

ADAPTATION OF MULTILINGUALISM: THE DIMANTAL ELEMENTARY SCHOOL EXPERIENCE

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ABSTRACT

The Dimantal Elementary School (DES) was formerly an Alternative Learning School (ALS) that catered to the adult illiterate natives of Pangasinan. The success of the program which was conducted in the tongues of the natives – Ilocano, Kankanaey, Pangasinense and Ibaloi—prompted the natives to entrust their children to DES which was eventually converted into a full pledged elementary school to serve the increasing population of Dimantal. Though held in combination classes, DES is one of the schools nationwide that adapted the Mother-tongue Based Multilingual Education (MTBMLE) in 2009.

This descriptive research focused on languages used by teachers and pupils (specifically in Grades 4 to 6) in subject areas like Filipino, English, Mathematics and Science inside the school and even out of school. It utilized survey and observation of the student-respondents, immersion with some of the natives, and interview with the teachers of the school. This paper tried to describe the languages teachers and students used in a multilingual class; the effects of adapting a multilingual approach on the students of DES; and, the needs of DES to fully give quality and dependable education for multilingual classes. The study found that even though there are prescribed languages for academic purposes, one's own language cannot be curtailed and is definitely the best language for literacy.

Keywords: Multilingualism, multicultural, MTBMLE, Dimantal