

The Reflective Review on Post - Modern Thinking a Basis for the Visual Art Education Curriculum Development in Indonesia

Zakarias S. Soeteja

Abstract

The modern thinking which influences the different fields of knowledge has led to a post-modern era to Indonesia's education. This post-modern thinking is reflected in the varying disciplines of knowledge which include: philosophy, psychology, socio-culture, information technology and of course in visual art and design. The development of the visual art education curriculum in public senior high schools in Indonesia has had an impact on the components of the curriculum design and its implementation. In this case, the basis of the research is the reflective review on the Critical Post-modern thinking towards the current **Visual Art Education Curriculum** for senior high schools in Indonesia. A critical and reflective investigation was carried out in a qualitative way through a non-interactive strategy by using the theory and concept of postmodern thinking, and curriculum development. The findings of this study showed that the basis for curriculum development in Indonesia for senior high schools is mostly influenced by the postmodern thinking, though the contemporary

Faculty of Language and Art Education (FPBS),

Department of Art Education, Indonesia University of Education (UPI), Indonesia

Jl. Dr. Setiabudhi No. 229 Bandung 40154, Tel. (022) 2013163, Ext: 24115 Fax. (022)2015411

E-mail: zsoeteja@gmail.com

fine-art has not been considered. The components and concepts used in curriculum design are evident to the influence of postmodern thinking, more so, with the use of multi-concepts which accommodate similarities and differences. The implications and recommendations of the research include: redefining post-modern thinking in relation to visual art education based on the socio-cultural context of a given place; developing up-to-date learning materials based on the prevailing condition of a given period; understanding the development and implementation of the curriculum in relation to the principles which accommodate similarities and differences; and carrying out evaluations that measure the potential development of children and support multi-culture and also continuous research in an effort to develop appropriate learning models based on principles which aim at developing the different potentials of students through visual-art education.

Keywords: Visual Art Education, Post-modern Thinking, Curriculum, and Curriculum Development

Introduction

In this rapidly changing world, education is meant to serve as an up-to-date problem solving tool. This calls for a properly designed curriculum that culminates to appropriate problem solving skills at any given period of time. The curriculum as an important component of education is one of the Medias that fulfill the requirements for an era's development needs. It reflects the society's willingness to build a better life now and in the future. The concepts of curriculum foundation are derived from the philosophical, psychological, socio-cultural, and science-technology sources related to our every day living.

The emergence and developments in the *postmodernism thinking* movement has influenced the various disciplines of knowledge, including the field of education. Several literatures based on research and assessment with regard to the phenomenon of postmodernism particularly visual art (Pelfrey & Pelfrey, 1986; Sugiharto, 1996; Sumartono, 2000; Walker, 2001; Yustiono, 1995), and art education, express the broadened application of postmodernism thinking (Broudy, H. 1988, Doll, W. 1993, Duncum, 2001, Slattery, P. 1995). Some of the literature shows how influential postmodern thinking influences visual art education in the contemporary art education curriculum. The postmodern thinking reflects the contemporary world-wide era of modernity.

Postmodernism as an ideology and a movement acts a guide to the present day visual art education. Experts of art education from allover the world, have carried out studies on postmodernism to examine how this ideology has influenced art education (Allison, 1995; Armstrong, 1990; Asselbergs dan Altje Knoop., 1995; Duncum, 2001; Freedman & Stuhr, 2006; Hardy, 2004; Salam, 2001; Schuman, 1981). Because of this, for Indonesia, the curriculum is expected to tackle such issues. Thus, postmodern thinking as an ideology and a movement is considered important moreso in the development of most of the learning materials; however, for this research, I limited the study to the reflection and critical examination of the foundational concepts in the art education curriculum development. The research is basically a reflective analysis of the developments in postmodern thinking in art and visual art education. The curriculum of 2006 (*KTSP 2006*) was chosen, specifically because it entails visual art lessons for senior high schools. This limitation was made due to the fact that the “object has similar materials, methods, media, and learning evaluation”. So, I found it fundamental to be used as the basis of understanding for

the curriculum developers in the development of the curriculum of visual art education.

The general objective of this research was to examine the foundation of curriculum development in visual art education in Indonesia which is currently based on the postmodern thinking. And the specific objective was to comprehend (review) the *postmodernism thinking* from the philosophical, psychological, socio-cultural, and also science-technology perspective in relation to the visual art education curriculum of senior high school. Besides, the study also aimed to analyze the art and design concept and its implementation through the visual art education curriculum. The significance of this study is to enrich and develop the theoretical and practical concept of visual art education. It is hope that through this research, art and design teachers will able to enrich their knowledge on the basic concepts of curriculum development in visual art education.

Postmodernism, Curriculum and Visual Art Education

The theory and concept used in this research are related to the theories and concepts of postmodernism, curriculum, and art education.

1. Postmodern Thinking

The term *postmodern* is derived from a combination of two words that is; post and modern, which refers to *after* (post) and now (modern), so the two can be translated as *after modern or after the present* (Sugiharto, 1996). This term was first used by the artist at the end of the 19th Century and at the beginning of the 20th Century, in reference to all the new movements which tried to escape from the old order systems (Sugiharto, 1996).

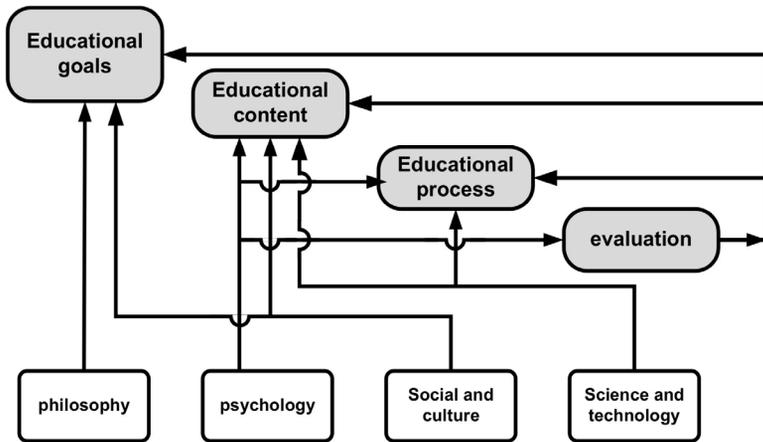
From this, the researcher therefore perceives postmodernism as a movement which is against a single, universal, and obsolete thinking. Here, postmodernism is seen as a ***think tank movement*** which always tries to search for varying alternatives that help us to understand any discourse, paradigm or consensus in seeking for the truth. So, the implication of the mentioned definition is an accommodative attitude toward any differences.

2. The Foundation, Design, and Implementation of Curriculum

There are three concepts of curriculum, they are: curriculum as substance, curriculum as a system, and curriculum as a lesson (Sukmadinata, 2002). So, curriculum needs to be developed based on strong foundations following philosophical, psychological, socio-cultural, and science and technological aspects (Hamalik, 2007, 2008; Marsh, 2004; Miller & Seller, 1985; Print, 1993; Sukmadinata, 2002, 2004b). This implies that, the developed curriculum should contain main components which may include: objectives, content or material, process, media, and evaluation.

Curriculum development can be differentiated from curriculum design and curriculum implementation (Hamalik, 2007, 2008; Print, Murray, 1993). *Implementation means put something into effect.* Specifically, in the context of curriculum, some experts propose several definitions of implementation. Fullan (1982), in Miller and Seller (1985), relates curriculum implementation to teachers' subjective reality and the effect of resource, methodology, and attitude change. Another definition, proposed by Saylor and Alexander (1974), in Miller and Seller (1985), refer to teaching process as implementation. They believe that teaching is the implementation of curriculum planning, since it is related to the teacher-students interaction in the school setting.

Framework 1



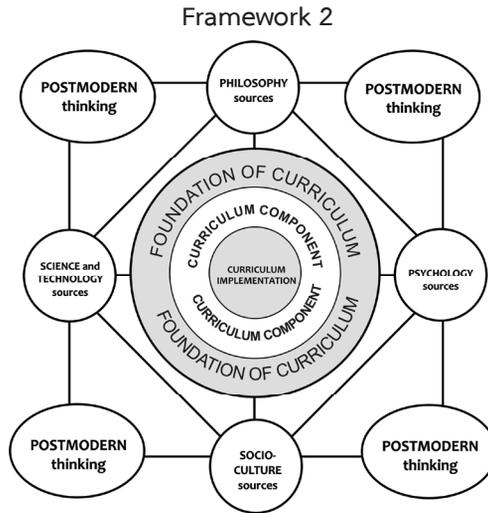
(Source: Sukmadinata, 2002)

The Contribution of Each Foundation towards Curriculum Development

3. Visual Art Education

The concept of visual art education as used in this research is that introduced by Herbert Read (1970) from his book entitled *Education through Art*. He sees art as a tool to accomplish educational objectives, not the art objective itself. Education (through) art is a human-shaping process through art. In general, visual art education has functions to develop student competences, to help them discover their personal life fulfillments, to transfer culture inheritance, to enhance social awareness, and as a path to improve knowledge (Chapman, 1987). The objective of art education is in line with the wide responsibility of education in general (Macdonald, 1970; Ramanto, 2003; Read, 1970; Soedarso, 1972; Yampolsky, 2001).

As mentioned earlier, the framework of this research includes postmodern concept, curriculum development concept, and visual art education concept. The relationship can be seen in the framework below.



Research Methodology

Qualitative method was used in this study to make sure I acquire the needed and necessary information. The multimethod strategy was used. According to Mcmillan and Schumacher (2001) multimethod is the use of multiple strategies to collect and corroborate the data. In specific, this research is an analytical research; the researcher basically used non-interactive documents (Zed, 2008). The common approaches in qualitative research are; limited context-generalization, finding the orientation, case study design, holistic analysis, non-interactive inductive data analysis. They are used to describe and interpret the past and future concepts from the selected sources of data. The credibility of analytical study relies on its procedure and methodology (Gall, Borg, & Gall, 2003; Zed, 2008).

1. Sources of Data

The literature used in this study comprised of; books, journals, magazines, national documents, and other relevant sources which were appropriate to describe the phenomena of postmodern thinking development in visual art and art education.

2. Type of Analysis

This research analyzed the theory and concepts, compiled documents, narrative description of some phenomenon, comparative analysis of phenomenon or certain periods, and philosophical literature related to developments in postmodern thinking. Each of analysis study had a different scope and generalization level. It involved either the analysis of education concepts, historical documents, and educational policies. The concepts were analyzed by reflective analysis to describe the meaning regarding to people's perception about the development of visual art education curriculum. The focus of this research was to discover the meaning of postmodern thinking which is used to reflectively and critically analyze the curriculum of visual art education in the present day.

3. Design and Strategy of the Study

Literature study was dominant since the problem of this research is related to the process and perception of concepts. The non-interactive strategy in qualitative research was appropriate to analyze the data specifically analyzing the written documents, so it was not necessary for the researcher to meet with the respondents. The data collection techniques were basically reading and writing down the necessary points and by analyzing the documents. The research also used purposive sampling technique / criterion based on selection. In general, the steps and the strategy ranged from finding and developing general ideas related to the phenomenon of postmodern thinking development. Then, organiza-

tions and categorizing source of data based on the framework which has been determined earlier. Finally, drawing a conclusion of the research analysis and reconceptualizing the curriculum development.

Findings and Discussion

1. Postmodern Thinking in Curriculum Development Foundation of Fine arts Education

Based on the research questions of this study, the analysis of this study started with an explanation of postmodern thinking as the foundation for Indonesia's art curriculum development. The analysis of curriculum development of fine arts education in Indonesia is based on developments of fine arts education in Europe (Netherland) and United States of America. Some literatures mention that fine arts education in both countries influences the fine arts education of Indonesia (Lombard, 1996; Soehardjo, 2005; Salam, 2003; Surjomihardjo, 1978). The educational system, especially formal education, in Indonesia was developed in the colonial period (Soehardjo, 2005; Salam, 2003). Therefore fine arts education in Indonesia has experienced changes. The government tries to make innovation on developing the quality of art education by evaluating and renewing the curriculum (Depdikbud, 1975; Depdiknas, 2006; Soehardjo, 2005; Salam, 2003; Sukmadinata, 2004a; Tilaar, 2000).

❖ Postmodern Perspective toward Philosophical Foundation

The Curriculum of 2006 explains that Art and Culture Education are multilingual, multidimensional, and multicultural. Multilingual means developing self-expression ability creatively through any ways and media. Multidimensional means developing any competences which included conception, appreciation, and creation harmonically from esthetic, logic, kinesthetic, and etiquette way. While multicultural means the meaning of

art education to develop the awareness and appreciation toward various national and world culture. Those are the shape of democratic attitude which leads a person to live politely and tolerant in society and cultural plurality (Depdiknas, 2006).

The Education of Art and Culture has a role to shape student's personality by emphasizing on their multi-intelligent ability. Fine arts, music, dance, and theater have their own characteristics. So that, the philosophical foundation of fine arts education curriculum can be seen as conceptual and ideal basis to accomplish the objectives, process, and the performer of fine arts education. Related to the postmodern thinking, the developed fine arts education must not be only oriented on individual's development and science, but also on the attitude and appreciation toward global society differences (Duncum, 2001; Schuman, 1981).

❖ **Postmodern Perspective toward Psychological Foundation**

Psychological foundation is considered important on the learning process of fine arts education. However, the shift of the fine arts education objectives from mastering skill aspects to expression aspects shows a paradigm change in fine arts education in a psychological manner.

❖ **Postmodern Perspective toward Socio-Cultural Foundation**

The socio-cultural foundation in fine arts education curriculum is based on the dynamic change of society. If the postmodern thinking influences the concept and work of fine arts products, the postmodern fine arts will also influence the change of socio-cultural foundation of fine arts education.

The result of analysis toward the development of fine arts education shows that innovation of fine arts education curriculum persuades the social-cultural dynamics in Indonesia. So, the contemporary fine arts development in Indonesia is highly influenced by visual culture.

❖ Postmodern Perspective toward Science and Technology Foundation

The science and technology foundation is related to the use of technology (medium and technique) in producing fine arts works. It is importance in postmodern since it is considered as an absolute standard of the beauty of aesthetics in West; which is done by re-exploring the medium and techniques of pre-modern fine arts techniques and by investigating the modern technology of image projection, visual, sound, and movement. Both ways can be translated as the result of postmodern thinking as it accommodates varieties of universal, single, and absolute dimension in fine arts world (Marianto, 2001; Sumartono, 2000; Walker, 2001; Yustiono, 1995)

2. The Effect of Postmodern Thinking to Curriculum Design

The reflective way on seeing fine arts education curriculum persuades the curriculum design itself. It is included the components of fine arts education curriculum such as objectives, materials, methods or strategies, media, and evaluation. The following explanation is a concept of fine arts education curriculum components as a result analysis from post-modern's perspectives.

a. The Effect to the Objectives Components

Initially, the objective of fine arts education is to bequeath the fine art skills to other to fulfill the needs of skillful manpower in industries. Thus, this need was developed to conserve the art works; to develop creativity, personal fulfillment, sensitivity, fine arts science; and to integrate it with other lesson objectives.

b. The Effect to the Materials Components

The effect to the material aspects is related to psychological, socio-cultural, information and technology foundation which lead to

postmodern fine arts, known as contemporary fine arts. Based on the data of the development of contemporary fine arts in Indonesia and other countries, it can be seen that the implication of change and development of the types of fine arts works are various.

c. The Effect to Method and Media Components

Psychological and science-technology foundation influence the components of method and media in the curriculum of fine arts education. The appearance of postmodern fine arts should be seen as a historical development in visual arts world. The implication is in choosing of the appropriate method to make students comprehend this phenomenon in fine arts. Besides, there should be an adjustment in composing the fine arts practice objectives from the modern period perspectives to the postmodern ones.

The characteristics of fine arts in postmodern period usually use ready made objects and also the use in installation arts. Another characteristic in postmodern period is the use of information and communication media. It gives significant changes in the use of techniques and medium, since it processes the movement, light, and also the aroma of their works. The image projection and virtual become main idea for the artist to produce a fine art work.

d. The Effect to Evaluation Components

As stated earlier that psychological foundation can be used by the curriculum developer to evaluate students' progress. The evaluation is developed to assess students' art work, students' knowledge of arts (history, etc.), students' skills (to use tools or materials), students' attitude on appreciating art works, and students' creativity development.

3. The Effect of Postmodern Thinking to Curriculum Implementation

Based on the post-modern's point of view toward the foundation and components of curriculum, there are some possibilities that can be proposed as the consequences of the postmodern thinking in the curriculum of fine/visual art education.

According to postmodernism's perspectives, the implementation concept of curriculum requires teacher's role as the main factor which determines the success of curriculum implementation (De Alba, 2000; Freedman, 2004). In addition, headmasters, school administrative staffs, supervisors, and society have the same role to determine the success of the curriculum planning and implementation (Hamalik, 2008).

Conclusion and Recommendations

Conclusion

The concept of postmodern is used to analyze the foundation of fine arts education curriculum. It is seen as a reference, which opposes the single, universal and absolute thinking. It always tries to find alternatives by critically and reflectively questioning any discourse, paradigm or consensus to seek the truth.

To conclude, it is obvious that postmodernism gives benefits to the fine arts education curriculum and also visual arts in general, by stimulating creative exploration. The deconstruction is no longer seen as act of damaging but as a critical attitude to keep questioning any thinking and action to find out the truth. It is used to rebuild and reconstruct new ways of thinking; in relation to fine arts and visual arts education concepts, it encourages creativity, improves critical attitude, and supports the idea to respect differences and diversities.

Recommendation

- ❖ In terms of educational benefits, especially for the Department of Curriculum Development of Post-Graduate School of UPI, the result of this study is expected to enrich the science treasure and educational science, related to the postmodern thinking development in certain lesson curriculum.
- ❖ For the developer of fine arts curriculum, the result of this study is expected to give contribution to the foundation of curriculum development through postmodernism which is appropriate with the needs of students, society, the development of fine arts education, and also the background of certain local cultural background.
- ❖ For the researcher of curriculum development, the result of this study is expected to be used as reference for the upcoming research, by reflectively analyze the postmodern thinking on developing curriculum.
- ❖ For the researcher of fine arts education study, the result of this study is expected to be a valuable reference to conduct and develop curriculum model of fine arts education by using postmodern thinking in school level.
- ❖ To provide suggestion for curriculum developer of fine arts education in Indonesia on evaluating and developing curriculum model which is appropriate with the science-technology development, and also students' and society's needs.

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