

AN ACT TO ESTABLISH A NATIONAL LANGUAGE INSTITUTE AND DEFINE ITS POWERS AND DUTIES.

Commonwealth Act No. 184, November 13, 1936

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Be it enacted by the National Assembly of the Philippines:

SECTION 1. There is hereby created a National Language Institute which shall be composed of a president and six members, each of whom shall represent one of the principal linguistic groups of the Philippines.

SEC. 2. The President and members of the National Language Institute shall be appointed by the President of the Philippines, with the consent of the Commission on Appointments of the National Assembly, and shall each receive a per diem of ten pesos for each session they attend.

SEC. 3. The Department of Public Instruction shall provide the National Language Institute with a suitable office and the necessary clerical personnel.

SEC. 4. The National Language Institute shall adopt its -own rules of procedure, shall hold sessions at least once a week, and shall submit a. monthly report of its work and activities to the President of the Philippines, through the Secretary of Public Instruction.

SEC. 5. The National Language Institute shall make a study of the Philippine dialects in general for the purpose" of evolving and adopting a common national language based on one of the existing native tongues. For this purpose, it shall be the special duty of the National Language Institute:

- To make a study and survey of each of the chief tongues of the Philippines spoken at present by at least half a million inhabitants.
- To select from said native tongues and arrange in separate groups:
 - Words and phrases used in all or in the majority of said tongues, with common sound and meaning.
 - Words used in all or in the majority of said tongues, with the same sound but with different meanings.
 - Words used in all or in the majority of said tongues, with similar sound but with the same or different meanings.
- To study and determine the Philippine phonetics and orthography.
- To make a comparative critical study of all Philippine prefixes, infixes and suffixes.
- To choose the native tongue which is to be used as a basis for the evolution and adoption of the Philippine national language. In proceeding to such election, the Institute shall give preference to the tongue that is the most developed as regards structure, mechanism, and literature and is accepted and used at the present time by the greatest number of Filipinos.

SEC. 6. Not later than a year after the date of its establishment, the National Language Institute shall prepare the lists of words and phrases provided for in paragraphs (a), (b), and (c) of subsection (2) of section five of this Act,

the Philippine phonetics and orthography; and the comparative critical study of Philippine prefixes, infixes and suffixes.

SEC. 7. Immediately upon publication of the work enumerated in the preceding section, it shall be the duty of the National Language Institute to state which native tongue it has chosen as basis for the national language and to recommend to the President of the Philippines the adoption of the national language based on the native tongue chosen. The President of the Philippines shall, by executive order, proclaim such national language based on the native tongue chosen by the National Language Institute, as national language of the Philippines, effective two years thereafter.

SEC. 8. Upon the proclamation of the national language by the President of the Philippines, it shall be the duty of the National Language Institute to prepare a dictionary and a grammar of the national language. Special attention shall be given to the purification and enrichment of the national language in accordance with the following procedure :

- To purify the vocabulary of the national language, the National Language Institute shall safeguard the proper meaning and use of the words and expressions of the national language and shall cleanse the same of unnecessary foreign terms, words and constructions.
- To enrich said vocabulary, the Institute shall use as a source primarily the Philippine tongues and then, if necessary, to Spanish and English, adopting from these languages such terms as are already familiar to the Philippine tongues, having been accepted and being in general use in the same. Whenever it shall be indispensable to form new words, these shall be taken principally from the classical languages, such as Greek and Latin, especially for scientific, literary and technical uses. Foreign words thus newly formed shall be assimilated to Philippine phonetics and orthography: Provided, however, That the current spelling of family names of foreign origin and form used by Filipinos shall be preserved in order not to render the identification of persons difficult.

SEC. 9. Not later than two years after the proclamation of the national language by the President of the Philippines, the National Language Institute shall publish the dictionary and grammar of the national language prepared as provided for in the preceding section, and the President of the Philippines shall issue orders to the Department of Public Instruction to the effect that, beginning with a day to be fixed by the President of the Philippines, said national language shall be used and taught in all public and private schools of the Philippines, in accordance with the dictionary and grammar prepared and published by the National Language Institute.

SEC. 10. The decisions of the National Language Institute on all linguistic matters, when approved by the Secretary of Public Instruction, shall be adopted as literary, standard in all official publications and school texts.

SEC. 11. The National Language Institute, subject to the approval of the Secretary of Public Instruction, shall have authority to correct, alter or amend the linguistic form of any or all text books written in the Philippine national language intended for adoption as official texts in the schools.

SEC. 12. The existence of the National Language Institute shall be of indefinite duration unless otherwise provided by law, and its members shall hold office during good behavior.

SEC. 13. The sum of fifty thousand pesos is hereby appropriated, out of any funds in the Philippine Treasury not otherwise appropriated, to carry out the provisions of this Act and defray the necessary expenses incurred in the administration thereof until December 31, 1937.

SEC. 14. The President of the Philippines, on recommendation of the National Language Institute approved by the Secretary of Public Instruction, shall order the disbursement of the sum or sums required for the publications

provided for in this Act.

SEC. 15. This Act shall take effect on its approval.

Approved, November 13, 1936.

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