



## Imaginative Expression of Autistic Children's Painting as a Form of Response to The Environment at Fredofios School Yogyakarta

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### Abstract

Autistic children are children who experience impaired brain function development which is characterized by difficulties in the ability of social interaction, communication with the environment, behavior and a delay in the academic field. Imaginative expressions in children with autism can be done through the media of painting. The media of painting can help as a therapy and to develop the painting skills of autistic children. This study aims to review and analyze (1) The form of autistic children's painting in the Autistic Advanced School (SLA) Fredofios. (2) Environmental elements visualized in paintings as a result of the imagination of children with autism. The method used in this research is qualitative. Data is collected through controlled observations, interviews, and document studies. The data validity technique uses triangulation and interactive data analysis techniques. The results of this study First, the form of autistic children's painting shows artistic painting in terms of subjects, color elements and shapes. Second, visualized environmental elements describe the school environment and family environment. Expressions of imagination of autistic children are always inspired by the environment every day.

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## INTRODUCTION

Autism is a developmental disorder that affects the way a child processes information in their five senses. Pamuji (2014) said that children with autism are children who experience impaired brain function development which is characterized by difficulties in the ability of social interaction, communication with the environment, behavior and a delay in the academic field. Children who have this disorder have difficulty expressing their feelings. Autism does not depend on race, ethnicity, economic strata, social strata, education level, geographical location of residence, (Hidayat, 2018). Often autistic children are ostracized or underestimated, even considered crazy by the community because of their poor ability to interact. Autistic children use symbolic language meaning expressions of thoughts and expressions of autistic children have their own peculiarities.

Imaginative expressions in children with autism can be done through the media of painting. Painting media can help as picture therapy and to develop the ability to paint autistic children. Socially and emotionally can help release feelings of tension and reduce anxiety, process self-confidence, facilitate the identification of emotions and expressions as well as awareness of individualism and uniqueness. According to Leksono (2013), children with autism are not infrequently they laugh alone, cry without cause, are hyperactive and silent so they are ignorant of those around them. As humans, children with autism also need art to meet the needs of aesthetic expression. As stated by Triyanto (2017: 53) that art is one of human needs that does not recognize place, time, and status. Its presence is a medium to express various feelings, knowledge, or experiences in aesthetic forms. According to Lukita (2018) painting for autistic children has the aim to develop the creative power, motivation, and attitude of students to learn something that will generate positive interest.

The expression of painting is certainly based on the imagination and creativity of children. Imagination in children can develop according to the environment in which the child lives. Imagination in children is a means for them to surf and learn to understand the reality of their existence in their living environment. According to Gunadi (2017) imagination can also arise purely and originally from his mind, as a result of processing and utilizing the strengths and abilities of the brain that God bestows upon him. Imagination is the ability of the mind to build mental images, objects, or events that did not occur, or was never present in the past (Rusli, 2016).

Some people think that those who are entitled or monopolize imagination are in the arts, even though art is the smallest part of imagination captured in the brain (Tarsa, 2016). Imagination in a child is influenced by the environment in which the child lives. Tobroni (2013) explains the need to create an environment that gives children creativity freedom. In other words, the environment is everything that appears and exists in the ever-expanding nature of life.

Hertati (2009: 21) says that the social environment is a social environment between people, relationships between educators and students and other people involved in educational interactions. This environment greatly affects children's activities. Environmental tensions, parental characteristics, house demographics (home location), family management, can all have an impact on children's activities. Relationships between family members, parents, brothers and sisters in harmony will help children do their activities well.

As conveyed by Malchiodi (2005: 16) that scientific research finds images that can influence the level of thought, as well as engaging in drawing, painting or other artistic activities, thus leading to brain and human connections that support health, support the body and individual stress levels. From agreeing to what was conveyed about the

activities benefited many people in various groups and walks of life, specifically on human psychology in expressing expressed through a work. Painting is a language that contains someone's aesthetic experience as outlined in a two-dimensional field in color, line shape, texture, space, and so on (Kurnia, 2015).

Previous research that is relevant to this analysis is Sugiarto's research (2014), the contents of his research, the expression of images of coastal children in Semarang, shows 'artistic expression' ecologically. A variety of cultural expressions 'manifested in drawings. Painting for autistic children as a container of aesthetic expression as outlined in a painting. By painting for autistic children, children can understand and recognize colors, as said by Fauziah (2016), one of the cognitive problems in autistic children is the ability to recognize colors. Color is a series in painting. According to Hidayati (2016), painting is a means of expressing ideas, thoughts and feelings that exist from within everyone, especially children, which contains a thousand meanings that are not possessed by parents.

According to Anggraeni (2018), painting can be used as therapy and the characteristics of autistic children can be understood by looking at his paintings. Therefore, researchers are interested in conducting research on (1) The form of a painting of autistic children in the Autistic Advanced School (SLA) Fredofios. (2) Environmental elements visualized in paintings as a result of the imagination of children with autism.

## METHOD

The method used in this research is descriptive qualitative method. The researcher acts as a key instrument. Researchers dive right into the field, adjusting to local time and space

The research was carried out by Fredofios Autistic Secondary School (SLA). Data is collected through controlled observation, interviews and document study.

In-depth interviews were conducted with the painting teacher Ibu Ika Wahyuningtyas on May 13, 2019, and assistant painting teacher Ibu Amel and Ibu Risma on May 14, 2019. Interviews relating to the work of autistic children as material for evidence data. With document study techniques, data about autistic children, autistic children's painting works. This study uses a qualitative method

The technique of data validity is based on credibility criteria, with source triangulation techniques. Next, the sources are explained, categorized, and analyzed so that they come to a conclusion. Data analysis techniques use the theory of visual elements and the concept of imagination with data analysis steps starting from, data collection, data reduction, data presentation and data verification.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

According to Historian Wolfflin (in Sugiharto, 2014) painting is a form that remains constant and does not add problematic differences between actual forms and visual forms that have advantages because it is the easiest medium to reach for purifying conceptual problems. The work of children with autism has a variety of styles and painting techniques, but there is an implied expression about an autistic child because an environmental condition of the community will have an impact on each individual in expressing themselves in creating art.

The discussion on the imaginative expression of autistic children's painting can be started from the works that he has made through the archive of images and the results of previous learning (before the controlled observations were made by researchers). It can provide a more holistic picture about the form of autistic children's painting, in terms of the subject of the picture that represents life that is close to him creatively.

Based on the results of preliminary observations of the works of painting that have been there before, both from previous learning,

from images in autistic children picture books, and from teacher documents, it turns out the child has an imagination that is explored from the depiction of the subject / forms. Basically every picture, painting, or other fine art contains its constituent elements, which are lines, shapes, space, color, texture, and darkness, no exception to children's drawings.

In a controlled observation, it is obtained the work of children's drawings that are able to show visual creativity in terms of elements, structure and shape, as well as visualized environmental elements. From several children who took part in painting, selected works by Ni Nyoman Riskia choirunnisa (19 years old), M. Harun Arrofiq Siregar (33 years old), Emilianus Humprey Reinaldo Warwuru (20 years old) These visual elements form the subject of the image, which is thematically revolves around the family environment and school environment.

Playing activities in the home, school and surroundings. Children show more active works that have taken place every day. Autistic painting by an autistic child, Fredofios, is art as a meaningful form (signification form). Signification form according to Bell (Sahman, 1993: 199) is a form of art that gives rise to responses in the form of aesthetic emotion in a person, and that is found in autistic children's painting. If we accept the work

as a work of art, then that happens because we feel there is uniqueness, there are creative sides to the form, not because we can see it as a work of art like a famous artist.

The environment influences the shape, structure, and style of a child's art, because it is the source of much of the artistic knowledge that is relevant to him, and elements of habits, attitudes, and values can help to determine the nature of a child's art, because it has the power to shape a personality or emotional state. This is confirmed by Lansing (1969: 138) that the environment contains systems of behavior, attitudes, and values, which directly or indirectly influence the expression of children's art as part of it.

This is also relevant to the scientific statement put forward by Richards (2007: 23) that a person's artwork is a way to connect his inner life with the socio-cultural conditions that surround him.

The environment is the source of much artistic knowledge that is relevant to it. Habits / behaviors, attitudes, and values can help to determine the nature of a child's art, because it has the power to form personalities or emotional conditions, and ultimately helps the formation of artistic knowledge that is appropriate to their environment.

The child's ability to represent their environment is obtained from the outcome of the child's interaction with the surrounding environment. Autistic children have their own sensitivity in sensing, observing, understanding, interpreting the life around them, and those closest to them. In more detail, the overall visualization of images of autistic children, in representing the visualized environment as a result of artistic imagination, can be seen from the few works below.

The Painting	Shape	Color	Theme
	Square and triangle	Blue, red, brown, yellow, green	Flood
Kiki's Work	Round, square, triangle, oval	, orange	Playing
	Square, oval, round, triangle	Blue, purple, green	Playing
Kiki's Work	Triangle, round, irregular shape,	, yellow, orange	Farming

	Round, square, triangle  square, round, triangle	Orange, yellow, blue, red, pink, purple	Playing
	Round, square,	Blue, yellow, green, brown, white	Go to school
	Aldo's Work	Blue, brown, green, black, yellow	Burnt
	Aldo's Work	Red, white, green, blue, brown	
		Blue, red, purple, black, green	

Figure 1. An autistic children's painting matrix

**Kiki's Painting (19 years old)**

The theme in the Kiki painting above is taken from everyday life. Visualized imagination is the family and surrounding environment. The shape of the kiki painting above varies to form a square consisting of houses and boats, in the form of a triangle consisting of clothes. Round head. As Sunaryo (2002: 9) argues, a shape can be recognized from its expression, whether it is a flat, lumpy lump or a volume, oval, round, and so on.

The color composition in Kiki's paintings shows gradations of color and gives rise to bright dominant colors. According to researcher interviews with painting teacher Ika Wahyuningtyas, Kiki in color selection always uses bright colors, Kiki can name the colors without the help of others like other autistic children. Color, including the most important visual elements, such as the opinion of Sahman (1993: 65) color makes our eyes see a variety of objects.

**Ofiq's Painting (33 years old)**

The theme in Ofiq's painting is taken from personal experience and looks at the surrounding environment, then he poured it into his painting. The shapes in Opiq's paintings use neatly arranged geometric shapes. As expressed by Sunaryo (2002: 10) Geometric features are shapes which are found in geometry or geometry.

According to the researcher interview with the painting teacher assistant, Amel. Opiq's imagination when painting must be invited to talk first, Opiq always likes to repeat words and like to ask questions. From there Opiq's imagination can be formed and poured into his paintings. The painting media that Opiq uses are different from her friends, because Opiq prefers using canvas and acrylic paint. The selection of colors in Opiq's paintings seems dark but still uses color gradations in the coloring.

**Aldo's Painting (20 tahun)**

The theme is taken from Aldo's paintings, taken from everyday life. He prefers

to paint people rather than scenery. The forms used in making his paintings are good enough. Irregular shapes. According to a research interview with painting teacher Ibu Ika Wahyuningtyas, Aldo in choosing colors according to his own desires, he prefers bright colors, and also always uses color gradations in the making of his paintings. Aldo is an autistic child who has an autism level, he is not too severe.

From the three Fredios autistic children's paintings above, the imagination imagined in his work is inseparable from the environment every day. The choice and arrangement of colors has harmonious colors. As said by Sunaryo (2002: 27), the arrangement of colors is the harmony of the arrangement resulting from the alloys of colors.

## CONCLUSION

The discussion above can be concluded as follows. First, the form of autistic children's painting shows artistic painting in terms of subjects, color elements and shapes. Second, visualized environmental elements describe the school environment and family environment. Expressions of imagination of autistic children are always inspired by the environment every day. It can be emphasized that the imaginative expression of autistic children Fredofios Yogyakarta shows the expression of art in everyday life, with environmental elements that lie behind it.

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