

Exploring the Cordilleran Culture Through the Language of Panagbenga

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Abstract

Festivals emerge as a socially sustaining device through which humans express their identities, connect with their place and communicate with the outside world (Ekman, 1999; Farber, 1983, Geertz, 1993). Bakhtin (1968) considered that festival practices represent a time when the world is turned upside down. Exploring the Cordilleran Culture through the language of Panagbenga was examined using qualitative design. The data were gathered from selected thirty (30) respondents from audiences and participants through structured interview. Observation was also utilized in formal and informal setting. This study analyzed the relationship of language and culture which is said to be quite entwined and each affects the other. It focuses on the embedded meaning of different contributors that promotes the cordilleran culture through the Panagbenga Festival. From the cool and warm analyses of the data gathered from the interviews and observation, significant themes emerged. Findings revealed that there were different languages whether spoken or not that reflect Cordilleran culture namely: language of products, language of dances, language of flowers and language of costumes.

Keywords: Culture, Identity, Language, Arts, Music, Society and Festival

1. Introduction

Language and culture plays a very important role in understanding the social norms. Every culture recognizes and emphasizes the direct relationships and the differences of how it operates in society and culture. This is made under conditions of expressing goals; recognition to this nature results to further differences and changes in a dynamic society (Orfner 1974 as cited by Niranjana, 2010). The attitude towards language and the kind of which it is expressed in the community is a part of the cultural knowledge that incorporates symbolical ways of expressing kind, level or and social status where these people belong in society.

The study of culture embraces an overall tedious process of the different elements of knowledge, belief, arts, law, attitude, values among others that can be incorporated in the learning of a person as a part of the community (Panopio, 1988); likewise as a system of symbols that connotes the language (Geertz, 1973 & Douglas, 1970 as cited by Yueqin, 2013). Hence, no culture separates language since it is the foundation and spirit of culture and carries the meaning of culture in a society composed of a group of people sharing a common way of living and interests (Yueqin, 2013; Boas, 1939). Since language and culture go hand in hand (Akl, 2007; Seelye, 1984); in the course the study, culture and identity of the speakers and their language are inseparable (Firth & Wagner, 1998; Canale & Swain, 1980; Downes, 1998). Language and culture affect each other vice versa by means of daily events incorporated in the attitude and conversations (Lin, 2008; Humphrey & Harumi, 2002). This only means that language does not only refer to the meaning of culture but also the reflection of language and culture (Tanreverdi & Apak, 2008). Language then is a representation of a particular culture.

Culture is embedded with symbolic material, arts, writings, traditions, values and beliefs of a community or group of people (Hymes, 1964 as cited in Yueqin, 2013) of authentic ways of life, beliefs and philosophies of true experiences of people (Sparapini, 2010); and presenting different forms through specific types of expressions (Turin, 2010; Yin, 2009). According to anthropologists, culture is a set of meaningful symbols like language. Cultural meaning should be analyzed to understand the meaning of its linguistic elements (Geertz & Douglas, in Yueqin, 2013). As an aspect of the communicative competence, the integration of structural knowledge and cultural knowledge is very important in giving creative meaning to the symbolic representations (Hymes, 1964 as cited in Yueqin, 2013) like fiesta and festivals.

Festivals, globally, serve to meet the specific needs, as well as to provide entertainment. Festivals emerge as a socially sustaining device through which humans express their identities, values, connect with their place and communicate with the outside world (Ekman, 1999; Farber, 1983; Geertz, 1993, Yueqin, 2013). Bakhtin (1968) considered that festival practices represent a time when the world is turned upside down. These times of celebration offer a sense of belonging for religions, social, or geographical groups and introduce one's cultural heritage. It is a way of reflection of the totality of human beings, of the frustrations, success, change and improvement. According to Vallbona and Richards (2007) festivals serves as an avenue for individuals to share their perspectives in greater cultural, social and political issues at the same time serves as a discourse in the preservation of traditional and local culture in the rise of modernization and globalization.

Cordillera Region, which is located in the north-central part of Luzon and is bounded by Ilocos Norte and Cagayan in the North, Pangasinan and Nueva Viscaya in the south, Cagayan Valley in the east, and the Ilocos Region in the west, is known for exemplifying a very distinct culture. The region is comprised of seven major ethno-

linguistic groups with their own family of languages and cultures, notwithstanding this cultural diversity which refers to the variety of the makeup or the multiculturalism of a group or organization or region. It is also called multiculturalism. It includes various social structures, belief systems, and strategies. The differences in race, language, ethnicity, values systems, religion, and local cultures that make up various groups in a community also account for the diversity. The people of Cordillera is often noted for being united in surmounting circumstances and in accomplishing a certain activity and this again was proven during the annual celebration of the Panagbenga Festival.

The word Panagbenga originated from a vernacular word in the Cordillera. A Kankanaey (language widely used by Cordillerans in the Northern Luzon boondocks, specifically people from the Mountain Province and people from the Northern part of the Benguet Province) term meaning “a season for blossoming; a time for blooming.” It is also known as the Baguio Flower Festival, homage to the beautiful flowers of Baguio City. The festival showcases the many floral floats, native dances, local arts show and different competitions that amuse not only the locals but also the tourists (Liporada, 2010).

In accordance with the grand celebration of the Panagbenga Festival, language and culture become effective instruments in developing and molding one’s philosophy in life. The culture embedded involves one’s philosophy in life. A philosophy pertains to the overall vision of or attitude towards life and the purpose of life, therefore, there is philosophy in Panagbenga Festival and this is studied through its culture and language. Culture and language is quite entwined, the latter being an important feature of the former, and each affects the other (Humphrey & Harumi, 2002). Though, the word language in this study would be understood and defined as unspoken symbols presented in a particular culture, still language is very much closely related to culture, as it is the primary means by which a culture transmits its values, beliefs, concepts, customs and social norms and habits. So we may say that a language, to some extent, is the symbolic representation of a particular culture. Culture, on the other hand, imposes considerable influence on language and the use of language as well.

As festivals emerge as a socially sustaining device through which humans express their identities, connect with their place and communicate with the outside world (Ekman, 1999; Farber, 1983, Geertz, 1993) and so is Panagbenga Festival. It is very lucid that through Panagbenga Festival, Cordillerans are able to recognize their personal identities as Cordillerans by the vivid manifestation of Cordilleran culture all throughout the events. As the word identity would mean, it links self-attitudes, or identities, to the role relationships and role-related behavior of individuals. Identities can be defined as one’s answer to the question “Who am I?” (Stryker & Serpe, 1982). Consequently, this festival becomes a medium for helping one decipher his identity as a Cordilleran and be aware of his own culture.

Panagbenga Festival is the image reflecting the rich cultural heritage of the Cordillera region. Symbolically, Panagbenga Festival is likened to a knot which laces are

carefully twined together. The laces would now represent the identity, philosophies and culture of the Cordilleran people.

Ethnic identity is separate from one's personal identity as an individual, although the two may reciprocally influence the other. In addition, the Panagbenga festival makes one sentient of his ethnic group wherein he can develop the sense of belongingness within the group and be a part of one's thinking, perceptions, feelings, and behavior that is due to ethnic group membership. The ethnic group tends to be one in which the individual claims heritage (Phinney, 1996).

The festival parties, provide a series of celebrations in a month long show highlighting Baguio as melting pot of cultures, in a community affair creatively blending, varying ethnicity winding up with the world-famous street dancing, cavalcade of parade of floral and presentation of various products. Setting aside this jocund celebration, unity and camaraderie upholds the different ethnic groups. Through the years, Panagbenga has steadily become the best avenue where Baguio people can shine and innovate what best depicts their community. Thus, undoubtedly Panagbenga Festival becomes a major pillar in Baguio city and the country's tourism industry.

The study attempted to find out whether Panagbenga truly promotes the identity of the Cordilleran people. It is often that researchers give much attention and focus to festivals coinciding culture but usually taking for granted the influence of language in promoting the Cordilleran Culture. Hence, this research is believed to be the first to study the correlation of culture, language, and festival as one. Specifically, this aimed to answer the problem "How is Cordilleran culture manifested through the Language of Panagbenga?"

2. Methods

2.1 Research Design

The researchers used a qualitative phenomenological approach in order to describe the language of the panagbenga festival. It also employed triangulation and coding. Triangulation involves checking what one hears and sees to establish the validity of the information taken (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). The study involved individual, face-to-face, and verbal interchange with the respondents during the panagbenga festival. Coding was also employed to organize and analyze the overwhelming data collected and to assign themes or meanings to them (Hahn, 2008).

2.2 Subjects and Setting

A total of thirty (30) respondents from audience and participants were purposively chosen by the researchers as respondents based on the inclusion criteria set for the study. The participants are members of the different ethnic tribes of the Cordillera, members of organizations, schools, and other private sectors who actively participated in the preparation and staging of the festival. These participants had their rich experiences in the

planning, preparation, involvement, and staging of the festival's activities and themes. The audience respondents are selected from their experiences in witnessing the different activities of the festival. The respondents are from the different activities of the Panagbenga festival like grand street parade, the entrepreneurs in the market encounter, and the session road in bloom. The study was conducted in the city of Baguio where the Panagbenga festival happened.

2.3 Data Collection Tools

A semi-structured in-depth interview (Patton, 1990) was used as data gathering tool. An aide memoire which probed the dynamics of the participants' experiences and perspective in participating and witnessing the festival was developed by the researchers based on a priori code. Their sharing revolved around the questions, "What were your experiences in participating and witnessing the Panagbenga festival? What Cordillera culture is represented in the different products and activities shown in the festival? What do you think were the best activities helped facilitate the emerging the Cordilleran culture? What concepts and dominant language are used to promote the Cordilleran culture?"

If the interviewer is skilful, Best and Kahn (1993) believe that the interview can be regarded as data gathering device which is often superior to others as people are more willing to talk than to write, and confidential information may be obtained from respondents who might be reluctant to put it in writing. The interview was considered suitable in this study in order to determine respondents' opinions, attitudes or trends of beliefs (Sharma, 1994 as cited by Ndamba, 2008). Also, personal formal and informal observations were conducted to further witness the actual setting, especially how the programs, products and other activities were conducted. Video, tape recordings and actual pictures were used during the interview and observation.

2.4 Data Collection Procedure

To capture the essence of the phenomenon under investigation, a letter of request was addressed to the respondents informing them of the nature of the research, the topic to be discussed and extent of their participation. After seeking their permission and willingness to participate, an appointment was scheduled for a one-on-one interview during the events of the festival. To elicit natural responses for questions, all the respondents were interviewed in locations of their own choice and lasted for at least 45 minutes to one hour per respondent.

The in-depth and semi-structured interview was conducted in the language that the respondents are comfortable with to ensure the richness of data. The interview sessions for the respondents have closed and open-ended questions to allow the researchers to follow up points which needed elaboration and to clarify questions that were misunderstood by the respondents (Mouly, 1978 as cited by Ndamba, 2008).

For the actual observation, the researchers observed the activities from the planning, preparation until the staging of the festival. As a member of the community and

the city, they were able to personally witness the different activities of the festivals. They were able to take some video and pictures of the different activities.

2.5 Data Analysis

The video/tape recorded interviews were transcribed accurately with minimum error. The extended text was subjected to phenomenological reduction by means of a repertory grid. The grid presented the significant statements made by the respondents which were classified by means of making themes. Constant re-reading of the significant statements of each respondent facilitated the surfacing of the important ideas and experiences of the respondents. For the warm analysis, highlighted words or phrases were proof-read and analyzed to formulate categories and themes. The validity, truthfulness and trustworthiness of the emerging patterns and themes were done through correspondence with the participants where the consistency of the transcription and interpretation made by the researchers on the respondents' statements were verified individually with the study participants. Member-checking procedure (Graneheim & Lundan, 2004 cited in Valdez, De Guzman & Escolar-Chua, 2012). The themes were also verified through the observations done by the researchers.

3. Findings and discussions

From the data gathered, the researchers carefully examined the valuable information from the respondents. There were four categories or themes of languages that emerges from the language of Panagbenga. The themes included the language of products, the language of dances, the language of flowers, and the language of costumes and with these languages, there is no need for spoken language to promote the Cordilleran culture.

3.1 The Language of Products

Products consist of characteristic elements of the traditional artistic heritage developed and maintained by a community or by individuals reflecting the traditional artistic expectations of such a community. The knowledge of creating cultural products is usually handed down orally, in writing, or both orally and in writing, and also through practice, imitation and observation (Fina, 2006).

Culture is a system of meanings shared by members of a group. It is an important part of marketing because it influences the consumers' wants and needs and because it impacts on the interpretations of products' communication. Cultural aspects impact directly or indirectly on the consumer behavior. The study of the consumer behavior conducts companies to adapt their products features, their packaging, their symbolic attributes, their service attributes and their promotion. The researchers were able to find out that through products, the essence and meaning of it can be extracted by following its impact to the people who use, see, or consume it.

Using the information gathered from the respondents, we were able to identify several products that promote the Cordilleran culture through its embedded meaning. The table shows the different products and goods present during the Panagbenga Festival. These products came from different provinces in the Cordilleran region. Using these products, the researchers unlock their embedded meanings in order to understand language they want to present. The products are a visible and very valid proof of an unspoken language because the name and the essence on how they create the products is already a language that promotes the Cordilleran culture.

Table 1: Products of Cordilleran Culture and their meanings

<i>Products</i>	<i>Culture</i>	<i>Concepts</i>
Okbong	Benguet	Tobacco used by women leading a certain dance.
Taccian	Benguet	Seeds from the plant made into necklace.
Bahay	Ifugao	Rice wine
Pinuh-ha	Ifugao	A woven bag with tassels hanging.
Banga	Kalinga	Clay pot of Cordilleran people. A craft of hand, a product of talent and a visible proof of resourcefulness and creativity of the Cordilleran people.
Kallopi	Kalinga	A rattan shoulder bag where beetle nut or "Moma" is kept.
Lubay	Kalinga	Gold earrings which signifies the Cordilleras rich lands for earth minerals.
Etag	Igorot	Smoked meat
Gabey/Gaboy	Mountain Province (Western)	A three piece of woven cloth worn by the women to enhance their beauty.
Tinali	Mountain Province (Eastern)	A small accessory of hand worn by women. Small strands of beads worn at the hand of the women.

Panagbenga is one of the best venues in promoting the Cordilleran culture through its unique and artistic products that were displayed in the different events of the festival. Cordilleran products are very important in the Panagbenga Festival because they help a lot in encouraging the audience or tourists to embrace the fun-filled activities by getting attracted to the arts, crafts and hobbies that the Cordillerans have.

The product from the different places in the Cordillera like *pinuh-ha* shows the creativity in weaving cloth and *taedian* shows the resourcefulness of Benguet people, both of the two products were seen during the grand street parade as observed by the respondents and the researchers themselves. *Bahay* which is a rice wine is very popular product of Ifugao. This native wine from fermented rice is also produced in the some Cordillera provinces; particularly in Apayao, Benguet, Kalinga, and Mountain Province. The *tapuy* or rice wine is considered as the ceremonial wine served during special occasions (such as weddings) and large celebrations like a bountiful harvest festival. Since the natives can produce *tapuy* - wine inside their homes, the local wine is also imbibed by the locals on a daily basis. *Bahay* is sold during the session road in bloom. Another product that promotes Cordilleran culture particularly Kalinga is the *lubay*. *Lubay* is a gold earring which signifies the Cordilleras rich lands for earth minerals. *Lubay* also signifies the industry of the Kalinga people because they use it to trade with textile woven by the lowland Ilocano in the late 19th century. *Lubay* is seen in different exhibits during the Panagbenga Festival. *Etag* is a smoked meat. It's been known to be the ancient practice of the Igorot. This product symbolizes the ancient practice of the Igorot in preserving meat before they go in a long hunting. *Etag* is enjoyed by the people during the Panagbenga Festival particularly in the session road in bloom. Even if *etags* are commercialized and used in other purposes like burger, the essence of preserving the meat is still marked through its distinct taste/flavor.

The following are sample statements coming from the respondents themselves. The respondents were able to understand the real essence of Panagbenga Festival through the products they saw. Session Road in Bloom is a weeklong street party that is a favorite among the locals with sidewalk cafes, food stalls and nightly performances by top bands. Session Road flourishes in magnitude. People flock to the place on foot to personally experience how does one feel of the festive environment.

The event presents varied Filipino products most especially of the Cordillera. The food kiosks were very tempting. I liked most that which offered different recipes for etag (smoked fermented meat). I tried the burger etag and it was delicious. It makes me come back here next Panagbenga

When one viewer was asked what she thinks is the concept of the festival, she said that it was both on business and/or advertisement.

What concept? I see, business or advertisement; promotion of local products. It is a showcasing of different Filipino products though Cordilleran products are still of dominance.

Market Encounter, “shopping area”, is meticulously landscaped park by prominent artists bounded at the sides with a string of different kind and variety of flowers. Housed inside are numerous kinds of novelty items and articles made locally from indigenous materials. Some of the common products that were present in the Market Encounter were different handicrafts particularly the woven products of the different places in the Cordillera. This woven product shows the various cultures that the region has. Moreover, it represents the cold climate of the region.

The findings conform to what Wang, et al., (2014) mentioned on the importance of products in the organizational or corporate culture. They discussed the concept of the products not only as part of the culture but also as part of commerce and business where they recognized the influence of history and management style as a very important factor in production. The practice and improvement in production is also influenced by the marketability impact and innovation or changes.

Further, the culture in one community is recognized in different forms. Individuals interact in the society because of the material and non-material culture as tangible and intangible culture (Koc, 2012). The tangible or material culture are those literal or concrete things symbolizing the traditions like foods, design of costumes, sculptures, etc. while intangible or non-material culture are those considered not designed or created that is not seen nor touched like beliefs, aspirations and values.

3.2 The Language of Dances

Dance traditions are interwoven in the social, religious, political and economic ways of life of indigenous communities. Every dance accompanied by instruments reflects the identity and reveals a community’s culture through the unspoken language, which refers to every movement executed by the performers.

Cordilleran culture is manifested through the unspoken language employed in the Cordilleran ethnic dances, hence, this table shows the Cordilleran dances, which were presented during Panagbenga Festival.

Table 2: *Native Dances of Cordillera*

Dances	Culture	Concepts
1. Tadek or Lablabaan	Abra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A Tinguian dance practiced by the Mountain Tinguians in the Province of Abra • It is danced in accompaniment of the Suklit- a music produced by the gongs
2. Inlaud	Abra	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A dance performed by the Lowland Tinguians • Hopping symbolizes manliness, courage and for the woman gracefulness; stamping symbolizes strength and power while running steps, to pursue his lady;

		arms that are raised upward signify praise and thanksgiving
3. Talip or Rooster Dace	Apayao	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Music comes in the form of beating the gansa (gongs) and the ludag (long wooden drum) • The trotting and stamping step of the dance symbolize the alertness and cooperative undertaking of Isneg tribes activity; spreading of the arms symbolize openness and hospitality
4. Banga (Pot Dance)	Kalinga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Derived from the earthen pot called “Banga” which is carried by the female dancers on their head while dancing • Danced to entertain visitors during feasts
5. Pattung	Kalinga	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Usually performed by the Kalingas during celebrations such weddings, house blessing, inaugurations and other feasts. • Composed of 6 gongs players
6. Bendiyan (Victory Dance)	Benguet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A ritual and ceremonial dance to celebrate victory and vengeance • It is performed for entertainment of local and foreign visitors
7. Binegbegan	Benguet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A festival dance performed during the Pedit, a grand Canao which qualifies the celebrant the status in the community where he resides
8. Mamakar (Bontoc Raw Dance)	Bontoc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This war dance is a contemporary creativity depicting the victor and the vanquished; • Portrays a certain portion of the life of the Bontoc warriors of olden times • Danced to entertain local and foreign visitors
9. Pattong (Bontoc Central)	Bontoc	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Another Bontoc war dance which is danced in any ordinary occasion; • A dance usually consists of 8-10 gong players

10. Patanggok	Mountain Province	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It is danced by the Balangao Tribe; • The word is used to describe instruments made of bamboo; • Also a festival dance'
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These dances are evidences of the great heritage of the Cordilleran region. Abra believes marriage to be a very sacred ceremony, that's why during a matrimonial ceremony, Tinguians conduct the marriage ceremony in the house of the bride and officiated by the most respected elder of the place. This is an evidence of the high respect and belief towards their elders. *Tadek*, a marriage dance, which was performed during the Grand Parade, presented Abra's belief about marriage. Dances of Abra irrefutably feature the richness of their culture. The costumes being worn by the participants are indeed a manifestation of artistry within the blood of the Abra people. Another dance, which was performed, was the *Talip*, a dance which originated from Apayao was seen during the Grand Float Parade. Many eyes caught the attention of this breathtaking Apayao dance, the dancers strongly made a *trodding* and stamping steps synchronized with hand a gesture that denotes meaning, for example the spreading of their arms in a lateral position symbolizes openness and hospitality. With these movements, we can easily distinguish the philosophy embedded in their culture, they are the people who possess the value of openness and hospitality. Apayao dancers were sported by their native indigenous costumes, which augmented their look. During the Grand Parade, Kalinga dances such as *Pattungang Banga* were performed in the loud beat of the gongs and *ludag*, both dances are being conducted during feasts; these depict thanksgiving by the Kalingas to their gods and deities. One fact about Cordillera people is that they are too preoccupied by these superstitious beliefs and with the body movements Kalingas portray, their belief for their gods is evident. These dances enthralled the viewers of Baguio with their meticulously body movements, once again, Kalingas showcased the undoubtedly fascinating culture of the Cordillerans.

Dances performed during the parade are not just understood as foot works or hand works, rather these dances are considered to be very sacred by the Cordillerans because of the cultural value rooted in tradition. Some of these dances which were performed were *Bendian* which is considered sacred by the people of Kabayan was once associated with victory in battle but now performed as an agricultural festivity; *Tadek* by Abra is a Tingguian dance accompanied by *Suklit-a* music produced by the Gansa (bronze gongs).

Respondents agreed that dances promoted the culture of the Cordillera people. This is shown form the transcribed responses from the respondents. It shows that the respondents indeed appreciated the language of the dance showcased during the festival.

Creativity and Skill... It really amused me how these people move with astern gracefulness, moving in circular, gracious, spontaneous yet gentle manner.

The dances performed during the Grand Parade were one of a kind! I think the concept embedded by these dances is perhaps tourism, because I myself would absent from work just to witness these dances matched with colorful costumes.

Another dance which was performed is *Talip* or rooster dance by the Apayao. Again it is danced with the beating of the *gansa* (gong) and the *ludag* (long wooden drum). The participants from Benguet and Mountain Province employed different positions and movements of the arms and hands, which have significant meanings spreading of arms in lateral position signifies their independence and freedom. Expressions that the male portrays are aggressiveness and self confidence while the female portrays or projects meekness and submissiveness, the hopping, raising, pivoting and running steps and bending of knees signify the natives intimate relationship with the earth considering it as their burial ground and provider. Thus, rituals and ceremonies are performed on the ground. As the respondents replied;

Indeed Cordillera people have a very colorful culture and the concept or message brought out by these varied dances is fullness of their culture.

I think culture and tourism... Culture because they are presenting the dances of their own tribe at the same time promoting it... and tourism because the merely sound of the gongs and their costumes itself invites people to watch the Panagbenga Festival.

The general theme of the presentations was cultural in nature as the participants presented stories about the traditions and culture of the Cordilleras.

It is a showcasing of the unity of the Cordillerans. They promote their culture and their different dances.

Every movement executed by the dancers speaks of meanings. The coordinated formations accompanied by their native songs and donned with their tribe's indigenous costumes undoubtedly showcase the vibrant culture they possess.

As mentioned by Balasingham & Palanivel (2013), aside from being a social entertainment and enjoyment, dance is an essential activity of an individual. The unity of dance steps and facial expressions are considered universal language that has no limitations in meaning. The individual is free to express his feelings in a powerful manner of language – that is dance. As mentioned in Martine Heidegger's thing theory

as cited by Bernstein (2009) that the meaning and repetitive movements of the eyes, hands, feet and shoulders can become a symbolic material in coming up with choreography to give meaning to the culture in a society.

3.3 The Language of Flowers

Through these different flowers that are produced in the region, Cordilleran culture was promoted as the real language of the Panagbenga festival. Flowers represent beauty therefore these flowers symbolize the beauty and creativity of the Cordillerans not only the people but also their rich cultures, and these flowers have a great meaning and essence on the lives of the Cordillerans as well as the Panagbenga festival. This is the core because it speaks of thousand ideas to represent about their culture, identity and philosophies and the whole entity that is being enveloped in the Cordilleras. These different flowers are used in different activities like Grand float parade, Grand street parade, market encounter a session road in bloom.

The table below showcases the different flowers that were used in the Panagbenga festival most especially in the Grand street parade, Fluvial parade and Float parade that is used to promote the Cordilleran Culture through the language of flowers.

Table 3: *Flowers used in the Panagbenga Festival*

<i>Flowers</i>	<i>Culture</i>	<i>Concepts/Description</i>
1. Rose	Benguet	-often with a pleasant smell -used in the Float parade
2. Daisy	Benguet	-has varied colors -small wild flower with a yellow centre and white petals -commonly used in the float parade
3. Chrysanthemum	Benguet	-flower with petal clusters: a perennial garden plant with many cultivated varieties. Flowers: brightly colored, many varied shapes, small densely clustered petals. -commonly used in the float parade.
4. Everlasting	Benguet	-it is a flower that retains its form or color for a long time when dried -commonly used in the float parade

5. Sunflower	Cordillera	-any of genus composite plants with large yellow- rayed flower heads bearing seeds that serve as stock food and yield an edible oil. -commonly used in the street parade and float parade
6. Malaysian mums	Benguet	-a plant of any of numerous often cultivated and usu. double-flowered varieties -used also in the float parade
7. Carnation	Benguet	- flower with clove scent: a perennial plant of the pink family. Flowers: fragrant white, pink, or red with fringed petals, often smelling of cloves -they used in the float parade
8. Anthorium	Benguet	- plant grown for showy foliage: a tropical evergreen plant with showy foliage. Flowers: glossy, heart-shaped, red or white, enclosing a spike of yellow florets. -used in the float-parade
9. Callalily	Bnguet	-an ornamental lily of the arum type, with a large, brightly colored, funnel-shaped cone around a long lower spike. -used also in the Panagbenga festival
10. Dancing Lady	BahongBenguet and La Tinidad	-commonly used also in the Panagbenga festival

The table enumerates the different flowers that were used during the Panagbenga festival. Daisies, Chrysanthemum, Carnation, and Everlasting are the commonly used species of flowers during the grand celebration. Most of these flowers are produced in Bahong in La Trinidad Benguet because of its climate. The flowers stated above are very visible during the Panagbenga Festival particularly in the fluvial and grand float parade. Flowers are the main elements of the Pangbenga festival because it is the reason why they come up with “Panagbenga Festival” and showcasing the culture and creativity of the Cordilleras. The discussions below will validate that flowers became the passage of the culture and identity of the Cordilleran people.

Floats were made and solely adorned with different kinds, and species of flowers emerged in reality. This is to showcase the modernized care of flower garden that purifies the environment and adds beauty to the world we live in. Moreover, the Grand Float Parade kicked off with a series of marching bands, highlighted by pretty majorettes spinning their batons. Drum and lyre bands followed this from various schools that showed off skills at dancing and playing instruments while they were marching on parade.

One among the thousand audience of the Grand Float Parade was seen with satisfaction on her face while she was watching.

The floats showcased the creativity of people. The different flowers produced in the region were very beautiful. It's so difficult to be convinced that those huge floats are made of purely flowers. Awesome!

Fluvial Parade is a virtual trip to paradise via Burnham lake's boats adorned with real flowers arranged to depict figures 'fished' from fantasy books. It is an equally awe-inspiring display of artistry as one of the respondents said;

When I was watching, I asked myself how those floats were placed on the lake? Mystifying!

The source of living of the Cordillerans especially in Benguet where the flowers are grown is considered an agrarian culture. This is why their ethnic ways are preserved and less influenced by modernization. In connection to the findings of LeVine and White (1986) many people in the world depend in the agricultural ways including living in smaller communities, they have their own source of food supply and materials for their locality, creating agricultural jobs like planting vegetables and flowers and rearing animals. They also cited the traditional cultural agriculture which is still their main livelihood principle, is strong in influence in the people's lives in the world until today. This is true to the accounts of people sharing their message through the use of words linked to flowers and the context in which everyone understands in the community (Savin, 2012). This only proves that language is a symbolical representation of a particular culture (Yajuan, 2009; Yueqin, 2013).

3.4 The Language of Costumes

Costumes have its own language to promote the culture of indigenous people in the Cordillera. These languages were used to identify the Cordilleran people from other ethnolinguistic group in the country. Cordilleran costumes reflect their way of life, cultures, personalities, religions, practices and rituals. The linings, designs, motifs, and colors of their costumes also depict something related to their daily lives. Examples of these are the symbols and shapes of their costumes. The triangular shape manifests stability and strength.

The circles and wheels stand for the positive vision of every province towards the development and industrialization.

The festival became more colorful and meaningful with the help of the costumes from different provinces of the Cordilleran region. The costume worn by the different ethnic groups has representations and embedded meanings. The costumes are very visible during the Panagbenga Festival.

Table 4: *Costumes of Cordillera*

Costumes	Culture	Concepts
1. Aken	Apayao	A tapis of cotton silk made in dark blue with woven horizontal cloth weave and enhancement by ethnic embroidery into two parallel lines across the length.
2.Ladaong and Sabon	Apayao	Headdress cloth top with feathers, it symbolises the bravery of Apayao people.
3. Alashang	Benguet	A dark blue blanket with diamond designs.
4. Aten	Benguet	A wrap-around skirt worn by Benguet women.
5. Ampuyo	Ifugao	A tapis or wrap -around skirt for women.
6. Ayub/Alap	Kalinga	A rectangular piece of cloth worn by dancers.
7. Bidang	Kalinga	Woven cloth worn across the shoulders of the male.
8. Appong	Mt.Province (central)	Beads worn on the head by female dancers.
9. Lufid	Mt.Province (central)	The native garment for Bontoc women. It is woven using the backstrap loom or the “pinagud”.
10. Wakes/Wanes	Mt.Province	White woven belt with colourful designs worn to hold the lufid or tapis.

The costumes above represent the variety of cultures of the Cordilleran people. The costumes are used to promote the creativity, artistry and rich cultural heritage. Through the Panagbenga festival, the culture and identity of the Cordillerans are showcased. The costumes are enough to depict the Cordilleran culture. *Aken*, *ladaong*, and *sabon*, represents the culture of Apayao. *Alashang*, and *aten* represents the Benguet. *Ampuyo* on the other hand showcase the Ifugao. *Ayub* and *Bidang*, promote the culture of Kalinga. While Mt. Province is presented by *appong*, *lufid* and *wakes*.

The celebration of Cordillera life, tradition and heritage is best seen and felt with the evolution of its festivals. Panagbenga connotes merrymaking, dancing, music,

delectable cuisine and ingenious costumes. The costume itself depicts meanings. The costumes they have worn serve as symbols that present the culture of the Cordillera.

During the festival, varied Cordilleran costumes made of indigenous materials were worn during the celebration. All throughout the feast, Cordilleran culture is distinct not only among the performers but also among most of the participants. Some costumes which were seen and used during the festival were: *bahag* and *tapis*, the very common costume among the cordilleran tribe, augmented by their favorite Ilokano blankets and festooned with row upon row of trade beads. This made one of the respondents reacted in awe as manifested by her statement:

The Filipino and the Cordilleran Culture is terrific. I'm really enjoying seeing these guys in bahag and tapis. It really amused me!

Another costume present during the festival was the Kalinga and Gaddang torsos which are long strings of agate, ceramic, glass and bone beads-back bounded, in the case of important individuals with tattoos; Bontoks became active participants of the festival for they were one of the performers wearing an ensemble of fabric and antique shells, a detailed Bontok blanket, necklace of Carnelians and other beads in the spectacular Grand Street Dancing Parade; there are also the Ibaloyos who use beaded loin cloth, comb-like head piece, a belt like garment and an Ibaloy skirt. Indeed it showed creativity among Cordillerans as mentioned by some respondents:

From what tribe are they? Their costumes are too meticulous, this group is really creative or should I say Baguio people are very creative that they were able to come up with such designs.

Apayao who are also performers, sported sipattal, braided and tasseled end piece of Apayao loin cloth.

Cordilleran are very artistic. Their costumes are unique.

Hearing these statements from the respondents only proved that Cordillera is rich in culture taking into account their skilled ability to produce such an artistic craft.

How the people are recognized in the community because of their clothing is linked to the truth that culture influences language that reveals the meaning according to the ways of life that is why a deep understanding of it in the socio-cultural aspect of language is vital (Yajuan, 2010). The clothing used in the festivals can give clues regarding identity and culture that people belong to (Sanchez, 2009). This is proven in the different costumes used during the festival that show clear culture from the Cordillerans.

4. Conclusion

The results clearly indicated that the word “language” as used from the phrase “language of Panagbenga” does not conform to its denotative meaning “the manner or style of a piece of writing or speech”, but merely the results showed that the language of Panagbenga pertains to any activity/product utilized during Panagbenga Festival, through which evidences of Cordilleran culture is manifested.

The Language of Panagbenga Festival not only has opened the minds of the Cordilleran people to appreciate their culture and take pride of their own identity but also has established unity and camaraderie among different ethnic groups. As everyone celebrates this jocund event, let’s not forget the very purpose of this event-- to entice the Cordilleran people to help in the preservation of their heritage.

Hence, as long as the Cordilleran people not only continue to showcase the flowers of the region but also advocate the promotion and preservation of the true and unique nuances of the various indigenous cultures of the Cordillera, the Panagbenga festival will surely have a long way to go.

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