

The Ideology and Implementation of Aesthetic Education in Junior High School of Semarang Municipality

Mohammad Rondhi^{1✉}, Soesanto¹, Ignatius Bambang Sugiharto²

¹ Universitas Negeri Semarang, Indonesia

² Universitas Katolik Parahiyangan, Indonesia

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Abstract

Aesthetic education is an aspect of art education in schools whose implementation is very diverse. The diversity in the implementation is thought to be due to differences in the teacher's ideology on aesthetic education. The teacher's perception of aesthetic education must be influenced by the ideology he/she embraces. Therefore, field research is needed to provide an explanation of the teacher's ideology and the implementation of aesthetic education at school. Problems to be solved through this research were (1) how is the ideology and understanding of teacher's art about aesthetic education and (2) how is the implementation of aesthetic education at school. This research utilized a qualitative approach with cultural ecology model. Data were collected by observation, interview, and documentation techniques. The target of this research was art and culture teachers of Junior High School in Semarang. The results showed that in carrying out the learning of art and culture all teachers refer to the school-based (KTSP) curriculum and the 2013 Curriculum. Almost all art and cultural teachers carry out the learning process in accordance with the guidelines of the curriculum although they still adjust to school conditions. According to the art and culture teachers, in fact, the substance of the two curricula is not very much different; both are based on students and learning strategies using a scientific approach. In addition to providing an aesthetic experience to students, art education is also very appropriate as a means of character education for the nation.

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✉ Correspondence:

Jalan Sekaran, Sekaran, Gunung Pati, Sekaran, Gn. Pati, Kota Semarang, Jawa Tengah 50229

E-mail: mohrondhi@unnes.mail.ac.id

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INTRODUCTION

For some, talking about aesthetic education today is probably not so relevant given that in today's postmodern era the art is supposedly aesthetic and may also be unaesthetic (Shusterman, 1997). If art is not aesthetically pleasing and may also be unethical, or may be profane and so forth, it means that aesthetic, ethical, and sacred art may be abandoned or forgotten. For art and art education educators in general, there is a challenge on how to prepare future generations to avoid misdirection or misconception. Of course, this is not easy considering that the future is something that has never happened. The future cannot be accurately predicted by history or calculated precisely through statistics but the future is a time when anything can happen (Aronowitz, 1991). Therefore, education requires an ideology that can lead to where the educational objectives are placed, how the strategy achieves them, and how to know the level of success.

It is often said that in very fluid conditions, contemporary society appears to have allowed erosion of understanding and boundaries of tradition (Djatiprambudi, 2015; Salam, 2017; Sugiharto, 2008). The older concepts, including 'art' and 'architecture', can no longer be seen as something beyond attention especially in an era when popular cultural values are visible everywhere and when traditional forms of 'high culture' - opera, classical music, avant-garde art, experimental films - seem to struggle for economic survival. It is undoubtedly the truth, but at the same time it is all too early to talk about the end of high or quality art, even if romantic art ideas are still trying to separate themselves from popular culture that is no longer credible (Rampley, 2005, p3). The statistical facts show that high-level art enthusiasts and low-level art fans still and will remain exist.

Besides containing aesthetic values, art contains nonaesthetic or extra aesthetic values. Understanding postmodernism actually does not reject the aesthetic value. However, it is not prioritized. Not all posmodern art is anti-

aesthetic. Postmodernism only wants to criticize whether the concept of beauty or aesthetics that we have understood is correct and in accordance with the present situation or not. If it is correct, of course, the concept can be used but if it is less precise it must be replaced or revised (Aronowitz, 1991). Some people are worried about losing aesthetic sensibilities because postmodern art is only interested in 'cutting and sticking' (pastiche), it is eclectic in nature and with a saying that 'everything is allowed' so that art can be detached from its relation to the historical (ahistorical) aspect. Some people are afraid that posmodern art will only serve as a tool to help socio-political agenda. Another fear is that in this postmodern cultural era, creativity is increasingly threatened. Postmodernists think that creativity in art, especially individual creativity, is actually a relatively new phenomenon. Many pieces of art in the past were imitative, expressive, and symbolic; they were collectively and anonymously created. Many works from the past are monumental and beautiful but it is not recognizable who the creators are. Many visual cultures today are also worked out collectively, such as films, television programs, promotional media, culinary delights, and so forth (Hardy, 2006).

The next problem that has not been solved yet is the question of aesthetic value, including the aesthetic experience itself. The understanding of people including art educators about the aesthetic experience is not the same, as is the learning strategy and its development. Differences of opinion can occur because of the various concepts or definitions of beauty that are usually associated with aesthetic value. Until now, the question of aesthetic value is still a debate that will never end. Some argue that aesthetic value is objective, but others argue that aesthetic value is subjective, it all depends on the subject as the observer. Some people also argue that the intrinsic value of a work of art does not exist, that there is an extrinsic value that is the value attached or given by the observer or viewer to a work of art.

The aesthetic experience can not be understood as a static, or unchanging, concept that is closely recognized as a pure acceptance of

pure art autonomy. In addition to impoverishing, the static concept also limits itself. The aesthetic experience actually reaches beyond the boundaries of fine art and applied art, such as experiences of natural beauty; the experience of scientists when successfully solving the problem is also known as an aesthetic experience. The aesthetic experience is also conditioned by an atmospheric change in the world beyond art. Things that can affect the aesthetic experience are not only the art form but also the people's ability to experience or understand it.

Shusterman (1997, pp. 29-41) classifies aesthetic experience into four categories. First, the essentially aesthetic experience is something of value and interest, that is called the evaluative dimension. Second, aesthetic experience is something that is directly felt and appeals subjectively (can affectively attract and focus our attention on its existence directly); this event is beyond the usual wave of regular experience, that is called the phenomenological dimension. Third, aesthetic experience is a valuable experience but not just a sensation, called semantic dimension. Fourth, the aesthetic experience is a distinct experience known narrowly as a marker of pure art and is used to denote the essence or essence of artistic purpose, called the demarcation dimension.

Talking about aesthetic education certainly can not be separated from the talk of figures or philosophers who have focused on the field, such as Schiller. Schiller's view of aesthetic education refers to Kant's formalism about the regulation of moral life and civil society (Kooy, 2002, p 97). However, the aesthetic effect on moral life must be indirect. Nevertheless, everything will not be beautiful. Schiller tends to describe the whole process of aesthetic education such as the experience of sublimity with the limitations of a person or audience in dealing with the artwork. By surrendering, through the power of his/her own imagination, he/she will find the work as a masterpiece (Kooy, 2002, p 98).

For Kant, the thing that determines the nature of beauty is freedom. In deciding whether a piece of work is a work of art, one must free

his or her mind from various prejudices. Beauty is just an experience that can be enjoyed absolutely freely. One thing Schiller agrees with Kant is the statement that the nature of the aesthetic experience begins and ends in a free-form of perception. Therefore, it is fun. This can affect the moral life indirectly. Schiller, however, seems to disagree with Kant about the strict separation between aesthetics and ethics (Kooy, 2002, p. 118). For Schiller, aesthetics cannot be separated from ethics because they determine each other; art can not be separated from the moral aspect or other social values.

Almost the same as Schiller's view, Carter (2008, pp. 87-102) proposes an idea which he calls volitional aesthetics. Carter's idea is based on an assumption that art world is the core of visual culture while the visual culture itself lives in a society. Among the art world, the visual culture, and the society are not limited by the firmed line so that they can influence each other. The art world can influence the visual culture, and the visual culture can also affect people's lives, and vice versa. Carter's idea places the human role as human agency and expression as part of a dialogical relationship between the individual and the society in which he lives.

Carter's idea of aesthetic education or art education is actually a merger between the constructivism model initiated by Piaget and the social construction model conceived by Vygotsky. Carter's model seems to be suitable to be applied in this multicultural Indonesia. Merging the two models or paradigms that are really different is not easy. Some people argue that if you want to support Vygotsky's opinion, then you must reject Piaget's opinion or the other way round. In the field of physics, is there any doubt that Einstein's explanation of 'movement in a distance' is much better than Newton's explanation? In fact, most engineers still use the count commonly used by Newton (Smith, 1997, p.40). Therefore, in aesthetic education, the effort to combine the two different paradigms is complementarily expected to give better results, in a sense that it is more useful for the learners and the community. In an effort to know the teacher's understanding of aesthetic education and its implementation in

the learning process at school, a field study needs to be done.

The issue of aesthetic education including its ideology and implementation is certainly very diverse. Therefore, field research is indispensable to provide a detailed explanation especially concerning aesthetic education in junior high school in Semarang. The problems to be solved include How is the art teacher's ideology and understanding about aesthetic education? How is the implementation of aesthetic education in school? Are there any supporting and inhibiting factors, and How does the teacher overcome various obstacles that he/she faces? In addition to these issues, of course, there are other issues that may arise during field research.

The first objective of this research was to explain the issue of ideology of aesthetic education and its implementation in junior high school in Semarang Municipality. The second objective was to explain the various supporting factors inhibiting the implementation of aesthetic education. The third objective was to explain the various ways teachers overcome various obstacles in the implementation of aesthetic education.

METHODS

This research utilized a qualitative approach focusing the study on the form of teacher ideology and implementation of aesthetic education through art learning in junior high school in Semarang Municipality. The subjects of this study were art teachers and students who attended the lesson. As a way of life, ideology serves as a guide for its supporters in action.

Aesthetic education is part of art education. The focus in this research was art education. The concept of art education was of course adjusting to the curriculum applicable in schools that were the target of this research. If the school had implemented the 2013 curriculum, art education in question was the version of the 2013 curriculum. The word 'student' refers to junior high school students who attend the art education lessons. The students' parents were also the subject of this

research because their role on the student's learning outcomes was considerable. Other factors that also contributed to student learning outcomes were of course many but they were not specifically described because they would be determined after the researchers came to the field and found their significance in accordance with the context of aesthetic learning. Aesthetic learning result refers to a competence that the students obtain after attending the learning process designed by the art teacher. The result is not an aesthetic experience and a sense of intelligence that can be seen from the students' behavior and from the artwork they produce.

This study utilized a cultural approach in the sense that all the components involved in the aesthetic education process were in the shade of a particular culture. Schools are social units that have their own social institutions. Likewise, as members of the wider society, parents also have institutions that they use as a reference in action. Although teachers are part of school institutions, they also live in communities with different environments. Thus, the cultural concept referred to here is a living guide used by a person as a reference in acting in relation to the process of aesthetic education. Here, culture is not interpreted as standard, rigid, and static, but as a guideline that is interpreted or understood dynamically in accordance with its context and purpose. Cultural concepts like that are of course in accordance with the conditions of urban communities where this research took place that are dynamic, progressive, pragmatic, and tend to multicultural.

The ideology of aesthetic education can be viewed as a social order that is referred to by teachers, students, and parents in undergoing a learning process at school. The ideology or social order is the operationalization of a culture that overshadows and, at the same time, provides guidance for its inhabitants who, in this case, are teachers, students, and parents. Although they are shaded by a common culture, it does not mean that their behavior is exactly the same. The behavior of teachers, students, and even the parents can be different from each other because it all depends on the learning process and their environment that may not be

the same. Of course, everything will affect the cognition system and their perception of their culture. Hence, culture is not perceived as a static but as a dynamic view of life. Likewise, aesthetic educational ideologies must also be understood as dynamic things that constantly change according to its context (Hansen, 2006; Abbs, 2003).

The process of art learning that is included in aesthetic learning is determined by the ideology of the teachers, students, and parents; it is also influenced by environmental factors as both supporting and inhibiting factors. The learning process can be more optimal if the teacher is able to understand the interrelated factors and be able to overcome them. Art learning outcomes include esthetic (intra aesthetic) and non-aesthetic (extra aesthetic) areas. The purpose of art education or cultural art learning is not only to provide aesthetic experience to the students but also to build human character as a member of the society.

The data of this research were collected by interview, observation and document studies. The data were analyzed utilizing a qualitative method through interactive reduction, display, and verification process. The work was examined using formal, hermeneutic, and phenomenological analysis to understand their aesthetic and non esthetic meanings.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Implementation of Aesthetic Education in Junior High School

Art work is not just completing the work given by teachers but art work is learning to understand the environment including the school environment, home, and a much wider place including the community environment. The art and culture lesson is a lesson to recognize the environment. Both the natural environment and the social environment are herarchical (Barchana-Lorand, 2009). Therefore, art lesson aims to recognize the environment, that is the school environment, residence, and community.

In carrying out the learning process, some cultural art teachers have done that, for example

by inviting students to go out of the class to find objects to draw. If the object to be drawn is flowers or leaves, the students are allowed to pick or take the leaves to be brought to class to be recognized and drawn. There is a student drawing on the spot, they draw objects and their environment directly. By facing objects directly, the students are expected to recognize the characteristics of the objects and the environment directly.

In addition to drawing objects directly, the teacher can also instruct the students to view their objects through certain media, both images and photographic works. With the help of the internet, the students and the teacher can find the various objects they desire. With the help of a smartphone or laptop, the students no longer need to go outside the classroom to find objects to be drawn. The way to teach like that is almost commonly done by junior high school teachers in the Municipality of Semarang. In the past, to draw a model or form the students must see the object directly, now the real object has been replaced with a digital image or photograph. The learning process of drawing with the imitating method can be seen in Figure 1.



Picture 1. Students drawing a tree by imitating a photo of scenery through LCD impressions.

If the drawing lesson aims to provide an aesthetic experience to the students, then drawing by looking directly at the original object is actually much more qualified than drawing through the medium, whether in the form of images or photographs. However, if the goal is to produce an image only, then the use of media may be considered more practical and efficient.

According to Plato, drawing by imitating nature would be much better than drawing by imitating the work of human creation.

Based on the observation of the learning process of drawing with the method imitating, it turns out that the perception and attitude of the students to the model they are drawing are quite diverse: There may or may not try to imitate the model exactly. There are even students who draw pictures without regard to the model. Therefore, the work of the students is very diverse. Besides due to technical problems, it may also be due to the students' desire to draw it according to their own desires. The results of the students' diverse works can be seen in Figure 2 a, b, c, d).



Figure 2. a, b, c, d. The students' pictures are different from each other even though the object is the same.

In teaching today, teachers also tend not to force their students to draw the model exactly. Each of the students seems to be given the freedom to draw in accordance with his/her wish and ability. Technically, there are students who draw pictures by imitating the way the drawing process is exhibited by the teacher but there are also students who draw their pictures in their own way in the sense of not modeling their teacher. In art work, there is not any

technique that can be considered as the most valid one; everyone can use various techniques or try to find his own technique. Read (1970) says that every student is an artist with his/her own characteristics. Therefore, it is not wrong if the teacher gives freedom to his/her students to find their own techniques. The learning outcomes are various forms of students' work with different coloring and workmanship techniques. There are even teachers who give orders to their students by saying "please work in accordance with your desire as far as you feel happy and satisfied". The teacher also says "work or draw with your heart so you can feel its beauty". Thus, the target of learning art is not only to produce artwork but also to train students' aesthetic sensitivity.

Most art and culture teachers recognize that the purpose of art learning is to give or to develop the students' sensitivity to aesthetic forms. Therefore, through the work of art aesthetic experience of the students is expected to grow. Art learning in public schools mostly uses educational art model or paradigm.

Education through art implies that through the art of intelligent, creative, and confident individuals will be creative (Read, 1970). Therefore, cultural art teachers believe that by learning through the art, a creative, confident, and appreciative generation of the beauty of artwork and natural beauty will be created (Rohidi, 2015). Most teachers also believe that character education is very appropriate when presented through the education of art and culture. One of the objectives of art and culture learning in schools is to train students to be able to appreciate and enjoy the works of art both produced by friends or made by artists.

Giving tasks to work in groups can also foster a spirit of mutual cooperation and mutual understanding and respect for your friends. Based on interviews and observation results, most of the teachers in the arts and culture field practiced group learning systems, each consisting of four to six people. Each group works together to produce a work of art both in the form of pictures and paintings. Learning in this group includes doing the task and getting

the materials and equipment. They work together or collect some money to buy the necessary drawing tools and use them together. The work of students done in groups can be seen in Figure 3 a, b).



3.a



3.b

Figure 3. a, b Painting done in groups, each work done by four students.

Teacher's Understanding and Ideology of Aesthetic Education

Ideology is a multi-interpretive concept so that teachers' understanding of it is also not uniform and some even do not understand at all. Some teachers say that the teacher's duty is to teach according to what has been determined by the government as stated in the curriculum. "We teach according to the applicable curriculum" they explain. Almost all schools in Semarang implement the Curriculum 2013, commonly called 'Kurtilas' (short for Curriculum year two thousand thirteen). Classes in junior high schools that have implemented the Curriculum

2013 in the second year are class VII and class VIII, while class IX still using Curriculum KTSP.

According to the teachers, art and culture lessons, especially art, aim to train children so that they can be creative in accordance with their own desires. Creativity in drawing is very important in addition to the skills of the work itself. To support the skill, most of the art culture lessons are filled with practical lessons.

The 2013 curriculum states that each class lasts for three hours of lessons. In practice, usually the first hour is filled with an introduction and explanation of the tasks that must be done by students, the next two hours they do the task. When doing the task, students are given complete freedom to work and expression; teachers are just watching them and setting an example if necessary. When teachers give examples, students usually notice enthusiastically (see Figure 4).



4.a



4.b

Figure 4. a, b Students are very enthusiastic to see the teacher's drawing demonstration

According to the art and culture teachers, the students are really creative in the sense that they can create unique and expressive works. Creativity no longer belongs to a genius but belongs to everyone. In the past it was impossible for art to be articulated, now art

becomes part of industry, for example in design or creative industry. Nevertheless, inducing all types of art is of course impossible and unwise. Therefore, in addition to using scientific approaches such as in studying technology and design, learning can use other artistic approaches such as creative, instinctive, and expressive approaches. Thus, the approach in art learning does not have to be a scientific approach, especially if the teacher embraces the educational through art model. Thus, an understanding of the nature of art and its function is essential. In the education through art model, art work serves as a means of education not as a destination (Read, 1970).

Learning through art does not mean that children skillfully work art but so that students can gain an aesthetic experience. It is this aesthetic experience that can not be obtained through other learning. Therefore, although the instructional procedure designed by the teacher is a scientific approach, in practice the approach is not carried out consistently. Some teachers say that "... we should be able to ngemong" which means that in teaching teachers must menyesuaikan by the will of students, for example in choosing objects to be drawn, media, and techniques need to adjust to the ability of students. Art education that aims to provide aesthetic experience to students would require a special learning strategy.

An aesthetic experience is impossible to obtain simply by reading or studying theory. Aesthetic experience can only be obtained if students are dealing directly with aesthetic objects both natural objects and art objects (Santosa, 2011; Eisner, 1967). Drawing face to face with the object will give the students experience (Kuhn, 1967). In the lesson of drawing the model of natural objects (stilllife) students are expected to recognize the shape, color, texture, and size of the object. Some of the drawing of the model can be seen in Figure 5 a, b.

Aesthetic experience can also be obtained when students work art because with the art work the feelings of students can be directly touched both by materials, tools, and objects of art (Osborn, 1984). Feelings can be touched by

something without going through an understanding of the object that touches his or her feelings. The composition of the tone and also the elements of a way can touch the feelings of people who hear and who see it without having to understand it. For example, a person can cry when hearing a music even though he does not know the meaning of the song's lyrics. Likewise, one can be affected by an abstract painting without having to know its meaning. That is why art education can be done without going through the process of reasoning.



5.a



5.b

Figure 5. Example of student's work in drawing nature

Before the lesson ended, in closing, usually teachers together students make a summary or conclusion about the subject matter they have learned. In the closing section, sometimes students are invited to appreciate the work of students one by one. That way, students are expected to learn from each other and even give each other criticism. The habit of criticizing each other or giving opinions to his friends as well as train children to be honest and open to accept criticism. Therefore, according to the teachers of art and culture, art education is very appropriate as a means of character education because children are trained to be confident, courageous expression, creative, and so forth.

CONCLUSION

Teachers' knowledge and understanding of the art and culture learning materials is still limited. Of course, it makes the teacher less critical of both the source book and the delivery method, especially for teachers who do not have the appropriate science background. Most teachers try to apply the contents of the new curriculum consistently in order to be disciplined and orderly according to the rules. From the aspect of ideology, the curriculum of art and culture education can be said to follow the ideology of multiculturalism which is highly respected and upholds the cultural diversity in Indonesia. On the other hand, the national curriculum is also very concerned about the interests of individuals and society so that the ideology of humanism also affect the system of art education in Indonesia.

Loyalty to a particular model and approach in the implementation of aesthetic education can narrow the space for art development because art is essentially difficult to curtail. The negative side of an ideology is that teachers can become less accommodative of new methods and approaches. Teaching facilities that are perceived less often faced by teachers wisely that is by adjusting to the existing conditions with the best possible and it can be done if the teacher feel free from various binding rules.

On issues related to teacher ideology about aesthetic education, almost all agree that the goal of art and culture education is to provide an aesthetic experience to students. Through the practice of art work, teachers believe that students will gain an aesthetic experience in addition through the appreciation activities themselves. Education of art and culture is also believed to be able to build a good student character that is creative, responsive, and tolerant to various critics so as to foster a sense of love in the homeland and submission and thank God.

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