

Cultural Continuity or Change: Pedagogical Implications of Layered Transformation in Malay Offering Dance

Silvia Gea^{1✉}, Agustina²
(1,2) (2) Universitas Negeri Padang, Indonesia

✉ Silvia Gea
[silviagea07@gmail.com]

ABSTRACT

Urbanization and the growth of the creative industry have shifted the Riau Malay Offering Dance (Tari Persembahan) from sacred ceremonial contexts to commercial performance stages. While this transformation is often framed as a loss of tradition, limited attention has been given to its pedagogical implications—particularly how teachers transmit core values such as *rasa* (sensibility) and *adab* (politeness) in increasingly fast-paced and spectacular performances. This study employs a qualitative case study at Sanggar Wan Dance, Pekanbaru, and analyzes the transformation through the lens of deterritorialization. The findings reveal a layered transformation: the outer layer (costume and music) undergoes significant modification, the middle layer (movement structure) is simplified and accelerated, while the inner core (*sembah* gesture and ethical values) remains relatively stable. These results suggest that cultural preservation in contemporary contexts depends on intentional pedagogical design, where teachers actively implement explicit strategies to sustain and transmit core cultural values.

Key Word: *Culture Continuity, Pedagogical Implications, Riau Malay, Dance Transformation.*

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INTRODUCTION

When a welcoming dance that once embodied communal etiquette is reconfigured for stages, screens, and tourism venues, education becomes one of the first domains to experience its disruption. Teachers and instructors must renegotiate how to transmit *rasa* (embodied sensibility) and character values when the dance's form, context, and audience expectations have shifted. This tension is particularly evident in arts classrooms and community studios (*sekolah/sanggar*), where traditional dance functions not only as performance training but also as a lived curriculum of ethics, identity, and social conduct.

Globalization, intensified by digital media, has accelerated cultural circulation, rendering local traditions increasingly mobile and recontextualized. Within this context, deterritorialization—understood as the loosening of cultural practices from their original socio-spatial anchors and their reinterpretation in new settings—has become a defining feature of contemporary cultural life (Basit & Khotimah, 2024). For education, this process raises critical questions about what constitutes authentic knowledge, which meanings remain teachable, and how values can be sustained when cultural forms travel faster than their underlying philosophies.

In the context of dance, deterritorialization is reflected in modified movement vocabularies, shifting performance media, and restructured presentations aligned with contemporary audience preferences (Hermansyah et al., 2024). These changes often emphasize visual intensity, immediacy, and brevity, transforming dance from a communal practice into a consumable spectacle. Such shifts are pedagogically significant: as the “form” of movement evolves, the transmission of its embedded moral and symbolic meanings may also be altered. However, existing studies tend to frame these transformations primarily in aesthetic terms—focusing on whether a dance appears modern or traditional—while paying limited attention to how educators sustain cultural depth, interpretive competence, and ethical awareness in changing contexts.

Urbanization and the expansion of the creative industry further reinforce this transformation by relocating traditional performances into commercial and media-oriented spaces. In Pekanbaru, for example, performances increasingly take place in hotels, exhibitions, and tourism venues, reflecting the growing influence of market-oriented cultural production (Maulidya & Hidayat, 2023). At the same time, processes of hybridization suggest that cultural adaptation is often a strategic response to maintain relevance, enabling traditions to persist through selective transformation (Kandolia & Nugraheni, 2025).

Meanwhile, educational observations indicate that limited integration of local arts into formal schooling contributes to students' weakening interpretive understanding of cultural symbols and moral meanings (Tiaradita, 2023). Taken together, existing studies explain what changes and why such changes occur; however, they leave a critical pedagogical gap. Far less is understood about how deterritorialized cultural forms reshape the teaching of character—particularly how teachers and studio instructors translate values such as Malay decorum, politeness, spirituality, and hospitality into learning experiences when the dance's contextual "grammar" is no longer stable.

This gap becomes more evident in the case of the Riau Malay Offering Dance (Tari Persembahan Melayu Riau), created by O.K. Nizami Jamil, which has historically functioned as a ceremonial expression of respect embodying adab, spirituality, social harmony, and communal ethics (Jamil et al., 2017). While prior scholarship has emphasized form, function, symbolism, and preservation, relatively few studies examine how deterritorialization unfolds across layers of choreographic transformation while simultaneously reshaping pedagogical practices in schools and sanggar. As a result, transformation is often treated as a cultural phenomenon "out there," whereas the instructional challenge—how educators sustain meaning under shifting conditions—remains underexplored.

Responding to this gap, the present study advances an education-sensitive account of deterritorialization by conceptualizing the transformation of the Offering Dance as a layered process major, moderate, and minimal. This approach moves beyond reductive narratives of loss or authenticity crisis by identifying which elements are substantially reconfigured, which are selectively adapted, and which moral-symbolic components are actively preserved. In doing so, it clarifies where and how pedagogical tensions emerge, particularly in the transmission of character through embodied cultural practice.

Accordingly, this study aims to (1) analyze the deterritorialization process affecting the Offering Dance and (2) examine the factors driving its transformation within Pekanbaru's urban cultural landscape, with explicit attention to their implications for cultural education and character formation. The study argues that cultural continuity is not inherently sustained but pedagogically mediated: as performances are reformatted for contemporary aesthetics and media visibility, educators must adopt intentional strategies to preserve interpretive depth, ensuring that learners engage not only with technique and spectacle but also with the ethical sensibilities embedded in Malay traditions.

The literature review synthesizes key debates on deterritorialization, urban cultural transformation, and dance pedagogy. The method section outlines the qualitative design, data sources, and analytical procedures. The findings present the three layers of transformation and their driving forces, followed by a discussion that interprets these dynamics as an ongoing negotiation between cultural preservation and contemporary demands. The article concludes with implications for educators and curriculum designers.

Beyond arts education, this study also contributes to English Language Teaching (ELT) in multicultural contexts. Deterritorialized cultural performances—particularly those circulating through digital media—can function as rich multimodal texts for developing intercultural communicative competence, critical cultural awareness, and value-oriented discourse. However, their pedagogical potential depends on how teachers scaffold cultural context, symbolism, and ethical interpretation, positioning performance not merely as visual content but as a meaningful resource for culturally responsive learning.

In international heritage-education perspectives reinforce this critique. UNESCO emphasizes that intangible cultural heritage becomes educationally meaningful only when it informs both content and pedagogy through deliberately designed contextual learning. Recent applied studies further highlight technology-mediated heritage learning—from social media integration to immersive and

metaverse-based environments underscoring that meaningful engagement depends on instructional scaffolding rather than passive exposure.

Despite these advances, a persistent pedagogical blind spot remains. Much of the dance-and-education literature asserts that values are “embedded” in performance but rarely examines how teachers operationalize those values under deterritorialized conditions—particularly when dances are shortened, movements simplified, costumes modernized, and performances oriented toward spectacle. This reflects an implicit assumption that values travel automatically with form. A more critical perspective suggests otherwise: as dance is re-situated across hotels, festivals, and digital platforms, values risk becoming merely indexical signaled through symbolic gestures rather than instructional, requiring sustained explanation, embodied practice, and reflective engagement. This shift helps explain the growing difficulty teachers face in transmitting *rasa* and ethical meaning, revealing a significant empirical and theoretical problem.

Across the literature, four key patterns emerge. First, deterritorialization theory associated with Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari offers a robust framework for understanding cultural mobility and recontextualization, complemented by globalization perspectives such as Arjun Appadurai. Second, digital media scholarship highlights the acceleration of cultural circulation and the prioritization of visibility. Third, studies on urbanization and the creative industry reveal the economic and institutional forces shaping performance formats. Fourth, Malay dance scholarship provides essential documentation of aesthetics, symbolism, and standardization, forming a crucial empirical foundation.

However, three critical gaps remain. First (analytic specificity): prior studies tend to address transformation in broad terms—modernization, hybridity, or preservation—without systematically mapping layered degrees of change across core elements such as movement, costume, music, spatial context, and function. Second (education as a central problem): pedagogical implications are often treated as secondary, with limited attention to how deterritorialization reshapes the transmission of *rasa* and character values in schools and *sanggar*. Third (teacher mediation): there is insufficient analysis of how educators actively negotiate meaning—through explanation, symbolic interpretation, scaffolding, and assessment—under conditions increasingly shaped by spectacle, efficiency, and digital circulation.

Addressing these gaps, the present study moves beyond documenting cultural transformation to theorizing its pedagogical consequences. By introducing a layered model of transformation and foregrounding teacher mediation, it reconceptualizes cultural continuity as an actively constructed process—one that depends on deliberate pedagogical strategies to sustain ethical meaning without constraining cultural adaptation.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative case study design to examine the deterritorialization of the Riau Malay Offering (Persembahan) Dance, focusing on shifts in (1) meaning, (2) form (movement vocabulary and costuming), and (3) socio-cultural dynamics in teaching and performance. This approach is appropriate as the study investigates a culturally situated process requiring interpretive understanding of participants’ lived experiences and practices.

The research was conducted at Sanggar Wan Dance, Pekanbaru, selected purposively as an information-rich case where the dance is both systematically taught and publicly performed. The site is treated as an analytical case rather than a statistically representative sample, enabling in-depth exploration of how deterritorialization operates within a pedagogical-performance context.

Participants and Sampling

Participants were selected through purposive sampling based on their expertise and involvement. The study involved eight participants: O.K. Nizami Jamil (dance creator), Wan Harun Ismail, S.Pd., M.Sn. (studio leader and trainer), five active dancers, and one cultural expert (Iwan Irawan Permadi). This composition captures multiple perspectives: origin, pedagogy, practice, and cultural interpretation.

Data Collection

Data were collected over approximately three months through (1) semi-structured interviews, (2) participant observation during rehearsals and performances, and (3) documentation (archives, photos, videos, and written sources). These complementary techniques enabled triangulation between discourse and practice.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using the interactive model of Matthew B. Miles and A. Michael Huberman, involving data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing/verification. Coding focused on three core themes: (a) costume change, (b) movement transformation, and (c) shifts in pedagogical values. Data were organized into matrices to compare perspectives across participants and data sources, enabling identification of patterns, convergences, and divergences. Interpretation was developed iteratively and verified through continuous cross-checking with raw data to ensure analytical consistency.

Trustworthiness

Rigor was ensured through triangulation of sources (creator, trainer, dancers, cultural expert), methods (interviews, observation, documentation), and theoretical perspectives. This approach strengthens credibility and reduces bias in interpretation.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical procedures were followed throughout the study. All participants provided informed consent prior to data collection, were informed of the study's purpose, and were assured of confidentiality and the voluntary nature of participation. Identifiable data were handled carefully, and participants had the right to withdraw at any stage.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings demonstrate that the deterritorialization of the Riau Malay Offering (Persembahan) Dance does not constitute a unilinear erosion of tradition, but rather a stratified reconfiguration shaped by shifting performance contexts. This transformation follows a center-periphery logic organized into three layers. First, major transformations occur in the outer layer—costume, music, venue, and function—where adaptation to spectacle, visibility, and commercial demands is most pronounced. Second, moderate transformations affect the choreographic structure through simplification and acceleration, aligning the dance with the temporal constraints of contemporary events. Third, minimal transformations characterize the inner core, where elements such as the sembah gesture and adab are deliberately preserved to maintain cultural legibility. This layered pattern suggests that practitioners are not passive recipients of change but active agents negotiating continuity and adaptation.

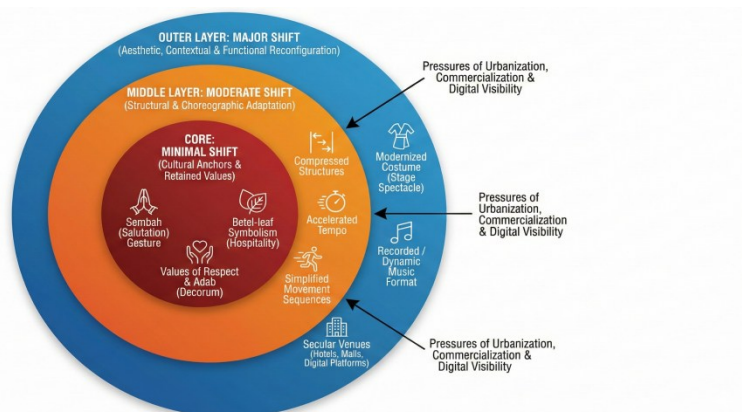


Figure 1. Conceptual Diagram of 'Layered Transformation' in Riau Malay Offering Dance: navigating external pressures through selective adaptation.

As illustrated in Figure 1, the outer layer operates as a buffer that absorbs external pressures, allowing structural adjustments without compromising the symbolic core. In this sense, deterritorialization is not a process of loss but of selective reconfiguration, where the “form” of peripheral elements is adjusted to safeguard the “essence” of cultural identity.

Transformation in costume as a shift in aesthetic ideology

Costume emerges as the most visible site of change, reflecting a shift from symbolic restraint toward stage-oriented spectacle. Traditional elements such as songket fabrics and barefoot performance are increasingly replaced by bright color palettes, elaborate accessories, and high heels.



Figure 2. Visual transformation of costume and aesthetic presentation: from traditional restraint (left) to stage spectacle (right)

As shown in Figure 2, this shift not only alters visual appearance but also reorganizes bodily technique: high heels, for instance, modify posture, balance, and movement quality, privileging verticality and visual impact over groundedness. Costume thus functions as an “aesthetic policy” that redefines standards of appropriateness and attractiveness, while subtly reshaping how cultural values are embodied.

Choreographic Restructuring: Simplification and Acceleration

Movement transformation is characterized by condensation and tempo acceleration. Sequences that previously carried ceremonial depth are shortened to meet modern scheduling demands, while simplified patterns facilitate faster training and replication. However, this efficiency introduces a pedagogical trade-off: when movements are taught primarily as technique without interpretive context, the dance becomes easier to perform but more difficult to understand as a cultural text. Deterritorialization, therefore, not only alters movement but also reshapes the conditions under which meaning is transmitted.

Musical and Spatial Shifts: From Ritual to Programmatic Performance

The replacement of live traditional ensembles with recorded music enhances portability and efficiency but reduces ritual intensity. Historically, live music contributed to a relational and ceremonial atmosphere; in contemporary settings, it functions more as a tool for program management and audience engagement. Similarly, the relocation of performances to hotels, government venues, malls, and digital platforms transforms the dance’s function. These spaces prioritize clarity, brevity, and spectacle, reducing the implicit cultural framing once provided by ceremonial contexts. As one practitioner noted, performing in commercial venues alters the “feeling” of the dance, while cultural experts warn that such shifts risk detaching movement from its ethical and spiritual grounding if not pedagogically mediated.

Selective Preservation and Cultural Anchors

Despite extensive modification, core elements such as sembah gestures, betel-leaf symbolism, and ethical codes of courtesy are intentionally retained. These elements function as cultural anchors, marking the boundary between adaptation and loss. The findings indicate that practitioners operate along a “negotiation line,” where peripheral flexibility enables survival in modern performance economies, while core elements are protected to sustain identity.

Drivers of Deterritorialization and Performance Ecology

Four interrelated drivers shape this transformation: urbanization and event-based performance demands, digital media circulation, commercialization within the creative industry, and generational shifts among practitioners. These forces interact to produce a performance ecology in which aesthetic decisions are increasingly governed by visibility, speed, and market relevance. For instance, digital circulation amplifies visually appealing adaptations, which then become normalized and reabsorbed into local practice.

Pedagogical Implications: From Embedded Values to Mediated Learning

A key contribution of this study lies in demonstrating that cultural values do not automatically persist within transformed forms. As performances become shorter, faster, and more spectacle-oriented, values risk becoming merely symbolic rather than instructional. This finding challenges the common assumption that values are inherently “embedded” in dance. Instead, the results indicate that value transmission depends on deliberate pedagogical mediation—through explanation, contextualization, and reflective practice.

The transformation of the Riau Malay Offering Dance reflects a broader process of deterritorialization in which shifts in form, space, and function reconfigure the semiotic and pedagogical structure of the dance. At the level of costume, the transition from songket cloth and barefoot embodiment toward bright colors, high heels, and modern accessories signals a reorientation of aesthetic ideology—from symbolic restraint to visual spectacle. This shift not only alters surface appearance but also reshapes embodied practice, as costume elements such as high heels reorganize posture, balance, and movement quality, thereby mediating how values of adab are physically enacted.

At the choreographic level, movements that were once subtle and symbolically dense are increasingly simplified and accelerated, reflecting a logic of efficiency and performativity. While this enhances replicability, it also transforms the epistemic status of movement—from a carrier of cultural meaning into a technical sequence—unless supported by explicit pedagogical scaffolding. Similarly, the shift from live musical accompaniment to recorded, tempo-driven sound reconfigures the affective dimension of performance, moving from ritual immersion toward synchronization and timing, thus weakening the experiential transmission of ceremonial sensibility.

Functionally and spatially, the relocation of the dance from sacred ceremonial contexts to commercial venues and digital platforms disrupts its contextual “grammar,” where meaning was previously co-produced by space, community, and ritual atmosphere. In deterritorialized settings, meaning becomes increasingly disembedded, requiring teachers to assume a more active interpretive role. Without such mediation, cultural values risk becoming merely indexical—reduced to symbolic markers—rather than pedagogically enacted through disciplined embodiment and reflective understanding.

Taken together, these transformations indicate that cultural meaning does not reside inherently within the form but is pedagogically produced. As such, sustaining the ethical and cultural dimensions of the dance in contemporary contexts depends on the capacity of educators to recontextualize, interpret, and scaffold meaning within increasingly fragmented performance environments.

Discussion

This study shows that deterritorialization in the Offering (Persembahan) Dance is best understood as a transformation of the conditions of meaning, not merely a modification of choreography or costume. The key finding is a selective pattern: visible elements adapt strongly to modern performance economies (costume, music, venue, function), movement is restructured for speed and stage legibility, and a small set of cultural anchors is preserved to safeguard Malay identity.

The dance therefore does not simply “decline”; it is re-situated into a new cultural economy where success is measured through flexibility, spectacle, and public readability.

The empirical evidence supports the idea that space acts as a determinant of semantics: what the dance means is partly produced by where it is performed. When the dance migrates into hotels, malls, and state events, it enters a different regime of expectation. This aligns with Deleuze and Guattari (1987): when a cultural practice moves beyond its original territory, it becomes open to structural and semantic change. In practical terms, the ritual atmosphere that previously stabilized meaning is weakened; the performance must then “compensate” through stage aesthetics, tempo, and visual clarity. This helps explain why modifications cluster around costume modernization and movement acceleration: these are the most effective mechanisms for adapting to modern spaces.

A critical interpretive contribution of the findings is that deterritorialization does not operate alone. The preservation of salutation/prayer gestures, betel-leaf symbolism, and courtesy values signals an ongoing re-anchoring process. This interpretation is corroborated by cultural expert Iwan Irawan Permadi, who emphasizes that while the “skin” of the dance (costume and tempo) may evolve to meet industry standards, the “soul” (adab and sembah) functions as a non-negotiable boundary that distinguishes Riau Malay identity from generic entertainment.

Rather than treating modernization as cultural deterioration, the data suggest a negotiated hybrid form in which tradition persists through selective retention while other elements adapt for survival. This supports the broader argument that cultural forms are dynamic and can blend traditional and modern aesthetics to meet shifting contexts (Kandolia & Nugraheni, 2025). The novelty here is that hybridization is not only artistic; it is pedagogical, because the transformation changes what learners are likely to absorb as “the essence” of the dance.

Digital platforms intensify deterritorialization by changing the logic of value: visibility, replicability, and spectacle become decisive. Viral circulation encourages glamorous styling and camera-friendly movement, and it can reposition modified versions as “normal.” This resonates with Piliang's (2009) view that media globalization produces a “culture of images,” shifting orientation from layered meaning to visual impact. Within this environment, the Offering Dance becomes vulnerable to being evaluated primarily through surface qualities tempo, costume brightness, stage symmetry unless cultural meaning is actively taught and institutionally protected.

The findings also reveal a cultural literacy gap among younger dancers: many initially perceive the dance as entertainment or a simple welcoming routine, with symbolic meanings understood later or unevenly. This supports concerns about weakened cultural education accelerating erosion of cultural identity (Tiaradita, 2023). Crucially, the problem is not youth “disrespect,” but an instructional condition: when symbolic meaning is no longer carried by ritual context, it must be carried by pedagogy.

The most consequential implication is educational: deterritorialization risks turning a value-rich cultural text into a technique-centered stage routine. Yet this is not inevitable. The study suggests that instructors can preserve adab and symbolic literacy through deliberate design, especially by adopting a Hybrid Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching orientation.

Hybrid Pedagogy (as used here) means teaching the dance in two integrated layers: technical competence and interpretive-cultural competence. The goal is not to romanticize the past or reject modern venues, but to ensure that meaning remains portable across contexts. Culturally Responsive Teaching offers a practical stance: rather than treating digital culture and modern aesthetics as enemies, instructors can use them as entry points for critical cultural learning.

This pedagogical approach extends beyond arts mastery; it cultivates critical thinking skills essential for general education. By analyzing why a costume changes from traditional to modern, students engage in higher-order thinking (evaluating and analyzing) rather than rote memorization. Students can be guided to compare versions, identify what changes, and articulate which values must remain.

This study examines the pedagogical challenges that arise when traditional dance forms are transmitted beyond their original cultural contexts. To address the pedagogical disruptions produced by deterritorialized performance contexts, this study advances a set of instructional strategies grounded in a synthesis of cultural theory and learning theory. Drawing on deterritorialization as articulated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, the transformation of the Offering Dance is

understood as a reconfiguration of meaning across shifting spatial, aesthetic, and institutional conditions. Within this framework, cultural meaning is not inherent in form but must be actively rearticulated through pedagogy. This perspective is further supported by constructivist learning theory, which emphasizes that knowledge is produced through guided interpretation, and by embodied learning approaches that view the body as a site of meaning-making rather than mere technique reproduction. Together, these theoretical lenses inform a pedagogical model that moves beyond technical transmission toward a critically reflexive practice — one in which teachers and learners collaboratively negotiate cultural meaning, contextual awareness, and embodied understanding within the deterritorialized spaces in which the Offering Dance increasingly takes place.

Within this conceptual grounding, meaning-first sequencing positions cultural understanding as the epistemic foundation of learning, ensuring that symbolic meaning precedes performance acceleration. This aligns with constructivist pedagogy, where learners actively construct meaning rather than passively imitate movement. Complementing this, micro-ritualization reflects an embodied pedagogical approach, preserving affective and ethical dimensions through controlled pauses and intentional gestures, allowing the body to remain a carrier of cultural meaning even within compressed performance formats.

The strategy of assessment redesign challenges technicist evaluation models by integrating ethical intentionality into performance assessment, reframing competence as both technical and moral. Similarly, contextualization modules function as pedagogical scaffolds that reconnect deterritorialized forms to their cultural origins, restoring narrative, symbolism, and historical grounding within instruction. In parallel, comparative media reflection situates learning within contemporary digital ecologies, enabling students to critically analyze how cultural forms circulate and transform. Finally, dual-outcome lesson design integrates technical mastery with cultural-ethical understanding, ensuring that performance efficiency does not displace educational purpose.

Taken together, these strategies articulate a pedagogical response to deterritorialization that moves beyond preservationist approaches. Rather than attempting to “freeze” tradition, this framework emphasizes adaptive continuity, where educators actively mediate meaning through interpretation, embodiment, and critical reflection. Cultural transmission, therefore, is not an automatic inheritance but a dynamic pedagogical process requiring intentional design to sustain ethical and symbolic depth.

Taken together, these strategies articulate a pedagogical response to deterritorialization that moves beyond preservationist approaches. Rather than attempting to “freeze” tradition, this framework emphasizes adaptive continuity, where educators actively mediate meaning through interpretation, embodiment, and critical reflection. Cultural transmission, therefore, is not an automatic inheritance but a dynamic pedagogical process requiring intentional design to sustain ethical and symbolic depth. Within this perspective, the challenge of teaching cultural values under transformed performance conditions becomes a question of pedagogical design rather than cultural loss.

These findings directly address the central pedagogical problem: how can instructors teach adab when movements are accelerated? The answer lies in shifting from implicit transmission—once supported by ritual context—to explicit instruction, where meaning is embedded in teaching strategies, learning activities, and assessment practices. This shift also opens interdisciplinary opportunities beyond arts education. As deterritorialized dances increasingly circulate as digital videos, they function as authentic multimodal texts that can be utilized in English Language Teaching (ELT). Through structured tasks such as comparative observation, students can analyze differences between traditional and contemporary performances, producing descriptive or argumentative outputs that foster critical literacy and intercultural communicative competence. In this way, cultural heritage becomes not only an object of preservation but also a resource for meaningful language learning.

Several limitations should be acknowledged. First, the study is based on a single studio context, limiting generalizability across different regions and institutional settings. Second, audience reception is inferred rather than systematically analyzed. Third, the role of digital circulation is identified qualitatively and would benefit from more detailed mapping of how specific versions gain visibility and

influence practice. Finally, while pedagogical strategies are proposed, their effectiveness has not been empirically tested through intervention-based research.

The study makes three key contributions. First, it reconceptualizes deterritorialization as a layered transformation (major–moderate–minimal), offering greater analytical precision than generalized notions of modernization. Second, it demonstrates that deterritorialization is simultaneously aesthetic and pedagogical, reshaping not only what is performed but also what is learnable and valued. Third, it translates theoretical insights into actionable pedagogical strategies, linking specific transformations to concrete educational implications.

Practically, these findings suggest that cultural sustainability in contemporary performance contexts requires deliberate pedagogical engineering. Educational institutions and cultural studios should document not only choreography and costume standards but also the underlying teaching rationales and symbolic meanings. Such efforts ensure that cultural values remain transmissible across shifting performance environments, allowing tradition to adapt without losing its ethical and interpretive core.

CONCLUSION

The deterritorialization of the Riau Malay Offering Dance reveals that cultural change is not simply a matter of aesthetic adaptation, but a fundamentally pedagogical one. As the dance migrates across spatial and institutional contexts, its symbolic core particularly the *sembah* gesture and the ethical orientation of *adab* demands active rearticulation rather than passive transmission, calling for what this study terms pedagogical engineering: a deliberate integration of symbolic meaning, embodied experience, and critical reflection into instructional design. Beyond the performance context, the dance's circulation as a digital and multimodal cultural text opens interdisciplinary possibilities, notably in English Language Teaching, where it may serve as a vehicle for developing critical literacy and intercultural communicative competence. Future research would benefit from comparative cultural inquiry, empirical testing of pedagogical interventions, and closer examination of how digital mediation shapes the interpretation of embodied cultural meaning.

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