

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

THIRTEENTH CONGRESS
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 1652



Introduced by **Hon. EDUARDO R. GULLAS**

Explanatory Note

The Bilingual Policy of the Department of Education, introduced in 1974 through DECS Order No. 25, s. 1974, was designed to develop a "bilingual nation competent in the use of English and Filipino". This policy mandated the teaching of Filipino as a subject in all curricular levels from elementary to college. In addition, it required the use of Filipino as a medium of instruction in Social Studies, Character Education, Values Education, Physical Education, Industrial Arts and Home Economics.

As a result of this policy, learning of the English language suffered a setback. One of the reasons for this setback according to linguists is language interference. Targeting the learning of two languages (English and Filipino) is too much for Filipino learners, especially those in the lower grades. If a child happens to be a non-Tagalog speaker, he/she must learn two "foreign" languages at the same time-truly a difficult, even impossible task.

Another reason is that the use of Filipino (which is Tagalog-based) as a medium of instruction in the subjects mentioned earlier, limits the exposure of the learner to English. Since exposure is basic language learning, learning and mastery of the language is not attained.

Books in almost disciplines especially in mathematics and science are written in English. Without adequate mastery of the English language, our young people will lag behind in mathematics and science which are the fundamental disciplines to develop our global competitiveness in terms of knowledge and skills that can enable us to access and compete in the fields of science and technology. To date, we lag behind other Asian nations in these disciplines as evidenced in the TIMS results of 1998.

This bill aims to remedy the deficiencies of the current Bilingual Education Policy of the Department of Education. Its ultimate objective is the improvement of the total learning process in our schools to ensure better education for Filipino students and their enhanced competitiveness in terms of knowledge and skills in the global arena.


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AN ACT
PROVIDING FOR THE USE OF ENGLISH AS A MEDIUM OF
INSTRUCTION IN THE PHILIPPINE SCHOOLS

Be it enacted by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the Philippine in Congress assembled.

SECTION 1. The medium of instruction in all curricular levels beginning in Grade I shall be in English, Provided That in Grade I and II the regional language may be used as auxiliary language instruction.

SECTION 2. English and Filipino shall be taught as separate subjects in all grade levels in the elementary and in the high school levels.

SECTION 3. In the tertiary level, the current programs on instruction in English and Filipino shall be maintained and/or modified subject to the discretion of the heads of schools in consultation with the Commission on Higher Education.

SECTION 4. Examinations for purposes of admission, to accreditation, acceleration and promotion in Philippine schools shall use English as the language of assessment, Provided, That questions in Filipino may be included but the credit given such questions shall not exceed ten percent (10%) of the total points in the examination.

SECTION 5. Within ninety (90) days from the approval of this Act, the Secretary of Education shall issue the necessary implementing rules and regulations.

SECTION 6. Upon approval of this Act, there shall be a transition period of one school year before its implementing. No extension of the one year period of transition shall be allowed.

SECTION 7. All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations and other issuances, or parts thereof which are inconsistent with contrary to any provision of this Act are hereby deemed repealed or amended accordingly.

SECTION 8. This Act shall take effect upon its approval.

Approved.