

Republic of the Philippines
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Quezon City

Eighteenth Congress
First Regular Session

HOUSE BILL NO. 6405



Introduced by Honorable Mark O. Go

EXPLANATORY NOTE

Article XIV, Section 7 of the 1987 Constitution provides,

“SECTION 7. For purposes of communication and instruction, the official languages of the Philippines are Filipino and, until otherwise provided by law, English.

The regional languages are the auxiliary official languages in the regions and shall serve as auxiliary media of instruction therein.

Spanish and Arabic shall be promoted on a voluntary and optional basis.”

This bill proposes the abrogation of the mandatory use of regional languages as the primary media of instruction in Kindergarten to Grade three, and to relegate said languages as auxiliary media of instruction as provided for by the Constitution.

In 2013, the use of regional and native languages as the medium of instruction for students in the Kindergarten until Grade 3 was institutionalized with the passing of RA No. 10533. The Said law further provides for a transition program wherein Filipino and English shall be gradually introduced to prepare students in Grades 4 to 6 for secondary education where these are the primary languages of instruction. While the intentions of the law to develop the country’s regional languages and make education more accessible and learner-oriented are noble, the Philippine educational system is confronted with several realities that make the current use of the mother tongue as medium of instruction counterproductive.

According to a recent study from the University of the Philippines – Baguio, teachers are confronted with three possible scenarios in the use of the mother tongue. The first is when majority of the students communicate in the regional mother tongue, which is more common in rural areas. The second is when the teacher uses the regional lingua franca but the students use different mother tongues. The third scenario is when the students’ linguistic profiles show that they are more competent with Filipino or English as when either of these two are used at home instead of the regional lingua franca.

As validated by the Komisyon sa Wikang Filipino, there are approximately 130 Philippine languages used all over the country. Many of these languages are further diversified into many different dialects. Apart from the Ortograpiyang Pambansa, the country has yet to completely develop the orthographies of even the major regional languages of the Philippines. The country has proceeded to implement the use of the mother tongue as medium of instruction when our education system is not equipped with sufficient teacher training, textbooks, and other instructional materials to support mother tongue-based multilingual education. The mobility of people and local economic development created many cosmopolitan areas across the country where the local population is now composed of people from different ethno-linguistic backgrounds, and the mandatory use of the regional language instead of the widely understood Filipino or English has become difficult for teachers and learners alike. While it is recognized that the development of regional languages is essential in cultivating the national identity, such can be achieved without impose upon learners and teachers the use of a regional language they are not proficient in.

On the other hand, a 2000 survey by the Social Weather Station showed that 85% of Filipinos nationwide understand Filipino. Meanwhile, the last survey conducted by SWS on English proficiency was in 2008, which revealed that 76% of Filipinos understand English. In this day of interconnectivity and access to technology, the proficiency of Filipinos nationwide on the use of Filipino and English has significantly improved. These two languages remain to be the most widely used in commerce and mass media. Furthermore, there are readily available instructional materials in Filipino and English, which learners and teachers can use.

The formative years of the students from kindergarten to Grade 3 are crucial in preparing them for personal and academic development. Ultimately it is the development of the learners that would suffer when we impose the mandatory use of the mother tongue when the teachers themselves are not equipped to teach using the mother tongue, and the learners are more competent with using Filipino or English.

Hence, approval of this bill is earnestly requested.



MARK O. GO

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**AN ACT TO
ABROGATE THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE MOTHER TONGUE-BASED
MULTILINGUAL EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN KINDERGARTEN TO
GRADE 3, AMENDING FOR THE PURPOSE REPUBLIC ACT NO. 10533
OTHERWISE KNOWN AS THE "ENHANCED BASIC EDUCATION ACT OF 2013"**

*Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the Philippines in
Congress assembled:*

SECTION 1. Section 2 of Republic Act No. 10533 is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 2. *Declaration of Policy.* — The State shall establish, maintain and support a complete, adequate, and integrated system of education relevant to the needs of the people, the country and society-at-large.

Likewise, it is hereby declared the policy of the State that every graduate of basic education shall be an empowered individual who has learned, through a program that is rooted on sound educational principles and geared towards excellence, the foundations for learning throughout life, the competence to engage in work and be productive, the ability to coexist in fruitful harmony with local and global communities, the capability to engage in autonomous, creative, and critical thinking, and the capacity and willingness to transform others and one's self.

For this purpose, the State shall create a functional basic education system that will develop productive and responsible citizens equipped with the essential competencies, skills and values for both life-long learning and employment. In order to achieve this, the State shall:

- (a) Give every student an opportunity to receive quality education that is globally competitive based on a pedagogically sound curriculum that is at par with international standards;
- (b) Broaden the goals of high school education for college preparation, vocational and technical career opportunities as well as creative arts, sports and entrepreneurial employment in a rapidly changing and increasingly globalized environment; and

(c) Make education learner-oriented and responsive to the needs, cognitive and cultural capacity, the circumstances and diversity of learners, schools and communities through the appropriate languages of teaching and learning[, including mother tongue as a learning resource].

SEC. 2. Section 4 of Republic Act No. 10533 is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 4. *Enhanced Basic Education Program.* — XXX

XXX

XXX

XXX

Secondary education refers to the third stage of compulsory basic education. It consists of four (4) years of junior high school education and two (2) years of senior high school education. The entrant age to the junior and senior high school levels are typically twelve (12) and sixteen (16) years old, respectively.

Basic education shall be delivered in [languages understood by the learners as the language plays a strategic role in shaping the formative years of learners.

For kindergarten and the first three (3) years of elementary education, instruction, teaching materials and assessment shall be in the regional or native language of the learners. The Department of Education (DepED) shall formulate a mother language transition program from Grade 4 to Grade 6 so that Filipino and English shall be gradually introduced as languages of instruction until such time when these two (2) languages can become the primary languages of instruction at the secondary level.

For purposes of this Act, mother language or first Language (LI) refers to language or languages first learned by a child, which he/she identifies with, is identified as a native language user of by others, which he/she knows best, or uses most. This includes Filipino sign language used by individuals with pertinent disabilities. The regional or native language refers to the traditional speech variety or variety of Filipino sign language existing in a region, area or place.] FILIPINO AND/OR ENGLISH.

SEC. 3. Section 5 of Republic Act No. 10533 is hereby amended to read as follows:

SEC. 5. *Curriculum Development.* — XXX

The DepED shall adhere to the following standards and principles in developing the enhanced basic education curriculum:

- (a) The curriculum shall be learner-centered, inclusive and developmentally appropriate;
- (b) The curriculum shall be relevant, responsive and research-based;
- (c) The curriculum shall be culture-sensitive;
- (d) The curriculum shall be contextualized and global;

(e) The curriculum shall use pedagogical approaches that are constructivist, inquiry-based, reflective, collaborative and integrative;

[(f) The curriculum shall adhere to the principles and framework of Mother Tongue-Based Multilingual Education (MTB-MLE) which starts from where the learners are and from what they already knew proceeding from the known to the unknown; instructional materials and capable teachers to implement the MTB-MLE curriculum shall be available;]

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SEC. 4. Repealing Clause. – All laws, decrees, orders, rules and regulations, or other issuances or parts inconsistent with the provisions of this Acts are hereby repealed or modified accordingly.

SEC. 5. Effectivity. – This Act shall take effect fifteen (15) days after its publication in two (2) newspapers of general circulation.

Approved,