

Form and Structure of Music in the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* Dance from the Gorontalo Community

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ABSTRACT

Tidi Lo Polopalo is a traditional dance performed during traditional wedding ceremonies, commonly referred to as 'Hui Mopotilandahu.' This dance symbolizes the refined character and grace of a woman, her hospitality, as well as the duties and responsibilities she will assume after marriage. This dance cannot exist without its accompanying music; in this context, music is considered essential in strengthening the identity of the dance, which serves to represent the essence of womanhood in Gorontalo. The musical accompaniment of the Tidi Lo Polopalo dance is not merely a form of entertainment in traditional ceremonies; rather, it serves as a manifestation of cultural expression rooted in specific values. Within the performance, the music acts as a universal language that transcends words. This study aims to analyze the form and structure of the musical accompaniment in the Tidi Lo Polopalo dance within the Gorontalo community. This study employs a qualitative method, incorporating interviews, literature reviews, and direct observation. The research utilizes the concepts of form and structure to analyze a vocal or musical composition, which conveys the creator's thoughts and emotions through musical elements specifically tempo, rhythm, harmony, and expression as a unified whole. The results of this study indicate that the form and structure of the music in the Tidi Lo Polopalo dance reflect the aesthetic dimensions of sound within the Gorontalo community. Consequently, the presence of this music is essential in accompanying the Tidi Lo Polopalo dance for the people of Gorontalo.

KEYWORDS

Form
Structure of Music
Tidi Lo Polopalo
Gorontalo

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INTRODUCTION

This research is driven by the researcher's interest in a specific cultural phenomenon in Gorontalo: the *Polopalo* dance, commonly known as *Tidi Lo Polopalo*, performed by female dancers. As one of the traditional dances originating from the Gorontalo region, *Tidi Lo Polopalo* was first created for a wedding ceremony in 1565. The dance is performed during traditional wedding ceremonies, specifically one night prior to the marriage contract (*akad nikah*), in a ritual known as Hui Mopotilandahu or the engagement night, where it is performed by the bride herself. The dance takes its name from the primary property used by the female dancers: the polopalo. This instrument is crafted from natural materials, specifically the petiole of the sago palm tree (*rumbia*), which produces a distinct vibrational sound when played. Within the context of the dance, the *polopalo* functions not merely as a choreographic accessory but also carries profound symbolic meaning. It is interpreted as a symbol of a sword, representing strength, firmness, and the readiness to protect the integrity of the household (B. Reyners, personal communication, August 15, 2023).

In addition to the *polopalo*, this dance utilizes another property called '*ladenga*', a rectangular wooden board. This geometric shape signifies a household life that must be built holistically and balanced from all sides. The *ladenga* also reflects a solid foundation or base for a harmonious relationship, where each corner supports one another. According to (Daulima, 2006), the attire, properties, and movements of this dance symbolize various forms of commitment: adherence to Islamic Sharia, the role as the 'queen of the household,' fostering kinship with others, maintaining social boundaries in daily life, and fulfilling marital rights and obligations in accordance with *adat* (customary law) and *syara'* (religious law).

The performance consists of three dancers: the bride as the lead dancer and two companions. The bride wears the traditional Gorontalo attire known as *Bili'u*, featuring a chest ornament called a long *Kucubu*, which consists of five layers of gold chains. Meanwhile, the accompanying dancers wear the *Madi Pungu* traditional costume. Overall, this dance represents the refinement of women's character, their hospitality, and the fulfillment of the duties and responsibilities they will assume after marriage (B. Reyners, personal communication, August 15, 2023). In the tradition of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance in Gorontalo, there is a distinct division of roles between men and women. Men play the *rebana* to regulate the rhythm, while women dance to these beats as a form of aesthetic expression. This pattern reflects the sociocultural construction of Gorontalo society, where men are viewed as figures who control the rhythm of social life, while women serve to refine and beautify the traditional ceremonies through symbolic movements. The presence of these two distinct roles represents the symbolic structure of Gorontalo's customary laws. This phenomenon demonstrates a close relationship between music and movement, which are bound within a social construction. The *rebana* played by men can be interpreted as 'rhythmic rules' that govern the flow of the dance, while the female dancers provide 'aesthetic adjustments' symbolizing balance and harmony.

Music plays a pivotal role in traditional dance, serving as an accompaniment that determines the rhythm, atmosphere, and meaning of every choreographic movement. Traditional music does not merely provide the cadence that guides dancers in executing movements precisely, but also strengthens the emotional expression and cultural values embedded in the dance. As emphasized by Sedyawati (1981), music in traditional dance serves a dual function: as a technical accompaniment to movement and as a reinforcer of the symbolic meaning within the performance. The *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance utilizes *rebana* instrumentation and vocal chants, featuring a 4/4 time signature. The *rebana* percussion is essentially divided into two types: *Rebana I*, which serves as the rhythmic foundation, and *Rebana II* and *Rebana III* serve as variational striking patterns. Bahar (2016) states that cultural music is viewed as a knowledge system that serves as a guideline for appropriate behavior within its supporting community; thus, cultural performing arts are closely related to this unified system of cultural knowledge.

Consequently, cultural musical performances are primarily characterized by their contextual nature. In contrast, the existence of such performances is almost never independent or self-contained as a spectacle, as is common in the Western 'art music' tradition. Based on the problems outlined above, the objective of this study is to analyze the form and structure of the music in the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance within the Gorontalo community.

METHOD

Systematic process consisting of interrelated components, or a series of systematic and logical steps taken to solve a problem and achieve objective results. This study employs a descriptive qualitative method. As stated by Sugiyono (2016), qualitative research is often referred to as a naturalistic method because it is conducted under natural conditions. It is also known as the ethnographic method, as it was originally developed for research in the field of cultural anthropology. It is categorized as qualitative because the collected data and subsequent analysis are qualitative in nature. Based on the aforementioned description, this study employs a descriptive qualitative method with a musicological approach to explore and explain the musical forms and structures within the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance. This analysis is conducted in-depth, considering the cultural and social dimensions inherent in the performance.

This study employs a qualitative approach utilizing ethnomusicological methods to dissect the musical structure embedded within the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance. To operationalize the data gathered through participant observation, in-depth interviews with cultural practitioners, and audio-visual documentation, the musical analysis is executed through several systematic stages. Audio recordings are first transcribed into notation followed by formal segmentation and motif reduction processes to identify the emergent musical units within the performance.

The data collection stage began with determining the research location in Ayula Village, South Bulango District, Bone Bolango Regency, Gorontalo Province. This location is the home of the *Hui Mopotilandahu* traditional ceremony. The data in this study consist of verbal, visual, and musical data. Verbal data rely on oral or written communication to gather information addressing the research questions. Visual data utilize images, photographs, and videos as information sources derived from audio-visual recordings of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance performance. Musical data are employed in studies related to music and sound, collected through audio recordings, analysis of musical compositions, song lyrics, and performance observations.

Data collection techniques were carried out through several stages, including six observations at the research site. The first observation was conducted on May 10, 2023, engaging all sensory faculties as the research object involves both auditory and visual realities. The second observation took place on February 23, 2024, at the *Duluhopa* traditional house, aiming to collect performance data within the context of traditional wedding ceremonies. The third observation also occurred on February 23, 2024, at a wedding hall in Gorontalo City. Finally, the fourth through sixth observations were conducted during wedding ceremonies to further observe the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* performance. In addition to observations, data were gathered through interviews with informants who are practitioners of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* art, including Reyners Bila, a cultural figure, and the musicians involved in the dance.

This study also employed a literature review method, gathering written sources such as books, journals, theses, and dissertations related to the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* performance. Based on the described approach and methods, the data were analyzed using data triangulation. The analyzed data were subsequently categorized, processed, and rewritten using a descriptive approach to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the findings.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The *Hui Mopotilandahu* tradition (Engagement Night) is a ritual conducted on the night of the engagement, one day prior to the wedding ceremony (*akad nikah*). This tradition consists of a series of ceremonial events, beginning with the recitation of the Al-Qur'an—specifically Surah Ad-Dhuha and Al-Lahab—by the bride-to-be. This recitation symbolizes that she has completed her religious Quranic education. Subsequently, the groom performs the *Molapi Saronde* dance, which involves the symbolic dropping of a shawl, accompanied by two assistants who take turns performing the dance. This dance serves as an opportunity for the groom to catch a glimpse of his future wife in her room, a practice known in Gorontalo as *molihe huali*. During this performance, the groom and his assistants may invite family members or invited guests to join the dance, enhancing the atmosphere of joy and celebration within the *Hui Mopotilandahu* event.

The *Molapi Saronde* begins with the striking of the *rebana* (tambourine), accompanied by the *Turunani* song (a call to sing). The lyrics of this song, composed in both Arabic and Gorontalo languages, consist of prayers for safety and blessings. The duration of this dance is flexible, depending on the number of guests or family members invited to join the performance. The procession then continues with the bride's performance, specifically the traditional *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance. In this stage, the bride prepares to dance alongside two assistants; the bride wears the *Hamsei* (Half *Bili'u*) traditional attire, while the assistants wear the *Madi Pungu* traditional dress. Additionally, a twelve-year-old boy acts as the carrier of the wooden board (*Ladenga*), which serves as the dancing platform for the bride, and a twelve-year-old girl carries a tray containing the dance properties.

The lyrics chanted in the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* performance utilize the Gorontalo indigenous language, which is rich in philosophical meanings and local cultural values. The language serves as a medium for conveying customary (*adat*) and moral messages that have been passed down through generations by the ancestors of the Gorontalo people.

Musical Form of the Tidi Lo Polopalo Chant Tidi Lo Polopalo Poem

The lyrics chanted in the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* performance utilize the Gorontalo regional language, which is rich in philosophical meanings and local cultural values. The language serves as a medium for conveying customary (*adat*) and moral messages passed down through generations by the ancestors of the Gorontalo people. Each word contained within the lyrics possesses profound layers of meaning, embodying not only aesthetic beauty but also reflecting local wisdom. These lyrics do not merely exist as poetry or songs; rather, they function as a vehicle for cultural education, subtly and elegantly delivering advice to the newlyweds and the invited guests. This guidance emphasizes the importance of leading a life that upholds customs and traditions, maintaining politeness in speech, and practicing mutual respect—both within the context of domestic life and in broader social interactions.

In terms of presentation, the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* lyrics adopt the Malay chanting style integrated into Gorontalo tradition, generally performed as rhythmic singing. The presentation can be delivered solo or in groups of two to three singers, depending on the context and requirements of the performance. The harmony between the vocalists and the accompaniment of traditional musical instruments, such as the *rebana*, creates a sacred and emotional atmosphere, strengthening the connection between the audience, the performers, and the cultural values being conveyed. Here are the lyrics of the music Tidi Lo Polopalo:

Table 1. Lyrics of the poem Tidi Lo Polopalo

Lyrics part 1:	Lyrics part 2:
<i>Popoto limowa mayi</i>	<i>Dila po titi manguru</i>
<i>Polopalo libulayi 2x</i>	<i>Dahayi utakaburu 2x</i>
<i>Botiye polopalo</i>	<i>Po'oleyata umolintingo</i>
<i>Dihimi po'otohetalo 2x</i>	<i>Payinga motilandingo 2x</i>
<i>Bulayi potidipo</i>	<i>Wonu motolo ngala'a</i>
<i>Payinga umolito 2x</i>	<i>Dila potiti uda'a 2x</i>
<i>Dila ohuto ololo</i>	<i>Po'opiyohe loiya</i>
<i>Polopalo tolongolo 2x</i>	<i>Lo ungala'a motabiya 2x</i>
<i>Wonu odungga lobali</i>	<i>Mbu'i poti lumboyoto</i>
<i>Po'otahangi usabari 2x</i>	<i>Umopiyo dumo'oto 2x</i>
<i>Utiye nasehati</i>	<i>Wonu mau lili ole</i>
<i>Ungala'a ihilasi 2x</i>	<i>Agama u'pomontola 2x</i>
<i>Modile mau mongu bele</i>	<i>Tidi mayilapato</i>
<i>Po'otoheta to mele 2x</i>	<i>Ma'apu mongobubato</i>
	<i>Lomilohu lo hulato...</i>

Musical Accompaniment

Music in dance is not merely an accompaniment; it is an indispensable partner. Music provides a harmonious rhythm that helps regulate the timing or counts and offers a descriptive framework for the expression of movements Soedarsono (1977: 46). According to Jamalus (1988:1), music is a work of sound art in the form of a song or musical composition that expresses the thoughts and feelings of its creator through musical elements, namely rhythm, melody, harmony, form/structure, and expression as a unified whole. Jamalus (1988:35) further defines song form and structure as the arrangement and relationship between musical elements within a song that result in a meaningful composition.

The *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance utilizes *rebana* (tambourine) instrumentation and vocal chants. These chants typically use the key of Fis=Do, with a 4/4 time signature. However, the use of Western solmization terminology such as "Fis=Do" in this context does not necessarily imply that the pitch organization system in the oral tradition of *Tidi Lo Polopalo* strictly adopts Western diatonic structures. The *rebana* percussion is fundamentally divided into two types of striking patterns: *Rebana 1* serves as the rhythmic foundation, while *Rebana 2* and *Rebana 3* typically provide rhythmic variations based on the first *rebana*. In this musical composition, the *rebana* can be played by more than three performers, provided they adhere to the established rhythmic patterns and variations. The percussion play is categorized into 3-beat, 5-beat, and 7-beat patterns. Every word contained in the lyrics possesses profound layers of meaning, which not only encompass aesthetic beauty but also reflect local wisdom. These lyrics do not exist merely as poetry or song; rather, they serve as a medium for cultural education, subtly and elegantly conveying messages and counsel to the bridal couple and the invited guests. The advice revolves around the importance of leading a life that upholds customs (*adat*) and traditions, maintaining politeness in speech, and practicing mutual respect and appreciation, both within the domestic sphere and in broader social life.

In the performance context of *Tidi Lo Polopalo*, The accompanying music does not merely function as an acoustic background rather, it acts as a crucial timekeeper for the dancer. The musical clarity achieved through structural balance, rhythmic consistency, and the repetition of vocal motif establishes the primary foundation enabling a harmonious synchronization between music and dance. This straightforward sentence structure and

periodization align with Karl Edmund Prier's perspective, which asserts that in folk and traditional music, simple yet functional forms are the primary keys to conveying musical messages within social and performance contexts. However, within the dynamics of *Tidi Lo Polopalo*, this simplicity of form should not be misinterpreted as static rigidity. Within this functional framework, the repetition of vocal motifs precisely provides a secure space for the percussion instruments to flexibly improvise in response to the kinetic intensity of the dancer's body. Consequently, this simple constitutive relationship between sound and movement within the performative space. The following is an analysis of the musical phrases:

q = 70

po o po o o to li mo wa a ma a yi i i

po lo o o pa lo li i bu la a yi i po o lo pa

lo li i i bu u la a yi i bo o o ti i ye po o

lo o pa a lo o o di hi i i i mi po o o to he ta

lo o o di i i hi mi po o to he e ta a lo o o

bu u la a a yi po ti di i i i po o o

pa a yi i i nga u u u mo li i to o o pa a yi i

nga u mo o li i i i to o o di i la a a to o hu

to o o lo lo o o po lo pa a a lo ti lo o ngo lo o

lo o o po o lo pa lo ti lo o ngo o lo o lo o o

Figure 1. Musical Notation and Lyrics of Tidi Lo Polopalo

2

60

Voice & 
 wo o nu u u o dung ga lo o ba a li i i

66

Voice & 
 po o o o ta ha ngi i u sa ba ri i i po o ta ha

72

Voice & 
 ngi u u u sa a a ba ri i i u u ti i i ye na a

78

Voice & 
 e e ha a ti i i u nga la a a i i i hi la a

84

Voice & 
 si i i u unga la a i i i hi i la a si i i

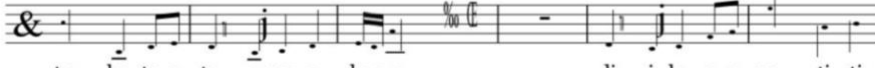
90

Voice & 
 mo o di i i le mo mo ngu u be e lee e e

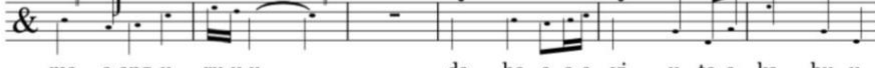
96

Voice & 
 po o o o to he ta a to me e lee e po o o o

102

Voice & 
 to he ta a to o me e lee e di i la a a po ti ti

108

Voice & 
 ma a ang u ru u u da ha a a a yi u ta a ka bu u

114

Voice & 
 ru u u da a ha a yi u ta a ka a bu u ru u u

120

Voice & 
 po o o lee ya ta u mo o lin ti ngo o o

Figure 2. Musical Notation and Lyrics of Tidi Lo Polopalo.

3

126
 Voice & pa yi i i nga mo o o ti lan di ngo o o pa a yi i

132
 Voice & nga mo o o ti i lan di ngo o o wo o o o o nu mo to

138
 Voice & lo o nga la a a a di i i i i la po ti i ti u da

144
 Voice & a a a di i i i i la po ti i ti i u da a a a

150
 Voice & po o o pi i yo he e lo o o i ya a a a

156
 Voice & lo o u u nga la a a mo ta bi ya a a lo o u nga

162
 Voice & la mo o o ta a a bi ya a a mbu u u u u i po ti

168
 Voice & lu um bo yo to o o o u mo pi i i yo du u u mo o o

174
 Voice & to o o u u mo pi yo du u u mo o o o to o o

180
 Voice & wo o nu u u mo li i li i i o la a a a

186
 Voice & a ga a a a ma u po o mon to o la a a a a a ga

4

192
 Voice & ma u po o mo o on to la a a ti i i i i di ma a

198
 Voice & yi i la pa to o o o ma a a a a pu mo o o ngo bu ba

204
 Voice & to o o lo o o mi lo hu u u lo o hu la to o o

Figure 3. Musical Notation and Lyrics of Tidi Lo Polopalo.

Structural Analysis of the Tidi Lo Polopalo Music

1. Tempo

In Western musical notation, tempo is generally indicated in BPM (beats per minute), which signifies the number of beats occurring within one minute. This tempo marker serves not only to regulate the speed of the music but also plays a vital role in determining the expression, emotion, and musical function within a specific cultural context. In traditional dance accompaniment such as *Tidi Lo Polopalo*, tempo acts as the primary reference that maintains the synchronization between the music and the dance movements. This is because tempo relates not only to the technical aspects of the performance but also influences the spiritual and symbolic nuances intended for the presentation. In the *rebana* performance of *Tidi Lo Polopalo*, there are typically three rhythmic patterns. The primary basic pattern is the 3-beat, followed by variational patterns of 5-beats and 7-beats, all of which are played at a consistent tempo of $\text{♩} = 70$. This indicates that there are 70 eighth-note beats per minute, categorizing this tempo as moderate to slow. In Western musical terminology, this tempo falls within the *Andante* range (69–76 BPM), which is commonly understood as a walking pace—calm and stable.

2. Metrum

In the musical accompaniment of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance, it is observed that the time signature used is 4/4, which means that each measure consists of four beats, with the quarter note (♩) as the basic unit of the beat. According to Prier (2004), the upper number indicates the number of beats per measure, while the lower number indicates the note value that forms the basis of one beat. Consequently, the metrical structure in this music follows a metric accent pattern of strong – weak – medium-strong – weak.

3. Rhythm

In the traditional *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance, rhythm serves as the primary musical element that guides dance movements, strengthens expression, and organizes the performance structure. The accompaniment is generally played using traditional percussion instruments such as the *rebana*. The rhythmic patterns in this accompaniment also function as a communication medium between the drummers and the dancers, as well as markers for sectional transitions within the dance structure. Each rhythmic pattern provides cues for the dancer on when to initiate, accelerate, decelerate, or conclude a movement. Consequently, rhythm is inseparable from the concept of musical function within a traditional performance context.

The musical accompaniment of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* traditional dance features three distinct *rebana* rhythmic patterns: 3-beat, 5-beat, and 7-beat patterns, which are played repetitively. Although these rhythmic patterns differ, they are executed synchronously to integrate seamlessly with the dance movement patterns. Repetition in the *rebana* performance serves to maintain tempo stability, reinforce the dynamics of the performance, and provide rhythmic variations that enrich the nuances of the dance accompaniment.

Musicologically, the 3, 5 and 7-beat patterns played simultaneously and petitively in the accompaniment of *Tidi Lo Polopalo* constitute a **polymetrics** structure. Rather than being constructed by the musicians through conventional Western music framework as rigid divisive meters, this polymetric phenomenon emerges from the internal logic of Gorontalo's oral tradition. These concurrent asymmetrical patterns represent an accumulation of interlocking rhythmic sensibilities, wherein synchronization among *rebana* instruments is maintained not by a metronomic pulse, but by a shared aesthetic feeling the

dynamic movement of the dancer. The following is a detailed explanation of each rhythmic pattern:

This pattern consists of three basic beats structured as **TAK – TAK – DUM | TAK – TAK**. This rhythm exhibits a triplet pattern (three beats per bar), which is common in traditional music to provide a swaying rhythmic nuance. 'TAK' typically denotes a light stroke or rim shot (played on the edge of the *rebana*), while 'DUM' represents a heavy stroke (played in the center of the *rebana*) that provides the primary accent. This combination creates a consistent, repetitive rhythmic cycle that is easily followed by the dancers. The constant rhythmic pressure on the first and second beats (through 'TAK') reinforces the bar's accentuation pattern, while the third beat (with 'DUM') fills the rhythmic time-space and maintains the continuity of movement.

In contrast to the 3-beat pattern, which is steady and serves as the rhythmic foundation, the 5 and 7-beat patterns emerge as representations of dynamic, creative development. In the musical accompaniment of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance, the 3-beat pattern acts as the metric backbone, ensuring tempo stability for the dancers. However, in the 5 and 7-beat patterns, the musical structure undergoes an expansion where the internal patterns are non-formulaic and not bound by rigid rules. This indicates that despite the freedom in determining accents or sound placement within each beat, the musicians remain strictly bound by the quantitative number of beats or the total duration. This phenomenon creates an aesthetic space where mathematical constraints (beat counts) meet expressive freedom.

The flexibility of the 5 and 7-beat patterns provides a crucial improvisational space for *Polopalo* musicians to spontaneously respond to every dynamic and articulation of the dance movements. This flexibility allows musicians to create richer, non-monotonous rhythmic textures without deviating from the overarching frame of counts established in the tradition. Technically, this demonstrates the principle of linear improvisation, where the resulting sound variations form a dialogic relationship between the musician and the emotional essence of the dance. Thus, the synchronization between the music and the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance is built not only through the regularity of the basic pattern (3-beat) but also through the musician's dexterity in processing odd patterns (5 and 7) as decorative elements that enliven the performance atmosphere.

4. Musical Motifs

Determining motifs in musical notation is conducted by identifying the smallest musical patterns that possess meaning and serve as the fundamental material for development. A motif typically consists of a short sequence of notes, generally two to four notes in length, which exhibits distinctive characteristics in both melody and rhythm. In notation, a motif can be identified through the repetition of specific patterns—either exact or varied—as well as through accents or tonal emphasis that provide the pattern with its identity. Motifs do not always stand alone; they frequently appear as integral parts of a musical phrase or sentence, meaning their identification must be viewed within the context of the overall musical structure. Furthermore, the function of a motif within a song aids in its determination, such as an opening motif at the beginning, a transitional motif connecting musical sections, or a concluding motif that marks the end of a phrase. Consequently, motivic analysis emphasizes the search for short, recurring patterns that possess unique characteristics and play a role in constructing the overall musical structure.

The opening motif consists of the text: '*po o po o o to*'. This motif serves as the *Grundmotiv* (basic motif) that is rhythmic and repetitive in nature, forming the foundation for the initial dance movements. Its primary function is to signal the beginning of the song.

The character of this short motif, with its recurring tones, emphasizes stability and rhythmic clarity.

The developmental motif consists of the text: '*li mo wa ma a yi i*'. This motif can be categorized as a *Sequenzmotiv* (sequence motif). It features a longer pattern with a rising and falling melodic contour that is arch-shaped. The final note is sustained (extended), creating the impression of a conclusion for a small phrase. Its function is to expand the musical space following the initial motif while simultaneously adding expressive color.

The transitional motif consists of the text: '*lo li i i bu u la a yi i i*'. This motif connects the opening and developmental motifs to the subsequent musical sentences. It functions as an expanded variation of the basic motif. While maintaining a repetitive character, it is notably longer, acting as a musical bridge. Consequently, this motif ensures continuity between phrases, preventing the music from sounding fragmented.

The dialogic motif (question) consists of the text: '*lo o pa a lo o o di hi i i*'. This motif functions as the *antecedens* (antecedent/question) within a *Periodenmotiv* (period motif) pattern. Its melodic character is light and open-ended, as if incomplete. According to Prier's theory, a question motif serves to build expectation. In the context of *Tidi Lo Polopalo*, this motif seemingly invites a response, thereby creating a musical dialogue.

The dialogic motif (answer) consists of the text: '*mi po o o to he e ta a lo o o*'. This motif serves as the *consequens* (consequent/answer) that concludes the musical period. The melody is more stable, with the final note sustained to create a sense of finality. The purpose of this response motif is to provide resolution and balance following the preceding question.

The fixed rhythmic motif consists of text that appears repeatedly across various sections with different vocalizations (e.g., '*nga u u mo li i to o o ...*', etc). According to Prier's theory, this pattern is categorized as a *Rhythmisches Motiv* (rhythmic motif). The pattern remains consistent throughout nearly the entire song, serving as a rhythmic 'common thread' (*benang merah*). Its purpose is to maintain tempo stability, ensuring that the dancers remain synchronized. The closing motif (cadential) consists of the text: '*po o o le e ya ta u mo o lin ti ngo o o*' (found in measures 120, 192, etc.). This motif is categorized as a *Kadenzmotiv* (cadential motif). Its primary characteristic is the sustained final note with an open vocalization (such as 'o', 'a', or 'i'). Its purpose is to conclude a phrase and provide a transitional signal to the subsequent section. Functionally, this motif serves as a cue for the dancers to end a specific sequence of movements before transitioning into a new choreographic pattern.

5. Musical Phrases

The musical phrases in this song can be identified based on rhythmic structure, melodic contour, and markers such as sustained notes at the end or vocal pauses. Determining phrases in musical notation does not merely follow bar lines; rather, it is primarily determined by the musical flow. A phrase can be likened to a collection or combination of words in a language, possessing an introduction, a development, and a conclusion. In practice, a phrase typically spans four to eight measures, though this is not absolute as it may be shorter or longer depending on the character of the music. To identify phrase boundaries, attention must be paid to natural stopping points within the melody, whether in the form of sustained notes, rests, or points of repose that create a sense of temporary closure. Furthermore, the repetition of rhythmic patterns or melodic motifs, the appearance of pitch climaxes, and changes in harmony can also serve as phrase markers. A phrase may also begin in the middle of a measure through an upbeat (*anacrusis*); thus, phrase determination is not always aligned with the bar lines. Consequently, phrase identification emphasizes the musical sense built

through melody, rhythm, and harmony rather than merely following the mathematical structure of the notation. Some examples of phrase structures from the beginning of the song are as follows:

Phrase I :

Rhythmic Notation: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

Lyrics: *po o po o o to li mo wa ma a yi-i-i.*

The structure of this phrase is constructed from two interconnected short motifs. The first motif is repetitive, featuring short notes emphasized by the rhythmic recurrence of the syllables '*po o*'. Meanwhile, the second motif exhibits a subtle rising and falling melodic contour, concluding with a sustained note on '*yi i i*'. The presence of this sustained note serves as a marker for a temporary closure, yet it does not convey a sense of finality for the song. Consequently, according to the theory of musical periods, this phrase can be categorized as an antecedent (question) because it remains 'suspended' and demands a response in the subsequent phrase. Functionally, this phrase opens the initial musical idea and introduces the textual-rhythmic pattern that forms the basis for further development."

Phrase II:

Rhythmic Notation: ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩ ♩

Lyrics: *po lo o o o pa lo li i-bu-la-a-yi-i*

When compared to Phrase I, the rhythmic structure of this phrase is more complex, featuring variations in pitch repetition and shifts in accents. Phrase II also concludes with a sustained note on '*yi i*'; however, it conveys a more resolute and stable impression, as if providing a resolution to the tension of the preceding phrase. Consequently, Phrase II functions as the consequent (answer), which balances the musical question posed by the antecedent. The combination of Phrase I and Phrase II forms a complete musical sentence (8 measures, 4+4 structure) that is symmetrical, reflecting the musical balance characteristic of repetition-based traditional music.

The use of long notes (indicated by slurs or horizontal lines in the lyrics, such as '*yi i*' and '*po o o*'), marks points of musical emphasis that also serve as resting points for the dance movements. Furthermore, the melodic contour of the aforementioned song generally moves within a limited ambitus (a narrow vocal range), utilizing conjunct motion (stepwise movement between adjacent notes). This reinforces the folk-melody characteristic, making it accessible and easily memorized.

CONCLUSIONS

The music functions not only to accompany the movements and regulate the rhythm but also to establish the atmosphere and emphasize the aesthetic value of the movements' meaning and beauty. Furthermore, the community perceives the meaning within the lyrics of the Tidi Lo Polopalo chant as a form of moral guidance, encapsulated in the proverb "*Ode momata potipiya, mohohayuw hemetiya, mogigimbida umopiya,*" which translates to: "Behave well; the bad will distance itself, and goodness will approach." This expression serves as a medium for conveying advice to the king and the royal family to maintain virtuous conduct.

The formal structure of the musical accompaniment for the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance follows a patterned sequence of **A - A' - B - A'**, which collectively forms a ternary pattern

with variations. This structure reinforces the movement's balance between repetition and development while asserting the primary musical idea. The musicality in the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance is based on simple yet meaningful rhythmic and melodic repetitions. Furthermore, the music significantly strengthens the representation of graceful femininity, creating a harmony between the power of sound and the refinement of the dancer's body. Through lyrics imbued with moral and religious values, along with gentle melodies, the music serves as the primary medium in constructing the identity of the Gorontalo people.

Research concerning the forms and structures of traditional music remains extensively open for further development. Future researchers may delve deeper into musical compositions or examine the relationship between music and gender through a local cultural perspective. In view of these considerations, the documentation of the *Tidi Lo Polopalo* dance is of paramount importance, necessitating systematic preservation efforts to ensure its survival against the challenges of changing times.

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