

# REPRESENTATION OF CROPPING CULTURE OF THE BENUAQ DAYAK TRIBES IN THE GANTAR DANCE

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**Abstract.** This research aims to determine the representation of farming culture contained in the gantar dance based on semiotic analysis. This research uses a qualitative type of method with an interpretive method. Based on research, it is concluded that the representation of farming culture contained in the gantar dance based on semiotic analysis is knowledge, social and livelihood. The representation of knowledge is contained in the movement of holding/playing the kusak. Social representation is seen in the movements of holding the senak and stamping the foot and the kusak against the board, while the representation of farming is seen in the initial movements of forming a row, a straight pattern, and holding the senak.

**Keywords:** cultural representation; Gantar dance; Dayak Tribe; planting Match

## I. INTRODUCTION

One form of symbolic communication that has emerged and developed in society is dance. As an expressive form, dance is also synonymous with 4 things, namely as a cultural representation, a means of traditional or religious ceremonies, a bond between social groups, and a means of entertainment. Especially in the function of dance as a cultural representation, the movements presented often have special significance and significance (Ginting, 2016: 7).

One of the dances that represents a certain culture is the gantar dance from East Kalimantan. This dance, according to Daniswari (2023:1), shows the culture of farming. This representation can be seen from the main props used, including doyo magic clothes, headdresses, bamboo, wooden sticks, and drumming tools. Apart from that, when this dance is held, it is driven by female dancers, while the musical instruments to accompany the dancers are played by men. The gantar dance has at least several general movements such as hand movements holding kusak (wooden sticks), holding senak (bamboo containing fruit seeds), foot movements and walking, as well as grain sowing movements (Daniswari, 2023:1).

Even though this dance is famous internationally, Emanuel, as an arts activist in West Kutai, in initial observations made by researchers on January 5 2021, stated that the younger generation's knowledge about it is quite low. The low level of knowledge about the gantar dance is motivated by 5 factors, namely changes in lifestyle, lack of cultural education, the influence of globalization, the emergence of negative perceptions, and the lack of opportunities for performances. Regarding lifestyle changes, Emanuel said that the current

younger generation is more focused on modern things, causing a decline in interest in traditional culture.



Figure 1. Kusak holding movement  
Source: Screenshot of Gantar Dance at  
<https://bitly.ws/3fKcE>.

Minimal cultural education in schools and the emergence of the influence of globalization have triggered negative perceptions among the younger generation. This negative perception arises because the younger generation views traditional dance as something ancient or irrelevant to their lives today. On this basis, opportunities for performances are minimal due to lack of enthusiasm/interest in the gantar dance. This lack of opportunity, based on the results of the interview with Emanuel, has implications for the fact that it is not widely known about the meaning of each movement in the

gantardance, especially those related to the representation of farming.

The lack of opportunities to perform also has an impact on misunderstandings regarding the wiraga, wirama, wirasa, wirupa gantar dance. For example, wiraga is related to dancers' body movements, based on researchers' observations, many of them are moved incorrectly. This movement error occurs due to the lack of knowledge possessed by young people, so they cannot differentiate between original gantar dance movements and creative gantar dance movements. At Wirama, researchers also saw that there was a clear difference between the creative gantar dance and the original gantar dance. In the creative gantar dance, the wirama used is a free wirama or a wirama that does not always have beats with repeated and regular accents. Meanwhile, in the original gantar dance, the wirama used is the wiramatandak or wirama which is steady (steady) and pure with repetitive and regular beats and accents. Another difference lies in the flavors used. In the creative gantar dance, the wirasa shown tends to be firm, whereas in the original gantar dance the wirasa or appreciation shown tends to be soft, smooth and happy. Wirupa is another element that is different between the creative gantar dance and the original gantar dance. In the creative gantar dance, the clothes used are red, while in the original gantar dance the clothes are green. The headband used in the creative gantar dance is also significantly different from the original gantar dance. This can be seen because in the original gantar dance the headband wraps the hair with brown and red heart patterns, whereas in the gantar dance the creation of the headband only resembles a bright red bandana. Mistakes in dancing the gantar dance, apart from the lack of performances which result in low knowledge about the original gantar dance, are also due to the lack of study of dance movements based on wiraga, wirama, wirasa, wirupa. Studies in previous research based on researchers' initial observations only targeted the representation and meaning of movements. Apart from that, in previous studies these meanings were generalized in general and not specifically conceptualized based on the elements in the dance movements.

Referring to the phenomena and problems above, the researcher considers that it is important to study the cultural representation of cultivation in the gantar dance. This research on the Gantar dance will be entitled "Representation of the Cropping Culture of the Benuaq Dayak Tribe in the Gantar Dance". The research will be carried out using Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis, with the consideration that through this analytical model the researcher can provide a complex picture starting from the signs and meaning in each movement. These signs will be produced and found from the wiraga, wirama, wirasa, wirupa gantar dance. Apart from that, to support the findings on cultural representation, the theory of representation described by Stuart Hall will be used. Based on the background above, this research aims to determine the representation of farming culture contained in the gantar dance based on semiotic analysis.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses a qualitative type with an interpretive method. Qualitative according to Sugiyono (2019:25) is "research that focuses on a deep understanding of the context, processes, meaning and complex relationships in a situation". Meanwhile, the interpretative method is a method that focuses on signs and text as the object of study and understands and interprets the code behind the signs and text (Sugiyono, 2019: 54). The choice of an interpretive approach was based on the fact that this research will reveal a representation of the cultivation culture of the Dayak Benuaq tribe in the gantar dance through signs in markers, signifiers, denotations, connotations and meanings.

Research focus is a limitation used to carry out research observations so that the results of observations and analysis results are more focused (Sugiyono, 2019:275). In this research, semiotic analysis only reveals denotation, connotation and meaning. The dance movement analyzed is the gantar dance movement, where the analysis process includes elements of wiraga, wirama, wirasa, and wirupa. The process of meaning in the cultural representation of farming includes language, knowledge, social systems, living equipment and technology, livelihoods, religion and art.

Primary data is the main data used in research (Sugiyono, 2019:455). Primary data in this research comes from the analysis unit of gantar dance movements including wiraga, wirama, wirasa, and wirupa. The unit of analysis will be obtained from the YouTube channel of the West Kutai Regency Education and Culture Office (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=n7DaHTSCzJc>). The data obtained will be in the form of screenshots in JPG format.

Secondary data is data obtained or collected by researchers from existing sources (Sugiyono, 2019:455). Secondary data that will be used by researchers comes from journals and books that suit the research objectives.

Data collection techniques are carried out using documentation. Sugiyono (2019:52) said that "documentation is a way that qualitative researchers can use to get an overview from the subject's point of view through written media and other written documents".

Data analysis in this research will use semantic analysis from Roland Barthes with 5 stages, namely signifier, signified, denotation, connotation and meaning. An explanation of the analysis process carried out is as follows.

### 1. Bookmarks

Markers are signs that can be seen by the eye, because they can be seen in their physical form. Markers are obtained by observing the gantar dance movements, including hand movements holding kusak (wooden sticks), holding senak (bamboo containing fruit seeds), foot movements and walking, as well as grain sowing movements. Markers are generated from the screenshot process in JPG format.

### 2. Sign

A sign is the meaning contained in a message that has the concept, function and value contained in the sign. Markers are obtained by observing one of the images in a movement that is being analyzed.

### 3. Denotation

Denotation is associated with closure of meaning. The denotation process will be carried out by detailing the movements carried out and the properties used by the dancer.

#### 4. Connotation

Connotation is associated as a sign related to broader cultural aspects. The connotation process is carried out by interpreting each denotation with the help of the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI).

#### 5. Meaning

The final analysis process is to uncover meaning. This process is carried out by drawing conclusions from the connotations that have been found previously.

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION


The semiotic analysis carried out in this research was carried out in 2 steps. The first step is to carry out the process of observing each gantar dance movement via the YouTube channel of the Kubar Education and Culture (Dikbud) Service (<https://shorturl.at/XHq9D>). This video was chosen as analysis material because of 2 considerations. First, the video published by Dikbud Kubar is an official source that has high authority and credibility. Second, the Kubar Education and Culture Department has direct access to the Benuaq Dayak community and their cultural activities. Therefore, the video uploaded by this service shows the original and authentic form of the gantar dance, without any distortion or external influence that can occur in other sources.

The second step is done by taking a screenshot of each gantar dance movement. At this stage, the researcher identified movements including movements to form a line, holding or playing the kusak, holding the senak, as well as stomping the foot and kusak against the board. The identification results are then analyzed in 5 ways, namely determining the sign, omen, denotation, connotation and meaning. The results of the analysis process that has been carried out can be seen in the following description.

#### 1. Movement To Form A Line

##### A. The Initial Movement Forms A Line

Table 1. Analysis of Initial Movements to Form a Line

Signifier	Signified
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dancers walk from left to right to form a line</li> <li>2. Before straightening the body to face forward, the dancer faces to the right</li> </ol>

Source: Youtube (@ Bidbud Kubar)

Denotation	Connotation
Dancers walk from the right to the left to form a sideways line carrying kusak and senak. In this	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Kusak is a wooden stick</li> <li>2. Senak is bamboo filled with seeds</li> </ol>

row formation movement, the dancer's right leg is in front with the right hand open upwards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>3. Side rows are interpreted as the initial pattern/rule in the seed sowing process</li> <li>4. The right foot is put first when stepping on the board/floor which is interpreted as a person's way of honoring the land where they farm as a source of life</li> </ol>
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#### Meaning

The movement to form a line carried out by the dancers has the meaning of cooperation. At the level of farming dimensions, the movement of forming rows is included in the representation of livelihood. This representation can be seen from the pattern of marching sideways by carrying kusak and senak, where in the process of marching the dancer moves obliquely to the right and left.

#### Source: Primary Data, 2024

#### B. Movement Forms A Straight Pattern

Table 2. Analysis of Movements Forming Straight Patterns

Signifier	Signified
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Dancers line up lengthwise from left to right</li> <li>2. The dancer's gaze faces forward</li> <li>3. The right hand is raised and the right foot is on tiptoe</li> </ol>

Source: Youtube (@ Bidbud Kubar)

Denotation	Connotation
The dancer forms a straight pattern from left to right with a forward gaze, accompanied by the right hand being raised and the right foot slightly on tiptoe and the head swaying slightly.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. A straight pattern indicates that the seed sowing process will begin soon</li> <li>2. The raised hand is interpreted as a form of request that the seeds to be sown grow well</li> <li>3. Standing on tiptoes has a connotation that describes effort or effort that is extra careful and thorough</li> </ol>

#### Meaning




The movement that forms a straight pattern carried out by the researcher means sincerity and caution in work. At the level of farming dimensions, the movement of forming rows is included in the representation of livelihood. This

representation can be seen from the movements of submission, feet standing on tiptoes, and a straight pattern

Source: Primary Data, 2024

## 2. Movement of Holding/Playing A Kusak (Wooden Stick)

Table 3. Analysis of Movements for Holding/Playing Kusak

Signifier	Signified
	1. The dancer holds a stick in the left hand
	2. The dancer moves the stick up and down/hits it on the board/floor
	

Source: Youtube (@ Bidbud Kubar)

Denotation	Connotation
The dancer faces to the left with the kusak and left leg slightly raised. Apart from that, in this movement, the head in the initial movement faces the ground, then slightly to the side, and perpendicular to the front	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Lifting and hitting the kusak against the board/floor can be interpreted as a method used to make a hole/dig in the ground as a place to store seeds</li> <li>2. The head facing the ground can be interpreted as a way to avoid dangerous animals</li> <li>3. Head slightly to the side can be interpreted as a way to see the distance between hole</li> <li>4. Head perpendicular to the front can be interpreted as a way to see area of cultivated land/remaining land that needs to be hollowed out garapan/sisa tanah yang perlu dilubangi</li> </ol>

### Meaning



The movement of holding the kusak performed by the dancer can be interpreted as an initial planting pattern. At the level of farming dimensions, this is included in the representation of knowledge, because farmers have to make

holes and determine the distance of the holes before sowing seeds.

Source: Primary Data, 2024

## 3. Movement of Holding Senak (Bamboo Filled With Seeds)

Table 4. Analysis of Senak Holding Movement (Bamboo Filled with Seeds)

Signifier	Signified
	1. The dancer makes an oblique movement to the left and lowers the senak
	2. The dancer bends to the right and raises the senak

Source: Youtube (@ Bidbud Kubar)

Denotation	Connotation
The dancer performs a left oblique movement with his senak lowered, while when performing a right oblique movement the dancer raises his senak. Apart from that, in this movement the dancer's right hand is raised and seems to be opening upwards	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Left and right oblique movements can be interpreted as a method used to see the results of sowing grain on the ground</li> <li>2. Senak being lifted up and down is interpreted as the process of sowing seeds into the ground</li> </ol>

### Meaning


The movement of holding the senak carried out by the dancers can be interpreted as the process of sowing seeds into the ground. At the level of farming representation, this includes knowledge, social and livelihood aspects. This representation is supported by the sowing process, covering the soil after being sprinkled with grain, as well as the process of providing information.

Source: Primary Data, 2024



### 3. The Movement of Stomping The Feet And Pressing To The Board

Table 5. Analysis Of Foot Stomping and Kicking Movements Against The Board

Signifier	Signified
	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. The dancer faces straight forward with the senak on top and stamps the feet and stick on the ground</li> <li>2. Dancers form 2 lines, with their feet raised, their left foot slightly on tiptoe</li> <li>3. Dancers form a circle and move in circles while stamping their feet and pressing against the board/floor</li> </ol>
Denotation	Connotation
Dancers form 2 rows then face straight forward while stamping their feet and pressing against the board/floor. After that, the dancer makes a circle and moves in a circle while stamping his feet and hitting the board/floor	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Senak barada above can be interpreted as meaning that the seed sowing process has been carried out</li> <li>2. Stomping the cuscus and feet can mean that the process of sowing seeds/grains has been completed.</li> <li>3. Forming 2 rows can be interpreted as the process of providing information to other farmers that the land has been given grain seeds.</li> <li>4. The dancer forms the moon with a circular movement indicating that the seed sowing celebration has been completed</li> </ol>

#### Meaning

The movements of stomping their feet and pressing against the board by the dancers can be interpreted as a procession ending the planting of seeds. At the level of farming representation, this is included in the social aspect because there is a kinship system and social organization that is highlighted and is related to customs and rules regarding various kinds of units in the environment where one lives and socializes from day to day.

Source: primary data, 2024

The discussion in this research will focus on 2 main areas, namely the dance elements inherent in the gantar dance including wiraga, wirama, wirasa, and wirupa as well as the meaning of farming contained in the gantar dance.

*Dance elements in the Gantar dance movements are based on Wiraga, Wirama, Wirasa and Wirupa*

Dance is a rhythmic movement of the human body which is represented by a movement that has a certain meaning. According to Wulandari & Hartono (2018:58), this rhythmic movement can function as part of a ritual, for social purposes (communication), or as part of a spectacle. Therefore, in dance there are always 4 main elements that surround it, namely wiraga, wirama, wirasa, and wirupa. In the gantar dance, the 4 elements are as follows.

#### 1. Wiraga

Wiraga is a movement skill of the dancer's body or the dancer's physical parts. These skills include movements of the fingers, toes, wrists, ankles, face and head, shoulders, neck, mouth, knees, hips, chest, stomach, eyes and eyebrows (Eki, 2015:54). Wiraga in the first movement is forming a line seen from 2 patterns, namely the initial movement and the straight pattern. In the movement that forms the initial movement pattern, Wiraga is characterized by the dancer's right leg being at the front, where the bend can form a 35 degree angle. Meanwhile, the movement to form a straight line pattern of wiraga is characterized by the right hand being raised, the right foot slightly standing on tiptoe and the head slightly swaying.

In the movement of holding/playing the kusak, wiraga is characterized by the left leg being slightly raised. Apart from that, in the movement of holding/playing the kusak, the head at the beginning of the movement is facing the ground, then slightly to the side, and at the end of the movement it will be perpendicular to the front. Meanwhile, the movement of holding the senak wiraga is characterized by an oblique movement of the body. Apart from that, the gesture in this movement is characterized by the hands looking up. As for the movement of stomping the feet and pressing the board, wiraga is characterized by the body facing forward. Not only that, in this movement the dancer's feet are also stamped on the board/floor.

#### 2. Wirama

Wirama basically correlates with rhythm, not only the rhythm of the piece or dance music, but also the rhythm and rhythm of the movements. Wirama is divided into two, namely sign wirama and free wirama. Tandak beats are beats that are steady and pure with repetitive and regular beats and accents, while free beats are beats that don't always have beats with repetitive and regular accents. In the initial movement to form a line, the rhythm used is steady, because the dancer is given a beat with the same note repeatedly when forming the initial pattern of the line and the straight pattern.

In the movement of holding/playing the kusak, the wirama used is the sign. Wirama Tandak can be seen from the dynamic rhythm of the sape music that is played. Apart from that, the curama Tandak in the movement of holding/playing the kusak can be seen from the beat of the drum and gong with the same beat when the dancer faces to the left side and when

lifting the kusak to the board/floor. In the movement of holding the senak, the wirama is still included in the free wirama because the music used is still in line with the previous movement. Meanwhile, when stomping the foot and hitting the board, the rhythm used is marked and free. Tandak wirama is used when the dancer stomps his feet, while free wirama occurs when the kusak is stamped on the board.

### 3. Wirasa

Wirasa is an expression of movement and facial expressions that have levels of appreciation and soulfulness in dance, such as soft, smooth, firm, happy and sad, resulting in beautiful movements. In the movement to form a line, the expression that is emphasized is joy, which can be seen from the dancer's facial expression with a faint smile and his right hand open upwards. In the movement of holding/playing the kusak, the rhythm shown is firm. This can be seen from the dancer's facial expression which shows a serious and determined expression, with slightly furrowed eyebrows and sharp eyes and lips that are quite tightly closed or slightly pursed.

In the movement of holding the senak, the wirasa shown is happy and firm. The feeling of joy can be seen from the faint smile, shining eyes, and warm gaze when the dancer makes a slanting movement to the left and lowers the senak. Meanwhile, when the dancer makes a movement that tilts to the right and raises the gesture, the feeling that is highlighted is firm, with sharp eyes and not smiling. As for the movements of stomping the feet and pressing against the board, the wirasa that is highlighted is soft, smooth, firm and happy. This whole wirasa can be seen from a thin smile, slightly raised eyebrows giving the impression of gentleness, sharp eyes, and open/upturned hands.

### 4. Wirupa

Wirupa is an element that gives dance movement character which is shown through color, clothing and make-up. In this element, the dancer throughout the movement uses ulap doyo, which is a woven cloth made from the fibers of doyo leaves or a plant similar to pandan which has strong fibers in black, red and white.

## The Meaning Of Farming Contained in The Gantar Dance

Sobur (2015:31) explains that, "Meaning is an abstract concept and is a relationship between language and the outside world that has previously been agreed upon by language users so that they can be mutually understood." Regarding the meaning of farming, if you refer to the description above, it can be seen that the main meaning created is knowledge, social and livelihood. The explanation of each meaning is as follows.

### 1. Knowledge

Knowledge is a collection of information, facts, and skills acquired through experience and education. Through knowledge, a person can interpret and interact with the world around him more effectively so that in this context, knowledge is not just data collection, but also involves the ability to analyze, synthesize and apply that information in a relevant context. The representation of knowledge is contained in the movement of holding/playing the kusak.

Clear evidence of this meaning is that farmers have to make holes and determine the distance of the dug holes before sowing seeds. This representation is in line with Wahyu's statement (2019:10).

It is stated to be in harmony because according to Wahyu (2019:10) representation works through 2 main concepts, namely concepts in the mind and concepts of language. The two influence each other and are interrelated, because the concepts in the mind cannot be conveyed if not through language. Vice versa, language without concepts is meaningless. If this statement is linked to a representation of knowledge, it will form the premise that theoretical knowledge about farming will not have significant meaning if it is not implemented well in practice. However, on the other hand, if someone "knows" about farming but does not understand the theoretical aspects, then the results from the farm will not be optimal.

This form of knowledge then emerged as a cultural system, where in the context of gantar dance, according to researchers, it can be grouped into two types. First, material culture in the form of creations, intentions, which take the form of objects. Second, non-material culture which takes the form of habits, customs and knowledge (Puspasari, Masriadi, & Yani, 2019:21). These forms will then become an identity, where according to Puspasari (2017:3) "cultural identity is the feeling that a person has towards a particular culture or ethnic group, where this feeling is formed not only because of cultural forms but also by aesthetics, thought patterns and social structures".

### 2. Social

The second representation found is social, where this can be seen in the movements of holding the senak and stomping the foot and the kusak against the board. In social representation, the cultural dimension refers to the kinship and organizational system related to customs and rules regarding various kinds of entities in the environment where one lives and socializes from day to day. Apart from being a kinship and organizational system, according to researchers, this social representation functions as part of communication in society. This is in line with the function of dance according to Wulandari & Hartono (2018: 58), because according to him the function of dance in society is as part of ritual, as well as as part of spectacle and part of communication.

The communication function in particular, if combined with the movement of holding the senak and stamping the foot and the kusak against the board, can be seen from the tone/rhythm of the stroke. When one dancer (like a farmer) hits the kusak, it is a signal for the other dancers to hit the board too. Likewise with senak, when one dancer carries out the sowing process, the other dancers will also do this. This statement is in line with Hall's opinion in Menawati (2021:427), especially in the concept of enlightenment subject or a concept which assumes that humans are subjects who are centered, united and have a natural sense of self-awareness within their communal group.

### 3. Livelihood

The third farming representation found is livelihood, where this representation can be seen in the initial movements of

forming rows, straight patterns, and holding the senak. This movement can represent a livelihood because if it is correlated with a reflective approach, it can be understood that this is the result of the real production of ideas, objects and experiences in society (Hall in Strinati, 2020: 15). Apart from that, if it is connected to the intentional approach, it can be understood that the representation of livelihood is the speaker's process of communicating the meaning in each case that is special and unique (Alamsyah, 2020: 94).

Livelihoods are a representation of farming because farming is the main source of food and income, and has a central role in the economic sustainability and daily life of traditional communities. This activity reflects a close connection with nature, involves various rituals and traditions to ensure the success of the harvest, and strengthens the values of cooperation and mutual cooperation within the community. Therefore, livelihood is also a form of identity, where according to Puspasari (2017:3) this identity is formed not only because of cultural forms but also by aesthetics, thought patterns and social structures..

#### IV. CONCLUSIONS

Based on the research results presented previously, it can be concluded that the representation of farming culture contained in the gantar dance based on semiotic analysis is knowledge, social and livelihood. The representation of knowledge is contained in the movement of holding/playing the kusak. Social representation is seen in the movements of holding the senak and stamping the foot and the kusak against the board, while the representation of farming is seen in the initial movements of forming a row, a straight pattern, and holding the senak.

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