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Improving Character Makeup Skills for the *Ebeg* Group of Mega Laras Tanjunganom, Rakit, Banjarnegara, Indonesia

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Abstract. Dancers' makeup in a performance is an attraction for the community of connoisseurs and observers of the *Ebeg*. The Mega Laras group in Tanjunganom, Rakit, Banjarnegara was plagued by problems with the makeup of its performers in staging performances, caused by the lack of knowledge and skills of the dancers and makeup artists. With full support from the village government and all group members to conserve *Ebeg* as an Indonesian cultural heritage, Universitas Negeri Semarang through its community service team provided a solution through facilitation-based action learning model training. The purpose of this activity was to improve the makeup skills of the group members, with main stages of implementation of preparation, training, and result analysis. The preparation included coordinating with partners about the place and time of the activity, and team coordination regarding technical implementation. The training phase included planning, workshop, and mentoring. During the training, a set of tools and makeup materials were distributed to partner. Analysis of the overall activity showed that 80% of participants demonstrated significant skill improvement after the training. The community service activity supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 4, namely Quality Education, for providing lifelong learning opportunities for the traditional arts practitioners.

Keywords: ebeg; makeup; performance; training

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INTRODUCTION

Tanjunganom is a village in Rakit, Banjarnegara, which is approximately 17 km from the city center. One of Tanjunganom's cultural potentials is the traditional arts group of *Ebeg*, namely Mega Laras, which was founded in 1983. This group consists of dancers, *gamelan* players, *sindhen*, makeup artists, and other special officers from the local population, and has been widely known by the Banjarnegara community, especially in the Rakit sub-district area. Residents' celebrations and national holidays held by the village become a means for the Mega Laras group to showcase traditional *Ebeg* art works. When the performance took place, the community welcomed it with great enthusiasm. The area around the venue was filled with spectators and vendors selling food, drinks, horse accessories, children's toys, and other goods. This demonstrates that Mega Laras is an integral part of the community and contributes to the economy of Tanjunganom village.

For the performance, the Mega Laras group outsources the dancers' makeup to local women, whose makeup skills are very limited. Problems arise when these female makeup artists must apply makeup to the faces of *Ebeg* dancers, which requires distinctive character makeup (Ardani &

Faidah, 2020; Mukafi & Prawita, 2024; Yunanto, & Kusumastuti, 2025; Margareta, & Wahyudiarto, 2025), and represent the knight characters portrayed in the *Ebeg* dance, which is very different from everyday makeup (Faizin, Ardana, & Sudiarta, 2024). The makeup artists here tend to apply makeup techniques with everyday makeup styles, using personal makeup tools and materials that give a makeshift impression, so they do not match the characteristics required by the dancers for the performance. Another problem arises when the time available for makeup is very short because the performance is urgently about to start, while many dancers (children and adults) have to be made up. In such conditions, adult dancers are usually asked to do their own makeup. Fitriah and Lutfiati (2014) said that this is usually done with the intention that dancers do not always depend on makeup artists and to shorten the process of preparing for the performance. However, in Mega Laras group, this still results in inconsistent makeup results because generally the dancers also do not have adequate knowledge and skills to apply materials and use makeup tools.

During field observations in preparation for an *Ebeg* performance at a community celebration, it was discovered that prior to the event, the makeup of 16 dancers was done by only two makeup artists whose skills were inadequate. During the makeup session, the dancers queued up one by one to be made up. The makeup process appeared to be carried out in a hurry and gave a superficial impression. The use of simple makeup tools and the lack of consideration for choosing strong colors occurred during the session. As a result, the bold makeup effect was not visible on the dancers being made up. Furthermore, the use of inappropriate makeup tools was still carried out, which affected the method and accuracy of the work, and disrupted the application process and the results of the makeup. For example, using a single brush to create eyebrows results in a different sharpness of the eyebrow line than using an eyebrow pencil. The proper application technique for makeup materials to the dancer's face is also not followed. Eyebrow shaping using corrective makeup techniques, for example, is less suitable for the makeup of a *Ebeg* dancer who must appear with a dashing knight's face, with eyebrows shaped using character makeup techniques. Furthermore, the makeup materials are not properly conditioned, for example, mixing them with a specific-colored foundation to match the skin tone. This improper makeup conditioning method results in an undesirable appearance, namely uneven skin tone due to the difference in color on the face and neck.

Makeup is a crucial component of the performance (Yoga, Puspawati, & Mastra, 2022). Meanwhile, the makeup skills of the dancers in the *Ebeg* Mega Laras group in Tanjunganom, Rakit, Banjarnegara, are still limited. This is thought to be due to the lack of specific makeup training received by the makeup artists. Furthermore, the women who are usually in charge of applying makeup to dancers, particularly character makeup, lack experience in properly applying makeup to dancers.

Jayadi, Saputra, Brata, Dewi, & Putri (2022) said that someone can become skilled if the person concerned learns from the demonstrations he receives, practices a lot, and uses good quality materials. Furthermore, Heldisari, & Anandhita (2023) added that with active participation and more practice, the skills of participants in an activity will show significant improvement. Based on this, the limitations of the makeup skills of the dancers of the Mega Laras group members were solved through training consisting of workshops, assignments, and mentoring. This paper discusses the process of training implementation for improving the makeup skills of the *Ebeg* dancer characters for the Mega Laras group, in Tanjunganom village, Rakit, Banjarnegara.

METHODS

The solution provided to overcome the problem of limited makeup skills for dancers for performances experienced by the Mega Laras group is adapted from the facilitation-based action learning training model, developed by Rusilowati & Cahyono (Taufiq, Rusilowati, & Astuti, 2021). The adaptation of this model is summarized in the training stage, which consists of workshops, assignments, and mentoring.

The training phase was conducted offline. Participants attended workshops and assignments held at the Tanjunganom Village Hall, Rakit, Banjarnegara. The workshop participants included makeup artists, dancers, both male and female, and 25 local women. The participation of the local women was intended to ensure that if the Mega Laras group needed more makeup artists than usual, they could provide assistance. Meanwhile, mentoring sessions were conducted both offline and online to discuss the assignment results.

The training phase began with a workshop session, held from 9:30 a.m. Western Indonesian Time, after the Community Service event was

officially opened by the Head of Tanjunganom Village, Mr. Suwahyo, S.Pd. The workshop began with presentations on general makeup and character makeup for dancers delivered by the team. The presentation of the material was then followed by a demonstration by the team and hands-on practice by the participants. During the demonstration session, participants watched the team demonstration of how to treat the subject being make up and the techniques for applying makeup to the dancer's face.

After watching the demonstration, participants practiced applying makeup, either in pairs with other participants' makeup subjects or on their own, while still being accompanied by a team to correct any errors or inaccuracies in their makeup work. The training phase ended with an assignment. Participants were given the assignment of practicing makeup during routine group rehearsal. Participants were asked to document their activities and present the results to the team. Furthermore, a discussion of the results of the assignment was carried out in the mentoring step.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The community service activity' purpose is to improve the makeup skills of the *Ebeg* dancer characters of the participants. After participating in a series of training activities, participants demonstrated several makeup skills, which are summarized in Table 1.

The training stages in this community service program are based on the participants' initial conditions, as determined through observation. Based on the data from these initial observations, it can be concluded that participants' knowledge and understanding of makeup materials and tools, their function, and their purpose in performing arts is only around twenty percent. The participants were mostly understanding the materials and tools of makeup for general purposes. One example of this situation is that participants lacked the proper eyebrow application technique. Furthermore, the lines in each makeup session were still rough, the color selection was inappropriate, the color composition of the makeup appeared haphazard, and it failed to adequately convey the characters portrayed in the *Ebeg* performance.

Table 1. Results of training activities demonstrated by the participants

No	Before training	Training stage	After training
1	Only 20% of participants understand training materials	Workshop – Presentation	All participants have new knowledge about general and character makeup: terminology, materials, and tools
2	10% of participants understand makeup techniques applied for Ebeg dancers	Workshop – Demonstration	All participants got new knowledge about makeup techniques applied for Ebeg dancers. Six participants got experiences in applying makeup techniques for Ebeg dancers.
3	All participants understand daily and character makeup techniques applied for Ebeg dancers	Assignment	All participants got experiences of applying daily makeup and character makeup for dancers.
4	All participants understand daily and character makeup techniques applied for Ebeg dancers	Mentoring	80% of participants shown their skills of making up dancers for live performance

Figure 1. Workshop team delivered and demonstrated makeup techniques materials

The participants' initial knowledge and skills guided the community service team to determine appropriate materials to be provided to them. With these considerations in mind, the makeup training at the Mega Laras group in Tanjunganom village, Rakit sub-district, Banjarnegara regency focused on providing an understanding of the function of makeup in a performance, as well as appropriate makeup techniques for folk performances to enhance the performance of Ebeg performances. It is understandable since there was no activity of character makeup workshop taken by the participants. Xiong et al., (2024); Xiong, & Fan, (2023); and Hidayah, et. al., (2024) said that structured technical training is needed for stage tradition actors.

Workshops and assignments

The workshop team delivered the training materials one by one, through theoretical and examples of characters who would be practicing their makeup explanations, as shown in Figure 1. The team then provided examples of makeup techniques and appropriate color selection. Participants then practiced after receiving the material from the team. Lewandowska & Bojnarowicz (2025) stated that repeated practice activities for practitioners will support the acquisition of results that are more relevant to their field.

The first practical session involved preparing the makeup tools and materials to be used. In this section, participants learned how to choose the right colors for their makeup and performance, based on the time and structure of the play. After the preparation of tools and materials, participants took part in the second practical session, which was about applying makeup. In this makeup practice, participants applied powder to the face, paying attention to the level of powder thickness and the right color according to the dancer's skin tone for a more natural look. Foundation was applied to the face after the face was cleaned from dirt and covered with ice cube liquid so that the pores of the face were completely closed, so that the powder would look more flowless. After that, powder was applied to and sprinkled over the foundation.

Part three of the practical session focuses on applying eyeshadow. Choosing the right color is crucial for the quality of your makeup. If your performance is during the day or evening, participants can choose soft colors. However, if your performance is at night, participants can choose strong colors such as blue, red, green, and dark brown. In the morning, participants can choose purple, light green, light blue, or light brown. Before applying the desired color, participants first apply a brown base color to the eyelids, followed by applying a base color such as green, blue, purple, and others. Using brown as a base for your eyeshadow will make the colors above it appear stronger. The strength of this color will affect the quality of your makeup and the shape of your eyes, making them appear more defined.

The next practice was about applying rouge. Rouge was applied by several participants with different techniques, according to the face shape and cheek line of the subject being made up. For subjects with elongated faces, the rouge was applied horizontally, but for round faces, the rouge was applied by forming a diagonal line from the cheekbone towards the corner of the cheek. Next, for subjects with large cheekbones, the rouge was applied under the cheekbone with a thin color, but for subjects with narrow cheekbones, the rouge was applied above the cheekbone, so that the subject's cheeks looked fuller.

Participants gain knowledge and skills about makeup techniques, color composition, material selection, blending techniques, how to apply eye shadow correctly, introduction to eyebrow shapes, mustaches, and eyeshadow applications

commonly used in horse dance performances. Participants have the opportunity to improve their makeup skills by practicing the application of makeup materials for princesses, gentle sons, and handsome sons according to the exemplary images, and making adjustments to the depiction of the characters they will play in the horse dance performance. This is in line with Mickel (2024) who stated that performing arts are closely related to learning and teaching.

In the eyebrow shaping practice, participants were asked to practice according to their needs, namely the type of eyebrows of the princess, the gentle prince, and the handsome prince. The strokes of the princess's eyebrows follow the natural line of the eyebrows of the makeup subject, and only require slight corrections to the shape to look more perfect. Meanwhile, the eyebrows of the gentle prince are shaped larger than the princess's eyebrows with a slightly more defined line. If the gentle prince is *lanyap*, the shape is slightly elongated and pointed upwards, while for the handsome prince eyebrows, the eyebrows can be made with a very defined line, with the shape adjusting to the character to be played. The eyebrows that have been shaped according to the needs are then filled in with an eyebrow pencil with an even color. The eyebrow color for the performance needs will be predominantly black, so that the character being played is more alive.

The next skill practiced by the participants was depicting the *godek* (princess, noble son, and handsome son). In this case, participants were given the freedom to shape the *godek* according to their abilities, as they sometimes had difficulty memorizing the classic *godek* forms. However, participants were still required to meet the criteria for the *godek* shape according to the character portrayed in the performance, which reflects and depicts the characters portrayed in the *Ebeg* performance.

Applying lipstick was the next skill practiced by the participants. The lipstick color was chosen by the participants according to their needs. For the makeup of the princess character, color modifications were made to match the dominant color of the makeup subject's face. Meanwhile, for the makeup of the noble and handsome sons, the dancer's lips should be emphasized by creating a lip outline to enhance the appearance. The outline was created using a softened lip or eyebrow pencil to facilitate easy application.

The workshop was ended with a makeup finishing session. This activity included adjustments to the thickness of powder, eyeshadow color, eyebrow lines, lip lines, and eyeliner, as well as color composition as needed.

Participants participated in a series of workshop activities. Throughout the entire workshop, participants gained eight additional skills and knowledge in *Ebeg* dancer makeup. These skills are: 1) preparing makeup tools and materials, 2) applying powder to the face, 3) applying eyeshadow, 4) applying rouge, 5) shaping eyebrows, 6) applying eyeliner, 7) applying lipstick, and 8) finishing makeup. Bellayuana and Puspitorini (2020) explained that these kinds of makeup are an important part of the *kuda lumping* performance.

Assignments were given to participants after attending the workshop. In this assignment session, participants demonstrated their seriousness in applying makeup with three types of makeup. The results of the assignment demonstrated by the participants showed that the powder application technique was evenly distributed on important parts such as the forehead, chin, and cheeks. However, there were still shortcomings in terms of color selection. Participants were still hesitant to use strong colors such as green, blue, and red. In addition, the eyebrows of the female dancers still followed the original eyebrow shape, not adapting to the character of *Putri Luruh* or *Putri Lanyap*. The *godeg* of the male dancers was also still too long and pointed downwards at the ends. The color of the *godeg* or shading needed to be tidied up again. Furthermore, the creation of the *laler menclok* or *cithak* needed to be practiced again, by making it triangular and dotted or made to resemble a question mark. The makeup results also needed to be thickened again by adjusting the performance time (day/night) so that when viewed from a distance by the audience the character portrayed by the dancers remained visible.

Mentoring

Mentoring is provided to participants during individual practice and during makeup sessions for fellow dancers for performances, as shown in Figure 3. Huang, Zhang, and Li (2025); Santoso, Nuraini, Dermawan, Vebriyanti, Daffa, and Kusuma, (2024); and Mukafi and Prawita, (2024) recommended the use of formal mentoring in training programs to maintain the quality of transmission. Participants in this agenda are accompanied by a team that provides corrections or feedback if they make mistakes or inaccuracies in their makeup practice. The results of this mentoring were then used in the performance

Figure 2. Male participant practice applying makeup to fellow male dancer

showed in Figure 2. From the performance of this stage, it can be stated that 80% of participants shown their skills of making up dancers for live performance.

The community service activity aimed at improving character makeup skills for the Ebeg dancers among the members of the traditional art group Mega Laras, Tanjunganom, Rakit, Banjarnegara, has provided significant benefits for both participants and the surrounding community. The villagers and participants welcomed the program enthusiastically, expressing joy and appreciation for gaining valuable knowledge and hands-on experience in facial makeup techniques for Kuda Lumping performers. Through this training, participants learned the importance of each stage of makeup application from preparing tools and materials, applying the base and powder, to finishing touches that highlight the dancer's expressions and character on stage. In addition to expanding their aesthetic understanding, the activity also fostered self-confidence and pride in preserving local cultural arts. For the Mega Laras group, this program served as an important step to enhance the quality and professionalism of their future performances, enabling them to present more expressive, polished, and characterful stage appearances. Thus, the program not only strengthened the individual capacities of the artists but also contributed to the preservation and development of traditional performing arts at the local level. Additionally, the community service activity supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDGs) 4, namely Quality Education, as it provides lifelong learning opportunities for the traditional arts practitioners.

CONCLUSION

This community service activity aimed at improving the character makeup skills of Ebeg dancers at the Mega Laras group, Tanjunganom, Rakit, Banjarnegara through training. The training consisted of workshops, assignments, and mentoring. After the training activities were carried out, the results showed that 80% participants in this community service program had improved their makeup skills, both in techniques and color selection. The accuracy of their eyebrow, lip, and lip lines' work demonstrated improved makeup skills. The cleanliness and neatness of their makeup application had also improved. The training provides also benefits for the Mega Laras group to improve the quality and professionalism in every performance, so that they are able to display better and more attractive performances in the future.

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