



A Symbolic Interaction in The Teaching of Gambang Semarang Music at School

Eko Raharjo✉¹

Faculty of Art and Languages, Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study aims to provide a comprehensive description of the forms of symbolic interaction in the learning process of Semarang Gambang Music. The concept and theory of Symbolic Interaction belonging to George Herbert Mead (1934, 1938) which views the way of thinking about the mind (mind), self (self) and society (society) is used to examine the implementation of the learning process of Gambang Semarang Music. By using a qualitative approach, the data were obtained through the use of literature study techniques, observations, interviews, and document studies. Then some of the data that has been obtained is analyzed using steps according to Miles and Huberman's theory, namely analyzing data in three steps: 1) Data condensation, presenting data (data display), and drawing conclusions or verification (conclusion drawing and verification)). Data condensation refers to the process of selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming data. The results of the study show that symbolic interaction in learning Gambang Semarang Music occurs during the learning process. The forms of symbolic interaction between the teacher and the students are first, the teacher gives a signal (one, two, three, four) when leading the students to play the Semarang gambang musical instruments and sing songs together, and secondly, the teacher guides and guides them. students in reading sheet music notation prepared in the learning process

Keywords:

Symbolic, interaction, teaching, Gambang Semarang

INTRODUCTION

The success of a learning process is greatly influenced by many factors; one of which is communication. Communication that occurs during the learning process can take the form of verbal and nonverbal communication. In addition, communication is also a part of an interaction process. It refers to the interaction that takes place between teachers and students, students and students, students and school principals, teachers and teachers, and teachers and school principals effectively and efficiently.

Further, interaction is an activity that enables the establishment of a relationship between individuals, which is then actualized through communication practices. Communication interaction in learning has a broad meaning, not just limited to the relationship between teachers and students, but also involves educational interactions. In this context, it involves not only the delivery of subject matter but also the cultivation of attitudes and values in the students.

Schramm, in an article titled "Science of Human Communication," defines communication as a reciprocal process involving the exchange of symbols or signals that aims to convey information, instructions, persuasion, and is carried out to achieve a shared understanding between communicators within a social context (Diah Kurniawati & Sekreningsih Nita, 2018)

Based on the description in the background above, the problem investigated in this study is how a symbolic interaction is demonstrated in the teaching process of Gambang Semarang music at Karangturi Semarang National Junior High School.

METHOD

This research was conducted using a qualitative approach (Cahnmann & Siegesmund, 2013; Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2005; Creswell, 2018; Cristancho, Goldszmidt, Lingard, & ..., 2018; Rukajat, 2018; Sławewski, 2018; Smith & Sparkes, 2020; Sugiyono, 2013; Underwood, Kowalczyk-Walędziak, & ..., 2020) with phenomenology as its approach. Creswell (2014) defines phenomenology as a research strategy in which the researcher can identify the essence of human experience regarding a particular phenomenon. Alongside the phenomenological perspective, the approach used in this study is associated with symbolic interaction theory. The interpretation of symbols in interactions regarding a particular matter is adjusted to an individual's experiences. The research was conducted at Karangturi Semarang National Junior High School, with the main focus on the symbolic interaction between the teacher and students in the teaching process of Gambang Semarang music. The subjects, who served as both data sources and key informants, were the art and culture teacher and the 8th-grade students.

The data collection was done using in-depth interviews and observations. The most important aspect of data collection is to clarify the meaning of a phenomenon experienced by a small number of individuals as intended in research. Interviews serve various purposes, including constructing knowledge about other individuals, events, activities, organizations, emotions, motivations, and verifying, modifying, and expanding the constructs

developed by the researcher (Moleong, 2000: 135).

The data analysis technique used in this phenomenological study is based on Creswell's approach to data analysis. Creswell (2014) proposes a data analysis process that involves interpreting and understanding data in the form of text or images. In this regard, the researcher prepares the data for analysis, understanding, presentation, and to make the meaning in the data more easily comprehensible with a broader understanding through an overview. This approach aligns with the data analysis technique proposed by Miles and Huberman (1994), which includes: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing or verification. Data reduction involves selecting, focusing, simplifying, abstracting, and transforming the data. This study used source triangulation. Sugiyono (Sugiyono, 2011, 2013) states that source triangulation is conducted to test the credibility and validity of data by examining the data through multiple sources, including primary and secondary data sources in the research. In this study, source triangulation was done by comparing the interview results between the teacher and students as key informants with those of supporting informants.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Definition of Symbolic Interaction

The history of Symbolic Interactionism theory cannot be separated from George Herbert Mead (1863-1931). Mead was born in Hadley, a small town in Massachusetts. His career began when he became a professor at Oberlin College in Ohio. He taught at various

campuses, moving from one campus to another, until he was eventually invited to move from the University of Michigan to the University of Chicago by John Dewey. As an introduction to the theory of symbolic interactionism, it is necessary to first define the meaning of the words: "interaction" and "symbolic".

According to the communication dictionary (Efendy and Uchjana, 1989), interaction is defined as the process of mutual influence through behaviors and activities among members of society. Symbolic, as defined in the same source (Efendy and Uchjana, 1989: 352), involves the act of symbolizing something. The term "symbolic" derives from the Latin word "Symbolic(us)" and the Greek word "symbolicos". In the book "Ilmu Komunikasi: Suatu Pengantar" (Mulyana, 2008), Susanne K. Langer highlights that one of the basic human needs is the use of symbols and symbolization. It is noteworthy that humans are the primary beings known to use symbols in their communication and expression.

The concept of symbolic interactionism refers to a way in understanding the interplay between mind, self, and society that has significantly contributed to the socio-cultural tradition in developing communication theories. Built upon a foundation of sociology, this perspective teaches us that when humans interact with each other, they share meanings for a specific period of time and for particular actions (Eka Putri, 2009). In addition, symbolic interaction is a process that involves interpreting actions because symbolic meanings can vary for different individuals. For instance, students observe a professor walking towards their classroom. They might assume

that this professor is the type who gives lectures, hands out syllabi, discusses course requirements, and engages in traditional first-day activities. However, this professor is "called" a professor. Some students become suspicious and want to see the professor's identification card. While the professor continues to play the role of an educator, the students also play their roles within certain limitations (Aksan et al., 2009).

Symbolic interaction exists because fundamental ideas shape the meanings originating from the human mind regarding the self and its relationship within social interactions. Its ultimate purpose is to mediate and interpret meanings within the society where the individual resides. As noted by Douglas (1970) in Ardianto (2007: 136), meaning originates from interaction, and there is no other way to form meaning except by building relationships with other individuals through interaction (Siti and Siregar 2011).

Gambang Semarang Music Teaching at a School

The music education at Karangturi National High School in Semarang utilizes the 2013 curriculum, commonly known as K13. This is a competency-based curriculum implemented by the government to enhance the quality of national education in Indonesia, replacing the previous curriculum known as the School-Based Curriculum (KTSP-2006). The 2013 curriculum promises to nurture a productive, creative, innovative, and character-driven generation as the future leaders of the nation. However, the success of this curriculum in realizing the objectives of national

education is highly dependent on several factors, including the creativity of teachers. Teachers play a crucial role and have a significant influence, as they determine the success of students in their learning process. Teachers not only convey information to students but also need to be creative in providing learning services and facilitation to all students to enable them to learn in a comfortable environment. This foundation is essential for students to grow and develop into adaptable individuals capable of thriving in the challenging era of globalization.

Music education, as a part of cultural arts, is designed based on the activities in various domains of cultural arts, namely visual arts, music, and dance, which are derived from the richness of arts and culture as the cultural heritage of the nation. Cultural arts learning activities are not only designed within the classroom but can also take place through activities organized by schools, as well as outside the school or within the surrounding community. Further, local content is added to the cultural arts curriculum, extracted from local wisdom and relevant to students' lives, with the expectation of enriching students' knowledge. According to Andreas Inu, the music teacher, cultural arts learning activities conducted outside the school environment are referred to as outdoor learning. As an example, when there is a cultural arts performance held at the Raden Saleh Cultural Park in Semarang, such as *Ketoprak* performances or art festivals organized by the Semarang city government or private organizations, students are requested to attend assisted by their music teacher. Students are encouraged to appreciate and create

group reports on what they have watched, and relate it to the music education topics previously taught.

In addition, music education is conducted in an integrated and comprehensive manner. Further, integration and comprehensiveness mean that within the basic competencies, specific skills are included, and therefore, they should be taught in a holistic manner. By teaching them comprehensively, students can master the skills, knowledge, and attitudes in visual arts, music, dance, and theater. Moreover, music education emphasizes an active learning approach for students. Students are encouraged and empowered to seek learning resources available within the school, their homes, or the community. Teachers can propose other suitable and relevant activities sourced from the social and natural environment.

The teaching of music in Karangturi Junior High School, Semarang, is designed in the form of syllabi and Lesson Implementation Plans (RPP) for each meeting by the teacher. According to the guidelines of the 2013 revised curriculum for Grade VII, the core competencies that students must acquire are divided into two parts: 1) understanding knowledge (factual, conceptual, and procedural) based on a sense of curiosity about science, technology, art, culture related to observable phenomena and events, which falls under the realm of knowledge; 2) attempting, processing, and presenting in the concrete realm (using, analyzing, composing, modifying, and creating) and the abstract realm (writing, reading, counting, drawing, and composing) in accordance with what is learned at school and from other sources within the same

perspective/theory, which falls under the realm of skills that students must master.

In the realm of knowledge, the basic competencies that students must master are understanding the basic concept of singing in unison as a group, understanding the basic concept of singing in two or more voices as a group, understanding the basic concept of playing simple musical instruments individually, and understanding the basic concept of music ensemble. In the realm of skills, for Grade 7 students, there are four basic competencies they should acquire. These include singing songs in unison as a group, singing songs in two or more voices in vocal groups, playing simple musical instruments individually, and playing music ensembles of similar and mixed instruments.

Understanding the basic concept of singing in unison as a group is the first fundamental knowledge competency that students should achieve in the teaching and learning process. This competency consists of three achievement indicators: explaining the meaning of singing in unison, describing the benefits of vocal techniques in singing, and explaining the techniques of breathing, phrasing, articulation, intonation, and expression in singing in unison. Meanwhile, the skill-based competency learned by students is to sing songs with a single voice as a group in unison. This competency includes two indicators: singing songs in unison with correct techniques of breathing, phrasing, articulation, and intonation, and performing songs in unison with correct techniques of breathing, phrasing, articulation, intonation, and expression.

The teaching of Gambang Semarang music is one of the main

topics in the implementation of cultural arts education, particularly music education, at the National Junior High School Karangturi Semarang. It is conducted in accordance with the current national curriculum. However, for seventh-grade students, there is a special arrangement in which they receive alternating lessons with dance and visual arts subjects every quarter semester. Therefore, the music teacher adjusts the curriculum content that should be taught over one semester to fit within a four-month period or a quarter semester.

According to the lesson plan prepared by the music teacher, Gambang Semarang music teaching is provided to eighth-grade students in the odd semester for a full duration of two months. The delivery of Gambang Semarang music teaching material is carried out through several stages, including introducing the instruments, learning to read notation, and playing Gambang Semarang instruments, and concluding it with group practice in playing Gambang Semarang music. The continuous and ongoing routine of Gambang Semarang music teaching can be likened to the theory and concept of enculturation, as it can be considered as a process of enculturation or cultivating Gambang Semarang music among young generations, especially children, through cultural arts education in schools (Raharjo and Arsih, 2019; Triyanto, 2015).

Forms of Symbolic Interaction in Gambang Semarang Music Teaching at a School

Symbolic interaction is the interaction between human individuals through meaningful symbol statements. Individuals interact with each other using symbols

that contain signs, signals, and words. Such interaction can be observed through three stages: mind, language, and meaning. Mind is fundamentally rooted in what is believed, so thoughts and occurrences align with those beliefs. Language, through which many meanings are derived, can be expressed verbally or non-verbally. Meanwhile, meaning is a self-process in which thoughts process received information or symbols.

In line with the theory mentioned earlier, in Gambang Semarang music teaching at schools, various forms of symbolic interaction exist, involving symbols that carry meaning and understanding between students and students, teachers and students, and teachers and teachers. However, this article specifically discusses the symbolic interaction between teachers and students in the teaching of Gambang Semarang music at Karangturi National Junior High School in Semarang.

The teacher gives the cues 'one, two, three, four' when he is about to invite students to start playing the Gambang Semarang musical instrument by reading the song notation. The time signature 4/4 carries the meaning conveyed by the cues given by the teacher. Further, time signature is a symbol that appears at the beginning of a musical composition or musical notation which indicates the unit of beats and the number of beats in each measure within a rhythmic sequence of grouped pulses, with the first pulse accented and the others unaccented (Exarchos 2014; Godøy 2009; Jamalus 1988; Whyte 2018).

In reading song notation, the teaching of Gambang Semarang music is done through the methods of sight singing and ear training (Fournier 2019, 2020; Reifinger 2018).

The teaching process includes the following steps: firstly, the teacher prepares a numerical and staff notation score of the model song as the learning material. For example, the teacher prepares the Gambang Semarang song notation, including the notation for Gambang Semarang musical instruments such as saron, bonang, demung, gambang, gong, suling, kendang, as well as the vocal part. Secondly, the teacher provides an example by playing the bonang instrument and demonstrating how to read Gambang Semarang song notation, starting from the introduction. Symbolic interaction is highly evident in this phase as the played notation represents symbols with meaning and understanding. The figure below provides an example of the bonang instrument notation played by the students under the guidance of the teacher. Thirdly, similar to the previous stage, the following stages of Gambang Semarang music teaching involve a series of symbolic interactions between the teacher and the students that occur throughout the learning process until it is completed. The sequence of symbolic interactions is observed and depicted in a table of teaching and learning activities for a single class meeting, which is provided in a separate sheet in the appendix.



Figure 1: Notation of the Bonang instrument intro for Gambang Semarang song

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that symbolic interaction occurs during the teaching of Gambang Semarang

music. The forms of symbolic interaction between the teacher and the students are, firstly, the teacher gives instructions by counting (one, two, three, four) while guiding the students in playing the instruments of Gambang Semarang music and singing the song together. Secondly, the teacher guides and assists the students in reading the notation score prepared for the learning process.

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the previous discussion, it can be concluded that symbolic interaction occurs during the teaching of Gambang Semarang music. The forms of symbolic interaction between the teacher and the students are, firstly, the teacher gives instructions by counting (one, two, three, four) while guiding the students in playing the instruments of Gambang Semarang music and singing the song together. Secondly, the teacher guides and assists the students in reading the notation score prepared for the learning process.

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