

An Analysis of Aesthetic Communication on *Wayang Tavip*'s Performance to Influence Public Understanding

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Abstract

This research discusses the Wayang Tavip performance with a focus on the analysis of aesthetic communication in a public context. The research method used is descriptive to gain an in-depth understanding of the aesthetic aspects contained in the Wayang Tavip performance. Wayang Tavip is an art form that combines traditional elements with a modern public context. This study identifies aesthetic elements such as visual design, color usage, stage arrangement, and artistic expression used in the Wayang Tavip performance. Additionally, this research explores how aesthetic communication in the Wayang Tavip performance can influence the audience in a public context. The results of the study show that the Wayang Tavip performance possesses aesthetic richness that creates a deep visual and emotional experience for the audience. The aesthetics presented in this performance have the potential to enrich and expand the public's understanding of traditional art, while also attracting the attention of the younger generation.

Keywords: Wayang Tavip, Bandung city, Entertainment, Aesthetic communication, Socio-cultural values

1. Introduction

Wayang, as a form of performing arts, holds deep cultural and traditional heritage in Indonesian history. This art form is uniquely characterized by puppet figures, made from leather or other materials, brought to life by a dalang (puppeteer) to tell epic and legendary stories. Wayang is not just entertainment; it is an art form that integrates movement, sound, music, and profound meaning. In each performance, wayang serves not only as a stage for acting but

also as a mirror of culture, morals, and local wisdom passed down from generation to generation. With its diverse forms, wayang performances symbolize the beauty and richness of Indonesian traditional arts, reflecting the identity and continuity of noble values embedded in society.

Today, wayang performances have undergone significant development, adapting to the dynamics of the times without losing their traditional values. This development must align with

changes in all fields without sacrificing the essence of wayang art (Soewirdjo, 2011: 1). Such evolution in wayang art can also be seen in the city of Bandung, where a type of modern wayang with a new performance pattern that deviates from traditional standards has emerged. This modern wayang is known as Wayang Tavip.

Wayang Tavip is a modern type of wayang made from third-generation transparent fiber plastic in Bandung. It is the result of further exploration of existing fiber wayang types, such as Wayang Gambar Motekar and Wayang Kakufi. Wayang Tavip was officially established in 2010 as M. Tavip's final project for his postgraduate program at ISI Surakarta.

In its performances, Wayang Tavip has abandoned the traditional wayang performance standards. Traditionally, wayang, as a performing art, is not merely entertainment but also serves certain functions in the traditional context. In Indonesian society, wayang performances often serve as a means of conveying cultural,

moral, and spiritual values. Wayang not only tells epic stories but also delivers messages of ethics, life wisdom, and religious teachings symbolically. Furthermore, wayang performances are often held in conjunction with traditional ceremonies, religious rituals, or celebrations, adding a sacred dimension and significance to each performance. Thus, wayang plays a profound cultural role, maintaining and passing on traditional values from generation to generation. In Wayang Tavip performances, such ceremonies and rituals are no longer used.

The art of Wayang Tavip, now emerging in the culturally diverse urban society, has successfully maintained its existence to this day. This success can be attributed to a form of communication that delves into the influence of culture on communicative activities. Communication plays a crucial role in the survival of humans as social beings. By defining communication as the process of delivering messages, whether verbally, non-verbally, or symbolically, the

success of communication can be measured by one's ability to convey a message as intended.

The presence of wayang in performances becomes integral in the context of communication. This is because the content of wayang performances reflects human behavior in interpersonal interactions and simultaneously serves as a communication channel that conveys values to the audience. Communication in wayang performances acts as a medium for delivering messages, especially those related to ethical aspects. These ethical messages are generally conveyed clearly through the open storyline, providing a definite understanding of behavioral norms. Although often implied in the storyline, it is important to interpret the symbolic meanings hidden in wayang performances.

2. Theoretical Basis

2.1 Urban Society Types

Urban society is a rich arena of modern life dynamics with all its complexities. Amidst the glitter of skyscrapers, the bustle of motor

vehicles, and cultural diversity, urban communities live in an environment that tends to be dynamic and heterogeneous. Life in the city is often marked by high activity levels, rapid mobility, and intense competition. Individuals in urban society have greater access to various types of employment, education, and entertainment. Although urbanization brings changes in lifestyle, traditions, and cultural values, urban society also serves as a stage for the fusion and blending of various cultural elements. In its complexity, urban society reflects the dynamics of modernity and the challenges and opportunities that arise in the ever-evolving era of urbanization.

The characteristics of urban society encompass various aspects that distinguish it from rural environments. Several distinctive traits often identified include heterogeneity, individuality, high mobility, and intense competition. Urban society often consists of individuals with diverse backgrounds, cultures, and life goals. This diversity creates a

dynamic environment filled with complex social interactions.

Individuals in urban society also tend to emphasize individuality, where everyone strives to achieve personal goals and pursue their desires. High mobility is a key characteristic, whether in terms of work, education, or social activities. The potential for obtaining employment and broader life opportunities is the main attraction for many people living in the city. High competition is also a hallmark of urban society, especially in the context of employment and professional life. The drive to succeed and grow in a competitive environment can create its own pressures and challenges. Nonetheless, urban society also offers various facilities, entertainment, and social opportunities, making it a place where innovation and modern life flourish rapidly.

2.2 Aesthetic Communication in the Public Context

Aesthetic communication in the public context forms a stage where art and beauty merge with social

interaction. In daily life, aesthetic elements such as visual arts, performances, and design play a crucial role in shaping communicative experiences. Amidst the hustle and bustle of the city or through digital media, aesthetic communication presents captivating beauty, evokes emotions, and stimulates thought. In the public realm, aesthetic communication serves not only as a means of entertainment but also as a catalyst for understanding and appreciating the profound meanings of art. As a form of communication beyond mere words, aesthetics in public spaces open the door to indirect dialogue, where meaning and beauty can be jointly discovered and enjoyed by the community. Generally, aesthetics can be defined as an arrangement of parts that contains patterns, which unify these parts into a harmonious whole, thus creating beauty (Effendy, 1993).

2.3 Public Communication

Public communication is the heart of social interaction within a broader society. It is the process of delivering messages that involve

numerous people within or outside an organization. In this domain, communication is not only about the exchange of words but also encompasses all forms of public interaction, from speeches to mass media. Its primary goal is to convey information, influence opinions, and build a shared understanding among a diverse audience. Public communication also plays a key role in shaping the image and reputation of an entity, whether an organization, public figure, or even government. Through the dynamics of public communication, society can engage, be enlightened, and feel connected to relevant issues, forming a strong foundation for democratic and participative functions within a community. According to West and Turner in Jaeni (2012: 208), public communication typically involves communication from one person to many, with persuasive messages considering factors such as audience analysis, speaker credibility, and the persuasive message delivery process. The elements of public communication are as follows:

- a. Source/Communicator: The individual or entity that creates or sends the informational message.
- b. Message: The information, idea, or concept conveyed by the source or communicator to the receiver or communicant in public communication. The message can be an idea, information, invitation, or form of enlightenment as an effort for socialization.
- c. Media: The tools or channels used to transfer the message from the communicator to the communicant in public communication.
- d. Receiver/Communicant: The party targeted by the message sent by the communicator. The communicant is the individual or group that receives and processes the delivered message.
- e. Effect/Influence: The difference in the thoughts, feelings, and actions of the communicant before and after receiving the message from

the communicator in the context of public communication.

- f. Feedback: The response or reaction from the communicant or receiver after receiving the message from the communicator. Feedback functions as an evaluation or confirmation of the understanding or acceptance of the message.

3. Research Methods

This research utilizes a descriptive approach. According to Nawawi (1993: 35-36), descriptive research is defined as a method used to study the status of human groups, objects, sets of conditions, systems of thought, or classes of events in the present. The aim of the descriptive method is to provide a systematic, objective, and detailed depiction of a particular phenomenon, condition, or variable. This method is designed to describe or explain the characteristics of an object or event without manipulating or altering the variables being studied. By

using the descriptive method, researchers can identify patterns, relationships, or trends within a population or sample. According to Nazir (1988: 64), the characteristics of the descriptive method are that it is a research method aimed at creating a depiction of a situation or event, thus this method aims to accumulate basic data.

3.1 Data Collection Methods

To obtain data from all research objects, various techniques were employed. The data collection techniques used in this study include:

- a. Observation: Observation involves direct observation with the aim of obtaining an accurate picture of the research object and verifying the accuracy of the collected information (Keraf, 1989: 162).
- b. Interview: The interview technique is used to obtain necessary information by directly questioning informants (Sangaribun and Effendi, 1995: 92).

- c. Documentation: According to Sangaribun and Effendi (1995: 93), documentation is a method used to obtain information in the form of data, important records, books, or documents related to the research object.
- d. Literature Study: The literature study conducted involves seeking data from written sources such as books, newspapers, and papers related to the research object.

3.2 Data Analysis Methods

In descriptive research, the analysis method involves the process of understanding, organizing, and interpreting data to reveal existing patterns or relationships within the observed phenomena. Initially, data collected from various sources—such as surveys, observations, interviews, or literature studies—are organized systematically for ease of understanding. Subsequently, descriptive analysis is performed by presenting descriptive statistics, such as mean, median, and mode, to

provide a general overview of the data.

By employing these methods, the research aims to provide a comprehensive and accurate depiction of the aesthetic communication in the public context, particularly in relation to the Wayang Tavip performances. The detailed observations and analyses will help in understanding the role and impact of aesthetic elements in public communication and their influence on urban audiences.

4. Discussion

4.1 Urban Society in Bandung

Bandung is known as an urban and metropolitan city, currently inhabited by people from various ethnic groups across Indonesia. The social life in Bandung demonstrates a diverse pattern across different social strata, including lower, middle, and upper classes. These differences can be observed in terms of educational background, habits, and daily professions. From a sociological perspective, urban life tends to be heterogeneous, individualistic, and highly

competitive, often leading to conflicts or tensions.

This brief description provides an overview of the socio-cultural phenomena in Bandung, highlighting its complex social issues. Cities are fertile grounds where diverse and vibrant subcultures can thrive (Fischer in Arthur S. Nalan, 2014: 52). The physical manifestation of the city includes towering buildings, busy traffic, factories, congestion, and a society engaged in hectic activities and high competition. To cope with some of these challenges, urban residents often seek entertainment as a mental respite. Entertainment becomes essential for individuals, offering opportunities for psychological recovery, enabling them to face various life activities with a clear and refreshed mind.

4.2 Emergence of Wayang Tavip

Wayang Tavip has emerged as a form of entertainment within the urban community. This performance art not only serves as entertainment but also functions as a medium of communication. Wayang Tavip acts as an intermediary between artists

and the public for conveying messages or information. It goes beyond mere entertainment, serving as a communication medium with multiple functions, including information dissemination, teaching, and moral education. Wayang plays a significant role in conveying universal values, depicting human life and behaviors that should be emulated. Therefore, Wayang Tavip performances are not only a source of entertainment but also a platform for delivering constructive and educational messages. From the perspective of its creator, Wayang Tavip is an art form intended for entertainment, reflecting the urban life's phenomena.

4.3 Success of Communication

Effective communication is the result of understanding and exchanging information between involved parties. The success of communication can be measured by the extent to which the message is received and understood by the receiver without distortion or confusion. Key factors supporting successful communication include

the communicator's ability to convey messages clearly, sincerely, and relevantly, and the receiver's ability to listen attentively, be open to information, and provide constructive feedback. Successful communication not only creates mutual understanding but also builds strong relationships, prevents conflicts, and enhances collaboration. Thus, effective communication fosters an environment where ideas, thoughts, and feelings can be exchanged meaningfully among individuals or groups.

4.4 Wayang Tavip Performance as a Communication Medium

Wayang Tavip performances serve as a medium for delivering messages from the creator to the public. The performances are meticulously packaged, adhering to a performance concept. Typically, the creator considers the audience and the desired theme before the performance, ensuring that the aesthetic values and messages can be effectively communicated.

A typical Wayang Tavip performance involves a pre-

performance process, including several rehearsals. The crew usually conducts 4-6 rehearsals to interpret the script and fine-tune the performance. The creative process of Wayang Tavip involves several interrelated stages:

- a. Idea Generation: The initial stage involves creating an idea or concept, which is then translated into a script.
- b. Script Development: The idea is developed into a script, including dialogue, narration, and musical elements.
- c. Idea Development: The script is translated into puppet movements, narration, dialogue, and music, developing the artistic and aesthetic ideas of the performance.
- d. Implementation: The developed ideas are implemented through intensive rehearsals, integrating all performance elements into a harmonious whole.

4.5 Detailed Stages of Wayang Tavip Production

Each stage is integral to the creative process, laying the foundation for a performance that embodies artistic and cultural values.

- a. **Script Interpretation:** The script is the core element of Wayang Tavip, containing organized stories, dialogues, narrations, character descriptions, and stage directions. It guides the entire performance, ensuring cohesion and a complete experience for the audience.
- b. **Movement Choreography:** The choreographer focuses on detailed puppet movements, interpreting the script creatively. Ideas are tested and refined through rehearsals, ensuring that movements align with the desired shadow effects and continuity from one scene to the next.
- c. **Dialogue and Music Arrangement:** Dialogue includes narrations, dialogues, and monologues, crucial for the performance.

Music interpretation supports and enhances the performance's atmosphere, involving selection and editing of appropriate music pieces.

- d. **Lighting Design:** Lighting enhances the performance atmosphere, requiring a thorough understanding of the script to choose the appropriate lighting techniques and equipment.

The rehearsal process, designed meticulously, aims for a polished performance. Routine rehearsals ensure that the crew is thoroughly familiar with the structure and scenes of the script. With these detailed processes, Wayang Tavip performances aim to deliver both aesthetic pleasure and meaningful messages to the public, embedding moral and ethical values in the entertainment.

In conclusion, Wayang Tavip is not merely a puppet show for entertainment but a medium for conveying messages from the creator to the public, embedded

with moral and ethical values through an artistic performance.

5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study sheds light on the multifaceted role of Wayang Tavip in Bandung city as both an entertainment form and a medium for aesthetic communication. Bandung's urban environment, characterized by social diversity and competitive dynamics, underscores the city's need for cultural outlets and entertainment. Wayang Tavip not only meets these needs but also serves as a platform for conveying moral and socio-cultural messages effectively. The creative process involved in crafting and presenting these performances ensures that they resonate with the audience, fostering understanding and appreciation. Overall, Wayang Tavip emerges as a vital cultural asset in Bandung, enriching the city's social fabric through its artistic expressions and meaningful communication of values.

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