

**IN THE MATTER OF THE PETITION FOR PHILIPPINE CITIZENSHIP
LUIS TAN ALIAS UY GUAT, PETITIONER AND APPELLEE, VS.
REPUBLIC OF THE PHILIPPINES, OPPOSITOR AND APPELLANT.**

G.R. No. L-5593. December 29, 1953

Ponente: REYES, J.

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REYES, J.:

This is an appeal from a decision of the Court of First Instance of Occidental Negros, granting appellee's petition for naturalization.

It appears that the petitioner is a Chinese citizen, born in China in 1916. He came to the Philippines in 1932 and resided in the city of Bacolod, Occidental Negros, where he engaged in business as a haberdasher. Starting with a capital of P500, his business was, at the time of the trial, worth about P15,000. In 1943 he married a native woman, Natividad Valencia, and with her he now has six children. These he proposes to educate in the public schools when they attain school age. He has not been convicted of any crime involving moral turpitude, and he has observed proper conduct in his relation with his fellow men and with the constituted authorities. He believes in the principles of democracy and abhors communism as well as any other system that preaches the use of violence to attain a change in government.

It does not appear that the Government has filed a formal opposition to the petition. But in the course of the hearing the provincial fiscal subjected petitioner to a language test by dictating to him a sentence in English and asking him to write it down together with a translation into the Visayan dialect. The sentence dictated was: "I want to become a Filipino citizen because I married a true-blooded Filipina." As appears in exhibit "1", this is what petitioner wrote: "I when to Become a Pilipino Citizen Becus I Married a tro my . . . Ang aco gusto ma Pilipino citizen Sang Matu-o." It is obvious that petitioner did not have enough time to write down what was dictated and to translate it into Visayan. But contending that what petitioner wrote showed that he did not know how to read and write English and Visayan, the fiscal then and there registered his opposition to the petition for naturalization.

By way of further test, the trial court asked the petitioner to write down the following sentences: "This is a cat. This is a ball. This is a flower. * * * Do you have a panty? Are you selling ties in your store?" As appears in exhibit "T", petitioner was able to take down the dictation although he committed some slight mistakes in spelling, which, however, did not prevent his writing from being legible and understandable.

Satisfied that the petitioner had the necessary qualifications for Filipino citizenship, the trial court granted his application for naturalization.

Appealing from this decision, the Solicitor General contends that, judging from what petitioner wrote on exhibits "T" and "1", petitioner did not possess a sufficient knowledge of English and Visayan to entitle him to a grant of Filipino citizenship. We are inclined to believe, however, that those exhibits show petitioner to be fairly versed in those languages. And considering that he testified in court in both English and Visayan, we agree with the

following conclusion of the trial court:

"* * * De los dos Exhibitos 'T' y '1' se desprende que el conocimiento del solicitante respecto al lenguaje ingles y el dialecto visayo es imperfecto, pero bastante para capacitarle a entablar las necesarias relaciones de un filipino ordinario con otros en el curso ordinario de la vida, y unida a este criterio la conducta del solicitante durante el interrogatorio en el asiento testifical que en opinion del Juzgado, demuestra que comprende suficientemente dicho lenguaje, el Juzgado cree que el requisito legal de que un solicitante de naturalization para ser ciudadano filipino debe saber cualquiera de los dos lenguajes, el castellano y el ingles y un dialecto principal del pais, esta cumplido satisfactoriamente."

It is not perfect knowledge of any language that the Naturalization Law requires. As was said by this Court in *Kookooritchkin vs. Solicitor General* (46 Off. Gaz., Supp. to No. 1, p. 217), "the law has not set a specific standard of the required ability to speak and write any of the principal Philippine languages," it being sufficient that the person applying for citizenship knows enough words required for the ordinary purposes of life.

The decision appealed from being in accordance with law and the evidence, the same is hereby affirmed. Without costs.

Paras, C. J., Pablo, Bengzon, Padilla, Tuason, Jugo, Bautista Angelo and Labrador, JJ., concur.

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