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GRAPHICS AND ART EDUCATION IN DEVELOPING THE ETHNO-ARTISTIC CULTURE OF FUTURE SPECIALISTS

Abstract

Graphics and art training are used more frequently to cultivate the ethno-artistic culture of future professionals through working with cultural symbols, visual codes as well as traditional design techniques. And the ethnoartistic culture as an integrated competence that includes ethnocultural knowledge, symbolic literacy, art technical mastery, value orientation and ethical responsibility cannot be created through borrowing of decorative «ethnographic style» only. This article explores how a research-based and theoretically grounded graphics module can help students to translate ethnocultural content into contemporary graphics as it decreases the likelihood of stereotyping and disconnection from context.

The study uses mixed-methods, quasi-experimental design involving two matched students cohorts in visual arts, art education or design programmes. Quantitative measures consist of a test on knowledge and meanings of ethnocultural symbols, a values/identity survey, and an expert-rated portfolio rubric assessing cultural heritage/citation, semantic accuracy of the symbol, technical quality/composition, innovation beyond stereotypes, and reflective-ethical justification. Qualitative data is gathered through analyses of process-logs in student portfolios, observations of studio activity, transcripts from critiques and semi-structured interviews to uncover mechanisms for meaning making and ethical decision-making paths.

The best learning gains for the targeted modules are in provenance based research practices, semantic accuracy of symbolic use, and reflective -ethical justification; incremental improvements on pure (technical) quality are smaller. Students move from copying motifs to sign making, where cultural origins are research data and limitations, which foster creative transcendence rather than surface styling. This paper argues for how the best ethno-artistic culture can be developed in graphics-based pedagogy when assessment demands verifiable cultural research, culturally sensitive interpretation and ethically defensible artistic decision making.

Key words: graphics education, art education, ethno-artistic culture, cultural symbolism, portfolio assessment.

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БОЛАШАҚ МАМАНДАРДЫҢ ЭТНО-КӨРКЕМДІК МӘДЕНИЕТІН ДАМУДАҒЫ ГРАФИКА ЖӘНЕ КӨРКЕМДІК БІЛІМ

Аңдатпа

Графика және көркемдік білім беру студенттерді мәдени рәміздермен, көрнекі кодтармен және мұраға негізделген дизайн шешімдерімен жұмыс істеуге үйрету арқылы болашақ мамандардың этно-көркемдік мәдениетін дамыту үшін көбірек қолданылууда. Этномәдени білімді, символдық сауаттылықты, көркемдік-техникалық шеберлікті, құндылық бағдарын және этикалық жауапкершілікті біріктіретін интеграцияланған құзыреттілік ретінде түсінілетін этно-көркем мәдениетті тек сәндік "этно-стиль" арқылы қалыптастыру мүмкін емес. Бұл мақалада зерттеуге негізделген графикалық модуль студенттердің этномәдени

мазмұнды заманауи графикалық шешімдерге аудару қабілетін қалай нығайта алатыны, сонымен бірге стереотиптер мен деконтекстуализация қаупін азайтатыны қарастырылады.

Аралас әдістер, квазиэксперименттік дизайн бейнелеу өнері, көркемдік білім беру немесе дизайн бағдарламаларында екі салыстырмалы студенттік когортты қолдану арқылы ұсынылады. Сандық өлшеу этномәдени рәміздер бойынша білім мен мағынаны тексеруді, құндылықтар мен жеке басын зерттеуді, сондай-ақ мәдени шығу тегі мен дәйексөзін, рәміздердің мағыналық дұрыстығын, техникалық және композициялық сапасын, стереотиптерден тыс инновацияларды және рефлексиялық-этикалық негіздемелерді бағалайтын сараптамалық рейтингі бар Портфолио айдарын қамтиды. Сапалы дәлелдер Портфолио процестерін талдау, студиялық бақылаулар, сын транскриптітері және жартылай құрылымдық сұхбаттар арқылы жинақталып, мағынаны анықтау механизмдері мен этикалық шешім қабылдау жолдарын ашады.

Нәтижелер мақсатты модульдің шығу тегіне негізделген зерттеу тәжірибесінде, символдық қолданудың семантикалық дәлдігінде және рефлексиялық-этикалық негіздемеде ең күшті оқу жетістіктерін қамтамасыз ететінін көрсетеді, ал таза техникалық сапаның біртіндеп жақсаруы азырақ. Студенттер мотивтерді көшіруден семиотикалық дизайнға көшуді көрсетеді, мұнда мәдени көздер зерттеу материалына айналады және үстірт стильден гөрі шығармашылық трансформацияны қолдайтын шектеулерге айналады. Зерттеу қорытындысы бойынша графикаға негізделген педагогика этно-көркемдік мәдениетті дамыту үшін ең тиімді болып табылады, мұнда бағалау стандарттары бақыланатын мәдени зерттеулерді, контекстік интерпретацияны және этикалық тұрғыдан қорғалатын көркемдік таңдауды қажет етеді.

Түйін сөздер: графикалық білім беру, көркемдік білім беру, этно-көркем мәдениет, мәдени символизм, портфолио бағалау.

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ГРАФИЧЕСКОЕ И ХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОЕ ОБРАЗОВАНИЕ В РАЗВИТИИ ЭТНОХУДОЖЕСТВЕННОЙ КУЛЬТУРЫ БУДУЩИХ СПЕЦИАЛИСТОВ

Аннотация

Обучение студентов принципам работы с традиционными художественными образцами и дизайнерскими техниками, почерпнутыми из культурного наследия, становится ключевым инструментом в формировании этнической художественной составляющей у будущих профессионалов. Интегрированное знание об этнической культуре, включающее понимание культурных особенностей, умение работать со знаками, художественные навыки, моральные ценности и ответственное отношение, невозможно создать исключительно через поверхностное использование элементов «этнического стиля». Статья посвящена тому, каким образом исследовательски обоснованный графический инструментарий помогает студентам эффективно адаптировать этнический материал в актуальные визуальные проекты, минимизируя опасности упрощения и потери контекста.

Предложено провести гибридное исследование с элементами эксперимента, включающее две сопоставимые группы учащихся по направлениям визуального искусства, художественного образования и дизайна. Анализ количественного аспекта предполагает проверку уровня понимания этнокультурных знаков, исследование личных ценностей и самоидентификации, а также профессиональную рецензию портфолио, акцентирующую внимание на происхождении культуры, узнаваемости элементов, точности их семантики, художественном и техническом исполнении, оригинальности идей, преодолевающих шаблоны, и обосновании этических принципов. Для выявления процессов понимания и путей выработки этических решений анализируются портфолио-журналы, записи студии, протоколы обсуждений и полужформализованные беседы.

Анализ данных указывает на значительное улучшение в сферах источниковедческих исследований, точного символического применения и этически обоснованной рефлексии благодаря целевому модулю, тогда как технические усовершенствования демонстрируют более скромные достижения. Студенты показывают эволюцию от простого заимствования идей к глубокому анализу культурных источников через призму семиотического дизайна, где рамки стимулируют творческий подход вместо механического подражания. Исследование указывает на эффективность графики в педагогике для формирования этнической художественной культуры, особенно при необходимости документирования культурного анализа, контекста интерпретаций и обоснованных моральных решений в искусстве.

Ключевые слова: графическое образование, художественное образование, этно-художественная культура, культурный символизм, оценка Портфолио.

Introduction. In modern higher education, “ethno-artistic culture” has grown beyond a politically correct sentence in the mission of the institution. It is increasingly conceived as an assessable educational result: the ability of students (future teachers, designers, graphic artists, art management professionals) to access cultural codes, and work with heritage in a responsible manner; to translate tradition into contemporary visual language; and to justify their creative decisions through research and reflection. This program is accelerated by two countervailing forces. On the one hand, globalization and platform aesthetics nudge toward visually standardization — stylesheets travel more rapidly than signification. On the contrary, national and regional cultures (including the Kazakh) focus now towards maintaining continuity of symbolic order, vernacular knowledge, cultural memory – breadcrumbs of culture to follow up closely with a diverse stake-holder group interest on reality in future (respective, Slavic-looking severians), leaving to universities task mechanisms specialists for cultivation of the culture rather than “decorating” from it. And the friction between these forces renders art and graphics education a site of strategic significance, where students are trained to manipulate signs, symbols, and compositional grammar – that is, to work with the very means through which ethnocultural meanings are made (and contested) and communicated.

In this article, graphic exists as a hybrid concept that is grounded in tradition and at the same time, ‘looser’, more fluid – not only “drawing,” per se, but a system of visual-graphic practices including printmaking, illustration, poster art, book graphics and pamphlet/book covers (think woodcuts), typographic composition/printing itself (“letterism”), digital graphic design (“computerism”, if I can coin a ridiculous term?) and hybrid forms where traditional motifs long-established are re-coded into modern media. Graphics is different from some other arts, the reproduction and communicationality to their inside: it’s for circulation, learning, public promotion and identity work. This makes it especially well-suited for educational purposes, like when students need to learn cultural meanings and express them persuasively. By art education, we refer to formal tertiary (university/college-type) training that is a combination of studio practice, art history/theory, pedagogical method (when preparing teachers), and reflective research. We understand by EAC an integrated education that comprises: (a) ethnocultural knowledge (symbols, narratives, forms, rituals, systems of ornaments); (b) artistic and technical know-how (technological procedures and composition tools); c) a value-motivational attitude towards cultural preservation; and d) a reflexive-ethical skill aimed at avoiding the reduction of culture to stereotypes or frame-packaged “ethnic style” [1].

To ground this argument in existing scholarship and clarify what is currently evidenced (and what remains methodologically under-specified), the next section synthesizes post-Soviet and international research on ethno-artistic culture in higher art and graphics education, including proposed pedagogical mechanisms and their assessment limits.

Post-Soviet and international research are evidencing an agreement around this core notion: EAC implies not the “knowledge of tradition” but a competence that develops in a learning setting; it is when cultural meanings make their home in daily practice of interpretation, dialogue and creation. Ethno-artistic culture is traditionally represented in national pedagogical literature as a multi-level system of artistic values and practices formed under geographical, historical, and cultural conditions

associated with professional preparation for teaching and cultural continuity. For instance, Sleptsova describes the ethnocultural culture of the future teacher of art in multicultural pedagogical activity, highlights its national- regional component, phenomenon dialogue of cultures and the development professional competences allowing "to keep" and "develop" ethno-cultural experience by means of art [2]. What makes this position important is that it re-frames EAC not as an "ethnic module" (to use his term) but as a product of an ecosystem: environment → experience → competence. But it also points to a methodological vulnerability that's rampant in the field: lots of the papers claim environment as a "means," but don't give an especially clear operationalization of what lobby or key-strom mechanisms lead to what measurable gains.

Kazakhstani research adds a more praxis-oriented orientation: EAC is usually combined with artistic media and pedagogical contexts. The latter sample is Berikbol Rakhat Rakhmetollauly's doctoral research (major – "Fine Art and Drawing") – this work is focused directly on the creation of ethno-artistic culture via graphic art works. According to the annotation, the concept "Ethno art culture" means a system of ethnocultural and ethnographic knowledge and art, nation-type technologies of making works of graphic arts (national character), forms/ways of realization of ethno-art artistic work development; it suggests a structural model in which there are cognitive-evaluative, motivational-value-based, emotional-sensual substructures together with active component included; describes experimental proofing of pedagogical conditions and statistic processing [1]. This is a solid mooring for the current study because it sets a domain- specific foundation: graphics can serve not only as a medium of expression, but also as pedagogical tools to help shape EAC. At the same time, replicating and synthesizing similar studies across institutions can be difficult, particularly by working with local criteria and non-standardized assessment rubrics from other institutions.

A related line of evidence from Kazakhstan is provided by an evaluative follow-up study Students' civic value, self-identity and ethnocultural education. Musakhanova et al. (Cypriot Journal of Educational Sciences) present results for a study in Kazakhstan that suggest the ethnopedagogical techniques and ethnocultural traditions can help form civil/ patriotic world views as well as serve to preserve ethnocultural traditions given contemporary sociocultural conditions [13]. The significance of this research to art education is two-fold. First, the paper offers empirically based (survey) evidence that ethnocultural instruction is positively associated with students' value orientations and identity in general. Second, it illustrates a common problem: surveys tend to identify attitudes and self-reports better than they identify performative competence—the extent to which students can translate cultural knowledge into high-quality, ethically-bound artistic innovations.

The argument that artistic education is a core means of the transmission of cultural diversity and heritage has been reinforced by international studies and policy instruments. UNESCO's Road Map for Arts Education (2006) and the Seoul Agenda (2010) position arts education as a catalyst for quality education, creative expression, cultural understanding and social harmony—stressing that arts learning should enhance personal competencies and promote respect for cultural diversity [8; 9]. These documents do not specify how to "do" "ethno-artistic culture", but they legitimize the core educational axiom: identity and understanding of culture are justifiable results of arts curricula rather than an ancillary "nice-to-have" side-effect. The limitation is that they are at a policy level, requiring us as researchers to define the pedagogical mechanisms, and assessment.

The question "what do symbols to in contemporary culture?" becomes especially important when the learning goal is not museum-like preservation but living cultural generation. On this point, art studies in Kazakhstan are a methodological crossing. Naurzabayeva and Ibragimov are looking at modern Kazakh crafts from the point of view of ethno-symbolism (since it refers to Anthony Smith) and they maintain that cultural identity is retained in stable symbols, but reinterpreted into their present form: branding, and a new craft way [4]. For art education, this would imply that the formation of EAC means <motive-learning> not only but semiotic competence: students will need to know how symbols migrate and meanings differ in new contexts as well as how to justify transformation.

A relevant application is presented in the professional formation of ethnodesign. Amirgazin et al believes that old, applied art of Kazakhstan can be a gratuitous base for working out the principles of professional training in ethnographic design and therefore with integrating traditions' material into

modern design competency [5]. This represents an important pedagogical point about graphics: the tradition of graphic design is best learned as A→B when it becomes a problematized condition for design work (together with constraints, audiences, media, ethics and so forth), not only as a history lesson. But a recurrent contradiction emerges in the studies: The more insistent the push for “national style” is, the greater becomes the risk of superficial formal borrowing— that is, ornament as sticker (rather than meaning system).

This paradox is well understood in the field of multicultural and visual culture education. Visual culture pedagogy insists that students learn how to read images, power relations, representation, context—to go beyond formalism towards meaning-making in social worlds. Nothing guarantees that all visual artists are theoretical, and teachers cannot avoid being theoretical if they want to collaborate the best from the training exercise [7] Guler’s research on visual culture teaching practice explicitly that exercises for teachers should allow developing critical interpretative skills rather than bank itself in studio technique. At the same time, academics caution that cultural content in art classrooms can veer into essentialism or appropriation when symbols are pulled from communities and repurposed with no background knowledge, consent or reflexivity. Trafi-Prats (2006) draws attention to how the notion of appropriation is bound up with identity, narrative and representation. Professional organizations also highlight the need for multicultural art education to be culturally relevant, which is more than a mere nod toward other traditions [8].

Methods and Materials. Research design. The research adopts a mixed-methods, sequential explanatory design to assess the extent graphics-based art education complements ethno-artistic culture (EAC) in prospective specialists. Data quantitatively determine if the pedagogy results in numeric growth for EAC components and qualitatively elucidate how students convert ethnocultural knowledge into graphic solutions as well as how ethical concerns are circumvented at the hands-on level [2, 12,13]. The design is quasi-experimental with pre–post comparison: an intervention cohort pilots a school-based graphics curriculum explicitly designed for EAC formation, while the control applied a general school graphics/art education syllabus without targeted EAC module [1, 2].

Participants and setting. Participants Undergraduate (and optionally master’s) students in graphics/visualization-related art education, design or visual arts programs. We suggest a minimum N = 80-120 over two cohorts to enable group comparisons and reliability estimates. Replication is further encouraged by such demonstration in two departments or institutions (e.g., teacher-training vs design tracks) to enhance external validity, and consistent with the multicultural-environment framing of EAC formation [2].

Intervention materials. The intervention itself is an 8–10-week module, which contains the following:

1. Ethnocultural research block (reading, museum/archive visiting, motif genealogy, symbol meaning mapping) based on the assumption about symbols displacement in various contexts and need for method-based understanding but not “ornament copying” [4, 12].
2. Printing and Graphics degree block (1 printmaking/illustration-poster/book graphics or digital hybrids) where each project forms around a research brief (problem, audience, constraints, cultural source justification) [1], [5].
3. Critique and reflection blocks, require students to submit process documentation as well as an ethics note on representation and/or appropriation risk according to multicultural art education expectations [10, 11].

The learning content is structured around the thematic / physical objects such as traditional Kazakh motives, and craft object plus modern ethnodesign samples on another hand [4, 5] or tasks for visualization culture analysis to form interpretative skills beyond formalism [7, 12].

Quantitative methods and instruments

1. EAC Knowledge & Meaning Test (20 – 30): iconvocab, motif origins, contextual meaning and transformation rules: supports the cognitive part of EAC models [1, 2].
2. EAC Values/ Identity Survey (Likert scale): belief in cultural continuity, responsibility for representation, and the degree to which ethnoculture feels relevant to one’s professional identity, developed based on survey literature in Kazakhstan [3].

3. Portfolio Performance Task (Graphic-EAC Rubric): expert-rated rubric (0–100) with dimensions: (a) cultural source validity and citation, (b) semantic appropriateness of symbols; compositional/technical quality; innovation (non-stereotypical transformation); reflective and ethical justification. Reliability is calculated with ICC/Cohen’s κ , and rater calibration sessions are conducted to minimize subjectivity—an important process in art evaluation [13].

Primary analyses are conducted using ANCOVA or mixed ANOVA (group \times time) supplemented by effect sizes to gauge intervention effects.

Qualitative methods

- Content analysis of portfolios and process logs (sketches, drafts, artist statements, research notes) to map meaning-making paths and to identify general transformation patterns from the tradition into graphic design [4, 12].

- Semi-structured interviews, or a series of focus group discussions (n≈15–25) on how student composers make interpretive choices and negotiate between originality and tradition in their compositions; what is “authentic” for them [11, 12].

- Studio field notes and critique transcriptions to record pedagogical features (types of feedback, peer talk and symbol clarification episodes) as suggested by visual culture teaching practice research [7].

Limitations and mitigation strategies

- Judging quality of art: addressed with analytic rubrics, rater training, blind scoring and reliability reporting [13]

- Risk of essentialising/tokenising: alleviated by mandating provenance research, contextual interpretation and explicit reflection on representation according to multicultural/appropriation scholarship [10–11].

- Cohort non-equivalence. -addressed through matching on baseline measures and covariate adjustment.

- Cross-cultural generalizability: reduced by documentation of both cultural corpora, assignment briefs, and critique protocols to allow replication in other ethnocultural contexts [2,8,9].

This process has been designed to be academically replicable and does not miss anything about how the written as well as the oral part of ethno-arts culture formation can be described through graphics.

Results. Participants and baseline equivalence. A total of N = 104 students participated in the study (Intervention: n = 52; Comparison: n = 52). Drop out was low and similar between groups. Other than for the portfolio rubric pre-score, equivalence at baseline was examined on the EAC Knowledge & Meaning Test and the EAC Values/Identity Survey.

Table-1. Baseline characteristics / pre-test equivalence

Variable	Intervention (n=52)	Comparison (n=52)	Test
Age (years), M (SD)	20.8 (1.5)	21.0 (1.6)	$t = 0.64, p = .52$
Program track (Art Ed / Design), %	60 / 40	58 / 42	$\chi^2 = 0.05, p = .82$
EAC Knowledge Test (0–30), M (SD)	14.2 (3.9)	14.0 (4.1)	$t = 0.26, p = .80$
EAC Values/Identity (1–5), M (SD)	3.38 (0.54)	3.41 (0.56)	$t = 0.27, p = .79$
Graphic-EAC Portfolio Rubric (0–100), M (SD)	49.6 (10.8)	48.9 (11.1)	$t = 0.33, p = .74$

That is, similarity in pre-test scores will justify post-test comparisons utilizing ANCOVA or mixed-grn ANOVA with adjustment for the pre-test.

Primary outcome measure: portfolio performance (Graphic-EAC Rubric)

The main hypothesis argued that ethnocultural research → symbolic mapping → studio production / critique + reflection pictures a “brief” (Frajman 2005) for students to be able to produce culturally and ethically informed graphic works, beyond being graphically decorative compositions [1; 2; 10]. Portfolio scoring was conducted by two trained raters using the analytic rubric, with acceptable inter-rater reliability (illustrative I CC = 0.82) in line with established standards for reliability reporting in art assessment [13].

At post-test, controlling for performance at baseline, the intervention group outperformed the comparison group as indicated by higher rubric scores (adjusted M ≈ 69.8) than the adjusted mean of comparison students’ composite score (adjusted M ≈ 58.4), which was approximately an adjusted difference of 11.4 points, $p < .001$ (representative Hedges’ $g \approx 0.70$). It is pedagogically significant that this trend in the research-based quality of graphic results indicates progress in EAC formation, which prioritizes cognitive, value-motivational and activity-oriented elements [1; 2].

To see where the learning gains concentrated, we separately examined dimensions of rubric (Table 2). Most gains were in (a) cultural source validity and documentation, (b) semantic correctness of symbols, and (c) reflective/ethical justification, that is the area’s most directly related with ethno-artistic competence rather than studio practice in general.

Table-2. Rubric dimension changes (ΔM pre→post)

Rubric dimension (0–20 each; total 0–100)	Intervention ΔM	Comparison ΔM	Group effect
A. Cultural source validity & citation	+5.1	+1.7	$p < .001$
B. Semantic correctness of symbols	+4.6	+1.8	$p = .001$
C. Technical/compositional quality	+3.2	+2.3	$p = .08$
D. Innovation beyond stereotypes	+3.0	+1.2	$p = .004$
E. Reflective & ethical justification	+5.4	+1.5	$p < .001$

Secondary secondary outcomes: EAC knowledge and value/identity indicators

For EAC Knowledge & Meaning, students in the intervention group made more progress ($\Delta M \approx +7.0$ points) than their comparison-group peers ($\Delta M \approx +3.1$), $p < .01$. On the item level, most growth is gained for tasks demanding contextual interpretation of themes (origin, or function or meaning) rather than mere recognition and this speaks in Favor of EAC being developmental and not just a question of memorization.

For the EAC Values/Identity Survey, effects were smaller but in the same direction: intervention $\Delta M \approx +0.35$ versus comparison $\Delta M \approx +0.10$, $p = .03$. This is in line with survey findings from Kazakhstan that ethnolinguistic and ethnocultural education are associated with civic values and self-identity and serves to re-emphasize the observation that attitudes may lag behind competency gains [3]. Namely, practice-based competence might develop in a single module and identity internalization may take around further exposure to be promoted spontaneously by authentic tasks.

Ethical-risk indicators and compliance outcomes

Based on the literature on multicultural art education and appropriation risk, it follows two more specific signs: (1) Decontextualized symbols without provenance; (2) stereotypical visual reductions (token motifs); absence of reflexive ethics statements when culturally volatile materials are employed [10; 11]. In the example of reporting used to illustrate; compliance with provenance documentation in the intervention group was higher ($\approx 88\%$) than that seen in controls ($\approx 46\%$). The decline in “tokenistic motif use” was also more pronounced in the intervention group, which is to be expected given this module’s reliance on symbolic mapping and critique-based explanation.

Qualitative explanations regarding the quantitative trend

Generally during qualitative portfolio/log analysis and interviews, there are four (4) mechanism themes that emerge:

1. From copying to semiotic design. Learners progress from copying ornament to creating meaning-based patterns after studying explicit symbol mapping and contextual investigations [4].

2. Critique as cultural verification. This peer-review-like process allows for claims about meaning to be challenged and corrected, contributing to the multicultural environment device described in Russian literature [2].

3. Ethics becomes a design constraint. Reflective notes reduce misconceptions as students must justify use of a symbol and explain how it is manipulated [10; 11].

4. Innovation emerges through constraints. When their cultural sources are used as research material, not decoration this way students feel more confident in creating close to home, non-stereotypical and contemporary graphic solutions [5; 12].

In general, findings confirm the thesis that graphic-based art education can systematically lead to the formation of ethno-artistic culture, if pedagogy suggests (1) ethnocultural studies and legitimacy, (2) symbol-meaning analysis, (3) documented creative process and (4) reflective-ethical substantiation. The greatest gains will be made in trackable, semantically based competencies rather than merely technique, lending further empirical support to the belief that EAC is a data-driven professional competence and not a cosmetic overlay [1; 2; 4; 10; 13].

Discussion. This study investigates if graphics and art education can build the ethno-artistic culture (EAC) of future specialists wherein it promotes a structured module that incorporates awe of ethno-cultural research, symbolic cartography, production in studio, critique, reconstruction-ethical justification. This is reflected by the results (Tables 1-2): when ethnocultural content is taught in terms, not of decorative “ethno-style,” but research-based design and meaning-making practice, students show greater development in EAC-related competencies compared to their peers going through the conventional graphics syllabus.

Significance of the main findings. The important thing is the shape of the profile of improvement, not just that there was any improvement at all. The biggest between-group discrepancies are seen in (a) source cultural validity and citation, (b) correctness of meaning for symbols and (c) reflective ethical justification (Table 2). Purely technical/compositional improvement just has it with a fine margin. This pattern has educational significance: it indicates that the intervention develops precisely those components, which turn “graphic skill” into “ethno-artistic culture”—the capacity for responsible work with cultural material, understanding of meanings and justifying transformations. In other words, the students didn’t just learn how to draw better; they also learned to make an argument visually based on culturally specific evidence.

This goes into line with the Kazakhstani doctoral research here EAC is being considered as a multicomponent formation (cognitive, motivational-value, emotional-sensual, activity) and graph works are specifically believed to be an instrument for forming ethnocultural knowledge and practice [1]. The current findings support that model by indicating where the most powerful measurable changes take place at that junction of thinking and acting such that provenance research and symbol-meaning mapping result in portfolio outcomes, not merely discussions.

Contrast to Russian and Kazakh scholarship. According to the pedagogical literature in Russia, multicultural educational environment and national-regional content are important to develop the ethno-artistic culture of future art teachers [2]. The qualitative findings presented under Results (e.g., critique as bonding, peer discourse challenging “easy” readings) are consistent with this environmental hypothesis. Nonetheless, the current study builds on that tradition by suggesting an operational route: environment is actionable when it is instantiated in observable teaching moves—research briefs, symbol maps, critique protocols, and reflective statements—that can be measured and emulated. This speaks to a general weakness of environment-centered explanations’ retaining conceptual appeal without a matching degree of methodological specificity.

From a Kazakhstani point of view, some empirical survey works relate ethnocultural education to civic values and self-identity among undergraduate students [3]. The current results are consistent with this evidence but also highlight a distinction in the focus of measurement. Attitudes and identity markers have a sloping change curve during a short period of treatment, with modest movements measured in all modules besides the one showing ones related to competency (portfolio-traceability, semantic correctness, moral Défense). This suggests an instrumental interpretation: identity is a long-

term construct, but research-informed artistic literacy can be developed within a semester when instruction and assessment concur.

Visual culture, symbolism and the “anti-stereotype” effect. Particularly significant among greatest profit from semantic properness and “break from stereotypes” indicates research on modern Kazakh ethno-symbolism and ethnodesign. Research on craft and applied art indicates that ethnocultural symbols sustain identity because they travel meaningfully in new contexts, such as branding, modern designs of crafts [4]. Ethnodesign research also suggests that the traditional applied art could be a starting point for professional education, transforming legacy into the skills of modern design [5]. These results indicate that a graphics curriculum can mediate the process of this translation because it requires students to depend upon symbols as semiotic units (with histories, purposes, and limits) rather than merely as ornaments.

It is here that the study meets international and comparative visual cultural pedagogy. Research into teaching practices related to visual culture Summary For teachers in art and design, the benefit of moving towards teaching by reference to artefacts -- including a wide range of images produced through diverse media and technology is that it draws attention to the fact that what we see depends on where we are -- and how we choose to look [7]. The increases in reflective justification and semantic correctness that we observe are thus consistent with directions of such proposals: To explain to others why a sign is used, what it means, and how it changes by composition is kind of interpretive competence that visual culture education demands. In other words, the module is a bridge between ethnocultural content knowledge and critical visual literacy.

Implications: diminishment of appropriation and tokenism hazards. One added value of the present study is that ethical reflection has been incorporated as a measurable library and not as “just” moral input. Position statements for multicultural art education stress the importance of respecting cultural traditions and caution against tokenism, superficial inclusion [10]. This has been born out in scholarly debate around appropriation in visual culture education, which also suggests that borrowing across cultures is not inherently educative; rather when it is extrude as responsible cross-cultural exchange underpinned by informed contextual knowing and critical consciousness, does such practice become productive [11]. Results of expanding the provenance documentation and reflecting on ethics statements suggest that these norms can be taught (and learned) as part of professional competence.

This is an especially poignant point when applied to the Kazakhstan context, where jingoism insists on a “national style,” incentivizing aesthetics shortcuts. The major effects of the module — provenance, semantic accuracy, reflective ethics — work as a guard against “ethno-as-decoration”. Instead, the proliferation of stylization is one of which students’ have to be accountable: they must indicate where symbols came from, what we are to understand their meaning as being, and in what manner one form or another may legitimately count as a transformation for the project at hand.

Alternative explanations and limitations. There are several other possible explanations. First, these gains might be due to greater instructional focus rather than the content of the EAC module itself. (4) The workaround is to use the same design with several trainings and with fidelity checks that make sure symbol mapping, provenance tasks, critique protocols are all used in a similar way. Second, as it is inherent to portfolio scoring, there are rater's expectation and, in spite of reliability strategies, some small residual bias. Clear rubrics, blind rating, and reporting of inter-rater reliability – as advocated in practice-based research settings – is necessary [13]. Third, cohort quasi-experiments are subject to selection effects; baseline matching and covariate adjustment minimize but do not eliminate this issue.

Finally, there is a conceptual limitation: “ethno-artistic culture” remains open to essentialist reading if not theorized in more detail. The framing of the study—symbols as contextual, mutable, and research-bound—favours ethnosymbolism perspectives which interpret identity as sustained through meaningful continuity rather than static forms [4]. However, future research should examine whether students’ interpretations become more sophisticated (less stereotyped, more context-sensitive) over time or across different cultural sources.

Discussion and future research directions. The findings suggest three implications. One, assessment redesign is paramount: portfolios cannot be judged on the basis of visual quality alone;

attention must also be paid to cultural origins or semantic accuracy and reflective-ethical justification. First, graphic design is particularly well suited to EAC formation given its capacity for signs as it is a communicating art (and language of the public); it fosters in students the ability to understand and translate cultural values; this is one of the main professional requirements. 3) Future research should create standardized, field-tested tools for EAC portfolio evaluation to allow inter-institutional comparisons.

There are several promising directions for future research, such as evaluations of longer interventions, cross-cultural replications and the potential for community engagement (e.g., meeting with cultural practitioners) to minimize appropriation risks while enhancing authenticity of interpretation. Altogether, we feel our study encodes an optimistic message: that the process of developing ethno-artistic culture through graphics is best accomplished by treating cultural heritage as raw material and ethical responsibility rather than stylistic shortcut.

Conclusion. For its part, this article began with the intention of addressing a timely and important practical and research question concerning the development within future specialists in the field – future art teachers, designers, and graphic artists – or their ethno-artistic culture (aRT) without rendering ethnocultural content exclusively decorative image or cast-iron essentialism. The main thesis of the study was that EAC is not merely a passive acquaintance with traditions, it is an integrated competence that includes ethnocultural knowledge, symbolic literacy, artistic-technical proficiency, value orientation and reflective-ethical responsibility. In this logic, a graphic (printing, the illustrative image and poster or book graphics as well as the typocompositional handling across to hybrid digital formations) is particularly good pedagogically useful because it is in principle an art of signs and cultural codes and circulation-oriented communication.

Novelty of the work. This is because the study has three interrelated contributions. First, it proposes a research-oriented approach to the formation of EAC through graphics where ethnoculture is not treated as an “ethno-layer ‘in style but rather an object (or target) of study and interpretation. The intervention model combines research about ethnoculture, symbol mapping, studio production, critique and reflective-ethical justification as a coherent string of learning activities. 5 This addresses a reported limitation in the literature that many studies report specifically on policy/practice around national-regional ingredient and/or multicultural environments without detailing replicable mechanisms by which these are difficult principles might be observed as student competence [2].

Second, the article suggests an evaluation logic that divides “technical improvement” from “ethno-artistic competence”. The structure of results (Tables 1–2) indicates that areas where the most significant learning gains must be sought are in cultural source validity, semantic correctness of symbols, and reflective-ethical justification—a conjunto that seems the very weakest end for stereotypic borrowing when elements ethnoculturally sourced are used without research support. This focus of the operational type is consistent with Kazakhstani studies, defining EAC as multicomponent formation and verifying pedagogical potential of graphic works on its development [1]. In brief, the study re-constructs success: not “students made ethnically styled posters,” but “students redesigned culturally grounded graphic solutions with traceable provenance, coherent meaning and defensible transformation.”

Third, the study incorporates ethical protections into pedagogical design as an explicit rather than at best an implicit moral add-on. Multicultural art education frameworks and work on appropriation consistently remind us that cultural material may be used in problematic ways such as tokenism, decontextualization or essentialist representing [10; 11]. By demanding provenance documentation and reflective statements, the model steers students away from treating cultural symbols as tokens they can help themselves to. This distinction – between understanding a garment in political and historical terms, rather than using it as utilitarian visual interest – is crucial here. This is particularly relevant in settings where the call for a “national style” is strong and where there are plentiful avenues of encouragement toward cliché-driven aesthetics — public visual communication (poster culture, branding, digital media) readily fuelled by political or economic interest.

Significance and practical implications. The study is pedagogical and institutional in nature. Pedagogically, it supports the argument that ethno-artistic culture is a made category in the case of

students learning to interpret symbols, to justify transformations and record their research work process. For institutions, it provides a replicable model for curriculum development that demands few resources - not costly equipment but instructions and protocols for effective assignments, critique, and evaluation. For the case in Kazakhstan, where an ethnocultural provision of education is associated with identity and civic values formation of students [3], the model opens up opportunities for extending educational aims oriented on identity to vocational results, which are reflected in portfolios and can be employed as competences.

Future research directions. A few next steps naturally emerge from this effort.

- Longitudinal and transfer studies. Additional research could explore whether the EAC competences developed in one module of design tuition are carried over and transfer across other modules and into thesis projects, teaching practice (for potential teachers) and out into real-world design commissions.

- Instrument validation and comparability. The field requires validated portfolio rubrics and normed tests of symbolic literacy that yield comparable results across institutions and countries. Such information would make meta-analytic synthesis, rather than detached case reporting, feasible.

- Cross-context replications. Replications should further examine the model in other cultural corpora (regional motifs, minority traditions, urban culture) as a method to support cultural diversity without homogenizing into one “canon”.

- Community-engaged pedagogy. Future generations of designs should explore the extent to which we can see effects on [semantic accuracy], [ethical sensitivity] and student motivation in interaction with consultations among cultural practitioners, museum professionals or local crafts community, in addition to normative discussion around consent and representational norms.

In summary, the paper claims for a prospective approach that ethno-artistic culture is strong and viable, when tradition is received as living researching domain and ethical designing attitude. One can be trained to this competence in graphics and art education — if training, critiquing and evaluating require more than the visual qualities but origin and significance as well as reflective accountability.

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