

Borysov, Yu. B., & Tarakhtii, L. O. (2026). Copying classical works as a form of teaching “Drawing” within students’ independent work. *Actual Issues of Modern Science. European Scientific e-Journal*, 42, 63–76. Ostrava.

DOI: 10.47451/esej-cul-07

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Article history:

Received: April 30, 2026

Revised: June 6, 2026

Accepted: June 15, 2026

Published: July 4, 2026

Copying Classical Works as a Form of Teaching “Drawing” within Students’ Independent Work

Abstract: This article examines the pedagogical role of copying classical artworks in the teaching of the fundamental discipline “Drawing” within contemporary design education. The relevance of the study is determined by the need to strengthen students’ professional graphic training under conditions of reduced classroom hours and the growing importance of students’ independent work. The article argues that copying the works of old masters, academic drawings, and exemplary graphic models should not be understood as mechanical reproduction, but as an analytical and creative method that develops compositional thinking, constructive understanding of form, tonal vision, technical discipline, and artistic taste. The aim of the study is to determine the role, pedagogical value, and methodological potential of copying academic artworks as a form of students’ independent work in the teaching of drawing to future designers. The study is based on a complex methodological approach that includes structural-semantic, formal-stylistic, historical-comparative, interdisciplinary, and pedagogical analysis. The research draws on the historical experience of classical art education, the legacy of the old masters, and modern approaches to the organisation of independent learning in higher education. The article substantiates the educational, developmental, and formative functions of copying and proposes a staged methodology for its implementation: selection of an appropriate model, compositional analysis, constructive construction of the drawing, tonal modelling, and final synthesis. It is concluded that copying classical works can compensate for the limited time allocated to classroom drawing practice, deepen students’ understanding of artistic principles, and contribute to the formation of individual professional style. The proposed approach may be used by teachers of design and fine arts departments when developing curricula, methodological recommendations, and assignments for students’ independent work.

Keywords: copying, academic drawing, design education, students’ independent work, graphic training, classical artworks, art pedagogy.

Introduction

“Drawing” is one of the fundamental disciplines in the professional training of designers and representatives of other creative specialities. It provides the basis for the formation of artistic and aesthetic qualities, technical skills, visual literacy, and theoretical knowledge. Through drawing assignments, students acquire the principles of compositional organisation, constructive form-building, linear and aerial perspective, proportional relationships, tonal modelling, and the plastic representation of objects.

The relevance of this study is determined by the current transformation of higher art and design education. In many educational programmes, the number of classroom hours allocated to fundamental artistic disciplines, including drawing and painting, has been reduced, while the amount of time assigned to students’ independent work has increased. Under these conditions, the problem of organising effective independent work becomes especially important. Students must not only consolidate what they learn in the classroom, but also continue developing professional visual thinking, technical accuracy, and analytical skills outside direct teacher supervision.

One of the productive forms of such independent work is copying classical works of art, drawings by old masters, and high-quality academic examples. This method has been practised for centuries in European art schools and academies. It allows students to analyse compositional decisions, methods of hatching, constructive form-building, tonal relationships, stylistic features, and the individual artistic language of outstanding masters. In this respect, copying is not merely a technical exercise. It has important intellectual and analytical value, since it helps students understand how an image is constructed, how artistic means are selected, and how visual form is transformed into an expressive artistic whole.

The research problem lies in the contradiction between the reduced time available for classroom drawing practice and the continuing need to provide future designers with strong academic and analytical training. At the same time, the method of copying is sometimes perceived narrowly as a mechanical reproduction of an existing model. Such an understanding does not reflect its real pedagogical potential. In contemporary design education, copying should be reconsidered as a conscious analytical method that links technical training with the development of professional thinking and creative individuality.

The scientific novelty of the study consists in interpreting the copying of classical and academic works not as an auxiliary or secondary task, but as a structured form of students’ independent work within the discipline “Drawing”. The article clarifies the pedagogical functions of copying in design education, identifies its methodological stages, and substantiates its value for the formation of analytical thinking, technical skills, artistic taste, and individual creative style.

The object of the study is the process of professional training of students of art and design specialities in higher education. The subject of the study is the copying of classical and academic artworks as a pedagogical method within students’ independent work in the discipline “Drawing”.

The study aims to determine the role of copying academic artworks as a form of learning within students’ independent work in the teaching of “Drawing”, and to define its pedagogical value and specific features of application in design education.

To achieve this purpose, the study addresses the following objectives:

- to analyse the historical evolution of copying as an effective method of teaching drawing;

- to determine the pedagogical functions of copying in the formation of the future designer's analytical thinking;
- to identify the relationship between copying, academic drawing, composition, perspective, anatomy, and art history;
- to define methodological principles for selecting works for copying according to students' level of preparation;
- to develop a staged algorithm for copying academic works within students' independent work;
- to determine the significance of copying for the development of professional graphic skills and creative individuality.

The theoretical basis of the research includes the pedagogical and methodological heritage of the classical school, including the principles of academic drawing and constructive analysis of form, as well as contemporary studies in art pedagogy devoted to continuity of tradition and the actualisation of classical heritage in design education. The study takes into account the experience of drawing pedagogy associated with the old masters, classical academies, and modern educational practice.

The theoretical significance of the study lies in clarifying the pedagogical meaning of copying as a conscious analytical and interpretative process rather than as mechanical repetition. The practical significance lies in the possibility of using the proposed methodological approach in the development of curricula, independent assignments, teaching recommendations, and assessment criteria for students of design and fine arts departments.

Methods

The study applies a qualitative pedagogical and art-historical methodology aimed at analysing the role of copying classical and academic works in the teaching of drawing. The methodological framework combines structural-semantic analysis, formal-stylistic analysis, historical-comparative interpretation, interdisciplinary integration, and pedagogical modelling of students' independent work.

Copying academic works should primarily contribute to the development of analytical thinking rather than become a mechanical repetition of a selected model. Before beginning the practical task, the student should analyse the image. The artists whose works are copied have already analysed nature, selected essential elements, found artistic solutions, and, where necessary, simplified, generalised, or even stylised the represented object. The student must understand how this artistic transformation is achieved and then apply this understanding when working from nature (*Borysov, 2002*).

The method of structural-semantic analysis involves dividing an integral work of art into its components and identifying the internal relations between them. The analysis begins with the composition: whether it is static or dynamic, whether it is based on contrast or nuance, whether it has a compositional centre or appears deliberately chaotic. This approach helps students understand the logic of the author and move from mechanical copying to conscious reproduction of artistic methods (*Mahalias, 2019*). At this stage, it is necessary to consider the laws of composition previously studied in the corresponding discipline, but to interpret them through the specific requirements of drawing.

The next stage is the analysis of form construction. The formal-stylistic method makes it possible to study the specificity of form-building, the character of line, tonal modelling, and the material basis of the work. It enables students to analyse the structure of form and to understand the artistic “language” of great masters. This method supports the gradual development of the assignment: from linear-constructive analysis to deeper tonal modelling with the use of different graphic materials (*Hale, 2009; Mabalias, 2019*). The student should understand, observe, and determine how the structure of form is conveyed in the work being copied.

The selection of models for copying should follow the sequence and logic of classroom assignments. When students learn to draw geometric forms in class, their independent work should include copies based on simple geometric structures. When they study plaster heads, they should copy examples of classical head drawings. When they work with the human figure, they should copy works that contain full-figure studies. Such correspondence between classroom practice and independent work allows copying to function as an extension of the educational process rather than as an isolated exercise.

Given the limited time allocated to the teaching of drawing in design education, classroom practice often focuses mainly on linear-constructive work. More attention is given to the constructive building of form by means of line, sometimes at the expense of tonal development. In a traditional academic setting, work with light and shadow usually takes place at the final stage and requires considerable time. Students’ independent work can partly compensate for this imbalance. If copying is understood as a continuation of classroom study, the execution of copies should also include analysis of how the author uses tonal relations and chiaroscuro.

When more creative tasks are assigned, a wide range of tonal drawings may be selected for copying. In such works, the line may be less dominant, while the artist concentrates on the relationships between light and shadow. Soft materials such as charcoal, sepia, and sanguine are often used in these cases. Copying such examples allows students to become familiar with the expressive potential of different graphic materials and to develop sensitivity to tone, texture, and atmospheric modelling (*Hale, 2009; Piddubna, 2012*).

Copying also supports interdisciplinary integration. It connects drawing with composition, perspective, anatomy, and art history. Work with the drawings of outstanding artists gives students a deeper, almost tactile acquaintance with the history of art. Through copying, students engage with the achievements of world and national culture, learn different styles and artistic traditions, and observe the individual features of different masters. For example, Michelangelo demonstrates the dynamism of movement and the expressive tension of the human body; Albrecht Dürer shows the precision of linear drawing; Ingres represents academic refinement; Goya reveals the force of expressive gesture; and Rembrandt van Rijn demonstrates deep tonal modelling (*Cennini, 2012; Hale, 2009*).

The study also uses pedagogical modelling to formulate a staged methodology for copying classical drawings within students’ independent work. This methodology includes the following stages: selection of a work appropriate to the student’s level and current classroom topic; preliminary analysis of composition; constructive construction of the drawing from the general form to details; analysis and reproduction of tonal relationships; final synthesis and harmonisation of details. This sequence transforms copying into a structured educational process and helps students develop both technical and analytical competence.

The methodological limitations of the study should also be noted. The article is theoretical and methodological in nature and does not include a quantitative assessment of students' learning outcomes. Further empirical research may test the proposed methodology in different design programmes, compare student progress before and after copying assignments, and develop assessment criteria for different levels of academic and creative performance.

Literature Review

The methodology of academic drawing, particularly the role of copying as an instrument of professional training, remains an important subject of scholarly discussion in art pedagogy. The problem is especially relevant for contemporary design education, where the reduction of classroom hours in fundamental artistic disciplines requires a reconsideration of traditional teaching methods and their transfer into the sphere of students' independent work. In this context, copying classical and academic works should not be interpreted as a mechanical reproduction of an existing visual model, but as a complex analytical, technical, cultural, and pedagogical practice.

The historical continuity of the copying method, from antiquity through the Renaissance and Baroque periods, has been analysed in detail by Strieltsova and Zaitseva (2022). Their research demonstrates that the formation of "old master" schools was based on the transmission of artistic knowledge through direct observation, imitation, repetition, and gradual interpretation of established models. This historical perspective is important because it shows that copying functioned not merely as a technical exercise, but as a mechanism of professional succession. Through copying, students entered an artistic tradition, mastered the language of form, and gradually acquired the ability to transform inherited models into individual artistic practice.

The same logic can be observed in the creative biographies of outstanding artists. The experience of Taras Shevchenko, for example, confirms that copying and the study of classical models can become an important stage in the formation of an individual artistic language (Skliarenko, 2013; Yatsiuk, 2004). Shevchenko's early academic works demonstrate the transition from the assimilation of classical plots and compositional schemes to the development of a national and personal artistic vision. This example is pedagogically significant because it refutes the simplified idea that copying suppresses creativity. On the contrary, when properly organised, copying may become a preparatory stage for the emergence of creative independence.

The methodological foundations of constructive form analysis, which underlie high-quality copying, are based on the classical theories of Bridgman (2012) and Hale (2009). Bridgman's constructive approach emphasises the internal structure of the human body, the logic of volume, and the transformation of anatomical knowledge into graphic form. Hale, in turn, focuses on the study of drawings by great masters as a way to understand proportion, line, tonal modelling, plasticity, and the expressive organisation of the figure. Both authors are important for the present research because they treat drawing as an intellectual process: the artist does not merely reproduce the visible surface of the object, but analyses its construction, movement, rhythm, and internal logic.

This analytical understanding of copying is also supported by contemporary Ukrainian researchers. Mahalias (2019) examines copying and sketching as methodological tools for forming drawing skills and emphasises that the student must learn to identify the structure of the image, the logic of the line, and the system of tonal relationships. Prokhorova (2016) considers academic

drawing as a foundation of creative literacy and argues that drawing develops not only technical accuracy, but also the ability to think visually. These approaches are particularly important for design education, where drawing is not an isolated artistic discipline, but a basic means of professional visual thinking.

A separate group of studies addresses the organisation of students' independent work in higher education. Stebliuk (2024), Kvetsko (2023), and Piddubna (2012) examine the possibilities of interdisciplinary integration and the adaptation of traditional artistic disciplines to contemporary university education. Their works show that independent work becomes effective only when it is methodologically structured and meaningfully connected with classroom practice. In this regard, copying classical and academic works may become a productive continuation of classroom assignments. It allows students to deepen the skills that cannot always be fully developed during limited classroom time, especially tonal modelling, detailed analysis of form, and work with different graphic materials.

The interdisciplinary potential of copying is also significant. Copying connects drawing with composition, perspective, anatomy, art history, material studies, and visual culture. It allows students to understand how the same artistic problem may be solved through different historical styles, techniques, and individual manners. For example, the study of Renaissance and Baroque drawings may reveal the principles of dynamic movement, anatomical construction, and expressive plasticity; the analysis of academic drawings may clarify proportion, tonal hierarchy, and compositional balance; and the copying of works by later masters may demonstrate the transformation of classical principles into more individual artistic languages. Thus, copying becomes not only a technical task, but also a form of visual research.

At the same time, the reviewed literature makes it possible to identify several unresolved issues. First, while the historical importance of copying in art education is well established, its methodological role in contemporary design education has not been sufficiently defined. Secondly, many studies emphasise the value of academic drawing, but do not always specify how copying should be organised within students' independent work. Thirdly, the criteria for assessing copying tasks remain insufficiently developed: it is not always clear whether the teacher should evaluate visual similarity, technical accuracy, analytical understanding, or the student's ability to transform the acquired experience into independent design thinking.

Borysov (2002; 2003) draws attention to the need for a balanced approach to the selection of educational material in design education. This position is important because improperly selected copying tasks may lead to formalism, superficial imitation, or passive reproduction of artistic models. The pedagogical value of copying depends on the correspondence between the selected work, the student's level of preparation, the current classroom task, and the broader objectives of professional training. For example, a first-year student may benefit more from copying works with clear constructive structure, while senior students may work with more complex examples involving dynamic composition, anatomical complexity, tonal richness, or expressive stylisation.

The analysis of the literature also shows that copying should be understood as a transitional mechanism between academic tradition and individual creative development. At the initial stage, the student learns discipline, accuracy, proportion, line, and tonal modelling. At a deeper stage, copying develops analytical thinking: the student begins to understand why the master chose a particular compositional solution, how the form is generalised, how the line organises the image,

and how light and shadow reveal volume. At the final stage, the acquired knowledge may be transformed into the student's own artistic and design practice. Therefore, copying does not contradict creativity; rather, it provides a professional foundation for it.

In the context of modern digitalisation, the problem of copying receives an additional dimension. Digital technologies provide students with access to a wide range of classical works and allow them to analyse images in detail. However, the use of digital tools also raises the question of whether the tactile and material experience of traditional drawing may be weakened. This issue remains insufficiently studied in the literature and requires further pedagogical and empirical research. For the purposes of the present article, it is important to emphasise that digital access to classical works may support the copying method, but should not replace the manual experience of drawing, through which the coordination of eye, hand, material, and analytical perception is formed.

Thus, the existing scholarship confirms the pedagogical value of copying in academic drawing, but also indicates the need to reinterpret this method within the context of contemporary design education. The reviewed studies demonstrate that copying becomes most effective when it is integrated with constructive analysis, art-historical knowledge, technical training, interdisciplinary connections, and students' independent work. However, the problem of developing a clear methodological algorithm for copying classical works within design education remains insufficiently elaborated. This research gap determines the relevance of the present study, which aims to define copying as a structured, analytical, and pedagogically meaningful form of students' independent work in the discipline "Drawing".

Results

Historical Development of the Copying Method in Art Education

Copying as a teaching method has a long history. As early as antiquity, a similar practice existed in the training of artists and sculptors. In Ancient Greece and Rome, students began their training with the elementary repetition of the works of their mentors; they then executed secondary details, filled in the background, worked from the teacher's sketches, and only afterwards began their own artistic path. However, everything started with copying. This method of teaching made it possible to transmit technical methods and professional knowledge from teacher to student, and this process of continuity led to the formation of entire schools and workshops (*Strieltsova & Zaitseva, 2022*).

This established form of teaching is especially traceable during the Renaissance, when copying became an important component of art education. Through copying, future artists studied, among other things, anatomy, linear and aerial perspective, methods of compositional solution, and, naturally, copied the works of their mentors. Considerable attention was paid to copying ancient sculpture, which was a particularly popular method.

Such outstanding artists of the Renaissance as Leonardo da Vinci, Michelangelo Buonarroti, and Raphael Santi actively practised copying and studying works from the ancient period during their training and at the beginning of their creative activity (*Cennini, 2012; Stebliuk, 2024*).

In the Middle Ages, art significantly changed its priorities and moved away from the ideals of the Renaissance, but copying became not only a teaching method, but also a principle of art-making.

With the emergence of various schools and academies in the seventeenth–nineteenth centuries, the method of copying became the foundation of classical art education. Along with drawing from plaster models and from life, students of leading European academies made copies from old engravings and copied drawings by masters. This process was divided into several stages, but continued throughout the entire period of study. Such an approach to the education system was used in many European academies, particularly in the Paris Academy of Arts, founded in 1799 (*Kvetsko, 2023*).

The outstanding genius of the Ukrainian people, Taras Hryhorovych Shevchenko, began his creative path by copying works of world art. This is evidenced by his early period of study, in particular in the drawing classes of the Society for the Encouragement of Artists: from drawing park sculpture to the cycle of drawings executed in 1835–1837. These works were executed in the style of classicism, which was a mandatory requirement of academic education at that time (*Skliarenko, 2013; Yatsink, 2004*).

The Death of Lucretia (1835): a watercolour drawing, the subject of which is taken from the legend of the great Roman woman.

The Death of Virginia (1836): illustrates dramatic events from Roman history.

The Death of Socrates (1837): depicts the ancient Greek philosopher Socrates at the final moment of his life.

The work of T.H. Shevchenko shows a natural transition from purely academic ancient subjects to national historical themes.

Copying was not always recognised and valued in many movements and styles of art; this is especially true of the twentieth century, when the role of copying changed somewhat. With the emergence of new artistic ideas and the development of modernist movements, greater attention began to be paid to creative personality and the manifestation of individual identity. However, in academic art education, even in contemporary art educational institutions, copying classical works, the works of “old masters”, and works from institutional collections remains an important educational tool. Even Pablo Picasso, in the early stages of his creative work, copied the works of classical masters, which helped him develop his own artistic principles.

Thus, copying has passed from the ancient craft tradition of transmitting experience to a fundamental academic method that became an integral part of the professional training of artists. Its effectiveness, tested over centuries, proves that even under conditions of the rapid development of new visual technologies, direct contact with the classical heritage remains a key factor in forming the professional consciousness of the artist, since it allows the student, through the analysis of works by great predecessors, to comprehend the deep laws of composition, form, and style, thereby laying a solid foundation for further creative self-realisation.

Implementation of Pedagogical Functions in Copying Classical Works

The pedagogical functions of the teacher in teaching copying are certain areas of activity designed to ensure the harmonious development of the student both as an artist and as an integral personality. They must ensure the effectiveness of the educational process.

The educational function ensures the transmission of a system of theoretical knowledge, technical abilities, and skills that will help the student in further professional activity.

The formation of technical professional skills may be attributed to the educational function in copying academic works of art and drawing in particular. In the process of making copies, the student has the opportunity to study various artistic and technical features of drawing (*Kvetsko, 2023; Mahalias, 2019*).

First of all, for educational drawing, understanding the constructive construction of form is important. It is important not to simply copy the external appearance, but specifically to construct the form, whether it is the form of simple objects or the form of the human figure.

The second important point is the understanding and knowledge of proportion, especially when depicting the human body. The “old” masters had knowledge of human anatomy and used this knowledge in their creative work. For example, proportions are very important in conveying the age and gender characteristics of a person.

At the initial stage of learning, it is useful to copy examples in which linear and aerial perspective are used. In such examples, the existing laws can be traced more clearly than from nature. What may be barely visible or hidden when observing living nature is more clearly visible in works selected for copying, since analysis has already been carried out and an appropriate solution has been found.

When analysing artistic and stylistic features, the student must understand and then use in further practice the technical methods and properties of materials. Attention should be paid, for example, to the character of the stroke, its direction, strength, activity, aggressiveness, emotionality, whether it is applied according to the form or chaotically, and its density (*Hale, 2009; Pidubna, 2012*).

The student should analyse the tonal relationships used in the work being copied and adopt successful approaches and techniques. This will be especially useful for those students who, due to personal preferences, are inclined towards a more tonal execution of drawing.

The next function is formative. It helps to form the student’s worldview and moral values and to influence the culture of behaviour and social adaptation of the personality. Copying monuments of world culture, whether directly or indirectly, influences the cultural level of the performer and accustoms the student to working according to certain algorithms.

The developmental function, in physiological terms, ensures the development of hand motor skills and visual acuity; in psychological terms, it develops emotional and mental processes, including thinking and memory, stimulates the creative potential of students, their abilities, and cognitive activity.

The development of artistic taste is also important. In addition to knowledge of art history, acquaintance with the best examples of world culture contributes to the formation of artistic taste and aesthetic thinking in future designers. Without a sense of beauty, harmony, and style, it is impossible to create things that are, first of all, functional, but at the same time aesthetic.

Adherence to such pedagogical functions in the learning process will help form a strong professional culture of drawing in future designers.

Thus, the implementation of a complex of pedagogical functions in the process of copying transforms a purely technical exercise into a powerful instrument of comprehensive professional development of the student. Through disciplined imitation of the best examples of art, the future

designer not only acquires the necessary technical tools, but also cultivates inner culture, develops an analytical view of the world, and forms an aesthetic ideal, which will later allow the designer to confidently operate with the complex categories of harmony, proportion, and style when solving contemporary functional and creative tasks.

Methodology for Copying Classical Drawings

Since copying takes place within students' independent work, the student performs the task independently at home or in specially designated university workshops. The teacher gives general instructions on the organisation of the work according to a certain methodology and evaluates the result.

Selection of a work for copying. The process of copying should be a continuation of classroom assignments. In accordance with this requirement, the model for copying is selected. To achieve educational goals, it is recommended to choose works of appropriate complexity. For example, in the first year, examples that have a clear constructive structure should be selected. It is useful to use students' drawings on a given topic that were selected during previous reviews and are preserved in the department's collections. In senior years, it is already possible to turn to world classics. Modern means of information eliminate the need to visit museums for this purpose, although the latter is more beneficial.

The purpose of copying may also include such aims as becoming acquainted with different graphic techniques. In this case, examples are selected that demonstrate the artistic qualities of a particular material or instrument.

An important point in the contemporary educational process is the need to take into account the individual characteristics of the student. Therefore, examples for copying must be selected according to the student's level of preparation and individual style. Even when copying the works of others, the student must develop their own artistic manner and handwriting.

Analysis of composition. It is important to accustom the student to the correct algorithm for performing the work. Before beginning the work, the student must analyse the work of art. The student should consider compositional methods, the general character of the composition, and determine the compositional centre. When depicting the human figure, attention should be paid to proportions, the plasticity of the body, and movement.

If the goal is to study a particular artistic technique, then the character of the lines and strokes is analysed first.

Construction of the drawing. Constructive construction in copying, as in academic drawing, begins with the large, general form. Analysis is then carried out gradually: we move from the large to the small. We trace and determine the main proportions in the original and transfer them to our own work. We work through the details and move to synthesis, that is, generalisation, subordinating all elements of the composition to an integral appearance.

Work with light and shade. This is the next stage. In working with tonal relationships, the student must determine the general area of shadow and light; work begins with the treatment of the shadow. Then the student gradually moves from the darkest to the lightest areas. If this algorithm is not followed and the work begins with the light, the strength of tone in the shadow may be insufficient.

Completion of the work. Work with tone finalises the work on the copy; the details are clarified and the general tonal structure of the drawing is harmonised.

Thus, a clearly structured methodology of copying becomes an effective algorithm of professional growth, in which the student's independent work is transformed into a conscious research process. Consistent observance of the stages—from compositional analysis and construction of the general form to the subtle treatment of light and shade and the final synthesis of details—makes it possible not only to acquire the necessary technical skills, but also to develop the ability to systematise complex artistic tasks, which is an integral component of the designer's professionalism and a prerequisite for successfully mastering various graphic techniques for the realisation of their own creative ideas.

Discussion

The study demonstrates that copying classical works can become an effective pedagogical instrument in contemporary design education if it is understood not as passive imitation, but as a form of analytical reconstruction. This interpretation is especially important in the context of reduced classroom hours in the discipline "Drawing". The central challenge is the tension between the long-term academic nature of drawing training and the current need for flexible, intensive, and individualised educational models for future designers.

The first important issue concerns the distinction between mechanical reproduction and conscious interpretation. In traditional academic practice, copying was often associated with discipline, accuracy, and technical imitation. In contemporary design education, however, its value lies primarily in the student's ability to identify the logic of the master's artistic thinking. The quality of the copy should therefore not be assessed only by external similarity to the original. It should also be evaluated according to the student's understanding of composition, form construction, proportional relations, tonal structure, rhythm of line, and expressive use of material.

This point is particularly significant for students of design. Unlike students whose main professional aim is easel art, future designers must learn to analyse visual structures and transform them into new functional and communicative solutions. Copying classical works can help them acquire a disciplined visual method: to see the whole before the detail, to distinguish structure from surface effect, to understand the hierarchy of elements, and to subordinate technical means to an artistic purpose. In this sense, copying may contribute not only to drawing competence, but also to broader design thinking.

The results also confirm the pedagogical importance of integrating copying with other disciplines. When copying is linked with composition, perspective, anatomy, art history, and material studies, it becomes a multidimensional educational practice. It allows students to understand that drawing is not an isolated skill, but a synthetic visual language. This interdisciplinary function is especially valuable in design education, where professional competence depends on the ability to combine artistic, technical, historical, and conceptual knowledge.

Another important issue is the role of the teacher in the organisation of students' independent work. Since copying is performed outside regular classroom time, there is a risk that the task may become formal or superficial. To prevent this, the teacher should provide not only the model for copying, but also clear analytical instructions, staged requirements, and assessment criteria. Feedback should address both the technical execution and the student's analytical decisions. In this

way, students' independent work becomes a guided research process rather than a purely reproductive exercise.

The question of model selection is equally important. The copied work should correspond to the student's level of preparation, the current classroom assignment, and the pedagogical goal. For first-year students, it is advisable to select models with clear constructive structure and relatively simple tonal relations. At later stages, students may work with more complex examples from the old masters, including figure drawings, dynamic compositions, and works executed in different graphic materials. Such progression helps avoid both excessive simplification and premature complexity.

A further discussion concerns the relationship between copying and the development of individual style. At first glance, copying may seem to contradict the idea of creative individuality. However, the historical experience of art education shows that many great artists developed their own visual language through the study and reinterpretation of earlier masters. The pedagogical purpose of copying is not to suppress individuality, but to provide students with a professional foundation from which individual solutions can later emerge. A student who understands the logic of classical form, line, proportion, and tone is better prepared to depart from tradition consciously rather than accidentally.

The role of digital tools also requires special attention. Contemporary students increasingly use digital tablets, image archives, and graphic software. These tools can expand access to visual material and support detailed analysis, scaling, and comparison. At the same time, digital copying may reduce the tactile experience associated with traditional materials such as pencil, charcoal, sepia, or sanguine. Therefore, the integration of digital tools should be balanced. Digital technologies may be useful for preliminary study and analysis, but they should not fully replace the manual experience through which eye, hand, material, and perception develop together.

The study also reveals a broader cultural dimension of copying. Through contact with classical works, students enter into dialogue with the history of world and national art. This contributes to the formation of artistic taste, cultural memory, and professional self-awareness. In the education of designers, this is particularly important because design solutions are always connected with visual culture, symbolic systems, and aesthetic values. Copying helps students perceive classical heritage not as a static museum phenomenon, but as a living source of visual methods and artistic thinking.

The proposed methodology has several practical implications. It may be used in the development of independent assignments, methodological guidelines, and assessment rubrics for the discipline "Drawing". It may also help compensate for the reduced number of classroom hours by transferring part of the analytical and technical workload into structured independent practice. For this purpose, copying assignments should be included in curricula as a regular and systematic component rather than as an occasional supplementary task.

At the same time, the study has limitations. It is primarily theoretical and methodological and does not present quantitative data on student achievement. Future research should include empirical testing of the proposed methodology in design programmes, comparative analysis of student works before and after systematic copying tasks, and the development of criteria for assessing analytical understanding, technical quality, and creative transformation. It would also be useful to compare the effectiveness of traditional and digital copying formats.

Thus, copying classical works remains relevant in contemporary design education when it is methodologically organised and pedagogically interpreted as an analytical, developmental, and creative practice. It preserves the continuity of academic tradition while adapting it to the needs of modern visual education and the professional formation of future designers.

Conclusion

The study substantiates that, under contemporary conditions of design education, where there is a shortage of classroom hours, copying classical works of art and academic examples within students' independent work becomes an important instrument of professional development. To a certain extent, it helps compensate for the lack of time allocated to classroom drawing practice. The historical development of this method has shown that, from antiquity to the present day, copying has remained one of the foundations of artistic education. Many outstanding artists began their creative path through copying. The continuity of experience demonstrated by the creative biographies of artists from Leonardo da Vinci and Raphael to Taras Shevchenko and Pablo Picasso proves that copying is not a mechanical repetition, but a deep intellectual analysis of artistic form and nature.

The analysis of pedagogical functions has shown that copying ensures the comprehensive development of the student. It performs an educational function through the acquisition of technical skills, including hatching, constructive form-building, and tonal modelling. It performs a formative function by introducing students to the world's cultural heritage. It also performs a developmental function through the improvement of hand motor skills, visual accuracy, analytical thinking, knowledge of art history, and the formation of artistic taste. Over time, this knowledge may be transformed into the student's own creative style.

In the process of copying, the student does not merely reproduce an image, but analyses artistic techniques, compositional structure, and the principles of form construction. The proposed methodology, which includes staged work from compositional analysis and linear-constructive construction to final tonal modelling, allows students to systematise educational tasks and consciously approach the formation of their own creative manner.

The results of the study make it possible to state that copying classical works of art is an important method in the teaching of the discipline "Drawing". It organically combines classical academic traditions with contemporary requirements for the training of designers. The method has considerable pedagogical potential: it contributes to the formation of professional skills, develops observation, strengthens understanding of compositional structure, and supports deeper assimilation of artistic principles that later transform into the professional style of the future specialist.

Despite the rapid digitalisation of art education, copying remains relevant and necessary because it provides a basis for developing analytical thinking and intellectual preparation. Further research may focus on adapting the principles of copying to the digital environment and on developing new assessment criteria for students' independent work in contemporary art and design schools.

Therefore, copying classical works is an effective pedagogical tool that helps connect the traditions of academic art with modern approaches to artistic and design education.

Funding

No external funding was received.

Conflict of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest.

Acknowledgements:

Not applicable.

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