



Rudolf Puspa's Communication Style in the Teater Keliling

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Abstract

One of the keys to the success of a theatre performance is the communication pattern between the director and the crews. Any organization (regardless of its form) can run well if the conversations among its crews and leaders function smoothly, especially if the organization consists of members with a significant age difference. To be precise, age differences can sometimes become barriers in communication or the process of conveying messages. This article aims to provide an analytical exposition on Rudolf Puspa's leadership style through communication management in managing the Teater Keliling. This type of research is qualitative research using a qualitative descriptive approach. The author will research natural object conditions, where the research subject is a key factor. All data obtained are in the form of interviews, documentation, field notes, and observations. In addressing the age gap in Teater Keliling, Rudolf Puspa strives to learn several things, one of which is to study topics that attract the attention of today's youth and appoint his own child as a producer. Thus, his child can convey his instructions more simply and easily understood to the crew with the same age. He is a leader with a democratic style. This can also be seen from how he is willing to listen, open up for discussions together, and accept input from Teater Keliling crews who are much younger than him. As the "Father" of Teater Keliling, he realizes that he must apply an adaptive attitude to maintain the longevity of the community he loves. He does all this in the name of the theatrical art that has become one with him.

Keywords: *Teater Keliling, Democratic, Communication, Director, Producer.*

Introduction

An organization cannot be separated from the existence of a leader. Leader comes from the word lead which means to move first, direct the opinions and thoughts of others, and mobilize others in their influence. Likewise in theater art, the head of a theater performance is a director. Harymawan in his book titled "Dramaturgy" (1988) outlines the tasks in the directorial process are to determine the basic tone, casting, stage layout and technique, arrange mise en scene, strengthen or weaken the scene, create aspects of behavior, and influence the soul of the player. In short, in designing a theater performance, a director is needed who is responsible for the staging area. The director is responsible for the cast, stage staff such as musicians and other artistic teams, and not to forget the public or audience (Harymawan, 1988).

Patiño & Vizcaíno in the study "Leadership for Performing Arts" (2013), revealed that the main task of a leader in a performance is how the leader solves problems

related to the performance and provides comments on the performance of the performers. The leadership style in a performance is tailored to the performers' abilities, discipline, talent, commitment, and the number of rehearsals each week. This is an interesting finding because one of the keys to the success of a performance is the role of the leader himself. The leader must be able to read the situation that occurs in the players. In addition, the leader must also be able to provide suggestions and criticism to the players so that a performance can run smoothly. As stated above, the leadership style of a leader must also be adjusted to the performance and abilities of the performers (Patiño & Vizcaíno, 2013).

One of the keys to the success of a performance is the leadership role of the director himself. As a leader, he must also be able to read the situation that occurs in the players. In addition, the leader must also be able to provide advice and criticism to the players so that a performance can run smoothly. As stated above, the leadership style of a leader must also be

adapted to the performance and abilities possessed by the players.

Theater directors in Indonesia are increasingly numerous, along with the development of culture and the preservation of theater art itself. Starting from the oldest generation, Putu Wijaya (founder of Teater Mandiri), Jose Rizal Manua (founder of Teater Adinda and Teater Tanah Air), Slamet Rahardjo (successor of Teater Populer), and Rudolf Puspa, one of the founders of Teater Keliling, which is one of the oldest theater groups in Indonesia that is still actively producing today. The history of this latter theater group is important to study.

Rudolf Puspa (born June 29, 1947 under the name Rudolf Puspa Heruana) is an Indonesian theater artist and the director of the Teater Keliling community. He started his career in theater since he was in high school. HIGH SCHOOL. In 2016 Rudolf was named Abdi Abadi of the Indonesian Theater Federation (FTI). Federation (FTI). He was awarded the honor for his services in the field of performing arts and culture. performing arts and culture.

Together with his wife Dery Syrna, Buyung, and Paul Pangemanan, Rudolf Puspa formed the community "Teater Keliling" which was supported by Saraswaty, Jajang C. Noer, Wit, Syaeful Anwar, and RW Mulyadi. Teater Keliling was established on February 13, 1974 in Jakarta. Its main mission is to educate the the nation, especially young people, through character education that is not oriented to profit but to the idealism of education. Teater Keliling also performs performances abroad to support Indonesia's cultural diplomacy in the world. international world.

In every performance of Teater Keliling's musical dramas, the number of participants and crew members always reaches hundreds of people. participants and crew members always reach hundreds of people. The cast and crew who participate also vary in age. From junior high school students, to office workers. office workers. This makes it unique for Teater Keliling to regenerate the cast and committee in every performance. process of regenerating the cast and committee in each performance. With the increasing enthusiasm of young people to join the team of the Teater Keliling's performance team, shows a unique leadership style. Rudolf Puspa as the director of Teater Keliling is able to see the challenges that will be faced and the changes that occur in the surrounding environment. faced and the changes that occur in the surrounding

environment. Willingness, willingness, sincerity, courage and the ability to let go and give his seat to his successor. to his younger successors was one of the ways Rudolf was more aware of and adapted to the changing times. realize and adapt to the changing times. Not many directors from old generation can do this. However, Rudolf believes this attitude must be for the better future of the Teater Keliling.

Method

This type of research is qualitative research using a qualitative description approach. The author will research on natural object conditions, where the research subject is the key instrument. All data obtained in the form of interviews, documentation, field notes, and observations are findings that are presented in words. This research is focused on examining the leadership style of Teater Keliling directors in terms of communication management. This research was conducted in Bekasi and Jakarta. The research was conducted face-to-face with the director, the production team, and the management of Teater Keliling. The address of Teater Keliling studio is located at Jl. Gladiolus V No.14, RT.14/RW.6, Ujung Menteng, Kec. Cakung, East Jakarta City, Special Capital Region of Jakarta 13960. Data collection was carried out in this study, namely: observation, interviews, literature study and documentation.

When researchers made observations, some of the information obtained from the results of observations included space (place), actors, activities, objects, actions, events or events, time and feelings. In this case, the researcher has conducted observations for 3 months in the staging of the musical drama "The Great Ravana" which was carried out in January-March 2023. Processing as an Assistant Director makes researchers better understand the leadership style of the director of the Teater Keliling.

As for the interview technique itself, the author chose several figures including Rudolf Puspa as the Director of Teater Keliling, Aditia Jaya as Assistant Director, Najib as Stage Manager, Dery Syrna as Executive Producer, Dolfry as Producer, Reno Kiragah as Art Director, and Farhan as Music Director. The seven people have different divisions, Rudolf Puspa as Director will tell about his leadership style directly, Aditia Jaya as Assistant Director will talk about the division of tasks in directing, Najib as Stage Manager will talk about the leadership style with the stage manager, Dery

Syrna as Executive Producer will talk about the leadership style from the production team side, Dolfry as Show Producer will talk about the division of tasks with the Director, Reno Kiragah as Art Director will talk about the relationship of leadership style with the Art division, and Farhan as Music Director will talk about the leadership style with the music division.

In addition, the author explores this research by conducting a literature study. The author collects relevant or appropriate data needed for research from books, scientific articles, news, and other credible sources and also in accordance with the topic of the research conducted. Finally, the author also collects and analyzes documents, both written, pictorial and electronic documents.

In addition, one of the important stages in this research is comparison with previous studies. The author discusses the similarities and differences between previous research and this study. Because the topics to be discussed and the theories used in previous studies can be a reference for this research so as to strengthen the theoretical basis of the research. Some previous research comparisons that have been traced include:

1. Research by Dewi (2022) on Leadership Styles in the Nusantara Musical Theater Production House as a Pioneer of Broadway Shows in Indonesia. The research shows that Chriskevin Adefrid as a production leader, emphasizes technical ability, the ability to work together, the skill to compromise with people around him, and also shows strong conceptual abilities in his role as a leader. The leadership style applied by him is transformational leadership, where his main focus is to motivate and inspire team members. The similarity with Dewi's writing is that both specifically discuss leadership styles in the context of a theater community with a focus on Musical Drama and the concept of Broadway shows. As for the differences, this research is more focused on leadership in the field of theater production, especially in the production stage before directing. With a more detailed focus on the production stage, this research aims to understand the role of leaders in designing, organizing and managing the technical aspects of theatre production, providing a unique insight into how transformational

leadership can positively impact these aspects (Dewi, 2022).

2. Research by Erwin (2015) on Leadership Style and Management of Performing Arts Organizations Case Study: Gandrik Theater. From the results of the study, it can be concluded that the leadership style should be adjusted to the conditions and needs of the group being led. Each phase in the life of the group will demand different needs and approaches. Therefore, the creativity of a leader becomes very important in developing effective leadership strategies. Particularly, in the face of global economic and cultural pressures. Performing arts groups need to have leaders who are simultaneously skilled in both artistic and managerial aspects. This ability is crucial to provide a critical and broad perspective in determining group strategies in the midst of changing environmental dynamics. The similarity between the two studies lies in the focus of the research on leadership styles in theaters with members from various generations. Starting from the beginning of its establishment to the current leadership. Erwin's research only discussed leadership patterns in general. While the present study highlights that each generation has its own characteristics and changes in their leadership approach. By identifying these differences, the author seeks to provide a more in-depth picture of the evolution of leadership in Teater Keliling from one generation to the next (Erwin, 2015).

Result and Discussion

Rudolf Puspa's Profile

Rudolf Puspa is an Indonesian theater figure best known as the founder and main director of Teater Keliling. He was born in Solo on July 6, 1944. His early education was taken at Pangudi Luhur Bruderan Elementary School in Solo after returning from the evacuation, and graduated in 1960. Then he continued to Bintang Laut Junior High School where he was introduced to drama training at school, and graduated in 1963. He then went on to SMA Negeri II Margoyudan Solo, where his interest in theater began to develop. His drama activities grew stronger because he was elected as the head of the Margoyudan theater, a school theater group founded by Slamet Sukirnantanto and Salim Said. Since he was in high school, he has also become

a director. At first, he chose to major in theater at school because of the backstage activities. This was in accordance with his shy nature. At every school theater meeting or invitation, he always sent his vice-president to speak because he couldn't make speeches and talk much. Her dominant traits were shyness and quietness. This became one of the major factors that influenced him when he became the leader of the Teater Keliling.

Since high school, he had been performing around Solo and experienced how hard it was to resist the performances put on by LEKRA, which was well-funded because the PKI was behind it. The experience opened his mind about art being used as a tool by political parties. It has left a lasting impression on him because, inevitably, he had to study politics in order not to be consumed and used by power. He is very sensitive to the efforts of political games that only seek power by using the people only as complementary sufferers and becoming pawns at the forefront. After graduating from high school, Rudolf moved to Jakarta in 1967 to continue his education at the Indonesian National Theater Academy. He also studied theater on his own through the guidance of several famous theater figures such as Teguh Karya, Wahyu Sihombing, Pramana PMD, Kasim Achmad, D. Djajakusuma, and became an active member and assistant director of Arifin C. Noer, whom he had known since 1964 in Yogyakarta. As we know Arifin C. Noer's "Teater Ketcil" in Jakarta in 1968. With his friends such as Rulakso, he studied with Arifin every Saturday night and met him again in Jakarta in 1968 and stayed with him until 1974 at Teater Ketjil. Arifin had a strong influence on him to always experiment in theater and to become Indonesian. It was Arifin who encouraged him to make the life choice to be fully devoted to theater. Since then, he has carried the mandate from his theater teacher until now.

In 1974, Rudolf, together with his wife Ir. Dery Syrna, Buyung Zasdard, and Paul Pengemanan, founded the Teater Keliling community. Its early members included Saraswaty, Jajang C. Noer, Wit, Syaeful Anwar, and RW Mulyadi. The theater is known for its traveling performances that have visited all provinces in Indonesia and several countries abroad. Teater Keliling focuses on bringing theater to the wider community, with the aim of building awareness of the nation's culture and history. Until now, Rudolf Puspa is still the director of Teater Keliling. With a wealth of

experience as a teacher, scriptwriter and theater practitioner himself for more than forty years, he deserves to be named an important figure in the development of theater in Indonesia.

Teater Keliling

The beginning of the formation of Teater Keliling was due to the interest of several theater activists who shared the same vision of making theater more widely known to a wider audience. For this reason, some of the early founders of Teater Keliling aimed to perform in areas that were not only focused on Jakarta. Seeing that there was a good interest from the public in theatre, Rudolf Puspa and his friends formed Teater Keliling to become a legal organization.

According to Rudolf Puspa, Teater Keliling became much better and more productive after it was legalized as an organization. Initially Rudolf felt that the organization did not need regeneration, as he already had a candidate to continue the organization, who was none other than his son. However, after finding it difficult to deal with the changes that occurred over time, Rudolf Puspa finally decided to regenerate the organization so that Teater Keliling could last longer than originally planned.

What Rudolf Puspa did at the beginning of the formation of the Roving Theatre was not appropriate, as stated by Permas (2003) that the first step that must be taken by an organization is to define the organization in order to create an agreement among a group of people. While the beginning of the Teater Keliling was only coordinated by Rudolf Puspa, without expecting the organization to have a long life. Rudolf Puspa's lack of organizational skills in the early days of the theatre led him to invite his son to be involved in the core of the theatre, where he was appointed producer (Permas, 2003).

Unlike other organizations, leadership in the production of a theatre performance is divided into two: the director and the producer or production leader. In Teater Keliling, the directing that takes place is in two parts, namely directing and stage production. Directing is led by the director, Rudolf Puspa, while the production is led by the producer, Dolfry Kiragah. The director's direction is about the story, script, acting, staging, and stage art. While the direction given by the producer is more about the production as a whole, starting from the presentation of the performance, the development of the production team in several divisions such

as costumes, documentation, promotion, makeup, property, and finance. The role of both is very important in the final result of the performance presented by the Teater Keliling.

In the organizational structure of the production of Teater Keliling performances, there are two leaders, namely the director and the producer. The existence of the producer in the production received a lot of criticism from the players and crew members. This had to be accepted because in the previous production team, there had never been a producer, let alone a position parallel to the director. He had no experience at all as a producer of theater performances, where at that time he also “messed up” quite a lot of the director's work. But at that time there was an agreement between the producer and the director that the director had to be sincere and humble about the old rules that would be changed to keep up with the times.

Rudolf Puspa's Direction Style

As a director of the Teater Keliling, he always gives instructions to the cast and production team regarding the directing and artistic arrangement of a performance. The instructions are about scene formation, cast details, and scene setting selection. His role is also needed in motivating the actors during rehearsals.

Through the detailing process in the directing process, Rudolf Puspa tries to get closer to the actors. The process becomes a bridge of knowledge between him and the actors to improve chemistry, and also results in synergy and a common vision between him and the actors.

The way a director, especially Rudolf Puspa, leads the Teater Keliling organization is through coordination with several members under him. As for the purpose of coordination or discussion carried out by Rudolf Puspa, so that the results of the agreement to be approved can be accepted by all circles, given the considerable generational differences between the director and other members.

According to Franklyn in Onong Effendy (1993), there are three main styles of leadership, namely authoritarian leadership (outocratic/authoritarian leadership), democratic/participative leadership, and free-rein/laissez faire leadership. Rudolf Puspa's leadership style is a democratic leadership style, in which the leader makes decisions in such a way that the agreed decision is a joint decision of the

group members. Every member has the right to express their opinion. He often asked members for their opinions, especially regarding the style of the current generation of children (Onong Effendy, 1993).

According to Kartono (1998), the leadership style of a democratic director like Rudolf Puspa can be clearly seen in these three characteristics: (1) The organization with all its parts runs smoothly even when the leader is not on site. When members and actors have to rehearse, they are able to do so with or without the presence of the director. Likewise, when there are some things they have to discuss, especially related to the script to be played, they try to practice as much as they can and then have a discussion with Rudolf Puspa to receive input until they get the final result so as not to get out of the script to be performed. (2) Authority is fully delegated downwards and each is aware of their duties and obligations. Rudolf Puspa has tried to apply this method to the regeneration of Teater Keliling. (3) Members and actors involved in the performance come from different generations and therefore have different views. The communication and discussion between generations has made Rudolf Puspa's thinking more open to the changes that are happening today (Kartono, 1998).

In every leadership style, of course nothing is perfect. There are some shortcomings that Rudolf Puspa has with his democratic leadership style. One of Rudolf Puspa's shortcomings in this leadership style is that there are many pros and cons to the decisions that will be taken, especially in the different perspectives of each generation.

Rudolf Puspa's Communication Style

In the Teater Keliling, there is a difference in age between the director and the cast and crew who are members of the production team. This difference sometimes becomes an obstacle in communication. In dealing with the age difference, Rudolf Puspa tries to learn a few things, one of which is learning about topics that attract the attention of young people today. Initially he had difficulty communicating, but after making observations and seeing the way of communication from interesting topics among them, so he tried to get out of his communication skills that were considered difficult to understand by today's children. What Rudolf did was vertical communication, from top to bottom. In giving instructions or doing briefings, it will be easier to

accept because he is more familiar with them. Even to appreciate the actors, because what has been done is in accordance with the director's wishes.

Rudolf Puspa once experienced an incident that was beyond his expectations. This is seen from the part of the script that aims to make the audience laugh, but it turns out that the reaction shown by the audience is the opposite, which is sad. This became Rudolf Puspa's question to himself, what caused the audience to have a different interpretation of the script he intended. Responding to this, Rudolf Puspa did not see the incident as a failure, but he saw it as something different. This made him realize that people's interpretations can vary, not always in accordance with what they want, which makes it a reflection so as not to have expectations regarding the audience's interpretation of the stage.

The difficulty of communication is not only experienced by Rudolf Puspa with Generation Z children. But this was also experienced in the relationship between director and producer, where the chosen producer was his own son. This made Rudolf Puspa not assertive. In addition to not being assertive, this communication difficulty occurs because the producer is not able to understand his role as a producer, and is often involved or interferes in directing. Their solution is to discuss first, then the producer will deliver the results. In the planning process, the director and producer discuss in formulating the concept of the performance, which is then conveyed by the producer to the production team that will work. This is because the producer is easier to communicate with the young actors and the production team, and Rudolf Puspa admits that he has problems communicating with young members of the Teater Keliling, therefore he entrusts his son to convey it more simply and easily understood.

The next implementation was also carried out by the production leader, Haikal Akbar Ilmi when he would convey information related to finance. For example, when Teater Keliling planned to perform in America, but still lacked sponsorship funds, he did not explain clearly about the economic situation. Or even when a production had a surplus, it was not shared with other members of the Teater Keliling. In other words, it's like they curate what will be delivered to other members. So there is no need to provide information that is not needed.

In an effort to convey information that is easily accepted by members, the director usually conveys it with phenomena that have occurred. One of them is about the use of belts used in performances. He thought that a leather belt was more appropriate for the era than an obu belt, which would reduce the meaning of the usage. At first this caused consternation, but when he tried to explain based on the events he experienced, the members finally found a middle ground by replacing the belt with another belt.

In the performance of "Musical Mega-Mega", there was a difference of opinion in the costume section for one of the characters, namely the use of a belt. At that time, the belt used was a modern-day Obi-shaped belt. But the director thought that the belt did not fit the time setting of the play, which was set in the 1990s. Dolfry thinks that the Obi can also be used as a belt, instead of the usual belt. Plus there will be a scene where the character takes off his clothes, so when using the Obi it will be difficult for the actor. What the producer did at that time was one of the implementations of communication management that occurred between the director and producer, where Dolfry tried to convey the intention of using the Obi as a substitute for belts today.

Conclusion

Based on the results of research on the leadership style of theater directors with Rudolf Puspa's communication management case study, he is a leader with a democratic leadership style. It can be seen from how he is willing to listen, open himself up to joint discussions, and receive input from members of the Teater Keliling who are far older than himself. He also always tried to get closer to his actors by having dialogues during the rehearsal meal breaks. He would approach some of the new kids and ask them questions about their lives.

But in certain situations, when he is confronted with a producer and finds a difference of opinion, he often gives in. The producer at the Teater Keliling, who is younger than him in age, is the bridge between the director and the cast or crew. This is because the producer is able to explain things and give directions that are clearer and easier to understand, compared to the director. Rudolf Puspa himself was aware of his weakness in communicating with members of the Teater Keliling who were quite far away from him. His humility in adapting to the youth of Generation Z has made him better at

communicating with them, although he has not yet succeeded.

Rudolf Puspa's strategy is to appoint a producer to help convey information. This is most often done when he finds it difficult to convey the information to other members. Because of this limitation, he realizes that information other than that related to the script or scenes is conveyed by the producer. Even so,

Rudolf Puspa has tried to convey well on every occasion he spoke to the actors and crew. His adaptation process took a long time to attract the attention and sympathy of his actors. The more he gets to know the person, the easier it will be for Rudolf to communicate, because he already has a bit of chemistry to smooth the rehearsal process.

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Curriculum Vitae

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