



The Role of Tingkilan as Accompaniment Music for Jepen Dance

Mar'ie Muhammad

Postgraduate Program at the Indonesian Art Institute Yogyakarta, Indonesia

<http://dx.doi.org/10.18415/ijmmu.v11i6.5837>

Abstract

This research explores the role of Tingkilan music as accompanying music in the Jepen dance, a traditional dance of the Kutai tribe in East Kalimantan which is influenced by Malay and Islamic culture. Using qualitative methods of descriptive analysis, this research reveals how Tingkilan functions as a solid rhythmic foundation, determining tempo and movement patterns, and helping dancers maintain harmony and synchronization. Through its melodies and variations in dynamics, Tingkilan is able to convey various moods and emotions, enriching the artistic expression in Jepen dance. This music also enriches the aesthetics of the performance with unique colors and textures produced by traditional instruments such as the psaltery, drum and violin, creating a distinctive and mesmerizing atmosphere. Apart from being an accompaniment, Tingkilan contains deep cultural meaning, conveying classic stories, myths and moral messages passed down from generation to generation. This research emphasizes the importance of understanding and preserving Tingkilan music as an integral part of the cultural heritage of the Kutai tribe, as well as its contribution to enriching the experience and artistic value of Jepen dance.

Keywords: *Tingkilan; Jepen Dance; Kutai Tribe*

Introduction

Indonesia is a country rich in cultural diversity, traditions and arts stretching from Sabang to Merauke. This diversity includes various very valuable aspects such as dance, which need to continue to be preserved and cultivated. One province that is rich in traditional arts and culture is East Kalimantan. This province has a wealth of unique arts and cultural customs, including the traditional dance known as the Jepen Dance. Jepen dance is an integral part of people's lives in East Kalimantan, especially in the East Kutai area (Pertiwi & Politik, 2017). This dance is not only a valuable cultural heritage, but also plays an important role in the social life of the local community (Pertiwi & Politik, 2017). The existence of Jepen Dance among the people of East Kutai reflects cultural richness that must continue to be preserved and developed (Pertiwi & Politik, 2017).

The importance of preserving Jepen Dance is especially felt among the younger generation. The younger generation needs to be invited to know, love and preserve this traditional dance so that this cultural heritage is not lost to time. Apart from the younger generation, this conservation effort must also involve all levels of society, from the elderly to the general public. This strong support from various

parties will help in efforts to preserve and develop the Jepen Dance, so that this dance remains alive and growing among the people of East Kutai (Pertiwi & Politik, 2017). Thus, through preservation and development involving various groups, Jepen Dance can continue to be maintained and passed down from generation to generation. This will not only enrich local culture, but also make a significant contribution to the richness of Indonesia's national culture (Asrani, 1993). This collaborative effort will ensure that Jepen Dance remains an inseparable part of cultural life in East Kalimantan.

Jepen Dance itself is a traditional dance originating from the Kutai tribe in East Kalimantan (Kusnadi, 2009). This dance has a strong influence from Malay and Islamic culture. Jepen dance was developed by the Kutai and Banjar tribes who live along the banks of the Mahakam River (Warga, 2004). This dance reflects Malay culture which is dynamic, attractive and full of positive energy for both dancers and spectators. Apart from that, the Jepen Dance has a simple nature and is very well known among the local community. Jepen dance highlights a very strong Malay nuance, which is clearly visible from the dance movements to the make-up and clothing worn by the dancers (Warga, 2004). The uniqueness of the Jepen Dance also lies in the make-up and clothing of the dancers, especially the female dancers (Warga, 2004). Their make-up is usually done in a minimalist manner, but still maintains the graceful and elegant characteristics of Malay fashion.

The clothing worn by the Jepen Dance female dancers is generally simple but beautiful, reflecting the elegance of Malay culture. They often wear traditional clothing decorated with distinctive motifs and bright but not flashy colors (Warga, 2004). This creates an elegant and harmonious appearance with smooth and rhythmic dance movements. Apart from the aesthetic aspect, Jepen Dance also has deep philosophical values. The movements in this dance are not only beautiful to look at, but also have meanings that reflect daily life and the teachings adhered to by the local community (Isnaini, 2022). Each dance movement carries messages and values that are passed down from generation to generation, making Jepen Dance not only entertainment, but also a means of education and cultural preservation (Isnaini, 2022).

Apart from the make-up, clothing and typical movements in the Jepen Dance, there are also traditional musical instruments typical of the Kutai tribe, namely Tingkilan music. Tingkilan music has characteristics similar to Malay music and is often used to accompany Jepen dance. Tingkilan music is an integral part of Jepen Dance performances, providing a rhythm and atmosphere that enriches the viewing experience. This music is not just a background, but also plays an important role in determining the tempo and mood of the dance. The presence of Tingkilan music makes the Jepen Dance performance even more lively and dynamic.

The instruments used in Tingkilan music generally include traditional musical instruments such as the harp, drum and violin (Fahrurazi et al, 2023). The gambus, which is a stringed musical instrument, provides a deep and rich melody, while the drum adds an energetic and uplifting rhythm (Gunawan, 2021). The violin, with its melodious sound, adds an element of elegance to the overall musical composition. The collaboration between Tingkilan music and Jepen Dance movements creates an enchanting harmony (Gunawan, 2021). Soft and rhythmic dance movements are accompanied by melodious music, creating an enchanting atmosphere and inviting the audience to be immersed in the beauty of the performance. Tingkilan music also reflects the Malay and Islamic cultural values held firmly by the Kutai people, adding a spiritual and emotional dimension to the dance (Hakim, 2011).

Apart from being an accompaniment to the Jepen Dance, Tingkilan music is also often played at various traditional events and celebrations in the Kutai community. This music is a symbol of strong cultural identity and a means of strengthening social ties among community members. Through Tingkilan music, cultural values and traditions are passed down from generation to generation, making it an important element in preserving the cultural heritage of the Kutai tribe (Hakim, 2011). Therefore, it is important to conduct further research regarding the role of Tingkilan music as an accompaniment in Jepen

Dance. This research is really needed to understand in depth how Tingkilan music contributes to the beauty, dynamics and meaning of Jepen Dance performances.

Research Methods

This research uses a qualitative descriptive research design (Moleong, 2017). This design aims to describe and depict in detail the events and phenomena that occurred in the subject of study, namely the role of Tingkilan music as an accompaniment to the Jepen Dance. Through a qualitative descriptive approach, this research will reveal various aspects related to the use of Tingkilan music in the context of Jepen Dance, as well as how these elements interact and influence each other. The data sources used consist of primary data in the form of observation and documentation as well as secondary data originating from books or journal articles discussing Jepen Dance, Tingkilan Music and Kutai tribal culture. Data collection techniques are carried out through observation and research documentation. Then the data analysis technique in this research uses qualitative analysis which consists of data reduction, data presentation, and drawing conclusions. The data validity method used is using source triangulation techniques.

Results and Discussion

1. History of Tingkilan as an Accompaniment to Traditional Jepen Dance

Jepen Dance is a traditional dance from the Kutai tribe in East Kalimantan which has a lot of influence from Malay and Islamic culture. This dance is a representation of Malay culture which is dynamic, attractive, energetic and down-to-earth. In the past, Jepen Dance was often performed in various traditional ceremonies and religious rituals. This dance functions as a means of communication with ancestral spirits and as an expression of gratitude to God (Gunawan & Fahrurazi, 2019).



Fig 1. Jepen Dance Performance

In this context, the Jepen Dance has a deep spiritual meaning and is an integral part of the religious life of the Kutai people. Apart from ritual contexts, Jepen Dance is also performed at celebratory events, such as harvest parties and weddings. This dance functions as entertainment that unites people and strengthens social ties between them (Isnaini, 2022). At harvest parties, for example, the Jepen Dance depicts joy and gratitude for the abundant harvest. Currently, Jepen Dance also plays a role as a tool for education and cultural preservation. Through practice and performances, the younger generation is taught about traditional values and dance skills (Putra, 2018). This helps ensure that the cultural heritage of the Kutai tribe remains alive and continues to be passed on. Jepen dance has several advantages that have grown and developed over time: (Pertiwi & Politik, 2017)

- a. As Royal Entertainment: Since its inception, the Jepen Dance has been entertainment that is inseparable from royal events. This emphasizes its vital role in entertaining and honoring the royal family and the guests in attendance. As part of cultural heritage, this dance has become a symbol of majesty and honor in a royal context.
- b. As a Means of Welcoming Important Guests: The Jepen Dance is a very special way to welcome important guests. His presence at special events marks the grandeur and specialness of the event. However, the limitations of its appearance on certain occasions also show that people still see it as something sacred and carried out in a meaningful context.
- c. Existence as entertainment in society: Jepen dance has also become part of the entertainment enjoyed by the wider community. Although initially limited to royal circles, over time, this dance has become an inseparable part of people's culture. Its presence at various events, both formal and informal, shows that Jepen Dance has become a lively and inspiring part of everyday life.

Thus, the Jepen Dance not only has value in royal contexts and special events, but has also grown to become an important part of entertainment and the cultural identity of society as a whole. Its regular development reflects adaptation to the times and values that continue to be appreciated and preserved in the context of traditional culture.

Tingkilan music is traditional music that accompanies Jepen Dance. This music is very important because it sets the tempo and rhythm of the dance, and creates an atmosphere that matches the theme of the performance. Musical instruments used in Tingkilan include the harp, drum, and violin, all of which contribute to the richness and unique sound of this musical accompaniment. Because tingkilan is an essential element in Jepen Dance performances, the thing that makes tingkilan essential is because this music is inseparable from the overall experience of the art. Apart from setting the tempo and rhythm of the dance movements, this music also plays a role in creating an atmosphere that suits the theme of the performance. By using traditional musical instruments such as the gambus, drum and violin, Tingkilan provides a rich and unique dimension to the Jepen Dance performance. Through a combination of harmonious sounds and flowing rhythms, Tingkilan music is able to elevate the audience's emotions and deepen their appreciation of the message they want to convey through dance. The atmosphere created by this music becomes an integral part of the overall artistic experience, enriching and strengthening the cultural expression represented by Jepen Dance. Thus, Tingkilan's role in the Jepen Dance performance is not only as an accompanist, but also as an addition to the artistic richness and values contained in the dance.



Fig 2. Tingkilan Music Performance

In the context of the application of Tingkilan Music, there is an interesting tradition where two singers respond to each other in singing poems that are full of advice or moral messages. This tradition creates a distinctive vocal performance and enriches the experience of listening to Tingkilan music. The exchanges between the two singers provide a deeper dimension in conveying moral messages and advice to listeners. Through alternating voices, they not only bring the words to life, but also create dynamic and evocative dialogue. In this way, the message conveyed becomes more interesting and easier for the listeners to absorb.



Fig 3. Jepen Dance Performance

In composing their poetry, the two singers were able to choose words that had deep meaning and were full of wisdom. They can use beautiful metaphors, similes or similes to convey moral messages

more creatively and evocatively. Every verse they sing becomes like part of a flowing story, and listeners can be carried away by the storyline conveyed through Tingkilan music. The vocal play between two singers also provides an opportunity for them to complement and enrich each other. They can improvise and respond to each other with spontaneity, creating captivating and mesmerizing vocal harmonies. In this way, the response to singing poetry becomes not just a performance, but also an artistic interaction that enriches and inspires.

Overall, the tradition of replying between two singers in singing moral poetry through Tingkilan music is not only part of an artistic performance, but is also a meaningful forum for conveying cultural and moral values to society. This creates an immersive and inspiring experience for listeners, as well as maintaining the continuity and authenticity of this traditional culture in society.

2. The Role of Tingkilan as Accompaniment Music for Jepen Dance

Tingkilan music is a type of traditional music from the Dayak Kenyah tribe in East Kalimantan, Indonesia. This is a distinctive music and has an important role in their culture, especially as accompanying music in various traditional ceremonies and traditional dances such as the Jepen Dance. In the context of Jepen dance, Tingkilan music has several very important roles:



Fig 4. Tingkilan Gambus Musical Instrument

Provides a Solid Rhythmic Foundation

Tingkilan music provides a solid rhythmic foundation for Jepen dance performances. With its distinctive and repetitive rhythm, this music not only becomes the basis for dance movements, but also becomes the binding that allows dancers to synchronize each step with the harmony of the flowing music. Every beat of the drum and blow of the wind seems to be a guide that directs the dancer's steps, strengthening the connectivity between musical artistic expression and agile body movements. In regular repetition, Tingkilan music provides a steady rhythm, allowing the dancers to feel the flow of time and

space, so they can convey emotional messages through body movements that blend with the rhythm. Thus, Tingkilan music not only accompanies, but also guides and inspires every dance movement, making it a vital element that forms the integrity and beauty of a Jepen dance performance (Satyawati, 2017).

Tingkilan music plays an essential role in providing a solid rhythmic foundation for Jepen dance. With a distinctive and regular rhythm, this music not only sets the tempo, but also forms movement patterns that form the core of the dance performance (Irawati, 2013). In this way, this music becomes the link that allows the dancers to maintain harmony in their movements, ensuring that every step and gesture is coordinated harmoniously, creating a stunning and memorable performance. With the touch of Tingkilan music, the dance execution becomes more than just a body movement, it becomes a living expression of rhythm and emotion, adding artistic depth and beauty to the performance experience.

Communicating Mood and Emotions

Through the flowing strains of the melody to the variations of dynamics that merge into Tingkilan music, a wide window opens into the various moods and emotions that are expressed in every Jepen dance movement. This music has the uncanny ability to weave together a wide range of feelings, from fiery joy to deep sadness, creating a rich and colorful emotional canvas. When the tempo runs fast and the rhythm is wavy, Tingkilan music creates an atmosphere of happiness and joy that is very encouraging (Irawati, 2013). Every note and gust of wind seems to evoke unstoppable enthusiasm and joy, allowing joy to weave every movement with joyful power (Putra, 2018). However, in the stillness of its soft melodies and peaceful rhythms, Tingkilan's music is also able to convey deeper layers of feeling. Here, a mood of sadness or deep reflection becomes clearly expressed, permeating every movement with moving subtlety. Every melody call and rhythmic vibration becomes a flow that conveys a flow of emotions that touch the heart, creating space for introspection and deep appreciation (Fahrurazi et al, 2023).

Enriching Aesthetics in Performances

Tingkilan music participates in decorating the aesthetics of all Jepen dance performances with a very significant contribution. The traditional instruments that are an integral part of Tingkilan, such as booming gongs, thumping drums, and various other percussion instruments, not only add dimension to the sound, but also provide amazing color and texture to the auditory experience (Gunawan et al, 2022). With each thunderous gong beat and space-filling drum vibration, Tingkilan's music creates a stunning soundscape, inviting the audience to feel its profound power and presence. The distinctive melodies of these traditional instruments take the audience on an enchanting sensorial journey, conjuring up images of the rich and colorful culture in which Jepen dance is rooted.

However, the beauty of Tingkilan music lies not only in the sound it produces, but also in its ability to create a distinctive and enchanting atmosphere. With the harmony created between various musical instruments, Tingkilan music forms a background that supports and enlivens every dance movement with unforgettable beauty. The atmosphere created by this music becomes like a living painting, filling the space with a majestic and mesmerizing presence (Gunawan et al, 2022). Thus, Tingkilan music is not just an accompaniment, but also an inseparable part of the overall aesthetics of Jepen dance performances. Its unique contribution in creating a mesmerizing sensorial experience for the audience makes it an essential element in expressing the beauty and richness of the culture from which Jepen dance originates.

Creating Atmosphere in Performances

Tingkilan music does more than provide a rhythmic backdrop for dance performances, as tingkilan also transports the listener into a deep and enchanting experience. With traditional instruments

such as gongs, drums and various other percussion instruments, this music creates an atmosphere rich in spiritual and emotional dimensions, adding depth of expression to the dance movements. Every sound produced by these instruments not only blends into the rhythm, but also penetrates into the souls of the audience, bringing various feelings, from elegance to spiritual firmness (Kusnadi, 2009). With soaring melodies and evocative harmonies, Tingkilan's music opens the door to a magical world, inviting listeners to reflect and feel the greater presence around them.

In the presence of deep gongs and rumbling drums, there is a spiritual touch that feeds the soul, while soft, heartfelt melodies provide space for deep emotional expression (Fahrurazi et al, 2023). All these elements come together to create an enchanting atmosphere, filling the space with wonder and profound presence, seeming to expand the boundaries of reality and transport the viewer into a new world. In this way, Tingkilan music is not just an accompaniment, but also an atmosphere creator that enlivens the dance with spiritual and emotional power, making every dance performance a soul-stirring journey.

Communicating Cultural Meaning

Tingkilan music often contains a depth of cultural meaning and symbolism that enriches the experience of Jepen dance. Through its melody, rhythm, and sometimes lyrics, if any, this music can be a powerful medium for conveying stories, myths, or cultural values that are very meaningful to the community that brings the dance to life. Every note produced by traditional musical instruments in Tingkilan carries a rich cultural heritage, becoming a trace that forms the collective identity of a society. From the tinkling of gongs to the vibration of drums, every sound contains old stories, indigenous myths and values passed down from generation to generation. This music is not just an accompaniment, but also a keeper of traditions, preserving and conveying cultural heritage to future generations (Isnaini, 2022).

In every melody and rhythm, deeper messages are contained, arousing the thoughts and feelings of the audience. They become connected to their cultural roots, swept up in a flow of time that takes them back to a distant past but remains relevant in their lives today. Tingkilan music becomes a bridge that connects the past with the present, inviting the audience to reflect and understand how valuable their cultural heritage is (Savitri & Suryaningsi, 2024). Tingkilan music often provides a vessel for the rich cultural wisdom and traditional values held in high esteem by the communities who inherited the practice. Through the lyrics that may be included or through distinctive musical motifs, Tingkilan is able to become a strong medium for passing on classic stories, original myths, or moral messages that have been passed on from one generation to the next. In every melody, old stories are hidden which are transformed into colorful musical narratives. With each unique musical motif, such as a beautiful melody or a rhythmic beat, Tingkilan is able to weave a story that moves the heart, creating a deep experience that evokes feelings of awe and conversion (Hakim, 2011).

Apart from that, the lyrics that sometimes accompany it also become a vehicle for conveying valuable messages. From wise advice to heroic stories, these lyrics strengthen the meaning and significance of each piece of music, bringing to life the values that are the foundation of the culture and morality of the people who practice them. As a result, Tingkilan music is not just a collection of notes and rhythms, but a reflection of the depth of a community's culture. Through its blend of melodies, musical motifs and memorable lyrics, Tingkilan becomes more than just entertainment or accompaniment as it becomes a center of local wisdom and valuable cultural heritage, connecting the past, present and future, while enriching and extending the traditions that exist. valuable from generation to generation (Hakim, 2011).

Thus, Tingkilan music is not just an accompanying sound, but also a reflection of the rich culture of a community. Through its enchanting harmonies, this music opens the door to the world of thoughts

and feelings, allowing us to experience the beauty and wisdom contained in the traditions of our ancestors.

Facilitates interaction between dancers

Collaboration between dancers in Jepen dance is an inevitable and very vital aspect. Tingkilan music plays an important role in facilitating this interaction by providing a steady and consistent foundation for the dancers, allowing them to move together in enchanting harmony. With a continuous melody and a steady rhythm, Tingkilan music provides clear instructions for every step and movement of the dancer. It's like an unspoken guide that guides them through each stage of the dance, ensuring that each movement is beautifully synchronized with the others. This creates a cooperative atmosphere between dancers, where they not only move as individuals, but also as a harmonious unit (Irawati, 2013).

Apart from that, Tingkilan music also creates an emotional bond between the dancers, because they respond to each other and together experience the power and beauty of the music (Gunawan et al, 2019). This helps strengthen the sense of brotherhood and solidarity between them, forming a strong and unified team on stage. Thus, Tingkilan music not only provides accompaniment, but also becomes a unifying element that connects the dancers, making Jepen dance performances a memorable and captivating experience for the audience.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Jepen Dance, as a traditional dance originating from the Kutai tribe in East Kalimantan, reflects the richness of Malay culture and the influence of Islam. Tingkilan music, as the main accompanying music for Jepen Dance, plays an essential role in enriching the aesthetics and beauty of the performance. With traditional instruments such as the psaltery, drum and violin, Tingkilan not only provides a solid rhythmic foundation but also creates an atmosphere that fits the theme of the performance. This music is able to communicate various moods and emotions, enriching the artistic expression of the dancers and providing an immersive experience for the audience. Apart from that, Tingkilan also functions as a strong medium for conveying cultural values, classic stories, myths and moral messages that are important for the people who practice it. Suggestions that can be given for further research should be to explore the structure of Tingkilan music, including technical analysis of the melody, rhythm, harmony and instruments used, to provide a more detailed understanding of this traditional musical composition. It may also include a study of how Tingkilan music has developed over time.

Reference

- Asrani. 1993. *Tingkilan Musik Tradisional Kaltim*. Samarinda: Taman Budaya Kalimantan Timur.
- Asril Gunawan. (2021). Gambus Paser Performance As A Cultural Literacy Enhancement Of Paser Culture For Indonesian Capital Relocation To East Borneo. *International Journal of Social Science*, 1(4), 341–346. <https://doi.org/10.53625/ijss.v1i4.712>
- Fahrurazi, F., Gunawan, A., & Pratama, Z. W. (2023). Strategi Sanggar Seni Karya Budi dalam Menjaga Kesenian Tingkilan Tradisional Kutai di Kalimantan Timur. *Jurnal Mebang: Kajian Budaya Musik Dan Pendidikan Musik*, 3(2), 85–92. <https://doi.org/10.30872/mebang.v3i2.66>
- Gunawan, A., Mursalim, & Fahrurazi. (2019). Transformasi Musik Tingkilan Kutai dalam Kontinuitasnya di Era Globalisasi (Sebuah Pendekatan Etnomusikologis). *Prosiding Seminar Nasional Bahasa, Sastra, dan Seni (Sesanti)*, 1–16. <https://eprosiding.fib-unmul.id/index.php/sesanti/article/view/3>

- Gunawan, A., Vivian, Y. I., & Putra, A. K. (2022). Kontemplasi Musik Tradisi di IKN Kalimantan Timur dalam Kontinuitas dan Perubahan. *Jurnal Mebang: Kajian Budaya Musik Dan Pendidikan Musik*, 2(2), 111–122. <https://doi.org/10.30872/mebang.v2i2.30>
- Hakim, A. Q. (2011). *Tingkilan Alunan yang Mengarungi Abad*. Samarinda: Nuansa Harmoni.
- Irawati, E. (2013). Kreativitas Seniman Tingkilan Kutai Kalimantan Timur. *Panggung*, 23(4), 386–398. <https://doi.org/10.26742/panggung.v23i4.150>
- Isnaini, F. (2022). Pengembangan Dan Pelestarian Tari Jepen Masyarakat Kutai Timur. *SIBATIK JOURNAL: Jurnal Ilmiah Bidang Sosial, Ekonomi, Budaya, Teknologi, Dan Pendidikan*, 1(12), 2887–2890. <https://doi.org/10.54443/sibatik.v1i12.463>
- Kusnadi. (2009). *Penunjang Pembelajaran Seni Tari*. Yogyakarta: Tiga Serangkai.
- Moleong, L. J. (2017). *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif (Edisi Revisi)*. Bandung: Remaja Rosdakarya.
- Pertiwi, A. F. (2017). Makna Komunikasi Nonverbal Pada Tari Jepen Tepian olah Bebaya. *eJournal Ilmu Komunikasi*, 5(3), 488–497.
- Putra, B. A. (2018). Tantangan Keberlanjutan Musik Tingkilan di Kutai Kartanegara. *Seminar Antar Bangsa: Seni Budaya dan Desain*, 201–210. <https://repository.unmul.ac.id/handle/123456789/12456>
- Satyawati, M. (2017). Tingkilan: Ekspresi Masyarakat Kutai di Tenggarong, Kalimantan Timur Sebuah Kajian Seni Wisata. *Imaji*, 15(1), 120–125. <https://doi.org/10.21831/imaji.v15i1.13523>
- Savitri, P. A., & Suryaningsi, S. (2024). Eksistensi Lembaga Adat dalam Melestarikan Nilai-Nilai Sosial Budaya di Kabupaten Paser Kalimantan Timur. *Konstruksi Sosial: Jurnal Penelitian Ilmu Sosial*, 1(3), 91–102. <https://doi.org/10.56393/konstruksisocial.v1i3.1309>

Copyrights

Copyright for this article is retained by the author(s), with first publication rights granted to the journal.

This is an open-access article distributed under the terms and conditions of the Creative Commons Attribution license (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>).