperative, language used for criticism is expressed as straightforward repair, a form Of feedback with a corrective function. Repair, according to Schwartz (1980; cited in Brown, 2000)), is part of the process of negotiation so vital to communication. The correction consists of the incorrect form and the correct or appropriate form, as shown above.

The researcher believes that one of the important categories, given its and psychological usefulness for students, is given short shrift or important than it deserves. This is the teacher praises or encourages category, or more briefly, positive feedback to distinguish it from another kind of feedback, correction or repair, which is dealt with in the preceding paragraph. The importance of positive feedback can hardly be exaggerated. In fact, it is the only form of extrinsic motivation acceptable to authorities in the field, such as Bruner, Kohn, and Brown (Brown, 2000). It is only in Urban-Private schools that its beneficial effects are recognized. In the corpora built for the other types of school, there was a paucity of samples or evidence of the common occurrence of the category, based on the descriptive statistics set out in the table.

Although its use in this study is confined to certain types of school, particularly Urban-Private, praises are generously strewn in classroom interaction in those schools as shown in the following excerpts:

T: Sino nakapunta sa zoo?

P: Ako, sa Manila Zoo.

T: Very good! Ah 'yong nakita n'yo sa Manila Zoo? Noong maliit ka, anong nakita mo?

P: Giraffe.

T: Ano pa, Kayla?

P: Lion in a cage.

T: Ikaw, Ahthea, anong nakita mo sa Zoo noong pumunta ka?

T: Palakasin mo, hindi marinig ni teacher. Tiger? Very good! Ikaw, Pretty?

P: Ok, lion? Very good! Next.

P: Zebra. Wow, very good!

P: Hippo.

T: Ok. Very good!

T: What is this? This one?

P: Flowers, trees. (chorus)

T: And this one?

P: Rainbow. (chorus)

T: Very good!

The frequency of occurrence of teacher's words of praise is relatively lower, but samples such as those quoted above could be found in the observed and audiotaped interaction in Urban-Private and Rural-Private schools where the language used was English or Tagalog/Filipino, or the latter interspersed with the former. It is interesting to note that in Rural-Public schools where interaction was conducted in the Mother Tongue (Meranaw), the teacher did not have the chance to interject "Very good!" or slip in praises for correct answers. The pupils, carried away by their enthusiasm, were just too eager to chime in their own views or experiences and reactions, and be heard. Their interaction was crammed full of pupil talk. Another possible explanation for the absence of teacher's positive feedback in the form of praise is, the Meranaw for "Very good" could seem unfamiliar or even awkward. Probably, it takes some time for teachers in MTBMLE classrooms to grow accustomed to using words of praise in Meranaw.

In the Rural-Private school transcript of classroom interaction, the researcher found this sample.

T: Sino kaya nakatira rian? P: Farm. Mga animals.

T: Yes, there is a farm, mga animals. Very good! How about this one?

In this study, the line is drawn more sharply between private and private schools, and less between urban and rural settings. Meranaw as the Mother Tongue is the medium of instruction in public schools, whether rural or urban. In contrast, private schools, regardless of the setting, still use English interlaced. Some snatches of conversation in Meranaw could be with Tagalog/Filipino. Some snatches of conversation in Meranaw could be caught, but seldom or rarely. It is clear that use of English in such institutions, despite the MTB-MLE being propagated by the DepEd, remains the norm.

4.3. Pupil-related categories — pupil-talk response and pupil-talk initiation

Pupil Talk-Response and Pupil Talk-initiation are categories that turn the light on the Pupil half of class interaction. Interesting samples representing the former are found in profusion in the corpus made for a Rural-Public school.

T: Antonaa i miyailay niyo sa Zoo, ago antonaa ipesowaan niran?

P: Tomatabid.

Tetambiteka.

T: Antonaa i pekailay niyo sa walay a pangangayamen a sesaya?

P: Elephant, Nipay.

P: Nipay, miyailay aken sa walay so Nipay.

P: So Nipay, so nipay, so Baboy.

P: Manga kayo, kayo a dowa, malai modo/. Aroy a mala.

P: Manga papanok, kakowak.

P: Miyakailay ako san mambo.

Sa Maze Park, saken na pure a Nipay

P: Manga papanok

P: Miyakailay ako saya mata mataan.

P: Miyakailay ako mambo saya.

P: Miyakailay ako saya sa film.

Actually this extract in its entirety is a much longer stretch of discourse dominated by the students. It took only one question of the teacher based on a stimulus in the form of pictures to elicit or draw forth from several members of the class different answers. One sees the conversation building up and becoming more interactive and engaging, as more members of the class were drawn into the discussion, comparing their prior experience of the topic introduced by the teacher: a tour of the Zoo.

The middle part of the extract shows the members of the same class exploring the scene depicted in the visual aid.

P: Sekaniyan na Zebra. Tomitindag.

P: Dima/a/ago-lagoy. P: Pesineb.

p: Gini na. . .ditona-i.

p: Gini, Fai, na dinggiloba sa katona-an niyan. P: Gini nipay na din dola-dola, P: Ginan a dowan na ditonai.
P: Di malalagoy, dimelayo-layog.
P: Gini Lion, anda petepad.
P: Manga puno. KKahaharrrrrr

In the later part, egged on by the teacher's instruction to share what they knew, they enthusiastically talked about a film they were able to watch, with the teacher slipping in her questions now and then to sustain the narration by drawing out more information from the students as "narrators".

T: Kagi yaw kowan? Panoto/ angka man.
P: Gini, Madagascar.
Giyanan i actor-on.
Ago giya actor ron aya.
Ago gini a, gini pen.
T: Gini antaw ron aya?
P: Saladeng
T: Giraffe.
P: Ginipen miyakambantay ako saya. Gini Baboy-damo. T: Kagi yaw miyakala siran?
P: Di siran di sayaw.
Miyakilala niyan so abie niyan- Gini a mayto na mipekadasangan a trak.
Ago gini a Baboy.
From the Urban-Private school corpus, the following excerpt exemplifying Pupil Talk —initiation category is drawn:
T: It's a seesaw. Ano ito? What's this? p: Cat (chorus).
P: Persian. Persian cat May ganyan si tita ko. Eh, mayron kaming ganyan, nawala.
T: Saan? Ganito?
P: Pero kami, nawala.
Sa bahay naming mayron. At saka mayron kaming miming. Mga Miming na la/aki at babae. 'Yong babae na may bata siya na apatAko teacher na may miming ako na black.
T: Ano pangalan, name ng cat mo?
p: Kami na si. . yong isa na si Christy ung /alaki. Isa lang babae, tapos Na tatto ang lalaki. Yong babae na Michelle. Yong isang falaki naman na nakalimutan ko.

Following the progress of the exchange in this excerpt shows how one of the pupils initiates a topic shift by talking about her aunt's Persian cat, a subject evoked by the sight of a cat in the picture. Another student took up the same topic, this time embarking on topic development, featuring their own family's cat menagerie.

The findings highlighting the distinct language use patterns between public and private schools, regardless of their urban or rural setting, offer a crucial insight into the practical implementation of MTB-MLE in the Meranaw context. The consistent use of Meranaw as the medium of instruction in public schools, contrasted with the continued dominance of English interlaced with Filipino and rare instances of Meranaw in private schools, underscores a significant divergence in how the policy is being enacted on the ground. This disparity has direct implications for the linguistic environment and the opportunities for mother tongue development among Grade 1 Meranaw students in these different school systems.

This observation aligns with Anudin's (2018) earlier findings (cited in a previous turn) regarding the challenges in MTB-MLE implementation, suggesting that despite policy directives, the ingrained preference for English in private institutions persists. This could be

attributed to various factors, including parental expectations, perceived prestige of English, and potentially a lack of resources or teacher training specific to MTB-MLE implementation in these schools. The limited use of Meranaw in private schools might also impact students' sense of linguistic identity and the value placed on their mother tongue in the educational setting, a concern raised by Kiramba (2018), who emphasized the importance of valuing and leveraging students' full linguistic repertoires.

Conversely, the description of the "Pupil Talk-Response" excerpt from a rural-public school, showcasing a sustained and engaging discussion initiated by a single teacher question, exemplifies the potential of MTB-MLE to foster interactive and participatory learning environments when the mother tongue is the primary medium of instruction. The way students built upon each other's responses and even initiated a topic shift, as seen with the discussion about cats, demonstrates a higher degree of student agency and communicative competence in their mother tongue. This aligns with the principles of communicative language teaching (Littlewood, 1981) and underscores the importance of providing students with opportunities to use their mother tongue for meaningful communication and knowledge construction. The active engagement and extended discourse observed in the Meranaw-medium public school classroom also support the potential of MTB-MLE to create a more culturally relevant and accessible learning experience, potentially leading to greater student engagement and understanding (Cummins, 2000).

The contrast between the language use in public and private schools highlights a critical challenge for the effective implementation of MTB-MLE. While public schools in the Meranaw context appear to be adhering more closely to the policy, private schools seem to be maintaining a more English-dominant approach. This disparity could lead to different linguistic and academic trajectories for Meranaw students depending on the type of school they attend. Moving forward, it is crucial to understand the underlying reasons for this divergence and to explore strategies to ensure that all Grade 1 Meranaw students, regardless of their school setting, have equitable opportunities to develop proficiency in their mother tongue as a foundation for multilingualism and academic success, as envisioned by the principles of MTB-MLE and supported by the reviewed literature (Morillo, 2023; De Los Reyes & Bagona, 2022; Sulaiman et al., 2024).

5. CONCLUSIONS

In conclusion, while the study reveals aspects of effective MTB-MLE implementation in Meranaw public schools, it also highlights challenges in ensuring uniform adoption across all educational institutions. The findings underscore the critical role of the mother tongue in fostering student engagement and the need for pedagogical approaches that promote balanced classroom discourse and actively leverage the multilingual resources of the learners. Addressing the disparities in implementation and promoting more interactive, student-centered pedagogies are crucial steps towards realizing the full potential of MTB-MLE in supporting the linguistic and academic development of Meranaw children.

A prevalent pattern across all school types is a teacher-related categories, characterized by a high frequency of teacher questioning and directives. While these are essential pedagogical tools, an over-reliance on them may limit opportunities for student-initiated talk and extended discourse, potentially hindering the development of communicative competence, particularly in the mother tongue. This suggests a need for pedagogical training that emphasizes strategies for fostering more balanced and interactive classroom discussions.

While, in variable MTB-MLE Implementation, a stark contrast exists in the implementation of MTB-MLE between public and private schools. Public schools in the Meranaw context predominantly use the mother tongue as the medium of instruction, fostering more student-initiated and extended discourse in Meranaw. Conversely, private schools continue to heavily rely on English, with limited use of the mother tongue. This divergence indicates a challenge in the uniform implementation of the national MTB-MLE policy and

may lead to inequitable linguistic and academic outcomes for students in different school systems. Efforts are needed to support and ensure consistent MTB-MLE implementation across all school types.

The instances of sustained and engaging student talk in the Meranaw-medium public school classroom, sparked by teacher prompts, highlight the potential of the mother tongue to create interactive and participatory learning environments. When students are comfortable communicating in their first language, they are more likely to actively engage, build upon each other's ideas, and even initiate new topics. This underscores the importance of prioritizing and effectively utilizing the mother tongue as the primary language of instruction in the early grades, as envisioned by the principles of MTB-MLE.

Strategic Use of Repetition: Teacher repetition of student answers serves as a form of affirmation and can provide comprehensible input. However, its effectiveness depends on how it is integrated into the broader interaction. Simple verbatim repetition without further elaboration or prompting for deeper thinking might limit language development. Teachers should be encouraged to use repetition strategically as a springboard for more extended interaction and to encourage students to build upon their initial responses in various languages.

Need for Pedagogical Shifts: To fully leverage the benefits of MTB-MLE and foster multilingualism, a shift towards more student-centered and interactive pedagogical approaches is warranted. This includes strategies that encourage student-initiated talk, promote translanguaging as a natural and valuable classroom practice, and provide ample opportunities for students to use their diverse linguistic resources in meaningful communication. Teacher training should focus on equipping educators with the skills to facilitate such dynamic and linguistically inclusive classroom environments.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions and implications drawn from the analyzed data, the following recommendations are made:

The researcher wishes to offer a testimony on the utility of the UAM Corpus Tool. It has proved to be a very helpful aid to corpus-based analysis, and most likely prove the same in studies of language use patterns and other language studies. Thus its wider use is recommended to other workers in the field of language studies or research. However, it should be acknowledged here that while this survey yielded interesting findings, it could still stand some improvement methodologically for its results to be more generalizable, reliable, and insightful. As the perceptive reader cannot help noticing, in terms of sample size, the survey is definitely limited; perhaps, a larger sample would yield better results.

While this survey was able to tease out the emerging patterns of language use among Grade 1 Meranao and take these as indicators of the sociolinguistic success of MTB-MLE, it is still important to look at the effect of such language policy on the academic achievements and language proficiency of the participants, a significant and sustained investment in teacher training is paramount. This should encompass pre-service education and continuous professional development programs focused on multilingual pedagogical approaches, including strategies for fostering student-centered interaction, promoting translanguaging effectively, and utilizing the mother tongue as a strong foundation for learning and language acquisition. Specific modules should address the linguistic diversity within classrooms and equip teachers with practical techniques to leverage all students' linguistic resources. Training should be context-specific and culturally sensitive, taking into account the unique linguistic landscape of the Meranaw region.

As regard language planning and policy-making in the country, the Picture of success that seems to take form from the findings of this study should be still pursued beyond present levels. Assessment policies and practices should be revised to align with the goals of MTB-MLE and to recognize and value students' linguistic abilities in all their languages. This includes moving towards more holistic assessment methods that consider students'

understanding and communication skills across languages, incorporating formative assessment strategies that acknowledge the use of the mother tongue as a tool for learning, and developing assessment tools that are linguistically and culturally appropriate.

Relative to the foregoing, it is important that this LI (Meranaw)-based Multilingual Education be supported by the regional and local educational system, which definitely is involved in language planning. The MTB-MLE is worth the try, since it is grounded firmly in sound and tested theories and findings of numerous studies, particularly those conducted in bilingual/multilingual settings abroad. Initial misgivings or fears of certain segments of the population or society should be seen as a challenge, not a roadblock or obstacle. All concerned teachers, school administrators, parents, and the whole community have a stake in the program's success. For MTB-MLE to succeed in the Philippines, specifically in Lanao, it is not enough that the media of instruction have been changed. Much remains to be done. One is that schools should continue the campaign through dialogue and sponsorship of orientation programs, symposia and seminar-workshops. Another is the urgent need for teacher training on the new curriculum, new methodologies, and techniques or strategies. An equally great challenge is the development of new instructional materials that make use of native cultural heritage. Teachers should be competent in the required language, content and methods. Teaching materials must be available.

Monitoring and evaluation are vital to the successful and sustained implementation of any program like the MTB-MLE. Concerned agencies or instrumentalities of the government in all levels national, regional, and local should carry these out periodically, systematically and conscientiously.

In addition to the proposed inquiry on the link or correlation between the use of Mother Tongue and the academic performance of young learners, the following strikes the researcher as interesting and promising areas of inquiry for Survey of the language use patterns among Grade 1-3 public school teachers in Lanao Del Sur District to see if these match with those of the pupils in the same locale; genre Analysis applied to Acknowledgments in theses and dissertations of MSU-Marawi graduate students. Corpus-Based Analysis applied to vocabulary building and lexical richness in the compositions of Grade 7 students. Comparison of the academic performance of public school Grade 1-3 pupils introduced to the MTB-MLE curriculum and their counterparts in private schools where MTB-MLE has not been implemented.

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