



## Ethnosemiotic Analysis of Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols in Torompio Traditional Dance of the Pamona Ethnic Group, Central Sulawesi

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### ABSTRACT

**Purpose of the study:** This study aims to analyze the verbal and nonverbal symbols in the Torompio traditional dance of the Pamona ethnic group in Central Sulawesi. It seeks to interpret the cultural meanings embedded in its movements, lyrics, costumes, and music through an ethnosemiotic approach to reveal the moral, social, and spiritual values reflected in the dance.

**Methodology:** This study employed a qualitative descriptive method with an ethnosemiotic approach, integrating ethnography and semiotics. Data were collected through observation, semi-structured interviews, and documentation using audio-visual tools such as cameras and recorders. Supporting data were analyzed using an interactive model of data reduction, display, and conclusion drawing with reference to Miles and Huberman.

**Main Findings:** The study found that verbal symbols in the Torompio dance such as traditional chants and lyrics express love, respect, and harmony, while nonverbal symbols such as gestures, movements, costumes, and colors represent unity, spirituality, and cultural identity. These symbols together form a semiotic system reflecting Pamona philosophical values of balance, modesty, and social harmony in human relationships and cultural life.

**Novelty/Originality of this study:** This study offers a new ethnosemiotic interpretation of the Torompio traditional dance, highlighting its dual role as an artistic performance and a medium of cultural communication. By revealing how verbal and nonverbal signs convey moral, spiritual, and social meanings, it advances understanding of Indonesian traditional arts as living semiotic systems that preserve local wisdom and identity.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is an archipelagic nation renowned for its extraordinary cultural diversity [1]. Comprising more than 17,000 islands and home to hundreds of ethnic groups, it stands as one of the countries with the richest array of local cultures in the world [2], [3]. Each ethnic group in Indonesia possesses distinctive languages, customs, religious rituals, music, and performing arts. This cultural diversity is the result of a long historical process, shaped by geography and interactions among ethnic groups that collectively form the nation's identity [4]. Culture serves as a means of expression, communication, and social cohesion within Indonesia's pluralistic society. As stated by Aragon [5], culture encompasses the entire system of ideas, actions, and human

creations that are learned and shared within society. In the Indonesian context, culture functions not only as an artistic expression but also as a tool to strengthen both local and national identity amid the growing influence of globalization [6], [7].

One of the most prominent forms of cultural expression in Indonesia is the performing arts, particularly traditional dance [8]. Indonesian traditional dances are not merely forms of entertainment or aesthetic performance but embody profound symbolic meanings rooted in the cultural values of their respective communities. Traditional dances often serve as a medium to convey social, spiritual, historical, and even political messages [9], [10]. They communicate symbolically through both verbal elements such as accompanying chants or lyrics and nonverbal elements such as body movements, facial expressions, dancer formations, costumes, and properties. As Akas [11] explains, traditional dance contains cultural symbols that represent a community's worldview, noble values, and social relationships. Thus, dance can be interpreted as a cultural text that reflects and transmits meaning [12].

Among the many traditional dances in Indonesia, some remain understudied, particularly those from regions beyond the major cultural centers [13]. One of these is the Torompio dance, a traditional dance of the Pamona ethnic group from Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi. The term Torompio originates from the Pamona language, derived from *toro* meaning "to spin" and *mpio* meaning "wind," which together can be interpreted as "spinning wind." The dance is usually performed by young men and women during customary festivals, welcoming ceremonies, and religious celebrations. Its lively and dynamic movements symbolize love, togetherness, and harmony core values in Pamona society [14].

Verbal symbols in the Torompio dance are reflected in the local-language songs sung by the dancers. For instance, the verse "*Mosipanca siko a'i, mompogonggamu kamagi inalelenado le inado...*" ("How beautiful you are, wearing a pearl necklace, my beloved") illustrates the emotional and social dimensions of youth relationships in Pamona culture [15]. The use of symbolic metaphors such as the pearl necklace signifies beauty, affection, and social connection, while also expressing broader values of loyalty and respect. These verbal symbols not only represent romantic affection but also convey love for the homeland and the community [16-17].

Nonverbal symbols are equally significant in the Torompio dance [18]. The synchronized circular movements performed by male and female dancers depict vitality, unity, and communal harmony. Circular formations and spiral motions symbolize togetherness and social balance, while the traditional costumes dominated by red and gold represent courage and nobility [19-20]. Female dancers' scarves signify gentleness and attraction. Through these gestures and visual cues, nonverbal symbols communicate meaning beyond spoken language, allowing audiences to grasp the moral and emotional essence of the performance [21].

To interpret such complex symbolic layers, the ethnosemiotic approach provides a relevant analytical framework. Ethnosemiotics integrates ethnography and semiotics to examine how signs and meanings function within a specific cultural context [22], [23]. According to Ghazvineh and Fahimifar [24], semiotics explores not only linguistic signs but also all forms of cultural communication, including bodily gestures, rituals, and artifacts. Through this approach, each verbal and nonverbal element in a cultural performance is viewed as a sign that carries meaning inseparable from its social and cultural setting [25]. This study aims to analyze the verbal and nonverbal symbols in the Torompio traditional dance of the Pamona ethnic group in Central Sulawesi. It seeks to interpret the cultural meanings embedded in its movements, lyrics, costumes, and music through an ethnosemiotic approach to reveal the moral, social, and spiritual values reflected in the dance.

## 2. RESEARCH METHOD

The research was conducted in the Pamona ethnic region, specifically in Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi, which serves as the cultural center of the Pamona people. This location was selected because the Torompio traditional dance is still actively practiced and performed in various traditional ceremonies and cultural celebrations. The study took place in October 2025, encompassing the preparation, data collection, and data analysis stages. The duration of the research was considered sufficient to obtain comprehensive data regarding the verbal and nonverbal symbols found in the Torompio dance.

This study employed a qualitative approach with a descriptive ethnographic design. This method was chosen because the research aimed to describe, interpret, and analyze the meanings of verbal and nonverbal symbols embedded in the Torompio traditional dance of the Pamona ethnic group in Poso, within its socio-cultural context. The analysis was carried out through an ethnosemiotic perspective, which integrates semiotics the study of signs with ethnography the study of culture to explore how symbols convey meaning in a specific cultural setting [26].

The data used in this research were qualitative in nature, focusing on descriptive and interpretative information about the symbolic meanings of the dance. The data consisted mainly of oral information gathered from key informants, including Poso cultural expert Andre F. Purogombo, S.Sos, Torompio dancers, members of the Pamona community, and traditional leaders or elders. The data sources were divided into two categories:

primary and secondary data. Primary data were obtained directly from the field through observations and interviews, while secondary data were collected from books, journals, articles, and previous studies related to semiotics, Pamona culture, and ethnosemiotic research. These secondary data supported and strengthened the analysis of primary data [27].

Data collection was conducted through three main techniques: observation, interviews, and documentation. Observation was carried out by directly attending Torompio dance performances to identify and record both verbal and nonverbal symbols, including utterances, songs, prayers, movements, costumes, and properties [28]. This process also provided an understanding of the performance context, the atmosphere of the event, and the interaction between the performers and the audience. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with dancers, ceremony leaders, cultural figures, and members of the Pamona community to gain deeper insights into the meanings and functions of the symbols used in the dance [13], [28]. The information obtained through interviews served to enrich and validate the observational data. In addition, documentation techniques were employed by collecting photographs, videos, audio recordings, and field notes related to Torompio performances. Written materials such as cultural archives, books, articles, and prior studies were also reviewed to provide additional context and serve as supporting evidence in the analysis [11].

The data were analyzed using an interactive model of data analysis. Following Casumbal-Salazar [29], data reduction and presentation were conducted simultaneously during the collection process, and conclusions were drawn after all data were obtained and reviewed. The analysis involved four main stages: data collection, data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing. In the data collection stage, the researcher gathered information through interviews and observations of Torompio performances, focusing on both verbal (utterances, songs, prayers) and nonverbal (movements, costumes, and properties) symbols. In the data reduction stage, the information was sorted to retain only data relevant to the research focus [5]. The reduced data were then presented in categorized forms verbal and nonverbal symbols to identify emerging patterns, meanings, and functions. Finally, conclusions were drawn to interpret and explain the meanings and cultural functions of the symbols in relation to the research objectives [11], [12].

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Torompio Dance is one of the traditional dances of the Pamona ethnic group in Poso Regency, Central Sulawesi, typically performed during traditional ceremonies such as welcoming honored guests, harvest festivals, and other customary events. The term Torompio derives from two syllables: *toro*, meaning “to spin,” and *pio*, meaning “wind.” Thus, Torompio literally means “spinning wind,” symbolizing love that swirls gently like the breeze, which is why the dance is often referred to as the “Whirlwind of Love.” The Torompio Dance expresses affection, modesty, and harmony between Pamona youths through symbolic and ethical movements. Its choreography, chants, costumes, and music create a unified aesthetic rich in cultural meaning. The dance is usually performed at traditional weddings, art competitions during the GKST (Central Sulawesi Christian Church) Youth Anniversary, as well as in cultural festivals and welcoming ceremonies. It is performed by up to seven pairs of male and female dancers, accompanied by three traditional musicians.

#### 3.1. Forms of Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols in the Torompio Dance

##### *Verbal Symbols*

The Torompio Dance contains several traditional chants or songs (*kayori*), which serve as its main verbal elements. These chants are sung in the Pamona language with a distinctive melodic style. Below is the translation of the Torompio chant:

*How beautiful you are when wearing a pearl necklace,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
If you would give me a moment, I would accompany you,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
How handsome you look with a gold-threaded headband,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
If you would give me space, how wonderful it would be to stand beside you,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
A shining flower I pluck to delight you,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
My journey through the world is only to gaze upon you,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
A lovely flower I pluck to please my heart,  
Oh my dear, my beloved.  
My journey to the afterlife, I hope to be by your side,*

*Oh my dear, my beloved.  
 How beautiful the necklace that adorns your hair,  
 Oh my dear, my beloved.  
 If you can accompany me, I shall follow you,  
 Oh my dear, my beloved.  
 A beautifully layered necklace rests upon your head,  
 Oh my dear, my beloved.  
 If you can walk beside me, I will bravely be with you,  
 Oh my dear, my beloved.  
 Now our dance is done, dear ones we honor,  
 Ah... this is the Torompio, the sacred traditional dance,  
 Before our elders and guests,  
 We offer our farewell.  
 Now that the counting is done, Ah... it is time to part,  
 The necklace of bond I shall keep, And we shall bid each other goodbye.*

In general, the lyrics of the Torompio Dance convey profound symbolic meanings that reflect the distinctive cultural identity of the Pamona people [30]. The term Mosipanca symbolizes harmony, representing the unity of body and soul within a sense of togetherness, as expressed in the lyric “Mosipanca siko a’i, Mosipanca siko aka.” Meanwhile, Inalele refers to ancestral chants that convey feelings of longing and the beauty of love, illustrated in “Inelelenado le’inado.” The expression Damancolodi portrays the exchange of affection and romantic emotions between male and female dancers, as seen in “Damancolodi mo siko inalelenado le’inado.” Furthermore, Kupa bebaka ringapa depicts the gentle yet passionate outpouring of love, demonstrating emotional depth and restraint, as expressed in “Kupa bebaka ringapa” [10], [24].

Collectively, these poetic expressions such as Mosipanca and Inalele lenado serve as refined metaphors that communicate affection in a polite and respectful manner, reflecting the Pamona people’s emphasis on ethics, modesty, and social harmony [4], [16], [25]. The use of symbolic language in the Torompio Dance not only enriches its aesthetic dimension but also preserves traditional norms of interaction between men and women. Through its lyrics, the dance becomes a form of moral education, teaching values of respect, sincerity, and emotional control that align with Pamona cultural wisdom [17].

Moreover, the integration of verbal and musical elements in the kayori (traditional chant) reinforces the role of the Torompio Dance as a medium of cultural transmission. Each verse, melody, and rhythm encapsulates the community’s worldview linking humans, nature, and spirituality in a harmonious balance [12], [17], [28]. Thus, the verbal symbols of the Torompio Dance do not merely serve as artistic expressions but also function as a living testament to the Pamona people’s philosophy of life, where love, harmony, and respect intertwine within the fabric of their cultural identity [3].

### 3.2. Nonverbal Symbols

Nonverbal symbols in the Torompio Dance are expressed through movements rich in cultural and emotional meaning [31], [32]. Each gesture embodies the Pamona people’s social values, harmony, and spirituality, forming a visual language that communicates without words. The opening movement, Linggi Doe, serves as a call for dancers to enter the stage from two directions men from the left and women from the right symbolizing the meeting of two different yet balanced worlds [4], [19], [30]. The Respect Movement follows, in which dancers bow slightly to one another as a gesture of politeness and mutual respect, representing the Pamona people’s deep appreciation for humility and social harmony. The movement Mantuju Ada, where dancers form large and small circles, reflects unity and togetherness within the community [33].

The Mosipanca movement depicts the act of seeking a partner while singing love chants, symbolizing harmony and balance in relationships [34]. In Moncolodi, dancers perform gentle, symbolic gestures of courtship, expressing attraction and emotional connection. The sequences Mompalakana and Mosangkalima portray the exchange of necklaces and handshakes, symbolizing love, commitment, and the union of hearts. Finally, the Hand Waving Movement marks the end of the performance, serving as a graceful farewell filled with emotional and cultural meaning [35], [36].

The costumes worn by the dancers also serve as powerful nonverbal symbols of Pamona cultural identity [7]. Female dancers wear lemba (a short blouse decorated with beads), mombulu (a layered skirt), tali bonto (a bamboo headband wrapped in red cloth), and necklaces made of stones or sirupu. Male dancers wear banjara (a beaded long-sleeved shirt resembling teluk belanga), salana (decorated long pants), siga or destar (a head covering), and salempa (a shoulder sash) [15], [23]. The dominant colors red, black, and gold represent courage, dignity, and prosperity, respectively. Together, these costumes and colors reinforce the aesthetic harmony and philosophical depth of the dance.

In addition, traditional musical instruments play an essential role as nonverbal elements that accompany the movements and strengthen the emotional atmosphere of the performance [37]-[39]. The Torompio Dance uses several instruments, including nonggi (gong), ganda (drum), karatu (sitting drum), and guitar. The rhythmic interplay of these instruments creates a dynamic tempo that guides the dancers' movements while enhancing the dance's ceremonial and spiritual essence. Through this integration of movement, costume, and music, the Torompio Dance becomes a holistic expression of Pamona culture one that unites visual, auditory, and symbolic dimensions into a deeply meaningful traditional art form [23], [40].

### 3.3. The Meaning of Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols in the Perspective of Ethnosemiotics

In the ethnosemiotic approach, every sign whether verbal or nonverbal is interpreted based on the cultural context in which it emerges. In the Pamona community, symbols in the Torompio Dance represent the relationship between humans, nature, and ancestral spirits.

Table 1. The Meaning of Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols in Ethnosemiotics

Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols	Description
Mosipanca	The meaning of mosipanca is harmony, referring to the unity of body and heart in togetherness. In the context of ethnosemiotics, mosipanca is a sign that represents harmony between the physical and the spiritual, as well as the balance between male and female. It not only illustrates the synchronicity of dance movements but also symbolizes the ideal social relationships according to Pamona culture. This sign emphasizes the Pamona belief that love and human relationships must be built on balance rather than domination.
Inalele	Inalele is an ancestral song or chant expressing longing and the beauty of love. This symbol carries deep layers of meaning: on one hand, it conveys nostalgia for the past and the ancestors; on the other, it signifies the continuity of tradition through emotional expression. In the ethnosemiotic framework, Inalele becomes an icon of spirituality and cultural continuity, where song functions as a medium connecting the human world and the ancestral realm.
Damancolodi	The damancolodi symbol depicts the process of courtship and the exchange of romantic feelings between male and female dancers. Semiologically, the accompanying gestures and lyrics indicate polite and ethical social interaction. In Pamona culture, expressions of love are not made directly or vulgarly but through meaningful symbols, songs, and movements. Thus, damancolodi represents norms of modesty and moral boundaries in male-female interactions, which are hallmarks of Pamona culture.
Kupabebaka Ri Ngapa	The expression kupabebaka ri ngapa conveys the meaning of intense but controlled romantic feelings. From an ethnosemiotic viewpoint, this sign highlights the importance of self-control and emotional balance. The Pamona people regard true love as a natural force that must be governed by reason and customary values. This symbol reflects the Pamona worldview that every desire must be harmonized with traditional norms to prevent imbalance in social and spiritual relationships.
Linggi Doe Movement	The linggi doe movement serves as the opening of the Torompio Dance, where male dancers enter from the left and female dancers from the right. From an ethnosemiotic perspective, left and right directions signify two different yet balanced worlds symbolizing the duality of male and female, the profane and the sacred, and the natural and the human realms. Their meeting at the center of the stage depicts cosmic harmony, a balance that underpins Pamona life. This movement also marks the beginning of symbolic communication between two complementary forces of life.
Gesture of Respect	The act of bowing or slightly bending forward symbolizes respect, politeness, and appreciation. In Pamona tradition, bowing is a nonverbal form of communication that expresses humility before others and the ancestors. Semiologically, this movement serves as a marker of social morality, emphasizing that every interaction must be grounded in etiquette and ethical values.



Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols	Description
Mantuju Ada Movement	In this part, the dancers form large and small circles, symbolizing unity and togetherness within the Pamona community. The circular form holds strong symbolic meaning—it represents wholeness, continuity, and equality. There is no beginning or end in a circle, reflecting the balance between individuals and the community. In ethnosemiotic terms, circular motion serves as an icon of social solidarity, teaching that community life flows in harmony and mutual cooperation.
Mosipanca Movement	The mosipanca movement is when dancers search for partners while singing love verses. Its meaning is harmony and relationship balance. From a semiotic perspective, this movement acts as a metaphor for the alignment of body, soul, and nature, signifying balance between emotion and ethics. Mosipanca also represents the Pamona teaching that love is not merely a personal feeling but part of the social structure that must be maintained within moral and cultural balance.
Moncolodi Movement	The moncolodi movement depicts the symbolic courtship process and mutual approach between male and female dancers. In Pamona tradition, courtship is not performed directly but through gentle and polite signs. Ethnosemiotically, moncolodi is a symbol of interpersonal communication governed by customary norms, where expressions of love are controlled by manners and social ethics. This indicates that male-female relationships are always framed by values of modesty and respect.
Mompalakana and Mosangkalima Movements	In this part, the male dancer places a necklace (enu inti/kalide) on the female dancer and then shakes her hand. This movement signifies love, commitment, and unity of hearts. From a semiotic viewpoint, the necklace represents the material sign of inner union, while the handshake symbolizes social and spiritual agreement. These movements affirm the Pamona belief that love and human relationships must be based on sincerity, responsibility, and spiritual balance.
Hand-Waving Movement	The final movement a graceful hand wave symbolizes a beautiful and meaningful farewell. In ethnosemiotic terms, waving is not merely a closing gesture but a symbol of life's cyclical nature: every meeting is followed by parting, yet both complement each other in balance. This movement reflects Pamona philosophy the beauty within separation and the awareness that every relationship, whether romantic or social, must be embraced with sincerity and openness.
Female Dancer's Costume	Female dancers wear lemba (a beaded blouse), mombulu (layered skirt), tali bonto (a bamboo headband wrapped in red cloth), and necklaces made of stone or siropu. The red color of the tali bonto symbolizes spirit and courage, the beads represent prosperity and beauty, while the stone necklace reflects a deep connection with nature and ancestors.
Male Dancer's Costume	Male dancers wear baju banjara (a beaded shirt), salana (decorated long pants), siga/destar (head covering), and salempa (shoulder cloth). The costume signifies steadfastness, honor, and the social status of Pamona men as protectors and guardians of harmony.

In the context of ethnosemiotics, the Torompio costume does not merely serve as an aesthetic element that enhances the visual beauty of the dance; rather, it functions as a marker of collective identity that communicates who the Pamona people are, where they come from, and what values they uphold [24]. Each color, ornament, and design element carries a symbolic message that reflects the community's social structure, spirituality, and worldview [29]. The costume thus becomes a living text that embodies cultural meaning, conveying the moral and emotional dimensions of Pamona life through visual and material symbols [30].

Every aspect of the Torompio costume such as the red tali bonto symbolizing courage and vitality, or the beaded decorations representing prosperity and beauty reveals a complex semiotic system in which aesthetic form and cultural philosophy are inseparable [13], [26]. These visual elements not only represent personal adornment but also express collective ideals of balance, respect, and harmony. Through the interplay of colors and ornaments, the Pamona people reaffirm their identity as a community that honors both ancestral wisdom and the natural environment.

The entirety of nonverbal symbols within the Torompio Dance forms an interconnected system of signs that articulates three fundamental dimensions of Pamona culture. First, it embodies the cosmic balance between male and female, human and nature a duality that underlies the Pamona worldview. Second, it emphasizes politeness and social harmony as the foundation of interpersonal relationships, reminding every individual to act with grace and moral awareness [21], [30]. Third, it represents cultural identity and spirituality, values that have been transmitted across generations through the body, movement, and ritual expression.

From an ethnosemiotic perspective, every movement and costume in Torompio transcends mere artistic display. They function as cultural communication acts expressive narratives that tell stories of love, morality, and social life among the Pamona people. Through dance, gestures, and attire, the community maintains an ongoing dialogue between the past and the present, between the visible and the spiritual realms [4], [21]. In this way, Torompio is not only a performance but also a symbolic discourse that preserves and celebrates the living philosophy of Pamona culture.

### 3.4 The Meaning of Verbal and Nonverbal Symbols in the Perspective of Ethnosemiotics

In the ethnosemiotic context, symbols in the Torompio Dance function not merely as aesthetic elements, but as a complex system of cultural communication. Each verbal and nonverbal sign serves as a medium through which the Pamona people express, preserve, and transmit their collective values, beliefs, and worldview. The meanings embodied in the movements, lyrics, costumes, and rhythms of Torompio reflect both the visible and invisible dimensions of Pamona life, uniting social, spiritual, and educational functions in one performative expression [9], [28].

The Torompio Dance serves as a powerful social glue that strengthens solidarity and fosters a sense of belonging among members of the Pamona community. From a semiotic point of view, verbal symbols such as the chant “Torompio’o!” and the collective singing of praise verses act as verbal markers of communal spirit and social participation. Nonverbal symbols, including circular movements and symmetrical formations, represent social cohesion and the balance of roles within the community each individual holding a distinct yet complementary position in the collective structure. Through the ethnosemiotic lens, these social symbols illustrate how meaning in Torompio is not individually constructed, but intersubjectively shared, understood, and performed together as a living system of cultural communication that unites the Pamona people [3], [27].

The ritual and spiritual function of the Torompio Dance is evident in its role as a medium of transcendent communication between humans, ancestors, and the Creator. The sacred lyrics sung in the Pamona language are not mere artistic expressions but are imbued with the spiritual power of prayer, gratitude, and reverence. Meanwhile, hand gestures lifted toward the sky and the rhythmic stamping of feet on the ground symbolize the vertical connection between humans and God, and the horizontal relationship between humans and the earth. From an ethnosemiotic perspective, these movements preserve the cosmic balance that is central to Pamona cosmology sustaining harmony between nature, humankind, and ancestral spirits. Thus, Torompio is not simply a performance; it is a ritual act that renews the spiritual bond between the community and the metaphysical world [6], [25].

The Torompio Dance also functions as a vital educational tool and medium for cultural inheritance. Every verbal and nonverbal symbol carries moral and ethical lessons that guide the younger generation. Traditional verses and chants transmit local wisdom values such as bravery, loyalty, respect for elders, and gratitude to the Creator. The coordinated, graceful movements foster discipline, cooperation, and collective responsibility. From an ethnosemiotic standpoint, this educational function demonstrates how signs in Torompio serve not only to communicate but also to transmit cultural meaning across generations. The dance thus becomes a living cultural text an experiential form of social learning that shapes the moral, emotional, and cultural identity of the Pamona people from an early age [13].

Perhaps the most distinctive function of the Torompio Dance lies in its role as a marker of cultural identity. For the Pamona people, Torompio symbolizes the essence of their ethnic existence and uniqueness [9]. The verbal use of the Pamona language in chants serves as a linguistic sign of local identity, while nonverbal elements traditional attire with distinctive motifs, instruments like ganda and gimbe, and unique choreographic patterns act as cultural icons that differentiate the Pamona from other ethnic groups in Poso. In ethnosemiotic terms, these signs represent a symbolic strategy for maintaining and asserting ethnic identity. Through its continued performance, the Pamona community reaffirms and reconstructs the meaning of ke-Pamona-an (Pamona-ness) amidst the challenges of cultural change and modernization [4], [22].

In essence, Torompio is more than a traditional dance it is a cultural declaration and a symbolic dialogue between the past and the present. It communicates collective values, preserves spiritual connections, and sustains the moral and cultural continuity of the Pamona people, demonstrating that their traditions remain alive, dignified, and deeply meaningful in the modern world.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The Torompio Dance integrates verbal and nonverbal symbols that express the Pamona people's moral, social, and spiritual values. Through poetic language, gestures, costumes, and music, it conveys harmony, respect for ancestors, and a deep connection between humans, nature, and the divine, serving as both cultural identity and cosmological communication.

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#### AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

MW was responsible for the research design, data collection, data analysis, and manuscript preparation. S, A, and IN, contributed to conceptual development, research methodology guidance, and critical review of the manuscript. All authors have read and approved the final version of the manuscript.

#### CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The author(s) declare no conflict of interest.

#### USE OF ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE (AI)-ASSISTED TECHNOLOGY

The authors declare that no artificial intelligence (AI) tools were used in the generation, analysis, or writing of this manuscript. All aspects of the research, including data collection, interpretation, and manuscript preparation, were carried out entirely by the authors without the assistance of AI-based technologies.

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