

Implementing Discipline-Based Art Education in Kuwait Secondary Education

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مختصر البحث

لقد تطورت مناهج التربية الفنية النظامية على المستوى النظري خلال العشرين سنة الماضية، هذا بالإضافة إلى أهمية التربية الفنية كمادة تساعد على اكتساب المعرفة والابتكار، وتسرى الفن على أنه نموذج قابل للنمو. وفي هذا البحث نحاول أن نصل إلى إمكانية تحديد الشمولية لتدريس التربية الفنية في برنامج التربية الفنية النظامية عند طالبات المرحلة المتوسطة في دولة الكويت، باستخدام نوعين من الدروس : (١) عمل دروس من المكعبات وتوظيفها في أفكار تتناسب مع سن الطالبات. (٢) عمل تجارب تجريدية للفنون الشعبية يتعرف من خلالها الطالبات على برنامج التربية الفنية النظامية.

وبعد ذلك يكتب تقييم يحتوي على الجزء النظري والجزء العملي. والدراسة توضح أن هناك مواقف إيجابية كثيرة تؤثر على تعلم التلاميذ، وهذا يبين لنا أن منهج التربية الفنية النظامية له مكان واضح في برنامج التربية الفنية في دولة الكويت.

Abstract

Discipline-Based Education has been developed on a theoretical level over the past twenty years. While it includes those aspects of art education which are significant in the knowledge, appreciation and creation of art it has been seen as a model more often than as a viable working process. This article seeks to assess the potential for the inclusion of discipline-based art education into a Kuwaiti (females) secondary art lesson. Using two lesson types; a Cubist lesson sequence (11th grade), incorporating the ideas and visions associated with that school, and an Abstract Expressionism and Pop-Op Art lesson sequence (12th grade), students were introduced to a discipline-based art education approach. Evaluation was then carried out through a written assessment including both verbal and visual content. The study concludes that there is a strong positive affect on students' learning and that discipline-based art education has a place in the art education program in Kuwait.

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Innovations in art education have been significant and far reaching including criteria based education, standard-driven education and discipline-based art education. Discipline-based Art Education (DBAE) has proven to be significant in its requirements of broad areas of knowledge and learning, which the student benefits from. While DBAE has been considered to be a viable theoretical model it has not been implemented in a significant number of non-western classrooms. It is the focus of this study to investigate the implementation of DBAE in Kuwaiti secondary classrooms. Kuwait seeks to provide the highest quality in its education programs and DBAE can be of significant value in the art education program of Kuwait.

Problem:

Discipline-Based Art Education (DBAE) is a western-developed approach to art education. There have been few examples of its inclusion in art education programs outside of western societies. This study seeks to design a lesson combining aspects of DBAE and its presentation to secondary art education classes in Kuwait. This study, while introducing western schools of art (Cubism, Abstract Expressionism and Op Art), will be aware of the uniqueness of the Kuwaiti culture. Values and traditions of the society will be acknowledged and maintained in the presentation of art works.

Hypothesis:

1. That Discipline-Based Art Education is a viable and meaningful method of art education which can be adopted and implemented in a lesson plan format in Kuwait
2. Those secondary students in Kuwaiti art classrooms will demonstrate an enhanced understanding and appreciation of art after experiencing DBAE lesson sequences.

Rationale:

This study intends to identify if a series of Discipline-Based Art Education lessons, centered on the Cubist school at one grade level and another centered on Abstract Expressionism and Pop-Op Art at another level, can be successfully taught in a secondary art education classrooms in Kuwait with identifiable positive outcomes. It is believed that the development and implementation of DBAE in Kuwait would be of benefit for Kuwaiti students in their increased knowledge, understanding and appreciation of art.

Limitations:

This study is based on the introduction of schools of art (Cubism, Abstract Expressionism and Pop-Op Art), while known and taught in Kuwait, they are not indigenous to the region. This is done in an effort to insure that results may be compared and contrasted to those of other studies, which have used a similar format. The need to formulate and implement DBAE lessons using Kuwaiti cultural content would add to the significance and understanding of the potential for DBAE in Kuwait art education.

Goals and Objectives:

This paper will seek to:

1. Design Discipline-Based Art Education lesson sequences to be presented in Kuwaiti secondary art classrooms
2. Through a written assessment measure the degree of knowledge and awareness exhibited following the lesson sequence
3. Evaluate the outcomes of the instruction and identify the potential for the success of DBAE as an instructional format in a Kuwait secondary art education program

Review of the Literature:

An interesting paradox attends current discussion of Discipline-Based Art Education. On the one hand the comment is heard that, "this is nothing new, the ideas have been around for decades." On the other hand is the remark that "DBAE is present in theory, but can it be accomplished in the classroom?" Salome (1987) asked, "Where can I find descriptions of application of DBAE programs, and analysis of the results that prove they work? Are there any research reports that translate DBAE theory into classroom practice?" (p. 67). He pointed out that, although theoretical articles about the discipline-based approach detail characteristics such as the requirement for a balanced art curriculum derived from aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production, and integration of content for instruction, more papers are needed that "describe classroom application of DBAE curricula". He wrote that "there has been no widely distributed data describing successful, DBAE programs," and that there is a need to "compare the achievements of students of DBAE and non-DBAE programs" (p.67)

What can we attribute the failure to move from theory to practice to be in the view of Stephen Dobbs (1989) attributable to the “generality and irrelevance of much published theory and the scarcity of interpreters.”? The need to make DBAE theory a reality in the classroom lies in the need for understandable implementation methods. If, Dobbs argues, implementation is stagnate there needs to be a improvement in professional development, curriculum development, assessment and teaching resources.

Earlier studies reported results of integrated instruction compared with traditional programs (Day, 1969, 1976) and provide additional descriptions of the “classroom applications” that contributed to student achievement. A study commissioned by the Getty Center for Education in the Arts in “search for school districts that are developing art education programs that include art production, art history, and art criticism.” (Duke, 1984). This study yielded “rich and vivid accounts of how art specialists and general classroom teachers are practicing disciplined-based art education” (p.v).

While considerable attention has been paid to elementary art curriculum development (Eisner, 1996; Gardner, 1996; Gentile, 1989) there have been fewer studies of DBAE theory applied at the secondary level in the literature (Eisner, 1996). Earlier studies applied and tested DBAE theory in the junior high schools were conducted at the time that the ideas of McFee (1961), Barkan (1962), Smith (1966), Eisner and Ecker (1966), and others were supplanting the foundation for art education laid by D’Amico (1942), Read (1945), Lowenfeld (1947), and Schaffer-Simmern (1948). These involved the development of in-depth lesson units that integrated content derived from the disciplines of art production, art criticism and art history.

A redefinition of the role and relationship of the art specialist and the classroom teacher has evolved, as discipline-based art education programs have been implemented (www.finearts.armstrong.edu). As national standards have been developed and accepted by many school districts the question of their relationship to DBAE has been asked repeatedly. Eisner (1996) argues that the presentation of the National Standards for Arts Education (USA, 1994) ratified the role of DBAE in the future of art education. The goals and standards reflect a striking similarity to those of Discipline-Based Art Education’s (Ibid.). The question remains how effective is implementation and what are possible achievement outcomes?

Implementation in Kuwait Secondary Education

The transference of DBAE to Kuwait and its implementation has been considered (Al-Muhanna, 1995) and found to be potentially successful at the theoretical level. This study seeks to identify the anticipated success of implementation in actuality.

Consideration of art history, production, esthetics and criticism has been incorporated in the art lesson presented in accordance with DBAE principles.

This study seeks to address the implementation of Discipline-Based Art Education in terms of the following questions:

1. How might DBAE be applied at the secondary level (junior high, middle and/or senior high level)?
2. Does the academic DBAE approach result in programs of instruction that add to student interest in the arts?
3. Does the quality of students' art production increase when a balanced art curriculum is implemented?
4. Is balance among the four art disciplines needed for DBAE at the secondary level?

Each DBAE lesson has three segments: Visual Analysis, Art Production, and Critical and Historical Analysis. Into these three segments fit interactive concepts and skills from other disciplines: aesthetics, art criticism, art history, and art production. Each complete lesson contains practice in all four, including a studio art activity (see Fig. 1 and 2).

Figures 1 and 2 present lessons as taught into two different art classrooms in Kuwait and included all four aspects of DBAE instruction. These lessons identify visual concepts (Visual Analysis), their incorporation into tutored images (Art Production) and their relation to the world of art (Critical/Historical Analysis) that constitute DBAE instruction. These are the first in a series of lessons one on collage (Cubist) and a second series on painting (Pop-Op Art).

During Visual Analysis, students learn verbal and visual art vocabulary by analyzing real-world or art images for their aesthetic properties. Learning these vital concepts prepares the student to construct images that contain the same properties or concepts during Art Production and, upon completion, to identify these properties or concepts in their own images. During Critical Analysis students learn to look more deeply at other works of art and identify the same properties and images. Historical analysis involves the student placing art objects into a cultural and historical context. Conceptual consistency is crucial to the effectiveness of a DBAE lesson; once a teacher knows the basic DBEA structure, he/she is free to modify the imagery and art techniques without jeopardizing any lesson's conceptual content or the conceptual consistency of the curriculum. This is of particular importance when we consider adopting a DBAE paradigm to a non-western culture such as Kuwait. Adaptation is a vital and ongoing aspect of discipline-based art education.

Eleventh Grade Lesson:

A six-week unit of instruction about Cubism was developed for 137 eleventh grade students in five art foundation classes; both control (two sections) and experimental groups were taught to determine effects of an integrated teaching approach. The purpose was to investigate ways to integrate traditional studio art activities with critical, historical and aesthetic activities and to evaluate the outcomes in terms of a written test with verbal and visual items. Results of the study indicated that students learned critical and historical content better when it was integrated with studio activities than when it was presented in the traditional lecture technique.

A pre-test was administered consisting of twenty-five questions. Included were questions focusing on students' previous knowledge of Cubism (visual), their attitude towards art in general, their prior activities in art (studio), and their knowledge of art in relation to a broader context. Each question was ranked for significance and weighted. Students were requested to answer on a scale of "Very Significant" to "Less Significant." There was also provided opportunity for comments if required.

Results of the pre-test indicated that the majority of students (63%) had no prior knowledge of Cubism as an art related school or term. Fewer than 20 students were able

to identify a Cubist art piece when presented in the context of 5 artworks. Eighty-three percent of the population expressed a positive attitude towards art-related activities and a willingness to learn about art related material. All students had a prior studio experience in some media. Less than thirty-two percent (32%) stated they felt art had a relationship to broader aspects of culture.

Students were introduced, through the use of slides and art reproductions, to the three major phases of Cubism: the Ce'zanne phase that carried the French master's work a logical step farther, the Analytical phase that emphasized intellectual analysis, equally of positive and negative space, and the integrity of the picture plane, pushing abstraction to near non-objectivity; and, the Synthetic phase that introduced collage, returned to the use of color and texture, and featured the artists' fluent and playful investigation of the concept of "reality" in art.

To gain a context for the study of Cubism, students viewed Impressionist paintings and listened to DeBussy's musical compositions, then compared these to Cubist paintings and Stravinsky's music. The students noticed how one art style related to an earlier style, in this case through the artists' rejection of ideas and practices of their predecessors. They studied how the Cubists turned away from the sunny and light palette of the Impressionists toward more limited and somber colors. They saw how the Cubists rejected the misty, atmospheric, shimmering light qualities of the Impressionists and emphasized solid form after the manner of Cez'anne, whose ideas they embraced. As students studied the Ce'zanne phase of Cubism, they experimented with flattened perspective and equal emphasis of positive and negative space in their own work and they explored the use of the dull colors of that phase.

As they were introduced to Analytical Cubism and the artists' almost total obliteration of subject through an intellectual process of abstraction, the students heard a recording of poetry, made by an English teacher, and were introduced to the concept of "stream of consciousness" in context with the Cubist ideas of time, space and multiple views. The experimental group worked on a painting based on the notion of simultaneous views of an object, and attempted to achieve an equality of visual interest in the positive and negative spaces of their work.

The fact that the students were employing ideas and practices in their artwork that were developed by famous artists seemed to impress and motivate them. A concern expressed by some educators regarding the selection of an art style for study by students is that students might copy the appearance of the style with no understanding of content. In this unit, however, it was the conceptual content of the style, not the appearance, from which art activities were derived for students. The conclusions of the study address this point: The teachers felt that the artwork produced by the experimental group was above average in quality and individuality. Students' artwork was not of a "copied" nature, nor did most of it appear to be especially Cubist. Most of the paintings and collages were highly individual and varied in subject matter, color selection, technique, and composition. Study of the art history subject matter seemed to provide students with increased depth of background in art and added motivation for their studio work.

The most successful studio activity was a collage still life did in conjunction with study of the Cubists' invention of collage and the artists' use of a wide range of materials in their works. The students' experience with equality of positive and negative space and simultaneous multiple views in their own work was utilized as they developed collages made largely out of drawings and paintings they created themselves based on a still life arrangement. During the first class period in this sequence, students made a contour pencil drawing of the still life (Fig.1), applying what they had learned in a previous drawing unit about proportion, composition, and shading. They chose their drawing surfaces from a wide variety of papers (white drawing paper, manila, newsprint, oatmeal, rice paper) and some cloth materials.

During the second meeting students tried more expressive interpretations of the same still life using pen, brush, and ink on different surfaces. The third meeting was spent making watercolor paintings of the same still life setup. All of these renderings were saved for the culminating activity, a collage still life using parts of the three studies they had previously done and additional materials such as cloth, wallpaper samples, and sandpapers. All of the concepts that had been derived from Cubist art and studied by students in this unit were available to them for this final activity. They were encouraged to draw and paint on the collage as they saw the need to clarify their ideas.

Although the teachers noted a high level of achievement in art production, the primary intent of the unit was to teach historical and critical knowledge rather than the production of skills. The critical and historical material was presented in episodes ranging from five to twenty minutes at the most, and appeared to explain the following:

1. Shorter periods of subject matter presentation were possible with the experimental method, thus accommodating short attention spans of some students.
2. Individual confrontations by students with aesthetic problems similar to problems with which the Cubists were concerned seemed to cause many to take a "second look" at Cubist paintings and theories
3. Students' daily involvement with their own original art work based on ideas introduced through the study of Cubism resulted in many opportunities for reinforcement of subject matter concepts through causal discussion.
4. Increased respect and understanding for Cubist paintings seemed to result as students discovered through their own artistic efforts the magnitude and nature of the Cubists' contributions to Twentieth Century art.

The responses from the written assessment indicated that students had gained a positive overall experience. Students demonstrated an increased ability to identify Cubist works of art (82%), and to identify a relationship between art and aspects of culture (73%). Their expressed attitude towards art did not show a significant change (86%) though it did increase.

Twelfth Grade Lesson

Further exploration of integrated art lessons occurred in the 12th grade art appreciation classes. Enrollment of 159 secondary students in six sections of art appreciation was included in this portion of the study. The goal of the researchers in this section of the study included:

How can students be assisted to perceive aesthetic qualities and relations in works of art? How might the critical, historical and productive aspects of art

learning be integrated in the classroom? What means are available for evaluation of aesthetic perception and art appreciation? How can we educate for art appreciation?

Two experimental art units focused on the study of Abstract Expressionism and Pop-Op Art. Two sections taught of art appreciation adhered to the standard curriculum. These eight-week units involved approximately 40 hours of class time. The experimental curricula for the two art styles were based on the following guidelines:

1. Students viewed many slides, filmstrips, and movies explaining the art style they were studying.
2. Students and teachers discussed salient characteristics and underlying aesthetic concepts of the style. For example, the concept of social awareness painting as practiced by the Pop-Op Artists was discussed in relation to the result of the awareness, i.e. the painting themselves.
3. Students were made aware of biographical and cultural information pertinent to the milieu surrounding the art style, which they studied.
4. Students engaged in studio activities based on visual aesthetic concepts exemplified within the style, which they studied. For example, students explored the visual effects of the juxtaposition of bands of complementary hues, as in Op Art, by creating their own design and paintings.

The pre-test administered reflected that used at the 12th grade level with the exception that the focus was on Abstract Expressionism and Pop-Op Art prior knowledge. Students expressed similar knowledge, preferences and attitudes as those of the 11th grade students.

The objectives for this lesson (Fig.2) include the student's ability to:

1. Recognize and discuss universal themes
2. Recognize how the illusion of mass can be created by color, line and/or texture in a two dimensional work
3. Judge an artwork based on its organizational ability to create a vivid and intense image

4. Identification and analysis of the effect media and techniques have on the expressive and formal content of an artwork
5. Identification of the medium and techniques used in selected artworks and their influence on expressive qualities

Evaluation was achieved through the administration of a written assessment that students filled-out at the beginning of the following lesson. Teachers evaluated artworks produced based on the criteria presented to students. Questions such as the following were included in the assessment for this particular lesson:

1. Describe the action depicted-what is going on? Where are we?
How do we know this?
2. How many figures are depicted here? Do we see these figures in detail? Are the figures still or in motion? Can we tell exactly what action is occurring here?
3. What sorts of colors is the artist using? Is the painting bright or bland? How do colors help the artist achieve this?
4. How does the artist express the rapid movements and energy in this scene?
5. Did a man or a woman paint this work? Why do you think so?

The results indicate that the students have achieved a new awareness and knowledge of the particular school of art that they understood how color and line worked in a painting to produce a sense of expression, in general and specifically in the painting of Elaine DeKoonig. Students in the control group showed a reduced awareness and ability to identify the expressive nature of the same work of art. These students produced works of art that appeared to have less motion and be less integrated artworks in terms of color, intensity, motion and line. Kuwaiti (female) students, participating in the DBAE instruction, appeared to benefit from a positive experience and gained new and additional insight.

Conclusion:

The intent of this study was to determine if discipline-based education might prove to be successfully implemented in secondary art education classrooms in Kuwait. In an effort to establish the potential for success two different art classes were chosen. Each class was presented with an appropriate lesson based on the level and the nature of the class. Control groups were taught similar lessons using the traditional methodology. Pre-test were administered to establish a base line for knowledge and attitude to all groups. Following the lesson teachers evaluated students on both their artwork and their knowledge as expressed in an in-class evaluation.

It was determined that Kuwaiti (female) students benefited (positively) from DBAE instruction. Discipline-based art education signals a fundamental change of direction in Kuwait for art education because it provides, in a systematic form, essential visual concepts needed to express ideas in an artist way. Although the optimum curriculum is yet to appear, students receiving DBAE instruction generate more knowledgeable and more expressive artistic images than students who receive non-discipline based instruction. Interlocking images that form the conceptual core of DBAE lessons are, it can be argued, the potential avenue for both making and appreciating the visual arts.

Fig. 1 Cubist Lesson

TOPIC: DESCRIBING SHAPE WITH LINE – CONTOUR DRAWING

GRADE: Eighth/Adult **DATE:** April, 1997

OVERVIEW (Teacher's Intention): Participants will make a contour drawing of a still life in pencil on a 21x29.7 cm smooth white drawing paper.

LEARNNG OBJECTIVES:

VISUAL ANALYSIS

ART PRODUCTION

CRITICAL/HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

On completing this lesson the student will be able to:

Identify

Use pencil to make

Identify art concepts in line drawings by:

Contours

Contour Lines

Picasso

Kuhn

Lines

Kinds of lines

Matisse

Shapes

Qualities of lines

Barque

Overlapping

Expressive lines

Delaunay

Production

Overlapping shapes

Landacre

Space

Large, medium and
Small shapes

VISUAL ANALYSIS:

VOCABULARY WORDS:

Contour

Line

Shape

Space

Edge

Short-long, etc.

Positive-negative

Shallow

External

Thick-thin, etc.

Overlapping

Contrast

Internal

Straight-rigid, etc.

Proportion

VOCABULARY IMAGES:

Line Drawing

Photographs of still lifes

Contour drawing by Picasso

Diagram of overlapping shapes

ART PRODUCTION:

MATERIALS:

6 B drawing pencils
A4 smooth white drawing paper
Erasers

DEMONSTRATION:

The teacher uses the materials described to demonstrate ways to produce the following visual concepts:

1. Kinds of lines: short-long, curved-straight, broken-continuous
2. Qualities of lines: thick-thin, hard-soft, clean-fuzzy
3. Expressive lines: straight-rigid, diagonal-exciting, horizontal-restful, vertical-dignified, undulating-energetic
4. Line describing an edge: external contour (outline)
5. Line describing an internal edge: internal contour
6. Overlapping lines and shapes

The teacher presents the criteria upon which assessment will be based and art work evaluated.

CLASS ACTIVITY:

Students use prescribes art materials to make an image that will display the characteristics stated by the teacher as criteria for assessment.

EVALUATION OF ARTWORK:

Each student creates a drawing that will:

1. Depict contours (edges) of a still life by means of line.
 2. Touch at least two edges of the paper
 3. Have thick and thin, soft and hard lines
 4. Have three kinds of shapes: small, medium and large
 5. Have overlapping shapes
 6. Express the character of the still life represented
-

CRITICAL/HISTORICAL ANALYSIS:

ART IMAGES: Line drawings by Matisse, Kuhn, Picasso

ART INFORMATION: Names of artists, their countries and lifespans: titles of drawings, dates, media and size
Additional visual analysis concepts in preparation for a following lesson on creating volume

Fig. 2 Pop-Op Lesson

TOPIC: DESCRIBING EXPRESSIVE QUALITIES

GRADE: Eighth/Adult **DATE:** April, 1997

OVERVIEW (Teacher's Intention): Participants will make a gesture drawing in charcoal or pencils on 21 x 29.7 cm smooth white drawing paper.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES:

VISUAL ANALYSIS

ART PRODUCTION

CRITICAL/HISTORICAL ANALYSIS

On completing this lesson the student will be able to:

Identify

Use pencil/charcoal to make

Identify art concepts in works by:

Contours

Contour Lines

DeKooning

Lines

Kinds of Lines

Rothko

Shapes

Qualities of lines

Kline

Overlapping

Expressive lines

Motherwell

Production

Overlapping shapes

Color

Intensity of tone

VISUAL ANALYSIS

VOCABULARY WORDS:

Contour

Line

Shape

Space

Color

Edge

Short-long, etc

Positive-negative

Shape

Shade

External

Thick-thin, etc.

Overlapping

Contrast

Tone

Internal

Straight-rigid, etc.

Proportion

Hew

VOCABULARY IMAGES:

Line Drawing

Photographs of gestures

Painting by Elaine De Kooning (*Baseball Players*)

Table of tonal gradients

ART PRODUCTION

MATERIALS:

Pencils
Charcoal sticks
A4 smooth white drawing paper

DEMONSTRATION:

The teacher uses the materials described to demonstrate ways to produce the following visual concepts:

1. Kinds of lines: short-long, curved-straight, broken-continuous
2. Qualities of lines: thick-thin, hard-soft, clean-fuzzy
3. Expressive lines: straight-rigid, diagonal-exciting, horizontal-restful, vertical-dignified, undulating-energetic
4. Line describing an edge: external contour (outline)
5. Line describing an internal edge: internal contour
6. Overlapping lines and shapes
7. Shading to provide volume and placement

The teacher presents the criteria upon which assessment will be based and the artwork evaluated.

CLASS ACTIVITY:

Students use prescribed art materials to make an image that will display the characteristics stated by the teacher as criteria for assessment.

EVALUATION OF ARTWORK:

Each student creates a drawing that will:

1. Depict contours (edges) of a still life by means of line.
 2. Touch at least two edges of the paper
 3. Have thick and thin, soft and hard lines
 4. Have three kinds of shapes: small, medium and large
 5. Have overlapping shapes
 6. Express the character of the gesture represented
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CRITICAL/HISTORICAL ANALYSIS:

ART IMAGES: Drawing and Paintings by DeKooning, Rothko, Kline, and Motherwell

ART INFORMATION: Names of artists, their countries and lifespans:
titles of drawings/paintings, dates, media and size
Additional visual analysis concepts in preparation
for a following lesson on color.

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