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## **CRITICAL AND CREATIVE AWARENESS SCHOOL TEATER ACTORS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Theater at school is an extra-curricular activity. It is hoped that theater arts in the school will bring forth qualified young actors as professional actors. Theater actors in schools that develop into professional actors must have abilities that are equivalent to professional actors. Theater actors in schools must have proper theater skills. The Augusto Boal theater concept is a theater method that can be used as a process of awareness, liberation in developing aspects of life, sensitivity and creative power and imagination. The Boal concept is oriented to the process of empowering knowledge that is aware of life values and liberation and develops a critical attitude. Critical awareness is needed for theater actors to be able to open insight into thinking, create space to freely identify and analyze. Andre Malraux in Alma Hawkins explains that a person's creative journey involves seeing, exploring and realizing. Creative starts from the desire to realize a form of art. The creativity of theater will be achieved by seeing, exploring, and realizing what is in man by feeling and absorbing it and then realizing it by free thinking. In order for a theater actor in a school to develop and make it possible to become a professional actor, it is important to have critical and creative awareness in theater.

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### **Introduction**

Theater is a form of performance art known in the community. Theater is a story of human life that is arranged to be displayed as a show and played by actors with characters that can be witnessed by the public. Bernhart Clerence (1957: 365) mentions theater as follows.

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A composition in process or verse presenting in dialogue or pantomime a story involving conflict or contrast of character, esp. One intended to be acted on the stage.

Theater is an entertainment stage: it has an audience, based on a script, processed by a director, played by actors, supported by musicians and other artists. Theater besides having an entertainment function also has an educational function. It is possible for everyone to get entertainment as well as get education through theater.

Theater art has developed in schools in general. Theater in schools is an art activity whose existence is as an extra curricular activity. School theater is a place that is deliberately formed by the school in the hope that it will become a place for students to develop themselves through theater performance arts. In Minister of Education Regulation No. 22 of 2006, this personal development activity has been specifically regulated.

This condition is a factual description that occurs in almost all high schools, especially in big cities in Indonesia. The existence of theatrical arts at school is the hope of the emergence of young actors who are qualified by professional class actors.

Theater art has become the choice for activities in schools because it is considered to have many benefits.

It is possible for an actor in a school to develop into a professional actor who should have an ability equivalent to a professional actor. Thus the theater actors in schools must have the skills or ability to properly stage theater.

### **Critical Consciousness as the Foundation of the Theater**

One of the theater training that has developed in the community in the 60s was the concept of theater which was popularized by Augusto Boal in the book 'Theater of the Oppressed' (2008). This Boal concept has been tested in society especially in Latin America. Theater functions and is managed as a means of mobilization and enlightenment for the poor who are considered as oppressed. Theater becomes a tool for the people to be enlightened, become a great power, as a cultural movement to free themselves from oppression. Awareness as the most important element in human beings to be free and enlightened (Boal, 2005: 29).

The enlightenment developed by Augusto Boal was based on the thoughts of Paulo Freire (Hidayat, 2013: 166) which is about magical, naive, and critical awareness. First, magical awareness, namely the awareness of God's destiny which is a provision and impossible to avoid. It is impossible to design changes or influence change, because only God has planned and influenced the situation.

Second, naive awareness, namely awareness of the differences that are possible. The human aspect is only a factor that causes the possibility of change or that affects the change, which can be planned and can be influenced.

Third is critical awareness, namely awareness that requires fundamental structural changes in the order. The critical awareness perspective is able to open insight into thinking, creating space for someone to identify and analyze freely and critically.

Augusto Boal's theater form aims to free people from oppression both structural and cultural in accordance with the reality of space and time where they are. The practice of the theater makes the process of maturation by liberation (Boal, 2008: 107).

Everyone in every place is a stage to express common problems; study together, observe joint problems; then fight together free themselves from oppression.

The Boal theater method is used as a process of awareness, liberation in developing aspects of life, sensitivity and creative power and imagination. The concept of Boal can be oriented to the process of empowering knowledge that is awareness of life values and liberation and develops critical attitudes of school theater actors. This critical awareness is needed for school theater actors to be able to open up insight into thinking, create space to identify and analyze freely and creatively.

### **How to Practice Theater Actors**

Augusto Boal in the book `Games For Actors And Non-Actors` (2005) explains several ways to practice theater. This exercise can be used as a model for practicing theater skills to have the ability correctly.

#### **Muscle exercise**

The way to practice muscle is to relax all the muscles in the body and focus on each muscle. Then step and bend to pick up any object. All done very slowly by feeling all the muscle structures that intervene in the achievement of movement.

Then repeat the same action, but without the object or pretending to take it off the ground by remembering all the muscle movements that occur when they do it in reality. The most important thing is to become aware of the muscles being moved. The purpose of this exercise is not imitation or imitation, but a deep understanding of the mechanism of every muscle movement.

#### **Sensory Exercise**

The way to practice sensory is to taste a spoonful of honey, then taste a little salt, and a little sugar. Then do the same thing again without the original stimulus or without honey, without salt and without sugar. The moment must remember the taste, like really experiencing it again, and then represent all the physical reactions when tasting honey, salt, sugar, and so on.

This exercise is not mimicry or artificial smile reaction, grimacing for salt and so on, but rather the experience of the same sensation from memory. This exercise can also be done with the smell or done by putting on music to examine the melody, rhythm, tempo of the music. Then try to hear the same music, with the same rhythm and the same tempo, but without music.

#### **Memory exercise**

The way to practice memory is to remember carefully and chronologically everything that happens during the day. To remember everything that has been seen and heard. Memory training will have many concrete details practicing revisiting the regularities performed, daily routines at certain times of the day.

The essence of this exercise is to develop memory, and to increase awareness. Remember everything that is seen, heard and felt, with the power of attention, concentration, and analysis.

#### **Imagination exercise**

Imagination practice begins with being in a dark place, then sits with your eyes closed, listening to the sound of a tape-recorder. Assisted by others giving instructions to indicate the place or object. This exercise then imagines this and describes it in detail.

This exercise is used to develop imagination and improve the memories of all that is seen, heard and felt, with concentration and analysis in order to develop.

## **Emotional exercise**

Emotion training is done by feeling the emotions of a particular character who then expresses the emotions of the character in his own way, with his own physical description, with his own tone of voice. Exercise according to how to smile and how to get angry in his view.

This exercise is intended to erase the printed and patterned 'personality' to give birth to a new 'personality' or character. The new print begins with feeling the character's emotions seriously, so that they will be found in the body in a relaxed, adequate and efficient way to "transmit" themselves to the audience so that the audience can feel them.

Emotional exercises are carried out routinely anywhere, anytime, on stage, in the office, on the road, or in restaurants. Emotion training uses improvised emotional memories. This exercise is done to remember something that is then transferred. Transfer and modify emotions to suit the character's emotions as needed.

## **Creative as a Theater Encouragement**

Besides having critical awareness and basic theater competencies, school theater actors need to have high creativity. Creative must start from desire to realize a form. Andre Malraux (Hawkins, 2003: 25) says that creative requires the process of seeing, exploring, and realizing.

The process of seeing, exploring, and manifesting it by feeling, living, imagining, manifesting, and giving shape. Feeling becomes an important part of the five human senses. Sensation in humans is always in the feeling phase. Feeling is interpreted after going through the process of seeing and hearing and absorbing. See and hear what is there, who is doing, what is happening, how it happened, when it happened, and where and then feel and absorb it until a certain sensation arises in yourself.

Living is interpreted as exploring or feeling the findings made in the feeling phase. Indicator of living is to personal awareness of the sensation that he gets.

Imagining is the phase of bringing back what has been felt, what is lived in the form of delusion in the hope of obtaining other new delusions. Freeing the process of thinking or opening the wildness of thinking becomes a supporter in the imagining phase. The wilder the more imagination will develop.

Manifesting the phase manifests from the three previous processes. This phase needs to use an aesthetic filter so that the flow of the results of the previous phase is more valuable. This aesthetic filter is also expected to bring out creativity that is not just imitation, repetition, or matching and justification that already exists.

Giving form is a phase of strengthening the embodiment by natural processes, flowing, using symbols and metaphors so that desires and dreams can become a work.

Farid Gaban quoted Cal Moyer, Director of the American Creativity Association as saying that humans are creative creatures, and creativity is like a muscle that will strengthen if we continue to train it.

As one example that can be used as learning materials for theater skills is the *walik-walik* puppet developed by Jumali. In the beginning, *walik-walik* puppet was the puppet shown depicting the atmosphere of the 'wolak-waliking' era. *Walik-walik* puppet is a puppet show whose puppets will often be made jumps, so that it is possible for the puppet's head to be placed underneath, and occasionally his feet on top and vice versa. Named *walik-walik* puppet because one color (screen) as a medium for puppet shows used by two or more puppeteers.

This puppet show uses lighting on both parts of the screen. The lights on the back of the screen are used as a puppet area for storytelling and the front of the screen is the puppeteer who acts as the narrator as well as theater performances in general.

The uniqueness of this *walik-walik* puppet does not have the standard figures displayed. The figure is more up to date by adjusting conditions or current trends. Puppeteer frees the story, there are no fixed rules like for example in *purwa* puppet. Mastermind is also possible more than one. It can happen that every puppet character has a puppeteer.

Music instrument of *walik-walik* puppet is different from music in *purwa* puppet. Musical accompaniment is usually *sapek* music from Kalimantan. *Sapek* musical instrument is not the grip but rather a musical instrument which happens to be often used by the accompanying musicians.



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The choice of music is efficiently played or carried everywhere. The main thing in applying the concept of wayang music is in line with the content of the story. Music illustrations depart from logic not to 'make it good', but to be in harmony with the story. Limited sound that can bring the condition and atmosphere of the soul played by wayang. Theatrical creativity performed by *walik-walik* puppet is one of the forms of how to see, explore, and realize what is in Jumali as an actor by feeling and absorbing everything around him and then re-manifesting in a free way of thinking.

Actors free themselves by involving the audience as performers as developed by Augusto Boal. The way Jumali criticizes and creates actors and their performances can be used as learning for school theater actors.

## Conclusion

An actor in a school might develop into a professional actor. Theater actors in schools must have the right theater skills or abilities on a par with professional actors. Critical awareness is needed for school theater actors to be able to develop, open up insight into thinking, create space to freely identify and analyze their creativity. The

training model for school theater actors can use game training techniques for actor Augusto Boal. The exercises include muscle training, sensory training, memory training, imagination training, and emotional training. School theater actors need theater creativity that is done by seeing, exploring, and manifesting what is within themselves by feeling and absorbing everything around them which then realizes with free thinking. Actors need to free themselves to be critical and creative, especially theater actors at school.

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