

## THE ISSUE OF INTEGRATED VISUAL ARTS EDUCATION AT SCHOOL

DOI: 10.24234/miopap.v22i2.449

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### ABSTRACT

*This article presents the issues related to the reforms of public education, strengthening of interdisciplinary links of teaching, applied techniques and problems. It concerns the issue of integrated visual Art within the school education system and emphasizes its importance for development of new coming generation within the digital reality of today's life.*

*The implementation of changes in regular or professional schools first of all means improving the quality of education, developing new levels of knowledge and worldview of students. And in order for students to understand the basics of natural and social sciences, the laws concerning the development of society, first of all it is extremally necessary to change the nature of education, which should not be reproductive, but developing or teaching. With this pedagogical approach, students will be able to solve cognitive problems, make analysis, generalizations, comparisons, reflections, explain a given phenomenon or reality using the knowledge obtained from different subjects.*

*Desk review is used as a research method to select the articles and publications reflecting visual art in education and its integration in school life. Detailed analyses of existing literature prove that integrated visual art in public school enables students' high-level thinking and productive participation in lessons.*

**Keywords:** *learning, integration, visual arts, interdisciplinary communication, fairy tale, image, imagination, creativity, skills, memory, fiction.*

### INTRODUCTION

Visual arts are art forms such as ceramics, drawing, painting, sculpture, printmaking, design, crafts, photography, video, filmmaking, and architecture (UVA,n.d.). In the changing world visualization in education plays a crucial role. Especially the role of art for making the world understandable from another scope is very important for school age

children. Designed for the new generations to succeed in the new perspective of the global economic the world reorganization is needed: stress on the art's needs to be reiterated in the education system and given greater claims and legitimacy in the classroom (Harris, 2011). The developmental and educational functions of teaching provide students with a wide range of opportunities to delve into the essence of the taught material, to study the integrative connections of the same interdisciplinary course in various subjects. In fact, it is impossible to teach and form all the knowledge about nature and society and the possibilities of their application within one discipline. This is possible only due to the introduction of various subjects into the system of education, and it is no accident that in the course of the development of a comprehensive school, the subject of mastering the content of education that is the structure was formed. Within this approach the role of art is invaluable and indisputable. Visual arts integration helps to develop child's creativity, imagination, understanding how to overcome challenges. At the same time, it helps to perceive the reality and develops the process of reflection, evaluation, learning from successes or failures, perspective, and determination (Winner & Hetland, 2000).

## **METHOD**

Desk review as a research method within the frame of current qualitative research has been used to review previous research findings to gain a broad understanding of the integrated visual art education in school. Within this study Harris's (2011) Integrating visual arts into the curriculum research paper was reviewed and analyzed, as well as Douglas' and Jaquith's Engaging Learners Through Artmaking: Choice-Based Art Education in the Classroom (1st Edition) book has been taking as a basis for the research study. Special emphasizes has been given to the content of the studies and references provided within the bodies of two different works.

While reflecting the definitions Krutetsky, Vigotsky and other authors have been reflected within the body of the current paper as well.

## **THEORETICAL ANALYSES OF EXISTING LITERATURE**

The developmental and educational functions of teaching provide students with a wide range of opportunities to delve into the essence of the taught material, to study the integrative connections of the same interdisciplinary course in various subjects. In fact, it is impossible to teach and form all the knowledge about nature and society and the possibilities of their application within one discipline. This is possible only due to the

introduction of various subjects into the system of education, and it is no accident that in the course of the development of a comprehensive school, the subject of art in mastering the content of education structure was formed. Within this scope it is possible to state that: "Throughout time, people have expressed themselves through the arts, communicate with one another through the arts, convey abstract and complex emotion and turmoil through the arts" (Harris, 2011, p.63). Based on this statement it might be thinkable to claim that art can be a basic formula for inter-subject and interdisciplinary dialog inside of the school curriculum.

The study of various subjects reflects the objective reality from different angles, it is interconnected, and interdisciplinary connections provide ample opportunities for an integrated approach to learning and education, serve to form common views on objective reality. The material or materials of other disciplines must be previously studied and mastered by the student from the courses of the relevant subjects; otherwise, the student cannot determine any interdisciplinary connection. For example, in the artwork the material is used the native language or literature as a way to artistically describe the object or phenomenon and make it emotional and imaginative, and because the disciple all have learned the lessons, it is necessary to entrust such tasks, means of execution which must be determined by the ability of students, in accordance with the effective application of knowledge obtained in different subjects (for example, the illustration of a literary text through visual art). While the integration of visual art in different school disciplines is discussed, it is extremely important to stress that it is also about opening the classroom door to the new and exciting, and allowing students to express themselves creatively and emotionally (Harris, 2011). This method of identifying interdisciplinary links makes it possible on the one hand to check the capabilities of students: how well they managed, comparing the knowledge and facts obtained in different subjects, to draw conclusions and conclusions, on the other hand, by performing such work, students acquire the ability to analyze and compare facts, the ability to quickly navigate, they form a consciousness that both social and natural phenomena are not independent and isolated, but have different manifestations and connections during the courses of different disciplines.

It should also be added that integrated art interdisciplinary links contribute to the optimal formation of students' creative abilities, since they help to delve into objects and phenomena, to understand, to realize the specifics, the essence and uniqueness, the silhouette. According Krutetsky (1998) the creative imagination is the ability to combine life impressions, to create a creative image in which the unique, special and exceptional

will be presented in unity. This kind of ability is extremely important for adaptation and action in today's digitalized reality.

Due to inter-subject connections, students' creative abilities are developed through a more complex analytical and comparative perception of art, a deeper recognition of their mutual connection, which the psychologist Nalchajyan (1980) regards as the "nail and axis" of intellectual activity. The ratio of intuitive-conscious moments of human activity is extremely complex and ambiguous.

Vigotsky (1986) believes that human beings are inclined to the idea that not only in scientific and technical, but also in literary and artistic activities, imagination actively acts in close unity with logical thinking, coming, leading-transforming, as evidenced by creative psychologists, about the cruciform of imagination and thinking. That might be the truth also in the case of integrated visual art education outcome establishment.

When the idea of an integrated art education arises, without detracting from the role of the mysterious unconscious and subconscious components of creation, it should be noted, however, that thinking and imagination usually occupy an adequate place in the complex process of creativity. Every famous artist achieves perfection as a result of the harmonic combination of thought and idea. And that is the point that can be implemented as educational component in the curriculum in schools.

It follows that, relying on interdisciplinary links, when referring to them, a significant role is played by complex combinations of interesting conclusions obtained by the student, which function in the mental, cognitive activity of adolescents, in this case, when making comparisons in the coordination of various academic subjects.

Referring to the research of Samarin (1968) and his colleagues, Krutetsky (1998) describes the fact that from the formation of separate and partially coordinated combinations, the student moves to internal subject combinations (a higher degree, a level of formation that reflects the system of knowledge within the subject), and in higher grades, student creates conditions for the transition to higher levels of interdisciplinary combinations. What visual art can teach within interdisciplinary approaches is intrinsic to the successfulness for student own livelihood and society (Harris, 2011).

From all the above mentioned it follows that interdisciplinary links can provide a connection between art and different academic subjects, a common perception, and the formation of knowledge acquired in various academic fields.

The above is fully applicable to the combined study of integrated visual arts in all levels of school academy: elementary, middle and high. It is also clear that the passion for various branches of art in combination with educational classes, in-depth study of them

can be not an end in itself, but a means of turning a student of various genres and types of art into a means of forming creative abilities. In practice, this method of implementing interdisciplinary connections between fine arts and literature, in our opinion, contributes not only to the optimization of teaching these subjects, but also to the development of creative abilities of schoolchildren and a deeper assimilation of knowledge of these subjects. The latter is particularly emphasized, since interdisciplinary links or interdisciplinary combinations, being a high level of mental activity, exist and operate not only in the educational activity of the student, but also in other types of activities. In this regard the thesis of Samarin (1962) indicates that interdisciplinary relations should be carried out not only in the direction of logical activity, but also in the direction of the development of its specific types. To do the work of artists children need opportunities to behave, think, and perform like artists (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009).

Thus, when children study integrated visual art, interdisciplinary connections contribute to the development of their creative abilities and complex mental processes that has been observed, from fine art to illustrations of literary works, from art painting to creative classes, classrooms, schools, shop windows and billboards, in the process of decorating newspapers, as well as creating literary and artistic subjects based on poems, short stories, fairy tales, fables, creative essays, impressions of literary works.

Conducted desk review shows that search, research and problem-based learning methods contribute to the implementation of interdisciplinary connections while implementing visual art in the process of education. Using such methods, teachers can assign students in general such tasks, the implementation of which will require a comparative application of knowledge and skills in different subjects. In this case the main milestone of the curriculum is to facilitate independent learning in different educational environments (Douglas & Jaquith, 2009).

Students as learners act on the first place, the implementation, direction and development of their abilities and among the favorable conditions should be allocated using the method viable communication through art, or the thesis of the creative activities of students. The teacher's attention should be focused on any experience of independence and creative expression of students, the ability to extract the necessary information from the learning material. The arts are a fundamentally important part of the culture, and an education without them is an impoverished education leading to an impoverished society (Winner & Hetland, 2000).

Viable communication is based on asking questions or problems raised by students at the beginning of the lesson. While using this method, the creation of a favorable

atmosphere leads to greater viability of cognitive activity, providing an open assessment of learning outcomes, allows to identify omissions in knowledge, makes it viable and increases the authority and motivation of students' efforts, who, when composing their original questions, show cognitive and creative abilities, resourcefulness, especially if the problem has a logical connection with the learning material and worldview. It can also be noted that this method combines the control function of educational activities, creates a trusting relationship between the teacher and the pupil.

In such a situation, within certain limits, students should be given the opportunity to freely choose creativity in accordance with their interests and abilities. Integrated visual art is a perfect mean that helps to develop the creativity and emotional orientation in any age, despite of the child's intellectual abilities.

In this context, it is necessary to be guided by a parallel-comparative method, which is possible with the use of interdisciplinary connections for the presentation and understanding of the training material, identifying significant features and relationships in it.

This method is especially effective in combination with visual art integration at the initial stage of mastering the learning material in determining the basic concept, since to some extent it is a criterion that determines the sequence of theoretical provisions of the subject.

The depth of the definition of the concept, especially in the context of school education, coordinates the combinations between the characters that complement the logical range in teaching theoretical material. In addition, many of the concepts included in the system of perception of graphic subjects form a unified whole with other educational subjects, that is, they can be used for a different purpose.

In the process of teaching graphic concepts, the indirect means of its introduction plays a large role and can be important when referring to various knowledge, relationships and forms of action. For us, it is extremely important that the teaching of different types of art - folk art, fine art, literature and music - is in the same context. At the same time, a literary work can be included in the training not only as an illustration on the same topic that serves for this concept, but also as an emotional means of understanding the educational material, at the same time introducing students to literary works, developing in them the ability to sublimate (transform) imagination and creative thinking.

The process of enriching educational materials with emotional impressions, identifying the mutual links between science and art contribute to the education of a bright

sense of beauty. In turn, there is a justification for any educational material on the subject being taught, psychologically providing students with a viable learning experience.

An important methodological method of forming cognitive interest in graphic activities to stimulate emotionality and learning is the illustration of a literary work, with its integration into the visual arts. For the development of creative abilities in students, it is important to introduce a method for performing differential actions with educational material, which allows students and the teacher to choose educational proofs and examples for the exact conditions for the implementation of graphic activities.

An example of the differentiation of information can be the use of those basic concepts that relate to the forms of human activity, graphic objects. The implementation of alternatives to the training material involves the integration of tasks focused on drawing. Specific functionality is revealed in the process of integrating various academic subjects or activities. Such objects seem to contradict their constructive or artistic characteristics. Their connection with the visual arts makes it possible to increase the effectiveness of students' graphic activity, to give it an aesthetic, social, and emotional orientation.

## **CONCLUSION**

Thus, this method of teaching presentation, which is involved in educational activities, performs its inherent function, which is of great methodological importance, since the degree of integration of students into analytical learning is directly proportional to the effectiveness, integrity and reliability of knowledge assimilation. The implementation integrated visual art and related methods in education process provides for the features of the learning process, namely: a special educational and theoretical orientation, individualization of learning, using identification, development of creativity, emotional orientation, etc.

Education through art is a critical and vital point in the digitalized world. Still the role of teachers seems to be very important as they are mediators and critical link between what is and is not introduced and learnt in the classroom. It is teachers responsibility to allow the child to grow, to participate in art and be able to express himself through art.

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**The article submitted and sent to review: 25/11/2021**

**Accepted for publication: 09/02/2022**

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