



THE ROLE OF ART-BASED PEDAGOGICAL APPROACHES IN FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEACHING: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

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ABSTRACT

Art-based approaches that combine creativity and language growth have emerged as a major methodological trend in modern foreign language teaching. This paper examines two studies — “English Activation through Art: Tensions and Reward” by Tat Heung Choi (2016) and “Visual Thinking Strategies for English Learners: Learning Language through the Power of Art” by Beth Clark-Gareca and Tom Meyer (2022) [1] - that explore the incorporation of art into English language teaching. To reveal how the integration of art in language teaching can promote communication, creativity, and motivation among learners and teachers, this paper discusses and compares the goals, methodology, and results of these studies.

Introduction

The role of creativity and artistic expression in developing language proficiency and cultural sensitivity has become one of the main focuses of modern approaches to foreign language teaching. The inclusion of art in language learning stimulates critical thinking, creativity, imagination and emotional investment, and is considered a pedagogical tool that promotes both academic and moral growth. This paper investigates and compares two academic studies that implement art-based instruction in teaching the English language. Both scholarly works share the aim of enhancing language competence through an art-based approach but vary in context, participants and scope.

Theoretical Framework

Both studies use art as a real-world context for language practice. This aspect aligns with the ideas of Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL), where students acquire language through meaningful content rather than through isolated grammar exercises. By interacting with cultural tools, students enhance not only their communication skills but also their analytical thinking and self-awareness. According to Vygotsky's (1978) [2] concept of mediated learning, art has a significant impact on both intellectual and language growth. Bruner

(1986) [3] also emphasized the importance of active participation and artistic expression in fostering learners' linguistic competence.

Methodological and Pedagogical Insights

The study "English Activation through Art: Tensions and Reward" examined content-based foreign language teaching and aimed to develop students' language competence through implementing art as authentic material. The research was conducted by Tat Heung Choi [4]. It described the organization of a special seminar in Hong Kong for teachers who are non-native English speakers to promote creative teaching by applying art-based instruction.

The study "Visual Thinking Strategies for English Learners: Learning Language through the Power of Art" conducted by Beth Clark-Gareca and Tom Meyer [1] investigated the effectiveness of applying visual thinking strategies (VTS) in a multilingual student environment. The article was published on December 16, 2022. This research was implemented during lessons with ninth-grade students to observe how an art-based approach impacts language acquisition.

The study by Clark-Gareca and Meyer focused on utilizing art objects in school classes and mainly targeted elementary learners. The researchers illustrated only one historical piece of art as an example in the practical part. However, Choi (2016) [4] highlighted the use of multiple forms of art, such as narratives, drama, short stories, poetry, songs, and popular culture, making her research more extensive.

It can also be noted that both studies maintained a learner-centered approach and applied questions to guide art-based practices. In terms of results, Clark-Gareca and Meyer (2022) [1] confirmed that demonstrating visuals served as real evidence and helped learners overcome language barriers that interfered with natural communication. They argued that VTS can be viewed as a productive approach that fosters collaboration among English learners while enhancing decision-making, observation skills, and critical thinking.

Similarly, Choi (2016) [4] demonstrated the effectiveness of applying art practices to improve learners' speech literacy, reading, and writing abilities. The students were also able to express ideas in context, producing meaningful and appropriate sentences. Choi (2016) [4] assumed that natural interaction with pieces of art would increase motivation for language learning and creativity.

It can be observed that Choi's article described potential outcomes teachers could achieve after applying the art-based technique, whereas Clark-Gareca and Meyer (2022) [1] illustrated the actual outcomes of learners after the method had been implemented. The inclusion of visual support in lessons made language comprehension easier by creating an aesthetic environment and adding variety to the language curriculum.

Limitations and Future Directions

Despite providing valuable methodological and pedagogical insights, both works include certain limitations. Choi (2016) [4] mainly focused on qualitative reflections and lacks quantitative assessment of language development. Clark-Gareca and Meyer (2022) [1] used a small sample and short-term observation of the outcomes. Future research could combine both approaches by implementing a larger sample, mixed methods, and long-term observation of the results.

Another limitation constitutes the small investigation of the impact of art in shaping moral and cultural development. Future study may also include the integration of cultural tools that

foster empathy and respect for different manners. It could strengthen social and emotional knowledge of the learners in multilingual context.

Conclusion

Both scholarly works provide strong evidence that the inclusion of art-based instruction not only contributes to language development but also promotes personal growth and intercultural awareness. Choi (2016) [4] highlighted teachers' professional growth through applying art-based instruction, whereas Clark-Gareca and Meyer (2022) [1] examined the influence of visual art tools in developing vocabulary and critical thinking of the students. These academic researches demonstrated how the art-based approach promotes creativity, communication, and motivation among both learners and teachers.

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