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## Symbolic Communication in Ludruk Art Group Karya Budaya Mojokerto

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### Abstract

One of the forms of communication is through symbols. However, the forms and obstacles encountered when conveying it through the ludruk art performance media. This research is in the realm of field research. The research uses a descriptive qualitative approach, while the data sources are secondary and primary. The results of this study explain that the form of symbolic communication in the first LKBM ludruk art group was in the form of arek language as a ludruk player's self-concept in positioning himself and as a ludruk player. Second, a form of symbolic communication through the symbolic movement of the LKBM ludruk art goes through the mind process of a ludruk player taking action to draw the meaning of the message content to the audience. Third, a form of symbolic communication through symbolic costumes of LKBM ludruk art with interpretation in the community (society) in interpreting symbols. Fourth, symbolic communication is direct communication between ludruk players and the audience through one-way communication (one-way communication) and two-way communication (two-way communication).

**Keywords:** *Symbolic Communication, Symbolic Interactionism, Ludruk Art*

### Abstrak

Bentuk komunikasi merupakan wujud dari komunikasi melalui lambang maupun simbol. Namun bagaimana bentuk dan hambatan yang terjadi ketika menyampaikan melalui media pertunjukan seni ludruk. Penelitian ini merupakan dalam ranah penelitian lapangan. Pendekatan penelitian menggunakan pendekatan kualitatif deskriptif. Sumber data menggunakan sumber data sekunder dan primer. Hasil penelitian ini menjelaskan bahwa bentuk komunikasi simbolik dalam grup seni ludruk LKBM yang *pertama*, berbentuk bahasa *arek* sebagai konsep diri (*self*) seorang pemain ludruk dalam memposisikan dirinya sendiri serta sebagai pemain ludruk. *Kedua*, bentuk komunikasi simbolik melalui gerakan simbolik kesenian ludruk LKBM yang melalui proses pikiran (*mind*) seorang pemain ludruk dalam mengambil tindakan penyampaian makna isi pesan kepada penonton. *Ketiga*, bentuk komunikasi simbolik melalui kostum simbolik kesenian ludruk LKBM dengan interpretasi di tengah masyarakat (*society*) dalam memaknai simbol. *Keempat*, komunikasi simbolik dalam bentuk komunikasi langsung antara pemain ludruk terhadap penonton. Melalui komunikasi satu arah (*one ways communication*) dan komunikasi dua arah (*two ways communication*).

**Kata Kunci:** Komunikasi Simbolik, Interaksionisme Simbolik, Seni Ludruk



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## INTRODUCTION

Communication is the process of channeling messages between communicators to communicants using certain media to produce the same understanding. As one of the communication experts, Harold D. Lasswell, has said, "Who says what in which channel to whom with what effect?" the definition of communication according to Harold D. Lasswell's definition provides an example of how communication as a message transmission process (Kusuma, 2010).

Meanwhile, communication comes from the Latin word *communis*, which means creating or constructing harmony between two or more individuals. Communication can also be a way of conveying messages from person to person, from person to small gathering, or from large gathering to large gathering (Yetty Oktarina, 2017), as is the case in an association of performance groups on stage.

The performance on stage is in the Ludruk art performance, which is in symbolic communication. In this Ludruk art performance, there is a form of message delivery (communicator) and message recipient (communicant). The exchange of interactions can produce the same understanding, harmonizing the show's beauty.

However, in general, Symbolic itself is a symbol of agreement with its own meaning and is made by itself to communicate in certain circles. Each environment certainly creates symbolic communication that differs from one environment to another. Nevertheless, it cannot be separated from the notion of symbolism, which comes from the word symbol; the word symbol, according to KBBI, is a symbol; it can also be interpreted as a sign that can interpret certain meanings in performance or the realm of a particular group. (Badan Pengembangan and Bahasa, 2016)

The explanation above provides an overview of the meaning of Symbolic Communication itself, namely the form of delivering messages (communicators) and receiving messages (communicants) using symbols or symbols that have been mutually agreed upon equally. This is one form of the exchange process of interaction and communication that is happening or intertwined but is now referred to as symbolic communication, which can be analogous to verbal and non-verbal communication.

As is the case when we do verbal and non-verbal communication in daily activities that encourage us to interact with others, of course, behind the ludruk art performance, it is impossible when they (ludruk players and gamelan players) do not carry out a symbolic communication process in the performance, so it is very important according to researchers this phenomenon be studied more deeply about the form of symbolic communication that exists in the performance of the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group.

Since its beginning, ludruk performances have been mixed with various elements of performing arts, including comedy and dance. Even female characters played by men are attractive in themselves (Sumardi et al., 2010). However, ludruk art is an original Indonesian traditional culture from East Java Province that first developed in Jombang, Mojokerto, Sidoarjo, Malang, and Surabaya.

However, the development of ludruk art is dominant in the Surabaya area, the second-largest city in Indonesia. So according to its development, Ludruk in Mojokerto itself is still famous and still growing, one of which is the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group which is a theater and drama performance art that was born in Mojokerto Regency in Canggu Village, Jetis District, which was founded on May 29, 1969 with the leadership of a member of the Jetis Police Precinct named Cak Bantoe.

Cak Bantoe is a resident of Canggu Village who wants a Ludruk art group, just like the general public who wanted a Ludruk art group that could entertain the community in the past. This desire was based on the community's longing for Ludruk performances, which had previously been vacuumed for 2 (two) years due to the events of G 30 S / PKI (Ismawati, 2017).

The Ludruk founded by Cak Bantoe is Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto. Since 1969, it has developed and changed hands with his son, Mr. Eko Edi Santoso, known as Mr. Edi Karya. He started leading Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) in 1993.

He (Cak Edi) said that the number of spectators would be extraordinary if the performance were still around the Mojokerto area, such as in Balongpanggang. It can be noted that the range of approximately 1000 (one thousand) people or spectators, for example, when in Dawar Blandong, it can be said that the bicycle parking lot can get wage income up to approximately eight million (Santoso, 2022).

The wages earned by the parking guards prove that many spectators are from various regions. Watching a performance work of the Ludruk LKBM art group shows that the Ludruk LKBM art group has many fans among the many branches of other Ludruk art groups.

This is one reason researchers should study the LKBM Ludruk art group. In addition to having many fans, the LKBM Ludruk art group has been developing for approximately 53 years, so its branding is based on the assumptions of the wider community.

So, since 1931, the Ludruk art performance has begun to form the characteristics that exist in the Ludruk art performance itself without eliminating the concepts of Ludruk art. These characteristics include Ngremo, Kidungan, Dagelan, and story (Lakon). In 1937, new figures appeared in the art of Ludruk, such as Cak Durasim, a figure from Surabaya. By his hand, Ludruk tells the story of the legend in the form of drama (Restian et al., 2022).

So, behind the success of the Ludruk art performance in the form of drama is certainly the effect of the interaction between synchronized and harmonized players. As in the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group, being able to develop or survive until now is certainly not easy. The struggle and enthusiasm of the Ludruk players and crew certainly deserve our example.

In coordinating a group, there will be an exchange of interactions between groups, where one player with another will always communicate and interact directly or indirectly through the communication media they use.

Symbolic communication, bound and wrapped in the Ludruk art performance, is a phenomenon of interaction or contact between one player and another that is mutually sustainable in forming a meaning. The application of the communication process is very simple but still has elements that impact the Ludruk art performance when it takes place.

This clarifies the function of the Ludruk art itself, which then wraps it into a performance (art) on stage. However, of course, there must be an obstacle to communication in its development. Obstacles can occur before or after the Ludruk performance, such as misunderstanding each other's communication, resulting in differences of opinion or misperceptions in responding to existing problems.

This can be proven by the continuous process of exchanging roles between one player and another. In this case, it can interfere with the ongoing performance when player improvisation does not overcome obstacles. So, according to researchers, this phenomenon needs to be studied more deeply. In addition to the form of symbolic communication in the art of Ludruk, researchers are also focusing on how barriers to symbolic communication exist in the art of Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM).

This study aims to determine the form of symbolic communication in the performance of the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group and find out how the barriers of symbolic communication affect the performance of Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM). Based on the purpose of the research, this research is expected to benefit science and insight both directly and indirectly.

This research is expected to be academically useful in addition to reading references to research related to the phenomenon of symbolic communication in other Ludruk art group performances. Furthermore, it can add new insights into symbolic communication in the performance of the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group. It also provides scientific thinking, especially in the context of symbolic communication in Ludruk art performances.

Ludruk art is a traditional art from East Java in the show's frame. In this art, ludruk is played by a group of artists and performed in an organized manner, where the drama told in this

art can be stories about the daily lives of individuals, battle stories, and other stories that become legends in society, usually stories about small people. In ludruk performances, in addition to playing stories, these stories are mixed with jokes or *parikan* and accompanied by *gamelan* as the back sound of the show (Lisbijanto, 2013). But Ludruk Etymologically, the word ludruk comes from the words *molo-molo* and *gedrak-gedruk*. *Molo-Molo* implies that his mouth is full of *sugi* tobacco (and words, when the tobacco comes out), which are about to spit out, as well as words that carry a tone and conversation (sunaryo, 2020).

Then, in Ahmadi's interpretation, *gedrak-gedruk* means that the feet stomp when dancing on stage. According to a different view, ludruk comes from the words "*gela-gelo*" and "*gedrak-gedruk*". *Gela-gelo* means dancing while shaking your head, and *gedrak-gedruk* means dancing while stomping your feet on stage. Both perspectives, word verbalization, and motion visualization, have the same meaning when matched. In other words, there are elements of dance, language, movement, and singing (*kidung*). The language of Ludruk, or the verbal element, can be expressed in two forms: singing (*kidungan*) or dialog (*narrative*).

Dancing, singing, and acting while playing a role on stage are examples of the element of motion. The art of ludruk is inseparable from a ludruk art group as a medium of artistic expression. (Eko Crys Endrayadi, 2022) Therefore, in the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto art group, researchers found something new in a ludruk performance. It can be compared to drama or theater in general, but it is still different in its presentation or packaging.

In accordance with the discussion to be studied, researchers see the theory's accuracy to be presented by the phenomena that occur in symbolic communication in the LKBM ludruk art performance. The discussion is still within the scope of the social sphere.

In the discussion of the social field, researchers will use George Herbert Mead's symbolic interactionism theory, which in this theory discusses interaction in symbolic form and focuses on how humans form meaning and structure through conversation. Stephen W and Karen A Foss say that symbolic interactionism theory is a way of thinking about the mind, self, and society (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011).

Similarly, Richard West and Lynn H Turner say that Symbolic Interaction Theory is based on ideas about the self and its relationship with society. (West and Turner, 2017) This is presented in his assumption, which says:

"People are motivated to act based on their meanings to people, objects, and events. These meanings are made in their spoken language (intrapersonal context) or personal thoughts. Language allows people to develop self-awareness and act with others in society" (West & Turner, 2017) .

Of course, this will be considered valid. According to the researcher's view of the above forms of communication, there is certainly a connection between direct and indirect forms of communication in the performance. However, according to Edison Hutapea, a brief definition of Mead's three basic ideas of symbolic interaction, including:

"Mind is the ability to use symbols with the same social meaning, where individuals must develop their minds through interactions with others. Self is the ability to reflect on each individual's self from the assessment of other people's perspectives or opinions, and the theory of symbolic interactionism is one of the branches of sociological theory that proposes the self (the self) and the outside world. Society is a network of social relationships created, built, and constructed by each individual in society. Individuals engage in behaviors they actively and voluntarily choose, ultimately taking on a societal role." (Hutapea, 2016).

The theory above describes the importance of meaning for human behavior, the concept of self, and the relationship between individuals and society. So, in its meaning, the researcher assumes that symbolic communication between one player and another requires three (three) forms of Mead's symbolic communication concept. This can be the basis for their interaction on the performance stage. This is proof that symbolic communication has a two-way or reciprocal concept.

## **METHOD**

In this investigative problem, questions about qualitative strategies were used. Because the issue in this study specifically examines symbolic communication, which is still in the social realm and not yet in the order of quantity based on the theme taken, the research discusses a case study of the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto Art Group in the process of symbolic communication in ludruk art performances.

Applying qualitative research methods requires the optimal presence of researchers in the field. Therefore, this study encourages researchers to go directly to the field, where the researcher himself becomes a tool to describe data. This research encourages researchers to go directly to the field, which means that the research location in this study is the Jula-juli studio of the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group in Cangu Village, Jetis District, Mojokerto Regency. The researchers used this research to answer the problems or phenomena by focusing on the proposed discussion.

Two types of data sources are used in this qualitative research: primary and secondary. In this sense, primary data sources come from original or first sources (Rosyidah and Fijra, 2021). It can also be a source or initial information obtained through research procedures such as, first,

interviews with ludruk players and directors of ludruk groups in the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto (LKBM) art group, then continued with observation and documentation in research.

Secondary data sources are already available data that must be searched for and collected. Secondary data can be obtained easily and quickly. For example, we can retrieve data through books at the library, and the data quoted can also come from other sources or the original source (Rosyidah and Fijra 2021).

Participatory observation, in-depth interviews, and document review are the main methods used in qualitative research to collect data. Document review also aims to reveal the importance of the research setting. Researchers can easily observe during participatory observation because they actively participate in field activities and mingle with those being studied (Djaelani, 2013). The rest are additional forms of data, such as documents, photographs, and statistical data. The data collection techniques chosen include observation, interviews, and document studies.

The researcher validated the research data using the data triangulation technique. Triangulation can be used to obtain highly reliable data by combining methods. Triangulation is a method that uses something other than the data itself to verify the validity of the data for comparison or verification purposes. The triangulation technique is also used with interviews and data observations through various methods used in this process.

In terms of analysis, the author will also include opinion documents and references from various sources, which will be combined with field data to increase data credibility (Bachri, 2010). The data analysis procedure used in this discussion is the Miles and Huberman interactive data analysis technique, which consists of three components: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion drawing and validation (Sudiono, 2017).

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

### **Forms of Symbolic Communication in Ludruk Art Performance of Mojokerto Cultural Works**

As social creatures, humans have a sense of wanting to convey messages through media and forms of communication as a means of interacting with each other. So in its understanding, according to the Big Indonesian Dictionary (KBBI), the word form means (1) bending, (2) building, (3) form, (4) arrangement, (5) appearance, and (6) sentence structure. (KBBI, 2023) The definition of form is also explained by Suwardi Endraswara, that form is everything that talks about the intrinsic factors of the work, starting from elements, structures, symbols, metaphors, and so on (Endraswara, 2017).

Meanwhile, symbolic communication is communication through symbols or symbols. A symbol or symbol is limited in meaning because it has a meaning that is only agreed upon by a group of people or organizations. Symbols can show the meaning of message content through words, language, and mutually agreed upon objects.

Symbolic communication in this study is a form of communication through symbols and symbols, which have been agreed upon by a group of LKBM ludruk art. So, the symbol in question is contained in the LKBM ludruk art performance. Symbols are a medium of communication that conveys the meaning of messages to the audience through language, movements, and clothing in ludruk art performances.

A ludruk player interacts with the audience through the meaning of symbols conveyed through ludruk art performances, which, of course, has become a common thing to do because deepening the character in conveying the meaning of the message requires a greater understanding of the symbols that exist to agree on its meaning.

The theory used in this research is the theory of symbolic interactionism. Researchers use data from observation, interviews, and documentation in this research. So researchers will relate the form of symbolic communication in the LKBM ludruk art through Mead's three basic elements of symbolic interaction: mind, self, and society (Hutapea, 2016).

As a social being who needs knowledge and new insight, it is necessary to have information updates in every scientific field. Of course, understanding symbolic communication will make it easier to understand a scientific discipline through a symbol. The following is a form of symbolic communication in the ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto art performance:

#### 1. Symbolic Language of Ludruk LKBM Art in Self-Concept (self)

The self is the specific ability to be both subject and object. (Ihsanudin, 2019) As Mead explains, the self has two facets. Namely, "I" is the impulsive, disorganized, undirected, and unpredictable part of you. "Me" is the general reflection of others through regular and fixed patterns shared with others. Every action starts with an impulse from the I and is further controlled by the me (Littlejohn and Foss, 2011).

In the experience of a ludruk player, Ahmad Fatoni positions himself as a cultural arts teacher in a junior high school. However, from the audience's viewpoint, Ahmad Fatoni is a ludruk player who plays the role of Paidi in the play Sarip Tamba Oso.

In the "I" concept, Ahmad Fatoni defines himself as a teacher, so in his daily interactions, he uses language according to a teacher's needs. However, in the "Me" concept, Ahmad Fatoni's social behavior shows that he is a Paidi ludruk character and, as a Ludruk player, has a symbolic language that has been used since the establishment of ludruk art.

The form of culture or habits in communication greatly influences the process of conveying the content of the meaning of the symbolic message to be conveyed, including the use of language in communicating in the LKBM ludruk art performance.

In symbolic language, one word has a certain meaning due to social agreement among the language user community in each region (Hendro, 2020). Meanwhile, the development area of ludruk art has always been the Arek area.

Arek is part of the culture of East Java, located on the east side of the Brantas, which includes Surabaya, Sidoarjo, Gresik, Mojokerto, Jombang, and Malang. The area is the cradle of Arek culture (Respati, 2018). From this understanding, it can be concluded that Arek is the language of LKBM's ludruk art.

Ahmad Fatoni conveys himself in his own language, but when he becomes a ludruk player, he will certainly convey it into the ludruk language (arek). Thus, in its development, the Arek language among arek certainly has a natural meaning and even contains a humorous meaning. However, it is different from the point of view of the mataraman circle; of course, interpreting the Arek language as a language that is quite rude and impolite.

Language or communication through symbols is a gesture with a special meaning that appears to others who share the idea that thinking will occur with gestures and symbols. Thus, using language against symbols is a model or form of communicating and interacting in symbolic communication.

The meaning of symbols in the Arek language is how they interact between individuals and others. As Ahmad Fatoni said, some of the arek language that is often spoken in performances, for example in the ludruk dialectic between a brother and sister. "cak, seumpomo aku iki beras sing kuning, terus nempel nang beras sing putih jelas aku kudu isok putih cak, but lek aku iki gak mengguru tidak nempel nggone perguruan e samean aku ya gaisok sakti cak".

The language spoken in ludruk dialectics is not a frontal dialect of the Arek language. However, ludruk players are required to explain socially acceptable behavior through the Arek language with the concept of me. So, in social behavior, ludruk players also have an understanding of themselves by using the arek language in Javanese parikan, which produces a symbolic meaning. The word "Goblok" in the Arek language has the meaning of a word symbol that means "Stupid". It is considered a reasonable meaning of a witty word, but it is different when uttered in the mataraman circle; of course, it will make a difference in the meaning of the symbols.

This harsh word in arek circles is also considered normal when pronouncing words with flexible intonation without pressure. In contrast to the pronunciation using a high tone and while

glaring, it is already a form of angry symbol in arek circles. The interaction of ludruk players like me in the Arek language in LKBM ludruk art performances. So, during his development as a ludruk player, he is still required to be himself I as an individual from his own heart and as me in ngeludruk and symbolic communication.

## 2. Symbolic Movement of Ludruk LKBM Art in the Concept of Mind

According to Mead's understanding in Ihsanudin, mind is the process of a person's conversation with himself, not found within the individual; the mind is a social phenomenon. Thoughts arise and develop in the social process and are an integral part of the social process (Ihsanudin, 2019). One of the most important activities people accomplish through thinking is role-taking, or the ability to symbolically place oneself in the imagined selves of others. (West and Turner, 2017).



**Figure 1.** Ludruk Kidungan Performers

The actions were taken by a ludruk performer in dancing and playing the scene of the play as role-taking. Of course, the concept of mind plays a very important role in determining the actions of a ludruk player. A ludruk player acting during a performance gives the meaning of an organized symbol. An audience will interpret a symbolic movement through self-talk or, in their mind, formed through social interaction. Interpreting meaning through the movement of symbols in ludruk art is a process of interpreting symbols through the mind as a form of social phenomena that occurs when watching LKBM ludruk art performances.

Ludruk players communicate symbolically through communication media, not through language or words alone but through body gestures and movements. According to Djelantik in Ajeng Aulia and R Indriyanto, Motion is a change of place, a change in the position of objects,

the dancer's body, or part of the body (Azzahro and Indriyanto, 2019). Therefore, the meaning of symbols through movement can be built through interaction between individuals and others.

Suyanto's experience is that he positions or takes a role (role-taking) himself as a remo dancer who moves like a dancer and is accompanied by a gamelan. So, thinking that he is a remo dancer can help him think (mind) and convey the message's meaning through the movements of a remo dancer.



**Figure 2.** Remo Ngidung Performer

Before acting according to the symbol's meaning, a ludruk player must think (mind) about what movements are appropriate and which have symbolic meaning as a dancer. In the art of Ludruk, symbolic movements have meaning according to social interpretation.

The movements described by ludruk player Suyanto, (1) "gedruk", a movement by stomping the feet to the ground, which has a meaning, "we must be self-aware of what is on earth". (2) "tepisan", the movement of playing the slendang with the speed of hand movements, has a symbolic meaning "As self-protection". (3) "Gendewa", the movement of the feet by ringing the rattles on the ankles, has a symbolic meaning "as a sign of self-awareness".

Suyanto's role-taking as a remo dancer through thinking (mind) about the movements in ngremo has such meaning, but the thought only exists within himself and conversations with himself. Therefore, before acting, the Ludruk player thinks about what is in his mind and what the next movement should convey to the audience.

Thinking (mind) before acting creates a problem-solving process within the ludruk performer himself. Movement means giving individual views to other individuals about the meaning of a movement by conversing with themselves through social interaction. So, in front of the audience, an actor must be able to act naturally and must not make movements without

reason (Yahya and Hidajad, 2017). Such is the importance of thinking for a ludruk actor who conveys the meaning of symbolic messages through dance and civilization movements.

The form of the thought process (mind) of the ludruk player regarding the meaning of symbolic movements in remo dance is through role-taking on himself in the LKBM ludruk art performance. The medium of delivery is through movements in the performance of jokes and plays of LKBM ludruk art, where the movements in the jokes and plays have movements that convey the meaning of the message by the dialectical paradigm displayed.

Symbolic communication in ludruk movements and plays occurs according to how the ludruk performers can place themselves in imagining themselves by the role or role taking in a scene delivered to the audience. They make themselves another person who fits the role's character in the ludruk play. This is in accordance with the concept of mind, which uses the ability to use symbols with social meaning (West and Turner, 2017). As explained by Syakirun, a ludruk player actor must be able to position himself in playing any character as long as it becomes a role in the play.



**Figure 3.** Lakon Omah Deso

Syakirun explained that before the performance begins, ludruk players must think creatively and innovatively as a ludruk player. For example, in a comedy performance, there is a scene of eating together, but the ludruk player must move one hand straight and eat the fruit, but the hand cannot be bent. The only way to help each other is by extending their hands to each other.

The result of the thought process (mind) in role taking on himself to become a ludruk player with an active and innovative character. So, in this case, all ludruk players convey the message's meaning through the medium of movement (gesture).

It uses the concept of thinking (mind) as a symbolic communication medium. Ludruk players develop their minds through role-taking and interactions with other individuals who can form important motives in behavior.

### 3. Symbolic Costume of Ludruk LKBM Art in the Concept of Society (society)

Your self-interpretation is the result of interactions with other people (society). In accordance with the third concept of Mead's symbolic interactionism, Society is a network of social relationships that are created, built, and constructed by each individual in society. Each individual is involved in behavior that they choose actively and voluntarily, taking societal roles (Hutapea, 2016). Likewise, the meaning of a performance costume is interpreted through the interpretation of society.

Visualization of costumes and clothing can support the effectiveness of language use and minimize the audience's misinterpretation of the message through costumes as a form of symbolic communication in the art of ludruk, which has a meaning that is adjusted to the interpretation of the community on things that have become an agreement.

Costumes or clothing is a form of media that supports the delivery of play messages during dialectics. The word costume or clothing is taken from Sanskrit "bhusana, " meaning jewelry, (Dewi, 2019). This adds to or strengthens the character of conveying messages through symbols.

As a ludruk player, Ahmad Fatoni explained how the selection and use of costumes in the art of ludruk are very concerned with the value of the character by the deep role as well as paying attention to the interpretation of the general public about the meaning so that it is expected to facilitate the audience in interpreting a character role in a ludruk play.



**Figure 4.** Sarips's Thug Clothes

Ahmad Fatoni also shared his experience of being reprimanded directly by the director because of a misunderstanding in wearing role costumes. For example, in the Sarip tamba oso play, Ahmad Fatoni played Paidi, an ordinary citizen, but in choosing a costume he chose a black costume. This was immediately reprimanded by the director, and told to immediately change the color of the costume so that it was not black, because the black color in the Sarip play has a symbolic meaning of a thug. Pada mulanya mungkin warna hitam tidak memiliki simbol sebagai ciri khas seorang preman. Namun sesuai dengan insiden yang sering terjadi di tengah masyarakat (*society*) kasus preman yang selalu memakai baju warna gelap, memberikan interpretasi masyarakat (*society*) mengenai makna simbol baju yang berdominan hitam adalah seorang preman.

As himself, Ahmad Fatoni interprets the color of the costume or clothes worn by a thug as any color. This is different from the interpretation in the community (society), which agrees that the all-black costume symbolizes the role of a thug. Such is the formation of meaning that occurs in social gatherings or society.

The clothing symbols in the Sarip Tambak Oso play always appear using black outerwear, white underwear, black pants, a black cap, a sarong on the neck, and a large belt. This may be based on the interpretation of the community (society), which considers Sarip, a village thug. So, the media, costumes, or clothing as above can show the meaning of symbols to the community (society) about the role in the LKBM ludruk art play, that the role of Sarip is a village thug.

The idea or atmosphere raised in Sarip's costume is to show the atmosphere of the life of a thug devoted to his mother, supported by the character through the appropriate costumes and props. This is in the style and color of the costume, which also has a symbolic meaning that is formed to strengthen the character. So, in taking roles in the community, ludruk players interpret messages with visualization through the role costumes worn when performing so that the form of symbolic communication through costumes can add to the strengthening of character and understanding of the interpretation of the audience and the community (society) towards the role character being displayed.

#### 4. Communication between Ludruk Players and the Audience

##### a. Forms of One-way Symbolic Communication with the Ludruk LKBM Audience

The interaction process in the LKBM ludruk art performance with the audience can be one-way communication. As found in the characteristics of the LKBM ludruk performance in conveying a symbolic message meaning. When the ludruk players perform the kidungan jula juli performance, a display of a symbolic form of delivering a message

of advice wrapped in Javanese parikan and performed with gamelan accompaniment to the audience.

According to the explanation of the LKBM ludruk leader, Mr. Edy, kidungan jula juli has the meaning of a one-way advice message in accordance with existing developments, so the content of the advice message presented is also in accordance with developments in the present era. In social interaction, individuals are shaped by society through interaction. One of the results of this interaction is to produce one-way communication.

One-way communication in Ludruk performances can also be considered a form of communication to oneself or intrapersonal communication. Meanwhile, Charles V. Roberts, in Rahmania, defines intrapersonal communication as all the decoding, processing, storage, and encoding of physiological and psychological messages that arise within individuals at a conscious and unconscious level whenever they communicate with themselves or others to define, maintain, and to develop social, psychological, and physical self problems (Rahmania, 2019).

In kidungan jula juli performances, messages are conveyed through one-way communication and ludruk performances of remo dance movements are also conveyed. This form of unidirectional communication (One-Way Communication) through remo dance with existing movement symbols can be understood by the audience and is favored as the opening dance of the show before the jokes and plays begin.

An audience member of the LKBM ludruk art Pak Mujoko acknowledged that the form of delivering one-way messages (One Way of Communication) through remo dance could make the heart calm with the jula juli song when listening to the gamelan also has the right blend with the sound of bells at the foot of the remo dance.

The harmony of remo dance movements and gamelan music adds beauty to conveying the message through one-way communication, and it can mean the message of inner calm.

#### b. Forms of Two Ways Symbolic Communication to the Ludruk LKBM Audience

In conveying messages through the media of ludruk performances, the interaction between the players and the audience can be in the form of two-way communication directly during the performance.

Two-way communication is complete communication because the information flows between the sender and receiver of information, where the ludruk players invite direct

communication to the audience through jokes in the performance of jokes and play (Muslim et al., 2022).

The ludruk players convey the message's meaning through the scenes in the jokes and play. Then, the audience was carried away to make comments directly uttered by the audience and responded to directly by the Ludruk players. Indirectly, there is two-way communication (two-way communication). Moreover, as an explanation of the content of the meaning conveyed at the end of the story, the Ludruk players provide the essence of the moral message displayed in the jokes and plays. It is an affirmation of the moral message conveyed by Ludruk players through jokes and plays.

Ahmad Fatoni, a ludruk player, experienced This when he was on stage for a performance. During the dialectic of the scene, the audience conveyed a lot of babble, which the player answered directly without losing the message's meaning.

In accordance with Mead's concept of symbolic interactionism in the idea of society, which is a network of social relationships that are created, built, and constructed by each individual in society, and each individual is involved in behavior that they choose actively and voluntarily, which in turn is the process of taking roles in society (Hutapea, 2016).

The process of taking roles in the community is a form of interaction between ludruk players and the audience, which has a two-way nature (Two ways of Communication) and individual interaction with society (society) created through LKBM ludruk art performances, thus by the concept of society (society) in Mead.

## **Symbolic Communication Barriers in Ludruk Art Performance of Mojokerto Cultural Works**

Of course, obstacles will occur in communicating every performance of Ludruk art because barriers can hinder the progress of achievement and make it difficult for each person to achieve a goal (Shintaviana and Yudarwati, 2013). So, every ludruk player as a human being is certainly not free from mistakes. Therefore, obstacles and problems in preserving the cultural art of ludruk are common. However, this will still burden players because obstacles can occur within themselves or outside parties.

Obstacles in communication between players, of course, are not far from the players themselves, so the challenges that occur in symbolic communication in the LKBM ludruk art are several factors, namely:

## 1. Limited Knowledge

Hajja Knowledge is a provision for us to know and understand something, so we must continue learning about external and academic knowledge. Knowledge can change our perspective on things and facilitate communication in any form.

Expertise is in-depth knowledge of a particular field that can open up good career opportunities for the future. However, a proper and good education can help us realize our dreams (Alpian et al., 2019). Therefore, education is very important in building the knowledge of even one ludruk player.

Although it is clear that ludruk players certainly have expertise and advantages in performing arts, especially in LKBM ludruk art performances, a LKBM ludruk leader also admitted that the ludruk players in LKBM are mature in exploring the character. However, some of the players still lack education. So, to be invited to coordinate or communicate is sometimes still constrained.

However, it does not rule out the possibility that it can still be developed again into a great player. It only takes diligence and patience to guide it, as well as the willingness of ludruk players who still have limited knowledge to continue learning.

The development of today's times is growing significantly, and the world of youth creativity is increasingly being explored. Because it is very dependent on the creativity of a content creator, this encourages LKBM ludruk players always to be required to appear creative and innovative.

However, some ludruk players still have limited knowledge of today's youth's trends or styles of jokes. So, it is still often the jokes of Ludruk players that sound old-fashioned or are left behind by the developing trend.

For example, in the Sarip play, some ludruk players throw guessing jokes, commonly called "bapak-bapak," by today's children, which means old jokes are still in use.

Thus, the art of Ludruk must satisfy the tastes of its audience and popular tastes, and it is expected to follow the times or meet the demands of the times (Jaelani, 2019). Following the circumstances or situation of the era, ludruk players must be able to satisfy the audience, so it is very important to have broad knowledge to realize a common goal of entertaining the audience.

Therefore, Ludruk players must keep up to date or have new information to become material for LKBM Ludruk art performances. This will make it easier to convey symbolic communication to the audience with extensive knowledge.

## 2. Self-awareness in Learning

Building trust in someone, of course, requires self-awareness of the social environment. So, the character must be self-aware of something with a big responsibility, such as being easy to communicate with.

An influential person must have self-awareness, responsibility, trust, wisdom, and social tolerance (Wening, 2012). Of course, as a performer and the center of attention, Ludruk LKBM players need to have a self-aware character and want to learn about new things.

As a famous ludruk actor, according to Syakirun, some LKBM ludruk players still lack self-awareness in learning, making communication obstacles, as explained by Ahmad Fatoni, when the ludruk player has been given the mandate to carry a kris property in hand as a symbol of thugs, but because of his ignorance and no self-awareness to ask. The ludruk player ignores the director's direction and puts the kris on the left side of the body. This led to a misunderstanding of the meaning of symbols in the performance because hiding Kris on the left side meant that a warrior was not a thug.

This will be an obstacle in symbolic communication because the lack of knowledge and self-awareness in learning about something will hinder the delivery of the meaning of the contents of the LKBM ludruk art performance message.

Therefore, ludruk players need to have a self-conscious learning character to build broad knowledge and a high degree of self-introspection to make it easier to convey symbolic communication to the audience by changing the bad traits in themselves.

## 3. Performance time

Giving the audience satisfaction is required to succeed in LKBM's ludruk performances. However, the audience in the performance is the ones who deliberately want to get a sense of satisfaction from the performance's results. The feeling of wanting to watch longer is already there, but it is hindered by the performance time, which is quite late at night, making the audience rarely watch the performance until the end.

Mr. Sudarto, as an audience member of LKBM ludruk, admitted that when he felt that his body was getting tired and sleepy, the desire to see ludruk until the end was no longer a top priority. In addition to watching a ludruk performance, there are other activities, namely work obligations, because that is more important.

This creates a communication barrier for the audience because the performance is relatively late at night and ends early in the morning. The audience cannot watch the show until the end, so the message's meaning has not been conveyed completely.

A ludruk player, Ahmad Fatoni, also stated that the obstacle ludruk player in conveying the message's meaning is because the audience continues to decrease when the play has not ended. This becomes an obstacle in communicating with the audience.

So, ludruk players must remain on time or have appropriate time management to perform optimally on the LKBM ludruk art performance stage. Punctuality will make conveying symbolic communication easier to the audience with proper time management.

## CONCLUSION

This is obtained from the results of research that has been conducted on Ludruk players and audiences of Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto art. The form of symbolic communication in the art of Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto is, first, in the form of arek language as a self-concept (self) of a ludruk player in positioning himself and as a ludruk player. Second, the form of symbolic communication through the symbolic movement of LKBM ludruk art through the thought process (mind) of a ludruk player in taking action to convey the message's meaning to the audience. Third, the form of symbolic communication through the symbolic costumes of LKBM ludruk art with interpretation in the community (society) in interpreting symbols. Fourth, symbolic communication is direct communication between ludruk players and the audience through one-way and two-way communication.

In the obstacles that occur in the symbolic communication of the art of Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto, the most influential obstacle in conveying the meaning of the message content is the limited knowledge of some players. The delivery of the meaning of the message content is the limited knowledge of some players. LKBM ludruk. Furthermore, self-awareness in learning is needed to build broad knowledge. The ludruk players' self-awareness in learning new things is necessary, and the performance time is quite long until late at night. The long performance time until late at night exhausts the audience from watching the show until the end, so it is rare to watch it until the end. The audience is exhausted from watching the performance until the end, so it is rare to be able to watch until the end. See it to the end.

For the Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto art group in the performance time or Ludruk art performance, Ludruk art performances prioritize the right duration, are not too late at night, and have good time management. Ludruk Karya Budaya Mojokerto prioritizes the right duration, not too late at night, and has optimal and appropriate time management so that the content of the moral message in the ludruk performance can be evenly delivered to the community and audience.

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