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Jacko Hendrik Ayub Bullan's Sasando Akustik Elektrik as a Cultural Dissemination

Treyanus Homklom[✉], Wadiyo Wadiyo, Widodo Widodo
Email: treyanus18@gmail.com

Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

This research focuses on the Sasando Acoustic Electric instrument developed by Jacob as a cultural transfer strategy. The aim of this research is to demonstrate that Sasando is a part of the cultural heritage of the Rote Island community, and Jacob, as an artist, plays an important role in the development of the instrument. Sasando Acoustic Electric was created as an effort to preserve culture while maintaining its traditional characteristics, yet also able to adapt to the changing times. This musical instrument has become popular and is used for various purposes, including performances, beginners, and courses. Therefore, the researcher chose to investigate Jacob's Sasando Acoustic Electric instrument as one strategy for cultural transfer. The research method used a qualitative approach, using a case study design that analyzed the phenomena that occurred. Qualitative research is considered appropriate for exploring art phenomena. Data analysis in this study went through three stages, namely data collection, data reduction, and data presentation, using the Interactive Model for Qualitative Research by Miles and Huberman. To maintain data credibility, data triangulation and theory were employed. Data was collected through observation, interviews, and document study. The results of this study show that Jacob's Sasando Acoustic Electric is an innovation that successfully transfers traditional culture into a modern form. As an artist, Jacob was able to maintain the traditional characteristics of Sasando while also adapting to the changing times by adding acoustic and electric elements to the instrument. The results of this study can also contribute to the development of traditional culture and art in Indonesia.

Keywords: Sasando, Cultural Transfer, Jacob.

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INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is known for its diverse cultural heritage, referred to as the Nusantara culture (Sari et al., 2019). Nusantara represents a geographical region inhabited by diverse communities with their own unique cultures living together based on the principle of mutual respect and acknowledgement of their diversity as a *conditio sine qua non* for coexistence (Rohidi, 2014:135). In line with this explanation, Cahyono (2010) argued that the diversity of each region's characteristics is a cultural asset that needs to be preserved to prevent its values from changing or declining.

The development of time and globalization has had an impact on various traditional arts (Nirwanto et al., 2021). This is worrying for various groups of traditional art supporters and enthusiasts in Indonesia. As stated by Sutyono (1994), the influence of globalization is worrying for the future prospects of traditional arts, one of which is traditional Nusantara music. Indonesia has a variety of traditional music types. According to Hastanto (2005), there are more than 149 types of music in the region, each with its own unique character, including musical instruments. One of Indonesia's unique traditional musical instruments that deserves to be preserved, especially among performers and art enthusiasts in Indonesia, as well as ethnomusicologists and musicologists worldwide, is the sasando.

The sasando is a simple instrument, consisting mainly of a long bamboo tube with a circular middle part supported by a holder, on which strings are stretched from top to bottom. It is played by plucking the strings with the fingers. This instrument is similar to traditional musical instruments such as the Kecapi or Harp, but has a very distinctive shape and sound.

Sasando is a well-known musical instrument, not only in Indonesia but also abroad. Sasando belongs to the plucked musical instruments from the island of Rote, East Nusa Tenggara (NTT). With some

modifications and starting from the sasando gong, which has pentatonic tones and became the forerunner of sasando, it is usually played with gong rhythms and sung with the typical rhythm of Rote Island.

This type of sasando has 7 strings or 7 notes and then developed into 11 and 12 strings. This sasando violin type has two kinds, the first having a resonance chamber made of wood or plywood (box) and the second having a resonance chamber made of palm leaves and a diatonic scale, with 30, 32, 36, and 48 strings. The electric sasando or Sasando Listrik was created by Arnold Edon. This electric sasando belongs to the sasando violin type developed without using palm leaves as a resonance chamber, with the support of advanced technology resulting in the creation of the electric sasando.

Traditional sasando music in East Nusa Tenggara (NTT) society, known as a plucked musical instrument, has a unique organological shape. As Atiqoh Hasan stated through Merdeka.com media, "Who doesn't know the picture of a musical instrument displayed on the 1992 edition of the Rp 5000 bill?" Sasando is a unique musical instrument from the Rote Island region of East Nusa Tenggara. This musical instrument is a plucked instrument, and its sound sometimes resembles that of a harp or piano.

The sustainability of traditional art, especially the Sasando instrument, which is quite well-known in Indonesia and abroad, is still a concern. It is acknowledged that in 2018, there were less than ten people who could play Sasando, especially on its native island, Rote, which now has disappeared. The technique of playing Sasando is similar to the Western harp, a stringed musical instrument. Sasando is usually played using both hands from opposite directions. The right hand is used to play chords, while the left hand plays bass/melody. Sasando requires skill and harmony to produce melodious sound. Players need practice and proficiency in plucking this musical instrument. Hand skill will affect the tempo and sound produced by Sasando.

The uniqueness of Sasando can be seen from its organology, which is determined by its material, shape, size, sound quality, and other factors. The Sasando instrument has a main part that is a long tube made of special bamboo. This musical instrument has a circular shape from top to bottom with strings stretched on the tube from top to bottom. Recently, a unique Sasando was discovered in terms of its organology and created by Jacko Hendrick Ayub Bulan in Jakarta. Due to its uniqueness, Sasando is not only known in NTT but also outside NTT (Kaet et al., 2020). Sasando has spread and used in various places, especially in art education institutions, including the Jaya Suprana School of Performing Arts, which is the focus of this research.

Jacko Hendrick Ayub Bulan, who is affectionately called "Jackob," is a Sasando player who started learning Sasando since the 1980s. He was also a productive and creative Sasando maker, and his works are well-known even though he has passed away (died on February 7, 2021). He came from Kupang and Rote Island, East Nusa Tenggara, but he has contributed a lot to the Sasando music world in Jakarta, Indonesia, and abroad. His interest in Sasando began when he often enjoyed the string play of Sasando played by his maternal grandfather. Gradually, he was able to produce strings that were pleasant and beautiful to hear. His name began to be known when he worked in Jakarta. He often performed in church events, which led to invitations to weddings. However, his contribution to promoting Sasando music was more prominent in the capital city of Jakarta, and his works were not only used and spread in Indonesia but also in various places abroad (Kusumastuti et al., 2019).

In addition, Jacob's Sasando works also have uniqueness in developing Sasando musical instruments from acoustic double Sasando mode, electric Sasando, and transparent Sasando. The original 24-string Sasando was developed into an 84-string Sasando (double Sasando), which earned

Jacob a Muri Record for creating and playing the 84-string Sasando. Jacob's latest Sasando creation is the transparent Sasando.

He created the transparent Sasando to simplify learning at the Jaya Suprana School of Performing Arts (JSS-PA.), where he teaches. Currently, the author has found imitation transparent Sasando instruments that follow Jacob's work but are not the same circulating in society. Jacob's contributions make him one of the productive and creative Sasando musicians and instrument makers. Based on the background information above, the author is interested in conducting research on Jacob's Acoustic Electric Sasando instrument as a cultural transfer strategy.

METHODE

The research method used in this study is a qualitative approach, specifically a case study design, which analyzes the phenomenon that occurs. A qualitative research type is deemed appropriate for exploring artistic phenomena.

This study uses a qualitative data analysis method with three stages: data collection, data reduction, and data presentation. The Interactive Model by Miles and Huberman is used as a guide for data analysis. To ensure data credibility, data triangulation techniques using theory and sources are employed to achieve a level of credibility that can be understood and proven through information gathering from those involved in the research.

Data collection is done through observation, interviews, and document studies. Direct observation is carried out on Jacob's Acoustic Electric Sasando using free observation to obtain comprehensive and objective data. Interviews are conducted with interviewers and interviewees such as Jacob's students, wife, brother, and students to obtain information about events that cannot be observed directly by the researcher.

After the data is collected, data reduction and data presentation are carried out

through three procedural stages. The data obtained from the three sources are examined together and analyzed through these procedures. From the data analysis, conclusions or research findings are obtained that can be used as a basis for maintaining and developing the sustainability of Sasando as a traditional Indonesian musical instrument.

Interviews are a data collection technique where verbal communication occurs between the interviewer and interviewee related to Jacob's students (Moleong, 2002). The conversation, in the form of verbal communication, is conducted by the researcher (interviewer) who asks questions to several of Jacob's informants, including his wife, brother, and students. The purpose of conducting interviews is to obtain information about events that cannot be observed directly by the researcher, either because the observed action or event occurred in the past or due to other factors (Rohidi, 2011).

Then, the three data sources are compared and cross-checked, and analyzed through the three procedural stages. From this analysis, conclusions or research findings are obtained.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Instrument Sasando by Jacob

Sasando is a cultural asset owned by the people of Rote Island, East Nusa Tenggara. Jacob, on the other hand, is an artist who has developed the sasando musical instrument with several types, one of which is the Acoustic Electric Sasando. According to an interview with Mandiang Jacob on June 17, 2020, the Acoustic Electric Sasando was created as a middle ground so that the sasando could reach the market without losing its traditional atmosphere by using lontar leaves and bamboo.

As we know, Sasando or Sasandu is a folk musical instrument that originated from the island of Rote Ndao, NTT (Emalisa, 2021:61). The main materials used in producing Sasando are bamboo and lontar

leaves. The main part of this Sasando is a long tube made of specially selected bamboo. At the bottom and top of the bamboo, there are places to attach and adjust the tightness of the strings. In the middle of the bamboo, a senda (support) is usually attached to stretch the strings.

According to Dejitron Pah/his sibling (interview on July 26, 2021), the bamboo used to make Sasando is one of the types of bamboo that grows on Rote Island and several other places in Indonesia. There are several alternative types of bamboo that can be used for the aon and some parts of Sasando. Based on Jacob's testimony, some of the bamboo he uses are bamboo tutul, bamboo hitam, and bamboo betung. He was sent or ordered some by a relative from Kupang.


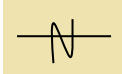
"There are 4 out of 19 bamboo species in NTT that are considered rare, with 3 of them being endemic and rare. Jacob uses the following alternative bamboo:"

Table 1. Bamboo Sasando Base Material (researcher's commentary, December 17, 2022)

Names Bamboo	Names Latin
Names Black Bamboo	Gigantochloa atrovioleacea
Spotted Bamboo	Bambusa Maculata
Bambu Betung	Dendrocalamus asper

"Furthermore, in addition to the aforementioned bamboo species, Jacob often uses black bamboo, which is also abundant in the West Java region. Additionally, several additional materials are used in producing the Acoustic-Electric Sasando, including (a) teak wood for the body; (b) support wood (also can be taken from teak wood); (c) flat iron for string support placed on the wood; (d) nails for string attachment; and (e) a jack or plug that provides electric pizzico to transfer sound to a

Table 2 . Nada yang dihasilkan Sasando AEJ (dokumentasi peneliti, 28 Desember 2022)

1	String Number	7
	Bass & Rhythm Strings	String no 7 is the Fifth melody
	Strings Melody	string on a 32-string electric acoustic Sasando..
	Left Hand rhythm strings pitched sol, Fa and Mi	

Keunikan Sasando Akustik Elektrik sebagai Strategi Alih Budaya JSSPA.

Sasando acoustic electric is a combination of traditional Sasando with modern technology by adding a pickup to produce a louder sound that can be connected to an amplifier or audio system. The use of Sasando acoustic electric as a cultural transformation strategy for JSPAS (Identity, Soft skills, Academic Achievement, and Spirituality) can be done in several ways, including:

Preserving regional culture - By introducing Sasando acoustic electric to students, it will introduce the culture of East Nusa Tenggara region. This will help preserve the regional culture that is eroding due to modern development.

Developing creativity and soft skills - Playing Sasando acoustic electric not only requires music skills but also develops creativity and soft skills such as teamwork, creativity in arranging music, and the ability to improvise.

Improving academic achievement - Studies show that students involved in music activities tend to have better academic achievements. By playing Sasando acoustic electric, students can develop problem-solving skills, concentration, and the ability to understand and interpret music notation.

Building spirituality - Sasando acoustic electric can also be used as a means of building

spirituality for students. In playing music, students will learn to focus their attention and concentration, and they can feel a greater presence within themselves.

Thus, the use of Sasando acoustic electric as a JSSPA cultural transformation strategy can help students understand regional culture, develop creativity and soft skills, improve academic achievement, and build spirituality. This can help students become more competitive individuals and have pride in their regional culture.

Jacob Ayub Bullan, also known as Jack, according to Silfa's statement at Jaya Supraana Performing Art Music School (interviewed on July 17, 2020), has developed Sasando widely, starting from the capital city of Jakarta, Indonesia, to the acoustic electric, Doble Sasando and transparent Sasando, as stated by Klara et al. (2020). However, by maintaining the use of lontar leaves as decorations and in the resonator space, it is an effort to maintain traditional artistic values or conservation of the connection between art and the environment, as stated by Dilfa et al. (2020).

Furthermore, with Sasando acoustic electric, the main purpose is to maintain its market demand and make it more flexible for performances or practices. This is in line with Natonis' statement (2018) that this strategy is by penetrating the market and developing products. Eventually, the Sasando acoustic electric created by Jacob Hendrik Ayub Bullan answers the market demand and becomes a middle ground for cultural preservation.

CONCLUSION

The conclusion is that the Sasando instrument is a cultural asset owned by the community of Rote Island, East Nusa Tenggara. Jacob is an artist who has developed the Sasando musical instrument with several types, one of which is the Acoustic Electric Sasando. The Acoustic Electric Sasando was created to meet the market demand as a middle ground for cultural preservation. Despite being innovative

with the acoustic electric style, it still uses lontar leaves as a distinctive traditional feature. As a result, this Sasando has also been successful and has the highest sales in the capital city, used for performances, beginners, and students taking courses.

On December 17, 2022, the researcher documented the elements or parts that can be found in the Sasando organology style of Jacob, specifically the Acoustic Electric Sasando created by Edon (Klara et al., 2020). The resonator part in Edon's style on the Acoustic Electric Sasando preserves it with lontar leaves. In addition, the Sasando produces various tuning techniques according to each family's playing style.

Physically, the sound produced by the Sasando musical instrument is created by the movement that occurs on the Sasando strings, which are plucked. If the Sasando strings are plucked in the right position, it will produce a beautiful sound. Conversely, if the plucking is in the wrong position, the sound produced will be less beautiful.

The number of strings on the Sasando varies depending on the type of string, but there are several variations with 32, 45, and 60 strings that have the same note attachment technique. The modified Acoustic-Electric Sasando by Jacob Ayub Bullan has 32 strings, which will produce a sound similar to other Sasando instruments as revealed by Edon (Tukan et al., 2020)

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