



Review of the Minimax Concept of Slamet Abdul Sjukur in Music Education Praxis

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Abstract. Minimax is the thought of composer Slamet Abdul Sjukur as another option that departs from (minimal) limitations and utilizes them to the maximum. This concept is considered very conducive to developing creativity and sensitivity, especially in the context of music education. Based on musical composition observations, various aspects are similar between Slamet Abdul Sjukur's Minimax concept and several ethnic music concepts in Indonesia, especially regarding the idea of limiting the musical material. The purpose of writing this article is to review the Minimax concept of Slamet Abdul Sjukur so that it can be implemented in the practice of music education based on ethno-pedagogy studies. The method used is document analysis by taking several sample documents in the form of writing, notation, and audio/video about the concept of Minimax Slamet Abdul Sjukur, which is then interpreted to obtain meaning that can be implemented in music education praxis. From the analysis process, it was found that the concept of Minimax is essentially related to ethnic music, namely, the use of musical instruments and materials tends to be limited as necessary as a characteristic of the composition concept. In his limited situation, Slamet Abdul Sjukur captures this phenomenon, so that his ideas have an educational impact, especially on the development of students' musical creativity. Various limitations that exist in facilities, and resources in the music education process, are no longer a problem if what is limited is fully realized and developed to the fullest as Slamet Abdul Sjukur did. If we take it deeper, the concept of Minimax Slamet Abdul Sjukur can be used as a solution to the problem of music education, both music practice activities and understanding meaning in building cultural values based on ethno-pedagogy.

Keywords: Minimax · Music Creativity · Musical Ethno-Pedagogy

1 Introduction

The problem of music education lies not only in the problem of the incompatibility of the educational background of the teacher, but music teachers who have a background in music education also have problems in the process of implementing their learning, especially the teacher's performance in developing student creativity. In the aspect of developing creativity in the music learning process, Utomo [1] suggests several problem

findings, among others, for some teachers of basic competencies related to the development of student creativity, in this case arranging simple music is difficult to achieve, even though this activity is important so that students get musical experience. This problem has not been taken seriously until now.

The teacher's lack of ability in developing student creativity is based on the limited skills and insights of the teachers in the field of music creation. The knowledge and skills of creating music are still considered a non-educational field, which leads to the field of artistry. Whereas a music educator should have artist insight, this is a special competency that must be possessed by music educators. Thus, the competence to create music possessed by music educators does not have a pure purpose of creating music but is applied.

Various guides launched by the Ministry of Education and Culture in the form of books related to the development of students' musical creativity did not help much. As in the Book of Teachers of "Seni Budaya Kelas XII", written by Budiman, et al. [2], there are special topics related to musical creativity, namely in chapter XI of *Musik Kreasi* and chapter XII of *Pertunjukan Musik Kreasi*, but the content of these topics in the author's view is less relevant to the development of musical creativity, even very confusing. Cases like this have also been criticized by Sjukur [3] that, school lessons with 'democratic' intentions, often make music into a caricature of concern.

In the book "Seni Budaya" for student's version on 2018, the author is the same as the teacher's book version, the essence is the same. The book contains the term "Musik Kreasi" (music creation) which has a confusing meaning because all musical works are the creative efforts of their creators (artists). However, from the confusing terminology, various aspects of encouragement/motivation, offering musical ideas, creative techniques, and so on that lead to the production of applied musical works are not developed. The content of the material is still knowledge with the way the information is presented which is still debatable. Whereas in encouraging students' musical creativity, it is necessary to have a practical and empirical approach to things that build sensitivity/care in the surrounding environment.

If we observe the contents of the formal music education curriculum in Indonesia, there are three aspects of learning activities designed, namely the development of musical insight/knowledge, appreciation activities, and the development of creativity/expression. These three activities have the aim of enabling students to gain musical experience. This idea arises because the method that teachers often use in music learning is theoretical with a lecture method that is not related to the musical experience. As stated by Rahayu [4] that the method used in learning must emphasize the musical experience of the students to sort what students get after learning the music, starting from knowledge, music appreciation, and music skills until the end students have an aesthetic experience. in music education. This statement relates to Rahayu's research in applying the Kodaly method in music learning which has the aim of improving students' musicality. This method uses body parts in learning. One of the techniques used in the Kodaly method is hand signing with a function to imagine the tone and know the high and low of the tone with hand movements.

While Ridwan [5] also researched the application of the Orff method. The Orff method is an active learning method that develops the power of creativity based on the

characteristics of the child in his learning. Children show positive responses and enjoy musical experiences through this method.

In addition to the Kodaly method and the Orff method, other methods are often applied through research on music learning, including the Dalcroze method and the Suzuki method. But in essence, all these methods lead to the cultivation of musicality through musical practice experience, but the development of the creativity of students based on ethno-pedagogy principles has not been thought of. For this reason, before applying the various existing methods, music educators must provide awareness of specific musical experiences to students. This musical experience can be trained by developing an attitude of actively listening to music [6] so that the ideas of ethnic music that are around can be identified and interpreted in the development process towards musical creativity.

If we observe the artistic concept that exists in various ethnic music, one example is ethnic music in West Java, there is a tendency to process/use aspects of sound that are limited. From this concept, there are repetitive contours and textures of sound. Music that is repetitive if it is internalized is always contemplative and transcendent. Therefore, in ritual music/traditional ceremonies, this style of musical composition is very prominent. As in the traditional/traditional *angklung buhun* art, Nugraha [7] suggests, among others.

Traditional *angklung* is an instrument that accompanies the agricultural tradition of the Sundanese people, played as a transcendent offering to *Nyi Pohaci Sanghyang Sri or Dewi Padi*... believes in the transcendental power of the gods to help humans cultivate agriculture, and *angklung* as the medium is reinterpreted as something absurd.

According to Spiller in Nugraha [7], the *angklung* used in ethnic culture is seven with only five notes (pentatonic). In contrast to the *angklung "Pak Daeng"*, which has 12 notes, it is based on the well-tempered system of western music culture. Thus, limiting the number of tones used in *angklung buhun* has the principle of "saving" which is only selecting five tones from tens or even hundreds of tones that can be heard on this earth. The principle of "limitation" of musical material in Sundanese *karawitan* is not only limited to the number of notes but can be seen from the concept of processing other musical aspects. Suparli [8] in his book entitled "Gamelan Pelog Salendro-Induk Teori Karawitan Sunda" provides main examples of *gending* in Sundanese gamelan. From the various existing *gending* points, the principles of *kenongan* and *goongan* are always limited to a maximum of only 4 tones as in the form of *rerenggongan gending*.

Unfortunately, the researchers conducted on traditional music are more focused on the context aspect, which tends to be in the social and anthropological fields, but the simplicity of the musical material is often ignored. Whereas in the simplicity of ethnic music, it is very possible to contain hidden wealth that has great potential so that it can be developed to maximum.

This is what Slamet Abdul Sjukur sees in the *Minimax* concept as the basis for musical creativity. *Minimax* is the thought of composer Slamet Abdul Sjukur as another option that departs from limitations (minimal) and makes maximum use of them. This concept is considered very conducive to developing creativity and sensitivity, especially in the context of music education [9].

Minimax's thinking has been very clearly seen in the *angklung* recording event in Paris [3]. In his book, Sjukur points out all the limitations that exist, from the recording

facilities and facilities to the quality of the musicians, most of whom are amateurs, namely the employees of the Indonesian Embassy. However, this situation is fully realized, even Sjukur [3] himself considers that *angklung* as a musical instrument is still far from being considered a perfect musical instrument, but its features must be sought in its shortcomings. However, the recordings of his works have a very interesting concept, especially in terms of the use of limited materials but they are worked out to the maximum.

Slamet Abdul Sjukur's other works have a consistent concept. The tendency to work on music with limited situations or limiting materials, tools, and players is a strong trait. There is an interesting review related to the concept of Slamet music proposed by Supiarza [10], among others.

As a composer of contemporary music, Slamet always provides new concepts in his work. One of the novelties of this is that it does not depend on musical instruments. It is rare for an Indonesian composer who does not to use musical instruments in the form of objects as did Slamet. For example, in the work "Uwek-Uwek", where the works use paper tools marked, 'jembe' clapping tools, two hands and one mouth of his playmate, and two hands and one mouth.

What Slamet does in creating his works has values in maximizing human potential based on its local capacity. Although he studied and lived in Europe for a long time, the spirit and spirit of the local culture were always implied in the concept of his works. Of course, this is closely related to the meaning of the concept of ethno-pedagogy.

According to Alwasilah, et al. [11], so far our national education is very centralized. National orientation is paid dearly by the neglect of local potential. As a result, humans lose their identity and social sensitivity, collective consciousness becomes low. National education which aims to "humanize Indonesian people" is oppressed and even encourages the growth of the roots of dehumanization. For education to be able to realize its ideals, a concept or educational framework is needed that can develop all the potential of human beings.

Based on the suitability of the vision put forward by Alwasilah with what Slamet has done in working on various musical works, it is necessary to review how the *Minimax* concept can be implemented in educational practice, especially in developing students' creativity based on local culture.

2 Methods

The method used is document analysis by taking several sample documents in the form of writing, notation, and audio/video related to the concept of *Minimax* Slamet Abdul Sjukur. According to Bowen [12] document analysis has the following meanings.

Document analysis is a systematic procedure for reviewing or evaluating documents—both printed and electronic (computer-based and Internet-transmitted) material. Like other analytical methods in qualitative research, document analysis requires that data be examined and interpreted in order to elicit meaning, gain understanding, and develop empirical knowledge.

The various documents used in this research are several audio/video recordings of Slamet Abdul Sjukur's musical works, as well as various *Minimax* concept thoughts that have been published in various writings and video publications when he lectures

and teaches composition. Furthermore, in reviewing the musical aspects in the implementation of the *Minimax* concept, three documents were selected from what has been done by Slamet Abdul Sjukur. The first is the KUKIKO/*Kursus Kilat Komposisi* video document (composition quick course), and the second is the audio recording document of two musical works, namely “Ronda Malam” for the angklung ensemble. From these two documents, the aspects of the teaching model and its composers were analyzed, then interpreted to obtain ethno-pedagogy meanings that could be implemented in music education praxis.

3 Results and Discussion

As mentioned above, although Slamet Abdul Sjukur (hereinafter referred to as SAS) has studied and lived for a long time in Europe, precisely in France, his musical aesthetic cannot be separated from the power of music originating from Indonesian culture. This is interesting because the experience of living in a different cultural environment, with existing musical influences, SAS musical ideas are intercultural [13], fused to form an original identity. Therefore, from several existing Indonesian composers, Mack [9] places SAS in the category of new music composers with Indonesian and western cultural backgrounds. However, the signs of the influence of the two cultures are very faint, although listeners often “mistake” by only relating things based on limited knowledge.

In some of his works, SAS often plays with pre-existing music material. SAS himself once said directly to the author that “there is nothing new on this earth”. As in the work “Spiral” on 1993, according to Mack [9], this work is a decomposition of Erik Satie’s “Gymnopedies” (a French composer). Likewise, in the work “Gameland I” on 2005, which happened to be the author himself was the conductor during the project’s premiere. During the rehearsal process, SAS said that there was a part of the flute melody quoted from Bach’s “Air” melody. But in general, the parts of the music that are taken that no one can notice.

We can review the *Minimax* SAS concept in several cases based on existing documents:

3.1 Composition Flash Course (KUKIKO)

In a video document entitled “KUKIKO”-“composition flash course” (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7lwDnqPmo7Q>) [14], SAS teaches about the “pickpocket principle” which can be illustrated as follows (Fig. 1):



SAFE=LOVELY

Fig. 1. SAS’s “pickpocket principle”.

This teaching is a musical composition technique that can be applied so that every musical moment that is composed always attracts attention and is unexpected. In addition, the teachings of the composition of SAS always make people aware of their full potential. In the phenomenon of written culture versus oral culture, SAS has an interesting view. According to SAS, through writing culture, we can record everything so we don't forget easily, but without realizing it we end up relying too much on writing so that our memory becomes weak as a result. Furthermore, SAS explains that our perception (of what is seen/heard) is much faster than our brain's ability to understand. The method used to prove this, is 1) is heard clapping, many times and very quickly, not allowed to think 2) a participant is asked to imitate, usually true even though he does not know how many times he clapped. But most of the participants did not play the rhythm of the applause correctly because they counted the number of claps. Then SAS said to remember how long it was and how fast it was, and finally, the participants could imitate it correctly. From this method, SAS can prove that our bodies have intelligence and memory faster than the ability to understand.

The development of memory skills as a potential intelligence in our bodies, in the practice of music education in general, is a bit neglected. Students are more likely to be encouraged to understand and read symbols/notations such as studying western music based on written culture. In fact, in various ethnic music in the world, there are so many musical works whose notations have never been written but to this day musicians can still play them. Perhaps this memory ability is a legacy of ethnic traditions that are important to always be developed in achieving a balance of intelligence in educational praxis. In this case, Sjukur [3] stated, among others.

Our body is an amazing nervous system, which can receive and send messages with vibrational waves. The ear receives acoustic wave stimulation and transmits it to the brain which will then process it into perception and energy. Thanks to the energy we receive through hearing, we can focus, remember, be alert and perform various other intellectual actions.

In developing musical creativity, SAS stated that it seemed there was no other way to try to set aside all the routine things. Routine is comfortable, but without us realizing that routinely makes humans like living corpses (Zombies). When we are creative, we must be able to criticize and analyze the music that is made. This has an impact not only on being able to understand music analytically but it is a sign that we have concern for what is around us, and that is the main goal. Furthermore, the participants played music with the sound and the surrounding items spontaneously guided by SAS and produced interesting music.

The idea of setting aside all routine things encourages and motivates exploration, as well as being critical of the actions taken, and simultaneously responding to the sounds around them so that collective communication occurs. Of course, these events can be used as a model for learning music in developing students' creativity based on local culture. Thus the examples of music offered in "Seni Budaya" Book [15] such as the song "Ibu Pertiwi" or songs that have become routines as models of musical works so far, need to be deconstructed to be relevant to the development of students' musical creativity that is appropriate. With the demands of the times.

3.2 Inspiration from Ethnic Music

SAS's basic thoughts and origins from local intelligence are implied in the concept of his musical works. The first example is the piece "Ronda Malam" for the angklung ensemble. This work was commissioned by a French record company called ARION as a result of the victory of the angklung troupe at the international festival in Dijon, in September 1975.

The award given by the French, namely the chairman of the academia Charles Cros, did not escape SAS criticism, because apart from being amazed by the extraordinary sounds and unpredictable twists and turns of such a simple instrument (angklung), he advised that don't copy western songs. In addition, there are also concerns that Western songs will have a bad influence on the future of music in Indonesia.

SAS's criticism is quite striking, not only criticism of the French side but also of some politicians' views on art in Indonesia. Sjukur [3] wrote as follows.

The future of Indonesian music? Why do you have to think so far?

Now, we're used to being "*di puncak pohon cempaka dengan segala li-li-li-nya*", shamelessly imitating Love Story or acting from the West to Marseillaise!

Pessimistic (or optimistic?) thoughts like this are stale. Indonesian music is not just a silk scarf. Everyone knows.

SAS's statement above indicates that in working on angklung music, SAS has its attitude and concept. Although SAS is very knowledgeable and skilled in western music, the concept of working on SAS does not just imitate what is the conception of western music as the angklung troupe mentioned above does. SAS has the attitude that it holds the heritage of elements of Indonesian music. However, he mentioned that his music is not a tradition itself (which tradition?), it is up to his interpretation of the tendencies and abilities of each listener.

If we listen to the recording of the work "Ronda Malam", there is an impression of "darkness in search". This interpretation is of course very easy if it is associated with the title of his work. However, in terms of musical elements, the musical material is relevant in angklung *buhun*, first the concept of "work rhythm" namely interlocking rhythm patterns. This concept has become an important musical principle in various concepts of ethnic music, especially in Indonesia. In the angklung *buhun* and gamelan, there is a concept of a melodic phrase that is played in cooperation, for example, there is a melodic pattern as follows (Fig. 2):

If the above melody is played by four angklungs with a configuration of one player holding one angklung, as in the *buhun* angklung, four players are needed. So the shape of the rhythm layer becomes (Fig. 3):

Thus, each player has their time cycle length, complementing each other and neither of them coincides. This rhythm pattern has a philosophy in the life of ethnic communities. There are values where everyone can live their lives individually but pay attention to each other to maintain harmony.

Laras: Salendro
j4j 2 j3j 2 j1j 2 j3j 2 4

Fig. 2. A melody example.

A 1	4	.	.	.	4			
A 2	ḡ.ḡ	2	ḡ.ḡ	2	ḡ.ḡ	2	ḡ.ḡ	2
A 3	.	3	.	3	.			
A 4	.	.	1	.	.			

Fig. 3. Notation transcript on angklung buhun.

This concept was captured by SAS as part of the elements of Indonesian music. In the work “Ronda Malam” the concept of this game is maintained. However, there are aspects of ‘harmony’ as well as processual sound processing. So that the repetitive rhythms become more progressive, not just a background but have a certain form of achievement. There are six tones used, namely (Fig. 4):

The melodic contour that is built has the impression of a *madenda* tuning, based on the pentatonic notes of A, Bb, D, E, and F. However, the B tone in addition gives another color harmony. If we approach western tonal music theory, the B note is like the sixth note of the D minor chord (Dm6). The technique of constructing the contour of the melody is that each note appears one by one with the concept of rhythm as discussed above until all the notes sound in duplicate. The duration of the rhythm of each interlocking note is short, (in terms of the angklung playing technique it is called centok). However, note B is played a little longer until there is a more varied and dynamic contour of the melody. Furthermore, the technique that was built from the beginning is done in reverse, if the overall sound texture is described it looks more or less like the one below (Fig. 5).

Furthermore, this work ends with the tempo slowly accelerating, and it just stops unexpectedly.

Based on the description above, it is very clear how the music material that is considered simple, such as in angklung *buhun* music, can be maximized so that there are different sound textures through the construction of processual melodic contours, and this is one of the applications of the *Minimax* concept in SAS’s work.



Fig. 4. Notes A, Bb, D, E, F, B.

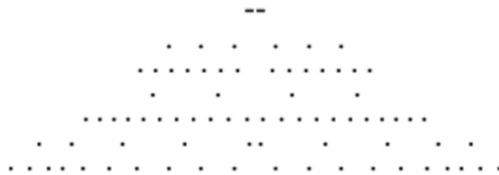


Fig. 5. Illustration of the rhythm texture of “Ronda Malam”.

3.3 Implementation in Educational Praxis

If we apply this concept of SAS thinking to the implementation of education, of course, it will provide a new offer. In its implementation, both students and educators are no longer burdened with things that “require knowledge and skills” specifically. To get a musical experience like this, you don’t have to understand notation or be skilled at playing musical instruments and even be good at singing. However, for music educators, it is very important to have analytical and critical skills towards musical phenomena, especially musical phenomena originating from local traditions that have relevance to the social situation around them.

4 Conclusion

Based on the two documents analyzed concerning the *Minimax* SAS concept, there are several important points to consider in the educational praxis process. First, it is very important to find musical phenomena that exist in local traditions that are not material but conceptual so that they become potential ideas that can be developed in musical creativity. In this case, the concept of interlocking which is used as a source in the work “Ronda Malam” can be used as an example of developing things that are limited to the maximum. Second, besides the importance of growing experience in playing new music, there are essential things that need to be developed, such as developing memory and other intelligence in our bodies, as well as motivating us to try to get out of routine things. The box). Various limitations contained in the facilities, facilities, and resources in the process of music education, are no longer a problem if what is limited can be developed to the fullest as done by Slamet Abdul Sjukur.

If we take it deeper, the concept of *Minimax* Slamet Abdul Sjukur can be used as a solution to the problem of music education, both music practice activities and understanding meaning in building human values based on ethno-pedagogy. Of course, the *Minimax* SAS concept in the implementation of educational practice still has to be developed in various other studies, so that more varied and creative music learning models and methods are created.

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