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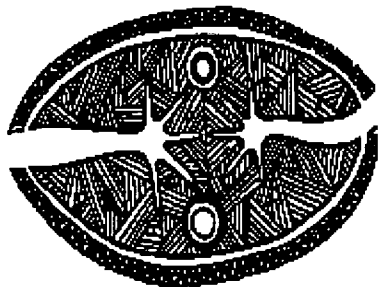
ED 453 090

SO 032 112

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TITLE Actual Dimensions of the Visual Aesthetic Education (VAE) Process and Teacher's Valuation of Pupil's Work at School.
INSTITUTION Australian Inst. of Art Education, Melbourne.
PUB DATE 1999-09-00
NOTE 7p.; Paper presented at the Annual World Congress of the International Society for Education through Art (InSEA) (30th, Brisbane, Australia, September 21-26, 1999). This project has been assisted by the Commonwealth Government through the Australia Council for the Arts, its art funding and advisory body. Document contains small print.
AVAILABLE FROM Australian Institute of Art Education, Melbourne, C/Suite 125, 283 Glenhuntley Road, Eisternwick, VIC 3185, Australia.
PUB TYPE Reports - Research (143) -- Speeches/Meeting Papers (150)
EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Action Research; *Aesthetic Education; Educational Research; Foreign Countries; Secondary Education; *Student Evaluation; *Teacher Education; *Visual Arts
IDENTIFIERS *Portugal; Research in Progress; *Teaching Perspectives

ABSTRACT

This paper reports on research-in-progress motivated by the need to educate Visual Aesthetic Education (VAE) teachers. The research asks, how VAE teachers can find a referential to orient their pupils' work in this time of aesthetic controversy and technological/economic pressures and do this adequately for a class of 30 pupils. The paper summarizes two earlier reports that asked what VAE development is possible and actually takes place in the classrooms. The paper then presents, from the research-in-progress, a synthesis of the emergent valuation referential, drawn from a qualitative analysis of student dialogues in which the teacher tried to remain a mirror-mentor. (BT)



“Actual Dimensions of the Visual Aesthetic Education (VAE) Process and Teacher’s Valuation of Pupil’s Work at School”

by

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**Proceedings from the
InSEA 30th World Congress
“Cultures and Transitions”**

**21-26 September 1999
Brisbane Australia**

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ACTUAL DIMENSIONS OF THE VISUAL AESTHETIC EDUCATION (VAE) PROCESS AND TEACHER'S VALUATION OF PUPIL'S WORK AT SCHOOL

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Introduction

This Research Conference reflects about *Knowing, Doing and Being* through *Art Education* at a time of *Cultural Transitions*. The present **synthesis** (even without images) of my Presentation to the Research Conference, accounts for my research in progress, within this theme.

The **motivation of my research** has been the need to educate VAE Teachers (already with a 4-5 Licence in Art, Design or Architecture; on paid In-service at Lisboa District schools of the Basic Education 3rd Cycle (ages 12-15, final compulsory education stage) or of the Secondary Education (ages 15-18, for those intending to go to Higher Art /Design/Architecture Courses or for Artistic Professions); and coming to the Faculty of Education for a 2 years Teacher Education Course, at which 1st year we are in charge of the VAE Didactics and, in the 2nd year, we supervise VAE Teaching Practice in the schools.

The **question** to the answer of which our research aims to contribute is the following:

How can the VAE Teachers find a *referential* * and orient their pupils' work in our time of aesthetic controversy and technological/economical pressures; and to do this adequately for about 30 pupils, or groups, even in the instant of a class ?

*Scheme of ideas to which one may refer, as a starting point in comparison, for decision about one's own ideas. We prefer the concept of *referential* to the concept of *model*.

To answer this question, we have to answer a **previous problem**:

What VAE development is possible and actually takes place in the classrooms?

We must start by our understanding of the meaning of some essential **concepts**:

VAE is intended for all and ought to be granted up to the adolescents being capable of autonomous criticism and vocational clarification (by the age of 15). It is expected that the young persons had developed a self development system for VAE along life.

Artistic Education is intended for the vocational education of the professional artists.

Aesthetics is defined as orientation of (each person's) energy for quality (as *qualia* = character - Peirce, C., 1958), while recreating or appreciating form.

Methodology and some findings

concerning the previous problem: Pupil's possible developments through VAE

To answer the **previous problem** above, we made a **1st Action Research Pilot Study** (Oliveira, E., 1997), questioning our own 50 *Art/Design* students, (9th year, age 15) Coimbra, either in 1977-78, at the end of their Course and 4 years afterwards (with 50% responses),

about their representations of the effects that such a Course might have had in their lives (work/leisure).

Through their responses content qualitative analysis, we verified that, 4 years later, 68% were following with Art appreciation; 58% were practicing some kind of Art, even if engaged in courses or having a job removed from Art; and for 27% of them, Art/Design had become a way of living or a professional field. We also verified that *Art/Design* studies can – and must – reach, in its didactic units, the following:

Aesthetic development: Three dimensions & Three functions:

Material dimension	___	Technological function
Social dimension	___	Communicative function
Ontological dimension	___	Life-Organizing function.

In a 2nd Pilot Study, in the 80's, we verified that these Aesthetic development dimensions and functions were also reached (according with the pupils' representations) in common Basic School 3rd Cycle VAE classes of 4 contrasting Portuguese regions,. We followed a methodology of qualitative analysis of the content of their responses but, also, of their **Free Expression**, in drawings that we asked them to make; and we attempted to understand Expression evolving from pre-adolescence, through adolescence, until transition-to-adulthood, coming to conclusions such as that, for that kind of sample, tension was a crucial feature in adolescents' free expression; imagination might not undergo blockage at that level but, instead, turning to apply to a more functional purpose; and flight appears to be the most common methafor occuring in works across these ages. (Oliveira, E., 1997).

In our recent research we analysed, in the same 4 Portuguese contrasting regions, samples of Basic School 3rd Cycle VAE pupil's **Free Expression** (Drawing), **Design** (problem solving applied to a project of bettering the visual impact of a fruit shop window, with restricted means) and **Art Appreciation** (onbervation of three poster size images: a Chagall's painting, a Pop poster and an Industrial Paint catalogue poster). Our observations of the responses in the main categories of this *Questionnaire* were submitted to the test of three specialist Judges, resulting no need of important corrections.

In interpretation, at this content analysis, we have reapproached the parallel already made in our research presented in 1994, between Michael Parsons's framework of art appreciation and our VAE framework of appreciation. It is shown here, as a *referential* for further analises:

Parson, M.'s VAE appreciation framework - Oliveira, E.'s VAE framework

Favouritism - Realism Expressivity - Style/Form Autonomy	Denotation (no interpretation) Senses/Concept imagination*(w/ interpret.) Autonomy/Synthesis
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Imagination is the most crucial factor in VAE development: *To give sense to the unknown* (Warnock, M., 1976).

As a sample of our analysis outcomes, in **Art appreciation**, we found the emergence of the following 7 emphasises in pupil's Image **Description Type**:

0. Absent or no (clear) description
1. Denotative/Enumerative
2. Denotative/Object category integrative
3. Story imaginative
4. Denotative/Form organized
5. Wholistic/Expression generalized
6. Imagined/Structural
7. Integrated/Structural (5+6)

The understanding of these emphasises may open the way for a referential taxionomy helping the teacher to stimulate the pupil's Art appreciation growth. It must be safeguarded that advanced appreciators may intentionally stay at the lower level emphasises, that remai, only..

Once evidence appears to have emerged, that Aesthetic developments may occur ad of what characteristics they might show, in Free Expression, Design and Art Appreciation, we tackled the main question:

**Methodology and some findings on: Teacher referential criteria
in valuating and orienting pupil's work**

We organized an **Action-Research approach** to this question, through discussion among our Students (In-service Teachers-in-Education), along our 1995-1999 VAE Didactic classes. The qualitative analysis of their dialogues in which the teacher tried to remain as a mirror-mentor, still in progress, is expected to allow relevant insights into the Students' **procedure of constructing valuation criteria** and the value of peers' interaction in building such referentials.

Here, we present only a syntheses of the **emergent valuation referential** at the conclusion of our 1997-1999 Students'discussions. And we register that almost all of them recognized the usefulness of this **interactive reflection in class**, for their further teaching practice; some said that they did not expect that our class discussion could *bring them so far* ; and all of them found the resulting evaluation framework to be an aid-tool, inventing variations of it applied to the most different types of VAE that they had to orient in schools.

Pupil's VAE work evaluation framework (Key)

For Schooling at ages: 12-18

In a double entrance Specification Table, of the **Behaviour Typology to be developed through VAE by the VAE experience Typology**

Behaviour Typology:

To live : I. To Know

General knowledge
Specific knowledge : Theoretic
Practical

Research

II. To Do

(Deadline fulfillment)
Work methodology
Ideas & language relevance
Functionality/Usefulness
Techniques and materials/tools mastery

III. To Be (Interventions/Togetherness):

III.1. More specific capabilities, criticism
Expressiveness
Criticism
Creativity: individuality/imagination/originality

III.2. Values/attitudes

Autonomy
Self-accountability
Participation/Initiative (including Presence frequency)

VAE experience typology: 1. Diagnostic

- 2. Design Project**
 - 3. Free Expression**
 - 4. Geometries (& other Exact Sciences)**
 - 5. Art History (& Art Heritage/Environmental Studies)**
 - 6. Arts Workshop**
 - 7. Functional Expression**
 - 8. Technologies**
-

VAE development in Pupil's work

Weight Chart of behaviour by VAE experience type in a scale of 0-100 points

V = Weight Variation among the 4 classes of about 80 responders, 1997-1999-09-30

	I.	II.	III.1	III.2
1	0	40	45	15
2	15-25 V 10	25-40 V 15	22,5-35 V 12,5	10-20 V 10
3	10-15 V 5	20-35 V 15	40-35 V 15	10-25 V 15
4	30-40 V 10	35-40 V 5	10-20 V 10	5-12,5 V 7,5
5	30-40 V 10	12,5-32,5 V 20	20-20 V 0	10-20 V 10
6	30-40 V 10	12,5-32,5 V 20	20-20 V 0	10-20 V 10
7 By 1 class only	25	25	30	20
8	30-30 V 0	30-40 V 10	20-25 V 5	10-20 V 10

Obs: **To know: acquisition of knowledge**, only 1st in Arts Workshop and Art History
To do: application of knowledge, 1st in Project Design, Geometries and Technologies;
 Max. V (as 2nd) in Art History and Arts Workshop
To be- III.1. 1st in Free and Functional Expressions (and Diagnostic)
III.2. Always 4th, except in Free Expression (and Diagnostoic) (3rd).

Main conclusions in Methodology for Teacher Education

The discussion among Students proved to be advisable for:

. Awareness of the different nature of the VAE approaches.

So: An integral VAE experience must be allowed.

No one ready-made best VAE work evaluation framework exists.

. Students' reflexive discussion open views of how far VAE can reach and open must remain in the proposals to the pupil's work.

So: Each VAE unit of work must reach the 3 Dimensions/3 Functions considered before.

This discussion procedure initiates to the *Teleanthropos* age, of the *Society of*

Communication/sharing Education (Pimenta, E., 1999) (Levy, P. , 1994).

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EFF-089 (3/2000)