



PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES TO THE ANALYSIS AND IMPROVEMENT OF STUDENTS' SKILLS IN PLEIN AIR PAINTING

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Abstract. *This article examines the pedagogical aspects that contribute to the development of creative potential and professional mastery among art students in the process of learning plein air painting. The methodological foundations of analyzing nature, perceiving color, and developing compositional thinking in open-air conditions are explored. Special attention is paid to creating an educational environment that stimulates the formation of an individual artistic style, aesthetic taste, and students' powers of observation. The study demonstrates that a systematic integration of theoretical knowledge and practical assignments in plein air painting fosters students' holistic perception of nature, their ability to convey the emotional and artistic state of a landscape, and the improvement of their technical skills.*

Keywords: *plein air, painting, artistic perception, composition, pedagogical technologies, creative thinking.*

Introduction. The term plein air (from the French plein air - "open air") refers to the artistic practice of creating works of art outdoors, in direct contact with nature. In the tradition of fine arts, plein air implies the artist's work outside the confines of the studio - under the open sky - where the goal is to capture the living impression of the surrounding world, its colors, light effects, and atmospheric changes [1, 3]. During plein air sessions, artists typically create sketches, studies, and color drafts that serve as the foundation for subsequent studio paintings. The main purpose of this activity is to cultivate in the artist a sensitive perception of color and light, as well as the ability to perceive the subtlest nuances and interrelations among natural

objects. Working outdoors enables not only the study of real color relationships but also a deeper understanding of nature's emotional state, allowing the artist to express its mood through color and composition.

The painter's task in plein air work is to reflect the living essence of nature, the interplay of light and shadow, and the movement of the atmosphere, inspired directly by the natural environment. It is important to recognize that natural lighting constantly changes; therefore, plein air painting demands a high level of observation, concentration, and professional mastery. Experienced artists note that the best results are achieved under certain pedagogical and organizational conditions [2, 4, 6]. For instance, it is advisable to work in the shade to avoid color distortion. On cloudy days, studies are often completed in a single session, since the stable, diffused light allows for several hours of uninterrupted work. Conversely, in sunny weather, a single sketch may require two or three sessions, each lasting approximately one and a half hours.

The process of creating a study in plein air typically follows a consistent sequence. First, the artist defines the general color mass, then quickly fills the entire compositional space, moving successively from the model's clothing to the face, from the face to the surrounding objects, and finally to the hands, attire, landscape, and other details. This systematic approach allows the painter to maintain the unity of perception and convey the natural harmony between the human figure and the environment.

Teaching students to paint outdoors and improving their proficiency in analyzing plein air art constitute an important aspect of the pedagogical methodology of art education. The essence of this pedagogical approach lies in combining group activities within a collective learning environment with individualized sessions for each student. Such a balance enables the implementation of a differentiated approach to the development of creative abilities. The analysis of pedagogical methods demonstrates that the effectiveness of plein air training is

directly linked to the formation of students' professional artistic thinking, observational skills, and the ability to perceive and analyze natural phenomena in their dynamic state.

The period of plein air practice serves not only as a time for technical refinement but also as a stage for the theoretical comprehension of the creative process. During this practice, students master the laws of color relationships, perspective, and composition, while developing the ability to convey the mood and emotional state of a natural motif. Pedagogical analysis of this process requires examining it from both the standpoint of art theory and the psychological and pedagogical principles of creative personality development.

Practical classes conducted in natural settings - in the mountains, on picturesque plains, near water bodies, or in parks - create a unique educational environment in which students learn to perceive the beauty of the surrounding world in all its diversity. Experience shows that it is through direct observation of nature that students develop the ability to freely interpret what they see, to convey the distinctive qualities of lighting, color, and form. Thus, plein air painting fosters the development of independent creative thinking and imagination.

It is recommended that teachers organize plein air sessions primarily during the summer period, when weather conditions are most favorable for prolonged observation and outdoor work. Such sessions not only develop students' artistic skills but also strengthen their connection with nature, fostering both ecological awareness and aesthetic thinking. Completing sketches and color studies in natural settings allows students to better understand the specific features of fine art and to apply theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom to real-life practice.

The fine arts curriculum includes a sequence of assignments aimed at developing students' compositional vision and skills in working with color. Particular importance is attached to exercises involving the depiction of natural objects, the observation of changes in lighting, and the creation of live sketches. This activity

promotes active growth of students' creative potential and strengthens their self-confidence. Systematic study and analysis of students' works enable the teacher to correct individual mistakes, eliminate perceptual inaccuracies, and guide the learners' artistic development in a targeted manner.

One of the most effective pedagogical methods is the collective discussion of completed works during group plein air sessions. Interaction between students and the teacher, exchange of opinions, and sharing of creative observations create a favorable atmosphere for the development of artistic thinking. Particularly useful is the analysis of studies completed during previous plein air classes: discussing compositional strengths and identifying mistakes helps students to gain a deeper understanding of the principles of pictorial structure and the regularities of natural perception.

Thus, the process of teaching plein air painting should be regarded not only as the development of technical skills but also as the formation of a holistic artistic worldview, emotional sensitivity, and the ability to perceive the world through the eyes of an artist.

Theoretical knowledge acquired by students in the course of fine art education is not always successfully applied in practice when working outdoors. From a pedagogical standpoint, it is essential to understand that depicting nature in plein air requires not only technical proficiency but also a well-developed imagination and the ability to perceive and convey artistic images. For this reason, the teacher must constantly observe students' progress during practical sessions, analyze their achievements and difficulties, provide timely clarification of mistakes, and guide the creative process.

The teacher's primary role lies not merely in supervision but in cultivating students' consistent motivation for independent artistic work. Art education should begin with the formation of value-based orientations - the students' awareness of the meaning and significance of art, its spiritual and cultural mission. It is important for

the teacher, from the very beginning of practical training, to emphasize that depicting nature demands attentiveness, precision, and depth of perception. This approach helps to prevent superficial attitudes toward painting and promotes the development of imaginative and associative thinking.

Students often make typical mistakes caused by haste, the absence of a unified compositional vision, inaccurate spatial perception, and insufficient sensitivity to color nuances. Such shortcomings manifest as fragmented imagery, disharmony between light and shadow, and unnatural color transitions. The causes of these difficulties may include inadequate adaptation to the natural environment, underdeveloped observational skills, and a misunderstanding of the fundamental principles of color perception.

During the learning process, it is crucial to systematically analyze these errors, examining the characteristics of lighting, the specifics of the color environment, and the perception of spatial depth. Joint discussion of artworks with the instructor helps students grasp the importance of harmony between warm and cool tones and the laws governing the interaction of color and light. This analytical approach develops students' ability to perceive nature holistically and to convey its emotional essence through the expressive means of painting.

Based on the conducted observations, it can be concluded that the success of plein air practice largely depends on the methodological competence of the instructor - their ability to combine theoretical explanations with practical demonstrations, to encourage students' initiative, and to create a creative and inspiring atmosphere. When the educational process is properly organized, students not only master technical techniques but also learn to perceive the beauty of the world through the eyes of an artist, expressing their own attitude toward nature - which represents the ultimate goal of artistic and pedagogical education.

Conclusions:

1. Plein air painting is one of the most important means of artistic and pedagogical education for students.

Working in the open air develops aesthetic perception, attentiveness, and the ability to perceive harmony in nature, while fostering emotional and imaginative thinking and a refined sense of color.

2. The effectiveness of instruction depends on the integration of theoretical knowledge and practical activity.

Only through consistent practice in natural conditions can students consciously apply the artistic principles of light, shadow, composition, and color, which ensures their professional development as future artists and educators.

3. The pedagogical role of the teacher lies in organizing observation, analysis, and correction of students' creative processes.

During plein air practice, the instructor should not only evaluate completed works but also guide students' thinking, helping them to identify and independently correct their mistakes.

4. Collective forms of learning promote the development of critical and aesthetic thinking.

Joint discussion of studies, exchange of opinions, and analysis of artistic solutions contribute to a deeper understanding of the laws of painting and the formation of professional reflection.

5. The pedagogical methodology of plein air instruction must be based on an individual approach.

It is essential to consider each student's level of preparedness, personal pace of development, creative interests, and emotional sensitivity, ensuring a balance between freedom of self-expression and pedagogical guidance.

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