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READING WITHIN REACH

Early Grade Reading Program Design and Implementation:
Best Practices and Resources for Success

Webinar series presented by Reading within Reach
(REACH) in collaboration with the Global Reading
Network

June-July 2019

Welcome!

- This EGR professional development series was developed by the **Reading within Reach (REACH)** initiative, which is funded by **USAID** and implemented by **University Research Co., LLC (URC)**
- REACH supports the **Global Reading Network (GRN)** to develop and share research, innovations and resources related to EGR programming
- For more information about REACH and the GRN, visit www.globalreadingnetwork.net



Webinar presenters

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Webinar series goal, content and approach

- The purpose of this professional development webinar series is to **provide participants with evidence-based information, guidance and resources to support the design and implementation of effective EGR initiatives**
- Each session is focused on a key technical topic and includes a summary of **research, experiences and best practices to date**
- **Cross-cutting issues** such as gender equity, ICT and inclusive education are integrated throughout the different webinars
- Issues related to EGR program **monitoring, evaluation, expansion and sustainability** will be addressed as well
- **Opportunities for interaction and questions** will be provided throughout each webinar

Webinar session topics and dates

Past webinars – Materials available on GRN website

- **Webinar 1** – Early grade reading programming: From conception to scale (June 25)
- **Webinar 2** – Resources for teaching and learning early grade reading (July 10)
- **Webinar 3** – Key EGR skills and strategies for effective instruction and assessment (July 17)
- **TODAY! Webinar 4** – Language considerations in early grade reading programs (July 24)
- **Webinar 5** – Continuous professional development in early grade reading programs (July 30)

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Language considerations in early grade reading programs



Alison Pflepsen
Reading within Reach



Adrienne Barnes
Florida State University

July 24, 2019

Acknowledgments

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- It was prepared by Reading within REACH, which is implemented by University Research Co., LLC. (URC). Contract No.AID-OAA-M-14-00001, MOBIS#: GS-10F-0182T, for the Office of Education (E3/ED).

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Webinar Objectives

By the end of this webinar, participants will know and be able to apply learning about:

- How language is a critical issue to consider and plan for in EGR programming
- The benefits of teaching children to read in a language that children and teachers understand
- Language-specific factors to consider when designing, implementing and evaluating an EGR program
- Policy and advocacy around language issues and EGR programs



Photo: RTI International, Nigeria RARA (USAID)

To share your questions and comments

- We will provide time throughout the webinar to address your questions and comments
- Please submit them via the chat box in Zoom
- Send them to “all panelists and attendees”



— Part I: Language issues in EGR programs



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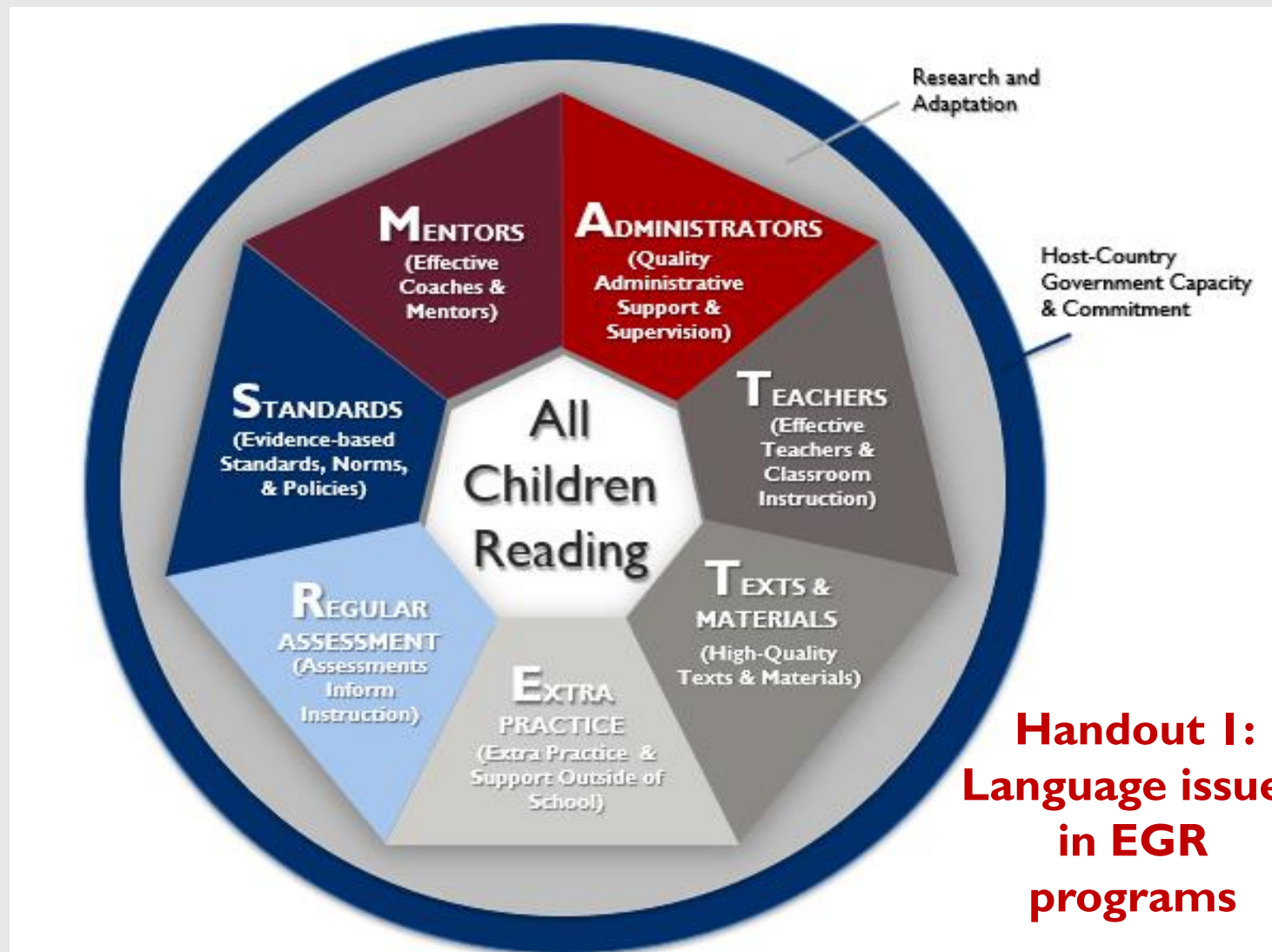
Why is language a critical consideration for EGR improvement initiatives?

- Language and literacy go hand-in-hand
- Language-related issues are often sensitive and multi-faceted
- Addressing and integrating language issues is critical to the success of EGR programs
- Language is a significant factor in providing equitable and inclusive education



Photo: USAID

Language cuts across all EGR programming components: USAID Reading MATTERS framework



First, a few terms....

- A **first language (L1)**, sometimes referred to as *mother tongue language*, is the language a child learns to speak and understand first
 - A person can have more than one L1
 - An L1 can be used for different purposes at different times
 - L1 proficiency may change over time
- A **second language (L2)** or **other language (Lx)** is a language learned in addition to a first language
- Other terms used in some contexts: **Dominant** and **non-dominant languages; official** and **national languages; language of wider communication**
- **Language of instruction (LOI)**, sometimes called Medium of Instruction (MOI), refers to the language used for teaching and learning

Sources: UNESCO, 2018b, 2018c

ACTIVITY:

Language issues in EGR programs—What do we need to consider?

Reading and
language
instruction

Sociolinguistic
context

Education
context

Stakeholder
considerations

Handout 2: Factors to consider

— Part 2: Effective approaches for teaching reading and language



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How research on instruction informs programming

Research and evidence on how literacy and language are most effectively taught and learned can inform decisions regarding:

- What language(s) to use for literacy instruction
- What skills to teach, and when
- Instructional approaches to effectively teach literacy and language in a first (L1) language, a second language (L2) or other language (Lx)
- If, when and how to transition from learning in an L1 to learning in an L2/Lx

Reading is different from language learning!

Importance of a strong foundation in a familiar language

- The language in which a child learns oral communication is the basis for literacy development
- Children learn to read more efficiently when they do so in a language they already speak and understand

Sources: Nation, 2006; Nation & Wang, 1999; Seymour, Aro & Erskin, 2003; Van Ginkel, 2008

L1-based instruction is “at the heart of inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning for all.”
~Gwang-Jo Kim, Director,
UNESCO Bangkok

*Advocacy kit for promoting
multilingual education:
Including the excluded*

**Handout 3: Benefits
of instruction in
familiar languages**

Handout 4: UNESCO Asia and Pacific Regional Bureau language infographic



How long does it take a child to learn to read?

- The length of time needed to learn to read in an LI or familiar language varies depending on:
 - The **orthography** (written representation of the language)
 - **Time available for teaching and learning**
 - Availability of **quality instructional materials**
 - The **quality of instruction**
- With good instruction most children should be able to read in a familiar language by the end of grade 2

Relationship between L1 and L2 learning

- A solid foundation in L1 reading skills helps children to learn to read another language
- Success in L2 is strongly associated with oral and written proficiency in L1
- Teaching reading in an L2 too early may lead to reduced success or reading failure in both languages
- It's important to continue to build L1 literacy skills even after an L2 or Lx is introduced

Evidence from Kenya

Research conducted in Kenya supports existing evidence on the importance of children acquiring strong L1 literacy skills.

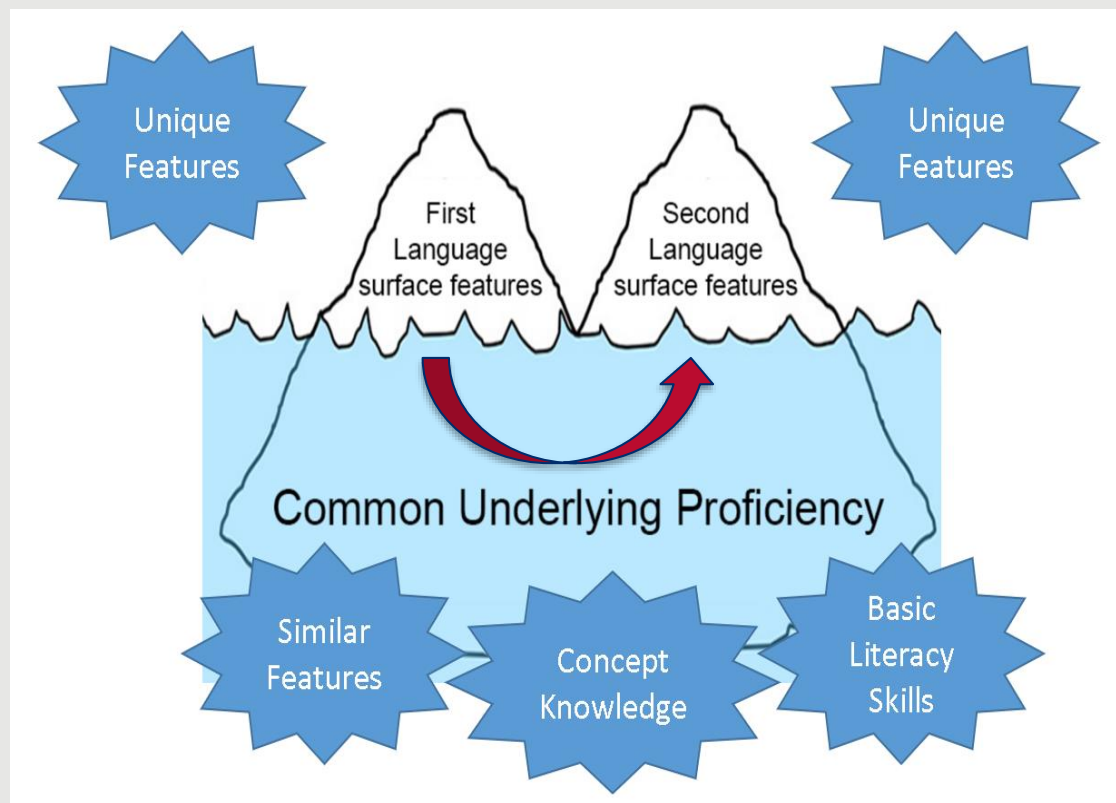
An analysis of grade 3 students' reading assessment results found that poor English-language outcomes were correlated with poor reading skills in children's first, or mother tongue, language.

Source: Piper, B., Schroeder, L., & Trudell, B. (2015)

Sources: Ball, 2001; Center for Applied Linguistics, 2006; Cummins, 2009; August & Shanahan, 2006; Bialystock, 2006; Geva, 2006

Transfer of language and literacy skills

- Basic language/literacy skills and knowledge are the foundation for literacy learning in any language
- LI skills can be applied to a new language



Learning to read a second or additional language

Factors influencing children's acquisition of a second or additional language include:

- Language characteristics
- Proficiency in LI
- Time for instruction
- Quality of instruction
- Exposure outside the classroom



Photo: EDC Basa - Pilipinas (USAID)

ACTIVITY:

Language-related issues in EGR programs

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

1. In the contexts where you work, are the evidence-based approaches to reading and language instruction we just discussed being used? If not, why? How might you be able to support their use?
2. Tell us one new piece of information you learned today about effective approaches to reading and language instruction. How could you apply the information to your work?

— Part 3: Steps to take to effectively incorporate language throughout an EGR program



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I. Engage diverse stakeholders at all stages

- Learn about stakeholder attitudes, knowledge and beliefs related to language
- Involve stakeholders in information gathering, analysis, decision-making and planning
- Provide learning and professional development opportunities to build knowledge and skills



UNESCO Bangkok, 2018

Examples from practice: Understanding stakeholder considerations and working with government

The GRN webinar “Language Policy, Planning and Practice in EGR Programs” shares recent experiences and reflections on working with government on language-related issues in Ethiopia, Nepal and the Philippines



Photo: RTI International, Nepal Early Grade Reading Program (USAID)

2. Understand the country's educational context

Learn about:

- Education and learning goals
 - Policy and practice related to language
 - Political issues related to language
 - Access and learning outcomes as they relate to language
 - Past experience planning and implementing language-related education policies and plans
- Teacher language proficiency and skills
 - Materials available for teaching reading, language and content



Photo: Democratic Republic of Congo ACCELERE (USAID)

3. Understand the sociolinguistic context

To inform program design and implementation, gather information about:

- What languages and dialects are spoken, by whom and where
- Percentage of children/student population whose home language is an official LOI or other languages
- Languages teachers and students speak, and their level of proficiency

**Handout 5:
Language
mapping
experiences and
resources**

**Conduct a
language
mapping
exercise**

Example from practice: Language mapping in Afghanistan

Purpose: Document the linguistic landscape in and around a school



Photo: Creative Associates Int'l

Findings:

- Greater language diversity than originally assumed (12-15% of students in some areas do not speak LOI)
- Differences between dialect spoken by students and their teachers, and in textbooks
- Teachers were using languages besides the LOI when students spoke other languages

Handout 5: Language mapping experiences and resources

4. Review and analyze orthography

- Identify whether it has been standardized and is ready to be used for instruction
- Identify how language characteristics will influence how reading is taught

Handout 6: Orthography assessment tool

Handout 7: Orthography standardization: A case study from Uganda

- Identify similarities and differences between languages that will be taught simultaneously

EGR program experiences

- Balancing linguistic and contextual factors:
Example from Nepal (Ralaingita & van Ginkel, 2018)
- The role of linguistics in Ghana *Learning* (Trudell, 2018)
- Negotiating language complexities and government policies for Khmer instruction (Pinto, 2018)

Example from practice: Orthography review


- Khmer is a relatively complex language in terms of the number of graphemes (71), density of script and similarity between letters
- Review of language identified ways in which instructional approach and materials could be adapted to the language

Learn more about the experience in Cambodia and implications for other contexts in the presentation by Pinto, C. (2018)

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ទះសី



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ខែតុលា លាំហៅពៅទះសី។
ពៅថាពុំចេះទះសី។
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២. តើនរណាថាពុំចេះទះសី ?

៣. តើលាំទះសីទៅណា ?

ACTIVITY: Taking stock of the context

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

1. In your work, what information have you gathered (or plan to gather) about the sociolinguistic and educational context? How did you do so?
2. How did the information gathered affect program design and implementation?
3. What information gaps do you still have?

5. Identify languages to be used for instruction

Take into consideration:

- sociolinguistic context
- language mapping findings
- education and language learning goals
- orthography readiness
- similarities between languages
- languages for children with disabilities (sign language, Braille)
- availability of materials and other resources
- timeline and funding available

In countries with multiple languages, consider *staggering the use of languages for instruction.*

Piloting instruction in select languages can build support for LI-based instruction and use of additional languages, identify effective approaches, and provide sufficient time for materials development.

6. Develop instructional approach based on evidence, context and languages to be used

- Build oral language skills before teaching reading
- Create a strong foundation in the LI or other familiar language
- Support gradual transition to learning to read in L2/Lx

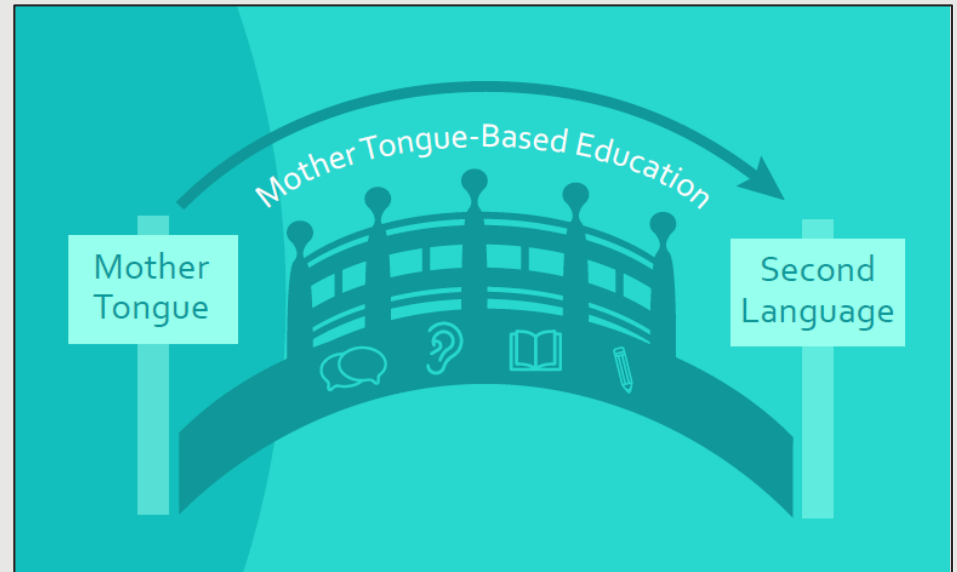


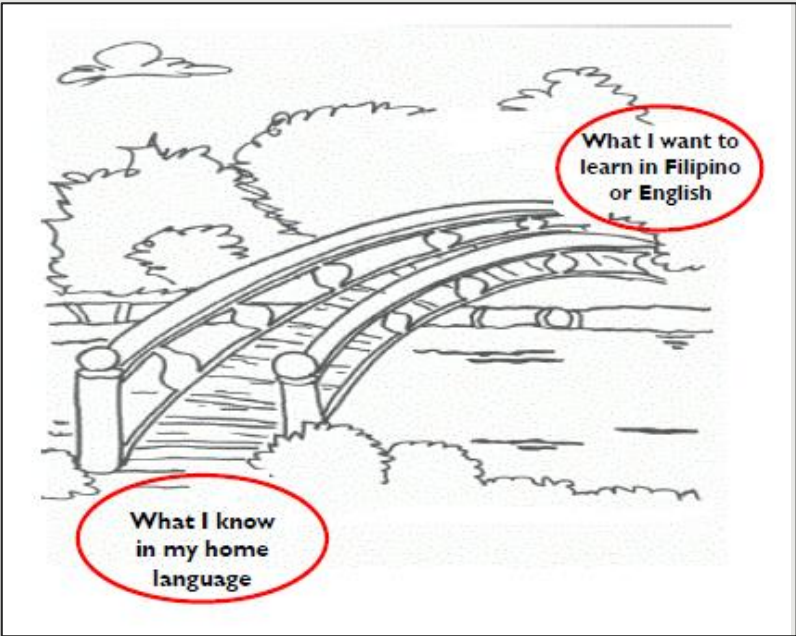
Image: MTB-MLE Asia-Pacific Infographic (2018)

Handout 8: Guidance on language skills transfer and supporting instruction for L2/Lx learners

Example from practice: Supporting reading acquisition across languages in the Philippines



For more information, consult
Bruckner, S. & Ocampo, D.
(2018) GRN presentation



	GRADE 1				GRADE 2				GRADE 3			
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4
Mother Tongue	Reading/Writing and Language of Instruction for All Subjects											
Filipino Language		Oral Language			Reading/Writing							
English Language			Oral Language			Reading/Writing						

6. Develop instructional approach based on evidence, context and languages to be used (continued)

- Develop scope and sequence (e.g., what is taught and when) based on properties of the languages; align S&S when multiple languages will be taught
- Identify how language type, properties and orthography will affect content and instructional strategies

Reading and Language should be taught as two separate subjects:

- In different time blocks
- Using different materials
- Implementing different—yet synergistic—instructional strategies

Engage reading specialists *and* language specialists to identify how to most appropriately teach reading in a specific language!

6. Develop instructional approach based on evidence, context and languages to be used (continued)

- Identify competency-based “language thresholds” in contexts where children are expected to learn to read in more than one language

USAID-supported research in India identified specific skill levels students need to successfully transfer their knowledge of reading from one language to another.

Nakamura & Hoop, 2014



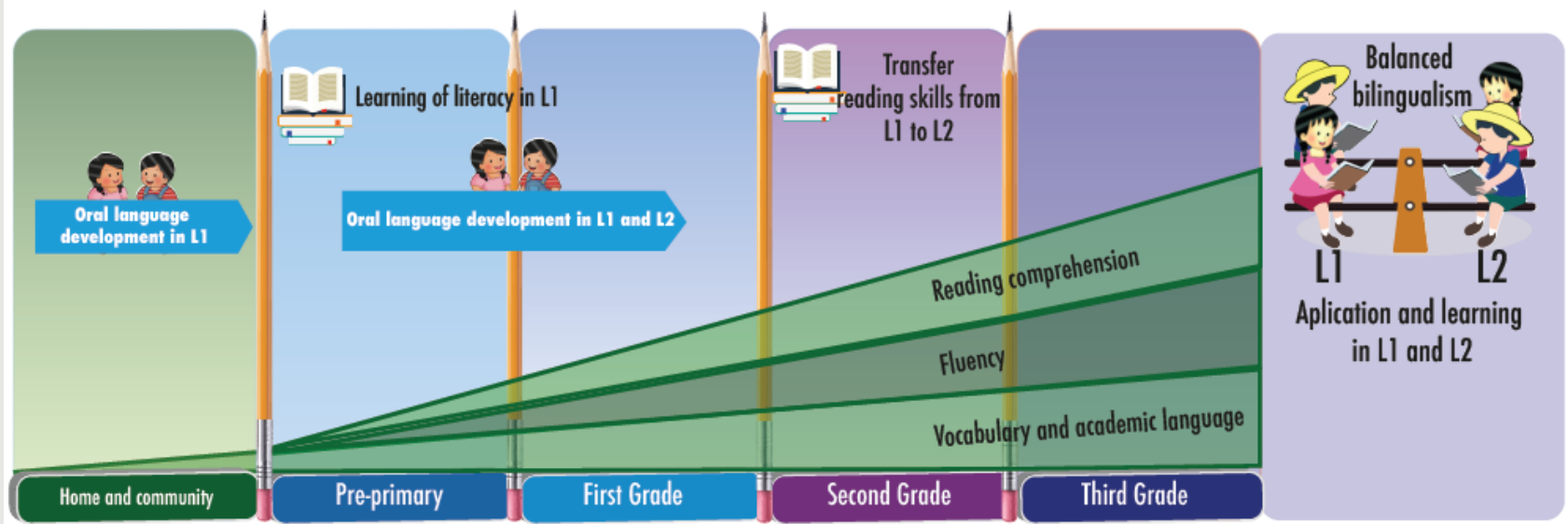
**Facilitating Reading Acquisition
in Multilingual Environments in
India (FRAME-India)**

FINAL REPORT

Example from practice: Assessing bilingual reading trajectories in Guatemala

- A longitudinal study of children in Guatemala (USAID Lifelong Learning project) compared expected versus actual trajectories in children's L1 and L2 reading skills
- The results were used to develop policy and practice recommendations to improve literacy and language instruction

Expected trajectory of learning to read in bilingual contexts



7. Develop language-specific resources

- **Involve language-specific teams** including authors, teachers, community members, language specialists and children
- **Conduct an inventory** of available materials; analyze quality, appropriateness
- **Conduct orthography review** as described previously
- **Use software** (such as Bloom) to inform scope and sequence, develop controlled text
- **Develop quality control processes and tools** to support production of materials across languages



Resources developed for Philippines Basa Pilipinas (USAID; Image from Bruckner, 2018)

Examples and resources from practice: Developing resources in multiple languages

- **Handout 9: Role of linguistics in content and materials development**
- **Handout 10: Language-specific considerations for EGR materials**
- **Handout 11: Multilingual digital libraries**
- **Developing materials in 11 languages: The case of Ghana**
- **Enabling Writers**

Technology to support resource production

- **Bloom** software supports decodable and leveled text development
- **PrimerPro & SynPhony** software conduct language analysis
- **SIL** provides fonts, language analysis software and shell books

Webinar 2: Resources for teaching and learning EGR includes many country examples, tools and recommendations
Handouts include lesson templates and other tools to support materials development across languages

The link between language and effective teachers

To be effective, teachers need to be:

- ✓ Able to communicate with students in a language they both understand
- ✓ Able to speak, read and write in the language they are teaching
- ✓ Knowledgeable about the orthography, sound structure and spelling patterns of the language in which they are teaching reading
- ✓ Able to apply evidence-based best practices for teaching children to read
- ✓ Knowledgeable about and able to apply strategies for teaching a second or other language, if required
- ✓ Respectful of the language (and language speakers) they are teaching

8. Incorporate language in teacher professional development

- Assess teacher language and literacy knowledge, skills and practices (see next slide)
- Include language-specific issues and instructional strategies in teacher PD (pre- and in-service)
- Provide teachers with TLMs in the appropriate languages
- Provide opportunities for teachers to improve their literacy and language skills if needed



Photo: RTI International Nigeria RARA (USAID)

Examples from practice: Assessing teacher language knowledge, skills & practices in 3 countries



- Informs teacher PD, materials development and content, teacher placement
- Requires thoughtful planning and appropriate tools
- Findings should be used only for the purpose of informing program design and PD

Handout 12: Assessing teacher language and literacy skills

ACTIVITY:

Language-related issues in EGR programs

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

How have teachers' professional development needs specific to language been addressed in your EGR work? Have teachers' language and literacy skills been assessed? Share your experiences with us before we move on to the next section....

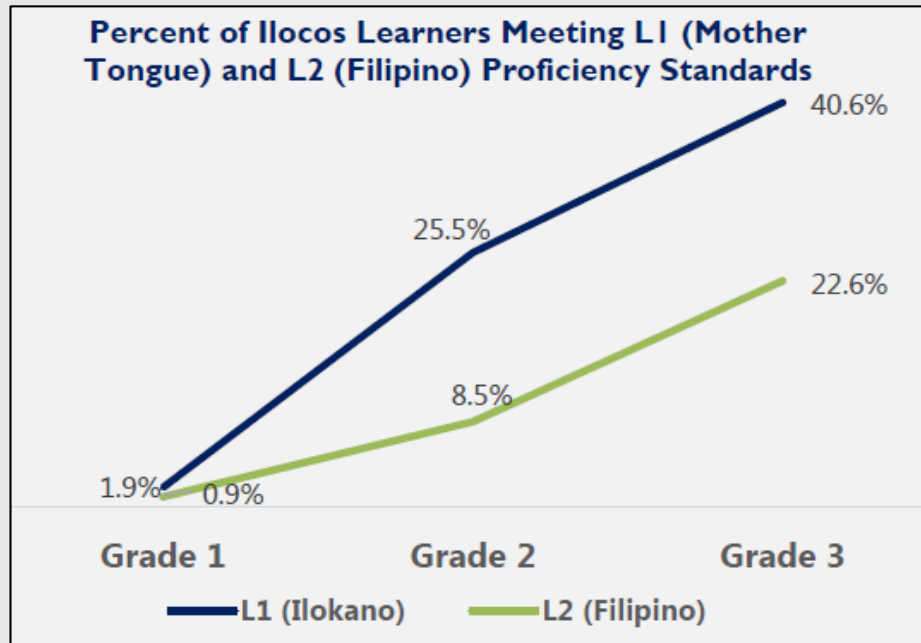
9. Incorporate language into EGR program MERL

- Language should be a specific focus of monitoring, evaluation, research and learning (MERL)
- Programs should:
 - Monitor fidelity of implementation
 - Disaggregate outcomes by school and home language
 - Conduct relevant research
 - Report language-related results appropriately
 - Identify language-specific benchmarks
 - Use findings to adapt instructional approach, teacher PD and materials, policy and practice related to language

Examples of language-related research

- What is children's reading and language progression over time?
- What are skill-specific thresholds for students to successfully transition from LI to Lx learning?
- What skills and instructional strategies are more effective for teaching certain languages?
- What strategies are most effective in multilingual classroom contexts?

Example from practice: Evaluating the multilingual approach to instruction in the Philippines



Expectation that children will become proficient in three languages by the end of grade 3 is not realistic, given current approach and context

- Fluency in L1 is associated with higher fluency in L2 (Filipino) & L3 (English)
- But most students do not acquire sufficient proficiency in Filipino or English to transition to learning in those languages by grade 4
- Children for whom Filipino is not their MT do not “catch up” to MT speakers of Tagalog, the basis of Filipino

Source: EDC, 2017

10. Communicate and advocate about language issues

- Develop a communications and advocacy strategy
- Target information appropriately
- Use appropriate media (briefs, infographics, radio, television, etc.) to reach specific groups
- Share experiences and results along the way

Handout 13: Policy Brief: Transition to English



Source: Creative Associates, 2018

ACTIVITY: Key steps to take

Reflect and use the Zoom chat window to share your experiences and ideas

1. Reflecting on the key steps just presented, which have you conducted? Which did you find to be most challenging? What was most successful?
2. What guidance can you offer others about steps to take and factors to consider with respect to EGR programming?

The following resources provide additional guidance and support:

- **Handout 14: Strategies for addressing language-related issues in EGR programs**
- **Handout 15: Language in EGR programs: Key activities, questions and considerations**

Key takeaways

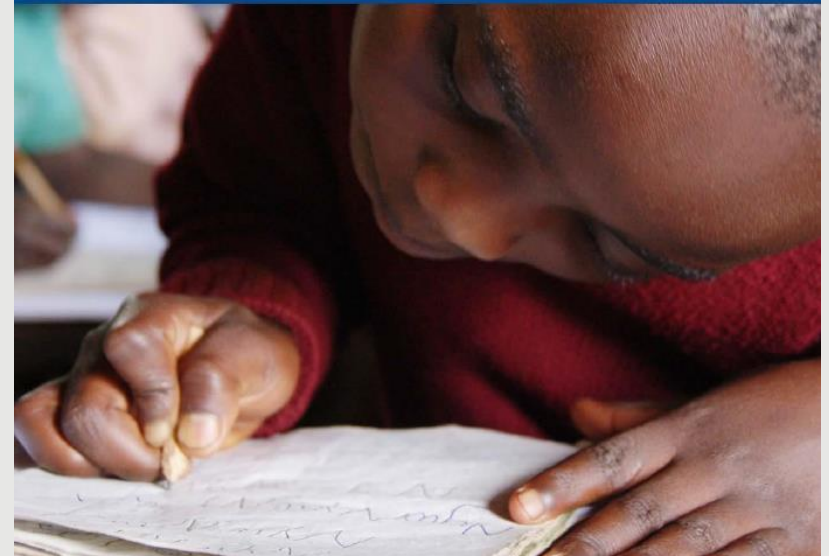
- ✓ Language applies to all aspects of EGR improvement
- ✓ Take time to understand the context and the evidence
- ✓ Engage in a collaborative process to build understanding, knowledge, capacity and consensus on language issues
- ✓ Ground decisions in evidence and good practices
- ✓ Monitor, evaluate and *adjust* plans, practices and policies as needed
- ✓ Communicate plans and findings, and conduct appropriate advocacy

Coming soon!

We are currently updating the resource **Planning for Language Use in Education: Best Practices and Practical Steps to Improve Learning Outcomes (2016)** to reflect the latest information and experiences related to language issues in EGR programming

Stay tuned!

PLANNING FOR LANGUAGE USE
IN EDUCATION: BEST PRACTICES
AND PRACTICAL STEPS TO
IMPROVE LEARNING OUTCOMES



EdData II: Data for Education Research and Programming (DERP) in Africa

AUGUST 2015

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Thank you for attending the “Early Grade Reading Program Design and Implementation: Best Practices and Resources for Success” webinar series!

Webinar presentation materials and handouts may be downloaded from the “Tools and Training” category at:

www.globalreadingnetwork.net



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Upcoming webinars and events



- **July 30:** Continuous professional development in early grade reading programs (5th and final webinar in the series)
- **August 22-23:** Universal Design for Learning Toolkit in-person workshop in Chevy Chase, MD – details coming soon

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