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CONTENTS

Kandungan

Between Two Landfills: The Analysis of Gender Representations in Linda Faigao Hall's The Female Heart Through Brechtian Techniques

Mahtab Mahdavifar, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

1

Ghulam Sarwar Yousof, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

Mohd Nasir bin Hashim, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

Perkembangan Labanotasi dalam Institusi Pengajian Tinggi dan Adaptasi Pengetahuan Labanotasi oleh Yayasan Warisan Johor

Leng Poh Gee, School of the Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia

14

Mumtaz Begum Aboo Backer, School of the Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia

The Use of Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) on Ameliorating Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) of Piano Students: An Exploratory Case Study

40

Wang Zi Lin, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

Poon Chiew Hwa, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

Writing Artistic Works Academically and Creatively by Engaging Descriptive and Critical Writing

67

Mumtaz Begum Aboo Backer, School of the Arts, Universiti Sains Malaysia

An Exploratory Study on Perspectives on Taking Elective Performing Arts Classes among Undergraduate Students in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

93

Pan Kok Chang, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

Chew Yi En, Faculty of Creative Arts, Universiti Malaya

Pengkategorian Tarian Terinai sebagai Tarian Istana, Tarian Klasik dan Tarian Rakyat

Mohammad Khairi Mokhtar, Fakulti Seni Kreatif, Universiti Malaya

117

Premalatha Thiagarajan, Fakulti Seni Kreatif, Universiti Malaya

Between Two Landfills: The Analysis of Gender Representations in Linda Faigao Hall's The Female Heart through Brechtian Techniques

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Abstract

Women have long been portrayed through the binaries of virgin vs. whore, mothers vs. stepmothers or miserable vs. magical. For a very long time, the roles of mothers have been idealized in ways which seem far from the reality of real women's experiences and resulted in what we call "female shame". What is mostly overlooked is the social and economic status of women providing more/fewer opportunities to have control over their lives. This article focuses on how in *The Female Heart* (2000), Linda Faigao Hall, the Filipino playwright interprets the concepts of motherhood, marital relationship and sacrifice as being necessarily interwoven with economic status and in what ways she represents gender identity of her characters by deconstructing the traditional images of gender-related roles. This will be done through analyzing the use of some Brechtian techniques through which Linda Hall, like many other feminist playwrights, juxtaposes seemingly unrelated images to undermine and critique stereotypical representations and present the possibilities of creating new images. Moreover, the article draws attention to the cultural conversation undertaking between Filipino characters and Roger, the American son-in-law as the playwright's attempt to represent a dialogue, or as she herself declared a multi-logue, between these two cultures.

Keywords: Asian Feminists, Brechtian Techniques, Motherhood, Gender Binaries.

Introduction

When Martial Law was declared in the Philippines in 1972, Filipino artists were under the accusation of being “subversive” and against Ferdinand Marcos’ regime and consequently were sent to detention camps. There are plenty of examples of when theater practitioners being dragged off the stage because their plays were interpreted as “seditious”. However, despite all the pressure, these twelve years can be seen as the golden years of Filipino drama as it marked a time of unusual growth and blossoming. On the other hand, the time prior to People’s Revolution or EDSA (1986) which led to Marcos’s overthrow, accommodated a theater that, inevitably, continued to be political. Doreen Fernandez in her article *Philippines Drama 1972-1984: Literature of Indirection* discusses how drama before EDSA was “radical in content and allegorical in method” (Fernandez, 1984). In other words, due to the censorship and pressure on playwrights, the drama of the time, mainly protest drama, was written with “the techniques of indirection and circumvention” (374). In some ways this helped playwrights to pick a safer way of protest as other media were limited to government press release. Class and economic issues were the dominant social topics of the time, making Filipino feminists theater practitioners use theater as the main forum to politicize the significance of gender issues which also resulted in addressing ethnic and class issues on stage. Before EDSA Revolution, various dramatists, playwrights and directors succeeded in drawing their audiences’ attention to the social issues that women were encountering through staging their plays, mostly performed by PETA (Philippines Educational Theater Association). A high number of these plays revolved around the plots of mail-order brides, overseas domestic helpers and the issue of Filipino women lured into the sex and entertainment industry in Japan, portraying their female characters as protagonists who suffered from various difficulties created by patriarchal society. In 1972,

after the Philippines government showed positive affirmation towards international recognition of women rights, PETA artists started to play an active role in engaging more women and portraying them on stage and as a result, within the office of CAP (Concerned Artists for Philippines) a women's movement section was established with artists including Marilou Jacob, Soxy Tobacio and Chris Milando.

Following the declaration of Martial Law in 1972, a significant number of Filipinos including theater playwrights, actors and directors fled the country mostly to the US. Angela-Dee Alforque in her article *Transnational Stages: Prospectus for a Filipino American Theater* discusses how this immigration led to “confronting diversities” as well as “negotiate(ing) issues of racial, ethnic and national identity in the wider context of contemporary American society” (120) despite marginalization of Filipino American studies in their educational paradigm. Therefore, the artists in exile played an essential role in making Filipino-American studies accessible by the “creation and production of culturally distinct theatrical representation” (Alforque, 2000). Some of the Filipino playwrights in exile began to actively participate in opening theater groups and theater companies in order to be able to stage their work. Among them were Cecile Guidote-Alvarez (PETA founder and director), Jessica Hagedorn (poet, novelist and playwright) and Linda Faigao Hall (playwright) who performed their works mainly in Ma-Yi Theater Company and National Asian American Theater co. (NAATCO). Linda Hall who holds a graduate degree in English literature and educational theater from New York University and Bretton College, Wakefield, England produced several works including *Woman From the Other Side of the World*, Ma-Yi Theater Ensemble, Inc. (New York); *State Without Grace*, Pan Asian Repertory Theater, Inc. (New York), Asian American Theatre Company (San Francisco), a tour which included Arlington, Va., Washington, D.C., Tufts, Rutgers, Syracuse and Cornell; *Americans or How We Met*, a performance piece, Catskills Reading Society (Ellenville, N.Y.), Philippine Performing Company (New York), which also produced *Men*

Come and Go, a one-act play *Requiem*, a full-length play *Best Play Award*, Henry Street Settlement Arts for Living Center and Alliance for Asian American Arts and Culture (New York). Linda Hall believes that more than being influenced by any other writer, she is influenced by Russian playwright, Anton Chekov for being “ostensibly conversational and sometimes banal” [in] dramatic action where subtext is always about something devastating” (Liu, 2002). Her focus on disturbing subject matters and her love for educational aspects created a theater that is very close to Brecht’s epic features. In addition, she is highly praised for the audacious sweep of the topics covered in her plays and dealing with contemporary issues like homophobia, sexism, domestic abuse as well as women immigrants’ challenges creating a feminist characteristic for her works. Gary Steinhoff in *Asian American Playwrights* discusses how this rainbow of topics in accordance with post- modernistic dramatic techniques resulted in her work being described as magic realism, insofar as it created a coexistence between fantasy and realism and “yet magical elements are not textually subordinate to a realistic” (58).

Filipino Feminists and Brecht

Brecht has long been championed by various Feminist playwrights and directors. The reason why epic theater (as opposed with realistic theater) is more favored in Feminist Theatre, not only in the Philippines but also in other countries, is that when the audience has the capacity to distinct accustomed interpretations and actions from the conventional connotations and understand the assemble of ideas, they can relate the social and material construct and gender (Bial & Martin, 2005). Karen Laughlin, in *Brechtian Theory and the American Feminist Theatre* (Laughlin, 2000) explains that two aspects of Brecht’s ideas essential to the evolution of Feminist Theatre are “an emphasis on historical context; and an epic structuring of dramatic narratives” (p. 147).

In discussing the adaptation of Brechtian techniques by feminists I take as the starting point Elizabeth Goodman’s discussion in *To Each Her Own: Gender and Performance*

(Goodman, 2003) in which she argues the reasons feminists adopted Brechtian techniques in their works is that both Feminist theatre (she calls it “a fractured subject”) and Brechtian theatre used to be called “alternative’ in relation to the mainstream movements of their own time. Brecht emphasizes violating the conventional “framing of cultural and artistic standards” (17) in order to overturn the “general habit of evaluating works of art by their suitability for the apparatus without ever judging the apparatus by its suitability for the work” (17). Goodman defines “apparatus” as “the structures and value systems by and through which artistic works are judged” (18).

In *Understanding Brecht*, Walter Benjamin discusses how “epic theatre can be defined more readily in terms of stage rather than in terms of a new kind of drama.” (Benjamin & Bostock, 2003). To be more specific, in order to alienate the audience, he used some techniques, including non-linear structure, the use of slides, music and dance, noise and voice, cross-dressing (which Feminists widely exploited), puppetry, pastiche including genre manipulation not to enforce and rather to contradict the actions. Brecht defined defamiliarization as a technique “designed to free socially-conditioned phenomenon from that stamp of familiarity which protects them against our grasp today”, through a representation “which allows us to recognize its subject, but at the same time makes it seem unfamiliar” (p. 61). In other words, A-effect is a collection of techniques used to create a sense of defamiliarizing the common and blindingly familiar, to prevent the audiences from being trapped in emotional engagement and instead engage in discussion and employ their critical thinking strength, by reminding them that they are watching a show and not real life.

Among the most repeated themes touched by Feminist theater practitioners who found Brechtian techniques useful to deconstruct patriarchy-reproduced concepts is motherhood, as one of the most represented roles for women in various forms of art, in cinema and on stage. Bette Gordon and Catherine Texier in *Motherhood and Sexuality* explain how filmmakers for instance, have repeatedly represented women as mothers in a way

“patriarchy deems appropriate” (Langer, 2000). As a repeated portrayal in the Philippines stage, mother characters have either been represented as absent, like in *A Portrait of the Artist as Filipino* (Joaquin, 1966) for instance and peripheral, like in *Agnoia* (Magtoto, 2005) or been categorized as either bad or good mothers presenting an oversimplified portrayal. They portrayed good women as ideal mothers and good wives who sacrifice anything (including themselves) for the sake of family. However, in many modern Filipino plays, when female characters as mothers step outside their allocated place, they are pictured as either vagrant mothers (Like Emilya in Linda Faigao Hall’s another play, *Woman from the Other Side of the World* (2000) who kills her old husband and flees to America or characters who always go back to the family circle.

The Female Heart through Brechtian Techniques

The *Female Heart* is Faigao Hall’s devotion to create a multi-logue rather than a dialogue between America as the colonial and cultural force and the Philippines as the colonized land and to cover various topics on the basis of the contrast between life in her motherland and in a land of exile. The *Female Heart* is the story of a single mother, Rosario, with two children in their 20s, who lives in Smokey Mountain, the large landfill in Tondo, Manila where it was operated for 40 years with flammable substances on decomposing waste leading to thousands of deaths. The narrative of *The Female Heart* constantly shifts between present time in Brooklyn, New York told by Adelfa, Rosario’s daughter, and her distant memories of the past in Tondo, Manila. The play starts with the news of Adelfa’s success in graduating from high school. With the support of her brother, Anghel, Adelfa is encouraged to enter a college to follow her dream of being a teacher. However, to do so, her brother has to secretly take a job as a sex worker in a touristic part of the town eventually leading to severe health complications and later to his death. When Adelfa finds out about her brother’s condition through her mother, she leaves the college and marries

an American, Roger, through a mail order bride agency for only three hundred dollars a month. She moves to New York and starts a life full of challenges.

Faigao Hall's framing the image of motherhood in *The Female Heart*, however, is non-traditional and anti-mainstream where, unlike the mainstream, in which the mothers are punished for leaving their children, Rosario fails to hide her excitement at receiving what she calls the miracle of life (a new lover and a bigger house) by sacrificing her only daughter. Rosario knows the dangers and consequences of sending Adelfa to the States, but she ignores that and that is the way in which Faigao Hall questions the concept of motherhood and empties it of the meaning which is supposed to be mimesis (i.e. concerned and sacrificial) leaving the spectators' expectations about Rosario's mimesis not met. When Adelfa receives letters from Anghel and Rosario, we find out that this is Anghel who is more worried and as the play implies, he is the one who has a female heart or is an angel, as the name signifies. Accordingly, the representation of a female heart in the body of a woman is deconstructed by finding out the sacrifices we expect from Rosario are finally made by Anghel and she instead enjoys a bigger house and a new love: "who would have thought we'd won a co-op? Or I'd fall in love again? At my age? A miracle my life is full of miracles" (18). But by Anghel's death, Faigao Hall implies Rosario's ignorance of the fact that there is no miracle in their life and as Adelfa puts it, "there is nothing to be said for poverty". This very feminist point of view shows that "motherhood, spectators see, is embodied in economics; it comes easier, to the bourgeois who can afford it" and that is the point of divergence of different feminists deconstructing universalized images of women.

In depicting the marital relationship, Faigao Hall used various Brechtian techniques in imaging the husband-wife relationship between Adelfa and her American husband Roger. Adelfa moves to the States to live with Roger, hoping to financially support her brother who suffers from AIDS and her mother who does not work. But as the story progresses, the spectators see their relationship as resembling a prostitute-

customer relationship ending with no mercy at the final scene of the play. Adelfa asks for more money as her brother's medical care demands more and follows Roger's weird instructions in bed in return which turns into severe domestic abuse. The playwright leaves the audience with the question of what takes to be married. To better understand this deconstruction, an analysis of Adelfa's character is needed. Adelfa's marriage that is planned through "order bride agencies" starts with questioning the idea of the obedient oriental bride who "puts up with everything". The first scene introduces her as a young girl who has done something that no girl in her community had ever done: "the first high-school graduate from Smokey Mountain". Therefore, the first image of an empowered young girl builds up new expectations for the audience which does not confirm to the stereotypes. But Adelfa has to leave the college to marry Roger to save her family is a highly feminist image of a savior to be given to a female character. Throughout the play, she breaks the stereotypical images constantly. When she is settled in the States, she handles her life and later asks Roger to go back to college or start a work. She even uses her education as a weapon to defend herself. At first, she asks Roger if she can work but Roger's insecurity hinders him from accepting:

ADELFA: I have two years of college! Make me your secretary. I'll go to computer class. Learn Word processing. You said you're busy!

ROGER: I've a friend Tony. His wife is from Romania. He sends her to Excel training and next thing you know; she's run off with a classmate from the Ukraine. So, he says next time he gets a new wife, he's gonna keep her home and her passport under lock and key.

Later in the play, when Roger finds out that Adelfa opens a bank account to save money to go back to college without telling him, he shows an overreaction and she threatens to leave him emphasizing her powerful character, even though she is not in her own country and has no protection:

ADELFA: You can't pay me enough for what I do for you.

ROGER: What are you gonna do about it?

ADELFA: I quit!

ROGER: Quit? Quit. And go where?

ADELFA: Do you think I care? You'll never see me again. Who'll put up with you then? I'm one in a million, remember? I'll find work. I have skills. I have two years of college.

There is a political/ personal message from Faigao-Hall represented in Adelfa's attempts to bring happiness to the family which is embodied in a TV set, a bigger house and VCR ending up up bringing emptiness to the family instead. This portrayal of consumerism for the price of Adelfa's lost soul and Anghel's death confronts the audience with the question of "Is it worth it?" "Isn't it too much "being" to pay to "have" some of these things?" - questions which the playwright would hope the audience takes with them when leaving the theater. On the other hand, this consumerism was represented as bound up with patriarchy. Feminists have long been against consumer practices believing that they support the dominance of global capitalism "a system which thrives on the exploitation of labor, theft of resources and facilitates vast accumulation of wealth among a tiny percentage of elite." (Nikki Lisa Cole). Roger Gold whose name signifies his love for money is the representation of this idea making him a misogynist character:

ROGER

Dangerous combination, Adelfa. Money and women. A woman gets hold of a little cash and she's out the door. Joanne was smart as a whip. She even went to NYU. I used to like smart women. Until I found out how exhausting they are. They never shut the fuck up! You're not going anywhere. I bought you. I bought your family. I bought your house. And everything in it. Your brother is still alive. Every fuckin' breath he takes, he takes because of me.

Roger who had a failed marriage before Adelfa, is portrayed as the "husband from hell". He is the last thing Adelfa needs in her life: an alcoholic husband with sadistic sexual behaviors who constantly rapes her. His insecurity does not allow Adelfa to leave the house as he tries to buy her with money and gifts. On the other hand, as one side of a business-like marital

relationship (the images of money and sex are constantly juxtaposing in the play), Roger is a very money-minded buyer who does not understand some notions essential to Adelfa's life. Having argued with Adelfa about sending fifty dollars more to her family after Anghel's health started to deteriorate making him have to stay in sanatorium indefinitely, Roger tries to convince Adelfa that her family is faking it:

ROGER

Out of the question. We've had this talk before. (Pause.) Drug-resistant TB. Are you sure Anghel's not faking it? So, he doesn't have to work? Don't you think it's suspicious?

ADELFA

Don't you ever say that about Kuya Angel.

ROGER

What do they do? Sit around all day and wait for the check? It's like welfare except that I'm the fucking government.

ADELFA

That's unfair!

ROGER

But it's true!

ADELFA

How dare you judge my family.

ROGER

You're too kind. They're taking advantage of you.

ADELFA

How can my own family take advantage of me? Everything I have is theirs!

ROGER

I'm your family now. I'm looking out for you. You have nothing of your own. It's fucked up.

Despite the fact that Hall tends to represent Roger as a husband with no mercy, this scene connotes the difference between Adelfa's understanding of family and Roger's and this is again portrayed through money reminding the audience the difference in their economic class.

The Female Heart has been performed on different stages in the States and in the Philippines. The contrast is presented by many directors in the stage performances by extensively staging the contrast had mostly been performed in the States where the playwright resides, when it was performed in the Philippines in 2016 the adjustments were intelligently and artistically made for the Filipino audience to empower the subtext and connotations intended. Brecht believed all the actions on stage have a gestic representation which is associated with underlying meanings, there are more obvious ones related to the social entity of the actors' body. This is usually associated with what the audience is not able to understand through the storyline and is an unusual way of forcing the audience to see a bigger picture of the situation. A highly known example is Mother Courage's attempt to show her inner emotional turmoil by looking at the audience and having a silent scream. This physical presentation of a hidden pain is only considered as *gestus* due to the social meaning associated with it: the fact that there is a risk of losing her daughter and her life if this scream turns into words.

Banau Miclat Janssen in an interview with the researcher discusses the ways both American and Filipino audiences were surprised at the representation of the characters on stage as they did not expect. Janssen who was among the audience for the New York production found it very fascinating how American and Filipino-American audiences in NYC expected Filipino characters to be represented in a different way especially in terms of gender and dealing with related issues like AIDS. This brought her to the point of consciously creating moments of *gestus* in her 2016 Manila production to help the audience see the bigger picture of Adelfa's life as someone who sacrifices her life for her family but at the same time as a powerful woman who resists playing the victim. The scene in which she looks at the audience and announces that she is leaving and not coming back is a powerful example of *gestus*. This was the least likely decision which created several questions in the audience's mind. Among them, and most importantly, is "What about the Anghel?"

Conclusion

Filipino Feminist playwrights, like their peers in other countries, are drawn to use Alienation Effects for various reasons. However, the intensity level of their tendency to use Brecht is not the same. Among them Linda Faigao Hall successfully employed Brechtian effects to draw audiences' attention to framing motherhood and sacrificial images in a non-traditional way, interweaving them with the economic status of the characters.

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Perkembangan Labanotasi dalam Institusi Pengajian Tinggi dan Adaptasi Pengetahuan Labanotasi oleh Yayasan Warisan Johor

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Abstrak

Penggunaan Labanotasi di semenanjung Malaysia sejak 1980-an telah menjadi salah satu alternatif dalam pengukuhan dokumentasi dan promosi tari tradisional. Artikel ini menghuraikan perkembangan Labanotasi melalui penerangan faktor-faktor pendorongnya di dalam konteks institusi pengajian tinggi tempatan, dan seterusnya membincangkan fenomena pengetahuan Labanotasi diadaptasikan untuk kegunaan vernakular melalui Yayasan Warisan Johor. Artikel ini ingin mengisikikan kekurangan maklumat Labanotasi yang belum diwacanakan di dalam konteks pengajian dan penyelidikan tari tempatan, dan seterusnya menunjukkan relevansi pengetahuan Labanotasi di dalam industri tari.

Kata kunci: Rudolf von Laban, Labanotasi, Yayasan Warisan Johor

Pengenalan: Rudolf von Laban (1879 – 1958) dan Kaedah Laban

Labanotasi yang diasaskan oleh Rudolf von Laban (1879 – 1958) membekalkan satu badan pengetahuan yang penting dan komprehensif dalam transkripsi dan analisis gerak. Beliau merupakan seorang penari, koreografer, pengajar dan pengasas teori pengajian tari yang amat berpengaruh (Boyette, 2012; Hwang, 2013; Preston-Dunlop & Sayers, 2010). Beliau berniat untuk meningkatkan tahap akses tari yang saksama di golongan umum, demi memupuk semangat komuniti dan menekankan ekspresi

emosi individu (Laban & Ullmann, 1975). Beliau tidak mementingkan kemegahan pementasan dan kesempurnaan pelaksanaan teknik, malah lebih mengutamakan penerokaan gerak yang boleh membantu meningkatkan kesedaran terhadap prinsip pergerakan, yang seterusnya memanfaatkan pelajar tari dari segi perkembangan kreativiti, seperti yang dinyatakan oleh Laban dan Ullman (1975).

Di sekolah-sekolah di mana pendidikan seni dipupuk, bukan bertujuan untuk mencapai kesempurnaan seni atau penghasilan persembahan tari yang sensasi, tetapi mendatangkan kesan yang baik terhadap keperibadian pelajar daripada aktiviti tari kreatif (p.11-12).

Laban menghasilkan pelbagai kaedah analisis gerak yang saintifik untuk kegunaan perbincangan dan dokumentasi secara ilmiah. Secara umumnya, kaedah-kaedah ini dikenali sebagai Kaedah Laban. Antara tiga jenis Kaedah Laban yang lazimnya digunakan adalah (1) Labanotasi atau juga dikenali sebagai *Kinetography*, yang mentranskripsikan gerak ke dalam bentuk skor; (2) Penulisan Motif (*Motif Writing*) atau Deskripsi Motif (*Motif Description*) yang boleh mencadangkan satu kerangka pergerakan yang terarah; serta (3) Analisis Pergerakan Laban (*Laban Movement Analysis*, [LMA]) yang menawarkan satu cara pemerhatian yang boleh menghuraikan kualiti pergerakan. Ketiga-tiga kaedah ini walaupun berkongsi sesetengah konsep pergerakan dan simbol yang sama, namun ketiga-tiganya masih mempunyai kelebihan dan fungsi yang tersendiri, sehingga boleh dibelajari secara berasingan. Ketiga-tiga kaedah ini dianggap pembelajaran yang formal bagi kebanyakan institusi pengajian tari.

Impak dan keberkesanan ketiga-tiga kaedah ini dikaji daripada pelbagai konteks sama ada dalam bentuk kualitatif atau kuantitatif (Fügedi, 2003; Preston-Dunlop & Sayers, 2010; Warburton, 2010; Wang, 2012; Hwang, 2013; Dania, Koutsouba & Tyrovola, 2017; Heiland, 2018). Sebagai contohnya, dalam pengajaran tari kreatif dengan menggunakan Labanotasi, Warburton (2010) merumuskan bahawa “jika tujuan pendidikan tari adalah untuk meningkatkan kemampuan penari dalam

menggunakan konsep-konsep tari, dan untuk ‘membaca, menulis, dan menarikan’ tarian, maka penggunaan notasi adalah alat yang baik untuk melakukannya” (p.210). Manakala Heiland (2018) mencadangkan bahawa pembelajaran tari melalui Labanotasi berupaya “menelusuri pelbagai kemungkinan hasil pembelajaran” berhubung dengan konteks taksonomi Bloom (p.32). Hwang (2013) pula memerhatikan bahawa pengetahuan Kaedah Laban dipergunakan untuk memperkasakan hak-hak kesamarataan penghayatan seni tari di kalangan warga Korea Selatan, serta mempertingkatkan daya persaingan pengajar tari wanita, seiring dengan dasar pembangunan globalisasi dan demokrasi budaya (*cultural democracy*) negara.

Pengetahuan Kaedah Laban turut diaplikasikan di Malaysia. Nor (1986, 1993 & 1998), Mokhtar (1993) dan Chan (2006) masing-masing telah mentranskripsikan Randai, Zapin, Asyik, Kuda Kepang dan Kuda Pasu ke dalam bentuk Labanotasi. Kumpulan penyelidik sains komputer dan informasi teknologi, Musa, Idris, Hashim, Othman dan Lim (2020) melakukan pendigitalan ke atas data gerak Mak Yung melalui *motion capture* dengan berdasarkan ciri-ciri gerak yang digariskan oleh LMA. Pengetahuan *Motif Writing* turut diaplikasikan ke dalam pengajaran tari kreatif untuk kanak-kanak tempatan oleh sesetengah pengajar tari (Lim, 2018; Tan, 2018). Fenomena kepenggunaan pelbagai Kaedah Laban di Malaysia masih belum diwacanakan sepenuhnya, dan artikel ini hanya fokus kepada perkembangan dan peranan Labanotasi di dalam konteks penyelidikan tari tempatan.

Labanotasi

Apabila seni tari dibandingkan dengan seni muzik yang perlu membunyikan skor muzik, serta seni drama yang perlu melakonkan skrip dan plot, Laban mendapati bahawa notasi tari adalah sesuatu yang diperlukan demi meningkatkan status akademik pengajian tari, dan membolehkan perbincangan. Beliau mula menciptakan satu sistem notasi yang dikenali sebagai *Dance Script*, yang kemudiannya diperkembangkan menjadi Labanotasi

atau Kinetografi Laban. Bermula daripada Laban, pengetahuan, simbol dan bahan arkib Labanotasi dikemaskini dari semasa ke semasa, supaya ia lebih bersifat praktikal dan mesra penggunaan, terutamanya oleh *Dance Notation Bureau* (DNBⁱ) dan *International Council of Kinetography Laban*ⁱⁱ.

Labanotasi terdiri daripada satu koleksi simbol yang boleh menunjukkan sekurang-kurangnya maklumat pergerakan dari segi arah, aras, masa pelaksanaan dan bahagian badan yang terlibat. Arah boleh diketahui melalui bentuk simbol, aras boleh dimaklumkan melalui lorekan yang terdapat di dalam simbol, masa pelaksanaan sesuatu pergerakan boleh dikenalpastikan melalui kepanjangan simbol, manakala bahagian badan yang terlibat boleh diketahui melalui peletakan kedudukan sesuatu simbol di dalam *staff*. *Staff* yang terdiri daripada tiga garisan vertikal merupakan ‘rumah’ bagi susunan simbol, dan pembacaan *staff* adalah bermula dari bawah ke atas. Labanotasi merupakan satu bahasa tari yang rumit, tidak mesra penggunaan di kalangan umum, dan sentiasa dikaitkan dengan golongan intelektual atau status kelayakan seseorang pengamal tari lepasan ijazah peringkat pengajian tinggi.

Royce (1977) dan Kaepler (2007) masing-masing mengesahkan kepenggunaan Labanotasi dalam bidang penyelidikan etnografi tari. Mereka menghubungkan Labanotasi (sebagai pengetahuan etik yang teknikal) dengan pemahaman amalan dan makna gerak daripada perspektif emik. Kedua-duanya menggunakan Labanotasi sebagai satu kaedah saintifik yang membolehkan pengumpulan koleksi spesimen, pelaksanaan eksperimen empirikal demi memperolehi dapatan hasil yang berfakta dan berpadan dengan makna bagi sesebuah komuniti tari. Oleh itu, seseorang notator perlu mengkaji bukan sahaja amalan pergerakan, tetapi juga mendalami isi-isi tersirat yang terkandung dalam fenomena amalan pergerakan, seperti yang dicadangkan oleh Zile (2001) bahawa seseorang pencatat notasi atau notator juga merupakan seorang “sejarawan - pakar bahasa - pakar cerita rakyat (*folklorist*) - pakar muzikologi - pakar etnologi tari - pakar kesusasteraan - pakar sejarah seni - sarjana keagamaan”

(p.xviii) dalam mengendali dan memproses data kerja lapangan, kerana terlalu banyak maklumat perlu disemak secara sahah.

Wang (2012) mengesahkan faedah kepenggunaan Labanotasi di Taiwan dalam aspek pementasan-semula (*restage*) bagi repertoir-repertoir agung tari moden yang signifikan, seperti *Afternoon of the Faun* yang dihasilkan oleh Vaslav Nijinsky; *Dreams* yang dihasilkan oleh Anna Sokolow; *Air for G String* dan *Water Study* yang dihasilkan oleh Doris Humphrey. Pelajar tari di sekolah seni menengah dan institusi pengajian tinggi bukan sahaja mempelajari sejarah tari Barat melalui teori, tetapi memperolehi pengalaman mempersembahkan ciri-ciri keunikan sesebuah repertoir yang berhubung dengan gerakan liberal semasa. Di Malaysia, pementasan-semula repertoir klasik berdasarkan skor Labanotasi adalah tidak pernah diamalkan. Amalan pementasan-semula repertoir klasik biasanya dilakukan di dalam kelas sebagai latihan, serta dalam pertandingan-pertandingan balet.

Para pembaca Labanotasi boleh membayangkan imej-imej sesuatu tari tanpa batasan lokasi, dan seterusnya meningkatkan tahap apresiasi dan harapannya (*expectations*) terhadap tari tersebut. Zile (2005) dari Amerika Syarikat telah memperakui bayangan tersebut melalui pengalamannya dalam rancangan pelancongannya ke Malaysia seperti petikan tersebut.

Saya pejamkan mata dan simbol-simbol yang saya lihat pada muka surat bagi tarian di kampung pertama menjadi nyata. Saya boleh melihat para penari dengan jelas dan dapat merasai kelancaran dan kerumitan pergerakan yang dipersembahkan oleh mereka. Keputusan saya adalah senang. Saya menghantar mesej ke kenalan tempatan saya, setelah yakin bahawa skor Labanotasi telah menyediakan saya untuk menonton tari yang akan dipersembahkan, seperti saya mengenali hotel dan restoran melalui buku panduan pelancongan. (p.370)

Labanotasi adalah satu produk budaya yang berteraskan budaya tari Barat (terutamanya balet). Apabila Yoo (2007) menotasikan tari rakyat Korea, *Salp'uri ch'um*, beliau telah diminta oleh penyemak notasinya, Odette Blum supaya

menotasikan lebih banyak maklumat perincian gerak untuk memudahkan golongan pembaca yang bukan daripada latar belakang tari Korea. Ini kerana tari Korea tidak memiliki konsep gerak ‘semula-jadi’ yang sama seperti tari Barat. Dengan itu, Yoo merumuskan bahawa pemahaman Labanotasi mempunyai limitasi yang tertentu dalam menotasikan ciri-ciri ‘semula-jadi’ dalam konteks tari yang berbeza.

Perkembangan Labanotasi di Pangajian Tari Akademik

Dengan pemahaman kekuatan dan limitasi Labanotasi yang dibincangkan, peranan yang dimainkan oleh Labanotasi di dalam perkembangan tari di institusi pengajian tinggi (IPT) tempatan kini dibincangkan. Skop artikel ini hanya berfokus ke IPT yang menawarkan program pengajian tari sahaja. Saya memperolehi naratif dan data perkembangan Labanotasi ini melalui kajian sorotan literatur, kerja lapangan, serta mengadakan refleksi secara autoetnografi ke atas pengalaman sendiri sebagai seorang pengajar Labanotasi lebih daripada 15 tahun. Perkembangan Labanotasi di IPT dibincangkan dengan bertemakan faktor-faktor pendorongnya.

Faktor Pendorong 1: Penubuhan Institusi Pengajian Tinggi Tari

Pada 1980-an, pakar etnokoreologi Mohd Anis Md Nor menekankan pendekatan analisis struktural gerak dan antropologi tari sebagai satu trajektori baharu dalam penyelidikan seni tari tempatan (Nor, 2005, p.6). Beliau yang berkelulusan *Elementary* dan *Intermediate Labanotation* daripada DNB telah menerbitkan naskah-naskah mengenai tari Randai (1986) dan Zapin (1993), dengan melampirkan skor-skor Labanotasi untuk ragam dan gerak. Kedua-dua penerbitan tersebut telah memerincikan hubungan antara tari, masa/muzik dalam ruang, serta memperkenalkan Labanotasi ke dalam bidang akademik. Pada masa yang sama, penggiat seni tari Marion D’Cruz yang mempelajari Labanotasi di London dan New York, serta Mew Chang Tsing yang menerima kursus Labanotasi di *Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts* (HKAPA) turut kembali ke Malaysia.

Ketiga-tiga individu ini kemudiannya telah bertemu untuk menubuhkan program seni tari di Akademi Seni Kebangsaan pada

tahun 1994 [yang kemudiannya dikenali sebagai Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan (ASWARA) pada tahun 2006]. Labanotasi telah diterapkan ke dalam kurikulum program tari tersebut. Kumpulan perintis pengasas institusi seni tari yang penting ini kemudiannya menubuhkan program tari di Pusat Kebudayaan, Universiti Malaya (UM) pada tahun 2005. Mereka turut memasukkan Labanotasi sebagai siri kursus yang wajib. Pada tahun 2013, Labanotasi juga dijadikan sebahagian daripada kurikulum program tari yang ditawarkan oleh Fakulti Muzik dan Seni Persembahan, Universiti Pendidikan Sultan Idris (UPSI). Walaupun Labanotasi adalah kursus wajib bagi ketiga-tiga institusi itu, tahap pengajian kursus ini adalah berbeza. Pelajar tari di ASWARA dan UPSI kini hanya wajib mengambil satu kursus Labanotasi yang bertahap pengenalan sahaja, manakala pelajar tari di UM wajib lulus Labanotasi tahap pengenalan dan menengah, seiring dengan hala tuju status UM sebagai universiti penyelidikan (*research university*).

Tenaga pengajar diperlukan untuk pengajaran Labanotasi di IPT. Saya merupakan salah seorang pelatih Labanotasi yang mula mengajar pada pertengahan tahun 2000-an. Saya mula diperkenalkan kepada Labanotasi oleh Mohd Anis Md Nor semasa melanjutkan program Sarjana Seni (Seni Persembahan) di UM. Di bawah sokongan daripada beliau, Jabatan Tari UM, MyDance Alliance serta bantuan kewangan daripada Jabatan Kebudayaan & Kesenian Negera (JKKNⁱⁱⁱ), saya berpeluang menyertai kursus-kursus jangka pendek Labanotasi di *Taipei National University of the Arts* (TNUA) pada tahun 2006 dan 2007. Kedua-dua kursus ini masing-masing mengambil masa lebih kurang tiga minggu dan diarahkan oleh Wang Yunyu dan Tseng Ra-Yuen dari TNUA, serta Ilene Fox dan Sheila Marion dari DNB. Kedua-dua kursus ini telah mengumpulkan para pelatih pengajar muda Labanotasi (bukan dari segi umur, tetapi dari segi pengalaman pengajaran Labanotasi) dari Malaysia, Indonesia, Filipina, Singapura, Hong Kong dan Taiwan. Hasil daripada kursus-kursus ini, saya memperolehi kelayakan pengajar Labanotasi DNB yang bertauliah, serta menjalinkan rangkaian hubungan pengamal Labanotasi di rantau Asia.

Di antara ketiga-tiga IPT ini, saya bertanggungjawab penuh ke atas pengajaran dan pembelajaran Labanotasi di UM dari tahun 2006 sehingga ke 2018, semasa saya berkhidmat sebagai pensyarah sepenuh masa; dan saya masih mengajar secara sambilan sejak 2018 sehingga ke kini. Saya turut mengajar Labanotasi di UPSI di antara tahun 2016 sehingga ke 2018; serta di ASWARA pada tahun 2008 dan 2010. Barisan tenaga pengajar yang sedang dan pernah mengajar Labanotasi di IPT ialah Norsafini Jafar (ASWARA); Lim Siew Ling (UPSI, 2018-2019) dan Tan Chai Chen (UM). Kami sering bertukar pendapat dan maklumat dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran Labanotasi.

Di sini, saya ingin menghuraikan beberapa dapatan yang berkaitan dengan relevansi Labanotasi di pengajian tari IPT melalui tiga aspek, iaitu (1) transkripsi gerak, (2) teknik tari, dan (3) koreografi, berdasarkan testimoni terutamanya daripada Tan Chai Chen dan Norsafini Jafar (Tan, komunikasi peribadi, 31 Dis 2020; Norsafini Jafar, komunikasi peribadi, 31 Dis 2020). Dalam penulisan latihan ilmiah di kalangan calon Ijazah Sarjana Muda tari, sesetengah calon memilih menggunakan skor Labanotasi, atau deskripsi pergerakan sebagai cara penyampaian transkripsi gerak dalam menghuraikan pelbagai hubungan antara pergerakan, masa dan ruang. Dalam hal tersebut, Norsafini Jafar, Tan dan saya sering menjadi penyemak skor Labanotasi, atau penyemak deskripsi tari yang biasanya menggunakan terminologi Labanotasi. Norsafini dan Tan masing-masing telah memperakui bahawa pengetahuan dan konsep kinesiology Labanotasi memainkan peranan yang amat penting dalam menghasilkan skor atau deskripsi yang menyakinkan untuk menyokong hujahan penulisan ilmiah mereka.

Kedua-duanya turut mengenal pasti bahawa pengetahuan Labanotasi adalah membantu dalam menjelaskan pelaksanaan teknik tari, yang lebih berdasarkan kepada teknik balet. Sebagai contoh, mengetahui konsep lima kategori lompatan sememangnya memudahkan pelajar melaksanakan sesuatu lompatan hanya fokus kepada pelepasan dan pendaratan kaki, dan bukan dikelirukan oleh pergerakan kaki di ruang udara. Dalam pengajaran koreografi, kedua-duanya turut mendapati bahawa Labanotasi telah

memudahkan pengajar dari segi cara berkomunikasi, menjelaskan konsep pergerakan, serta menjanakan perbendaharaan pergerakan. Penghayatan terhadap gerak boleh ditingkatkan kerana penari mendalami kedua-dua cara pergerakan secara teknikal, serta naratif mengenai struktur pergerakannya. Lim Siew Ling, bekas pensyarah tari UPSI, menyedari kepentingan pengetahuan Labanotasi dalam membantu pelajar menjanakan perbendaharaan gerak dalam pengajaran tari kreatif (Lim, komunikasi peribadi, 08 Jan 2019).

Kepenggunaan Labanotasi di IPT masih relevan melalui aspek transkripsi gerak dalam penulisan ilmiah, serta pengajaran dan pembelajaran bagi kursus teknik tari dan koreografi. Labanotasi sebagai satu proses analisis gerak yang amat ‘cerewet’ memerlukan pemerhatian yang sangat tajam. Para pengajar Labanotasi mendapati bahawa selepas menghadapi kekecewaan dan kesusahan untuk mengenal pasti corak pergerakan dalam ruang dan masa, pelajar adalah lebih matang dan berdikari dalam mengendali dan menghayati data analisis gerak – dan itu merupakan antara satu relevansi kenapa Labanotasi masih dikekalkan di IPT, walaupun jumlah kredit dan tahap Labanotasi berubah dari semasa ke semasa dalam semakan kurikulum, berdasar perkembangan pengutamaan dan tuntutan keperluan yang berbeza IPT masing-masing.

Dalam penulisan tesis pengajian tari pasca siswazah, saya sering dijemput menjadi penyemak skor atau notator Labanotasi. Saya sering bertanya kepada mereka tentang tujuan penghasilan skor Labanotasi sedangkan kebanyakan mereka telah mentranskripsikan seluruh atau sebahagian tari ke dalam notasi yang berbentuk ilustrasi, iaitu satu siri rajah yang menunjukkan posisi-posisi penari yang ‘dibekukan’. Jawapan yang biasa saya perolehi adalah “itu cadangan daripada penyelia”. Dalam hal ini, saya memerhatikan bahawa memiliki skor Labanotasi di dalam tesis mereka menjadi satu bukti yang boleh dibanggakan, atau boleh menunjukkan tahap intelektual yang lebih tinggi – sekurang-kurangnya di kalangan penyelia mereka – tanpa melihat kepada kos dan beban usaha pengnotasian yang amat berat, serta tidak

meneliti kepada pilihan ragam atau motif tari yang hanya signifikan kepada komuniti pengamal. Saya menyokong cadangan Royce (1977) yang menggariskan bahawa hanya pergerakan yang bermakna sahaja dikenalpastikan dan dipilih untuk dimasukkan ke dalam inventori gerak kerana bukan semua pergerakan adalah berkaitan dengan tradisi tuan-punya sesuatu tari (p.68). Dengan itu, kos pengnotasian boleh dikurangkan. Keinginan memiliki skor Labanotasi di dalam tesis ini mencerminkan bahawa Labanotasi masih memiliki kedudukan yang istimewa dalam menunjukkan tahap penyelidikan dan kebijaksanaan analisis yang lebih tinggi.

Secara umumnya, penggunaan dan perkembangan Labanotasi adalah amat berkait rapat dengan pembangunan pengajian seni tari di IPT, terutamanya di ASWARA, UM dan UPSI. Kursus Labanotasi kadang-kala menimbulkan kekeliruan dengan kursus Analisis Pergerakan Laban atau LMA yang ditawarkan di sesetengah institusi. Walaupun kedua-duanya dilahirkan oleh pengasas yang sama, namun fungsi kedua-duanya adalah berbeza.

Faktor Pendorong 2: Penganjuran Persidangan Penyelidikan Tari

Persidangan akademik memangkinkan penyebaran pengenalan Labanotasi di negara ini. Pada Julai 2005, Persidangan Tari Antarabangsa Asia Pasifik atau *Asia Pacific International Dance Conference* yang pertama telah dianjurkan oleh Pusat Kebudayaan UM. Persidangan tersebut telah dihadiri oleh beberapa pembentang kertas merangkap pengamal Labanotasi yang terkemuka seperti Judy Van Zile (2005) yang menegaskan keperluan Labanotasi dalam konteks analisis struktural gerak, dokumentasi, dan pengajian tari; Wang (2005) yang menelitikan perkembangan Labanotasi di dalam konteks IPT di Taiwan; serta Ilene Fox, selaku Pengarah Eksekutif DNB semasa, yang membentangkan satu demonstrasi-kuliah *A Language of Dance*, demi menunjukkan keberkesanan penggunaan Labanotasi dalam pemeliharaan tari.

Pada tahun 2008, UM menganjurkan persidangan *25th Symposium of The ICTM^{iv} Study Group on Ethnochoreology* di Kuala Lumpur, di mana ia adalah satu-satunya persidangan yang

dibawa keluar daripada Eropah dan berlaku di Asia sejak tahun 1988. Persidangan ini tidak mempunyai kertas pembentangan yang berkaitan dengan Labanotasi secara langsung. Namun kehadiran para pakar dan pengamal analisis struktural gerak yang terkenal seperti Adrienne L. Kaeppler, Egil Bakka, Mohd Anis Md Nor dan lain-lain lagi telah menunjukkan keberkesanan skor Labanotasi dan kepenggunaan terminologi Labanotasi dalam menyampaikan dapatan mereka secara analitik dan kritikal. Tan Shioa Por, seorang pelajar tahun 2 program tari UM semasa itu mengingati kembali persidangan tersebut dan menyatakan: “Pertama kali saya berasa semua orang mengenali Labanotasi dan boleh berkomunikasi melalui skor atau terminologi.” (Tan, komunikasi peribadi, 2 Ogos 2020)

Persidangan-persidangan akademik tari sebegini terus dianjurkan oleh IPT yang berbeza, yang lazimnya melibatkan input pengelolaan daripada Mohd Anis Md Nor. Antaranya adalah *Asia Pacific International Dance Conference* kedua di Kuala Lumpur (2011); *International Symposium of Ethnomusicology and Ethnochoreology* di Kuala Lumpur (2012); *International Conference on Dance Education* yang pertama di Kuala Lumpur (2014); *The 4th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia* di Penang (2016); *The 4th Symposium of the ICTM Study Group on Performing Arts of Southeast Asia* di Sabah (2016); serta *The 2nd International Conference on Dance Education* di Kuala Lumpur (2018). Persidangan-persidangan kemudian ini tidak mendatangkan impak yang tinggi dalam mempromosikan Labanotasi secara langsung, disebabkan tema persidangan dan trajektori penyelidikan yang kurang menyentuh kepada analisis struktural gerak dan dokumentasi tari. Namun, pengetahuan Labanotasi dan Analisis Pergerakan Laban tetap didengari sama ada di dalam atau di luar daripada sesi pembentangan.

Faktor Pendorong 3: Penerbitan Naskah Akademik

Notasi adalah sesuatu yang perlu dalam usaha pemeliharaan dan pelestarian tari yang lazimnya diwariskan secara lisan. Skor Labanotasi adalah sangat terhad di Malaysia, dan biasanya ia

diterbitkan oleh syarikat penerbitan akademik sahaja. Mohd Anis Md Nor (1998, 1993 & 1986) merupakan notator yang produktif menghasilkan skor Labanotasi. Skor Labanotasi dalam kedua-dua penerbitan Nor (1986 & 1993) adalah dilakarkan dengan lukisan tangan, dan peta petunjuk simbol dilampirkan untuk memudahkan pembacaan. Skor muzik yang berkaitan turut dilampirkan.

Mohd Anis Md Nor (1986) telah menotasikan 11 ragam gerak Randai, seperti Jahit Sangkuek, Alang Tabang dan lain-lain lagi dengan bersertakan pelan pola lantai yang berkaitan. Mohd Anis Md Nor (1993) juga menghurai dan mengukur perbezaan gerak antara Zapin Melayu dan Zapin kontemporari melalui skor-skor Labanotasi. Selain daripada penghasilan skor, Nor turut mendeskripsikan gerak Zapin dengan menggunakan sistem terminologi Labanotasi, untuk menghubungkan antara pelaksanaan gerak dengan nama ragam atau alam Melayu. Contoh pengungkapan deskripsi ragam 'Brek' seperti berikut bukan sahaja mewajarkan nama ragam, tetapi juga menerangkan sikap fizikal badan yang diperlukan.

The brek (brakes/braking steps) dance motive involves brake-like steps after the first count of the first dance phrase. Instead of stepping into 'forward middle' on the left foot on the second count, the dancer steps into 'forward low' with the knees bent forward. He follows this by making a backward step on the right foot on the third count and lifting the left leg on the fourth count. The leg movements on the second and third counts of the dance phrase arrest or retard the forward motion of the body. Hence the term 'brek', derived from the English word 'brake'. In the second dance phrase of the brek motive, the dancer performs the gerak asas in a small semicircular path to the right to face in the opposite direction. The same dance phrases are repeated in the third and fourth measures to bring the dancer back to his or her initial place on the dance floor. (p.77).

ASEAN Committee on Cultural and Information pada tahun 1998 telah menerbitkan sebuah buku untuk memperkenalkan

pelbagai tari di negara-negara Asia Tenggara. Di dalam bab Malaysia, tari-tari Malaysia diterangkan mengikut kategori, iaitu tari rakyat Melayu, tari istana, tari di Sabah, tari di Sarawak, tari kreatif dan tari kontemporari. Salah sebuah tari yang diperkenalkan adalah Asyik, satu tarian istana negeri Kelantan yang lazimnya dipersembahkan di dalam posisi duduk, dan hanya berjalan dengan cara gaya yang spesifik apabila ingin bertukar tempat kedudukan, masuk dan keluar dari ruang persembahan – Ragam Berjalan Masuk dan Duduk Sembah, bersertakan pola lantai yang berkaitan telah ditranskripsikan melalui skor Labanotasi.

Sasaran pembaca skor Labanotasi tari Melayu adalah khusus. Penerbitan sebegini sememangnya berupaya menarik perhatian daripada para peminat tari Melayu yang lazimnya terdiri daripada penari, koreografer, pelajar, pengamal, ahli akademik, dan pengulas/pengkritik seni persembahan. Naskah-naskah tersebut bukan sahaja dijadikan rujukan yang penting dalam penerokaan kaedah analisis struktural pergerakan, tetapi juga sebagai rujukan dalam pembinaan dan perbincangan wacana ilmiah dalam penyelidikan seni tari. Penerbitan sebegini dipercayai telah mengukuhkan penggunaan Labanotasi di kalangan pelajar program tari di IPT yang boleh akses kepada Labanotasi. Penerbitan sebegini memperkenalkan bagaimana rupa dan bentuknya Labanotasi kepada golongan peminat seni tari Melayu yang umum, sedangkan bukan semua naskah melampirkan peta petunjuk, penerangan simbol-simbol yang berkaitan dan panduan penggunaan yang lengkap.

Faktor 4: Peranan SEAMEO SPAFA

Southeast Asian Regional Centre for Archaeology and Fine Arts (SPAFA^v) merupakan satu organisasi antarabangsa di bawah pernaungan *Southeast Asian Ministers of Education Organization* (SEAMEO). SPAFA yang diasaskan oleh pihak kerajaan Negara Thai pada tahun 1985 bertujuan untuk mengerat hubungan kerjasama dalam bidang pendidikan, sains dan budaya di kalangan negara-negara Asia Tenggara, dan ingin menjadi satu pusat sumber rujukan dalam bidang arkeologi dan seni halus yang berwibawa. Sejak akhir tahun 1980-an, Labanotasi telah dipilih sebagai salah

satu kaedah untuk pemeliharaan dan pelestarian warisan tari di rantau Asia Tenggara. Untuk mempromosi Labanotasi sebagai satu kaedah transkripsi tari yang penting di Asia Tenggara, SPAFA telah menganjurkan pelbagai bengkel Labanotasi yang disertai oleh negara-negara di Asia Tenggara (Rujuk Jadual 1). SPAFA pernah menawarkan tiga jenis kursus Labanotasi, iaitu tahap pengenalan, menengah dan tinggi masing-masing untuk golongan sasaran daripada pelatih, penggiat seni tari dan pengajar seni tari, sehingga ke kumpulan penyelidik seni tari merangkap pengguna notasi yang mahir dan berminat dalam analisis struktural gerak dan dokumentasi.

Sesi Tahun	Kursus	Bilangan Peserta mengikut Kewarganegaraan
1986/ 1987	<i>Training Course in The Technique of Labanotation and Its Implementation for Teachers and Trainers of The Performing Arts.</i> (Labanotasi tahap pengenalan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Filipina (2 peserta) ● Indonesia (3 peserta) ● Negara Thai (3 peserta)
1988/ 1989	<i>Training Course in The Technique of Labanotation and Its Implementation for Teachers and Trainers of The Performing Arts.</i> (Labanotasi tahap pengenalan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Filipina (2 peserta) ● Indonesia (3 peserta) ● Malaysia (1 peserta): Azanin Ahmad ● Singapura (2 peserta) ● Negara Thai (2 peserta)

<p>1990/ 1991</p>	<p><i>Intermediate Level Training Course in The Technique of Labanotation and Its Implementation for Teachers and Trainers of The Performing Arts.</i> (Labanotasi tahap menengah)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Filipina (2 peserta) ● Indonesia (2 peserta) ● Malaysia (1 peserta): Sharifah Mahani Syed Kassim ● Negara Thai (2 peserta) ● Singapura (2 peserta)
<p>1992/ 1993</p>	<p><i>Training Course on Advanced level Technique of Labanotation.</i> (Labanotasi tahap tinggi)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brunei Darussalam (1 peserta) ● Filipina (1 peserta) ● Indonesia (1 peserta) ● Malaysia (2 peserta): Abdul Rahim Mokhtar, [Pemerhati: Mohd Anis Md Nor] ● Negara Thai (2 peserta) ● Singapura (1 peserta)

Jadual 1: Senarai kursus Labanotasi anjuran SPAFA dan bilangan pesertanya
(Disusun berdasarkan data daripada senarai alumni SPAFA)

Selain daripada menyalurkan pengetahuan Labanotasi kepada peserta, SPAFA turut mementingkan implementasi yang praktikal berdasarkan konteks bentuk dan budaya tari negara masing-masing demi meningkatkan peranan Labanotasi dalam pemeliharaan dan promosi tari negara masing-masing. Kursus-kursus latihan ini membekalkan satu platform untuk meningkatkan kemahiran penggunaan Labanotasi untuk tari-tari Asia Tenggara serta membina rangkaian untuk pengamal notasi di rantau ini. Peserta Malaysia yang pernah menyertai kursus-kursus ini ialah Azanin Ahmad (sesi tahun 1988/1989), Sharifah Mahani Syed Kassim (sesi tahun 1990/1991) dan Abdul Rahim Mokhtar (sesi

tahun 1992/1993). Ketiga-tiga peserta tersebut tidak memainkan peranan yang signifikan di dalam mempromosikan pengetahuan Labanotasi kemudian, dan lebih fokus dalam pembangunan kerjaya di dalam industri seni persembahan masing-masing. Mohd Anis Md Nor yang hadir pada sesi tahun 1992/1993 selaku pemerhati masih bergiat aktif dalam akademik tari.

Satu laporan telah dicetak untuk menunjukkan hasil daripada bengkel *Training Course on Advanced Level Technique of Labanotation* yang telah dilangsungkan pada 16 April – 13 Mei 1993 di Bangkok, Thailand. Laporan tersebut memaparkan skor-skor Labanotasi yang mentranskripsikan repertoir tari tradisional (Rujuk Jadual 2). Skor-skor ini telah disemak oleh pakar-pakar Labanotasi yang bertauliah dan telah dibetulkan. Latar belakang, karekteristik gerak, kostum, peralatan dan muzik yang berkaitan turut diterangkan. Dalam tari Malaysia, Mohd Anis Md Nor telah menotasikan dua ragam daripada tarian Asyek (atau Asyik), manakala Abdul Rahim Mokhtar telah menotasikan repertoir tari Kuda Kepang yang pendek (22 *measures* atau bar). Laporan tersebut tidak diterbitkan secara rasmi, dan naskah tersebut hanya dapat diakses oleh peserta-peserta yang terlibat.

Bil.	Repertoir	Notator (Tahun Pengnotasian)	Penyemak
1.	Samalindang: Satu tari tradisional Brunei	Jeffree Haji Md Kassim (Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman, Ilene Fox
2.	Klana Topeng Gagah Gaya Yogyakarta: Satu tari klasikal Jawa	Arif Eko Suprihono (Mei 1986, disemak semula Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman, Ilene Fox

3.	Asyek: Satu tari tradisional Malaysia	Mohd Anis Md Nor (Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman
4.	Kuda Kepang: Satu tari rakyat Malaysia	Abdul Rahim Mokhtar (Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman, Ilene Fox
5.	Ragragsakan: Satu tari suku kaum Fipilina	Larry Gabao (March 1991, disemak semula Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman, Judy Van Zile, Zhang Ling-Ling, Ilene Fox
6.	Yapong: Satu tari adaptasi untuk "Ramayana".	Lee Yen Hoe (March 1991, disemak semula Mei 1993)	Zhang Ling-Ling, Luo Bing-Yu
7.	Fontien: Satu tari tradisional Negara Thai.	Usa Sobrerck (March 1991, disemak semula Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman, Ilene Fox
8.	Baht-Sakunee: Satu tari tradisional Negara Thai.	Chommanad Kijkhun (March 1991, disemak semula Mei 1993)	Rhonda Ryman, Ilene Fox

Jadual 2: Senarai repertoir, notator dan penyemak notasi (SPAFA,1993)

Peranan SAEMEO SPAFA yang pernah menggalakkan interaksi, pemeliharaan dan pelestarian seni tari melalui Labanotasi kini tidak aktif lagi. Dengan menelitikan kepada aktiviti-aktiviti anjuran SPAFA sejak pertengahan tahun 1990-an, penekanan lebih diberikan kepada pembangunan bukan seni persembahan seperti

pemuziuman, komunikasi, interculturalisme, kebeliaan, penukaran iklim, arkeologi dan lain-lain lagi. SPAFA pernah memainkan peranan yang sederhana dalam mempromosikan pengetahuan Labanotasi di rantau ini.

Faktor Pendorong 5: Peranan Koreografer atau Pengajar

Saya mula didedahkan kepada notasi yang mudah seperti manusia lidi dan pelan pola lantai oleh Anthony Meh Kim Chuan, pengasas/koreografer Dua Space Dance Theatre yang berkelulusan daripada HKAPA yang pernah mempelajari Labanotasi. Dalam proses pengkaryaan, walaupun beliau tidak menggunakan sebarang simbol atau terminologi Labanotasi, namun beliau pernah memperakui bahawa Labanotasi telah menajamkan pemerhatian dan memperkukuhkan penerangannya. Marion D’Cruz sebagai pensyarah tari ASWARA memperakui bahawa pengetahuan Labanotasi diaplikasikan ke dalam pengajaran kelas improvisasi dan komposisinya (D’Cruz, 19 Nov 2012), manakala Azura Abal Abas mengesahkan kepentingan Labanotasi semasa beliau menyelaraskan pembangunan modul-modul seni tari untuk JKKN (Azura Abal Abas, komunikasi peribadi, 20 Julai 2019). Lim Shin Hui pula mendapati bahawa penggunaan pengetahuan Labanotasi dalam mengajar tari kreatif kepada kanak-kanak pelarian Myanmar boleh mengatasi halangan dari segi penyampaian bahasa (Lim, 2017).

Saya mempercayai bahawa penyebaran Labanotasi daripada koreografer atau pengajar tari ini adalah minimal. Walau bagaimanapun, aplikasi pengetahuan Labanotasi yang terus dilangsungkan di dalam pengendalian kelas mereka boleh mempengaruhi pemikiran pelajar mereka tentang notasi tari – walaupun dalam bentuk yang mudah dan kadar yang minimal, tetapi ia adalah sangat praktikal. Saya dan Tan merupakan contoh pelajar yang dimanfaatkan daripada koreografer atau pengajar tari kami dalam mengenali kepentingan notasi – perakuan ini lebih menyakinkan relevansi Labanotasi pada zaman ini.

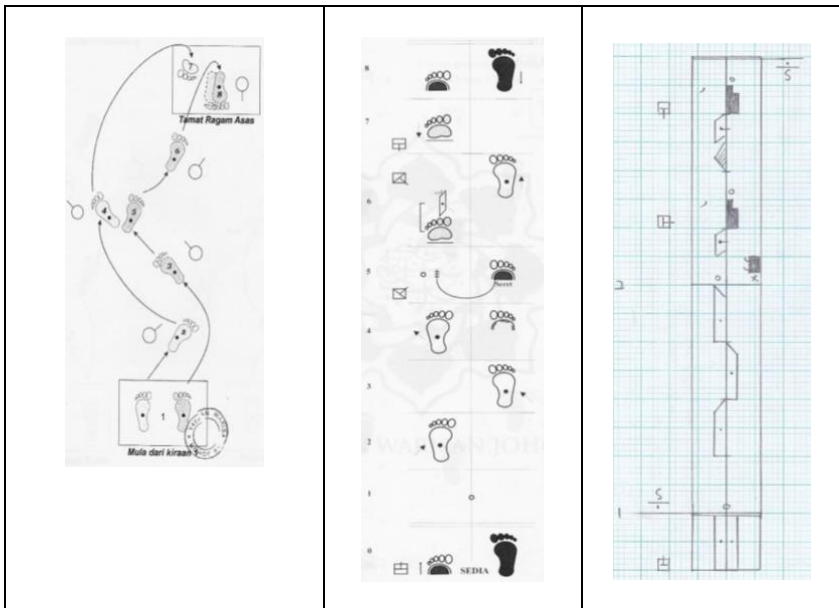
Faktor 6: Adaptasi Pengetahuan Labanotasi oleh Yayasan Warisan Johor

Satu fenomena dalam penyebaran pengetahuan Labanotasi adalah melalui Yayasan Warisan Johor (YWJ^{vi}), yang mengangkat Zapin dijadikan satu kegiatan yang boleh memartabatkan semangat kenegerian Johor. YWJ membangunkan dua sistem notasi yang tersendiri untuk mentranskripsikan Zapin, iaitu Notasi Tapak yang diasaskan pada akhir 1990-an dan Notasi Vertikal yang diasaskan sejak akhir 2000-an. Skor Notasi Tapak telah dijadikan rujukan penting bagi kejurulatihan, pengajaran dan pembelajaran. Manakala Notasi Vertikal yang sedang dibangunkan berniat untuk menyebarkan seni Zapin ke peringkat antarabangsa. Penciptaan konsep dan pembentukan kedua-dua sistem notasi ini dipantau dan direalisasikan oleh karyawan tamu semasa, Mohd Anis Md Nor, demi menyempurnakan program pemugaran Zapin (Mohd Anis Md Nor, 2014). Kedua-dua sistem notasi YWJ ini dibangunkan secara berperingkat.

Dalam mengasaskan Notasi Vertikal, kakitangan YWJ perlu menguasai pengetahuan Labanotasi sebelum mereka mampu meminjam dan mengadaptasikan simbol dan terminologi Labanotasi, untuk memudahkan penggunaan sistem notasi ciptaan mereka. Walaupun hampir kesemua ragam Zapin yang diselidik telah ditranskripsikan ke dalam bentuk Notasi Vertikal, namun ia belum diterbitkan secara rasmi kerana masih dalam peringkat percubaan ke atas keberkesanannya, dan pemurnian susulannya sedang dilakukan. Skor Notasi Tapak, Notasi Vertikal dan Labanotasi bagi satu ragam Zapin yang sama ditunjukkan di dalam Rajah 1a, 1b dan 1c. Seperti Labanotasi, sistem Notasi Tapak dan Notasi Vertikal turut ingin melengkapkan sesuatu notasi tari dengan hanya menggunakan simbol sahaja untuk memaklumkan arah (melalui anak panah), aras (melalui lorekan dalam simbol kaki), masa (masing-masing melalui angka dan petak yang tersusun), bahagian badan yang melaksanakan pergerakan (melalui bentuk tapak), serta mengamalkan pembacaan dari bawah ke atas. Diperhatikan bahawa terdapat banyak simbol telah dipinjam daripada Labanotasi di skor Notasi Vertikal seperti tanda depan (*front sign*), tanda bertahan (*hold sign*), pin, lengkungan sentuhan (*contact bow*) dan tanda pergelangan kaki. Bentuk simbol telah

diubahsuaikan supaya tidak berkelihatan seperti lakaran geometri atau arkitek.

Peminjaman dan adaptasi Labanotasi ini adalah salah satu tindakan yang signifikan dalam memindahkan pengetahuan Labanotasi daripada domain akademik ke golongan umum, walaupun bukan dalam bentuk Labanotasi yang asli. Fenomena tersebut turut menunjukkan tahap kebijaksanaan dan fleksibiliti pengamal tari Melayu yang tinggi demi meneruskan keberlangsungan sesuatu warisan budaya lisan, serta menawarkan satu alternatif dalam bidang dokumentasi, pedagogi, penyelidikan dan promosi tari rakyat Melayu.



Rajah 1a: Skor Notasi Tapak bagi Ragam Asas, Zapin Melayu Johor (YWJ, n.d., p.1)

Rajah 1b: Skor Notasi Vertikal bagi Ragam Asas, Zapin Melayu Johor (Zamzam & Leng, n.d., p.17)

Rajah 1c: Skor Labanotasi bagi Ragam Asas, Zapin Melayu Johor (Sumber: Koleksi peribadi)

Rumusan dan Pemerhatian Lanjutan

Perkembangan Labanotasi telah dibincangkan secara bertema berdasarkan faktor-faktor pendorongnya, serta tahap impak yang berbeza. Daripada penggunaan hanya di dalam domain akademik, pengetahuan Labanotasi kini telah dipinjam dan diadaptasikan melalui YWJ. Mengetahui perkembangan Labanotasi adalah penting dalam mengisi satu kekosongan dalam sejarah pengajian tari tempatan yang biasanya lebih mementingkan struktur dan bentuk sesuatu genre tari, tetapi bukan kepada kaedah analisis gerak yang sememangnya sedang digunakan. Suara atau peranan daripada agensi Labanotasi masih tidak tercatat di dalam arus penyelidikan pengajian tari tempatan. Artikel ini bukan sahaja ingin menghargai peranan dan pengamal Labanotasi dalam aspek penginstitutionan dokumentasi dan promosi warisan seni tari, malah juga menerangkan relevansi kewujudan Labanotasi terutamanya di peringkat IPT yang menawarkan satu kaedah alternatif pengajaran dan pembelajaran bagi transkripsi gerak, teknik tari, dan koreografi tari. Dalam perkara tersebut, Mohd Anis Md Nor merupakan individu yang amat penting dalam gerakan penggunaan Labanotasi.

Wacana perkembangan Labanotasi ini turut menjanakan satu pemerhatian yang baharu, iaitu fenomena kewujudan sistem notasi tidak formal yang khas dicipta dan digunakan oleh sesetengah komuniti pengamal tari, demi melangsungkan warisan tari masing-masing – ini bukan hanya merujuk kepada pihak YWJ yang ‘memesrakan’ Labanotasi, tetapi lebih merujuk kepada mereka yang telah lama berusaha dalam transkripsi tari dengan cara yang tersendiri melalui grafik kegemaran sendiri. Sumbangan dan hasil daripada golongan akar umbi tersebut juga masih belum dicatatkan dalam konteks penyelidikan tari tempatan.

Pernah saya bertanya kepada Marion D’Cruz tentang apakah faedah mempelajari Labanotasi? Beliau menjawab: “Untuk mengenali siapa itu Rudolf Laban dan kebijaksanaannya, dan seterusnya menginspirasi kita semua sebagai pengamal dan pengajar seni tari berani membentangkan budaya tari kita sendiri dengan cara kita yang tersendiri”. Walaupun saya bersetuju bahawa Labanotasi bukan satu-satu cara yang mutlak untuk

transkripsi tari, namun saya mencadangkan bahawa Labanotasi adalah salah satu asas teori pengetahuan yang amat penting dalam membangunkan pelbagai kecerdasan melalui pemerhatian, pencatatan, perbahasan, pengkaryaan dan pengamalan warisan dan kreativiti tari – dan ini merupakan perkara-perkara yang merelevankan penerusan Labanotasi, terutamanya di peringkat pengajian tinggi.

ⁱ <http://dancenotation.org/>

ⁱⁱ <http://ickl.org/>

ⁱⁱⁱ <http://www.jkkn.gov.my/>

^{iv} <http://ictmusic.org/>

^v <http://www.seameo-spafa.org/>

^{vi} <http://www.ywj.gov.my/>

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**The Use of Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR) on
Ameliorating Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) of Piano
Students: An Exploratory Case Study**

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Abstract

Music Performance Anxiety (MPA) is an experience of constant nervousness associated with musical performance abilities in public setting. This challenge was often encountered by performers and it is difficult to be resolved. This study aims to apply Progressive Muscle Relaxation (PMR), a relaxation training method which can reduce an individual's stress and tension of body muscles as well as mind, to overcome MPA issues among undergraduate piano students. Three undergraduate piano students were recruited for this qualitative study. All participants were involved in the treatment for the duration of seven weeks. The data were collected through semi-structured interviews and self-reflective diary study, while interviews were conducted before and after intervention. All participants were required to report their experiences in the form of self-reflective diaries writing during treatment. Both the interviews' transcripts and participants' self-reflective diaries were coded and thematized. The results indicated that PMR has treatment effects on alleviating MPA level of all participants. The findings evidenced that PMR is an effective technique in lowering both physiological and cognitive symptoms of MPA. The implications of this study suggest that performers can employ PMR technique to enhance their music performance abilities by reducing their MPA.

Keywords: music performance anxiety, progressive muscle relaxation, undergraduate piano students

Introduction

Music performance anxiety (MPA) has been widely recognized as a common performance problem experienced by musicians and performers in variety of disciplines such as dancers and public speakers (Kenny, 2011). MPA is a feeling of constant distressful nervousness associated with musical performance (Barlow, 2002). It interrupts a performer's mental states which is stage fear and anxious in front of crowds, concerning of judgement from others and memory insecurity. From professional performers to amateur students, they endure different degree of anxiety prior to the performance or during the performance (Spielman, 2009). In this scenario, it can steal the enjoyment of the performance and replacing it with dread and stress. Hence, it seems that individuals suffer from MPA regardless of the music performance situation such as an academic recital, a professional audition or a performance on the stage (Salmon & Meyer, 1992).

MPA can affect a musician's bright future over its prevalence because an extreme degree of MPA can result in deterioration of performance abilities (Yoshie et al., 2009). There were several research regarding MPA conducted by Spielman (2009) and Plaut (1990), the results showed that MPA has a significant effect on the music performers. Music performers encounter some level of apprehension when they become the centre of attention. Kokotsaki and Davidson (2003) also mentioned that MPA troubles musicians at all stages, including music specialist, amateur or music students. Due to the musical and mental effect that MPA brings to music students, an appropriate solution on this issue is certainly worthy of attention.

In order to reduce MPA among music students, many therapies and treatments have been developed to manage stress and mitigate the impact of MPA (Brodsky, 1996). Various interventions to reduce MPA include muscle relaxation training, desensitization, biofeedback, Alexander technique, cognitive-behavioural therapy, meditation, yoga, hypnosis and drug therapy. Although these interventions were proved to be effective in reducing MPA level,

the effectiveness in reducing both physiological and psychological symptoms of MPA from these interventions were not entirely satisfying. According to Harvey (1995), one of the most common interventions recommended by school psychologists and other professionals for reducing anxiety is relaxation. Hence, this study introduced an advanced version of relaxation technique, progressive muscle relaxation whereby there are limited research discussed on this intervention.

Progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) is a muscle relaxation technique that based on the repetition of tension and relaxation in different body parts. It is beneficial in minimizing the manifestations of performance anxiety. There were several research regarding the effect of PMR on reducing stress of the breast cancer patients (Sheikh Abumasoudi et al., 2015), prostate cancer patients (Mohamad Rodi Isa et al., 2013) and nurses (Palak Patel et al., 2015). These studies proved that PMR possesses positive effect on reducing anxiety.

Although numerous studies on overcoming MPA issue among musicians and effects on PMR on different sectors had been done over years, there were insufficient studies on utilizing PMR method in overcoming MPA. In most of the previous study, PMR method was being used in other contexts instead of focusing on undergraduate pianists who are experiencing the difficulty on MPA. Further, the research on MPA was mostly analysed statistically, this research intends to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' MPA and PMR experiences through qualitative data inquiry. Additionally, there were limited research focusing on the population of undergraduate pianists, who had limited performing experiences compared to professional pianists. Hence, to investigate the relationship between the PMR method and the stimulus effect on MPA problem among undergraduate piano students become a pivotal task.

Undergraduate piano students often encounter difficulties upon dealing with audiences and jurors during performances, juries, and auditions. Stress, fear, and anxiety conquered their minds during performance. This can lead to feeling helpless,

depressed, and resulted in giving up on stage performances. Therefore, observation is needed to examine the participants' anxiety states and how they respond when facing difficulties when performing in public.

This study aims to investigate the experiences of applying PMR in overcoming the MPA issue among undergraduate piano students. Besides, this study also intends to examine the students' experiences of applying PMR in their daily piano practice. The research questions of this study are as follows:

1. What is the experience of progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) in overcoming the music performance anxiety (MPA) issue among undergraduate piano students?
2. What is the experience of progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) in piano practice among undergraduate piano students?

Through this study, the researchers aim to obtain a deeper understanding on the effect of PMR treatment in overcoming MPA during performance. PMR method is suitable to be applied to all pianists who wish to improve their MPA problem during performances and improve their piano playing skills in terms of the quality of practicing their piano practice. Thus, this study provides a new insight into the music psychology, which is the inner world of pianist, PMR is introduced as an effective pathway of minimizing the issue of MPA among pianists both physically and mentally.

Music Performance Anxiety

According to Kenny (2004), MPA can be defined as “the experience of constant, distressing apprehension and its real impedance of performance abilities in a public setting, to a degree unjustified given the individual's inclination, training, and level of preparation” (Kenny et al., 2004). Some researches argue that MPA is a form of social anxiety disorder and the definition of it was inconsistent. However, Kenny (2016) presented the idea that MPA is not considered as a social anxiety disorder. In a recent study, Wiedemann et al. (2021) had proven that MPA is different than social anxiety disorder even though there were some similar

characteristics.

There are some types of anxiety that distract a performer's mind such as being judged and worrying about failure. Performers can encounter serious anxiety during a performance that involves judges, audiences, grades, and employment. MPA is recognized when the symptoms of apprehension become intense to a level that affect performer's health and satisfaction in terms of physical and psychological.

The Yerkes-Dodson Curve theory illustrates the effect of anxiety on a performer. As shown in Figure 1, when the performer's anxiety increases, the performance is more successful until it reaches the optimal point. After this point is reached, the rising of anxiety will lead to the impaired performance (Lehmann et al., 2007). However, a low arousal can cause a flat and dull performance which is not attractive. Conversely, when arousal level exceeds optimal level, these results the performer in suffering strong anxiety.

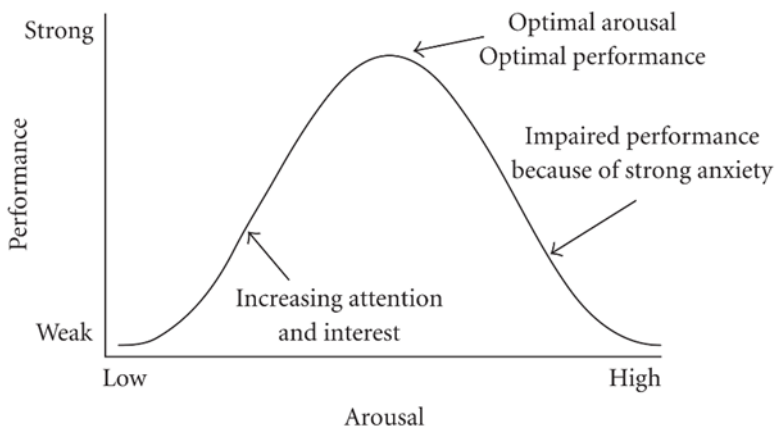


Figure 1: The Yerkes-Dodson Curve

Andrew Steptoe (1982) mentioned that the Yerkes-Dodson Curve can be applied to music performance setting. From the data of his study, it was noticed that performances associated with moderate anxiety is the most successful as compared to performances associated with lower and higher anxiety. This supports the Yerkes-Dodson Curve theory that a performer with normal anxiety level can bring positive impact to the performance.

MPA can lead to failure of musical performances of musicians when they perform on the stage, it is identified as one of the psychological factors that can inevitably prompt a series of cognitive, physical, behavioural and psychological issues (Papageorgi et al., 2011). Depending on the intensity level of these symptoms interfering with the performance, MPA appears to have different origins and meanings.

As the MPA can bring negative effects to the performers, many researches have been conducted in order to treat performer's MPA. The interventions include cognitive behavioural therapy, virtual reality exposure, biofeedback, Alexander technique, yoga, meditation and others (Burin & Osorio, 2016). In the same study, it was evident that not all of the interventions obtain positive findings in MPA reduction.

Alexander Technique is a series of training of body movement developed by F. Mathias Alexander with the purpose of keeping relaxed during the time of nervous and panic. Alexander realised that many problems of individual came from habit and he experienced muscles tension when performing on stage. Once the habit is formed, it can take twice longer time to break the habit. Hence, Alexander suggests the breaking of bad habit method and creating a new proper habit. However, Alexander Technique is not recommended for higher stress performance conditions such as jury, music audition and recital (Valentine et al., 1995).

Furthermore, cognitive-behavioural therapy was also introduced to solve the MPA issues. This therapy works through internal dialogue by replacing the negative thoughts with positive thoughts. According to the research conducted by Steptoe (1989), it was found that the musician group with cognitive-behavioural

therapy has an obvious improvement in MPA. Nevertheless, this therapy demands high commitment from the musicians and it was difficult to sustain. Musicians had to attend regularly on 18 therapy sessions and some additional work from the therapy which was time consuming.

Although it is believed that these methods can reduce the MPA level among performers, but there are some limitations and weaknesses. Thus, PMR has been proposed in this study in order to investigate its effectiveness on the treatment of MPA among undergraduate piano students.

Progressive Muscle Relaxation

PMR is a technique introduced by Edmund Jacobson (1938) which involves the muscle tension and subsequent relaxation, then an individual will be able to recognise the feeling of tensed muscle and alleviate the stress of certain muscle. Jacobson suggests a control of relaxation therapy that progressively shortening of muscle fibres sequentially, an individual will retain only the lowest stress and tension required for each activity eventually. This is also known as “differential relaxation” theory (Jacobson, 1938). According to Barker (1991), Jacobson the pioneer of PMR approach, stated that relaxation is dependent upon awareness of body state. When employing this approach, the participant is trained to contract and release each major muscle group in the body in an ordered way to achieve complete relaxation of the body.

In the procedure of PMR, each muscle group is required to tense to an exaggerated degree which may even result in torment and discomfort. The muscle group is then relaxed completely once the discomfort and painful feeling has reached the muscle group. The most significant feature of this practice is that the muscles will become more relax than normal level after an intense stress is executed to the particular muscles. This exercise illustrates what is often a rule of physiology; when a muscle is tensed to an extreme degree, it will release the tension to the hilt and that is the natural reflex (Bernstein & Borkovec, 1973).

There were limited studies on implementing PMR to reduce the MPA level. Huang et al. (2021) discovered nine self-managed strategies in coping MPA among music students were self-talk, accepting mistakes, mental and visual rehearsal, contrived performance situation, breathing and muscle relaxation, physical activities, absorbing activities, diet, and cognitive restructuring. Although PMR is a form of breathing and muscle relaxation, the students did not have proper instruction or training on PMR.

Kim (2008) implemented music-assisted PMR to reduce pianists' MPA; the findings demonstrated it was highly successful in reducing MPA. Similarly, Grishman (1989) used modified Jacobsonian progressive muscular relaxation in order to test its effectiveness on reducing physiological, cognitive, and behavioral symptoms of MPA. This research also examined which types of symptoms would be effectively alleviated by PMR training. Based on the research, the treatment group displayed a lower state of cognitive anxiety in the post test after receiving 6 sessions of modified PMR training.

A study was carried out to evaluate the efficiency of PMR on managing the stress among nurses by Palak Patel (2015). There were 30 staff nurses involved in this study. The findings of the experiment discovered that PMR is an effective way in the relaxation of the staff nurses and there was a great improvement in anxiety after the PMR treatment.

In conclusion, there are various research regarding the effects of PMR on managing stress and anxiety in different fields. These studies had indicated that PMR is an effective method on reducing stress level among people. However, there was limited study on the effectiveness of PMR on MPA, especially in the use qualitative method.

Methodology

This study adopted the exploratory case study approach to understand the students experience of MPA and PMR. According to Travers (2001), the qualitative data was evident to be more worldly and powerful towards the community. Case study allows

an in-depth investigation and exploration in using PMR as a technique to alleviate MPA issue among undergraduate piano students.

Three participants were involved in this study. They were undergraduate music students from the Music Department of University of Malaya who are majoring in piano. All of the participants had no prior experience in incorporating progressive muscle relaxation with their performance and practice. Three of them were observed individually on the effectiveness of progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) treatment towards their improvements on MPA.

Progressive muscle relaxation training script (Appendix A) were provided and explained to the participants. The semi-structured interviews were conducted before and after the intervention of PMR. The participants were required to write a daily self-reflective diary during the intervention.

All participants received the PMR treatment within a period of seven weeks and were instructed to do their daily practice according to the training procedure before each piano practice. All the participants had to practice the PMR training procedure with a minimum of 10-15 minutes each time so that they could recognize the feeling on relaxing muscles from all parts of the body and they would probably apply them into piano practice to relax the muscles. The training procedures are as below:

1. Relax the overall of the body
2. Take a slow and deep breath
3. Tense the particular muscle groups of the body up to 4 counts under speed 54 per beat (Using metronome for the counts)
4. Release the stress and tension and exhale.

As the tension flowed up, they would feel the muscles became loose from the top to the bottom of the body. The muscles involved were forehead, neck and shoulders, stomach, arms, hand, followed by leg and foot.

Data Collection Procedure

In this research, semi-structured interviews were conducted. The processes of interview sessions were recorded in both video and audio forms thus the data was captured more effectively for both data analysis and textual interpretation.

Researcher observed the participants during the virtual online performance after the intervention through video recordings. Besides, the participants were assigned to write their self-reflective diaries after they conducted the treatment at home or practice room. The purpose of self-reflective diary study method was to ensure the participants applied the techniques of relaxation accurately during the home practice session. In addition, self-reflective diary was aimed to motivate the participants to practice the relaxation techniques regularly.

The participants completed the self-reports on their feelings and thoughts during the treatment by writing down in a self-reflective diary book after the daily practice session. The self-reflective diaries were collected by the researcher at the end of the treatment week. These were served as the data of self-reflective diary study for later analysis.

Due to Movement Control Order (MCO) from Covid-19 pandemic, Malaysian government announced that all university courses to be conducted online, students were prohibited to go back university. Therefore, a virtual online piano performance with the presence of few audiences was conducted through Zoom meeting on April 26, 2020 for the participants after the intervention to replace the physical performance. The purpose of virtual performance was to put participants to feel the real performance circumstance with audiences and their anxiety levels were observed by the researcher through video recording. Post-interview session with all participants were conducted immediately after the virtual performance to collect more accurate data from their fresh memories towards the performance. Their anxiety levels and thoughts were being described as well as recorded by the researcher.

Data Analysis Procedure

In this study, the contents of participants' responses to both pre-interview and post-interview were transcribed into words from audio recordings and interview notes recorded by researcher. After that, data coding was employed to analyze the data of both interviews and self-reflective diaries. According to Creswell (2007), coding is a process of fragmenting and classifying the text to form explanations and thus the comprehensive themes are identified in the data. After the process of coding and categorization, the researcher analyzed the emerging themes from the data collected from interviews and self-reflective diaries study.

Results

Based on the findings of the study, the PMR practice had shown evident effects to all participants during the performance moments as well as daily practice. The effects of PMR intervention were summarized and shown in the following part.

Performance

The muscular relaxation state and MPA state of three participants during performance before and after the intervention were summarized and tabulated in the following to make a comparison individually and the relative improvements throughout the study were observed.

Participant 1's muscular relaxation state and her anxiety level during performance before and after the study were summarized and tabulated in Table 4.4. In general, there were some improvements shown on each stages of the performance throughout the study. After the study, her anxiety states were seemed much lower before, during and after performance. Her muscles were more relaxed and calmer as she was able to relax the muscles when she felt tensed. Eventually, she was satisfied with her performance.

Table 4.4 Comparison of Muscular Relaxation State & Music Performance Anxiety State of Participant 1 Before and After the PMR Treatment

Stages	Before PMR Treatment	After PMR Treatment
Before Performance	Muscular State: Tensed muscles	Muscular State: Relaxed muscles
	Anxiety State: Quite nervous	Anxiety State: Less nervousness
During Performance	Muscular State: Unconscious with the muscles state; Coldness of hands	Muscular State: Able to recognize the tensed muscles and made them relax
	Anxiety State: Very anxious	Anxiety State: Felt nervous at the beginning; Calmed down afterwards
After Performance	Muscular State: The muscles were calmed down	Muscular State: Felt comfortable of muscles
	Anxiety State: Calm	Anxiety State: Felt relaxed with satisfaction

The muscular relaxation state and the anxiety level of Participant 2 during performance before and after the study were summarized and tabulated in Table 4.5. In overall, she showed some improvements on lowering her anxiety level at the end of the study. After the study, her muscles were more at ease and she could recognize the tensed muscles and made them relax. She was calmer and more confident before performance because she assumed that she had get well-prepared to practice the piece for the

performance. Besides, she was able to control her anxiety level during performance. As a result, she performed with satisfaction and enjoyment.

Table 4.5 Comparison of Muscular Relaxation State & Music Performance Anxiety State of Participant 2 Before and After the PMR Treatment

Stages	Before PMR Treatment	After PMR Treatment
Before Performance	<p>Muscular State: Face and shoulders were tensed</p> <p>Anxiety State: Nervousness</p>	<p>Muscular State: More relaxed muscles</p> <p>Anxiety State: More calm with self-confidence due to well-preparation</p>
During Performance	<p>Muscular State: Stiffness of the muscles</p> <p>Anxiety State: High anxiousness</p>	<p>Muscular State: Able to loosen up the muscles; Felt relaxed</p> <p>Anxiety State: A bit nervous at the beginning; Enjoy performing afterwards</p>
After Performance	<p>Muscular State: Soreness of the muscles</p> <p>Anxiety State: Relaxed and tiredness</p>	<p>Muscular State: Relaxed muscles</p> <p>Anxiety State: Relaxed and satisfied</p>

While for Participant 3, the muscular relaxation state and her anxiety level during performance before and after the study were summarized and tabulated in Table 4.6. Overall, there was also some improvements on reducing her anxiety level observed at

the end of the study. After the study, her muscles were more relaxed during performance as she was able to loosen up the muscles once she realized the tensed feeling. Furthermore, she felt less nervousness and calmer while performing. As a result, she was more enjoyable during performance and she performed with satisfaction due to well-preparation of performance during daily practice reported by her that made her to perform with calmer and relax feeling.

Table 4.6 Comparison of Muscular Relaxation State & Music Performance Anxiety State of Participant 3 Before and After the PMR Treatment

Stages	Before PMR Treatment	After PMR Treatment
Before Performance	Muscular State: The muscles were tensed	Muscular State: More calm and relaxed muscles
	Anxiety State: High anxiety level	Anxiety State: Lower anxiety level
During Performance	Muscular State: The muscles were stretched	Muscular State: Able to recognize the tensed muscles and made them relax
	Anxiety State: Very nervous and stressful	Anxiety State: More calm, less nervousness
After Performance	Muscular State: Felt relaxed	Muscular State: Fully relaxed muscles
	Anxiety State: Felt peaceful	Anxiety State: Relaxed with satisfaction due to well-preparation of piece

Effects of Muscles Relaxation States Towards Performance

All of the participants reported that a relaxed muscles state contributed to a better quality of performance. The participants described PMR was effective in the effort of relaxing the muscles. They addressed that the relaxed muscles could help in reducing the memorization problem. Through PMR practice, the participants were able to recognize the tensing state of the muscles and make them relax. They could also be more focus and their minds were calmer during performance. It was effective in lower their performance anxiety level. They would recommend the PMR to others who encounter music performance anxiety issue.

Participant 1 stated that her relaxed muscles state throughout the performance made her to perform without memory lapse. She could relax her muscles when she realized the tensing of the muscles. With PMR practice, she described her more relaxed state of muscles and calmness of her mind during performance. This resulted a decrease in her performance anxiety level and she would recommend this practice to others.

Participant 2 also described her relaxed muscles condition helped her to perform without memory lapse problem but with satisfaction. Upon PMR practice, she was able to recognize the tensing state of the muscles and loosen up the muscles. She emphasized the more calmness of her mind and muscles was the most effective result to her after practicing PMR. In this case, she could be more focus and raised her confidence during performance thus lowering her anxiety level unintentionally.

While Participant 3 was able to be more focus on her performance when her muscles were relaxed. She did not need to worry about the possibility that her muscles would become tensed and she could express well in her performance. She reported the significant improvement from PMR practice is that she could identify the feeling of muscles tension and tried to relax them. However, she stated that this PMR practice has helped her to solve the muscular problem in some ways only. In spite of this, she would still recommend PMR practice to others because the practice made the muscles more relaxed and her mind could be

calmer, this would reduce her anxiety state.

Daily Practice

The PMR practice had showed some positive effects to all of participants especially Participant 1 and Participant 2 during daily practice. Huang et al. (2021) demonstrated in their findings that breathing and muscle relaxation was one of the most commonly practiced self-managed strategies by the students during daily basis in comparison to other strategies. All the participants were observed to acquire the ability to recognize the muscles state and the ability to relax the muscles at the end of the study. The calmness of mind was the most significant outcome of PMR practice throughout the study as reported by all of the participants coincidentally. The calmness of mind enables them to achieve better concentration with greater quality of practice such as goal achievements. These positive effects were mostly shown towards the end of the intervention (week 5 onwards). However, there was no significant improvement for the Participant 3 as she reported her muscles tension state were not reduced after long hours of practice with fast tempo pieces. Although there was little improvement observed from her self-reflective diaries written at the end of the study. The muscles states of Participant 3 were not stable during intervention as her muscles tension state was still noticeable in the later weeks of intervention. However, her muscles were reported to be more relaxed intermittently after PMR practice. Hence, she could practice more efficiently with goal achievements when the muscles were at ease.

Participant 1 was able to feel the calmness of the muscles that resulted to her greater quality of daily practice with concentration and goal achievements. Participant 2 showed a notable effect on her muscle relaxation state. The calmness of mind and stress released that resulted from PMR practice had generated a more focus mind and efficient outcome of daily practice with smoother progression as well as positive improvement on goal setting strategy.

In essence, there were positive effects of PMR practice

shown on lowering music performance anxiety state as well as developing a preferable quality of daily practice.

Discussion

Based on the findings of this current study, it showed a significant effect of PMR training on lowering MPA level. Firstly, a more relaxed muscular state was achieved after the intervention. According to Andrews (1997), the physiological symptoms that he summarized in his research include the loss of muscular control that caused the participants failed to maintain tactile contact with their instruments during performance. Hence, this study had proved that PMR practice reduced the physiological symptoms of MPA by assisting the participants to recognize and control their muscular states so a more easiness of muscle condition was achieved during performance. All participants reported their relaxed muscular state and their ability to recognise and control the muscles after the intervention. This was supported by the previous research of Grishman (1989). One of the findings from his research indicated that the physiological anxiety of the participants had been decreased after PMR treatment. The participants were more aware of their physiological states and responses.

In addition, less nervousness and higher self-confidence were perceived from PMR training. The participants showed their lower anxiety states during the performance after intervention. However, they were still encountered some anxiety at the beginning of the performance, but they were able to control their nervousness afterwards and they became calmer. According to Steptoe (1982), his theory on the Yerkes-Dodson Curve has supported this study by stated that a performer with a moderated anxiety state possesses a higher potential and capability towards a successful performance. Furthermore, the participants were also more confident to participate in the performance, especially Participant 2. She was more calm and confident prior to the performance thus resulting her to be able to focus on her playing and she managed to control her anxiety level during performance moment. Eventually, she performed with satisfaction and

enjoyment. Participant 3 also reported her satisfactory and enjoyable feeling towards performance after PMR intervention. There were similar results reported in a research by Mansberger (1988). According to his findings, the treatment group showed higher strength of self-efficacy and lower MPA level after PMR treatment.

Consequently, there were some positive impacts resulted from PMR training during music performance such as: a more relaxed muscular state was achieved, stress level was reduced, less nervousness and higher self-confidence were perceived, and a more satisfactory performance quality was fulfilled. The majority of these effects were based on cognitive measures. Thus, this study had showed a visible evidence that the physiological intervention, PMR practice, which is a muscle relaxation training, altered the cognitive measures of MPA. There was similar evidence reported from a previous research by Grishman (1989). According to his research, he mentioned that the participants assumed and believed that they were less nervousness and calmer after they practiced PMR. The self-belief conception of the participants that consoled them to neglect the existence of anxiousness was an instance of reduction of cognitive anxiety. Hence, the participants could better concentrate and enjoy their performance with lesser irrelevant thoughts. As a result, a better quality of performance with lower anxiety level could be achieved. This had proved that PMR practice could lead to long-term benefits, the raised of self-confidence and self-efficacy in subsequent situations as reflecting lower cognitive anxiety.

By way of explanation, PMR practice had given the participants a sense of confidence. The participants were conscious that they had received training in coping the MPA problem. Thus, their confidence levels were boosted up and they felt more secure as they considered they were learning the strategy to reduce their MPA level. According to Hingley (1985), lack of self-confidence was a cognitive symptom of MPA and a person might be overwhelmed by anxiety and failed to engage in the performance if no training was approached on anxiety reduction. If an individual's

self-confidence is raised up through the anxiety reduction intervention, the MPA level will be reduced consequently.

Furthermore, PMR practice also depicted beneficial effects towards participants' practice quality during daily piano practice sessions. The ability to recognize the muscles state and the ability to relax the muscles were resulted from PMR practice after intervention. Both Participant 1 & 2 reported their notable improvements on muscular relaxation while Participant 3 experienced with slightly improvement in terms of her muscle tension. Nevertheless, all participants included Participant 3 reported that they could practice effectively with goal achievements and satisfaction when their muscles were at relax condition. The calmness of mind during piano practice had been claimed as the most significant benefits from PMR training. Both Participant 1&2 described the calmness of their mind that cultivated after PMR practice. They were able to be more concentrated on their practice with goal achievements. Eventually, greater qualities of practice with efficiency were achieved by the participants.

Based on the findings of the study, the piano practice behavior would affect the MPA level as well as the quality of performance. As reported by the participants, they could be more focused and practiced with longer duration when their muscles were at ease. As their muscle relaxation state showed visible improvements after PMR intervention, their daily practice outcomes were achieved effectively. According to LeBlanc (1994), the preparation for the performance such as the duration and quality of practice before performance would affect the MPA level of a performer. Under this circumstance, the deficiency of daily piano practice could increase the nervousness of a performer when it comes to performance moment. This was supported by the statements which stressed that the factors that had seriously impacted to the higher MPA level encountered by the performers includes the amount of practice and level of preparation (Ely, 1991). When the performers felt they were well-prepared for the performance, they would have less anxiousness prior to

performance moment.

A well-prepared condition indicated that the amount of practice, the quality and positive outcomes of practice and the other mental preparations such as self-encouragement, self-worth and self-confidence. Based on current research, Participant 2 and Participant 3 reported their well-preparation for the performance resulted them to perform with satisfaction and less nervousness. Due to the positive and confident mental thought generated in their minds, they felt calmer while they were performing. Hence, daily practice quality is important to reduce MPA issue. When PMR was applied in daily practice, results showed that they were more concentrated to practice and they felt calmness of mind, thus quality of practice was attained, and performance anxiety was reduced gradually.

On that account, a distinctive music performance with lower MPA state could be achieved from well-established preparation of performance during daily practice sessions. Hence, the effectiveness of daily practice has contributed to the endeavour to reduce MPA level of participants. Based on this research, PMR practice showed positive impacts on both physiological and psychological aspects towards a greater efficacy of daily piano practice. Under this circumstance, an adequate preparation for performance was compatible with an effective daily practice session and concurrently resulted a satisfactory performance with less nervousness perceived.

In summary, PMR practice has proved to develop a more relaxed muscular state along with a more calmness mind of participants as well as higher self-confidence cultivated on music performance affair.

Implications of the Study

MPA is a common yet serious problem to musicians which affects their music performance quality. In spite of the current literature on the efficacy of psychological and pharmacological treatments, there is lacking attention on solving MPA issue by musical community due to the misunderstanding about MPA that is

related to mental illness. Hence, PMR is one of the examples of non-pharmacological interventions which played a role of physiological treatment for MPA that had been implemented in this study. The results of the study showed that PMR practice has positive effects on music performance, it can reduce the MPA among piano students. The positive outcomes resulted from PMR treatment which includes establishing relaxed muscles and calmness mind before performance, the improvement on the realization of tensed muscles state and the satisfaction achieved after performance. Additionally, PMR has also shown its effectiveness on both physiological and cognitive aspects for music performers after applying PMR in their daily practice. Since PMR practice is believed to relieve an individual's tension and nervousness thus it is practical to debilitate the aspects of performance anxiety. Therefore, this study suggests that PMR training could be introduced not only for music performers, but it is also strongly recommended to other performers who experiences higher performance anxiety level in any types of performance.

Conclusion

The findings in this research revealed that the participants experienced significant positive impacts in overcoming their nervousness during performance. Furthermore, PMR practice has helped the participants to formulate a calmness mindset while practicing with efficiency in daily practice. It is shown in the result that the muscular conditions and anxiety state of all the participants have shown some improvements after the application of PMR training during performance and daily practice. In conclusion, PMR has contributed to the improvement of positive feelings such as self-confidence and self-worth in music performers' mind and improved the participants' ability to cope with the challenges of music performance anxiety.

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Appendix A

Progressive Muscle Relaxation Training Script (Adapted from Jacobson, 1938)

Participants will carry out the practice according to the steps below. The muscles involved are forehead, neck and shoulders, stomach, arms, hand, followed by leg and foot.

Forehead & Facial Muscle

First, you focus your attention on your face muscles. Then, you start to raise your eyebrows, wrinkle your nose, bite your teeth tightly in your mouth. Take a deep breath and start to feel the muscles tighten for 4 counts under the speed of 54 per beat. After that, exhale and let all the muscles relax for 4 counts. Apply the same counts with the same speed on the rest of other parts of the muscle training. Now you feel the difference between tension and relaxation.

Neck & Shoulders

Now, you focus your attention towards your neck and shoulders. Put your chin downward and raise your shoulders up closely to your ears. You can feel some muscles are shaking. Take a deep breath and start to tighten these muscles up to 4 counts. Then, exhale and relax all the entire muscles, notice the difference feeling between tension and relaxation.

Chest & Stomach

Now, you focus your attention on your chest and stomach muscles. Take a deep breath and hold it. Meanwhile, you tighten your chest and suck your stomach inwards. You start to tense these muscles for 4 counts. Then, you exhale slowly and let all the muscles relax, feel the difference between tension and relaxation.

Arms & Hands

Now, you focus your attention on your lower arms, upper arms and hands muscles. Start from your left arms. Bend your arms at the elbow to 90° and curl your fingers to fist. Take a deep breath and start tighten the muscles up to 4 counts. You can feel the muscles

pull. Then, try to exhale and relax the muscles. Feel the difference between tensing and relaxing muscles.

After that, straighten your arms and curve your fingers again. Hold the arms and hands at this posture and start to tighten the muscles up to 4 counts by taking and hold the deep breath. Then, exhale slowly and relax again the entire muscles. Observe and differentiate feeling between tension and relaxation. Repeat the same steps above by using the right arms and hands.

Legs & Feet

Now, you focus your attention on your legs and feet. Start from your left legs. Squeeze your thigh muscles, tighten your calf muscles and curl your toes downward. Take a deep breath, tighten all these muscles up to 4 counts. Then, exhale slowly and let all the muscles relax. Observe and differentiate feeling between tension and relaxation.

Repeat the same steps above by using the right legs and feet.

All Muscles

Now, you tighten all of the muscles together that you have tensed before, the muscles of forehead, face, neck, shoulders, chest, stomach, arms, hands, legs and feet. Take a deep breath and you start to tense all the muscles up to 4 counts. Then, let all the muscles all over your body go relax. Notice the difference between the feeling of tension and relaxation.

Writing Artistic Works Academically and Creatively by Engaging Descriptive and Critical Writing

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Abstract

The focus of discussion in this paper is how to engage both descriptive and critical writing in an academic paper with regards to the field of creative arts; dance, performance, theatre and fine arts. This paper is intended to help students, young researchers, academics who are practitioners too in the creative arts to write publishable articles and get their thoughts and messages across. As we know researchers, academics who are artists themselves and students in the arts are increasingly pressured to publish their works, they are also challenged to write in an explanatory manner keeping the discourse within the academia and at the same time writing it to seize the attention of the reader. The approach that a writer employs must be a linear one which tells the story of his/her work or research in a simple yet engaging manner right from the title, problem statement to the methodology, leading to findings which engages critical analysis of data and concluding strongly while maintaining a balance between factual analysis and at the same time highlighting the creative part of the artwork or the research. This paper gives a simple structure and insight into how one can write on the arts by preparing mentally, intellectually and creatively. There is no one way to write, however, in this paper, I would like to suggest the engagement of both descriptive and critical writing when writing articles about the arts or artistic engagement. Descriptive style of writing requires specific use of adjectives, imagery and metaphoric language, whilst critical writing engages in a much more complex style of reasoning which requires argumentation, dialectical, and justification. At the same time, a writer must always include creativity in his/her writing in order to ensure that the article is engaging and captures the attention of the reader.

Keywords: Arts, Descriptive writing, Critical writing

Introduction

On purpose, I start the introduction of the paper in a rhetoric manner by posing an important question, ‘why do we write?’. Many academics who are practitioners or practising artists often argue as to “why should they write?”, “is it not enough for them just to produce the art work?”! Many practicing academics are caught in between producing or making their creative art work and later having to write about it and publish in academic journals or books. Back to the question above, “why do we write?”, there are many differing reasons as to why one writes or needs to write. A student writes because he is made to write his thoughts as part of the learning process. A novelist writes as a way to craft his insatiable creative thoughts and imagination. A scholar writes to make a logical connection between his/her critical faculties, thoughts, and his/her discoveries. Whatever the position or reason one may take for writing, it is undeniably a process that requires ideation, thoughts, structure, organisation, style, and of course, a lot of practice. Writing reflects our thinking as both acts connect and complement each other. In order to write well, one needs to think clearly. Simultaneously, when one starts to write, he is able to create ideas, clarify his thoughts and even justify his arguments. E.M. Foster, the novelist writes, “how can I tell what I think till I see what I’ve said?” (Cooper & Patton, 2014).

Writing requires the dissemination of consolidated ideas and thoughts in a systematic and orderly fashion. Organizing one’s thoughts is vital while undertaking the writing process. It is vital to write based on facts and logical reasoning even if the argumentation is on an art work, dance, theatre production or ritual performance, whereby its creation is derived from an artist’s inspiration, creativity, mythology, community’s practices and beliefs systems. Dealing with arts and artistic works engages creative faculties, and writing about the art work from a creative standpoint is highly encouraged. One may ask, “why creativity is important in writing”? As mentioned earlier, creativity is not

something new in and for the arts, in fact, it is the mantra being chanted over and over by those involved in the arts. Bell (2018), claimed in her article which was published in a website that creativity can be defined as novel or original idea that has not been discussed, explained nor written before and this premise usually describes creative works and artistic expressions such as storytelling, novels, scripts, short stories for children, poetry, drama, dance and so on. Other scholars too point out that creative thinking nurtures us to think differently from others, enables us to challenge our limitations, develops our curiosity in looking and searching for alternatives and encourages us to ask questions. In addition, creative thinking motivates exploration of new and hidden ideas through the deep reflection and connection to our deepest hidden thoughts and feelings (DiYanni, 2015), (Griffiths & Costi, 2019), (Davies et al., 2013). On the other hand, academic writing is regarded as factual, informative, structural and theoretical as well. We often find ourselves asking these questions, “how could creativity complement academic writing?”, “how could scholars, academics and students in the arts write about an artistic work academically while highlighting the creative expression of the work or subject matter objectively?” and “what is the common ground between creativity and academic writing?”.

To answer the questions above, let’s take a step back and recollect on our writing experiences, “have we ever found ourselves in a situation whereby we keep repeating sentences, words, writing dryly, unable to engage interestingly on the subject matter, issue that we are writing about?”. This is a huge problem in academic writing especially when we are supposed to write in an explanatory manner of an artistic subject-matter. In fact, repeating a sentence verbatim is an academic flaw and degrades the article and simply shows that the writer is not creative with no or limited choice of words and unable to organize his thoughts well (Sawyer, 2021). This puts forth a stronger reason as to why creativity is needed in academic writing especially in the arts. Although academic writing is factual and structured in nature, it uses persuasive skills to convince the reader through findings, theories

and argumentation. This is where creativity is much needed. Adding on creativity in the academic writing can surely put forth stimulating ideas, concepts and theories, making the writing more interesting, engaging reader's curiosity and increasing attention towards both the article and the artistic work.

Undeniably, academic writing is also a product of creativity as the authors undergo a process of coming up with new original ideas to communicate their thinking to an audience, just as story tellers, musicians, and artists capture their ideas in their preferred modes. In fact, although the final result of academic writing is formal and structured, it is still an expression of creative thinking that meets the expectations of a scholarly audience. Creativity can be engaged in the way one chooses to write the title of the essay, choice of words, narrating the research methods or the processes involved and so on. A creative approach in writing is to see how the writer can gain and hold the attention of the reader, to make the reader keen on further reading your findings, methods, suggestions, recommending your writing to colleagues, fellow academics, students, debating and discussing the arguments put forth in your works. In reality, writing is not an easy task; it requires years of practice, it is gruelling as the critic Joshua Reynolds calls as the 'real labour of thinking' (Cooper & Patton, 2014).

A Writer Prepares

Before a writer embarks on writing process, it is imminent to know the purpose of his/her writing and who his/her target audiences are. This can further motivate his/her writing and the flow of his/her thoughts. To express one's thoughts and feelings to others and to unravel what he or she wants to say through his or her writings are sufficient motives to start on the process of writing effectively. One needs to believe that he or she is able to write and that there is a deep desire from inside to speak up and let the voice within be heard through the most powerful way; words on the paper!

Organizing the thoughts systematically is vital before writing. Golden question is, "how do we do it?". Firstly, attention

needs to be given to the title of the article as having the right title can propel your article to the top choice of reading for researchers, scholars and students in the respected fields. Title is the sneak-peek into your article or the first glimpse to your article. Choose a working title for the paper helps the writer to narrow down the scope of the paper and at the same time conveys the message across. In the title, the subject matter must be clearly spelt out, the genre or medium of the art form, the location, time or period but must be written in an interesting, catchy manner whilst upholding the central argument in an academic manner. I would like to draw your attention to an interesting title discussing Indian classical dance in Malaysia; “Move in Time: Male Dancers of Indian Classical Dance in Malaysia” (Thiagarajan, 2017). The words such as “move in time” connotes that the writer may be talking about past, present and future as “move” and “time” are the keywords here. The second part of the title confirms the direction of the article, where she chronicles the history of Malaysian male Indian classical dancers. What attracts me or caught my attention is the choice of words used by the writer, “move in time”, as a dancer, I could relate cognitively, physically and rhythmically to the medium of art; dance. This connection between a reader and the choice of words is very personal and based on certain knowledge and experiences.

Once the title has been written, the next step is to answer the question, “what do you want to write about or what is your subject-matter?”. Here, the writer needs to position the problem statement of the art work, research and set the direction of the argument. The objectives and aims of the paper must be presented in order to guide the reader the trajectory of the paper. Brainstorming and writing down all your ideas by using short, simple notes or mind maps may help you code and decode (Bell, 2018). The usual guide to write an academic paper is the abstract which comprises a standard structure of introduction, discussion and conclusion, however, a discourse on arts employing a creative manner of positioning the arguments and discussions can be of help here as how to make the article interesting. Many follow a

linear line of article writing but having mind maps, story boards can also help one plan the writing interestingly. Below is an example of a simple story board which can be used as a quick guide.

Title of Article: (choose interesting, catchy words to position subject matter)

Introduction:

How to start? With a quote?
Definition of title/Definition of Keywords
Present & explain the problem statement
State the research questions
Ensure that the objectives/aims are clear
Background of research/subject-matter

Body (narratives)

Break the body into small and creative sub-titles/areas to discuss:
A quick & brief historical analysis (if applicable)
Literature review/research gap (keep the information fresh and updated)
The subject/art work/dance that you wish to write about (descriptive writing is appropriate here)

Mid-section of the paper (Discussion & Analysis)

Keep the flow of discussion linear. Be creative. Throw some questions just to probe and provoke your thoughts.
Critical writing is important here
Discuss the methods/ approaches/limitations
Key findings/data/analysis /main arguments- so what now? How does all this matter/contribute?

Conclusion

Tie the knots
Present the key challenges. Any suggestions for future research?
What is your take on the entire subject-matter?
End creatively- with a quote? Question to ponder?
References

Once the narratives for the discussion have been planned, the writer must think about the tone of the article. For an academic paper, a much more analytical perspective which calls for a critical discourse and engagement is needed. The writer then must take on the task of writing and challenging him/herself to convey the findings of the research, discussing the various methods involved, creating an appreciation and huge interest towards the art work and at the same time keeping the writing resourceful, engaging, simple and within the academic spectrum.

One can also look up other scholars, researchers in the arts and humanities and read their articles in various journals to see how they position their arguments, thoughts and ideas dynamically. Many art scholars and art practitioners who are academics as well tend to write by incorporating both the descriptive and critical styles, making their article sound creatively interesting. The whole idea of writing on the arts academically is about engaging the creative art works into a critical discourse demanding complex style of reasoning by postulating argumentation based on theoretical frameworks, synthesis, and validation. As students of the arts, both styles of writing must be mastered as there are times when one needs to describe a piece of art work and at the same time review it critically.

Descriptive Writing

Descriptive writing can be understood as a style of writing that evokes certain moods. Descriptive style of writing sees the author describing or elucidating about a person, a place or an event in great detail (Sassi, 2020). This style of writing uses a lot of adjectives, adverbs, metaphors, and similes to explain something or someone in a 'showing' manner (Harappa, 2021), (Kundan, 2012). According to Sassi (2020), the purpose of descriptive writing is to help the reader see, feel, taste, hear what you are trying to show, using vivid language, not vague. Descriptive writing is also known as expository writing whereby the purpose is to deposit information to the reader, define the subject matter, describe interestingly, expounding and creatively (Febriyanti et al.,

2018). Descriptive writing can also be done in a reporting manner and discuss similarity, differences, and contrast. There are various techniques and methods involved in descriptive writing, among the simple guide that I would like to highlight here; i) show your reader, don't tell, ii) use figurative language, iii) use sensory details, iv) use adjectives, similes, metaphors, synonyms and v) paint the image/scene/object mentally first before describing it. Below are examples of descriptive writing from novels, memoirs and also academic art articles as a way to understand the different types of use of descriptive writing. The choosing of excerpts from novels is appropriate because art scholars use many techniques suggested in novel writing especially the five simple guides mentioned above when writing about theatrical productions, dance performances which use figurative writing, sensory detailing and vivid language to describe the acting, facial expression of the actors/dancers.

Example 1 looks at how author Rani Manicka takes her readers on a tight clenching journey back and forth from the colonial era in Malaya through the eyes, voices, fears, emotions and experiences of her characters as they suffer the torturous gripping times of the Japanese occupation, surviving the bleeding World War 11, having hopes for Malaya's independence and the complex present day. *The Rice Mother* won the Commonwealth Writers Prize for First Best Book South Asia, 2003.

“...two months later, Anna came into my hot and freezing malaria-struck world, caramel-coloured and saucer-eyed. The nights were the worst. First delirious with slow-burning fever, then shivering uncontrollably in my own sweat...”

The excerpt above is taken from Rani Manicka's *The Rice Mother* (2002). Notice how cleverly the writer uses adjectives such as 'hot and freezing' to heighten the sensory emotions of readers in explaining about the hazardous conditions of malaria, 'caramel' to describe the colour of the child's eyes, and 'saucer' as to define the shape of the eyes. The writer wants her readers to feel the difficult condition her subject had to endure while being sick with malaria

but juxtaposes it with the arrival of a baby girl as her hope for survival.

The following example is a personal account of a surgeon who was volunteering at Gaza, “showing us” the experiences of the Palestinian people’s life-threatening situation.

“They were told of the olive and orange groves and the blue Mediterranean Sea. The place had calming effects as it was covered with greenery landscapes, picturesque sceneries and an uninhabited ambiance.”

This excerpt is taken from Ang Swee Chai’s *From Beirut To Jerusalem* (2002). The writer, a volunteer and a surgeon registered with the MAP to help the Palestinians during the Israeli occupation, describes the beauty of Gaza by using ‘fruits’ and ‘colours’ as adjectives. The use of words such ‘olive’ and ‘orange’ portray life and cycle of nature, while colours ‘blue’ and ‘green’ for sea and landscapes picture revitalisation. Study the next example and see how Ang uses contrast to turn the beauty of Gaza from the earlier picturesque and calmness of Gaza in an instant into a bleeding battle ground.

“The wounds of Gaza are deep and multi-layered, since the Palestinian election, she has been under total or partial blockade for years, stripped of her rights as a sovereign nation” (Ang, 2002).

Ang utilises sharp, cutting, and powerful words such as, ‘the wounds’ of Gaza are ‘deep’ and ‘multi-layered’, to describe the mutilation of the people of Gaza, the bloodshed, pain, and sufferings they endure. The phrase ‘stripped of her rights’ informs us of how the war has ripped Gaza apart and her people from their dignity. The whole passage shows the readers the hostile situation at the war- stricken zone.

Descriptive writing is mostly used in fictions, narratives, reviews, school textbooks, personal journals, plays, screenplays, advertisements, and also journalistic writings. This style of writing helps us to imagine the unimaginable, see the unseen, hear the unheard, taste and feel the emotions as it stirs the senses. The employment of descriptive writing is not unusual in the academia

with regards to describing an artwork such as dance, theatre, painting, music. Below are examples of descriptive writing within the fields of performing arts.

We are now going to take a look at how descriptive writing has been employed in an arts discourse academically. The statement below is taken from Viv Gardner's article titled, "The New Woman in The New Theatre" (1998). Gardner gives a fresh appeal to the notion of the "New Woman" in theatres as she goes back to the 1890's to re-look into the very much imagined concept or painted picture or image of how the era would produce a new woman to lead or be patron of the theatre.

"The New Woman, was seen typically as young, middle-class and single on principle. She eschewed the fripperies of fashion in favour of more masculine dress and severe coiffure. She had probably been educated to a standard unknown to previous generations of women and she was certainly a devotee of Ibsen and given to reading 'advanced books'" (Gardner, 1998).

This particular "New Woman" would be very different in her dressing, thoughts and upbringing as she would deliberately avoid the ornate or showiness of the usual feminine fashion for a much more masculine outfit. The sentence, "devotee of Ibsen" evidently sends the message that she is a modern woman who is not afraid to demand her own emancipation and is ready to leave her dependency role as wife, mother in order to get what she wants just like Ibsen's woman in "a Doll's House". Henrik Ibsen's New Woman, "Nora Helmer" is seen as the epitome of the early feminist struggles and Ibsen as the defender of women's cause. Both the "New Woman" from the article and portrayed by Ibsen simply differs from the images of the existing women portrayed as subjected, minority, voiceless or dependent onto someone else in the theatre.

In the next example below, we get to see how art historian Sarena Abdullah makes a tie between the emerging middle- class society in the rapid developing modern Malaysia with urban

lifestyle which portrays wealth and materialism through the works of artiste Wong Hoy Cheong.

“Wong Hoy Cheong’s “The Nouveau Riche, The Foreign Maid” (1991) reflects the newly attained wealth and materialism of the multi-ethnic middle-class society in Malaysia. The mix-media work presents a canvas illustrating a group of figures in a portrait- style set in a cocktail party.....The characters portrayed are multiracial with their eyes gazed at the audience. On the right side of the foreground are three figures- a man in batik shirt, standing next to a lady in *baju kurung* (Malay dress) and another lady wearing a short dress-perhaps representing the Malay race based on their attires.... A Chinese man dapperly dressed in a tuxedo, his partner.....dressed in a short black dress sitting cross-legged in a luxurious sofa.....carrying glasses of red wine. Further back.... A young pair of children is being held in the arms of a woman who may be a foreign domestic helper as suggested by the title of the art work” (Abdullah, 2018).

Sarena Abdullah’s description of “man in batik shirt”.... “lady in *baju kurung*”....and “another lady wearing a short dress”... “a Chinese man dapperly dressed in a tuxedo” supported by the by the artist’s illustrations explicates how the attire of a person actually represents the ethnicity and depicts the lifestyle of the person. The description of a woman in a short black dress sitting cross-legged on a luxurious sofa illuminates the status of a new emerging society defined by class and lifestyle. Sarena captures the essence of class, status and lifestyle by using words like “sitting cross-legged on a luxurious sofa”. The style or the manner in which the woman sits depicts her status and authority. The statement above is further supported by the last sentence showing middle-class society in Malaysia were able to hire foreign domestic maids to take care of their children and the house chores while the lady of the house is now able to sit comfortably, throw parties and enjoy her cocktail.

Moving on to another exemplary descriptive writing in academic article is the excerpts from Premalatha Thiagarajan's paper. She demonstrates how a writer uses the power of imagination to visualize herself dancing to the piece of song that she is actually watching or observing and writing about it in a scholarly paper.

“While sitting at a corner in the Sutra House dance studio in Persiaran Titiwangsa, I try to contain the urge to move with the dance music. My body becomes restless. I tap my right hand on my right thigh. My torso moves sideways to the rhythm *tai, tai, dhi kit tai; dhi kit tai; dhi kit tai*. Closing my eyes, I visualise myself dancing to the tune of ‘Ardhanareshvara’” (Thiagarajan, 2017).

Premalatha Thiagarajan moves in and out as an observer, performer and writer. Notice the use of description for the rhythmic beat, “tai, tai, dhi kit tai”, which allows her to close her eyes and permits her imagining herself dancing. Her seamless style of writing helps the reader to be engaged with her thoughts and arguments through her writing.

“At this juncture, my vision blurred. I did not see Ramli and January, but Sivadas and his spouse, Vatsala, in a duet dance, Shiva-Parvathi and then, the image changed to Gopal Shetty—Radha. Psychically, I travelled several decades back, transported through the decades starting from 2012 through 2000... 1990s... 1980s... 1970s... 1960s... 1955... 1954... 1953. (Stop... Play...)” (Thiagarajan, 2017).

She continues to unfold the narratives by interestingly expressing to us that she herself was being transported through time, supported by a historical chronology of the first male-female dance couple who performed the Shiva-Parvati dance and at the same time revealing the first male Indian classical dancer in Malaysia, Mr Sivadas. Her style of writing augments her passionate involvement with Indian classical dance but also as a researcher of the subject-matter, she is able to navigate her readers to move

along with her in time to understand the history, politics and gender related issues in Indian classical dance in Malaysia.

Moving on, we look at how Patricia Hartwick's article on *Kuda Kepang* (celestial horses) in Singapore uses descriptive style of writing to describe the performance structure right from the beginning until the process of *mabuk* or trance by the performers.

“Performers describe *mabuk* as feeling like they themselves have become horses, their movements driven by the sounds of Gamelan.....As horses, performers gallop around the *gelanggang*, some are drawn to the *sajian*, while others choose to dance on shards of broken glass, chew the thin glass of kerosene lamps, drink pails of water, or open coconut husks with their teeth. Marshals crack the horsewhips to get the attention of their charges, and whip them to demonstrate the ability of performers to withstand pain....” (Hartwick, 2017).

Coming from the perspective of a performance scholar, Patricia Hartwick gives detailed explanation about what goes on physically and in the minds of the performers of the *Kuda Kepang Mabuk* performance. Her writing gives an insight into the feelings of the performers once they are in the altered state of consciousness which is known as *mabuk* in Malay. During this level of consciousness, the dancers relate to her about themselves being or feeling like a horse, having the power to move or gallop like the horse, and doing unusual things that even they or nobody would do in their right minds (chewing glass, dancing on glass and so on). Note how Hartwick gives importance to the native terms such as *Kuda Kepang*, *mabuk*, *sajian* without changing them to English. This is very important in performance art criticism or writing about an artwork to respect the tradition or being responsible towards the artwork, as suggested by anthropologist Dell Hymes, (Carlson, 1996) in this case, the *Kuda Kepang Mabuk* performance.

Critical Writing

Critical writing, on the other hand, enhances logical thinking through the flow of strategic points. Critical writing is a

formalised way of positing a point across. It illuminates a point of view or opinion supported by rational or factual claims such as evidence or even statistical analysis (DiYanni, 2015). It can be argumentative, persuasive, dialectical, convincing and even a negation, all depending on the nature and the purpose of the writing (Sims, 1998).

Critical writing creates critical thoughts, which lead to inquiry and making inference. According to Cooper and Patton (2014), an inference is a conclusion about the unknown made on the basis of the known. This can further be explained as to imply, to suggest something, and to arrive at a conclusion by reasoning from facts or evidence. The task in critical writing is to create a systematic evaluation in order to deepen not only the reader's but also the writer's thoughts in understanding the subject and studying the issues raised. When writing critically, one is forced to examine his/her own knowledge, beliefs, and findings (Wallace & Wray, 2011). Let's take a look at some examples of critical writing in the field of art.

The following example states a problem statement which requires research into the subject-matter which links folktales and children. Notice how clearly the writer is emphasizing on the effectiveness of using folklores to teach foreign language to children. The words such as 'rationale', 'used effectively' are simple but good choices of words to an effective critical writing. The writer does not raise any incongruent issues or doubts.

"This article highlights the multifaceted rationale for using folktales to teach foreign languages, especially to young learners. It presents features of folktales which have the potentials to facilitate child foreign language acquisition. The article also provides implications for how folktales can be used effectively in language classrooms to young learners." (Pham Ti Hong Nhung, 2016).

Many researchers are passionate about working and researching children. While Pham Ti Hong Nhung discusses the effectiveness of using folktales to teach foreign language to children, dancer-scholar-researcher Marcia Llyod explains how

creative movements and dance are effective expressive tools for self- exploration, especially with children.

“Creative dance is a unique self-expressive art form which blends rhythmic movement and aesthetic expression that is selected by participants to communicate their ideas, thoughts and feelings” (Lloyd, 2014).

Lloyd (2014) presents a simple but in-depth explanation about creative dance in just one sentence. She posits that creative dance is able to express oneself artistically through rhythmic movements. These movements are further expressed aesthetically by the dancers as a way to showcase their thoughts and feelings. Movement is the core of any dance forms, therefore, a dance and the dancer’s thoughts and feelings can be understood through the construction of the movements.

Let’s take a look at how Gonzales (2011), critically points out the need to have more discussions about dance intellectually in Malaysia.

“While there are a slowly growing number of studies on Malaysian dance, there has not been a concerted academic effort to provide a qualitative description of what constitutes Malaysian contemporary dance choreography or a debate if it is even necessary. This absence is not through a lack of interest or expertise.....dance as a dedicated full-time career is a relatively new and difficult path in Malaysia and the pool of professionally trained dancers remains small. While the nation abounds with talent, most performers are nonprofessional; and while the interest of the general public in the arts is growing, the audience for the kinds of contemporary dance discussed in this book is fairly small (Gonzales, 2011).

Gonzales (2011) puts forth that although Malaysia has been producing many talents in the field of dance especially contemporary dance, but the effort to have more intellectual discussions about dance is slow to be recognized. According to him, the reason for this could be that the professionally trained dancers or performers are relatively small compared to non-

professionals. To add, although there is a growing demand for dance performances in the country, however, the demand for intellectual debates and discussions on dance is not the same.

Writing critically also means describing/explaining the text; as ‘what does the text mean’. Writing critically raises a discourse (Ballenger, 2007) ‘the act of communication in which the writer intends to affect a reader and the reader attempts to work out the writer’s intentions’, in other words, “what does the writer mean’. Ideologically, critical writing refers to ‘the ways of thinking which produce/reproduce and reflect the power structures of society’. It is educational in context; argumentative; consisting rational arguments, and resists assumptions (Crusius & Channell, 2003).

Descriptive Writing and Critical Writing

Descriptive writing and critical writing come hand in hand. Both styles of writing are equally important in the field of arts. While describing an artwork from the aesthetics point of view, one may also want to study the work from different perspectives such as historical, philosophical, design aspects, school of thoughts, theoretical framework, research methods and processes, genre and movement. Notice how the scholars have positioned both descriptive and critical writing to explain their subject matter in an engaging and explanatory manner.

Let’s take a look at Mohd Anis Mohd Nor’s remarkable incorporation of descriptive and critical writing styles explaining about the choreographer Ramli Ali’s experience in composing the *Zapin Sindang* in the example below.

“...Ramli Ali was inspired to include a non-‘*zapin*’ song to accompany his style of ‘*zapin sindang*’. Ramli was stirred to use an old Malay boat-rowing, ‘*ala dondang*’, which is sung by Malay fisherman while rowing their small boats in search for shellfish, as a signature tune to ‘*zapin sindang*’. ‘*Ala dondang*’ was rearranged to the ‘*zapin*’ beats to become a ‘*zapin*’ song while retaining much of the quatrains in the lyrics, thus situating the song as a traditional piece. (Mohd Anis, 2003).

The sentence “Ramli was stirred to use an old Malay boat-rowing....” is highly descriptive. The choice of words such as ‘stirred’ describes Ramli’s urge to seek for the *ala dondang* and “old Malay boat rowing” in return describes the act of boat rowing itself that the song *ala dondang* signifies. “Malay” represents an ethnic race and fishermen a community by profession. The part from “... *ala dondang*...until...in search for shell fish...” is expository in character (Behrens & et al., 2005, as Mohd Anis Mohd Nor deposits sufficient information about the connection between the song and its significance to the Malay fishermen community of Sindang. Through last sentence in the statement, he justifies the *ala dondang* not only as a *zapin* song but also as a traditional piece.

The following example looks at how the writer gives an insight into the issues of culture, nationhood, and identity in modern Malaysian art in the advent of independence and post-colonialism through both descriptive and critical styles of writing.

“Artistic conditions prevailing on mainland Malaya during the 1950’s were marked by the emergence of a number of amateur art groups in Kuala Lumpur and Penang. In response to the new winds of change, self-taught artists attempted to project a notion of ‘Malayan’ cultural identity by employing localised subject matter within a wide array of styles and techniques. The approaches were again representational and drew inspiration directly from everyday situations, the folk culture, regional mythologies and past cultural traditions. This is discernible in Nik Zainal Abidin’s ‘*Wayang Kulit* series’ where the astute juxta-positioning of the colourful Kelantanese ‘*wayang*’ shadow puppets, within a flattened two-dimensional pictorial space, resulted in decorativeness peculiar to Malay and regional sensibilities” (Piyadasa, 2003).

Notice how intelligently Piyadasa (2003) engages both the descriptive and critical styles of writing in the fourth sentence, “...the astute juxta-positioning of the colourful Kelantanese *wayang*...”. Juxta-positioning refers to the act of placing

something side by side or close to each other in order to compare and contrast, so one can see, study it carefully and “colourful”, on the other hand, describes the Kelantanese *wayang* aesthetically.

The next example discusses women and the roles they play as performers in cultural and religious rituals. Ethnographer and ethnomusicologists Sarah Weiss puts forth through her analysis that women play an important role in weddings which is the embodiment of both cultural and religious aspects of a community.

“The performance of lamentation and mockery are two genres commonly performed by women at weddings in context around the world. The performance of lamentation focuses on the daughters and sons “lost forever” from their protective natal family.....performances of mockery feature lewd caricatures of sexuality and representations of the “horrific” or “miserly” features of those “foreign others” who will soon be related (Sarah, Weiss, 2009).

By employing critical writing, Sarah Weiss goes on to posit that lamentation portrays emotionally the feelings of losing or the separation of the daughters or the sons who are leaving the family through the marriage. She continues her explanation by clarifying although biologically the person even though married is still related to the family, technically, the person now has a new extended family, hence being separated from his or her own natal family. The descriptive part of the writing is used to portray the performance of mockery, on the other hand, by using words such as “horrific, miserly” to show the unsure or uneasy feelings of the families through the arrival of the new person (bride or bridegroom) to the family through the marriage. The arrival of the new family member through the marriage “forces” the family to accept the person and all that she or he brings along; character, attitude, behaviour, likes, dislikes and everything that the person embodies, which is described by the use of words “foreign others”.

While still on the subject of gender and performance, Thiagarajan (2017) gives historical and political discussion about male dancers in Indian classical dances in Malaysia. Critically putting forth an important point through her all-encompassing

discussion that Bharata Natyam as a form of dance and proper structure had begun to be seen, understood and studied, she describes how the male dancers during the 80's and onwards performed Bharata Natyam following the *margam* (complete repertoire of Bharata Natyam) rather than dancing to popular songs or choices from Indian Cinema unlike in the early days by the male dancers.

“These formally trained men deviated from their predecessors by advocating *margam* format in their productions, but retained to a large extent duet and group performances (as described in the two dance scenes in *italic*) either due to lack of funding or as a result of artistic choices. Duets and group dances were seen as visually appealing on large proscenium stages in Malaysia. Moreover, the presence of multi-ethnic casts in *Odissi* and *Bharata Natyam*, transcending ethnic and religious boundaries in Malaysia, became apparent and one of the crucial selling points since the 1980s, particularly, in the productions of Sutra Dance Theatre. While the principal choreographers and artistic directors were men, their collaborators and performers were mostly women. In contrast to most female practitioners who switched role from public performers to dance teachers after *arangetram* or marriage, male artists' life span as performers were usually longer, allowing the growth of patriarchal power, access, and visibility in public performance spaces” (Thiagarajan, 2017).

The discussion looks at several interesting and key points, the emergence of “multi-ethnic” dancers as an exciting image and selling point (as Thiagarajan emphasizes), gendered dancers and roles which leads the men to stay longer as the performer, thus, creating a much more powerful visibility for male dancers which ultimately suggests patriarchal power and access in Indian classical dancing. The notion of gendered dancers and roles refer to male and female dancers performing together and at the same time experiencing a shift or switch of roles between being performers, principal choreographers and dance teachers whereby when

women choose to be the backstage player (individual choice, circumstances) which allows the men to have a longer life span as a performer on stage, asserting images of male dominance for the audience.

If the article above discussed about *Bharata Natyam* and *Odissi* through gendered bodies, we continue to look at how researchers and performance scholars' study various theories, frameworks and concepts to explore ideas and thoughts. In the article below, Ann David examines the concept of liminality proposed by Van Gennep and further elaborated by Victor Turner by studying two forms of Hindu dances, the *kavadi* and *raas/garba* or rather known as cultural performance by Milton Singer, in her article, "Performing faith: dance in current Hindu worship in the United Kingdom (David, 2008).

"Liminality is a phase that can be extended or elaborated almost indefinitely, and is where transformation may take place. Turner's detailed analysis of liminality forms an important frame through which to view Hindu dance practices, such as *kavadi* or *raas/garba*, in an extension of Van Gennep's theoretical three-fold approach. Turner further expands the idea of transition or liminal state to: a) "communication of *sacra*" (sacred objects), b) "ludic recombination" (notion of play); and c) "communitas" (feeling of group solidarity)" (David, 2008).

By using both critical and descriptive writing, she states that both the dance forms mentioned goes through the three-fold processes whereby the communication of *sacra* is not only limited to the objects prepared but also extended to the actions, including dramatic and the rituals by the performers/participants or devotees. She describes that the communication of *sacra* covers all the objects prepared such as the *kavadi*, *vel*, flowers, pots of milk, offerings and the action represent the dancing, chanting, piercing of the *vel* and blessings of the priests or ritual practitioner. This transitional part also looks at the sacred preparation of the performer who is also the devotee physically, emotionally and spiritually to undertake the rituals. David makes a critical

statement by agreeing that the ludic recombination of liminality looks at ritual as a notion of play. With regards to the *Garba*, which is performed by women during the *Navratri* (Nine Goddess festival), David moves back into the descriptive mode by telling us that many would refer to *Garba* as “play” rather than dance. She enhances the description by quoting common questions such as, “would you want to play the *Garba*” by participants or “you play nice *Garba*” by audience. This phenomenon is quite similar to some of the Malay folk dance and theatrical forms in Malaysia especially the *Joget* in an unchoreographed form, whereby, they are popularly referred to by the verb “to play” rather than “to dance or perform”. David continues that, the notion of play also refers to fun and joy just as when during playing a game, whilst dance is usually used for a staged performance but not to cultural or religious practices involving movements. The explanatory and dialectical of the term “play” is further established as being significant to be applicable in the cultural and religious dances as it also symbolizes the tricks, antics of the Hindu gods and goddesses such as Lord Krishna playing with the *Gopikas* (the girls) in Sanskrit, “*lila*” or play. As for the experience of *communitas*, it can be understood from a religious philosophy when the *kavadi* dancers admit a deep sense of being one with their god/deity, as Turner suggests, a magical feeling of being happy and well, returning home feeling blissful and blessed.

From liminality in the United Kingdom through Indian dances, our journey employing both descriptive and critical writing continues through Margaret Sarkissian’s discussion on the sustainability of Portuguese music and dance in Malaysia. Sarkissian outlines all the major challenges faced by the Melaka Portuguese people in the Settlement not only with regards to their dance and music but also their livelihood, economy and ties it back to the ownership of “their culture, their dance, their music” and what seems to be the most practical and meaningful way to continue the performing traditions within the community.

“By re-embodiment songs and dances last performed, a quarter century earlier, the new group blurred the line

between performative and presentational forms. True, the goal was to perform on stage, but the act of mimicking and dancing was intentionally social and community oriented. They were a group of friends having fun, even on stage the end result was “our”, not “Portuguese”, music and dance.lately the 1511 members have used the local set when performing Portuguese dance within the Settlement, a stance that is greatly appreciated by the community members. Questions such as, “why do we wear Portuguese dress to dance our own Branyo” sparked lively discussions and ultimately, a radical change....the 1511 group members wore local *sarong* and *kebayas* for women and *pajamas* for men” (Sarkissian, 2017).

Sarkissian points out the fact that it is important for the current generation to re-enact their culture to their current setting and take ownership over the way they want to dance, sing and play music so that it continues to be meaningful and sustainable for them and their community. Through this article, Sarkissian not only plays the role of an ethnomusicologist who only wants to document the findings but rather as a researcher who wants to encourage and help the community realize if this is what and how the community wants to perform for its various audiences, or is this what the community performs for itself? Notice how by provoking the thoughts of the people, she cleverly makes them to question themselves about their own identity. The way she documents their feelings, questions, unsureness and re-writes them in a descriptive narrative that touches the readers but at the same time she critically poses the challenge to both the Portuguese community and us about the true sense of identity and cultural ownership and practical sustainability of performing traditions.

Most journals in the arts are receptive towards articles which highlights discourses with a combination of both descriptive and critical perspectives. This is to ensure there is a direction or trajectory in the writing, whereby, an in-depth analysis is carried out shadowing the artistic or creative part and process of the work. Writing on the arts is about amplifying the dynamics between the

illumination of the aesthetics and at the same time positing or in other words, theorising the rationale of the art work, therefore adding value and justification towards the thoughts, ideation and product of the art work. This in return, sees both the article and the art work enabling various discussions at different levels to take place.

Conclusion

As mentioned earlier, on writing arts, the existence of both the descriptive and the critical styles of writing cannot be ignored or doubted especially when it involves putting the art work in context. Writing a contextual analysis of an art work recognises the work as social context and having effect on the people and society at large, therefore, appreciating the work from a cultural point of view. (D'Alleva, 2010). The analysis through both styles of writing amplifies the intention, content and the process of creation of the artwork. Questions about the artists, his identity, his poetics, his politics and his messages conveyed through his work becomes the central discussion of the writing. Both descriptive and critical writing can be considered as mutually constituting; as having effect on each other. A writer must understand that a work of art usually starts with the inception of an idea, theme, and sometimes a point of view. As the artist starts his work, the creative process begins and elements such as colour, lines, shape, and composition craft and mould and further define the artwork. The responsibility of a writer, art critic, art scholar, researcher must look at both the formal and the contextual elements and vice versa as the total divorce between these two would result in the work of art as being detached, incomplete, and void of meaning. Last but not least, it is important for a writer especially students, researchers, and scholars in the arts to be competent in both style of writing. Describing a work of art aesthetically, formally, contextually, philosophically, historically, ethnographically, and culturally is just as scholarly as inviting an inquiry into the critical faculties of the readers as the writer critically writes on the work of art.

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An Exploratory Study on Perspectives on Taking Elective Performing Arts Classes among Undergraduate Students in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia

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Abstract

Much research has been done in investigating the effect of performing arts on an individual's life. However, very little research was done in Malaysia in examining the perspectives on taking elective performing arts classes among undergraduate students at public universities. Thus, the main purpose of this research was to examine the perspectives on taking elective performing arts classes among undergraduate students. The survey questionnaire design was used in this study. A total of 117 undergraduate students who are non-performing arts majors and had participated in the elective introductory performing arts classes at a major public university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia were chosen. The survey questionnaire was divided into three sections to investigate the background of selected participants, reasons of participants in taking the elective performing arts subjects, and the opinions and attitudes of the participants towards performing arts participation. The results showed that performing arts participation is more popular among female students. Interest is the major factor that leads undergraduate students in participating in performing arts subjects. The majority agreed that their stress levels were reduced through performing arts participation and their creativity was developed through the process of hands-on activities in the performing arts classes. The data proved that participation in performing arts did give an impact on the students' life, thoughts, and values.

Keywords: Elective performing arts classes, undergraduate students

Introduction

Performing art is a type of art that involves movement and is presented by the artist live on stages such as music, dance, and drama (Frank, 2016). Performing art allows people to convey their feelings and emotions into movement through a series of performances (Miller, 2017). According to Alter and Hay (2009), the arts subjects use the related cognitive processes which allow thoughts, emotions, and language to be transformed and expressed through a series of presentations. Thus, it is believed that arts education could help students optimize their learning process and change people's lives, especially among young people who will be our future leaders.

Yerbury (2009) found that it is important to understand the perspectives on community among young people because young people have a role in shaping our community in the future. According to Community Foundations of Canada (2017), performing arts represent the identity of a community and creates a sense of belonging among people. Thus, it is important to investigate the perspectives on performing arts classes among undergraduate students in Malaysia. This is to understand the undergraduate students' overall perception of performing arts and whether it will contribute to the creative industry in the long term.

Literature Review

Art plays an important role in society for it visualizes human creativity, the identity of a population, and a form of interaction among humans (Schechner, 2013). It is difficult to define art, however, the form of art can be categorized into two main streams which are visual arts and performing arts. The visual arts allow artists to convey their feelings and opinions through visual means such as painting, sculpting, and photography while the performing arts allow artists to convey their feelings and

emotions through performances such as music, dance, and drama (Miller, 2017).

The arts allow people to express their feelings, thoughts, and emotions. Thus, arts education is important to society, especially among the population who were least advantaged economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally (Kay, 2000). This is because arts education could lead to the change of behaviour (to more positive behaviour such as being more responsive in class), increase in class attendance, increase in academic performance, and even increase the rate of employment (Gross, 2013). The arts education includes music, dance, drama, visual arts, and literature (Hetland & Winner, 2004) while performing arts include only music, dance, and drama for performing arts involving arts that are presented in real-time and involve movement (Frank, 2016).

The performing arts provide plenty of opportunities out there that call out worldwide involvement in auditions, television shows (TV shows), and public shows (Moreno et al., 2017). This shows that our society is flourishing with the public's participation in the performing arts performances, yet the performing arts subjects such as music, dance, and drama are still considered as the least important subjects by the school authorities (Liao, 2018). Besides that, according to Liao (2018), the lack of art specialists at the school level also often leads to problems that the school teachers need to ponder on various approaches to integrating arts into the classroom. Hence, this contradicts the idea of performing arts being weak in the sense of educational curriculum but as an important component in our lives and learning.

There is much research done in the performing arts and this includes the research done relating to music, dance, and drama. The majority of the research proved that society benefits from the performing arts. For instance, music aids in the business field by increasing the purchasing power of consumers. According to Moreno et al. (2017), music played in the stores soothes the customers' emotions, making them relax, happy and increase the urge of purchasing more items from the stores. In the social field,

performing arts aid in building social connections between one another by creating interesting conversation topics. People would gather around to discuss their favourite music, plan the plot of their drama in delivering some awareness through performance, etc. (Kay, 2000). Furthermore, researches in the medical field had proven that performing arts could be used in increasing recovery speed among patients. This is where the music therapists and art therapists come in. They help patients to resolve their emotions while they are in pain and upset about their body condition. People who have emotional problems or trauma were treated with music or art therapy to help ease their emotions and maintain their body condition at the optimum state (State of the Field Committee, 2009). In the education field, there are various researches done on how performing arts could enhance the academic performance among students (Athimoolam, 2004; Carter, 2004; Kariuki & Humphrey, 2006; Kokkidou et al., 2008; Fleming et al., 2010; Bayraktar & Okvuran, 2012; Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac, et al., 2013; Perlovsky, Cabanac, Bonniot-Cabanac, et al., 2013; Hallam & Rogers, 2016; Higuera-Fresnillo et al., 2016), spatial intelligence (Rauscher et al., 1993; Nantais & Schellenberg, 1999; Swartz, 2015), social skills and depression level (Akandere & Demir, 2011; Korukcu et al., 2015; Duberg, 2016; Masadis et al., 2019).

Furthermore, there is much research done in investigating the effect of music on academic performances among students (Kokkidou et al., 2008; Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac, et al., 2013; Perlovsky, Cabanac, Bonniot-Cabanac, et al., 2013; Hallam & Rogers, 2016). According to Kokkidou et al. (2008), an investigation on the impact of music learning on academic performances among 5th and 6th-grade primary school students was done and the results were positive as the academic performances of the primary school students were enhanced after the participation in music learning classes. According to Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac, and Cabanac (2013), their study also showed that music could boost the academic performances of secondary school students. However, Perlovsky, Cabanac,

Bonniot-Cabanac, and Cabanac (2013) disagreed with Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac, and Cabanac (2013) study as they believed that the Mozart effect is a short term effect where the effect will be gone after some time. They also believed that the academic performances had increased due to the presence of music that had aroused the students' mood or the music had pleased them while listening to it. But, Hallam and Rogers (2016) again agreed with Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac, and Cabanac (2013) study and supported that music learning could enhance the academic performance of secondary school students, especially in the subject of English and Mathematics.

Besides researches in music, there is much research done on the effect of drama on academic achievement (Athimoolam, 2004; Kariuki & Humphrey, 2006; Fleming et al., 2010; Bayraktar & Okvuran, 2012) and social skills (Korukcu et al., 2015). In Athimoolam's (2004) study, the academic performance of the students had increased after involving drama in education. The students, especially EFL (English as a Foreign Language) students had greatly improved in their English performance. Kariuki and Humphrey (2006) also agreed that including drama in the Mathematics class does improve the students' academic achievement, especially the at-risk students who are more disadvantaged in the aspect of social, environmental, cultural, and economic. Besides that, Fleming et al. (2010) supported that the impact of drama on student's language, Mathematics, and attitude did have a positive effect among primary school students. However, Bayraktar and Okruvan's (2012) study showed that implementing drama in the students' writing class did not have a significant difference in improving the primary students' writing level. Furthermore, the drama also has an impact on the social skills levels among undergraduate students. Korukcu et al. (2015) proved that the effect of drama education on social skills levels among undergraduate students was positive. They did their study by requesting the undergraduate students to complete a set of social skill inventory (SSI) questionnaires.

In addition, besides researches in music and drama, there are researches done on the effect of dance on students' academic performance, emotion, and social skills (Carter, 2004; Akandere & Demir, 2011; Duberg, 2016; Higuera-Fresnillo et al., 2016; Masadis et al., 2019). Carter (2004) found that high school students who received dance education obtained a higher GPA score compared to students who did not receive dance education for students who received dance education have a better attendance rate and more self-discipline. Besides helping students in boosting academic performances, dance was also found to have decreased the depression level among students. According to Akandere and Demir's (2011) study, university students who participated in dance classes successfully decreased their depression level after attending 12 weeks of dance training because it is believed that people who exercise regularly faced less anxiety and depression. Duberg (2016) found that participating in dance classes after school produced a positive effect in reducing mental health problems among teenage girls for dance allows them to express their emotions and release stress through body movement. Higuera-Fresnillo et al. (2016) also found that the academic performances among teenage girls had improved through participation in dance classes. Besides that, Masadis et al. (2019) found that traditional dance class is the best tool in teaching social skills among primary school students for traditional dance requiring teamwork, cooperation, mutual support, and good communication among the members.

Participation in arts provides fulfilment, happiness, and fun (Colley & Comber, 2003). It creates an optimum learning environment for the students and teachers. Lucardie (2014) suggested that students who are having fun and enjoy the learning process could boost the concentration of learning, being able to identify teachers as a motivator to attend class and is a good way in building social connection among students and teachers. Thus, it is important to have the fun element (entertainment) in education. The existence of the educational element in entertainment or the existence of the entertainment element in education is also known

as the term “Edutainment” (Zorica, 2014). According to Anikina and Yakimenko (2015), edutainment can be defined as the application of technology in the forms of entertainment into traditional classes, tutorials, workshops, and lectures. Mat Zin and Mohd Zain’s (2010) study found that edutainment could boost the students’ interest in the learning process and help the students obtain a better understanding of the chapter being taught. Mat Zin and Mohd Zain’s (2010) study was supported by Aksakal’s research in 2015. According to Aksakal (2015), edutainment shows positive results towards students’ focus level in class, students’ enjoyment during the lesson, and a better understanding of the subject taught by the teacher.

With the support of the above literature, performing arts classes could enhance the academic performances, spatial intelligence, social skills, and emotion of a student. This was proven through the previous research findings on academic performances (Athiemoolam, 2004; Carter, 2004; Kariuki & Humphrey, 2006; Kokkidou, Tsakiridou & Geka, 2008; Fleming, Merrell & Tymms, 2010; Bayraktar & Okvuran, 2012; Cabanac, Perlovsky, Bonniot-Cabanac & Cabanac, 2013; Perlovsky, Cabanac, Bonniot-Cabanac & Cabanac, 2013; Hallam & Rogers, 2016), spatial intelligence (Rascher, Shaw & Ky, 1993; Nantais & Schellenberg, 1999; Swartz, 2015), social skills (Korukcu et al., 2015; Masadis, Filippou, Derri, et al., 2019) and emotion (Akandere & Demir, 2011).

Research Objectives

The main objective of this study was to examine whether the participation in elective introductory performing arts classes could (1) enhance students’ overall perception, attitudes, and opinions towards the performing arts and academic studies; (2) enhance the creativity and problem-solving skills among undergraduate students; and (3) contribute to the creative industry in the long term.

Research Questions

The research questions are (1) does participation in elective introductory performing arts classes enhance students' overall perception, attitudes, and opinions towards the performing arts and academic studies?; (2) are the creativity and problem-solving skills among the undergraduate students being enhanced after the participation in elective introductory performing arts classes?; and (3) will the undergraduate students consider contributing to the creative industry in the long term after the participation in elective introductory performing arts classes?

Research Methodology

The focus of this study was to examine the perspectives on taking elective performing arts classes among undergraduate students in a major public university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. The quantitative survey questionnaire research design was used in this study. Survey research is a method of gathering details from a group of people via their reply to a set of questions (Ponto, 2015). In this research, the target sample was the undergraduate students who are non-performing arts majors and had participated in the elective introductory performing arts classes offered by their university.

Target Sample

A total of 117 undergraduate students who are non-performing arts majors and had participated in the elective introductory performing arts classes in a major public university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia were chosen to participate in this survey. All participants in the elective introductory performing arts classes were included as respondents to the survey. The participant population consisted of 27 students from the Introduction to Drama class, 45 students from the Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 45 students from the Traditional Malay Music class (total n = 117). Only three elective introductory performing arts classes were

selected. This is because only three elective performing arts subjects were available for non-performing arts major students.

Procedure

Several meetings and discussions between the researchers based on the literature review and research questions were carried in designing the questions for the research questionnaire. The survey questionnaire form consisted of three sections with 27 questions in total (Section A – 5 questions; Section B – 8 questions and Section C – 14 questions). Section A was to collect the information about the background of the participant, Section B was to find out the opinions of undergraduate students in choosing the particular elective introductory performing arts classes as their elective subjects and Section C was to investigate the undergraduate students' perspective towards the participation in performing arts. The researchers had prepared 120 copies of the survey questionnaire form and 120 pencils to facilitate the answering of the questionnaires.

An approval of entering the elective introductory performing arts classes was obtained in advance through communication and email between the researchers and the tutors of the respective classes. The dates and times to carry out the survey were discussed and agreed upon by both the researchers and tutors. The survey in the three elective introductory performing arts classes was carried out on three different occasions in the same week for consistency. The study was conducted at the end of the semester for maximum learning effect.

A copy of the questionnaire survey form and a pencil were given out to each participant. The survey was done at the beginning of the class. The participants were given 10 minutes to fill up the survey form and hand it back to the researcher. All forms were collected and counted before the researcher left the class. The same fieldwork procedures were carried out on all of the three elective introductory performing arts classes.

Results

The purpose of this quantitative survey questionnaire study was to examine the perspectives on taking elective performing arts classes among undergraduate students in a major public university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. There were a total of three analyses by the sections stated in the questionnaires which include Section A – Analysis of the demography of participants, Section B – Analysis of opinions of undergraduate students on chosen performing arts elective subjects, and Section C – Analysis of undergraduate students' perspective towards participation in performing arts based on mean scores. The analysis of each section included data from each elective class and an overall analysis of three elective introductory performing arts classes. A summary of the three analyses can be observed in Table 1 to Table 3.

Section A – Analysis of Demography of Participants

There were a total of 117 participants in all three elective introductory performing arts classes. 27 undergraduate students in the Introduction of Drama class, 45 undergraduate students in the Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 45 undergraduate students in the Traditional Malay Music class. All undergraduate students who participated in this survey were non-performing arts major undergraduate students who studied in a major public university in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia.

Through the survey, 79% of the participants who participated in the performing arts elective classes were female undergraduate students while 21% of the participants were male undergraduate students. The majority 79% of female undergraduate students were contributed by 21% from the Introduction of Drama class, 27% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 31% from the Traditional Malay Music class. However, 21% of male undergraduate students comprised 2% from Introduction to Drama class, 12% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 7% from Traditional Malay Music class.

Furthermore, 58% of participants had prior experience in learning performing arts subjects such as music, dance, or drama while 42% of participants had no experience in learning performing arts subjects. Among the 58% with prior experience included 14% from Introduction to Drama class, 17% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 27% from Traditional Malay Music class. 42% without prior experience included 9% from Introduction to Drama class, 21% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 12% from Traditional Malay Music class.

Table 1: Section A – Analysis of Demography of Participants.

		Drama	Dance	Music	Overall
Gender (%)	(a)Female	21	27	31	79
	(b)Male	2	12	7	21
Experience in learning performing arts (%)	(a)Yes	14	17	27	58
	(b)No	9	21	12	42
Total participants (in person)		27	45	45	117

Section B – Analysis of Opinions of Undergraduate Students on Chosen Performing Arts Elective Subjects

Section B of the survey gathered data on the reasons why students decided to sign up for the particular elective introductory performing arts classes. The reason for choosing the particular performing arts subject was mainly due to interest which shows a major 71% (19% from Introduction to Drama class, 23% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 29% from Traditional Malay Music class) of participants while 29% (4% from Introduction to Drama class, 16% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class and 9% from Traditional Malay Music class) of the

participants agreed that other reasons led them in choosing the elective introductory performing arts subjects. This includes peer influence and the lack of elective class choices given by the university.

However, 96% of participants agreed that the chosen elective performing arts classes met their expectations which consist of 22% from Introduction to Drama class, 37% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 37% from Traditional Malay Music class. Only a minor 4% of participants responded that the chosen elective performing arts classes did not meet their expectations.

In addition, participants were asked whether the elective introductory performing arts classes helped in their academic studies. A major 73% (16% from Introduction to Drama class, 26% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 31% from Traditional Malay Music class) of participants agreed that the performing arts classes aid in their academic studies while a minor 27% (7% from Introduction to Drama class, 13% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class and 7% from Traditional Malay Music class) of participants disagreed with the statement that the performing arts classes helped in their academic studies.

Furthermore, a major 98% of participants believed that performing arts is important in life and this includes 22% from Introduction to Drama class, 38% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 38% from Traditional Malay Music class. Yet, only a minor 2% (0% from Introduction to Drama class, 1% from Introduction to Malay Folk Dance class, and 1% from Traditional Malay Music class) of participants did not believe that performing arts is important in life.

Table 2: Section B – Analysis of Opinions of Undergraduate Students on Chosen Performing Arts Elective Subjects.

		Drama	Dance	Music	Overall
Reasons for choosing the subject (%)	(a) Interest	19	23	29	71
	(b) Others	4	16	9	29
Meet expectation (%)	(a) Yes	22	37	37	96
	(b) No	0	2	2	4
Aid in academic studies (%)	(a) Yes	16	26	31	73
	(b) No	7	13	7	27
The arts are important in life (%)	(a) Yes	22	38	38	98
	(b) No	0	1	1	2

Section C – Analysis of Undergraduate Students’ Perspective towards Participation in Performing Arts Based on Mean Scores

Section C of the survey gathered data of the undergraduate students’ perspective towards participation in performing arts. The participants (undergraduate students) were required to choose a score from 1 (totally disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral), 4 (agree) to 5 (totally agree) to express their thoughts about the participation in performing arts for 14 questions. There were a total of 14 questions in section C which can be categorized into three groups. The first group consisted of Question 1 to Question 7 where the advantages in performing arts were stated, such as gaining happiness, stress reduction, expressing emotions, gaining

confidence, improving in grades, enhancing problem-solving skills, and creativity. The second group consisted of Question 8 to Question 10 where the negative statements about the performing arts were stated, such as performing arts is a waste of money, not helpful in building character, and not important in life. The third group consisted of Question 11 to Question 14 where the researchers would like to find out the opinions of the participants regarding whether performing arts could help the participants in their future career development, life-long learning, holistic development, and choosing performing arts as their career.

In Table 3, the first group (Group A) consisted of Question A1 to Question A7. Questions in Group A asked participants about the advantages of participating in performing arts which include whether participation in performing arts could help gain happiness, stress-reduction, expressing emotions, gaining confidence, improving in grades, enhancing problem-solving skills, and creativity. The total average mean score of Group A is 3.82, which is towards the positive side of the Likert scale. The highest mean score is 4.40 where the participants strongly agree that participation in performing arts makes them feel happier. The lowest mean score is 3.39 where the participants agree that participation in performing arts could help to enhance problem-solving skills. Through the analysis of Question A1 to Question A7, the result shows that the perspective of undergraduate students towards the advantages in participation in performing arts is above average and towards the positive side of the Likert scale. Undergraduate students in the music class had the most positive experience followed by drama and dance students.

The second group (Group B) consisted of Question B1 to Question B3. Questions in Group B examined the participants' perspective towards the negative impact of participation in performing arts and this includes performing arts is a waste of money, not helpful in character building, and not important in life. The total average mean score of Group B is only 1.54, which is towards the negative side of the Likert scale. The highest mean score is 1.68 where the undergraduate students agreed that

participation in performing arts is important in building one's character. The lowest mean score is 1.44 which suggested that the performing arts are important in the life of an undergraduate student. Through the analysis of Question B1 to Question B3, the result showed that the participants did not agree with the statement indicating participation in performing arts is a waste of money, not helpful in building one's character, and not important in life. In another word, the undergraduate students agreed that participation in performing arts is not time and money wasting, can help build one's character and it is important in life. The perspective of undergraduate students towards the negative statements about the performing arts was far below the average score and towards the negative side of the Likert scale. All the students strongly agreed with the statements indicating participation in performing arts is not time and money wasting, can help build one's character and it is important in life.

The third group (Group C) consisted of Question C1 to Question C4. Questions in Group C investigated whether participation in performing arts helped in career development, life-long learning, holistic development, and choosing performing arts as a career in the future. The total average mean score is 3.70, which is towards the positive side of the Likert scale. The highest mean score is 3.97 where the participants agree that participation in performing arts aided in life-long learning. The lowest mean score is 3.37 where the participants would consider choosing performing arts as a career in the future. Through the analysis of Question C1 to Question C4, the result showed the participants do agree that participation in performing arts could help them in career development, life-long learning, holistic development, and choosing performing arts as a career in the future. In Section C, the drama class students had the most positive responses followed by music and dance class students.

Table 3: Section C – Analysis of Undergraduate Students’ Perspective Towards Participation in Performing Arts Based on Mean Scores.

	Statement/Mean scores	Drama	Dance	Music	Overall
A1	Participation in Performing Arts makes you feel happy.	4.37	4.38	4.44	4.40
A2	Participation in Performing Arts makes you feel relaxed and relieves stress.	4.41	4.36	4.47	4.41
A3	Participation in Performing Arts makes it easier to express yourself.	3.96	4.20	4.22	4.15
A4	Participation in Performing Arts makes you feel more confident.	4.30	4.09	3.98	4.09
A5	Participation in Performing Arts improves your academic performance.	3.19	3.40	3.47	3.40
A6	Participation in Performing Arts helps you to enhance problem-solving skills.	3.26	3.38	3.49	3.39
A7	Participation in Performing Arts helps you to be more creative.	4.11	4.09	4.11	4.10
	Group A in Total	3.94	3.50	4.03	3.82
B1	Participation in Performing Arts is a waste of time and money.	1.48	1.67	1.44	1.54

B2	Participation in Performing Arts is not important in building one's character.	1.67	1.73	1.62	1.68
B3	Participation in Performing Arts is not important in life.	1.37	1.44	1.47	1.44
	Group B in Total	1.51	1.61	1.51	1.54
C1	Participation in Performing Arts aid in career development.	3.67	3.42	3.60	3.55
C2	Participation in Performing Arts aid in lifelong learning.	4.07	3.89	3.98	3.97
C3	Participation in Performing Arts aid in holistic learning/development.	3.93	3.91	3.87	3.90
C4	Participation in Performing Arts leads to choosing performing arts as a career.	3.30	3.33	3.44	3.37
	Group C in Total	3.74	3.64	3.72	3.70

Discussion

Through the results, the participation of the performing arts in all three elective introductory performing arts classes was popular among non-performing arts major undergraduate students. A surprise finding in this study is female undergraduate students are keener in taking performing arts classes as their elective classes in the university as compared to the male undergraduate students. Although female undergraduate students were the majority in the performing arts classes, this does not mean that the male undergraduate students do not show interest in performing arts.

This is probably because the student population in most of Malaysia's public universities are women-majority (Yong, 2017). Thus, the data could not prove that male undergraduate students are not interested in performing arts classes. The numbers may just be a reflection of the gender demography in public universities.

Interest is the major factor that leads undergraduate students in participating in the elective introductory performing arts subjects. Undergraduate students did agree that the class met their expectations and they loved the elective introductory performing arts subject that they chose. This might be due to the class content that consists of new things or knowledge that they never had the opportunity to explore and it is very interesting as the lessons are mostly practical. Most of the undergraduate students did agree that participation in performing arts could contribute positively to their academic studies. This is because the students' stress level has been reduced and happiness is gained through the process of hands-on activities. Besides that, performing arts provide new insights and teach them to see things from different angles and perspectives, thus making them more creative to think out of the box (An & Youn, 2018). Therefore, the first and second research objectives were fulfilled for the participation in arts could enhance the students' academic studies, overall perception, attitudes, and opinions towards the performing arts and to enhance creativity and problem-solving skills among the undergraduate students.

Participation in performing arts also provided the undergraduate students a lot of advantages such as happiness, stress-free, easier to express their thoughts and emotions, confidence, improved grades, enhanced problem-solving skills, and creativity. Through the survey, the advantages mentioned above obtained an average mean score of 4 and above, which means undergraduate students agreed that participation in performing arts could bring lots of benefits to them. Besides that, undergraduate students agreed that participation in performing arts is not a waste of money and time, helpful in character building and it is important in life. The majority of the undergraduate students

agreed that participation in performing arts could also help in holistic development and enhance life-long learning. This is because there is no end to the learning of performing arts (Laal, Aliramaei & Laal, 2014). The undergraduate university students also believed that performing arts can aid in their career development. According to Fareeth (2016), performing arts provide the opportunity for students to practice social skills such as effective communication, enhance problem-solving skills, increasing confidence level and ability to think creatively that would help in their career development in the future. Therefore, the third research objective was fulfilled because the undergraduate students agreed to show continuous support to the arts industry and thus contributing to the creative industry in the long term.

Conclusion

The analysed data proved that participation in performing arts do give an impact on the students' life, thoughts, and values. Students could enhance their creativity in their daily life dealing with various activities such as studying and working life (career). Performing arts are important in lifelong learning as it gives pleasure to the individual and also helps the individual to gain a sense of satisfaction. Performing arts help to build connections and build strong bonds between humans as art is a way to express one's emotions, share thoughts, happiness and also a platform to gain self-confidence.

Lastly, this study may indicate the importance of holistic development among undergraduate students, contribute to the economic impact on the creative industry in the long term, and also shows the importance of the performing arts in the curriculum of the undergraduate students. Thus, we need to support the funding of the performing arts as part of the holistic development of the graduates. Nevertheless, this is only an early exploratory study on the impact of performing arts classes on the undergraduate student population. Further study studies could be done on a different age population, larger sample as well as correlational studies between learning performing arts and academic grades.

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Pengkategorian Tarian Terinai sebagai Tarian Istana, Tarian Klasik dan Tarian Rakyat

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Abstrak

Pengkategorian tarian Terinai dalam tarian istana berbeza dengan dua tarian istana yang ternama di Malaysia iaitu Joget Gamelan dan tarian Asyik Kelantan kerana penari dan tarian dinaungi sepenuhnya oleh golongan diraja manakala tarian Terinai tidak. Rejab Ismail, dalam kajian dan penulisan beliau mengenai tarian Terinai pada tahun 2003, menegaskan bahawa tarian ini berada dalam kategori tarian istana. Kenyataan ini disokong oleh kebanyakan penggiat seni di Malaysia melalui kajian tinjauan saya yang mendapati majoriti mengenali tarian ini sebagai tarian istana dan juga tarian klasik Melayu. Walau bagaimanapun, tarian Terinai hanya dipersembahkan di istana apabila mendapat undangan diraja. Jadi, bagaimana ia boleh dikategorikan sebagai tarian istana? Justeru, melalui kajian ini, saya menghujah bahawa tarian Terinai lebih tepat dalam kategori tarian rakyat dan tarian klasik, bukan sebagai tarian istana. Kajian ini penting bagi melihat perspektif definisi pengkategorian tarian-tarian Melayu di Malaysia melalui kajian perbandingan yang disokong dengan kajian dokumen, pemerhatian dan lisan yang diperoleh dari sumber informan.

Kata kunci: Tarian Terinai, tarian istana, tarian klasik, tarian rakyat

Pengenalan

Tarian Terinai mula terkenal di Kuala Lumpur sejak ia dilestarikan dalam institusi tari sekitar tahun 2000, terutamanya

apabila Terinai dijadikan kursus wajib dalam program Diploma Seni Tari di Fakulti Tari, Akademi Seni Budaya dan Warisan Kebangsaan (ASWARA) oleh dekan pada ketika itu, Joseph Gonzales. Hasil daripada titik usaha Fakulti Tari ASWARA ini, tarian Terinai mula tersebar lebih luas dalam kumpulan, agensi kebudayaan dan sekolah-sekolah di Malaysia. Saya berminat untuk meneliti topik ini kerana mempunyai pengalaman peribadi sebagai pelajar di ASWARA di mana tarian Terinai dikategorikan sebagai tarian istana, klasik dan rakyat. Walau bagaimanapun sejauh manakah pengkategorian ini dikenali dan diiktiraf?

Sehingga kini, Rejab Ismail (2003) merupakan satu-satunya penulis yang mengeluarkan buku berkenaan sejarah tarian Terinai dan beliau hanya menerangkan tarian Terinai adalah tarian istana. Rejab Ismail menyatakan tarian Terinai mungkin berasal dari rakyat dan dibawa ke istana tetapi tidak dibincangkan dengan mendalam. Rejab Ismail juga langsung tidak menyatakan tarian Terinai adalah tarian klasik Melayu. Dalam masa yang sama, saya juga mempunyai keraguan dalam pengkategorian tarian Terinai sebagai tarian istana kerana menurut Rejab Ismail sendiri, tarian ini pernah dipersembahkan di hadapan Raja Perlis dan baginda telah menamakan kesenian ini sebagai tarian Terinai. Namun, tiada sumber yang menyatakan ia adalah tarian istana. Tambahan pula, jika ia benar, adakah tarian ini dinaungi oleh kerabat diraja Perlis atau ia sekadar tarian hiburan raja yang dipersembahkan oleh rakyat Perlis? Adakah situasi ini juga boleh dikategorikan sebagai tarian istana? Jika begitu, pada masa sekarang sudah terdapat banyak tarian yang telah dipersembahkan untuk persembahan majlis diraja. Adakah kesemua tarian ini juga boleh dikategorikan sebagai tarian istana? Apakah kriteria sesuatu tarian dikategorikan sebagai tarian istana? Perkara ini membuatkan saya tertarik untuk menyelongkar dan melihat adakah benar tarian Terinai Perlis merupakan tarian istana. Atau ia merupakan tarian rakyat atau klasik?

Untuk mencari definisi tarian istana, klasik dan rakyat Melayu di Malaysia, saya akan melihat kategori tersebut melalui perspektif globalisasi dan memfokuskannya melalui definisi-

definisi genre dalam kajian tarian-tarian di Malaysia. Kajian ini tidak bertujuan untuk memberikan kata putus tetapi ingin mempersoalkan pengkategorian tarian Terinai sebagai tarian istana dan memberi pendapat mengenai pengkategorianannya dengan membuat perbandingan antara tarian istana, klasik dan rakyat Melayu di Malaysia dan global.

Meneliti Latar Belakang dan Kategori Tarian Istana di Malaysia

Definisi tarian istana di Malaysia mengikut kefahaman saya masih tidak ditulis dalam mana-mana penulisan dengan jelas. Walau bagaimanapun, di Malaysia dua tarian yang sangat ternama sebagai tarian istana iaitu tarian Joget Gamelan dan Asyik. Tarian Asyik berasal dari istana Patani (sekarangnya Selatan Thailand) manakala Tarian Joget Gamelan dari Istana Riau dan Lingga. Kedua-dua tarian ini ditarikan untuk hiburan kerabat diraja di istana sejak awal abad ke-16 lagi. Kedua-dua tarian ini dikategorikan sebagai tarian istana kerana dinaungi oleh kerabat diraja sendiri (Mohamed Ghouse Nasruddin, 1994, ms. 69). Naungan adalah perkataan yang sangat penting di sini yang mana akan saya perelaskan dalam artikel ini. Ia terbukti dalam penulisan terawal Joget Gamelan yang didokumenkan dalam penulisan Swettenham 1985 yang menyatakan bahawa tarian Joget Gamelan dijadikan sebagai hiburan raja dan para jemputan diraja (Harun Mat Piah & Siti Zainon Ismail, 1986). Sehubungan itu, saya akan meletakkan kedua-dua tarian ini sebagai tanda aras untuk melihat apakah yang dikatakan dengan naungan diraja sekaligus melihat adakah tarian Terinai juga terkandung dalam ciri-ciri ini.

Tarian Joget Gamelan mula bertapak di Malaysia pada tahun 1811 iaitu semasa perkahwinan diraja antara Tengku Hussain, putera sulung Sultan Abdul Rahman dari Riau-Lingga bersama Wan Esah, adik kepada Bendahara Pahang Wan Ali (Marion, 2011). Kesenian ini terus dinaungi bawah pemerintahan Wan Ahmad yang merupakan Sultan Pahang pertama yang memerintah dari tahun 1863 - 1914. Ia juga dinaungi oleh isteri-isteri baginda Tengku Ampuan Fatimah, Cik Zubedah dan Cik

Besar. Dalam naungan Sultan Ahmad dan isteri-isterinya, Joget Gamelan dikenali sebagai Joget Pahang (Harun Mat Piah & Siti Zainon Ismail, 1986). Selepas kemangkatan Sultan Ahmad pada tahun 1914, tradisi ini diwarisi oleh anak perempuan Sultan Ahmad dan Cik Zubedah iaitu Tengku Ampuan Mariam dan pasangannya Sultan Sulaiman Badrul Alam Shah di istana Terengganu sekitar tahun 1932-1942 (Ahmad Omar, 2005).

Melalui kajian terdahulu dan latar belakang sejarah, Joget Gamelan dikenali sebagai tarian istana kerana kerabat diraja merupakan tulang belakang dalam perkembangan tarian ini. Penaungannya termasuklah pelestarian di dalam istana dengan wujudnya kumpulan-kumpulan penari dalam istana Pahang dan Terengganu. Penari dan pemuzik dilatih dalam istana dan persembahan selalunya dipersembahkan di hadapan raja. Muzik majoritinya dinaungi dan diketuai oleh putera atau sultan sendiri manakala tarian dinaungi oleh puteri atau permaisuri istana. Pelestarian tarian Joget Gamelan juga termasuklah seperti perkembangan dari segi namanya yang dipanggil sebagai Joget Pahang semasa ia berpindah ke istana Pahang di bawah pemerintahan Sultan Ahmad dan Wan Esah, kepada Joget Terengganu semasa ia giat dipraktikkan di bawah pemerintahan Sultan Sulaiman iaitu Sultan Terengganu dan permaisurinya Tengku Ampuan Mariam.

Menurut Marion D'Cruz (2011) dan Norsafini Jafar (2016), di bawah kelolaan Tuanku Ampuan Mariam beliau telah melestarikan sebanyak 50 ke 64 repertoir Joget Gamelan. Kebanyakan repertoir ini adalah penciptaan semula Tuanku Ampuan Mariam (Norsafini Jafar, 2016). Tahun 1941 bermulanya zaman kegelapan tarian Joget Gamelan disebabkan penaklukan Jepun ke Tanah Melayu dan kemangkatan Sultan Sulaiman di Istana Maziah Terengganu. Joget Gamelan sempat dipersembahkan untuk tontonan umum pada tahun 1942 di Terengganu dalam sebuah persembahan khas sebelum lenyap sepenuhnya buat beberapa dekad.

Tarian Joget Gamelan bangkit semula dan giat dipersembahkan bermula tahun 1969 bersempena dengan Pesta

Muzik dan Drama Asia Tenggara yang diusahakan oleh Tan Sri Mubin Sheppard dan Tengku Asmara Raja. Namun, ia tidak lagi dinaungi oleh kerabat diraja kerana tiada generasi atau kaum kerabat istana yang berminat meneruskan tradisi ini selepas kemangkatan Sultan Sulaiman. Walaupun tujuannya telah berubah dari persembahan diraja ke persembahan umum, ia kekal sebagai genre tarian istana kerana sejarahnya yang kuat dengan kesenian atau hak milik istana Pahang dan Terengganu. Estetika keistanaan dari segi kostum, bentuk pergerakan dan muzik tetap dikekalkan walaupun pergerakan telah banyak dicipta dan diolah semula.

Tarian kedua yang sangat terkenal dalam genre tarian istana adalah tarian Asyik. Ia dipercayai wujud pada zaman kesultanan Patani yang pernah dicatatkan dalam Hikayat Patani iaitu era pemerintahan Raja Kuning sekitar tahun 1614 (Mohamed Ghouse Nasuruddin, 1994). Menurut Pak Nik Man dalam Mohamed Ghouse Nasuruddin (1994), tarian Asyik dijejaki bermula dan dipersembahkan di Jembal, Kelantan (sekarang dikenali sebagai Bachok) sekitar tahun 1683. Ketika itu ia dikenali sebagai Gerak Jinjang Raja. Walau bagaimanapun, bentuk tarian Asyik yang terawal ini tidak dapat dikesan.

Bentuk Tarian Asyik yang dapat dikesan dipersembahkan di istana pada zaman pemerintahan Sultan Mohammad I dan Sultan Mohammad Mulut Merah atau dipanggil Sultan Mohammad II. Sultan Mohammad I membawa guru tari bernama Siti Mas dan suaminya untuk mengajar tarian Asyik di istana. Mereka menjadi guru tarian Asyik sehingga di bawah pemerintahan Sultan Mohammad II. Di bawah tunjuk ajar mereka berdua, tarian Asyik telah dipersembahkan dalam pelbagai upacara di istana. Ketika pemerintahan Sultan Mohammad I dan Sultan Mohammad IV inilah tarian Asyik telah berubah formatnya. Ia dinyatakan dalam Mohamed Ghouse Nasuruddin (1994) yang mana:

The format of the dance, in which a single dancer performed to the accompaniment of a rebab, continued through successive reigns of sultans beginning from Sultan Ahmad II (Successor of Sultan Mohammad II) to just before

the reign of Sultan Mohammad IV. It was during the reign of Sultan Mohammad IV that the Asyik was performed as an ensemble rather than a solo dance. (ms. 89).

Sejarah ini juga dinyatakan dalam Mohamed Tharuwat dan Mohd Anis Md Nor (2011), tetapi mempunyai sedikit perbezaan di mana semasa pemerintahan Sultan Mohammad II, tarian Asyik ditarikan oleh putera puteri istana Kelantan. Mereka berdua juga menyatakan bahawa bentuk tarian Asyik terawal di istana Kelantan tidak dapat dijejaki namun ia dapat didokumentasi oleh bekas penari istana atau primadona tarian Asyik yang dikenali sebagai Siti Katijah (Toh Puan Siti Katijah). Siti Katijah merupakan salah seorang anak angkat keluarga Sultan Kelantan iaitu Sultan Ismail Muhammad IV yang mempelajari dan mempersembhkannya untuk hiburan raja di istana (Mohamed Tharuwat dan Mohd Anis Md Nor, 2011). Pada zaman dahulu, anak angkat adalah perkara yang biasa dilakukan di mana anak-anak rakyat jelata dipilih untuk menjadi anak angkat raja dan dibesarkan di istana. Siti Katijah merupakan salah seorang daripadanya yang telah melalui proses mempelajari tarian Asyik sejak umur 9 sehingga lingkungan 14-15 tahun (Mohamed Tharuwat dan Mohd Anis Md Nor, 2011). Sehingga kini, tarian Asyik terbahagi kepada dua iaitu tarian Asyik Sasang yang dicipta semula oleh Ismail Bakti, bapa kepada Tharuwat dengan mempunyai watak putera mengacau puteri Asyik sedang menari. Manakala Asyik Kijang Mas adalah tarian yang tidak mempunyai watak putera di dalamnya (Mohamed Tharuwat, temu bual peribadi, 2018).

Saya mendapati bahawa kedua-dua tarian mempunyai perhubungan rapat dengan kerabat diraja di mana ia dinaungi sepenuhnya di istana dalam tempoh masa yang lama. Kedua tarian ini juga diakui sebagai tarian istana di Malaysia seperti mana yang diperjelaskan di dalam Mohamed Tharuwat & Mohd Anis Md Nor (2011) iaitu:

Asyik from the courts of Istana Balai Besar has to a certain extent, been kept alive with the resurrection of the 1957 version that catapulted it from the closed inner courts of the Istana Balai Besar in Kelantan onto the Malaysian

stage. Together with Joget Gamelan of Pahang and Terengganu, Asyik will continue will be performed as Malaysia's only known the court dance tradition by dance groups in Malaysia and in their performances abroad. (ms. 35)

Juga dinyatakan dalam penulisan Mohamed Ghouse Nasruddin (1994):

Today it has been regulated to a form of folk entertainment, though it is periodically performed for royal audiences such as during Sultan birthday and royal weddings... the asyik dance is once again elevated to its courtly status, reminiscent of its heyday as a form of court entertainment from the court of Patani right up to the reign of Sultan Mohammad IV of Kelantan. (ms. 89)

Secara menyeluruh, saya melihat kedua-dua tarian ini mempunyai bukti yang lebih kukuh statusnya sebagai tarian istana. Pertama, atas sebab sejarahnya yang sangat kuat dengan naungan istana dan kedua, adalah ia telah banyak didokumen dan dibincangkan dalam penyelidikan akademik di Malaysia sebagai milik kerabat diraja. Berbeza dengan tarian Terinai yang mana masih berpandukan sebuah buku sahaja dan kategori serta sejarahnya sebagai genre tarian istana di Malaysia masih tidak dibincangkan.

Hujahan Kategori Tarian Terinai Sebagai Tarian Klasik Melayu di Malaysia

Bagaimanakah pendefinisian genre tarian klasik di Malaysia diterangkan mungkin tidak sama seperti pengertian tarian klasik di negara Asia, mahupun Barat. Setiap negara mempunyai perspektif yang berbeza dalam memberi hujahan tentang tarian klasik. Di Malaysia, para sarjana menyatakan bahawa tarian Asyik dan Joget Gamelan sahaja yang terkandung dalam genre tarian klasik kerana selari dengan tarian istana. Ia ditulis dalam Mohd Anis Md Nor (1988) yang menyatakan tarian klasik Melayu merupakan sebuah genre yang pernah dinaungi oleh istana dan Mohamad Zulkifli (2015) menerangkan tarian Terinai adalah salah satu tarian klasik Melayu di Malaysia atas sebab dirujuk sebagai

tarian istana. Kedua-dua sarjana mengaitkan dengan naungan istana. Namun seperti hujahan saya sebelum ini, tarian Terinai tidak terkandung dalam kategori istana. Di sini saya tidak bersetuju sepenuhnya jika tari klasik itu hanya boleh dikategorikan untuk tarian yang dinaungi istana kerana terdapat beberapa perkara yang boleh menentukan tarian itu adalah klasik.

Dalam penulisan Buckland (1983), model bentuk tari klasik yang diadaptasi dari model muzik klasik Green 1978 terbahagi kepada lapan perkara. Pertama, mempunyai syarat-syarat (cara pergerakan) yang perlu dipatuhi. Kedua, pembelajaran dan pengajaran dalam institusi iaitu bersifat formal. Ketiga, komposer dan koreografer adalah orang yang berbeza manakala keempat, terdapat jurang antara penari dan penonton di mana penonton bersifat pasif. Kelima, persembahan berbentuk formal. Keenam, penari dalam lingkungan kelompok komuniti dan yang ketujuh, dinaungi oleh golongan kaya. Akhir sekali yang kelapan, transmisi berlaku dalam bentuk tari dan syarat-syarat yang telah ditetapkan. Jadi adakah tarian Terinai boleh tergolong dalam kategori ini?

Daripada lapan ciri model dalam Buckland, saya melihat hanya dua ciri yang mungkin tidak terkandung dalam tarian Terinai iaitu penari Terinai dari awal kewujudannya sehingga sekarang terdiri daripada pelbagai komuniti dan penaungan tarian Terinai oleh golongan kaya ataupun istana tidak pernah ditulis atau didapati dalam mana-mana sumber. Selain daripada dua perkara ini, tarian Terinai sangat bertepatan dengan model Buckland lebih-lebih lagi setelah ia dilestarikan dalam organisasi dan institusi tari di Malaysia pada tahun 1970-an. Jadi adakah tarian Terinai boleh dipertimbangkan pengkategorian dalam tari klasik? Bagi menyokong hujahan ini saya akan menggunakan rujukan tari klasik Cina yang mendefinisikan klasik luar daripada konteks penaungan istana.

Tarian klasik di negara Cina bukan bergantung pada tempoh masa atau pemilikan mahupun penaungan dalam istana. Dalam artikel sarjana Chen (2018), tari klasik Cina berpandukan kepada estetika pergerakannya yang dipanggil “Shenyun”. “Shenyun” merupakan penjiwaan yang mengandungi elemen kompleks dan organik di dalam badan penari yang meliputi rentak,

rhyme, teknik pergerakan dan semangat. Chen menyambung di mana tarian klasik dipengaruhi seni mempertahankan diri Wushu, Tai Chi dan Opera Cina. Walaupun negara Cina kaya dengan tradisi tetapi mereka juga mempunyai isu dalam definisi tari klasik dan hanya dikenali sejak tahun 1950 di mana distandardkan oleh dua orang profesor ternama di Cina yang dikenali sebagai Tang Mancheng and Lee Zhengyi. Melalui Chen (2018) mereka berdua mendefinisikan:

Shenyun is equipped with the motion principles of lifting, sinking, marching, leaning, harboring, protruding, migrating, side-lifting, and circling horizontally, vertically and in the shape of figure 8, based on elements, centralized on rhythms. Shenyun has its pattern of motion of “down before up, right before left, close before open”, measuring the aesthetic standard with form, spirit, power and rhythm.
(ms. 45)

Ia berbalik kepada cara pergerakan, estetika dan falsafahnya yang membentuk sesebuah tari itu klasik. Pengklasifikasian ini juga ditulis dalam Zhu (2015) yang mana sebuah proses mengklasikkan bentuk tari ke bentuk klasik yang berlaku dalam kelas dengan berpandukan intipati budaya dan falsasah tari kuno. Ia menjerumus kepada kesatuan estetika pergerakan, semangat (*spirit*) dan bentuknya yang menjadi pegangan dan prinsip untuk mendefinisikan tarian klasik Cina. Dalam tarian Terinai saya melihat pengklasifikasian ini mungkin boleh dipertimbangkan dan bertepatan dengan kategori tarian klasik Melayu apabila melihat peralihannya dari sebuah bentuk tarian rakyat kepada bentuk yang lebih tegar. Saya melihat proses ini mungkin sama dengan pengertian yang diterangkan oleh penggiat seni, artis dan sarjana di Malaysia iaitu Marion D’Cruz melalui temu bual bersamanya pada tahun 2018.

Dalam temu bual saya bersama Marion D’Cruz, beliau menerangkan definisi tari klasik itu adalah sesebuah tarian yang telah melalui proses penghalusan pada tempoh yang lama termasuk dari segi pergerakan, muzik, idea, cara persembahan dan kostum. Beliau menambah, selain dari itu, penari tari klasik biasanya perlu

menjalani proses pembelajaran yang lama kerana syarat-syarat dalam tari klasik adalah lebih kompleks dan sukar berbanding tarian rakyat. Di sini saya melihat tarian Terinai mempunyai hampir kesemua ciri pengkategorian dalam definisi (Buckland, 1983; Zhu, 2015; Chen, 2018) dan Marion D’Cruz setelah ia dilestari dalam bentuk persembahan pentas bersempena dengan kebangkitan kebudayaan¹ di Malaysia pada tahun 1970-an.

Tarian Terinai Sebagai Tarian Rakyat

Ramai penggiat seni tari tradisional mempercayai bahawa tarian Terinai berada di bawah kategori tarian istana dan tarian klasik. Walaupun elemen yang menyebabkan ia klasik tidak dinyatakan tetapi ia terbukti melalui kajian dan kajian tinjauan saya pada tahun 2020. Seramai 66 peserta dalam kalangan penari dan penggiat seni tari di Malaysia terlibat dalam sesi soal jawab mengenai penglibatan dan pengalaman mereka dalam tarian Terinai Perlis. Kebanyakan—mereka berpengalaman dalam tarian tradisional Melayu. Hasil daripada tinjauan ini didapati bahawa 45 peserta daripada 66 daripada mereka mempercayai tarian Terinai adalah dalam kategori tarian istana, 33 peserta daripada 66 memilih kategori tarian klasik Melayu manakala hanya 11 peserta mempercayai tarian Terinai dalam kategori tarian rakyat. Mengapakah begitu? Saya mempercayai tradisi lisan dan penulisan daripada Rejab Ismail menjadi penyuntik kefahaman ini. Tambahan estetika pergerakan tarian Terinai yang sangat perlahan seakan-akan sama dengan tempo Joget Gamelan mungkin menjadi penyebab. Walaupun begitu, saya mempercayai tarian Terinai tergolong dalam kategori tarian rakyat yang mana saya akan perelaskan dalam penulisan ini melalui definisi tarian rakyat dan apa yang telah dipraktikkan dalam setiap persembahan tarian Terinai dari awal kemunculannya sehingga sekarang.

Dalam kajian *Estonian Folk Dance: Terms and Concepts in Theory and Practice* oleh Kapper (2013), definisi tarian rakyat di peringkat antarabangsa diterangkan melalui empat perkara. Pertama, persekitaran tarian tersebut adalah terhasil dari kawasan kampung atau pedalaman. Kedua, penari atau pelaku terdiri

daripada golongan masyarakat kampung atau amatir dari pedalaman atau luar bandar yang mana berlawanan dengan golongan profesional. Ketiga, adalah pengisian atau penceritaannya dari sebuah ritual, pertanian, atau aktiviti mempertahankan diri dan terakhir, komuniti yang menerima mesej tentang tarian adalah golongan rakyat kampung atau penari tersebut. Dalam kajian yang sama, beliau memfokuskan tarian rakyat di negara Estonia yang merupakan pengaruh ideologi romantisme negara yang mengidealkan pengetahuan dan identiti orang Estonia sebagai petani.

Malaysia mungkin tidak sama situasi dengan negara Estonia. Di Malaysia, apabila menyentuh tarian rakyat, sudah tentu akan melibatkan populasi yang mana rakyat di Malaysia terdiri daripada pelbagai bangsa iaitu Melayu, Cina, India, Orang Asli dan komuniti minoriti. Kategori tarian rakyat ini terbahagi daripada bangsa-bangsa yang ada seperti tarian rakyat Melayu, rakyat Cina dan rakyat India. Walaupun orang Asli juga merupakan rakyat di Malaysia, biasanya tidak dikenali sebagai tarian rakyat orang Asli tetapi dipanggil tarian orang Asli. Ia mungkin kerana pengistilahan daripada bahasa atau secara tradisi lisannya tidak sesuai disebut sebagai tarian rakyat Asli Malaysia.

Tarian Terinai merupakan tarian yang wujud dalam bangsa Melayu jadi ia boleh tergolong sebagai tarian rakyat Melayu tetapi kategori ini tidak dikenali kerana mungkin faktor statusnya sebagai tarian istana lebih berpengaruh. Penghujahan saya yang menyatakan tarian Terinai sebagai tarian rakyat bukan sahaja bergantung pada definisi Kapper (2013) malahan pada definisi terawal tentang tarian rakyat Hoerburger (1968) yang menjustifikasikannya kepada dua fasa iaitu “kewujudan pertama” dan “kewujudan kedua” (*first existence* dan *second existence*). Beliau mendefinisikan kepada empat pembahagian di mana dalam penulisan Nahachewsky (2001):

1. *"Folk dance in its first existence is chiefly an integral part of the life of a community... [T]he folk dance in its second existence is no longer an integral part of community*

life. It is not the property of the whole community any more, but only of a few interested people..."

2. *"Folk dance in its first existence is not fixed... Each new performance is only a kind of improvisation within a specified framework, not a definitive form. In the second existence there are fixed figures and movements, which vary only slightly".*

3. *"Generally speaking, we find that folk dances [in their second existence] have to be taught to the dancers by special dance teachers or dance leaders. But this type of intentional teaching does not exist in the first existence of the folk dance. Here folk dances are learned in a natural, functional way. Everybody participated from the very beginning of his life".*

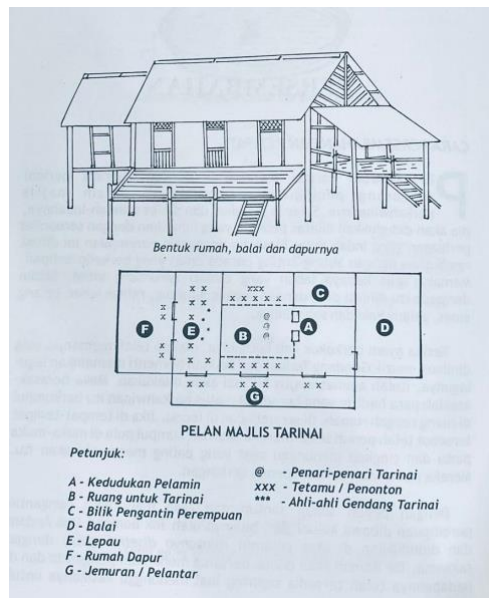
4. *Hoerburger describes second existence dance as "conscious revival or cultivation of folk dance". It is understood that he considers dances in their first existence to be representatives of the "original tradition" survivals which are generally performed more unselfconsciously.*

Keempat-empat ciri di Hoerburger boleh dikatakan dilalui dalam perkembangan tarian rakyat Melayu, Cina dan India di Malaysia. Salah satu contoh dalam Mohd Anis Md Nor (2001), adalah tarian Zapin. Walaupun beliau tidak menjelaskan melalui perspektif Hoerburger tetapi dengan menerangkan tarian Zapin yang awalnya merupakan sebuah persembahan tarian berstruktur yang melibatkan penyertaan daripada komuniti kampung, juga dipanggil "main" (Mohd Anis Md Nor, 2009) yang mana saya katakan "kewujudan pertama". Tarian Zapin melalui proses "kewujudan kedua" di mana apabila wujudnya koreografi yang tegar, struktur yang lebih sistematik dengan penambahan elemen pergerakan kaki yang lebih sukar atau menarik untuk persembahan pentas oleh komuniti profesional sebagai tari rakyat (Nahachewsky, 1995). Melalui pemerhatian saya sebagai artis, penggiat seni tari, pendidik tari di Malaysia, situasi ini memang banyak berlaku dalam tarian-tarian di Malaysia seperti Tarian Piring di Negeri Sembilan, Tarian Dabus di negeri Perak, Tarian Kuda Kepang di negeri Johor,

Tarian Daling-daling di negeri Sabah dan pelbagai lagi. Ia juga merupakan tarian yang wujud dalam kalangan komuniti kampung bukan profesional yang menjadi sebahagian amalan dalam kehidupan mereka dan berkembang ke bentuk profesional dalam organisasi dan institusi tari di Malaysia.

Dalam situasi tarian Terinai, terdapat tiga perkara yang akan saya ingin perelaskan untuk menyokong mengapa ia merupakan tarian rakyat iaitu pertama, tokoh atau penggiat, kedua tujuan persembahan dan yang ketiga, pergerakan, struktur dan kostumnya. Seperti yang diperjelaskan awal penulisan ini, Rejab Ismail (2003) hanyalah satu-satunya yang boleh dirujuk yang mana saya akan menggunakannya bagi menghujah mengapa ia lebih termasuk dalam kategori tarian rakyat Melayu berbanding tarian istana. Dalam perkara pertama iaitu tokoh, tarian Terinai dipelopori oleh golongan rakyat biasa yang berasal dari kawasan kampung di Perlis. Kesemua tokoh tarian Terinai terutama dua tokoh yang difokuskan dalam penulisan Rejab Ismail iaitu Hussain bin Mat dan Ismail bin Hassan adalah masyarakat biasa yang menetap di kampung. Tokoh-tokoh ini tidak menetap di istana dan mereka mempelajari tarian Terinai daripada guru-gurunya yang juga berasal dari kawasan kampung di negeri Perlis. Ia terbukti di mana dalam Rejab Ismail (2003) menyatakan Hussain mempelajari daripada empat orang gurunya iaitu Ismail, Mat Arshad, Mat Isa, dan Mat yang berasal dari kampung Santan dan Utan Aji Perlis manakala Ismail bin Hassan menuntut dari seorang gurunya dikenali dengan nama Pak Wan Choh. Mereka berdua mempelajarinya dengan membuat latihan di rumah guru-guru mereka setiap malam atau setiap minggu dalam tempoh yang lama dan pelajar perlu memberi pengkeras sebagai hadiah kepada guru-gurunya. Pengkeras adalah sebahagian daripada adat berguru dalam kehidupan rakyat atau masyarakat kampung yang wajib dilakukan dan bukan di istana. Di istana, ia mungkin hanya dipersembahkan dalam majlis diraja tertentu tetapi sehingga sekarang tiada pembuktian jika penari dilatih atau tenaga pengajar melatih penari di dalam istana.

Keduanya, tujuan persembahan tarian ini berbalik kepada tajuk Terinai iaitu inai atau berinai. “Berinai” dan “Malam Berinai” adalah sebuah tradisi yang dilakukan sebahagian dalam adat perkawinan masyarakat Melayu. Tradisi ini selalunya berlaku pada waktu malam sebelum persandingan pasangan pengantin. Ia dipercayai merupakan adat persediaan pengantin dan majlis dilakukan supaya perjalanan baharu bersama pasangan diberkati oleh ibu bapa dan ahli keluarga. Pada “Malam Berinai” ini tarian Terinai dipersembahkan di hadapan pasangan pengantin. Secara tradisinya, ia dipersembahkan bersama muzik langsung Gendang Terinai yang terdiri daripada dua pemain serunai, dua pemain gendang dan seorang pemain tetawak atau gong. Ia jelas ditekankan dalam penulisan Rejab Ismail yang mana beliau menyatakan persembahan biasanya dilakukan di sebuah rumah kampung yang sederhana seperti rajah di bawah.



Rajah 1. Pelan Tempat Persembahan untuk Persembahan “Malam Berinai” di kawasan kampung di Perlis.
(Rejab Ismail, 2003. ms. 24)

Pelestariannya di Perlis semasa tahun 1900 mendapat sambutan rakyat sehingga wujudnya kumpulan-kumpulan tarian Terinai kampung seperti di Kampung Paya, Utan Aji, Ngulang, Santan dan Nisam, Perlis (Rejab Ismail, 2003).

Ketiga, bagi pergerakan dan struktur tarian Terinai adalah perkara besar yang saya akan perelaskan. Tarian Terinai secara keseluruhan mempunyai rangka pergerakan dan juga mempunyai bahagian improvisasi. Saya melihat tarian Terinai yang ada pada masa kini sama ada yang dipraktikkan di Perlis dan Kuala Lumpur adalah sebuah versi tarian yang telah dikembangkan oleh Zamin Haroon atau lebih dikenali sebagai Chandrabanu iaitu anak didik kepada tokoh Ismail Hassan. Beliau juga merupakan penaung yang wujud sehingga sekarang. Tarian Terinai versi Zamin Haroon mungkin yang telah distandardkan dengan lebih tegar yang mana saya lihat sebagai “kewujudan kedua” konsep Hoerbürger. Sehingga sekarang tarian Terinai dipraktik dengan struktur yang dimulai dengan Terinai Mengadap dan diikuti dengan Terinai Selom. Struktur tarian Terinai sedikit berbeza dengan Rejab Ismail yang mana dimulakan dengan Terinai, Timang Welo dan diakhiri dengan tarian Selom. Menurut salah seorang pewaris muzik Gendang Terinai, Amil Senapi mengatakan apakah yang dimaksudkan dengan Timang Welo dan Selom tidak dapat diperjelaskan lagi kerana tarian ini wujud secara lisan dan ia menjadi ikutan dan penerangannya tidak pernah ditulis dalam mana-mana penulisan (Amil Senapi, temu bual peribadi 19 Mei 2021)

Tarian Terinai Penulisan Rejab Ismail (2003)	Tarian Terinai Versi Zamin Haroon (Masa Kini)
Terinai	Terinai Mengadap
Timang Welo (Terinai Selom Variasi Pertama)	Terinai Selom
Selom (Terinai Selom Variasi Kedua)	

Jadual 1. Perbezaan antara struktur tarian Terinai dalam penulisan Rejab Ismail (2003) dan versi tarian Terinai yang dipraktikkan pada masa kini.



Rajah 2. Persembahan tarian Terinai yang dilakukan oleh Ismail Hassan (kanan) dan Zamin Haroon (kiri) pada awal tahun 1970-an (Koleksi peribadi Zamin Haroon, 2020)

Tarian Terinai atau Terinai Mengadap adalah merujuk kepada segmen pertama bagi tarian Terinai. Tarian ini ditarikan secara duduk bersila. Kebanyakan penekanan motif pergerakan diberi pada bahagian tangan yang biasa dilakukan berulang-ulang dari sebelah kanan ke sebelah kiri. Tarian ini diikuti dengan Timang

Welo iaitu tarian Selom Variasi Pertama bagi versi Zamin Haroon yang merupakan sambungan tarian Terinai Mengadap di mana penari menggunakan piring kecil yang mempunyai lilin yang dinyalakan, diletak pada bahagian tengah piring. Ia ditarikan seperti Tarian Piring Minangkabau iaitu motif pergerakan yang berbentuk lapan. Persembahan Terinai biasanya diakhiri dengan tarian Selom iaitu Terinai Selom Variasi Kedua yakni versi Zamin Haroon. Bahagian Selom di mana penari atau tokoh tarian Terinai akan membuat improvisasi mengikut citarasa atau kreativiti sendiri. Dalam versi Zamin Haroon atau masa kini, elemen improvisasi langsung tidak dipraktikkan dan ia hanya tertumpu kepada koreografi yang telah distandardkan oleh Zamin Haroon sejak ia dikoreografkan untuk kumpulan kesenian Teater Seri Indera (TESERI) di Perlis sekitar tahun 1977 seiring dengan kebangkitan kebudayaan di Malaysia.

Menurut Zamin Haroon, melalui pengalamannya berguru bersama tokoh Ismail Hassan, secara keseluruhan, struktur dan juga pergerakan tarian Terinai adalah tidak tetap (Zamin Haroon temu bual peribadi, 2020). Pada bahagian Terinai Mengadap beliau menceritakan setiap kali tokoh Ismail Hassan membuat persembahan atau mengajar adalah berlainan. Apa yang dipelajari pada hari ini, tidak akan pasti keesokan harinya adalah pergerakan yang sama (Zamin Haroon, temu bual peribadi, 2020). Ini yang saya katakan sangat dekat dalam kategori tarian rakyat. Beliau turut menyatakan semasa proses menjadi pembantu Ismail Hassan semasa mengajar di TESERI, penari-penari selalu keliru. Penari mengeluh sehingga mengatakan “*Satgi dia pi buat tang ni, pahtu dia buat tang tu pulak*”. Penari mengadu kepada beliau kerana setiap kali Ismail Hassan mengajar tidak sama dan kerap kali marah jika tidak melakukan dengan baik. Situasi ini saya katakan sangat tepat dengan konsep “kewujudan pertama” Hoerburger. Sesuatu yang tidak tetap sama ada dari segi bentuk motif, arah, aras dan penggunaan tenaganya. Tarian Terinai Mengadap hanya mempunyai rangka pergerakan yang tidak tegar. Walaupun situasi di TESERI ini adalah titik permulaan untuk perubahan ke arah “kewujudan kedua”, tetapi situasi ini adalah sama dengan definisi

tarian rakyat. Bukan itu sahaja, dalam bahagian tarian Selom merupakan salah satu pengukuhan buktinya.

Jika dilihat tarian Selom pada zaman Ismail Hassan dan Hussain Mat, ia ditarikan secara solo. Improvisasi dilakukan mengikut kreativiti individu untuk persembahan majlis perkahwinan atau “Malam Berinai”. Persembahan improvisasi tidak mempunyai batasan kerana peraturan tidak pernah ditetapkan dan estetikanya berpandukan pengalaman penari. Hussain Mat membuat improvisasi Selom seakan-akan sama dengan persembahan tarian rakyat Inai atau Tari Inai negeri Kelantan dengan cara melayahkan badannya ke belakang untuk mengambil duit di atas lantai yang diberikan oleh penonton dengan menggunakan mulut (Rejab Ismail 2003). Ismail Hassan membuat improvisasi Selom dengan memasukkan elemen silat dan seni persembahan yang beliau miliki berpandukan pada muzik yang disukai. Setiap kali persembahan tarian Selom, Ismail Hassan mampu membuat penonton berteriak kepuasan sehingga terdengar sorakan kuat. (Zamin Haroon, temu bual peribadi, 2019). Situasi ini yang dikatakan tidak tetap.

Seperti yang saya jelaskan, tarian Selom pada masa kini telah termasuk dalam konsep “kewujudan kedua”. Zamin Haroon adalah individu yang telah menukarkan elemen improvisasi ini kepada bentuk yang tetap. Pertamanya, beliau menyatakan untuk menaiktarafkan tarian ini ke peringkat antarabangsa atau profesional. Dalam masa yang sama, saya melihat faktor perubahan juga adalah disebabkan persembahan pentas telah mula meningkat sejak tahun 1970-an. Persembahan di atas pentas selalunya dilakukan dengan jumlah penari yang ramai atau persembahan berkumpulan. Zamin Haroon menyambung, apabila tarian Terinai ditarikan secara berkumpulan, improvisasi adalah tidak bersesuaian (Zamin Haroon, temu bual peribadi, 2020). Secara visual, persembahan kelihatan tidak mempunyai arah dan terlalu berterabur. Justeru persembahan yang seragam adalah lebih dipandang profesional berbanding improvisasi.

Persembahan Terinai versi tokoh Ismail Hassan atau Hussain Mat tidak lagi dipraktik di Perlis kerana kepakaran untuk

tradisi improvisasi sudah tidak dilakukan dan tidak diturunkan oleh tokoh. Kebanyakan persembahan pada masa kini mengikut koreografi yang telah ditetapkan oleh Zamin Haroon. Bukan sahaja dari segi pergerakan malahan ragam- ragam juga telah diberi nama yang tersendiri. Pada awalnya ia tidak dipanggil ragam tetapi lebih dikenali dengan “lapis”. Lapis 1, lapis 2, lapis 3 sehinggalah lapis 7. Pada masa kini kesemua lapisan telah ditukar kepada nama-nama ragam yang lebih terperinci. Nama-nama ragam ini boleh dilihat pada jadual di bawah:

Terinai atau Terinai Mengadap			
Versi Awal Kemunculan Tokoh Ismail Hassan dan Hussain Mat (1920-1970)	Versi Kompleks Budaya Negara (KBN) - MAWARKU (1970- 1990)	Versi Kompleks Budaya Negara (KBN) – Istana Budaya (1990-an)	Versi semasa saya mempelajarinya di (ASWARA) 2010 (Versi Zamin Haroon)
Lapis 1	Sembah	Sembah	Angkat Sembah
Lapis 2	Sembah Buka	Sembah Buka	Sembah Bumi
Lapis 3	Perkahwinan	Perkahwinan	Adat Perkahwinan
Lapis 4	Memberi Salam	Memberi Salam	Memberi Salam/Buka Pintu
Lapis 5	Buka Pintu	Buka Pintu	Pakai Baju
Lapis 6	Mengurai	Mengurai	Pakai Seluar
Lapis 7	Rambut	Rambut	Sembah Akhir

Jadual 2. Perkembangan nama-nama ragam yang telah dipraktik dari tokoh Ismail Hassan dan Hussain Mat sehingga tahun 2010.

Apakah itu lapis 1 sehingga lapis 7 memang sukar dipastikan kerana deskripsi yang terdapat pada zaman tokoh-tokoh Terinai adalah bersifat lisan dari mulut ke mulut. Jadi sumbernya sudah

tidak dapat dijejaki. Dalam penulisan Rejab Ismail ia ditukarkan daripada lapis kepada variasi. Kesemua nama hanya diperbaiki semula setelah Zamin Haroon mula mengajar di Kompleks Budaya Negara (KBN) pada tahun 1977 bersempena persembahan dramatari “Inderaputra” bawah terbitan Krishen Jit dan Ismail Zain. Manakala pelestarian di ASWARA untuk bengkel atau kuliah jangka pendek pada tahun 2001. Menurut Zamin Haroon, istilah ini mungkin telah bertukar dengan sendirinya dalam KBN dan Pertubuhan Warisan Seni Tari dan Muzik Melayu (MAWARKU) bagi memudahkan kefahaman mereka sendiri untuk proses pembelajaran (Zamin Haroon, temu bual peribadi, 2021). Walaupun masih terdapat perbezaan dari segi istilah ragam atau susunannya tetapi pergerakannya adalah pada lingkungan yang sama. Persembahan tarian Terinai juga bukan sahaja tegar pada pergerakannya tetapi juga pada penggunaan muziknya. Penari perlu menari mengikut tempo muzik mengikut bar yang sudah ditetapkan. Pada bahagian Selom versi Zamin Haroon pula terdapat pembahagian gender di mana tarian yang menggunakan lilin ini hanya ditarikan oleh penari perempuan dan penari lelaki hanya menari Terinai Selom Variasi Kedua iaitu pergerakan bermotifkan pergerakan silat.

Kostum tarian Terinai pada awalnya adalah tidak tetap lebih-lebih lagi apabila ia dipersembahkan di kawasan kampung. Menurut Rejab Ismail (2003), kebanyakan persembahan di kampung hanya dengan menggunakan Baju Melayu dan songkok dan apabila ia dipersembahkan untuk persembahan raja ia mula diselarikan dengan pakaian seakan-akan pakaian diraja iaitu sepasang baju yang dilengkapi dengan tanjak dan samping. Ia terus berkembang pada era Ismail Hassan dan Zamin Haroon dengan wujudnya aksesori tambahan. Lelaki memakai baju dan seluar tiga suku, manakala perempuan memakai kain songket dan baju satin pendek. Penambahan aksesori seperti pelapik dada, cucuk sanggul bagi perempuan, pending, gelang tangan, dan bunga melur yang dihiaskan di kepala penari lelaki menjadi estetika yang tetap untuk persembahan tarian Terinai masa kini.

Hasil pengkajian ini, saya berpendapat ciri-ciri seperti kewujudan dan pelestarian dalam komuniti kampung, tiada ketetapan dalam pergerakan dan struktur, penghalusan yang dilakukan untuk persembahan pentas adalah hujahan yang sangat kuat untuk menyatakan bahawa tarian Terinai termasuk dalam kategori tarian rakyat dan bukan tarian istana. Tarian ini mungkin juga boleh dilihat sebagai tarian klasik Melayu bukan pada status tarian istana tetapi proses penghalusan dan pengembangan yang dilakukan secara berperingkat oleh Zamin Haroon untuk persembahan pentas yang melibatkan penghalusan kualiti gerak, kostum, dan muzik yang selari dengan definisi Marion D’Cruz, Chen 2018; Zhu 2015.

Penutup

Tarian Terinai pada masa kini sudah mengalami proses perubahan yang besar di mana secara lisannya dikategorikan dalam tarian istana dan tarian klasik Melayu. Rejab Ismail (2003) mengatakan ia adalah tarian istana. Walaupun begitu saya mendapati pengkategorianya sebagai tarian istana mempunyai keraguan kerana sehingga kini status naungan diraja tidak dinyatakan dengan kukuh oleh mana-mana pihak sama ada dalam penulisan Rejab Ismail (2003) dan pewaris tarian ini. Melalui penelitian dokumen dan tradisi lisan yang dinyatakan dalam artikel ini, saya yakin untuk mencadangkan tarian Terinai adalah di dalam kategori tarian rakyat. Ia juga boleh dikategorikan sebagai tarian klasik Melayu pada ketertibannya apabila telah distandardkan kepada bentuk yang lebih tegar dalam organisasi kebudayaan dan institusi tari di Malaysia. Pengkategorianya sebagai tarian rakyat yang tepat pada pengertian rakyat dalam penulisan Hoerburger adalah tidak dapat dinafikan yang mana penari, persekitaran, bentuk tari, elemen improvisasi adalah berasal dari milik rakyat atau komuniti bukan profesional dari kampung-kampung di negeri Perlis; “kewujudan pertama” konsep Hoerburger. Manakala perkembangannya dalam organisasi kebudayaan dan institusi pada tahun 1977 sehingga kini menjadikan status tarian rakyatnya ke arah profesional.

ⁱ Kebangkitan kebudayaan ini wujud selepas peristiwa rusuhan bangsa pada 13 Mei 1969 yang menjadi titik perubahan dalam mencerminkan budaya kebangsaan Malaysia yang meliputi kaum Melayu, Cina, India, dan etnik minoriti di Sabah, Sarawak dan orang asli. Ia juga selari dengan kewujudan Dasar Ekonomi Baru, Dasar Kebudayaan Kebangsaan, dan Rukun Negara.

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