

広島大学学術情報リポジトリ

Hiroshima University Institutional Repository

Title	A Methodological Construction of Analysis on Mak Yong' s Mengadap Rebab Dance to Address the Discontinuance of Data Using a Mixed-Method Approach
Author(s)	SYAFIQ FALIQ, BIN ALFAN
Citation	Bulletin of the Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hiroshima University. Studies in integrated arts and sciences , 3 : 53 - 55
Issue Date	2022-12-31
DOI	
Self DOI	
URL	https://ir.lib.hiroshima-u.ac.jp/00053572
Right	掲載された論文，研究ノート，要旨などの出版権・著作権は広島大学大学院人間社会科学研究科に帰属する。 ©2022 Graduate School of Humanities and Social Sciences, Hiroshima University. All rights reserved.
Relation	



A Methodological Construction of Analysis on Mak Yong's Mengadap Rebab Dance to Address the Discontinuance of Data Using a Mixed-Method Approach

SYAFIQ FALIQ BIN ALFAN

Graduate School of Integrated Arts and Sciences, Hiroshima University

論文の要旨

Mak Yong, a traditional Malay dance theatre is regarded as one of the intangible cultural heritage by UNESCO since 2005. It combines ritual, music, dance and improvised acting to provide entertainment to its crowd since days of old. Although no documentation was found on its origin and historical narrative due to its oral tradition, Mak Yong was recorded and studied at least one hundred years old. However, the different periods of its study since the early twentieth century has led to one of the problematic issues that have yet to be criticized by its scholars, which is the discontinuance of data. There seems to be a different description of what Mak Yong is through its one hundred years of study. In addition, during the fieldwork in Southern Thailand and throughout this study, fewer people could connect the early recorded form of Mak Yong early in the twentieth century with its current form. The situation calls for a different approach than what was done in the past for the Mak Yong study. The limitation of the ethnographic study on Mak Yong was unable to address this issue of discontinuance or track any possible changes that happened in the period before the study. Due to this issue, we decided to use pragmatism as the philosophical foundation of

this study as it caters to inquiry-oriented study. In addition, pragmatism philosophy allows applying a mixed-method approach to answer its inquiries, therefore overcoming the issue of limitation in an ethnographic study. We used the cultural evolution concept to connect these data with the supplementary understanding of the connection between creativity, social action, tradition and environment through George Herbert Mead's social behaviourism and Hans Joas' Creativity in Action theory. Using motion capture technology, we will understand the connection between environment, social culture and choreography in Mak Yong's cultural evolution. In short, we have expanded the objective of this study into five main concerns, which are given below:

1. To understand the physical and dramatic movements of Mak Yong's Mengadap Rebab dance through its movement pattern data obtained using motion capture.
2. To interpret the data and connect to their cultural representation from the bodily expression given in the current and previous ethnographic studies.
3. To examine the connection between the use of accessories and costumes in the dance choreography of Mengadap Rebab.

4. To connect all past ethnographic data using motion capture data and cultural evolution theory.
5. To examine the viability of using motion capture in the future studies of traditional performing arts in Malaysia.

However, to test the universality of this approach, we will also use different traditional performing art with no historical connection to Mak Yong as a comparison. If choreography in both performing arts corresponds to the background information on their environment, we can accept the connection between environment and other background information towards the dance choreography. For this study, we will be using Japanese Noh theatre to compare as they do not have a historical connection based on our literary review. We used Noh's Hagaromo Shimai as the comparative subject to Mak Yong's Mengadap Rebab. After the preliminary fieldwork, we decided to imitate the acquisition of dance knowledge by each dance's community member to provide valid comparable motion capture data. Using MoCap MATLAB Toolbox created by Berger and Toiviainen in 2013, we have chosen three elements for our studies. These elements are cumulative distance by toe markers, standard deviation and velocity graph on several important markers. The cumulative distance by toe markers on both dances shows the corresponding connection between the distance travelled by toe markers with the performance space. The high value of cumulative distance in Noh's Hagaromo Shimai shows how it corresponds to the big performance space provided in Noh theatre compared to the small one in Mak Yong. The standard deviation in Mengadap Rebab and Hagaromo Shimai shows both Mak Yong and Noh have less preference in vertical movement of the feet in their choreography. Finally, the velocity

graph shows the important part of the body utilized for the dance choreography. In Mak Yong, the hands are the most important element in the dance, which corresponds to the accessories worn by the performers. Meanwhile, the feet in Noh becomes an important tool in expressing the dramatic choreography. Therefore a proper technique and socks need to be used to execute it as intended. From this experiment, we had established the universality of our hypothesis for the connection between the environment and dance choreography. It also implies that we can connect the past and present data on the Mak Yong dance. We understand that both past and present Mak Yong shares similarity as they both regard the hand as the attractive element of the performance. While in the past, they utilized Canggai or fake fingernails for their performance, particularly in Southern Thailand, today, Mak Yong in Kelantan and Kuala Lumpur use bangles to enhance the aesthetic of the performance. The Canggai is also the element that connects the Kelantan Mak Yong to its past in Southern Thailand and other forms of Mak Yong in Southeast Asia, particularly in Indonesia's Sumatran and Riau Islands.

During our fieldwork, we found that the Mak Yong community in Raman, Southern Thailand exhibits Lamarckian inheritance cultural evolution with a guided variation. Coined by Alex Mesoudi (2011: 43), it can be understood that the inherited traits were passed after changes in the lifetime of their predecessors. Meanwhile, guided variation is the characteristic of a process that causes a change in cultural variation over time. It can be defined as a change made by individuals on the information they received due to their own cognitive biases. Through interviews we made during our fieldwork, there is a tendency by the community members to modify their approach towards the tradition, and this we believe will create cultural variation

over time. The same examples happen in Mak Yong's well-known personalities, such as Khatijah Awang. She, too, made improvements and adjustments to the Mak Yong tradition to keep it relevant to the contemporary audience in Kuala Lumpur. This information, together with historical documentation on the banning of Mak Yong in the nineteenth century and during the 1990s, we have a reason to believe that this caused the distinct variation between Mak Yong in Kelantan, Sumatran and Riau islands. In the case of Sumatran and Riau Islands, it was exported out of the Malay Peninsular more than one hundred years ago, which is why their style is akin to the one recorded by Skeat in early 1900. Using the approach of Mead and Joas, we could understand how these processes occur using available information. The changes in Kelantan and Southern Thailand may cause by the need of the community to protect the tradition through the 'I' in the individual's self. As in the example of Khatijah Awang, changes are much easier to occur in the community where the 'Me' within the community is not as strong. Through this understanding, we can understand how she thrived in Kuala Lumpur as the community was not familiar with Mak Yong tradition compared to Pattani – Kelantan. However, Han Joas' approach enlightens us on why these changes could have resulted in the discontinuance of data. In one of his tacit assumptions, he highlights that situationality is an important element in discussing the creativity of social action's. Due to creativity in action that does not necessarily fit within the means-end schema, human social action often finds themselves reflecting and changing its course over time according to their current need. In the case of Mak Yong, due to its roots in oral tradition, there is no way of tracking progress on the changes made in the tradition. Over time, each generation influences the tradition and consequently cause cultural

variations to occur.