

**A CULTURE-BASED ASSESMENT STRATEGY
FOR FINE ART WORKS**

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A. Introduction

People generally think that a fine arts subject only includes drawing or creating other art works. A fine arts subject is not considered as a methodology for learning other knowledge. As a teaching method, a fine art provides a lot of activities for students to recognize the problems related to the field of fine art both during the creation and appreciation process.

One of the success indicators in the teaching and learning of fine arts is the teacher's ability to develop professional teaching and learning which includes planning a lesson, performing a teaching, and assesing. One of learning models applied in the teaching of fine art subject is a culture-based learning model. This model employs an integrated approach in providing a comprehensive understanding about the link among concepts or principles in various branches of fine arts. Through this learning model, the students can transform the creation of meaning and the development of knowledge therefore they do not merely immitate and take the information that they get. Also, the students can create meaning to get deeper understanding about the teaching materials they learn.

The use of this learning model requires a learning assesment which does not only measure the student's knowledge through written tests but also measure the creation of meaning for their knowledge based on the contexts. This can be done by using assessment instruments that can measure the process of art works creations such as project and portfolio assesment by taking the elements of fine arts from the students's environment both traditional and modern fine arts. The implementation of the

assessment and the formulation of its criteria can be jointly carried out by the teachers and students.

B. A culture-based learning in the teaching of fine arts

A fine art education subject belongs to the field of Cultural Art instead of music, dance, and theater. As a teaching and learning methodology, a fine art provides a lot of actions and activities which introduce the students some problems dealing with the field of fine arts both during the creation and appreciation process. The creation activities are conducted by training the student's imagination through the creation and production of art works; making new relationships; and overcome previous limitations. Meanwhile, the appreciation activities aim at developing the students in order to be able to appreciate, observe and assess the objects of fine art. These appreciation activities involve activities that satisfy the intellectual, mental, and spiritual aspects of the students. Therefore, appreciation activities are a form of a sense-emotion learning which may become a source to develop the students' affective potential (Trie Hartiti, 2011:6).

One of the success indicators in the teaching and learning of fine arts is the teacher's ability to develop professional teaching and learning which include planning a lesson, performing a teaching, and assessing. One of the learning models in the teaching of fine arts is a culture-based learning model. This learning model is an approach that promotes students' activities with a wide range of cultural backgrounds and is integrated in the learning process of a particular subject. With regard to this, an integrated approach which can provide a comprehensive understanding of the concepts or principles; operational and synthetic; among the field of arts and cross the field of arts is badly needed. In a culture-based learning, a culture is a medium for the students to transform the results of their observations into creative forms and principles about their natural environment. Thus, the teaching of fine art through a culture-based approach enables students to transform the creation of meaning and the development of knowledge therefore they do not only imitate and take the information they get but also they use culture to create meaning, go beyond the boundary of imagination and creativity in order to achieve an understanding of the

lessons being learned. A culture-based learning can be divided into three, namely learning about the culture, learning with culture, and learning through culture (Goldberg, 2000).

In reference to the explanation above, the implementation of a culture-based approach in the teaching of fine arts include: learning about culture which means building basic skills about culture as a discipline of study covering various aspects of theoretical and practical knowledge and experience to be studied as a learning experience. Therefore, learning about culture also means that the students are expected to develop their knowledge about the culture themselves.

Learning with culture means that the students can develop their knowledge beyond the field of fine arts by studying the culture which includes introducing various cultures from Indonesia and abroad through artworks. This approach is based on the assumption that art is viewed as a medium for the students to gain information, understanding, and experience from the various phenomena that exist or happen around them. Thus, students can gain knowledge of a subject matter from other subjects through fine artworks. In other words, art is a means to learn a particular subject matter.

Learning through culture is a method that encourages students to learn and express their understanding about the learning materials of the subject matter through cultural forms. Learning through culture can be applied to all school levels. In this case, the students are actively involved in an imaginative and creative thinking to reconstruct meanings through culture. Learning through culture also allows students to pay attention to the depth of his thinking, internalize the concepts or principles that they learn from a lesson, and produce creative imagination in expressing his understanding. Learning through culture can be implemented in elementary school, secondary school, or higher level in any subjects (Sarjiyo, Panen, 2005:89).

In line with the explanation above, the application of an integrated approach to the teaching of fine art is as follows: in learning with culture, students can develop

their knowledge beyond their expertise by studying art. In learning through culture, students can develop their knowledge through producing creative art works. In learning about the culture, the students can develop knowledge about culture themselves. Therefore, a culture-based learning is viewed as a method of learning.

As a teaching method, fine arts provide broader actions and activities for teachers to introduce the problems related to the field of fine arts to the students both during the creation and appreciation activities. The creation activities are conducted by training the student's imagination through the creation and production of fine art works; making new relationships; and overcome previous limitations. Meanwhile, the appreciation activities aim at developing students in order to be able to appreciate, observe and assess the objects of fine arts. In an appreciative fine art education, students gain experience by absorbing, filtering, revealing, interpreting, and responding to the aesthetic symptoms both from the work of arts and nature (Jazuli, 2008:93). The fine art appreciation activities involve activities that satisfy the intellectual, mental, and spiritual aspects of the students. Therefore, appreciation activities are forms of a sense-emotion learning which may become a source to develop the students' affective potential.

To implement fine art education optimally and meet the expected goals, an integrated approach that can provide a holistic understanding to the concepts or principles is badly needed. Barrett (1997) says that integrated capabilities among conceptual; operational; and synthetic; the field of arts and cross the field of arts need to be developed in the teaching of fine arts. Thus, the implementation of the integrated approach should be supported with a range of appropriate methods so that the students' understanding about fine arts can be achieved optimally.

C. An Assessment Strategy for Fine Art Works

The implementation of a culture-based learning in the teaching of fine arts requires a form of learning assessment. An assessment should not only be performed by giving a final test in the form of multiple choice and short essay but also in the form of fine art works such as paintings, statues, illustrations, designs, and

etc. In this case, the assessment can be traditional fine arts, contemporary fine arts, arts created by the students, a diary, scientific reports, and a clipping commented by the students. Moreover, the assessment can be jointly carried out i.e. the students themselves, students with their classmates and students with the teachers by referring to the criteria which had been developed in advance based on the learning stages, skills achievement, and artistic work assessment.

The assessment in the teaching of fine art should be able to suit with the characteristics of fine art itself. According to Goldberg (1997:164), the types of fine art assessments may include content and concept assessment, incidental assessment, and artistic assessment.

1. Content and Concept Assessment

The fine art works can serve as an evidence of an assessment on the students' understanding of the concepts in the fine art subjects. In this case, teachers can determine the extent to which students understand the concepts in certain subjects in the field of fine arts (painting, illustration, drawing, designing, and etc).

There are many ways to know the student's understanding which is expressed through their works. Observing their art works carefully will give many clues about how students conceptualize the theme and how far they try to elaborate by making the details in their works.

2. Incidental Assessment

Art activities can provide a better understanding about the intelligence and ability of the students. Incidental assessments occur when students show something through arts that lead to a better understanding about arts and general abilities. For example, when assessing the students' fine art works to ensure their understanding about the science concepts, teachers can understand the ability of the students in creating visual symbols, using materials and tools, as well as showing empathy for other living creatures.

3. Artistic Assessment

Artistic assessment is an assessment used to measure the student's ability in making various fine art works. The creation of fine arts is an expression of thoughts and feelings which are related to the highest cognitive level in Bloom's taxonomy, that is, creation. The creation in the field of art includes the development of concepts and its realization in the form of fine art works using art materials and tools. The conceptualization of fine art works involves the depiction or delivery of messages which requires not only literal but also aesthetic visual symbols. Thus, artistic assessments put emphasis on the students' ability in building and organizing the unity of aesthetic into the embodiment of the artistic fine artworks.

An assessment in the field of art education should develop students' real competencies objectively therefore it is necessary to consider some aspects related to the characteristics of the lessons. A fine art assessment includes three aspects; namely determining learning evidence; establishing assessment parameters; and developing strategies to gather assessment evidence such as through portfolio assessment, performance-based assessment, as well as listen and observe the students. Each aspect is presented below.

1. Determining Learning Evidence

Fine art may have a unique assessment since fine art can provide a proof in the form of fine artworks and learners' ideas attached to their works. When performing fine art activities, students use their ideas and create imagination (representation) to express their understanding. Fine art works are evidence that can be assessed and compared both individually and in group with other students.

2. Establishing Assessment Parameters

The planning of assessment content and concept must be linked with the standards of competence and teaching objectives. Moreover, assessment instruments must be contextualized with individual learners and the existing situation. The main priority of the assessment on the learners' understanding of the learning material is collecting evidence or data that can show the progress of the students. The next step is deciding how to interpret the evidence. For example, in drawing expressions, the

aspects to be considered may include (1) the extent to which students explore the ideas of creation, (2) the extent to which students use visual symbols, and (3) the extent to which learners successfully visualize their ideas by using media. In this case, the assessment focuses on the essence and details that appear in the students' art works rather than the beauty of the works.

3. Strategies to Gather Assessment Evidence

There are many strategies to gather the assessment evidence. They include:

a. Portfolio assessment

In making a portfolio, students and teachers can collect various students' fine art works and their reflection to assess the student's progress individually. If teachers want to quantify the portfolio data, they can make a rubric.

b. Performance-based Assessment

Performance-based assessment often involves an activity in which a student or groups of students show their performance so that teachers can assess what they have mastered.

c. Listen and observe the students

To assess the student's understanding, teachers may listen to the talks and actions performed by the students. The observation can be performed directly when the students are creating fine art works or indirectly through the art works they had made. The fine art works are observed in terms of the details and whether they are appropriate with their description or not. An assessment of the fine art works may not only illustrate the competence of learners about fine arts but also reveals the ability of other fields based on the theme given by the teachers.

D. Conclusion

In a culture-based learning, culture becomes a method for students to transform the results of their observations into creative works. Thus, a culture-based learning in the teaching of fine arts may drive the students not just to imitate or

receive any information but also create and understand meaning based on the information they get. Knowledge is not only a collection of other people's knowledge but also one's knowledge about thoughts, behavior, and feelings gained from the transformation of diverse information they obtain.

The result of assessment in the teaching of fine art should be able to suit with the characteristics of fine art itself. The strategies that can be employed include contents and concepts assessment, incidental assessment, and artistic assessment. Moreover, there are three assessment aspects that must be considered in the teaching of fine arts, namely determining learning evidence; establishing assessment parameters; and developing strategies to gather assessment evidence such as through portfolio assessment, performance-based assessment, as well as listen and observe the students. The implementation of a culture-based learning in the teaching of fine art requires various forms of learning assessment. An assessment should not only be performed by simply giving a final test in the form of multiple choice and short essay but also there are many forms of assessment that can be applied such as through paintings, statues, illustrations, designs, and etc. Also, the assessment can be jointly carried out by the students themselves, students with their classmates and students with their teachers using criteria which had been developed in advance based on the learning stages, skills achievement, and artistic works assessment.

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