

Dialects, Beliefs and Practices of the Tinguians of Abra

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Abstract - This descriptive research identified the dialects, beliefs and practices of the Tinguians in Abra utilizing a questionnaire – checklist coupled with personal interview and ethnography. Of the twenty-seven (27) municipalities of Abra, only twenty-two (22) speak the eleven (11) Ethno linguistic dialects: Adasen, Balatok, Banao, Belwang, Binongan, Gobang, Inlaud, Mabaka, Maeng, Masadiit and Moyadan; while Fourteen (14) municipalities speak the Inlaud dialect. Courtship was never practiced. Tani was the mode of marriage. The Danon was done on moonlight nights. The Sab-ong was discussed when the marriage was set. One is assigned for the Billite to all the relatives and friends when the marriage was set. The deads were not embalmed, thus, bagungon lasted only for three

days. Somebody does the Beccaang to the relatives and friends about the death of a relative. Taradyo was collected. Tadek was danced during marriage and burial. Uggayamand Salidummay were chanted during death and danon. The deads were buried in the yards, under the houses orstairs. Balliwes was danced after the burial. Golgol was done a day after the burial. Today, Bagungon, Taradyo,Waksi and Tadek are still practiced. Tani, Danunand Sab-ong are no longer practiced. Billite and Beccaang are now obsolete ways of information during marriages and death of their relatives. Deads are already buried in cemeteries.

INTRODUCTION

Abra is a land-locked province situated at the western side of the Cordillera in northern Luzon. It is bounded on the west by Ilocos Sur, on the north by Ilocos Norte and Apayao, on the east by Kalinga, and on the south by Mt. Province.

The Abreños has an elaborate network of beliefs and practices as manifested in their songs, dances and ceremonies particularly during mourning's, courtships, weddings and festivals.

However,these beliefs and practices are now slowly dying or already been forgotten due to modern transformation in all aspects of life. This started when Filipinos wanted to experience luxurious living and to look for greener pastures that prompted them to go abroad bringing home these new practices, beliefs, styles and fashions that were imitated and adopted.

Inevitably,Abra is not exempted from the fast pace of development and from other influences brought about by modernization. With these powerful changes, these dialects, beliefs and practices are now slowly being set aside or not being appreciated by the new generations.

Although our modern society manifests the progress brought about by cultural influences, social changes and technological advances, it could still be seen and heard that there are still people who value these legacies.

In as much as the Province of Abra is on its metamorphoses, this endeavor has set the following objectives: 1) to identify the dialects spoken by the Tinguians; 2) to trace the roots or origin of the different Tinguians; 3) to identify the different tribes in the different municipalities/barrios where the Tinguians reside; 4) to explore, identify and enumerate the different beliefs and practices of the early Tinguians; 5) to identify the beliefs and practices still being practiced or observed today; and 6) to preserve these heritages through documentation that would serve as reminder to the present Abreños of the rich legacy left by their forebears.

Considering the significant contributions and instrument of creating solidarity among the Abreños, it is deemed necessary for the preservation of these dialects, beliefs and practices. These would continuously serve as a reminder about the rich and famous culture. This would serve as an avenue for the Abreños to realize and nurture the legacy left by their ancestors that would guide them in going through their lives. The preservation of these legacies would also serve as a challenge for the Abreños to continue speaking, practicing and preserving these legacies.

Hopefully, the findings would serve as a reminder to all Abreños and the future generations about the rich legacy that their ancestors have left and serve as their binding force.

In addition, the findings would serve as an eye opener for the Department of Education (DepEd) of Abra to review and include in their curriculum particularly in their Music, Arts and Physical Education (MAPE) the study of the ethnic songs and dances as well as in their Araling Panlipunan the beliefs and practices of the province.

Furthermore, results of this study would entice the Office of Representative, Provincial Government and the National Center for Indigenous People (NCIP) of Abra to include in their programs concrete activities showcasing these beliefs and practices.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study made use of the descriptive method of research coupled with personal interview. Ethnographic profile, field immersion and observation were also done.

The researchers gathered initial information at the Office of the National Center for Indigenous People (NCIP), Bangued, Abra as to the tribes and the Tinguian municipalities.

The researchers spent days in these places and interviewed personally the elders in the Tinguian municipalities.

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

The succeeding presentation discusses the results of the study.

Table 1. Dialects distribution of the Tinguian municipalities/villages of Abra

Dialects	Municipality	Barrio/ Barangay
Adasen	Lagayan	Ba-I
	Lagangilang	Bacooc
	Tineg	
Banao	Malibcong	
	Daguoman	
Binongan	Licuan-Baay/Baay-Licuan	
Gobang	Malibcong	Bangilo
	Bucay	Abang
	Danglas	
	Dolores	Malaylay
	Lagayan	
	Lapaz	Alimudong`
	Langiden	Palpalitpit
	Lagangilang	
	Penarrubia	Bolbolo
	Pilar	Tangbao
Inlaud	San Isidro	
	San Juan	
	San Quintin	Gaddani
	Tayum	
Maeng	Villaviciosa	Lumaba
	Luba	
	Tubo	
Mabaka	Villaviciosa	
	Lacub	Bacag, Buneg, Talampak
	Malibcong	Mataragan

Moyadan	Manabo	San Ramon Catacdegan
Nasadiit	Boliney Bucloc Sallapadan	

As gleaned from the table, Inlaud is the dialect that the majority or fourteen (14) municipalities speak; Adasen, Maeng and Nasadiit come next with three (3) municipalities each. Banao and Mabaka having two (2) municipalities each; and Binnongan, Gubang and Moyadan with one (1) municipality each.

However, looking closely at the table, it is noticed that there are some barrios in the mentioned municipalities that speak some other dialects like in Ba-i, Lagayan and Bacooc, Lagangilang wherein Adasen is spoken; and in Mataragan, Malibcong wherein Mabaka is used by the natives. But the differences in their dialects are not hindrances for understanding. This agrees with the findings of Begnalen (2009) that their dialects although spoken differently have commonalities, thus; they understand each other.

Table 2. Origin of the Tinguian tribes

Tribes	Origin
Adasen	This is found at the Northern part of Abra. Variant of Apayao and Kalinga dialects. This group came from Cagayan, then moved somewhere in Kalinga then to Abra
Banao	Variant of Belwang and Sadanga dialects Others were those who landed in the coastal towns of Cagayan then moved to Ilocos before settling to Abra
Balatok	These were the people who came from the coastal towns of Cagayan
Belwang	These were the same group of people who came from the coastal towns of Cagayan
Binongan	Could be the predecessors of the Inla-uds and probably the group who landed first in the Ilocos coastal towns then moved upward to where they are now.
Dao-ayan	Variant of Kalinga in Dao-ayan and Baklinga
Gubang	In Bangilo, a barrio of Malibcong. Came from coastal towns of Cagayan
Inlaud	This is at the low land of the province.

Mabaca	Northern side of the Binongan River
Ma-eng	Mixture of Igorot and Kalinga in Southern Abra. They come from Narvacan, then moved to Abra to settle peacefully without being disturbed by the next groups of settlers.
Nasadi-it	Eastern towns
Moyadan	Traces their origin from the Mountain Province through the mountain towns of Ilocos Sur.

As reflected in the table, it could be observed that the settlers of the different Tinguian tribes were migrants from the different neighboring towns of the province. This migration proves the existence of the different dialects spoken by these tribes. However, as stated in the study of Begnalen (2009), despite differences in points of origin, the phonemic similarity could be traced with slight variation across dialects. Begnalen (2009) further said that it is also evident of the borrowing of these words among the Abra dialects.

The succeeding Tables 3 to 6, present the beliefs and practices that are practiced and observed by all the Tinguians of Abra. These findings showed that the Tinguians are united although they speak different dialects.

Table 3. Courtship practices of the Tinguians

Practices
1. Tani/Tampa
2. Danun or Kalkalimusta
3. Katulagan/Puon/Sab-ong(Dowry)
1. Kwartá (Money)
2. Daga (lot)
3. Carabao
4. House
5. Farm
4. Sillot / Beddel as a sign of engagement
5. Singing of the Salidummay
6. Dancing of the Lab-labbaan

Looking at Table 4, courtship was not observed during that time. The Tani or Tampa system was strictly observed. This agrees with the

findings of Rosal and Somera (2003) that the parents of both parties have already agreed to have their children, even when they were still inside the wombs of their mothers, to be married when the time comes. The Danun or kalkalimusta was done as related by Guinaban and Dumasing (2010) to retain their property and power. When the man and his parents go for the Danun or Kalkalimusta, the most respected elder or panglakayen of their place accompanied them.

The Katulagan of the Puon/Sab-ong was tackled in the forms of money, lot and animal title or declaration preferably carabao, house and farm land. According to Dugayen, Sad-ang and Rivas (2010), the Sab-ong was very important for the couple as well as their parents and friends. The Sab-ong served as the property that the couple used to start their married life.

The Sillot/Beddel (beads or batek) is left to the woman as a sign of their being engaged. This was worn until marriage. Pariñas, Aquino and Taverner (2010) said that the Danun was not complete without singing the Salidummay and dancing the Lab-labbaan. This was also a sign of their unity.

Table 4. Marriage practices of the Tinguians

Practices	
1.	Somebody was sent for the Billite as to the exact date of marriage.
2.	Marriage was done in the house of the bride.
3.	The marriage was officiated by the most respected Panglakayen (elder).
4.	Uggayam and drinking of Basi were done on the eve and during the wedding.
5.	After the ceremony, the imbentaryo of the Puon was read.
6.	The couple danced the Tadek accompanied by the Gansa
7.	The Sab-it or Bitor and Parwad were done as the couple danced.
8.	Patan-aw was done after the marriage in the house of the groom.

As shown in the Table, the date of the marriage has to be known by all the relatives and friends of the couple through the Billite a month prior to the exact date because during those days, the means of communication was very hard. The marriage among the Tinguians was done in the house of the bride and officiated by the most respected Elder or Panglakayen of the place. This is an evidence of the high respect and belief towards their Elders.

The relatives particularly the Elders of both parties gathered together for the Uggayam. This is an exchange of words by both parties. They chanted their advices and their happiness for the couple.

The Inventory of the Puon (agreement during the Danun) was read before being handed to the couple. This also showed the honesty being observed by the Tinguians.

The marriage ceremony was not complete without the Sab-it or Bitor (Jueves and Gulam 2010) as the couple danced the Tadek accompanied by the Gansa. As musedly stated by Guinaban (2010), this was the way of manifesting that the couple will live harmoniously and that understanding between the couple and their parents who were very much in favor of their marriage.

The Patan-aw was done when the couples went to the house of the groom. This was a welcome rite to the bride in their house. This was done because not all the relatives of the groom were able to attend their wedding. Everybody danced again the Tadek. Gifts were again given to the couples. They butchered pig to be served to all those present.

Table 5. Wake (Bagungon) and burial (Panagipunpon) practices of the Tinguians

Practices
<p>Wake (Bagungon)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The dead is bathed and clothed with the Tinguian dress and decorated with the Batek but removed when buried. 2. The wake lasted only for a maximum of three days. 3. Somebody did the Bekkaang 4. The dead was seated in an armchair or lied in a papag. <p>Burial (Panagipunpon)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The Albaab (Dung-aw) with Basi was done while waiting for the arrival of the relatives and guests. 2. The Taradyo (Namin) was collected from every house 3. The Batakan started when the relatives arrived. 4. The Sangsanggit/ Uggayam was done for the duration of the wake. 5. The Palpalubos was done before the dead was buried. 6. Everybody danced the Wagwag/Balliwes. 7. The dead was buried in their yard, under their house or under their stairs.

The table reflects the practices observed by the Tinguians when their relative's die. Cleanliness was observed as evidenced by bathing the dead before the dead was dressed with the native clothes and decorated with the Tinguian jewelries or the Batek. The dead was seated on a native chair or lied down on a bamboo bed. The wake lasted for only three days because there was no embalming yet.

Since it was hard for the relatives who were from other places and barrios to know about their dead relatives, they were notified through the Bekkaang. The Albaab or Dung-aw (Jefferson, Rivas and Dugayen, 2010) was done by the barrio folks while waiting for the relatives and guests to arrive. Of course, the Basi was already served. The Taradyo or Namin was collected from the households. This showed their help to the bereaved family. The Bahamian was also displayed during the whole wake. The barrio folks offered their services without anything in return. Leadership and responsibility were also displayed in the preparation of food, orderliness, cleanliness and all other activities during the wake.

When the relatives arrived, the Batakan was done. It was headed by an elder who was knowledgeable of the process and assigned a mantenedor to manage the activity. The Sangsangngit or Uggayam was done for the whole wake with the Basi being served.

During the last day of the wake, the palpalubos was done wherein the dead was brought outside the house for the last activity. The mantenedor assigned persons in the gathering to represent the widow/widower, children, relatives and guest. They were the ones to do the Sangsangngit when the dead were already brought outside the house for the last respect. Everybody who was in the occasion danced the Tadek. After the Punpon, the Wag-wag Balliwes was danced (Crisologo, 2009) was danced to show that all their grief were removed.

Since there was no cemetery during the early days, they buried their dead in their yards, under their house or under their stairs. This practice showed of the close family ties. They still wanted to see their dead because they believed that whenever the family has problems or experiencing trials, their dead's were always around looking and protecting them. The widow/widower was not allowed to join the others when the dead is placed inside the tomb. They believed that this practice would prevent of the immediate death of another relative or members of the family.

Table 6. After the burial (Panagipunpon) practices of the Tinguians

Practice	
1.	The nine-day prayer starts on the night the dead was buried.
2.	The following day, all the members went to the river for the Gol-gol.
3.	The old woman applies oil on the hair of all the members of the bereaved family before all of them plunged into the river at the same time.
4.	No one looked back when going home so as not to be forgetful.
5.	The Waksi was done after a year of mourning by the bereaved family

During the first night that the dead was already buried, they started praying for nine days. The following day, everybody went to the river for the Golgol. An old woman performs the ceremony before applying oil. The oil was mixed with the burned rice straw (arutang). After that, they plunged into the river at the same time. All the clothes that the bereaved family used were thrown into the river. This was a belief that all the worries and misfortunes that come with those thrown into the river. When they went home, nobody should look back to prevent them from being forgetful. The waksi showed close family ties because it was done after a year.

Table 7. Beliefs and practices of the Tinguians

Still Practiced/observed	Not Practiced/ Not Observed
Wakes	Tani / Tampa
Namin/Taradyo	Danun / Kalkalimusta
Waksi	Lab-labbaan
Tadek	Dowry / Sab-ong
	Billite
	Beccaang
	Burying of deads on yards, under houses or under stairs

The table reflects that the following beliefs and practices are no longer practiced or observed today. Tampa/Tani, Danun, Dowry, Lab-

labbaan are now being forgotten. as observed and musedly commented by Mrs. Campol (2010) Today, a woman already gets pregnant before getting married or no marriage is done; Billite and Beccaang are no longer done due to modern technology of communication; cemeteries and gardens now served as cemeteries, thus the deads are no longer buried in their yards. The in observance of these are due to the effects brought about by science and technology and due to the influences brought by those who come home abroad and are later imitated.

However, Wakesup to now are still very important to the Tinguians. The close family ties are still shown. Funeral parlors offer services including embalming. Thus, Wakes last for a week or more. The Namin or Taradyo is still practiced today. The Tadek is still done. The Waksi is done after a year.

CONCLUSIONS

Based from the results and discussions, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. There were nine (9) dialects spoken by the Tinguians in the twenty-two (22) Tinguian municipalities of Abra with the eleven (11) Ethno linguistic groups namely: Adasen, Balatok, Banao, Belwang, Binongan, Gobang, Inlaud, Mabaka, Maeng, Nasadiit and Moyadan.

2. Majority or fourteen (14) Tinguian municipalities speak Inlaud. These are: Abang, Bucay; Danglas; Malaylay, Dolores; Lagayan; Alimudong, Lapaz; Langiden, Palpalitpit Lagangilang; Penarrubia; Bolbolo, Pilar; Tangbao, San Isidro; San Juan; an Quintin; Gaddani, Tayum; and Lumaba, Villavbiciosa. Adasen, Maeng and Nasadiit come next. This could be due to the fact that Inlaud is the easiest dialect to learn, spoken and understand.

3. Courtship was never done. Tampa or Tani was the mode of marriage. This was to retain their Property and power. The man and his parents accompanied by their Elder went to the woman's home for the Danun or Kalkalimusta. The Katulagan of the Puon or Sab-ong was discussed first before the marriage was set.

4. The Lab-labbaan was danced and the Salidummay was sung. The Billite was the form of informing the relatives on the set date of

marriage. Wakes lasted only for three days because their deads were not preserved before. The Beccaang was done to inform the relatives and friends about the death of a person.

5. The Tadek was danced accompanied by the Gansaduring marriage and burial ceremonies. The Uggayamand the Salidummay were sung during death and Danun respectively. The Balliwes was danced after the burial of their dead. TheGolgol was done after the burial. The Lay-og was the means of remembering their deads and at the same time reunion.

6. Wakes, Lay-og, Namin/Taraydo and Tadek still hold true today. Today, Tani/Tampa, Danun, and Sab-ongare no longer practiced when marriages are planned. Beccaang and Billite are now obsolete to inform their relatives during death and marriage. Deads are now buried in cemeteries.

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