Review Form 3

Journal Name:	**Asian Journal of Education and Social Studies**
Manuscript Number:	**Ms_AJESS_130294**
Title of the Manuscript:	**AFTER 10 YEARS OF MTB-MLE IMPLEMENTATION: NARRATIVES OF FIRST-HAND IMPLEMENTERS**
Type of the Article	**Original Research Article**

PART 1: Comments

	Reviewer's comment	**Author's Feedback** *(Please correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)*
Please write a few sentences regarding the importance of this manuscript for the scientific community. A minimum of 3-4 sentences may be required for this part.	This manuscript holds significant value for the scientific community, particularly in the fields of education, linguistics, and policy evaluation. By documenting the narratives of first-hand implementers after a decade of MTB-MLE implementation, it provides critical insights into the real-world impact of mother tongue-based instruction on teaching practices, learning outcomes, and policy execution. Such qualitative perspectives enrich the body of research by highlighting successes, challenges, and contextual nuances that quantitative data may overlook. Furthermore, the findings can guide policymakers and educators in refining educational frameworks, ensuring culturally responsive pedagogy, and addressing gaps in future implementations of language-based education policies.	Thank you for mentioning the importance of the manuscript.
Is the title of the article suitable? **(If not please suggest an alternative title)**	**Suggested title:** A Decade of MTB-MLE Implementation: Perspectives and Experiences from Frontline Educators	Thank you for suggesting a relevant title.

Is the abstract of the article comprehensive? Do you suggest the addition (or deletion) of some points in this section? Please write your suggestions here.	Make the abstract clear and concise. Simplify sentences to make it more reader-friendly. For example, the phrase "considered MTB-MLE as a mandate, beneficial and fallible" could be clarified as "viewed MTB-MLE as both beneficial and subject to challenges." On the structure, separate the purpose, methods, results, and conclusions more distinctly to improve readability and logical flow. On the results part, expand briefly on what "positivity and openness" entail, as well as the identified challenges in implementing MTB-MLE. Readers may benefit from examples or key themes to better understand these insights. On recommendations, emphasize how these findings might concretely inform policy adjustments or curriculum enhancements. Moreover, avoid repetitive statements, such as the mention of adhering to government standards and the role of policymakers, which appears in different forms throughout.	
Is the manuscript scientifically, correct? Please write here.	The manuscript needs improvement to strengthen scientific orientation. 1. Avoid overgeneralizations (e.g., "a bilingual approach not only improves educational outcomes..."). Cite specific evidence or studies to substantiate such claims. 2. Align the discussion more closely with the Philippine context, as this is the focus of the study. 3. Consider restructuring to balance the global overview with the specific research problem. 4. Provide the research questions section and explicity state them. 5. Avoid phrases like "springboard to future research" unless specific gaps are identified for future exploration. 6. Elaborate briefly on how the findings could directly influence policy or practice. 7. Justify the sample size of 10 participants in terms of representativeness and data saturation.Address the consistency in the number of participants. It is different in various discussion sections. 8. Discuss potential biases introduced by using convenience sampling and how they were mitigated. 9. Under instruments, thoroughly discuss the instruments used, and specify how content validity was assessed by the five experts. 10. Clarify how data gathering was conducted for both interview and FGD. You included observations as a method of data gathering but there was no observation tool discussed. Clarify how observations were integrated into data analysis. 11. Briefly mention challenges encountered during data collection, if any. 12. Ensure consistency in referencing frameworks and theories throughout the manuscript. 13. Strengthen the discussion of limitations and how they were addressed to reinforce credibility. 14. The paper lacks clear methodological framework. The process of thematic analysis is not explicitly described in the paper. There is no clear mention of how themes were derived, whether inductive (data-driven) or deductive (theory-driven), and what steps were followed to ensure rigor. Include a description of how the data were coded, how themes were identified and refined, and the steps taken to ensure trustworthiness (e.g., inter-coder reliability, triangulation). 15. Themes lack specificity and differentiation. The themes, such as "Policy as a Mandate," "Policy as Beneficial," and "Policy as Fallible," are overly broad and overlapping. The analysis does not fully explore the nuanced distinctions or sub-themes within these categories. Break down broad themes into smaller, more precise sub-themes to provide deeper insight. For instance: "Policy as Beneficial" could include sub-themes like "Improved Student Comprehension" and "Teacher Support." "Policy as Fallible" could be divided into "Language Orthography Challenges" and "Material Consistency Issues." 16. There is an observed overreliance on descriptive summaries. The discussion of themes often reads as a summary of participant responses rather than an in-depth interpretation of underlying patterns, contradictions, or relationships between themes. Provide more critical analysis by linking participant responses to broader theoretical or contextual discussions. Discuss why these patterns may have emerged and their implications for policy or practice. 17. There is limited participant voice. While some quotes from participants are included, they are sparse and seem selectively chosen. This weakens the credibility of the thematic analysis. Include more direct quotes to illustrate each theme and sub-theme, ensuring a diverse representation of participant perspectives. This allows readers to see how conclusions were drawn from the data. 18. Inconsistent connection to existing literature is noted. Although references to existing studies	We are thankful for your comments. We have thoroughly revised the paper as suggested.

(e.g., Andrino et al., Berger et al., Maragha) are present, they are not consistently integrated into the discussion of themes. The connections feel surface-level rather than analytical. Deepen the discussion by comparing and contrasting findings with the literature. Discuss how this study confirms, extends, or challenges existing knowledge about MTB-MLE.

19. The findings are presented as if they represent universal experiences, despite being based on a small, specific sample. The transferability of these findings to other contexts is not addressed. Acknowledge the limitations of the sample and discuss how the findings might vary in different contexts. Clarify that the themes are specific to the participants in this study.

20. There is insufficient reflexivity. The role of the researcher in shaping the thematic analysis is not discussed. This includes potential biases in theme development or interpretation. Add a reflexivity section to reflect on how the researcher's background, assumptions, and interactions with participants may have influenced the findings.

21. Participant ambivalence was neglected. Participant ambivalence, such as expressing both positive and negative views, is mentioned but not analyzed in-depth. This can lead to an oversimplified representation of experiences. Explore these ambivalences as a separate theme or discuss them in relation to each theme. For example, investigate why participants might view the policy as both beneficial and fallible simultaneously.

22. Contextual influences were omitted. The thematic analysis does not sufficiently consider how contextual factors (e.g., regional linguistic diversity, training opportunities) might have shaped the participants' experiences. Embed a discussion of contextual influences within the themes to provide a richer and more grounded analysis.

23. Contradictions and silences were unexplored. Contradictions in participants' responses (e.g., expressing positivity while highlighting challenges) are noted but not deeply explored. Additionally, hesitations to disclose challenges are mentioned but not unpacked. Analyze contradictions as a theme in itself, exploring what they reveal about the complexities of implementing MTB-MLE. Discuss the reasons for participant silences and hesitations, potentially linking them to fear of reprisal or systemic issues.

24. Under findings, theoretical misalignment was observed. While the study claims to use the frameworks of Ricento and Hornberger (1996), Borg (1998), and Krashen (1989), the findings do not explicitly tie back to these theories. The connection between the frameworks and the described experiences of the implementers is vague or missing entirely. For instance, how specific teacher practices align with Krashen's Input Hypothesis remains unclear.

25. The findings repeat some points without adding depth (e.g., "teachers' stance on the implementation" and "policy as a mandate" appear to overlap in content).

26. Terms like "motivating factors to sustain" and "applying the strategies from trainings" are broad and underexplained. What specific factors or strategies were effective?

27. There is limited analysis of contradictions. The findings acknowledge contradictions in teachers' perspectives (e.g., policy as beneficial vs. fallible) but fail to analyze or explain these tensions in depth. What factors lead to such contradictory views?

28. The study lacks quantitative/contextual data. While the findings are qualitative, they lack contextual data (e.g., examples of specific training strategies or classroom scenarios) to substantiate the claims. Inclusion of concrete narratives or quotes would enhance credibility.

29. The implications section presents overly broad solutions like "teachers must help their students develop oral and written skills" without addressing how this can be done given the resource and training constraints identified in the findings.

30. The implications stress ideal practices (e.g., fluency in both the mother tongue and official language) but do not propose actionable solutions to the critical lack of resources, teacher training, or orthography issues cited earlier.

31. Suggestions for DepEd officials, school heads, and teachers are general and lack specificity. For instance, what specific curricular changes should DepEd officials prioritize? How should school leaders practically address the lack of instructional materials?

32. There is an observed overreliance on secondary sources. The section leans heavily on the conclusions of Malone & Malone (2011) and Fillmore (2014) instead of providing original insights from the study. This reliance undermines the uniqueness of the study's findings.

33. Many future directions restate findings or implications rather than proposing genuinely novel research avenues. For example, "teachers may be true to themselves in dealing with the challenges" is vague and not a forward-looking research recommendation.

34. The suggestions focus narrowly on mother tongue instruction but fail to explore the multilingual

	nature of the classrooms or implications for languages other than the mother tongue (e.g., English or Filipino).	
	35. While the future directions propose reviewing the curriculum, they do not provide specific recommendations, such as what content should be revised or how stakeholders should be engaged in the process.	
	36. While the study mentions future research on MTB-MLE in the "new normal," it fails to suggest methodologies for assessing distance learning dynamics or for including parents and students.	
	37. Under the thematic analysis, the themes are inconsistently developed and lack depth. Findings often lack supporting evidence from data or participant quotes.	
	38. There is limited integration between findings, implications, and future directions. The transitions between the sections are abrupt, making the narrative feel fragmented.	
	39. The study does not adequately address the complexity of teaching in a multilingual setting or how the MTB-MLE policy interacts with national or regional languages like Filipino or English.	
	40. Many recommendations lack feasibility or actionable detail, undermining their potential impact.	
	41. Explicitly tie findings to theories. Demonstrate how the findings support, contradict, or extend the frameworks of Ricento and Hornberger, Borg, and Krashen.	
	42. Include participant narratives. Integrate quotes or anecdotes to provide richer, more credible evidence.	
	43. Address contradictions. Analyze the reasons for opposing views (e.g., policy as both beneficial and fallible) to provide a nuanced understanding.	
	44. Clarify future research directions. Offer more detailed and innovative suggestions for research, including specific methods or focus areas.	
	45. Propose practical solutions. Provide concrete and feasible recommendations for DepEd, school heads, and teachers to address the challenges identified in the study.	
	46. Some references (e.g., Durodolu & Mojapelo, 2024) appear speculative. Verify their credibility and ensure they are current.	
Are the references sufficient and recent? If you have suggestions of additional references, please mention them in the review form.	Some references are outdated such as the following: Jean Clandinin, D., & Connelly, M. (2004). Knowledge, narrative and self-study. In International handbook of self-study of teaching and teacher education practices (pp. 575-600). Dordrecht: Springer Netherlands. Malone, S., & Paraide, P. (2011). Mother tongue-based bilingual education in Papua New Guinea. International Review of Education, 57, 705-720. Nolasco, R. (2012). K + 12 & MTB-MLE: Make haste, lay waste. Philippine Daily Inquirer. http://opinion.inquirer.net/25095/make-haste-lay-waste. Nunan, D. (2009). Second language teaching & learning (Philippine Edition). Pasig City, Philippines: Cengage Learning Asia.	Thank you for pointing this out. New references have been added.
Is the language/English quality of the article suitable for scholarly communications?	The manuscript contains several grammatical errors and awkward phrasing (e.g., "was focused in order to draw ideas of sequences"). Improve coherence in the narrative flow, particularly in the methodology section, by avoiding repetition and jargon. Have this checked by an English language editor.	Noted.
Optional/General comments		

PART 2:

	Reviewer's comment	Author's comment *(if agreed with reviewer, correct the manuscript and highlight that part in the manuscript. It is mandatory that authors should write his/her feedback here)*
Are there ethical issues in this manuscript?	*(If yes, Kindly please write down the ethical issues here in details)*	