



ARTISTIC LITERACY IN THE PARADIGMS OF TEACHING FINE ARTS

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Abstract

Purpose of the study: The article discusses some aspects of the professional development of the artist in the context of changes occurring in the modern domestic system of higher education. The authors conducted research aimed at studying the phenomenon of the artist's personality and related features of students' search for their own trajectory of education.

Methodology: The literature review of works describing the life and work of artists, essays on the history of art has been conducted.

Main Findings: As a result of the study, the criteria for evaluating the level of artistic literacy of students before and after passing elective courses were identified. In the course of the experiment was the evaluation of the creative works of students, performing tests and surveys. Quality indicators have significantly improved as a result of the experiment. The level of motivation of students has increased significantly.

Applications of this study: The main conclusion of the experimental classes was to prove the relevance and importance of studying the basics of artistic literacy for the successful education of an artist of any specialization. The results of this study will serve as a basis for continuing research in this area of art education. The experience described in the article can serve as a prototype for higher school art pedagogy.

Novelty/Originality of this study: Comparison of the results of experimental and control groups showed a significant increase in quality indicators. During the experiment, several points were identified that determine the prospects for further research on the introduction into the educational process of topical issues included in the conditional representation of the structure of the concepts of artistic literacy.

Keywords: *Art Education, Visual Literacy, Artistic Literacy, Fine Arts, Psychology of Creativity, Contemporary Art, Formal Composition, Abstract Art.*

INTRODUCTION

The diversity of views on the nature of artistic creativity, the variability of trends and styles of fine art, often entering into insoluble contradictions in the ways and methods of searching for artistic and figurative expressiveness, is a characteristic phenomenon of our time. Of course, all this affects art education in a variety of forms and methods of implementation. Many educational institutions, based on the specifics of training artists of different directions, are looking for their own, in their opinion, relevant to this specialty, methods of teaching fine arts. This is of course nothing unusual and bad if the issues of fundamental training of the artist are adequately reflected in the educational program, regardless of the direction of the specialty. But the question is, what do we mean by the disciplines of fundamental training of the artist? It is considered to be a composition, drawing, painting, sculpture, art history. All educational standards reflect this list. But educational programs and departments that carry out this activity make their own adjustments to the programs of disciplines, adjusting them to specialization, dominant educational trends, preferences to the directions, and styles of leading teachers. So there is a "special" drawing, "special design" painting, etc. It is "special" within the academic course, and not "drawing specialization" or "painting specialization", aimed at the development of visual means of solving problems of specialization.

Studies show that depending on the professional level of artists and teachers of educational institutions, this passion for finding a special drawing and painting for decorative artists and designers can have a negative character, harming fundamental art education. It is fair to assume that academic drawing and painting can be either good or bad, and already drawing and painting specializations can perform tasks inherent in a particular educational program. In addition, the disciplines of fundamental training of the artist are based on the achievements of academic art and many teachers and students seem outdated, boring, do not meet the challenges of the time, and therefore must be modernized. At the same time, many artists and teachers are well aware that to achieve sufficiently good results of academic art requires serious immersion in this work, a lot of time and dedication. For a small example, here is an excerpt from the treatise of Channing, giving instructions to students of painting: "it is Constantly necessary to draw, leaving no work either on holiday or on weekdays. And thus, through a long exercise, one can develop one's natural abilities and become a good practitioner. Otherwise, do not hope to achieve perfection. Although many say that without learning from the master studied art - do not believe them" (Kiplik, 1998, p. 376). This is not always possible in the conditions of modern trends in the development of art education, requiring early results in the optimization of the educational process. "Classical art education is resistant to changing realities not only because the knowledge of outstanding works of art distinguishes the formed person, but also reflects the splendor technical perfection of masters of fine art. Finding your own way in the art of the majority artists began with the study and copying of classical examples, and even abstract, abstract works of many

famous representatives of modern art are based on careful work with color and composition” ([Lomov, Galkina, Chistov, 2019](#)).

METHODOLOGY

We see that all of the above cannot but have a serious impact on the development of art education and aesthetic education of young people, is reflected in the development of educational programs and their content, creating a contradiction in the perception and development of the basic concepts of artistic creativity students. In this regard, before the art and pedagogical education is a number of serious problems are to find forms and methods of organization and conduct of the educational process in modern conditions.

To determine the directions of solving this problem, studies were undertaken, which, first of all, are aimed at studying the phenomenon of the artist's personality and the associated features of the students' search for their own trajectory of education.

According to fairly common opinion, people engaged in art, often have a complex mental organization of the personality. This is widely noted in many works of literature describing the life and work of artists, essays on the history of art, and firmly entered into the public consciousness about the personality of the artist as a stereotype. The works of literature widely reflect the emotional experiences and artistic and creative searches of great artists, often associated with complex relationships with the surrounding social phenomena and the imbalance of their mental state. Suffice it to recall the works of composers that have become firmly rooted in our consciousness. These are novels by Lyon Feuchtwanger, Irwin stone, Henri Perruchot, D. S. Merezhkovsky, William Somerset Maugham and many others. Of course, that much of what is written and said about the personal qualities of artists is the place to be and if we turn to the development of ideas about the personality of the artist, then there is a certain dependence of the artist's character on his social status. In the early stages of civilization, the artist belonged to the lower strata of society. For example, in ancient Egypt, the work of the artist was the lot of the slave and unworthy of the work of a free man. In the middle ages, the artist was already equated in social status to the artisan. His work was strictly regulated by the rules developed by associations of artists and strictly controlled by shop foremen. Here are excerpts from the Charter of Hanskogogrosmeisters the 14th century: "the jury (the foreman) shall attend painters at home at any time and in any place, as a good and caring home inspector to observe the exact implementation of the rules to prevent any violations" ([Ivanov et al., 2019, p. 376](#)).

Global changes in the social status of the artist occurred in the Renaissance. The nature of the relationship to the artist as a person began to change. Now the artist becomes a person close to high society, he carries out orders of influential people ([Chistov, 2016](#)). The level of education, position in the social hierarchy, and the General development of artists of this time allowed them to actively seek creative expression. Further, these trends only intensify. At the end of the 19th and in the 20th century, the artist is not only not a craftsman, but a visionary, a person spiritually meaningful, able to express the ideas of the worldview by means of art and make breakthrough discoveries in the field of philosophy of art and aesthetics. As confirmation of this conclusion we give the words of J. J. Herchuk in his famous work "the basis of artistic merit": "In different ages, in different cultures, the artist's personality, his style and temperament, his own look at the world differently might be made manifest in his creations. The relation of the General and the personal in art changed. As the individual realized his relative independence in society, the artist gained a certain degree of creative freedom, could give within certain limits the will of his imagination, the manifestation of individual feelings. He no longer felt his work as a direct realization of the divine higher will standing over him. The manifestations in the art of various spiritual tendencies, sometimes opposing in society, became freer and more diverse" ([Gerchuk, 1998, p. 29](#)).

Naturally, such ideas about the personality of the artist as not ordinary, but even claiming a special attitude to it is reflected in the formation of the character of the novice artist. It is reasonable to assume that every student of fine arts sees himself in artistic creativity is quite special, in accordance with the ideas about the personality of the artist, which they have to this period formed.

At the same time beginning artists in search of the place in creativity look not only for prospects of specialization but also styles, a manner, art receptions, etc. up to elements of borrowing. This process is not only complex and time-consuming but also very individual, depending on many factors related and dependent on the personal qualities of students.

All this indicates a special attitude to the construction and design of the educational process for students of artistic creativity. And this feature of the educational process is largely due, in our opinion; it is the social status of the artist's personality in the modern period, the diversity and variability of views on the nature of artistic creativity, often opposite and antagonistic. At present, the General picture of the number of trends and styles in the visual arts is presented so widely and voluminously that it is difficult for a person who is not experienced in matters of artistic literacy to understand the merits of a particular artistic phenomenon.

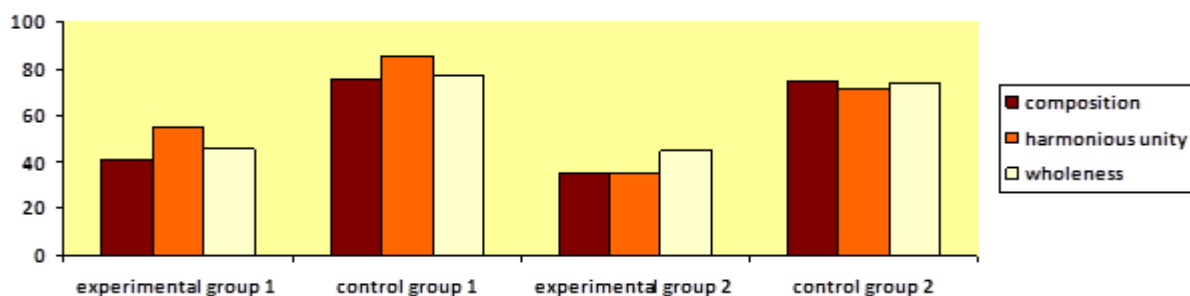
Defining, thus, the problem and some measures to solve it, it was proposed in the framework of elective courses to introduce into the educational process the development of issues of artistic literacy not included in the traditional practice of training teachers of fine arts. Attention was primarily focused on the theory, history, and practice of the

formal method in artistic creation, formal composition, the development of abstract art and the impact of these trends on contemporary art. This decision was due not only to the relevance of this knowledge for the training of designers and artists of decorative art, but also the demand of students of any direction of artistic creativity to meet their needs of personal intellectual growth. "Painting and drawing afford a methodology for cultivating perceptual experience in a way that passes beyond the mere knowledge of its objects to enable deep-rooted reciprocity" (Newell, 2014). "Modern trends in design are largely associated with the visual arts of the 20th century, from abstract expressionism and pop art to conceptualism, assemblages and installations. Most of the original ideas of avant-garde and postmodern, relevant in the modern world, the designers of the 21st century have picked up, rethought, reincarnated and given them a new life in a new socio-cultural situation" (Belyakova et al., 2019).

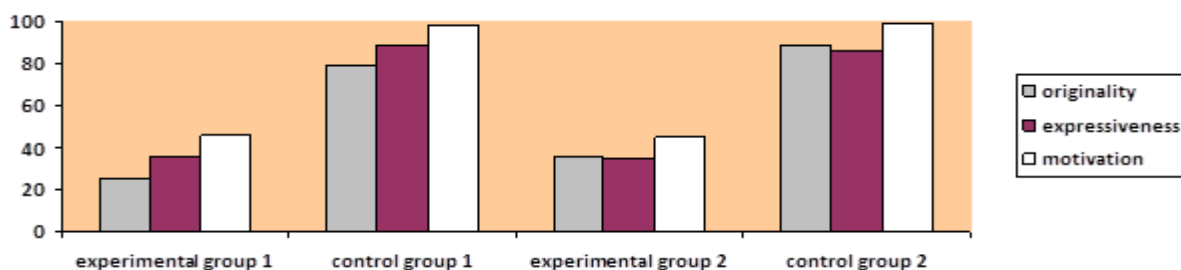
RESULTS

Naturally, the above requires a reaction from the professional community of teachers and artists. And it occurs, as a rule, in the definition of measures and conditions of such organization of educational process where individual forms of occupations take a worthy place. And here art pedagogy has its own characteristics, which largely determines the nature and forms of individual classes. If for musicians this is expressed quite naturally in the form of the presence of the teacher at the time of performance of the work, then for artists it looks more difficult. The teacher-artist can also give useful recommendations and advice as the work is created, but it is difficult to imagine in the mode of constant control when performing the work by the author. This is impossible, if only because constant control for a long time over the person creating the work of art, even in the form of educational work, will be extremely uncomfortable for the author and cannot promote creative self-expression. Individual work of the teacher with the future artist more consists of periodic views of works, consultations, display of receptions of the decision of any problems and of course in conversations about history, prospects and problems of art creativity.

To determine the results of the experimental work, the criteria for assessing the quality and effectiveness of classes for the development of students' fundamental ideas about the basics of artistic literacy were developed. Along with the General positions of the criteria related to professional skills and knowledge of creating a work of art, an important task is to determine the level of motivation of students to study a wide range of issues included in the conventional idea of artistic literacy. Analytical expressions of evaluation criteria were determined as a result of views and discussions of creative works, tests, and surveys of students. In General, according to the group of criteria evaluating such concepts of artistic literacy as composition, harmonious unity, the integrity of plastic and coloristic solutions of the image, the results of the final works showed an improvement of 35% (Graph 1). According to the group of criteria assessing originality, expressiveness and motivation of students, the results of the final studies showed an increase in indicators by 54% (Graph 2).



Graph 1: The results of experimental and control groups according to the group of criteria: composition, harmonious unity, the integrity of plastic and color solutions of the image.



Graph 2: The results of experimental and control groups on the group of criteria: originality, expressiveness, the motivation of students.

DISCUSSION / ANALYSIS

Colleagues from Near East University (Nicosia, Cyprus) in their work "Aesthetic perceptions of art educators in higher education level at art classes and their effect on learners" say that art education is a way of knowing the world ([Miralay and Egitmen, 2019](#)). The teacher of the higher school should give the student a tool of knowledge, value orientations in art, and ideas about aesthetics in the art to make new discoveries and further development of students in the professional sphere.

In the Derek Jones review of Orr, S., and Shreeve, A. "Art and Design Pedagogy in Higher Education: Knowledge, values and ambiguity in the creative curriculum", the red thread is the judgment that art education and design education are parts of one whole ([Jones, 2018](#)). All innovations and discoveries, the development of art and design should be based on the cultural and value basis of classical art. The research of colleagues confirms the need to form a cultural environment and support art pedagogy by means of intersectional and cross-cultural links ([Schlaack, Simpson Steele, 2018](#)).

Professor Howard Riley, in his article "Aesthetic cognitivism: Towards a concise case for doctoral research through practices in the visual arts," writes that visual art is a means of understanding through which "we can look to evaluate, not measure, to interpret reality anew" ([Riley, 2018](#)).

Modern scientists talk about the need to find new approaches to aesthetic education: "...life justifies the necessity for studying such disciplines as "Music cultures of the world", "World art culture", etc. in the process of university training. The subject itself is not new, new is its value, content, and direct involvement in universal competencies development" ([Shafazhinskaya et al., 2020](#)).

The research "Abstract art paintings, global image properties, and verbal descriptions: An empirical and computational investigation" is interesting as a scientific approach to art education. This paper presents a series of studies examining the relationship between verbal descriptors, global image properties, and preferences for abstract art paintings ([Hayn-Leichsenring et al., 2020](#)).

All these forms of individual work in varying degrees are reflected in the educational processes of educational institutions. Most often, the quality of such work depends on the professional level of the teacher and his ability to communicate with students ([Ukolova, 2017](#)). Some of the students fall under the personal influence of the teacher and with great diligence inherits the professional and creative experience of the master. Others do not take so close to the teacher's instructions and try to find their own vision of artistic creativity. It is difficult to determine the degree of effectiveness of this process. Someone becomes an imitator of the manner of the master; someone is looking for his way. The individual work of the teacher of the artist with pupils has very subjective character, depends on a set of factors and certainly is not regulated in any way. This work is not laid hours in the curricula of training in fine arts, and individual work of the teacher with the student and in the forms of conducting and obtaining any results is purely personal. In our opinion, this is a problem in the training of a teacher of fine arts.

In practice, there are often students who have fallen under the personal charm of the teacher, who has his views on artistic creativity, going against academic trends, and denying some elementary knowledge of visual literacy. Well aware that artistic creativity is variable and personal ambitions of the artist in the theory and practice of art in recent decades are a trend of artistic life, it is necessary to understand that the training of a teacher of fine arts involves developing students' professional competencies in accordance with a decent level of visual and artistic literacy. The problem of freedom of choice by the student of his individual trajectory in learning by revealing to him numerous opportunities and paths in art is very relevant today ([Thompson, 2015](#)). As one of the measures to solve this problem, in our opinion, is the development of ideas in students of fine arts concepts of artistic literacy. At present, almost all institutions of training teachers of fine arts development of professional competencies in the field of artistic creativity are concentrated on the basic theoretical and practical provisions of visual literacy. Issues of General artistic training are reflected in such disciplines as drawing, painting, composition, art history, sculpture. Some of the questions relevant to our understanding of artistic literacy are not considered or presented very poorly. In particular, the questions of the nature of artistic creativity, the personality of the artist in the context of creative activity, the retrospective of the development of ideas about the artistic form in visual art, the development of technological and technical aspects of visual activity, the formal method in art, the main directions of modern art, etc. are not considered. We intentionally leave this list unfinished, as we assume that it may contain both additions and clarifications.

One of the most important educational goals is familiarizing a student with productive artistic and creative activity ([Roshchin et al., 2018](#)). The motivation of students and teenagers to independent creative activity plays a great role in art education and aesthetic education. This is stated in his work by academician, Professor Lomov S. P. with co-authors: "A new approach to education is revealed in the pedagogy of consciousness, where the value basis of activity is the education of joyful attitude to difficulties, trust in overcoming obstacles as a way of self-development. The task of a pedagogue is to help to find ways of overcoming, but not to eliminate these difficulties for an adolescent, to support an optimistic attitude to difficulties. These include maintaining interest in the development of volitional qualities, the creation of conditions under which the impetus for their development will become their need passing into the relevant

motive" (Ivanov et al., 2019). We believe that "The problem of modern methods of teaching drawing as a discipline in higher education is to fill the lessons with creative meaning, open up the expressive possibilities of graphic art for the student, and give them the means to solve problems artistic and creative tasks" (Roshchin and Filipova, 2019).

CONCLUSION

Much attention in the course is devoted to the study of the nature of artistic creativity and related aspects of the formation and development of the artist's personality, his social status depending on the historical era. In the context of this topic, attention is not focused on the fate of specific well-known artists and a detailed analysis of their life conflicts. The main attention is paid to the issues of artistic and creative needs of the artist's personality depending on the basic worldview (Tverdokhlebova and Bobrov, 2015). Exploring current trends in art education, Susan Orr and Alison Shreeve suggest a student-centered model of curriculum that supports the development of creativity (Orr, 2019).

Considerable attention is paid to the theory and practice of composition. The composition is considered, first of all, from the point of view of the objective regularities existing outside of our intervention in the harmonious existence of natural phenomena. Also, the composition is considered as a product of human creativity, the tasks of which include the aesthetic possibilities of organizing the space of human activity (Gephardt, Davidson, Davis, 2002). Accordingly, the concepts of figurativeness and non-figurativeness of the composition, as well as its structural regularities, are introduced. On the example of the works of artists of different directions of creativity, the relevance of knowledge of the laws of composition for the creation of works is determined. As a practical part, students created abstract compositions that have a specific associative nature with the goals and objectives of the disclosure of artistic and figurative solutions to the theme of the work (Lomov, 2016). That is, on the basis of abstract art techniques, to express the theme of his work without using the figurativeness and "figurativeness" of the images created. "The language of the art form of design is characterized by stylistic generality, revealing in the image the characteristic features of other arts, transmitted through stylization and the introduction of further enriching the image of patterned elements" (Burovkina, Koreshkov, Prishchepa, 2018). In General, the experimental work was in the nature of open classes, where often some changes were made in the course of work. Thus, the use of modern means of communication and information made it possible to quickly respond to emerging issues in the study of styles, trends, and technologies of masters of fine arts (Barcic, 2017). This made it possible to make the learning process dynamic, actively include the audience in the field of discussion of problems of artistic creativity, and constantly activate the interest of students in the topic. The experience of organizing various cross-cultural courses is a popular innovative method in art pedagogy, as evidenced by the study of Dennis Beck (Beck, 2018). Also, the study of mixed methods and approaches to art education is devoted to the work "Art connections: An investigation of art education courses for preservice generalists" (Hunter-Doniger, Fox, 2018). A study conducted in Canada is devoted to the problem of creating a unified ecological cultural educational environment, which confirms the relevance of our research (Kukkonen, 2020).

A colleague from the MCU, Moscow says that: "The language of the picture has always been understandable even to an illiterate person (remember those same rock paintings or subjects of icons and paintings temple). Modern a teenager with his "video clip thinking" is more likely to perceive the image than text" (Arkhipov, Penzin, Khlebnikov, 2018). This confirms that the most important task of the experimental classes was to convey to the consciousness of students the relevance and importance of studying the basics of artistic literacy for the successful professional growth of the artist of any specialization (Balaban et al., 2019). The continuity of art education and aesthetic education in the modern world is discussed in the book "Art, artists and pedagogy: Philosophy and the arts in education", a Revue written by Marissa Nesbit (Nesbit, 2019). In the course of the experimental work, several points were identified that determine the prospects for further research on the introduction into the educational process of topical issues included in the conditional representation of the structure of the concepts of artistic literacy. "Based on the tradition of teaching drawing in the art and graphic faculties of pedagogical institutes, the teachers of our Institute try not only to meet the standards of the national art school but also to improve the method of teaching drawing in accordance with the demands of the time" (Roshchin, 2019).

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This research can serve as a basis for further development and testing of elective courses for students of art and graphic specialties. In the course of the study, a theoretical analysis of scientific and methodological literature sources was made, and criteria for evaluating the level of students' visual literacy were determined. The practical significance of the study consists of the model of elective courses "Abstract and real" presented by the authors.

The relevance and scientific and theoretical basis of the study is confirmed by an extensive analysis of the problem of research of scientific and educational sources. The practical significance and effectiveness of the conducted experimental work are confirmed by the results obtained from the indicators of the ascertaining and control experimental groups during the testing of elective courses.

AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

S. P. Roshchin carried out structuring the experimental design and formulating the hypothesis, collected data, built the

apparatus, and interpreted the results. L. S. Filippova carried out a literature review, organized and conducted the statistical analysis, interpreted the results, and wrote a major portion of the paper.

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