

**The Medium of Instruction for K1-Grade3 in the Private Schools in Cebu City:
Revelations of Language Preference, Usage, Exposure, and Views of Students,
School ,Administrators and Parents in Relation to L1**

Charity T. Turano

University of San Carlos Cebu City, Philippines
chatecon@gmail.com

Mary Ann P. Malimas

University of San Carlos Cebu City, Philippines
maryannmalimas@yahoo.com

This study determined the medium of instruction employed by the selected private schools in Cebu City; identified the reasons for the preferred medium of instruction; noted what language the students consider as their first language (L1); and verified if the medium of instruction used by the schools matches the L1 of the students. The study was conducted in the (1) University of San Carlos (USC)-South Campus (2) University of San Carlos- Montessory Academy (3) Sacred Heart- Hijas (4) Sacred Heart School – Ateneo de Cebu and (5) Philippine Christian Gospel School. The participants were four (4) school administrators; thirty six (36) teachers; Three hundred seventy six (376) from all levels (K1-Gr.3); and two hundred and sixty (260) parents. Results revealed that English is the most preferred medium of instruction by students and their parents, the faculty and administrators of the schools. Secondly, the reasons for preferring English are: the established status of English as a language spoken by many countries of the globe in terms of business transactions and other international communications and perception and observations that fluency in the language means better job offers. Thirdly, a good number of students claim that they use English more frequently at home, in school and when talking and playing with friends. The study further revealed that English is the L1 of the majority of the respondents based on their exposure to media and language usage. English as a medium of instruction among the private schools in this study therefore matches the students' L1.

Keywords: mother tongue, first language, mother tongue-based multilingual education, language preference, language exposure

1.0 INTRODUCTION

The Department of Education (DepED) has mandated all public and private schools to use the “Mother Tongue” as a medium of instruction for students in the pre – elementary until grade 3. This policy of DepED order #74 series of 2009 institutionalizes the use of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MLE) which is the effective use of more than two languages for literacy and instruction takes on the position that:

a. Learners learn to read more quickly

when in their first language (L1)

- b. Second, pupils who have learned to read and write in their first language learn to speak, read, and write in a second language (L2) and the third language (L3) more quickly than those who are taught in a second or third language first and
- c. Third, in terms of cognitive development and its effects on other academic areas, pupils taught to read and write in their first language acquire such competencies more quickly.

(“Institutionalizing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education”, 2009)

In connection to the above mentioned directive from DepED, this paper attempted to find out whether the private institutions in Cebu City have indeed implemented the policy. There has not been any data gathered in Cebu City regarding the private institutions’ practice and views on a language as a medium of instruction, and the students’ and parents’ language preference and attitude.

It is therefore noteworthy to document and validate the different assertions by the administrators, parents, teachers, and students written in the survey questionnaires to give information to the gatekeepers of the languages in the Philippines. Hopefully, they may be able to strike a balance on the execution of this policy and somehow rethink if the policy should be strictly imposed to the private schools or to the least consider redefining or expanding the definition of Mother Tongue thus adding English as one of the mother tongues for students in some of these private schools in the basic education.

This study gathered information from the administrators, teachers, students and parents as to the language they prefer as a medium of instruction and the reasons for their choice. The *Language Attitude* of the respondents in terms of language preference is also presented in this paper. This research may also pave the way for a follow-up study which focuses on the significance of a balanced approach in learning which employs not only English but also the assumed Mother Tongue of the local community as the “local language” is an integral part of every culture and should not be totally excluded in education.

Furthermore, this study may also challenge other researchers to re-examine the definition of *Mother Tongue* as this term

may possibly not necessarily equate with the *local tongue* or the official language of a community.

2.0 Theoretical Background

DepED’s policy on “Mother-Tongue based Multilingual Education” has gained support from some sectors and at the same time raised objections from other groups. The supporters have greatly appreciated this policy by DepED believing that this will result in a more successful learning among students in the pre-elementary up to grade three. Moreover, the “Mother Tongue” will now have a significant role in the education of the children. However, oppositions coming from school administrators, teachers and parents of the private schools have also been voicing out their concerns. On a preliminary interview conducted by the researchers of this study, it was found out that many of these private schools in basic education think that English is still the best medium of instruction for their students since this is the language the parents of their students want them to use. Parents of these students assert that even at home this is the language they speak to their children. They also believe that these children can learn the mother tongue on their own even if the local language is not used in schools.

Parents play an influential role towards their children’s positive reception of one’s language. A probable explanation on why there are children favoring English more than their first language is that parents are telling their children that one of the reasons why they go to school is for them to learn English (Fyle, 1976; Roy-Campbell, 1996; Otto, 1997). The appreciation of parents of the English language may also have a negative effect on children towards their L1 (in this case L1 being the mother tongue and L2 is English). This happens when these parents attach a strong use of English where children are taught that using

the English language provides both educational and employment opportunities in the future (Nondo, 1996).

Interesting findings were disclosed in the study of Gaerlan (2009 in Bernardo and Gaerlan, 2011) which focused on the social factors that influence successful learning in English by the Filipino-English bilingual students. Students themselves reveal that their family members are really encouraging them to speak the English language, thus they tend to code-switch when they are at home. Their family members have influenced them positively in using this language and students find this very significant since it helps them shape their learning experiences in English. The parents help motivate their children learn and use a language.

Motivation to learn and use a language according to Gardner (1985) can be based on integrative and instrumental reasons. Motivation is defined as the learner's orientation with regard to the goal of learning a second language (Holt, 2001). Baker (1992) classifies two types of motivation: Integrative and Instrumental Motivations. Integrative motivation refers to those students who are “motivated to identify with or join another language group that is integrate into the group” (p.46). This kind of motivation is likely to help students become proficient in the second language. On the other hand, Instrumental motivation refers to those who are “learning another language for a practical reason such as getting a job or enhancing their career possibilities, or passing an exam” (p.46).

Tamimi and Shuib (2009) researched on “Motivation and Attitudes towards Learning English: A Study of Petroleum Engineering Undergraduates at Hadhramout University of Sciences and Technology” identified Petroleum Engineering students’ motivation and attitudes towards learning the English language. Using questionnaires and

interviews to 81 student-participants, the findings showed that:

- Students demonstrated greater emphasis on instrumental reasons for learning the English language (e.g., enable me to get a job easily); (2) academic reasons (e.g., enable me to carry tasks more efficiently, it is a university requirement and to further my education); (3) personal reasons (e.g., for a personal development and to enhance their status among their friends) were also regarded as important motives by the students.

Almost all students were interested in attending more English language training courses to improve their proficiency in the English language.

A related study done by Mee-ling (2009) on ‘I love Cantonese but I want English’ – A Qualitative Account of Hong Kong Students’ Language Attitudes investigated the language attitudes of secondary students towards the three official spoken languages: Cantonese, English and Potunghua. Based on students’ perceptions, this was one of the findings:

- English maintains the role of a gatekeeper for higher education and career opportunities in Hong Kong and is believed to be the language to access advanced technological knowledge.

Apart from the family members as influencers of children in language usage, the study of Gaerlan (2009) also avowed that teachers have indeed crucial roles for students to learn the English language well. The student-participants in her study pointed out that “their teachers were models of good English use” (Bernardo and Gaerlan, 2011: 5).

The Filipino bilinguals only regarded the home and school environments as giving them a big impact on learning the English language. They also added that their experiences in using any of these popular media like the television shows, films, and

websites in English augment their learning the English language (Bernardo and Gaerlan, 2011).

Aside from parents, teachers also have significant roles towards positive perceptions of using a language. Most of the time, children spend five days every week in school with their teachers. Murray and Smith (1988) explained that when these teachers do not value the children's first language, it would result to children not being able to attach importance to it neither. Moreover, Baker (1988) cited in Vizconde (2006) concurred to this idea that whether teachers are consciously or unconsciously doing this, "their attitudes play a crucial role in languages' growth or decay, restoration or destruction" (p.9).

Vizconde (2006) mentioned that students prefer the English language because they are trained to speak English well at home. Moreover, she articulated that those students who are good at speaking the English language were indeed taught of this language when they were still kids.

Vizconde (2006) explained on her paper that somehow the English language users come from those who are in the middle and upper part of the society. This finding is also concurred by Tupas (2003) where "in reality, English seems to be a social stratifier in the Philippines. Most Filipinos may have high regard for English and they believe that Filipinos who speak this language very well belong to the upper crust of the society where the language is the medium even at home." (p.23).

During President Gloria Arroyo's administration, she released Executive Order No. 210 in 2003 with the stated purpose of "Establishing the Policy to Strengthen the Use of the English Language as a Medium of Instruction." (Nolasco, 2008: 3). Thus, the E.O. 210 instructed the following:

a. English shall be taught as a second

language, starting with Grade 1;

- b. English shall be the medium of instruction for English, Mathematics and Science from at least Grade 3;
- c. English shall be the primary MOI in the secondary level, which means that the time allotted for English in all learning areas shall not be less than 70%;
- d. Filipino shall continue to be the MOI for Filipino and social studies.

Through the issued EO No.210 by the Arroyo administration, it has gained support from the three representatives: Del Mar, Gullas and Villafuerte. First, Representative Del Mar who at the same time is a co-author of the English bill openly verbalized that English is the main key in order for Filipinos to obtain better jobs here in the Philippines and all those who aspire to work abroad. According to him "English is the language of research, science and technology, areas which global business and employment are very much into." (Nolasco, 2008: 4). Furthermore, he explicated that English should be the medium of instruction as early as pre-school and should be then continued in the elementary level. Del Mar also supposed that the formative years begin at the childhood stage and it is as well good to start implementing the use of English as MOI in the early years of schooling as more difficulties might be encountered in the older years (Nolasco, 2008).

Second, Representative Gullas shed light on the bilingual policy where the English language of the children as a result will suffer and not being able to master it well because of the lack of exposure. He added that it is too much for the Filipino children targeting the learning of the two languages, especially those who are in the lower grades (Nolasco, 2008)

Third, Representative Villafuerte on his part made an argument on the reading materials used in schools. According to him, "the best quality educational and reading

materials are in English” (p.4). Thus, teachers need to translate the materials first into Filipino before they can discuss the topics to their students (Nolasco, 2008).

A study done by Ndamba (2008) presents the language preferences of the different respondents in Zimbabwe. Ndamba (2008) studied on “Mother Tongue Usage in Learning: An Examination of Language Preferences in Zimbabwe”. The study sought to establish the extent to which pupils in grades 1-3 and parents with children in those lower grades value the use of the mother tongue as the language of instruction. The respondents were purposively chosen which consisted of 60 pupils, 42 parents, 25 school heads, 152 infant teachers 17 teachers-in-charge of infant departments. Results showed that:

- Majority of children understood when the mother tongue is used as the medium of instruction in the infant school.
- Majority of pupils during the interview preferred to read and write in English, but preferred Shona/Ndebele language when speaking.
- Parents wanted their children to learn in English.
- Majority of the participants favored English as the language of instruction in the infant grades because English is a gateway to success in school and subsequent employment opportunity.
- Both pupils and parents preferred English as the language of instruction at infant level.

The present study would pay attention to the voice of the language community specifically those in the private basic education schools in Cebu City through their responses, perceptions and sentiments of the use of Cebuano-Bisaya, Filipino and English languages. The researchers believe that a study like this may shed light on the policy makers and enable the latter to make plausible amendments in the policy. Parents,

students, teachers and school administrators are considered as the top groups that should directly influence and not only one-sided researches any language policy set in the Philippines. Thus, the language policy makers would also be responsive to the *peculiar needs* of the different regions in terms of the medium of instruction that should be employed because the failure to investigate might lead to the failure of the policy itself.

3.0 Statement of the Problem

This study sought to determine the medium of instruction employed by the selected private schools in Cebu City; identified the reasons for the preferred medium of instruction; found out the dominant language used and by which students are most exposed to on the following settings and occasions- home, school; reading, talking and playing with peers, doing computer activities, consuming media such as movies, television shows, music ; and found out which language the students feel most comfortable with and frequently use; and determined the reasons for the non-preferentiality of the other languages as medium of instruction. Furthermore, this study aimed at knowing if the declared L1 of the students matched with the medium of instruction employed in the schools.

4.0 METHODOLOGY

4.1 Research Environment

The study was conducted in the selected private schools in Cebu City namely: (1) University of San Carlos (USC) – South Campus, (2) University of San Carlos – Montessori Academy, (3) Sacred Heart – Hijas, (4) Sacred Heart School – Ateneo de Cebu and (5) Philippine Christian Gospel School.

Research Participants

The selection of schools was done using purposive sampling. These are the

criteria in selecting the schools. The number of enrollees and good track record (as perceived). These are private schools offering basic education program. The participants of the study included four (4) school administrators; thirty six (36) teachers; Three hundred seventy six (376) from all levels (K1-Gr.3);and Two Hundred and Sixty (260) parents.

4.2 Research Data

The data of this study mainly comprised the different reasons cited by the administrators, teachers, parents, and students for preferring the English language

as a medium of instruction. Furthermore, the reasons for the non-preferentiality of other languages to be used as a medium of instruction in schools were also alluded to.

4.3 Research Instrument

This study made use of questionnaires (one questionnaire per group) which are originally written by the researchers themselves. The questionnaire for the administrators and teachers included the following items: (a) medium of instruction used, (b) preferred medium of instruction, and (c) reasons for the preference. On the other hand, the

5.0 RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**The Dominant Medium of Instruction Employed in Different Schools
According to the Administrators and Teachers**

Table 1
The Dominant Medium of Instruction Employed in Different Schools

What is the dominant medium of instruction employed in your school?	<i>f</i>	%
Cebuano-Bisaya	0	0
English	27	93.10
Chinese	2	6.90
Total	29	100

Table 1 clearly shows that among the three languages, English language is the medium of instruction presently employed in the different private institutions. Despite the initial mandate of DepED for basic education to employ the “Mother- Tongue Based Education”, these private schools have

maintained the use of English as a medium of instruction. In a preliminary interview conducted by the researchers with the administrators, it was found out that the main reason English is still the medium of instruction in these private institutions is that the parents themselves demanded for it, and

**Preferences of Administrators and Teachers
on the Medium of Instruction for their Students**

Table 2
The Medium of Instruction Preferred by the Administrators and Teachers for their Students

What is your preferred medium of instruction?	<i>f</i>	%
Cebuano-Bisaya	2	6.90
English	26	89.66
Filipino	1	3.45
Total	29	100

Both the administrators and the teachers in the various private schools concur in giving preferentiality to the English language with 89.66% as a medium

of instruction for their students. The next table articulates the reasons for preferring the English language.

**Administrators and Teachers' Reasons for Preferring
the English Language as the Medium of Instruction**

Table 3
Administrators and Teachers' Reasons for Preferring the English Language as the Medium of

- The English language is universally used. The materials for instructions are ready and available. Pupils and students can interact easily using the English language.
- In this globally-competitive world, students need to be well-versed with the English language so that they can communicate well with other people in their workplaces, in school...
- Parents' request. More people prefer to communicate in that medium or language since it's globally accepted and understood.
- It would prepare the child to communicate and deal with different people in the future.
- English is a universal language, it should be taught to our students. Being proficient in English is very important to get a job and to be competent here and abroad.

The administrators and the teachers who star as influential individuals in schools towards their students in order for the latter to be better learners in the future have further elucidated the importance of employing the English language as a medium of instruction

in schools. These were the reasons that surfaced in the questionnaires about the English language: first, it is considered as a universal language; second, it prepares the students to get better jobs in the future; third, parents request the schools to use English as

a medium of instruction; and fourth, it provides easy communication with people from different races.

Watson (2003 in Lazaro and Medalla, 2008) itemized five reasons why English is considered as a global international language.

(a) flexibility of the English language itself, which has been prepared to absorb words from many different languages;

(b) the process of economic globalization, part of which is the process of control of aspects of the global economy and hence an external penetration of internal

economies by transnational corporations, the media and international organizations;

(c) the economic dominance of the United States and the influence of US culture spread around the world;

(d) the growth of mass tourism and advertising has advanced the spread of English; and

(e) migration to Canada and the United States has created a segment of the world population whose aim is to learn English for survival purposes. Watson (2003 in Lazaro and Medalla, 2008, pp.3)

Preferences of Parents on the Medium of Instruction for their Children

Table 4

The Medium of Instruction Preferred by Parents for their Children

What is your preferred medium of instruction for your children?	<i>f</i>	%
Cebuano-Bisaya	31	9.75
English	266	83.65
Filipino	13	4.09
Korean	2	0.63
Chinese	5	1.57
Waray	1	0.31
Total	318	100

Table 4 illustrates that the parents from different private institutions in Cebu City highly favor English as the medium of instruction for their children. Though there are other five languages that were enumerated by the parents like Cebuano-

Bisaya, Filipino, Korean, Chinese and Waray, still the English language is regarded as the first choice of the parents. The next table articulates the reasons why most of the parents prefer English as the medium of instruction for their children in

Parents' Reasons for Preferring the English Language

Table 5

Parents' Reasons for Preferring the English Language

I prefer English as a medium of instruction as most academic books use English as the only language. Instructing the children will break the language barrier and would allow increased comprehension of the lessons on hand. Moreover, it would promote fluency among children and since this is a universal language, it would allow our kids to be globally competitive.

English is a universal language. People get better jobs if they're proficient in English. Majority of middle class Filipinos dream to go abroad for greener pastures therefore English will be required and used for communication. English should be enhanced and taught more to the younger generation to be more competent.

This would prepare the children for their future since English is the preferred medium globally. Also this is beneficial for the child to have English as a second language wherein the child would be at ease and be proficient in using the English language.

English is the language preferred in business and commerce so the advantage of my child speaking English will boost his confidence in dealing with people here and other races especially when he becomes an adult.

English is an international language. If children are used to hearing and speaking English at school, it will be natural for them to speak this language when they talk to others even outside of school. Being fluent in English makes a person become confident in his communication skills and in interacting with other people...

I want that my child will speak fluently in English, though our dominant language at home is Bisaya. That is why we decided to send her in the institution in order for her to make used in speaking English.

English is the international language. Students need to be comfortable using it as early as possible in order to be competitive in the future when they join the global workforce or the

Majority of the parents as respondents in the study gave much value to the English language for their children. From the explanations revealed by parents, most of their reasons for having a high preference of the English language are: first, the parents supposed that the English language is a universal language; second, they deem that fluency in this language helps their children to be successful in the future, especially in landing better paying jobs; third, the children can boost up their

confidence in expressing themselves freely with other people; fourth, they believe that English is the language commonly employed in workplaces; and fifth, the parents assume that the school is the best place to learn the said language since the other languages (such as Cebuano, Filipino, etc.) may just be spoken and learned easily outside school. All these reasons can be ascribed as an instrumental orientation in learning a language – that a learner favors a certain language because s/he believes of the

practical benefits of the language.

Lazaro and Medalla (2004) highlighted the importance of English especially to Southeast Asian countries where according to them, “English in this era of globalization will increase the capacity of people to communicate and exchange ideas and goods across borders. The English language skill has become a necessity for establishing linkages with the rest of the world in international trade, economic development and even in the use of new technology” (p.3)

According to one of the country’s leading job search sites, most of the country’s employers reject job applicants who are not proficient of the English language. Furthermore, “JobStreet general manager Grace Colet said studies showed 75 percent of employers had turned down jobseekers with a poor command of English,

and 97 percent believed those with good English were also more productive” (Flores, 2010).

Raymundo (2007) believes that the English language is the global language for business. If one has a good command of the English language, then the individual who is globally competitive in the world will always have an edge compared to those who are not proficient of the said language. She further avowed that “any communications problem, whether personal or business, translates to losses, zero result in negotiations, incompetence for global business, or will just simply leave you ill-equipped to carry out international business” (Raymundo, 2007).

In the study, 83.65% of the parents (which is majority of the respondents) pointed out very sensible and highly practical reasons for preferring English as a

Preferences of Students on the Medium of Instruction to be Used in School

Table 6
The Medium of Instruction preferred by the Students to be used in School

What is your preferred medium of instruction?	<i>f</i>	%
Cebuano-Bisaya	40	15.04
English	208	78.20
Filipino	16	6.02
Korean	1	0.38
Japanese	1	1.38
Total	266	100

Table 6 reveals that most student-respondents from K2 up to Grade 3 enrolled in private schools desire English as the medium of instruction to be used in their

respective schools. Even with other four languages that ascend in the students’ questionnaires such as Cebuano-Bisaya, Filipino, Korean, and Japanese, the English

language still got the highest frequency. To fully understand the different reasons of this

preference, the elucidations made by the students are provided in the next table.

Students' Reasons for Preferring the English Language

Table 7

I want to learn English cause I find it very useful when I grow up.

English is easy to understand. Most books that are available are written in English.

I choose English because it is easier to understand.

So that I will learn English well and be able to communicate to other especially to other races.

It is the language I am most comfortable using.

Because I like speaking English and I feel comfortable speaking it.

It is a universal language. It is easy to learn.

It is the most commonly used language. Even instructions are written in English. English is universal.

I am more comfortable in talking, reading, and listening English. My school wants me to speak English. My parents encourage me to learn well in English.

Because my mother always speaks English to me everytime, she said it's for my own good.

Because it will serve as my training to speak English well.

The different reasons alluded to by students from different private institutions in pointing out the English language more clearly manifest their full grasp of the usefulness of the said language. These were the common reasons why they choose English as a medium of instruction: first, it is regarded as a universal language; second, it is easier to learn; third, parents have been very influential towards their children in learning the language; fourth, there is accessibility and availability of English reading materials; fifth, there are better jobs

for those who speak the language fluently.

Likewise, the studies of Al-Tamimi and Shuin (2009); Vizconde (2006); and Chang (2010) corroborated their significant observations to the findings of this present study.

In the study done by Al-Tamimi and Shuin (2009) among engineering undergraduates, the results revealed that the students would want to express themselves using the English language naturally just like the native speakers. They have this desire because these students believe that in order

for them to function effectively in companies; they need to be adept in the said language.

Most of the respondents in the study done by Vizconde (2006) highly gave importance to the status of the English language. "Some of them valued English highly because it is used for business, transaction, and communication with foreigners." (pp 16-17). Thus, the opinion of Vizconde's respondents matched with the opinions of the students here in the present study where the first group believed that "fluency of the English language signifies

success in profession and society" (p.17).

One of the important findings revealed in the study done by Chang (2010) is that most students from the six departments "feel that being good in English is an important determinant of academic success and in their future careers" (p.64).

The students even in their young ages seem to realize the benefits of being able to use the language fluently. They understand the importance of the English language, so they prefer it to be the medium of instruction. It is also noteworthy that many of the students who prefer English declare

**Different Reasons by the Administrators, Teachers, Students,
and Parents for the Non-Preferentiality of Other Languages
to be Used as a Medium of Instruction in Schools**

Table 8

Reasons by the Administrators, Teachers, Students, and Parents for the Non-Preferentiality of Other Languages to be Used as a Medium of Instruction in Schools

(Administrators and Teachers)

- It will take longer time for the students to adapt (example: Filipino) since most of the kids are in general use English at home.
- Cebuano-Bisaya and Filipino can be taught and learned at home and in the community.
- Cebuano-Bisaya are the commonly used here in the Visayas. Dialect words are easy to learn. They can understand them as they grow with their families and peers. (prefers English)
- Cebuano-Bisaya is a dialect learned by students as they grow up with family and friends. (prefers English)
- Materials are not easily available. (prefers English)
- They might have difficulty in communicating with other people. Say for example in applying jobs, during the interview they will be asked in English in giving their answers. So as early as now, they must know how to speak English. (prefer English)

(Students)

- Because I'm not used to these languages and I find it a little hard to understand. (preferring English)

- Because those languages are already spoken at home, easily learned. (preferring English)
- I am a Cebuano-speaking person already that's why I wanted to speak English so that when my cousins come home I can communicate with them because they lived in the States. (preferring English)
- Because my mother said not to speak Cebuano in school. (preferring English)
- Because I don't know how to speak those languages and none of my family knows how to speak those languages. (preferring English)
- Cebuano is our language and it cannot be used when kids grow up to look for a good job. (Preferring English)
- The other languages are difficult to understand. There are less printed materials in these languages. (preferring English)
- Because my parents doesn't allow me to speak Filipino... (preferring English)
- Well, wherever you go English is always around, and English is 100% used most of the business sectors especially at present that most business are call centers and dealing most clients in U.S.

(Parents)

- Cebuano language or the vernacular isn't a rightful choice of language to teach the students. As young children, they should be molded into successful professionals which will be easier to commit if the students are taught in English.
- Cebuano and Filipino language were used at home so no need to practice at school.
- Cebuano-Bisaya is our native language and it is already learned in the home. Moreover our native language is only of local application so it will not empower our children in this globally competitive and highly technological world.
- If they don't practice English in school and at home they get lazy and will speak Bisaya always. Adjustments would be easy if they speak English first cause after a while they will adopt the Bisaya language. Can only be used locally and can't be used outside the country.
- Cebuano in particular though is our dialect, is not yet understandable to other regions/nationality. So how can our child be competent in the future if she can hardly speak the language being used globally?
- It's only English that you need to use when you start finding a job – starting from making the resume and interview. Even when you are in business, if you want to introduce your

business it is mostly or usually in English.

- Mastery of the English language is an acquired skill that should be nurtured and developed since the formative years; you don't need a formal education to learn Cebuano.
 - When the medium of instruction is not English, tendency is the child will never get it to his/her system (English). There are no stable and decent-paying jobs/careers that require the Cebuano-Bisaya dialect and Filipino language. You cannot be a teacher, doctor, lawyer, etc. if you cannot communicate in English well. You cannot work in good companies and you cannot have good positions in the company if you do not communicate English well, regardless of how hard you work.
 - As parents our reason why we are not preferring the Cebuano language are they already learned and exposed it everywhere and in our home they didn't use to speak the English language or dialect all the time. That is why we are hoping that our children will learn how to speak English by introducing them the English language.
 - I don't really teach them how to speak Bisaya because I know that they learn it by themselves especially when they interact with helpers and driver.
-

There were diverse reasons pointed out by the different respondents in the study and indeed clarifications were made as to why they do not prefer the other languages such as Cebuano, Filipino, and other languages mentioned to be used as their media of instruction in schools. First, the Cebuano language could just be learned outside school as these students would surely interact with other local people speaking in Cebuano. Second, the other languages are not required when students are placed in the real world situations such as job interviews, business establishments and work promotions. Third, there are a few available learning materials in Cebuano. Fourth, they deem that after the students have completed

their degrees they could not be globally competitive working outside the Philippines because of low proficiency in English.

In the case of Filipino language, Villegas (2000) also observed that the young people of today have all the chances to learn the Filipino since they can talk and listen to their family members, relatives and friends who use the language. In addition, they can watch movies and listen to music in this language (referring to Filipino). On the other hand, these young people do not have all the opportunities to practice the English language outside school.

Moreover, Villanueva (2007) clearly asserted that "learning to speak and write in English in this age of globalization is

Dominant Language Used by their Children at Home

Table 9
Dominant language used by their children at home

What is the most dominant language used by your children at home?	<i>f</i>	%
Cebuano-Bisaya	115	33.05
English	198	56.90
Filipino	9	2.59
Chinese	23	6.61
German	1	0.29
Japanese	1	0.29
Korean	1	0.29
Total	348	100

Table 9 discloses seven languages that the parents deem their children dominantly use at home. English is the language used according to a significant number of parent-respondents and this is followed by Cebuano- Bisaya. This reveals that for some families, the local tongue or what is referred to as the native tongue which is Cebuano-Bisaya for Cebu City, may not necessarily be the mother tongue for some. English being spoken by 56.90% parents at home may already be attributed as the mother tongue of these families. The surfacing of the Gullas bill rationalizes that those who want to “have greater competence in English, be in the position to take advantage, or compete in a globalized world, English must be used as the medium of instruction” (“English vs mother tongue as a medium of instruction”, 2009). This article

further explained about the concept of mother tongue that “the most effective medium of instruction is in the child’s mother tongue that is her first language or the language spoken at home” (“English vs mother tongue as a medium of instruction”, 2009). In this study, it is an interesting revelation that a good number of the respondents use English at home, this means that English has already become their mother tongue.

Luz S. Almeda, DepEd-Northern Mindanao regional director asserted “that they will use languages that are used at homes as a medium of instruction to children for them to understand clearly what has been discussed in their classes” (Yu,2012). On the other hand, tables 7 and 8 affirm that the most dominant language used by these students and as observed well by the

students' parents at home is the English language with a high difference in percentages (English language which is 56.90% and Cebuano language with only 33.05%).

The present study is a good hint that if the 'mother tongue-based language in school'(referring to Cebuano-Bisaya in the case of Cebu City) be implemented in these private institutions, this might just lead to

**Dominant Language Used by the Students
in Different Settings and Occasions**

Table 10
Dominant language used by the Students in different settings and occasions

What is most the dominant language you use on the following settings and occasions?	Home	School	Talking/ Playing with peers	Total	%
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>		
Cebuano-Bisaya	149	52	107	308	26.32
English	209	290	267	766	65.47
Filipino	22	10	15	47	4.02
Chinese	22	15	3	40	3.42
Japanese	1	0	0	1	0.09
Korean	1	0	0	1	0.09
Spanish	2	0	0	2	0.17
British	1	0	1	2	0.17
Waray	2	0	0	2	0.17
Bahtayanon	1	0	0	1	0.09

Table 10 unveils that the most dominant language used by the students in settings such as home, school, and occasions like talking with friends and playing with peers is the English language. This data reinforces the claims of the parents that English is the language used at home. It is albeit understandable that English is the

language used in these private schools since the language is currently the medium of instruction employed. On the one hand, it is interesting to note that the student-respondents claim that even when they talk and play with their peers (occasions which are very informal), English is still the medium of communication. This divulges

that even in candid situations and conversations English is naturally spoken by these student-respondents.

One of the news in Philippine Daily Inquirer titled as ‘DepEd issues guidelines for mother tongue teaching’ apparently highlighted that the language used at home is considered as the most effective in teaching (Calleja, 2011). The researchers believe that this is one of DepEd’s foremost reasons that certainly it is the Cebuano language which is dominantly used at home. But in the case of these student-respondents coming from different private institutions, it is not the

Cebuano language that they dominantly use, rather it is the English language.

Espinosa (1997) observed that for most middle and upper class Filipino children, English begins at home with adults who use English or through snatches of English words and phrases heard over the radio and on TV. To the Filipino child or, at least, one who has grown up in a home where English is often heard and spoken, English is not an alien tongue. Filipino children may not understand the nuances of the English language, but it's there and it is theirs to

Children’s Exposure on the Different Activities and the Dominant Language Used According to their Parents

Table 11
Children’s Exposure on the Different Activities and the Dominant Language Used According

To what language are your children most exposed to on the following activities	Computer Games/ Activities	Media (movies, television, music)	Reading	Total	%
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>		
Cebuano-Bisaya	15	3	2	20	2.90
English	209	198	195	602	87.25
Filipino	6	38	11	55	7.97
Chinese	0	4	4	8	1.16
Japanese	0	1	1	2	0.29
Korean	1	1	1	3	0.43
Total	388	367	392	1,170	100

Table 11 divulges that most children, according to their parents are mostly exposed to the English language as the children play computer games and engage in other activities. Furthermore, the media (movies,

television shows) they are most exposed to are those that employ English. Parents also claim that in reading, their children are most exposed to the English language. Reading is known to be one of the most effective ways

to learn a language. In this exposure, children are incidentally learning English thus, fluency is intensified. This result is also

strengthened in table 10 where the children themselves agree that English is the language that they are mostly exposed to in

Students' Exposure on the Different Activities and the Dominant Language Used

Table 12

Students' Exposure on the Different Activities and the Dominant Language Used

To what language are you most exposed to on the following activities?	Computer Games/ Activities	Media (movies, television shows, music	Reading	Total	%
	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>	<i>f</i>
Cebuano-Bisaya	27	33	9	69	6.41
English	298	293	295	886	82.34
Filipino	8	66	21	95	8.83
Chinese	3	7	1	11	1.02
Japanese	4	4	0	8	0.74
Korean	0	2	1	3	0.28
Singapore	0	1	0	1	0.09
Indian	0	1	0	1	0.09
French	0	1	0	1	0.09

Table 12 shows that students are mostly exposed to the English language in activities such as using the computer, watching shows, listening to music , and reading.

Likewise, the students in the study of Cahapay (2007) also favor the use of English language when doing any leisure time activity such as watching television

programs, reading books and magazines, writing letters to friends and sending text messages to friends.

Similarly, Mones (2004 in Cahapay, 2007) found out that the students had a high favorable attitude towards English. They further enumerated different activities that motivate them to use the English language

**Languages Which Students Feel Most Comfortable Using
and Which They Most Frequently Use**

Table 13
Languages which students feel most comfortable using and which they most frequently use

What languages/s do you feel most comfortable using?			Which language do you most frequently use?		
	<i>f</i>	%		<i>f</i>	%
Cebuano-Bisaya	113	32.19	Cebuano-Bisaya	117	32.23
English	211	60.11	English	218	60.06
Filipino	21	5.98	Filipino	20	5.51
Bantayanon	1	0.28	Bantayanon	1	0.28
British	1	0.28	Ilonggo	1	0.28
Korean	1	0.28	Korean	1	0.28
Chinese	2	0.57	Chinese	4	1.10
Japanese	1	0.28	Japanese	1	0.28

Table 13 evidently exemplifies that with the two questions asked to the students, there were consistent results where the English language emerges as the language that the student-respondents feel they are most comfortable using. Indeed it is the same language which they most frequently use.

A press release by the Department of Education/Office of the Secretary titled ‘DepEd trains teachers on mother tongue-based education’ which was for immediate release on May 9, 2009 clearly stated that “studies show that children learn best when the primary education is in their first language or Mother Tongue; conversely, they learn very little when the Medium of Instruction (MOI) is a language they do not speak or understand.” This present study is a clear indication that certainly these students

coming from the different private schools understand and speak the language (English) which is at the same time the medium of instruction in their schools.

Education Secretary Armin Luistro justified that if the mother tongue is used in teaching, then “it is the easiest way for children to access the unfamiliar world of school learning” (Calleja, 2011). He further explicated that “Educators say students lose interest in learning when the mother tongue is disregarded in favor of an unfamiliar language.” (Calleja, 2011). Table 12 would convey that the English language is never considered an unfamiliar language to these students.

SUMMARY

English is the most preferred medium of instruction by students and their parents, and

the faculty and administrators of the selected private schools in Cebu City. The reasons for preferring English is mostly related to the following: the established status of English as a language spoken by many countries of the globe in terms of business transactions and other international communications; fluency in the language means better job offers. Most reasons are related to the instrumental motivation where learners and users of the language choose to employ a language with the goal to gain social or economic rewards and other practical benefits, thus referring to a more functional reason for language learning. Furthermore, for the students, it was clarified that they use English frequently and comfortably.

Most reasons why the parents, students, faculty and administrators do not prefer the other languages specifically Cebuano-Bisaya as a medium of instruction is that this language is not yet available in most learning materials, thus harder to understand especially when used to explain concepts. Furthermore, they believe that Cebuano-Bisaya may always be learned outside of school through other people and may not necessarily be used in formal studies. The respondents express their desire to maximize the use of English and not Cebuano-Bisaya in schools as the former language is deemed more useful in the future careers of the students.

A good number of parents and students claim that English is the dominant language used at home. Most of the students declare that they employ English at home and school and even when talking and playing with their friends. The students of Kindergartens 1&2 and Grades 1 to 3 are mostly exposed to English in the following: computer activities, media (movies, television shows, music, etc.) and reading.

A good number of students claim that the language they feel most comfortable using is English. Many of the respondents assert that

the language they most frequently use is English. Most reasons why the parents, students, faculty and administrators do not prefer the other languages specifically Cebuano-Bisaya as a medium of instruction is that there are very limited available learning materials in this language, thus harder to understand especially when used to explain concepts. Furthermore, they believe that Cebuano-Bisaya may always be learned outside of school through other people and may not be used in formal studies. The respondents express their desire to maximize the use of English and not Cebuano-Bisaya in schools as the former language is deemed more useful in the future careers of the students.

6.0 CONCLUSIONS

- The parents, the students in Kindergartens 1 and 2 and Grades 1 to 3, the administrators and the parents in the private schools have a very *favorable attitude* towards English language as the medium of instruction as shown in their language preference. The respondents have acknowledged that fluency in the language will offer a number of advantages especially in the future careers of the students.
- The responses of the parents, students, administrators and faculty reveal that the respondents are unprepared for a change of the status quo with English as a medium of instruction.
- The L1 for a number of respondents in the study is not Cebuano-Bisaya as the student-respondents claim that the language they use more frequently without much effort is English.
- There is a need to review and expand the definition of Mother Tongue as this may not and should not be assumed automatically as the native language of the community but also as one of the strongest languages a person uses.

Based on the conclusions of the research, the following recommendations are taken into account. First, these private schools whose clientele employ English as L1 should have English as a medium of instruction. By using L1, the students may learn concepts with ease. Second, DepEd may only compel institutions wherein most students have the local tongue as their L1 to impose the “Mother-tongue based education policy”. Third, translations of learning materials to Cebuano-Bisaya must be aggressively pursued by writers so that there will be more available books written not only in Filipino (which is mostly Tagalog) but in the local tongue. Fourth, Cebuano-Bisaya as the native tongue of Cebu City must also be formally studied by the students (especially in the private schools) in their formative years to avoid language displacement. Fifth, further investigations on the L1 of the students in the other private basic education schools taking into consideration certain demographic factors such as socio economic status may be conducted. And sixth, researches which will correlate test scores in Math and Science using English as a medium of instruction among private schools may be also pursued to verify successes or failures in the study of the mentioned fields.

REFERENCES

- Baker, C. (1992). *Attitudes and language*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
- Bernardo, A.B.I & Gaerlan, M.J. (2011). Non-Native English students learning in English: Reviewing and reflecting on the research. *Global Perspectives Local Initiatives*.
- Cahapay, M.B. (2007). *Attitudes and preference toward English language of pre-university program students of Mindanao State University toward English*. Unpublished Linguistic Research from <http://unpublinguistresearch.blogspot.com/>
- Calleja, N. (2011). DepEd issues guidelines for mother tongue teaching. *Philippine Daily Inquirer*. Retrieved from <http://newsinfo.inquirer.net/104027/dep-ed-issues-guidelines-for-mother-tongue-teaching>
- Chang, Y.Y. (2010). English-medium instruction for subject courses in tertiary education: Reactions from Taiwanese undergraduate students. *Taiwan International ESP Journal*, 2(1), 55-84.
- deLotbinière M. (2011). Research backs English as key to development. *Guardian Weekly*. Retrieved from <http://www.guardian.co.uk/education/2011/jul/05/research-backs-english-language-delotbiniere>
- DepEd trains teachers on mother tongue-based education. From the Department of Education/Office of the Secretary. Press Release.
- Espinosa, D. (1997). English in the Philippines. *Global Issues in Language*. Issue 26.
- Fakeye, D. & Ogunsiji, Y. (2009). English language proficiency as a predictor of academic achievement among EFL students in Nigeria. *European Journal of Scientific Research*, 37(3), pp.490-495.
- Flores, H. (2010). 75% of employers reject applicants with poor English. *The Philippine Star*. Retrieved from <http://mabuhaycity.com/forums/culture-style-fashion-home/12184-filipinos-losing-their-english-proficiency.html>
- Fyle, C. (1976). The use of the mother tongue in education in Sierra Leone. In Bamgbose, A. *Mother Tongue Education. The West African Experience*. London, Hodder and Stoughton.
- Gardner, R. C. (2001). *Integrative motivation: Past, present and future*. Temple University

- Japan, Distinguished Lecturer Series, Tokyo, February 17, 2001; Osaka, February 24, 2001. publish.uwo.ca/~gardner/docs/GardnerPublicLecture1.pdf
- Holt, J.N. (2001). Motivation as a contributing factor in second language acquisition. *The Internet TESL Journal*, 7(6).
- Institutionalizing mother tongue-based multilingual education (MLE). Retrieved from <http://multilingualphilippines.com/?p=4645>
- Kavaliauskiene, G. (2009). Role of mother tongue in learning English for specific purposes. *ESP World*, 1(22), 1-12.
- Lazaro, D.C. & Medalla, E. (2004). English as the language of trade, finance, technology in APEC: An east Asia perspective.
- Lapus, J. (2009). Institutionalizing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education. (September 20, 2011). Retrieved from <http://www.deped.gov.ph/.../DepEd%20Memo%20No.%2019%20s.%202011.pd...>
- Martin, R. (2008). English as a medium of instruction in the Philippines. *UE Today*, 17(4). Retrieved from <http://www.ue.edu.ph/manila/uetoday/index.php?nav=27.htm&archive=200808>
- Mee-ling, L (2009). I love Cantonese but I want English – A qualitative account of Hong Kong students' language attitudes. *The Asia Pacific Education Researcher*, 18(1), pp.79-92.
- Monsod, W. (2009). English vs mother tongue as a medium of instruction. Retrieved March 23, 2012 from <http://blogs.gmanews.tv/winnie-monsod/archives/3-English-vs-mother-tongue-as-a-medium-of-instruction.html>
- Murry, J. & Smith, F. (1988). *Language arts and the learner*. Melbourne, Mcmillan.
- Ndamba, G.T. (2008). Mother tongue usage in learning: An examination of language preferences in Zimbabwe. *The Journal of Pan African Studies*, 2(4), 171-188.
- Nolasco, R.M. (2008). The prospects of multilingual education and literacy in the Philippines. Retrieved from http://www.seameo.org/_ld2008/doucmnts/Presentation_document/NolascoTHE_PROSPECTS_OF_MULTILINGUAL_EDUCATION.pdf
- Nondo, S. J. (1996). The main problems faced by students whose mother tongue are other Zimbabwean African languages in learning Ndebele. University of Zimbabwe, Unpublished.
- Norris-Holt, J. (2001). Motivation as a contributing factor in second language acquisition. (September 20, 2011) iteslj.org/Articles/Norris-Motivation.html –
- Nunan, D. (2003). The impact of English as a global language on educational policies and practices in the Asia-Pacific Region. *TESOL Quarterly*, 37(4), 589-613.
- Otto, D. (1997). First language maintenance in a second language context. Paper presented at the Regional Conference on Early Childhood Education in Higher Education: The way forward. Kadoma, Zimbabwe.
- Raymundo, M.E. (2012). Business English and its importance to business and professional success. Retrieved on March 23, 2012 from http://EzineArticles.com/?expert=Maria_Eliza_Raymundo
- Roy-Campbell, Z.M. (1996). A neglected pillar of African education: The language of schooling. Paper presented at the First Annual Conference of the Zimbabwe Languages Association. 10-12

- December. Harare.
- Tamimi, A.A. & Shuib, M. (2009). Motivation and attitudes towards learning English: A study of Petroleum Engineering undergraduates at Hadhramout University of Sciences and Technology. *GEMA Online Journal of Language Studies*, 9(2), 29-55.
- Vizconde, C. (2006). Attitudes of Student Teachers towards the use of English as Language of Instruction for Science and Mathematics in the Philippines. *The Linguistics Journal*, 1(3).
- Yanagihara, Y. (2007). A study of bilingual education in the Philippines- Difference in pupils' degree of understanding between learning Mathematics in Cebuano and English. *The Kelai Journal of International Studies*, (19), 175-201.
- Yu, M.A.W. (2012). Education department to use mother tongue-based language in school. Sun.Star Cagayan de Oro newspaper from <http://www.sunstar.com.ph/cagayan-de-oro/local-news/2012/03/26/education-department-use-mother-tongue-based-language-school-21>