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Questioning the artistic dissertation: Barthesian and Gamsonian analysis of art creation research in Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the dissertation manuscript of art creation in the Doctoral Program of Art Creation, Institut Seni Indonesia (ISI) Surakarta, with the aim of revealing the construction of meaning and the problems of its authorship. This study combines Roland Barthes' semiotic theory and William Gamson's media framing devices in an integrative manner. Gamson's framing devices—including metaphors, slogans, exemplars, depictions, and visual images—are used to identify the dominant representational elements in the manuscript. Furthermore, Barthes' semiotic approach is applied to analyze the denotative and connotative meanings of these elements. The results of the study identified two main categories of meaning in the dissertation: reflective and substantial meaning. On the other hand, the study of the authorship problems found two main issues, namely the positioning strategy of the Nusantara Aesthetic concept as a strengthening of institutional identity, and the formatology of authorship that shows the tension between academic conventions and creative expression. This study concludes that the level of epistemological awareness of the author affects the scientific quality of the dissertation, and confirms that the dissertation of art creation has an inherent contribution to the artwork itself. These findings provide a basis for reformulating the role and function of artistic dissertations in the context of higher arts education in Indonesia.



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1. Introduction

The Postgraduate Art Creation Program at art colleges encourages artists' creativity to become more formal and institutionalized. This institutionalization shifts the tradition of art from organic intellectual practice in a non-scientific society to a more structural campus intellectual. One important stage in this academic tradition is the writing of scientific literacy in the form of an art creation dissertation, especially at the doctoral level (S3). The dissertation functions as a reflective medium and theoretical articulation of the process of creating a work, as well as being an artist's intellectual contribution to his or her art discipline. However, the status of a dissertation as intellectual property demands a clear conceptual formulation regarding the relationship between academic texts and artworks as complementary entities. Given that the character of art creation is often experimental, intuitive, and cross-disciplinary, a more open epistemological approach is needed. Therefore, dissertation literacy must be able to describe the process to the production of the work scientifically and comprehensively. In other words, artists with doctoral degrees are required to master artistic competence with artistic skills and understanding that are scholarly in nature. This is in accordance with the Indonesian National Qualification Framework (KKNI) as stated in Presidential Regulation Number 8 of

2012. The regulation states that doctoral education is at level 9. Level 9, among other things, states that (S3 graduates) must be able to develop new knowledge, technology, and/or art in their scientific fields or professional practices through research to produce creative, original and tested works. Another problem is that there is no reference used to assess the weight of the dissertation writing manuscript on art creation. In foreign campuses that have doctoral programs in creation, it is said that they do not have references. At the University of Queensland, Australia, for example, to pass the final assignment a doctoral candidate for art must create a paper called a "Critical Commentary" of at least 20,000 words. The Critical Commentary contains the creative process, aesthetic context, and must explain how the work created contributes to science. For the postgraduate lecturer at ISI Surakarta, Bambang Sunarto, said the Critical Commentary requirement is not just "should be a minimum of 20,000 words", but also "should be scholarly in character!" [1, pp. 127–136].

The dissertation manuscript on art creation is an autonomous literary entity, so it can be appreciated separately from the artwork created. This dissertation reflects deep academic consistency, while explaining the essential relationship between the artwork performed and the written one. Thus, the dissertation on art creation becomes a reflection of the comprehensive intelligence of its creator, which is important in the context of academic writing. This problem encourages a study of the meaning and epistemological issues in the dissertation on art creation in the Postgraduate Program of ISI Surakarta. This epistemological crisis shows that the discipline of art creation has not been fully supported by established and accommodating academic tools. Sunarto stated that art creation has similarities with other disciplines, and a doctoral degree can be achieved by creators who are able to think academically and offer new paradigms of creation critically [2]. This confirms that art creation has an equal position with scientific research. The dissertation manuscript on art creation must reflect the values of the artwork produced while also meeting the requirements as an academic text. As a scientific manuscript, the dissertation must contain propositions in the form of principles, concepts, rules, or theories related to the creation process. The formulation of these propositions is similar to the approach in science, namely through logic and reasoning that support pragmatic arguments and the artistic goals of the creator. Thus, the dissertation helps ensure the accuracy of the values used in the artistic process [2]. In this context, a dissertation can be likened to a "performance of words," with its structure reflecting the form of the performance, and its readers as the audience. This requirement has become the standard in the Postgraduate Art Creation Doctoral Program at ISI Surakarta. The doctoral artists born from this process are intellectuals on par with doctors in other fields of science. However, the status of the dissertation as an academic instrument still leaves interesting issues to be studied further.

The term "*pertunjukan kata-kata*" is then not just an analogy, but a discourse that wants to say that the writing of a dissertation on art creation—which is parallel to the artwork being performed—must be consistent in applying its scientific study. It must refer to scientific principles, use selected reasoning and focus on arguments that underlie pragmatic issues in the creation of works of art as well as arguments for developing its artistic goals. These epistemological aspects must be reflected in the writing system and format provided by the art creation study program institution. Epistemological problems in writing a dissertation on art creation arise when knowledge is limited to the formalistic academic dimension without paying attention to the reflective expression typical of art. In the Postgraduate Program of ISI Surakarta, the concept of Nusantara Aesthetics is an institutional characteristic for building a scientific identity based on local values. However, this approach poses a challenge because student creativity must be adjusted to a highly structured format, creating tension between artistic freedom and academic obligations. The technical guidelines for writing a dissertation only regulate technical aspects, not the substance of the work, but its systematic nature can limit the writing style [3]. The rigid formal and stylistic format makes the writer focus more on structure than style [4], so that the direction of the dissertation is easy to predict. Similarities in themes also arise due to the lack of development of student creativity in responding to institutional positions, so that creativity is often constrained by formal rules.

A dissertation manuscript on the creation of performing arts is not a copy of the reality of The dissertation manuscript on the creation of performing arts is not a direct copy of the reality

of the performance staged by its author, but rather a construction of that reality. Each audience can construct the meaning of the same artistic event differently, as can the author of the dissertation. The reality of art is not simply written factually, but is the result of interaction between the author and the artwork he created [5]. To understand this manuscript, the researcher uses the analysis of dualism framing and the constructivism paradigm as an initial approach. Furthermore, Roland Barthes' semiotic analysis is applied to give critical and objective meaning to the dissertation text. Barthes' focus on the concept of "Death of the Author" [6] emphasizes that the text is no longer controlled by the author's authority in determining the final meaning. After reaching the reader, the text becomes a space free of signs that are free from the control of its creator. St. Sunardi explains that with the death of the author, the text "explodes" and "spreads" so that authority shifts to the text itself and the reader who functions as a unifying space for meaning. The reader is not a particular persona, but an impersonal entity that replaces the author's position in the process of meaning, making the text a dynamic and open arena for playing signs [7].

The death of the author is the right momentum to study the dissertation manuscript objectively, eliminating bias from the author's intent [8]. Tracing the dissertation text means tracing the textual truth of the work created, by uniting the signs in the text as a whole. The Bartsian semiotic approach is used to elaborate critical meaning academically, not only in terms of writing, but also holistic intelligence in the creation of the work. Academic consistency is important to assess whether the dissertation can reflect the quality of performing arts while standing as an independent text. The dissertation reflects the value of the artist's expertise and experience in seeing the sacred reality of art. This is determined by the artist's psychomotor, intellectual, affective, and spiritual intelligence. Spiritual intelligence, which is related to transcendental values and practices, is often part of traditional practice. Fulfilled academic consistency shows sacred works and writings, spreading joy to the creator and its audience. To examine practical issues and writing techniques, academic writing rules combined with creative writing rules are considered appropriate. The study uses Oida's body theory [9] and ethnographic writing style to analyze the form and style of the dissertation text creation. The main contribution of this research lies in the holistic approach that integrates epistemological, technical, and cultural aspects in the analysis of art creation dissertations, which previously received less in-depth attention.

2. Method

The dissertation on performing arts creation contains important issues in an academic context. This study highlights three main aspects. (1) the dissertation is understood as a companion text to a work that forms meaning through its structure, content, and distinctive style, as in artistic literacy and creative reflection; (2) the dissertation is an intellectual articulation of a complex creative process, including the exploration of ideas to the representation of aesthetic experience; (3) the dissertation remains intertextually and performatively related to the artwork it represents. To obtain holistic and comprehensive information, researchers studied dissertation manuscripts on performing arts creation representing the fields of music, dance, and theater, limited to works that had been graduated up to 2016. The manuscripts studied included *Hutan Pasir Sunyi*, *Garak Nagari Perempuan*, *Cahaya Garih*, *Ghamuhyi*, *Legong Tombol*, *Wayang Boneka*, *Rumah Dalam Diri*, *Teater Tutar PMTOH*, dan *Harkat Bunyi Alam Mangrove*. Complementary data were obtained from performance documents, articles, and interviews with related parties at ISI Surakarta. Primary data collection was conducted through the acceptance of the dissertation manuscript on the creation of the specified performing arts. The researcher also conducted historical research on the production of the manuscript by analyzing the text and the context of its composition using Barthesian hermeneutic framework [10]. This approach aims to trace the understanding of the events during the preparation of the dissertation, not just to find the meaning intended by the author. In-depth reading was used to reveal the background of the work, including the role of the Promoter and Co-Promoter, and the author's way of translating performing arts into written form. Based on Gamson's framing theory [11], the data in this study are divided into five groups. (1) metaphor data, namely metaphorical words or sentences in the dissertation; (2)

catchphrases, in the form of interesting and contrasting phrases in discourse; (3) exemplars, namely data that link points of view with concrete examples. (4) depiction, namely descriptions of connotative issues. (5) visual images, in the form of pictures, graphs, or supporting images. Data from the first to fourth groups were obtained through a thorough reading of the dissertation text, observing idioms, vocabulary, and paragraph structure. Visual data was traced through all image elements in the manuscript and validated with performance videos and other supporting documents.

Data processing begins with the preparation of a synopsis, which contains a summary of the core of each case dissertation to provide an overview. In addition, the researcher determines the components used to group the meaning in the dissertation. These components are divided into two categories: (1) reflective, namely a dissertation with dominant, organized, communicative, and clear information; and (2) substantive, namely a dissertation that emphasizes the essential aspects of performing arts, so that it is considered a substantial and meaningful work. This study aims to answer three main questions: (1) the meaning of the dissertation text, (2) the problems that arise in the text, and (3) the intensity of the author's academic consistency. The researcher bases the analysis on three assumptions. First, the meaning of the dissertation is divided into two categories: reflective and substantial. Second, the problems of the dissertation include the conflict between the administrative rules of the institution and the creativity of the students, as well as the issue of ethnographic approaches. Third, academic consistency is characterized by four intelligences: cognitive, psychomotor, affective, and spiritual. To find out the value or meaning of the written material, the researcher started by borrowing the theory of framing analysis which is commonly applied in the world of mass communication media [12]. In this context, the researcher analogizes the dissertation manuscript of art creation as similar to the manuscript in the mass media. Media framing analysis is known as the concept of frames [13]. Therefore, the use of framing theory in this study is more used in practical interests, namely to "frame" the research dissertation manuscript so that the scope of what will be studied is not too broad. To be more relational and operative, this study uses William A. Gamson's media framing theory model as a way to frame it [14]. This analysis starts from the concept of an organized central idea that can be analyzed through two derivatives, namely the framing device [15] and reasoning device [16]. However, because this research only requires selected data, only the framing device is used, namely *Metaphors* [17], *Catchphrases* [18], *Exemplar* [19], *Depiction* [20] dan *Visual Images* [21]. Framing theory is used to assess how performing arts information is constructed in a dissertation on art creation: whether the author experiences ideological struggles as an artist and doctoral student, or simply describes his/her creative process. This framing analysis also applies a constructionist paradigm, which views the dissertation text not as a natural reality, but as the result of the author's construction. The focus of constructionist analysis is to reveal how the reality of the text is formed and through what means the construction is realized [22], Fig. 1 is research method flowchart.

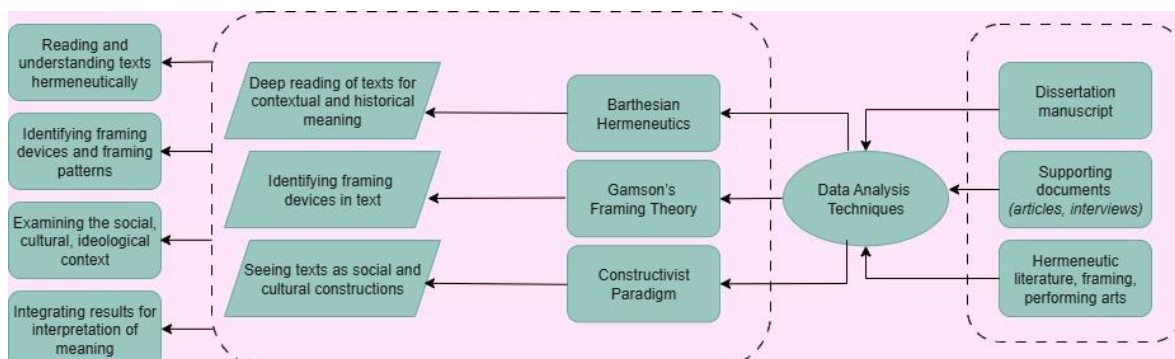


Fig. 1. Research Method Flowchart

3. Results and Discussion

3.1. Production of Meaning in Dissertation Texts

Based on the framing analysis carried out, the production of meaning in the research dissertation manuscripts can be grouped into two categories of meaning, namely reflective dissertations and substantial dissertations.

3.1.1. Reflective Dissertation

In the context of reflective thinking, this diction can be defined as an intelligence that is able to connect knowledge and practice obtained with previous practical knowledge and experience to obtain a conclusion or action that can be used to solve new problems. Thus, reflective assumes something that already exists, *manjing* or is in the body (embodiment), both in thought and practical actions of life, to then be presented in new actions in solving problems. Yoshi Oida said that an actor does not need to be a theoretician, but learns through the body, because in the body there are all sources of knowledge and life practices [23, p. xi], see Fig. 2.

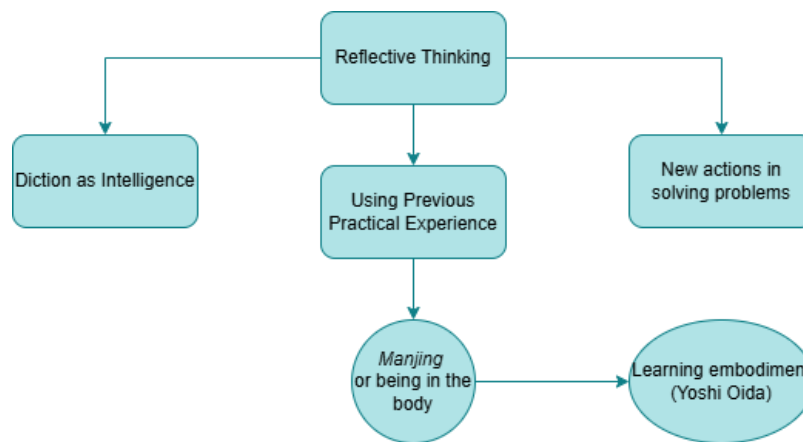


Fig. 2. Reflective representation in art practice

In the context of writing a dissertation, reflective means that the artist uses his/her bodily experience, such as Kamarulzaman's term of '*hidup dalam lumpur*', to deeply understand the practice of creating artworks. With this understanding, dissertations such as *Hutan Pasir Sunyi*, *Ghamuhyi*, *Rumah Dalam Diri*, and *Teater Tuter PMTOH* were written reflectively by their authors. This can be seen from their ability to narrate their knowledge and practical experience in the field of art into the dissertation manuscript. Framing analysis shows that the dissertation effectively expresses themes, ideas, steps of creation, and forms of presentation with elegant writing techniques. They use effective metaphorical sentences and assumptions, interesting phrases, comprehensive presentation techniques with examples and theoretical descriptions, and describe connotative issues appropriately. In addition, the dissertation also utilizes visual images such as pictures, photos, and graphics appropriately to strengthen the message conveyed.

Dissertation manuscripts in the reflective category show a tendency to use a more expressive writing style, which can be associated with the practice of creative academic writing. The characteristics of this style are reflected in the flowing sentence structure, aesthetic choice of diction, and the use of contextual metaphors. For example, titles such as *Hutan Pasir Sunyi* and *Teater Dalam Diri* show the author's efforts to articulate artistic experiences through symbolic and reflective language. This approach is in line with the view that academic writing in the arts does not have to be completely subordinated to a formal expository style, but can combine creative expressions that function as rhetorical and epistemological devices. However, to assess the extent to which this style contributes to the scientific quality of the dissertation, an evaluation framework is needed that considers the integration between the form of expression and the depth of conceptual reflection it contains. Creative writing is almost always associated with the world of fiction: the unreal, imaginary, subjective, and not really happening. This

writing style is identical to fictional scripts such as novels, short stories, and poetry, so it is often referred to as a literary writing style (Pranoto, www.rayakultura.net May 22, 2017). This means that the authors here have the courage to dismantle the rules of formal scientific writing as required in the form of academic writing. In this study, the writing of factual issues with this literary writing technique can be found, for example in the writing of the chapter subtitles, "Senandung Ladang" and the subtitle "*Hutan Meraung*" in the manuscript *Hutan Pasir Sunyi* [24, p. 85]. In the context of art writing, according to researchers, the technique or style of creative writing is something that should be used by creators. This is because the form and expression of artwork are often not sufficiently narrated in standard and formal language expressions. On the other hand, this writing style makes the script more interesting to be read by the wider community. Moreover, is it a fact if in reality it presents subjective imagination? Meanwhile, is what is called fiction completely imaginative and subjective, when, for example, many works by novelists and poets are found which are actually reflections of the struggles and social experiences of the creators, as is often found in the socialist realism novels written by Pramoedya Ananta Toer?

3.1.2. Substantial Dissertation

Substantial means the core or the real thing. A substantial dissertation must be able to show the main elements of the artwork created with a focus on the main issue. Therefore, this dissertation must be strong and broad in conveying the main message of the elements of artistic creation. The writing technique that explains the main issue must be complete and convincing, while the use of visual language is also important to verify the message in the manuscript [25]. Dissertations such as *Garak Nagari Perempuan*, *Wayang Boneka Wong Agung Jayengrana*, *Harkat Bunyi Alam Mangrove*, *Cahaya Garih*, and *Legong Tombol* are included in the substantial category because they have the strength and completeness of detailed information that shows the author's good literacy. The choice not to use many metaphors or poetic language avoids bias in meaning, so that the writing of the dissertation is in accordance with academic rules that use formal language and academic terms, as required in scientific writing style. (www.rayakultura.net, 22 May 2017).

3.2. Academic Problems and Consistency

3.2.1. Performance of Words: Epistemology of Art Creation

The dissertation manuscript on art creation is analogous to a stage of "Word Performance", namely a text that reflects or describes a performance construction, the entire contents of which are a representation of the artwork presented by the promovendus in the Final Assignment Examination stage. If we borrow a term from the theater treasury, it is a kind of dramaturgical text composed by the creator as part of an instrument that is jointly accounted for in the final assignment creation work. In the world of theater, dramaturgy is structure, while what is displayed on the stage is texture. Structure is everything contained in the script, while texture appears when the script is acted or performed [26]. In reviewing the dissertation manuscripts on art creation, the discussion of 'structure' becomes very important, especially to understand the problems of compiling the manuscript. Umberto Eco stated that in writing a thesis, students must be able to organize ideas, data, work using methods, and build an 'object' that is in principle useful for others [27]. Organizing ideas in the context of studying dissertation manuscripts on art creation is how the author is able to formulate ideas for his/her creations, in the construction of a dissertation manuscript carefully. The author is not only able to narrate his/her ideas aurally (hearing experience), but is also capable of constructing language or written sentences, so that the ideas are formulated clearly. As the creator of his/her own creations, the author should not have a problem with his/her writing work, because he/she has done what Eco said: "You should write a thesis that you can write." [27]. Thus, the theme or topic taken by the artist actually reflects his/her artistic studies and experiences. Because the topic written is related to the entire process of the artist's creation, related to his/her artistic research during the creation process, also based on the general socio-cultural experience, religiosity, and political experience of the artist. With all of these experiences and knowledge, the topic can be described clearly.

By writing their own creations, artists can access and organize reference sources more easily, because they have sufficient skills, experience, and knowledge to understand them. Writing themselves also makes it easier for artists to apply methods and steps of creation, because they

are experienced in using the methods that will be operationalized in their works. This approach makes artworks equal to scientific research, where the processes of creation and writing are epistemologically interrelated. The resulting artwork is equivalent to text-based art discourse, such as a dissertation that tells the journey of creation and the value of the artwork. Therefore, "*Pertuntungan Kata-kata*" is not just an analogy, but a discourse that emphasizes that writing an art dissertation must follow the rules of scientific knowledge. The dissertation manuscripts studied generally meet scientific principles in terms of process and reporting, as seen from the systematic writing format like scientific works in other disciplines. This scientific argument is reflected in the chapters that describe the themes, ideas, creation procedures, techniques, and translation of works to the performance stage. The dissertation presents the epistemological practice of art creation through scientific procedures, although the translation of epistemological aspects is often limited to formalistic writing systems.

3.2.2. Manuscript Formatology: Academic Writing and/or Creative Writing?

The format for writing a dissertation manuscript for art creation at the ISI Surakarta postgraduate program has been determined in the Technical Guidelines for Writing a Dissertation for Art Creation book published by the ISI Surakarta Postgraduate Program. The format regulated in the guideline becomes an instrument for the operation of the regime. Two important problems were found related to this, namely: First, the format template gives the impression that the author will only fill in the points available in the standardized manuscript systematics. Second, related to the writing style technique, there is a tug of war between the academic writing approach and creative writing.

- **Rigidity of Academic Writing:** Academic writing is always associated with scientific and factual aspects, used to compile formal reports in educational institutions. Its characteristics include the use of facts, academic objectives, research support, references, formal language, footnotes, bibliographies, appendices, and indexes. This academic writing often conflicts with creative writing, so that dissertation writers are less free to express their literal language style. Examples can be seen in dissertations such as *Cahaya Garih Tangan Sako Bajawek Aubade Hoerijah Adam*, *Wayang Boneka Wong Agung Jayengrana*, and *Re-Interpretasi Legong Tombol di Desa Banyuwatis*. However, several dissertations such as *Hutan Pasir Sunyi*, *Ghamuhyi*, *Rumah Dalam Diri*, *Harkat Bunyi Alam Magrove*, and *Teater Tuter PMTOH* try to get out of the rigidity of formal language by applying a creative writing style, using metaphors, associative diction, symbols, and interesting phrases that give a different color from standard academic language.
- **Fluidity of Creative Writing:** Creative writing style is the process of writing with an artistic spirit without reducing objective facts as material. This style makes the manuscript more interesting and provides space for the writer's imagination so that productivity increases. Examples can be seen in the dissertations *Hutan Pasir Sunyi*, *Ghamuhyi*, *Teater Dalam Diri*, and *Teater Tuter Adanan PMTOH*, which use associative metaphorical and idiomatic sentences. Although some metaphors seem old-fashioned, their use gives a unique color to scientific work. The ethnographic approach that supports creative writing is less accommodated in academic guidelines, even though it is very relevant for art creation dissertations. According to John Jacobs (York University), doctoral students must be able to describe creative work and their training reflectively without being bound by formal systematics, giving freedom of writing forms and techniques. For example, *Wayang Boneka Jayengrana* and *Hutan Pasir Sunyi* add special chapters on artistic journeys and profiles, which are not in the guidelines, as a form of creative narrative freedom.

3.2.3. Nusantara Aesthetics versus Student Creativity

The ISI Surakarta postgraduate doctoral program establishes an art education positioning that is oriented towards the concept of aesthetics based on Nusantara traditional art. The rationale for this positioning, as stated in the Academic Manuscript document proposing the ISI Surakarta Postgraduate Doctoral Program (page 1), is a continuation of the ideals of the founding fathers of this institution since the Indonesian Karawitan Art Academy (1964-1992), then became the Indonesian College of the Arts (1992-2006), and finally became the Surakarta Indonesian Art Institute (2006 to present). With Nusantara cultural arts as the conceptual basis

for the creation of 'new' art, ISI Surakarta—including its Postgraduate Program—has a unique academic characteristic, thus occupying a different position from other universities. In addition, by directing their students to explain the concepts contained in Nusantara cultural art works, they have indirectly taken a role in maintaining and celebrating the arts that have led this nation to become a nation that holds the title of Nation of the High Culture. One of the members of the founding team of the ISI Surakarta Postgraduate Program, Rustopo, said that Nusantara cultural art was determined as the basis for study because its existence was marginalized by the increasingly global progress of science and technology. The existence of Nusantara art as a cultural product in Indonesia has not received adequate attention from its own society, so that research or scientific studies on Nusantara art are mostly carried out by researchers or scholars from the West who have previously mastered the tools for research.

The impact is that society tends to understand its own Nusantara art precisely from or based on the representation of Western scholars. By placing Nusantara art and culture as the basis for creating student artwork, it has implications for the direction of curriculum policy based on concepts, forms, and artistic expressions in the Nusantara cultural area. This positioning contains a message that the limitations of the cultural area demand students' creative intelligence in creating works. Nusantara art and culture must be an exciting charm for students to explore inspiration when they want to create works. The composers of the past passed on the passion for creating 'new traditional music' to their students. The artists who graduated from the ISI Surakarta Postgraduate Program above have shown that making Nusantara traditional art as the basis for work is a necessity that produces brilliant works. They are great not only because of the works of student assignments, but also the works created after graduating and entering the art world outside the campus. On the other hand, if the policy of Nusantara traditional art as the basis for creating works is not placed as something important to spark creativity. Students are actually less able to develop concepts, themes, even forms or artistic structures, so that students are trapped in themes, concepts, and work approaches that have similarities. This was found in eight research dissertation manuscripts, where the similarities in themes can be grouped into three categories, namely: (1) Ecosystem theme; (2) Revitalization theme; (3) Historical or artist biography theme.

- **Natural Ecosystem Theme:** The theme of natural ecosystems and environmental damage is the focus of the works *Hutan Pasir Sunyi* and *Harkat Bunyi Alam Mangrove*, which raise the issue of ecology in the archipelago. *Hutan Pasir Sunyi* highlights environmental damage in the Dayak Kenyah community, East Kalimantan, due to forest encroachment by logging companies that ignore sustainability. In fact, the Dayak community's shifting cultivation tradition actually maintains the fertility of the forest. This work was performed in a contemporary manner at the Bogor Botanical Gardens, combining elements of Dayak dance, music, and poetry as well as the daily activities of its people. Meanwhile, *Harkat Bunyi Alam Mangrove* focuses on the destruction of mangrove forests in Benoa Bay, Bali, inviting the community to establish a harmonious relationship with the environment based on the concept of *Tri Hita Karana*. The sounds of the mangrove nature are arranged in a symbolic soundscape composition, linking humans, God, and nature. Other works such as *Plastic Forest*, *Meta Ecology*, *Soloensis*, and *Black Man* also raise the theme of ecology, especially damage due to industrialization in Kalimantan. Ecological-based artworks are now considered less meaningful without strong literacy and performance practices as part of environmental revitalization efforts.
- **Revitalization Theme:** The theme of revitalization is often an important issue for student artists in their creative works, especially in dissertations such as *Legong Tombol*, *Ghamuhyi*, *Teater Tutar PMTOH*, and *Teater Boneka Wong Agung Jayengrana*. In *Ghamuhyi*, this theme focuses on strengthening Ghazal music in Johor, Malaysia, which was previously a traditional love poem that developed into popular music art. GMJ traditional music began to be replaced by Western pop music, so composers combined old and new idioms by including divine values. In *Teater Tutar PMTOH*, revitalization attempts to strengthen the form of performance with a new interpretation of the expressions, characters, and language of the Dangderia speech theater dialogue, which originated from Aceh. The creators enrich the performance by involving supporting actors and the community for direct interaction, creating a new idiom that reflects the

values of the Acehnese people. Meanwhile, Teater Boneka Wong Agung Jayengrana raises the revitalization of wayang golek in Yogyakarta by rearranging conventional performances. The creators change the form of the puppet, story structure, music, stage, and duration, even using several puppeteers in the performance. This project resulted in a renewed presentation of wayang golek, strengthening the existence of traditional art through creative innovation.

- **Historical Theme or Artist Biography:** The theme of history and artist biography is the focus of Cahayo Garih's dissertation, which describes the life and artistic thoughts of Hoerijah Adam and her mother, Zuniar, figures of Minangkabau art and culture, West Sumatra. The artist is motivated to pass on the spirit of both of them and their creative legacy to the next generation. Cahayo Garih's dance work is based on Minangkabau aesthetic norms and customs based on sharia and the Book of Allah. This dissertation weaves together the history of Hoerijah's thoughts, depicting her struggles in facing domestic and societal conflicts related to the position of women. Meanwhile, Zuniar is depicted as an ideal woman who obeys the rules even though she opposes them. Through this dance work, the artist conveys a message about the strength of Minangkabau women in artistic and social life. However, the similarity of themes and aesthetics without a new ideology of creation can reduce the weight of the work's novelty. In addition, the dominance of the promoter's thoughts, as in the work guided by Prof. Sardono W. Kusumo, also influences the concept, ideas, and expression of the work, showing the hegemony of ideas in the process of creating art.

3.2.4. Ethnography and the Author's Body

If we borrow Geertz, the author of a dissertation is like a researcher who has the capacity as an ethnographer. As an ethnographer in the field, the author conducts research, exploration, experimentation followed by the production of themes, ideas, concepts of work, steps of creation, to the process of practice to realize his work. Meanwhile, as a dissertation author, the author is like an ethnographer who uses scientific research strategies to study and explore material and spiritual culture obtained in the field; collects empirical data about the object of his work through participant observation in order to be able to explain the object of the work he is working on. As a researcher in the field, the author of a dissertation on art creation is the person who knows best about the ethnographic phenomena he is exploring. As someone who is "really there" he will be able to convince that what is said through the dissertation manuscript is the result of real research on other forms of life. Ethnographic uniqueness greatly determines the beauty of ethnographic writing [28, p. 5]. Explanation using ethnographic writing techniques is difficult for writers who do not have a 'writer's body' as stated in Oida's embodiment theory. This means that the artist will have difficulty reflecting on their knowledge and practical artistic experience if they do not have the capacity of an ethnographer who is able to explain what has been absorbed into their artistic body.

On the other hand, Oida's statement about the theory of embodiment is also more meaningful when compared to the world of writing dissertation manuscripts on art creation. Embodiment raises awareness of the writer's bodily capacity when creating their manuscript. Writing art manuscripts should be fluid, communicative, and beautiful to read. Not formal and rigid texts, which close off the space for wild imagination for their readers. Without the beauty of writing techniques and styles, a dissertation manuscript becomes merely a verbal text that functions as a complement to the artwork created and is difficult to become an interesting independent text to read, outside of the actual facts of the performance. The dissertation manuscript must become a kind of dramaturgy that becomes the basic structure of art creation, which determines the good and bad of the artwork performed. That is the significance of the phrase "performance of words" to associate that the dissertation manuscript of art creation is another stage, outside the real stage. Namely, a performance stage with the medium of words. With this meaning, the dissertation of art creation becomes an important reference for the world of creation and even art studies. Its position will be increasingly strong as the intellectual property of the artist. Not just a complement to student graduation.

3.3. Academic Consistency of Tineliti Dissertation Manuscripts

Observing the script is to perceive what is shown on stage. If we return to the analogy with the world of theater, a dissertation of an artwork is a dramaturgy that is in the realm of "structure" in an artwork. While what is shown is the "texture" that is in the outer structure or front room. Thus, the energy that appears in the performance on stage is also the emergence of text vibrations that become addictive for readers of the dissertation script. In other words, academic consistency through the dissertation text is an *elan vital* that is integral to the power of the performance. As a vital driving force, academic consistency can build the "spirit" or "soul" of the performance. Plato defines the soul as something that is invisible but is the real world. Its nature is eternal. The soul plays a role in regulating rational actions to control human desires or passions. For Plato, humans have three important elements in the human soul, namely: (1) the ability to use language and think; (2) elements of the body or body in the form of physical lust, desire, and needs; (3) spiritual elements in the form of emotions, honor, pride, and ambition [29, pp. 73–74]. If we look closely at the content of the dissertation which contains a comprehensive 'inner structure' of the text, it can be said that the dissertation on art creation is a manifestation of the soul of the artwork. It is a reflection of the sacred and sublime reality of the artwork that was created. With such understanding and awareness, the *elan vital* that forms the soul of the performance is certainly present in the dissertation manuscript that accompanies the artwork. Therefore, in terms of academic consistency, the energy that becomes the *elan vital* should be achieved through the artist's ability to process all of his/her competencies and intelligence, both in terms of mind, body, emotions, and spirituality. Academic consistency is a manifestation of all of the intelligence values above. Academic consistency makes an artwork sacred, because academic consistency will become the *elan vital* that maintains and cares for all elements of the artist's soul. Therefore, in order to be sacred, the dissertation on art creation must reflect the values of the entire creative process that is based on the aspects of intelligence mentioned above. As a work that reflects the entire process of creating art, the dissertation manuscript on art creation can be placed as an independent text, namely a text that can be read as an independent work without having to see the work presented during the final exam. Because, as previously explained, a dissertation on art creation is another form of art work that is presented in the final exam stage.

The dissertation manuscript on art creation may be written after the work is created, but it is not just a tool for explanation or partial information. The dissertation must be the author's reflection on the entire process of art creation, reflecting the author's soul and literacy. This study found that most dissertations excel in cognitive and affective aspects, but lack in spiritual aspects and technical skills. GhaMuhyi's dissertation was considered strong in cognitive, affective, and technical writing. This assessment is subjective, but the meaning remains valid as long as it uses a comprehensive interpretation procedure. The strengthening facts obtained from the process of interpreting the framework of GhaMuhyi's manuscript are:

- First, the dissertation shows a new finding in the form of the concept of 'musical numeric', namely the integration of the value of tauhid in the hybrid structure of Ghamuhyi's music. This concept combines the chromatic tone system of Western music with the Arabic hijaiyah letters in the Qur'an. The author not only combines musical materials, but also relates the intrinsic aspects of music with the extra-musical context relationally. He understands that the intrinsic and extrinsic aspects in music creation are not separated, but overlap. The structure of Ghamuhyi's music is closely integrated with the culture and religion of the Malay people of Johor, Malaysia, which is the basis of Ghazal music.
- Second, GhaMuhyi's dissertation stands out in terms of technique and writing style with the creative use of metaphorical language that is appropriate and effective in an academic context. The author's writing skills reflect a deep intelligence and soul, making this script full of 'spirit' that is able to reflect the spirit of the performance into words. In addition to designing musical ideas, the author is also adept at intelligently composing the 'inner structure' of the work. The language techniques in the script not only convey messages, but create sublime values that free meaning from conceptualization, according to Deleuze's concept. This dissertation invites readers to get out of the conceptual and representational paradigms in aesthetics, through the defamiliarization of artistic

construction. The success of this work lies in the ability to capture the existence of art directly without turning it into an object, as explained in Deleuze's logic of sensation, namely capturing the essence without distorting verbal or sociocultural meaning.

4. Conclusion

This study categorizes art creation dissertation manuscripts into two main approaches: reflective and substantial. The reflective approach emphasizes personal exploration and creative body experience reflected in conceptual narratives, metaphorical language, and flexible structures. Meanwhile, the substantial approach emphasizes the systematic presentation of creative elements, artistic contexts, and aesthetic contributions of works to the development of art. These categories are determined through structural and semiotic analysis of the form and focus of the dissertation. Both approaches demonstrate epistemological challenges, especially in balancing freedom of expression and academic demands. The ISI Surakarta policy that emphasizes Nusantara Aesthetics demands a flexible approach so as not to limit the diversity of student expression, while rigid formal writing guidelines have the potential to hinder creative styles, especially in practice-based or ethnographic dissertations. In terms of academic consistency, dissertations that are able to integrate cognitive, affective, and practical dimensions produce complete and reflective scientific narratives, such as in GhaMuhyi's work. This study contributes to the evaluation framework and guidelines for writing art creation dissertations that are more adaptive and in accordance with the characteristics of art in Indonesia.

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