

# Development of Romblomanon Legends in Comic Book Form as Mother Tongue-Based Online Supplementary Learning Resource Material in Asi, Onhan and Ini Languages

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## ABSTRACT

This study aimed to develop the Romblon legends in comic book form. Specifically, it aimed to investigate the background of Romblomanon legends in the three languages that could be used for promoting Filipino values of children who are still in the process of assimilating the culture of Romblon, investigate ways to conserve and develop these legends into a comic book form and determine the rating of the comic book as supplementary learning resource materials (SLR) in the elementary level as rated by the Learning Resource Management Development System (LRMDS) Team of DepEd. The Evaluation Rating Sheet for Story Book was used in determining the appropriateness of the SLR material in terms of content, format, and technical aspects; and solicited comments and suggestions from the respondents that served as inputs for the improvement and revision of the legends in Comic book form. This paper is a descriptive-evaluative investigation. The research area is the whole Romblon Province. The research sample was determined through a dragnet method wherein key informants, casual informants, and general informants were identified in the field. Evidence was gathered from document analysis and field research. Data collection tools were observation, interviews, and focus group discussions. The research was conducted in five stages: planning, development, validation, final output, and dissemination. Of the four legends, 10 Romblomanon values were extracted and incorporated into the stories. It is highly recommended that the streamlined five-stage development process may be used for the comic book development of the rest of the undocumented legends of Romblon.

Keywords: *comic book evaluation, culture, legends, online supplementary learning resource material, Romblomanon values*

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## INTRODUCTION

Capturing the Romblomanon legends for the contemporary culture in a contemporary medium like a comic book would benefit the young generations who are still in the process of assimilating the culture and values of the society where they belong. Legends are permanent fixtures of society (Abbot, 2013). Though the presence of legends is permanent, Abbot (2013) added that functions and meanings of legends can fluctuate as the context in which they are told and retold shifts. This fluctuation in context could result from a change in the culture of the members of the society as they move through history.

With the advent of technology and 21st century learners, the teaching method should also cope with the

increasing demand of the times and use 21st-century literature. In this sense, transforming the legends to 21st-century genres, like a comic book, printed and softcopy, will lead to an interested audience and a fresh approach to the teaching and learning environment.

The meaning and functions of legends must be handed down to generations. However, the problem is the lack of legend narrator resulting in most children and youths who are either misinformed or, worst, ignorant of their legends because the telling of legends are not perpetuated by the present generations (Saenboonsiri et al., 2015). Saenboonsiri et al. (2015) suggested that for the conservation and the development of folktales or legends in this study, all members of the community must cooperate either by establishing a museum, integrating the folktales in school curriculums, and holding folktale storytelling competitions throughout the region. In the Romblon province setting, however, establishing a museum is still farfetched. On the other hand, holding competitions is doable but would entail a lot of time and resources. Meanwhile, legends are

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already integrated into the curriculum, especially literature subjects, but problems lie in the choice and availability of materials. Teachers usually select known and popular Tagalog legends because of the availability of materials or the lack of knowledge of their local legends. This problem could be solved by developing supplementary learning resource material like a comic book of Romblomanon legends.

Lastly, the COVID-19 pandemic resulted in the shutdown of schools worldwide. The traditional classrooms shifted to online teaching, changing education dramatically and driving the rise of e-learning and online teaching materials. This online comic book of legends is a timely contribution in response to this critical demand. This study aimed to develop a comic book out of the Romblomanon legends in the three languages and determine the rating of the comic book as SLR in the elementary level as rated by the LRMDS Team of DepEd. The Evaluation Rating Sheet for Story Book was used in determining the appropriateness of the SLR material in terms of content, format, and technical aspects; and solicited comments and suggestions from the respondents that served as inputs for the improvement and revision of the legends in Comic book form.

## METHODOLOGY

This paper is a descriptive-evaluative investigation. The research area is the whole Romblon Province. The research sample was determined through a dragnet method wherein key informants, casual informants, and general informants were identified in the field. Evidence was gathered from document analysis and field research. Data collection tools are observation, interviews, and focus group discussions. The research period was eight months.

The research was conducted in five stages, as illustrated in Figure 1. There is an additional 6<sup>th</sup> stage which is a recommendation for further study. The first stage is a documentary investigation period or collection from secondary sources using the paradigm suggested by Perlas (2011). The researcher searched documents, studies, collections, compilations, and internet postings of Romblomanon legends. For the second stage, these documents were collected and authenticated in the field and served as the basis of the research in the writing and illustration of the legends to its comic book form. A graphic artist was commissioned to illustrate the legends in comic form. However, the script and storyboard were a collaborative effort between the researcher, the

Filipino psychology consultant (for the extraction and incorporation of Romblomanon values), and the commissioned graphic artist. Filipino psychology consultant and the researcher extracted the Romblomanon values from the legends in comics form. Moreover, the head of the LRMDS Team of DepEd was consulted to ensure the feasibility of the supplementary learning resource material.

After all appointments were in place in the third stage, the researcher submitted the legends draft in a comic book form to the LRMDS Team for their initial scrutiny. The LRMDS team was composed of the DepEd Program Supervisor in Learning Resource Management and two other teachers. The initial result of the consultation was forwarded to the graphic artist for the necessary revision. The revised SLR was then submitted for the second time to the LRMDS team for the final revision and the rating score of the DepEd Evaluation Rating Sheet for Story Book. The evaluation rating sheet comprises two factors: content, and format and technical aspect. In order for the comic book on legends to pass the criterion for a supplementary learning resource material and be allowed or approved, the SLR rating score must at least be 24 points out of the maximum 32 points for content and 9 points out of the maximum 12 points for format and technical aspect.

In the fourth stage, the final output, the result of the rating sheet, underwent analysis, and all comments and suggestions were incorporated in the final draft of the legends in comic book form. A focus group discussion (FGD) was conducted. The final draft was then shown to the respondents for further comments. The final draft was then sent to the graphic artist for final rendering.

The focus group comprised the researcher, the LRMDS Team of DepEd, carriers of the tradition, a graphic artist, and a Filipino psychology consultant. Asynchronous online FGD was done due to the restrictions of the COVID 19 pandemic. Participants in the FGD are asked one or more pre-determined questions in asynchronous online focus groups using FB messenger. Participants move issues ahead through dialogues — or 'threads' — on each question, which are uploaded at various time intervals and sometimes all at once. Questions are based on the LRMDS team and the Filipino psychology consultant's suggestions for the graphic artist to follow in the revisions of the illustrations. Meanwhile, the carriers of the tradition were asked if the modifications were acceptable and would not change the legend's story drastically.

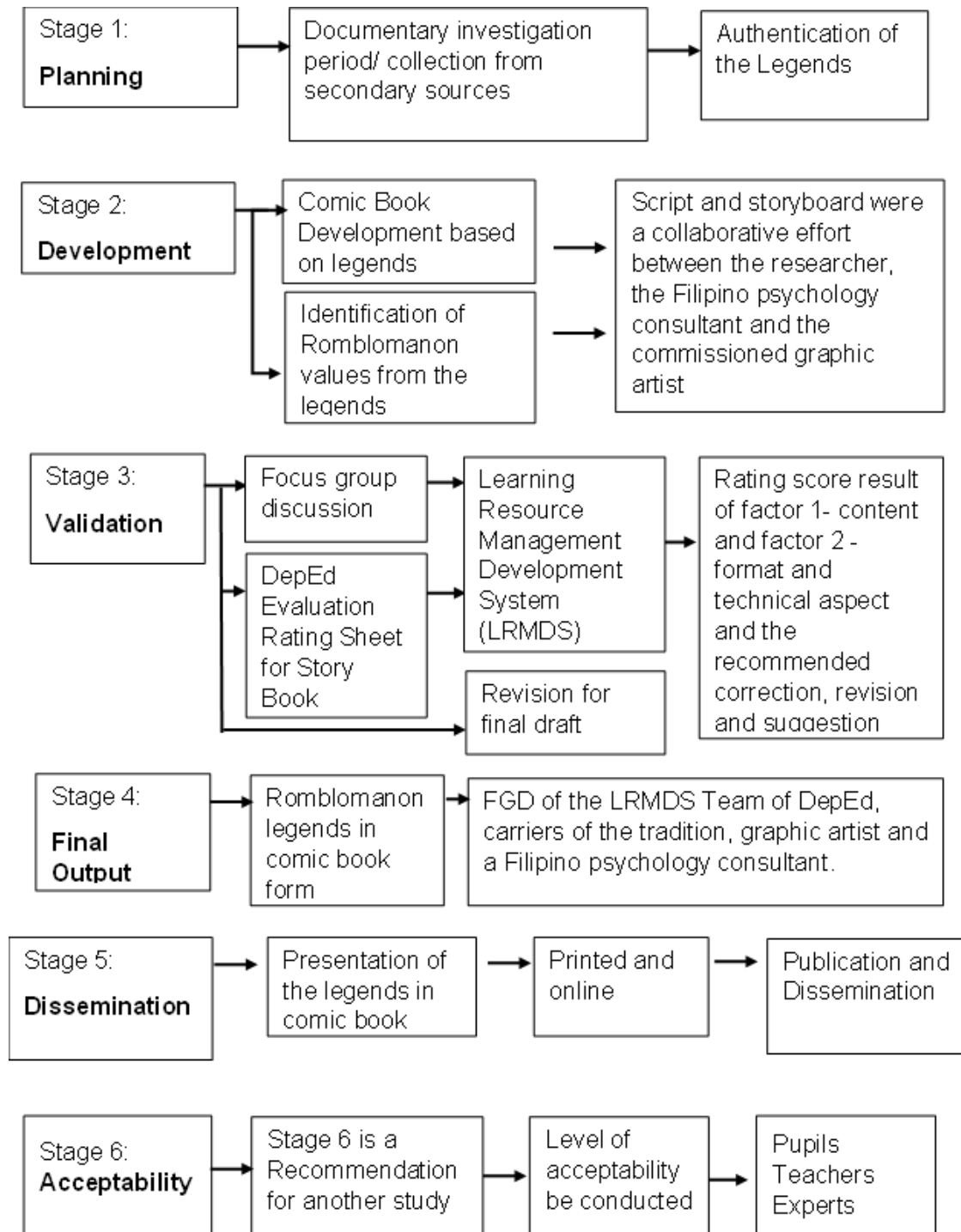


Figure 1. Schematic Diagram.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The supplementary learning resource rating of the Romblomanon legends was determined using indicators and two factors: content and format and technical aspect. The raters are the LRMDS team of DepEd composed of the DepEd Program Supervisor in Learning Resource Management and two other teachers. The DepEd Evaluation Rating Sheet for Story Books and Big books was used.

The content was rated along with the story, socio-cultural sensitivity, developmental aspect, plot, characters, visuals, language, and grammar. Presented in Table 1 are the ratings on the four legends in comic book form by the DepEd evaluation team, along with the factor of content. It shows that the total points of 26 for *Talabukon*, 26 for *Cresta de Gallo*, 24 for *Bato ni Jimmy* and 28 for *Ibong Parpagayo* pass the SLR criterion of at least 24 points out of the maximum 32 points.

Table 1. Supplementary Learning Resource Rating of the Romblomanon Legends in terms of Content

Factor 1: Content	<i>Talabukon</i>		Cresta de Gallo		<i>Bato ni Jimmy</i>		<i>Ibong Parpagayo</i>	
	Rating	VI	Rating	VI	Rating	VI	Rating	VI
1. Story	3	S	4	VS	4	VS	4	VS
2. Socio-cultural Sensitivity	4	VS	3	S	3	S	3	S
3. Developmental Aspect	3	S	3	S	2	F	4	VS
4. Plot	4	VS	3	S	3	S	3	S
5. Characters	4	VS	4	VS	4	VS	4	VS
6. Visuals	3	S	3	S	3	S	3	S
7. Language	2	F	3	S	3	S	4	VS
8. Grammar	3	S	3	S	3	S	3	S
Total points	26		26		24		28	

Table 2. Supplementary Learning Resource Rating of the Romblomanon Legends Along with the Factor of Format and Technical Aspect

Factor 2: Format and technical aspect	<i>Talabukon</i>		Cresta de Gallo		<i>Bato ni Jimmy</i>		<i>Ibong Parpagayo</i>	
	Rating	VI	Rating	VI	Rating	VI	Rating	VI
1. Prints	2	F	4	VS	4	VS	3	S
2. Book design and layout	4	VS	3	S	4	VS	4	VS
3. Paper and binding	4	VS	3	S	4	VS	4	VS
Total points	10		10		12		11	

This result implies that the LRMDS team recommends the approval of the legends, in terms of content, as a supplementary learning resource for possible use in public schools, provided that the corrections/ revisions included in their report are made. The evaluation team's ratings range from 2, described as fair, to 4, described as very satisfactory. As to the total points, the legends *Talabukon* and *Cresta de Gallo* got 26 points, the second highest, while *Ibong Parpagayo* got the highest score of 28. Sari et al. (2020) argued that since Folklore is ingrained in the culture, the lessons, and actions of the characters in a story and the values it promotes may be utilized as learning material.

Format and technical aspects were rated along with prints, book design and layout, and paper and binding. Presented in Table 2 are the ratings on the four legends in comic form by the DepEd evaluation team, along with the factor of Format and technical aspects. It shows that the total points of 10 for *Talabukon*, 10 for *Cresta de Gallo*, 12 for *Bato ni Jimmy* and 11 for *Ibong Parpagayo* pass the SLR criterion of at least 9 points out of the maximum 12 points. This result implies that the LRMDS team recommends the approval of the legends, in terms of format and technical aspect, as a supplementary learning resource for possible use in public schools, provided that the corrections/ revisions

included in their report are made. The evaluation team's ratings range from 2, described as fair, to 4, described as very satisfactory. As to the total points, the legends *Talabukon* and *Cresta de Gallo* got 10 points each, *Ibong Parpagayo* got 11, while *Bato ni Jimmy* got the highest score of 12.

### **Romblomanon Values from the Legends**

Astillero and Ocbian (2015) extracted cultural characteristics and values in Sorsogueños' poems, and Ocbian et al. (2015) extracted values from big books. These Filipino values are undeniably reflected in literary pieces. Similarly, Romblomanon values and culture are reflected in the legends. The four legends manifested the following Romblomanon values: respect for elders, close family ties, courage and bravery, patient suffering (*pagtitiis*), camaraderie, solidarity, humane (being *maka-tao*), patriotic (being *maka-bayan*), cheerful (*pagiging masiyahin*), fellowship (*pakikipagkapwa*), long for peace (*kapayapaan*), kindness (*kagandahang-loob*), authority figure, don't-be-caught" attitude and obedience.

The legend *Ang Bato ni Jimmy* shows respect for elders. Respect for elders is a value inculcated early in socialization. Although Romblon is predominantly of a Visayan culture, the children are taught to say "*po*" or "*opo*" when talking with elders. This phenomenon is an assimilation of the Tagalog culture. Close family ties are also evident in the legend. There is already interdependence among family members from infancy to old age in terms of economic, social, spiritual, and emotional aspects. Patience (*Pagtitiis*) is also evident, as shown by both Jimmy and his wife. In the legend, *Pagtitiis* is a source of their strength. A Filipino is by nature *matiisin* because he is loving towards the family. He is ready to face the challenge of responsibility for the sake of his loved ones. He is willing to pay the price of doing this with pain and suffering for himself.

The legend *Parpagayo ng Ilog Parpaguya* likewise shows respect for elders. Titles of respect like "*Tito*," "*Tita*," "*Mang*" or "*Aling*" or "*Kuya*," "*Manang*," or "*Ate*" and using "*po*" or "*opo*" in talking with elders abound in Filipino languages. There is also camaraderie and solidarity, as shown by their celebration of the fiesta. The legend shows that being humane or *maka-tao* by valuing freedom, love, equality, and peace and being patriotic or *maka-bayan* promotes the common good and builds a just and humane society. Most importantly, the legend shows the cheerful attitude or *pagiging masiyahin* of the community. Filipinos have an innate sense of happiness. We can even find humor in our problems. In the legend, the annual visit of the *Ibong Parpagayo* inspired the annual fiesta celebration of happiness.

The legend of *Talabukon* shows the residents longing for fellowship and peace (*pakikipagkapwa* and *kapayapaan*.) Being regularly raided by Moro pirates and sold as slaves, the people of the place exhibit fellowship. The story also shows patriotism as the characters of the story work together for the common good. Their love for nature or being *makakalikahan* were exemplified by the characters who are shown to care for the environment and utilize resources wisely and economically. Lastly, the legend shows kindness or *kagandahang-loob* in the person of *Talabukon* by helping people in dire need.

Lastly, the legend of *Cresta de Gallo* shows respect for elders, as shown by the characters. The legend also shows Euphemism wherein an unpleasant truth is stated in an ambiguous term not to hurt the feelings and avoid potential situations for shame or *hiya*. *Hiya* is perhaps the strongest motivation in the behavior of the Filipino. The Filipino who is *walanghiya* or shameless lacks certain inhibitions and is insensitive to the feelings of others. In contrast, the Filipino who is *mahiyain* develops the value of respect and decency.

The high SLR rating, along with the story; very satisfactory for the legends of *Cresta de Gallo*, *Bato ni Jimmy* and *Ibong Parpagayo*, may be attributed to the fact that the legends are already ingrained into the consciousness of the community, thus contributing to the heightened interest of the reader. However, one story, the *Cresta de Gallo*, needs to be retold to be appropriate to the grade level (K to Grade 3) as observed by the LRMDS team. This finding is factual with what Abbot (2013) said about the shift in meaning and functions of legends as it is told and retold. The *Cresta de Gallo* legend recounts the story of the two siblings who fall in love and commit the great taboo of incest. *Bathala* punished them by striking them with a *dugsak* or the combination of thunder and lightning separating them when a part of the earth was thrown away and became the island of *Cresta de Gallo*. The hollowed-out area became *Lamao Lake*. The comic book form of the legend was retold and made appropriate to the grade level by downplaying the incest to the mere accidental peeking of the brother of his sister's undergarment from the lake's reflection. In this manner, the function and meaning remained.

The legends are supposed to garner a higher score for cultural sensitivity since the materials are related to one's own cultural experiences. However, *Cresta de Gallo*, *Bato ni Jimmy* and *Ibong Parpagayo* got only a satisfactory rating. This result is because some stories lack conflict, as in the case of the *Ibong Parpagayo* as commented by the LRMDS team. The plot of the *Ibong Parpagayo* legend recounts the story of the giant bird who only comes to town when the people are happy. The community celebrates the *Ibong Parpagayo* festival, hoping that the giant bird

will soon revisit them. Another is the deviation from the norm of the story of *Ang Bato ni Jimmy*. The story narrates the plight of Jimmy, who allows his wife to go to Manila to work. The unnamed wife was not able to return for some time. Every day Jimmy climbs a rocky hill to wait for incoming ships, shouting for his wife to return home. It was suggested that Jimmy should be the one to go to Manila because of Filipino values that men should do the work and earn for the family. This suggestion is impossible since the legend is about Jimmy patiently waiting for his wife's return.

*Ibong Parpagayo* got the highest rating of 4 or very satisfactory for the developmental aspects while *Bato ni Jimmy* got the lowest, two or fair. Meanwhile, *Talabukon* got the highest score of 4 or very satisfactory for the plot, and the rest got satisfactory ratings. These ratings are attributed to the fact that the stories are legends, and deviation from the known plot of the legends sacrifices its authenticity. For the characters, all legends got four or very satisfactory. This result is attributed to the fact that the characters' personalities are all interesting and possess Filipino values. Moreover, the rest of the factors, visuals, language, and grammar, got varied scores. The revision, corrections, and suggestions in this part of the criterion under content are easier to address since they will not interfere with the authenticity of the legends. On the other hand, for the format and technical aspect, the legend of *Talabukon* got the lowest rating score of 2 or Fair. The result is attributed to the recommended font size and font family corrections. The rest of the criteria got high rating scores proving the appropriateness of the layout to the approved grade level.

Lastly, the four legends manifested the following Romblomanon values: respect for elders, close family ties, courage and bravery, patient suffering (*pagtitiis*), camaraderie, solidarity, humane (being *maka-tao*), patriotic (being *maka-bayan*), cheerful (*pagiging masiyahin*), fellowship (*pakikipagkapwa*), long for peace (*kapayapaan*), kindness (*kagandahang-loob*), authority figure, don't-be-caught" attitude and obedience.

## CONCLUSION

Romblomanon legends in the three languages could be used for promoting Filipino values for children who are still in the process of assimilating the culture of Romblon. Interestingly, aside from a means for conserving the legends, the comic book development is aptly suited to the 21st-century learner and a timely SLR in the elementary level in this time of the COVID-19 pandemic. Although some countries have rich folklore legacy, it has remained chiefly oral, and no substantial attempts have been made to exploit it as teaching material. Improvements in compliance with prescribed

classroom duties were seen after using folklore as teaching materials, and the familiar subject sparked interest among the young students.

However, the rigorous process of comic book development could hinder others from joining this endeavor. Nevertheless, this study developed a streamlined five-stage development process with an additional 6th stage for the test of acceptability. Therefore, it is recommended that the streamlined five-stage development process plus the acceptability test be used for the comic book development of the rest of the undocumented legends of Romblon. Further, published Romblomanon legends in the comic form will be made available for tourism use of the municipalities in Romblon.

Likewise, Romblomanon legends will also be promoted to the whole Philippines through popular media such as the comic book and the Romblon State University as the champion of this cause. The softcopy of the comic book will also be published on websites for broader dissemination and will serve as supplementary learning resource material for use online. Erwinsyah and Andayani (2019) found out that students are more engaged and less bored while learning in class due to the animation of the legendary stories as teaching material. They argued that technological advancements are becoming more rapid. People must follow and stay up, and humans have employed various types of technology in their daily lives, including in the educational system. Lastly, the comic form legend can be channeled to promote Romblomanon culture, nature, and its collective consciousness as an island province, and it will significantly promote Romblomanon values.

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## CONFLICT OF INTEREST

The author declares no conflict of interest.

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