

**THE ROLE OF PHYSIOGNOMICS IN ENHANCING STUDENTS' SKILLS IN  
PORTRAIT DRAWING***Babadjanov Akhmadjan Khudayberdievich**Associate Professor at the Department of**Applied Arts and Design, Gulistan State University**Email: [ahmadjanbabadjanov@gmail.com](mailto:ahmadjanbabadjanov@gmail.com), tel. +998972777902*

**Abstract:** This article emphasizes that a fine arts teacher must possess advanced technical skills in portrait drawing, particularly in pencil techniques, alongside a substantial understanding of psychological principles. The integration of psychological knowledge enhances the effectiveness of artistic education, supporting both the creative and pedagogical development of future artists.

**Keywords:** fine art, imagination, portrait drawing, psychology, physiognomy, ethnopsychology, iridodiagnostics, dermatoglyphics.

**Introduction**

The acquisition of foundational knowledge in education and upbringing is achieved through the in-depth study of psychological sciences. Experiences, observations, and conclusions derived from higher education institutions indicate that a young specialist teacher must not only focus on the general aspects of psychology in their pedagogical practice – such as understanding human psychology, correctly addressing individual characteristics, and selecting appropriate teaching methods for students – but also actively apply this knowledge in practice. This is particularly important during various training sessions, especially those involving visual activities and the education of youth.

Analysis of scientific literature and observations during practical training reveal that educating young students and preparing them for future pedagogical roles within faculties of graphic arts necessitates addressing numerous theoretical and practical challenges. Based on psychological observations conducted in the domain of portrait painting within the training of prospective fine arts educators, the following conclusions have been drawn:

The psychological essence of a portrait is insufficiently revealed prior to the execution of the pencil sketch.

Physiological factors are inadequately analyzed when students perform specific practical tasks.

The compositional structure of the subject matter, as well as the methodological stages for its practical implementation, are not consistently elucidated.

Effectively resolving these issues constitutes a crucial factor in adequately preparing future artist-educators for their pedagogical responsibilities.

### Literature analysis and methodology

Prominent psychologists and educators regard creative imagination as a fundamental psychological process in visual activities, highlighting its indispensable role in the development of young individuals' creative abilities. This perspective has been extensively explored and supported in theoretical and experimental studies conducted by Russian scholars such as E.I.Ignatyev, V.S.Kuzin, L.T.Medvedev, N.N.Rostovtsev, E.V.Shorokhov, as well as Uzbek researchers including R.Hasanov, S.Bulatov, B.Boymetov, A.Sulaymanov, O.Khudoyorova, U.Nurtayev, S.Abdirasilov, M.Nabiyev, G.Abdurahmanov, R.Rajabov, among others.

For every aspiring visual arts educator, it is essential to become acquainted with the art of surface reading, which can be effectively achieved through a comprehensive study of physiognomy. Physiognomy, the ancient art of interpreting facial features, remains a critical tool for discerning the psychological state depicted in a person's portrait.

Notably, folklore places considerable emphasis on the facial characteristics of its characters. For instance, giants are often described with chocolate-colored eyes and large ears, while old women are portrayed as ravenous with drooping lips. Conversely, sages are commonly depicted with broad foreheads and radiant faces. Such vivid descriptions underscore the enduring cultural significance of facial features in conveying personality traits and psychological states.

In folklore, the facial features of positive characters are typically portrayed as harmonious and proportionate characterized by a broad forehead, flat eyebrows, beautiful eyes, and a clear complexion. In essence, all facial organs are depicted in balance and symmetry. Conversely, negative characters often have narrow foreheads, sweeping eyebrows, and cheeks that are irregularly shaped. Features such as a hooked nose, hawk-like nose, lop ears, crooked mouths, and chubby faces are portrayed as defects or distortions in their facial structure [1:224].

What accounts for this dichotomy? Historically, people have observed that an individual's character, morals, and inner spiritual world are reflected in their facial appearance much like a mirror. For instance, consider the eyes. It is commonly said that little good can be expected from someone described as narrow-eyed or one-eyed. A person with a harsh gaze is often described as having "teshvorgud" eyes, implying severity or cruelty. In contrast, those considered good-hearted are said to have shining, even magical eyes [2:24].

This belief extends to aesthetic ideals as well. Beautiful girls are often depicted with delicate eyebrows and small eyes, while the eyes of men are metaphorically compared to "charos" (a type of precious stone or gem). Expressions such as "koykoz," "botakoz," "ohu koz," "shahlo koz," and "xumor koz" reflect the poetic cultural descriptions of various eye shapes and their associated meanings. Similarly, individuals with thin lips are perceived as quick-tempered, bitter, or spiteful.

Descriptions of physical appearance often extend to skin tone and complexion. Girls with clear, bright skin are praised with expressions like "washed in milk," "white-white, red-red," "faces like pomegranates," or "faces are red." In fairy tales, older women with harsh or strained

expressions are described as “their faces are strained, they fight with God,” underscoring the connection between outer appearance and inner disposition.

Additionally, expressions such as “bodomkavok” and “badkovok” serve as linguistic tools that reveal the inner world of characters. Traditionally, beautiful individuals are described as having delicate, pencil-thin eyebrows, whereas unattractive individuals are characterized by thick, bushy, or broom-like eyebrows. The shape of the nose similarly conveys significant meaning. The ancients wisely proclaimed that the nose is the ornament of the face. Thus, no facial feature should appear distorted; rather, an elegant, sharply defined nose imparts a special charm and distinction to one’s visage.

However, it is noteworthy that a beautiful nose is rarely found on an unattractive face. While one might occasionally observe beautiful eyes or lips on an otherwise unattractive face, an elegant and pointed nose is seldom present. This highlights that numerous subtle indicators on the face serve as mirrors reflecting an individual’s inner essence. It is no coincidence that our culture often compares the human face to a mirror of the soul.

Expressions such as “the face of so-and-so shines” or, conversely, “the face of the piston is cold” exemplify this connection between outer appearance and inner character. Even without formal knowledge of ethnopsychology, people have intuitively grasped the organic link between a person’s inner world and their external appearance through lived experience. These expressions effectively communicate who is naturally inclined toward goodness and from whom goodness is unlikely to be expected.

## Discussion

The practice of inferring a person’s character, morals, and spiritual state through the analysis of facial features is known as the art of face reading, a tradition found across cultures worldwide. In scientific terminology, this field is referred to as “physiognomy.” The term “physiognomy” derives from the Greek words *physio*, meaning nature (specifically human nature or the face), and *gnomon*, meaning knowledge. Thus, physiognomy is understood as the systematic study of the face.

This art merits serious scholarly attention, as it shares conceptual parallels with fields such as dermatoglyphics and iridodiagnostics, which demonstrate the interconnectedness of the human body’s organs and systems. Historically, practices like palmistry fortune-telling based on palm lines were widely regarded as mere superstition. However, dermatoglyphics has since emerged as a promising scientific discipline, where specialists analyze palm patterns to diagnose genetic disorders, mental disabilities, and other diseases.

Physiognomy is similarly significant because certain facial characteristics may indicate hidden pathological conditions. Beyond its medical implications, physiognomy holds ethnographic value, offering insights into the psychological dimensions of specific cultures and nations. It enables a deeper understanding of societal perceptions regarding human appearance and character, thereby enriching cross-cultural psychological and anthropological research.

It is important to recognize that assuming cultural practices or concepts from one nation can be directly and universally applied to another often results in a superficial understanding of ethnography, leading to misconceptions and confusion about seemingly straightforward matters

[3:89]. To illustrate that such assumptions are not only incorrect but can be quite absurd, consider the following examples.

Among the Uzbek people, averting one's gaze from an interlocutor is regarded as disrespectful, with expressions like "Come on, talk to me!" emphasizing the importance of direct eye contact. In stark contrast, within the Luo tribe of Kenya, it is considered disrespectful and even sinful for a groom to look directly into his mother-in-law's eyes; he is expected to turn his back while speaking to her. Imagining Uzbek grooms turning their backs when addressing their mothers-in-law highlights the cultural specificity of these customs.

Similarly, cultural interpretations of animal symbolism vary widely. In China and Korea, calling a girl "snake-like" is the highest compliment, as snakes symbolize wisdom, beauty, and agility. In India, cows are revered as sacred and symbols of beauty, and women compared to cows are considered fortunate. One can only imagine how these metaphors would be received by girls and women from other cultures!

Therefore, it is essential not to accept ethnographic data uncritically, but rather to respect the unique traditions of each people. Turning our attention to physiognomy itself, it is intriguing to consider how every facial feature might convey specific meanings.

Historical records from China are replete with detailed descriptions of emperors, rulers, and sages [4:27], linking their behaviors and personalities closely with distinctive facial traits. It was widely believed that each mark or characteristic on the face signified a particular quality or destiny.

Over time, Chinese physiognomists significantly advanced the art of face reading, and the treatises they authored spread widely across various Eastern countries [11:192]. These works eventually reached Japan, where, despite the current lack of widespread public interest in physiognomy, its influence persists in fine arts, mask-making, theater, and different communication fields. This raises the question: what constitutes the essence of Japanese physiognomy?

To facilitate the interpretation of the human face, the Japanese traditionally divide it into three horizontal zones: upper, middle, and lower. Each zone corresponds to distinct phases of a person's life and behavioral traits. The upper zone primarily comprises the forehead and is believed to reflect the overall life path of the individual. It conveys information about the life stages between the ages of 15 to 30, as well as the period of extreme old age. A forehead that aligns with the ideal shape depicted in traditional brochures characterized by a well-defined form and clear skin tone is considered indicative of robust physical and mental health.

The middle zone, extending from the eyebrows to the tip of the nose, corresponds to the life period between 35 and 50 years. The overall harmony within this zone suggests psychological balance and emotional stability. The lower zone, encompassing the upper lip, jaw, mouth, and chin, relates to the age range of 51 to 57 years and beyond. A well-formed lower zone signifies calmness, self-restraint, and a good character.

Thus, Japanese face reading is based on the interpretation of clearly defined signs, each linked to specific age intervals and particular behavioral characteristics. Various schools of physiognomy exist in Japan, each employing its own system of signs, with the total number ranging from 99 to 130. A comprehensive assessment of these signs enables practitioners to draw conclusions regarding an individual's character and personality traits.

Additionally, Japanese physiognomy places special emphasis on the condition of five vital facial features: the eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth, and ears [5:27]. The mutual harmony among these features including aspects such as proportion, color, clarity, and texture is regarded as a

positive indicator. According to Japanese physiognomists, if all five characteristics are ideally formed, the individual's life will be as fortunate and abundant as a flood. Conversely, imperfections or defects on the face are interpreted as indicators of flaws or disruptions in character.

In physiognomic analysis, a wide and long eyebrow is regarded as the most favorable feature. The balanced development of its shape, color, and thickness is interpreted as an indication that a person's emotions, intellect, and character exist in harmonious alignment [6:101]. Conversely, eyebrows that are rough and thin tend to signify a lack of this balance. According to physiognomists, eyebrows are reflective of an individual's interpersonal relationships, particularly with close associates. Well-shaped eyebrows are seen as markers of positive and healthy social connections.

The outer ends of thick eyebrows are often raised, a characteristic traditionally associated with nobility and courage [7:346]. Individuals exhibiting this trait are believed to enjoy good fortune. In contrast, eyebrows whose outer tips slope downward are thought to indicate shyness. When such eyebrows also lack visible structure and color, this is interpreted as a sign that enthusiasm or vitality has diminished within the individual's heart.

Further distinctions in eyebrow shape and skin clarity also carry meaning. Straight and long eyebrows, coupled with clear surrounding skin, are attributed to intelligence in men. However, women with these same eyebrow characteristics are often perceived as critical and unpredictable in behavior. On the other hand, short eyebrows generally suggest the opposite qualities. Notably, a short yet thick eyebrow is characteristic of a person prone to sudden and intense emotional reactions. Such individuals are often described as having a "devilish" character, akin to a broomstick a symbol of stubbornness, impatience, and intolerance.

A wide, thick, and connected (or "welded") eyebrow is viewed as an indication of a determined and assertive personality. Women exhibiting this trait are often described as having a strong character and are seen as unlikely to conform to traditional domestic roles as depicted in literature. Additionally, a high eyebrow is considered a sign of ambition and goal-oriented behavior, while a low eyebrow is interpreted as indicative of the opposite disposition.

The eye has long been regarded as the "mirror of the soul," reflecting a person's inner experiences and emotional state. According to physiognomic principles, individuals with attractive and captivating eyes tend to possess qualities such as health, strong willpower, intelligence, and enthusiasm, symbolizing a "fire in the heart" [9:77]. Such eyes are characterized by several distinctive features: they emit light and warmth, are well protected by the eyelids, and express cheerfulness and vivacity. In contrast, the absence of these qualities may indicate deficiencies in a person's character or intellect.

Large eyes often signify heightened sensitivity, bravery, courage, and in many cases, leadership aspirations. Conversely, small eyes are typically associated with stubbornness and introspection; individuals with small eyes may frequently say "look inside me" and tend to build their own metaphorical "house," demonstrating remarkable emotional stability. The size of the iris (colorful curtain) further reflects personality traits: a large iris is linked to gentleness and calmness, while a small iris suggests internal inconsistency, which may negatively impact interpersonal communication.

The color of the iris also carries specific meanings. Black and brown irises are associated with enthusiasm and vigor; blue irises signify impressionability; and light brown hues suggest shyness. Eye placement is another important factor: eyes positioned on a single horizontal line

are considered a positive indicator. In men, lower-set eyes indicate boldness and determination, whereas in women, they are interpreted as signs of lightness or playfulness [10:103].

Additional features of the eyelids and surrounding area provide further insight. Drooping of the upper eyelid often signals maturity; however, excessive drooping can indicate a loss of enthusiasm and vitality, particularly in men. An unhealthy coloration of the sclera (the “white” of the eye) may point to physiological imbalance. Similarly, a sagging lower eyelid, commonly known as “bags under the eyes,” suggests an active, lively life, while severe drooping is considered a sign of fatigue or desire. Swelling of both upper and lower eyelids is interpreted as an indication of exhaustion or weariness with life. Finally, the shape and appearance of the outer corners of the eyes are believed to reveal intelligence and cognitive abilities.

The Japanese also classify eyes into various types, each associated with distinct personality traits. For instance, large, shining, and piercing eyes, known as “dragon eyes,” are typically found in dominant individuals. Another type includes long eyes with both ends turned upwards, resembling a bird’s eyes. Large eyes with layered eyelids are referred to as “lion’s eyes” and are characteristic of leaders who can inspire and guide others. Eyes with two to three-layered eyelids that are narrow and elongated are called “elephant eyes,” commonly seen in mildly overweight individuals.

Additionally, round, shiny yellow eyes are known as “tiger eyes,” while narrow, small eyes of a dark yellow hue are called “sheep eyes.” Eyes with cool-colored eyelids that have a triangular shape are termed “horse eyes,” and very large eyes with a distinctively colored iris, known as the “colorful veil,” are identified as “wolf eyes.” In total, Japanese physiognomy recognizes about forty different eye types. Many of these are likened to animal eyes, with the behavioral traits attributed to these animals believed to reflect the character of the person possessing those eye types.

Eyes are considered central in determining a person’s character and destiny. Traditional treatises on physiognomy emphasize beginning the face-reading process by analyzing the eyes [12]. However, it is important to note that the most reliable insights can be obtained only from individuals over 40 years old, as by this age, all the relevant signs and features tend to be fully developed and stable.

A round face is traditionally regarded as a symbol of openness, gentleness, and a peaceful disposition [8:166]. Individuals possessing such facial features are often drawn to sweet foods and enjoy the comforts of home and close-knit social circles. They generally do not seek fame or public recognition. However, despite their modest nature, these individuals are not without a strong sense of honor. According to physiognomic principles, a person with a smooth facial complexion, prominent cheekbones, and sparkling eyes is considered goal-oriented. Such characteristics are often associated with effective leadership qualities, making these individuals well-suited to roles as leaders and generals.

## Results

Physiognomics operates on a system of age-related symptoms, wherein basic vital facial features such as the eyebrows, eyes, nose, mouth, and ears are assessed in accordance with the individual’s age [13]. Therefore, determining a person’s approximate age is a crucial preliminary step before conducting a comprehensive facial reading. Moreover, it is important to consider that certain facial characteristics may have been altered by surgical interventions or cosmetic scars. In such cases, evaluative methods that focus on changes in the person’s

behavior become essential [14]. Observing a person's smile, gestures, and posture can provide valuable supplementary insights. In Japanese culture, it is often said that the face can serve as a mask; thus, laughter reveals character traits concealed behind this façade [15]. Gestures convey subtle emotional states and furnish additional clues about personality, while the overall condition of the body frequently exposes the deepest layers of the human psyche. Nevertheless, Japanese physiognomists emphasize that mastering the art of interpreting these signs and symptoms requires considerable diligence and patience, as face reading, like all other traditional arts, is a discipline learned over an extended period of time.

### Summary

It is well established that the science of pencil drawing forms the foundational basis for mastering all types of fine arts [16]. Research conducted in this area indicates that students of the Faculty of Graphic Arts, particularly those engaged in learning to draw human portraits, must consistently adhere to several fundamental requirements in each pencil drawing session. These include regular sketching and pencil practice, careful drawing and analysis of plaster casts of the human head, and an in-depth study of human plastic anatomy. Additionally, theoretical knowledge of the art of face reading should be integrated into the learning process. Attention must also be given to the pedagogical methods employed in teaching pencil drawing, alongside the practice of copying works by artists renowned for their achievements across various fine art genres. The inclusion of examples drawn from national art traditions further enriches the learning experience.

Alongside these technical and theoretical requirements, it is essential for students and independent learners alike to recognize the common challenges encountered in pencil drawing. Success in this discipline demands not only manual skill but also active intellectual engagement and mental focus. It is our conviction that this scientific article will serve as a valuable resource for students of visual arts, as well as for learners in vocational and art colleges, facilitating their effective and informed practice in pencil drawing.

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