

Emerging Themes in the Published Poems of Ilokano Women Writers

Juvie Lynne T. Almachar¹

College of Arts and Sciences, University of Northern Philippines, Vigan City

Juvielynne.almachar@unp.edu.ph

Abstract – The study aimed to analyze the themes that emerge in the writings of Ilokano women writers in the Ilocos Region. The study was limited to the profiling of Ilokano women writers in the Ilocos Region, who have published at least three poems in the contemporary period. The researcher utilized content analysis to identify the themes of the selected poems of the four Ilokano women writers of Region 1. The data were taken from published weekly magazine, *Bannawag*, and in other publications. The study made use of a survey questionnaire specifically used for gathering the details for the profile of the writers. Results of the study show that most of Ilokano women writers considered in this study are married, professionals, have published several other works in addition to poems, and are active members and officers of certain organizations, common among them is *Gunglo Dagiti Mannurat nga Ilokano (GUMIL)*. Moreover, themes that emerge in the poems include those that relate to legacy, death, sense of appreciation and time. Lastly, the themes identified in the works reflect the profile of each of the Ilokano women writer. They reflect either their educational attainment, their past and present work, and their experiences.

Keywords: *Ilokano Literature, Contemporary, Expressive, Reflections*

1. Introduction

Philippine literatures are the manifestations through succinct translations of our cultural heritage into words from prehistory, through its colonial legacies, and on to the present. These are written in Spanish, Tagalog, English, and other variety of other languages or dialects. Among which of these literatures represents one of the largest ethnics and linguistic group. Ilokano literature is considered to be the second richest. There are a large number of Ilokano literary pieces such as poems, riddles, proverbs, epic, short stories, folk songs, novels, and other literary works that can be traced back to the pre-Spanish period through transcribing oral literature and the contemporary period. Foronda (1967), cited from Carreon (2019), stressed that the Ilokano language is so highly developed as to have produced the greatest number of printed works in any Philippine language, next to Tagalog. With this, it is imperative to put focus and effort into studying Ilokano literature.

Several reasons may account for the development and enrichment of Ilokano literature. Since its infancy years in the 1930s, *Bannawag*, a weekly magazine in Ilokano, has played and still plays a major role in the development of Ilokano literature (Bragado, 2016, as cited by Carreon, 2019). At present, it publishes poems (*daniw*), short stories (*sarita*), novels (*nobela*), essays (*salaysay*), comics, biographies, folktales, and many others, including what some call avant-garde literary output.

Similarly, several organizations like the *Gunglo dagiti Mannurat nga Ilokano iti Filipinas (GUMIL, Filipinas)*, a national organization of Ilokano writers, where well-off Ilokanos continue to sponsor contests in the production of Ilokano literature. Aside from these, several literary contests such as *Salip Iti Salaysay Para Iti Upland, Premio ANDEL (Anel Barroga Awards for Iluko Literature)*, *Salip iti Sarita – Judge Vivencio S. Baclig Awards for Ilokano Literature* and, others continue to encourage Ilokano writers to keep on writing.

Many scholars, writers, and authors create literary works with a specific purpose; to share their ideas, and express themes that represent themselves exposing, what their minds are, and what lessons they want to share - convey with an individual or the society as a whole. It is the writer's idea or view of the world that he or she wants to express, and opens the readers' awareness of human conditions that constitute the theme. Often, meaningful literary pieces are crafted with a theme. Interestingly, these themes are based on reality, or how the writer perceives the world, the truth is contained in this world, as seen in his or her eyes. Because literature is the story of man, it deals with activities, ideas, and emotions that envelope man in society.

As per Kurtz and Schober (2001), literary critics are well aware of the dangers of proposing that a text has a single universally-agreed-upon theme or even that authors intend a particular message. Despite that, they contend one reason that literary stories, though fictional, a life beyond their pages is that readers attempt to connect them to the outside world; as we see it, themes are the bridge between print and life. As Marcel Proust puts it, "Every reader, as he reads, is the reader of himself. The writer's work is only a kind of optical instrument; he provides the reader to discern what he might never have seen in himself without this book. The reader's recognition in himself of what the book says is the proof of the book's truth."

Throughout history, it is seen that the literary world is still male-dominated. Though the gender-sensitive contemporary setting allows that new waves of feminist writers in the country to continue to effort and to write in different genres of literature in both Filipino and English languages, a majority still have to see their works in book form; thus, it is noticeable that there is lack of women's anthology, Velasco (2015) reports. Velasco (2015) added that the anthologies were authored mostly by Ilokanos. Of which, the writers were predominantly male. Researchers have surveyed, too, that majority of Ilokano writers are male. It is then clear that studies are analyzing the writings of Ilokano female writers particularly, on the themes that frequently surface in their works that have been conducted or published, are lacking

and insufficient to create a bigger picture of what contributions female writers have in this field.

Consequently, profiling of Ilokano women writers in the region might not have been documented or empirically studied while similar studies have been found in the neighbor regions. It is imperative to know the women writers and their writings in the region as contributors in Philippine Literature to develop a gender-friendly community of writers and to investigate their literary works further. Ilokano women writers also deserve to be recognized, praised and applauded.

1.1. Objectives of the Study

This study aimed to analyze the themes that emerge in the writings of Ilokano women writers in the Ilocos Region. It specifically aims to get the profile of the Ilokano women writers, identify the emerging themes in their literary works, particularly their poems, and to examine whether the themes of their writings reflect the Ilokano women writer's profile.

1.2. Theoretical Framework

This study, therefore, was anchored on Abram's (1989) expressive theory and formalism theories.

The expressive theory forwarded by Risdianto (2014) holds that the artist is not essentially an imitator but a man who expresses his feelings. Two quotations from William Wordsworth will make this theory clearer. "Poetry," he said, "is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings"; the poet's job is to treat things not as they are...but as they seem to exist to the senses and the passion.

On the one hand, Formalism, as a theory, also known as the theory of literariness, looks at poetry that subjects language to a process of defamiliarization. Roman Jakobson formulated the concept of "literariness," a quality that makes a verbal message a work of art.

In English, the word "literature" is used in at least two ways: *informative literature* and *imaginative literature*. Informative literature tells about facts, explanations, history, real 'great life figure, etc. Meanwhile, imaginative literature aims to arouse thoughts and feelings. Its author

expresses ideas, attitudes, may talk of things; people, etc. Imaginative literature, according to many writers and writers, has a fuller and deeper sense than informative literature (Risdianto, 2012).

According to Soto (2010), poem may reflect the other end of one's emotional scale; as the happy feeling of liking another person, owning a puppy, receiving a birthday gift one truly loves, the rush of braving a monstrous ride at the amusement park, rock climbing, dancing, and other exhilarating moments. Poetry, then, is an emotional response to the world.

Mopps and Joyner (2012) noted that a theme is a declarative statement that asserts the role of the main subject in work. A thematic statement contains two critical components: first, a theme must uphold the values and principles contained within a work's motifs and subject and. Second, a thematic statement must apply these textual insights to the outside world or humanity as a whole.

On the one hand, Ryan and Bernard (2003) stated that themes are abstract (and often fuzzy) constructs that link not only expressions found in text but also expressions found in images, sounds, and objects. A reader knows they have found a theme when he or she can answer the question, *what is this expression an example?* Themes come in all shapes and sizes. Some themes are broad and sweeping constructs that link many different kinds of expression.

Ahmed (2018) mentioned that some poets have a large collection of themes, but some have a limited *collection*, but their representation technique is authentic. Philip Larkin belongs to the second category; he is criticized because of the narrowness in his themes. His collection is, although limited, yet his method of presentation is above board. Undoubtedly, he has limited subjects, but he is a master in elucidating them, and it is the reason he is known as the best poet who will be remembered in every era. Some of the common themes, which the poet uses in his poems, are time, death, chances, choices, change, disillusionment, mystery, desire, disappointment, and inexplicableness. Also, some other leading themes identified by the critics are a failure, the fragility of human choices, the importance of

vocation in life, the horrifying reality of death, the struggles of the ordinary people, and the universality of human misery and sadness, isolation from environment and nature.

Moreover, Ronald states that a "theme" is a reality independent of any idea, influence, or image." As to the way of recognizing it, he proposes three solutions. First, the theme may be identified due to its recurrence; the theme may be traced in the whole work of an author, the theme resists the passing of time, it never changes the recurrent character of a theme, or several themes are made efficient by its/their verbal fixity; they are always signaled by the same image or word. Second, a theme has a substantial effect: it asks for a certain attitude on behalf of the author towards the qualities of the material he works on. Third, a theme can be reducible; all its variants converge into one (Manoliu, 2015).

According to Reaske (1966) as cited by Ningrum (2015), a biography is a detailed description or account of someone's life. More than a list of basic facts (education, work, relationships, and death), the biography also portrays the subject's experience of those events. Unlike a profile or curriculum vitae (résumé), a biography presents the subject's life story, highlighting various aspects of his or her life, including intimate details of experience, and may include an analysis of the subject's personality.

Also, Wijaya (2018) mentioned that a biographical approach examines the literary work about the author's life. Often, a particular poem or song is subject to this kind of analysis simply by the nature of its material about the background of the author's personal experience. Or, we can say, a Biographical approach is an approach used to understand and comprehend a literary work by studying deeper about the life of the author.

In Velasco's (2015) study, she analyzed the works of the four Ilokano women writers of Nueva Vizcaya, namely, Rpuerta Vega Ramos Asuncion Cristina Gervacio Gallato, Sherma E. Benosa, and Marichel Eugenio Suguitan. In the short stories of Rpuerta Vega Ramos Asuncion, the subject of her short stories are love, family, and marriage, and its themes revolve around power and social class: between a city girl against a girl-from the province; between the poor and the rich.

Hand in hand with the *Bannawag* is GUMIL Filipinas (*Gunglo dagiti Mannurat nga Ilokano iti Filipinas*) o Ilokano Writers Association the Philippines, one of the most active groups of regional writers in the Philippines. It has hundreds of active writer-members in provincial and municipal chapters and overseas chapters in the Mainland U.S., Hawaii, and Greece (Wikipedia, 2015). The main objectives of GUMIL Filipinas include: to provide a forum in which Ilokano writers can undertake mutual and cooperative efforts to improve their craft of writing literary, historical, research, and other works; to enrich Ilokano literature and cultural heritage as phases of the national identity by encouraging the members to concentrate on writing extensively and intensively about the social, economic, cultural and other aspects of growth and development among the Ilokans through literature, history, research, or the like; to publish books of poetry, short stories, essays, novels, historical accounts, research and critical studies, and other writings; and to assist each member in pursuing his/her writing career and in fulfilling his life as a member of Philippines society.

Velasco (2015) noted that a survey of writings on regional women writers shows a dearth on the documentation, study, scholarly preservation, and appreciation of the life and writings of regional women particularly, in Nueva Vizcaya. The same holds in Region 1.

Unfortunately, the generation of these Ilokano women writers has passed. There is, therefore, the need to highlight the works of women writers and determine what themes emerge in their writings.

2. Methodology

2.1. Research Design

The data of this paper are primarily the published poems written by selected Ilokano women writers, and this study used the descriptive method of research involving documentary analysis wherein literary pieces, particularly poems, served as documents. According to Rao

and Jabali (2014), descriptive research is fact-finding with adequate interpretation. It involves the elements or explanation of meaning or significance of the described or the description, recording, analysis, and interpretation of the present nature, composition, or process or phenomena. On the one hand, content analysis is useful for examining trends and patterns in documents. It is a useful tool for allowing researchers to discover and describe the focus of individual, group, institutional, or social attention.

2.2. Subjects of the Study

The Ilocos Region, where the study was conducted, is considered as the original home of the Ilokano-speaking group in the country. It includes four provinces: Ilocos Norte, Ilocos Sur, La Union, and Pangasinan. The writings of these Ilokano women writers include only the poems (*daniw*) written by those who have already published their works more than three times in the weekly magazine, *Bannawag*, or in other publications or anthologies. These poems are produced and published from 2001 until the present. The four Ilokano women writers have published at least three poems from 2001 to the present, and they are born and residing in the Ilocos Region. The study made use of a survey questionnaire specifically used for gathering the details for the profile of the writers.

2.3. Data Gathering Procedure

First, the researcher profiled the Ilokano women writers in the Ilocos Region. Second, selecting the representative literary pieces published during the contemporary period in any publications was done. Third, the preliminary reading for the initial understanding of the works was done. Fourth, there was a closer reading of the works to determine the themes in the writings. Lastly, a final reading was done to determine that all details have been correctly identified and described, and the analysis was subjected to validation by three experts. Data were analyzed using frequency counts and percentages.

2.4. Ethical Considerations

The four Ilokano women writers gave their consent to participate in this study and allowed their names and other personal information to be mentioned. There were no risks related to the conduct of the study.

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Profile of Ilokano Women Writers

Four Ilokano women writers who have published at least three poems from 2001 to the present are profiled in this study. Their profile includes details on age, civil status, published works, educational attainment, active membership and position in organizations, work experience, all covering the period 2001 to present, and their current affiliation.

The Ilokano women writers are aged 55 and above and are married. As to their educational attainment, all of them are bachelor's degree holders, and two of them have doctorate degrees, which means that the writers are all professionals. The Majority of their published works are poems, and the least is a short story. The writers are active members and officers of some professional, literary, and religious organizations. The common organizations they are either officers or members of are GUMIL Filipinas and the local chapter of GUMIL in their places.

Moreover, three of them are in the teaching profession; one is a consultant in development management. The results suggest that the Ilokano women writers are educated and are active professionals. Hence, their literary works are expected to reflect both their personal and professional lives.

Following is a description of the profile of Ilokano women writers, namely: Djuna Alcantara, Marlyn G. del Rosario, Onofresia I. Ibarra, and Alegria T. Visaya.

Alcantara, Djuna

Djuna Alcantara was born on January 10, 1958, and is married to Edilberto H. Angco. She is a native of Sto. Domingo Ilocos Sur but now

residing at Accasia St., Namnana Village, City of San Fernando, La Union. She obtained her Master in Development Management degree at the Asian Institute of Management (AIM) Makati City, and her Bachelor of Science in Financial Management at the University of the Philippines Diliman, Quezon City. She finished high school at Ramon Magsaysay High School – Espana, Manila, and elementary at Flora Elementary School, Sto. Domingo, Ilocos Sur.

She is the owner of Sangkap, an Ilocano Arts literary-cum-trade enterprise. She is likewise a consultant at Development Management and a freelance writer in Ilokano. Djuna is currently affiliated with the Red Cross, the City of San Fernando, La Union as the Peace Relation Officer, and the Lions Club Bulletin as an editor. As a freelance writer in Ilokano, she has published 12 poems and four essays in *Bannawag*, two poems in the book, *Labaw ti Gumil La Union*. Some of her poems and essays are also published in *Rimat* and *Sirmata*.

She was once a member of GUMIL – Filipinas, where she served as Secretary-General for two terms, a President for six-terms of GUMIL – La Union, and a President also of GUMIL – San Fernando City.

del Rosario , Marlyn Garcia

Marlyn, a native of Galimuyod, Ilocos Sur, was born on Oct. 20, 1961. She is married to a man from San Nicolas, Villasis, Pangasinan. She finished 39 units in Master of Arts in Education at Panpacific University North Philippines, Urdueta City. Moreover, she obtained her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education at the Baguio Colleges Foundation. She also studied at Candon National High School, Ilocos Sur, and Bugnay Elementary School. At present, Marlyn is Teacher III at Bacag East Elementary School, Bacag East, Villasis Pangasinan. She has published 16 poems for children in the *Bannawag* magazine. Marlyn also has published two opinions, *Ilokano Ngaruden*, *Biddut Pay*, and *Maul-ulaw ni Ma'am* in the column *Ti Makunami* in the same magazine. She has likewise published eight features in the *Northern Watch*.

She is active in the following organizations: The United Methodist Church – Villasis Pangasinan as secretary of the Board of Trustees, The United Methodist Learning Center Villasis Pangasinan as secretary to the Kindergarten Board and as member of GUMIL –Filipinas and GUMIL Pangasinan.

Ibarra, Onofrecia I.

A retired professor of the Mariano Marcos State University, Onofrecia was born on July 21, 1936, at Pacis, Sinit, Ilocos Sur. She finished Doctor of Philosophy - Philippine Bilingual Education from the consortium of Philippine Normal University, De la Salle University, and Ateneo de Manila University, while her Master of Arts in Language Teaching at Philippine Normal University and her Bachelor of Secondary Education major in Curriculum at Ilocos Norte Normal School now known as Mariano Marcos State University College of Teacher Education. She also studied at Sinit Provincial High School and Binacud Elementary School, Sinit, Ilocos Sur.

She is an educator and writer. She served as Professor at the College of Teacher Education at Mariano Marcos State University, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. Before this, she was the principal of Sta. Cruz Elementary School in Sinit Ilocos Sur. As a writer, she has published eight poems in *Bannawag*, and some of her writings were published in the Filipino Teachers Magazine. She has likewise written short stories specifically for children and has published these in the *Bannawag*. She was active in the following organizations: GUMIL Ilocos Norte as an Adviser, GUMIL National as a Board Member, and Language and Reading Teachers as a member. She is currently the President of the Brgy. Senior Citizens of Brgy. Pacis, Sinit, Ilocos Sur, Vice President Federation of Senior Citizens Barangay Association and as the Chapter Head FFC Hand Maids of the Lord of Sinit, Ilocos Sur.

Visaya, Alegria Tan

Alegria was born on July 6, 1951. She is from Bacarra, Ilocos Norte, and is married. Alegria

finished Doctor of Education major in Educational Management (1988), Master of Arts – Administration and Supervision (1977), Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education with a concentration in Math, *summa cum laude* (1972). She was valedictorian when she graduated from San Agustin Elementary School (1964) and the Bacarra National High School (1968). She was trained at the University of the Philippines and Ateneo de Manila for an enrichment program in Research and Statistics.

She is a professor at the Graduate School, Mariano Marcos State University, Laoag City, Ilocos Norte. She has also served as the Board Secretary and University Secretary of said university. She has published literary works such as poems in Ilokano and English in the *Bannawag*, *Timpuyog Journal*, *Aweng: Antolohia Dagiti Napili a Daniw ken Sarita Dagiti Mannurat iti Bacarra*, the MMSU Newsletter, *Modern Teacher Journal*, *The Ilocos Times*, *Pambansang Komisyon para sa Kultura at mga Sining*, and *Komisyon ng Wikang Filipino*. Her book, *Sapsapo/Balm: Poems in Ilokano & English*, published by Nakem Philippines and Undertow Books, was recently launched. She likewise has published a book, *Kankanta para kadagiti Ubbing iti Pagadalan*, which comprises 33 songs for children. Also, she has published 14 essays in the *Bannawag*, two news in the *News MMSU Newsletter* and *Manila Bulletin*. and two Ilokano types of research in *Sukisok*, a book edited by Aurelio S. Agcaoili, Josie P. Clausen, Precy L. Espiritu, Raymund Ll. Liongson.

Her main roles in organizations are Director of Philippine Association of Board Secretaries of State Colleges and Universities, President of Nakem Conferences Philippines, member of Nakem International Conferences, Adviser of *Timpuyog dagiti Mannurat nga Ilokano* Ilocos Norte Chapter, Secretary of College of Teacher Education – Mariano Marcos State University Alumni Association and President of Laoag Fundamental Baptist Church (LFTBC) - Ladies Fellowship. At present, she is affiliated with the Graduate School, Mariano Marcos State University, Laoag City.

It is important and useful to understand the author's life to provide a good interpretation of their works. They can also comprehend better the themes that the poet wants to convey.

3.2. Emerging Themes in the Selected Poems

The second objective of this study was to determine the emerging themes reflected in the published poems of the Ilokano women writers.

Table 1 shows the emerging themes in the published poems of the Ilokano women writers. The theme refers to the main idea, the message, or the universal truth that a writer wishes to convey in their literary work; in this study, the women writers' poems.

In Djuna's poem, "Ti Bituem nga Imbatim (ken ni Manang Claire Sumahit)," the theme is legacy: *Leaving a legacy is an important part of life. It vests one to live fully in the present. To fulfill one's legacy, one needs time, hard work, voice, and most of all, love. In the poem, one can see how Manang Claire Sumahit works hard and lives her life to the fullest. This is seen in the following lines: Naputarmo ti impabarukongmo a musikam, Pinarungbo ti inarakupmo a Panawen, Dinigosmo iti sudi naluom nga ayatmo, Sinippawmo la ketdi a sinippaw iti rag-o.*

Legacy is a part of life that will be left radiantly in the hearts and minds of others, especially those who have touched lives, and with this, they will follow for the rest of their life.

*Kas kasin-aw kinnablaaw dagiti bituen
Taklin itan ti rikna a mangpulingling libnos
Ti kinabituenmo a nagkaibit iti pusok*

*ti bituenmo nga imbatim
Kas tawid ti kinagayed.*

In Onofrecia's poem "Bay-am a Maregreg ti Sabong" the theme **legacy** was also identified: *With the legacy you left in this world, you will always be remembered.* These are the lines that show what they have done while living in this world: "A nakasisipan diro bang-ar adu a barukong, A namanguggot adu a pinuon, A nangraniag agsasallupang a dalan, A nanglailo nangil-ilot mas masmasnaayan a kararua, A

sinursurot, A nangted simbeng pakinake, A nagiturong ken nangibin, and A nangdigos iti lubong naidumduma a maris."

When someone leaves this earth, one wants to carve his or her name in the hearts of people, which will be shared with the next generation.

*Wen, bay-am, bay-am nga agtukeng
Dagiti nakaibati't tugotda iti kataratan ti panawen.*

Letting go is the hardest and painful thing, but everything has its end; one just has to remember the happy memories. The poem "Bay-am a Maregreg ti Sabong," has this for a theme. Letting go is the hardest and most painful thing to do, but one must mind that everything has its end, and there is nothing permanent in this world. In the poem, one can see in the following lines showing that some objects or conditions come to an end: *maregreg ti sabong, agsardeng nadungngo a tarakitik ti tudo, lumnek nasingpet a bulan, aggibus nasam-it a sonata, aglemmeng nasimgat a bituen, umadayon sagawisiw ti angina, agsardeng timek a manakem, agtabon ti init.* Everyone, therefore, has to accept and let go of loved ones, but that they should not be forgotten; instead, particularly their good deeds should always be remembered.

In the poem, "Bay-am a Maregreg ti Sabong," the recurrence of phrases like *maregreg ti sabaong, agsardeng nadungngo a tarakitik ti tudo, lumnek ansingpet a bulan, aggibus nasam-it a sonata nga aglemmeng nasingat abituen, umadayon sagawisiw ti anguinna, agsardeng timek a manakem,* and *agtabon ti init,* are concrete metaphors of an ending, that is, death. But the recurrence of parallel actions like a *nakasisipan diro, a namanguggot, a nangraniag, a nanglailo, a sinursurot, a nangted, a nagiturong,* and a *nangdigos* all help develop the theme that despite the certainty of death, there are many good memories to cherish. In the study of Naval (2015), she mentioned that memories are always treasured by anybody, especially if such memories bring back joy and happiness.

In the poem *Ambulance* of Philip Larkin, the theme is death. The correct fact of death cannot be ignored, nor can it be underestimated. No matter how painful or beautiful life a person has spent, death is common for everyone (Ahmed, 2018). Death is considered one of the common themes in literature, and their subject may be the grief of losing a loved one or a family member, the significance, or the concept of death. Death is a reality and universal experience that is something to be accepted and not to be ignored.

“*Dagiti Paset ti Rupak*,” is the poem where the theme sense of appreciation was identified: *Appreciate the gift of God and use them according to His will*. Appreciation is the recognition and enjoyment of the good qualities of someone or something. In the poem, the author recognizes the gift God has given to her, that is, her body, and enjoying it. The will of God is to use one’s gifts for the benefit of life and to express gratitude:

Table 1. Emerging Themes in the Selected Poems

Author	Poem, Publication, and Year of Publication	Theme
Alcantara, Djuna	Ti Bituem nga Imbatim (ken ni Manang Claire Sumahit) (Bannawag Magazine Nov. 11, 2013)	Legacy Leaving a legacy is an important part of life this will vest you to live fully in the present.
del Rosario , Marlyn Garcia	Dagiti Paset ti Rupak (Bannawag Magazine Aug. 3, 2015)	Sense of Appreciation Appreciate the gift of God and use them according to His will.
Ibarra, Onofrecia I.	Bay-am a Maregreg ti Sabong (Bannawag Magazine Jan. 22, 2001)	Legacy With the legacy you left in this world, you will always be remembered.
		Death Letting go is the hardest and painful thing, but everything has its ends. Just remember the happy memories.
Visaya, Alegria Tan	Agridamak a kas Kadagiti Aldaw (Bannawag Magazine Aug. 9, 2009 & Sapsapo/Balm: Poems in Ilokano & English Philippines 2016)	Time Always have a fruitful day, don’t waste time because days fly so quickly.

*Usarek a pagallingag
Sursuro ken balakad
Ken pudno a damdamag*

*Pagyebkasko pay iti pagyaman
Iti Dios a nailangitan!*

Time is the theme of the poem, "Agridamak a kas Kadagiti Aldaw." The following lines show how the speaker describe the days that fly so fast: *napardas ti taray ni lunes, napegges ti tayab ni martes, makitintinnarayan met ni mierkoles, napartak ti taray ni huebes, imbulos met askaw ni biernes, a di paatiw ken ni sabado, uray ni domingo*. Every day one has to see that they have a fruitful day; one should not waste time because days fly quickly. Once one stops, he or she will miss many things and be left behind. Life must go on, and one needs to run with the flow of life.

The recurring parallelism in the enumeration of the actions *napardas, insiwet, aglumbalumba, napegges, alipugpug, makitintinnarayan, ambulansia, napartak, and imbulos* all directs one's attention to the concept of fast. Similarly, parallelism in the days associated with each action on fast complets the theme *Always have a fruitful day, don't waste time because days fly so fast*. The *agsarimadeng, agtukeng, mabatiak, and agridamak* highlights the act of not wasting time.

The themes that surface in the poems, particularly on death and time have similar to the analysis of Ahmed (2018), Various Themes in the Poems of Philip Larkin this are some of the common themes, which the poet uses in his poems, are time, death, chances, choices, change, disillusionment, mystery, desire, disappointment, and inexplicableness. Meaning that the themes of the writers, male or female, are similar: they may vary on the topics of their poem.

The writers presented their themes in many ways, and one of them is by using motifs. Motifs are the recurring words or phrases in the literary pieces. In the four poems, there are repeated words and phrases such as objects, conditions, actions, and ideas that helps identify the main idea or theme of the poem. Fabien (2020) mentioned that poets often repeat words, lines, or entire stanzas to emphasize a particular idea. Repetition has a

memory effect and is, therefore, an active tool for emphasis.

In identifying the theme, the reader pushes beneath the surface details to discover the literature's deeper meaning. It gives readers wide understanding of the message that the writer wants to convey. And the theme gives modest and gentle reminders that make the reader reflect on their own life, on how they should live their life and their attitude towards how the world works. By reading poems and identifying its theme can lead to a better and happy life for every reader.

3.3. Themes as Reflections of the Profile of Ilokano Women Writers

The last problem tackled in this study dealt with whether the themes identified reflect the profile of the Ilokano women writers. The themes identified in the poems all reflect the profile of the writers.

The **legacy** theme is reflected in Djuna Alcantara. She is not using her husband's surname instead of her maiden name Alcantara in her literary pieces because she wants to continue the legacy of her name and follow the footsteps of her parents as one of the contributors of Ilokano literature. Her father Pelagio A. Alcantara, and her mother Crescencia Robianes-Alcantara are both Ilokano writers. According to Bosak, we are connected by the legacies passed down from those who came before us and the legacies we pass to those who come after us. Her writing ability was passed down by her parents, and as the owner of the Sangkap, Ilocano Arts, a literary-cum-trade enterprise, this will be her legacy to her children.

Similarly, Ibarra's theme on **legacy** also reflects her active involvement in different organizations and her being an officer of organizations such as the Senior Citizens of Brgy. Pacis, Sinait Ilocos Sur as a President of the Federation of Senior Citizens Barangay Association, as Vice President of the CFC Hand Made of the Lord and as the Chapter Head of Sinait, Ilocos Sur. To be a president, vice president, or chapter head, one is expected to do something to better of the organization, and whatever improvement one does serve as one's legacy to the organization.

Onofrecia Ibarra's themes on **death** reflect her profile as a person also. Her age speaks that she is already preparing for the coming of death. Naval's (2015) study dovetails this finding as she also found in her analysis of Selected Ilokano Poems by Leona Florentino that the misery of Leona progresses towards the end of her poem. At this stage, she already speaks of her death. Often, people only think of their death if they face a serious predicament that leaves them with no choice but to accept their demise.

Meanwhile, the theme of **sense of appreciation** reflects Marlyn G. del Rosario as a writer. God has given her the talent to write, and show her sense of appreciation for this talent; she has published literary pieces to be read by many and learn lessons from them. Her poems are for children since she is an elementary teacher at Bacag East Elementary School, Bacag East Villasis Pangasinan. She also served as secretary of the Board of Trustees United Methodist Church – Villasis Pangasinan at as secretary to the Kindergarten Board at The United Methodist Learning Center Villasis Pangasinan.

Lastly, Alegria Tan Visaya's theme related to **time** is seen in her educational attainment. Five years after her graduation from college, Alegria, at the age of 26, finished her Master's degree and, at the age of 37, earned her Doctorate. It shows that she values time; she did not waste time studying. As a professor in a university, time is very important as she serves as a Board Secretary and University Secretary of Mariano Marcos State University. Having an administrative function, she still manages to write and published poems (67), essays (14), songs (33), and research (2).

The themes identified in the works reflect the profile of each of the Ilokano women writers. They reflect either their educational attainment, their past and present work, and their experiences. It means that in literature, life and work are interrelated. The life experiences of the writer can help in shaping their writings; these are based on the feelings of the Ilokano women writers this support with the expressive theory that poetry is an expression or product of a poet's feeling.

It is similar in the study of Velasco (2015); it can be understood too, that the life of women writers is reflective in their short stories and are

interwoven, which can be subsumed that these women writers write to tell their stories and their stories functioned as their medium for self-expression and self-preservation.

Also, it is vital to know the profile or biography of the writer for the readers leading to understand and appreciate their writings. At the same time, it helps to a better understanding also to the writer. Learning the life of the writer is interesting. It serves as inspiration to the readers, and the success of the writer can apply it to their day-to-day life. Wijaya (2018) stated that the biographical approach examines the literary work in relation to the author's life. Often a particular poem or song is subject to this kind of analysis simply by the nature of its material about to the background of the author's personal experience.

4. Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following conclusions are forwarded:

The themes in the poems are based on reality, which is a wide-ranging message about life, with this it helps the readers to understand deeper about human conditions. The themes are the expressions of the Ilokano women's feelings, experiences, and thoughts; these themes are designed to teach morals which makes the poem meaningful.

The Ilokano women writers write from their personal experiences because the themes of their writings reflect their respective profiles. The poem is an instrument that reveals the lives of the authors.

Based on the conclusions drawn, the researcher recommends the following:

A directory and compilation of the writings of the Ilokano women should be found in the barangay, municipal, provincial libraries, and schools so that people could easily access the materials.

Teachers in the basic education curriculum particularly, in the Senior High School, can use these Ilokano poems as materials for discussion as these will provide easy references for literary pieces in one of their core subjects, 21st Century Literature of the Philippines and of the World.

Students should read the result of the study for them to fully understand how to identify the

themes and to be aware of what is happening to the human condition.

Further studies on women writings should also be conducted to appreciate and acquaint with the Ilokano women writers.

To further appreciate and promote the growth and development of Ilokano literature schools, must provide avenues for its promotion, such as conducting a seminar-workshop in writing Ilokano and integrating Ilokano literature in school journals.

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