

CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS

On this chapter the writer would like to describe and discuss more about the gestures including the facial expressions of *Kabasaran* dance and the meanings. After finishing the observation on the *Minahasan* people and the *Kabasaran* dancers in North Sulawesi in about 2 months, the writer completed the analysis based on the information and explanations from the interviewees. The interviewees were men with the age range from 27 up to 72 years old. The interviewees were chosen by *Minahasan* people living in North Sulawesi and having knowledge about the history and gesture of *Kabasaran* dance.

4.1. The Gestures of *Kabasaran* dance.

Gestures are movements made by people in order to deliver messages. The movements made by any part of body such as hands, leg, head, even facial expressions have their own meaning. Gestures can perform different meanings or messages in different social and cultural settings. Gesture is a non-verbal communication that links with physical movements/actions of human body. It is also a part of multimodal communication.

Language, body language, body movement, and gestures are means of multimodality communication. Using multimodality, people can choose

what strategy that suit with them to communicate with other people in any situation. For example, in a noisy environment where we cannot talk to each other, we may use gesture including facial expression in order to give other people signals about what we want to say to them. In other case, we can also get some knowledge or information about any culture or social life by watching the gesture such as the body movements/actions and the facial expressions by a dancer. Dance is a movement made by people following the rhythm and particular steps or movements pattern. *Kabasaran* dance is a war dance and also portrays of *Minahasan* people from the past. This dance is special based on the history and the *Minahasa* belief.

There are so many movement patterns included in *Kabasaran* dance. Each *Kabasaran* dance group in *Minahasa* has its own movement. Nowadays, there are more than 100 group of *Kabasaran* dance in North Sulawesi. Almost each village in North Sulawesi has a *Kabasaran* group dance and a big village can have more than 1 group. Based on the data, there are some permanent movement patterns in *Kabasaran* dance:

1. The gesture of legs: Jumping leg gesture.
2. The gesture of shoulder: Upright shoulder gesture.
3. The gesture of facial expression: Eye glare and biting lips.



Figure 1. The *Kabasaran* dancer and the Writer at *Puncak Rurukan*, Tomohon.

(Source: Researcher's personal collection)

From the observation, the writer found that the gestures in *Kabasaran* dance are divided into some permanent parts. The gesture of leg which is jumping leg, the gesture of hands which is swinging the sword, the gesture of body position which is upright shoulder and the gesture of facial expression which are eye glare and biting lip. There are also some other additional gestures which are different in each group, but the permanent gestures are the focus of my research. *Kabasaran* dance has three types, namely *cakalele* (the symbol of war), *lalaya'an* (the symbol of rejoicing because of winning the war), and *kumoyak* (respecting the spirit of the enemy killed in the war).

The gestures made by the dancer could be the composite between permanent and additional movements pattern (gestures). For the additional gestures, the dancer should understand what kind of gestures they show to the audience. The additional gestures could be different from a dancer to

another dancer and uncoordinated. However, it should still follow the theme of the gestures and the leader's command.

From the information obtained through the interview with Sir Billy Motulo as a Manager in *Amphitheatre* in Woloan, Tomohon city North Sulawesi, who is the keeper of the *Amphitheatre*, the writer found that the members of *Kabasaran* dance should be chosen by a ritual to the ancestor and by the old people. Nowadays, the selection is not done by some group of *Kabasaran* because the lack of young generation who wants to maintain the culture or because of personal reasons. In case the young generation does not want to do it, the members are taken by a volunteer.



Figure 2. Gesture of *Kabasaran* dancer; jumping leg, hands swinging sword and upright shoulder gesture performed by a *Tumutuzu* or a leader of *Kabasaran* dance. (Source: Courtesy of Vladio Kojongian; a *Tumutuzu* or a leader of *Kabasaran* dance group *SIOW KENTUR* in Walian, North Sulawesi)



Figure 3. Facial expressions of a *Kabasaran* dancer: the eye glare and biting lips.

(Source: courtesy of Vladio Kojongian; a *Tumutuzu* or a leader of *Kabasaran* dance group

SLOW KENTUR in Walian, North Sulawesi)

4.2. The meaning of gestures in *Kabasaran* dance

The writer then describes and explores the meaning of each gesture below:

4.2.1 Jumping leg gesture

This jumping leg gesture is a position of man who jumps up and down of his one leg alternately left and right accompanying with the rhythm and movement's patter of its dance while dancing the *kabasaran* dance.

According to Sir Joudy Dj. Aray, a General Chief of *Wale Mazani*, an art gallery in Walian, Tomohon, North Sulawesi, *Kabasaran* has

various meanings. The meaning is closer with the etymology. Based on the old *Minahasan people* that *Kabasaran* or *Kawasaran* means “compete”.

If we browse deeper and further we will find the words older than Kabasaran, for example Ma'wasal. If we hear from the old story from the old people, Ma'wasal means a game of clashing legs power from a man to another man using their legs and then it is developed through time and change to become a dance of clashing leg's power by men, so the name is also changed from Ma'wasal to Kabasaran which nowadays is a war dance and a welcoming dance for a great guest in any cultural event, ritual or important event.” Joudy Aray (08/02/2019)

It is the reason the dancer of *Kabasaran* jumps up their legs, because they want to clash their power of leg and it is related with the old story by the old people.

In the other side, the writer also found another point of view of this dance's story related to the history of *Minahasan people*. Nansy Tumuju (2014), wrote that the ancient land of *Minahasa* often received threats from two tribes the *Mangindano* tribe and the *Mongondo* tribe. The ancestors of the *Minahasan people* were often engaged in war to defend themselves, so they negotiate to collect the strong people with big body and teach them how to fight to victory. They are the knights called *Tuama* (masculine) or *Wuaya* (brave); the first soldier in *Minahasa*. That is why nowadays the young people in a village in *Minahasa* should be a *Penjaga Walak* or village Soldiers and each village should be a military village, so the gestures like jumping leg movement, is a forward jump attack to avoid and fend off enemy attacks accompanied by the frightening scream “*I Yayat U Santi*”

(lift your sword to war). That is the gesture of the soldier (*Waraney*) at that time when they prepared themselves to fight.

4.2.2 Hand swing the sword gesture

This hand swing the sword gesture is a hand hold the sword position of the *Kabasaran* dancer, it swings up and down while they are dancing accompanied by the rhythm.

Discussing the hand swing, Vladio Kojongian as a *Tumutuzu* or a leader of the *Kabasaran* group states that the way they open their hands like in figure 2, with the sword or spear on their hands is a symbol to fighting. The dancer symbolizes a rooster/bird that opens the legs and flaps its wings. When the dancer does that movements, swinging up and down with the spear or sword on their hands; they are ready to fight.

In north Sulawesi itself, a bird called *Manguni* or known as Owl is sanctified by *Minahasan* people. They believe that the *Manguni* bird has a magic power. *Manguni* bird is an intermediary between God (Opo Empung) and *Minahasan* people. Tumuju Nansy (2014) found on her research that the movements pattern or the gestures of swinging sword in one of the *Kabasaran* dance group in *Minahasa* combine the nine moves of sword and three moves of spear. The gestures are performed with 4/4 rhythmic dance. However, these movements are not permanent. They depend on each group interpretation. Here are the nine moves of sword in the *Kabasaran* dance according to Nansy Tumuju (2014) using *Tonaas* Language:

1. *Wira*, a slashing movement using a sword.
2. *Sambowen*, a movement of cutting towards the shoulder and left side of the opponent's neck.
3. *Sambiku*, a slashing motion with a swing left to right towards the shoulder right and side of the opponent's right neck
4. *Rampe'ren*, a slashing motion from right to left towards the left side of the opponent's waist.
5. *Rimperen*, a slashing motion from left to right, towards the right side of the opponent's waist.
6. *Parasen*, a slashing motion from right to left, towards the opponent's left foot
7. *Rap-rap*, slashing from left to right, towards the opponent's right foot.
8. *Tawasen*, cutting cross from top to bottom.
9. *Kiwilen*, a swinging a sword from the bottom up.

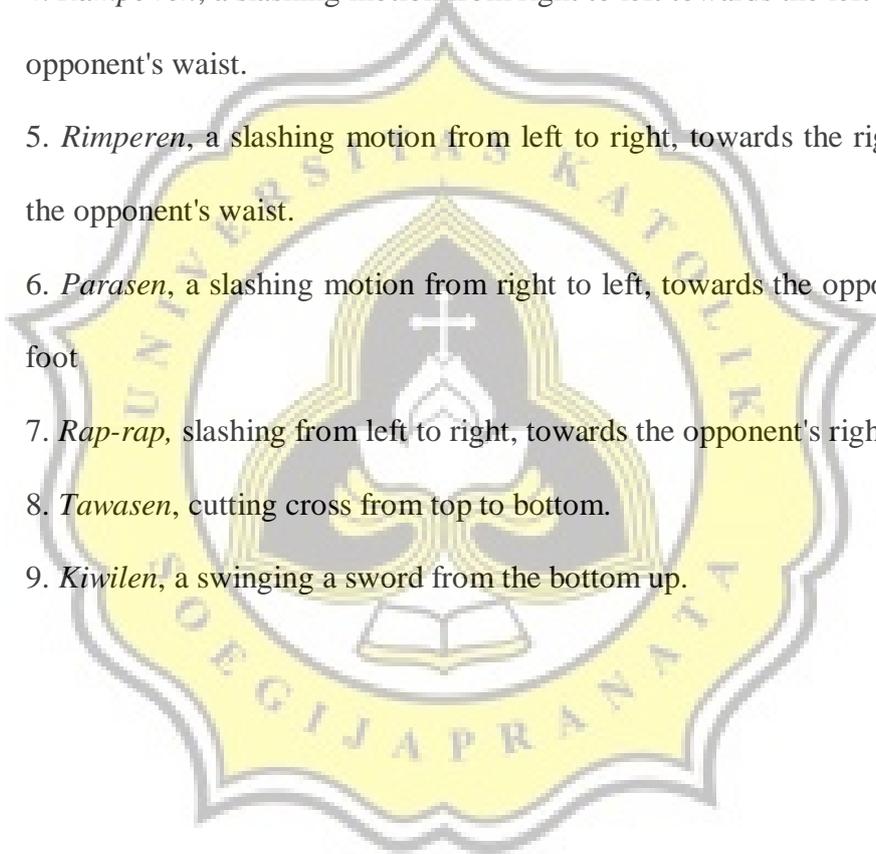




Figure 4. *Kabasaran* dance in upright shoulder position as an important dance to welcoming important and great guest.

(Source: Manado tourism Instagram @Genpisulut and @Kotamanado)

4.2.3 Upright shoulder gesture.

This upright shoulder gesture is a body position of upright shoulder while dancing the *Kabasaran* dance, accompanied by the other gesture such as swing the sword gesture, jumping leg gesture including the facial expressions and following the rhythm.

When a person talk to another person who stands up with the upright shoulder position and looks at other people in the eye, it means that the person with that position is a confident person. In other case, a man who talks with the upright shoulder position and looks at other people in the eye could be seen as more manly and cooler. In the case of *Kabasaran* dance, the upright shoulder position is a gesture expressing charming, manly,

strong, brave and confident characteristic, not just as a dancer but as a *Minahasan* people. It fits the characteristic of *Minahasan* people, which is vigorous. The gesture of upright shoulder in this dance aims to show up the real characteristic of *Minahasan* people. It is also related with the war history of the *Minahasa's* soldiers who are portrayed as strong, brave and unbeatable,

“In the Minahasa belief of Kabasaran dance, a man with the upright shoulder gesture showing that the man is brave, strong and ready to attack the enemy. That position or gestures portrayed a strong man or strong warriors of Minahasa”. Joudi Aray (08/02/2019)



Figure 5. Gesture of Facial Expression: Eyes glare

(Source: a Youtube video uploaded by Karol Wuysang titled *Kabasaran, Manado*

Sulawesi Utara)



Figure 6. Gesture of Facial Expression: Eyes glare and biting lip.

(Source: a Youtube video uploaded by Karol Wuysang titled *Kabasaran, Manado Sulawesi Utara*)

4.2.4 Gesture of Facial Expressions: Eye Glare and Biting Lip

This gesture is a gesture of the dancer's facial expressions such as eye glaring and biting lip. This gesture is obligated to put in each dancer while they are dancing the *Kabasaran* dance.

The face is a visible signal of others' social intentions and motivations, and facial expression continues to be a critical variable in social interaction. (Schmidt & Cohn, 2001, p. 4). Changes in facial appearance, for example, when a dimple appears when someone smiles can be an added value in making visible expressions. In *Kabasaran* dance, the basic facial expression that should be made by the dancer such as scary face that includes eye glare and biting lip are the important expressions obligated to put on by the dancer. Vladio Kojongian argued that the facial expression should be as infuriated as possible,

“Our facial expressions should look as infuriated as possible and should not look cute or sweet, because it will be weird to be seen by the audience. Besides, red costume and our appearance do not fit calm expressions. It is not Kabasaran” Vladio Kojongian (29/06/2019).

According to Sir Bili Motulo (2019), the expressions of scary face such as eyes glare and biting lip are important expressions to entertain the audience. Since *Kabasaran* dance is a war dance, so the expressions should be following the theme of dance, in order to get attention and to entertain the audience.

In other point of view, based on the research on the old people and the history of *Minahasan* people, the writer may conclude that the dancer's facial expressions in *Kabasaran* dance is a bridge that links the audience to the dancer and to the ancestor. Each dancer of *Kabasaran* dance is obligated to make a facial expressions expressing the spirit of *Minahasa* warrior. They believe that by doing that they can make an impression to the audience that their ancestor is real and that the ancestor gets into the dancer's body. While they are dancing, their soul unites so it feels like the ancestor greets the audience through the facial expression and gestures made by the dancers. However, some facial expressions in *Kabasaran* dance are choreographed by the coach or based on the leader's command to the dancer; they are included in additional movement pattern, not a gesture.

The dancers are obligatory to show their pride as warriors who must win the war by fighting so that they can go home victoriously. Thus, the facial expressions show that they, the *Minahasa* warrior, are brave and

strong enough to kill the enemy. The expressions of scary face (eyes glare and biting lip) mean that they are not afraid and they are ready to challenge their opponent or enemy. By making an eye contact to the other people in this case to the audience, they give signal that they are not afraid to fight and helped by the ancestor,

“It is not an angry expression to the audience, but an expression that this is me as a strong and brave warrior. I can kill the enemy in a minute with my sword that a typical of Minahasa warrior”
Joudy Aray (08/02/2019)

Relating to what Vivi Nansy (2014) wrote on her journal that the expression of eyes glaring sharply from dancer means to cast out evil spirits. The glaring eye expression is a symbol of *Opo Empung* that is angry to the evil spirits. It also could be linked with why this *Kabasaran* dance is a welcoming dance to the great and important guest in *Minahasa*. It could be because people believe that the ancestor spirit guides the dancers so when they are welcoming the guest all the bad spirit be averted from that certain event. The eye glare expressed by the *Waraney* could be a symbol of the owl, a bird sanctified in *Minahasa*.



Figure 7. The *Waraney* being possessed by the spirit of *Minahasa* ancestor.

(Source: Youtube video by uploaded Karol Wuysang titled *Kabasaran, Manado Sulawesi Utara*)

The interviewees believe that the member of *Kabasaran* dancer or *Waraney* up to nowadays is the representation of the spirit of the ancestor. They even believe that the spirit itself guides them to be a *Waraney* or the member of *Kabasaran* dancer and also keeps them safe while doing an extreme and dangerous performance. The spirit also helps them to choose the new member especially the new *Tonaas* or the leader of the group by some traditional ritual. The spirit of *Minahasa's* ancestor also leads them when they perform in some events, so sometimes they are possessed during a certain part of the dance. That part is where they can express themselves to do their capability in order to connect with the ancestor's spirit to do performances. The movements done in this part could not be categorized as permanent movement or a gesture because it is random and sometimes irrational.

Even though, time and religion really affect the past and the present of *North Sulawesi*, some groups of *Kabasaran* dance then also relate their rituals with God. The dancer and anyone engaged in *Kabasaran* dance pray to God before they start dancing. So, they pray to God and do the ritual for the ancestor in the same time. In the other side, there are some *Kabasaran* dance groups who are not doing any ritual to the ancestor before dancing, because they believe that the blessing from God will guide and protect them while they dancing. These groups believe that God itself is the one who will connect them with the ancestor of *Minahasa* people.

In answering the question whether the *Kabasaran* dancer is possessed by the ancestor spirit when they do extreme and danger performance, the interviewee says,

"As far as I have experienced, it never does but while dancing the Kabasaran dance, it seems the situation is different. Usually we don't wear footwear on asphalt, and while we are dancing we never feel the heat of the asphalt. The others feel the same too, but I never experienced being possessed while I am dancing and I feel my friends also are never possessed. Maybe the other group of Kabasaran dance experiences it." Vladio Kojongian (29/06/2019).

According to Vladio Kojongian (2019), he never felt possessed by any spirit while he was dancing the *Kabasaran* dance. He was fully aware what he did while dancing, even while doing some dangerous performance. They have already practise the dance daily and for a long time, so they feel confident to do any dangerous actions. In the other side, there is something different with his body while dancing it. He feels stronger, the feeling shared by other member of *Kabasaran* dance *SIOW KENTUR* group.

“Usually in our art gallery (Sanggar), we made a really good preparation long day before we do the extreme and danger attraction. That’s why it should be done by the expert member of Kabasaran dance and should not to be imitated by others. Although, it also could be the help of any ancestor spirit or certain spirit in certain group of Kabasaran, but not in our group” Vladio Kojongian (29/06/2019).

From the observation the writer found that *Kabasaran* dance and the environment of *Minahasa* in North Sulawesi is interconnected, the present social life is related to their past ancestor. *Kabasaran* dance nowadays becomes a forum that presents the historical meanings and past habits of the *Minahasan* people. It means that this research is strongly related to the Mimetic theory in literature. Through observation, the writer can conclude that this dance is really strong and stand out, It portrays the *Minahasan* people. The permanent gestures in *Kabasaran* dance is a result of imitating the social life and the nature of *Minahasan people* in the past up to nowadays. The gesture made by the *Kabasaran* dancer is interpreted as a characteristic of *Minahasan* people. They are:

- The relationship between *Tou Minahasa* (Minahasan people) with almighty God,
- The relationship between *Tou Minahasa* (Minahasan people) with the nature,
- The relationship between *Tou Minahasa* (Minahasan people) with the fellow *Tou Minahasa* (Minahasan people).

Minahasan people belief in the greatness from God as the creator and the protector is really strong up to now. They believe that God reveals His power through the nature in North Sulawesi. Bird whistling nine times are a good sign to go outside and do such outdoor activity like traveling, occupying a newly built house, a good sign for farming and etc. *Tawa'ang* plants are used as a benchmark or land boundary for planting. This plant also means "oath" in which any violator will be punished by *Opo Empung* or the Almighty God.

The beliefs of *Minahasan* people in the power of *Opo Empung* (The Almighty God) can be seen in the *Kabasaran* as a war dance. Among others are in the expression of eye glaring sharply from dancers that means to cast out bad spirits or demons. *Kabasaran* dance is a reflection of past warfare in each individual *Tou Minahasa* (*Minahasan* people).

