

SEMIOTIC ANALYSIS OF THE TORTOR DANCE IN NORTH SUMATRAN WEDDING CEREMONIES

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<p>Keywords: Semiotic analysis; Tortor dance; Sumatra Utara; Wedding ceremony</p>	<p>Abstract: This research intends to investigate the meaning contained behind the Tor-Tor dance. The researcher intends to use theories in this research, namely semiotic theory, nonverbal communication theory, and dance. The purpose of this research is to find out the meaning contained in the clothes and accessories used, song lyrics, and the meaning of each Tor-Tor Huda-Huda dance movement. The research method used in this research is an interpretive approach using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis. Researchers collected data in the form of observations and secondary data in the form of journals, articles on the internet that support this research. The reason, why researchers are interested in it, is because dance is not only a means of expression but as a means of communication to express and express, commenting on the reality of life through dance movements. As a means of communication, dance through space-time movement carries a certain mission or message to be understood by the audience, while the body is the dancer's tool for communication. So the success or failure of communication through dance is also determined by the dancer's movements in each movement. For this reason, this research is considered important because of the diversity of meanings.</p>	
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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that is rich in cultural diversity. Indonesia consists of thousands of islands, inhabited by various ethnic groups, groups and social layers. Of course, islands that have a diversity of ethnic groups, groups and social layers in their lives must have differences that foster their own habits. Culture itself is a distinctive characteristic of the ethnic groups in Indonesia, it cannot be denied either because of its many islands, as well as the experience and development of the history of various tribes. This diversity is a challenge for various ethnic groups to answer it so that it becomes one nation, intact with all its aspects, namely the Indonesian nation. Indonesia is very rich in ethnicity and culture, from Sabang to Marauke each region has a characteristic that cannot be removed. From starting languages, customs and arts and culture. One of the well-known cultures in the North Sumatra region is the Tor Tor dance or commonly called the Batak dance.

The diversity of dance is one of the archipelago's wealth. Type dance traditions in each region have a function in accordance with the pattern of life of the people of the area. According to Sulastianto (2007: 63) "based on its role in people's lives, the types of dance can be grouped



into ceremonial dance, entertainment dance, and spectacle dance". Each type of dance has certain characteristics, both seen from its purpose, costume, and movement. Dance is not a motion without meaning. "Every movement in dance has certain meanings and motives". In other words, each dance contains its own meaning and the dance is created from a creative process which is a human response to the motion of life in the universe.

Dance is one type of art that combines motion and sound into a form of culture that can be enjoyed by everyone. As part of art, dance is also a form of community expression. Therefore, usually dance always contains certain meanings or messages. According to Hanna (1987) "Dance is also often said to be a very old branch of art, because the raw material of this art is motion and expressing tools, the most important being the human body itself". From its history, dance in the Toba Batak tribe is called Tortor Dance and has existed since the 13th century and has become a culture of the Batak tribe. Tortor is the art of dance by moving the whole body with a guided rhythm, with a center of movement on the hands and fingers, feet and soles of the feet, back and shoulders. Tortor dancers are usually called Panortor. The musical instruments used as traditional musical instruments of the Toba Batak tribe are Gondang Sabangunan. Tortor and Gondang music are like a coin with two sides that cannot be separated. Dance is a vehicle of communication in conveying information about matters relating to good life, which are related to social, economic, ritual or religious aspects, as well as problems related to nature and the creator of nature. According to Fitri (in Asjono et al., 2006: 25) dance is an expression media to convey moral messages, social reality, establishment, and spiritual education. As one of the elements of art, dance is a cultural content, which is produced through expressive symbols which are conscious expressions of an artist as an expression, to respond to the natural surroundings through the language of motion. Through expressive experience, which requires understanding, explanation, and unification, dance gives the creator a feeling of self-adjustment and harmonious relationship with his world (Hadi Y,2003).

In the life of the traditional Toba Batak community, dance (Tortor) has an important role in the activities of their lives that are related to their spiritual lives and also to their social relations. Tortor is carried out with various ritual activities and religious ceremonies and can also be performed in traditional contexts. According to Purba (1989,1) "The Toba Batak custom in question is a series or order of social and religious norms that govern social life, human relations with their ancestors, vertical relations to the Creator, and the implementation of religious rituals. Tortor in ritual and custom ceremonies is usually accompanied by Gondang Sabangunan, which is the traditional music of the Toba Batak people. Manortor carried out by young people is a form of conveying heart desires to the opposite sex, and in the past this dance was performed on the night of the full moon. This means that this management activity is carried out as a means of conveying inner contents both to the spirits of ancestors and to those who are respected as well as those who are loved (fellow human beings) shown in the form of Toror dance.

The development of the life of the Tortor tradition of the Toba Batak community began with the entry of Christianity in the Batak Land. Christian missionaries in Tanah Batak have made restrictions on the use of Tortor and Gondang Sabangunan. This was applied to the Toba Batak people who had converted to Christianity. The Church makes a limitation that Tortor, accompanied by Gondang Sabangunan, may only be played or performed on certain events, which are related to social activities, for example in traditional ceremonies, marriages and this must be approved by the church or first opened or started by the church. This can be interpreted, that this activity will avoid the activities of the old belief of the Toba Batak community which



according to Christianity is contrary to Christian teachings. In traditional Toba Batak marriages, Tortor is one thing, which is considered important in completing each series of events. Batak tortor is a traditional dance that has been entrenched. Tortor is held to show one's feelings in certain situations. Some Tortor are situational, for example Tortor Simonang-monang is related to the dance of victory, Tortor contests with respect to dances of respect to the people and fellow believers, Tortor habonaran is related to dance of truth, etc (Lumban & Vioreza, 2024).

Tor tor in this area are used for certain events, for example such as: wedding parties, welcoming events for honored guests, entering new homes, childbirth and harvest parties. Tor-tor is a dance whose movements are in tune with musical accompaniment, which is played with traditional musical instruments such as drums (gondang), flutes, gongs (ogung) and so on. This Tor Tor is usually displayed during the usual big party called Horja Godang. This Tor-tor has become a cultural tool in every traditional activity of the Batak people. Tor-tor this is more often used in traditional wedding ceremonies.

In this research, the researcher will use the theory of semiotics. Semiotic Theory Ferdinand De Saussure is a Swiss linguist. According to linguists, Ferdinand De Saussure in Hoed (2008:3)., "semiotics is a study of sign life with the community that uses these signs". Based on the quote, Ferdinand De Saussure saw signs as a meeting between form and meaning. Saussure uses the signifiant term (signifer: marker), in terms of the shape of a sign, signifie (signified: sign) for the aspect of its meaning. De Saussure sees signs as structure.

Roland Barthes's semiotic theory. Roland Barthes is the successor of Saussure's thinking. This can be proven from Barthes' semiotic theory almost literally derived from the theory of language according to de Saussure. According to Barthes, semiology is learning about how humans interpret something around it. So objects are signs that carry messages implied. If in Saussure's view emphasizes marking only in the level of denotation and connotation. But in Barthes's thought, the marking was perfected from Saussure semiology with a connotative and mythical system of tagging (Vera, 2014: 27). Based on the statements, in the science of semiotics, signs become the main concept in analysis where signs help humans to interpret the intended message. In the sign there is meaning.

By seeing the background of study, the research statement would be: how semiotik could explain Tor-Tor dance? In addition, the second question would be, How Tor-Tor dance could represent Bataknese society? In this study, a dancer will be selected who is performing a dance. clothing and accessories worn, as well as the movements that are being displayed will be used as materials for analysis. Analysis is based on Roland Barthes's theory, which presents denotations and connotations.

METHOD

The research method that the researchers used in this study was a qualitative descriptive method, as explained by Moleong (2006: 8), saying, "one of the characteristics of qualitative research is descriptive. Data collected in the form of words, images, and not numbers. The data is taken from data in the form of photos, taken from:

[\(http://www.cometoliketoba.com/2016/09/19/iringan-gondang-dan-hentakan-kaki-tarian-tor-tor/\)](http://www.cometoliketoba.com/2016/09/19/iringan-gondang-dan-hentakan-kaki-tarian-tor-tor/)

There is also the purpose of this research, so that the problems analyzed can be interpreted



clearly. Qualitative by seeing method, Denzin (2008) declared it qualitative research is interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and sometimes counter disciplinary fields. It crosscuts the humanities and the social and physical sciences. Qualitative research is things at the same sciences "Qualitative research is at the same time. It is multiparadigm tic in focus. Its practitioners are sensitive to the value of the multimethod approach". The researcher tried to describe the data that the researcher had obtained through data collection. Then, the researchers analyzed the meaning of semiotics found in the traditional Toba Batak wedding ceremony using Barthes's theory. In the framework of the thinking framework the researcher applies the theory which is used as the basis of research on Nonverbal Communication in Tor-tor dance where the art is a tradition which contains nonverbal messages. The description on the chart under meaning, does not lie in words but in culture there are messages for that we need the context of nonverbal communication, where we can distinguish the meaning of messages contained in Tor-tor dance art by examining each meaning of clothing, and also movement.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

Tor-tor dance aesthetics are the basis of this research, aesthetic communication through gestures and gestures. Body language is symbolized, through the movement of each limb and dance accompaniment that contains certain aesthetics. Aesthetics in each movement and music that represent a meaning in fact not all participants and spectators who witness can understand and understand what the meaning in the movement and music in Tortor dance, because of the limitations of some art lovers, who understand in the process of nonverbal communication that occurs in the in the classification of body language where the delivery of messages is done only through hand signals, head movements, body posture and foot position, facial expressions, eye gaze, and accompaniment to Tortor dance.

Tor Tor dance is a celebration dance that has been around for hundreds of years. This dance is from Batak Toba, North Sumatra. Initially, this dance was a ritual of events such as death ceremonies, healing and so on. Then this dance gets the influence of Hindu-Buddhist culture. And as time goes by, this dance is not only used as a form of ceremony. Tor Tor dance is often performed for entertainment for Batak people. Even the movements and clothing used have also begun to be modified to become more attractive. Historically, tor tor dance was used in ritual events related to spirits. The spirit is called and "enters" into stone statues (an ancestral symbol). Then the statues then move like dancing, but with stiff movements. The movement is in the form of foot movements (tiptoes) and hand movements, this can be interpreted by Bathes as the meaning of denotation.

As mentioned earlier, in a Tortor activity accompanied by gondang sabangunan, one of the dancers (Panortor) will act as a Gondang lover. Paminta gondang is a person who asks for gondang (song) to be played and at the same time acts as a leader of a group of dancers (panortor). As a gondang lover, the person must have knowledge of the gondang to be played and must know the things (pantun, petatah-petitih) that always accompany manortor activities (dancing Tortor). The type of gondang that is played is the same as the name Tortor that will be danced. All of these things have no meaning that cannot be studied. For this reason, researchers will explore it with the theory of semiotics as a research surgical tool.

Tortor in marriage ceremonies begins with the entry of the bride into the building where she is held fully customary adat or fully customary. The bride is standing at the entrance with the



family of the man. Then the hula-hula party, the women's party, is invited, and is allowed to enter the room followed by the attendees and other invitees. All invitations entered the room with musical accompaniment and shook hands with the bride and her family. The whole family will manortor baik from the hula-huladan side and the boru boru bahkan dongan sabutuha party. Everyone who is present at a traditional wedding party must know and understand in taking a position when the Tortoise activity is carried out. In the traditional ceremony of the Batak marriage, there will be seen two hordes of people who form the march and form a line which is on the right side there is the Hula-Huladan on the left side of the Boru. The people present will participate in dancing in several groups. In ceremonies or parties, the tortor that must be done is the first tortor, tortor somba, tortor mangaliat and the last tortor hasahatan or sitio-tio.

Discussion

Tortor in a marriage ceremony is a Batak dance that has its own features, besides having a unique conveying meaning in dance, it is also a process of customary giving and receiving in the Batak kinship system using these dance symbols. In the beginning tortor will be seen dancing only party organizers, relatives as high as and both brides. The semiotic meaning of this original tortor movement is to explain that everything in this world begins with all kindness.



In the picture above, the dancers raised their hands up. The connotation meaning obtained from the dancer's picture, that hand movements, the dancers from Tor tor dance will give a blessing, the position of the hand will be directed to the head or to the shoulder of the boru (bride), whereas if boru will receive blessings then the position of the hand will open and the head will look down. In this traditional ceremony, the parties who dance the traditional tortor dance include the mora kinship group, kahanggi (suhut) and boru children. That's why the tortor danced by the kin group is called tortor mora, tortor suhut and tortor *anak boru*.

The above analysis is in accordance with the statement from Charpentier (2003: 15-16) "Pose is an object position that will relate to what character will be displayed in a photographic work. The face and body pose are broadly divided into two, namely the en face position, namely the face position towards the audience or camera and en profile ". Connecting to Tor-tor dance, Tor-Tor is believed to be an ancient art inherent in various Batak customary processes, both in joyful and catastrophic events. In the early days of the growth of Mandailing culture, and it was believed long before the Islamic period, Tor-tor became an inseparable part of the classical belief system. The myth of the researcher described above, it can be said, the Tor-Tor dance is indeed part of the procession of worship to the spirits of turtles.



As a result of the research, which refers to empirical references, the meaning produced is only in the blink of an eye from the physical form of the photographic work. Whereas deeper meaning can refer to textual-referential references, where various additional information and data can complement a meaningful result based on a deeper analysis so that it can produce a more in-depth variation of interpretation. With the signifier (sign) and signified (markers) photos with descriptions of Tor-Tor dancer images played by women, through these photos, researchers found a meaning that the Batak people still maintain local wisdom, one of which is preserved. In tortor somba party organizers will guide the bride and groom to pay homage or worship starting from God, like the picture bellow:



In the next picture bellow, the research finds another meaning from Tor-Tor dance. At the opening of the tor-tor who became the panoror in accordance with the position of the manager carried out by women. When the Tor-tor is done, there is a musical accompaniment. Inside music there are poems and several kinds of musical instruments as accompaniment. In his poem there are expressions of gratitude. This is in line with the statement from Djelantik, (1990: 23) "Preparation of motion in dance, the motion of each dancer and from a group of shared dancers, coupled with its adaptation to space, light, color and literary art, all of which is an organization of dance called "choreography".

Tor-tor which is interpreted by the wider community into Indonesian, is not the same as what is intended in the Mandailing community. Communities in North Sumatra interpret In the picture above, Tor-tor is a tool that has kinship values for the community in the implementation of traditional ceremonies, including traditional marriage. Therefore, in each of the ceremonial ceremonies there are dancers who perform Tor-Tor dance, which is called a manortor, but in the manoror do not hire or bring special dancers, because the participant in this traditional marital activity in the kinship system is the one who becomes the panoror.





From the picture to the two tor tor dancers, as a marker it can be seen, that the Dancers Wear Ulos when dancing. Ancestral traditions, who prioritizes togetherness is maintained until now. As in the modern era, it is very rare for young people to be among teenagers who care about local traditions. The message to be conveyed by the photographer, namely, the implementation of the Batak tribe traditional ceremony is also inseparable from the entertainment in the form of dance. As explained in several previous discussions that Ulos is an object that must be present in every cultural activity and the implementation of traditional ceremonies.

Many versions of the meaning of the word are attached to the Tor-tor. In the linguistic level, for example, it is not clear whether Tor-tor is the basic word or rephrase of the word Tor. That is related to the expression "Tor tu tor do na marsitatapan". Therefore, Edi Nasution (2019), ethnomusicologist, mentions that "Tor-tor is a short form of Tor tu Tor. In addition, indeed Tor-Tor dance meaning appears from the performance of Tor-tor dancers who are front and rear dancers, such as forming perspective ranges of hills. Especially when dancing, the Tor-tor dancers seem to make up and down movements like visualization, that the area of North Sumatra is a hilly area". This is what Barthes revealed as Myth. Myth is how culture explains or understands several aspects of the reality or symptoms of nature. Myth is a social product, which already has a dominance. For Barthes, myth is an ideological operation that is identical with connotation. With semiotic analysis of this movement researchers try to find meaning in every dance movement that is in the process of traditional marriage of the Batak tribe.

From the results of the study, the researchers stated that through Tor-tor dance in a Wedding Ceremony is a Batak dance that has its own features, besides having a unique convey meaning in dance, it is also a process of giving and receiving adat in the Batak kinship system through nonverbal communication using symbols -symbols, this dance also has the uniqueness of each symbol's meaning in accordance with the provisions of Batak customs, which have traditional meanings or advice, which are contained in the meaning of symbols in this dance.

CONCLUSION

Tortor is the reason or process of thinking Simalungun people to understand the meaning of a marriage. Because the function of this dance is as a medium that represents a household mahligai, which can be witnessed through rhythmic movement as an expression of the soul or feeling in interpreting a wedding. The Meaning of Nonverbal Communication in Tor-tor Dance is sacredness, respect, happiness or joy and unity which is reflected in the facial expressions, movements and clothing used, space and time, and can be seen during the process of traditional events and the process of managing or performing Tor-Dance tor.



Apart from dance moves, the representation of the sacredness of marriage is also seen in ulos. In the traditional Batak wedding ceremony, Ulos is also a communication medium to deliver prayers to the bride, who are given when carrying out the Tor-tor Dance. In traditional Batak marriage, Tortor is one of the things that is considered important in completing each series of events. Batak tortor is a traditional dance that has been entrenched. By seeing the picture, the researcher would like to show, that Tortor is held to spark people feelings in certain situations. From this study, the author argues that culture can reflect national identity and is an invaluable asset that is not shared by other nations. This Indonesian culture can certainly strengthen and strengthen the name of the nation in the eyes of the international community. However, the onslaught of foreign culture is a challenge for the Indonesian people, so that high awareness is needed to maintain and preserve Indonesian culture. If not guarded, gradually Indonesian cultural values will truly fade and make the national identity disappear. As one of the elements of art, dance is a cultural content, which is produced through expressive symbols which are conscious expressions of an artist as an expression to respond to the natural surroundings through the language of motion. (Hadi, 2003) explained, that "Through expressive experience that requires understanding, explanation, and such unification, dance gives the creator a feeling of self-adjustment and harmonious relationship with his or her world".

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