

A Critical Discourse Analysis of Selected Speeches of Educational Leaders in the Bangsamoro Education Sector

Juharto L. Usop 

Development Academy of the Bangsamoro (DAB-BARMM)

jholidasan9@gmail.com

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Corresponding Email:

jholidasan9@gmail.com

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Abstract. This qualitative study critically analyzed selected speeches and official messages of educational leaders in the Bangsamoro education sector. It focused on an under-researched leadership discourse as a process that creates meanings of reform, identity, inclusion, moral governance and formation of learners in post-conflict autonomous education. The corpus comprised five publicly available texts from 2019-2024, which included complete speeches or messages and source-based reports that included official texts. The study was guided by Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis to examine the textual features, discursive practices, and social practices of the corpus. Results revealed that educational leadership discourse in the Bangsamoro consistently presents education as a means of peacebuilding, self-determination, moral governance, inclusive access, and collective development. Learners are represented not merely as recipients of education but as future leaders, professionals, and contributors to regional transformation. Teachers, parents, public servants, and development partners are represented as shared actors in institutional reform. It was also found that religious language, reform language, collective language and future language were strategically used to justify educational action. The study finds that public education speeches in BARMM are not merely ceremonial messages; rather, they function as policy narratives that shape public perception of Bangsamoro education. The findings have implications for research, leadership and practice in the field of English language teaching, discourse studies, and education in multilingual and culturally grounded contexts. Specifically, it highlights how public educational language connects institutional reform with local histories, spiritual values, stakeholder participation, and the continuing aspiration for inclusive and transformative Bangsamoro education.

Introduction

Public speeches are important sites of educational meaning making because they do not just report programs or celebrate events. They also establish priorities, build institutional identities and call audiences to engage in certain conceptualizations of education. The role of leadership discourse is paramount during the process of educational reform, since it publicly represents the reasons for the reform, those who should be involved and what the future of the education system looks like. This function is exacerbated in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (BARMM), which experiences conflict, autonomy, and peace process implementation and ongoing educational transformation.

Within a unique political and cultural context, the education sector in the Bangsamoro is governed. The Organic Law for the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao (Republic Act No. 11054, 2018) establishes the basis of autonomous administration of education in the Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao, and also recognizes meaningful self-governance. The Bangsamoro Education Code of 2021 also establishes a comprehensive and holistic Bangsamoro Education System (BEIS) that supports the underlying principles of inclusivity, equity, rights-based education, contextualization, balance, integration and moral governance (Bangsamoro Transition Authority, 2021). These policy

directions are not only policy tools, but also discursive resources used by educational leaders as they engage with students, educators, communities and partners in their conversations.

Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) is suitable to address this issue as it regards language as social practice. Fairclough (1995) states that discourse is linked to social relations, institutional power and ideology. Elite discourse also influences public access to knowledge, values and institutional legitimacy, as described by Van Dijk (1993). CDA has been applied in educational research to examine the process of the production of schooling, policy, identity and power through the linguistic process (Rogers et al., 2005; Mullet, 2018). Leadership speeches can thus serve as a fruitful source of insight into the public representation and justification of educational reform.

The literature of the educational leadership also acknowledges the communication aspect of leadership as well as the managerial decision-making aspect. School and system leaders help to shape meaning when they name the problem, set priorities, and galvanize communities around a shared purpose (Bush, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2020). In post-conflict or autonomy-based situations, this discourse can have other purposes: it can be a means to introducing education as a peacebuilding tool, affirming cultural identity, substantiating institutional reform, and fostering collective trust in public systems. In this view, the speech of educational leaders turns into language and policy narratives.

Although there are many dimensions of BARMM education as it relates to peacebuilding, cultural identity and development of BARMM, limited studies are based in discourse to explore how educational leaders in Bangsamoro negotiate the meaning of education through public speeches. These are all recurrent themes found in the existing public materials, including autonomy, teacher quality, community participation, Indigenous Peoples education, Madaris education, moral governance, and inclusive education and learner development. These recurring ideas are not, however, well-analysed as discourse patterns. This study fills the gap by analyzing selected speeches and official messages of educational leadership in Bangsamoro education sector.

The following research questions guided the study: (1) What major themes are evident in the selected speeches of educational leaders in the Bangsamoro education sector? (2) How do the selected speeches represent education, learners, teachers, and reform? (3) What discourse strategies are used to legitimize and promote Bangsamoro educational development? (4) What implications do these discourses have for English language teaching, discourse studies, and educational leadership? The article proceeds by presenting the methodological procedures, followed by the results and discussion organized according to the major discourse themes generated from the corpus.

Review of Related Literature

Critical Discourse Analysis in Educational Research

CDA has been extensively applied to analyze the role language plays in the production of social knowledge, institutional power, and unequal power relations. Fairclough (1992, 1995) argues that discourse should not only be viewed as text but also as a social practice that is related to discourse institutions and wider social structures. This perspective is helpful for educational research, as education is not a purely technical task. It is also influenced by policy discourse, curriculum discourse, public leadership messaging and social discourses of becoming of learners, teachers and institutions.

For Van Dijk (1993), public discourses produced by powerful social institutions can have a significant impact on shared beliefs, the legitimacy of the power and on the way social problems are understood. In Education, it can be seen in policy, school mission statements, curriculum guides, announcements and speeches of educational leaders. These texts can help to formulate a conception of quality education, an idea of the role for improving it, and an idea of the kinds of learners envisioned in the system. CDA can thus be used to examine the surface meaning of words as well as the social assumptions and institutional values embedded in them.

According to Rogers et al. (2005), CDA has gained significance in education because it provides a way for researchers to study the relationship between language and learning, and the relationship between learning and schooling, and the relationship between schooling and social context. CDA does not see school texts as neutral, but rather ask how educational language can reproduce, challenge and transform social relations. In addition, Mullet (2018) suggests that when employing CDA in research on education, researchers should be explicit about their frameworks, tie analysis to social contexts, and be aware of their own interpretive role. The above principles were followed in the present study as the selected speeches are public documents that reflect the educational priorities in a politically and culturally meaningful region.

CDA is particularly well suited to the study of speeches as speeches are intended to persuade, inspire, explain action, and evoke public action. Repeated values, future oriented claims, legitimising references and positioning the audiences are features found in leadership speeches. Public speeches can employ two rhetorical elements to gain authority and establish

a collective identity: metaphor and evaluation (as demonstrated by Charteris-Black 2014) and pronouns and rhetorical structure (as demonstrated by Chilton 2004). The features are relevant in the Bangsamoro education context, since educational speech is not just for schools but also for a larger audience that includes a population that is autonomous, historical, religious, culturally pluralistic, and reform-oriented.

Educational Leadership as Discourse

Governance, management, policy implementation, and school improvement are some of the subjects under which educational leadership is studied. Leadership is also discursive, however. Leaders lead in part by articulating a vision, identifying institutional challenges, identifying stakeholders and setting up future action. Educational leadership and management are linked to policy and practice (Bush, 2007); successful leadership has an impact on direction setting, people development, and organizational improvement (Leithwood et al., 2020). Language is needed for these functions as leaders need to articulate goals, provide reasons for reform and encourage participation.

This is because, according to Arriaza (2015), school leaders have to have a critical awareness of language since school communication can either facilitate or impede change. The point is significant for the present study as the selected speeches are not just ceremonial or information texts. They bring messages of institutions regarding the values of Bangsamoro education, the needed changes and the ones who should be part in the changes. In the speeches, the researcher can thus analyze the situation of leadership as a public meaning-making practice.

Educational leaders, often build their own and others' identities in their speeches. A leader can communicate in any of the following roles: public servant, reformer, moral guide, policy implementer, or institution's representative. Learners can be built as beneficiaries, future professionals, resilient achiever or agents of change. Teachers may be represented as implementers, colleagues, heroes, or quality agents. Parents and communities can be built as supporters or co-owners of educational reform. The representations are important because they shape understandings about the role of the audience within the education system.

Thus, in the present study, speeches are considered as leadership texts, in which policies, values and identity are entangled. This is in line with CDA since it requires the consideration of the meaning of language choices. There is an obvious repetition of words and phrases, including access, equity, excellence, moral governance, learners, teachers, peace, and development. They arrange the public's understanding of the mission of education in the way the speaker desires. The study investigates these patterns to uncover the discourse in which Bangsamoro education leadership is building the concept of reform and development.

Bangsamoro Education, Autonomy, and Reform

The education sector in the Bangsamoro is based upon a distinct autonomy system. The Bangsamoro people and Indigenous cultural communities have long wanted a meaningful degree of self-governance to give them identity and posterity, which is provided by Republic Act No. 11054 of 2018 which established Bangsamoro Autonomous Region in Muslim Mindanao. The major area of this autonomy is found in the field of education, as the future of the region is influenced by the curriculum, language, cultural representation and institutional governance, among others.

The Bangsamoro Education Code of 2021 provides a policy foundation for a complete and integrated system of quality education in the Bangsamoro (Bangsamoro Transition Authority, 2021). This is because its concepts of inclusiveness, equity, rights-based education, rootedness in context, integration, balance and moral governance are discursive tools of importance in leadership communication. The principles also are visible in public messages, speeches, and discourse, embodying the interplay between policy language and leadership language. Educational leaders use inclusive education, Madaris education, Indigenous Peoples education, peace education or moral governance to mean not only programs, but also values which are embedded in the education framework across the region.

The Bangsamoro Education Reform and Development Plan 2035 is a testament to Bangsamoro's education long-term roadmap for reform. According to the public reports, the plan is to serve as a framework for education plans and policies until 2035 and is grounded on principles such as inclusivity, equity, rights-based approaches, contextual rootedness, integration, balance, and moral governance (Bangsamoro Government, 2022). In the same way, these terms are also used repeatedly in the speeches analysed in this study, which indicates that public leadership discourse is important in making long-term plans conveyable to the learners, teachers, parents and communities.

Because BARMM is a multilingual, multicultural, and historically complex region, public education discourse performs delicate work. It must speak to Moro, non-Moro, Indigenous Peoples, Muslim, Christian, urban, rural, and geographically isolated communities. It must also connect basic education, higher education, technical education, Madaris education, and

lifelong learning. This complexity makes the selected speeches especially valuable for CDA. They provide evidence of how a regional education institution publicly articulates reform while attempting to affirm inclusion, identity, peace, and development.

Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored on Fairclough's three-dimensional model of Critical Discourse Analysis. The first dimension, text, involves the linguistic characteristics of the speeches, such as the use of vocabulary, repetition of words, the use of pronouns, modality, evaluative language and metaphors. In this study, words and phrases were analyzed in relation to the description of education, learners, teachers, reform, moral governance and Bangsamoro identity.

Discursive practice is the second dimension, that of the production, circulation and reception of the texts. The speeches and messages selected were created in public education settings such as an international teachers' convention, graduation, an education summit, and a legislative-policy event. Their dissemination took place via official government means and news outlets. This dimension matters because a graduate's message, a headliner's speech and a policy sponsor's speech would have different audiences and purposes and could have common themes of leadership.

Social practice is the third dimension of the discourse that is constituted by the social and institutional context in which it is embedded. In this study, the social practices that would be relevant would be autonomy, peacebuilding, moral governance, inclusive education, cultural identity, and educational reform in BARMM. This analysis asks the question: How do the speeches relate local educational issues to regional aspirations? It also seeks to understand how education is associated with peace, development, faith, justice and transformation of learning, and what social values these are reinforcing.

The conceptual logic of the study is that the selected public speeches and official messages constitute discourse texts which are characterized by linguistic features and discourse strategies, these features give rise to meanings about education, Bangsamoro learners, teachers, Bangsamoro education reform, Bangsamoro governance, and Bangsamoro identity, and these meanings reveal the public manifestation of Bangsamoro education leadership about the role of education in regional transformation. This scheme is a direct reflection of the research questions as it takes us from text to discourse strategy to social implication.

CDA Dimension	Data Focus in This Study	Connection to Research Questions
Text	Words, phrases, pronouns, metaphors, repeated values, and representations in the speeches	Identifies major themes and representations of education, learners, teachers, and reform
Discursive practice	Speech contexts, genres, sources, audiences, and circulation through public platforms	Explains how speeches function as leadership communication and policy narrative
Social practice	Autonomy, peacebuilding, moral governance, inclusion, identity, and regional development	Interprets the broader implications for English teaching, discourse studies, and leadership

Table 1. Conceptual alignment of CDA dimensions, data, and research focus

Methodology

Research Design

This study used a qualitative research design, specifically Critical Discourse Analysis. The design was chosen because it was not designed to assess attitudes or test statistical relationships but to describe the construction of social meanings in texts in public educational leadership. The study is appropriate since CDA involves the close analysis of texts in relation to institutional and social contexts (Fairclough, 1995; Wodak & Meyer, 2016).

Fairclough's three-dimensional model was used as a framework for the analysis with focus on discourse at the level of text, discursive practice and social practice. The textual analysis was based on the vocabulary, repeated phrases, pronouns, modality, evaluative words, metaphors and patterns of representation. Discursive practice focused on the contexts where the speeches were created and disseminated, including at summits, graduation ceremonies, public policy events and official

news platforms. Social practice analysed the speeches in relation to wider issues of autonomy, moral governance, inclusive education, peacebuilding and regional development.

Corpus and Data Sources

The selection of materials comprised five speeches, messages and excerpts taken from the speeches and source-based reports from the Bangsamoro education sector that were all available in the public domain. The texts were selected because they directly spoke to Bangsamoro education, educational reform, learner development, policy direction and public leadership. Three texts (S1, S2 and S3) were used in a primary corpus since they were available as full speech or complete public message. Two texts (S4 and S5) were used as additional sources of excerpts, since only official texts, summaries or quotations were available to the public. The corpus is institutionally focussed on speeches and messages which are attributed to Minister Mohagher M. Iqbal during his time as the Minister of Basic, Higher and Technical Education but the texts are considered as educational leadership discourse as they represent the institutional stance of the Ministry of Basic, Higher and Technical Education (MBHTE). A summary of the corpus is shown in Table 2.

Code	Speech / Source Text	Context and Date	Text Status
S1	BARMM Educational System: Plans and Direction	35th ASEAN Council of Teachers +1 Convention; speech delivered Sept. 28, 2019; published Oct. 3, 2019	Full speech available online; used as primary speech text
S2	Graduation Message of MBHTE Minister Mohagher M. Iqbal	Graduation message for School Year 2020-2021; published July 2, 2021	Full message available on BARMM official website
S3	Graduation Message for 2023-2024 BARMM Graduates	Graduation message dated May 24, 2024; published June 1, 2024	Full message available through public news source
S4	State of Education Address during the Second Bangsamoro Education Summit	Second Bangsamoro Education Summit, Nov. 28-29, 2024; reported Dec. 1, 2024	Supplementary source-based report with official excerpts; full transcript not located
S5	Sponsorship Speech / Message on the Bangsamoro Education Code	Filing and approval of the Bangsamoro Education Code; 2020-2021	Supplementary official summaries and quoted excerpts; full sponsorship transcript not located

Table 2. Corpus of selected Bangsamoro education leadership texts

The corpus selection followed four criteria: public availability, relevance to Bangsamoro education, presence of leadership discourse, and usefulness for CDA. Materials were excluded if they were purely administrative announcements, short social media captions without substantial discourse, or unrelated to education. The source pack prepared for this study identified the five texts and noted which were full texts and which were summary/excerpt-based public reports. This distinction was retained in the analysis to avoid overstating the evidentiary value of incomplete transcripts.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher collected the corpus from publicly available online sources such as the BARMM official website, Bangsamoro Parliament website, Luwaran, and Science & Digital News. The 2019 speech was chosen as it was explicitly presented as the full text of the speech on the source page. The 2021 and 2024 graduation addresses were chosen as they gave a complete graduation message that was public. The public reports on the 2024 State of Education Address and the Bangsamoro Education Code sponsorship material were included in the public reports as supplementary data only as they were not complete transcripts of the speech or document, but contained direct statements, official descriptions and policy-relevant excerpts. To confirm, contextualize, or support patterns that were already present in the entire texts, these excerpt-based items were not used as the primary basis for a major theme.

Data Analysis Procedure

The analysis process went through five stages. The texts were read over and over again to highlight words, phrases, topics, and evaluative expressions that were repeated. Second, open coding was done to identify stretches of discourse concerning education, leadership, reform, learners, teachers, parents, governance, culture, peace, development. Third, codes that were related were clustered into more general themes. Fourth, the researcher analyzed the strategies used in the corpus in the

form of discursive strategies; legal and policy legitimization, moral-religious foundation, use of collective pronouns, future-oriented framing, and problem and solution structure. Fifth, the findings were analyzed from the perspective of the three levels of text, discourse and social practices as described by Fairclough.

A matrix which had been manually prepared in Microsoft Word was used in the coding process. Each text was coded with the following analytic categories: theme, key lexical choices, represented actors, implied values, discourse strategy and social implication. A qualitative study was conducted, thus there is no statistical treatment. The analysis focused on the interpretive depth, patterns in the text, and meaning within the context, not on frequency counts.

Analytical Layer	Focus of Analysis	Guiding Questions
Textual analysis	Vocabulary, repeated phrases, modality, metaphors, pronouns, evaluative descriptions	What words and expressions are used to describe education, learners, teachers, and reform?
Discursive practice	Production, circulation, audience, and genre of speeches or official messages	Why was the speech produced, where was it circulated, and who was addressed?
Social practice	Connection to autonomy, peacebuilding, moral governance, identity, and development	What larger social and institutional meanings are constructed by the discourse?
Trustworthiness	Repeated reading, source comparison, code checking, and transparent limitation of incomplete transcripts	How were interpretations checked and how were limitations acknowledged?

Table 3. Analytical coding framework used in the study

Trustworthiness and Ethical Considerations

Trustworthiness was ensured by repeated reading, source triangulation, an explicit coding framework, and the explicit identification of source limitations. Themes were not drawn from a single text alone but were checked across the five selected texts. It also separated full texts from the source-based summaries, which is crucial as CDA will require one to have a keen eye on the completeness and context of language data. No human subjects or direct interviews, surveys, classroom observations, private communication, or personal data were involved in the study. Ethics approval was not required because the study used publicly available documents and did not involve human participants, private data, intervention, or identifiable personal information. Informed consent was therefore not applicable. All materials used were public, and all sources were properly cited using APA 7th edition style.

Methodological Delimitations

The study was limited to the texts of leadership that were already accessible in the public online sources. It did not attempt to establish the personal motive of the speaker, the private or group work that led to the speeches, or the actual reception of the speeches by the audience. The focus of the analysis was thus on what the texts make available for interpretation and not hidden motives. This delimitation is consistent with CDA because the study focuses on how words, context, and circulation make discourse public.

Another restriction is on the completeness of the corpus. The three were dealt with as full texts and two as source-based public reports, with official excerpts. The latter were added both because they are important educational leadership events and for their policy discourse content, but interpretations from these were treated with care. The results therefore stress similarity of discourse patterns within the corpus as a whole and not statements about individual sentences of missing transcripts.

Lastly, the study was limited to English-language "public" texts or English-language reporting of speeches. This option is suitable for a researcher who is an English language teacher and for the journal that requires English manuscripts. It also does not mean that alternative interpretations offered in Maguindanaon, Maranao, Tausug, Filipino, Arabic and other languages were explored. A study in the future, conducted in multiple languages, might uncover other dimensions of identity, politeness, religion, and local meaning making that can only be conveyed in its other languages.

The audit trail has been enhanced by the use of source links, downloaded copies or archived screenshots (where these were available), the coding matrix and short analytic memos. These materials are not actual participant data but documentation

of the analytic process. This enables readers and reviewers to grasp how themes were generated from the corpus and how interpretations were linked to textual evidence.

Future research should have official reports and/or excerpts from MBHTE or the Bangsamoro Parliament to make the corpus more balanced and to be able to conduct a more in-depth discourse analysis on the events sentence-by-sentence.

Results and Discussion

The analysis generated six major discourse themes: education as peacebuilding and self-determination, inclusive and rights-based access, moral governance, learner formation and future leadership, collective responsibility for reform, and contextualized Bangsamoro identity. These themes show that the speeches and messages present education not only as schooling but also as a public mission tied to autonomy, justice, spirituality, institutional reform, and regional development. Table 4 summarizes the thematic pattern across the corpus.

Theme	Core Meaning	Representative Corpus Sources
Education as peacebuilding and self-determination	Education is framed as part of the peace process, autonomy, and the realization of Bangsamoro aspirations.	S1, S4, S5
Inclusive and rights-based access	Quality education is represented as a right that must reach Moro, Christian, Indigenous Peoples, learners with disabilities, and remote communities.	S1, S2, S4, S5
Moral governance	Educational reform is linked with ethical public service, transparency, accountability, and spiritual responsibility.	S1, S2, S4, S5
Learner formation and future leadership	Learners and graduates are constructed as future professionals, leaders, change-makers, and contributors to development.	S1, S2, S3
Collective responsibility for reform	Teachers, parents, public servants, development partners, and communities are represented as co-actors in educational transformation.	S1, S2, S4, S5
Contextualized Bangsamoro identity	Education is linked with Islamic values, Madaris education, Indigenous Peoples education, peace education, and local culture.	S1, S4, S5

Table 4. Major discourse themes across the selected corpus

Education as Peacebuilding and Self-Determination

The theme that is most prominent in the corpus is – framing education within the Bangsamoro peace process and the wider self-determination project. In his 2019 BARMM Education System speech, the Minister of Education has placed himself in the context of the Mindanao conflict, the peace process, the Bangsamoro Organic Law, and the creation of BARMM (Luwaran, 2019). This contextually opening is important because it renders education political transition inseparable. The speech does not start with curriculum or school management, it starts with history, struggle, autonomy, and the legal-political formation of the Bangsamoro government.

This act from a CDA's point of view becomes a legitimizing strategy. The discussion of education reform is embedded in the peace process and the Organic Law, making education reform an institutional responsibility, not a personal one. This is similar to the pattern Fairclough (1992) sees as using the naturalization of social change to align new institutional directions with the public values sanctioned. Here, education is seen as an extension of the Bangsamoro hope for self-governance or self-determination for meaning.

This is reflected in the subsequent public statements made on the State of Education Address and the Bangsamoro Education Code. The State of Education Address aligns education achievement to access, equity, excellence, and the establishment of an integrated educational system that caters to Bangsamoro learners (Luwaran, 2024a). The discourse of the Education Code also speaks of the legal framework as a reflection of a collective vision of an inclusive and relevant

education (Bangsamoro Government, 2020; Bangsamoro Parliament, 2021). The texts indicate that education is publicly told as a peacebuilding institution: it is supposed to be able to incorporate a historical concept of exclusion, it is supposed to be able to create human capital, and it is supposed to be able to support social transformation.

This peacebuilding discourse is summarized in the advocacy line 'no child in the Bangsamoro left behind,' which is repeated throughout the book. From a linguistic standpoint, the term employs universalizing language (no child) and a place-based identity (Bangsamoro). It argues that any reform of education which fails to include anyone is morally incomplete. This illustrates the mechanisms by which the language of policy is shaped into the public language of the leader.

Inclusive and Rights-Based Access to Quality Education

Access, inclusiveness and rights is another key theme. The speeches and official messages time and again put education as a right to be accessed by different learners in the Bangsamoro. Access is clearly mentioned in the speech to Moro, Christian & Indigenous Peoples learners, while the speech also acknowledges the importance of creating safe and inclusive learning spaces for learners with disabilities (Luwaran, 2019). Additionally, the Bangsamoro Education Code institutionalizes inclusion as it includes formal, non-formal, informal, public, and private learning institutions and Indigenous Peoples education, Madaris education and peace education (Bangsamoro Transition Authority, 2021).

The inclusive discourse is not just for enrollment. It is linked to curriculum, facilities, teacher quality, health and nutrition, community involvement and technical-vocational pathways. This generalised view of access implies that educational inclusion is not just about children being physically present in a school, it is about making things possible for children to be in a school meaningfully. This is crucial in a place where opportunities for education can be influenced by geographic isolation, poverty, conflict histories, and cultural diversity.

The term access in the 2024 State of Education Address report is used in conjunction with the terms equity and excellence. The address is related to marginalised and geographically isolated communities, AKAP programme for remote areas, Indigenous Peoples Education, Madaris education and scholarships for higher and technical education (Luwaran, 2024a). These elements of the discourse provide the framework for the Ministry to be presented as an institution which is seeking to redress inequities in access by using specific interventions. The language of 'access,' 'equity,' and 'excellence' also reflects the vocabulary of education-development going on in the moment, revealing the local education policy language's relationship to national and international education policy language.

For the teaching of English, this theme is pertinent as it illustrates the values promoted in public educational texts of inclusion, representation and learner diversity. These speeches can be used in language classrooms for the purposes of teaching critical reading skills, rhetorical analysis skills, and culturally embedded vocabulary. Students can explore the depiction of social groups in official discourse and the effect of an inclusive language on difficult social realities.

Moral Governance as Educational Legitimacy

The third theme is moral governance. In the corpus, moral governance appears both as a principle of public administration and as a moral-religious framework for education reform. In the 2019 speech, moral governance is associated with moral values, lawful programs, public welfare, transparency, and accountability. In the 2021 Graduation Message, change in BARMM is linked to a renewed commitment to moral governance, peace, justice, and development (Bangsamoro Government, 2021).

CDA is useful to uncover the discursive nature of moral governance. It does not just assert a management principle, but gives reform a moral rationale. If the speech is related to education and Islam and Islam is linked with seeking knowledge and public welfare and the idea of moral governance, then the reform of institutions will be connected to the values of Islam and spirituality. The rhetorical pattern is effective because it is able to address all audiences that can be engaged through a civic or religious lens, including policy audiences, education professionals, parents, and communities.

This theme also demonstrates the power of discourse to produce an idea of institutional legitimacy. The repeated focus on transparency, accountability and ethical behaviour addresses potential issues of bureaucracy, corruption and low quality public institutions. The power of public discourse through powerful institutions can influence social beliefs and the legitimisation of authority, as outlined by Van Dijk, (1993). The central aspect of the Bangsamoro education corpus is the legitimization of authority in the absence of commands and the promise of reform and a language of service.

But moral governance also has an analytical reservation. The CDA must ask, How is the phrase operationalised? It's value loaded. The speeches suggest moral governance as an ideal for guiding behavior, but empirical investigation is needed to

measure moral governance. The discourse should thus be interpreted as a leadership story that constructs an institutional identity that is sought, rather than as proof that all outcomes of reform have been accomplished.

Learners as Future Leaders, Professionals, and Change-Makers

Picking the graduation messages selected reinforces the image of the learners as future protagonists. The graduate's tenacity, resourcefulness, courage, integrity, professionalism and lifelong learning are commended in the 2021 message (Bangsamoro Government, 2021). It is in the 2024 message where graduates are called "the future leaders and change-makers of BARMM", and education is understood as the building blocks of opportunities, success, peace, development and prosperity (SDN - Science & Digital News, 2024). These messages go beyond mere formal and ceremonial congratulation, in that they involve placing social responsibility on the shoulders of the learner.

The repeated use of the future oriented is important. The use of words like 'future leaders,' 'professionals,' 'change-makers,' 'journey,' 'new chapter,' and 'bright future' create an image of education as a pathway from personal growth to societal progress. This provides a subject position for learners in CDA: students who have fulfilled requirements, and more important moral and social agents who should contribute to the Bangsamoro region. This positioning of the subject is motivational, but also has expectations of responsibility.

Intimate, encouraging and words are used throughout the graduation messages. The personal touch of the direct address 'my dear graduates' makes closer the institutional voice and makes closer the relationship between the Ministry and learners. Meanwhile, the voice of the speech changes from personal encouragement to public responsibility, connecting the success of the students with the advancement of the community. The rhetorical shift from individual to collective meaning is one of the important rhetorical patterns in the corpus.

This theme is pedagogically useful to English teachers for its ability to demonstrate how speeches shape audience identity. Learners can understand the role of pronouns, direct address, adjectives, and metaphors in relation to speaker and audience. This corpus can then be used for lessons on: discourse markers, persuasive language, positioning the audience, and values in public communication.

Teachers, Parents, and Communities as Shared Actors in Reform

Another recurring theme is collective responsibility. The speeches and messages do not present educational reform as the work of the Ministry alone. They repeatedly mention teachers, school administrators, parents, public servants, development partners, community leaders, and learners. The 2021 graduation message acknowledges educators and parents for supporting learners and investing in children's futures (Bangsamoro Government, 2021). The 2024 State of Education Address report emphasizes that educational success depends on unified effort among public servants, educators, development partners, parents, and learners (Luwaran, 2024a).

The discourse strategy here is collectivization. Through collective nouns and inclusive pronouns such as 'we' and 'our,' the speeches construct reform as a shared moral project. This strategy can create solidarity and distribute responsibility. It also positions the Ministry as a coordinating actor rather than the only actor. In educational leadership terms, this aligns with views of leadership as relational, communicative, and distributed across multiple stakeholders (Bush, 2007; Leithwood et al., 2020).

At the textual level, teachers are represented as quality agents who facilitate learning and help students reach their potential. Parents are represented as investors in children's futures. Community leaders and local government units are represented as partners in frontline service delivery. These representations support the broader discourse that education reform requires a social ecosystem. The speeches therefore construct Bangsamoro education as a community-based project rather than a purely bureaucratic intervention.

This collective framing has practical implications. It can encourage stakeholder participation and public trust. However, it can also obscure unequal capacities among stakeholders. For example, parents in remote or economically challenged communities may be asked to invest in education even when they face material constraints. CDA therefore helps identify both the empowering and simplifying effects of collective language.

Contextualized Bangsamoro Identity and Culturally Grounded Education

The fifth theme is contextualized Bangsamoro identity. Across the corpus, education is repeatedly connected with local culture, Islamic values, Madaris education, Indigenous Peoples education, peace education, and regional autonomy. In the 2019 speech, education is presented as an important value in Islamic teaching and is linked to the command to seek knowledge (Luwaran, 2019). The speech also refers to Madaris education, Islamic and Arabic studies, peace education, and

a tribal university system for non-Moro Indigenous Peoples. Similarly, Islamic higher education, Indigenous Peoples education, and peace education are recognized in the discourse surrounding the Bangsamoro Education Code (Bangsamoro Government, 2020; Bangsamoro Transition Authority, 2021).

This theme shows how educational leadership discourse localizes education policy. In place of quality education as a universal template out of context, the speeches set the quality education within Bangsamoro history, values and aspirations. This is a relationship between curriculum, culture and autonomy that is beautifully summarized in the statement in the 2024 State of Education Address, which says that "Contextual Education is at the heart of autonomy" (Luwaran, 2024a).

Contextualization does discourse work from an identity perspective. It informs the audience that Bangsamoro education is inclusive of multiple communities but is grounded on the unique social and historical experience of the Bangsamoro Region. This is significant because there are Moro communities, non-Moro communities, Indigenous Peoples, Christian, Muslim, rural, urban and geographically isolated communities. The discourse tries to balance the notion of diversity and a common regional identity in a culturally appropriate and inclusive framework.

This theme also carries over to language education. Such texts can be used by English teachers in BARMM to discuss their potential to represent local identities in English and as official public discourse. The speeches are composed primarily in English, but they carry cultural, religious, and political significance in the Bangsamoro. They are, therefore, useful materials for critical literacy as they enable learners to look at how English is used as a language of governance, a language of identity construction, and a language of regional development.

Discursive Strategies Used in the Speeches

Across the corpus, five discourse strategies were particularly visible: legitimization through law and policy, moral-religious grounding, collective pronoun use, future-oriented framing, and problem-solution structure. These strategies are summarized in Table 5.

Strategy	How It Appears in the Corpus	Discourse Function
Legitimization through law and policy	References to the Bangsamoro Organic Law, Bangsamoro Education Code, MBHTE mandate, and education plans	Presents reform as lawful, institutional, and necessary
Moral-religious grounding	References to Islam, seeking knowledge, moral governance, ethical public service, and public welfare	Frames education as both civic and spiritual responsibility
Collective pronoun use	Frequent use of we, our, and collective terms such as community, Ministry, parents, teachers, and learners	Builds solidarity and shared responsibility
Future-oriented framing	Graduates as leaders, professionals, change-makers, and builders of regional development	Connects present educational effort with future peace and prosperity
Problem-solution structure	Identifies historical conflict, resource gaps, remote communities, poor governance risks, and learning challenges, then presents reform responses	Makes institutional programs appear responsive to social problems

Table 5. Discourse strategies identified in the corpus

The most prominent strategy is legitimization through law and policy. The 2019 speech brings into the picture the peace agreements, the Bangsamoro Organic Law, and the mandate of the Ministry before listing the educational priorities. The Education Code texts on their own also provide the code as a reflection of the collective vision and a mechanism for a holistic and integrated education system (Bangsamoro Government, 2020; Bangsamoro Parliament, 2021). This approach links struggle of the past, legal autonomy, and education reform.

Another significant strategy is moral-religious foundations. The speeches convey Islamic notions of knowledge, and connect reform to moral governance. This strategy is more than symbolic. It offers a culturally relevant foundation for institutional responses and links education to values that are likely to resonate with many listeners in the Bangsamoro. Inclusive language for Moro, Christian, and Indigenous Peoples learners is also discursively present in the speeches, concurrently religious-cultural foundations are grounded in the context of rights-based inclusion.

Graduation speechwriters are particularly adept at using future-oriented framing. Graduates are built to become leaders and change makers and education is said to be a pillar of opportunity, peace, development and prosperity. This approach

puts the educational achievement in public discourse. It also illustrates how a ceremonial discourse can turn into a developmental discourse by connecting personal success to regional change.

Discussion: Public Speeches as Bangsamoro Education Policy Narratives

The results overall indicate that public speeches in the Bangsamoro education sector are policy narratives. They do not just go from one ceremony or event to another. They interpret the meaning of the reform of education for the public, describe institutional priorities, and relate technical programs to moral and cultural values. This lends credence to the notion that discourse is a type of social practice (Fairclough, 1995) and that leaders of the institution have symbolic power in public discourse (van Dijk, 1993).

The study indicates that Bangsamoro education leadership discourse is built on the use of both reform and identity vocabulary in the corpus. Vocabulary for Reform is access, equity, excellence, quality teachers, curriculum, facilities, scholarships, transparency, accountability, monitoring. Vocabulary in identity relates to Bangsamoro, moral governance, Islam, Madaris, Indigenous Peoples, peace education, struggle and autonomy. One of the salient features of the corpus is the combination of these vocabularies. It reveals that education is envisioned at once as a contemporary public service and as a culturally-based project of regional self-governance.

The results also demonstrate a positive discourse of hope and transformation. In the descriptions of learners, they are deemed to be resilient and capable; teachers need to be quality facilitators; parents and communities are partners and the Ministry is a reform-oriented institution. It is a positive talk that can help to establish citizens' faith in a new education system. But CDA also calls for action in what is not so visible. Speeches address challenges but tend to address them through promises of reform, and a collective sense of hope. Further research might involve a comparison of leadership discourse with classroom experiences, teacher narratives or learner outcomes, or with community perceptions.

This study illustrates how local public speeches can be used as authentic materials in teaching English language for critical literacy. English teachers in BARMM can analyze English speeches that are culturally and politically relevant to students rather than using general speeches or textbook extracts. These texts can be used to support lessons on rhetorical devices, modality, positioning the audience, persuasion, values, and ideology. They can also enable students to read the official discourse critically and respectfully.

The findings indicate that communication is important in contexts of educational reform. Educational leaders can foster trust, solicit participation and align education as a team effort through language. However, a leadership narrative must also be accompanied by accountability, measurable results and clarity of implementation. The speeches analysed in this study offer a clear vision of inclusive and moral education and further research is needed to better understand the way that both educators and learners experience and enact this vision on the ground.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study critically analyzed selected speeches and official messages of educational leadership in the Bangsamoro education sector. Using Fairclough's 3-dimensional CDA model, the analysis revealed six major themes of the corpus which constructs Bangsamoro education, namely, peacebuilding and self-determination, inclusive and rights-based access, moral governance, learner formation, collective responsibility, and contextualized identity. These themes present education as more than just classroom learning, as a regional peace and justice project, autonomy project, cultural affirmation project and a human development project.

The study makes a contribution to discourse studies by demonstrating that public education speeches can serve as policy narratives in an autonomous, post-conflict and culturally diverse area. This also helps English language instruction by showcasing the use of local public texts in ELL instruction for critical literacy and discourse analysis. The findings point to the importance of language for educational leadership all in the name of building institutional legitimacy, mobilizing stakeholders, and communicating the priorities of reform.

The study has limited findings. First, the sample consisted of five public texts, and two of the chosen texts were only provided as excerpts in the official report and in source-based reports, not in full text. Second, the analysis was only textual and contextual analysis and did not involve interviews with speech writers, policy makers, teachers, learners and audience. Thirdly, the findings are not intended to represent all educational leaders in BARMM because the corpus is focused on one primary educational leader.

There may be further studies conducted to add more speeches by other MBHTE officials, school division superintendents, university presidents, and education partners. Leadership speeches can also be compared to policy documents, teacher

accounts, classroom resources, or learner responses. This multilingual discourse study can also take a look at the transition of Bangsamoro education leadership discourse from English to Filipino, to Arabic, and to local language.

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Competing Interests Statement

The author declares no competing interests.

Data Availability Statement

The data supporting this study are publicly available speeches, official messages, and public source reports listed in the reference section. The coding matrix and research notes may be made available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. Because the study used public documents and did not collect data from human participants, no private participant dataset was created.

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Appendices

No appendices are attached to this study.