

The Role of Artistic Practice and Practical Experience in Higher Art Education: Analysis of Methodologies and the Structure of Practical Courses

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Abstract

Practical training plays an important role in the system of training specialists in the field of art. The purpose of this work is to investigate the leading approaches to the organization of practical training in the field of higher art education, which enable students to master high levels of technical skills and the ability to think creatively. A content-analysis of literature was used. A total of 48 positions were selected. The results demonstrate the importance of artistic practice in the system of professional training of art specialists. In particular, it was established that the use of project-oriented learning, interactive workshops, as well as cooperation with art institutions and active integration of digital technologies in the educational process is important for the formation of professional and creative skills of students of higher art education. These teaching methods also play an important role in ensuring the comprehensive development of students. The conclusions emphasize the issue of implementing practical courses in the system of training modern specialists in the field of art. The study also determined that the identified approaches to practical training develop not only practical skills in the students, but also help in the formation of creative personalities ready to work in an innovative artistic environment.

Keywords: artistic practice, technologies, approaches, complex analysis, methods and techniques.

1. Introduction

1.1 Introduce the Problem

Modern higher art education is an important element of the education and professional training system for future artists and connoisseurs of practical and scientific art. Taking into account the fact that such categories have a serious impact on the cultural and social development of society, in the framework of the modern world in which digital technologies have developed rapidly, new requirements for professional training need to be formed. In part, this is due to the fact that the requirements for professional skills and theoretical skills are significantly more complicated, the problems in improving methodologies and the structure of practical courses in higher educational institutions of art education are becoming an urgent problem for scientific research.

This is especially relevant from the point of view of comparing existing experiences, which makes it possible to identify positive practices in pedagogical work, to introduce effective methods in the training of specialists in the field of art. In addition, there is a need to take into account the fact that art in modern realities is developing, so we are talking about a combination of the evolution of art critics' ideas and interests with modern digital and technological changes that shape the perception of art for the general public. With this in mind, the proposed topic is designed to unite a fairly wide range of problems that are important for further scientific discussion and generalization.

1.2 Explore Importance of the Problem

Existing artistic practices and practical experiences that are actively applied are key elements in the process of studying in higher education institutions of art. Such elements not only guarantee that students acquire the necessary theoretical knowledge, but also form the appropriate practical tools, the use of which will allow them to further develop creative thinking, creativity, the ability to find innovative approaches to the implementation of creative tasks, the search for motivation and self-motivation for continuous improvement of professional skills, and the continuation of lifelong learning. The study of current learning and teaching methods (especially practical courses) allows us to trace the evolution of the most effective approaches to modern education, which will further open up opportunities for creating the necessary level of professional knowledge and skills in the student environment. Therefore, the focus of the proposed article will be on the role of artistic practices and practical experiences in the development of modern higher art education, which will be achieved by analysing the existing methodologies used in the learning process and combined with existing digital technologies and the possibilities of special practical courses.

1.3 Describe Relevant Scholarship

Researchers have been extremely careful about the development of modern art education. It is a study of various teaching methods that have demonstrated their effectiveness in the educational process. In particular, Barritt (2021) examines art education through the prism of modern pedagogical excellence, outlines the importance of integrating art education into broader learning contexts, and advocates for the integration of art education with other subjects. Casakin and Wodehouse (2021) systematically reviewed the current state of art education on the example of architectural studies, emphasising the importance of students' creativity as an integral part of learning.

Likewise, Blain and Minors (2020) examined the importance of art studies in higher education, arguing that active cooperation in the field of collaborative research will allow for a practical approach to the development of new methodological approaches to the use of art. Some researchers tend to share such theses, while considering art education to be one of the important conditions for the sustainable development of modern society, emphasising the importance of art disciplines in shaping cultural consciousness, social responsibility, etc.

Some scholars have drawn attention to the importance of implementing project-based learning, which is closely integrated with modern technologies. Lavrinets (2018) analysed the development of postgraduate art education in Ukraine and Europe, identifying common and different methods used in teaching. Other researchers emphasise the importance of effective management of higher education institutions in the arts, without which even successful teaching experience cannot bring positive results (Ruci et al., 2023). Researchers have also focused on the possibilities of digital arts learning, exploring existing experiences both within Europe and Asia (Martin & Betrus, 2019; Guler, 2021). This detailed research has repeatedly highlighted the importance of digital tools for the further evolution of new teaching methods and the effectiveness of arts residency programmes (Haleem et al., 2022).

Some researchers also emphasise the peculiarities of teaching in wartime, concluding that it is important to integrate innovative technologies to improve the effectiveness of educational processes in times of crises and challenges (Pobirchenko, 2023; Kalmykova, 2022). Such an analysis also allows us to assess the role of art in society through the prism of contemporary philosophical systems (Rudenko & Kharkov, 2023). Thus, in general, researchers assess aspects of contemporary art education in different ways, considering digital technologies and integration with the needs of society as important components of this process. At the same time, the methodological aspect and pedagogical practices will require additional study, as the updated opportunities for comparative studies have not been used and will require further involvement.

1.4 State Hypotheses and Their Correspondence to Research Design

The main purpose of the study is to analyse the leading existing approaches to the organisation of practical training in the field of higher art education, which allow students to master high levels of technical skills, the ability to think creatively and apply the acquired knowledge in practice, taking into account existing innovative activities. Main hypotheses:

1. Artistic practice plays an important role in the process of gradual formation of higher art education students;
2. There are effective universal approaches in modern practices in art education;
3. The structure of university practical courses corresponds to the general trends in the development of art education.

2. Method

2.1 Research Design

This research is a qualitative study based on the analysis of selected scientific works on art and education. The search for materials for the study and their analysis was carried out systematically and in stages, which allowed us to select the most relevant works.

2.2 Data Collection

The study used a rigorous data collection process based on an analysis of the literature and specific inclusion criteria. Initially, terms such as "art", "art training", "practice", "education", "innovation", "technology", "art education" were entered into the Google Scholar and Web of Science search databases. These data platforms were chosen because they are searchable and contain a wide database of scientific works in the humanities. A total of 984 relevant results were found. Based on a brief analysis of the titles, we selected those works that dealt with the training of specialists in the arts or education in general (331 items). Next, we critically analysed the abstracts and selected those studies that dealt with the specifics of teaching in art education (213 items). After that, all the received works were transferred to Excel spreadsheets, where the following data were entered: author, brief information from the abstract, date of writing. All the papers written before 2016 and those that do not correspond to the topic were excluded (therefore, 124 results were obtained). After that, the following inclusion criteria were applied to the received materials:

- The study was written in English.
- The research deals with various trends in teaching in the arts.
- The research describes practical methods of training art specialists.
- The work deals with innovative educational technologies and methods.
- The work should explore educational practice

Authors of this paper evaluated every publication according to the following standards in order to determine the caliber of the research:

Peer-evaluation Status. For example, to ensure a thorough evaluation process, papers published in peer-reviewed journals were given preference.

Table 1. Key Stages of Data Collection

Stage	Description	N
1	Introduction of the terms "art", "art training", "practice", "education", "innovation", "technology", "art education" into Google Scholar and Web of Science search databases.	984
2	The date range was reduced from 2015 to 2024 (this criterion did not apply to fundamental theoretical works)	734
3	Selection of works related to the training of specialists in art or education in general based on titles.	331
4	Critical analysis of the abstracts and selection of papers related to the specifics of teaching in art education.	213
5	Entering data into Excel spreadsheets, excluding papers written before 2016 and those that are not relevant to the topic.	124
6	Application of inclusion criteria: - The study is written in English or contains an abstract in English. - The study deals with trends in teaching in the arts. - The research describes practical methods of training art specialists. - The work deals with innovative educational technologies and methods.	75
7	Critical analysis of works and selection based on the following criteria: - Contain a research methodology. - Have practical novelty. - Do not duplicate previous knowledge.	48

Source: developed by authors.

Citation Count. Papers with more citations were thought to be more trustworthy and influential. Research Design and Methodology. Authors of this paper gave priority to studies that used strong research designs, such as longitudinal studies, randomized controlled trials, or in-depth case studies. Relevance and Currency. Authors of this paper preferred more recent articles that discuss emerging technology and trends in art education. Clarity and Depth of Analysis. It favored studies that showed a thorough comprehension of the subject area and offered clear, in-depth assessments.

By using these standards, we made sure that the chosen articles were not only pertinent but also of the highest caliber. All these materials offered a strong basis for our examination of techniques and the design of applied courses in higher art education.

Based on these criteria, 75 studies were selected. After that, a critical analysis of the works was carried out and those works were selected that: 1. Contained a research methodology. 2. Had practical novelty. 3. Did not duplicate previous knowledge. In this way, 41 items of scientific literature were selected (see Table 1).

2.3 Data Analysis

The obtained literature items were transferred to the Excel spreadsheet system, where such data as author, year of publication, main approaches, methods, technologies, and brief conclusions were entered. Thus, on the basis of this thematic analysis, the main techniques and approaches to the training of art education specialists were found. In this way, the main trends present in the world art education were identified. After that, a comparative analysis of the data obtained with the results of other scholars was carried out: similar opinions were found and different judgements were characterised. The study is based on the principle of scientific rigour.

3. Results

The current state of social development demonstrates the importance of using various tools to train specialists in any field. Learning requirements are combined with current trends in the labour market. Researchers emphasise that without the appropriate skills in modern life, it will be difficult for graduates of higher education institutions to apply even the knowledge they have acquired, especially if it is not backed up by adequate practical experience (Malyska et al., 2022; Meltzer & Schwencke, 2019). All of the above factors are also relevant for artistic education, as reality places its own requirements on future professionals in terms of employment and further development of professional skills. The latter is also relevant given the current trends in lifelong learning, when improvements and changes in working conditions require an appropriate and adequate response to the possibility of self-learning and improving one's skills on one's own. To achieve this goal, higher education institutions in the field of art have a wide range of specialised methods and techniques. In particular, modern higher education in the arts aims not only to provide students with important and necessary theoretical knowledge, but also to equip them with relevant practical skills that are extremely important in the current environment for further professional fulfilment in the field of art.

In such circumstances, artistic practices and practical professional experience at the stage of higher education become key elements of the educational process that contribute to the further evolution of creative abilities and already formed professional competences in the activities of future artists. Researchers, however, have different interpretations of the methodologies and scientific and practical recommendations used in the use of practical courses for higher art education institutions (Sami, 2024; Martynenko et al., 2023; Yan, 2023). An analysis of such methodologies can determine the optimal models of modern teaching, which will allow to train specialists of the appropriate level.

The role of artistic practice is also a rather controversial subject for research discussion. In general, scholars agree that practical training in the field of art plays a crucial role in the process of gradual formation of higher education students as creative individuals and professionals with the appropriate skills for further work or study. Practice, as well as the frequency of its application, allows not only to acquire new theoretical knowledge, but also to interpolate the theoretical experience gained in practical conditions, which, after all, is the main goal of any learning. However, there is a need to take into account the specifics of artistic work. It is not only about memorising already known performance practices (playing musical instruments, theatre performances, acting, etc.), but also about developing students' creativity (Piddubna et al., 2023; Muzyka et al., 2021). Students have the opportunity to work with different materials and techniques during practical classes, but they also have to develop their own self-expression. The peculiarity of higher education in the arts is that simple memorisation and reproduction is not enough - future professionals need to develop the ability to act and think outside the box.

According to scholars, practical experience and its importance is partly to ensure such an educational process. This

element has become an integral part of higher art education in many countries for a long time (Whitten, 2022). However, in the Ukrainian context, for example, theoretical education has long been favoured, and only in recent decades has it had a chance to develop in a practical way. The acquisition of practical experience during education involves not only the blind performance of practical tasks regulated by individual curricula, but also covers a considerable amount of out-of-class activities (Yefimenko et al., 2020; Aliyeva, 2023).

First of all, it means active participation in the implementation of real art projects, exhibitions, active participation in various art competitions, organisation of various events and festivals. Acquiring an appropriate level of professional experience allows students to feel the real possibilities and peculiarities of their chosen profession, to pay attention to their own shortcomings or gain additional confidence in their abilities, to establish the necessary contacts with representatives of artistic environments, which will allow them to turn to such connections at the right time after graduation.

Mentoring and internships occupy a prominent place within modern educational approaches. Within the framework of mentoring, individual artistic activity is realized with various experienced teachers or artists. They can share their experience, knowledge and advice. Mentors help students develop their own artistic practice skills in several ways. In addition, they help improve students' creative approaches, understand and explain different artistic concepts and styles. A separate important direction is the ability to form personal projects (portfolios), which allows you to assess your strengths and weaknesses in time for the further development of practical skills. Mentoring also opens up separate opportunities for establishing the necessary professional contacts in the artistic environment. At the same time, internship helps to apply theoretical knowledge in practice.

In addition, it contributes to the development of intercultural competence for applicants. students can undergo internships in various cultural institutions, galleries, museums, art studios and workshops. The advantages of internships are obvious, as they contribute to obtaining real work experience, getting to know the processes of organizing artistic projects, forming teamwork skills, etc. Perhaps the most important approach is collaboration with practicing artists. The latter provides students with direct contact with modern artistic practice, which can take various forms: master classes and seminars (in which artists share their techniques and work methods), joint projects (in which students have the opportunity to work together with artists on specific works), visits to artists' workshops, lectures and presentations (where professional artists can share their own experience in art). Therefore, these methods and techniques create a favorable environment for the development of students. In addition, they also contribute to the integration of students into the professional community.

A study of methodologies for transferring artistic practices at universities in Europe and Asia has helped to identify the most common models that facilitate this. It is worth noting that the modern world (including art education) is quite globalised (Danilyan, & Arbeláez-Campillo, 2022; Solomin, 2023). Accordingly, similar practices exist in many countries around the world, which generally makes it possible to formulate some generalisations about the use of methodologies for teaching artistic disciplines. For higher education, such practices are quite diverse, but they are based on separate approaches that may vary in frequency of application depending on the specifics of individual educational institutions, areas of study or competencies of the teaching team, and the desire to integrate modern technologies and theoretical pedagogical achievements into the educational process (see Table 2).

Besides, the structure of practical courses used in different universities is quite universal. This is primarily due to the emphasis on practical classes in higher education institutions of art education, which gives them an appropriate organisation and structure. The latter statement implies the functioning of certain established stages, each of which performs a specific function and requires detailed consideration. First of all, there is a preparatory stage, the main essence of which is to get acquainted with the theoretical foundations of artistic work in various fields, to analyse already formed existing works of art. Also at this stage, teachers select the necessary didactic material (written, audiovisual, etc.), which students can read before the start of the class. The creative stage involves the practical implementation of a specific idea, analysis of the materials received, and preparatory tasks to implement the main idea of the lesson. The third stage is aimed at implementing the project: performing the required excerpt, creating a complete holistic composition, working with acting techniques, mastering the necessary materials, etc.

The last stage involves presentation and evaluation: after the demonstration, teachers provide feedback to students and receive a reasonable assessment with valuable guidance on how to further improve their work. Therefore, artistic practice and practical experience are key factors in the implementation of the tasks of higher art education, which are to train modern specialists of the appropriate level. Assisting in the development of the necessary professional skills, working with students' creative inclinations contributes to the acquisition of theoretical knowledge and practical skills (Zupanic Benic & Vidovic, 2018; Tsekhmister, 2023). A look at the use of certain methodologies and the

structure of practical disciplines allows us to talk about the importance of integrating theoretical knowledge with practical training activities, which together form artists and art historians of the new generation. The use of various approaches and digital technologies in teaching artistic practices clearly contributes to improving the quality of art education and allows students to unleash their full creative potential.

Table 2. Universal Approaches in Contemporary Practices in Art Education (according to research interpretations)

Approach	Description	Literature
Use of projects and project-based learning	Implementation of individual planned tasks that can be carried out both individually and in groups. Specific projects proposed by the teachers should combine all stages of the creative process - from the formation of creative ideas to the development of a plan for their implementation, execution and presentation.	Blain & Minors (2020); Dalagna et al. (2024); Guler (2021); Nelson (2022).
Use of interactive workshops and masterclasses	For such events, it is planned to invite well-known specialists, artists, etc. whose practical experience is extremely high. This allows us to conduct important practical classes with students, which will allow them to receive valuable advice and knowledge from practical experience directly from well-known professionals.	Guler (2021); Ruci, Angge & Djatiprambudi (2023); Sami (2024) Shevniuk (2021); Zhang (2021); Sawyer (2017).
Cooperation with art institutions, theatres, galleries, museums and other organizations	Holding exhibitions of higher education students will provide valuable practical experience that will help to take into account mistakes, promote the work of young artists, and receive feedback and recommendations from the interested public, viewers, or experts.	Ruci, Angge & Djatiprambudi (2023); Sami, A. (2024).
Active use of digital technologies, their integration with educational environments	Modern software tools and virtual platforms provide the necessary opportunities for the rapid dissemination of artworks, receiving feedback from audiences, etc. In addition, modern platforms open up opportunities for self-study: watching relevant videos, searching for information and learning materials will potentially affect the quality of learning. Artificial intelligence, virtual reality, simulations, individual learning platforms, and online tools for the development of art education play an important role in the system of technologies.	Zhang & Jia (2021); Saribas, Coskun, & Mamur (2021); Salas-Rueda, Ramírez-Ortega & Eslava-Cervantes (2020); Pobirchenko (2023); Yan (2023); Pliushch & Sorokun (2022); Kus & Newcombe (2024).
Collaboration with artists, mentoring, internships	These proposed methods open up an opportunity for the development of practical skills necessary for further employment of the applicants. Acquiring practical experience in the art field is an indispensable element of the training of a modern specialist who aims to realize his creative potential through cooperation and mentoring.	Laverick (2016); Patel (2015).

Source: developed by authors.

4. Discussion

The data obtained confirmed the main preliminary hypotheses. In particular, the results proved the first hypothesis, which was that artistic practice plays an important role in the process of gradual formation of higher education students. Modern researchers have also drawn attention to the importance of practical training for students (Sullivan,

1993; Tsekhmister et al., 2022; Zimmerman, 2009; Pringle, 2008). At the same time, according to Sinclair & Robutti (2020), given the development of digital learning support tools, the support of practical learning in the digital age is especially important. Kolyvas (2020) emphasised the importance of innovative and collaborative learning in the visual arts using modern educational software. He noted that the use of modern technology contributes to the development of students' creative skills. These results confirm this, as the practical classes also include the use of modern technologies to achieve certain learning objectives.

In addition, the following hypothesis has been proved that there are effective universal approaches in modern practices in art education: based on a critical analysis of the literature, it has been found that the use of project-based learning, interactive workshops, cooperation with art institutions and the use of various digital technologies (virtual, augmented reality, simulations, training, and educational software) These theses are also confirmed in a number of contemporary works. In particular, the study by Dalagna et al. (2024) confirms the importance of using art projects as an important part of the professional training of artists. A number of contemporary scholars have also emphasised the importance of using modern circus technologies (Mozhenko & Pryadko, 2020; Dudar et al., 2021). Kus and Newcombe (2024) focused on the development of spatial thinking in the context of visual art through online educational programmes. They described how online programmes can be integrated into the learning process to optimise student outcomes.

At the same time, this study also confirms the importance of integrating different forms of learning, including online components, to achieve comprehensive student development. At the same time, Patton and Buffington (2016) explored the evolution of technology in arts education and found that technological advances have changed approaches to learning. This study confirmed these findings, as the integration of modern technologies into practical classes is now a key element of the learning process. This is also confirmed in other works, such as Pliushch and Sorokun (2022), who describe various innovative pedagogical technologies in the education system.

Yan (2023) investigated the impact of VR on contemporary art and noted that these technologies have the potential to develop artistic skills, which is also confirmed in this study. This is also in line with the work of Yefimenko et al. (2020), which describes modern innovative pedagogical technologies in art education. The authors noted that innovative methods significantly improve the learning process. The findings are also consistent with these conclusions, as they also showed that the integration of the latest technologies in practical classes is effective for teaching art courses.

The study also confirmed the third hypothesis, which was that the structure of university practical courses corresponds to the general trends in the development of art education. The modern world is globalised, and similar practices exist in many countries, which allows us to make generalisations about the methodologies of teaching artistic disciplines (Danilyan & Arbeláez-Campillo, 2022; Tsekhmister, 2023). Nelson (2022) described the research process in the context of practice development in the arts. He also emphasised the role of publishing practice outcomes as an important component of the modern learning process. This is supported by the present data, in which critical analysis and implementation of project methods play an important role in practical arts learning. Thus, this study has confirmed the importance of practical classes in art education and their role in the development of students' creative and professional skills, which determines its practical value.

However, the main limitations of the study relate to the fact that only contemporary works were selected. At the same time, as can be seen from the methodology of the study, a strict selection of literature was used, and future research will focus on including a wider range of works and general works on education in order to characterise more universal approaches to teaching art education in the world. In addition, an important future direction is to conduct an experimental study with students to characterise the role of practice in their development.

5. Conclusions

Thus, practical training in the field of art is important in shaping creative individuals and professionals with the necessary skills for further work or study. The frequent use of practice not only facilitates the acquisition of theoretical knowledge, but also allows students to interpolate it in practical conditions, which is the main goal of learning. It is important to take into account the specifics of artistic work, which includes not only the study of well-known practices, but also the development of creativity and self-expression of students. A characteristic feature of higher art education is the need to develop the ability to act and think outside the box. Practical experience provides an educational process that has become an integral part of many countries. Practical experience includes not only completing regulated tasks, but also active participation in art projects, exhibitions, competitions or festivals.

This allows students to experience the real possibilities and peculiarities of their chosen profession, to pay attention to their own shortcomings and gain additional confidence in their abilities.

A study of methodologies for transferring artistic practices at universities in Europe and Asia has identified common models that facilitate this process. In particular, the study outlined such approaches as the use of project-based learning, interactive workshops, collaboration with art institutions or art organisations, and the increased use of digital technologies (virtual reality, simulations). The study also found that practical classes in higher art education institutions have a universal structure that includes certain stages: preparatory, creative and project implementation. Thus, practical classes are an important component in the system of forming professional skills and creative abilities of students of artistic specialities, providing them with the necessary experience to form a successful career.

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