

Preserving Local Wisdom: A Semiotic Analysis of Lahat's Regional Songs for Character Education

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ABSTRAK

Kurangnya perhatian terhadap pelestarian lagu-lagu daerah sebagai media pembelajaran berbasis kearifan lokal menjadi tantangan dalam melestarikan budaya sekaligus mendukung pendidikan karakter. Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk menganalisis lagu-lagu daerah Lahat sebagai representasi kearifan lokal dengan menggunakan pendekatan semiotik Roland Barthes. Data dianalisis melalui identifikasi elemen-elemen seperti lirik, melodi, dan instrumen musik untuk menggali makna denotatif, konotatif, dan mitos yang terkandung dalam lagu-lagu tersebut. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa lagu-lagu daerah Lahat mengandung makna simbolis yang mendalam, mencerminkan nilai-nilai sosial, budaya, dan agama masyarakat setempat. Elemen lirik berfungsi sebagai media penyampaian pesan moral, melodi menciptakan nilai estetika, sementara instrumen musik memperkaya penyampaian pengetahuan tradisional. Temuan ini menegaskan bahwa lagu-lagu daerah Lahat bukan hanya karya seni, tetapi juga warisan budaya berharga yang memiliki potensi besar untuk mendukung pendidikan karakter. Simpulan penelitian ini menekankan pentingnya melestarikan dan mempromosikan lagu-lagu daerah sebagai media pembelajaran berbasis kearifan lokal. Langkah ini dapat dilakukan dengan mengintegrasikan lagu-lagu tersebut ke dalam praktik pendidikan untuk menanamkan nilai-nilai budaya dan moral pada generasi muda, sekaligus menjaga keberlanjutan tradisi lokal.

ABSTRACT

The lack of attention to preserving regional songs as a medium of learning based on local wisdom poses challenges in cultural preservation and character education. This study aims to analyze the regional songs of Lahat as representations of local wisdom using Roland Barthes' semiotic approach. The data were analyzed by identifying elements such as lyrics, melody, and musical instruments to uncover the denotative, connotative, and mythological meanings embedded in these songs. The findings reveal that Lahat's regional songs carry profound symbolic meanings, reflecting the social, cultural, and religious values of the local community. The lyrics serve as a medium for conveying moral messages, the melodies provide aesthetic value, while the musical instruments enrich the transmission of traditional knowledge. These findings underscore that Lahat's regional songs are not merely artistic creations but also valuable cultural heritage with significant potential to support character education. The study concludes by emphasizing the importance of preserving and promoting regional songs as a medium of learning based on local wisdom. This can be achieved by integrating these songs into educational practices to instill cultural and moral values in the younger generation while ensuring the continuity of local traditions.

1. INTRODUCTION

Regional literature refers to a body of works that reflect the unique cultural, historical, and social characteristics of a specific geographical area (Dharmalau et al., 2021; Islamiyati et al., 2024). It encompasses various forms of expression, including oral traditions like myths, folk tales, songs, and legends, as well as written forms such as novels, short stories, and poetry. This literature often serves as a medium for preserving local languages, traditions, and values, while simultaneously offering insights into the daily lives, struggles, and aspirations of the people from that region (Madeamin, 2021; Mungmachon, 2012; Simbolon et al., 2021). It plays a crucial role in fostering a sense of identity and belonging among the community, transmitting cultural knowledge across generations, and maintaining a connection to the past.

Regional literature is also an important tool for understanding the diversity of human experiences and the ways in which different cultures perceive and interact with the world. Regional literature represents the oral, historical, anonymous, and norm-controlling cultural values of a civilization that originated and developed in specific locations (Amir Karim, 2020; Maulana et al., 2023). This type of literature, which uses regional languages as its medium, evolves alongside civilization and includes forms such as oral literature, myths, poetry, fairy tales, folk stories, and regional melodies (Destriana et al., 2024; Disa Arliwan et al., 2022). In Lahat Regency, regional literature encompasses cultural assets like myths and songs that reflect its rich cultural heritage, alongside other regional benefits such as tourism and agricultural products (Destriana et al., 2024). These cultural elements contribute significantly to preserving local identity and transmitting values across generations.

Literature can generally be categorized into oral and written forms. Written literature includes works like novels, short stories, and ancient texts, which are preserved in tangible media and explicitly identify their creators (Nugraheni & Haryadi, 2021; Weisarkurnai, 2017). In contrast, oral literature is passed down verbally, encompassing topics such as history, culture, and social life, retaining artistic value through its oral transmission (Khairani et al., 2021; Wahyuni et al., 2024). Oral literature continues to be preserved in families and communities, often narrating local myths, historical events, and cultural values that form a unique cultural heritage (Nadiyah et al., 2023; Wulandari, 2023). Such literature is crucial for sustaining oral traditions and serves as a medium for transmitting the cultural values and ideas of its supporting community (Kafarina et al., 2023; Maulana et al., 2023). Previous studies have extensively explored the use of Barthes' semiotics as an analytical framework to uncover cultural and symbolic meanings embedded in various forms of artistic expression, such as films, music videos, and traditional performances (Dianiya, 2020; Mulyana et al., 2022; Wahyuningratna & Laura, 2022). For instance, Barthes' theory was employed to analyze social representation, highlighting how societal hierarchies and class struggles are symbolically portrayed (Dianiya, 2020; Shalekhah & Martadi, 2020). Similarly, the music video of BTS's hit song *Dynamite* was examined through the lens of Barthes' semiotics to explore themes of cultural imperialism, particularly how globalized cultural products subtly convey dominant cultural ideologies (Wahyuningratna & Laura, 2022). Additionally, the chanting of Sukamantri Bebegig mantras, a traditional ritualistic expression, was analyzed to reveal the intricate relationship between cultural practices and their symbolic representations (Mulyana et al., 2022). These previous studies underscore the versatility of Barthes' semiotics in analyzing a broad spectrum of cultural products, ranging from contemporary media to traditional rituals. Despite this versatility, there remains a significant gap in the application of this theory to regional songs, which are rich repositories of local wisdom and cultural identity. Regional songs from Lahat Regency, for example, encapsulate the unique traditions, values, and worldviews of the community, yet they have received minimal scholarly attention. This gap suggests the need for further research to apply Barthes' semiotics to such cultural artifacts, enabling a deeper understanding of their symbolic meanings and their role in preserving and transmitting local heritage.

The novelty of this research lies in its focus on applying Barthes' semiotic theory to regional songs from Lahat Regency, an area that has not been extensively explored in previous studies. While Barthes' framework has been widely used to analyze films and music videos, regional songs (especially those representing local wisdom) remain largely unexplored within this context. By examining these songs, this study aims to uncover the deeper cultural, social, and symbolic meanings embedded in the lyrics and performances, offering new insights into the role of music in the transmission of local values. Furthermore, this research will contribute to the growing body of work on the intersection of semiotics, regional culture, and local wisdom, offering a fresh perspective on how traditional songs can be understood as vital expressions of community identity.

The primary objective of this study is to explore how the meanings embedded in Lahat regional songs reflect the local wisdom, cultural values, and social practices of the community. By applying Barthes' semiotic theory, the research aims to decode the symbolic representations within the lyrics and melodies of these songs, revealing the intricate connections between language, culture, and identity. Additionally, this study seeks to contribute to the preservation and appreciation of regional cultural heritage by demonstrating the significance of these songs in maintaining and promoting local wisdom. Ultimately, the research aims to highlight the importance of regional songs as a medium for cultural expression and as a tool for fostering greater cultural pride and continuity within the Lahat community.

2. METHOD

This study applies a descriptive qualitative research method. Qualitative descriptive research is a research method that aims to provide an in-depth and complete picture of social reality and phenomena

that occur in society and become the subject of research, so this study describes the characteristics, nature, characteristics, and patterns of a phenomenon (Sugiyono, 2021). The data obtained is in the form of a sentence description so that to describe the phenomenon, analysis is needed to describe the data obtained. This study will describe and clarify the Lahat regional song in Roland Barthes's study as a representation of local wisdom.

The types of data used are primary and secondary data. Primary data is collecting data by conducting direct observation in Lahat Regency and direct interviews with informants. Secondary data used are scientific journals, relevant research, and the YouTube application platform. Meanwhile, the data sources used are YouTube, Lahat art figures, and Lahat regional song creators. In this study, the researcher applied library study and interview data collection techniques. Researchers validate data using method triangulation and source triangulation. Triangulation is a data analysis approach that collects information from various sources (Susanto et al., 2023). Triangulation method is a technique for collecting information from various sources by conducting observations, free or structured interviews, and field reviews to represent the truth of concrete data sources (Mills & Gay, 2016). While source triangulation is collecting data from various sources of informants.

The study of Lahat regional songs as a representation of local wisdom within the framework of Roland Barthes' theory involves several structured steps. Initially, regional songs from Lahat are grouped using the YouTube platform as a source for analysis. The lyrics of these songs are then carefully examined to uncover their deeper meanings and cultural significance. Following this, the songs are categorized according to Barthes' theoretical lens, focusing on identifying elements of local wisdom embedded within the Lahat community. To ensure clarity and accessibility, the regional language of Lahat is translated into Indonesian. Data obtained from informants, including their insights and contextual information, are meticulously identified to support the analysis. The gathered data is then reviewed using qualitative descriptive techniques to provide a comprehensive understanding of the themes and representations. Finally, the results are synthesized into a summary, highlighting the core findings and their implications for appreciating Lahat's cultural heritage.

3. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Result

The findings of this study highlight the crucial role of Lahat regional songs in preserving and conveying cultural values and local wisdom. These songs, as living cultural expressions, serve not only as entertainment but also as vital instruments for character education, providing moral teachings that are deeply ingrained in the community's identity. Through the lens of Roland Barthes' semiotic theory, this research examines how these songs encode meanings that reflect the social, cultural, and ethical dimensions of the Lahat community. The analysis focuses on 8 regional songs from Lahat Regency, each selected for its representation of specific aspects of the community's values and traditions. These songs serve as an insightful window into the rich cultural landscape of the region, revealing how music functions as a vehicle for transmitting important life lessons and preserving the collective memory of the community. The selected songs for this study are: 1) *Mutigh Tihau*, 2) *Gadis Ngantat*, 3) *Ame Hindu*, 4) *Sayang Selayak*, 5) *Jauh Dirantau*, 6) *Kota Lahat Nan Indah*, and 7) *Pantauan*. The detailed examination of each song will be presented as follows.

To provide a clear understanding of the cultural and moral messages conveyed through Lahat regional songs, the analysis begins with a detailed examination of the song *Mutigh Tihau*. Table 1 presents the lyrics of the *Mutigh Tihau* song, serving as the basis for the subsequent semiotic analysis.

Table 1. The Lyrics of *Mutigh Tihau* Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Ibung-ibung, Ude ujan kite kume</i>	Mothers, after the rain we go to the garden
<i>Mutiek tihau, batan gulai petang kele</i>	Mushroom harvest, for vegetables this afternoon
<i>Kume, kume</i>	To the garden, to the garden
<i>Ngambek tihau jantung pule</i>	Take mushrooms and heart (banana) too
<i>Manggang jagung campur dengan ubi sile</i>	Grilled corn mixed with sweet potatoes
<i>Ambek kunyit, ambek sehai</i>	Take turmeric, take lemongrass
<i>Ibung-ibung, balek kudai</i>	Moms, go home first, we'll cook.
<i>Kite masak, kite gulai, Kite makan gulai tihau</i>	We eat mushroom vegetables
<i>Lemak nian, petang-petang ku di ume</i>	Very nice, my afternoon in the garden
<i>Dek tehase badan penuh miang gale</i>	It doesn't feel like your body is all dirty

The denotative meaning in the song *Mutigh Tihau* is shown in *Kume, kume* which means "Garden". Garden in the big Indonesian dictionary is a piece of land/land planted with things like fruits, rubber, coffee, and vegetables. The people of Lahat are known as coffee and rice producing areas, besides that rubber and oil palm plants also dominate the Lahat area. This shows that the majority of the people of Lahat work as farmers. The connotative meaning in the song *Mutigh Tihau* shows a sense of comfort when doing activities in the garden. The Lahat community is very dependent on nature. In terms of cultivating gardens, the Lahat community has a habit of inviting their family members to work together to cultivate the garden so that the atmosphere in the garden becomes lively, this is also a form of fostering family closeness. They have divided tasks with each other, including men in charge of the garden, while women and girls are in charge of preparing dishes that will later be eaten together. Lahat people believe in myths when in the garden, namely as shown in [Table 2](#).

Table 2. Lahat People Myths

No.	Myth
1.	When wanting to defecate, one must say " <i>nek puyang numpang kemeh amen ade kesalahan aku minta maaf</i> (excuse me, grandma, I need to urinate; if I have made a mistake, I apologize)" which means that a person must remain polite and courteous when in the forest, because the Lahat community believes that not only humans and animals live side by side in the forest, but there are also supernatural things.
2.	It is not permissible to reprimand someone who has never been seen passing through the garden because it is believed that he is the incarnation of the guardian of the forest or garden.
3.	If there is a strange sound in the garden or in the forest, do not reprimand it, because if you reprimand it, it is feared that something dangerous will happen.
4.	If there is lightning in the middle of the day, don't be afraid of something dangerous happening.
5.	Don't eat while walking in the garden, because there are fears that animals will follow you into the garden and eat the plants.
6.	If someone calls once, don't respond
7.	If a guest comes to the garden, don't invite them to eat while on the way, especially to people you don't know. Tell them first that you are in the garden before inviting them to eat.
8.	If you want to bathe in the river, you have to do it before the sun sets, for fear of demons.

The lyrics of "*Gadis Ngantat*" song reflect themes of unity, family, and community, emphasizing the importance of togetherness in local customs, particularly in wedding traditions. [Table 3](#) presents the lyrics of the "*Gadis Ngantat*" song, which will be analyzed to uncover the denotative and connotative meanings within the text.

Table 3. The Lyrics of Gadis Ngantat Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Sandi dulu sampai mbak ini Gunung dempo ngak bukit serelo</i>	From past to present Mount Dempo and Serelo Hill
<i>Masih saje sededakan, Ade di ulu ade di ilee</i>	Still side by side
<i>Di lembahnya oi sungguh ribang, adat baghi maseh gi ade. Penameannye gades ngantat, peribang bujang begadesan</i>	There is upstream and there is downstream In the valley, Oi really likes it, the old customs still exist. It is called gades ngantat So that the boy who is going to get married will be happy
<i>Kebile ngetam nga musim kawe</i>	
<i>Itulah name musem di Lahat</i>	
<i>Bebago'an besak-besak'an</i>	When will the rice harvest and coffee season be?
<i>Sanak famili oi balek gale</i>	That's the name of the season in Lahat
<i>Sakdi mane, sandi rantau</i>	Holding a large-scale wedding event
<i>Sakdi mane</i>	The big family is all home
<i>Sandi rantau sandi rantau</i>	From where, from the region From where
<i>Alangkah senang alangkah ribang</i>	From the region, from the region
<i>Bunteng datang ngak gades ngantat</i>	
<i>Malam kele besigean</i>	Very happy, very like
<i>Malam lah kele begadesan</i>	The bride comes with a pregnant girl Have fun tonight Tonight we'll be virgins (get married)

The denotative meaning of the song *Gadis Ngantat* is shown in the title of the song *Gadis Ngantat* itself, which consists of 2 words, namely "*gadis*" and "*ngantat*". *Gadis* means a teenage girl who is not yet married. While *Ngantat (Mengantar)* means to accompany. The meaning of *Gadis Ngantat* is a girl who will accompany the bride during the wedding, starting from the preparations before the reception until the wedding ceremony is finished. Later, a special event will be held for young men and women whose purpose is as a form of releasing the single period of the couple who are going to get married before entering a new phase of life, namely the household. The connotative meaning of the *Gadis Ngantat* song is an expression of welcoming the happy day of the bride and groom who will marry someone they love, while the family also feels happy about their child's marriage. The Lahat community has a habit of holding weddings when the harvest is over, such as the coffee harvest, rice harvest, and fruit harvest. Family members who are away from home will return to their hometown and close families work together to help prepare the necessary things such as making cakes, collecting food ingredients and cooking dishes that will be served on the day of the reception. There is a myth that the Lahat community believes that if a girl becomes a *ngantat* girl or a *ngantat* bachelor, it should not be more than 3 times because it is believed that the girl or bachelor will have difficulty finding a partner and when the wedding is held, the bride and groom should not travel far and also the parents of the bride and groom should not do heavy work or go to the forest alone when the wedding day is approaching because it is feared that unwanted things will happen to them.

"*Hindu Ame*" stands as a cultural expression that conveys not only the melody and rhythm characteristic of Lahat's folk music, but also the deep-rooted spiritual and moral values that define the community's worldview. This song, like many others in Lahat's repertoire, encapsulates essential life lessons, particularly focusing on unity, respect, and social harmony, all while maintaining the cultural integrity of the region. Through the lyrics of "*Hindu Ame*", the listener is transported into a narrative that highlights the importance of community ties, reflecting the broader themes of togetherness that are intrinsic to the local way of life. Table 4 present the full lyrics of this song for further analysis.

Table 4. The Lyrics of *Hindu Ame* Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Bukan aku dek sayang, bukan aku dek ghindu Nga kakang di dusun di talang beniugh Kakang jauh di bukit temalam di kebun Nanam kawe baghi ay sebidang kecil</i>	It's not that I don't love you, it's not that I don't miss you With my brother in the hamlet in Talang Beniugh Bro, far away in the hills, staying in the garden Plant Dutch coffee, a small plot of water
<i>Amu hindu cunngaki bulan disitu mate kite betemu Disitu mate kite betemu Disitu mate kite betemu</i>	If you miss me, look at the moon There our eyes met There our eyes met

The denotative meaning of the song *Ame Hindu* is shown in each song lyric, all of which have meanings or references found in the big Indonesian dictionary, such as the words *tak sayang*, *tidak rindu*, *jauh*, *bukit*, *tinggal dikebun*, *kopi*, *sepetak*, *bulan*, and so on. The connotative meaning of the *Ame Hindu* song describes the expression of longing for a couple who are separated by circumstances. The woman is at home while the man is living in the garden. If they want to meet, they will look at the moon even though their bodies are separated but their eyes can meet when looking at the moon. The song *Sayang Selayak* is one of the prominent regional songs of Lahat Regency that encapsulates the deep cultural and moral values of the community. Table 5 presents the full lyrics of the *Sayang Selayak* song, which will be analyzed to uncover its cultural and ethical meanings.

Table 5. The Lyrics of *Sayang Selayak* Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Sayang selayak, burung lempipi Sayang selayak, burung lempipi Menarap aban keputehan, ai keputehan Kakang berayak ke duson ini Kakang berayak ke duson ini Tuape batan perulehan, ai perulehan</i>	Dear worthy, dove Dear worthy, dove Expecting aban vaginal discharge, ai vaginal discharge My brother went wandering to this village My brother went wandering to this village What are the results obtained, what is obtained
<i>Sayang selayak, burung lempipi Sayang selayak,</i>	Dear Selayak, lempipi bird Dear Selayak, lempipi

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>burung lempipi</i>	bird We went to this village
<i>Kami berayak keduson ini</i> <i>Kami berayak keduson ini</i>	We went wandering to this village We went to this village There was a mountain to be found
<i>Ade mbak gunung perulehan</i> <i>ai perulehan</i>	

The denotative meaning of the song *Sayang Selayak* is shown in the word "*Berkelana*" meaning travel anywhere to a place or migrate. Lahat society migrates influenced by 3 factors, namely, education, work, and following the husband or wife when married. The meaning of *Sayang Selayak* is a symbol that characterizes the uniqueness of the Lahat community, this term is often used in the Lahat district government. The connotative meaning of the song *Sayang Selayak* is literally teaches about the feeling of peaceful love, protecting each other and sharing sincere love for others. The meaning of the lyrics "There is a mountain to be gained" means that the experience gained when someone travels far or migrates such as a good job, improving the quality of life, friends from various regions, to meeting a soul mate. This makes a person feel at peace with the things that happen, both good and bad, in life. *Jauh Dirantau* focuses on its thematic elements and the cultural significance embedded in its lyrics. This song, which expresses the emotional experience of individuals separated from their homeland, serves as a poignant reflection of the feelings of longing and nostalgia. Table 6 presents the lyrics of the *Jauh Dirantau* song, which will be analyzed in the following section to reveal its deeper cultural and moral implications.

Table 6. The Lyrics of *Jauh Dirantau* Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Aku dirantau, jauh isandi dusun lamanku</i>	I am a wanderer, far from my hometown
<i>Di badah jeme, ngiluki naseb</i>	In people's place, improving fate
<i>Aku dirantau ade bagian</i>	I'm in a foreign land, there's a place
<i>Lame de balek, asenye khindu badah bekhusik</i>	I haven't been home for a long time, I feel like I miss the place I met
<i>Di lembak tebing, ayek pancuran badahku mandi</i>	Under the cliff, a fountain My place to take a bath
<i>Kundang kanceku sebitu</i>	My friends in the past
<i>La lame nian kite de betemu</i>	It's been a long time since we saw each other
<i>Kundang kanceku sebitu</i>	Send my regards from abroad
<i>Salamkah khinduku sandi perantauan</i>	Memories in the hometown
<i>Kenangan di dusun laman</i>	As long as there is life
<i>Sepanjang ade umur</i>	It will be a memory, it will be a memory forever
<i>Ka njadi ingatan, ka njadi kenangan selamenye</i>	

The denotative meaning of the word *Far Dirantau* is someone who lives far from their place of origin for a long time in search of income and education. The connotative meaning of the word *Far Dirantau* shows a person's longing for their hometown, family, relatives, childhood friends and activities that are usually carried out such as going to the garden (*ume*), harvesting fruit, picking vegetables, thus making someone want to return to their place of origin. Lahat society believes in the myth that people who migrate far away will still meet their soul mate around the area where the person lives even though they met in the place where they migrated. This myth has long been believed by the community because it has occurred a lot in some communities and occurs repeatedly in every generation. The song *Kota Lahat Nan Indah* serves as a vivid portrayal of the beauty and pride of Lahat Regency, encapsulating both the natural and cultural aspects that define the region's identity. It is an example of how regional songs are more than just artistic expressions; they embody the values and pride of the community. Table 7 presents the lyrics of *Kota Lahat Nan Indah*, which will be analyzed further using Roland Barthes' semiotic theory to uncover the deeper cultural and moral meanings embedded within the song.

Table 7. The Lyrics of *Kota Lahat Nan Indah* Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Kota lahat nan indah</i>	The beautiful city of Lahat
<i>Tepian lematang</i>	The edge of the cliff
<i>Di lingkar bukit barisan, ilok pemandangan</i>	Surrounded by Bukit Barisan, the views are very nice
<i>Seganti setungguan, titulah patiannye</i>	Seganti setungguan, that is the symbol of the area
<i>Bukit serelo nan gagah, lemak dipandang mate</i>	The majestic Serelo hill is pleasing to the eye
<i>Tinggi hari badah peninggalan baghi</i>	High day, place of old relics
<i>Nining-nining puyang kite, ngabatu megalite</i>	Our ancestors, and the megalithic stones
<i>Karang dalam ayek terjun ilok nian</i>	The coral in the fountain is very beautiful.
<i>Nungguka wisata datang, kandek nunjang pembangunan</i>	Waiting for tourists to come, to support development

Meaning of Denotative in the song *Kota Lahat Nan Indah* is in the meaning of *seganti setungguan* and *bukit serelo*. "*Seganti Setungguan*" means strong unity and togetherness, the spirit of mutual cooperation, deep loyalty, faithfulness to one's word, firm stance and responsibility. The term is characteristic of Lahat Regency because the two words are the philosophy of life of the local people and society who were born and grew up under the care of a unique thumb-shaped hill known as *Bukit Serelo* which is also a symbol of the Lahat Regency area itself. As a society that reflects the philosophy of *Seganti Setungguan*, the spirit of working together, mutual cooperation and a high spirit of solidarity and camaraderie, as well as a society that is light in reaching out to help one another. The meaning of connotative in the song *Kota Lahat Nan Indah* shows a sense of pride in the diversity of natural beauty and culture in Lahat Regency. In addition to natural beauty such as tourist attractions such as the beauty of the banks of the Lematang River and the hills, Lahat Regency contains a diversity of culture and history in it, starting from the origin of the spread of the Lahat tribe, agricultural traditions, wedding traditions, *gotong royong* traditions when there are celebrations, community customs, legends, traditional dance and music performances, and historical relics, namely the megalithic stone area spread across the Lahat region.

The Lahat district, rich in cultural history and folklore, is home to various myths that have been passed down through generations. One of the most well-known myths is that of the Elephant Mountain Tunnel (*Gunung Gajah Tunnel*), which serves as a railway crossing connecting the city of Lahat with Lubuk Linggau. According to local beliefs, the tunnel is haunted by a headless ghost that is said to wander near the tunnel's exit, creating an eerie atmosphere for those who pass through. This myth adds an air of mystery and intrigue to the already historical and strategic tunnel, which plays an important role in the region's transportation network. Another fascinating myth in Lahat involves a stone that cannot be moved, which is still located in the Gumay Ulu sub-district office. The local community has long held the belief that the stone's immovability is linked to a story from the past when Dutch troops attempted to move the stone using a car but failed. This event has led to the belief that the stone is imbued with supernatural power, and it is considered inauspicious to utter inappropriate words or engage in negative behavior near it. The stone is regarded as a symbol of the area's mystique, reflecting the cultural values and the importance of respecting the traditions and beliefs that have shaped the community. *Pantauan* is a regional song that holds significant value in the Lahat community, often associated with themes of longing, separation, and the ties that bind individuals to their homeland. This song, like many others in the region, reflects the deep emotional connection the people of Lahat have with their local environment and traditions. Table 8 provides the lyrics of the song, which will serve as the basis for the subsequent semiotic analysis using Roland Barthes' theoretical framework.

Table 8. The Lyrics of *Pantauan* Song

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Kalu kamu pegi nyimah</i>	If you go stop by
<i>Betandang ke dusun kami</i>	Visit our hamlet
<i>De ka lupe aluannye</i>	Will not forget the customs
<i>Dudol, bajik, lemanngnye pule</i>	Dodol, good, lemanng too
<i>Ade ye njadi penundenye</i>	There are those who become his
<i>Make simah pacak gale</i>	representatives
<i>Ye mane adek sananknye</i>	So that everyone can do it
<i>Khumanye didatangi gale</i>	Which are his relatives?
	Everyone came to his house

Regional Song Lyrics	Meaning in English
<i>Petande kami ribang</i>	As a sign of our happiness
<i>Kamu pacak datang</i>	You can come
<i>Ka kebile kina, kami pule tandang</i>	Someday, we will visit too
<i>Bujang, gades, tue, mude</i>	Bachelor, girl, old, young
<i>Di araq keliling duson</i>	In a parade around the village
<i>Makan minum sekenyangnye</i>	Eat and drink as much as you can
<i>Itulah namenye pantauan</i>	That's what monitoring is called
<i>Itulah adat dibadah kami</i>	That's the custom in our place
<i>Dipakai sampai mbak ini</i>	Used until now
<i>Sedekah pantau pantauan</i>	Alms monitoring
<i>Ade sanak ka milu gale</i>	There are relatives who will all come along

Denotative meaning comes from the word *pantauan* itself. *Pantauan* means to invite, in the big Indonesian dictionary inviting is to invite or ask to come. *Pantauan* is a tradition of the people in the Lahat district when there is a wedding, *aqiqah*, or death. The *pantauan* process is carried out by men who are sent to invite relatives who will later eat together and bring a message asking for help to cook dishes that will later be served at a predetermined time, usually the people who play a role in cooking are mothers. While men are assigned to make a stage and cook rice. The connotative meaning of the song *Pantauan* is to show a sense of mutual assistance and the social spirit of the Lahat community every time there is an event such as a wedding, *aqiqah*, thanksgiving, and death. The Lahat community works together and shares tasks with each other so that the event runs smoothly. This is also a value of the closeness of the community as social beings. There is a myth stored in the song *Pantauan* especially at wedding events to avoid unwanted weather such as rain on the day of the wedding, they do an activity called "*mantang ahi*" which means moving the rain to another place or area, by storing the wedding clothes in bamboo then covering it with cloth so that the wind does not come out. This method is believed to be able to ward off bad weather so that the wedding runs smoothly.

Discussion

The results of this study demonstrate how Lahat regional songs embody local wisdom, providing a comprehensive depiction of cultural and moral values. Utilizing Roland Barthes' semiotic framework, this research reveals the transformation of denotative meanings into connotative and mythological narratives, offering a nuanced understanding of the cultural identity of the Lahat community. These songs, as cultural artifacts, transcend their role in entertainment and emerge as essential instruments for character education, contributing to the academic understanding of how traditional music can be used in the pedagogical context to instill community values (Maulana et al., 2023; Wulandari, 2023). Songs such as *Mutigh Tihau*, *Gadis Ngantat*, and *Kota Lahat Nan Indah* exemplify how traditional music serves as a vessel for character education. The findings indicate that these songs are not merely artistic expressions but vehicles for transmitting essential life lessons about mutual cooperation, family solidarity, and local pride. For example, the connotations embedded in the song *Gadis Ngantat* emphasize the value of unity in wedding traditions, reflecting a collective cultural understanding that binds the community together. This aligns with study who suggest that the natural beauty depicted in traditional songs often symbolizes regional identity and local pride (Istiqomah et al., 2024; Witantina et al., 2020), and another study who stated that regional songs serve the function of reminding diasporas of their cultural roots through nostalgic narratives (Mukminin, 2021; Santoso et al., 2022).

These findings support the idea that music serves as a powerful tool for promoting social harmony and preserving cultural identity, a notion central to the ongoing exploration of cultural transmission in educational theory (Saputra et al., 2023; Yodi & Prasetyo, 2021). By identifying the myths embedded in these regional songs, this study highlights their continued relevance in shaping community behavior (Renyaaan et al., 2020; Santoso et al., 2023). For instance, *Mutigh Tihau* reflects agrarian practices, demonstrating how regional songs sustain moral and cultural values despite the influences of modernity. This aligns with the broader academic discussions on how traditional forms of cultural expression can adapt to contemporary contexts while maintaining their core societal functions (Dwipayana, 2023; Setiowati, 2020). The findings contribute significantly to the field of educational research by illustrating the potential of traditional music to be integrated into modern educational frameworks. This research suggests that regional songs, as living cultural artifacts, can enhance character development by fostering a deeper connection to cultural heritage and local wisdom. Moreover, the study

affirms the importance of preserving such cultural practices to ensure that they continue to play a vital role in shaping the identity of future generations, offering valuable insights for curriculum development in the context of globalized education systems.

4. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the crucial role of Lahat folk songs in preserving and transmitting indigenous knowledge, demonstrating that these songs are not merely cultural artifacts but active agents in shaping identities and imparting moral values. Through a semiotic analysis, the study reveals how these songs bridge generations while conveying important life lessons, from family unity to environmental harmony. Additionally, the myths and narratives embedded in these songs reinforce social norms and foster community cohesion. The research underscores the value of traditional music in character development and its potential to enhance educational practices by integrating ethical and cultural teachings, ensuring the continuity of community values in a modern context.

5. REFERENCES

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