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Exploring the Educational Potential of AI Generative Art in 3D Design Fundamentals: A Case Study on Prompt Engineering and Creative Workflows

By James Hutson & Bryan Robertson

Lindenwood University

Abstract- AI will be increasingly integrated into artistic practices and creative workflows with prompt engineering assuming an increasingly important role in the process. With readily-available generative AI, such as Midjourney, DALL-E 2, and Craiyon (formerly DALLE-mini), anyone can seemingly create "art," prompting questions about the future necessity of art and design education. However, whereas the ease with which content can be created has seen an outcry from the traditional artmaking community, fears over widespread adoption replacing the need for a firm foundation in art and design principles and fundamentals is unfounded. Instead, these tools should be seen and adopted as other photomechanical and computer-generated versions before them and leveraged to provide new models for artists to improve their workflow. Therefore, the case study here proposed the use of AI generative art for a traditional 3D design studio art course to determine the manner and degree of process change that may be expected and to determine potential benefits of the new technology. As such, students were prompted to use the Craiyon or DALLE-2 art generator to gather verbal cues to combine three different objects into a new version that would then be realized as a physical three-dimensional sculpture and/or model.

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EXPLORING THE EDUCATIONAL POTENTIAL OF AI GENERATIVE ART IN 3D DESIGN FUNDAMENTALS: A CASE STUDY ON PROMPT ENGINEERING AND CREATIVE WORKFLOWS

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Exploring the Educational Potential of AI Generative Art in 3D Design Fundamentals: A Case Study on Prompt Engineering and Creative Workflows

James Hutson ^a & Bryan Robertson ^a

Abstract- AI will be increasingly integrated into artistic practices and creative workflows with prompt engineering assuming an increasingly important role in the process. With readily available generative AI, such as Midjourney, DALL-E 2, and Craiyon (formerly DALLE-mini), anyone can seemingly create "art," prompting questions about the future necessity of art and design education. However, whereas the ease with which content can be created has seen an outcry from the traditional artmaking community, fears over widespread adoption replacing the need for a firm foundation in art and design principles and fundamentals is unfounded. Instead, these tools should be seen and adopted as other photomechanical and computer-generated versions before them and leveraged to provide new models for artists to improve their workflow. Therefore, the case study here proposed the use of AI generative art for a traditional 3D design studio art course to determine the manner and degree of process change that may be expected and to determine potential benefits of the new technology. As such, students were prompted to use the Craiyon or DALLE-2 art generator to gather verbal cues to combine three different objects into a new version that would then be realized as a physical three-dimensional sculpture and/or model. The assignment manifested in different ways, including literally typing the three objects or providing adjectives. Results indicate that proper prompt engineering, including an interaction between objects, resulted in positive outcomes. However, the study suggests that the principles of art and design will continue to be necessary, and a module on prompt design and creation should be included in the curriculum. This study can serve as a model for other art and design departments seeking to integrate AI into their courses through a pragmatic use case and example assignment.

I. INTRODUCTION

The latest generation of Artificial Intelligence (AI) art generators has attracted a great deal of attention due to their increased creative potential. This has resulted in an acceleration of both the capabilities of AI tools and the concern within the field of art. Amidst these advancements, various issues have arisen, ranging from concerns about the ethical misuse of AI technology and copyright to the so-called "Death of the Artist" (Ansari 2022; Murphy 2022). As a result, traditional arts practitioners have expressed their objections to AI art and have even called for a ban on such tools (Sherry 2022). Despite the practical recommendations of how to leverage AI for creative

Author a: Lindenwood University, Saint Charles, MO, USA.

e-mail: jhutson@lindenwood.edu

Author a: Yavapai College, Prescott, AZ, USA.

purposes, which have been widely disseminated in blogs, online forums, and e-magazines like Forbes, Inc., and Wired, the scholarly community has largely focused on the theoretical and aesthetic implications of this emerging technology. For example, Ajani (2022) has noted the existence of two competing definitions of "art" in her study of the role of human authorship in AI-generated content - "Art as an expression of technique, art as a display of sentiment" (p.253). In other words, art may be viewed and appreciated either for its technical characteristics or for its ability to capture the human experience and evoke emotions. This dichotomy is inherent in the historical framing of art, which has persisted since the Renaissance and survived the last redefinition of art in the twentieth century. Art can either be appreciated for the technical prowess of the agent that created it (e.g. an artist, photographer, cinematographer, etc.) or for the innovative way in which it elicits sentimentality (Rosenberg 1983; Mullholand 2022).

Despite ongoing scholarly debates concerning the appropriate role that artificial intelligence (AI) should play in the creative process and the valuation of art within the art world (Zhang & Yang 2021; Wellner 2022), it is evident that AI has already begun to disrupt the workflow of practicing artists and designers (Slotte Dufva 2023). Moreover, artists themselves have recognized the potential of AI art generators to provide fresh, innovative solutions to various formal elements, such as compositional design, subject matter, color palette selection, and others (Compton 2022). However, while these use cases have been identified in professional practice, their integration into higher education, particularly the instruction of studio art, has yet to be fully realized. Therefore, the present study proposes a case study centered on the utilization of AI-generative art tools within the framework of a conventional studio art classroom. By incorporating these tools, the study aims to investigate the feasibility and efficacy of incorporating AI into studio art instruction and provides a practical model for integrating AI into art and design curricula.

The present study involved prompting students to utilize either the Craiyon or DALLE-2 art generator to acquire verbal cues and subsequently merge three disparate objects into a novel form. This prompt could



be interpreted in various ways, ranging from straightforwardly typing out the three objects to including adjectives that depict the objects' interactions or interrelations, the latter of which produced more visually compelling results. Illustrative examples elucidate the iterative process and usefulness of these new AI tools in arriving at surprising and unexpected solutions to three-dimensional visual problems. Furthermore, the findings of this study reveal that, if students employ effective prompt engineering and incorporate an element of interactivity between the objects, they are likely to achieve favorable outcomes. Therefore, it is recommended that a module on prompt design and construction be integrated into the outset of each course prior to engaging in hands-on assignments. This study serves as a model for other art and design departments that aspire to incorporate artificial intelligence into their curricula via a practical use case and example assignment.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

a) *Framing the Discussion of AI Art*

Although previous discussions of AI art have primarily focused on the theoretical and aesthetic dimensions, the practical implementation of this technology in the classroom has yet to be fully addressed. For example, Ahmed (2020) framed AI in terms of a design-based praxis that emerges from the domain of arts and humanities, highlighting the adoption of AI as a design tool, rather than solely for design purposes. Ahmed noted that ephemeral interactive and immersive media installations, as well as their permanent "physicalizations" in media museums, exemplify the making concrete of "immaterial humanistic characteristics" such as emotions, experiences, senses, and memories. By doing so, AI should be reconsidered not merely as a product or traditional image for a design, but rather as a design in and of itself, as the interactions that humans have with AI-generated art embody AI as a design. However, while Ahmed's arguments are compelling, they do not fully address the question of creativity, which has garnered increased attention as of late.

The question of whether AI-generated art should be classified as "art" is often centered around the issue of artistic creativity and autonomy. Historical discussions of "creativity" have produced innumerable descriptions, but for the purposes of this discussion, Csikszentmihályi's (1988) model, which includes an accepted domain of knowledge, an agent who alters a component of the domain to produce something novel, and experts who judge whether the production is acceptable within the field, is particularly relevant. Jennings (2010) has since elaborated on this model and identified three criteria that must be met for an "agent" to

possess creative autonomy: autonomous evaluation, autonomous change, and non-randomness.

Specifically, an AI system must be able to independently evaluate the acceptance of its creation, initiate and guide variations on a standard without explicit direction, and its evaluations must not be purely random. Jennings applies these criteria to AI art and argues that for an AI system to progress from an apprentice to a creator in its own right, it must possess creative autonomy, which represents the system's ability to pursue a course independent of its programmer's or operator's intentions (Jennings 2010, p.491). Ajani (2022) contends that, in light of these criteria, the artist/author is not the sole provocateur in the creative process, since creativity does not exist independently. The author notes that "creativity depends on individual capacity, acquisition of information, and judgment by experts" (p.258). In other words, creativity must be externally validated, and the concept of "autonomy" cannot be applied to AI art. Humans with expertise in a given domain (art and/or design) must "judge" whether the product may be considered "creative," and it cannot be inherently so.

Recent discussions on AI art have brought about new criteria for judging this new genre, with some scholars proposing the creation of a new category of art genre for AI art. Cheng (2022), for instance, recently investigated whether AI can be considered creative and sought to define this new art genre. Citing the controversy surrounding the 2018 sale of the *AI Portrait of Edmond de Belamy* at Christie's, Cheng highlights the ethical questions raised about whether the work was created by a machine or human creativity. The author argues that new approaches are required to assess AI art, which provide strategies beyond historical approaches to artwork.

Cheng calls upon the Schema Theory as a critical empirical framework to better understand the audience's attitude towards art based on their artistic identity. According to Hong and Curran (2019), schema refers to "any active processing data structure that organizes memory and guides perception, performance, and thought" (p.58). Within this framework, Schemata would encompass an understanding of the concepts of art, the perceptions of the audience viewing and judging the work as creative or not, the method of viewing artwork, and more.

Opposing the judging requirements set out by Jennings (2010) and Ajani (2022), Cheng argues that AI art should be evaluated using different criteria that are not bound by the historical framing of artistic work. The author cites the new opportunities provided by AI technologies to explore new creative processes, reframe the psychological process of art in humans as re-embodied through computational abstraction processes, and create new forms of art itself. These

reasons highlight the need for reevaluating how AI art is assessed as a form of communication between different individuals, as well as the need to explore new avenues for artistic expression.

III. METHODS

The mixed-methods study included data from surveys collected from students, instructor feedback and artifacts (AI-generative content and final drawings). The sample was collected from a public community college in Yavapai County, Arizona. Participants included 24 students from AA, AS, AAFA, and continuing education students enrolled in *Three-Dimensional Design*, an introductory studio art course with instruction to designing in three dimensions. The course learning objectives included a study of design principals with emphasis on three-dimensional aesthetics; planning of sculptural, utilitarian, and environmental objects; and application of design principles. The purpose of the project was to assess pedagogical best practices for the use of AI art generators through student perceptions, performance, and feedback coupled with instructor feedback and observations.

The study involved one assignment in a studio art 3D course at the outset of the Spring 2023 term. After reviewing different AI software and assignment alignment in the 3D design class, researchers found that the form and texture assignment was best aligned with the parameters of the study and research question. The research question looked at whether the AI tool would assist students in combining various objects into a new, novel form. Students were prompted to use AI in generating example combinations of objects for their final projects. Students were then surveyed on their existing expectations regarding AI generative art prior to the assignment and then after completing the assignment in order to glean further insight from the data collected.

This project employed a mixed-methods approach to gather data on the use of AI art generators in traditional studio art courses. The data collection included both qualitative (open-ended comments) and thematic (quantitative) results from an online survey conducted in the Spring of 2023. The survey instrument focused on the different methods for using AI art generators and sought to inform the pedagogical considerations of future use of the emerging technology. After collecting the data, student demographics were gauged, feedback on the experience of using AI for image gathering and inspirational purposes was sought, and student preferences for use cases of integrating AI-generative content in their artmaking processes were evaluated. Students were also asked an open-ended question regarding their experience and what they felt AI was best suited to accomplish pedagogically.

To gather the data, students were contacted either through the University course management system or were emailed with links to online surveys. The survey was available for approximately one week at the outset of the eight-week term and one week at the end, and all data was collected using Qualtrics to ensure privacy and anonymity of responses. The results were sorted based on demographics, such as gender identity, major, age, etc., and data were exported from the survey system. Descriptive statistics were calculated and used for comparisons between groups. Finally, the artifacts produced by the students were evaluated along with the results of the surveys to glean more information on learning outcomes and obtain more extensive feedback on the experiences. The combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods allowed for a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of using AI art generators in traditional studio art courses.

IV. RESULTS

Out of the 24 student respondents, 38.10% of participants were sophomores, 28.57% were first year, 19.05% were seniors, and 14.29% were non-degree seeking. The majority of participants (66.67%) were between 18-24 years of age. In terms of gender identity, 57.14% identified as female, 14.29% as male, 23.81% as non-binary, and 4.76% preferred not to disclose. Racially, 95.24% identified as White and 4.76% as Other. Additionally, 28.57% of participants identified as first-generation college students.

Regarding their academic status, 95.24% of participants were commuter students and 4.76% were residential. When it came to their class format, 47.62% reported primarily taking classes online, 28.57% face-to-face, and 23.81% hybrid. Most students were taking the class as a general education fine art requirement for the AA degree. These demographics and characteristics provide insight into the specific population of students who participated in the study and how the use of AI art generators in traditional studio art courses may be evaluated.

a) Pre-Assignment Survey Results

In terms of students' comfort level and use of technology, 71.42% claimed to be somewhat or extremely comfortable with technology in general. This finding is consistent with research on the use of technology among the majority of students between 18-24 years of age (Culp-Roche et al. 2020; Hollandsworth 2022). When asked if they had used an AI generative tool in their artmaking process, 95.24% of participants claimed that they had not, with only 4.76% stating that they had. Participants were also asked about their feelings towards the use of AI in the creation of art in general, with 47.62% being neutral, while 38.10% were



somewhat or extremely negative, and only 14.28% were somewhat or extremely positive. These results suggest that while students may be comfortable with technology in general, they may have reservations or negative attitudes towards AI specifically in the context of art creation. This finding highlights the importance of addressing potential concerns and misconceptions about AI art generators in the classroom to foster greater acceptance and integration of the technology in traditional studio art courses.

Students were then asked to rank in order from most to least the ways in which they felt AI art generators would be helpful in their artmaking processes (Figure 1). The following were the results:

1. Assist in creating new ideas (38.10%)
2. Suggest creative solutions (28.57%)
3. Better understand AI in general (23.81%)
4. Provide a scientific approach to artmaking (4.76%)
5. Understanding how to leverage emerging technologies in art (4.76%)
6. Help in organizing existing ideas (0%)

Students were then asked if they would want to use an AI tool in their artmaking process and 52.38% responded as maybe, while the rest were split at 23.81% as both for and against. The last question was a free response essay and asked respondents to expand on how they feel these tools could be helpful or not. Preconceptions about AI were more evident in the pre-assignment survey. For instance, respondents were acutely aware of the news reports decrying the unethical use of AI art and copyright violations: "AI art making is highly unethical as it uses the artworks of artists without their consent of knowledge." Another student echoed the sentiment by stating: "AI "art" uses nothing but the hard work of other artists in their generations. It is art theft, and therefore I do not like it. It should be used to help get ideas, but anyone who just uses AI inputs and calls it "art" is nothing but a thief." Finally, another noted that even learning how to use these tools made them uncomfortable:

Honestly, as a real artist myself, the use of AI in the art process makes me feel very uncomfortable. I do not like what it does or how it does it. This technology steals previously existing artwork from actual artists and takes all their hard work and hours spent and makes something fake and emotionless. It's the 'easy' way to do art but I think it's lazy and unethical. I do not support the use of this technology as it's taking away my and other artists's livelihoods and hard work.

In fact, of the 19 responses entered, only four could be considered optimistic, while the rest were neutral or resoundingly negative, as outlined above. For example, even when open to the use of AI tools in the creative process, students noted only that it would keep them relevant and up-to-date in their field: "I think it will be useful to my education and help me stay relevant in

the field of art." When specifically noting how the tools may be useful, reflecting the ranking noted above, most highlighted the ability to form new ideas and "creating better ways to develop artwork." In all, the participants did not indicate a clear use case for the tool, nor enthusiasm for using them.

b) Post-Assignment Survey Results

The results of the study indicate the importance of covering prompt engineering as part of class instruction when using prompts in both DALL-E 2 and Craiyon. The use of AI art generators in the classroom can provide inspiring and innovative solutions to understanding and manipulating three-dimensional objects and volumetric space. Following the assignment, participants were surveyed on their experiences, and were specifically asked if they liked having the AI generator exercises as part of the artmaking process in the class. Of the respondents, 38.89% answered in the affirmative, while 38.89% were unsure and 22.22% responded negatively. This mixed response suggests that while some students may enjoy working with AI art generators, others may have reservations or negative attitudes towards the technology. Such feedback underscores the importance of understanding student perspectives and addressing concerns and misconceptions about AI art generators in traditional studio art courses to enhance student learning and experiences.

Students were then asked to re-rank the same ways in which AI may be used to improve their artmaking process (Figure 2). The distribution was much more even across the different categories with:

1. Suggest creative solutions (37.50%)
2. Better understanding of AI in general (18.75%)
3. Assist in understanding volumetric space (18.75%)
4. Assist in creating new ideas (12.50%)
5. Provide a scientific approach to artmaking (6.25%)
6. Help in organizing existing ideas (6.25%)
7. Understanding how to leverage emerging technologies in art (0%)

Comparing the results before and after the use of generative AI art tools is informative. The pre-survey results show that the respondents' primary interest was in using AI generative art tools to assist in creating new ideas (38.10%), followed by suggesting creative solutions (28.57%), and better understanding AI in general (23.81%). The other options were less popular, with providing a scientific approach to artmaking (4.76%), understanding how to leverage emerging technologies in art (4.76%), and help in organizing existing ideas (0%). On the other hand, the post-survey results show a shift in the respondents' preferences, with suggesting creative solutions (37.50%) being the most popular choice, followed by assist in understanding volumetric space (18.75%), and better understanding AI in general (18.75%). Interestingly, the option of assisting

in creating new ideas dropped to 12.50%, while providing a scientific approach to artmaking increased to 6.25%. Help in organizing existing ideas and understanding how to leverage emerging technologies in art remained less popular, with 6.25% and 0% respectively.

Overall, we can observe that respondents' preferences shifted from using AI generative art tools to assisting in creating new ideas towards suggesting creative solutions. This could be due to the fact that the respondents may have already generated several new ideas using AI tools and now want to explore ways to further develop and refine those ideas. The increased interest in understanding volumetric space suggests that respondents may have found the AI generative art tools useful in creating three-dimensional artworks. Moreover, the increased interest in providing a scientific approach to artmaking indicates that respondents may have developed an appreciation for the technical aspects of creating art using AI tools. This could also suggest that respondents are interested in developing a more rigorous and structured approach to their artmaking process, which is facilitated by the use of AI tools.

The next set of questions sought to investigate the utility of AI tools for teaching 3D design principles and help students understand three-dimensional qualities of artworks. First, regarding whether the AI tool helped improve user perception of volume 44.44% responded in the negative, while 33.33% positive and 22.22% neutral. Next, participants were asked whether the tool helped them imagine different shapes in volume and dimension and 44.44% stated that it did, while 16.67% did not and 38.89% were unsure.

The next set of questions sought to determine whether the tools assisted in moving from two- to three-dimensional design. As with those who found a positive correlation between tool use and understanding of volume and dimension, 50% stated that it helped them translate a two-dimensional image into a three-dimensional object with 22.22% stating it did not and 27.78% being unsure. A similar breakdown can be seen when respondents were asked whether the tool assisted in understanding the process of moving from 2D to 3D with 38.89% believing that it did, 22.22% that it did not, and 38.89% unsure. The same can be said of student experience when using the tool to create an interesting form with 50% agreeing that it did, and 61.11% claiming that they were able to create a successful prompt to arrive at the imagery they sought. 94.44% found the user-interface to be user-friendly.

The next set of questions sought to determine how self-aware students were regarding the complexity of their prompt engineering and the role of AI as a collaborative agent in the artmaking process. First, students were asked whether the AI helped them create something more interesting than they could have

themselves and, interestingly, 50% claimed that it did not. Next, students were asked if they were able to arrive at the exact visual solution that they wanted with the first prompt and 77.78% stated that they were not. In the negotiation between text and image, students were less able to admit the co-collaborator and creative role the AI played in the artmaking process with only 5.56% stating that they were "having a conversation through the creative process." Despite that, and the negative outlook on AI in general, 38.89% of students stated that AI tools should be allowed to complete and submit final works for a course on artmaking with 33.33% stating it should not be allowed and 27.78% unsure.

The last question was a free response asking for any other insights into their experience and the usefulness of AI art generators for art and design classes. Consistent with the first set of open remarks, most respondents were resoundingly negative about the emerging technology, noting difficulty with working with the tool (despite overwhelmingly agreeing how user-friendly the interface was). For example, one student wrote: "I just do not like AI as an art tool." While another stated "I had a difficult time with using AI because it felt like my results were something I was plagiarizing. I felt like I was trying so hard to follow the guidelines that the end result was not something that fit my style at all." In fact, the ethics and copyright concerns were still the primary focus of the responses even after using the tool. Only two students begrudgingly noted how the tool could be used to generate new ideas and solutions. But even in these instances, the caveats noted undermined the positive evaluation. For instance,

I think like any tool, using an AI generator is a good way to reorganize ideas and build or transform existing ideas, I also think that an AI generator may take paths that an artist may not, and produce interesting or fascinating results. But I believe the biggest concern is believing that artists can be replaced by AI. I dont believe a computer could ever replicate the works of existing art. The tactile existence I dont believe can or should rather be created. Leave that for the artists.

The comments suggest that the majority of students were not satisfied with the use of AI art generators in their art and design classes. Despite the user-friendly interface of the tool, many participants experienced difficulty in working with it, and some felt that the end result did not fit their style. The primary concern for students was the ethical and copyright issues associated with using AI-generated content. Even those who recognized the potential of the tool in generating new ideas and solutions were cautious and suggested that AI could never replace the role of artists in creating art.

c) *Instructor Observations & Artifacts*

After taking into account the qualitative feedback provided by the instructor, as well as





examining the artifacts submitted by students, the survey results are further corroborated. They suggest that the inspirational and iterative characteristics of artificial intelligence (AI) are indeed observable, despite the students' predominately pessimistic outlook on AI art. In this project, students are tasked with conceptualizing novel forms by combining ordinary household objects. By transforming the banal into something that is unexpected and captivating, the potential for the iterative nature of AI cannot be disregarded. At the project's outset, students are encouraged to reflect upon their logocentric assessment of their interaction with everyday objects. Consequently, the initial stage involves merely listing the nouns of objects that they find engaging, such as staplers, scissors, chairs, rulers, among others. Subsequently, students select three of these objects and contemplate how they might be integrated to generate a new three-dimensional structure. Finally, in the concluding phase, students imbue their final sculptures with diverse textures and continue to modify the original objects' connotation.

To generate and ideate the imagery for the culminating project, students were encouraged to utilize artificial intelligence (AI) tools, and to use descriptive adjectives and verbs to arrive at innovative solutions with the aid of the prompts. The Craiyon and DALLE-2 programs were utilized, which function in a distinct manner by combining written words with visual imagery. During the project, students could input descriptive language into these programs, and receive a tangible output. For instance, using the three nouns "bottle, fire, and wings" and the verb "conjoin" led to the generative AI image, as depicted in *Figure 3.1*. The ethereal and almost empyrean image elevates the seemingly pedestrian water bottle and imbues it with almost spiritual significance. Although the flame-like halo in the initial image was discarded in the final version (*Figure 3.2*), the inspiration is unmistakable, with an added element of motion as the wings and bottle now tilt as though being propelled forward. The ability of students to translate their thoughts into tangible illustrations was remarkably thrilling for them. Additionally, participants relished the creative workflow, as one student stated in class that the process "facilitated branching out my ideas and gave me an idea of what they should look like." While some students approached AI with a hint of skepticism, stating that "AI had a hard time grasping the ideas I had or the creativity I wanted behind it all," the innovative solutions are evident in the final projects submitted. For instance, one student generated an image of bread, a zipper, and a puzzle piece, resulting in the inventive solution, as seen in *Figure 4*.

Despite any initial skepticism, the instructor noted that all students had a remarkable and almost "transcendental experience" engaging in a creative dialogue with AI software applications. One of the most

noteworthy outcomes of the study was the importance of prompt engineering. The words and phrases used by students had a profound influence on the degree of novelty and innovation in the imagery created by AI tools. For instance, simply typing in the combination of words "shoe, lightbulb, and sunglasses" was not effective and resulted in the literal placement of the objects, as depicted in *Figure 5*. Here, the AI has positioned a lightbulb with sunglasses over a pair of brown shoes in a nondescript background, combining an oblique angle with one in profile. Conversely, students who used complete sentences with verbs were much more successful, as exemplified in *Figure 6*, created with the prompt "house made out of clouds." Therefore, regardless of preexisting bias against AI, the projects reveal the powerful impact that AI tools can have in assisting creative processes, and the importance of prompt engineering to ensure successful outcomes. Through engaging in a creative dialogue with AI software applications, students were able to ideate and generate innovative solutions, which they then modified and refined throughout the various stages of the project. This project not only provided students with a novel tool to assist in their creative endeavors but also highlights the potential for the integration of AI in various creative fields.

V. CONCLUSION

The integration of AI-generative tools into art and design education holds significant potential to enhance the creative process. However, this integration requires further research and development to optimize the use of these tools. One significant finding from the study is the importance of prompt engineering, with the words and phrases used having a profound impact on the novelty and innovation of the generated imagery. While the use of AI-generative tools did not necessarily result in well-crafted three-dimensional sculptures, it provided new inspirational models for students and improved their creative workflow.

The potential impact of AI-generative tools on traditional art and design curriculum is considerable. The integration of these tools can help students arrive at novel combinations and gain a better understanding of volumetric space. It is important, however, to recognize that while AI can be a valuable tool in generating new ideas and solutions, it should not be viewed as a replacement for artists but rather as a tool to enhance and complement the creative process. Additionally, educators must address ethical and copyright issues related to the use of AI-generated content in art and design classes.

As art and design education shifts towards integrating AI-generative tools, it is crucial to reevaluate the role of artists in the creative process. Future research should focus on modifying art and design

curriculum to place less emphasis on technical construction and more emphasis on the conceptual framework of creativity. Furthermore, a class could be created to teach proper use of text prompts for AI-

generated art to better comprehend and anticipate the outcome for different ideation processes. The ability to manipulate the algorithm will be the future purview of artists, as it has been for computer scientists.

FIGURES

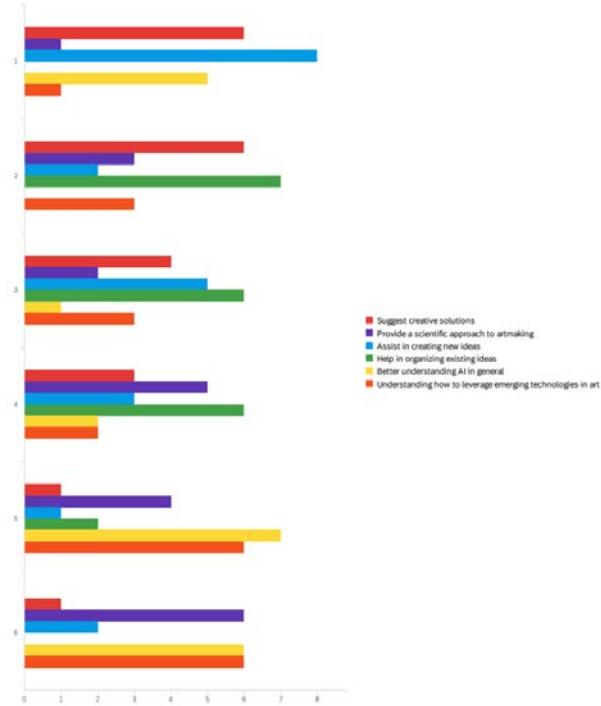


Figure 1: Respondent Ranking of Usefulness of AI Art Application in the Artmaking Process Before Use

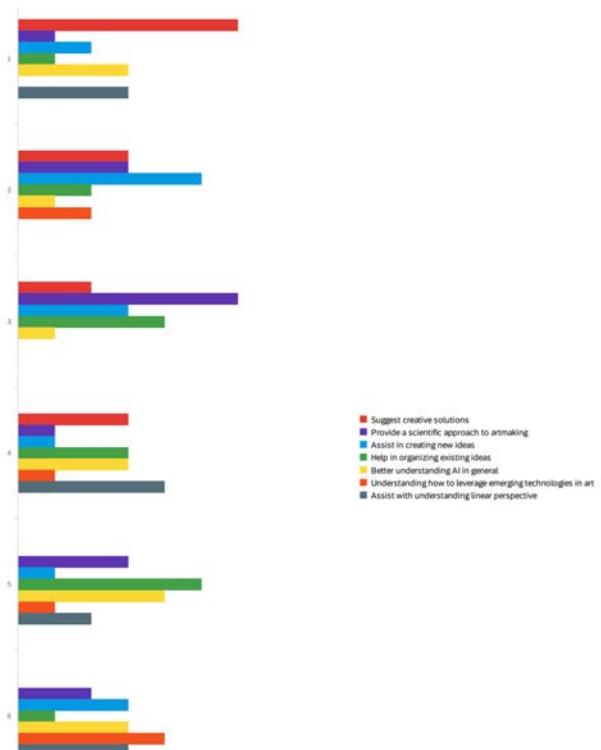


Figure 2: Respondent Ranking of Usefulness of AI Art Application in the Artmaking Process After Use



Figure 3.1: Generative AI Image of a Water Bottle on Fire with Wings



Figure 3.2: Final Sculpture of a Water Bottle on Fire with Wings



Figure 4: Final Sculpture of Bread, Zipper, Puzzle Piece

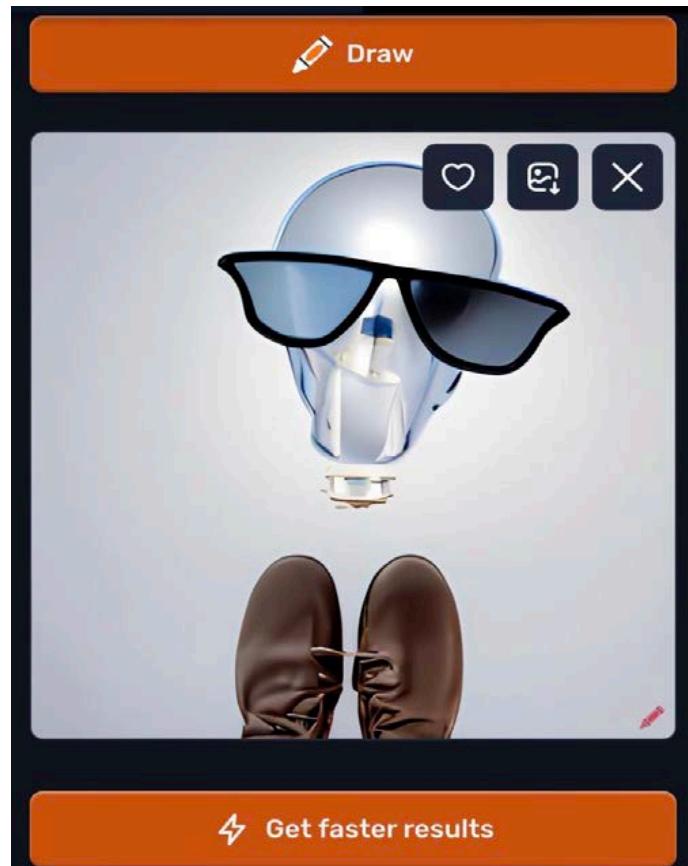


Figure 5: Generative AI Image of Shoes, Lightbulb and Sunglasses



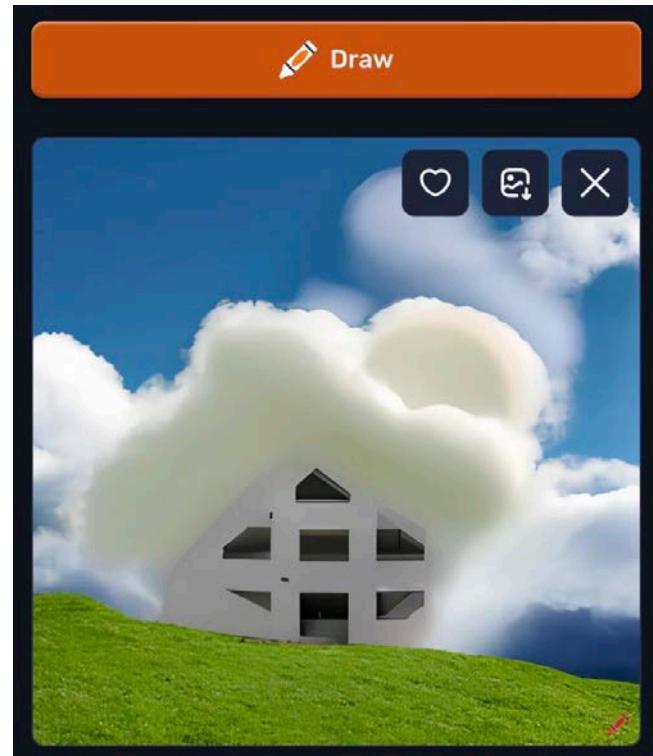


Figure 6: Generative AI Image of a House Made Out of Clouds

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The Research on Development of the Teaching Choral Music in Non-Professional Music Colleges in China

By Xiang Jie & Duan-Rong Lin

Abstract- This thesis explores the cultivation of emotional quality in the teaching of choral music in non-professional music colleges in China. With the increasing popularity of choral music in China, it is important to understand the effectiveness of teaching methods and how students connect emotionally with the genre. The research examines the current state of choral music education, including the strengths and weaknesses inherent in pedagogical approaches. The research questions explore the impact of a rural location on the quality of choral singing, the importance of students' participation in schools, the adequacy of school preparation for college-level music and choral delivery, the adequacy of teacher training, and the possibility of assessing the emotional quality of choral education. The theoretical framework of the thesis encompasses traditional textbook theories for choral instruction, scientific understanding of how the voice works, and theories of emotional connection to choral music. The research concludes that emotional quality is crucial to choral singing and teachers must have strong theoretical and practical backgrounds to effectively teach choral skills in nonspecialized Chinese educational colleges.

Keywords: choral music, emotional quality, non-professional music colleges, pedagogical approaches, teacher training.

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THERESARCHONDEVELOPMENTOFTHETEACHINGCHORALMUSICINNONPROFESSIONALMUSICCOLLEGESINCHINA

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RESEARCH | DIVERSITY | ETHICS

The Research on Development of the Teaching Choral Music in Non-Professional Music Colleges in China

Xiang Jie ^a & Duan-Rong Lin ^a

Abstract- This thesis explores the cultivation of emotional quality in the teaching of choral music in non-professional music colleges in China. With the increasing popularity of choral music in China, it is important to understand the effectiveness of teaching methods and how students connect emotionally with the genre. The research examines the current state of choral music education, including the strengths and weaknesses inherent in pedagogical approaches. The research questions explore the impact of a rural location on the quality of choral singing, the importance of students' participation in schools, the adequacy of school preparation for college-level music and choral delivery, the adequacy of teacher training, and the possibility of assessing the emotional quality of choral education. The theoretical framework of the thesis encompasses traditional textbook theories for choral instruction, scientific understanding of how the voice works, and theories of emotional connection to choral music. The research concludes that emotional quality is crucial to choral singing and teachers must have strong theoretical and practical backgrounds to effectively teach choral skills in non-specialized Chinese educational colleges.

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I. INTRODUCTION TO CHINESE CHORAL MUSIC

The development of choral singing is connected to the training of specialist teachers, and making sure those teachers are not only in the specialist musical academies is important. Music is closely associated with young children's cognitive and social development (Elliott and Silverman, 2015; Barrett et al., 2019), and in choral activities, it fosters community and emotional wellbeing. The value of choral singing comes from the fact that it involves different kinds of musical aesthetics and musical thinking. This helps musical aesthetics and cognitive development in some ways, changing how we see the world and how they experience it through music (Chen et al., 2023, p. 185; Yo, 2016; Xie and Leung, 2011).

Author a: Teacher of Xiangxi Vocational and Technical College for Nationalities, China No.1, Wuling Mountain Avenue, Jishou City, Xiangxi Tujia and Miao Autonomous Prefecture, Hunan.

e-mail: 1064007674@qq.com

Author a: Director of the Chinese Art Therapy Association Hong Kong. e-mail: art_therapy@hotmail.com

Even though choral music is an important part of higher music education in China, the first choral classes did not start until the early 1900s (Huang, 2022, para. 1). There is no proof that China has a choral tradition, and there are not even many choral components in Chinese folk music (Huang, 2022, para. 3). Up until the end of the 19th century, when China lagged behind in economic and military growth, European music had a significant influence on Chinese musical modernism (Mittler, 2020, p. 160). Early in the 20th century, China introduced a new educational system, and at the same time, modern musical education in China got its start with the Chinese school songs (xuetang yuege 学堂·歌) (Huang, 2022, para. 3; Yu, 2017, pp. 1–15). Most of the songs in Xuetang yuege were new versions of songs that had already been published in Japan, Europe, or the United States. The lyrics were written in Chinese. Most of these songs' composers have international educational backgrounds (Huang, 2022, para. 3).

China has not always had a smooth path for developing choral education and music education in general. During the Cultural Revolution, which took place from 1966 to 1969, all music lessons were stopped (Xiang, 2018). Also, after this time, music was taught without a formal curriculum, formal textbooks, or a unified teaching plan until the 1970s (Xiang, 2018, p. 422). This period impacted the availability of music specialists in the coming decades, and by 1956 there were only 20 specialist music colleges in the whole of China (Xiang, 2018). This has improved; today, China has approximately 100 professional music schools and colleges of music (Li and Burapajana, 2022, pp. 1043–1044), but the number of conductors trained each year is insufficient to meet society's needs. Li and Burapajana (2022, p. 1044) say that colleges of professional music are the best place to learn how to play music. But because there are not enough professors of chorus conducting, many colleges do not work to improve the way they teach chorus.

After the People's Republic of China was created in the 1950s, many important cities started professional choruses, which were followed by many amateur choirs (Huang, 2022, para. 4). This promoted Chinese choral activities. In 1951, Liu Zhi's "Charming



"Xinjiang" for female choir became a national hit, inspiring new folk song arrangements (Yu, 2017). Wang Weiliang arranged traditional songs for Peking's 1953-founded Northern Shaanxi Women's Choir. Their natural voices and regional accents helped the choir become popular. Chinese choral music now emphasizes folk song arrangements (Huang, 2022, paras. 4–5).

Chinese choral music has advanced greatly in recent decades, and Chinese choral compositions have multiplied and varied. Tan Dun and Chen Yi became international composers with their choral works. These pieces show their choral and Chinese traditional music skills (Chan, 1994).

China is also becoming increasingly choral (Huang, 2022, para. 9). First, commercial choral performances and concerts dominated the music market. Professional choirs like the Shanghai Rainbow Chamber Choir influence the music industry (Rose and Qiangwei, 2019, p. 107). They have fans like celebrities. Second, as choral music education has become essential, school choirs have been created from kindergarten through college. Rose and Qiangwei (2019) say that Western and Chinese choral repertoires are taught to show how flexible the genre is.

Given the increasing profile of choral music in China, teaching is important. Some of the problems that have been found are a lack of top-level national guiding papers, trained teachers, class hours, and a difference between how the materials are designed and how they are used (Hongxing and Zhen, 2019, p. 1).

This thesis presents the situation outside the professional music colleges, and asks how effective the emotional quality of the teaching is, connecting students to the emotion of the choral traditions.

II. RESEARCH MOTIVATION

A personal interest in music and an awareness of how little research has been done specific to colleges was the motivation for the research. Most current research papers are about how to teach younger children, not how to teach college students. Current research is also connected to a more general strategy in music pedagogy as opposed to the specifics of pedagogy in choral technique.

III. RESEARCH PURPOSE

This study looks at the research that has already been done on how choral music is taught in China's non-professional music colleges and how students' emotional skills are developed. In other words, effective choral singing will be achieved when students connect to the emotion within the songs, this develops over time with good teaching.

An extended literature review will explore the existing research that influences choral singing, looking at the strengths and weaknesses inherent in the pedagogical approaches.

IV. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

To what extent does a rural location impact the teaching and quality of choral singing in Chinese colleges?

How important for students valuing singing at college level is their participation in schools?

Do schools adequately prepare students for college music and choral delivery?

Are teachers adequately trained for teaching choral skills in non-specialized Chinese educational colleges?

Is it possible to assess the emotional quality of choral education?

V. LITERATURE REVIEW

a) Theories of Choral Music in China

- 1) The basic theories being addressed in this section are:
- 2) The traditional textbook theories for choral instruction.
- 3) Scientific understanding on how the voice works.
- 4) Theories of emotional connection to choral music.

The two main areas of chorus instruction in China at the moment are vocal performance and stage performance (Nie and Phu-ngamdee, 2022, p. 9448). This section looks at the theoretical position of teaching chorus singing and how there has been an over reliance on the traditional textbook approach, due to a lack of qualified staff, low levels of specialism in this field outside of the professional academies of music. Although this paper connects to the teaching of choral music in the college setting, college education is the product of teaching in the early years of schooling. If interest and skills are not sparked there, a strong desire to learn is not likely to happen when other goals, like college and work, come up.

Choral singing is based on a scientific understanding of how the voice works, but textbook explanations and lessons are not enough to teach it (Hongxing and Zhen 2019). The tone of the chorus affects how it sounds, and the tone of the chorus and the solo are different (Hongxing and Zhen, 2019). The one-of-a-kind, formant-focused solo vocal music training is unparalleled. It must also include sound training for SATB (mixed-gender groups), harmony and pitch practice, sound uniformity training, and so on. (Xu, 2009). Choral singing should avoid solo singing, and emphasize harmony (Hongxing and Zhen, 2019, pp. 2–3). The teacher should also think about the voices of the students, explain how singing works scientifically, and coordinate the timbres of the chorus members to make a tone that is soft and delicate, a voice that is clear and in tune, and a sound that is balanced and full of different sounds (Tan, 2015).

In a setting where people do not specialize, it is hard to keep up the same level of teaching as a specialist. A non-specialist teacher may not have a personal connection to the music and may be unfamiliar with it. Chorus teachers must have strong theoretical and practical backgrounds (Hongxing and Zhen, 2019). Vocal, instrumental, and theoretical professors teach "chorus and conducting" courses nowadays. A lack of good teachers makes scientific and organized teaching impossible. (Hongxing and Zhen, 2019, p. 5, citing Zhu, 2006).

Concerning choral singing, the development of emotional quality is important because the true chorus should come from the heart and be full of love and pleasure (Nie and Phu-ngamdee, 2022). In order to sing moving music, Nie and Phu-ngamdee (2022, p. 9448) consider that we must fully grasp the essence of choral works in order to study choral aesthetics. Both Liu Yuan (2004) and Nie and Phu-ngamdee (2022) connect this aim to the cultivation of "applied talents." The creation and development of chorus groups are crucial for achieving this objective. Yuan wrote in 2004 that we should put more emphasis on developing students' all-around skills, such as their ability to perceive, their sense of beauty, their ability to teach, and their ability to do theoretical research, so that they can develop artistic talents as well as master the techniques and skills of different kinds of works. For this goal to be reached, it is important to start and grow chorus groups, which is part of how choral music is taught. We should put more focus on helping students develop all-around skills like perceptual ability, aesthetic ability, teaching ability, and theoretical research ability (Nie and Phu-ngamdee, 2022, p. 9453). This will help students develop their artistic talents as well as master the technology and skills required for various types of work.

Looking at classroom delivery, Wang Fangying (2021, p. 15) raises many of the concerns about non-specialist teachers and the overuse of traditional methods driven by a textbook. Fangying (2021) says that teachers still use the traditional theoretical teaching method when teaching the Chinese singing style. This shifts the style toward the idea of technical supremacy and makes it easier for students to learn music. Despite the skills gradually improving, the singing style is becoming more uniform (Fangying, 2021, pp. 15–16). It is hard to teach Chinese choral singing styles with this type of pedagogy because students do not develop the right traits, learning abilities, or employment levels. It is also hard to make good teaching materials for Chinese choral singing styles (Fengying, 2021, pp. 15–16). If music is to emotionally connect to the listener, then it should not be overly mechanical. Fengying calls the choral displays "one thousand persons" (Fengying, 2021, p. 52) because the singers, clothes, and styles are getting more and more alike. Not only are tone and technology talked about, but so are the singers' similar

bright clothes, their many feelings, and their supposedly dignified mechanical movements. This type of national "academician" singer, for Fengying (2021), is lacking in vibrant personal emotional connection to the music; they are one of the thousand. In order to teach in a scientific way, academic Chinese singing style pedagogy gives more weight to technology than style and uses a single westernized aesthetic standard to measure the country's many different styles of singing (Fengying, 2021, p. 52). Because of this, national vocalists sound the same, have the same style, and do not have much of a personality (Fengying, 2021, p.52).

VI. RESEARCH METHODS

The research method selected in this paper will be an extensive literature review, and wants to understand the most basic situation from the literature first. McNabb (2008) wrote that a literature review demonstrates to the study's target audience that the author is aware of the significant advancements made in the research field by other authors. Essentially, the literature aids in highlighting the main problems in the field of study and glaring gaps in the body of knowledge. The literature review, for McNabb (2008) aids the readers of the study in understanding the concepts and theories that the author has applied throughout the investigation.

The methodology is different as there is no gathering of primary data. Therefore, the following steps describe the location and selection of literature: This is referred to as a search method as well. The search strategy shows how to narrow down the literature review to find the most important research and interesting topics and Brown (2006) breaks the review into five distinctive validity criteria: the readership and authority, its purpose, scope and format. This is presented in the following section and takes the form of a search strategy table, which replaces the customary "methodology" section (Flick, 2018, pp. 32–34).

The criteria for inclusion and exclusion, when they were used, and why filters like publication date, country of origin, and language of publication fall under the category of the search method. Initial steps to look at available material were through the search model (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research Type), common in social sciences research, which was used to assist in establishing the strategy. This was done to find articles that might not have mentioned these (so as to be as thorough as possible, since the college part of the question makes it much harder to find studies). Initial scoping searches that used AND to separate the "Sample" (S) and "Phenomenon of Interest" (PI) failed to turn up any information, furthermore the inclusion of "emotion" created problems, only Gannett (2017) connecting emotion with teaching choral work. This might have happened as a result of papers occasionally confusing



the sample and the phenomenon of interest and leaving out both. The decision was made to employ OR between S and PI, for example:

Sample: Non-Professional Music Colleges in China

Phenomenon of Interest: Choral Singing and Emotional Content and Teaching.

The design and collection of the initial literature review

Database name	Keywords/phrases used	Database headings used	Search limits (inclusions/exclusions)	No. of results
JSTOR	China, Choral Singing, emotion, non-professional colleges.	None	None	139 Of which only one was relevant.
Google Scholar	As above.	None	None	1403. Of which 3 were directly relevant.
Research Gate				17,300 of which 2 were directly relevant
<p><i>Comment:</i> This was an unfiltered 'global' search to establish the quantity and variety of research. In particular, noting the amount of primary, empirical data available on the topic before drilling down, it was notable how limited the specific connections to the non-professional colleges in China were.</p>				
SECTION 2				
A range of data bases were then used removing many of the filters and opening up the current field.	China and teaching choral music	None	None	105,000 plus. Ranging from using choral music in Chinese fast food environments to birth music.
<p><i>Comment:</i> Experimented with opening up to encompass more research however, results too large to assess for relevancy. Need to be more specific.</p>				
			None	65
<p><i>Comment:</i> To improve the quality of search, aim to narrow the results to books and journals that are specific to choral teaching and the results in China.</p>				
SECTION 3				
Proquest Scribd (for eBooks)	China + choral pedagogy & colleges		Inclusions Academic journals Peer reviewed eBooks 2010 – 2023 Exclusions - Those not related to education, for example: fast foods and competitive choral singing.	32 sources
Research Gate Google Scholar SAGE				
<p><i>Comment:</i> Applied inclusion and exclusion limiters to funnel most current / relevant / quality research. Also, aimed to standardize the search by focusing on colleges where possible. Some general books on educational techniques of music were useful.</p>				

a) Hypothesis

Choral singing at college may be inhibited by the lack of specialized teachers in a non-professional environment.

Students in rural environments suffer from parental disdain for music and the arts over academic subjects.

Rural students lack access to the best qualified teaching professionals.

China is seeing a division between the older connections of choral music to the red music of the state, and newer millennial interest with the choral groups that address their motivations and likes.

VII. ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

a) Lack of Specialists

Several papers point out that there are not enough trained music specialists (Reimer, 1989) (Mei and Yang, 2021). Current pre-teacher music training in China involves education at one of four different types of institutions: (1) a music conservatory, (2) music programs at general and comprehensive universities; (3) teacher preparation colleges, and (4) specialized teacher training institutes (Yu, 2016, pp. 1–15). Typically, Type 2 or Type 3 universities train the majority of primary or secondary school music teachers, whereas Type 1 institutions cultivate music professionals, and Type 4 institutions serve the pre-school level (Yu, 2016).

In a study done by Zhou (2012) with 30 music teachers and 800 students in Yulin City in north China, the amount of time spent on music lessons dropped significantly in the last year of primary school (from all required hours to 60%) and even more in junior secondary schools (from 80% to 20%) (Yang and Welch, 2019, pp. 8–9, citing Zhou 2019). Of the teachers who taught music full-time, 60% of them had bachelor's degrees (or above) in the subject, which led the majority of students to claim to "enjoy music" in general. It was revealed that 30% of the music teachers and 70% of the students disliked music classes, and 90% of the students thought that music was a pointless subject because they thought the teaching materials were weak (Yang and Welch, 2019, p. 9).

b) The advent of technology

These are the issues that need to be addressed in Chinese education if choral singing is to progress. Xiang (2018) showed that education has changed a lot in the 21st century. Music has taken advantage of many of the benefits of technology, which have also helped choral singing. The Chinese government says in 2012 that it hopes new technology will make it easier to play music in the classroom. Unlike the situation in the 1960s, and 1970s that the introduction noted, Chinese music teachers (in specialized and non-specialized schools) actively participate in academic conferences, organize international academic exchanges, or ask

foreign specialists to give lectures (Xiang, 2018, p.425). With the development of multimedia technologies and their application to music education courses like singing and ear training, composing, and music appreciation, many Chinese schools were among the first to offer computer music courses (Xiang, 2018). This made the students much more interested in learning and made teaching much more effective (Xiang, 2018, p. 425). The widespread use of the Internet in the 21st century has had a big effect on how education is given. Education in music is not an exception. In higher education, new classroom techniques including MOOCs, micro-classes, flipping the classroom, and online learning have emerged, revolutionizing the traditional music education classroom (Xiang, 2018, p. 425). The development of choral singing from singing and ear training is clear.

c) Emotion

For choral education to help students develop their emotional skills, teachers need to know what works and how to effectively prepare children for the singing exercise. One aspect of this is the "attack," represented by the use of the Bernoulli effect, which is directly related to the closure of the vocal cords, is necessary to understand how to make the vocal cords create a scientifically and medically close vibration with the breath throughout the attacking process (Vernnard, 1967). Hongxing and Zhen (2019, p. 5) list relaxation, singing posture, breathing, and resonance as the four steps of the warm-up process.

In a non-specialist setting, these are the procedures that might not take place, or be delivered in an inadequate fashion. Second, choral singing techniques, diction, and multi-voice synchronization are practiced during the rehearsal phase. In contrast to the warm-up, the last relaxation technique involves letting your voice relax and slowly starting to speak again. It works by using mild sighs, contemplative eye closure, listening to the piano, slowly stretching the limbs, etc. (Hongxing and Zhen, 2019, p. 5).

The right way to sing in a choir is to avoid the sound of solo singing and focus on blending with the other singers. Additionally, the teacher should take into account the unique vocal qualities of each student, demonstrate scientific singing techniques, and coordinate the timbres of the choir members to produce a tone that is mellow and soft, a voice that is accurate and harmonious, and a sound that is well-balanced and vibrant (Tan, 2015).

d) Choral Singing within Chinese Educational Culture

The literature search brought up a wide range of enquiry on music teaching in China. Chinese elementary and secondary students must take 1-2 music sessions every week (Mei and Yang, 2021, parag. 3). These classes should encompass singing, playing, enjoying, reading, and sight-singing (Yu and Leung, 2019, pp. 178–179). Singing dominates classrooms, because

music is not compulsory for the gaokao, and receives less attention than English, math, and science (OECD, 2016). (Yu and Leung, 2019).

Xinhua News covered the role of choirs in education in 2022. China's new "double reduction" education plan, which attempts to make primary and middle school students' lives simpler by giving them less homework and tutoring outside of school, has focused more on leisure and athletic activities, the news station believed (Xinhua, 2022). Parents considered choir practice "a waste of time" and a distraction from academics, making it difficult to encourage their children to attend. Choir was not popular with the parents (Xinhua, 2022).

Xinhua's article focuses on non-professional music colleges, while parents whose children attend elite music specialized institutions in most major Chinese cities may have different perspectives. Xiang (2018) criticizes how China used to teach music based on the Soviet Union's model, but he praises how it now focuses on local communities.

e) *Choir Singing and communities*

Choir music is now composed in China due to this link with local communities. Liu Xiaogeng, a composer, explained why choirs and professors liked his music. "Collecting hundreds of folk songs from people" gave him an emotional connection to music and inspired his China-themed works. His choral compositions include these resources and ethnic minority practises from diverse places, establishing an emotional relationship between the singer and the music. Local languages help blend compositions into local culture. The Chinese children's choir favourite "water bugs" employs Zhuang language (Xiaogeng, 2020). Choral music that is so strongly tied to regional Chinese oral culture is becoming more significant to the people.

The Cultural Revolution's impact on music in the ensuing decades is Xiaogeng's deepest regret. He noted that the Chinese only taught choral music for around 100 years, which was interrupted by Mao. He thinks it has potential but requires technological, aesthetic, and ideological improvements (Xiaogeng, 2020). Xiaogeng wants more Chinese choral singers to sing with international choirs and develop new tunes.

A feature of cultural life in China is its connection to the politics of the party. Edward Wong (2011) connects government support for choral music to the "red culture revival" commemorating the revolution's anniversary. To commemorate Maoist classics such as "The East is Red" and "Without the Communist Party, There Would Be No New China;" party officials have directed that choirs and musical acts be formed in schools, state-owned enterprises, and neighborhood groups (Wong, 2011). Even prisons in Chongqing were hosting singalongs, and one mental hospital has started

recommending them to inmates (Wong, 2011). When there is a connection between party goals and music, funding is provided, and parents become supportive because the songs remind them of their youth.

The millennial generation of Chinese youth in the urban centers are open to modern choral music, The Shanghai-based Rainbow Chamber Singers have proven a huge hit with Chinese millennials, they are a young choir group that came from the Shanghai Music Conservatory and look to open choral music beyond the "red revival" (Griffiths, 2017). Their lyrics connect to arranged marriages, the pressures of low pay, and growing up in modern China; they describe their music as a "rallying cry" for their generation (Griffiths, 2017). The way choral music is connecting to the emotions of the millennial generation should mean that they will Choral Singing in the Schools of Rural China.

Following on from the ideas of Xiaogeng, the revitalizing of the choirs in the rural parts of China, away from the specialized music colleges, has been a feature of the last decade. This may be closely connected to the local languages and the renewed interest in Chinese folklore that Xiaogeng alluded to in Chen et al., (2023) connection of the importance of the choirs to the ongoing rural revitalization in contemporary China. Due to its distinctive art form, choral art education for children in rural areas receiving compulsory schooling has a special educational value (Chen et al., 2023, 184). Chen et al., (2023) article showed three routes for the integrated and high-quality development of children's choral art education in urban and rural areas, using the integration of children's choral art education into the process of national rural revitalization as the starting point.

Rural village schools are common in China, and there are concerns about the quality of music education provided there. This is because, although quality-oriented education is becoming a bigger aspect of basic education in China as the country's curriculum reform moves forward, in rural China, due to historical and geographical factors, the economy and culture of the countryside are very different from those of the cities, and most schools have a dearth of professional talent and a thin artistic atmosphere (Chen et al., 2023). Even if policy guidelines continue to support the growth of arts education, it is challenging to put them into practice and enforce them in relatively underdeveloped rural areas (Chen et al., 2023, pp. 185–186). The new curricular standards are challenging to implement in many rural schools, and there is a gap between the policies that have been released and how they are being put into practice.

Many schools in wealthy urban areas have their own choirs, bands, or dance groups. This is because these schools can afford to hire highly qualified music teachers, and parents can send their kids to private classes after school to learn how to play an instrument

(Sun and Leung, 2013, p. 32). In remote areas, on the other hand, it can be hard to guarantee weekly music lessons, let alone regular lessons on musical instruments, because of the stress of high-stakes tests, the cost of music education, and the lack of certified music teachers (Sun and Leung, 2013, p. 32).

Part of the problem in rural areas is that parents do not respect this part of the curriculum. This can be because of cultural barriers that show up in the way parents act. This is especially true in rural areas, where teachers and parents do not help children develop aesthetic ideas in elementary and middle school (Chen et al., 2023, p. 185). Aesthetic education is not used as much in homeschooling because most parents have the wrong ideas about the arts and have strong beliefs about them. There are a lot of these kinds of biases in China, especially in rural areas (Chen et al., 2023, p. 185). Teaching children about the arts is perceived by many parents as a waste of time and money because schools and parents want their children to leave education with good academic grades. They do not even fully comprehend the value of aesthetic education, let alone understand it (Chen et al., 2023, p. 185).

VIII. CONCLUSION

From the initial research questions and the literature searches some results can be derived that lead to suggestions made toward the questions.

(1) *To what extent does a rural location impact the teaching and quality of choral singing in Chinese colleges?*

In education, it has been thought that choral singing is much further along in cities than in rural areas. This is because the parents in the rural area lack an appreciation for the value of the arts, they are reluctant to have children attend extra out-of-school classes for arts based subjects, where academic success is the principal driver.

(2) *How important for students valuing singing at college level is their participation in schools?*

It is essential. College education cannot succeed without preparation in the early years. The quality of music educators, parental support, and regional economic growth have been shown to all play a significant role in determining the nature and scope of choral music education in China's public schools.

(3) *Do schools adequately prepare students for college music and choral delivery?*

It is very dependent upon location, parental support and the training of teachers.

(4) *Are teachers adequately trained for teaching choral skills in non-specialized Chinese educational colleges?*

It would appear not. Over use on textbooks due to a lack of teacher expertise is one such pointer.

(5) *Is it possible to assess the emotional quality of choral education?*

This is a variable that is difficult to quantify and, possibly, complicated the research searches.

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“Writing as One Who Cries...”: The Poet as a Fencer

By Diogo Cesar Nunes

Abstract- This paper seeks to question the relationship between lyrical subject and living subject as from the poem *O relógio e o sonho*, by Moacyr Félix, originally published in the book *O pão e o vinho*, 1959, work in which the poet said he had found his “own face”. Highlighting the theme of memory, we refer to Baudelaire's metaphor of the “fencer” and the relationship between *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*, as well as between “lived experience” and “poetic experience” in Benjamin, to support the hypothesis that affirmative of poetic identity, in Felix's lyric, is at the same time the realization of its loss.

Keywords: *moacyr félix; poetic writing; memory; time; walter benjamin.*

GJHSS-A Classification: DDC Code: 851.1 LCC Code: PQ4315



WRITING AS ONE WHO CRIES THE POET AS A FENCER

Strictly as per the compliance and regulations of:



“Writing as One Who Cries...”: The Poet as a Fencer

“Escrever Como Quem Chora...”: O Poeta Como Esgrimista

Diogo Cesar Nunes

Resumo- Neste artigo busca se pôr em questão a relação entre sujeito lírico e sujeito vivente a partir do poema *O Relógio e o Sonho*, de Moacyr Félix, publicado originalmente no livro *O pão e o vinho*, de 1959, trabalho em que o poeta disse ter encontrado o “rosto próprio”. Destaca-se o tema da memória e, com ela, se recorre à metáfora do “esgrimista”, de Baudelaire, e às relações entre experiência (*Erfahrung*) e vivência (*Erlebnis*), bem como entre “experiência vivida” e “experiência poética”, em Benjamin, para sustentar a hipótese de que a afirmativa da identidade poética, na lírica de Félix, é, a um instante, a constatação, ou a realização, da sua perda.

Palavras-chave: moacyr félix; escrita poética; memória; tempo; walter benjamin.

Abstract- This paper seeks to question the relationship between lyrical subject and living subject as from the poem *O relógio e o sonho*, by Moacyr Félix, originally published in the book *O pão e o vinho*, 1959, work in which the poet said he had found his “own face”. Highlighting the theme of memory, we refer to Baudelaire’s metaphor of the “fencer” and the relationship between *Erfahrung* and *Erlebnis*, as well as between “lived experience” and “poetic experience” in Benjamin, to support the hypothesis that affirmative of poetic identity, in Felix’s lyric, is at the same time the realization of its loss.

Keywords: moacyr félix; poetic writing; memory; time; walter benjamin.

Escrever como quem chora... Meu Deus, onde e quando eu li
estas palavras que retornam tão nuas de passado?

(Moacyr Félix).

INTRODUCTION

Na preparação do livro *O Pão e o Vinho*, publicado em 1959, Moacyr Félix elaborou uma espécie de método de trabalho, por assim dizer, que manteve ao longo das obras que se seguiram: a reescrita constante dos poemas, sobretudo os já publicados, visando sempre uma “versão definitiva” em publicação futura. Até seu último livro, *Introdução a escombros*, de 1998, a partir de *O Pão e o vinho* todas as obras poéticas publicadas contém trechos de livros anteriores com “versões definitivas” de diversos poemas (inclusive as obras que não se apresentam como antologias e compilações).

Félix iria publicar *O Pão e o Vinho* na Suécia em 1955. Contudo, com o livro já no prelo, resolveu reelaborá-lo e, além de construir novos versos,

Author: e-mail: diogodcns@gmail.com

reescreveu os que seriam publicados. “Obra amadurecida”: “nele, já tenho meu próprio rosto”, disse ao *Jornal de Letras* à época do lançamento (FÉLIX, 2002, p. 155). O “rosto” próprio, buscado e/ou forjado, outrossim, no trabalho de reescrever os poemas, aparece como uma espécie de meta ao poeta: “que eu seja eu mesmo no livro, fazendo obra de arte” (FÉLIX, 2002, p. 156). Tratar-se-ia da busca por uma identidade poética cujo substrato seria a elaboração de uma “identidade narrativa” em que o sujeito lírico e o vivente pudessem se encontrar numa espécie de comunhão, ou fusão. Félix fala sobre si como duplo, e é este um mote, por assim dizer, importante da sua produção poética.

Se sujeito vivente e sujeito lírico não se confundem, seus encontros e desencontros produzem efeitos e têm implicações recíprocas de um sobre o outro. Se tal relação não é simétrica e se escapa a determinações causais, àquele que se enuncia como “poeta” as linhas que desenham um “rosto próprio” despontam dos versos impressos sobre o papel. Nos primeiros versos de *O relógio e o sonho*, o tema da escrita é atravessado pelo aparecimento de fragmentos de memória que apontam a uma biografia imprecisa:

Escrever como quem chora... Meu Deus, onde e quando eu li
estas palavras que retornam tão nuas de passado?
Como quem chora... O quarto, o berço, as coisas pálidas,
a lua
na parede branca de retratos que calaram.
Nenhum mapa na rua Voluntários, ao menos, ou de uma
borda
do Sena, do Sena tão distante
como aquele olhar de Ana Maria,
quando acordamos juntos em 9 de abril de 1950 (FÉLIX,
1959, p. 39).

Encontramos, nestes versos, como que um inventário de imagens que não chega a oferecer um mapa seguro para a memória. O poeta recolhe e dispõe tais imagens como quem lança sobre o papel um olhar que tenta recuperar aquele que fora lançado sobre as coisas, o que nos remete à figura do “esgrimista”, de Baudelaire, elaborada na sua análise de Constantin Guys – metáfora que permite identificar o artista como aquele que luta com a obra, travando “combate” com a memória e com a “ pena”; ou, antes, como aquele que

encarna um lugar impreciso em que memória e criação se confrontam.

Agora, no momento em que os outros dormem, esse homem está curvado sobre a mesa, lançando sobre uma folha de papel o mesmo olhar que há pouco fixava sobre as coisas, esgrimindo com seu lápis, sua caneta, seu pincel, respingando no teto a água do copo, limpando a pena na camisa, apressado, violento, ativo, como se temesse que as imagens lhe escapassesem, brigando sozinho, esbarrando em si mesmo (BAUDELAIRE, 2010, p. 32).¹

O artista e seu processo de trabalho são, a um tempo, a passagem e a fixação de uma dupla imprecisão: as "imagens do dia", que se destinam ao esquecimento, e a velocidade da pena sobre o papel, a registrar tais imagens o quanto puder antes que desapareçam.

Félix parece lutar, também, com (e contra) a evanescência da própria experiência criativa. Seria sua obsessão pelo "definitivo" – a versão última e definitiva do poema, o rosto próprio – uma aspiração ao eterno, no sentido do que resistiria ao tempo, no tempo. A metáfora do esgrimista poderia, aqui, representar o artista na sua labuta/luta com a obra a partir do confronto entre escrita e memória, mas, não mais especificamente a memória dos pequenos detalhes vistos durante o dia na cidade, ou seja, não mais uma memória que apreende imagens, mas uma memória que (se) fragmenta e desmembra o que estava pressuposto como identidade, ou como promessa de. A escrita que se apressa para fixar no papel a memória quer fixar a transitoriedade; vitorioso o poeta a dar "versão definitiva" à sua obra, a encontrar o "rosto próprio", a fundir sujeito lírico e vivente.

Vejamos que, na interpretação benjaminiana, "a esgrima representa a imagem da resistência ao choque" (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 111). Benjamin associa a experiência do choque primeiro à multidão. Mais adiante, é a noção de trauma, tomada de Freud, que serve de referência a Benjamin para pensar a relação entre o choque e a memória: "Quanto mais corrente se tornar o registro desses choques no consciente, tanto menos se deverá esperar deles um efeito traumático" (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 109). O que a multidão e o trauma podem ter em comum é certa "experiência" de desintegração subjetiva, ou, em outros termos, de clivagem e/ou vertigem do que poderíamos chamar de individualidade. Como assinalou, "nenhum tema se impôs aos literatos do século XIX" como a multidão (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 114). Isso, muito provável, porque

¹ Nas *Obras Escolhidas* de Walter Benjamin (ed. Brasiliense), a passagem aparece como: "Ei-lo curvado sobre a mesa, fitando a folha de papel com a mesma acuidade com que, durante o dia, espreita as coisas à sua volta; esgrimindo com seu lápis, sua pena, seu pincel; deixando a água do seu corpo respingar o teto, enxugando a pena em sua camisa; perseguindo o trabalho rápido e impetuoso, como se temesse que as imagens lhe fugissem. E assim ele luta, mesmo sozinho, e apara seus próprios golpes" (Baudelaire *Apud* BENJAMIN, 1994b, p. 68).

a sociedade moderna, que faz do "indivíduo" "alvo e efeito privilegiado" de suas "intervenções e investimentos" (BARROS; JOSEPHSON, 2007, p. 441) seja, ao mesmo tempo, a sociedade da "multidão". E "na multidão, o indivíduo ao mesmo tempo se dissolia e se constituía, com-formando-se aos processos de massificação e mercantilização" (VIEIRA, 2011, p. 350). Tal fenômeno tem no poeta efeito peculiar, uma vez que, na modernidade, a épica tenha cedido lugar, por assim dizer, à lírica, sustentada na (e sustentando a representação da) figura de uma individualidade autocentrada e autorreferenciada (representação que "cola" individualidade, identidade e subjetividade, ou como sinônimos, ou como causalidades entre si). Como disse Beatriz Vieira (2011, p. 350), a massificação provoca no poeta "a perda de sua aura de sujeito individualizado, inspirado e genial, bem como as aporias entre representação criativa, mimética-reprodutiva e comercial, até hoje insolúveis". Daí que Benjamin (1994, p. 110) indaga: "de que modo a poesia lírica poderia estar fundamentada em uma experiência, para a qual o choque se tornou a norma?".

Na sua apropriação de *Além do princípio do prazer*, Benjamin estabelece uma distinção que lhe é cara, entre vivência e experiência, advertindo que:

O fato de o choque ser assim amortecido e aparado pelo consciente emprestaria ao evento que o provoca o caráter de experiência vivida em sentido restrito. E, incorporando imediatamente este evento ao acervo das lembranças conscientes, o tornaria estéril para a experiência poética (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 110).

A apropriação benjaminiana da noção de trauma em Freud é, contudo, problemática e carece uma observação. A distinção entre experiência e vivência, como tal, é particular a Benjamin, e sua reflexão sobre a memória e a rememoração deriva mais da sua leitura de Theodor Reik, conforme é possível observar nas *Passagens* (BENJAMIN, 2007). Em Freud, a questão que se coloca é a de pensar por que repetimos "as mesmas vivências" (a "compulsão à repetição") se elas trazem à tona "experiências do passado" que foram e serão, ao retornar, desprazerosas: "[...] a compulsão à repetição também traz de volta experiências do passado que não possibilitaram prazer, que também naquele tempo não podem ter sido satisfações" (FREUD, 2010, p. 179). O problema a ser encarado, em *Além do princípio do prazer*, esboçado já no título do ensaio, é, portanto, compreender o retorno da "ferida narcísica" – que jaz como "dano permanente" – em vivências dolorosas, posto que tal movimento põe em crise a tese de que o aparelho psíquico se orientaria de acordo com o princípio do prazer. Surge, nestes termos, a elaboração de uma nova oposição que seria constitutiva do psiquismo, entre pulsão de morte e pulsão de vida, substituindo, por assim dizer, a que se orientava entre princípio de realidade e princípio de prazer.

Feita a observação, sigamos com Benjamin e a noção de trauma. De um lado, o registro consciente da lembrança “amorteceria” o evento, “protegendo” o indivíduo do risco do trauma; contudo, “amortecido” o choque pelo consciente, ou seja, registrado como “experiência vivida”, o evento seria nulo para a “experiência poética”. Adiante, Benjamin avança sobre sua leitura de Freud definindo a distinção entre experiência [*Erfahrung*] e vivência [*Erlebnis*]:

Quanto maior é a participação do fator do choque em cada uma das impressões, tanto mais constante deve ser a presença do consciente no interesse em proteger contra os estímulos; quanto maior for o êxito com que ele operar, tanto menos essas impressões serão incorporadas à experiência, e tanto mais corresponderão ao conceito de vivência. Afinal, talvez seja possível ver o desempenho característico da resistência ao choque na sua função de indicar ao acontecimento, às custas da integridade do seu conteúdo, uma posição cronológica exata na consciência (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 111; grifos nossos).

Observemos que em Benjamin o conflito não se dá propriamente entre o Eu coerente e o inconsciente², ou entre o Eu e as pulsões³, mas entre experiência e vivência – conflito este implicado em outro, que tem lugar na memória: memória voluntária, memória involuntária e rememoração. Tais conflitos, que se atravessam, reverberam naquele travado entre o poeta/esgrimista e a multidão: “[...] os golpes que desfere destinam-se a abrir-lhe caminho através da multidão. [...] é a multidão fantasma das palavras, dos fragmentos, dos inícios de versos com que o poeta, nas ruas abandonadas, trava o combate pela presa poética” (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 113). Isso porque “à vivência do choque, sentida pelo transeunte na multidão, corresponde à ‘vivência’ do operário com a máquina” (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 126). Em outros termos, trata-se do desaparecimento da experiência autêntica [*Erfahrung*], fenômeno característico da modernidade e

do qual o choque é índice⁴. Se a esgrima é metáfora do trabalho da elaboração criativa do poeta é porque este tenta, através do conflito instaurado entre memória e lembrança, escapar ao registro das vivências em favor, como disse Maria João Cantinho (2015, p. 119), de uma “desintegração necessária da unidade imediata da organicidade das coisas”, engendrado por uma “pretensão redentora que é o estabelecimento de uma (re)criação ou (re)construção que obrigue as coisas a significar”.

Em Baudelaire, no texto sobre Constantin Guys, o artista tem “pressa” para não deixar escapar “as imagens” que apreendeu durante o dia – “todos os materiais que abarrotavam a memória agora se ordenam, se arranjam, se harmonizam [...]” (BAUDELAIRE, 2010, p. 34-35). A leitura que Benjamin faz do poeta francês, em específico tomando como referência *As Flores do Mal*, já nos apresenta o artista como lançado num conflito mais complexo, por assim dizer, na medida em que seja também “um homem espoliado em sua experiência – um homem moderno” (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 130), ou seja, na medida em que, sob o signo de Saturno⁵, seja “engolido” pelo tempo, ao mesmo passo em que lutaria na produção de uma “experiência poética”.

Nos termos benjaminianos, a memória voluntária seria aquela que ordena, arranja e harmoniza as vivências, que não se confundem, todavia, com o passado. Ao contrário desta, a memória (involuntária, ou, digamos, inconsciente) é a-temporal. O gesto da criação poética – gesto alegórico (CANTINHO, 2015, p. 119) – diz respeito à rememoração, e tem, assim, íntima relação com o caráter atemporal da memória. Com ela, não se trata do ordenamento cronológico das vivências, mas de uma atualização do passado na

² Em Freud: “Evitaremos a falta de clareza se colocarmos em oposição não o consciente e o inconsciente, mas sim o Eu coerente e aquilo que é reprimido” (FREUD, 2010, p. 178).

³ Não nos caberá aqui insistir em uma costura (tampouco um confronto) entre Benjamin e Freud, sobretudo porque o propósito benjaminiano é o de se apropriar, a partir das demandas próprias ao seu pensamento, dos conceitos à disposição. Como dito na penúltima nota, a distinção proposta por Benjamin entre memória e rememoração remete a um tema que, em Freud, é anterior ao *Além do princípio do prazer*, em que a noção de recalque é de destaca importância. Por ora, já nos basta o gesto, notadamente indisciplinado, de compreender a elaboração consciente, como Benjamin a comprehende (constitutiva de “vivências” temporalmente ordenadas), como formadora de individualidade. Caberia, decerto, uma investigação mais demorada e detalhada, da nossa parte, acerca da relação entre a teoria das pulsões (conforme se apresentam a partir de *Além do princípio do prazer*) e o dualismo memória/rememoração (conforme em Benjamin), que guardaremos para uma outra oportunidade.

⁴ “Dizer perda de experiência significa falar da experiência do choque [*Chock erlebnis*], visto que toda a experiência do homem do século XIX nos aparece à luz dessa impossibilidade de uma experiência autêntica [*Erfahrung*]. A experiência do choque nasce e desenvolve-se, par a par com a consciência do declínio da aura [...], declínio que faz nascer um mundo ilusoriamente transfigurado, permitam-nos a expressão, ‘fantasmagorizado’, mediante a necessidade de tornar suportável a história arruinada, num mundo marcado pelo fetiche da mercadoria” (CANTINHO, 2003, s/p.).

⁵ Síno da melancolia, Saturno “rege” uma disposição afetiva íntima ao poeta e ao alegorista. Como escreveu Maria João Cantinho: “É à luz saturnina e melancólica do saber lutooso, que Baudelaire nos apresenta o ‘rosto da morte’, sob a forma concreta do velho que eternamente se repete. Poderíamos dizer, então, com toda a justiça, seguindo as pisadas, não apenas de Baudelaire, como também de Benjamin, que a experiência vivida do choque, na modernidade, pode encontrar-se subsumida nessa palavra-chave, que é o conceito de repetição, acrescentando ainda que a noção de repetição se configura como o componente fundamental e essencial da perda da experiência ou da experiência vivida do choque. Numa clara contraposição, parecem, então, ressaltar dois pólos dialécticos – que caracterizam a modernidade de que nos fala Walter Benjamin –, por um lado, uma experiência de fantasmagoria colectiva e de embriaguez dela resultante, por outro, uma experiência terrifica que a espera no seu despertar: a experiência da eterna repetição” (CANTINHO, 2015, p. 127-128; grifos da autora).



experiência presente. A memória, assim, em vez de "Registrar" acontecidos, é "lugar" de conflitos em que operam atualizações às demandas do próprio presente. Podemos, assim, perguntar em que medida a inscrição do vivido na ordem do cronológico não se empenha na meta de elaboração de uma identidade e, consequentemente, em que medida tal empenho – que seria "nulo" à experiência poética – não é frustrado tanto pela condição atemporal da memória quanto pelo caráter transgressor da rememoração. Benjamin se refere à estrofe inicial do poema *O Sol*, de Baudelaire, em que o poeta se refere diretamente à "estranha esgrima", como "talvez a única passagem de *As Flores do Mal* que o mostra no trabalho poético" (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 68):

Le long du vieux faubourg, où pendente aux mesures
Les persiennes, abri des secrètes luxures,
Quand le soleil cruel frappé à traits redoublés,
Sur la ville et le champs, sur les toits et les blés,
Je vais m'exercer seul à ma fantasque escrime,
Flairant dans tous les coins les hasards de la rime,
Trébuchant sur les mots comme sur les pavés,
Heurtant parfois des vers depuis longtemps rêvés
(BAUDELAIRE, 2003, p. 188).⁶

Diferentemente de Baudelaire, o trabalho poético foi tema recorrente nos poemas de Félix. No poema *O Relógio e o Sonho*, ele aparece já no primeiro verso, talvez de forma não tão explícita: "Escrever como quem chora... Meu Deus, onde e quando eu li / estas palavras que retornam tão nuas de passado?". Atentamos ao "retorno das palavras tão nuas de passado", e, mais especificamente, à indagação sobre elas. A memória, aqui, é lugar de um conflito: de um lado, a lembrança busca ordenar o vivido, para oferecer ao poeta um rosto próprio, de outro, o rosto é justamente aquilo que o esvaziamento da experiência subtrai ao vivente⁷ – e, neste sentido, a busca pelo rosto é de uma identificação que suporte uma história, em cujas rugas e traços se poderia ler marcas de experiências. A questão, todavia, que a vida moderna, com seu regime de excessos, põe em cena é que teríamos nos habituado à "exposição a circunstâncias

⁶ Optou-se pela transcrição original por conta das diferenças entre a versão que consta no texto em português de Benjamin e a presente na edição bilíngue da editora Relógio D'água, como, por exemplo, a opção desta por traduzir *fantasque escrime* por "ofício de textuante", que nos afastaria sobremaneira da discussão sobre a metáfora do esgrimista.

⁷ "A perda de experiência, no homem moderno, como Baudelaire nos dá conta, está longe de ser meramente entediante, ela reconhece-se como uma experiência de horror e de total alienação, no mundo estigmatizado pelo fetiche da mercadoria. Tal como a alegoria permitia reconhecer no barroco a impossibilidade da singularidade e da individualidade humanas (esse horror aparece sob a forma do riso em Pascal), também a experiência baudelaireana do choque e a sua transfiguração nos empurra para esse "abismo vertiginoso", que é, a um tempo, a constatação da impossibilidade do rosto humano e a revelação de uma única coisa: o saber da morte e da sua eterna repetição" (CANTINHO, 2015, p. 127).

traumáticas de grande intensidade", como disse Francisco Ramos de Farias (2008, p. 101), que geram *fraturas da memória*, restos não simbolizáveis. Se a busca pelo rosto é a de constituir uma história de experiências, o poeta está às voltas com um desafio, de um lado a ordenação cronológica não seria capaz de transformar vivência em experiência e, de outro, a dispersão põe em xeque a singularidade que se pretende representar com o rosto. A experiência da escrita seria, assim, a experiência de uma luta interminável. Daí que "antes de ser vencido, [o artista] lança um grito" (BENJAMIN, 1994, p. 111). Podemos, assim, acionar outra imagem-noção benjaminiana, a do colecionador:

[...] talvez o motivo mais recôndito do colecionador possa ser circunscrito da seguinte forma: ele empreende a luta contra a dispersão. O grande colecionador é tocado bem na origem pela confusão, pela dispersão em que se encontram as coisas no mundo (BENJAMIN, 2007, p. 245).

Em *O Sol*, de Baudelaire, é o acaso da rima, o tropeço nas palavras e os encontros com imagens já há muito sonhadas que a constituem a experiência da criação poética. Em *O Relógio e o Sonho*, de Félix, a lembrança esbarra nos seus próprios limites: "onde" e "quando" não são respondidos; a lembrança consciente não encontra casa na memória, a vivência não se inscreve na cronologia, a identidade não dissolve a alteridade. "Onde e quando...?". Em nove de abril, é o olhar de Ana Maria, já tão distante como a borda do Sena, a embalar silêncios que só fazem produzir abismos crescentes; nenhum mapa na Voluntários; os casebres, o subúrbio e a treva que chega são remetentes e destinatários de algo que, como um telegrama sem destino, bate no peito.

Escrever como quem chora... Meu Deus, onde e quando eu li

estas palavras que retornam tão nuas de passado?

Como quem chora... O quarto, o berço, as coisas pálidas, a lua

na parede branca de retratos que calaram.

Nenhum mapa na rua Voluntários, ao menos, ou de uma borda

do Sena, do Sena tão distante

como aquele olhar de Ana Maria,

quando acordamos juntos em 9 de abril de 1950;

nem mesmo o silêncio me explicava ali, o silêncio

a carregar espelhos de aço para os pássaros,

crescendo

seus abismos de seda, crescendo

malgrado tudo, crescendo misteriosamente, crescendo

sem raízes, sem deus, sem amor,

pura dor apenas.

Existe o relógio.

Duro ofício o de aprender coisa tão simples.

Mais difícil e nobre, no entanto, é reesquecer-la.

Tic-tac, tic-tac... Algo em meu peito bate um telegrama

a não sei quem... Tantos rostos, tantos olhos, tantos corpos e a noite! Essa mesma noite de estrelas e de mistérios empanando o maquinismo humano das cidades.

Tic-tac, tic-tac... Sonhar tanto e ter o sonho acorrentado nos troncos torturados desta noite sem estrela e sem mistério
mais que noite
nos subúrbios, nos casebres, na poesia contida e em toda a parte onde a treva chega como chegam ao escravo a sopa escassa e a bula dos doutores.
Sonhar tanto e nunca ter o sonho verdadeiramente o sonho, pois que em mudo escravo o coração encontra sempre a pedra em seu caminho, a pedra em que o magro poeta de Itabira gravou solene escrita, a pedra em cujo limo nos tornamos barro e desfeição (FÉLIX, 1959, p. 39-40).

"Existe o relógio" – a estrofe jaz solitária dividindo o poema, como interrupção e como passagem. Não há dúvidas, pois: a assertiva breve fratura qualquer pretensão de continuidade. Antes, o poema promove o aparecer de lembranças, ora imprecisas, ora com data e lugar, que abrem espaços, não vazios, para a nostalgia: os retratos calados, o quarto, o olhar da amada ao amanhecer. Depois, é a impossibilidade do sonho que assombra o poeta: o maquinismo, as correntes, o escravo, a pedra. A existência do relógio não é, assim, mera constatação; antes, ela dá sentido (ou afiança) a passagem interminável (se não interminável, ao menos de impraticável localização) entre sonho e memória, entre nostalgia e melancolia. Trata-se de esquecer, ou voltar a esquecer o relógio. Talvez, "reesquecer", diferente de "esquecer", marque justamente a intenção de uma "tarefa" por fazer, um gesto conscientemente orientado, um "ofício". Cabreia ao poeta contrapor-se ao relógio, confrontar-se à sua existência, ciente do fracasso (ou, ao menos, da incompletude) da sua empreitada, já que em um mundo maquinico e escravo. "Existe" o relógio, mas "insistem" o sonho e a memória.

Junto aos conflitos balizados entre sonho, memória e tempo insistem, pois, referências e endereçamentos ao desconhecido. "Algo em meu peito bate um telegrama / a não sei quem... Tantos rostos, tantos olhos, tantos corpos / e a noite!". Os casebres do subúrbio, a poesia contida, a sopa rala do escravo, as palavras do passado retornando nuas e sem autoria. O poema testemunha e provoca o fracasso da tentativa de afirmação de uma identidade autorreferente. As palavras, os sonhos, as memórias e os tempos do poeta são palavras, sonhos, memórias e tempos de outrem, capturados num instante fugaz de afirmação e de desintegração recíproca de si mesmo. Está em jogo,

nas palavras do poeta que se anuncia e enuncia no e com o poema, uma "história de desejos desejados"⁸.

"Escrever como quem chora...". Escrever como quem "lamenta", mas, talvez, também como quem "flui". Cabe observar que "choro" tem a mesma raiz etimológica de "chuva", no radical indo-europeu *Plew* (onde *pluvia*, *pluvius*, *plovere*, chuva, chuvoso e chover, mas também *plovo*, choro, e *plorare*, chorar) que indica "fluir", "escorrer". *Escrever como quem escorre...* "Escrever", todavia, deriva do indo-europeu *Skreibh*, cuja base é *Sker*: "cortar", "fazer incisão", já que a escrita primitiva se dava através de sulcos (PORTELLA, 1984, p. 110). Fazer um corte naquilo que flui, que escorre, e que, assim, irremediavelmente se perde, seria como que elaborar um limite para (e/ou em) aquilo que está escapando, como a memória e a experiência – e, com elas, a identidade, o rosto próprio, o definitivo. O "limite" do corte, estabelecido pela incisão (da escrita, da pena, da lâmina do esgrimista), ao ter por objeto o que flui, ou o que escorre, não seria outro senão aquele que, como teria definido Hegel na *Ciência da Lógica*, é uma "barreira de dois gumes" (HEGEL, 2016, p. 137) – "mediação" dialética (da alteridade). Nas palavras de Vladimir Safatle:

[...] compreender como algo tem em si mesmo seu próprio limite, seu outro, é a chave para ultrapassar as oposições abstratas [...] as oposições não são apenas modo de estabelecer relações entre seres exteriores um ao outro, mas modos de determinação da relação de um ser consigo mesmo. No interior desse processo de autorreferência a si, tal determinação de si não é mais oposição, mas sim contradição (SAFATLE, 2012, p. 105).

O esgrimista Moacyr Félix tem no encontro com o "rosto próprio" uma espécie de meta: a elaboração consciente que transforma em vivência, lembrança e cronologia os acontecimentos da vida, colecionando fragmentos em meio à dispersão. A escrita poética como corte (ou seja, como limite, que não interrompe, mas abre acesso à contradição), é, a um tempo, fixação e evanescência, identificação e fragmentação. Como limite, é o acontecer da contradição, em que a memória não se submete por completo ao cronológico. "O homem não é capaz de rememorar sem se dissolver" (SAFATLE, 2012, p. 113). A afirmativa da identidade poética é, ao mesmo instante, a constatação, ou a realização, da sua perda. Em *A estrada*: "Pedra a pedra faço minha pergunta / e me desfaço, pedra a pedra. [...] Pedra a pedra, construo o meu poema / e me destruo, pedra a pedra" (FÉLIX, 1959, p. 29).

⁸ Expressão de Alexandre Kojève, em *Introdução à leitura de Hegel*, comentada por Safatle (2012, p. 74): "[...] desejo, de maneira a princípio profundamente conflitual, é desejo de outros que me antecederam, e que, de certa forma, não deixaram de continuar falando em mim".



No trecho final de *Dois poemas do homem e sua escolha*, segundo poema de *O Pão e o Vinho*, lemos:

Quando parar, no tempo, esta alma cheia
de escolhas acabadas, rosa quieta
a desmanchar-se em desenhados ventos,
ah, vida, não me vença a noite alerta
atrás do abismo
e que os abismos incendeia:
deixa eu colher no rosto um rosto certo
do tempo irreversível, som de areia
que já foi casa ou ponte, e não deserto... (FÉLIX, 1959, p. 6).

Somente quando “parar no tempo” será permitido pleitear “colher no rosto um rosto certo / do tempo irreversível”. Mas o rosto possível é “som de areia”, resíduo do resíduo. Que seja “som de areia / que já foi casa ou ponte, e não deserto”; que a vida, já parada no tempo, não apague a noite que incendeia os abismos, eis a esperança do poeta. Frente à crise da lírica, ou ao desfazer-se do sujeito lírico num mundo que lhe incita e trai, Félix parece querer fazer da sua lírica um réquiem antecipado – ou constante – de si mesmo enquanto promessa de um rosto. Uma “necessidade”, escreveu na *Nota* de abertura de *Um Poeta na Cidade e no Tempo*, de 1966, “de não ir embora sem projetar contra as máscaras do Tempo um pedaço meu (por menor que fosse, mas que fosse meu!)” (FÉLIX, 1966, p. 1). Esgrimista, luta contra o tempo: não o tempo que transforma a casa ou a ponte em areia e a areia em som de areia, mas o que dá “adeus” às tristezas e à esperança, como na última estrofe de *O Hóspede*:

Eis o real assomo de existir, o ofício
irrevogável de quem cuida
a vida
como se cuidasse
do que fica
além desse atro adeus que entre os portais apaga
nossa peculiar tristeza, nossa herança
de osso e sal,
e de esperança (FÉLIX, 1959, p. 24).

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On Suicide: Study on Prevention and Intervention

By Yolanda Crespo Díaz

Universidad de Panamá

Abstract- One of the facts that has highlighted the current Covid-19 pandemic has been its impact on the mental health of the national and global population.

Depression, stress, frustration, domestic violence, depersonalization, and feelings of hopelessness have overwhelmed men, women, children, and elderly people.

In this sense, this study constitutes an approach to suicide, understood as a mental disorder, focusing on its diagnosis, prevention, and care.

Furthermore, the methodology designed, furthermore, sought to specify prevention and care strategies, valid both in Panama and in other latitudes. The research by notable scientists who have studied mental health, namely psychiatrists, psychologists, sociologists, and members of other health sciences, were considered. In turn, with the aim of better connecting suicide with reality, a psychodynamic examination of the cases of great personalities in world history was carried out, namely: Ernest Hemingway (American, 1954 Nobel Prize Winner for Literature), Frida Kahlo (Mexican, painter), Vincent Van Gogh (Dutch, painter), Virginia Woolf (English, writer) and Violeta Parra (Chilean, singer-songwriter) Sigmund Freud (Psychoanalyst).

Keywords: euthanasia, self-harm, bipolar disorder, depression, cutting, helplessness, and self-destructive behavior.

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On Suicide: Study on Prevention and Intervention

Yolanda Crespo Díaz

"Suicide is something planned in the silence of our heart, like a masterpiece." Albert Camus.

The term suicide comes from the latin word *sui* (oneself) and *caedere* (kill). The World Health Organization defines it as a deliberated act to kill oneself, initiated, and executed by the person in complete knowledge and expectation of the final fatal outcome. It is a personal decision.

The Manual of Diagnostic and Statistical of Mental Disorders DSM-V edited by the American Psychiatric Association includes suicidal behavior as a mental disorder.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Approximately one million people across the world commit suicide annually, and ten million attempt to do. The treatment and prevention of suicidal patients indicates that suicide can be prevented in most cases. Suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States, with an annual incidence rate of 11.2 for every 100,000.

Author: Universidad de Panamá. Faculty of Psychology, Department of School Psychology and Educational Psychology.
e-mail: zedrito@cwpanama.net

The risk factors are divided into sociological and clinical factors. Sociological causes include male, white or native, financial problems, living alone, aged older than sixty years.

Clinical risk factors may contribute to suicide completion. They include: rape, recent humiliation, bipolar disorder, panic attacks, substance abuse, schizophrenia, anhedonia, major depressive disorder and family history of suicide attempts. The presence of a major affective disorder, alcoholism, panic disorder, personality disorders, increased hopelessness, biological vulnerability, and a history of suicide attempts, indicates potential suicidal behavior in high-risk individuals.

Fatigue, deterioration of cognitive abilities, unemployment, debts, social losses, life stressors, loss of economic status, sickness, defenselessness, periods of depression, access to lethal means of suicide, self-destructive behavior, 20 % of the suicide victims were psychotic at the time of their deaths. Without immediate intervention, a negative environment will have adverse effects on these people.

Neurochemical Risk Factors: There is evidence of decreased brain stem levels of serotonin, or its principal spinal fluid metabolite. Serotonin abnormalities have been associated with potential suicidal behavior.

Familial risk factors: Biological vulnerability and shared environment have adverse effects.

Disrupted family environments may increase the risk for attempted suicide.

The field of suicide research has expanded since Emile Durkheim published his book on suicide in France.

National Statistics

The annual incidence rate of suicides in Panamá is estimated of 3.4 for every 100,000 inhabitants. In the province of Los Santos is of 11.2 for every 100,000 persons, 85% of the cases are men. Women report higher rates of attempted suicides, both in adults and adolescents.

There are more cases reported of suicidal attempts in females in the whole world. The cases of women and children have increased during the pandemic.

Public policies: Universal interventions, primary intervention, selective and indicated measures.



Using a Hotline, exercise, activity, communication with significant others can get people to give meaning to their lives. God's presence in people's lives protects them and fills them with peace, love, and the need to be useful and help those in need: it gives meaning to our lives.

Being grateful to be part of a group sustains people.

Community psychiatry is very useful for suicide prevention and logotherapy, as well as spiritual life.

School-based suicide prevention programs, suicide prevention centers, including parental and teacher training, student, and peer group support training and postvention as is. Identifying high risk students. One third to one half of adolescent suicides communicate in some way their suicidal ideations to friends and confidants.

Community Psychiatry Approach to Suicide Prevention.

Gordon's taxonomy offers new strategies.

This approach refers to the broad spectrum of mental health interventions for mental disorders through preventive public health interventions. Identifying cases, treatments, and rehabilitation. Low levels of serotonin in the brain point to an increased risk of suicide. The intervention is necessary and appropriate for patients between 20 and 30 years old, but not for patients between 50 and 60 years old. Strategies of the psychosocial prevention and intervention model to be effective must offer a 24-hour emergency and crisis response service, composed of health professionals, available by telephone and in person, accessible to people during periods of highest risk.

The three most studied prevention programs are:

1. Those offered in suicide prevention centers, the program in schools as a universal intervention.
2. Selective intervention.
3. Reduction in specific types of suicide. Programs in schools include parent, administrator, and teacher training, student training and access to hotlines for people with suicidal desires, gun reduction, and identifying high-risk students. One-third to one-half of suicidal adolescents confide their suicidal intentions to their loved ones. Many can be trained to identify their suicidal and very disturbed youth. Some teenagers have been influenced by the "copycat" phenomenon where they are carried away by the desire to imitate the deaths of famous people in the media especially if they are famous musicians or artists they admire.

In contained populations such as prison, preventive programs have been very successful and videos have helped reduce suicide considerably, according to the team of Drs. Smialek and Spitz by 4%. (1978). It is reported that 90% of suicides were committed by people with severe mental illness. By 1994 British doctors Gunnel and Frankel found that

between one-third, to one-half, of psychiatric patients who had been discharged committed suicide within a month of leaving. The risk of suicide of psychiatric patients who have returned home is 200 times higher in men, and a hundred times higher in female patients, according to research by the group of psychiatrists Goldcare, Seagrott and Hawton.

In the United Kingdom, confinement to psychiatric hospitals increases the risk of suicide. Dr. Lester argues, "The effectiveness of individual psychiatric and psychotherapeutic treatment has not been proven as suicidal prevention."

The use of substances and alcohol increases the risk of suicide by 20% in depressed people. The presence of a psychiatric illness is the major risk factor in suicidal behavior, accompanied by psychosocial stressors. Suicidal risk increases with age. A high percentage of suicides visited their psychiatrist or psychologist at least a month before their deaths: a British study reflects a figure of 60%. Interpersonal interventions by healthcare professionals for patients in crisis situations may reduce the risk of mortality in these patients.

Around 1910 at a meeting of the Vienna Psychoanalytic Society, the subject of suicide was addressed. Sigmund Freud was interested in this subject related to melancholy throughout his career and could never understand it. His most important essay on the subject was "Grief and Melancholy", written in 1929: it introduces the theme of confusion between being and the painful experience of significant loss, accompanied by mental anguish. In the background we find an unconscious identification of the being and the loved or hated person, which we have lost. The body identifies with the Other, this involves an attack on the superego. This is often accompanied by sexual fantasies, harmful sadistic feelings and a hatred of our body, intolerable anguish, and self-destructiveness. A strong desire to escape physical and mental suffering is noted. Laufer argues that teen suicide is an aggressive attack on the internalized parent. Something like: Since I cannot kill you, I kill myself. A suicide can be seen as a psychotic episode according to Schneidman. Like a hostile introjection of persecutory objects filling with hatred and organizing it around the image of another person.

Suicide is seen as a neurochemical inheritance or a premorbid experience during childhood or development or adolescence. Introjection of a hostile nature makes the mind structurally fragile. D.H. Bule has observed that, in the absence of certain ego capacities, patients are vulnerable to falling into psychotic or suicidal crises. The incidence of childhood trauma, sexual abuse, cause mental illness and suicidal ideations.

Behind every suicide attempt is a call to someone, God, or fate to choose a way out or a rescue.

Psychoanalytic theory contemplates that there is a life force Eros, and a death force Thanatos.

Karl Menninger states that suicide is the combination of three desires: the desire to kill, the taste to attack, destroy, retaliate against another. The desire to be killed, masochistic tendency of punishment. The need to feel pain and suffering. The desire to die. It includes the need to feel the essence of death and die. Baumeister's escape theory holds that suicidal behavior is the effort to escape intense and unbearable and painful psychological frustration. Scheinman's psychiatric theory holds that suicide is due to intolerable psychological pain.

Most suicides are the product of frustrations in four categories:

1. Frustrated love
2. Fractured control, excessive helplessness, and frustration.
3. Self-image assaulted, avoidance of shame, failure, humiliation, and misfortune.
4. Breakdown of an important relationship and the suffering that comes with this.

The psychological dimensions of every suicidal case or serious contemplation of suicide must be understood in terms of intense, unbearable psychological pain, accompanied by the thought of a way out of an unbearable situation through death. This unbearable pain has been generated by frustrations, every suicidal drama occurring in the mind. Suicide has a purpose which is, a search or exit from a crisis or situation of despair.

The methods used, the suicidal note, the calculation of the effects of the survivors are oriented by disturbance and annoyance, the desire to punish others or the desire to harm those who have harmed or disappeared. In several cases of girls who have committed suicide, there has been rape by a stepfather or an adult.

In 1921, Lewis Terman made a famous longitudinal study of gifted people in California, five of these men committed suicide, due to disturbing childhood experiences.

The most dangerous thing we can hear is when the suicide says, "It's the only way out I have."

We see cases of important men like former President Alan García of Perú, who shoot himself when the authorities went looking for him to try him for \$ 250,000, he received from Odebrecht.

The hanging of Judas was his only way out, when he felt the pain of his betrayal of Jesus, whom he sold for thirty pieces of silver. Cleopatra poisoned herself with an asp snake. In Egypt, suicide was seen as a disaster for body and soul.

Sociological theories about suicide: The structuralist studies of the French sociologist Emile Durkheim, had a great impact on the world. Around 1897 he published

Suicide: A Study in Sociology. Integration and regulation can have negative consequences if they occur excessively. This is the first and most influential theory of suicidal behavior. Social norms and rules regulate human behavior.

There are social structures that, according to Durkheim, influence the lives of individuals, there are four types of suicide:

Selfish suicide: Deficient social integration, this type of suicide originates from the lack of approval or acceptance of a group, little religious faith, divorce, widowhood, needs.

1. *Irruistic suicide:* it is when there is an excessive integration into society, it is opposed to the egoist. Suicide arises from a strong attachment or sympathy to the ideologies of a group, political or religious. The feeling is of passion, to be able to give one's life for the cause.

2. *Mental suicide:* Deficient social regulation, arises during extreme economic and social crises, transform the lifestyle of a person. Suicide is encouraged due to frustrations, loss of loved ones. Too little regulation encourages suicide. Economic and social imbalance.

3. *Fatalistic suicide:* Excessive social regulation as in authoritarian regimes where state terrorism.

Euthanasia: The act of taking one's life with medical assistance based on a contract is acceptable in Scandinavian countries in older adults and with sick people. The word Euthanasia which literally means good death is a concept that appears with that name in the seventeenth century, attributed to Francis Bacon. Euthanasia as a technique of elimination of life due to various circumstances (newborns with malformations, terminally ill, elderly, insane, oligophrenic, perverts.) It has been practiced by most cultures since the earliest times. It is still widely practiced in many of the world's primitive aboriginal or native tribes and cultures.

Suicidal patients may have the unconscious wish to end their lives assisted by their (savior) doctor. They don't want to be a burden to their family.

Euthanasia is legal in Belgium, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, Canada, and the state of Victoria. Assisted suicide can only be done in Switzerland and several states in the United States.

All these countries have different requirements to be able to carry out these practices.

In most cases, the following applies:

- Only the person who wishes to die can ask for it.
- Neither spouses, parents nor children can do it.
- It must be a free and repeated decision over time.
- The ailment must be incurable and the pain unbearable.
- Two doctors must verify that all these requirements are met.



Most of the physicians that perform euthanasia are troubled by it afterward. When chronically ill patients attempt suicide, their families often are relieved and required assisted suicide.

Euthanasia: positive, active, or direct, aimed at shortening the patient's life by radical means, either with or without the patient's consent (the so-called cases of compassion) and indirect active (alleviation of suffering by therapeutic means that necessarily shorten life). Negative euthanasia, passive or by omission, denies the patient the therapeutic means that could prolong his life, although not save him from death. The concept of dysthanasia (or therapeutic cruelty) consists in prolonging life beyond the limits of all hope, turning the sick person into reality into a dead man whose death is prolonged.

Self-mutilation

Non-suicidal self-harm, often referred to as self-harm, is the act of deliberately harming one's own body, such as cutting or burning oneself. Normally, it is not intended to be a suicide attempt. Instead, this type of self-harm is a harmful way to cope with emotional pain, intense anger, and frustration.

Vincent Van Gogh mutilated his ear, was hospitalized, committed suicide to help his brother Theo from ruin.

Suicide has increased in youth, in the general population, during the pandemic. Suicide is the ninth leading cause of death in the United States, responsible for about more than 30,000 deaths annually, and the third leading cause of death for young people between the ages of 15 and 24. Although it may be much more that have not been reported due to the social stigma that represents the death associated with suicide and many families try to hide the event to collect life insurance or for personal reasons.

In the United States, as in the province of Los Santos (in Panamá) there is an incidence of 11.2 suicides per 100,000 people. Most suicides are preventable. As Health professionals, we must avoid misfortunes. Judas and Cleopatra were the first recorded suicides.

Assisted suicide in older adults has become an outlet to end suffering. Risk factors can be divided into demographic, psychiatric, sociological, and clinical aspects. We found more cases in the male gender, in adults over 60 years of age who live alone as whites, with economic problems, without children. But suicide occurs at all levels of society and race. Among the clinical factors: people with affective disorders, manic depression, schizophrenia, substance abuse, family history, previous attempts, suicidal ideation, panic attacks, loss of pleasure, humiliation, mistreatment, and sexual abuse. The presence of fire weapons, alcohol, and drugs.

Loss of work or loved ones. About 90% of attempts are not made, only 7% commit suicide.

These behaviors are associated with suicidal behavior: cases of mental illness in the family, stories of suicidal relatives, dysfunctional families, parental separation, divorce, widowhood, family violence, incest, painful feelings, shame, and loneliness. 70% of suicide victims have communicated their thoughts before death.

Causes: Financial ruin, scandal, terminal painful illness. Substance abuse.

Suicide in children and adolescents.

Suicidal genetics.

Blows to the head can alter serotonergic function, as well as monoaminergic systems. There is a great deal of evidence indicating the importance of familial transmission and genetic factors that contribute to suicidal risk. Serotonin reduction is linked to suicide. Impulsive behaviors, including targeted aggression, are more severe in those who attempt suicide. These patients attempt violent methods to take their own lives according to studies by Yates and associates. The profiles of these patients show high levels of agitation, severe anxiety, associated with psychosis. And a major loss of a loved one can lead to extreme violence. Disintegration, cuts, and self-suffocation are associated with early loss and severe depression. Panic attacks and agitation lead them to a state of hopelessness and helplessness. The Recommendations are to monitor the presence of the following symptoms and the severity of anxiety. Agitation, psychosis, severe anxiety and symptoms of false illusions or hallucinations. Delirium tremens, unbearable tension, alterations in the perception of time, loss of self-control. Acts of self-mutilation are performed in private.

Suicide in older adults

For many people, religion gives meaning to their life. Suicidal behavior is found in 75% of depressive patients according to research by Dr. Neeleman and associates. More than a million people commit suicide every year. Mass or religious suicides have happened throughout history. Different cultures have different ways of dealing with this event. In Japan after a disgrace *seppuku* is the decorous and respectable departure.

The suicide of the prestigious Japanese writer, Yukio Mishima, was the culmination of a project planned, recorded, at a press conference and filmed.

II. PREVENTIVE ACTIONS

Stop mental pain, acting in time, offer psychiatric, psychological, and medical services to those suffering from an uncontrolled mental disorder, addictions, loneliness, depression, among others.

Guarantee social and community support.

Make sure to provide medicines.

Restrict access to weapons, poisons, and drugs.

Promote exercise, spiritual living.
Early identification and treatment.
Build, initiate a specialized health team of psychiatrists, nurses, and psychologists, and provide a helpline.

a) *The role of religion in suicide prevention.*

Studies show that religiosity is experienced as a source of hope and trust in God. It reduces the risk of severe depression in times of crisis, facilitates recovery, and minimizes the risk of suicide. Dr. Kruijsaar and associates estimate that the risk of depression is 40% in women versus 30% in men. This varies across communities and countries, with 3% found in Japan and 16.9% in the United States. In China, Confucianists consider suicide acceptable to protect dignity and virtue.

Confucius said that our bodies are derived from our parents, we should not offend or hurt them. We must understand the reasons and motives for suicide, the extreme forms of human suffering.

The Hindus towards the years 3000 BC accepted mass suicides, the practice of sati self-immolation was accepted as the Jauhar or mass suicide. The belief in karma and reincarnation has been a strong factor against suicide, Hindus are more concerned with having a dignified death.

Hinduism accepts and respects the decision of each person on how to live and die, the basis of the human being is the search for being and is individual. Mahaparasthana or the Long Journey is a type of suicide where the person walks towards Kailash subsisting on water and air until the body surrenders, there are religious suicides allowed as the desire to die in holy places. Sati is very common in India, when the husband dies the woman throws herself on the funeral pyre to die burned next to the corpse of her husband.

III. INTERVENTION

According to the center of investigation in UCLA's Mindfulness Awareness Research Center, expressing gratitude changes the molecular structure of the brain. It keeps gray matter working and makes us healthier, more functional, and happier. Learning to be self-compassionate strengthens us. Resilience is the process of adapting to adversity according to the American Academy of Psychology. People can learn to increase their resilience. Mindfulness allows your experience to be what it is, we must practice observing it at every moment. To Soften, soothe, allow, are strengthened with generosity and kindness. Spiritual people have a better chance of overcoming suicidal ideations. Anyone can contemplate suicide at any given time. Spiritual people have a better chance of overcoming.

Case studies: a. Ernest Hemingway (Suicide with a firearm) b. Frida Kahlo. C. Vincent Van Gogh. d. Virginia Woolf. e. Violeta Parra

a. *Ernest Hemingway (1899 –1961)*

Extraordinary American writer, Nobel Prize for Literature, was found dead in his residence in Ketchum, Idaho because of a shot in the mouth with a two-barreled rifle: it blew his brain. Forensic psychiatrist Dr. Andrew Farah says his tragic death was the result of neurological causes. Nine severe brain traumas, the unfortunate effects of electroconvulsive therapy (he received 15 treatments the first time, 10 the second time) obtained at the Mayo Clinic, where he was taken by his wife, for high blood pressure, erased his memory. Two days after finishing electroconvulsive therapy, his wife left the keys available to the place where he kept the weapons and he committed suicide. Mary, his fourth wife, did not warn her children of his depressive state, in order to keep his money and belongings, her marital relations were destructive, she detested his family. There is evidence of suicidal genetics in his family. His mother, whom he hated, committed suicide. Adriana, his Italian lover, hanged herself. His father committed suicide with a gun. His granddaughter Mariel and his son committed suicide.

Psychiatric disorders

Ernest Hemingway suffered from psychiatric disorders, traumatic chronic alcoholism and dementia, encephalopathy, diabetes, migraines, multiple head traumas blows to the brain and vascular dementia. In the last five years of his life he was depressed, he could not write, he could not work, he was fully aware of his cognitive decline. Many close people had taken their own lives. It is a tragedy to lose one's memory. His abilities were deteriorating, he was losing his way of life. He came to process and describe the dimension of his father's suicide, he felt that his father had betrayed him. "Man can be destroyed, but not defeated." He attacked his friends and females. He risked his life, went to fight in the Spanish Civil War, went on safaris to Africa hunting where he killed endangered animals. His mother used to dress him as a girl when he was a child. For many years he abused alcohol and drugs. He needed strong emotions; and had no limits. As a young man he was attractive, later he neglected his presence. He felt like a caricature of what he was. He became abusive, changeable. Realizing that his memory failed, he committed suicide. He had a history of various suicidal attempts, he had tried to take his own life before.

b. *Frida Kahlo (1907-1954)*

Magdalena Carmen Frieda Kahlo Calderón was born in Coyocan, Mexico on July 6, 1907. Her father Guillermo Kahlo, a Jew of Hungarian-German origin, was the official photographer of President Porfirio Díaz. He had a delicate health and suffered from epileptic seizures. His wife, Frida's mother had Spanish and indigenous ancestry, was conservative and very religious. At the age of seven Frida suffered from polio,



leaving the rest of her life with one leg thinner than the other, she spent a lot of time alone. They called her "stick leg". From an early age she showed traits of schizophrenia, as will appear in her diary. At the age of 6 she projected a second Frida that would appear in all her work and her life. Her most famous painting is "Las dos Fridas" ("The two Fridas"), it shows the Frida that Diego loved and that he one he no longer wants. "I remember being six years old when I intensely lived an imaginary friendship with a girl... of the same age or so. In the window of what was then my room, and which was on Allende Street, on one of the first windows I sprayed mist and drew a door with my finger.

Through that door I went out in my imagination, with great joy and urgency, I crossed the entire plain that could be seen arriving at a dairy called Pinzón.... Through the O of Pinzón I entered and unexpectedly descended to the interior of the earth, where my imaginary friend always waited for me. It has been 34 years since I lived that magical friendship and every time I remember it, it is enlivened and grows more and more within my world" (taken from her diary). At the age of 18, she will suffer an accident that will mark her forever and made her an invalid. All her tragedy and pain will be displayed in her works. Her love for Diego Rivera makes her forget this misfortune and she achieves a great artistic production. Her husband's infidelities fill her with insecurity and bitterness. Towards 1929 she married the great painter and muralist Diego Rivera. Later she suffered several miscarriages. A third part of her works are self-portraits. Her anxieties, pains and ghosts are reflected in her paintings. Her diary is a first-rate confidant of her life. Her desperation to live and her anguish and distress to overcome the disease were obvious. When asked why she made so many self-portraits, she replied, "I portray myself because I'm so lonely." Frida Kahlo led a tragic life. At age 7, poliomyelitis emerged. She was born with spina bifida, her sister and brother also had it, it may be one of the reasons why she did not have children. At the age of 18 she suffers the accident that will leave her invalid. Due to physical suffering, she is given morphine. Her diary shows suicidal tendencies, her anxieties and pains are reflected in her work." My leg was amputated six months ago. Centuries of torture have been done to me and at times I almost lost my mind. I still feel like killing myself. Diego is the one who stops me because of my vanity of believing I can need him. He has told me, and I believe him. But never in my life have I suffered more. I'll wait for a while." Frida was commissioned to make a painting of Dorothy Hale by Hale's family. Frida showed her committing suicide. She lived through a series of calamities, constant torture of surgical interventions, 35 operations, and had to wear 28 orthopedic girdles. On July 13, 1954, Frida Kahlo died during the early morning hours of a pulmonary embolism, according to her husband Diego Rivera. Her death could be the result of

suicide or an overdose of alcohol and drugs. No autopsy was done. The last thing she wrote in her diary is an outline of a black angel, the angel of death. It said: I look forward to the departure and I hope never to return."

c. *Vincent Van Gogh (1853-1890)*

The famous impressionist painter Vincent Van Gogh led a stormy existence, his life reflects his art. He painted non-stop; he slept little; he drank and smoked a lot and didn't eat enough. From his youth he had a sullen, unbalanced, and taciturn spirit. Exacerbated by alcohol, malnutrition and psychosocial tensions, the fight he had with the painter Paul Gauguin led to his mutilation of the ear. Then he could suffer delirium tremens due to the forced abstinence from drinking when admitted to a sanatorium and had several severe depressive episodes with psychotic traces. On July 27, 1890, the artist shot himself. He died two days later. He was 37 years old. His best works were painted in the psychiatric hospital De Saint Remy. Vincent, suffered stages of madness, evoking his pain and sadness, during his most severe episodes of psychosis. His canvases are marked by madness, and feels a permanent claustrophobia, Vincent committed suicide to help his brother Theo, who had economic problems, Vincent's work was revalued. His last work was the Wheat Field with Crows.

d. *Virginia Woolf (1882-1941)*

The best English writer of the 20-th century .Virginia Woolf was an abused child, a survivor of incest, suffered from bipolar schizophrenia. She was married to Leonard Woolf, a Jewish writer, at a time when anti-Semitism reigned, the Nazis had bombed London, she and her husband had considered ways to commit suicide. An excerpt from the last letter she wrote to her husband read.

"Dearest, I feel certain I am going mad again. I feel we can't go through another of those terrible times. And I shan't recover this time. I begin to hear voices, and I can't concentrate. So I am doing what seems the best thing to do. You have given me the greatest possible happiness. You have been in every way all that anyone could be. I don't think two people could have been happier till this terrible disease came. I can't fight any longer. I know that I am spoiling your life, that without me you could work. And you will I know. You see I can't even write this properly. I can't read. What I want to say is I owe all the happiness of my life to you. You have been entirely patient with me and incredibly good. I want to say that — everybody knows it. If anybody could have saved me it would have been you. Everything has gone from me but the certainty of your goodness. I can't go on spoiling your life any longer."

e. *Violeta Parra (1917-1967)*

Chilean Song writer famous for her song *Gracias a la vida*

"Thanks to life, which has given me so much.
It gave me two beams of light, that when opened,
Can perfectly distinguish black from white
And in the sky above, her starry backdrop,
And from within the multitude. The one that I love."

Violeta was going through an acute depression; she had lost the love of her life and her economic stability. Because of her work, the pressure she put on herself was greatly affected. Violeta Parra ended her life by shooting herself in the right temple with a revolver. She had twice tried to take her own life. She had various attempts before she completed her suicide, she resorted to barbiturates, then she cut her veins.

IV. CONCLUSIONS

Suicide has increased in youth and in the general population during the pandemic. Every week I find cases of suicide in my country, before this was not like that, children and young adults are taking their lives by hanging, overdose, shooting themselves, throwing themselves from high rise buildings or off the bridges to the sea, like never before. It is very sad. Suicide was the ninth leading cause of death in the United States, it was responsible for approximately 30,000 deaths annually, before the pandemic and the third leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24. Although the actual number may be much more, the reported number is unknown because of the social stigma that represents the death associated with suicide and many families try to hide the event in order to collect life insurance, or for personal reasons. Most suicides are preventable. 70% of suicide victims have communicated their thoughts before death.

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The Cosmogonic Proto-Bulgarian Model as a Basis of the Bulgarian Alphabets

By Dimitar Dobrevski

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The popularity of the swallow toy rivals that of the traditional martenitsa (red and white threads weaved in different shapes) in this region. At that time, my focus of interest as a lecturer in toy design was on the history of toys and games. The morphological analysis of the toy takes into consideration the profound symbolism and the allegorical nature of all the elements rooted in its formation. As if its structure, although not complicated at all, contains all the fundamental symbols: the rainbow-shaped element representing the sky and the celestial rainbow that sweeps over us like a magic semicircle bridge; the horizontal element, fundamental and supporting the whole construction, and ends as a handle, representing the earth as a symbol of stability; the vertical placed axis reminding us of the World Cosmic Tree (Axis mundi), representing the connection between the higher spiritual heaven realm and the lower earthly material substance.

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INTRODUCTION

It all started with a toy bird – a swallow (helidon) that the children in the villages around Asenovgrad town use to celebrate the coming spring and Baba Marta (Grandma March – a symbolic figure believed to mark the end of the winter).

The popularity of the swallow toy rivals that of the traditional martenitsa (red and white threads weaved in different shapes) in this region. At that time, my focus of interest as a lecturer in toy design was on the history of toys and games. The morphological analysis of the toy takes into consideration the profound symbolism and the allegorical nature of all the elements rooted in its formation. As if its structure, although not complicated at all, contains all the fundamental symbols: the rainbow-shaped element representing the sky and the celestial rainbow that sweeps over us like a magic semicircle bridge; the horizontal element, fundamental and supporting the whole construction, and ends as a handle, representing the earth as a symbol of stability; the vertical placed axis reminding us of the World Cosmic Tree (Axis mundi), representing the connection between the higher spiritual heaven realm and the lower earthly material substance.

There is also a balancing element, personification of the underworld 'chthonic' forces. The bird is not at all randomly placed on the highest edge of the Cosmic Axis and above the heaven. It is the divine heavenly messenger bringing the good news that Baba Marta is coming and the winter is finally defeated. The thread that helps the toy come to life could be also interpreted as a symbol that recalls the tale of Ariadne's thread in its winding and unwinding. With its constant humming, the toy guides the little brave hero and he, as a messenger and mediator, enhances our affection with this magical act. (fig.1), (fig.2)

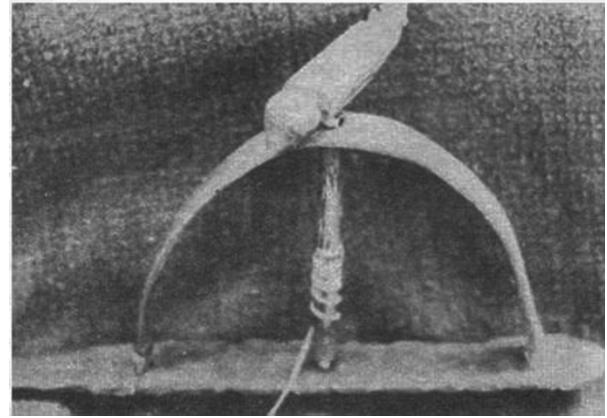


Fig. 1



Fig. 2

(This analysis – interpretation of deductive reasoning was presented in 1998 as part of a presentation report at a conference in Sweden with a focus on issues of the design for children and at a later stage, this resulted in redesign and update of the ancient folk toy, winning an award at the Trieste Contemporary Design Biennale - Italy 2000.)

This ritual also implies some distant connection with the boys' initiation rites – the transformation of the boy to adult, taking the role of the "Heros", who makes the transition between the earth of men and the heavens of gods through his remarkable deeds. Balarama, an ancient Hindu deity, god of farming, who appeared in the world from a white hair that the principal god Vishnu pulled out from his head, is holding in his hands a hala (plough) and a musala (pestle). Musala is the name of the highest peak of the Balkan region. Amazingly, the pestle reminds and corresponds semantically with the



penknife "chekich" of the boys in Asenovgrad town, a symbol of the agricultural work.

This toy, embracing so much symbolic meaning in its architectonics, was in fact the first piece in a series of a puzzle which spurred more profound search for the symbolic meaning of common objects, passed on to us through the depths of ancient times. Gradually, more elements were added, and part of the "curtain" was more widely opened with publications of Dr. Tacho Tanev on historical books and columns in "Avitohol" journal. My attention was drawn by the in-depth research of the Bulgarian embroidery ornament "Elbetitsa" - this ornament spreads through the centuries the cosmogonic ideas of the ancient Bulgarians, bearers of an ancient, age-old culture.

The geometric construction is most likely directly incarnated in the functional and decorative pattern of many of the artifacts inherited from our ancestors and we may presume it was a core building element in the structure of the entire material world surrounding them. They have aspired to symmetry and balance with Heaven or God. Or, as the Lord prayer reads: 'on earth as it is in heaven'.

It is the foundation of the architectonics of the major and most prominent buildings - temples and palaces, the traditional Bulgarian portable round dwelling - the yurt; it is found in the structure of composition of the Bulgarian alphabets (starting from the Runic and going through the Glagolitic and Cyrillic alphabet), in the functional structure of a number of tools, items and weapons, in the symbol elements of the most widely used ornaments for decoration of craftsmen works, and even in the structure of ritual and festive meals – round ritual loafs served at major calendar holidays. (fig.3)



Fig. 3

As it turned out, other authors (Prof. Vasil Yonchev, Dr. Tacho Tanev, Yordan Tabov, etc.) had also independently reached more or less to its presence although in different varieties. Just one more tiny push was necessary to structure these individual insights into

an integrated system. The next step was to look for the semantics of the symbols of the individual varieties, to unravel the meaning and the essence of the images, their philosophical and religious substance, to interpret them in a comprehensive and modern language.

The "Belief in Heaven" of the Bulgars is deeply encoded in the cosmological concepts and notions, and in the uniform harmonious model of the universe (macrocosm). A harmony, which reflects the relationship between the universe and the micro-world of the individual little person, contemplated as part of a divine cosmic order. A concept that sounds sustainable and modern nowadays.

The restless vibrant life - this is the main source of "the proto-art", "the well forgotten old" - according to Saint Porphyrios. The ancient Greek philosopher Pythagoras has also possessed extraordinary sensitivity and was able to "hear the harmony of the spheres and the cosmic music" according to Aristotle

"The organization of the Universe represents in itself a symmetrical harmony of numerical order and their relations", believe the Pythagoreans. *"Rhythmicity represents synchronization and adaptation to time and is as essential as the cellular structure in the universe"* – Prof. Fr. Halberg.

How about the steps in the fast-swirling folk dances? And the zigzags of the bright vivid embroidery (shevitsa), the rugs and carpets, the wavelike patterns of the pottery, aren't they an outburst of that urge, aspiration and manifestation of the inherent feeling of the cosmic rhythm vibrations? Rhythm... Time...

How can we depict time? Which is the most accurate symbol? Literally, it would probably bear closest similarity to a flying arrow. However, we can see the wheel of life painted on the wall of a monastery in Bulgaria (Transfiguration Monastery) (or on the old banknotes of BGN 100); even in our everyday speech we use the term "rounding" when it refers to periods of time and years. Time and the units of time do not just move - they "are rolling". And only an oval or circular form can roll. These arguments bring about the conclusion that the circle is associated not only with the sun, but also with time - the change of the seasons, years, months, hours. And this explains the common division of a circle into equal parts - three, four, eight, twelve, etc. Hence, we see how the major modular element naturally evolves by adding axes of symmetry. Axes may be deleted or halves and quarters modules may be added. The achieved module structure is in compliance with all the principles of the modern modular design and at the same time, it represents a complex multi-layered semantic model where the knowledge of astronomy is woven into the spiritual life and concepts of the Bulgarians. The system fully reflects the ideas about the structure of the Cosmos and the fundamental forces of its construction struggling with the forces of Chaos.

The primary central element in this system is the *point*, which evolves naturally into the oval shape of the *circle*, and represents the heavens and a complex group of stars that form constellations. And indeed, if we gaze at the sky, particularly in a flat location, it will look like a large round lid. The added *horizontal plane* would represent the Earth - the passive female power bringing the creative energy and fertility. The horizontal plane divides the sky into two parts - "higher earth" and "lower earth", black and white, good and evil. If a *vertical line* is extended above the horizontal, it signifies the male energy and its origin of creativity - the "Tree of Life". It emerges from the dark underworld kingdom, passes through the human world of the humans and soars above to the divine heavens. This module is identified as the "Cross of Life" for a reason. It represents the divine harmony: Earth – Heaven – Human - Lord. Four major initial points, four seasons, four cardinal directions, four colors. The modular structure could be further elaborated by adding more axes. It is not restricted by presenting it only as a symbol of time. It further corresponds to the concept of space for the ancient Bulgarians. The four-part division is a symbol of the cardinal directions: East, West, North, South. (fig.4)

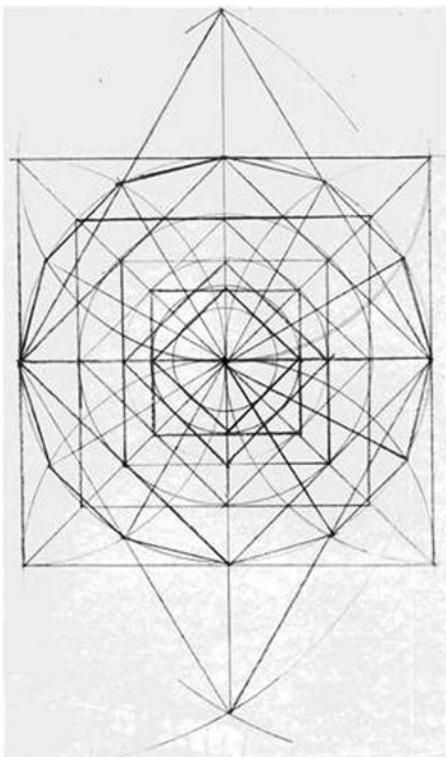


Fig. 4

Analyzing its graphic image, we cannot ignore the fact that the calendar is most likely the foundation upon which this modular element stands. The circular form and the rotation, the division of the circle into two, four and twelve parts is perfectly consistent with the calendar division (and the division of the primary module). We can find evidence of the existence of this

module in all spheres of life of our distant ancestors: residential dwellings, furniture, decorative design in clothing, weapons and even toys.

The most typical and genuine presence of the module system can be found in the structure of composition of the Bulgarian letter signs. There is no room for discontent in this aspect as we the Bulgarians, unlike other nations, have had over time not one but three alphabets. Among the most outstanding contributions of Bulgaria to the world cultural heritage is the Bulgarian script, widely used by number of Slavic and non-Slavic languages in many countries like Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Macedonia, Mongolia, etc. Many Bulgarian and foreign scholars have explored the origin and composition of the so-called *Bulgarian runic signs* and for all the years since the Liberation of Bulgaria, a vast literature and large number of studies have been collected on this subject (Karel Skorpil, Fyodor Uspensky, Vatroslav Jagic, Kr. Mityaev, Geza Feher, D. Bogdan, M. Komsha, V. Yonchev, P. Dobrev, B. Shkodrov, etc.).

Prof Dr. Lyudmila Doncheva – Petkova, archaeologist, has collected and described all the discovered signs (42 tables containing in total 1337 signs, of which 783 have been identified as runic, 14 - as Glagolitic, and 185 as signs of the Cyrillic or Greek scripts). Many of the facts reveal that these runes have been used by end of the 11th century, and their inception could be traced back to earlier times of the Bulgarian state.

Prof. V. Yonchev, author of several fundamental works on the Bulgarian letter designs, has studied in a comprehensive and detailed manner their composition structure and, following extensive research over several decades, he has proved that this large inventory of seemingly incoherent graphic symbols, although presumed by number of scholars to have represented arbitrary drawings, kinship and artisan signs and scribbles, were in fact integrated into a strictly organized, logically developed alphabetic system, which can be brought down to a single basic module. It represents a geometric figure recreating in detail the circle with two intercepted crosses inside it. „...the majority of these seemingly incoherent signs is in fact incorporated into a strictly organized logically structured system that could be finally brought down to a single geometric symbol – module.” (V. Yonchev, 1982, 37)

The *module figure of the Glagolitic script* is a hypothetical model, a basis for the *development and identification of all signs in the Glagolitic alphabet*. It was proposed in 1982 by Prof. Vasil Yonchev in his paper: 'Ancient and Modern Bulgarian Letter Design'. Prof. Yonchev presented his work at the *National Exhibition of Illustration and Bulgarian Book Design* in 1984. (fig.5)



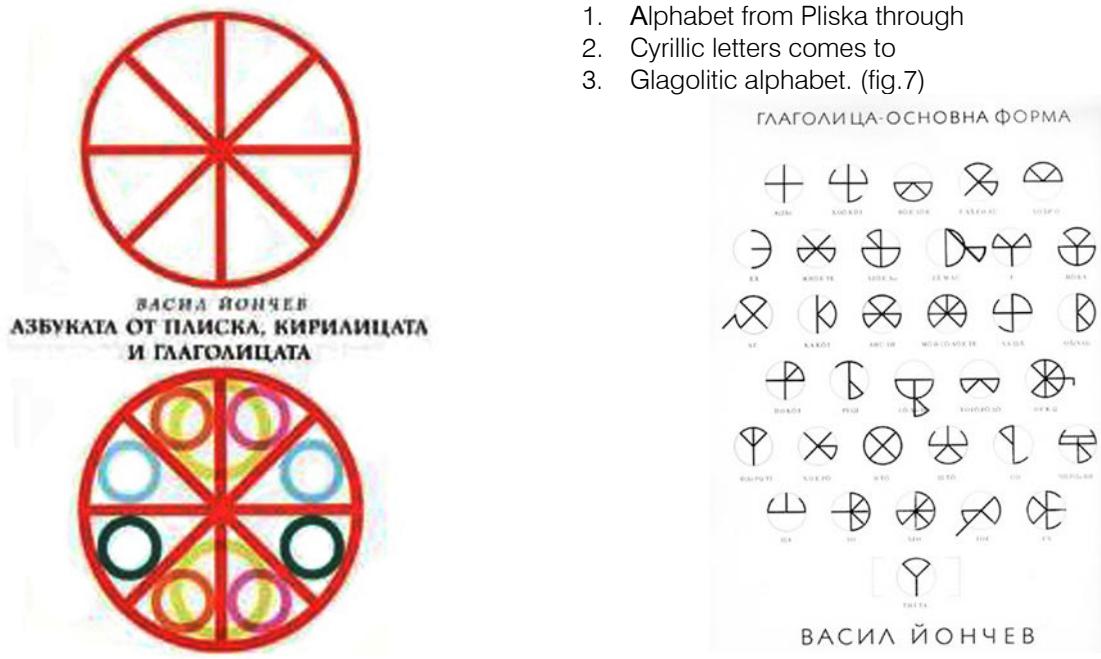


Fig. 5

For more than two decades Prof. Yonchev has been exploring the origin of the Glagolitic and Cyrillic alphabets. He has examined the shape of the letter signs in all the epigraphic sources of the First Bulgarian Kingdom and Glagolitic manuscripts that have come down to us and arranged them in order ranked by their similarity through tracing the historical development of the key composition and constructive changes of the letter signs. Thus, Prof. Yonchev reached to the *module figure*, which represents in his opinion, "a graphic symbol of the Universe and the Earth". At its base are the letters α and ω : (fig.6)

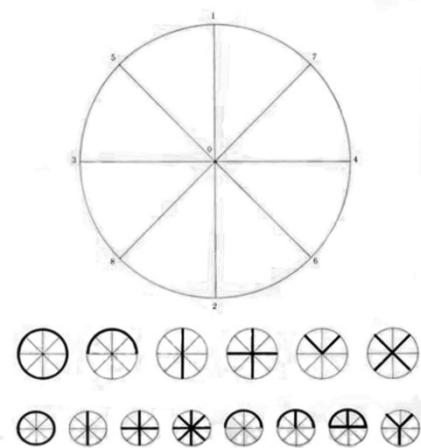


Fig. 6

Prof. Yonchev asserts that the *module figure* the Glagolitic is the highest peak in the development of the Proto-Bulgarian letters: the whole process bears historical, graphic and linguistic attributes, i.e. from

1. Alphabet from Pliska through
2. Cyrillic letters comes to
3. Glagolitic alphabet. (fig.7)

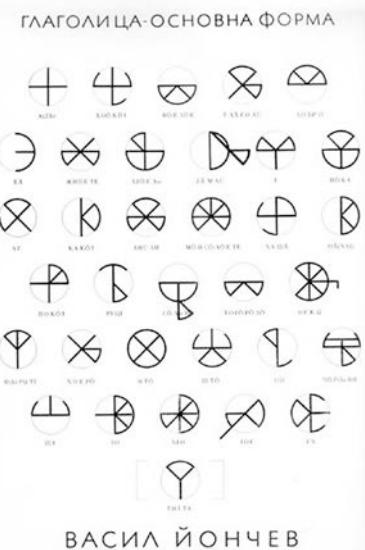


Fig. 7

According to Prof. Yonchev, the *module figure* determines the main cycles in the work of Constantine Cyril the Philosopher:

- Creation of the universe;
- Structure of the space;
- Evolution and history of life on the Earth;
- Universe and time;
- Origination of life in water and air;
- Origination of life on land,

and in addition, some other cycles. Prof. Yonchev refers to the Cyrillic alphabet as 'developed' by Constantine Cyril the Philosopher - it consists of 24 letters that have parallel letters in the Greek alphabet, and additional 14 new letters. (fig.8)



Fig. 8

Couple of centuries later, Saint Cyril the Philosopher used that same fundamental module underlying the runic characters to create the Glagolitic alphabet. He updated the graphic symbolism through the introduction of a new meaning into it, originating from the Christian beliefs and a new sequence in the application of the basic module. Engineer Radi Panayotov states in an article published in journal 'Naroden buditel': "...every Glagolitic letter sign is linked to all other signs united by a 'key-module' and it reflects in a graphic system the structure of the Universe, the solar system, the characteristics of the planetary orbits... and further, the frequency spectrum, colors, musical tones and so on." (R. Panayotov, 2000 journal "Naroden buditel" issue 2)

"The Belief in God Heaven" of our distant ancestors forms an essential component of their cosmological conceptions and a model of the Universe existing in harmonious unity. A harmony reflecting the relationship between the universe and the microcosm of the individual as a small representation of a higher cosmic order. The entire existence of the Bulgars was guided by their reverence for the powers of nature - Heaven, Earth, Sun, Moon and stars. Even if awareness for this succession over time is not always present, the essence of this cultural model seeking harmony between Heaven, Earth and Man, has been preserved and was passed down from generation to generation.

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Determinants of Students' Choice of Academic Programme at the Senior High School Level

By Dr. Felix Senyametor, Vida Naa Abagbana, Dr. Regina Mawusi Nugba, Angelina Adu & Michael Adu Asabere

University of Cape Coast

Abstract- The purpose of this study was to examine the determinants of students' choice of program at the Senior High School (SHS) level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region of Ghana. It was a quantitative study underpinned by the positivist paradigm. The descriptive survey design was employed for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 229 for the study. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data. The study found that students' general academic performance was the best predictor of students' choice of program followed by advice from colleagues or peers of students. The study, therefore, recommended that the Ghana Education Service (GES) and Management of SHSs, should work on equipping students with learning and research skills to enable them to enhance their self-efficacies and general academic performance.

Keywords: determinants, program choice, senior high school, gomoa east.

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Determinants of Students' Choice of Academic Programme at the Senior High School Level

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Abstract- The purpose of this study was to examine the determinants of students' choice of program at the Senior High School (SHS) level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region of Ghana. It was a quantitative study underpinned by the positivist paradigm. The descriptive survey design was employed for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used to collect data from a sample of 229 for the study. Multiple linear regression was used to analyze the data. The study found that students' general academic performance was the best predictor of students' choice of program followed by advice from colleagues or peers of students. The study, therefore, recommended that the Ghana Education Service (GES) and Management of SHSs, should work on equipping students with learning and research skills to enable them to enhance their self-efficacies and general academic performance.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The choice of program students make when entering Senior High school (SHS) is very critical for their future achievements. The choice of career students aspire for and the choice of program they make when entering SHS is very crucial and related to each other. A poor choice of program directs all individual efforts and resources in the wrong direction, particularly when not aligned with expectations; would not only be frustrating but also draining of energy and waste of resources (Hagel & Shaw, 2010).

a) Determinants of students' choice of academic program

The specific academic programs students pursue are determined by several factors, some of which are beyond the students' control. The factors which impact the choice of academic program involve significant decisions which set the foundation for success or otherwise in life and career (Agrey & Lampadan, 2014). To some extent, the choice is significantly driven by some demographic

Author α & ρ: Department of Education and Psychology, University of Cape Coast, Ghana. e-mails: felix.senyametor@ucc.edu.gh, regina.nugba@ucc.edu.gh

Author ο: Buduburam D/A Model D Junior High School Kasoa. e-mail: vidanaah12@gmail.com

Author ω: Presbyterian University of Ghana. e-mail: gyankromaa@presbyuni.edu.gh

Author ¥: Department of Education and Psychology. e-mail: expensivebrain1@gmail.com

characteristics of the students involved (Kinzie, et al., 2004). A review of studies on determinants of academic program choice revealed that some prevalent elements across nations such as parental preference, mass media, the influence of peers, and cost associated with pursuing a particular program drive the choice of the programs (Baharun et al., 2011).

Similarly, Kankam and Onivehu (2000), Taylor and Buku (2006) found that intellectual ability, aptitudes, school, family, personality, self-esteem, values, interest, and environmental influences as determinants of students' choice of career. Mankoe (2007) also added the following list as factors that influence students' choice of career and related programs; interests, abilities and personalities, life and work satisfaction, and employment variables. Students' low interest, content knowledge, and negative self-concept of ability as well as perceived lack of the subject's relevance in line with anticipated careers are identified as possible driving forces affecting students' decision to either enroll and stay in a particular program or not (Fullarton & Ainley, 2000; Merzyn, 2011). In advancing knowledge on the individual and personal factors that determine students' choice of program, some researchers revealed that students select their major academic programs that match their personality types and interest. (Worthington & Higgs, 2004; Asantewaa, 2020).

One wonders whether families of students play a role in students' crucial decision of program choice. Shumba and Naong (2012) revealed that the family was a significant determinant that predicted the career and academic program choices of secondary school students. Similarly, in a follow-up study, Kazi and Akhlaq (2017) examined the factors which affect the choice of program and career among students in two public sector universities in Lahore city, confirmed parental influence as the most significant factor in the choice of program and career aspirations of students. Research revelations on the phenomenon of determinants driving students' choice of program in other parts of the world are not quite different from those found in Ghana and Africa. In Hong Kong for instance, Law and Yuen (2011), Bardick, Berns, Magnusson and Witko (2004) revealed that students value the opinions of their parents, which implies that parents could inculcate an interest of certain programs in their children from childhood. Bardick,



Berns, Magnusson and Witko (2004) also found that Canadian adolescents tend to appreciate their parents' opinions more than any other source for answers to an academic program and career-related issues. Many parents are in the position to influence their children's career development because they observe their children's development, know their interests and strengths, and have developed a trusting relationship with them (Geiger & Ogilby, 2000). In Singapore, it was revealed that parental involvement had a significant influence on the selection of nursing careers (Ching & Keith, 2011).

Some studies investigating the extent to which children are likely to choose programs that are associated with their parents' backgrounds or occupations have been conducted in the last few years (Van de Werfhorst et al., 2001; Dryler, 1998). Van de Werfhorst et al. (2003) explored the implications of social class, economic and cultural standing on the choice of program at Senior High and some higher educational institutions in Britain and found that these factors immensely affect students' choice of programs. At the same time, Payne (2003) has acknowledged that family background affects the tendency of obtaining good grades in school. Gostein (2000) similarly revealed that parents influence their children's programs and career choices in several ways including acting as role models. He further mentioned that sometimes this influence comes in the form of order for the children to enroll in particular programs. The first category of influence identified by Gostein (2000) was direct inheritance. With this, he meant that the adolescent is brought up based on the ideologies such as the family business which is the ward's inheritance. This indirectly compels the ward to choose a business program to groom himself or herself well to fit the status. However, such a program may not necessarily be related to the ward's inherent capabilities and interests as emphasized by the factor and trait theory. Another influence from parents is the inculcation of interest in their wards from infancy to pursue certain career paths which eventually inform academic program choices (Berzin, 2010).

In a similar vein, Elacqua, Gobierno, and Ibanez (2005) revealed that parents across school types rated academic reasons as the most important factor in their wards' program choice. Likewise, Schneider and Buckley (2002) studied the search patterns of parents of schools on an educational website and found that, on average, parents looked at programs that performed better academically (higher reading and mathematics scores) as their search progressed. In other words, parents eliminated programs in which students were found to have poor academic performance. Myburgh (2005) also buttressed the foregoing findings with the revelation that relatives, the social environment, and

governmental policies have a significant impact on individual students' academic program choices.

Gregory (1998) has opined that in some instances, parents' choices for their wards are either in the same status category or above theirs. For instance, a parent who is a physician would encourage the ward to opt for the same career or one of the comparable pedigrees. In the same way, a skilled worker may encourage the child to emulate him or urge him to aim for a higher-level managerial position and this will influence the program choice of the child. In this context, Holland's (1997) vocational theory's position is that parents must offer their children the right information necessary to make suitable program choices. This will enable them to make their own future decisions in life at every stage of life when there is a need to make a choice. This style is not practiced in the Gomoa East District since it seems parents and wards are not very well educated. Thus, parents rather motivate their wards to blindly copy and become like their supposed role models without recourse to the ward's inherent traits.

In relation to peers and friends, research has shown that students make their choices of programs in school because of influence from friends or peers, the mass media, and the cost associated with the program (Baharun et al., 2011; Pafili & Mylanakis, 2011). Ramirez and Dizon (2014) opined that some students erroneously believe that brilliant students offer the sciences and usually get influenced by this and choose those courses but only realized later that it was the wrong field for them. Given this, it is always important to let one's interest drive the choice of study rather than follow friends blindly.

In addition to the foregoing, Students' backgrounds and abilities are very critical in program choice. Their ability to understand the concepts in a particular subject area could have a great impact on their decision regarding which program they will enroll in and commit their efforts to learn (Mustapha & Long, 2010; Christie, Munro & Fisher, 2004). In other words, if a person's ability does not match up with a particular program, he or she would naturally go for an alternative one that would fit his/her level of understanding and abilities. Auyeung and Sands (2006), in a follow-up comparative study between Ghana and Australian high school students, revealed that the choice of business studies career was attributed to the driving force of general academic background, motivational factors such as good long-term earnings prospects, and the nature of teaching the program may impact on career choice for Ghanaian students. Some studies have shown that parents' educational background, profession, and success of family relatives in the business environments do have a significant influence on the choice of business studies as a field of study among university students (Uyar & Ali, 2011). Malgwi,

Howe and Bornaby (2005) were also of the view that high earning potential is not the only factor influencing career choice in business studies (accounting). They maintained that factors such as career advancement opportunity, prestige, social status, job security, and variety of choices are among the chief factors that have a significant influence on the career choice of accounting.

Maudline, Crain, and Mounce (2000) also discovered that the role of educators and the faculty was significant in the career and program choice of prospective accountants. The study identified lifestyle, financial security and motivation, nature of work, and work roles as indicators of career choice in accounting. To this end, Asuquo (2011), indicated that the interest of the individuals, peer influence, prestige as well as lucrative prospects often affect the decision on program choice in business studies. Kim and Markham (2002) in a similar vein, conducted a study on business majors at the tertiary level (accounting, finance, general business, management, marketing, management information system, and double major). They discovered that the top five reasons for choosing programs were: interest in a career, good job prospects of the course, a desire to run a business someday, and projected earnings in the related careers pertaining to the course. The last selected reasons for choosing a major course were the reputation of the major at the university, the perceived quality of instruction, the amount and type of promotional information, and the influence of friends. Kaur and Leen (2007) contributing to the discourse, established earlier that students' choices of major courses are influenced by factors such as gender, race, quantitative skills, interest in the subject, expected marketability, performance in major classes, the approachability and teaching reputation of faculty members. Meanwhile, Kusumwati et al. (2010) have found that the reputation of the institution involved is the most significant factor in a student's decision for further study and program to read in a particular school. In addition to all these external influences, the trait and factor theory highlighted the need to acknowledge the inherent traits of the person involved (student or pupils) for the right choice to be made (Taylor & Buku, 2006).

It has been observed that the socio-economic background of students also contributes significantly to their choice of programs of study at the SHS level since the fees paid for some programs are higher than that of other programs (Kusumwati et al., 2010). In light of the foregoing, Abubakar (2017) earlier revealed that the socioeconomic standing or income of students' families constitutes an essential aspect of what program a student would pursue. In the same vein, society views some programs as expensive. For example, a parent who is not economically sound will make it known to the ward why he or she should not choose Science-related programs such as elective Science and Home

Economics. These subjects are practical-oriented and demand the purchase of several materials and apparatus. If parents of such wards are not economically sound, they will not be able to provide the needed financial assistance and support for the wards to pursue such courses. On socio-economic standing, an associated factor is the distance from one's home to the preferred institution hosting the program. Gibbons and Vignoles (2009) revealed that students originating from lower socio-economic backgrounds exhibited a lower attendance rate at high-quality institutions. Despite this, Holland's (1997) vocational theory cautions that there is a need for the person involved to possess enormous self-knowledge, self-awareness, and information required for choice or decision-making. In a modest form, however, this pathway is two-dimensional, consisting of monetary and non-monetary traits. A typical example of monetary characteristics is the direct costs associated with a particular program (i.e. tuition and books) and the revenue stream envisaged as a result of choosing a particular programme. On the other hand, social influences, tradition, and the aesthetic content of the program constitute the non-monetary aspect (Addadey, 2020).

Furthermore, high or low salaries associated with some occupations also determine what program students will choose to pursue (Taylor & Buku, 2006). These variations in salaries influence students to opt for particular programs instead of others (Hagel & Shaw, 2010). Odia (2014) earlier revealed that in Nigeria, job prospects, gender, and environmental factors significantly influence students' choice of Social Studies program, whilst socioeconomic standing, teacher-related, and parental factors did not influence students' choice of Social Studies.

Furthermore, Demi, Coleman-Jensen and Synder (2010) have found that other determinants of the choice of programs comprise tuition and financial assistance policies concerning the program. Generally, high economic standing poses positive effects on students' choice of career as students and their parents usually tend to take into consideration the associated cost of education before pursuing a particular program of study. More often than not, higher levels of parental economic standing are strongly aligned with post-secondary school attainment (Demi, Coleman-Jensen & Synder, 2010). Although these are external influences, the Trait-And-Factor theory stresses the need to acknowledge one's inherent traits amid all these externalities (Parson, 1909). The theory believes that it is only when the internal traits are in congruence with environmental factors that someone can progress. It would thus be proper if pupils in the Gomoa East District have ample exposure to such information to guide them in determining their choice of academic programs at the SHS.

The choice of an academic program is also influenced by factors such as gender, socio-economic status, better academic performance, parents' occupation and education level, and parental expectations (Adragna, 2009; Berzin, 2010; Domenico & Jones, 2006). These factors influence the norms against which adolescents compare themselves and the context within which goals are pursued. Several studies show that students all over the world are usually faced with a dilemma in making a career choice decision in their lives (Bandura et al. 2001; Cherian 1991; Issa & Nwalo 2008; Macgregor 2007; McMahon & Watson, 2005; Watson et al. 2010). In most cases, the choice of careers, subjects, and courses of study and the subsequent career paths to follow are a nightmare for prospective Senior High students (Issa & Nwalo, 2008).

Several studies have been conducted in places with differences in social settings and geographical location. For instance, a study among Optometry students by Kobia-Acquah, Owusu, Akuffo, Koomson and Pascal (2020) found that females were twice more likely to practice optometry and pursue an interest in pediatric optometry than males. A similar study in Sultanate of Oman by Al-Bahrani, Allawati, Shindi and Bakkar (2020) also revealed that females have higher scores on career aspiration than males. Similarly, in Hong Kong, Tsui, Lee, Hui, Chun and Chan (2019) also established that the academic and career aspirations of adolescents and their destinations are shaped by parental influences and outcomes of public examination results.

Shumba and Naong (2012) also found that the ability of the learner and teachers were significant factors that influence the career choice and aspirations of students in South Africa. Willcoxson and Wynder (2010) are of the view that predetermined career plans are good predictors of higher school achievement because they help students demonstrate greater interest in their coursework. Adeokun and Opoko (2015) also affirm that students with greater clarity about why they choose their course and whether the chosen course has a direct pathway to their preferred career have better outcomes in terms of academic performance.

On institutional link determinants of program choice, Quansah, Ankoma-Sey and Dankyi (2020) explored the factors influencing SHS female students' selection of STEM (Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) related programs in tertiary institutions in Ghana. It was discovered that school-linked indicators like elective mathematics status, course of study, and interest in science and mathematics, affected the choice of STEM-related programs by female students. Home-related factors (e.g., socioeconomic status, parents' educational level) and personal factors (e.g., locus of control, career indecision, self-confidence) also played a significant role

in the choice of STEM-related programs by female SHS students.

Agbo et al. (2015) hold the view that career aspiration is the professional path one wishes to follow and maintain; it is a lifelong process that requires accurate perceptions of ability, strength, potential, and achievement. The role of parents can neither be overemphasized nor underestimated in pupils' choices, especially in the area of choosing a program for Senior High School education since they have a portion to sign on the form of the choice of program (GES, 2019). Therefore, Sarkodie, Asare and Asare (2020) recommended that parents should always take time to discuss academic issues with their wards rather than imposing their opinions on them.

This is achieved through the play materials they offer to the children, the encouragement or discouragement of interests, the activities they motivate their wards to partake in, and the experiences they offer in the family (Gostein, 2000; Tucci, 2005). For example, a medical doctor encourages the ward to read science at the Senior High level. In the U.S. for instance, an estimated 44 percent of physicians' sons prefer to read medicine whilst 28 percent of lawyers' wards choose law (Yao, 1999). Again, role model constitutes another type of parental control. Gostein (2003) has reported that this situation works well when the ward identifies closely with the parent. Mortimer (2005) also reported having realized a validation for this when he reported that a combination of prestigious paternal role models together with a close father-son or mother-daughter interaction facilitated a very efficient parental transfer of career values and influence on children's choices. Such children adhere to their parents' choices in order not to offend them (Gostein, 2000).

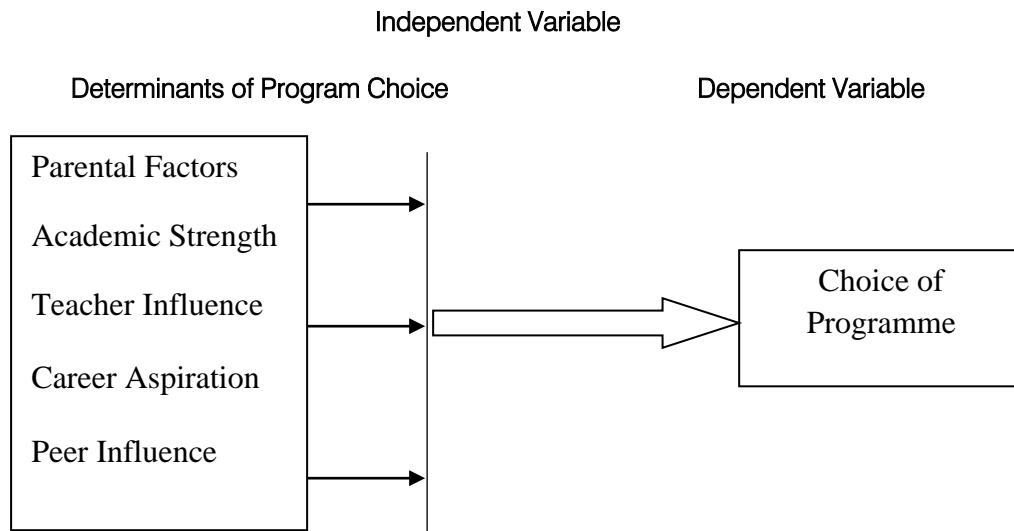
b) *Conceptual Framework*

Figure 1: Determinants of students' choice of program at the Senior High School.

The conceptual framework in Figure 1 depicts the determinants of students' choice of program at the Senior High School. Academic strength, parental factors, career aspiration, peers, and teacher influence are the independent or predictor variables whilst the choice of program (General Arts, Business, General Science, and Home Economics) is the dependent variable.

Webster's International Dictionary (1998) defines choice as the voluntary act of selecting or separating from two or more things that which is preferred; and the determination of the mind in preferring one thing to another. The definition incorporates two components: First is the availability of alternatives, which presents an objective reality, and the second one, is the act of preference, which involves a subjective process. If a reference to career choice is made, the availability of career choices and the dynamics of choosing a career should be examined. Hence, in order for career choice to take place, there should be alternative career routes available and there

should be an individual preference between these career options. A choice is a decision that most human beings make at some time in their lives; it is a decision that should be given careful consideration since it can affect the rest of a person's life and determines one's future career (Som, 2016).

The educational system in Ghana has three main transitional stages. It includes the basic level (Primary and Junior High Education). The second stage is a 3-year Senior High School Education, and the final stage is a 3 or 4-year tertiary education which comprises several different programs and courses offered in Universities, Technical Universities, Colleges of Education, and other tertiary institutions. Final-year students in Junior High Schools are required to select their preferred academic programs for SHSs. These programs determine to a large extent, which courses he/she can pursue at the University or other higher institutions of learning as well as where one's future career destination will be. Table 1 shows the programs offered at the SHS and their prospective careers.

Table 1: The table shows the programs offered and their prospective Careers

Program	Prospective Careers
General Art	Nursing, Teaching, Accountant, Communicator Editor
Business	Accountants, Financial Analysts, Bank Managers, Cashiers
General Science	Business Advisors, Investment Managers, Auditors, Teachers
Visual Arts	Doctor, Nurse, Teacher, Physician, Lab Technician
Home Economics	Artist, Graphic Designer, Painter, Print Making, Film Making
	Nutritionists, Caterers, Managers of Restaurants, Dietician and so on.

These choices have many implications for success in life and in the same vein pupils too are

confronted with choice-making regarding specific programs to read at the Senior High School level.



There is a centralized application system in which admission to Senior High School is premised and referred to as the Computerized School Selection and Placement System (CSSPS) application to Senior High School (Ajayi, 2011).

With this, gaining admission into SHS for a program is solely based on students' ranking of their preferred programs of interest together with their performance at the Basic Education Certificate Examination (BECE) which is a nationally administered examination meant to select qualified candidates into SHS. This implies that program choice is determined by students' performance in BECE. For example, if a student decides to do science at a particular Senior High School and does not attain the required grade point, she/he would not be permitted unless she decides to do a different program. Since the program of choice influences the choice of school, more often than not, pupils' choice of program emerges from the outcome of discussions between students and significant people in their lives such as parents, teachers, or friends. This choice goes in line with the position of Holland's Vocational theory because it acknowledges the need for counselors to educate parents on the need to study and identify the personality type of their wards to guide them to make better course choices that suit their personalities.

c) Problem Statement

It is evident that many students make wrong choices in relation to their program of study at the secondary school level because of ignorance, inexperience, peer pressure, advice from friends, parents, and teachers, or tags attached to certain programs without adequate knowledge (Salami, 1999). The SHS students including those in the Gomoa East district are challenged with several of these life issues of making choices in their education as well as their everyday endeavors.

Students find themselves in a dilemma as to what kind of program will commensurate with their future career aspirations, and some end up selecting programs that do not match their backgrounds or academic strengths (Takyi 2011). Research on students' choice of programme was done by different scholars and nearly all agreed that students' selection of programmes is affected by their career aspirations, careful planning, and influence from parents, teachers, peers, and siblings (Adinkrah & Ayarkwa 2020; Takyi 2011; Mankoe 2007; Baharun et al., 2011; Taylor et al., 2006). The researchers further revealed that students' selection of programmes was driven by the outcome of public examination results, students' personalities, and environmental factors.

Unfortunately, it appears that there is no available scientific study on this phenomenon in the Gomoa East District to assess the determinants of

students' choice of program at the SHS level. The current study was designed to fill this research gap.

d) Research Question

What are the determinants that best predict first-year students' choice of program at the Senior High School level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region?

e) Methodology

i. Design, Population and Sample

The descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. This design enabled us to gather data in a way that provided information on the determinants of students' choice of program. The target population for this study comprised all Senior High School (SHS) students in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region. The district has four SHSs, two public schools, and two private schools, totaling 2,006 first-year senior high school students in the district made up of 1,024 females and 982 males. The accessible population comprised all 1,144 first-year public senior high school students in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region comprising 629 females and 515 males.

A sample of 229 f was drawn from 1,144 students using Kumar's (2019) criteria for sample selection which posits that 20–50 percent of the population is suitable for a descriptive study.

Respondents for each school were calculated using the mathematical formula; Number of first-year students in a particular school divided by the accessible population of first-year students, multiplied by the sample size.

For example;

Number of first-year students at Fetterman SHS = 453

Total number of accessible populations = 1,144

Selected sample size = 229

$$453/1,144 * 229 = 91.$$

Therefore, the sample size for Fetterman SHS was 91 first-year students. The sample for the males-female strata for Fetterman SHS was calculated and presented in Table 2 using the formula;

$$\frac{\text{Accessible population}}{\text{M/F}} = \frac{\text{Sample size for Fetterman}}{X}$$

Where M/F stand for accessible males or females.

$$\text{For example;} \quad \frac{1,144}{515} \times \frac{91}{X} = 41$$

This was replicated in selecting samples for the Ahmadiya SHS too.

Table 2: Distribution of Samples Across SHSs in Gomoa East District

School	Accessible population	Sample	Boys	Girls
1. Ahmadiya SHS	691	138	62	76
2. Fettehman SHS	453	91	41	50
Total	1,144	229	103	126

Source: Fieldwork (2021)

Based on prepared sampling frames from each school, the systematic sampling approach was used to select the sample size of 229.

f) Data Collection Instrument

The main data collection instrument was a self-constructed questionnaire on the Students' Choice of Academic Program (SCAP). The instrument had two sections (A and B). the A section focused on determinants of students' choice of program and section B dealt with students' choice of academic programs. the items in the instrument were measured on a four-point unilinear Likert scale ranging from 1-4. (1-Strongly Disagree (SD), 2-Disagree (D), 3-Agree (A) and 4-Strongly Agree (SA).

g) Validity and Reliability

To enhance the validity of the study, the questionnaire it was given to questionnaire item construction experts and some senior lecturers in Measurement and Evaluation at the Department of Education and Psychology for their expert assessment. With this, both face and content validity were ensured. Regarding reliability, the questionnaire was pre-tested at the Odorgonno SHS in the Ga South District in Accra. This school was used because it is also a public senior high school and had similar administrative structures, offers the same programs, and had similar physical and emotional characteristics as those of the selected SHSs

for the main study. A reliability test was carried out on the pre-tested questionnaire and a reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained.

h) Ethical Considerations

The consent of all the respondents was sought before their involvement in the study. To ensure informed consent and participation in the study processes, the participants were debriefed about the purpose of the study. They were given a written consent form to read and freely decide to participate in the study by signing. Confidentiality and anonymity were strictly adhered to throughout the data collection process. For this reason, their names were not required on the questionnaire so that no traces could be made of them with respect to their responses.

II. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Research Question: What are the determinants that best predict first-year students' choice of program at the Senior High School level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region?

This research question sought to examine the determinants that best predicted first-year students' choice of program at the SHS level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region. The data were analyzed using multiple linear regression and presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Multiple Linear Regression of the Determinants that best Predict First-Year Students' Choice of Programme

Variables	Unstandardized B	Coefficients Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Tolerance	Statistics VIF
Constant	5.575	.471		11.841	< .001	.759	1.318
Teacher Advice	.009	.090	.007	.096	.924	.898	1.114
Future Prospect	.003	.079	.003	.037	.971	.917	1.090
Parents Selection	.001	.089	.001	.015	.988	.757	1.320
Colleagues Advice	.216	.132	.124	1.637	.103	.918	1.090
Career Aspiration	.006	.086	.005	.068	.946	.900	1.111
Academic Performance	.199	.072	.192	2.768	.006*	.759	1.318
R			.206				
R Square (R ²)			.042				
Adjusted R Square			.016				

Source: Fieldwork (2021) F = 1.632; df = (6, 222); (N = 229); VIF = Variance Inflation Factor
Dependent Variable: Students' choice of Programme

*p < .05



The tolerance values in Table 3 were not less than 10 which is within an acceptable threshold (Pallant, 2016). Also, the VIF results met the acceptable standard which requires that VIF values must be less than 10. For this reason, there is no problem with multicollinearity since both the tolerance and variance inflation factor results met the acceptable cut-off points. Therefore, a multiple linear regression model was run to examine the determinants that best predict first-year students' choice of program.

The results from Table 3 show that teachers' advice ($\beta = .009, p = .924$), future prospects ($\beta = .003, p = .971$), parents' selection of program ($\beta = .001, p = .988$), colleagues' advice ($\beta = .216, p = .103$) and career aspiration of students ($\beta = .006, p = .946$) have no statistically significant influence on their choice of program ($p > .05$). This result means that teachers' advice, future prospect, parents' selection of program, colleagues' advice and career aspiration are not best predictors of first-year students' choice of program. Conversely, Table 3 shows that there is a statistically significant positive effect of first-year students' academic performance on their choice of program ($\beta = .199, p < .05$), $F (6, 222) = 1.632, p < .05$, with an R^2 of .042).

III. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

The research question sought to examine the determinants that best predicted first-year students' choice of program at the SHS level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region. The results result mean that teachers' advice, future prospect, parents' selection of program, colleagues' advice, and career aspiration are not best predictors of first-year students' choice of program. The results suggest that first-year students' academic performance is the determinant that best predicts their choice of program. Also, it means that first-year students' academic performance positively influences their choice of program.

The findings of the study contradicted previous research on the fact that students' selection of academic programmes is determined by students' career aspirations, careful planning, and influence from parents, teachers, peers, and siblings (Adinkrah & Ayarkwa, 2020; Baharun, 2011; Takyi, 2011; Hagel & Shaw, 2008; Mankoe, 2007; Taylor et al., 2006). The study's finding implies that students' academic strength, academic success, or performance encourages them to know the required programme to choose at the SHS. For instance, when a student performs well, he/she is inspired to look at the programme that will be suitable for him or her based on his/her future and career aspirations.

The results of the study imply that advice from teachers, the future prospect of a program, parents' selection of program, colleagues' influence, and career

aspiration are not determinants that predict students' choice of program. On the other hand, the result of the study revealed that students' general academic performance influences or best predicts students' choice of program.

a) Conclusions

The findings of the study revealed that the determinant that best predicts students' choice of program at the SHS level in the Gomoa East District of the Central Region was students' general academic performance followed by advice from peers of students. This revelation contradicts other findings as indicated earlier which reported that career aspiration, teacher, and parental factors as the best determinants of students' choice of program at the SHS level. The study, therefore, concludes that parents and management of SHSs should work hard on equipping teachers with all the necessary educational logistics that they need to teach well, and build students' self-efficacy in order to enhance their general academic strength and performance.

b) Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from the study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Educational guidance and counselling programs be regularly organized for students at Junior High Schools (JHSs) to enable them to make informed choices regarding the choice of their academic programs of study at the SHS level.
2. Ghana Education Service (GES) and Management of SHSs, should work on supplying students with learning and research skills to enable them to improve their general academic performance.

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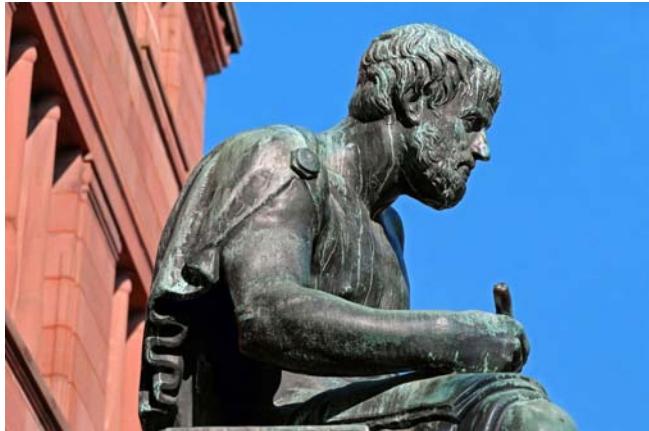
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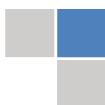
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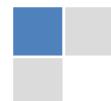
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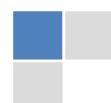
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11. Pick a good study spot: Always try to pick a spot for your research which is quiet. Not every spot is good for studying.

12. Know what you know: Always try to know what you know by making objectives, otherwise you will be confused and unable to achieve your target.

13. Use good grammar: Always use good grammar and words that will have a positive impact on the evaluator; use of good vocabulary does not mean using tough words which the evaluator has to find in a dictionary. Do not fragment sentences. Eliminate one-word sentences. Do not ever use a big word when a smaller one would suffice.

Verbs have to be in agreement with their subjects. In a research paper, do not start sentences with conjunctions or finish them with prepositions. When writing formally, it is advisable to never split an infinitive because someone will (wrongly) complain. Avoid clichés like a disease. Always shun irritating alliteration. Use language which is simple and straightforward. Put together a neat summary.

14. Arrangement of information: Each section of the main body should start with an opening sentence, and there should be a changeover at the end of the section. Give only valid and powerful arguments for your topic. You may also maintain your arguments with records.

15. Never start at the last minute: Always allow enough time for research work. Leaving everything to the last minute will degrade your paper and spoil your work.

16. Multitasking in research is not good: Doing several things at the same time is a bad habit in the case of research activity. Research is an area where everything has a particular time slot. Divide your research work into parts, and do a particular part in a particular time slot.

17. Never copy others' work: Never copy others' work and give it your name because if the evaluator has seen it anywhere, you will be in trouble. Take proper rest and food: No matter how many hours you spend on your research activity, if you are not taking care of your health, then all your efforts will have been in vain. For quality research, take proper rest and food.

18. Go to seminars: Attend seminars if the topic is relevant to your research area. Utilize all your resources.

Refresh your mind after intervals: Try to give your mind a rest by listening to soft music or sleeping in intervals. This will also improve your memory. Acquire colleagues: Always try to acquire colleagues. No matter how sharp you are, if you acquire colleagues, they can give you ideas which will be helpful to your research.

19. Think technically: Always think technically. If anything happens, search for its reasons, benefits, and demerits. Think and then print: When you go to print your paper, check that tables are not split, headings are not detached from their descriptions, and page sequence is maintained.



20. Adding unnecessary information: Do not add unnecessary information like "I have used MS Excel to draw graphs." Irrelevant and inappropriate material is superfluous. Foreign terminology and phrases are not apropos. One should never take a broad view. Analogy is like feathers on a snake. Use words properly, regardless of how others use them. Remove quotations. Puns are for kids, not grown readers. Never oversimplify: When adding material to your research paper, never go for oversimplification; this will definitely irritate the evaluator. Be specific. Never use rhythmic redundancies. Contractions shouldn't be used in a research paper. Comparisons are as terrible as clichés. Give up ampersands, abbreviations, and so on. Remove commas that are not necessary. Parenthetical words should be between brackets or commas. Understatement is always the best way to put forward earth-shaking thoughts. Give a detailed literary review.

21. Report concluded results: Use concluded results. From raw data, filter the results, and then conclude your studies based on measurements and observations taken. An appropriate number of decimal places should be used. Parenthetical remarks are prohibited here. Proofread carefully at the final stage. At the end, give an outline to your arguments. Spot perspectives of further study of the subject. Justify your conclusion at the bottom sufficiently, which will probably include examples.

22. Upon conclusion: Once you have concluded your research, the next most important step is to present your findings. Presentation is extremely important as it is the definite medium through which your research is going to be in print for the rest of the crowd. Care should be taken to categorize your thoughts well and present them in a logical and neat manner. A good quality research paper format is essential because it serves to highlight your research paper and bring to light all necessary aspects of your research.

INFORMAL GUIDELINES OF RESEARCH PAPER WRITING

Key points to remember:

- Submit all work in its final form.
- Write your paper in the form which is presented in the guidelines using the template.
- Please note the criteria peer reviewers will use for grading the final paper.

Final points:

One purpose of organizing a research paper is to let people interpret your efforts selectively. The journal requires the following sections, submitted in the order listed, with each section starting on a new page:

The introduction: This will be compiled from reference material and reflect the design processes or outline of basis that directed you to make a study. As you carry out the process of study, the method and process section will be constructed like that. The results segment will show related statistics in nearly sequential order and direct reviewers to similar intellectual paths throughout the data that you gathered to carry out your study.

The discussion section:

This will provide understanding of the data and projections as to the implications of the results. The use of good quality references throughout the paper will give the effort trustworthiness by representing an alertness to prior workings.

Writing a research paper is not an easy job, no matter how trouble-free the actual research or concept. Practice, excellent preparation, and controlled record-keeping are the only means to make straightforward progression.

General style:

Specific editorial column necessities for compliance of a manuscript will always take over from directions in these general guidelines.

To make a paper clear: Adhere to recommended page limits.



Mistakes to avoid:

- Insertion of a title at the foot of a page with subsequent text on the next page.
- Separating a table, chart, or figure—confine each to a single page.
- Submitting a manuscript with pages out of sequence.
- In every section of your document, use standard writing style, including articles ("a" and "the").
- Keep paying attention to the topic of the paper.
- Use paragraphs to split each significant point (excluding the abstract).
- Align the primary line of each section.
- Present your points in sound order.
- Use present tense to report well-accepted matters.
- Use past tense to describe specific results.
- Do not use familiar wording; don't address the reviewer directly. Don't use slang or superlatives.
- Avoid use of extra pictures—include only those figures essential to presenting results.

Title page:

Choose a revealing title. It should be short and include the name(s) and address(es) of all authors. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations or exceed two printed lines.

Abstract: This summary should be two hundred words or less. It should clearly and briefly explain the key findings reported in the manuscript and must have precise statistics. It should not have acronyms or abbreviations. It should be logical in itself. Do not cite references at this point.

An abstract is a brief, distinct paragraph summary of finished work or work in development. In a minute or less, a reviewer can be taught the foundation behind the study, common approaches to the problem, relevant results, and significant conclusions or new questions.

Write your summary when your paper is completed because how can you write the summary of anything which is not yet written? Wealth of terminology is very essential in abstract. Use comprehensive sentences, and do not sacrifice readability for brevity; you can maintain it succinctly by phrasing sentences so that they provide more than a lone rationale. The author can at this moment go straight to shortening the outcome. Sum up the study with the subsequent elements in any summary. Try to limit the initial two items to no more than one line each.

Reason for writing the article—theory, overall issue, purpose.

- Fundamental goal.
- To-the-point depiction of the research.
- Consequences, including definite statistics—if the consequences are quantitative in nature, account for this; results of any numerical analysis should be reported. Significant conclusions or questions that emerge from the research.

Approach:

- Single section and succinct.
- An outline of the job done is always written in past tense.
- Concentrate on shortening results—limit background information to a verdict or two.
- Exact spelling, clarity of sentences and phrases, and appropriate reporting of quantities (proper units, important statistics) are just as significant in an abstract as they are anywhere else.

Introduction:

The introduction should "introduce" the manuscript. The reviewer should be presented with sufficient background information to be capable of comprehending and calculating the purpose of your study without having to refer to other works. The basis for the study should be offered. Give the most important references, but avoid making a comprehensive appraisal of the topic. Describe the problem visibly. If the problem is not acknowledged in a logical, reasonable way, the reviewer will give no attention to your results. Speak in common terms about techniques used to explain the problem, if needed, but do not present any particulars about the protocols here.



The following approach can create a valuable beginning:

- Explain the value (significance) of the study.
- Defend the model—why did you employ this particular system or method? What is its compensation? Remark upon its appropriateness from an abstract point of view as well as pointing out sensible reasons for using it.
- Present a justification. State your particular theory(-ies) or aim(s), and describe the logic that led you to choose them.
- Briefly explain the study's tentative purpose and how it meets the declared objectives.

Approach:

Use past tense except for when referring to recognized facts. After all, the manuscript will be submitted after the entire job is done. Sort out your thoughts; manufacture one key point for every section. If you make the four points listed above, you will need at least four paragraphs. Present surrounding information only when it is necessary to support a situation. The reviewer does not desire to read everything you know about a topic. Shape the theory specifically—do not take a broad view.

As always, give awareness to spelling, simplicity, and correctness of sentences and phrases.

Procedures (methods and materials):

This part is supposed to be the easiest to carve if you have good skills. A soundly written procedures segment allows a capable scientist to replicate your results. Present precise information about your supplies. The suppliers and clarity of reagents can be helpful bits of information. Present methods in sequential order, but linked methodologies can be grouped as a segment. Be concise when relating the protocols. Attempt to give the least amount of information that would permit another capable scientist to replicate your outcome, but be cautious that vital information is integrated. The use of subheadings is suggested and ought to be synchronized with the results section.

When a technique is used that has been well-described in another section, mention the specific item describing the way, but draw the basic principle while stating the situation. The purpose is to show all particular resources and broad procedures so that another person may use some or all of the methods in one more study or referee the scientific value of your work. It is not to be a step-by-step report of the whole thing you did, nor is a methods section a set of orders.

Materials:

Materials may be reported in part of a section or else they may be recognized along with your measures.

Methods:

- Report the method and not the particulars of each process that engaged the same methodology.
- Describe the method entirely.
- To be succinct, present methods under headings dedicated to specific dealings or groups of measures.
- Simplify—detail how procedures were completed, not how they were performed on a particular day.
- If well-known procedures were used, account for the procedure by name, possibly with a reference, and that's all.

Approach:

It is embarrassing to use vigorous voice when documenting methods without using first person, which would focus the reviewer's interest on the researcher rather than the job. As a result, when writing up the methods, most authors use third person passive voice.

Use standard style in this and every other part of the paper—avoid familiar lists, and use full sentences.

What to keep away from:

- Resources and methods are not a set of information.
- Skip all descriptive information and surroundings—save it for the argument.
- Leave out information that is immaterial to a third party.



Results:

The principle of a results segment is to present and demonstrate your conclusion. Create this part as entirely objective details of the outcome, and save all understanding for the discussion.

The page length of this segment is set by the sum and types of data to be reported. Use statistics and tables, if suitable, to present consequences most efficiently.

You must clearly differentiate material which would usually be incorporated in a study editorial from any unprocessed data or additional appendix matter that would not be available. In fact, such matters should not be submitted at all except if requested by the instructor.

Content:

- Sum up your conclusions in text and demonstrate them, if suitable, with figures and tables.
- In the manuscript, explain each of your consequences, and point the reader to remarks that are most appropriate.
- Present a background, such as by describing the question that was addressed by creation of an exacting study.
- Explain results of control experiments and give remarks that are not accessible in a prescribed figure or table, if appropriate.
- Examine your data, then prepare the analyzed (transformed) data in the form of a figure (graph), table, or manuscript.

What to stay away from:

- Do not discuss or infer your outcome, report surrounding information, or try to explain anything.
- Do not include raw data or intermediate calculations in a research manuscript.
- Do not present similar data more than once.
- A manuscript should complement any figures or tables, not duplicate information.
- Never confuse figures with tables—there is a difference.

Approach:

As always, use past tense when you submit your results, and put the whole thing in a reasonable order.

Put figures and tables, appropriately numbered, in order at the end of the report.

If you desire, you may place your figures and tables properly within the text of your results section.

Figures and tables:

If you put figures and tables at the end of some details, make certain that they are visibly distinguished from any attached appendix materials, such as raw facts. Whatever the position, each table must be titled, numbered one after the other, and include a heading. All figures and tables must be divided from the text.

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Position your understanding of the outcome visibly to lead the reviewer through your conclusions, and then finish the paper with a summing up of the implications of the study. The purpose here is to offer an understanding of your results and support all of your conclusions, using facts from your research and generally accepted information, if suitable. The implication of results should be fully described.

Infer your data in the conversation in suitable depth. This means that when you clarify an observable fact, you must explain mechanisms that may account for the observation. If your results vary from your prospect, make clear why that may have happened. If your results agree, then explain the theory that the proof supported. It is never suitable to just state that the data approved the prospect, and let it drop at that. Make a decision as to whether each premise is supported or discarded or if you cannot make a conclusion with assurance. Do not just dismiss a study or part of a study as "uncertain."



Research papers are not acknowledged if the work is imperfect. Draw what conclusions you can based upon the results that you have, and take care of the study as a finished work.

- You may propose future guidelines, such as how an experiment might be personalized to accomplish a new idea.
- Give details of all of your remarks as much as possible, focusing on mechanisms.
- Make a decision as to whether the tentative design sufficiently addressed the theory and whether or not it was correctly restricted. Try to present substitute explanations if they are sensible alternatives.
- One piece of research will not counter an overall question, so maintain the large picture in mind. Where do you go next? The best studies unlock new avenues of study. What questions remain?
- Recommendations for detailed papers will offer supplementary suggestions.

Approach:

When you refer to information, differentiate data generated by your own studies from other available information. Present work done by specific persons (including you) in past tense.

Describe generally acknowledged facts and main beliefs in present tense.

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	A-B	C-D	E-F
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	Containing all background details with clear goal and appropriate details, flow specification, no grammar and spelling mistake, well organized sentence and paragraph, reference cited	Unclear and confusing data, appropriate format, grammar and spelling errors with unorganized matter	Out of place depth and content, hazy format
<i>Introduction</i>	Clear and to the point with well arranged paragraph, precision and accuracy of facts and figures, well organized subheads	Difficult to comprehend with embarrassed text, too much explanation but completed	Incorrect and unorganized structure with hazy meaning
	Well organized, Clear and specific, Correct units with precision, correct data, well structuring of paragraph, no grammar and spelling mistake	Complete and embarrassed text, difficult to comprehend	Irregular format with wrong facts and figures
<i>Methods and Procedures</i>	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring
<i>Result</i>	Well organized, Clear and specific, Correct units with precision, correct data, well structuring of paragraph, no grammar and spelling mistake	Complete and embarrassed text, difficult to comprehend	Irregular format with wrong facts and figures
	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
<i>Discussion</i>	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring
<i>References</i>	Well organized, meaningful specification, sound conclusion, logical and concise explanation, highly structured paragraph reference cited	Wordy, unclear conclusion, spurious	Conclusion is not cited, unorganized, difficult to comprehend
	Complete and correct format, well organized	Beside the point, Incomplete	Wrong format and structuring

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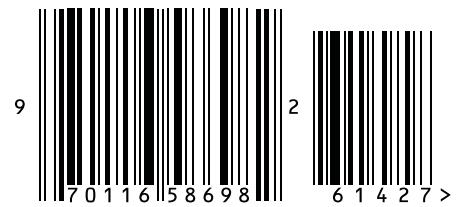


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