

Delving into the Manobo Tribe's literary pieces and culture

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ABSTRACT

Cultural values represent the core beliefs, norms, and practices that shape the identity and behavior of individuals within a specific community. Understanding these values is crucial for maintaining cultural heritage, fostering social cohesion, and promoting cross-cultural understanding. This study aimed to explore the influence of the Manobo's literary pieces from their tribes and their relation to cultural values, including language preservation as one way of preserving their culture. The researchers employed a cultural values framework to comprehend and examine its cultural values. This qualitative study utilized research corpora, which we collected and analyzed. The researchers collected five (5) literary genres of the Manobo tribe: Songs, Riddles, Proverbs, Stories, and poems. The significant findings revealed the values embedded in the Manobo literary pieces, which prove that they have a substantial impact on the Manobo community from their generation past to the next generation. Thus, the collected literary texts are well-founded from the cultural values depicting humility, strong faith, and patriotism. The significant findings revealed the values embedded in the Manobo literary pieces, which prove that they have a substantial impact on the Manobo community from their generation past to the next generation.

Keywords: *Cultural values, tradition, Manobo tribe, Philippine literary text, Competing Values framework*

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Introduction

The Manobo tribe is one of the largest indigenous groups on the Philippine island of Mindanao. They speak various dialects, including Minanubu, spoken by the Agusan Manobo with four dialects: Umayam, Adgawan, Surigao, and Omayamnon. De Leon (2006) notes that the name "Manobo" is linked to the Malay River People (p. 6). The Manobo primarily engage in rural agriculture. Research by Larena et al. (2021) suggests they are of Austroasiatic descent from proto-South Chinese or proto-Austronesian people (p. 118). They live in areas along the Agusan, Bukidnon, Cotabato, Davao, and Misamis Oriental borders. Manobo languages, influenced by early Malay settlers, are still spoken, but Cebuano is dominant in social and political contexts. Studies show positive sentiments towards the Agusan Manobo language, though its use is declining except in rural households (Campos, 2014; Nuñez, 2019).

The Manobo language is declining, especially among the younger generation, and is becoming less used in various areas like home, education, and social settings. Factors

contributing to this decline include technology, mixed marriages, religion, job prospects, and difficulties with language pronunciation. The younger Manobos show less interest in preserving their language and culture, while the older generation struggles to maintain them. Cebuano-Visayan influence is also accelerating the language's disappearance (Nuñez, 2019).

The researchers aimed to analyze the literary pieces of the Manobo tribe, focusing on how these works reflect their cultural values and traditions. This analysis helps uncover the deeper meanings within their literature. As noted by Gborsong et al. (2015), language is integral to culture, and studying their literary works is an effective way to preserve it.

To understand Manobo culture, this study used a cultural linguistics framework. Cultural linguistics, or ethnolinguistics, explores how language and culture intersect (Sharifian, 2017). It shows how cultural values are embedded in language and passed down

through generations, ensuring the continuity of cultural traditions (Brittanica, 2016).

This study enhances students' appreciation of Manobo literary pieces and fosters empathy and understanding of their cultural background. It emphasizes the importance of cultural awareness within the academic community, promoting unity and harmony.

Studying world literature, including Manobo works, is crucial for understanding globalization and its themes. While many studies focus on the Manobo tribe's plants, rituals, and education, this research specifically

Method

Literature mirrors a culture's beliefs, practices, and traditions, reflecting its value system. Literary texts pass these values from one generation to the next. Using corpora to analyze cultural values has become credible (Nunn et al., 2014). The researchers collected Manobo literary pieces, both old and recent, based on their content and conveyed values, without focusing on specific publication years.

Table 1. Manobo Literary Text

Title	Author	Genre	Synopsis
Si Alon	Vigales, Laine Grace & Galbayon, Mara Lee (2015)	Folk song	The song is all about a character of an individual.
"Ke lalangkay na naha, endoyawawad kana (sawad laka)" Wang	Jerome Catubo (2018)	Riddle	The riddle is all about the representation of water to the Manobo.
"Sa dila na kana, endilang na impan din na kana, atpikoma dila na nahanan din"	Manobo (Unknown Author)	Proverb	The proverb about being grateful and loyal to one's origin.
"Anay The man na sarawo na upat na sarawo di paka nahan."	Manobo (Unknown Author)	Proverb	The proverb about being grateful and loyal to one's origin.
Agay (An Ibanon epic of Medanan)	Arasmo Manuel (2000)	Epic story	The story is about a divine intervention and the affairs of the community.
Manobo language is life	Joan Martinez Polan	Poem	The poem is all about the importance of language.

Design and procedure

The researchers used ethnographic research, a qualitative method, to collect data. The data collected will go through observations and interviews and then used to conclude how a particular society and individual

examines how cultural values are reflected in their literary pieces.

Due to limited resources, this study analyzes five literary works: proverbs, poems, riddles, songs, and stories, highlighting the depiction of cultural values in Manobo literature

This study generally aimed to explore the influence of literary pieces from Manobo tribes and their relation to cultural values, including language preservation. Specifically, it seeks to elucidate the cultural values and traditions depicted in Manobo by exploring the different literary pieces of the group.

function. H. Sidky suggests that ethnography is another way of documenting cultural similarities and differences that helps in scientific generalizations about human behavior and how social and cultural systems operate (NPS, 2019).

This study uses textual analysis because it encompasses a variety of study techniques used to define, analyze, and comprehend texts. A text can provide various information, including its literal meaning and subtext, symbols, assumptions, and ideals (Caulfield, 2022).

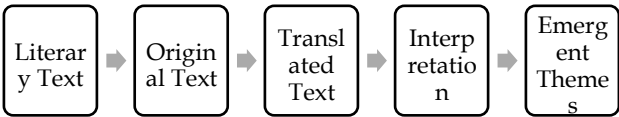


Figure 1. Framework of Analysis (José María Rodríguez García, 2004)

The study used original Manobo texts and translated them through reliable sources found in our research. The translations were provided alongside the original texts. For validation, we referenced written pieces and citations from previous research on Manobo literature. The text's interpretation and conveyed values may change due to linguistic and cultural differences.

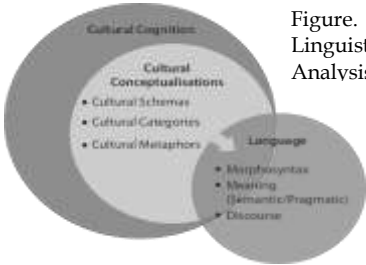


Figure. 2 Cultural Linguistic Framework of Analysis (Sharifian, 2015)

The literary pieces were analyzed using a cultural linguistic framework. According to Sharifian, cultural linguistics connects culture, language, and conceptualization. Cultural schemas and categories help communicate and interpret meanings constructed by a culture (Strauss & Quinn, 1997). This involves understanding actions and meanings derived from the native language of the culture (Sharifian, 2017a). The Manobo literary texts were translated to analyze and understand the original meanings. Cultural-conceptual metaphors explore the deeper meanings of figures of speech (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Our conceptual system, which shapes how we think and experience the world, is closely linked to language and metaphor (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980). Conceptual metaphors are central to cultural linguistics, blending culture, metaphor, and cognition (Sharifian, 2017b).

Results and Discussion

The transmission of cultural norms and values from one generation to the other assures the continuity of the traditions among a group. As we delve deeper into the shared cultural values in a specific community or region, a comprehensive analysis was conducted to shed light on the underlying principles that govern social interactions, individual behaviors, and decision-making processes within this cultural context (Jegatheesan, 2015). By understanding these cultural values, it seeks to gain valuable insights into the nuances of this society.

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Manobo Song

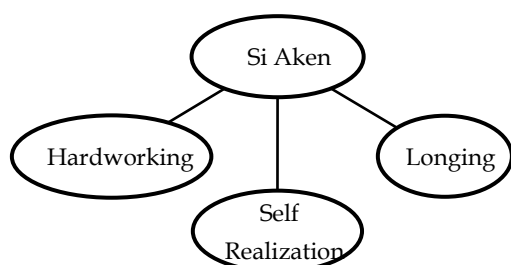


Figure. 1

The song is one of the most beautiful pieces of literature. It has the power to uplift and calm the listener. We might become

Ethical Consideration

This study adheres to research ethics, ensuring confidentiality and proper acknowledgment of others' work. Researchers followed the outlined protocol and sought advice as needed. The collected literary works were accurately assessed. The study, based on online sources, is the researchers' responsibility if any complications arise. Data were gathered from various sites and previous research, with all sources cited.

The research process, including data collection and analysis, was clearly documented, ensuring interpretations were evidence-based. Literary texts were collected from reliable sources, and translations included translator acknowledgments and citations. All contributors, including individuals, groups, and organizations, were duly acknowledged with citations in the references.

interested in the music by feeling the melody, rhythm, and lyrics. In addition, the song's more profound significance can serve as inspiration for daily living. Knowing a song's meaning allows us to understand the writer or any aspects of culture. Vegafria et. al., (2016) composed and translated the story "Si Aken" (p. 79). The Cultural and Traditional Values reflected in the Manobo Song are the following;

Hardworking

The lyrics vividly portray the Manobo's dedication to their work, emphasizing the challenges and labor involved in their role as servants. Manobo are not lazy people; they are hardworking individuals. They do not work just for themselves but also to provide for their families and for the other people in the community who might need their help. It conveys a strong commitment to their job, working for a wealthy individual.

"Si aken mid pengeleyek,

A rot balay te do eg kagagarin"

**I am working, with a rich man
and the work is not easy**

(Translated by Vegafria & M.L'Calibayan, 2016)

This Manobo folk song reflects a person's attitude, which can be represented by the song lyrics, which can give each listener a powerful touch. The song's lyrics have a deeper meaning rather than just being the author's composition. The presence of significance in the song's lyrics enhances its overall quality and appreciation. Song lyrics are also a means of communication in Manobo. Exploring the cultural and moral values embedded in the lyrics is fascinating.

The lyrics "*Si aken mid penggeleyek, A rot balay te do eg kagagarin*" (I am working, with a rich man and the work is not easy) reflect the challenges and sacrifices associated with labor, emphasizing the value of hard work. The mention of "*kagagarin*" suggests that the work is difficult, requiring significant effort and perseverance. Hard work is characterized by a real effort to overcome varied obstacles (Aryadiningrat, I., Sundawa, D. & Suryadi, 2023). The character of hard labor determines the quality of human life; specifically, humans with a high quality of life are those who are persistent in their work (Amin et al., 2021; Bomans Wadu et al., 2020; Yantoro et al., 2021).

Self-realization

Self-realization can be understood in various ways depending on cultural, spiritual, or philosophical perspectives. In a broad sense, self-realization in Manobo refers to becoming fully aware of one's identity, nature, and potential. It involves deeply understanding oneself, including one's beliefs, values, emotions, strengths, weaknesses, and overall purpose in life.

*"Na wey key ra ed paulia,
Ke alas dosi en ke andew,
Ne marasiy ne merehen,"*
**Then we will go home,
It's twelve o'clock in the afternoon.
It's hard to be a servant.**

(Translated by Vegafria & M.L'Calibayan, 2016)

The song explores the theme of self-realization beyond just depicting the hardships of work. The persona expresses gratitude for their job and the provisions it brings, acknowledging the challenges while finding contentment in the process. This realization

extends beyond the work itself to a deeper sense of purpose.

Viktor Frankl's approach emphasizes the importance of finding meaning in life as essential for personal growth and motivation. He also highlights the difficulties faced by those in service roles, such as long hours and demanding work.

Longing.

In the context of this song is depicted that the persona hopes for their mother's well-being and fondly recalls the care taken in preparing delicious meals. It beautifully conveys a sense of longing and appreciation for the mother.

*"So amun imbe biveyag da ke,
Mga Lukas ko pameneyik ara,
Eg Kaan,"*
**I hope my mother is still alive,
the one who prepares my food,
and all I have to do is eat, her
deliciously cooked food.**

(Translated by Vegafria & M.L'Calibayan, 2016)

The third stanza, specifically the lines:

"So amun imbe biveyag da ke, Mga Lukas ko pameneyik ara, Eg kaan," (I hope my mother is still alive the one who prepares my food, and all I have to do is eat, her deliciously cooked food.) Longing is always accompanied by a cry that fills someone's sadness. According to psychology, the first cry that causes tears directly in the center and beneath the eyes suggests that a person is experiencing sadness, which is distressing to his condition and interferes with his level of productivity (Shapiro & Forrest, 2004). This underscores the profound connection between hard work and the support and love received from family, particularly a mother.

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Manobo Riddle

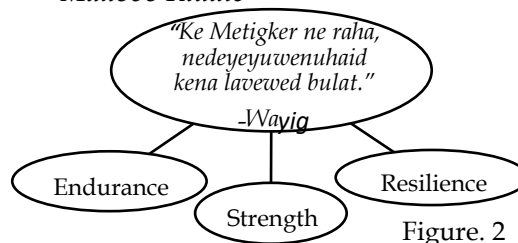


Figure. 2

Manobo's riddle was written by an unknown and translated by John Catoto in 2016. The riddle talks about the water or *wayig* symbolized as the life and humility for the Manobos. They believe that water has many usages and even though it is used a lot, *wayig* is still water, it does not change quickly. The riddle has the value of endurance, unwavering, and resilience depicted in the Manobo culture and traditions.

The values described in this riddle show the responsibility and capabilities of a woman as it shows how the wife takes responsibility for her husband's responsibilities even if they includemanaging the land, attending to the community's needs, and resolving conflicts. Due to this reason, men could have several wives to help lead the community. Bae Bechy shared that "*Women were back then able to maintain peace and order*" (Lucero, 2020). There have been no tales of a "*Datu*" being a female, but in Manobo, the wives take the leadership role when their husbands are absent. The "*Datus*" often leave the community to attend meetings in other remote areas and ancestral domains. In the "*Datus*" absence, the wives are left to lead the community (Lucero, 2020).

"Ke Metigker ne raha, nedeyeyuwenuhaid
kena lavewed bulat."

-Wayig

Figure 2. Riddle

(Translated by John Catoto, 2016)

Endurance

A woman is known to be the one who takes care of the family, especially the house chores. The role of a woman, as they expect, is soft, caring, understanding, and loving (Fawad, 2023). In Manobo, they are not just the typical type of women. Well, in this generation, we believe in equality, where women stand with the principle that "we women are capable of doing things that men do." Women endure like everyone else (Lucero, 2020).

"nedeyeyuwenuhaid kena lavewed bulat."

"who is oppressed, but still she remains strong."

(Translated by John Catoto, 2016)

According to an interview with Bae Becky Barrios on "What it Takes to be an Indigenous Woman Leader, Strong Women in the Philippines" in 2020. Bae Becky is a Manobo woman leader from the Municipality of Bunawan, Agusan del Sur. She is a leader of an indigenous people's organization, Panaghiusa Alang sa Kaugalingnan ug Kalingkawasan, Inc. (PASAKK), translated as Unity for SelfDetermination and Liberation. It was not an easy ride to be where she is now; she once questioned herself, "*Is it because I have no college education? I am Indigenous? I am lowly?*" because she has been looked down upon. In the Manobo community, specifically Agusan, indigenous women have an essential political and spiritual role in their community. Female traditional healers are known as "*Baylans*," where they also assist childbirth, which was soon banned due to unsafe procedures. And that led to the diminishing of indigenous healing culture (Lucero, 2020).

Strength

Women are capable of standing on their own. She can stand up for herself, not just him. It means that a woman can also do things that a man does. It shows how women can level the men's work (Kirker, 2016).

Manobo women are among the strongest females. With their unwavering dedication, they are expected to be strong as they somehow shoulder some of the responsibilities of their husbands, making them steady in balancing the responsibility of being a housewife and the responsibility in the community (Lucero, 2020).

"Ke Metigker ne raha"

"A patient woman"

(Translated by John Catoto, 2016)

For the Manobos, marriage is traditionally arranged by parents. It starts with families choosing a spokesperson, usually a datu or bai, to handle negotiations.

The women's representative offers betel chew, which is declined until a kagun (bridewealth) is discussed. The groom's family must gather this wealth, which sets the wedding date. This process reflects the value of stability in marriage and highlights the woman's strength in upholding tribal traditions (Lucero, 2020).

Resilience

A woman is resilient in that no matter how hard a situation is; she can always find a way to resolve and solve a particular problem. It takes a lot to be a resilient woman since it requires the need to recover from any circumstances, especially for a woman who is already a mother or a provider (Hesseln, 2023). The Manobo women are resilient in a way that they willingly accept the challenge of doing the house chores and serving their families. If they have spare time, some are doing the work that a man should do, such as leading a community. They are expected to be strong as they somehow shoulder some of the responsibilities of their husbands (Lucero, 2020).

"Ke Metigker ne raha, nedeyeyuwenuhaid kena lavewed bulat."

"A patient woman, who is oppressed but remains strong."

(Translated by John Catoto, 2016)

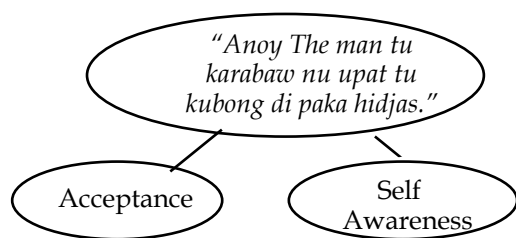


Figure. 4

Other than leadership and being a housewife, in the Manobo culture, a pregnant woman in their tribe observes several taboos just to protect the infant's life and health inside their womb. She should stay indoors when the sky gets red at sunset to protect the infant from the bloodthirsty busaw (malignant spirits).

Also, a pregnant woman must never run or even just stub her toe because it will cause a miscarriage. After bathing, she must not come out of the water until she has adjusted the position of the baby in her womb. This practice shows how patient a Manobo woman is just to protect her child. Her patience is constant, especially because there are limits to what she can do and what she should eat while pregnant, and even when giving birth, there are still limitations and practices to follow (Lucero, 2020).

Literary criticism involves interpreting a text through various lenses, and in this study, a feminist approach was used to understand and support the voices of Manobo women, revealing the values embedded in their riddles.

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Manobo Proverbs.

The proverb "Anoy man tu karabaw nu upat tu kubong di paka hidjas," which translates to "If a carabao with four feet can make a wrong step, how much more a man?" is woven into the Agusan Manobo cultural tapestry. This evocative proverb goes beyond its literal translation to offer a profound reflection on human fallibility and the path to self-awareness. It highlights the universality of imperfection by comparing the carabao's agility and human weakness.

"Anoy The man tu karabaw nu upat tu kubong di paka hidjas."

"If a carabao with its four feet makes a wrong step, how much more a man?"

(Translated by Agusanon Manobo, 2023)

Acceptance and Self-awareness.

Accepting the inevitability of errors allows individuals to navigate challenges with resilience and a commitment to continuous improvement. In essence, the proverb suggests that making mistakes should not be viewed as failures but as stepping stones toward self-awareness and fulfillment. Additionally, as the definition of acceptance suggests, self-awareness involves accepting and

acknowledging one's ideas, feelings, and behaviors without passing judgment. The capacity to focus on oneself and determine whether or not your behaviors, ideas, or feelings are consistent with your internal standards is known as self-awareness.

Highly self-aware people can assess themselves objectively, control their emotions, act in a way that is consistent with their ideals, and accurately gauge how other people see them.

"Anoy The man tu karabaw nu upat tu kubong di paka hidjas."

"If a carabao with its four feet makes a wrong step, how much more a man?"

(Translated by Agusanon Manobo, 2023)

This proverb compares a man to a carabao to illustrate acceptance of mistakes as opportunities for growth. It encourages viewing errors as learning experiences rather than failures, helping us make better decisions and develop self-awareness. Accepting faults is crucial for well-being and personal growth, emphasizing the importance of nonjudgmental awareness of our thoughts, feelings, and sensations (Eugenio & Damiana, 2007; Hayes et al., 2004).

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Proverbs

The Agusanon Manobo proverb *"Tu buhi angod tu atojog. Basta nwbuong on kunad ug kaulin,"* translated as *"A woman is like an egg. Once it is broken, it can never be repaired,"* was written and translated by Agusanon Manobo. This proverb, cloaked in the fragility of an egg, delves into the theme of brokenness and mistrust, exploring the profound impact of harm inflicted upon women within the community. *"Tu buhi angod tu atojog. Basta nwbuong on kunad ug kaulin"* translates into *"A woman is like an egg. Once it is broken, it can never be repaired."* It serves as a sobering reminder of the long-term effects of broken trust and the irreversible harm to the spirit. *"Tu buhi angod tu at oijog. Basta nwbuong on kunad ug kaulin."*

"A woman is like an egg. Once it is broken, it can never be repaired."

(Translated by Agusanon Manobo, 2023)

Brokenness and Mistrust. It likens a woman's worth and integrity to the fragility of an eggshell, suggesting that any transgression, even perceived or imagined, renders her "broken" and irreparable. This proverb reinforces stereotypes that portray women as delicate and passive, their value contingent upon their purity and obedience. It might mean different things to different people, such as the brittleness of emotional stability, personal boundaries, or trust.

"Once it is broken, it can never be repaired."

"Basta nwbuong on kunad ug kaulin."

(Translated by Agusanon Manobo, 2023)

"It" in the metaphorical sense refers to the egg. The proverb compares a woman to an egg. An egg cannot be fixed after it breaks, suggesting that a woman's virtue or reputation cannot be recovered once it has been tarnished or destroyed. Thus, in this instance, "it" refers to the egg and thus a woman's virtue or repute.

The expression implies that once a woman's life or experiences are harmed or disturbed, they can be difficult or impossible to repair by comparing them to an egg. This may emphasize how crucial treating others with consideration, empathy, and respect is. It promotes a thoughtful attitude toward interactions and relationships by highlighting the possible long-term effects of decisions on an individual's psychological and emotional health. The proverb makes one consider how important it is to maintain empathy, trust, and people's general emotional integrity. Indigenous women



Figure 4.

have always played significant roles in

politics and spirituality within the Manobo tribe in Agusan del Sur.

Tauli-Corpuz (2018) stated that Indigenous women face prejudice based on their gender from both inside and outside of their communities. With the advent of modern state government and the change to a cashbased economy, many indigenous tribes saw a solidification or shift towards patriarchal power structures (UNPFII, 2010). Because of their poverty or lack of education, Indigenous women's disadvantaged status interacts with other relevant types of exclusion (Camaya & Tamayo, 2018, p. 80).

Duflo (2012) also argued, "While development itself will bring about women's transformation, transformed women will bring about changes in decision-making, which will directly impact development." It implies that a woman's real or imagined missteps carry a heavier burden and have more lasting consequences than a man's.

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Proverbs

The Agusanon Manobo people have ingrained their beliefs and customs into their proverbs. This section explores the idea of persistence and consistency, as demonstrated by the proverb "Bisan bato nu bantilis mai duon panahon nu ug kahilis gihapon" which means "The hardest stone is eroded by constant dropping of water." This proverb is connected with the exploration of Manobo people's practices, such as swidden farming, weaving, basketry, farming, fishing, and hunting, practices of and it emphasizes the importance of persistent effort and dedication in overcoming obstacles and succeeding.



Figure 5. Proverbs

"Bisan bato nu bantilis mai duon panahon nu ug kahilis gihapon". **"The hardest**

stone is eroded by the constant dropping of water."

(Translated by Agusanon Manobo, 2023)

Perseverance and Consistency.

The most burdensome stone is eroded by constant dropping of water" has a symbolic connotation that even the most tenacious or formidable problems may be overcome with perseverance and consistency.

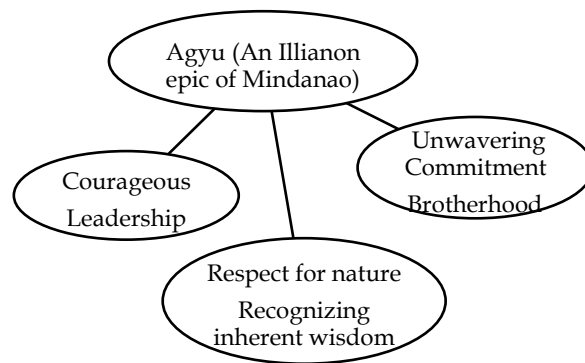
More broadly, it implies that little efforts done consistently over time can result in breakthroughs or achievements. It highlights the ability to accomplish or transform through the steady accumulation of acts, patience, and perseverance. The metaphor of water eroding a stubborn stone emphasizes that, with constant, persistent effort, even apparently insurmountable obstacles may be conquered.

"Bisan bato nu bantilis mai duon panahon nu ug kahilis gihapon".

"The hardest stone is eroded by constant dropping of water."

(Translated by Agusanon Manobo, 2023)

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Manobo Epic Stories



As we delve into this epic story, we begin with a dissection of its cultural values. Several Mindanao epic anthologies include passages detailing Agyu's life and adventures. This Epic story of Manobo focuses on Agyu and his leadership skills, as well as leadership in general in Mindanao's ancestral communities as depicted in the narrative. It explicitly focuses on Agyu as a spiritual leader.

Most folktales from various cultures include settings that take the story away from reality. This feature transports us to a time and place when animals communicate, magic spells play an essential role, and giants, witches, and wise men are familiar. Similarly, the Manobo folktales demonstrate this feature, as revealed in the collection. In the Epic Story entitled "Agyu," passed down through generations, we find a profound narrative that encapsulates the core values held by the indigenous people.

Agyu, the heroic protagonist, embodies these values through his remarkable journey of self-discovery and triumph over adversity.

This line employs the value of **courage**:

*"The great leader moved quickly, the datu of the Magindanaos, He struck the wound
Of Kuyasu' with the beeswax,
Making Kuyasu' utter cries for his wound
pained him So, he quickly took hold, Firmly gripped."
Agyu (Manobo Epic)*

For the Manobo, courage means facing and overcoming challenges with resilience and motivation, not just the absence of fear. Their bravery is deeply tied to their cultural and spiritual beliefs, reinforcing their connection to the land and community. In adversity, the Manobo show collective courage, supporting each other through shared values.

The epic highlights courage as central, with Agyu exemplifying it by facing difficulties and inspiring future generations to fight for what they believe in (Becker & Talsma, 2016; Arcilla, 2019).

This line employs the value of **leadership**:

"To the very attentive leader, who is counted as a friend to the honorable Lord who is regarded as a brother."

This shows what a leader would do to protect his people. Agyu's unwavering bravery endures numerous setbacks and hardships, yet he never succumbs to despair.

Instead, he taps into his inner strength, regains his composure, and perseveres.

This excerpt in the Epic story describes leadership as "a personal relationship between the individual and a group," while it is also described as "having common goals and values." It shows leadership as "that behavior, which is not so much in the control of an individual but driven by multiple forces in their environment" (Pandey, 2022). The Manobo people deeply revere the natural world and its elements. In the Agyu epic, nature is portrayed as a powerful force, often personified in various characters and creatures.

This line employs the value of **respecting nature**:

*The sea with so many baliti
The monkeys would be disturbed.
They would be screaming,
Female monkeys pleasant
To see Monkeys when we look at them
But actually, they are the Bantay,"*

The value of **recognizing inherent wisdom**:

*"They are the real tumanud of the pure men of Yandang, Genuine men from Nalandangan,
and when we take a walk, as we walk around leisurely. We will not feel lonely, we shall not feel sad."
Agyu (Manobo Epic)*

The Manobo people understand the interconnectedness of all living beings and the environment. They recognize the importance of maintaining a harmonious relationship with nature, treating it with respect, and avoiding actions that may disrupt the balance of the natural world.

This value has been depicted in the line of Epic as a Recognition of inherent wisdom. The Agyu epic portrays characters with intrinsic wisdom and knowledge passed down through generations. Agyu is depicted as a wise and skilled warrior who learns from his ancestors and spirits. The epic emphasizes the value of ancestral wisdom and the importance of listening to the guidance and teachings of the

past. This recognition of inherent wisdom is a reminder that knowledge and understanding are not solely derived from contemporary sources but can be found in the experiences and teachings of previous generations.

Respect for nature and recognition of inherent wisdom are essential aspects of the Manobo culture and reflect their worldview. The Manobo people understand that their existence is interconnected with the natural world and that they have a responsibility to live in harmony with it. They recognize the wisdom in their oral traditions and folklore, which guide their actions and decision-making (Derringham, 2007).

The Manobo people admire and respect Agyu's unwavering commitment to truth and righteousness, which serves as an example for others to follow.

This line employs the value of **unwavering commitment**:

*"So, they began building houses,
Erecting living quarters. After
finishing their work, completing
everything,
they lived in peace,
All the people Lived quietly,
All the villagers."
Agyu (Manobo Epic)*

In this line, the epic shows the value of unwavering commitment, and Agyu's journey in the epic reflects his unwavering commitment to his mission and his people. Despite numerous trials and tribulations, Agyu persists in his quest, never giving up or losing sight of his purpose. His determination and perseverance serve as a symbol of resilience and unwavering commitment (Libo-on, 2021). The story illustrates the value of dedication, highlighting that true success often requires sustained effort and an unwavering commitment to one's goals.

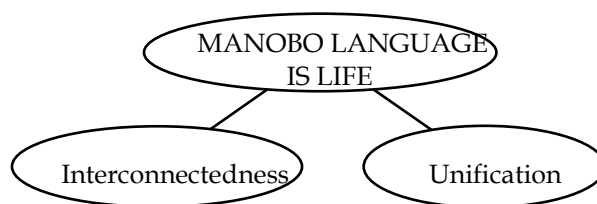
The value of **brotherhood**:

*"I have been away
For a long time
I have left Since many planting
seasons I have not returned.
I have not gone home*

*Because of this
I long for the brotherhood
For this reason
I seek friendship."
Agyu (Manobo Epic)*

The Agyu epics are crucial for understanding and uniting communities by showing their shared heritage. Studying these epics helps connect past and present, offering insights that can address current conflicts and reveal common bonds.

Cultural and Traditional Values Reflected on Manobo Poem.



*Manobo nu inikagihan yangosa tu ita
kayag
Dow'domdum 'yotò andue 'ta likat
Pag igwas, papoha-puha tu eta inikagihan
Ug yambung usab kausaban tu kinaadman nu
kultura
'kagi, dow iling gahum tu kinabuhi
Dow instrumento tu kultura Lindog nu
pag-ila tu eta kaugalingon katungod dow
mahutoy nu akma*

*"Inikagihan" kuna lamang nu kagi Ita siini
kultura, nabuyatan, dow pagbugkos
tu komunidad Ilingtaman diin likat. Katibuk-an
nu kasaysayan tu komunidad
Hinugpong bugkos niglindog durwon eta
inikagihan*

Manobo Language is the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow. Changes in language often reflect he changes in values of a culture. Language is the power of life and the instrument of culture. The implementation of authority and freedom, Language is just not words. It is a culture, a tradition, a unification of community. A whole history that creates what a community is, it's all embodied in a language.

(Translated by Joan M. Pisan, 2020)

The poet's deftly interconnectedness illustrates the Manobo language's significant influence on the fundamentals of culture and cognition. It depicted the comparison of the language to the "blood of the soul."

The mental images of ideas entering and emerging from this linguistic circulation suggest that language serves as a nourishing medium for the intellectual and cultural advancement of the community, in addition to being a tool for expression. It implies a fundamental and essential relationship between the people's language and their essence.

*Manobo nu inikagihan yangosa tu ita kayag
Dow' domdum 'yotò andue 'ta likat
Pag igwas, papoha-puha tu eta inikagihan
Ug yambung usab kausaban tu kinaadman
nu kultura*

*"Inikagihan" kuna lamang nu kagi Ita siini
kultura, nabuyatan, dow pagbugkos
tu komunidad Ilingtaman diin likat.
Katibuk-an nu kasaysayan tu komunidad
Hinugpong bugkos niglindog duwon eta
inikagihan*

"Manobo Language is the blood of the soul into which thoughts run and out of which they grow. Changes in language often reflect he changes in values of a culture. Language is the power of life and the instrument of culture. The implementation of authority and freedom,"

(Translated by Joan M. Pisan, 2020)

The poem "Manobo Language is Life" was written and translated by Joan Martinez Pisan. It delves into the profound significance of language, specifically focusing on the Manobo Language.

Learning a language is about understanding new perspectives and modes of thought. For the Manobo, language is a "power of life," crucial for communication and cultural essence (Lippi-Green, 2012). It reflects the value of its speakers and serves as an "instrument of culture" for preserving values and traditions (Wrench, 2021). Language embodies cultural and historical identity and is essential for

Indigenous people's well-being and cultural preservation (Olko et al., 2022).

Unification

The poet suggests that language is not just a medium of communication; instead, it is a tool that actively shapes and maintains the cultural identity of the Manobo people. The poet also argues that linguistic changes reflect the changing cultural values, highlighting the dynamic relationship between language and social standards. It captures the great variety and depth of language's importance in a community that goes beyond simple spoken communication.

*"Inikagihan" kuna lamang nu kagi Ita siini
kultura, nabuyatan, dow pagbugkos*

*tu komunidad Ilingtaman diin likat. Katibuk-an
nu kasaysayan tu komunidad*

*Hinugpong bugkos niglindog duwon eta
inikagihan*

"Language is just not words. It is a culture, a tradition, a unification of community. A whole history that creates what a community is, it's all embodied in a language."

(Translated by Joan M. Pisan 2020)

Oliver Wendell Holmes Sr. once said, "Language! –the blood of the soul, Sir! into which our thoughts run and out of which they grow!" which reflects its deep connection to identity (Shahrebabaki, 2018). Language shapes our identity and evolves with cultural values, linking it to social norms (Norton, 2013). Learning a new language involves acquiring not just vocabulary, but also the values and traditions of its speakers.

Stanlaw et al. (2018) explain that language and culture are closely linked, and understanding a language's cultural nuances is key to effective communication. Language reflects and embodies a community's customs, values, and heritage. The value of communication and language comes from the worth of those who use them, shaping and reflecting our identities and guiding the development of positive identities.

Conclusion

This study underscores the need to preserve Manobo language and culture through their literature. As modern changes impact the Manobo, this research helps protect their literary works and traditions for future generations. It aids young Manobos in balancing modern life with their culture and enhances academic understanding. By including Manobo literature in education, we offer new cultural insights and promote interdisciplinary research. This study is a key source of indigenous knowledge, highlighting the importance of Manobo oral literature, such as songs, proverbs, riddles, and stories, in reflecting and preserving cultural values.

This study highlights the Philippines' rich literary tradition, including the oral

narratives of its many tribes, such as the Manobo. These narratives are vital for preserving the tribe's language, culture, and identity. Understanding and interpreting Manobo literature is crucial for maintaining their cultural heritage and addressing concerns about linguistic extinction among younger generations. This research underscores the importance of preserving Manobo literary works as a key element of their ethnic identity.

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