

# The Bangladesh Initiative of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: Exploring the Significance, Challenges, and Way Forwards

Borendra Lal Tripura

Department of English, American International University-Bangladesh

DOI: <https://dx.doi.org/10.47772/IJRISS.2025.9020255>

Received: 30 January 2025; Accepted: 04 February 2025; Published: 17 March 2025

## ABSTRACT

This paper explores the significance, challenges, and potential way forwards for Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) in Bangladesh, particularly for Indigenous ethnic minority communities. MTB-MLE is recognized globally as an approach to enhance inclusive and equitable education by utilizing a child's mother tongue as the primary medium of instruction. While Bangladesh adopted MTB-MLE in 2012 and began piloting it in 2017 with five languages (Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo, and Santal), the initiative faces obstacles such as resource allocation, teacher training, and curriculum development.

The paper argues that MTB-MLE is vital for improving academic outcomes, preserving cultural identities, and promoting cognitive development. It emphasizes the theoretical underpinnings of MTB-MLE, drawing on the work of Piaget and Vygotsky to highlight the role of the mother tongue in thought processing and language acquisition.

Using a policy analysis methodology, the research evaluates the impact of the National Education Policy 2010 and the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord 1997 on MTB-MLE implementation. While acknowledging the limitations of relying on textual documents, the study aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the ongoing project, highlighting its achievements, challenges, and potential to address ethnolinguistic diversity and promote socio-economic development in Bangladesh. The paper also acknowledges the roles of UNDP, SIL Bangladesh, Save the Children, and UNICEF in the implementation of MTB-MLE in Bangladesh.

**Keywords:** Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE), Indigenous ethnic minority language of Bangladesh, Achievements and challenges, policy analysis

## INTRODUCTION

Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) is increasingly recognized as a vital approach to fostering inclusive and equitable education, particularly for ethnolinguistic minority communities. It emphasizes using a child's mother tongue as the primary medium of instruction, gradually introducing additional languages. UNESCO (2024) indicates that education in a child's first language enhances comprehension, retention, and overall academic performance. SIL Global (2024) stated that this approach to education fosters cultural identity and promotes social inclusion among marginalized groups

Globally, initiatives promoting MTB-MLE have gained strong ground, with organizations such as UNESCO advocating for its adoption to improve educational outcomes and preserve cultural heritage. Bangladesh Government also adopted MTB-MLE in 2012 and introduced this education program for its Indigenous ethnic minority communities in 2017 on a pilot basis. So far, this program has been implemented in five languages- Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Garo, and Santal- by handing over one additional subject to the Indigenous learners in their respective ethnic languages. The Bangladesh initiative created a sense of optimism and enthusiasm

among the Indigenous communities in Bangladesh. Thus, the initiatives gained significant progress starting from zero point to textbook development and implementation of the textbooks in some local schools. This initiative is expected to preserve and develop Indigenous languages, literature, cultures, heritage, and ethnic pride.

It is found in the literature that this kind of initiative usually faces challenges in resource allocation, teacher training, cultural resistance, linguistic diversity, curriculum development, policy framework, community engagement, and similar interventions in other countries. (See Chakma, 2023; Eslit, 2017; Rosario, et al., 2016; Mongsang, 2022 and David, 2021). Bangladesh's MTB-MLE program faces obstacles such as a lack of trained teachers, curriculum and resource development, cultural and linguistic marginalization, and gaps in policy implementation. This essay explores the significance of MTB-MLE and examines the efforts undertaken in Bangladesh to implement this educational framework and the achievements, hindrances, and obstacles facing the programs to offer some way forward.

## Significance of MTB-MLE

MTB-MLE is an educational approach that has gained recognition globally for its potential to improve academic outcomes and preserve cultural identities. Various studies and reports have found that MTB-MLE demonstrated vital importance for educational achievement and the preservation of cultural identity.

Research consistently demonstrates that children learn more effectively when taught in their mother tongue. According to UNESCO (2024), education in a familiar language significantly improves comprehension, retention, and overall academic performance. UNESCO (2024) further stated that children who receive instruction in their native language are more likely to engage with the material, leading to better learning outcomes. In line with the same view, Siegfried (2020) found in his studies that students taught in their mother tongue outperform their peers who are instructed in a second language in reading comprehension and literacy skills.

Conversely, MTB-MLE promotes cognitive development by allowing children to build on their knowledge and experiences. Atong & Ventura-Escote (2023) contend that when students can express themselves in their mother tongue, they develop critical thinking and reasoning skills more effectively. The cognitive leap facilitated by using the mother tongue as a medium of instruction encourages deeper understanding and retention of concepts. Not only that, but this educational approach also generally motivates and engages students more when learning in a language they understand well. The use of the mother tongue helps create a sense of belonging within the classroom, making learning more enjoyable (Rutu Foundation, 2024). Increased engagement leads to higher attendance rates and lower dropout rates, contributing to a more effective educational environment.

It is commonly noted that MTB-MLE enhances access to education for marginalized groups, particularly ethnic minorities who may not speak the dominant national language. UNESCO (2024) reported that by providing education in their mother tongues, MTB-MLE fosters inclusivity and encourages participation from all community members. This approach not only benefits individual students but also strengthens community ties by promoting shared cultural values.

Researches show that MTB-MLE has significant leverage on the students offering multifarious benefits that include academic performance- such as improved literacy and comprehension, increased engagement and motivation, reduced dropout rates and improved retention, facilitating second language acquisition, fostering lifelong learning opportunities; social performance- encompassing community involvement, increased parental involvement, social inclusion, and integration; cultural performances- underpinning cultural preservation, identity affirmation, promotion of multilingualism; cognitive development in children- such as strong foundation in mother tongue, development of higher order thinking skills, enhancing metalinguistic awareness, improved memory and multitasking skills, encouragement of cultural contextualization, and strengthening of social cognition. (See UNESCO, 2024; Siegfried, 2020; Atong & Ventura-Escote, 2023; Rutu Foundation, 2024; Walter & Dekker, 2011; Smits et al., 2008; Bradley et al., 2019; UNESCO, n.d.; Wisbey, 2016; Padvison, 2023; Asian Development Bank, 2015; Siegfried, 2020; Child's Dream, 2020; Catap-Lacson, 2019; Bialystok et al., 2012; Peng et al., 2019).

## Theoretical Significance of Mother Tongue in Education

The role of the mother tongue in thought processing is deeply intertwined with cognitive development and language acquisition theories. Two prominent theorists, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky, provide foundational insights into how language influences thought.

### 1. Piaget's Theory

Jean Piaget (1954) viewed cognitive development as a series of stages where children construct knowledge through interactions with their environment. While Piaget did not emphasize language as a central tool for cognitive development, his theory suggests that thinking precedes language. However, once children acquire language skills—initially through their mother tongue—it enhances their ability to reflect on and organize thoughts more effectively.

However, initial thought processes may not require language according to Piaget's early views on cognition, Munn et al. (1951), posit that it may be possible but less sophisticated without verbalization.

### 2. Vygotsky's Theory

Vygotskian perspectives highlight how acquiring one's native or first/mother tongue significantly intellectualizes the cognitive processes by facilitating communication & reflection upon them which can lead towards higher-order reasoning capabilities over time.

Vygotsky (1962) posited that language is crucial in **mediating thought processes**. He opined that language is the primary psychological tool that mediates our thoughts and enables self-awareness. Not only that but the mother tongue is also involved in **social interaction** where children transition from being 'other-regulated' to becoming 'self-regulated'. He further explained that though initially thoughts and speeches are separate entities, they gradually unite through social learning to leverage each other. This integration is important for enhancing cognitive abilities, for example, problem-solving.

Vygotsky's views are further supported by many other researchers. Noormohamadi (2008) and Krishnaji (1990) contended that the mother tongue facilitates **cognitive development** by facilitating deeper understanding and faster learning by providing a framework for organizing thoughts. It supports **emotional development** by serving as the primary medium for expressing emotions and ideas (Koda, 2005). In parallel, Cummins (2000) argued that a strong foundation in the mother tongue aids in **acquiring a second language** by transferring linguistic structures and patterns learned initially. Schick et al. (2002) explained how the mother tongue contributes to the development of **critical thinking skills**: Learning concepts through the mother tongue enhances critical thinking skills due to its intimate link with emotional and cognitive development.

## METHODOLOGY AND METHOD

This research has adopted a Policy Analysis methodology with a policy evaluation and case study approach based on qualitative documents and interpretation of reports such as the Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord 1997, Bangladesh Education Policy 2010, Small Ethnic Cultural Institution Act 2010), various reports published in the National dailies, organizational reports, and other available literature.

Browne et al. (2019) and Kodithuwakku (2022) stated that Policy analysis is a comprehensive approach that examines policies' formulation, implementation, and outcomes which can be categorized into different types based on their focus:

- **Policy Evaluation:** This method assesses the impact of a policy after its implementation to determine its success and identify necessary adjustments.
- **Case Study Approach:** Often used in qualitative policy analysis, case studies provide in-depth insights into specific policy implementations by focusing on real-world contexts (Kodithuwakku, 2022).

This paper will mainly assess the impact of the National Education Policy 2010 (NEP 2010) focusing on primary education with specific attention to the inclusion of the Indigenous and Small Ethnic groups' languages.

The 'Aims and Objectives' of the Primary Education section of NEP 2010 promised, "equal opportunities will be created to ensure access of all sections of children to primary education irrespective of ethnicity, socioeconomic conditions, physical or mental challenges, and geographical differences." (p. 4-5)

The NEP 2010 also aims "to facilitate learning in the mother languages of the Indigenous peoples and small ethnic groups at the primary level of education." (p. 5)

Therefore, the case of this research is the MTB-MLE which was implemented in five Indigenous languages since 2017 in the local primary schools of the localities where the pertinent Indigenous groups reside.

### **Scope and Limitation**

As this research is conducted based on available textual documents as mentioned above, some limitations and deeper challenges may be left unfolded that may attract more scopes for further in-depth research. However, this research strives to draw on the substantive landscape of the ongoing project highlighting its significance, achievements, challenges, and potential to draw the attention of other researchers for further investigation which may guide this historically unique and desirable initiative auspicious for addressing the ethnolinguistic diversity of the nation which has far-reaching socio-economic implications.

### **Current Status of MTB-MLE for Indigenous Ethnic Minority Communities in Bangladesh**

Bangladesh is home to approximately 1.7 million ethnic minorities (Population Census, 2022) (though the authenticity of the census data regarding the population of the ethnic minority people is questioned by the Indigenous leaders. See, The Daily Star (9 August 2022), International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (IWGI Report (2024). However, many of them speak languages that are not widely recognized or supported within the national education system (The Daily Star, 2025). Generally, the linguistic diversity of ethnic minority communities faces significant challenges in accessing quality education. The NEP 2010 emphasizes the need for education in mother languages to promote linguistic diversity and cultural preservation and opted for MTB-MLE, aiming to provide education in students' native languages. However, despite these policies, implementation has been inconsistent. Thus, it is facing many challenges.

Therefore, the MLE program is an important historical initiative by the government of Bangladesh for the educational attainment of ethnic minority children in parallel to the preservation and development of Indigenous languages. This policy is further supported by the Chittagong Hill Tracts Peace Accord of 1997, which emphasizes the need for formal education in mother tongues at the primary level. It advocates education in students' mother tongues to ensure equitable access to quality education (The Daily Star, 2025). The initiative for MLE in Bangladesh was first undertaken in 2012 to address the long-cherished demands of the Indigenous communities. As mentioned earlier, five Indigenous ethnic minority languages are included in the pilot phase. Under this program, a textbook was developed as a subject on each of the five languages involving the community members. However, despite this recognition, the implementation of MTB-MLE remains inconsistent.

In this journey, some organizations played significant roles, such as the United Nations Development Program (UNDP), SIL Bangladesh, Save the Children, UNICEF, Asian Development Bank, and others in many ways such as funding, tailoring the curricula, and materials development, and initial implementation of the ideas of teaching the Indigenous ethnic minority children in their languages. For instance, UNDP ran schools in the Chittagong Hill Tracts regions where it implemented the native languages of the Indigenous peoples on a test basis. Similarly, SIL Bangladesh developed curricula tailored to specific ethnic communities, enabling children to begin their education in their mother tongues for which the Kol community has benefited from mother-tongue classes since 2011 (SIL Global, 2024). Local communities have increasingly engaged in advocating for mother tongue education. Community leaders emphasize the importance of preserving indigenous languages and cultures as part of educational initiatives (The Daily Star, 2025). Consequently, the government of Bangladesh published textbooks under PEDP-4 projects. This marks a significant step towards formalizing minority language education within the national curriculum (The Business Standard, 2025).



## Achievements in MLE Implementation

Since the inception of the National Education Policy in 2010 and the Adoption of the MLE program in 2012, some progress has been achieved in Bangladesh which are briefly discussed below.

1. **Curriculum Development by Non-Government and International Organizations:** Organizations such as SIL Bangladesh, UNDP, Save the Children, and UNICEF have played a crucial role in developing culturally relevant curricula and teaching materials tailored to specific ethnic communities. For instance, the Kol community has seen the establishment of mother-tongue classes since 2011, enabling children to start their education in a familiar language (SIL Bangladesh, 2025).
2. **Government Initiatives:** The government has made strides by publishing textbooks in several ethnic minority languages, including Chakma, Marma, Tripura, Gago and Santal under the PEDP-4 project. This initiative marks a significant step towards recognizing and formalizing minority language education (The Business Standard, 2025). The government took over the program in 2017 through the development and distribution of textbooks at the pre-primary level. Since then, textbook development has been ongoing. In 2024, textbooks have been developed for class four.
3. **Community Engagement:** There has been increased awareness and involvement from community leaders regarding the importance of preserving indigenous languages and cultures. This grassroots support is essential for the sustainability of MLE programs (The Daily Star, 2025).

## Challenges Facing the MLE Program

Despite these achievements, several challenges hinder the effective implementation of MTB-MLE which are briefly discussed below.

1. **Lack of Legal Framework:** While the NEP advocates for mother-tongue education, there is no comprehensive legal framework to support its implementation across all educational levels. This gap limits the ability of ethnic minorities to receive formal education in their languages (The Daily Star, 2025).
2. **Insufficient Teacher Training:** A significant barrier to effective MLE is the lack of trained teachers who are proficient in both mother tongues and Bengali or English. Many teachers are not familiar with MTB-MLE methodologies, which hampers student learning outcomes (The Business Standard, 2025).
3. **Resource Constraints:** Educational resources such as textbooks and teaching materials are often scarce or not available in minority languages. This scarcity limits students' exposure to their mother tongues and affects their overall educational experience (The Financial Express, 2024).
4. **Geopolitical Factors:** The geopolitical landscape in regions like the Chittagong Hill Tracts complicates educational initiatives due to historical tensions and ongoing conflicts. These factors can lead to neglect of educational needs among ethnic minorities (The Business Standard, 2025).
5. **Impact of COVID-19:** The pandemic of COVID 2019 exacerbated existing inequalities within the education system, disproportionately affecting marginalized communities who already faced barriers to accessing quality education (The Business Standard, 2025).

## Recommendations and Way Forward for Enhancing MTB-MLE in Bangladesh

MTB-MLE is the first-ever initiative undertaken by the government for the preservation of languages and cultural identities of its Indigenous ethnic minority peoples which is a long-cherished desire of the communities; it is a very important program for the preservation of the country's cultural diversity and skill development of the ethnic minority children. Therefore, the following actions and interventions are recommended to improve the effectiveness of MTB-MLE initiatives in Bangladesh

1. **Establishing a Comprehensive Legal Framework:** The government should enact legislation explicitly supporting MTB-MLE at all educational levels to provide a solid foundation for implementation.
2. **Focusing and Investing More in Teacher Training:** Developing comprehensive training programs focused on MTB-MLE methodologies is crucial for enhancing teaching quality.

3. **Increasing Resource Allocation:** Allocating more resources towards developing teaching materials in minority languages will ensure that students receive a quality education.
4. **Strengthening Community Engagement:** Engaging local communities in curriculum development can foster ownership and relevance in education.
5. **Promote Awareness of Linguistic Diversity:** Initiatives that raise awareness about linguistic diversity can help garner broader societal support for minority language education.
6. **Incentivizing the Teachers:** Teachers should be paid extra for taking additional classes to teach the ethnic language-based subject which is introduced as an additional subject.

## CONCLUSION

The status of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education for ethnic minority communities in Bangladesh reflects both progress and persistent challenges. While there have been notable achievements in curriculum development and community engagement made through various initiatives aimed at promoting mother tongue instruction for ethnic minorities, significant barriers remain due to inadequate legal support, teacher training deficits, and resource limitations. By addressing these challenges and fostering an environment where linguistic diversity is celebrated and supported within educational frameworks as well as by undertaking targeted interventions and policy reforms, Bangladesh can move closer to fulfilling its commitment to providing equitable education for all its citizens.

MTB-MLE represents a vital approach to ensuring inclusive and equitable education globally and within Bangladesh. The impact of MLE on academic performance in primary schools is profound and multifaceted, which improves literacy skills, enhances comprehension of concepts, increases engagement and motivation, reduces dropout rates, and facilitates second language acquisition. As educational systems worldwide continue to recognize the value of linguistic diversity, the implementation and achievement of success in MTB-MLE will be essential for fostering inclusive and equitable education in Bangladesh.

## REFERENCES

1. Asian Development Bank. (2014). Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/publications/ino-mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education>. Accessed on 15 January 2025.
2. Asian Development Bank. (2015). Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education: A Key to Quality Education. Retrieved from <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/publication/176282/ino-mother-tongue-multilingual-education.pdf>. Accessed on 12 January 2025.
3. Atong, J., & Ventura-Escote, J. (2023). Implementation of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: Implications for Policy. *Psychology & Education*, 12(2), 462-479.
4. Ball, J. (n.d.). Promoting children's rights to use their mother tongue in early education. Retrieved from <https://www.seameo.org/language/mdgconference2010/doc/presentations/day1/JessicaBall-sn-eed.pdf>. Accessed on 15 January 2025.
5. Bialystok, E., Craik, F. I. M., & Luk, G. (2012). Bilingualism: Consequences for mind and brain. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 16(4), 240-250.
6. Bradley, L., Maulana, R., van Buren, H., & Amelink-Verburg, M. (2019). The impact of mother tongue-based instruction on academic performance: A review of literature. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 95, 1-12.
7. Browne, J., Cook, K., and Palermo, C (2018). A guide to policy analysis as research. In *Health Promotion International*, Vol. 34, Issue 5. DOI: 10.1093/heapro/day052
8. Catap-Lacson, M. (2019). Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: A key to cognitive development. *SunStar*. Retrieved from <https://www.sunstar.com.ph/pampanga/opinion/catap-lacson-mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education>. Accessed on 7 January 2025.
9. Chakma, S. (2023). Dreams of a minority student: The Mother Language education program. *The Business Standard*. Retrieved from <https://www.tbsnews.net/supplement/dreams-minority-student-mother-language-education-program-796402>. Accessed on 5 January 2025.

10. Child's Dream. (2020). Why Is Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education Important? Retrieved from <https://childsdream.org/why-is-mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education-important/>. Accessed on 4 January 2025.
11. Cummins J. (2000). Language Power And Pedagogy: Bilingual Children In The Crossfire.\* Multilingual Matters Ltd.\*
12. David, M.K. (2021). Challenges Facing Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in Malaysia. Conference paper presented at the International Conference on Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education. Available online: [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356776276\\_Challenges\\_Facing\\_Mother\\_Tongue\\_Based\\_Multilingual\\_Education\\_in\\_Malaysia](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/356776276_Challenges_Facing_Mother_Tongue_Based_Multilingual_Education_in_Malaysia). Accessed on 12 January 2025.
13. Eslit, E.R. (2017). Mother Tongue Based Multilingual Education Challenges: A Case Study in Edelweiss Appli Sci Tech 1: 10-23
14. IWGIA - International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs (2024). The Indigenous World 2024: Bangladesh. Retrieved online: <https://iwgia.org/en/bangladesh/5363-iw-2024-bangladesh.html#:~:text=Bangladesh%20is%20a%20country%20of,their%20land%20rights%2C%20remain%20ignored>. Accessed on 21 January 2025.
15. Koda K. (2005). Insights Into Second Language Reading: A Cross-Linguistic Approach. Cambridge University Press.
16. Krishnaji N. (1990). Learning Through Mother Tongue. Indian Journal of Social Work, 51(3), pp:349–358.
17. Mongsang, Y.B. (2022). Mother tongue-based multilingual education: A vehicle for building Myanmar into an equal and fair federal democratic union, in Gabusi, G. and Neirony, R. (Eds.) Myanmar after the Coup-Resistance, Resilience and Re-intervention. Available online: <https://www.twai.it/articles/multilingual-education-myanmar/>. Accessed on 14 January 2025.
18. Munn N.L. (1951). Handbook Of Psychological Research on The Rat. Houghton Mifflin Company.
19. National Education Policy 2010. Ministry of Education, People's Republic of Bangladesh.
20. Noormohamadi R. (2008). Mother Tongue: A Necessary Step to Intellectual Development. Journal Of Pan-Pacific Association of Applied Linguistics, 12(2), pp:25–36.
21. Padvision. (2023). What are MTB MLE Schools? Retrieved from <https://www.padvision.org/post/what-are-mtb-mle-schools>. Accessed on 19 January 2025.
22. Peng, P., Wang, Y., & Liu, Y. (2019). The relationship between bilingualism and cognitive development: A review of recent studies. Journal of Educational Psychology, 111(3), 400-412.
23. Piaget, J. (1954). The Construction of Reality in the Child. New York: Basic Books. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1037/11168-000>
24. ResearchGate. (2024). Examining the effectiveness of mother tongue-based instruction in teaching science at the primary level. Retrieved from [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361431938\\_The\\_Implementation\\_of\\_Mother\\_Tongue\\_-\\_Based\\_Multilingual\\_Education](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/361431938_The_Implementation_of_Mother_Tongue_-_Based_Multilingual_Education). Accessed on 5 January 2025.
25. Rosario, A. and Gabinete, S. and Rañola, V. (2016). Issues and Challenges in Teaching Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education in Grades II and III: The Philippine Experience. Available at SSRN: <https://ssrn.com/abstract=2768558> or <http://dx.doi.org/10.2139/ssrn.2768558>. Accessed on 6 January 2025.
26. Rutu Foundation. (2024). The impact of mother tongue education on cognitive development. Retrieved from <https://www.rutufoundation.org/impact-of-mother-tongue-education>. Accessed on 6 January 2025.
27. Schick B., de Villiers P.A., & Hoffmeister R.J. (2002). Are Signers Who Acquire ASL "Late" Really Delayed? In G.Morgan & B.Woll (Eds.), Directions In Sign Language Acquisition (\*pp.133–164). John Benjamins Publishing Company.
28. Siegfried, D. M. (2020). Why Mother Language-Based Education is Essential. Retrieved from <https://www.childsdream.org/why-is-mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education-important/>. Accessed on 12 January 2025.
29. SIL Bangladesh. (2025). Mother tongue-based multilingual Education - SIL Bangladesh. Retrieved from [https://www.silbangladesh.org/language\\_education/mle](https://www.silbangladesh.org/language_education/mle). Accessed on 13 January 2025.

30. SIL Global. (2024). Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education Programs. Retrieved from <https://www.sil.org/literacy-and-education/mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education-programs>. Accessed on 14 January 2025.
31. Smits, J., Wendt, H., & de Jong, J. (2008). The impact of mother tongue instruction on educational outcomes: Evidence from developing countries. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 28(6), 633-645.
32. The Business Standard. (2025). Dreams of a minority student: The Mother Language education program. Retrieved from <https://www.tbsnews.net/supplement/dreams-minority-student-mother-language-education-program-796402>. Accessed on 8 January 2025.
33. The Daily Star (9 August 2022). Ethnic population in 2022 census: Real picture not reflected. Retrieved online: <https://www.thedailystar.net/news/bangladesh/news/ethnic-population-2022-census-real-picture-not-reflected-3090941>. 21 January 2025.
34. The Daily Star. (2025). Right to education (in one's mother language). Retrieved from <https://www.thedailystar.net/law-our-rights/rights-advocacy/news/right-education-ones-mother-language-3553431>. Accessed on 9 January 2025.
35. The Financial Express. (2024). UNESCO to celebrate silver jubilee of International Mother Language Day ... Retrieved from <https://www.financialexpress.com.bd/home/unesco-to-celebrate-silver-jubilee-of-international-mother-language-day-in-2025>. Accessed on 14 January 2025.
36. UNESCO. (2024). Multilingual Education: A key to quality and inclusive learning. Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/multilingual-education-key-quality-and-inclusive-learning>. Accessed on 11 January 2025.
37. UNESCO. (2024). Why Mother Language-Based Education is Essential. Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/why-mother-language-based-education-essential>. Accessed on 15 January 2025.
38. UNESCO. (n.d.). Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education: A key to quality education. Retrieved from <https://www.unesco.org/en/articles/mother-tongue-based-multilingual-education-key-quality-education>. Accessed on 14 January 2025.
39. Vygotsky L.S. (1962). *Thought And Language*. MIT Press.
40. Walter, H., & Dekker, D. (2011). The role of mother tongue instruction in improving educational outcomes: Evidence from Mali. *International Review of Education*, 57(2), 233-251.
41. Wisbey, R. (2016). Lifelong learning opportunities through mother tongue education: A pathway for all ages. *Journal of Lifelong Learning*, 15(1), 1-12.
42. Zamani, F. L. (2014). The Importance of Receiving Education in One's Mother Tongue. Retrieved from <https://www.article19.org/resources/importance-receiving-education-ones-mother-tongue/>. Accessed on 14 January 2025.