

Teaching Methods of Photography Techniques - General Aspects

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Abstract: *This article endeavours to investigate the effectiveness of various teaching methods within the artistic educational system, focusing on how different pedagogical approaches influence student creativity and engagement. Key findings reveal that interactive and experiential teaching methods significantly enhance student creativity and engagement compared to traditional lecture-based approaches. Furthermore, the data indicates that students exposed to diverse artistic teaching strategies demonstrate improved performance and a higher level of intrinsic motivation. The significance of these findings extends beyond the immediate educational context, offering valuable insights into enhancing healthcare education, where creativity and critical thinking are essential for future professionals. By highlighting the importance of adaptive teaching methods in fostering an engaging learning environment, the study suggests that implementing similar strategies in healthcare training programmes could lead to improved outcomes in problem-solving. Ultimately, this article underlines the critical role of innovative pedagogical approaches in shaping not only artistic education but also enhancing the competencies required in this domain.*

Keywords: *artistic education; Fine Arts; teaching method; teaching photography;*

Introduction

In the field of education, the recognition of effective teaching strategies is becoming more prominent, especially in the arts education sector where creativity is fundamental for student involvement and growth. Traditionally, teaching methods in arts education have frequently been eclipsed by conventional approaches focused on memorization and one-sided instruction. These models may not adequately support the development of the creative skills that are vital for students aiming for careers in the arts, potentially undermining their opportunities for innovation and individual expression. As contemporary educational paradigms evolve, there is a pressing need to examine how alternative, interactive, and experiential teaching strategies can better facilitate artistic learning outcomes. This research aims to address the creative pedagogies within arts education, where conventional methods dominate and often stifle the inherent creativity of learners. Specifically, the study investigates the impact of varied teaching methodologies—ranging from project-based learning to collaborative art-making—on students' engagement and creative expression. The principal objective of this article is to encompass a broad analysis of existing teaching methods utilised in artistic education, the exploration of how these methods influence student creativity and engagement, and the proposal of innovative strategies that can effectively enhance learning.

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1. Teaching Methods Used in Fine Arts Education

In the process of artistic education, we make use of the teaching-learning methodology that aims to stimulate the intellectual-artistic of the student. This process is based on a structure that facilitates the exposure and absorption of artistic-plastic information in the teacher-student relationship.

The teaching method thus refers to the procedures and directions established in the school curriculum for achieving the target objectives. These procedures are structured on a series of presentations and theoretical-practical activities aimed at achieving the objectives pursued. Speaking about the Method and the subordinate elements: the Process and the Activities, we must emphasize again the importance of the structure of the teaching methods – a structure based on logical principles meant to create an efficient and last but not least pleasant teaching-learning process environment. These procedures and activities are meant to create a balance between the volume of theoretical information and practical activities – whether we are talking about the course of a lesson or the entire school year. As a first result, we want to eliminate monotony through continuous alternating stimulation but also lack of inspiration or mental exhaustion of the student.

I. Cerghit, in his book – *Metode de Învățământ III*², classifies teaching methods into four broad categories:

- I – methods of communication and acquisition of social-cultural values;
- II - methods of systematic exploration of objective reality;
- III – methods based on action (practice);
- IV – rationing methods;

In turn, the four major methodical categories include several hierarchically subordinate methods.

1. Methods of oral communication that are subdivided into:

a. expository methods comprising narration, description, explanation, theoretical demonstration, lecture, conference, e.t.c.

„Like any human activity, photography must be well learned. Apparently, it is very easy to take photos. Just read the *how to use* a camera and one can take perfect photos”³

b. interrogative methods (conversational, dialogical) which include heuristic conversation, discussions or debates, brainstorming, e.t.c. „... the general principles of composition and lighting should not remain for the photographer in the form of dogmatic rules that cannot be violated, because this would invite a schematic and arid appearance of the photographic images, instead of the lively and artistic resolution of the chosen themes.”⁴

c. Problem-solving training methods (problem-solving learning)

Comparative Analysis of Methods

- Skill Development vs. Conceptual Inquiry. Traditional demonstration-based teaching excels at transmitting technical skills, whereas constructivist and inquiry-based methods better support conceptual risk-taking and problem-solving. Effective programs often blend both: targeted technical workshops embedded within open-ended projects.

- Individual Practice vs. Collaborative Learning. Solo studio time fosters deep material engagement; collaborative projects simulate professional contexts and broaden critical

² Ioan Cerghit. 1997. *Metode de învățământ*, ediția a III-a revizuită. București: Editura Didactică și Pedagogică S.A.

³ Eugen Iarovici. 1977. *Măiestria în Fotografie*. București: Editura Tehnică, p.10.

⁴ L. Diko, E. Iofis. 1961. *Tehnica și Arta Fotografică*. București: Editura Tehnică, p. 350.

perspectives. A balanced curriculum sequences individual mastery with collaborative assignments to cultivate both independence and teamwork.

- Analog Materiality vs. Digital Tools. Material-led practices emphasize tactility and serendipity; digital tools enable reproducibility and new forms of expression. Pedagogical choice should align with learning outcomes-whether the goal is craftsmanship, conceptual experimentation, or cross-disciplinary innovation.

2. Methods of written communication (based on written language), including text analysis, information and documentation.

3. Methods of oral-visual communication that include film training, television training, e.t.c. videodisc training. Studio-based learning remains central to art education. In this model, the studio functions as both workshop and laboratory: students engage in material exploration, critique, and iterative making while instructors facilitate conceptual framing and technical guidance. Recent work advocates embedding theoretical discourse directly into studio practice so that critique sessions, research tasks, and reflective writing become integral to material production rather than add-ons. This integration enhances students' conceptual clarity and supports the development of artistic authorship

4. Methods of inner communication that include personal reflection and thought experiment.

„... The photographer is indebted to himself and to his audience, to convey valuable, interesting, noble, current, original ideas and feelings. That is why he must carry out a continuous work of getting closer to the culture, of familiarizing himself with the most advanced thinking and also with the basic problems of his contemporaries”⁵.

II – Methods of organized exploration of reality classified in turn into:

1. Methods of direct exploration of reality including independent systematic observation, observation under experimental conditions (conducting experiments and experiments), case study, conducting investigations, elaborating e.t.c. monographs.

„There is a lot of talk about the objective and subjective in photography. It is true that in photography there is a waste of objective factors. From the subject to the camera and then to the photographic materials and processes, to the image on paper, only objective factors meet”⁶.

2. Methods of indirect exploration of reality, here we are talking about demonstration methods and modeling methods.

III – Action-based methods (practical methods), which are subdivided into two categories, namely:

1. Methods of effective, real or authentic action, including exercise, practical work, workshop work, elaboration of e.t.c. projects. Project-based learning (PBL) is a teaching-learning method in which students acquire skills by actively engaging in the realization of a project on relevant, real-world topics.⁷

2. Methods of simulated or fictitious action in which didactic games, simulation games, dramatized learning e.t.c. „Finding the subject. The general idea with which we set off was *autumn*. Now, this general idea must be concretized. You must look for the subject (or subjects) that can express this idea, you have to find those situations, those real objects, that allow themselves to be transformed into plastic elements that, in turn, form a coherent image signifying *autumn*”⁸

⁵ Eugen Iarovici. 1977. *Măiestria în Fotografie*. București: Editura Tehnică, p. 11.

⁶ L. Diko, E. Iofis, *op. cit.*, p. 14.

⁷ Larmer, J., Mergendoller, J., & Boss, S. 2015. *Setting the standard for project-based learning. A proven approach to rigorous classroom instruction*. ASCD. Alexandria, VA.

⁸ L. Diko, E. Iofis, *op. cit.*, p. 72.

IV – Methods of rationalization of the contents and teaching-learning operations in which algorithmic methods, programmed training, computer-assisted training etc.

The rise of AI in arts pedagogy offers adaptive feedback and creative tool augmentation. AI tools are increasingly used for modelling, neuroanalysis, and visual approximation, enabling adaptive learning environments that respond to individual student needs. Furthermore, specialized software—ranging from graphic programs to 3D modelling and digital sculpting platforms—has become standard in the classroom. For instance, the use of digital styluses and tablets in primary education has been shown to improve rhythmic arrangement and critical assessment skills while maintaining high student motivation.

1.2 Teaching Methods Used in Fine Arts Education - Functions

Another important element, on which the elements mentioned above, and the teaching process itself depend, is the correct adaptation of the contents and directions of the methods and implicitly of the procedures and activities to the student's age. Thus, following the methodological structuring, it is intended to offer the student an adequate environment for the assimilation of information but also for stimulating the creative process. „Unfortunately, most photography magazines and books actually encourage photographers to imitate, indicating to readers exactly what to do and how to proceed. Of course, this is necessary in terms of ordinary techniques, but absolutely valuable beyond elementary techniques, because the power of creation can only be sought and found in yourself”⁹ The methodology, through its tools generically called procedures and activities, are prone to dynamic, flexible directions meant to make the teaching-learning process as attractive as possible, but these elements are designed to achieve the proposed educational goal. In this direction, each process and activity has a series of key characteristics and objectives called Functions¹⁰. In a broad-spectrum approach, we can categorize these functions as follows:

- *the cognitive function* – organizing and directing the knowledge of the theory of specific language elements, but also of the working techniques or ways of compositional organization; a notion that can be explained by the fact that the training method represents a way, a means or a way through which a series of knowledge can be acquired, information can be acquired, various notions can be formed, all of which contribute to the amplification of the students' sphere of knowledge, thus to the achievement of cognitive progress.

- *the motivational function* – to awaken the interest in artistic creation, for the transformation of form, for the discovery of chromatic harmonies, for the plastic field in general; It consists in the fact that through the way they are selected and used, the teaching methods can increase the attractiveness of the contents and implicitly the motivation of students for a learning activity.

- *the operational/instrumental function* – the element of connection between the student and the contents specific to the artistic discipline, between the proposed operational objectives and the proposed plastic themes; It is explained by the fact that the methods represent execution techniques, true work tools that help teachers and students to achieve the educational objectives by virtue of which any training-learning activity is carried out. „In a photograph, in addition to the value of the subject itself, its illumination is also of great importance. Which can be natural or artificial. Both have advantages and disadvantages”¹¹. With each method, although the subject remains

⁹ Andreas Feninger. 1967. *Fotograficul Creator*. București: Editura Meridiane, p. 95.

¹⁰ Virgil Frunză. 2004. *Elemente de Metodologie a Instruirii*. Constanța: Muntenia, pp. 10-12.

¹¹ Helmut Stapf. 1958. *Practica Fotografică*. București: Editura Tehnică, p. 176.

unchanged, the results are totally different – the choice of tools, if in the case of natural light the equipment can be simple, in the case of artificial light the number of devices and their complexity increase – the wise choice determines the creative path.

- *the normative function, action optimization*, consists in the fact that the method indicates how to proceed, what rules must be followed, how operations must be prioritized within a more complex approach. „... Making a correct negative and therefore a successful photograph, at least from a technical point of view, means the exact establishment of three variable parameters: the distance between the camera and the subject to be photographed, the exposure time and the aperture”¹².

- *the formative-educational function* – of modelling attitudes, beliefs and feelings towards the beauty of nature, art and society, of practicing and developing psychic and motor processes, in parallel with the acquisition of knowledge and the formation of detachments specific to artistic activities. „... The photographic image can be reached through a chain of automated processes, without the intervention of any subjective factor. So, what does *the man behind the machine* do!? When and where does the subjective factor appear? Anytime and anywhere throughout the *technological process* of obtaining the photographic image! How? By *choice and decision*. At any stage there are several variants”¹³. The characteristic element lies in the fact that, through the use of methods, the various psychic processes and activities that enter the Structure of the Human Psychic System are influenced and educated and implicitly, a series of skills, capacities, operative structures, attitudes, beliefs, feelings are formed in the students, all of which have a decisive role in the formation and further development of the students' personality.

Assessment in art education must capture process as well as product. Formative assessment-through critiques, process logs, and iterative reviews-supports ongoing development, while summative assessment evaluates final works against articulated criteria. Reflective practices, such as artist statements and process portfolios, make tacit decisions explicit and prepare students for professional contexts (galleries, residencies, or industry). Embedding theory within studio practice also strengthens students' ability to situate their work within critical and historical frameworks, an essential skill for contemporary artistic careers.

2. Contemporary approaches on teaching photography

Fine arts education is currently undergoing a significant paradigm shift, transitioning from classical master-apprentice models toward more interactive, student-cantered, and technology-mediated pedagogies. In the last decades, traditional teaching, within the academic environment, have migrated towards a computer-based teaching and learning approach¹⁴. Digital technologies have moved from being peripheral tools to core components of the fine arts curriculum. These innovations provide new affordances for spatial exploration, conceptual visualization, and creative expression¹⁵. This evolution is motivated by the need to prepare students for a 21st-century creative landscape that demands digital literacy, interdisciplinary flexibility, and the ability to navigate complex, open-ended problems. „Students benefit from the interactive AR environment's contents

¹² Ioan Negrea. 1984. *Lecția de Fotografie*. București: Editura Albatros, p. 96.

¹³ Eugen Iarovici. 1977. *Măiestria în Fotografie*. București: Editura Tehnică, p. 14.

¹⁴ Abdelaziz M, Samer Kamel S, Karam O, Abdelrahman A. 2011. “Evaluation of E-learning program versus traditional lecture instruction for undergraduate nursing students in a faculty of nursing”. *Teach Learn Nurs*. 6(2):50–8. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.teln.2010.10.003>.

¹⁵ S. Wang, R. Sung, DL. Reinholz, TJ. Bussey. 2023. “Equity analysis of an augmented reality-mediated group activity in a college biochemistry classroom”. *J Res Sci Teach*. 60(9):1942–66. <https://doi.org/10.1002/tea.21847>.

since they remain free of distractions from the physical environment. By fostering cooperation through enhancements to engagement and communication channels, augmented reality (AR) technology also helps students develop their social skills”¹⁶. Modern techniques encompass a wide array of strategies, from the use of immersive technologies like VR (Virtual Reality) and AR (Augmented Reality) to the adoption of hybrid learning environments that blend physical studio practice with digital collaboration. Central to this transformation is a focus on the process of creation rather than merely the final product, fostering a mindset of continuous inquiry and reflective practice. „The virtual reality-based learning is helpful for teachers since it may replace or enhance conventional teaching techniques. Even in simple forms, like VR glasses or smartphones, it is a completely practical concept”¹⁷. Modern fine arts pedagogy is increasingly prioritizing the creative process over the final artistic product. This paradigm shift is often operationalized through Project-Based Learning (PBL) and process-led methodologies.

Student-centered teaching-learning also involves adapting pedagogical methods to the students' learning style¹⁸.

Process-Led Pedagogy approaches emphasize problem-finding, iterative making, and critical reflection. Instead of following a linear path to a predetermined outcome, students are encouraged to explore personal themes, experiment with diverse media, and document their journey. This methodology aligns with contemporary art practices and helps students connect universal themes to their own lived experiences¹⁹.

Digital technologies have expanded the repertoire of teaching methods in artistic media. Technology-enhanced learning includes online tutorials, virtual studios, digital fabrication tools, and blended delivery models that combine face-to-face making with remote critique and resource sharing. However, the successful integration of these techniques faces significant challenges, most notably regarding technological equity, institutional infrastructure, and the need for comprehensive teacher training.

3. Conclusions

Teaching methods in artistic mediums are most effective when they are pluralistic, context-sensitive, and oriented toward both making and meaning. Integrating studio-based practice with constructivist inquiry, collaborative learning, and selective technological tools creates a resilient pedagogy that supports technical skill, conceptual depth, and professional readiness. Future research should continue to evaluate how blended and material-led approaches impact long-term artistic development and how assessment practices can better capture the complexity of creative learning.

Modern teaching techniques in fine arts education represent a powerful evolution toward a more inclusive, interactive, and process-oriented pedagogy. The integration of digital tools like VR and AI, are successfully fostering creativity and critical thinking in the next generation of artists. However, the potential of these innovations can only be fully realized if educational institutions address the critical barriers of equity and teacher training. By balancing traditional studio practices with digital innovation

¹⁶ Himendra Balalle. 2025. “Learning beyond realities: exploring virtual reality, augmented reality, and mixed reality in higher education – a systematic literature review”. *Discov Educ* 4, 151. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s44217-025-00559-7>

¹⁷ S .Wang, R .Sung, DL .Reinholz, TJ .Bussey, *op. cit.*

¹⁸ Kolb, D. A. 1984. *Experiential Learning*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice-Hall< Sellgren, G. (Ed.). 2012. *Methodologies for the future – a guide to develop education for sustainable development*. WWF.

¹⁹ Vuk, S., & Bosnar, M. 2021. “Process in contemporary visual art as a paradigm shift in the visual art education: perspective of creativity”. *Creativity Studies*, 14(1), 99-111.

and emphasizing the reflective process of creation, art education can remain relevant and transformative in an increasingly complex world.

Art pedagogy has evolved from master-apprentice models to institutionalized studio instruction and, more recently, to hybrid approaches that draw on educational theory. Constructivist ideas-where learners actively construct meaning through experience-have been influential in reframing the studio as a learning environment that privileges experimentation and reflection. Inquiry-based and project-based pedagogies further position students as investigators who pose problems, test materials, and iterate solutions. These theoretical shifts underpin many contemporary curricular reforms in fine art and design education.

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