

**ENHANCING LANGUAGE ACQUISITION: METHODOLOGY OF
INTEGRATING MOTHER LANGUAGE LESSONS WITH ENGLISH LANGUAGE IN
PRIMARY GRADES**

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Abstract: Language acquisition is a multifaceted process crucial for cognitive development, social interaction, and academic success. In primary education, where foundational language skills are established, integrating mother language (ML) lessons with English language (EL) instruction holds significant potential for enhancing students' linguistic proficiency and cultural appreciation. This article elucidates a comprehensive methodology for effectively integrating ML lessons with EL in primary grades, emphasizing the importance of contextual relevance, scaffolding, and cultural sensitivity. Drawing on theoretical frameworks and practical strategies, this methodology aims to foster a balanced bilingual environment conducive to holistic language development.

Keywords: language acquisition, mother language, English language, primary education, bilingualism, integration, methodology

In primary education, language serves as more than just a means of communication; it forms the bedrock upon which a child's cognitive development, social interactions, and academic achievements are built. As educators navigate the terrain of language acquisition in early schooling, they encounter a delicate balancing act: nurturing proficiency in the dominant language of instruction, typically English, while simultaneously valuing, preserving, and harnessing the richness of students' mother languages.

The significance of this balance cannot be overstated. For many students, their mother language represents not just a mode of communication but a vital link to their cultural heritage,

familial bonds, and sense of identity. Neglecting or marginalizing the mother language in favor of English risks eroding this connection and diminishing students' sense of self-worth and belonging. Conversely, exclusive focus on the mother language may limit opportunities for academic and socio-economic advancement in an English-dominated society.

Acknowledging the intrinsic value of both languages, our methodology advocates for the seamless integration of mother language lessons with English language instruction in primary grades. This integration is not merely additive but transformative, capitalizing on the unique strengths and advantages of each language to create a dynamic and inclusive learning environment. [1.28]

By embracing bilingualism as a cornerstone of our approach, we aim to empower students to navigate and thrive in diverse linguistic and cultural contexts. Bilingualism is not a zero-sum game where one language must be sacrificed for the other; rather, it is a synergistic relationship where proficiency in one language enhances and reinforces proficiency in the other. Through strategic integration, students can develop a deeper understanding of language structures, expand their vocabulary, and hone their communicative skills across multiple linguistic domains.

Moreover, integrating mother language lessons with English language instruction facilitates cross-cultural understanding and fosters a sense of empathy and respect for linguistic diversity. By exposing students to a range of linguistic and cultural perspectives, we equip them with the tools to navigate an increasingly interconnected and multicultural world with confidence and sensitivity.

In essence, our methodology represents a paradigm shift in how we conceptualize and approach language education in primary grades. It transcends traditional dichotomies of native versus non-native languages, embracing linguistic diversity as a fundamental asset rather than a deficit to be remedied. Through intentional and purposeful integration, we endeavor to create learning environments where every student's linguistic and cultural background is valued, celebrated, and leveraged to promote academic excellence and social equity.

Theoretical Framework The proposed methodology is grounded in socio-cultural theories of language acquisition, which emphasize the role of social interaction, cultural context, and meaningful communication in language learning. Vygotsky's Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) highlights the importance of scaffolding—providing support and guidance tailored to students' current abilities—to facilitate language acquisition. Cummins' Linguistic

Interdependence Hypothesis underscores the reciprocal relationship between proficiency in the mother language and second language acquisition. These theoretical underpinnings inform the design and implementation of the integrated language curriculum. [2.79]

Methodology a. Contextual Relevance: The integration of ML lessons with EL should be contextualized to students' cultural backgrounds, experiences, and interests. Incorporating culturally relevant texts, stories, and activities enhances students' engagement and promotes a sense of belonging in the learning environment. b. Scaffolding: Instructional strategies should scaffold students' learning, gradually transitioning from ML to EL as students develop proficiency. Utilizing visual aids, gestures, and contextual cues facilitates comprehension and supports language development across both languages. c. Cross-Linguistic Transfer: Explicitly highlighting similarities and differences between ML and EL fosters cross-linguistic transfer, enabling students to leverage their existing linguistic knowledge to acquire new language skills. Comparative analysis of grammar, vocabulary, and sentence structures enhances metalinguistic awareness and promotes language transfer. d. Multimodal Approaches: Integrating multimodal resources, such as audio-visual materials, interactive games, and digital platforms, accommodates diverse learning styles and enhances language acquisition through sensory experiences. Interactive storytelling, role-playing, and collaborative projects provide opportunities for meaningful language use and communicative competence. e. Assessment and Feedback: Formative assessment strategies, such as performance tasks, portfolios, and peer evaluation, should be integrated into the curriculum to monitor students' progress and provide timely feedback. Assessments should be aligned with learning objectives and reflect students' proficiency in both ML and EL.

Performance tasks offer a holistic approach to assessing students' language proficiency and communicative competence. These tasks may include oral presentations, role-playing scenarios, project-based assignments, and collaborative group work. By engaging students in real-world language use, performance tasks provide authentic opportunities to demonstrate language skills in meaningful contexts. Furthermore, performance tasks can be designed to incorporate both ML and EL, allowing students to draw upon their linguistic repertoire to complete the task successfully.

Portfolios serve as a comprehensive record of students' language development over time. In a bilingual context, portfolios may include samples of students' writing, oral recordings, language artifacts, and reflections on their learning experiences in both ML and EL. Portfolios

not only document students' progress but also empower them to take ownership of their learning journey by reflecting on their strengths, challenges, and growth as bilingual speakers and writers. [3.18]

Implementation Considerations Successful implementation of the integrated language curriculum requires collaboration among educators, administrators, parents, and community stakeholders. Professional development opportunities should be provided to equip teachers with the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary for effective implementation. School-wide support, including adequate instructional time, materials, and technology infrastructure, is essential to sustain the integrated approach over time. Furthermore, ongoing communication with parents and caregivers is crucial to garner support and promote the value of bilingual education.

Conclusion The integration of mother language lessons with English language instruction in primary grades holds immense potential for enhancing students' linguistic proficiency, cultural competence, and academic achievement. By embracing a holistic approach that values students' linguistic diversity and fosters cross-cultural understanding, educators can create inclusive learning environments that empower students to become competent and confident communicators in multiple languages. Through collaborative efforts and innovative pedagogical practices, we can realize the transformative potential of bilingual education in promoting equity, diversity, and social justice in education.

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