

The use of Prater's Model: concrete solutions for Indonesian, Asian arts or others local content?

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Most of art lecturers were familiar with Feldman's art criticism model because its simplicity which only four phases; describe, analyze, interpret, and judge. Prater (2002) proposed six steps to analyze the art work; prepare to critique, examine literal qualities, examine functional qualities, examine the formal qualities, examine the expressive qualities, determine the relevant theories. In order to know the use of Prater's art criticism model, we investigated 140 students from Visual Communication Design, fifth semester, Tarumanegara University. The research used many Indonesian famous art paintings that vary from old master such as Affandi, Dullah, Basuki Abdullah, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad to recent artist such as Heri Dono, Djoko Pekik, etc. This research investigated students' responses to interpret many Indonesian Art Paintings and other Asian's work. We made a format out of Prater's art criticism model; hence, the format helped the lecturer during delivery materials, student assignments, feed backs and evaluation. By using Prater's criticism model, students chose and evaluated four paintings from one of the Indonesian best painters. The students had no difficulty interpreting Affandi, Basuki Abdullah and other Indonesian artists who used western painting techniques, western theories, and western criterias. In contrast, they found difficulty interpreting I Gusti Nyoman Lempad's and some traditional artists's work, who did not use western painting techniques, especially perspective drawing technique. I proposed to modify Prater's

art criticism model and integrate Space- Time- Plane Systems drawings into Prater's art criticism model. According to Tabrani, P (2005), Space-Time-Plane systems drawing was the technique, which were used by prehistoric-primitive-traditional-children, and some modern masters such as Picasso, Paul Klee, Affandi, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad, etc.

Key words : Prater art criticism, Feldman art criticism, Tabrani, art education.

Introduction

The formalist model of art criticism, introduced by Feldman (1967), was the most popular among art educators due to its simplicity. The model had only four phases; describe, analyze, interpret, judge which were easy for students to remember, making the model easy for them to use on their own. Feldman's art criticism model was a standard in art education in America. With minor modifications Mittler (2000) uses it in his *Art in Focus textbook series (2000)*. However, Prater proposed a few modifications to Feldman's formalist model that make it easier to used with a wide range of artwork. According to Prater, Feldman's art criticism model had principal weakness was how poorly it addressed the ceremonial and utilitarian artwork of non-Western cultures and utilitarian art forms. Ceremonial and utilitarian aspects of the object were not addressed by the original Feldman's method. African mask could be judged as a formal work of art because of apparent emphasis on composition. For an African native, the mask was important because of its role or function as a ceremonial object. This article examined the use of Prater's art criticism model to criticize Indonesian's paintings which range varies from traditional painting to modern methods. We proposed to modify Prater's art criticism model and integrate Space- Time- Plane Systems drawings into Prater's art criticism model. According to Tabrani, P (2005), Space-Time-Plane systems drawing was the technique which were used by prehistoric-primitive-traditional-children and some modern masters such as Picasso, Paul Klee, Affandi, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad etc.

Methods of research

The research started on September – December 2010 at Visual Communication Design, Tarumanagara University. The subjects of the research were one hundred and forty students in fifth semester. The fifth semester students were chosen to learn painting interpretations because the students had prior knowledge in arts appreciation. Survey research methods (Cresswell, 2008) were the main forms of inquiry used in this qualitative study. The survey research were designed to investigate: (a) the students' knowledge, values, beliefs, and assumptions at the end of the semester, (b) the students' meaning making processes in their reading of paintings; and (c) the factors that influenced the student's interpretations of painting images, (d) the implementation of Prater's criticism model in learning painting appreciation. In order to attain beliefs, knowledge, assumptions, and values of students, asking questions was the main form of inquiry in this study. Written questionnaires and oral questionnaires were used to gather in –depth data of students' learning on how to interpret paintings.

For written questionnaires, students chose one painter out of fifty three Indonesian painters who live in the twentieth century, for example, Affandi, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad, Agus Suwage, etc. The two questions were listed in the paintings were: (a) How do you criticize the paintings by using Prater's art criticism model?; (b) What are the shape, color and space perceptions of these paintings?

The research question of how effective Prater's art criticism model was implemented in Indonesian paintings. Before conducting survey methods, the steps of preparation learning materials became important.

Step 1 Prepare Learning materials

The learning materials were based on Indonesian History of paintings, and *Art and visual perception; a Psychology of the Creative Eye*. We chose fifty three Indonesian painters who had been living in twentieth century, for example, Affandi, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad, Agus Suwage, etc. Some of them such as I Gusti Nyoman Lempad and Ida Bagus Made used Bali's traditional painting tools and techniques.

Step 2 Deliver materials

The perception of shape, color and space from Rudolf Arnheim's book were given six times by one hour and thirty minutes each. After delivery Rudolf Arnheim's materials, student answered the questions what are the shape, color and space perceptions of these western paintings? Students explained the shape, color and space perceptions of four western painters such as Picasso, Van Gogh, Piet Mondrian, and Josef Albers.

Step 3 Prepare Painting assignments and discussion of Prater's art criticism model

After the students understood the shape, color and space of the western paintings; we arranged four time meetings to discuss how to use Prater's art criticism model. Each student chooses four paintings out of one Indonesian painter and fills the format of Prater's art criticism model. The format of Prater's art criticism model could be divided into six steps; prepare to Critique, examine literal qualities, examine Functional Qualities, Examine the Formal Qualities, Examine the Expressive Qualities, Determine Relevant Theories. The Prater's phases are as follows;

- 1) Prepare to Critique: Record the title, date, the artist's name and culture or geographical attribution if available. Describe the art objects in general term and distinguish the features. This includes a description of the imagery and its subject matter.

- 2) Examine Literal Qualities: List the way the students perceive the art objects seems to be accurate to its subject. Students' summaries by stating which of the literal and qualities appear to be the most important, and how important they are to overall art objects.
- 3) Examine Functional Qualities of the art object. Students list aspects of the object appearing to convey the potential of a practical or ceremonial purpose.
- 4) Examine the Formal Qualities of the art object. Students list the ways that the element of Art are being organized by use of the Principles of Design.
- 5) Examine the Expressive Qualities. Student list their emotive responses to the work in terms of what they feel and how the artwork express that.
- 6) Determine Relevant Theories. Student summaries the findings of the first four phases, determining which aesthetic theories are most relevant to the work (imitationalism, Functionalism, Formalism, Emotionalism).

Finding and Discussions

We chose one student AS (20 years old) out of one hundred and forty students who gave the highest scored in answering two questions. His answers to the questions of how the paintings were criticized by using Prater's art criticism model, can be summarized as follows;

Prepare to Critique

Title: Gugurnya Raja Watugunung (the death of King Watugunung). The date of the painting was not known. Medium: water color and Bali Ink. Paper size is 31 X 32 cm.

Literal qualities

The painting showed a devil that had animal forms, eight faces, feet, and a lot of hands. The devil fought with a holy person that possible was King of Watugunung. The king was holding weapon in his right hand. In the right above of the painting, a Goddess watched their activities. King of Watugunung's shape was the biggest among other subject matters. I Gusti Nyoman Lempad used only three colors: black, red, and brown. He used colour mostly in the face of his subject matters. The outlines of the paintings were bold and not the same as painting sketch. The painting showed the devil tried to defeat the King of Watugunung. I Gusti Nyoman Lempad used symbols to reveal the subject matters. The symbols were shown in the devil who had long canine teeth and animals feet. In contrast, he drew a holy symbol as a circle on the top of goddess head.

Functional Qualities

The painting was made to tell the Bali's myth

Formal Qualities

The paintings were predominantly illustration objects and arrangement of subject matters. There was no line which was usually found in other paintings. Lines elements were drawn in hands, feet, and curves of the devil. The color was not dominant and acted as supporting elements. The colour was not contrast and looked natural. The black was dominant colors and used as outlined. The composition of the painting was balanced and showed the role of the subject matter. The meaning of the painting was not difficult to be interpreted. The painting meant that the King of Watugunung was stepped down by the devil.

Imitationalisme- Although the King of Watugunung and devils became characters in the Bali Myths, but I had never seen King of Watugunung, devils, and goddess. However, I could say that I Gusti Nyoman Lempad imitated shape of human bodies in King of Watugunung, goddess, and devils.

Functionalism- I Gusti Nyoman Lempad had tried to expressed the stories with his own styles, but he did not intent for ceremonial.

Emotionalism -the paintings has not shown emotion.

Formalism- all the subjects and objects were clearly drawn into details. There were no abstract in the picture. This painting was not formalism.

The A answer to what the shape, color, and space perceptions of these paintings are being made.

The shape perceptions - in this painting, a variety of shapes were the King of Watugunung, devil, and goddess. The placement of the King was the closest to the viewers; therefore, the size of the King led to became the main subject matter of the paintings. The devil tried to wrestle the King to the ground become second subject matter. Moreover, the size of the goddess who was the smallest than the others became the third subject matter.

The space perception - The King of Watugunung was placed on the right side and the devils are behind the King. The Goddess has her own special space and seemed to be separated from the left sides of the picture. Although the depth of the picture did not follow the theory of perspective but the goddess who looked to the left side was in the back.

The color Perception - The most prominent color in the painting was the brownish black which was used as outlined. The brown color emphasized black and red color.

Most students answered that some Indonesian old painters did not use theory of perspectives. Moreover, the students discussed the used of perspectives, when they answered what the shape, color and space perceptions of these paintings are being made. The students did not

discuss the use of perspective in Prater's criticism model; therefore, I proposed to modify Prater's criticism Model and integrate Space- Time- Plane Systems drawings into Prater's criticism Model. According to Tabrani, P (2005) divided the drawing techniques into two categories, Space-Time-Plane and Naturalistic-Moment-Opname (*photographic shoot*). A Space-Time-Plane systems drawing was the technique which were used by prehistoric-primitive-traditional-children and some modern masters such as Picasso, Paul Klee, Affandi, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad etc. Naturalistic-Perspective-Moment-Opname (NPM) was the technique which was used after Massachio era. The NPM drawing systems resembles photographic systems which was introduced by Western. It captured nature as it was, drawn from one particular angle, one particular distance and one particular time, producing a descriptive picture in one single scene. The western paintings used only one view point and one moment which was similar to the way photographers took a picture. Tabrani said that most Asian paintings or Indonesian old paintings followed Space-Time-Plane, which means that the painters tried to tell stories with combining many different occurrences inside one picture. However, we thought that not all old painters told stories with many different occurrences inside one picture; for example, I Gusti Nyoman Lempad's work did not show many different occurrences inside one picture.

In answer to the first questions, most students did not explain much about traditional painting methods, the way looking at Indonesian traditional paintings and the way Indonesian painters told stories with paintings. Hence, we proposed to add the way of Indonesian painters told stories and traditional techniques in prepare to critique. We emphasize the way painter control the depth of the paintings by using perspective or other techniques in the Examine the Formal Qualities of the art object during the courses. Finally, our proposed model for Indonesian traditional painters will be as follows:

- 1) Prepare to Critique:
 - a) Describes the Indonesian's or Asian traditional methods of drawings.
 - b) The way of Indonesian painters or other Asian's artist tell stories. For e.g. Some Indonesian traditional painters painted many human activities inside one picture; however, the human activities times inside the picture are possibly not the same.
- 2) Examine Literal Qualities.
- 3) Examine Functional Qualities of the art object.
- 4) Examine the Formal Qualities of the art object. Besides examining the element and the Principles of Design, students emphasize the ways the painters control the depth of paintings whether or not they use perspective.
- 5) Examine the Expressive Qualities.
- 6) Determine Relevant Theories

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