

Ifugao Terms Proposed for Incorporation Into the Vocabulary of the National Language

By: Manuel Dulawan
Patukan, Kiangan
Ifugao

Introduction

Ifugao is the name of the ethnolinguistic group inhabiting the province named after them- Ifugao. The Ifugao group is composed of two subgroups, the Ayangan and the Tuwali. They are distinguished from each other primarily by the way each group speaks the Ifugao language, the Ayangan dialect and the Tuwali dialect.

Except for the terms *Ifugao* and *hudhud*, all the other terms selected and discussed in this paper are uniquely Ifugao, i.e., they have no exact equivalent in other Philippine languages.

The terms/words in this presentation are defined and explained based on this presenter's knowledge as a native speaker of the Ifugao language, particularly of the Tuwali dialect

1. *Ifugao*

The term *Ifugao* derived from *Pugaw*. In Ifugao religion there are six (6) realms in the cosmos. These are Kabunyan (Skyworld), Dalom (Underworld), Lagud (Eastern World), Daya (Western World), Kadungayan (the place where the souls of people go when they die and Puga (Earthworld). The first five are spiritual realms while the sixth, *Pugaw*, is the physical world, the habitation of mortals or human beings.

The early Ifugao referred to themselves as *Ipugaw*, from *Pugaw*, the prefix *I* denoting place of origin. This self- ascription was made by them to distinguish themselves from deities in Kabunyan, Dalom, Lagud, and Daya and the souls in Kadungayanas well as from the unseen earth spirits.

The term *Ipugaw* has the same pronunciation and meaning in the language of the Kankanaey in Western Mt. Province and Northern Benguet. (This fact, among other lingual affinities between Ifugao and Kankanaey, bolsters the theory that the long-ago ancestors of the Ifugao migrated from Western Mt. Province to Ifugao land many centuries ago, particularly from the Bauko- Tadian area).

The gaddang in the northern part of Nueva Vizcaya adjacent to Ifugao have the sound in their language. It was they who referred to the *Ipugaw* as *Ifugaw*. From 1900 to 1906, the American colonizers governed the Ifugao from Nueva Vizcaya with their headquarters in Bayombong. In their oral or written references to the place and its people

hindi maaaring ilathala
AMBAGAN 2009

north of Nueva Vizcaya, they were influenced by the way the Gaddang pronounced Ipugaw as *Ifugaw*.

When schools were established in Ifugao by the Americans during the first decade their rule the first teachers they employed were Ilocanos from the Ilocos region. It was these first teachers who spelled and wrote Ifugao words and personal and palaces names in the way they spelled Ilocano words and names which was influenced by Spanish system of writing. Thus, *Ifugaw* was spelled by them as *Ifugao*, the phonetic sound *aw* written as *ao* – clearly the way such sound is spelled in Spanish as well as in Ilocano. So the original name *Ipugaw* metamorphosed into *Ifugaw* and finally into *Ifugao*, referring now to the people and the name of their place.

2. *Bagol*

The term *bagol* means in English deity. There are a myriad *bagol* or deities in the Ifugao pantheon found in or inhabiting the four spiritual realms of Kabunyan, Dalom, Lagud and Daya. A number of them have specific names, such as Ampuwal and Liddum in Kabunyan, Mayogyog in Dalom, Timmalug in Lagud and Dinipaan in Daya.

Bagol also refers to a phase in both the rice and well-being rites during which the *mumbaki* or ritualists address or invoke the deities.

A derivative of the word is *mumbagol* which refers to or mean an ordained *mumbaki*, priest. The *mumbagol* are a class of *mumbaki* who have been ordained in a special rite called *dawat di bagol*, “receiving of the deity” and are higher in rank and prestige than other *mumbaki* who did not undergo the ordination rite.

The *mumbagol*, having assumed the priestly calling by being ordained, can now address and invoke the deities or *bagol* because he has assumed the identity of a particular *bagol*. It is this particular deity he represents during *honga* performances. After sipping wine at the very start of the rite, the *mumbagol* assumes the identity of his spiritual counterpart. The *mumbagol* is now a medium through whom the deity acts and does the function in the ritual being performed. The possession by the deity of the *mumbagol* lasts at the termination of the ritual performance.

Mumbagol is also an action word which means to address or invoke the *bagol* or deities.

Bagol has no equivalent to any term or usage in any Philippine languages.

3. *Hudhud*

The term *hudhud* simply means story. But as commonly understood now, it means a manner of chanting epical narratives and romances, as differentiated from the way the other forms of chanting is done. *Hudhud* chanting is always a group performance.

Among the Kankanaey in Western Mt. Province, they have a term *sodsod* which also means story. However, they do not chant *sodsod*, neither is it a group performance. A *sodsod* piece is narrated by a woman in a singsong manner, and the people around are more listeners, not participants.

Originally, the term was pronounced by the Kankanaey as *hodhod*, but due to the influence of the Ilocano language thru the Ilocano teachers and traders the people in the area soon adopted the sound *s* sound and *hodhod* became *sodsod*. (The *u* sound, by the way, is rarely, if ever, is pronounced in Kankanaey.)

There are several derivatives of the term *hudhud*. These are as follows:

munhudhud means to chant *hudhud* story; group of *hudhud* chanters

makahudhud means one who is good at or fond of *hudhud* chanting

ihudhud to chant a particular *hudhud* piece to be chanted.

Hudhud is a non-ritual chant. This means that is not a part of any ritual performance although it may be performed during the wake of a dead person or during the bone cleansing rite of a relative who had died before. *Hudhud* chanting may be dispensed with if there are no chanters.

4. *Baltung*

The term *baltung* literally means “foot stamping”. It is one of the forms of ritual chants. This particular ritual chant got its name from the way a *baltung* chant leader stamps his foot on the floor upon introducing the piece of his chant. The stamping by the chant leader is done at intervals in the course of the chanting session until the whole chant piece is finished.

Mumbaltung, a derivative of the term *baltung*, refers to the chant leader. *Mumbaltung* also means to perform *baltung* chanting. The group of choristers in a *baltung* session is called *mun-abbuy*.

Baltung has no known equivalent in any other Philippine language.

5. *Bangibang*

The word does not have any equivalent in any other Philippine language. *Bangibang* refers to the elongated wooden percussion instrument. The instrument is about from 2 ½' to 3' long, 2"x2" thick and 3" wide at the middle and tapers to 1-1/2" at both ends. A cord is attached at the middle for handling the instrument and played by beating it on either end with a smaller piece of wood. When several *bangibang* instruments are played there is produced a lively yet funeral sound.

The term also refers to the ritual performance commonly called *bangibang* instruments are played by a long line of men. The men performing the ritual dance are called *mumbangibang*. *Mumbangibang* also means to play the *bangibang* instruments.

There are two different *bangibang* rituals. One is called *dog-al*, literally meaning “to drive away”. This *bangibang* rite is performed to drive away the spirits of pests that destroy rice crops, such as rats, locusts, weevil, etc. The other rite is called *him-ung*. It is performed in connection with the burial of a murdered person.

Either for a *dog-al* or *him-ung*, the *bangibang* ritual is performed in a very similar manner.

6. *Honga*

Honga is another Ifugao term that does not have any equivalent in other languages. This term generally means thanksgiving or well-being ritual.

There are two kinds of *hongga* rite. One is the *hongan di kitaguan* and the other is *hongan di page*. The first refers to the ritual performed in the home for the well-being of the family members. For the more prestigious forms of this ritual, they are performed for the attainment of social prestige. The other kind of *hongga* is done in the rice granary. There are twelve rice rites under *hongan di page* performed sequentially following the agricultural calendar the whole year round. The purpose of the rice rite performances is to insure a good harvest. Only the *mumbagol* or ordained *mumbaki* are the ones who perform the *hongga* rite either in the home or in the granary.

Munhongga, a derivative of *hongga*, means to have or sponsor the performance of a *hongga* in the home. It is not applied in the performance of a *hongga* in the granary.

Hong-on, another derivative, means to cause the performance of a *hongga* in the home in honor and behalf of one’s elder, a father or mother, or sometimes a grandparent.

Hingnga, past tense form of *Hong-on*, means having caused the performance of a well-being rite for and in behalf of one’s elder.

7. *Hagoho*

Hagoho has no equivalent to other languages. It is a specialized ritual performed in the home at night by only one *mumbaki*.

There are two forms of *hagoho* rite. One is called *halupe*. It is performed toward off the curses and ill wishes of one’s enemies or to cause them to be confused and lose composure during a mediation confrontation in the effort to settle differences like boundary disputes or other kinds of differences between families or individuals.

The other form of *hagoho* is the *dinongdong*. The purpose of its performance is not only toward off the ill wishes or curses of one's enemies but also return curses so that they will suffer miseries or even die.

Munhagoho is a derivative of *hagoho* which means the act of performing either the *halupe* or *dinongdong*. It may also mean the calling/occupation in connection with *hagoho* performance. Lastly, the term *munhagoho* refers to the *mumbaki* who does the *hagoho* rite.

8. *Bogwa*

This Ifugao term does not have any equivalent outside the Ifugao language. Literally, it means to bring out or uncover something from a buried state. *Bogwa*, therefore, means, the ritual practice of exhuming the bones of a dead person, cleaning and rewrapping them before reinterring them. It is an exhumation and bone-cleansing rite. After a two-night vigil during which a number of animals are butchered in sacrifice, the bones are returned to the grave in the afternoon of the third day.

Bogwahon means to exhume and clean the bones of a departed relative for the *bogwa* rite.

Mamogwa refers to the family that plans to cause the performance of a *bogwa* rite.

9. *Dangli*

Dangli is another term in the Ifugao language that does not have an exact equivalent in other Philippine languages. It refers to the animals sacrificed/butchered during a death or exhumation ritual which makes it perhaps another exclusive Ifugao term.

The *dangli* consists of a sow butchered in the first evening of the vigil during a death or exhumation rite, a pig on the second evening and another large pig on the third day. If the family is affluent, a carabao is added to the pig on the third day. A death rite may extend to five days depending on the social rank of the dead person. When this happens more *dangli* are butchered. For *bogwa* rites the bones are reinterrred the afternoon of the third day, and for the *kate* or death rite the dead is buried in the afternoon of the third or fifth day.

Dangliyan, a derivative of the term, refers to the act of butchering animals for the *dangli* of a dead person or during the *bogwa* of his/her bones.

Nadangliyan means that *dangli* has been accorded a dead person or during his/her exhumation or *bogwa*.

10. *Bolwa'*

Bolwa is the practice of meat sharing among blood relatives from the butchered animals in a *hongga* performance in the home. The sharing is strictly based on the degree of kinship-the nearer a relative is the sponsoring family, the bigger his/her share of the meat, the size diminishing as the degree of relationship goes farther.

The term *bolwa* also refers to the piece of meat share. Other derivatives are *binolwa* and *nabolwa* which both mean the same – referring to the meat of the sacrificed animals that has been shared among relatives.

mumbobolwa, another derivative, means relatives entitled to a *bolwa* or meat share from the butchered animal in a *hongga* performed in the home.

Conclusion:

The Philippine constitution provides for the adoption of a common Filipino national language. To make language truly national, it has to be enriched by incorporating words or terms, from the different Philippine ethnic languages.

The process of enrichment through the strategy of incorporating terms/words from other Philippine languages will soften the regional opposition to the Tagalog-based national language and insure its acceptance by all Philippine ethnic groups.

This conference is one appropriate and effective effort and strategy in hastening the process of enrichment of the national language through the incorporation of terms/words from other Philippine languages.

I congratulate the sponsors, supporters and organizers of this conference and wish them continued success in this important national endeavor.