

■ This young but intellectually mature columnist of the *Manila Times* gives us a sensible approach on the question of developing a national language.

THE FILIPINO LANGUAGE

If the national language is to finally take shape it will have to evolve into something different from Tagalog and accepted on a nationwide basis. Those who seek the preservation of Tagalog will naturally resist this; while those who hope to create a national language of a logical system will only be disappointed to find that public acceptance regarding language is peculiar if not irrational.

We have not hurled any charges at the Institute of National Language; there are many voices including public officials, who have imposed their own views about language on the community. What we are saying is that the approach to dissemination of a national language through education, is a long, arduous, and futile process if it is not accompanied by usage in the spoken form, acceptance through mass media, and creative bodies of

written literature. In other words, to simply leave the task to the INL through grammar school training is unrealistic. The INL needs support. Argument over form is healthy, not obstructive because acceptance is the only arbiter and shaper of language.

What we need is more discussion, not less; more criticism and observation, not less, of the shape and form that the national language is taking. Because such discussions will involve and interest the people who will use this language. It will make it a real, vital, living question involving their daily lives instead of a cold, academic, pedagogic, lofty, and nationalistic devise. Our culture is undergoing intense transition. The quality of readership in classical Tagalog or Pilipino has barely increased, whereas mass media has managed to propagate a spoken one through

movies and radio. The quality of English, according to teachers of English, has gone down, and of course Spanish is slowly vanishing as a spoken language here. How are we supposed to talk to on another? Each side could state its position without resentment and the public it-

self would be placed within the market place of this evolving language so that they can, through usage, and the peculiarities of human nature, give final form to the expression of their ideas. — *By Alfredo R. Roces in Manila Times, March 15, 1967.*

REVERENCE AND SELF-CONTROL

“It is an old saying that monarchies live by honour and republics by virtues. The more democratic republics become, the more the masses grow conscious of their own power, the more do they need to live not only by patriotism, but by reverence and self-control, and the more essential to their well-being are those sources whence reverence and self-control flow.” — *Bryce in The American Commonwealth.*