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Aweng, Timek, Garaw (Sound, Voice, Movement): Culturally Responsive and Mother-Tongue Based Music Education in the Ilocos Region of the Philippines

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Abstract

It has been almost a decade since the Philippines implemented the mother-tongue based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) approach in teaching, together with the reform of the basic education curriculum, within the K-12 program. These reforms established the teaching of music as a subject area for early grades, together with the use of the learners' mother-tongue.

Studies show the benefits of the use of culturally responsive materials and utilizing learners' mother-tongue inside the classroom, especially for colonized countries. Students learn using the language that they understand and this fosters participation, longer attention span, and multifaceted development. Furthermore, education that is culturally responsive doesn't only provide enculturation, but it also enhances the learning process.

This paper considers a pre-service teacher training project that proposed the development of a worktext for teachers and students that incorporates documented and undocumented local songs, dances, rhymes and games from the Ilocos region through archival and field research. It included specific objectives, teacher-facilitated and student-independent activities, and culturally related tasks using a developed spiral curriculum. In addition the community's *cultural calendar* was taken into account which was reflected with the sequences of materials and in the planning of lesson activities. These were then implemented to grade one learners from the said region whose mother-tongue is *Ilocano*. The implementation lasted for one academic quarter with once a week lesson for forty (40) minutes, that ended on a public performance wherein the learners were able to sing and play to their families and other members of the community songs, rhymes and games that hasn't been heard for a long time.

Findings from the implementation show that it presents fluid learning experiences for cognitive and psychomotor domains, as well as positive engagement with local music. This article argues that these are positive implications of mother-tongue and culturally responsive music education.