

Cultural and linguistic mapping in Laguna Province: Preserving indigenous heritage and communication

Karen Ang Manaig^{1*}, Chester Alexis C. Buama¹, Adrian Ting², Melvin T. Guache¹

¹Laguna State Polytechnic University, Laguna, Philippines

²Lingnan University Hong Kong, Hong Kong

*Corresponding author: karen.manaig@lspu.edu.ph

ARTICLE INFO

DOI:10.46223/HCMCOUJS.
soci.en.15.5.3538.2025

Received: July 05th, 2024

Revised: October 21st, 2024

Accepted: November 05th, 2024

Keywords:

cultural preservation;
communication; community
engagement; globalization;
heritage preservation; indigenous
communities; Laguna Province;
linguistic mapping

ABSTRACT

This study explored the cultural and linguistic mapping in Laguna Province in preserving indigenous heritage and communication. The study employed the narrative inquiry method. The study participants were ten residents across various towns and cities in Laguna. They were interviewed and asked to tell their stories and experiences. The data collected underwent coding and thematic analyses. The research uncovers four key themes: *Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution*, *Linguistic Diversity and Proficiency*, *Challenges in Preserving Cultural Heritage in a Changing Society*, and *Community Engagement and Participation in Cultural Preservation*. These themes underscore the urgent need to protect cultural traditions against globalization, urbanization, and technological advancements. Likewise, it revealed themes from residents' testimonials, offering deep insights into their experiences. The first theme highlights the importance of preserving cultural traditions while allowing them to evolve, emphasizing culture's dynamic nature and the need for ongoing efforts to safeguard it. The second theme focuses on the linguistic diversity in the province, stressing the value of proficiency in multiple languages for shaping cultural identity and promoting communication. The third theme explores the challenges of preserving cultural heritage in a rapidly changing society where globalization, urbanization, and environmental factors threaten traditional practices. Lastly, the study underscores the significance of community involvement, emphasizing that collective efforts are crucial to preserving cultural heritage for future generations. Thus, the Tradition, Roots, Evolution, Engagement (TREE) Model is introduced to encapsulate these themes and provide a comprehensive understanding of the complexities involved in cultural preservation. The findings offer significant insights into the challenges and motivations driving cultural and linguistic preservation, aiming to inspire respect and recognition for Laguna's diverse cultural practices. Acknowledging limitations such as a small sample size, the study calls for further research with a broader and more diverse participant base to deepen the understanding of cultural and linguistic dynamics in the province. Ultimately, the study aspires to contribute to policy-making and educational initiatives that support the revitalization of indigenous languages and the sustainable preservation of cultural heritage.

1. Introduction

It is crucial for teachers, particularly those who work with diverse learners and students learning a second language, to understand how culture, language, and identity are interconnected. Culture is a fundamental aspect of identity, shaping self-concept and group affiliations (Bakhtin, 1981, as cited in Mercuri, 2021). It encompasses a person's values, beliefs, and way of life and is rooted in their ethnic heritage, which is passed down from previous generations and inherited by subsequent ones. Thus, culture encompasses external aspects such as food, clothing, and customs and influences intangible elements such as religious beliefs, language use, and shared values that shape an individual's perspective and behavior towards the world (Monzo & Rueda, 2009; Nieto, 2009). Therefore, a teacher's awareness of the role of culture in shaping a student's identity is essential for creating a supportive and inclusive learning environment.

Culture and language are inextricably linked, with language serving a crucial social function by communicating group values, beliefs, and customs and reinforcing a sense of group identity (Bakhtin, 1981; Mercuri, 2021). In essence, language is the vehicle through which groups maintain their inherent cultures and preserve their traditions. Consequently, people must safeguard their cultures. Research has indicated that the loss of language also means the loss of culture and identity (Baker, 2001; Mercuri, 2021), and in the past, Latino children in the United States have already suffered from the loss of their first language, a situation that persists to this day. Apart from weakening their inherited culture, departing from their native languages also has significant implications for the cognitive development of English Language Learners (ELLs) (Gonzalez, 2001).

Consequently, in the southern region of the Philippine Island of Luzon, the province of Laguna is home to a wealth of cultural legacy. It has a diverse population of indigenous groups who have lived there for many years. These communities have passed down their distinctive cultural practices, convictions, and values from generation to generation, preserving them. Laguna's cultural landscape is a monument to the diversity and depth of Philippine heritage, ranging from the vibrant Tagalog celebrations to the delicate weaving customs of the Mangyan and the ancient Tao ceremonies (Caringal, 2017).

The cultural legacy of Laguna's indigenous communities is under threat from the effects of modernization and globalization. The intrusion of modern technology, commercialization, and Westernization poses a danger to the very essence of these communities' customs. Additionally, numerous native languages spoken in the area are at the edge of extinction, with younger generations preferring more dominant languages like Tagalog and English.

It is of utmost importance to preserve and advance the cultural heritage of Laguna's indigenous communities. An artistic and linguistic mapping of the province could help document these communities' diverse cultural practices, beliefs, and values and evaluate how they are communicated and handed down through generations. This research could provide an in-depth understanding of how heritage and communication intersect, influencing these communities' identity and sense of belonging.

Modernization and globalization significantly challenge Laguna's indigenous communities' cultural heritage. The encroachment of new technologies, commercialization, and Western cultural influences jeopardizes these communities' traditions. Furthermore, many indigenous languages in the region are on the verge of extinction, as younger generations prefer dominant languages like Tagalog and English.

Despite Laguna's vibrant cultural history, there is a distinct lack of research into the relationship between artistic and linguistic mapping in this region. Addressing this research gap is critical because it highlights the importance of conducting a comprehensive cultural and linguistic mapping of the province. Such research initiatives could document these communities' diverse artistic practices, beliefs, and values and assess how these elements are passed down through generations. This research would help us better understand how heritage and communication shape people's identities and sense of belonging in these communities.

Thus, this study aims to contribute to preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of Laguna's indigenous communities. By raising awareness of the importance of cultural diversity, we hope to inspire tremendous respect and recognition for these communities and their traditions. Furthermore, this research can inform policy-making and educational initiatives that seek to promote the preservation and revitalization of indigenous languages, ultimately contributing to the long-term sustainability of Laguna's cultural heritage.

1.1. Theoretical framework

This study is based on Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural learning theory, which provides a valuable lens for investigating the relationship between heritage and communication in Laguna Province. Vygotsky's (1978) theory emphasizes how social interaction and cultural context affect cognitive development and learning. It asserts that people in Laguna learn about their heritage and language through dynamic interactions with others, emphasizing the significance of social and cultural dimensions in the learning process.

Furthermore, the study is supported by the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis, developed by Whorf (2012) and influenced by his mentor, Edward Sapir. This hypothesis claims that language shapes thought and perception, implying that language structure and vocabulary can influence how speakers perceive the world and conceptualize ideas.

Munoz-Vinas's (2023) Cultural Heritage Theory is crucial for understanding how heritage is transmitted and preserved within Laguna Province communities. This theory emphasizes that cultural heritage is more than just a collection of artifacts or traditions; it is a dynamic process in which community members actively preserve and transmit their cultural identities. It emphasizes the significance of community engagement, social practices, and intergenerational knowledge transfer in safeguarding cultural heritage.

In the Province of Laguna context, this theory sheds light on how cultural practices, beliefs, and languages are communicated and maintained through various social interactions and communal activities. For example, traditional celebrations, storytelling, and communal rituals serve as vehicles for passing on heritage, allowing future generations to reconnect with their cultural roots. Also, the theory offers a comprehensive framework for understanding how communities preserve, transmit, and adapt their heritage and investigating the link between heritage and socio-cultural dynamics in Laguna's communities. Munoz-Vinas's theory (2023) provided a comprehensive framework for preserving heritage in the face of modern challenges; hence, the Tradition, Roots, Evolution, and Engagement (TREE) Model was conceptualized.

With these in mind, the study explored the cultural and linguistic mapping in Laguna Province in preserving indigenous heritage and communication. This research aimed to generate insights to inform the region's development of effective cultural and linguistic mapping strategies and solutions.

1.2. Statement of the problem

This study explored the cultural and linguistic mapping in Laguna Province in preserving Indigenous heritage and communication.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What are the intersections of heritage and communication among the indigenous communities in Laguna Province, Philippines, and how can cultural and linguistic mapping help preserve and promote their cultural practices, beliefs, and values?
2. What are the unique cultural practices, beliefs, and values of the indigenous communities in Laguna province, and how have they been passed down from generation to generation?
3. How have modernization and globalization affected preserving and transmitting these cultural practices, beliefs, and values?
4. What are the current language practices among the indigenous communities in Laguna, and how do dominant languages like Tagalog and English influence them?
5. How do cultural practices and language use contribute to forming individual and group identities among the indigenous communities in Laguna?
6. How can a cultural and linguistic mapping of Laguna province contribute to preserving and promoting the cultural heritage of the indigenous communities, and what implications does this have for their sense of belonging and identity?
7. Based on observations and reflections, what model can be developed for the Cultural and Linguistic Mapping of Laguna Province, focusing on exploring the intersections of heritage and communication?

2. Research method

2.1. Research design

This study utilized the narrative inquiry method (Kim, 2006), adopting an inductive approach to qualitatively interpret participants' realities by exploring the meanings inherent in the collected data. Narrative analysis encompasses various analytical techniques for evaluating narrative-formatted textual or visual data. This approach is based on the premise that individuals use storytelling to make sense of their experiences, with narratives serving practical and meaningful purposes. Structural analysis focuses on how a story is constructed to achieve specific communicative objectives, while thematic analysis delves into the meaning conveyed by a story.

Other approaches, such as dialogic narrative analysis (Riessman, 2008) and visual narrative analysis (Figgou & Pavlopoulous, 2015), offer additional perspectives by highlighting the contextual and multivoiced nature of stories and the integration of words and images to create a coherent narrative, respectively. As Connelly and Clandinin (1990) proposed, narrative inquiry provides qualitative researchers with a method to explore, discover, and understand teachers' stories, beneficial for examining a single episode of an event, such as the challenges faced during the pandemic. This method allows for a nuanced understanding of participants' lived experiences as they narrate their past and present situations and speculate about the future. The narratives collected in this study are organized chronologically to capture the complexity of the teaching and learning process.

2.2. Sampling and participants of the study

In this qualitative research, the researcher employed a purposive sampling design to select ten participants who met the eligibility criteria. Limiting the sample to ten participants was based on the need for in-depth, rich, and nuanced data, characteristic of qualitative studies. By focusing on a smaller, carefully selected group, the researcher ensured that each participant's unique experiences and insights could be fully explored. The participants, hailing from different towns in the Province of Laguna, were interviewed to share their stories about cultural and linguistic mapping, which can aid in preserving and promoting their artistic practices, beliefs, and values. This focused approach also allowed the researcher to closely examine specific factors influencing their emotions, thus facilitating a more thorough analysis of the issues that warrant further stakeholder attention. Data collection was conducted through individual semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions, and the resulting data were analyzed using coding and thematic analyses to uncover patterns and deeper meanings.

2.3. Research instrument

The researcher employed interviews as the primary data gathering method, a commonly used approach in qualitative research. Specifically, this study utilized semi-structured interviews, a popular method in information systems research (Myers & Newman, 2007). These interviews have a predetermined structure but an open-ended script, enabling the researcher to delve deeper and obtain detailed participant responses.

2.4. Data gathering procedure

This study investigated the Cultural and Linguistic Mapping of Laguna Province: Exploring the Intersections of Heritage and Communication. Interviews were selected as the preferred methodology for data collection due to their popularity and effectiveness in qualitative research (Myers & Newman, 2007). Consent forms were also distributed to all participants, and upon receiving their approval, they were collected for documentation purposes. Interviews with each participant were conducted at a mutually convenient time and location conducive to respectful interviewing.

2.5. Participants profiles and research contexts

Table 1 Outlines the profiles of the ten participants. Pseudonyms were assigned to protect their identities.

Table 1

Participants Profiles

Name	Profile
Lito	Lito, a 28-year-old male, is a Social Studies Instructor with postgraduate studies from Pagsanjan, Laguna. He is proficient in Tagalog, Filipino, and English, using Filipino in formal and non-formal contexts in school, outside of school, and in various aspects of life.
Ana	Ana, a 23-year-old male, is a Bachelor of Bachelor of Science in Business Administration student currently pursuing his undergraduate studies. He lives in Santa Rosa, Laguna, and is proficient in Tagalog, Filipino, and English. Tagalog is his mother tongue, which he uses frequently in various contexts, adapting his language use depending on the situation.

Name	Profile
Joseph	Joseph, a 22-year-old male, is a Bachelor of Secondary Education student from Los Baños, Laguna. He is half Waray and Tagalog but became more fluent in Tagalog growing up in Laguna. Joseph often uses Tagalog for personal essay writing about nature and Waray in conversations.
Matt	Matt, a 34-year-old Science Teacher from Victoria, Laguna, is dedicated to educating and inspiring students in the field of science. He is currently pursuing his master's degree. Matt is proficient in Pangasinense, Bisaya, Tagalog, and English, using them in professional communication as a teacher.
Carl	Carl, a 22-year-old Bachelor of Science in Fisheries student from Canlubang, Laguna, is dedicated to his studies and future career. He primarily uses Tagalog for communication, but he also uses Bisaya with friends from his hometown.
Carla	Carla, a 34-year-old Bachelor in Elementary Education Instructor, is a native of Biñan, Laguna, and a post-graduate. She is proficient in Tagalog and English, which she uses fluently in spoken and written communication.
Grace	Grace, a 21-year-old undergraduate with a Bachelor of Secondary Education, was born and lives in Calamba, Laguna. She primarily uses Tagalog daily and in school, especially since Filipino is her major. Grace believes that Filipino should be used more frequently to enhance and preserve the language.
Christopher	Christopher, a 22-year-old undergraduate student, lives in Paete, Laguna. He is proficient in Tagalog and can speak English fluently, but not as fluently as he would like. Christopher values language for communication and sharing experiences with others.
Mary Rose	Mary Rose, 27 years old, was born and lives in Bay, Laguna. She is currently pursuing her master's degree. Mary Rose is proficient in Tagalog and English, using both languages daily, especially in teaching Filipino and interacting with friends and family.
Maxine	Maxine, a 21-year-old college student, was born and lives in Cabuyao, Laguna. She is proficient in Tagalog and English, using both languages in daily conversations, especially in school.

Source. Data analysis result of the research

3. Results

Identifying four main themes across the interviews signifies the comprehensive nature of exploring the intersections of heritage and communication. These themes, including **Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution**, **Linguistic Diversity and Proficiency**, and **Challenges in Preserving Cultural Heritage in a Changing Society**, highlight the intricate relationship between heritage and society. The Community Engagement and Participation in Cultural Preservation theme underscores communities' crucial role in safeguarding and promoting cultural heritage. It emphasizes the need for inclusive and collaborative approaches that involve local communities in decision-making processes regarding heritage conservation and management.

Theme One: Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution

This theme encompasses how Laguna's cultural practices are preserved through traditional customs, such as the *Turumba* festival, culinary traditions, oral storytelling, and artisanal skills. Additionally, it includes adapting these traditions to modernization, as seen in Mary Rose's response about the evolution of fishing practices. The theme highlights the importance of preserving and evolving cultural practices to maintain Laguna's cultural identity.

"The celebration of fiestas and our traditions, like the example of fishing due to Laguna's proximity to the sea, remains integral to us. How does modernization affect traditional practices or customs? Well, because of the constantly changing world, there are also changes in our customs. For example, in the past, we focused solely on fishing. However, due to modernization, especially in technology, there are now opportunities for us to have new opportunities in life".

Lito highlighted the core of Laguna's culture, *emphasizing the intertwined relationship between the lake and religion.*

"The integral part of Laguna's culture is the relationship between the lake and religion, with the best manifestation being the Turumba festival, reflecting our connection to the lake, the main economic life of Laguna residents being focused on the lake, which also gave rise to our religious culture; so when these two aspects mix, that's when something like the Turumba festival happens".

Ana mentioned that she has a fondness for food, especially the ones preserved or those that she appreciates:

"I'm fond of food; maybe what they preserve or what I appreciate are the foods because usually here in Laguna, there are many things like buko pie, so that's where I focus on food".

Carla added about culinary tradition.

"It's like our delicacies are so rich, we have these, our identity, if I'm not mistaken, because what leaves a mark are our traditional snacks or the various types of sweet rice cakes, drinks made from rice, right, the products made from rice because it's important because if you look at it, you'll analyze it because the geographical location of Laguna is often flatlands and the type of soil we have is healthy for planting rice".

Joseph stated that he considers oral storytelling to be integral, saying

"Oral storytelling, I would consider this as integral, perhaps in my opinion, because of the stories of the elderly about their experiences or other customs that are not widely known or often seen by those in the town".

Christopher highlighted the significance of wood carving in their community, which is practiced by both young and old. Yet, due to modernization, this ancestral tradition faces challenges integrating into daily life.

"Wood carving is evident in our place, the skill of the people, even the elderly, and there are also children who practice carving at a young age, so really the legacy of our ancestors can also be used in our daily lives, it's overtaken by modernization, the culture passed down to us".

Matt said that one of Laguna's legacies, since Dr. Jose Rizal is from here, is patriotism.

"Laguna's legacy, since we have Dr. Jose Rizal with us, is the culture of patriotism, which is one of the most ingrained in us, or the legacy of Laguna to us".

Grace added:

“Since I was born in Calamba City, Laguna, I can say that being patriotic and, of course, being brave are evident there, especially since Jose Rizal’s house is there, so for the people of Calamba City, those characteristics inherited from Dr. Jose Rizal should be strengthened”.

Theme Two: *Linguistic Diversity and Proficiency*

The responses reflect a diverse linguistic landscape in Laguna, with individuals proficient in multiple languages, including regional dialects, Tagalog, and English, highlighting their adaptability and open-mindedness. This diversity is a testament to Laguna’s rich cultural heritage, where different languages and dialects coexist, reflecting residents’ strong sense of cultural identity. Like Lito said:

“I am proficient in Tagalog, Filipino, and English, with Filipino used for formal and non-formal contexts, both in and outside of school, and for other aspects of life”.

Ana said she is proficient in Tagalog, Filipino, and English.

“Tagalog is my mother tongue, so I always use it with anyone. Of course, there’s still a registered way of how you’ll talk to other people, but usually, I use Tagalog in many ways”.

Joseph is half Waray and Tagalog but has become more fluent in Tagalog

“I often use Tagalog because I write my nature essays, and Waray is often used in conversations”.

Matt is proficient in Pangasinense, Bisaya, Tagalog, and English, using them in professional communication as a teacher.

“I currently use them in terms of communication in my teaching profession”.

Carl stated that he primarily uses Tagalog for communication but also uses Bisaya with friends from his mother’s hometown.

“Maybe in terms of communication with people, like, for example, with my friends, of course, they speak Tagalog. If you speak Bisaya, it’s like wherever you’re from, your language is Tagalog”.

Carla shared that she uses Tagalog and English fluently in spoken and written communication.

“Ah, in terms of speaking and writing, that’s one aspect of it”.

Grace believes that Filipino should be used more frequently to enhance and preserve the language.

“Of course, in our daily lives, and also in school because, as you know, my major is Filipino, so our Filipino language should be used more and honed there”.

Christopher is proficient in Tagalog and can speak English fluently, but not as fluently as he would like. He values language for communication and sharing experiences with others.

“Well, in communication, of course, um, what is the purpose of language? Of course, it’s for our communication with other people, right? It’s where we share our experiences with others. That’s how important it is”.

Mary Rose said she is proficient in Tagalog and English, using both languages daily, especially in teaching Filipino and interacting with friends and family.

“In everyday life, in teaching as a Filipino teacher, and in interacting with friends and family,”

Maxine said she is proficient in Tagalog and English in daily conversations, especially in school.

“When talking in daily conversations, especially in school”.

Theme Three: Challenges in Preserving Cultural Heritage in a Changing Society

These themes collectively highlight the various obstacles and complexities involved in maintaining and transmitting cultural heritage in the face of modernization, technological advancements, changing perspectives, and communication dynamics among different generations. Joseph states that:

“There is, as I often mention, the fact that we are already in the twenty-first century, in modern times, where cultural heritage is often not very familiar to younger generations. For example, here in Los Baños, in our town itself, near the park, there used to be a large stone where all the barangay names were listed. Also, some surnames were written there, indicating how long they had been in Los Baños. But because of the rise of technology and change, there have been modernizations, and some of those things have been removed, especially the stone where the names of each barangay and the surnames of the older residents of Los Baños were listed. Nowadays, social media is one of the possible reasons because, as some people say, “I didn’t see this on this Facebook page” or “I didn’t know about this in Los Baños.” In contrast, others who are older and have been in LB for a long time would say, “Back then, you know, it was like this here in Los Baños.” These are some of the factors or instances of communication barriers”.

Carla mentioned that the times have changed due to modern technology, leading to different interpretations.

“Okay, in terms of etc. so, as I mentioned earlier, the times have changed because of modern technology. So, the way they interpreted things before is different from now. Before, what was possible, what was busy, and maybe what was etc. For example, courtship. Before, men needed to court women in their homes. So now, the times have changed because it has become more dangerous. For example, you must consider that you can’t just go out at night. So, the times have changed. Before, men would go to the women’s homes at night, but now it might be different because you can’t go out at night. After all, it’s dangerous, etc., if that makes sense. So, what else? Culture, when it comes to superstitions. So, superstitions before, like don’t sweep at night, for example, don’t sweep at night. Now, you can’t not sweep because it’s dusty. And we’re maintaining cleanliness because of the pandemic. So, there are things that are no longer appropriate, such as traditions and cultures that used to be done but are no longer appropriate now. However, this does not mean there is a misinterpretation; it is probably the application because people are becoming more practical now. So, that’s probably it. Some things are still being preserved, but because of the changes in the community and the needs or demands of the people, there are differences or traditions that are no longer continued”.

Matt mentioned that the generation gap often arises from differing perspectives between the young and the old.

“Yes, that’s a great example. The perspective of the young and the old differs, and that’s where the gap starts. Sometimes, the youth push for radical solutions, while the older generation prefers traditional solutions. That’s where we tend to have conflicts”.

Ana mentioned that there are communication barriers between generations due to the generational gap, where the mindset of the older generation differs from that of the younger generation.

“Yes, that’s part of our culture - the values and behaviors we consider good. Do you think there are communication barriers between generations? For me, there are. I still believe in the generational gap, where the mindset of the older generation is different from that of the younger generation. It’s like there are stories the older generation tells that the younger generation won’t understand, and vice versa. The older generation also won’t understand the younger generation. Since culture is involved, they might find it even more difficult. Of course, the younger generation thinks, “Why bother? That’s not relevant anymore. That happened in the past, so why should it matter now?” They must understand that what happened in the past can happen again. So, that’s what’s not often understood between generations”.

Carl stated the importance of respectful communication, emphasizing good communication without using inappropriate language.

“Yes, regarding that, wait, pause for a moment. Do you think taking care of communication is important nowadays? Of course, we need to have good communication without cursing, right? Communication should be respectful”.

Grace mentioned that generations’ cooperation can lead to a richer understanding and preservation of heritage and culture.

“There are no barriers for me, so that’s my answer. Because I see them cooperating even though our generations are different, they believe that each generation should unite to produce a better outcome in preserving the heritage or culture of one another”.

Christopher’s observation reflects a common challenge in intergenerational communication and understanding.

“Of course, there’s a big age gap, right? So, of course, there are still many disagreements, the disagreements are still there; according to the elders, our culture should be like this, we should still be like that, but because we have modernized, the youth, of course, their minds are changing, meaning their ideas about this culture are changing, their ways are changing in the eyes of the elders, so there’s still a barrier”.

Mary Rose makes a valid point. Improving communication between generations by recognizing and respecting different perspectives can help bridge these gaps.

“Yes, there is. First, it is about how older and young people converse, right? We have this saying, “Respect your elders,” so that’s one of the best examples. Also, if we notice, in the past, the understanding of the elderly is not as broad as that of the young people today”.

Maxine’s observation highlights a common challenge in intergenerational communication, where traditions and expectations from the past may clash with the desires and values of the younger generation.

“I think there are communication barriers when it comes to that, of course, because the older generation tends to be too protective of the traditions they are accustomed to, so when it comes to the younger generations, it’s like they’re saying, “This shouldn’t be for you,” that’s what’s happening”.

Theme Four: Community Engagement and Participation in Cultural Preservation

This theme encompasses various ways individuals actively engage with their communities and participate in cultural activities to promote and preserve their cultural heritage.

Carla's commitment to participating in and enriching cultural events and seminars reflects a profound responsibility toward preserving heritage and passing it on to future generations.

"Traditions, when there are celebrations in school or the workplace, we participate to serve our community. So, we really should participate; aside from that, when I have free time, and there are seminars to attend to enrich our culture, I participate because it is also our duty to our students so that when the time comes, their customs will be the same. They will carry on that tradition to continue the culture, the passing on of our heritage that we are identified with".

Christopher's experience highlights the connection between traditions, community involvement, and personal growth.

"Right now, I don't get to go home much to our place because I stayed here in Los Baños. So, whenever there's a fiesta, I only get to help back home. That's why I see my childhood friends there who are already skilled in carving crops. We used to say that as we studied together, those kinds of things were normal for us".

Ana's active participation in cultural events and festivals demonstrates her commitment to preserving and promoting Filipino and Laguna culture.

"So, the first one is the programs or platforms related to the arts that still promote Filipino culture, especially Laguna culture. Joining festivals, right? Of course, in Calamba, we still have many festivals like the Buhay Honey Festival; we join that, we go there, or we join in the dances or songs related to the festival that we have; it's the same in other places, for example, there's Anilag, I also go there, and of course, I'm not the only one going, I also join in the festivities".

Joseph's involvement in cultural promotion activities demonstrates a proactive approach to engaging with and preserving cultural practices.

"Well, because as a part of the Brad Society International before the pandemic, we conducted house-to-house or maybe community activities. For example, we had games first, and then we had educational content or activities. We would assign tasks, for example, games unfamiliar to other adolescents like patintero or moro-moro, to actively participate in events about cultural promotion".

Grace's perspective highlights the importance of preserving heritage preservation's positive aspects and advantages despite potential obstacles or negative comments.

"Well, as I mentioned earlier, we participate in events like parades, such as the commemoration of Dr. Jose Rizal as the national hero. What motivates or hinders you from actively participating in efforts to preserve Laguna's heritage? Maybe the negative things people say, but as a student who loves or needs to help their country preserve its heritage, you need to look at the positive way or the advantage it can bring".

Matt's perspective emphasizes the importance of local pride and the value of preserving and promoting one's heritage.

"That's a good question, but the best thing to say is always to love ourselves. By doing that, we also value prioritizing our province before giving opportunities to other provinces so that we can be experts in valuing it".

Carl's focus on promoting hope and fostering a culture of helpfulness and respect among the youth is commendable.

“For me, what I would promote is the hope for hope, hope for the youth to be helpful and respectful to each other”.

Mary Rose’s commitment to attending programs to showcase the cultural heritage of her province demonstrates her dedication to preserving and promoting local culture.

“Oh, as a teacher, it’s unavoidable to attend programs to showcase our province’s cultural heritage better”.

Maxine highlights that participating in local festivals like the Karakol is a great way to celebrate and preserve cultural traditions.

“In our area, we often participate in festivals. We join in the Karakol like that”.

The responses from the participants highlight the rich cultural diversity present in Laguna Province, which plays a crucial role in the preservation and evolution of its cultural heritage. Various factors, including economic activities, social behaviors, and historical influences, influence Laguna’s perception of cultural diversity. These factors shape the unique identities of different communities within the province. Arlie and Mark mentioned the impact of economic activities on cultural diversity, showing how economic activities are deeply intertwined with cultural practices. Ashly and Ivan discussed how social behaviors and interactions differ across Laguna Province, reflecting the cultural nuances unique to each community. Most participants highlighted various traditional practices and festivals that are integral to Laguna’s cultural heritage, such as *Turumba*, *Banamos*, and *Anilag Festival*, showcasing the richness and diversity of its culture. However, modernization poses challenges to preserving these traditions, as noted by Ashly and Ma’am A, who mentioned the role of social media in propagating and diluting Laguna’s culture. Despite these challenges, understanding and appreciating Laguna’s diverse cultural practices, traditions, and values are crucial in preserving and evolving its cultural heritage for future generations.

Most of the participants’ responses underscore the importance of linguistic diversity and proficiency in preserving cultural heritage within Laguna Province. Tagalog emerges as a central language, reflecting the cultural identity of Laguna. A minority of the participants, like Arlie, Ashly, and Mark, emphasize how language is intertwined with cultural practices, such as the unique concept of *“pasalubong”* that reflects Filipino identity. Ivan and Ma’am A highlight the role of language in daily communication and preserving the identity of communities. Grace and Jordan assert that language reflects a nation’s soul and is crucial in passing down cultural heritage to future generations. Mary Ann and Maxine stress that language is not just a means of communication but also an essential part of individual and cultural identity. In conclusion, the participants recognize that language plays a vital role in preserving Laguna’s cultural heritage, serving as a link to its past and a bridge to its future.

Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution are critical to maintaining a society’s identity and history. In Laguna, the communication between older and younger generations regarding cultural traditions plays a vital role in this preservation. The passing down of traditions through oral storytelling is a significant method, as it keeps the narrative and culture alive. Younger generations may face challenges in understanding and appreciating these traditions due to generational gaps and changing societal norms.

One of the primary barriers is the lack of interest among the youth in traditional practices. With modernization and the influence of external cultures, younger generations may find it challenging to relate to or see the relevance of these traditions. Additionally, the rapid

advancement of technology has changed how people communicate and gather information, leading to a disconnect between older and younger generations regarding their understanding and appreciation of heritage.

Efforts to bridge this gap include utilizing social media platforms to share and preserve cultural practices. However, there is still a need to implement policies properly and allocate resources to ensure practical cultural heritage preservation. Overall, the conservation and evolution of cultural heritage in Laguna require a balance between maintaining traditions and adapting to the changing times.

Community engagement and participation in cultural preservation are vital for safeguarding Laguna's heritage. Individuals like Arlie utilize social media to join cultural events, while Ashly and Mark actively engage in festivals, celebrating Filipino and Laguna culture through dance and song. Ma'am A and Grace contribute through educational and traditional events, fostering cultural awareness. Johnry emphasizes involving youth to ensure the continuity of cultural practices. Motivations vary from passion and talent, as seen in Ashly, to patriotism, as mentioned by Arlie, and a sense of cultural identity, as highlighted by Ivan. However, obstacles such as time constraints, lack of information, and societal changes, noted by Mary Ann, Maxine, and Ashly, hinder full participation. Recommendations include cultural education, active participation, and respect for tradition, as Jordan, Grace, and Mary Ann proposed. In conclusion, understanding these challenges and motivations can help promote and preserve Laguna's cultural heritage for future generations.

The study revealed four overarching themes that emerged from the participants' testimonials. These themes provide insights into the participants' authentic experiences and shed light on various aspects of cultural heritage, language, challenges in preservation, and community involvement.

The themes that emerged are as follows:

1. **Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution:** This theme indicates the importance of preserving and evolving cultural traditions, practices, and beliefs. It highlights the dynamic nature of culture and the need for continuous efforts to safeguard and promote cultural heritage.
2. **Linguistic Diversity and Proficiency:** This theme emphasizes the linguistic diversity present in Laguna Province and the importance of proficiency in multiple languages. It underscores the role of language in shaping cultural identity and facilitating communication among diverse communities.
3. **Challenges in Preserving Cultural Heritage in a Changing Society:** This theme addresses the challenges faced in preserving cultural heritage in a constantly changing society. These challenges include globalization, urbanization, modernization, and environmental changes, which can threaten the integrity and authenticity of artistic practices and beliefs.
4. **Community Engagement and Participation in Cultural Preservation:** This theme highlights the importance of community involvement in preserving and promoting cultural heritage. It emphasizes the role of collective action in safeguarding cultural traditions and practices for future generations.

Themes provide a comprehensive understanding of the intersection of heritage and communication in Laguna Province, offering valuable insights into the complexities of cultural preservation and the importance of community engagement in sustaining cultural identity.

The **TREE** Model encapsulates the key themes of the study on Cultural and Linguistic Mapping of Laguna Province, providing a mnemonic device to remember and understand the findings. Here's a breakdown of each component:

T: Tradition (Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution) - This represents the importance of preserving and evolving cultural traditions over time, highlighting the significance of cultural heritage in shaping identity and community.

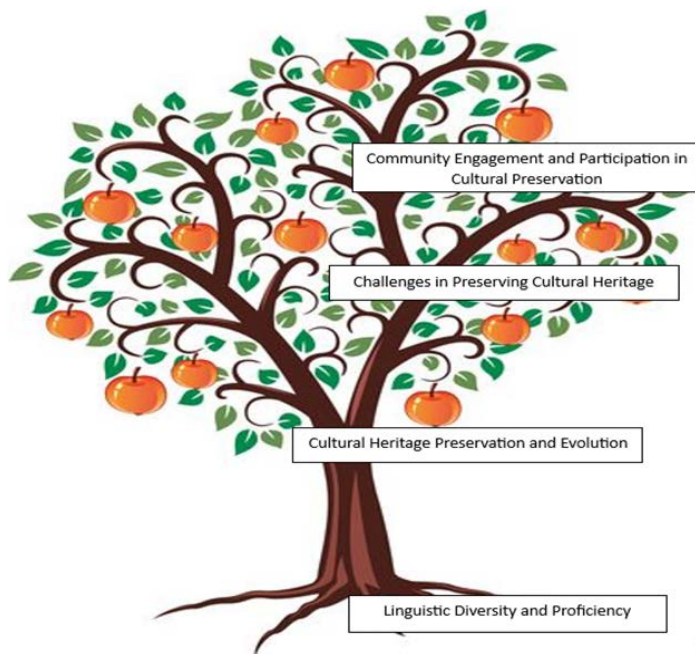
R: Roots (Linguistic Diversity and Proficiency) - This signifies the foundational role of language in cultural identity, emphasizing the diversity of languages spoken in Laguna Province and the need for proficiency to maintain cultural heritage.

E: Evolution (Challenges in Preserving Cultural Heritage in a Changing Society) - This acknowledges the challenges faced in preserving cultural heritage in a rapidly changing society, including globalization, urbanization, and environmental changes.

E: Engagement (Community Engagement and Participation in Cultural Preservation) - This underscores the importance of community involvement and participation in preserving and promoting cultural heritage, emphasizing the role of collective action in sustaining cultural practices and beliefs.

Figure 1

TREE Model



Source. The authors

The thematic framework outlined above provides a comprehensive overview of key aspects of cultural heritage preservation and evolution, linguistic diversity and proficiency, challenges in preserving cultural heritage in a changing society, and community engagement and participation in cultural preservation. These themes are interconnected and play crucial roles in shaping the conservation and evolution of cultural heritage.

Cultural Heritage Preservation and Evolution: The trunk of the metaphorical tree represents the core of cultural heritage preservation and its evolution over time. This theme

emphasizes the importance of safeguarding cultural traditions, practices, and beliefs while allowing for adaptation and evolution in response to changing societal contexts. It highlights the dynamic nature of culture and the need for continuous efforts to preserve and promote cultural heritage.

Linguistic Diversity and Proficiency: The roots symbolize linguistic diversity and proficiency, indicating that language is fundamental to cultural identity. This theme underscores the importance of preserving and promoting languages to preserve cultural heritage. It also highlights the role of language in facilitating communication and understanding among diverse communities.

Challenges in Preserving Cultural Heritage in a Changing Society: The branches and leaves represent the challenges in preserving cultural heritage in a changing society. These challenges include globalization, urbanization, modernization, and environmental changes, which can threaten the integrity and authenticity of artistic practices and beliefs. This theme emphasizes the need for strategies to address these challenges, such as community-based initiatives, policy interventions, and educational programs.

Community Engagement and Participation in Cultural Preservation: The fruits and flowers symbolize the outcomes and beauty that result from community engagement and participation in cultural preservation. This theme highlights the importance of involving local communities in preserving and promoting their cultural heritage. It also underscores the role of collective action in safeguarding cultural traditions and practices for future generations.

The thematic framework provides a holistic perspective on the complexities of cultural heritage preservation and evolution, grounded in key theoretical foundations related to cultural resilience, sociolinguistics, and community-driven change. It emphasizes the interconnectedness of cultural, linguistic, social, and environmental factors in shaping cultural identity, aligning with theories of cultural dynamism and the role of community participation in sustaining heritage. This framework highlights the need for collaborative, multi-stakeholder efforts, supported by participatory governance theory, to ensure cultural heritage's continued vitality and relevance in a rapidly changing world.

Policymakers, educators, and cultural organizations can draw directly from the TREE model, which is underpinned by theories of cultural continuity and adaptation, linguistic diversity, and participatory engagement. The model's emphasis on tradition, language, societal challenges, and community engagement reflects a comprehensive, theoretically grounded approach to cultural preservation. Focusing on these pillars, the TREE model offers a conceptual guide and an actionable strategy for preserving Laguna's rich artistic and linguistic heritage.

The true impact of the model is realized through its alignment with practical applications of cultural preservation theory - such as implementing tangible programs, integrating local stakeholders, and adapting to ongoing societal changes. This approach resonates with the concept of "living heritage," wherein culture is seen as dynamic and responsive to external pressures while maintaining its core identity. By adopting this framework, Laguna's communities can ensure that their cultural identity and diversity remain central to the region's future, reflecting theoretical insights and empirical findings on cultural sustainability.

4. Conclusions

Cultural and Linguistic Mapping of Laguna Province has shed light on the intricate relationship between heritage and communication in shaping the region's cultural landscape. The

thematic framework, represented metaphorically as a tree, provides a holistic view of the key aspects of cultural heritage preservation and evolution, linguistic diversity and proficiency, challenges in preserving cultural heritage in a changing society, and community engagement and participation in cultural preservation.

Cultural heritage preservation and evolution are depicted as the tree's trunk, emphasizing the need to safeguard traditions while allowing for adaptation to societal changes. Linguistic diversity and proficiency, represented by the roots, underscore the foundational role of language in preserving cultural identity and facilitating communication among diverse communities.

The challenges in preserving cultural heritage in a changing society are depicted as the branches and leaves, highlighting the complexities and threats posed by globalization, urbanization, and environmental changes. Strategies such as community engagement, policy interventions, and educational programs are necessary to address these challenges and ensure the continuity of cultural heritage.

The fruits and flowers represent Community engagement and participation, symbolizing the outcomes and beauty resulting from collective cultural preservation efforts. Involving local communities in preserving and promoting their heritage is crucial for maintaining cultural traditions and practices for future generations.

5. Limitation & further research

The study's limitation lies in its small sample size, consisting of only 10 residents from Laguna Province, each from a different city or town. This limited sample may not fully capture the diversity of perspectives and experiences within the province. Future research could benefit from a larger and more diverse sample size to provide a more comprehensive understanding of cultural and linguistic mapping in Laguna Province.

Furthermore, the study could be expanded to include a more in-depth analysis of specific cultural practices, languages, and communities within the province. This could involve conducting interviews or focus groups with residents from specific cultural or linguistic backgrounds to explore their experiences and perspectives further.

Additionally, future research could explore the impact of external factors such as globalization, technology, and migration on cultural heritage preservation and evolution in Laguna Province. Understanding how these factors influence cultural practices and identities could provide valuable insights into developing strategies for preserving and promoting cultural heritage in a changing society.

References

- Baker, C. (2001). *Foundations of bilingual education and bilingualism* (3rd ed.). Multilingual Matters.
- Bakhtin, M. (1981). Discourse in the Novel. In M. M. Bakhtin (Ed.), *The dialogic imagination. Four essays*. (pp. 259-422). University of Texas Press.
- Caringal, J. C. (2017). *Laguna's indigenous communities: Past and present*. Philippine Daily Inquirer. <https://newsinfo.inquirer.net/915297/lagunas-indigenous-communities-past-and-present>
- Connelly, F. M., & Clandinin, D. J. (1990). Stories of experience and narrative inquiry. *Educational Researcher*, 19(5), 2-14. <https://doi.org/10.2307/1176100>

- Erfe-Mejia, L., & dela Cruz, G. (2019). Documenting the intangible cultural heritage of the Mangyan of Occidental Mindoro, Philippines. *International Journal of Intangible Heritage*, 14, 74-85. <https://doi.org/10.18623/ijih.v14i0.2621>
- Figgou, L., & Pavlopoulos, V. (2015). Social psychology: Research methods. In J. D. Wright (Ed.), *International encyclopaedia of the social & behavioral sciences* (2nd ed., pp. 544-552). Elsevier.
- Go, D. (2019). *The Tao people of Palawan*. Rappler. <https://www.rappler.com/life-and-style/travel/the-tao-people-of-palawan>
- Gonzalez, V. (2001). The role of socioeconomic and sociocultural factors in language minority children's development: An ecological research view. *Bilingual Research Journal*, 25, 1-30.
- Kim, J. H. (2006). *Understanding narrative inquiry: The crafting and analysis of stories as research*. Sage.
- McAllum, K., Fox, S., Simpson, M., & Unson, C. (2019). A comparative tale of two methods: how thematic and narrative analyses author the data story differently. *Communication Research and Practice*, 5(4), 358-375. <https://doi.org/10.1080/22041451.2019.1677068>
- Mercuri, S. P. (2021). Understanding the interconnectedness between language choices, cultural identity construction and school practices in the life of a Latina educator. *Gist Education and Learning Journal*, 6, 12-43.
- Monzo, L., & Rueda, R. (2009). Passing as English fluent: Latino immigrant children masking language proficiency. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, 40(1), 20-40.
- Munoz-Vinas, S. (2023). *A theory of cultural heritage: Beyond the intangible*. Taylor & Francis.
- Myers, M. D., & Newman, M. (2007). The qualitative interview in IS research: Examining the craft. *Information & Organization*, 17(1), 2-26. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.infoandorg.2006.11.001>
- Riessman, C. K. (2008). *Narrative methods for the human sciences*. Sage.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in Society: Development of higher psychological processes*. Harvard University Press.
- Whorf, B. L. (2012). *Language, thought, and reality: Selected writings of Benjamin Lee Whorf*. MIT Press.

