

Performing Banà-banà: The Significations of ‘Hakop sa Kasinatian’ In The IPAG-In-The-Frames Multimedia Exhibit

John Michael C. Lagura

The Department of English Mindanao State University- Iligan Institute of Technology Iligan City

ABSTRACT: This paper proposes *Banà-banà* as a concept for describing the process and the result of a performance or a creative pursuit. With that, three main points are emphasized: 1) *Banà-banà* is an imminent phenomenon that creative individuals, performers, and actors encounter when dealing with unpredictable factors in the present moment; 2) it holds the potential for serving as a method for executing an evocative performance; and, 3) it can serve as an active lens for describing the quality of its (performance) engagement, as exemplified by the *Hakop* of MSU-IIT's resident theatre company, IPAG. Along this line, the need for understanding and liberating it from delimiting notions becomes a priority. In a nutshell, the study aims to (1) establish a discourse model for signifying performance experience and (2) develop a culturally-rooted performance method. To make sense of this, the study looks into three phases of the act of *Banà-banà* in performance: *Una*, *Akto*, and *Unya*, and their corresponding R-model efforts: reflect, respond, react. Through *Banà-banà*, the study hopes to gain at least a minute view of the complex cultural negotiation, creativity, and culture-building taking place in language exchange and performance, implying discoveries and possibilities in fields like Peace Studies, Language Studies, Public Relations, Politics, and the Humanities.

KEYWORDS: language, phenomenon, performance, liminality, dramaturgy, theatre.

INTRODUCTION

“Do not dwell in the past, do not dream of the future, concentrate the mind on the present moment”.

-Buddha

Banà-banà Signified

Banà-banà is a concept I propose for signifying the process and the result of a performance or a creative pursuit. This study posits three main points: 1) *Banà-banà* is an imminent phenomenon that creative individuals, performers, and actors encounter when dealing with unpredictable factors in the present moment; 2) it holds the potential for serving as a method for executing an evocative performance; and, 3) it can serve as an active lens for describing the quality of its (performance) engagement, as exemplified by the *Hakop* of MSU-IIT's resident theatre company, IPAG. Along this line, I have observed that, based on practice and the implications of the contexts of its locality, there is a need for understanding and liberating it from delimiting notions— unstable, volatile, speculative, and unreliable. In a nutshell, the study aims to (1) establish a discourse model for signifying performance experience and (2) develop a culturally-rooted performance method.

A Cebuano word that translates to the act of estimating, predicting, appropriating, guessing, and forecasting, *Banà-banà* could be all of these but can never be solely one of them. Decoding the word requires sourcing it from its contexts. For instance, it can double as either a method for acting or a method for signifying the enacted performance. In *Banà-banà*, one thinks and does the act simultaneously. In this study, *Banà-banà* acts as a method for signifying (describing) experience and determining (analyzing) how the actor can effectively elicit a dynamic audience response that doesn't solely conform to monolithic sources of validation. *Banà-banà* is basically improvisation but not exactly. Both the *Banà-banà* and improvisation methods are significantly different and the same altogether. Albeit that *Banà-banà* and improvisation are both essential intuitive modes for dramatic movement¹, they are, however, different in terms of enactment. Improvisation entails an alternative solution; *Banà-banà*, on the other hand, is an ineluctable process of doing (as in performance).

What is IPAG and Hakop?

For years now, the Integrated Performing Arts Guild (IPAG), a 48-year-old theater company based in the Mindanao State University-Iligan Institute of Technology, founded by Ramon Magsaysay Laureate and dance researcher Ligaya Fernando-Amilbangsa, and co-founded, sustained and nurtured by retired MSU-IIT professor Dr. Steven Patrick Fernandez, employs the *Hakop sa Kasinatian* as our aesthetic standard (determined through years of theory and practice). The *Hakop*, as expressed in the IPAG pedagogy, literally translates to the audience's state of being “embraced by the experience” of a performance (Fernandez, 2020). The *Hakop*, therefore,

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serves as a marker for a show perceived to be successful, consummated, or evocative. Concurrently¹, several professional theater companies describe the success of a performance as being “consummated by the perfect gelling of elements from the source vision to the target response” (Bleeker, et al., 2015; Frost and Yarrow, 1989; & Micu, 2022).

Why Choose IPAG's In-the-Frames as Lens?

Among the IPAG productions, the *'IPAG-In-the-Frames'* staged last August 27-30, 2024, was, I profess, highly engaging. I base this claim on the actor and audience's first-hand impression of the engagement. Further conversations contributed by MSU-IIT publications *Thu'um*, *Silahis*, *The Caducius*, *Sindaw*, etc., further shed light on the quality of the Hakop. Staged in a presentational style, the multimedia exhibit and performance art “constructs the conventional and unconventional, rebuilding and strengthening social engagements, communication, and speech acts in the heart of the university” (Pagarigan, 2024). Forged from the concept of found space², it aims to challenge the confines of the stage and reach out to the audience en toto from criss-crossing locations similar to that of a Brechtian³ convention.

The intentional subjection of the actors into the whims inherent in the outdoor space, like rain, heat, traffic of vehicles (especially that the time of the performance is simultaneous with the egress of the university employees), and other unpredictabilities, is what sets the recent production apart from IPAG's other repertoires. The production allowed the IPAG actors to fully utilize Banà-banà to achieve Hakop with the audience. Such discomfort of the outdoor setup provided the actors the means to exercise their abilities in their rawest and most immediate form in order to establish a meaningful connection with the audience.

i. Statement of the Problem

The Hakop 'aesthetic standard' is incomplete as a marker without the Banà-banà method. Although evaluation rubrics (performance evaluation sheets, production books, audience ratings, etc.) prove potent for reinforcing data pertaining to a consummated performance, they cannot take into account the overall nuance of the engagement. Some nuances exhibited by the audience during the performance are just too complex to be accurately embodied by scores. Audience appreciation of and participation in a performance can be challenging to measure. The subjective nature of audience experiences, influenced by individual factors, and cultural and environmental contexts, makes it difficult to quantify and generalize audience responses (Sontag, 1977; Schechner, 1985). This issue perhaps relates to the fact that experience and subjective reality are nearly impossible to access in their accuracy, or at least objectively (Heidegger, 1927; Husserl, 1913; & Merleau-Ponty, 1945). Even post-performance critiques and ticket sales cannot solely determine if the show is accurately a total success (Auslander, 1997; Schechner, 1985).

The Hakop, despite its complexities and unpredictability, cannot serve as a fully reliable measure as its significance can be obscured by the fluctuating mix of audience reactions, reflections, and responses within the semiotic sphere (semiosphere⁴). To fully gauge the quality of the Hakop, one must position it in the fidelity of Banà-banà and within its specific context—what I term the 'Hakop horizon.' This horizon represents the complete phenomenological unit where actions and meanings achieve closure. It compels the actor to Banà-banà in response to the evolving reality and its 'Happenings' (Kaprow, 1967).

Each of the actor's responses within a performance constitutes a form of completion. Every point of contact in a theatrical performance, even if part of a work-in-progress, establishes its own Hakop horizon. For example, a rehearsal, a performance, and a post-performance discussion each possess distinct Hakop horizons. Meaning-making occurs even during rehearsals, with the director and production staff acting as a surrogate audience. Similarly, critic runs offer opportunities for early feedback. While these developmental stages are smaller units contributing to the final production, each stage is complete in itself. From a broader perspective, the final production is only but a single completed unit (focused performance⁵) within a larger continuum of events (larger context⁶). Therefore, the Hakop horizon can be understood on two levels: the overall completed staging and the smaller constituent units, down to the smallest unit—the dramatic beat.

It is thus a business of this study to explore how the concept of completed units within a performance can be understood. It uses Banà-banà to describe and signify Hakop, drawing on Barba's (2010) levels of performance organization: "organic/dynamic, narrative, and evocative dramaturgies," and their associated efforts: react, reflect, and respond.

Reacting is characterized by an instinctive, immediate response to a specific action or stimulus within a performance. Responding, conversely, involves a more controlled, prepared, or considered reaction. Reflecting, on the other hand, entails the actor's momentary inward contemplation of the experience, similar to an aside. Of these three, reflection is not directly perceptible to the audience.

¹ I Refer to dramatic movement in this study as the continuous flow of energy and beats within a dramatic encounter.

² The influences of the *found space* concept can be traced to theatre practitioners Jerzy Grotowski's 'Poor Theatre' and Antonin Artaud's 'Theatre of Cruelty'. The concept of found space revolves around the reclamation of spaces that are not traditionally utilized for a theatre performance.

³ A Brechtian convention, or known formally as the 'Epic Theatre', is best characterized by elements that disrupt the illusion of realism and alienate the audience, encouraging critical thought rather than emotional investment in the performance.

⁴ See or read Lotman's (1984) *The Semiotics of Russian Culture* wherein he elaborated the concept of semiosphere as a "semiotic space" or "continuum" where culture operates.

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These reflective thoughts are enacted by the interplay between the actor and the audience's reactions and responses. Driven by impulse, all three actions are linked to individually completed beats or *puntos* within the performance. These actions are not necessarily sequential; an actor may experience all three—reflecting, responding, and reacting—simultaneously. These efforts manifest variedly in the performance phases which I term *Una* (proto), *Akto* (in-the-moment), and *Unya* (aftermath).

Una encompasses the preparatory phase (rehearsals, training, workshops, and feedback from previous audiences and critics). Here, the writer's/director's intent (vision) is subjected to banà-banà. This phase may not only involve rehearsals and training, but also research, strategizing, and marketing. *Akto* represents the live performance itself, an unalterable moment where the actor inevitably interacts with the audience, exposing their interpretation of the director's/writer's vision to audience reception. In addition, the *Akto* phase may also involve, other than the main performance, small interactions between the writer and director, director and actor, and actor and audience during short intervals between shows (in cases wherein matinee and gala occasions are slated). *Unya* occurs after this interaction, defining Hakop post-performance. It considers fulfilled expectations, latent reactions,² and potential impacts, employing Banà-banà to further understand and describe the Hakop that transpired. The *Unya* phase may also involve, apart from the critical response, the description, reworking, and the collection of evaluative data and other documentation. In a way, the *Unya* phase paves the way for another *Una*, if not the actual *Una* in of itself.

The Hakop through Banà-banà method allows theater-makers to redefine their understanding of success, purporting that Hakop as a marker is presumptuous until proven complete by all extents of signification. And only through its holistic state through the Banà-banà method can the Hakop aesthetic experience be fully reformed/performed in a sustained 'semiotic environment' (Lotman, 1984).

ii. Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the study:

1. Analyze Banà-banà as:
 - a. Methodology for signifying and attaining the Hakop
 - b. Imminent phenomenon experienced by actors across fixed points in a creative process/performance
2. Describe the nature of the Hakop sa Kasinatian in IPAG's In-the-Frames through Banà-banà:
 - a. Aesthetic standard
 - b. Dramatic experience (actor-audience)
3. Define Hakop in relation to the enactment of Banà-banà in the intellectual, emotional, and physical areas of the actor during the *Una*, *Akto*, and *Unya* phases in IPAG's In-the-Frames
4. Discuss the Banà-banà from:
 - a. The positions it emanates (director, actor, and audience)
 - b. The specific efforts involved in it whether be it reflective, reactive, responsive or none at all

iii. Theoretical Framework

I approach this study based on Eugenio Barba's *Levels of Organization in a Performance*. A dominant feature of the dramaturgy⁷ by Barba is a more "personalized" theater practice and valuation. He claimed that each dramaturg will have his own processes of gauging a performance's success (success, according to Barba, has different manifestations). Consequently, this system by Barba lays down the motivation for this study, treating the Banà-banà method not as a template, but as an active means for making sense of the experience delivered by the actor to the audience and, in turn, elicited by the audience to the actor in their specific Hakop horizons. Like Banà-banà, this system aimed to capture the essence of dramaturgy as the study of the actor's actions and how these actions come into work. Barba insists that this field of study is not limited to literature but rather overlaps into the more practical technical operations of developing a performance.

The three distinct levels of organization, according to Barba, are namely the Organic/Dynamic dramaturgy, the Narrative dramaturgy, and the Evocative dramaturgy. Deriving the efforts from the three levels, the study rethinks each one as having its own unique process of Banà-banà based on its actuality. The organic dramaturgy, the outer, most surface level, of the three, "concerns the way of composing and interweaving the dynamisms, the rhythms, and the physical and vocal actions of the actors in order to stimulate sensorially the attention of the spectators" (Barba, 2010). The second level is the narrative dramaturgy wherein the linking of two or more events offers several meanings to the audience. Finally, the evocative dramaturgy refers to "the faculty of the performance to produce an intimate resonance within the spectator" (Ibid., 2010). Herein is where the Hakop is presumed to be consummated. Another theoretical basis I use for the study is Schechner's (2020) *Performance Process Sequence*. The concept by Schechner dissects the phases of performance as Proto-performance, Public (actual) performance, and the Aftermath. According

⁵ See Richard Schechner (2010), especially page 54-55, for an elaboration and contextualization of the term 'focused performance'.

⁶ See Richard Schechner (2010), especially page 54-55, for an elaboration and contextualization of the term 'larger context'.

⁷ See Bogart (2001): pages 12-13, 35, 42, 57, and 130-134, and Brecht (1964): chapters 4-5, for further insight on dramaturgy.

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to Schechner, "this process applies to all kinds of performing arts, sports and other popular entertainments, rituals, play, and the performances of everyday life." The model is not prescriptive, though (Schechner, 2020, p. 39). Instead, he aimed it to serve as an "aid to understanding, not a straitjacket" (Ibid., p. 40). Therefore, this model should only relate to the Banà-banà's Una, Akto, and Unya phases, and resist determining its conventions. Meanwhile, all the Banà-banà processes in each phase importantly contribute to the integrative signification of the presumptive Hakop aesthetic standard.

iv. Scope and Limitation

This study examines IPAG's production of In-the-Frames, which was staged as part of its 47th theater season titled '*IPAG-Subang*,' from August 26-28, 2024. To explore the Hakop aesthetic standard through the Banà-banà method, this research categorizes respondents based on their positions: the director (represented by the author of the study), the actors (purposely selected for their audience-interactive roles), and the audience members (represented by the MSU-IIT publications). Data gathered from these respondents will be treated as sui generis to each individual. However, this data will also be valued as a means for signifying, rather than validating, the Banà-banà process."

v. Significance of the Study

The study of Banà-banà is admittedly not a novel idea. Only the intent of embracing it as a method of performance, to some extent, constitutes an innovative move. Alternatively, it is to be treated as a natural process of performance. This study aims to unravel the tendencies of Banà-banà in its rawest manifestations, in very specific moments of human transactions on and off-stage, and within our own impulses. The impulse to Banà-banà is innate in us, both givers and receivers. We only further automatize and enhance them in ritual and performance, the same way Stanislavsky, Meisner, Adler, and many others tailor-fit improvisation to acting. Although the aim of this study is to employ Banà-banà for expanding discourses around IPAG's Hakop performance aesthetics, it nevertheless acknowledges its salience in the pragmatic socio-cultural dealings in politics, religion, economics, academics, and the like. Performance, in all its continuums, often happens beyond the stage. Through Banà-banà, the study hopes to gain at least a minute view of the complex cultural negotiation, creativity, and culture-building taking place in language exchange and performance, implying discoveries and possibilities in fields like Peace Studies, Language Studies, Public Relations, Politics, and the Humanities.

vi. Definition of Terms

- Aftermath – It is a term that refers to the continuing life of a performance (Schechner, 2020).
- Akto – It is a Cebuano term for "now" or "moment", or its allusion in performance as "point of contact" (actuality).
- Cultural Appropriation – Cultural appropriation refers to the use of elements of one culture by members of another culture, in ways that are perceived as unacknowledged or inappropriate (Young and Brunk 2009; Ziff and Rao 1997).
- Dramaturgical praxis – It refers to the practices involved in setting a dramatic composition.
- Improvisation (in theatre) – It is the act of doing something on-the-spot.
- Semiosphere – It refers to the sphere within which semiotic processes occur, enabling communication and the generation of meaning (Lotman, 1984).
- Semiotics – It refers to the study of signs within society (Saussure, 1916).
- Una – It is a Cebuano term for "first"; it describes a state or an event that happened before (or cause to happen) a succeeding event.
- Unya – It is a Cebuano term for "end" or "after".
- Hakop - It is a Cebuano term that refers to the state of being embraced by the experience (evocative performance).
- Hakop Horizon - It refers to the individual and collective (larger) units of an event where communication, interaction, or engagement between actors and audiences occur, therefore inciting performance and Banà-banà. Performance, in this case, refers to either aesthetic or regular, uninterrupted activities.
- Hinangop - It is a Cebuano term that refers to the act of embracing, hugging, or cuddling someone tightly as a result of being extremely fond of that person.
- Kasinatian – It is a Cebuano term that translates to experience.
- Phenomenology – It is a philosophical approach to understanding how experience is structured and signified within human consciousness through the suspension of assumptions about its external existence
- Proto-performance – It refers to the event that happens before the public performance (Schechner, 2020).
- Public performance – It refers to the public performance phase of the time-space sequence process consisting of warm-up, performance, and cool down (Schechner, 2020).
- Punto - It literally translates to the fixed points as in 'point of contact' or units that weave as energy flow in a Hakop horizon.

MATERIALS & METHODS

This chapter discusses the research design, materials, and the methods of analysis. It shall also cover some ethical observations

appropriated to the nature of this research.

i. Research Design

This qualitative study aims to signify, elaborate, and analyze discourses around IPAG's Hakop sa Kasinatian aesthetic standard using the Banà-banà acting method and phenomenon. The said phenomenon and method will be observed and enacted in the creative phases of the staging of IPAG's In-the-Frames. To achieve this, I will employ an autoethnographic approach. This should make the process of qualifying the participants' experiences, beliefs, and impulses, as reflected in their performance on and off-stage, more accessible.

Knoblauch (2005) suggested a different but matching research frame, which he calls focused ethnography "because it focuses on small elements of one's own society" (para. 11). In addition, it allows the observer to immerse into a complex web of ethnographic experiences without painstakingly quantifying them. It basically allows the researcher to study culture from a small number of participants (Hughes, et al. 1994; Knoblauch, 2005; & Marcus, 1994).

ii. Data Gathering Procedure and Instruments

This study implements Narrative Inquiry and Participant Observation as a means of gathering data. Rightfully so, Narrative Inquiry is devoted to providing a forum for theoretical, empirical, and methodological work on narrative (Van De Mierop, et al., 2024). It should concisely capture the subjectivity of the Hakop and the diversity of the Banà-banà method in question. Ultimately, narrative inquiry draws upon a multitude of methodologies. It gives credence to the staging of IPAG-in-the-Frames.

Different inquiries are facilitated throughout the Una, Akto, and Unya phases. Subsequently, the method for eliciting each of the director and actor's Banà-banà processes, including the efforts they elicited within each actuality, will not be limited to a person-to-person interview. Instead, it extends to meaningful discussions throughout the duration of the creative process. To document the director (a position I occupy) and actor's reflection, reaction, and response in the performance, I will have subsequent events recorded on video and journal. These can also be supplemented by rehearsal notes and the like.

To strengthen the quality of the interview, I integrate into this paper a tool called *Listening Sessions for Theater*. Developed by Indi Young (1996), the listening session method easily makes sense of subjective social experience—its inconsistencies and idiosyncrasies. Furthermore, the method reifies its structure as similar to that of reflective theory as it facilitates "inclusive dialogue and reflection" (Gould, et al., 2022). Research papers aligned with the efforts of qualifying collaborative dramaturgical practices involving theater ensembles can best benefit from this method as it "progressively makes sense of individual experience, instead of generalizing them into a monolithic structure of perspectives" (Miller, 2015).

The bulk of the event contains the rehearsals, performance, encore, and audience interaction (expected to happen across Una, Akto, and Unya in the Hakop horizon). All of these will be obtained with prior written and verbal consent from the participants.

The instruments used in this study include the following: (1) script/scenario of the performance; (2) a video for capturing the actor-audience engagement in the Akto; (3) a set of written questions for the interview; (4) audio-visual recordings of the audience's responses; (5) some annotations of the rehearsal process; and (6) other written documents.

iii. Participants

All participants involved in the study either temporarily or permanently reside in Iligan City, or are, at least, in close proximity to the place. They must be between 18 to 50 years of age. Accordingly, the actors should be certified members of the MSU-IIT IPAG. The audience will be represented and given voice by the MSU-IIT publications: *Silahis*, *Caduceus*, *The Motherboard*, *CASSayuran*, among others who witnessed the In-the-Frames' three-day performance. Other audience feedback, both verbal and nonverbal, will also be included in the signification process. The director's Banà-banà will be narrated and expressed by the author himself.

iv. Method of Analysis

The study applies *Reflexive Thematic Analysis* as a method for illuminating patterns, discoveries, and reinforcements of the Banà-banà method through the gathered data. Accordingly, Reflexive Thematic Analysis proposes to make the "researcher's personal subjectivity and uniqueness part of the process" (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Also, this method of analysis expects the author's personal subjectivity and experience to "have an influence on the findings" (ibid., 2006).

v. Research Ethics

The ethics of the research centers on consent and mutual awareness of the study's aims. To ensure that the respondents were fully informed, they were contacted beforehand through face-to-face meetings, emails, social media, and mobile correspondence. Additionally, the respondents, who are IPAG artists themselves, were asked to sign a consent form containing clauses that protect their identities, uphold their confidentiality, and preserve their responses.

RESULTS & DISCUSSIONS

This chapter addresses the set of questions aimed to define the objectives of the study. Moreover, it collates the experiences (including my own as director) narrated by selected IPAG actors (respondents) using visual representations.

i. Banà-banà as Methodology & Phenomenon

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Banà-banà as a methodology involves the efforts of reacting, reflecting, and responding to environs and stimuli surrounding the actor. And despite the varied positionalities, Banà-banà puts all creative agents of the In-the-Frames in the position of the actor. And while actors, directors, and audiences have their own way of doing Banà-banà, they were rendered as actors by virtue of point of contact with the audience.

The Banà-banà is a phenomenon that is indicative of the transitions from one punto to another— between Hakop horizons. Whether the actor chooses to be active or inactive to such an impulse, he/she enacts Banà-banà. It is therefore a phenomenon because it is a process that we (as actors) had to go through whether we like it or not. Even in fixed cardinal points like in a music wherein you shift from one note to the next, one undergoes the risk of uncertainty, albeit very briefly, in the moment of the shift. For a clearer, more visual approach to the Banà-banà method and phenomenon, I present below the Banà-banà equation.

i. i The Banà-banà Equation

The Banà-banà equation is a visual representation I developed for pedagogical and analytical efforts on performance. It is a simplification of the complex unfolding of Banà-banà in the performance or creative process and in the signification of the Hakop quality. In each phase of the Una, Akto, and Unya phases of the In-the-Frames staging, the actor is the constant subject. Across the phases, the actor entered the performance space. As expected, the actor, driven by internal motivation (or intent) portrayed a series of gestures I refer to as points or punto 1, punto 2, and punto 3. These are all fixed points that the actor crossed to complete an actuality or actualities (which I refer to as the Hakop horizon). However, it is important to note that these points are not necessarily limited to three. But for the sake of analysis and mapping, I divide and represent the puntos through a tripartite pattern. By all means, one punto may have several sub-puntos in it, and so on and so forth.

Beyond the instructions of the director or the script, the actor, through breathing, allowed him/herself to be filled with the stimuli of the space and time, and be fired up in an event called *rapture*⁸ before proceeding from punto 1 to 2. As such, the actor absorbed and consumed every stimulus around him/her in order to act. I liken this process to a stretched rubber band aimed at a specific direction. It cannot just snap. It has to go through a preparation or a stretch. This analogy, I propose, emphasizes that acting is not about showing. Instead, acting is about feeling and absorbing all stimuli. Being moved to move from these stimuli is the after effect. As exhibited by our actors, thinking when and how to move should not be a point of concern. Conversely, an actor will be compelled to move at one point or another once he/she opens up to the environment.

Within that space between punto 1 and 2 crossed by our actors in each Una, Akto, and Unya phases throughout the In-the-Frames staging, an inevitable Banà-banà process took place. And within these processes, the actor may have reacted, reflected, or responded to his/her stimuli in space and time. Sometimes too, the actor may not have felt anything at all as the transition from punto 1 to 2 can be quite fast to make sense or recall.

The same process happened between punto 2 to 3. In fact, it did not always end in punto 3 as the actor went back to punto 1, or jumped directly to punto 3 until the actor, together with the director and the other actors, felt that the whole sequence is itself satisfied, fulfilled or completed with the audience in consideration. It is thus at this point that the Hakop horizon became consummated.

Upon inspection, the Hakop horizon is not something attained at the tail-end of the performance as it can actually prelude and become an impetus to another series of puntos, and in that effect, another layer of fulfilled Hakop horizon. In the same way, As I mentioned earlier, the actor's tendency to react, reflect or respond in the bana bana process in a Hakop horizon did not necessarily follow a linear logic. The flow of the puntos (also flow of energy) in a Hakop horizon instead reveals a forward motion in time.

Time and space indeed are dominant elements whereby the Hakop horizon takes place. Each Hakop horizon is completed in each of its phases— Una, Akto, and Unya. In the Una phase accordingly, the director/script writer/or creator and the actor were involved in the Banà-banà process. Meanwhile, in the Akto phase, the actor and the audience took part in the process. Finally, in the Unya phase, the audience, director and actor all enacted the Banà-banà and completed the Hakop horizon. Evidently, the actor was constant in every phase.

⁸Apart from its religious overtones and denotation pertaining to an intense feeling of joy or pleasure, rapture, for the purpose of the equation, refers to the actor's feeling of being filled with emotions from the confronting stimuli to the point that he is moved to act, react, reflect, respond, or instead become unresponsive to the situation.

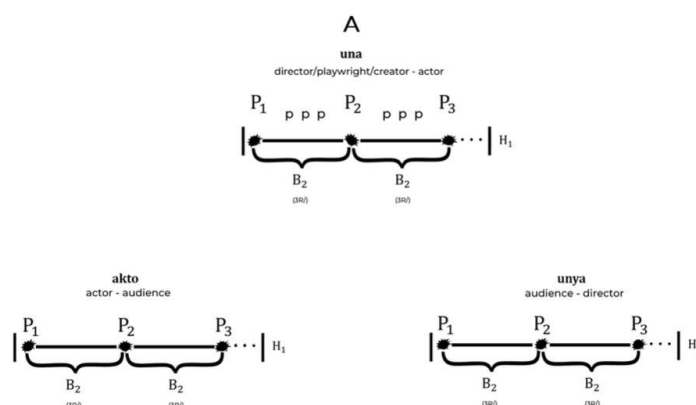


Figure 1. The Banà-banà Equation

ii. Nature of IPAG’s Hakop in the In-the-Frames from the Lens of Bana-bana

Hakop as an aesthetic standard signified by Banà-banà becomes an active state. Often described by IPAG actors as a collective act of pushing and pulling between actor-audience energies. We further make sense of the Hakop throughout the Una, Akto, and Unya phases in the In-the-Frames staging as a rising and falling action that moves in time. Moreover, the Hakop now departs from the binary notions of success and failure— good and bad, unraveling the ontology of experience on stage. Through Banà-banà, Hakop becomes a working standard so that the audience’s state of being embraced by the experience is but a processual, not a fixed quality. While Banà-banà enables IPAG to continue employing Hakop as an arbiter, it breaks the concept open for further signification and provides the theatre-makers of IPAG the technology of mindfulness of the reality that behind every completed or finished work lies an ongoing one.

Hakop as a dramatic experience becomes a feeling collectively attained by the actor and the audience in the moment of performance. Some of our artists in IPAG describe this as the *aha* moment whereby energies finally meet, emitting a force unseen but felt. However, the Hakop dramatic experience through Bana-bana reveals to our IPAG actors that such moments are unstable and are thus maintained by a responsive attitude. This responsive attitude is ensured by focusing on one’s sincerity of intent so that although he/she is the one enacting the process, he/she doesn’t single-handedly tackle it. As a result, this leaves a space of partiality for the audience (even the unresponsive ones) to take part in the process until the audience themselves ideally develop a feeling of being *Hinangop* (fond) for the performance experience.

iii. Nature of Hakop in Banà-banà During Una, Akto, and Unya

The Hakop of IPAG’s In-the-Frames as felt and enacted in the framework of Banà-banà manifests variedly in each of its phase: Una, Akto, and Unya:

³Table 1. Different Natures of Hakop in Banà-banà During Una, Akto, & Unya

IN-THE-FRAMES HAKOP THROUGH BANA-BANA		
UNA	AKTO	UNYA
Reflected: Hakop is tantamount to an imagined state that provides the theatre-makers and actors the directions and possibilities for work.	Reflected: Hakop is a motivator for the actor and the embodied character’s subsequent actions, reactions, and responses in the Hakop horizon.	Reflected: Hakop is a distant feeling that necessitates recall and writing.

⁹ Barba’s (2010) ‘bioenergetics’ pertains to the act of taking a step back to analyze, study, and problematize how actors direct the body and energy in a state of pre-expressivity.

¹⁰ See Turner (1969), especially pages 10, 13, 15, 16, 20, 16, 20-24, 37, 49, 55-57, and 117-129, for further discussion on ‘liminality’.

¹¹ See Durkheim (1912), especially chapter 3, for a closer look into the concept of ‘collective effervescence’.

¹² Barba refers to sats as a state of energy in the body which renders the actor’s preparedness for action.

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Reacted: Hakop is an actual feeling that either surprises (aha) or disrupts the actor's internal energy flow in the rehearsal's Hakop horizon. Such feelings can be obtained through repetition and further reflection.	Reacted: Hakop is the immediate trigger or an "off" switch for the actor/character's subsequent energy flow across the puntos in the Hakop horizon. However, this type of Hakop can no longer be recalled, reflected or scored outside the progressing time due to its fleeting nature. Instead, it becomes a compelling circumstance that has to be responded to.	Reacted: Hakop is a feeling that can still trigger and bring back related feelings in the form of audience commentaries, reviews, critiques, congratulatory gestures, and even the collective catharsis imminent in the post-performance Hakop horizon.
Responded: Hakop is the desired feeling that is scored, tested, simulated, and applied— a definite target point. Ultimately, it serves as a turning point for decisions, opening up for more reflections and reactions moving forward in the Hakop horizon.	Responded: Hakop becomes a conclusive feeling attained in a specific Hakop horizon. It is often referred to as the hit or miss point of a performance— a cause sometimes for overcompensation. It moves the energy flow for further reflection.	Responded: Hakop is a state that influences long-term the directions in the repertory season. After its signification, it becomes the quality marker or aesthetic standard that is revisited, reapplied or reincorporated into the vision/intent of the very same performance, or the other succeeding ones at that.
Push and Pull: Relaxed-tense-relaxed-tense	Push and pull: Tense-very tense-very very tense-very loose	Push and pull: Tense-loose-loose-loose-tense

iv. Banà-banà in Different Positionalities and Efforts

As the supervising director of IPAG's In-the-Frames, my application of the Banà-banà method across the Una, Akto, and Unya phases was primarily reflective and responsive, a common impulse among directors and dramaturgs. In aligning with director and curator Pagarigan's vision for IPAG's 47th theatre season: 'IPAG-Subang,' I made decisions based on both cognition and emotion. While some rehearsals involved in-the-moment reactions, most of my actions were processed, reflected upon, and contemplated. The actors of In-the-Frames employed all three efforts across the Una, Akto, and Unya phases, demonstrating their holistic engagement. This finding supports the idea that actors are crucial in channeling the director and playwright's vision to the audience within the Hakop horizons, as emphasized by Barba's 'bioenergetics'⁹ and Stanislavsky's 'inner and outer self.' This indicates that acting involves thinking, feeling, and being. As actors navigate through various puntos, they must choose between controlling synergy and allowing it to flow. However, while actors maintain scene flow, their ability to control audience Hakop within the liminal¹⁰ space is limited. In fact, excessive focus on audience Hakop can lead to overcompensation, overacting, and the defeat of one's genuine intent, contradicting Stanislavsky's 'Do not act' dictum. Thus, Hakop alone is an insufficient marker, as it can turn a supposedly fluid meaning-making process to a mechanical one. Banà-banà, on the other hand, aids actors in balancing thought and feeling, emphasizing character's inner truth.

Audience Banà-banà occurred during the performance, primarily as reactions. While performance pacing and design facilitated collective effervescence¹¹, some audiences remained unresponsive on day one of the performance, even in its presentational staging. Factors such as dissipated spatial energy, external elements, poor actor focus, and audience disinterest contributed to this lack of collective effervescence. Finally, audience response became more pronounced on day two. In the dialogue scenes, such as 'Ayaw, Kuya,' 'Asa ang Kwarta,' and 'IPAG o Ako,' some audience members expressed frustration by standing up and calling the characters out. Audience reflection was observed during talkbacks, where questions were asked, and in published reviews by MSU-IIT publications

CONCLUSIONS & RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter synthesizes the findings and draws conclusions and recommendations from the arguments presented in the related literature.

i. Conclusions

Based on the findings, I was able to surmise that 1) Banà-banà is an imminent phenomenon that creative individuals, performers, artists, and actors encounter when dealing with unpredictable factors in the present moment; 2) it can serve as a method for executing an evocative performance (with audiences feeling Hinangop for the performance) on and off-stage; and, 3) it can serve as an active lens for describing the quality of the Hakop shared between actors and audiences across diverse ongoing Hakop horizons, points of contact, communication events, and the overall social engagements.

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Beyond the confines of the IPAG, Banà-banà concept is a manifestation of an Iliganon-Cebuano-Bisaya sensibility. My decision to take a kernel of reality from the local Cebuano context and retool it for performance process-quality signification is a conscious one. I base it on Lagahid & Puyo's (2016) claim that "the Cebuano cultural behavior, attitude, practices, and language serve as observation ground." Although it appears as a seemingly unstable concept in comparison to the accuracy-driven and positivist scientific frame of mind, it carries with it idiosyncrasies of the local subject potent for interpreting and signifying shared meanings within the culture. Banà-banà, being a localized acting method and signifier for IPAG's Hakop, is akin to how Tiatco's (2017) *Buhol-buhol* serves as an idiom for understanding the contemporary theatre in Metropolitan Manila, or how Llana's study of the Dotoc ritual gives insight on postcolonial themes and concept of pilgrimage in the Bicol region.

Beyond its pragmatic implications in language and performance, Banà-banà allows the practitioner (theatre-makers and actors) to make sense of experience from the truth of one's positionality. Experience (with its quality marked by IPAG's Hakop), is a subjective course. In the absence of a direct translative agent in the symbolic space, experience must refer to subjectivity as the only tool at its disposal. After all, perception requires a never-ending process of building, rebuilding, approximating, estimating, giving value, and making sense of the experience made potent in the world (Bleeker et al., 2015; Benedek, 2020; Kirk, 2024; Kozel, 2007; & Zarrilli, 2020).

Needless to say, Banà-banà encourages the actors to be in the moment. As a case in point, our actors in IPAG were able to immerse into the creative process and experience of staging In-the-Frames regardless of the restrictions and freedoms afforded by, say, either a presentational or representational staging. Such a concept is reminiscent of Misner's technique of opening the focus to the self and extending it to the co-actor and even, at a point to the audience. Likewise, the Banà-banà should also reintroduce us to Stanislavsky's notions on the concentration of attention, units and objectives, sense of truth, the inner creative forces, the super objective, and the threshold of the subconscious.

Finally, Banà-banà as a signification of experience, implies the need to rethink the way we see and judge events and interactions in the social semiosphere, beyond the stage. It empowers us to consider, despite the specificities of the vision, goal, or intention, the latent and even marginalized discourses. Such a creative attribute is referred to by Geertz (1973) as "interpretive anthropology for cultural understanding". It allows us to expand our aesthetic standard by taking a step back in order to appropriately reflect, respond, or react to any given human situation. Most importantly, it encourages us to take risk in challenging the existing discourses and narratives without abandoning the conventions.

In a language setting, we are all agents (actors) enacting the abstract realities in our minds (Austin, 1962; Bauman, 2000; Butler 1990-1993; Carlson, 2006; Eco, 1984; Fernandez, 2020; & Spargo, 1999). As Austin (1962) puts it: "to say is to state", and some action is completed simply by utterance. But even before we enact our experience through language, we are to absorb every bit of it in lieu with our breathing. And that's how we solidly set forth our *sats*¹². In essence, language is the ultimate currency for meaning-making, it must assume its essence in all signs consumed and produced (Foucault, 1966; Saussure, 1916; & Wittgenstein, 1953). Indeed, the signification of the Hakop sa kasinatian through Banà-banà happens in the text.

With today's confounding issues, we are left with the only choice of embracing the uncertainty in the performances of language and meaning-making—the Banà-banà in our lives. After all, liminality is the dominant force which activates performance (Auslander, 2023; Barba, 2010; Llana, 2018; Maxwell, 2008; Thomassen 2014; Tiatco, 2017; & Turner, 1969), or in our case, the impulse to Banà-banà. Only when we have fully breathed in the confronting experience can we finally undergo rapture and fully respond to the needs of the world. Like how

Such is the Banà-banà that transpired in IPAG's In-the-Frames. Together with my involvement in the study, given its autoethnographic frame, our young artists in IPAG signify the In-the-frames engagement beyond the limits of success. To this point, we see the performance as a continuing evocative conversation being propelled by the audiences, critics, and publications. But even with the silence that follows a performance, the conversation never really ends. The point that a completed performance is a Hakop horizon that took place will always pave the way for a work-in-progress at some point in the progressing time. In actuality, life is a work in progress.

ii. Recommendations

Expanding from the findings gathered in this study, I have listed the following recommendations for moving forward on this topic:

1. Investigate the application of the Banà-banà framework in socio-cultural performative negotiations within Peace Studies, Language Studies, Public Relations, Politics, and the Humanities.
2. Analyze the Banà-banà framework's application in other IPAG productions and its impact on the actor's mind-body connection in performance.
3. Further examine the problematization of Hakop through Banà-banà in critical theory and artistic practice.
4. Incorporate the dialectics of the Banà-banà framework, particularly regarding points that constitute a satisfying or consummated Hakop experience, into IPAG's evaluation tools, such as production notes and rubrics.
5. Explore the Banà-banà framework as a tool for describing and signifying subjective experience across various creative and academic disciplines.

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6. Develop strategies for applying the fluid Banà-banà concept to optimize fixed objectives in corporate models for repertory companies.
7. Investigate how the Banà-banà framework integrates interdisciplinary approaches within Cultural and Performance Studies in the local context.

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