

The Discourse of Creativity through Autism Art and Its Aesthetic Disability

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Abstract—The paradigm of disability for children with special needs is shifting in a good direction nowadays. It starts from many studies that discuss the positive value of the specificity of children with special needs. Therefore, this paper wants to be a part to improve the quality of life for children with special needs especially children with autism syndrome disorders (ASD). This paper aims to explain the aesthetics of disability of 2 autistic children through his paintings. This study using grounded theory and literature studies, to explore aestheticization of 2 autistic children who were in Indonesia and also the work they produced. Through this research, it can be shown that autistic children have an artist's theoretical frame. The results of the study show that the psychological view from David Hume about empiricism, was used to see autism art to improve the art discourse relating to the ability to think critically and creativity of the community. This is because, through the symbolization in his paintings, autistic children are able to provide new freshness to the phenomenon of painting which in Indonesia is currently entering the stage of non-discourse. Discourse through the painting of an autistic child, later expected to be able to become one of the factors that can develop research on creativity in the art world. Furthermore, it is also a foothold in developing the abilities of autistic children in cognitive, psychomotor, and affective through art.

Keywords— *the discourse of creativity; autism art; aesthetic disability; Indonesia*

I. INTRODUCTION

The question of "what is art" is a long debate that continues to this day. Especially if we use the concept of beauty as an indicator of art objects. During this time we always think that everything called beautiful includes art. In the past art was once understood only as a representation of nature. We agree that works of art are beautiful if they have similarities with nature. This view becomes a stigma and is considered a common sense so when we find works that are not beautiful, we conclude if the work does not include art. Expressive works made by autistic children are often not considered as works of art because they are not similar to situations in nature. This opinion began to change along with the many studies on autism like Sampurno's research about therapy through art [1], [2]. These change are also supported by the perspective of Derrida's deconstruction where Kusumandyoko once discussed it on 2014 [3], and Hume's empiricism with psychological view.

In general, artwork created by autistic children has a different concept of beauty with most works of art. These differences cannot be interpreted if we use past aesthetic concepts. The paintings they have made are media for communication. Through painting autistic children can convey messages with visual language. Autistic children are proven to be more comfortable communicating through painting than verbal communication.

II. METHODS

This qualitative research uses literature study and David Hume's theoretical analysis. David Hume wants to build a philosophical system by departing from an entirely new basis, namely empirical experience. Through Hume's perspective, this study wants to build a system of understanding but from the opposite point of departure. The aim is to build a system of accountable, deconstructive understanding, that is, that is not built on assumptions or speculations that cannot be empirically proven at all. Therefore, this study also included two paintings of autistic children whose data was taken in Yogyakarta. Data analysis uses Hume's point of view, where making humans in this case is an autistic child itself as the starting point of research. This is because science is human property, meaning that knowledge acquired and cultivated by humans, of course, all that knowledge cannot be separated from human nature itself. Therefore we need to first know the nature of human beings before we know clearly all the other sciences in terms of interdisciplinarity which is currently prevalent. As Hume said, the attempt to explain the nature humans, should propose a complete system of knowledge, which is built on a completely new foundation, and only on that foundation can science stand with certainty [4].

III. HUME, EMPIRICISM, AND AUTISM ART

The painting of an autistic child has a unified sensory impression into an idea. A philosopher named David Hume said that knowledge arises because individuals unite ideas in a concept about something [5]. Based on Hume's words, the knowledge of autistic children who are interpreted through his paintings is formed as a result of the synthesis of ideas. Without the unified ideas, the individual only has a sensory 'impression' that does not form a knowledge. In the current phenomenon, it is often found about difficult art students in shaping the concept of ideas in their paintings. Unlike autistic

children, who have spontaneous creative power. This is because, autistic children do not have the concept of right or wrong in their lives.

In a psychological sense, Hume says that there is a principle of connection between different thoughts or ideas in the mind when he gives an image in a symbol [5]. These actions are called associations. The association is connected with the experiences experienced by children. Ernst Gombrich in *Art and Illusion* states that the power of a child as an artist is not to reproduce what is 'there', but to create an 'impression' that we are seeing something that is represented [6]. Even most representations that are similar to life cannot be thought of only as plagiarism. The author follows the provisions which determine how something is represented and uses techniques that require us to see it in a certain way. Children have their own vision to represent what they see and what they think in the painting. Thus, after tracing the development of art thought as a mimic representation of reality or subject expression of reality, it can be concluded that there are six views on what should be realized in art, namely: (1) art is a representation of the scientific attitude to the reality of nature and social reality; (2) art is a representation of the general characteristics of nature and human emotions; (3) art is a representation of general characteristics in nature and humans that are seen subjectively by the artist; (4) art is a representation of the ideal form that is attached to the realm of reality and the mind of the artist; (5) art is a representation of ideal forms that are transcendental; (6) art is a representation of the world of art itself [7]. The above view is entirely in the artwork produced by the child. They work spontaneously, expressively, and certainly are original, which is really the result of their ideas and ideas. When doing art, children express what they see, remember and experience without any limitations [2]. Children's knowledge is not confined to the definitive concept of adults, but by the freedom of narration that is usually possessed by children. Therefore, the most important aspect in children's learning is: the creative process or thinking process [1]. Furthermore, the historical, social, cultural context and content of the image or artifact will have an advantage over the quality of form. The argument emphasizes the importance of the child's creative process when performing arts. Because in the creative process, there are artistic and aesthetic experiences of children that are externalized into the typical symbols of children [8].

Back to the artistic experience of children. Another thing that should be obtained from children's paintings is about how children process their artistic experiences. Experience in art is categorized into two types, namely artistic experience (act of production) and aesthetic and perception experience [9]. Artistic experience is an artistic experience that takes place in the process of creating artwork. This experience is felt by children when carrying out artistic activities called the creative process. Aesthetic experience is the experience felt by connoisseurs of aesthetic works in the sense of beauty [9].

Enjoyment produced by the beauty of a work of art has a high level of subjectivity [10]. A person cannot enjoy and cannot receive the effects of a work of art if they do not have an interest in the art. This discomfort can be seen in the work of normally repetitive children artwork, there are similarities

between work and between children. This is because basically children do not have pleasure in work because of the restrictions on actual freedom which also limits children's imagination and creative ideas.

It is clear that there is a principle of connection between different thoughts or ideas in the mind, and that, in their appearance to memory or imagination, they meet each other with certain degrees of method and order. That is, the act of synthesizing ideas takes place spontaneously in the mind. The unification of ideas which then shape this knowledge takes place through certain principles. Hume said, for him there were only three principles of connection between ideas, namely (1) resemblance, (2) contiguity, and (3) cause and effect [5].

For resemblance principles, Hume gives an example of experience when someone sees an image [5]. An image naturally brings one's mind to its origin. That is, if we look at a picture of a scene, then our mind spontaneously connects the image with the picture of another sight we have ever seen. We always naturally connect an object with other similar objects that we have seen. And that is only possible because our minds are governed by the principle of resemblance. For the principle of contiguity, he gave the example of talking about an apartment in a building naturally would lead us to find out or ask about whether, for example, the building of a university is the same or different from the others in the building. Regarding the principle of cause and effect, he gives the example that if someone sees a wound, we naturally immediately imagine the pain caused by the wound. The individual naturally also always seeks the cause of the facts or events that he sees. If for example we see a fallen tree, or see footprints on the beach, or see a vehicle stop in the middle of the road, then we immediately ask about the "cause" for that fact or event.

IV. LEARN CREATIVE FROM AUTISM ART

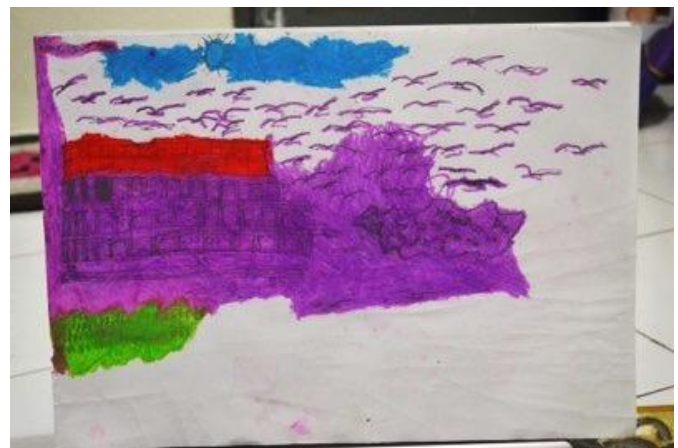


Fig 1. Heavy Rain

This is a painting made by A, 11 years old. He is an autistic child and his fingers always shaking especially when holding painting tools. The color of his painting is dominated by purple above the white background. There is one red-roofed building with lots of windows. A group of small fish seen on the right side of the building. There were also many birds flying above the building. Under the building there is a green part, it seems

grass. We can see that A paintings not stereotyped as the work of an 11 year old child.

A's painting process begins when he wants to tell about the situation that impressed him. The situation was a weather change from inside building to the outside. According to A the red-roofed building that has many windows is a museum. In the past, A had the opportunity to come to the museum and he had a deep impression when he saw there were many flying birds, fish ponds and lawns around the museum. The dominant purple color represents the condition of cold air from the museum produced by air conditioning.

The painting in figure 2 is the work of one of the autistic children (name B) with the specifications of asperger syndrome aged 11 years.



Fig. 2. Robot Family

He has a tendency to always draw geometric types. The symbols displayed are depictions of their daily lives. The painting titled 'Keluarga Robot' is the way children communicate from what they experience everyday. Autistic children have repetitive habits. He is often identified with rite work and activities.

An autistic child communicates through his painting, that he experienced disappointment with the 'repetitive' perception of those around him. In accordance with the observations made during this study, B, always carried out daily activities in a rigid, meaning, scheduled and tight manner. Similarly, when doing daily activities, where the activities carried out are only

rites and habits. Indeed it is quite good, however, if done very tightly it will be a problem later on. Like when B came home from school, the officer who picked him up was late. B is directly tantrum, and it is difficult to overcome. Furthermore, according to the saying that "gathering with good people will make you a good person too," if treating autistic children is not like a normal child in general, then it will increasingly give the child the impression of autism.

V. CONCLUSION

Paintings made by A and B, both 11 years old and autistic prove that their works have an aesthetic concept that deserves to be called an artwork. Psychological view from David Hume about empiricism is suitable for reading creative works made by autistic children. Paintings made by autistic children are the right medium for them to communicate so the painting cannot be judged to be true or false. They also feel more comfortable communicating using visual language than verbally. Through symbols and visual language in his paintings, autistic children are able to provide new freshness to the phenomenon of painting which in Indonesia today enters the stage of non-discourse. Furthermore, the process of painting makes children develop abilities in the cognitive, psychomotor, and affective fields through art.

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