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Students' Creative Process in Writing and Staging Dramas in the Oxygen Theater Student Activity Unit, University of Muhammadiyah Jember

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Abstract: This study aims to analyze the creative process of students in writing scripts and performing dramas at the Oksigen Theater Student Activity Unit (UKM) of the Muhammadiyah University of Jember. This study highlights the process of writing scripts, drama practice, drama performance days and reflections. The research method used is descriptive qualitative. The data source comes from Oksigen Theater UKM students who are experienced in performing drama performances. The data analyzed is the creative process of Oksigen students in performing drama performances. The author collected data using structured interview techniques, selected observations and documentation. The results of the study indicate that the creative process of Oksigen Theater UKM involves two stages, namely scriptwriting and the performance process. The scriptwriting process begins with in-depth research, field surveys, and refinement through script analysis. In performing a performance, it is necessary to practice with several stages and preparation for the performance and end with reflection. The creative process carried out by Oksigen Theater UKM students is relevant to be a reference in the process of presenting drama performances.

Keywords: *creative process, drama, performance*

1. INTRODUCTION

Oxygen Theater UKM is a student organization at the University of Muhammadiyah Jember which is engaged in the arts. In its activities, the Oxygen Theater UKM annually provides a drama performance to be watched in the general public. According to the results of an interview with one of the UKM members, "The problems that are often raised in the performance of oxygen theater UKM dramas are about family problems, friendships, adolescent romance, sarcasm towards politics, etc."

As a result of the observations and interviews that have been conducted, the Oxygen Theater UKM will make a new script to be staged. Before the manuscript is shown to the public, the manuscript will be dissected first. This script review itself is carried out together during the rehearsal process to give their respective opinions to the director, so that the director can get an idea of what the players have imagined. (Dexara : 2019).

So far, UKM Oxygen Theater has made many scripts and has also been staged. One of the manuscripts entitled "Without taste" was displayed in commemoration of the 15th birthday of the Oxygen Theater UKM in 2024. The monologue script of the drama was written by Hasyikana R. Girinti from the Faculty of Teacher Training and Education, Indonesian Language and Literature study program. Hasyikana's father founded a drama arts community in Situbondo,



therefore, he continued and channeled his interests and talents in the Oxygen Theater UKM.

Figure 1

15th Oxygen Theater UKM Birthday Staging, performance monologue "Without Taste"



In 2024, UKM Theater Oksigen will make a *DRAMA NIGHT* performance in which the performance features various drama performances and monologues. In addition, every year the Oxygen Theater UKM also conducts a routine performance called *APPLICATION PERFORMANCE*. All of these activities and performances are documented and can be rewatched on the UKM Oxygen Theater youtube channel

<https://www.youtube.com/@UKMTeaterOksigenUMJ/videos>

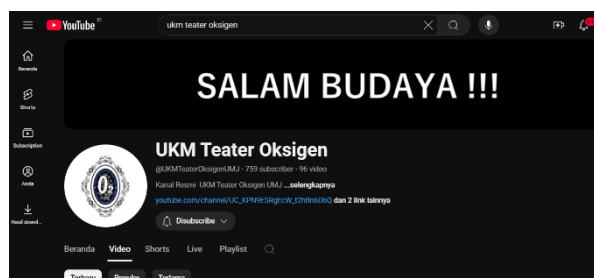
Figure 2

15th Oxygen Theater UKM Drama Night, Drama performance "The Promise of Twilight"



Figure 3

Chanel Youtube UKM Oxygen Theater



In the training process carried out, training that is no less important is the process of psychic training. This training can drain energy if the player does not have readiness in previous training, because this soulfulness requires sufficient inner experience (Kadek: 2014). In the process of practicing the drama UKM Oxygen Theater has a creativity that becomes a routine before the practice begins, namely meditation.

According to Brown, Ryan, and Creswell, meditation can make a person have the ability to adjust needs, feelings, and values that are appropriate to certain situations (Natassa, 2018). Meditation is considered to increase focus which will have an impact on the depth of the character being played. Meditation is done regularly before rehearsals and before the staging of the play.

Before the drama was performed, the players checked the property to be used. This is done to ensure that the property is ready to be used and there are no obstacles. After the performance is over, there will be an evaluation of the cast, script, property, etc. For input and suggestions. So that in the future it can show even better.

Drama is a play or script that has not been produced or worked on into a performance (Yusriansyah: 2023). Basically, the script of the play is written for stage. Drama is a quality of communication, action situations (everything seen on the stage) that cause attention, greatness (acting), and tension in the listener or audience (Farid and Ilmi: 2020). In the drama that is performed, each person or group has different creativity. Creativity is a complex study. (Cicik : 2017). So far, the creativity carried out in a drama performance has become an advantage and continues to develop from time to time.

This research focuses on the creativity of playing drama in Oxygen Theater UKM students. The author has observed that UKM Oxygen Theater has performed a drama several times both inside and outside the campus. The creativity that is currently being developed is the trigger for this research to be carried out. The author hopes that readers can find out about the process carried out in making a drama performance and the creativity carried out by the students of the Oxygen Theater UKM to present a drama performance in accordance with the times.

In line with the existence of drama that continues to grow and is increasingly in demand by the public, research on drama has also been carried out (Furica: 2016). What distinguishes this study from the study (Deni and Indra: 2023) is the study. The research conducted focuses on the dramatic formator structure in a performance. Another research conducted by (Feri, Farida and Desyari : 2023) The focus of the research that is the difference is that in his research the author focuses on the triggers of creativity that can arise from a drama performance.

2. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses a qualitative descriptive research type. Qualitative descriptive is a research method that moves on a simple qualitative approach with an inductive flow. This inductive flow means that qualitative descriptive research begins with an explanatory process or event that can finally be drawn a generalization which is a conclusion of the process or event. (Wiwin : 2018). The source of data in this study is students of the Oxygen Theater UKM of the University of Muhammadiyah Jember who have been involved or experienced in becoming drama actors, scriptwriters, and directors in drama performances. The research conducted focuses on the creative process of Oxygen Theater UKM students in writing drama scripts and staging drama in terms of pre-event in the form of rehearsals,

performance days in the form of performance preparation and post-performance which is concluded with reflection.

The research procedure used used structured interview techniques, selected observation and documentation. According to (Fadilla, 2013:38) A structured interview is an interview that is conducted by knowing exactly what information will be obtained. This technique is carried out by the researcher giving the same questions to the resource persons by collecting and recording the data obtained. The next technique is focused observation where research is carried out by making observations by narrowing and focusing on certain aspects. The last stage is documentation, in this stage the data that has been obtained will be collected to be used as an archive of the authenticity of the data.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. The Process of Writing a Drama

Writing a drama script is not an easy thing to do. In screenwriting, Freytag's Pyramid theory is widely used in the process of writing a play. According to Haizah (2021), there are 5 stages in writing a drama script, namely opening, the emergence of conflict, klimaks, conflict reduction and catastrophe. From the results of the interviews that have been conducted, in the creative process, UKM Taeter Oksigen has its own way of making a drama script. Every year, UKM Theater Oxygen will make several drama scripts to be stored as an archive of members' works and some will be staged. Every year the administrator who is the drama coordinator will change, in 2024 the drama coordinator at the Oxygen Theater UKM is Hasyikana R. Girinti. In the writing there are also several processes, as follows.

a. Searching for in-depth information about the story to be raised

Writing a drama script starts with the writer's desires and heartfelt wishes to the flow of story ideas (Rahmayantis, 2022:33) Finding detailed information about the story raised is the initial process in writing a drama script. Here, the author analyzes the state of culture, environment, social, and so on. According to the interview data, the purpose of this initial process is as a basic idea to get an idea of the storyline, the story description and the packaging of the script to be made. This stage is relevant to Freytag's Pyramid theory in the play.

b. Field survey

After the information is sufficiently excavated, the next step taken is a field survey. A playwright needs to make observations on aspects of life and human character (Rahmayantis, 2022:31). The purpose of holding a survey in writing a drama script is so that the story displayed can be in accordance with what is happening in the field. So that the performance of the drama will be in accordance with the reality that occurs. For example, when the writer wants to write a script about the ODGJ point of view, then the writer must analyze directly by trying to communicate with the ODGJ.

c. Scriptwriting

The third process can be done if the data collected is sufficient and the writer has got a thorough overview of the topics to be brought in the drama. according to (Rahmayantis, 2022:47) in writing a script, what is done is to plan the events that will be written in the form of dialogue. In writing a drama script, creativity is needed in conveying

the plot and message of the story through dialogue. The writer needs to think about how many scenes will be shown and what properties need to be prepared in the scene.

d. Manuscript Analysis

The finished drama script will go through the editing stage. according to (Rahmayantis, 2022) writing will not directly get maximum results, to produce a good manuscript improvements are needed. In Oxygen Theater UKM, in manuscript editing, it is called manuscript analysis. Manuscript review is carried out with the aim of perfecting the manuscript that has been made. The technique carried out in manuscript analysis is to gather several people who have experience in writing manuscripts. After that, the script will be described and open criticism and suggestions about the plot, scenes, properties, messages to be conveyed, stage layout and so on. The more points of view the more the perfection of the script that has been made.

In Oxygen Theater UKM, there are two types of manuscripts, namely written manuscripts and improved manuscripts. A written script is a script in which every scene, the property used and everything that will be staged is all written in the script. While *the improve* script only contains a synopsis and points that will be discussed in each scene. In the script there is no written dialogue. So, the character has to think about the dialogue improvised or spontaneous. an example is the script entitled "Pecah" written by Wahyu Setiawan and performed in the performance of UKM Oxygen Theater. The performance can be re-watched on the UKM Oxygen Theater youtube. The script is one of the creative processes of Oxygen Theater UKM Students in presenting drama performances.

The improve script has been applied several times in the Oxygen Theater UKM, according to Hasyikana as the drama coordinator of the Oxygen Theater UKM , *"the improve script can hone the creativity of the players to dialogue, which must rotate the brain to respond to the dialogue from the co-stars spontaneously and must connect"*. The obstacle of the improve drama is the speech error that is pronounced several times due to the absence of a script, so from the results of interviews with several players, the players feel a little difficult in this regard.

In making a script, each individual and community has their own way. One of them is (Sukron: 2016) explaining that an easy way to write a script is to use *the picture and picture* method relying on images as a medium in the learning process. Image media can stimulate students to be more motivated and interested in learning. Students can see directly the images that will be used as writing objects, so that students get convenience in writing activities.

In the Oxygen Theater UKM, before writing the script, it is required to conduct a field survey first with the aim that the story written can be in accordance with the circumstances that occur in real life. Creativity of Oxygen Theater UKM in writing scripts can be applied to make it easier to find imagination or references in writing drama scripts.

2. Drama Staging

Making a drama performance requires many things that must be prepared. In terms of pre-event in the form of script writing and drama rehearsals, then followed by preparation for the day of the performance and ending with the post-event in the form of reflection. The preparations made must be mature in terms of drama actors, wardrobe, property and stage mastery. In a community or art

organization, especially in drama, there are a lot of theories or creative ways used in realizing a perfect drama staging.

The creative process in presenting a drama performance is closely related to dramaturgical theory. Dramaturgy is a theory introduced by Erving Goffman, a sociologist in the school of symbolic interaction. The reason for using this theory is because this theory is closely related to scriptwriting and drama staging. There are three components in the theory, the first is about how to appear to be someone else or like someone else. Second, about people's assessment of the given appearance, third, developing one's appearance due to the development of other people's judgments. (Diah, 2018: 113). According to Goffman, life can be likened to a theater where social interaction resembles a performance on stage. In this context, individuals play various roles that allow the audience to understand the character's life and follow the storyline presented in the drama (Diah, 2018). In presenting drama performances, UKM Theater Oksigen divides its creative process into three types, namely the rehearsal process, performance day and performance reflection.

Drama Practice

Doing a drama is not an easy thing. Drama actors must be able to master scripts, stages, vocals, expressions, etc. Therefore, regular practice is needed for performance preparation. Here are the things that need to be trained in performing performances according to the Oxygen Theater UKM

1. Casting

The activities that must be carried out in preparation for the performance are to determine the actors (Jayanti, 2016). In Oxygen Theater UKM, this activity is called casting. Casting is the initial process that is done in training. Casting is done to determine who will be the player and what role will be in the drama. Casting is carried out by inviting prospective players and will read the script that has been provided, the determination of the cast is determined by the director and other players.

2. Reading

Reading is a script reading activity carried out by the performer and accompanied by the director. According to (Yusriansyah, 2022) Reading is an activity that focuses on reading drama scripts that rely on the appreciation and livelihood of characters through dialogue. The purpose of reading is to familiarize the player with the dialogue and inform about the character that will be played. In this practice process, players only need to read the script repeatedly according to the plot made.

3. Vocal training

Vocal training is the most important activity in performing a drama performance. According to (Faisal, 2022) An actor who does not apply vocal techniques while playing theater is at risk of losing his voice and injuries to the vocal cords, as they have to exert their voices with extra energy when performing on stage. Vocal training is a speech training activity using the voice of the stomach. The purpose

of this activity is to train players to be able to speak out loud what is said clearly can be captured by the audience.

4. *Blocking*

When it comes to drama, there are some things that drama actors are not allowed to do. Namely turning their backs on the audience for more than a few seconds and lacking control of the stage. Turning their backs on the audience for a long duration will ruin the performance of the drama because the actor's expressions cannot be seen by the audience. According to (Sari, 2021) They need to have the ability to pay attention to their own position and adjust actions with other actors, as well as have sensitivity to the movements made by their colleagues on stage.

The way players can dominate the stage is to always explore the place thoroughly and not stack up at the same point.

5. *Motion training*

According to research, physical exercise is very important in theater because actors use not only voices, but also bodies as the main elements in performances. Lack of mastery of physical exercise can cause staging to be less than optimal (Sari, 2021). In Oxygen Theater UKM, physical exercise is called movement training. This activity is used to train movements in accordance with the dialogue that has been made. Movement in a drama can mean anything and the movement that has been created will help the player to play the dialogue well and be captured by the audience.

Drama staging training varies, but what must be done in the training process is body and vocal exercises. (Sonia: 2014) revealed that the drama training process includes physical exercise, vocal and sukma training.

Oxygen Theater UKM has its own creativity in staging training, namely reading and blocking training. The purpose of holding a reading at the beginning of the rehearsal is for the performers to memorize the script and the function of blocking exercises so that during the performance, the drama performers do not turn their backs on the audience. The training needs to be applied so that the players can master the stage well and have a good dialogue in the drama performance.

Staging day

When staging a drama, there are several things that need to be prepared by the cast and director to help the performance. When the drama will take place, there are several things that need to be prepared by the cast and director to help the performance. Jerzy Grotowski's theory. Jerzy Grotowski is a director and one of the initiators of the establishment of Theatre Laboratory (Safitri, 2017). Jerzy is known for his directing concept, namely "poor theater" where in presenting a performance, Jerzy will reduce excess spices in the process of conveying the meaning of the story. The following are the things that need to be prepared in staging drama performances at the Oxygen Theater UKM:

1. *Setting up costumes and props*

Costumes and props are used by players when starting staging exercises so that they don't need to readapt to the props and costumes that have been given. This stage is important in drama staging because the players will be made up and use costumes that suit the character to be played (Safitri, 2017). Props and costumes are very important in the staging of a play. The costumes and props prepared must be in accordance with what is needed and in accordance with the role played. If the setting in the drama is in the living room, then the stage crew needs to prepare chairs/sofas, tables and objects outside the guests.

2. Stage Layout and Lighting

The stage layout or scenery depicts the scene of the play that is embodied in the performance of Setiya, et al. (2014). The stage layout in the Oxygen Theater UKM is a balanced arrangement of properties on the stage. This is necessary in the performance of dramas so that the composition of the stage layout is balanced. While lighting or spotlight lamps function for lighting and *highlight* (focus of the audience). Both need to be prepared for the perfection of drama performance.

3. Music illustration

Music has become a crucial supporting element in theater because of its role in building and creating an atmosphere that fits the storyline (Ardimansyah, 2022). UKM Theater Oxygen mentions music in the drama as an illustration. Music illustration functions as a dramatic effect of the atmosphere, or commonly called background. The tools used vary depending on the needs of the drama being staged. Oxygen Theater UKM often uses live music when the performance takes place. Examples of musical instruments that are commonly used by oxygen theater SMEs are guitars, jímbe, kalimba, etc.

4. Meditation

According to Brown, Ryan, and Creswell, meditation can make a person have the ability to adjust needs, feelings, and values that are appropriate to certain situations (Natassa, 2018). UKM Oxygen Theater utilizes meditation as a focus training in performing performances. Therefore, UKM Oxygen Theater always does meditation when performing a play, because this activity can help drama performers focus on the characters being played. Meditation is led by the Director of the drama.

5. Improve on stage

Rendra called improvisation a spontaneous creation immediately (Santosa, 2017). Improve in drama is a dialogue or spontaneous movement that exists in the performance of a play. The goal of improving is to make it easier for players if they make mistakes during the performance, for example forgetting dialogues, broken properties, movement errors, etc.

6. Documentation

Documentation in drama performances serves as a portfolio and activities that are immortalized in the Oxygen Theater UKM. Documentation is in the form of photos and videos of performances and uploaded on Youtube and the Oxygen Theater UKM Initiative.

Oxygen Theater UKM has its own creativity in performing a drama. especially meditation before the performance begins. Before performing, usually the players will be nervous, especially if the performance is seen by many people. Therefore, at UKM Theater, oxygen conducts meditation before the performance so that the performers can focus and relax when the performance takes place.

Reflection

The last stage is evaluation. Evaluation is the same as art criticism. According to (Suharto, 2007) art criticism has long been known in the world of art and literature, art criticism is evaluative. Oxygen Theater UKM also always conducts evaluations. The evaluation was carried out after the drama was completed. The purpose of this stage is to assess the drama that has been shown both in terms of storyline, properties and costumes used, intonation and articulation of the players, stage mastery, etc. Evaluation is held for a better performance of the drama. In a drama organization or community, evaluations are held with the audience and people who are experienced in performing a drama.

4. CONCLUSION

Many drama performances are carried out by communities and organizations in Indonesia. The creative process of writing and staging drama at UKM Oxygen Theater is a stage of the drama staging process that runs according to the theories that exist in the history of theater with development that is adjusted to the conditions and characters of the members. The creative process is made to add perfection in preparation and when the drama is performed. The creative process, techniques, methods and theories owned by the Oxygen Theater UKM can be applied by other students and the general public to perform a drama performance.

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