

# Therese Marie Villarante Select Songs: A Textual Analysis on Cultural Influences of Cebu

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**Abstract:** This study investigates the cultural influences of Cebu in the select songs of Therese Marie Villarante, which specifically delves into the figures of speech, symbols, and themes. The data which supports the study is obtained using three literary theories, namely New Historicism Literary Theory by Stephen Jay Greenblatt, as the primary theory, which mainly relates to the historical culture of Cebu found in the lyrics of the songs, Laurence Dollins Perrine's Figurative Language Theory, and Ferdinand de Saussure's Structuralist Literary Theory as the supporting lens to find latent connections between lyrics of the selects songs towards Cebu's cultural influences. Moreover, this study is qualitative in form, using discourse analysis as the method to analyze the literary work arduously. In conclusion, Therese Marie Villarante's selected songs have cultural influences on Cebu. Furthermore, in the recommendation, the following are prescribed to future literary researchers, pursuers, and enthusiasts; to conduct an extensive exploration of figures of speech to find out the cultural influences; to dig out the cultural influences in symbols by the use of the inquiry method; to conduct an in-depth investigation in themes that should be paired with values to reveal additional cultural influences.

**Keywords:** cultural influences, figures of speech, songs, symbols, themes.

## 1. Introduction

Cebuano literary works reflect Cebuano life experiences, viewpoints, and ideas while also serving as a source of entertainment (Caramihan & Canayung 41). A song is poetic poetry sung to the accompaniment of a musical instrument. When people couldn't read or write, songs were transferred from one person to the next orally (Sharma 2004). The lyrics, music, and significance of the songs evolve from generation to generation (Caramihan and Canayong 41). One of the year's batch of songs chosen finalist songs for the Vispop campaign was the song "Bok Love," which was composed by Felipe Anjelo Calinawan and Therese Marie Villarante, won multiple prizes for country music in the following years. Furthermore, it must be noted that Villarante's songs have become popular in Cebu and later nationally, having recognition in Visayan Pop (VisPop) music in recent years (Padayhag 2019). Like any recent songwriters, Villarante's compositions are absent from literary analysis, thus making this study timely and the first to make such textual analysis to identify figures of speech, symbols and themes. When these compositions depict

culturalism, they can provide cultural awareness that has profound effects on culture-based education and the proliferation of Cebuano literary arts.

The study investigates the cultural influences of Cebu on Therese Marie Villarante's selected songs. Specifically, it provides a textual analysis of the songs in terms of figures of speech, symbols and themes.

This study is supported by Stephen Jay Greenblatt's New Historicism Theory, Laurence Dollin's Figurative Language Theory, and Ferdinand de Saussure's Structuralist Literary Theory.

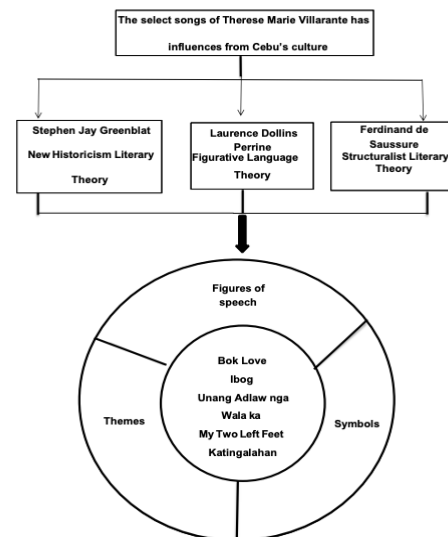


Fig. 1. Schematic presentation of the theoretical and conceptual framework of the study

The first theory is the New Historicism Theory. Using this theory, the critical analysis is made by associating the textual contents of songs with their socio-cultural and historical context, thereby creating a co-text literariness. Essentially, the historicity of text may portray the socio-political experiences of the maker while the textuality of history is an embedment of historical events in the art (Louis). According to this viewpoint, reading and interpreting song lyrics must take current socio-political events into account. New Historicists seek to comprehend cultural history through literature. By using this

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method, one may have a better understanding of cultural knowledge and how Maria Therese Villarante's written songs have influenced Cebuanos' customs.

The second theory is Theory of Figurative Language. The study is based on Perrine's idea in terms of using textual analysis of figurative languages in songs. According to Perrine, figurative language is classified into twelve, namely: metaphor, simile, personification, apostrophe, metonymy, symbol, synecdoche, allegory, paradox, hyperbole, litotes, or irony (Ketaren et al. 300). Figurative languages used to compare, associate, and contrast are present in a few of Therese Marie Villarante's songs. A figurative language that suggests cultural influence is a functional trait of tropes that brings additional imagery into the lyrics of songs under Perrine's analytical construct framework (Colston and Rasse 136).

Lastly, the third theory is Structuralist Literary Theory. Saussure is a Swiss linguist and philosopher who propounded theory in the field of language which was later termed Structuralism. Saussure believed that language should be seen as a social and cultural phenomenon. Structuralism is interested in the language of a literary text, the structure that allows text to make sense, and is sometimes referred to as grammar because it regulates the rules for identifying basic literary characteristics. The structure of the language speaks, dictates, or constructs one's perspective of reality and, as a result, one's responses to it (Montealegre 230).

This study is significant to the Cebuanos, Students, Composers, Bands, and Future Researchers. The scope focuses on Therese Marie Villarante's selected five written songs, *Bok Love*, *Ibog*, *Unang Adlaw nga Wala ka*, *My Two Left Feet*, and *Katingalahan*, and limits within the parameters of the sub-problems raised which are figures of speech, symbols, and themes.

## 2. Literature Review

According to Ofer Tirosh in 2020, *Cultural Connections Across Figures of Speech*, people use figures of speech to express themselves in a variety of ways. A figure of speech is a language that is not meant to be taken literally. Since it is consistently employed in languages spoken by a certain set of individuals, the figure of speech has been with us for hundreds, if not thousands, of years, according to this article. While literal terms are more straightforward and explicit, they are less entertaining and emotive. It's more enjoyable to say "quiet as a mouse" than "very silent." As a result, it becomes easier to select more relevant, intriguing, and expressive words to portray thoughts and emotions within the song. As a result, it is possible to examine how cultures utilize figurative language to express by looking at the word choices.

Moreover, according to Doyo at inquirer.net on her article *Pinoy Cultural Symbols Expression Brands* in relation to De la Torre's new book, built structures (foods), natural beauties (tourism places), material things (jeep), travel destinations, rituals/traditions, and personalities are the five categories of cultural symbols. This article claims that Doyo goes on to discuss how cultural symbols are divided into five categories and are prevalent in the society that developed and recognized

a certain culture. This is beneficial in the study since the artist in this song displays the community. In this study, the term "symbol" refers to a sound or an object with cultural value, whether visible or not, that has the ability to elicit or objectify a response. To support the aforementioned articles, it is important to note that language, which is the most prevalent cultural symbol, is understood in order to provide guiding principles for individual meaning.

Furthermore, in the article literary devices titled *Examples of Themes in Popular Song*, songs like literature and poetry frequently return to the same topics. The musicality of the songs gives another element to the songs instead of only using words. Look at these ten popular musical themes and the songs that go with them. Coming of age, death, disillusionment, feminism, friendship, and heartbreak are among the themes explored in this collection. The best vocalists can make the listeners care about someone you haven't thought about in a long time.

The cited articles are used in this academic paper as substantiation for the following sub-problems namely: figures of speech that refer to a text in song in a way that it is not directly expressed in the lyrics; symbols interpreted as sounds or objects that have cultural significance but are not explicitly mentioned in the lyrics; and theme, which expresses the main idea behind why a piece of literature created. In conclusion, the connected literature discussed in this chapter is to provide a thorough understanding of how to conceptualize each of the study's sub-problems, which are identical narratives delivered in a variety of forms and published works with a common goal.

## 3. Methodology

This study uses a qualitative method, particularly discourse analysis. The qualitative method entails textual and non-numerical methodologies that allow for a more in-depth analysis of data in this study. Discourse analysis is research that looks into the context of language in a literary work chosen. Qualitative method is used in the study to scrutinize in-depth analysis of the literary lines and phrases of the selected songs through the context of its language and interpret in the detailed discussion following non-statistical data with the help of discourse analysis. This study primarily focuses on the analysis of the literary piece to address the main problem and the sub-problems.

The primary source of data is gathered from different sources. *Bok Love* is taken from the Vispop 3.0 album and released in July 2015. *Ibog* is taken from the Ibog album and was released in April 2020. *Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka* is taken from PhilPop 2018: Top 30 album. The album PhilPop 2018: Top 30 was released in September 2018. *Katingalahan* is taken from music. apple and released on September 16, 2021. *My two left feet* are taken from letters and music.net 25 websites released on June 13, 2020. The secondary sources of data are accumulated from electronic sources of published and unpublished articles, theses, journals, dissertations, and researches.

This study follows three phases. Phase 1. Figures of Speech, Phase 2. Symbols, and Phase 3. Themes.

### Phase 1. Figures of Speech:

Phase 1 is the analysis of the Figures of Speech present in the studied songs. The lyrics of the songs are vital components to uncover the connection of Cebu's cultural influences present in Bok Love, Ibog, Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka, My Two Left Feet, and Katingalahan. In investigating this element, lyrics, lines, and phrases are significant variables to identify the cultural influences with the use of Laurence Dollins Perrine's Figurative Language Theory.

### Phase 2. Symbols:

Phase 2 is the analysis of the Symbols present in the studied songs. Language as a sign is used in the lyrics of the selected songs and are substantial elements to investigate the cultural significance that is visible and invisible in locating the cultural influences with the use of Ferdinand de Saussure's Structuralist Literary Theory.

### Phase 3. Themes:

Phase 3 is the analysis of the Themes present in the studied songs. The theme goes through a thorough analysis to determine the main event, time, mood, and message found related to the social and cultural perspective of Cebu's culture with the use of Stephen Jay Greenblatt's New Historicism Literary Theory.

## 4. Results and Discussion

### A. Figures of Speech

#### 1) Figures of Speech Analysis of Bok Love

Table 1  
Figures of Speech Analysis of Bok Love Analysis

Song	Lines	Figures of Speech	Cultural Influences
Bok Love	"Ngilngig pa nis mantikaong humba."	metaphor	garbo

Table 1 presents the figure of speech which is determined through the lyrics of the song Bok Love.

"Ngilngig pa nis mantikaong humba."

translates to "Worse than oily red braised pork" in English. Canayong and Caramihan (2016), who classified the song's lyrics as a metaphorical sort of figure of speech, determined that garbo reflects Cebuanos' pride and dignity, much like the oft-quoted but little-examined concept of amor propio. A Cebuano who misunderstands garbo may evolve into the garboso, excessive and obnoxious, maybe as a defensive tactic for expressing social place, as described by Lobbestael, Baumesiter et.al., (2014). The senders metaphorically "garbo" to share love represented by food "mantikaong humba" in accordance with the song. This exemplifies how Cebuanos show their love in a garbo manner.

#### 2) Figures of Speech Analysis of Ibog

Table 2 presents Cebu's cultural influences through Figures of Speech in the song titled "Ibog".

Table 2  
Figures of Speech Analysis of Ibog

Song	Lines	Figures of Speech	Cultural Influences
Ibog	"Ibog, Ibog kaayu ko nimo"	Repetition (Epizeuxis) /Hyperbole	Balak/ Spoken Poetry

"Ibog" is a Cebuano term translated as generally a strong desire towards someone's affection. Along with the Cebuano's traditional way of courting which is serenading (harana) and poem (balak), (Irish, 2009) express to traditional Cebuanos' way of courtship evolved. First, a man always makes his first move toward the woman and usually goes to the woman's house to show pure intention, respect and honor to the woman's parents. However, Harana is currently less popular with young Cebuano couples, although some guys still use it. (Torres 2009). Balak, or spoken poetry, used to be the most common form of courting in the Visayas, especially in Cebu. Many Cebuanos nowadays regard it as cheesy and occasionally "over-acting." (Lucido). This is the main cause of balak's decline in popularity and its rarity nowadays as a wooing gesture.

Furthermore, in the Philippines, spoken poetry has advanced to the point where even younger generations participate. This gesture is no longer just reserved for romance; it is now frequently utilized to convey emotions and mysteries, making it one of the most widely used forms of entertainment on Philippine shows.

#### 3) Figures of Speech Analysis of Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka

Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka, which is thought to have cultural influences hidden in the lyrics, is the subject of Table 3's analysis.

Table 3  
Figures of Speech Analysis of Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka

Song	Lines	Figures of Speech	Cultural Influences
Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka	"Damgohon na lang nga ugma kuyog ta"	Apostrophe	Espirituhanon

The assertion is substantiated by in-depth textual analysis and meticulous research that reveals the lyric lines' veiled meanings. In the seventh line of the song,

"Damgohon na lang nga ugma kuyog ta",

The figure of speech apostrophe is used in the English translation of the phrase, "I'll merely dream of being with you tomorrow." In the words of the song, the apostrophe alludes to a person who has passed away. The persona attempts to address the feeling of a missing person in the song's lyrics as though it is present. Although it is sometimes claimed that Cebuano customs are shrouded in superstition, *espirituhanon* has a good connotation because it is associated with the idea of an afterlife (Flannelly, Ellison, Galek, & Siltan, 2012). The Cebuanos believe that their dearly departed loved ones are watching over them in heaven. Their faith gives them comfort, while at the same time making it simpler for them to let go (Canayong and Caramihan 2016).

As a result, a song has more significance and worth for the listener. The song's lyrics illustrate how Cebuanos are *espirituhanon* or hopeful and affectionate when it comes to family, in relation to Cebu's cultural influences. Grandparents, uncles, aunts, cousins, and other relatives who may live with the nuclear family as part of Cebuanos' religious belief regarding "Asia's Cradle of Christianity" make up the extended family (Formentera et. al. 2013). This illustrates that Cebuanos' strong belief in religious spirituality also embodies superstitious

beliefs. Cebuanos are unique and continue to do things even if not completely sure to be effective. Cebuanos do so in the hope that good things will happen.

#### 4) Figures of Speech Analysis of My Two Left Feet

Table 4 represents the analysis of the song, *My Two Left Feet*, which has cultural influences hidden in the lines of the lyrics.

Table 4  
Figures of Speech Analysis of My Two Left Feet

Song	Lines	Figures of Speech	Cultural Influences
<i>My two Left Feet</i>	Clumsy-swinging, quirky-looking dance duo	assonance	<i>La Berde</i> courtship dance in Talamban

In this line,

*“Clumsy-swinging, quirky-looking dance duo,”*

is a figure of speech specifically assonance in which the recurrence of a vowel or diphthong sound in non-rhyming stress syllables close enough to each other for the echo to be discernible in poetry. It is clear that Cebuanos enjoy dances through experience and to express emotions, particularly on the court stage. It is commonly known that the Philippines has a rich culture and traditions. Costumes, music, and dances are all seen during the colorful celebrations. Traditional and folk dances portray the Philippines' tradition, customs, way of life, and manner of life and living. Philippine traditional dances are as diverse as the country's history, yet they are rarely seen in today's generation (Hofilena, 2019). A court dance from a mountain community in Talamban, Cebu called *La Berde* (literally green). Instead of a normal couple of dancers, the dance is performed by an intriguing cast of two girls and a boy. At a celebration in the Visayas region, locals from the area—mostly from Cebu—perform the *La Berde* folk dance. Especially during *Linggo ng Wika*, *La Berde* folk dance is widely shown in cultural and educational activities. It became more well-known and well-liked as a result of being shown to the broader public, growing recognition of folk dance in general and *La Berde* in particular.

#### 5) Figures of Speech Analysis of Katingalahan

Table 5 presents Cebu's cultural influences through Figures of Speech in the song titled *Katingalahan*.

Table 5  
Figures of Speech Analysis of Katingalahan

Song	Lines	Figures of Speech	Cultural Influences
<i>Katingalahan</i>	<i>“Katingalahan, Dugay na tang kaila. Katingalahan”</i>	repetition	Balak or spoken poetry

The song's first line,

*“Katingalahan, Dugay na tang kaila. Katingalahan”*

translated in English as *“I Wonder, we've known each other for a long time. I Wonder”* is a repetition (epistrophe) a repetition type of figure of speech which repeats the same word or words at the end of successive phrases, clauses, or sentences is an epistrophe. The line employs the traditional courtship in Cebu. As seen, Cebuanos are poetic in terms of selecting words to describe and express their love for someone. Balak, or

spoken poetry, was once the most popular wooing style in the Visayas region, particularly in Cebu. The suitor recited love rhymes to his adored lady in a highly emotional and passionate manner (Torres, 2019). Balak is then employed in Cebuano social situations or ceremonies to demonstrate one talent in poetry in order to gain courtship (Shay Du, 2021). It is proof that Cebuanos go beyond their vivid imaginations to someone they truly adore. Therefore, the song *Katingalahan* utilizes figures of speech that connect Cebuanos' culture.

To conclude, Garbo, Balak/Spoken Poetry, *Espirituhanon* and *La Berde* courtship dance in Talamban is the Cultural influence found in Figures of Speech.

#### B. Symbols

Table 6 presents Cebu's cultural influences through Symbols in the selected songs of Therese Marie Villaran.

Table 6  
Symbols analysis

Songs	Lines	Symbols	Cultural Influences
<i>Bok Love</i>	<i>“Ngaun tag kuan na lelelechon sa talisay”</i>	Lechon	<i>Halad-Inasal Festival</i>
	<i>Ay! Kuan nalang siomai sa tisa</i>	<i>Siomai</i>	<i>Siomai Festival</i> in Tisa Cebu
<i>Ibog</i>	<i>“Ibog, ibog kaayu ko nimo”</i>	“Ibog”	<i>Balak</i> or spoken poetry
<i>Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka</i>	<i>“Wa ghipos imong bag ong gitara”</i>	<i>Gitara</i>	Cebu International Guitar Festival
<i>My two left feet</i>	<i>“If you take me by the hand and spin me around the dance floor”</i>	“Dance”	Sinulog dance festival
<i>Katingalahan</i>	<i>...dawaton ning singsing...</i>	<i>singsing</i>	Cebu Traditional wedding

*“Lelelechon sa talisay (ay kuan lang)*

*Siomai sa tisa (dili na ta maglalis uy mag-away man gali ta walay sakit sa kasingkasing).”*

These lines from the song *Ibog* represent symbols that reflect Cebu's Cultural influence. *Lechon* symbolizes celebrations in Cebuano culture for special occasions. The traditional showdown at the *Halad-Inasal Festival* represents how the Talisaynons revere Sta. Teresa de Avila and how pig roasting has improved the lives of individuals who have dared to overcome obstacles. Since the *Halad-Inasal Festival* began in 2005, the city's tourism has remained straightforward but pleasurable. The celebration encourages city dwellers to demonstrate their actual cultural characteristics by being humble, friendly, and helpful to others (Drift, 2015). *Lechon* from Talisay City, Cebu, is proof that they offer their highly-desired delicacy for local and foreign tourists who travel to Cebu. Talisay City *Lechon* is highly known as the *lechon* of choice for celebrities, well-known public figures, and the general public since it consistently provides the greatest dine-in and take-out experience for its customers through its *“Da Best Gyud”* culture (Broacher 2018). Because it symbolizes both the joy of gatherings and the relationships that communities have during fiestas, *“lechon”* is cherished and appreciated across the

nation. As a result, serving "Lechon" has already come to be recognized as a distinctive feature of Cebuano culture and tradition and a representation of Cebuano identity, according to Broacher (2018).

In this lyric,

*"Siomai sa tisa (dili na ta maglalis uy mag-away man gali ta walay sakit sa kasingkasing)."*

As "siomai" is represented in the song, Cebu's cultural influences may be seen in the Siomai festival, where Cebuanos provide visitors—both locals and foreigners—the best cuisine. The dish siomai itself is an example of Cebuano cooking. People swarm to roadside cafes in Tisa, Cebu, where siomai has become a specialty in order to enjoy the dumplings. Consequently, the phrase "siomai sa Tisa" originally meant Siomai at Tisa (Ernestine 2016). Since then, this siomai sa Tisa has evolved into the benchmark for street-style pork dumplings in Cebu. Siomai also participates in large celebrations and family get-togethers. The siomai festival is one of the Cebuano cultures, and Cebu City is frequently referred to as the "Siomai Capital of Cebu." Every September, locals host the Siomai Festival. The people of Tisa, Cebu, not only celebrate this dish but also their patron saint, Saint Pedro Calungsod. In addition, according to Ernestine (2016) there are street dances, contests, and endless Siomai sold across the street. Siomai goes well with *puso*, and Cebuanos like to eat it with either hanging rice or *puso*. There were many events, but the Street Dancing, often referred to as the Ritual Parade, stood out because contingent members wore bright costumes and carried Siomai-themed decorations. Additionally, Siomai sa Tisa represents the richness and wealth of Cebuano culture.

"Ibog", the chorus lines,

*"Ibog, ibog kaayu ko nimo..."*

The lyrics are written in the Bisaya language, "ibog," which is used as a symbol of the song to represent the Cebuano concept for "crush" and is known as a Cebu cultural influence. Balak is a written language used by Cebuanos to convey their affection for someone. People think that composing Balak will enable individuals to express emotions to others in a novel way and will persuade women to go out with them. Balak, or spoken poetry, is a representation of how Cebuanos embrace unique creativity, unique dialect, and linguistic richness to express, share, and celebrate individuality via literature and music. One way to distinguish personality and individuality among many ethnicities is through language. No one escapes the word "Ibog" unscathed because it is so intense. In terms of Cebuano culture, teenagers enter the time where most individuals first experience childlike excitement, or "kilig" in Cebuano. Daposala notes that Cebuano poetry before the modern age is famous for its early attempts with Western techniques in Binisaya dialects while addressing how the characteristics of balak poetry have changed over time and via exposure to different cultures. Contrarily, contemporary balak appears to have largely amalgamated with literary movements throughout most of the world, according to Du's study from 2021, Du highlights how Cebuano literature and culture are particularly distinctive now due to the Visayan languages' resistance.

Balak is such part of Cebuano's courtship culture as speakers

tend to express and hope to see value in one self, and to find love, lines speak and appreciate one's beauty and the possibility of being loved reciprocated or not in life.

*My Two Left Feet,*

*"And my two left feet ..."*

*"And spin me round the dance floor..."*

On exceptional events like the Sinulog Dance Festival, dance serves as a representation of one of Cebu's vibrant cultures. It is believed that sinulog, which is Cebuano for "taken along by the current," originated as a ritual dance for a pagan deity that was caught in the sea. Later, it underwent Hispanization and became a Santo Nino worship dance. There are many different styles of sinulog dances. The most basic, least assimilated, and perhaps the purest type of ceremonial prayer is the tindera sinulog. Without a formal costume or audience, the dancer executes this supplicatory dance to a mute, unyielding beat. In Cebuano, the term "dancing" represents freedom and peace. Due to the original melody, ingenuity, and traditional dance of the Cebuano people, one can dance even when walking along the street or traveling to another location. This is because Cebuano culture is always recognizable. Religious pageantry, the Santo Nino feast, and a celebration of the Cebu island's beginnings are all part of Sinulog. The phrase "Pit Senyor kang Mama kini, Pit Senyor kang Papa kini" ends the Sinulog offering dance that worshippers do in reverence of the miraculous Santo Nino (Apura 2017).

*Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka,*

*"Sayo sa buntag, nag gakos sa imong unlan*

*Wa ghipos imong bag -o na gitara."*

"gitara" or "guitar" is the symbolism found in the line of the song. The Cebu International Guitars Festival also held as examples of Cebu's cultural impact because of the handcraft guitar fame that the Cebuano people are recognized for worldwide. Guitars, particularly those made in Cebu, are well-known throughout the Philippines due to their low cost, high quality, and durability. Due to its historic industries, Cebu has a long history of producing guitars. Lapu-Lapu City's flourishing guitar industry has established Cebu known as the "Guitar Capital of the Philippines," and vice versa. Cebu guitars are well-known both domestically and beyond for their exceptional quality. Cebu is renowned all over the world for their expensive guitars. For many years, the island's guitar-making sector has thrived, and it is vital to Cebu's culture and economy (Cortes 2019).

Therese Marie Villarante utilizes guitar as a symbol of the loss of loved ones. It stirs up emotions of love and gets the song's listeners to identify with the engulfing loneliness and heartbreaking reminder of the human condition to a loved one who has passed away. The lyric of the song is apparent that Cebuanos culture has distinct family ties while conveying unique love. The kind of loneliness that the song's lyrics describe inspires Cebuano to become artistic and suffer emotional agony, which might inspire them to create numerous works and songs.

*Katingalahan,*

*"Ug mas katingalahan kong di ta maminaw ning gugma sa atong dughan*

*Mao nang tibook kasingkasing kong dawaton ning singsing...*"

The word "singsing" or "ring" in the song's lyrics serves as a symbol. The "ring" in this context is a representation of love and adoration for a certain person. Embrace the cultural icons of Cebu, such as the customary marriage of Cebuanos. According to the study backed by Pagz and Lachina in 2021, "The Wedding Rituals Still Practiced by Cebu Residents Through the Eyes of Lensman," some Cebuano, especially those who live in the mountains, still follow these practices. The couple's parents made the couple kneel before an altar, pray, and consume a single glass of water. Each of these customary wedding rituals encapsulates the meaning of the others. The 30-minute walk from the couple's home to the main road included the couple, the wedding party, and the customary wedding rituals. Traveled by many vegetation, including sugarcane and coconut palms. Popular wedding customs include the Madrina de Arras, or the 13 coins. The groom's readiness to provide financially is symbolized by this tradition. The bride's acceptance shows that the groom has faith and confidence in her to handle the family's money (Sunstar 2018).

The persona in the song displays love by embracing the ring totally and seeing it as eternal, as was already discussed about the fascinating Cebuano wedding culture. Infinite love is symbolized by the ring that has no beginning or end.

Cebu's Cultural influences on the lyrics of the songs are Lechon festival in Talisay Cebu, Siomai festival sa Tisa Cebu, Balak or Spoken Poetry, Cebu International Guitar Festival, Sinulog dance Festival and Cebu Traditional Wedding found in symbols.

### C. Themes

Below is Table 7 which presents the themes that depict the central main idea of why a literary piece has been made.

Table 7  
Theme analysis

Songs	Themes	Cultural Influences
<i>Bok Love</i>	Romance	Cebuano's Personality
<i>Ibog</i>	Coming of Age/Adolescence	Balak/Spoken Poetry
<i>Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka</i>	Mourning	Cebuano Beliefs
<i>My two left feet</i>	Romance	Cebu Traditions Entertainment (balitao)
<i>Katingalahan</i>	Romance	Cebu Wedding Traditions

The stanzas are being used to identify the themes of the song. In the song Bok Love, the themes in the lyrics are identified as Romance. According to Villarante's interview by Batucan in 2015 at Sunstar Cebu, "The song is about being found, being loved for who you are and suddenly seeing yourself perfect in the eyes of another," The aforementioned lyrics are chosen by the author to make the point that love is constant and unbound. The song is about a couple who enjoys stuffing themselves with food till they both gain weight. The couple has put on a tremendous amount of weight but still accept and love each other. The exquisite art of love shouldn't be ruined by flaws and

defects. It must be cherished and accepted. The affection for one another grows stronger and stronger as one gets bigger. Thus, the song delineates a millennial Cebuano personality method of exhibiting a Cebuano love as such it was found that the couple in the lyrics has been with "*Lelelechon sa Talisay and Siomai sa Tisa*" which indicates that the setting of the song happened in Cebu, experienced Cebu's best and culture. Those foregrounded words in the aforementioned are tagged along with Cebuano's way of showing and celebrating love at its finest.

One thing that all music has in common is the "Ibog" song concept. The first line of the song's lyrics explains and analyzes how the character deals with the experience of a teenage crush. A Visayan Pop song that describes one's admiration to a being, his fascination with one's soul that requires bravery and courage. The lines, "*Mo-ngisi lang sa hilum, samtang gitalikdan mo*", "*Dili masabtan ang kakulba*" and "*Ug ako ra ang nasayud*" mean that the person is anxious and has dreadful feeling which further means personal struggle of the persona that is yet to overcome. The line, "*Makatigum na gani ko ug kaisog*" describes his desire to have the courage to express admiration which Cebuanos are renowned for their bravery. In relation to Cebu's culture, Cebuano teenagers step into the pre-stage of liking someone. The song "Ibog" narrates the experience and the process of Coming of Age or Adolescence that refers to a person's maturation into the person they were born to be. Not only does the author want to find love from another person, but more importantly, love for oneself. The author tried to give the listeners an awareness of how love can change a thing in life optimistically. Hence that the author's message is a hope that everyone will find the love they deserve, a love that reciprocates a love that can make the listeners grow and embrace for a lifetime.

Moreover, the twentieth century song, the term "Ibog" refers to the typical Cebuano courtship, which is "balak" or spoken poetry with strong Spanish influences, particularly the custom of "Harana". "*Tibook gabii ko naghulat nga modu-ol ka*" and "*Naa na bakay laing gihigugma, naa na ba kay laing gigukod*" describe, respectively, the attitudes of a Cebuano woman who is waiting anxiously for the man to show love and a Cebuano man who is polite to a woman. The admiration might advance and bear fruit if a man adopts the courage and optimism of a Cebuano guy.

The song, *Unang Adlaw Nga Wala Ka* describes the persona's agony and deep remorse, but with hopes that his beloved will come back. The lines in the first stanza, "sayo sa buntag nag gako sa imong unlan", and "gitutokan sukad imong bakanteng lingkuranan" declare that the subject beloved is gone. The word "sigarilyo," which appears in the third line of the first stanza, refer to how quickly the persona's beloved departs and how the persona is starting to think back on their love for one another. The second stanza describes the persona's feeling of emptiness, and great desire to be with his beloved which can be seen in the lines, "Ug ang kahilum na ang nipuli sa imong kanta", and "Wa'y siradong pultahan maghulat lang gihapon", respectively. The third stanza delineates being away with each other that has a desire to be with his beloved, which



can be seen in the lines, “*Padayon man ang tuyok sa kalibutan*”, and “*Hunongon ko’ang oras niining balay*”. Time or “oras” is fixed and constantly moving. The entire stanzas construed the idea of the chorus which talks about deep longing for the beloved. The line, “*Kon mobalik pa ang panahon, di na nako paabton*” puts weight to the intensity of deep desire to be with the persona’s beloved which supported by the line, “*Pirmi lang ko mingawon*”, and “*Damgohon nalang nga ugma kuyog ta*”.

Moreover, the song is about the author’s loved ones who passed away. The theme in this song is mourning and the Cebu cultural influences found is Cebuano Beliefs. “*Espirituhanon*” is another trait that demonstrates the Cebuano faith in the afterlife. The Cebuanos hold that even after the physical body has died, the spirit continues to exist and that romantic connections can continue beyond death (Lagahid and Puyo 2016).

*My Two Left Feet* is a song that holds the value of how men respect women. Cebuanos are gentlemen in fact a man asks a woman first and if the woman agrees that’s the time when both of them can enjoy their own dance steps. The song, “*My Two Left Feet*” depicts Cebuano’s inclination to music and dances which delineates resilience amidst difficulties. The first stanza describes the persona’s excitement about going inside a room. Then when the music begins, the persona activates to move without any hesitation. The line, “*My two left feet won’t cause you injury, and you won’t care if they do*” explains a courageous stalwart that depicts joy with music. This further means that once a person decides to be one with the music, everything glides. The line, “*Tonight, I will improvise my steps*” explains another characteristic of a Cebuano that is being innovative which means being clever to maximize the available and possible resources. The entire song expresses a kind of love to music that no matter what happens, the dance and show will go on.

In relation to Cebu’s culture, the Cebuano way of courtship to women is full of sincerity, respect, and values. In order to avoid being viewed as “presumptuous or aggressive” or arrogant, a Cebuano male suitor often displays his interest in a woman in a modest and pleasant manner. One of which is through a romantic dance, balak, gifts or song/ music because it appeals to the emotions and is incredibly romantic. This means that Cebu is a place of various courtship cultural influences. Cebu is rich in culture as Cebuanos are open to adapting and influencing to any other culture which makes Cebuanos adaptable and resilient.

Moreover, the song presents Cebuano’s fondness for music and dances. Gutierrez (1961) declared that Cebuanos are known for “Balitao” which is a love debate in song and dance by a man and a woman that embodied all sorts of Visayan activities, their social relationships, their loves, and friendships, by which the song speaks about. Lagahid, etc. (2016) believed that Cebuanos are greatly motivated by the belief in the individual’s coexistence with incorporeal, such as the supernaturals, souls, and divine beings calling it as “*Espirituhanon*”, which can be portrayed through dances and festivals like La Torta and Sinulog just like the song that shares the fondness of the persona

to a dance. Therefore, Cebu’s cultural influence that is found in the analysis of the theme for *My Two Left Feet* song is courtship in Cebu Traditions Entertainment which is a Balitao.

The song *Katingalahan* is a descriptive-narrative-love song that speaks about how enchanting love can be in a lifetime. This free-verse song begins with the time they met each other with a cup of coffee from the line, “*Di pa suod nga higala, Nag-abot lang ug nangape*”, then how it flourish into a beautiful feeling and a lifetime commitment from the lines, “*Karon, ani-ay kasuod nga dili matugkad ang gilawmon*”, and “*Mao nang tibuok kasing-kasing kong dawotong ‘ning singsing ‘ning grasya sa kahitas-an*”, respectively. The persona is astounded how love leads them into a promise of forever in the line, “*Ug kon wala man gani hangtod sa kahangtoran, Kanunay nimong gunitan ang akong kamot*”. Hence, the song delineates the wonders of love in a lifetime. “*Nothing can come between us*” As the bride and groom exit the chapel following the ceremony, they must hold hands, and no one must come between them. This symbolizes the strong bond between husband and wife during their marriage (Sunstar2018). Cebu’s cultural influence that is found in theme analysis for *Katingalahan* song is the Cebu wedding traditions.

Cebuanos personality, Balak or Spoken Poetry, Cebuano Beliefs, Cebu Traditions Entertainment (balitao) and Cebu Weddings Traditions are the themes found in the select songs of Therese Marie Villarante.

## 5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, Therese Marie Villarante’s selected songs are influenced by Cebu’s Culture.

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