

Integrating AI into Art Education: Reimagining Classical Styles with Microsoft Copilot

Muwaffaq Abdulmajid

The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training, Kuwait

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Abstract

This study investigated the potential of Microsoft Copilot, an artificial intelligence (AI) image generator, as a creative tool for 30 undergraduate art education students in Kuwait. The research explored how Copilot could synthesize classical artistic styles with contemporary themes using prompts inspired by six historical artists. Students generated AI-based artwork that merged iconic stylistic features with modern visual motifs. Evaluations by experienced art educators using a structured five-criteria rubric indicated that Copilot effectively reproduced historical styles while fostering creative experimentation and adaptive learning. Through iterative prompt refinement, students enhanced stylistic fidelity, developed critical thinking, and deepened their engagement with traditional art practices. While the findings highlight Copilot's potential as an educational tool, the study also raises important concerns regarding originality, authorship, and ethical use of AI-generated content. These results contribute to the ongoing discourse on integrating AI into creative education and its implications for innovative and responsible pedagogy.

Introduction

Artificial intelligence (AI) is increasingly reshaping creative domains, including visual arts education, by influencing the conceptualization and practice of imagination, artistic production, and pedagogy (McCormack et al., 2023; Zhao & Zhang, 2024). Among the most significant developments in this field is image synthesis, in which AI models generate visual content from textual descriptions. Tools such as MidJourney, Stable Diffusion, and DALL·E 3 have demonstrated their ability to translate descriptive prompts into refined visual outputs, expanding the scope of creative engagement in both professional and educational contexts (Çeken & Akgöz, 2024; Ramesh et al., 2022).

Given the emerging role of AI in art and design education, this study focuses on Microsoft Copilot, an AI-powered assistant embedded in Microsoft 365 applications. Copilot integrates the image generation capabilities of DALL·E 3 with ChatGPT's language processing functions to enable real-time prompt-driven visual outputs (Zhao & Zhang, 2024). To visualize the creative workflow adopted by the students, Figure 1 illustrates the AI-assisted generation process used in this study. Rather than focusing on the technical workings of AI, the diagram is designed to help art educators understand how Microsoft Copilot facilitates student engagement with prompt development, visual style analysis, and reflective refinement—key steps in supporting creativity and visual literacy in the classroom (Brisco et al., 2023).

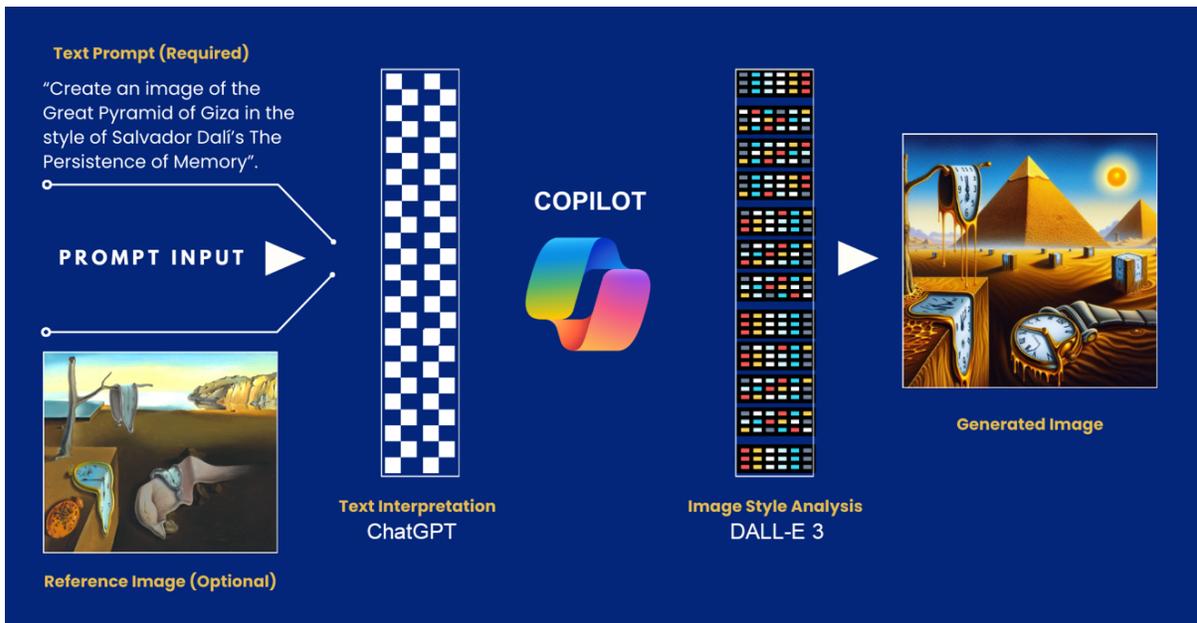


Figure 1. AI-assisted image generation process using Microsoft Copilot to support students' creativity. Through a combination of prompt crafting, text interpretation (via ChatGPT), and visual style generation (via DALL·E 3), students reimagined classical art in new cultural and thematic contexts. This process illustrates how Copilot facilitates iterative visual experimentation in art education. Source: by the author.

Despite the expanding role of AI in the creative industries, its integration into art education remains under-examined. While widely used in digital media and commercial design, AI tools have yet to be fully explored for their educational value—particularly their ability to foster visual literacy, creative autonomy, and reflective practice among students. This gap underscores the need for a systematic inquiry into how AI can be used meaningfully in classroom settings.

Recent studies have addressed the promises and challenges of AI in educational contexts. Concerns include a lack of digital readiness among educators, copyright and authorship issues, and the potential for student overreliance on AI-generated content (Cherevatiuk, 2024; Hu, 2024). Conversely, research highlights AI's potential to enhance accessibility, promote visual experimentation, and offer adaptive learning for diverse learners (Pavlik & Pavlik, 2024; Nikodimov, 2024).

Ethical considerations are central to this discourse, particularly regarding authorship, originality, and cultural sensitivity in AI-generated art (Bendel, 2023; Foka & Griffin, 2024).

Prompt engineering and iterative refinement are critical strategies for ensuring stylistic fidelity and creative intention (Cotroneo & Hutson, 2023). As image-generation models have evolved from DALL·E 2 to DALL·E 3, significant improvements in coherence and responsiveness to nuanced prompts have expanded the pedagogical uses of AI (Lin et al., 2023; Rosa & Cetinic, 2024).

Furthermore, scholars have proposed frameworks that support co-creation, cultural diversity, and inclusive practices in AI-enhanced learning (Evangelidis et al., 2024). In rapidly digitizing regions such as Kuwait, where national reform agendas emphasize innovation, tools such as Copilot present timely opportunities for transforming art education (Al-Huwail et al., 2025; Alhasan, 2024). This study contributes to this discourse by exploring how Copilot can support creativity, ethical awareness, and reflective thinking in the context of Kuwaiti art education.

Integration of Microsoft Copilot in Classroom Learning

This study investigates how Microsoft Copilot can serve as a creative bridge between classical artistic styles and contemporary visual expression. Through an iterative process that included prompt refinement, peer critique, and instructor feedback, students were encouraged to develop critical digital literacy skills while engaging in reflective artistic practice. Beyond creative production, this study also explores how Copilot's image-generation capabilities intersect with cultural considerations in Kuwait's educational context and raises awareness of the ethical implications surrounding AI-generated content (McLoughlin, 2024; Zhanguzhinova, 2024).

To evaluate Copilot's ability to synthesize classical styles with modern themes, six iconic artists were selected as stylistic anchors: Salvador Dalí, Joan Miró, Gustav Klimt, Vincent van Gogh, Paul Cézanne, and Rembrandt. Each artist represents a distinct artistic movement, aesthetic philosophy, and visual language, offering a broad spectrum of challenges for the Copilot's generative modelling, from Dalí's surreal dreamscapes to Rembrandt's chiaroscuro realism. This method aligns with recent research demonstrating how refined prompt engineering can help AI tools emulate complex artistic styles (Du et al., 2024; Ezhilmurugan & E, 2024).

These artists were chosen not only for their stylistic diversity but also for their pedagogical relevance. All six are widely studied in art education curricula, offering students a familiar foundation for exploring creative reinterpretation. Moreover, this selection reflects the Kuwaiti educational framework, where Western art traditions are frequently examined alongside Middle Eastern visual culture, fostering a cross-cultural learning environment (Olver-Ellis, 2020).

Cultural Integration in Kuwaiti Art Education

Kuwait's investment in digital infrastructure and educational reform provides a timely context for exploring AI's integration into art education. Recent research by Al-Huwail et al. (2025) indicates that students and faculty in Kuwaiti universities are optimistic about AI's potential to enhance learning, especially in project-based and creative disciplines. However, concerns persist regarding ethics, data privacy, tool complexity, and implementation costs, highlighting the need for responsible integration.

Kuwait's unique intersection of technological advancement and cultural heritage preservation presents both opportunities and challenges. While national strategies support AI innovation, the country's strong artistic traditions demand careful consideration of how modern digital tools interact with traditional forms of expression. The educational system's emphasis on blending Western and Middle Eastern artistic traditions further positions Kuwait as a compelling site for research on culturally informed AI-assisted creativity (Olver-Ellis, 2020).

In this study, students engaged with Copilot to reinterpret local architectural icons such as the Kuwait Towers and Dubai's skyline through the visual languages of classical Western artists. For instance, Van Gogh's swirling brushwork and Klimt's decorative motifs were applied to culturally significant structures, encouraging students to merge art historical knowledge with personal and regional identity. This creative dialogue between the past and present, local and global, underscores AI's potential to facilitate culturally grounded artistic exploration (Sukkar et al., 2023).

Purpose of the Study

This study investigates the potential of Microsoft Copilot as a creative partner in art education by addressing the following research questions:

- In what ways does Copilot enable students to merge classical artistic styles with contemporary themes in their projects?
- What impact does Copilot have on students' creativity, learning outcomes, and reflective practices in the context of art education?
- How do culturally significant symbols and ethical considerations shape the responsible application of AI in artistic practices?

By exploring these questions, this study contributes to the growing discourse on the evolving role of AI in creative education and its capacity to enrich artistic learning through adaptive, reflective, and ethically grounded engagement.

Theoretical Framework

The integration of artificial intelligence (AI) into artistic and creative domains has sparked critical discussions about creativity, authorship, and pedagogical innovation (Ali et al., 2023). While Microsoft Copilot offers promising opportunities to enhance creative learning, it also presents challenges related to artistic agency, authenticity, and ethical responsibilities. To explore these dynamics, this study adopts a theoretical framework synthesizing three key perspectives: Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1970), Reflective Practice Theory (Schön, 2017), and Augmented Creativity Theory (Boden, 2004).

Together, these theories provide a multidimensional lens for examining how Copilot can support creative exploration, foster iterative and reflective learning, and encourage responsible engagement with AI. In addition, the framework integrates cultural and ethical considerations relevant to the Kuwaiti educational context, where balancing tradition with digital innovation is a key concern. This theoretical approach offers a robust foundation for evaluating Copilot's educational value and its role in shaping students' creative practices in a rapidly evolving technological landscape.

1. Constructivist Learning Theory: Active Engagement in Digital Art Creation

Constructivist Learning Theory posits that learners construct knowledge through active engagement, reflection, and hands-on experimentation (Piaget, 1970). Rather than passively receiving information, students make sense of concepts by exploring, testing, and refining their understanding of them. This theory aligns closely with the way students interact with Microsoft Copilot's iterative creative process.

In this study, the students engaged with Copilot by continually adjusting prompts, analyzing visual outputs, and refining artistic details. Each modification demands critical reflection on composition, stylistic coherence, and overall aesthetics. These cycles of trial and revision mirror Piaget's (1970) assertion that meaningful understanding emerges through real-world exploration and experiential learning.

The Copilot interface supports this constructivist approach by enabling students to generate multiple AI interpretations, evaluate them against their creative intent, and refine their input accordingly. For instance, one student working on a "van Gogh-inspired" composition revised the prompt five times to fine-tune the brushstroke texture, color vibrancy, and spatial balance. This reflective engagement strengthens visual literacy, deepens conceptual understanding, and fosters creative autonomy (Knappett & Malafouris, 2008; Malafouris, 2013).

Moreover, Copilot's generative flexibility encourages students to assess a range of visual possibilities, promoting critical decision-making and reinforcing Piaget's emphasis on constructing mental models through the active reorganization of visual information. In this way, Copilot functions not only as a technical tool but also as a catalyst for experiential, inquiry-based artistic learning.

2. Reflective Practice Theory: Encouraging Critical Evaluation in Art Education

Reflective Practice Theory, as articulated by Schön (2017), emphasizes that skill development is a cyclical process involving action, reflection, and refinement. Central to this theory is the concept of reflection-in-action—the ability to adapt one's approach during the creative process in response to emerging outcomes and challenges.

Microsoft Copilot supports this reflective process through its dynamic and responsive design. As students generated visual outputs using Copilot, they frequently encountered unexpected results that prompted critical evaluation and iterative prompt modification. Such experiences align with Schön's (2017) assertion that engagement with unpredictability fosters creative growth, encouraging learners to reassess their decisions and refine their strategies in real time.

For example, a student working on a "Klimt-inspired" piece initially produced visuals dominated by rigid geometric patterns that deviated from Klimt's signature organic motifs. Through reflective analysis and successive prompt adjustments, the student gradually achieved a visual output that was more closely aligned with Klimt's style. This iterative refinement exemplifies Schön's (2017) principle that meaningful learning occurs through continuous cycles of critical reflection and adjustment (Sims, 2024).

Furthermore, Schön's concept of a reflective conversation with materials is particularly relevant in the context of AI-assisted creativity. With Copilot acting as a responsive "collaborator," each prompt refinement became part of a feedback-driven dialogue between the students and the AI. This dynamic exchange reinforces Schön's belief that reflective engagement—not just end results—is essential for artistic learning.

3. Augmented Creativity Theory: AI as a Creative Partner

Margaret Boden's Augmented Creativity Theory (2004) conceptualizes artificial intelligence (AI) as a tool that extends and enhances human creativity rather than replacing it. Boden (1984, 2004) emphasized that computational tools such as Microsoft Copilot can enrich the creative process by offering alternative ideas, accelerating iterative experimentation, and enabling novel, visual interpretations.

In this study, Copilot functioned as a co-creative partner, allowing students to generate a wide range of visual outputs that expanded their artistic explorations. Rather than passively relying on the tool's outputs, students retained their creative agency by critically evaluating the results and selectively incorporating Copilot's contributions into their final work.

For instance, students creating "Dalí-inspired" digital artworks used Copilot to introduce surrealist motifs but subsequently manipulated the results by adjusting object placement, intensifying colors, or refining compositional elements to better align with their intended aesthetics. This process reflects Boden's (2004) view of AI as an adaptive assistant that supports human creativity by providing raw material for inspiration and refinement (McLoughlin, 2024).

Boden's theory distinguishes between transformational creativity, where AI introduces radical conceptual shifts, and combinatorial creativity, where AI recombines existing ideas in novel ways. In this study, Copilot primarily facilitated combinatorial creativity by merging student-driven prompts with generative outputs to enable unconventional stylistic experiments while maintaining human oversight and interpretive control.

4. Cultural Context in Kuwaiti Art Education

Kuwait's educational landscape is undergoing a significant transformation, with a growing emphasis on the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance student learning outcomes (Alhasan, 2024). Within this context, art education has begun to adopt digital tools, such as Microsoft Copilot, to support creative experimentation and broaden students' engagement with diverse visual traditions.

The inclusion of AI in classroom practice enables students to explore a fusion of Western artistic styles with culturally resonant architectural and aesthetic motifs. For example, students reinterpreted landmarks such as the Kuwait Towers and Dubai's contemporary skyline, projects informed by Kuwait's architectural heritage and the region's broader embrace of digital innovation (Olver-Ellis, 2020). This blending of AI-generated Western aesthetics with Middle Eastern visual elements allowed students to deepen their creative inquiry while affirming their cultural identity and heritage (Foka & Griffin, 2024; Sukkar et al., 2023).

The potential of AI tools to support cultural narratives and inclusive education has gained traction in recent years. Research underscores that platforms like Copilot empower students to synthesize cross-cultural references in their creative practices, thus promoting adaptive learning and global awareness (Alhasan, 2024; Harun et al., 2024). This convergence aligns with broader educational reform efforts in Kuwait, which seek to cultivate inclusive and globally relevant learning environments in art education.

5. Ethical and Legal Considerations

Microsoft Copilot facilitated students' creative exploration of artistic styles while raising questions about authorship, originality, and ownership of generated content. The U.S. Copyright Office (2023) maintains that copyright protection applies solely to works created by human authors, introducing ambiguity regarding AI-generated content's legal status. Similarly, Ramos-Vallecillo and Murillo-Ligorred (2024) emphasized the importance of cultivating critical thinking to address AI's influence on creative processes.

To promote ethical responsibility, students were guided to evaluate Copilot's outputs, reflect on creative decisions, and include attribution statements acknowledging the tool's contribution (Bendel, 2023; Du et al., 2024). This approach aligns with Deckers et al.'s (2023) call for transparency in AI-assisted creative production.

Embedding ethical considerations into reflective processes helped ensure that students assessed the authenticity of their outputs. This emphasis on ethical engagement encouraged students to innovate with AI while maintaining respect for artistic integrity and intellectual property rights.

The theoretical framework integrates Constructivist Learning Theory, Reflective Practice Theory, and Augmented Creativity Theory to show how Copilot functions as an adaptive learning tool that enhances student creativity while fostering critical thinking. This framework incorporates Kuwait's cultural context and addresses ethical concerns, positioning Copilot as a responsible tool for supporting artistic creativity in educational settings in Kuwait. These concepts highlight Copilot's role in facilitating creative exploration, promoting reflection and encouraging ethical engagement with AI-generated content (see Figure 2).

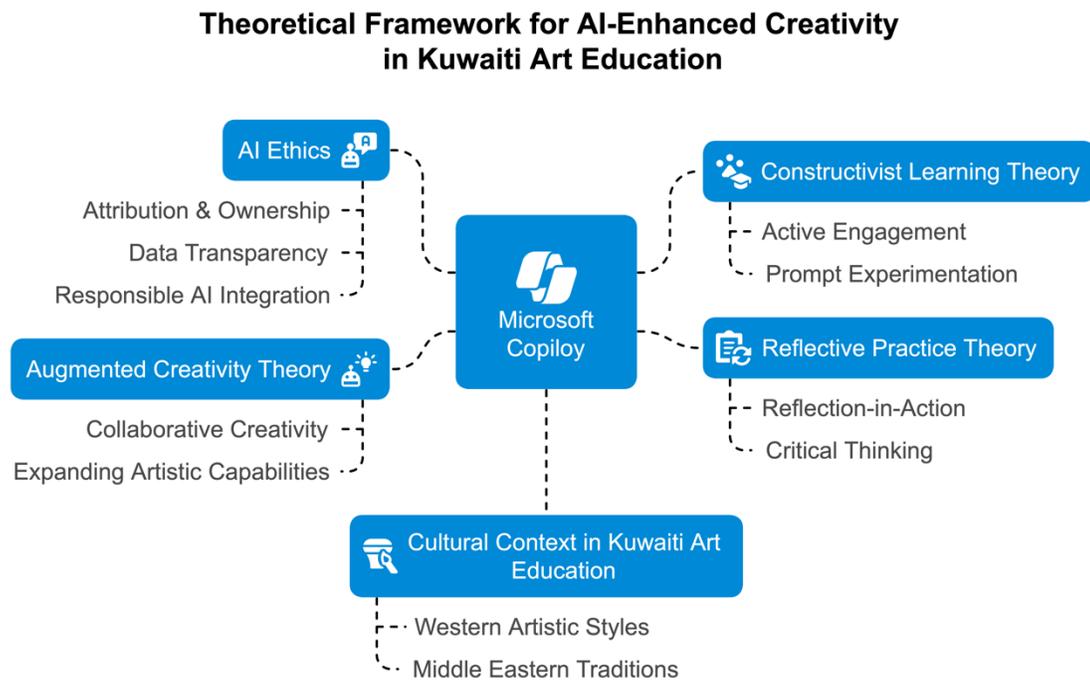


Figure 2. Theoretical framework illustrating Microsoft Copilot’s role in Kuwaiti art education, integrating key learning theories, cultural context, and ethical considerations. Source: by the author.

Methodology

This study investigates the potential of Microsoft Copilot in art education to synthesize classical artistic styles in contemporary creative contexts. A qualitative case study approach was adopted to explore how art education students in Kuwait engaged with Copilot to develop original artworks while addressing technical, artistic, and ethical considerations.

Participants and Context

The research was conducted with 30 undergraduate students (aged 19–25) enrolled in the Art Appreciation and Criticism course at the College of Basic Education, Public Authority for Applied Education and Training (PAAET), Kuwait. The participants exhibited varied levels of familiarity with AI tools, ranging from no prior exposure to moderate personal use. This diversity offers insights into the accessibility and usability of Copilot for both novice and experienced users.

To ensure a robust evaluation, the students' visual outputs were assessed by five experienced art education instructors, each with a minimum of five years of teaching experience (Brisco et al., 2023). The instructors received rubric calibration training to enhance interrater consistency and mitigate scoring subjectivity, which is an essential measure in research evaluating AI-generated artistic content (Harun et al., 2024).

The Kuwaiti cultural context shaped both the prompt design and visual interpretation. Students blended iconic landmarks such as the Kuwait Towers and Dubai's skyline with classical Western art styles, reflecting Kuwait's ongoing educational reforms that emphasize digital integration to foster innovation in higher education (Alhasan, 2024; Sims, 2024).

Table 1 presents the demographic details of the participating students and evaluators, underscoring the range of AI experience within the cohort. This variation enabled a comprehensive assessment of Copilot's support for creativity across different levels of user familiarity.

Table 1*Demographic Table Structure*

Category	Count (n = 30 students)	%	Evaluators (n = 5 teachers)	%
Gender				
Male	12	40%	2	40%
Female	18	60%	3	60%
Age Group				
19-21 years	14	47%	—	—
22-25 years	16	53%	—	—
AI Familiarity				
No AI Experience	10	33%	—	—
Limited AI Experience	12	40%	—	—
Moderate AI Experience	8	27%	—	—
Teaching Experience				
	—	—	5-7 years	2 (40%)
	—	—	8-10 years	2 (40%)
	—	—	Over 10 years	1 (20%)

Research Design

The creative process followed a six-stage model designed to engage the students in iterative experimentation (Figure 3). This design combines creative exploration with systematic evaluation to support the learning outcomes.

Select Artistic Style

Students researched classical artistic movements and selected a style for their Copilot-generated artwork. This stage emphasizes visual language comprehension and distinctive stylistic features.

Craft AI Prompt

Students developed descriptive prompts blending classical art styles with contemporary themes. Emphasis was placed on precise language to guide Copilot's visual interpretation.

Generate Initial Artwork

Copilot produced four visual outputs per prompt, providing students with variations to assess in terms of composition and creative expression.

Review and Refine AI Output

Students engaged in dialogue with instructors and peers to evaluate AI-generated outputs. This process enabled identification of inconsistencies and refinement of prompts to improve visual alignment.

Incorporate Feedback

Based on critiques, students revised prompts or adjusted AI-generated visuals. This stage reinforced adaptive learning and stylistic coherence.

Final Submission and Reflection

Students submitted revised artwork with a reflective statement detailing their creative process and Copilot's influence on their decisions. This fosters metacognitive awareness and critical engagement.

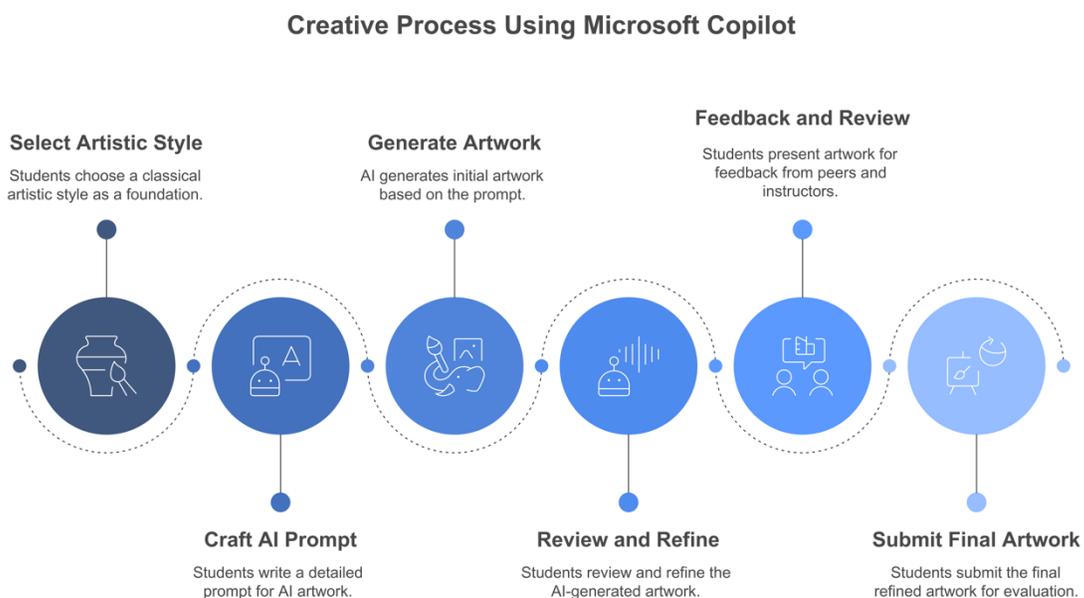


Figure 3. Creative process using Microsoft Copilot in five iterative stages. Source: by the author.

Assessment and Evaluation

To assess students' creative outcomes, a five-criterion evaluation rubric was implemented (see Table 2), adapted from recent studies on AI-generated content in educational contexts (Du et al., 2024). This rubric was designed to offer a comprehensive framework for evaluating both technical proficiency and artistic merit. The five criteria were as follows:

- **Artistic Fidelity** – The extent to which the AI-generated artwork aligns with the stylistic elements of the selected classical artist.
- **Aesthetic Coherence** – Visual harmony, composition, and balance within the final artwork.
- **Prompt Accuracy** – The clarity and specificity of the student-generated prompt in guiding Copilot's visual output.
- **Creativity and Originality** – The degree of innovation demonstrated in the artwork, including reinterpretation, symbolic elements, and visual storytelling.
- **Technical Quality** – The resolution, clarity, and refinement of the AI-generated visual output, as well as any post-generation modifications, are assessed.

Each criterion was rated on a five-point scale (1 = minimal achievement, 5 = exemplary performance). This structured assessment ensured that students were evaluated holistically, encompassing both conceptual creativity and technical execution.

To improve the reliability of the scoring, five independent evaluators, each with substantial experience in digital art and art education, underwent rubric calibration training. This training ensured a shared understanding of the scoring standards and reduced subjectivity during the evaluation.

Table 2*Rubric for evaluating AI-generated art*

Criteria	Excellent (5)	Good (4)	Satisfactory (3)	Needs Work (2)	Poor (1)
Artistic Fidelity	Perfectly matches the intended artistic style.	Mostly accurate, with small inconsistencies.	Some resemblances but noticeable deviations.	Minimal resemblance to the intended style.	No resemblance to the intended style.
Aesthetic Coherence	Classical style and subject blend seamlessly.	Mostly harmonious with minor inconsistencies.	Some conflict between style and subject, but it is still interesting.	Significant dissonance between style and subject.	The style and subject are completely incoherent.
Prompt Accuracy	All elements of the prompt are represented.	Most of the prompts are reflected, with small omissions.	Some key details are missing or altered.	Many important elements are missing or misinterpreted.	The prompt is misunderstood; the output is irrelevant.
Creativity & Originality	Highly original and innovative blending of style and subject.	Shows good creative effort and interpretation.	Some creativity, but somewhat predictable.	Limited creativity; blending is basic.	No originality; repetitive or uninspired output.
Technical Quality	The image is detailed, sharp, and free of errors.	Minor flaws or artifacts that do not affect quality.	Noticeable issues, but still acceptable.	Significant technical flaws reduce clarity.	Poorly rendered with multiple visual errors.

Ensuring Evaluation Reliability: Cohen's Kappa Analysis

To ensure consistent scoring among evaluators, Cohen's kappa (κ) was calculated to assess interrater reliability, a method widely recognized in both general research (McHugh, 2012) and creative arts assessment (Foka & Griffin, 2024).

- $\kappa \geq 0.80$ → Strong Agreement
- κ between 0.60 – 0.79 → Moderate Agreement
- $\kappa \leq 0.59$ → Weak Agreement

The calculated κ value was 0.82, indicating a strong agreement among the evaluators.

Data Collection and Analysis

The following data were collected.

- Observations during classroom activities and tracking student engagement with Copilot.
- Reflective Journals, where students documented prompt adjustments, creative decisions, and Copilot's impact on their learning process.
- Instructor Feedback, which captured insights on students' adaptive learning strategies.

Thematic analysis (Clarke & Braun, 2017) identified recurring themes such as:

- AI Bias
- Cultural Representation
- Creative Adaptation Strategies

Ethical Considerations

In the absence of a formal ethical review board at the College of Basic Education, this study followed the established ethical frameworks outlined by the British Educational Research Association (BERA, 2018) and the American Educational Research Association (AERA, 2011) to ensure participant welfare, informed consent, and data protection. In addition, ethical approval was obtained from the Department of Art Education at the College of Basic Education, which reviewed the study design and supported its implementation within the course context.

To promote responsible AI use and uphold artistic integrity, students were required to include explicit attribution statements acknowledging Microsoft Copilot's contribution to their creative outputs. This practice aligns with the recommendations for transparent AI-assisted authorship (Deckers et al., 2022; Baio, 2022).

Furthermore, students were encouraged to engage in critical reflection on potential cultural biases in AI-generated content. By analyzing and refining prompts to enhance cultural representation and authenticity, students developed ethical awareness and improved inclusivity in their outputs. This approach reflects the current best practices for addressing algorithmic bias in educational settings (Shaw et al., 2024).

Results

Visual Outcomes and Artistic Interpretations

The following examples illustrate how students employed Microsoft Copilot to merge classical artistic styles with contemporary themes, each highlighting Copilot's ability to interpret stylistic cues while underscoring the importance of prompt refinement.

Dali-Inspired Transformation: Surrealist Pyramids

Inspired by Salvador Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory* (1932), students explored surrealist distortions of the Great Pyramids (Figure 4). Copilot successfully captured Dalí's dreamlike motifs, blending distorted, fluid edges with symbolic elements such as melting clocks. Students observed that vague prompts often produced ambiguous outcomes, whereas specific terms such as "melting pyramids" and "distorted desert tones" improved visual fidelity.

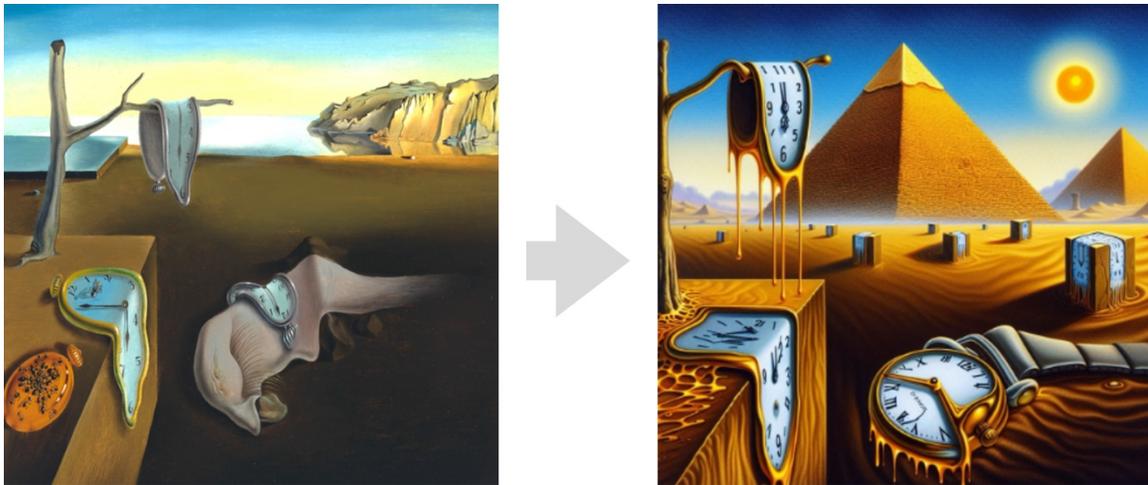


Figure 4. Copilot-generated image based on the prompt: "Create an image of Egypt's Pyramids inspired by Salvador Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory* (1932)." Museum of Modern Art, New York City, USA.

Miró-Inspired Transformation: Abstract Eiffel Tower

Inspired by Joan Miró's *The Garden* (1925), students experimented with prompts to apply Miró's abstract motifs to the Eiffel Tower (Figure 5). Copilot successfully integrated Miró's vivid color schemes and geometric shapes. Students found that emphasizing terms such as "bold lines," "primary colors," and "playful motifs" enhanced the stylistic fidelity of Copilot.



Figure 5. Copilot-generated image based on the prompt: "Create an image of the Paris Eiffel Tower inspired by Joan Miró's *The Garden* (1925)." The Fundació Joan Miró in Barcelona.

Klimt-Inspired Transformation: Ornamental Dubai Skyline

In response to prompts inspired by Gustav Klimt's *Tree of Life* (1905), Copilot effectively applied Klimt's ornate patterns to the Dubai skyline (Figure 6). Students discovered that describing "gold accents," "ornamental swirls," and "decorative forms" improved the Copilot's ability to merge Klimt's distinctive aesthetic with contemporary architecture.

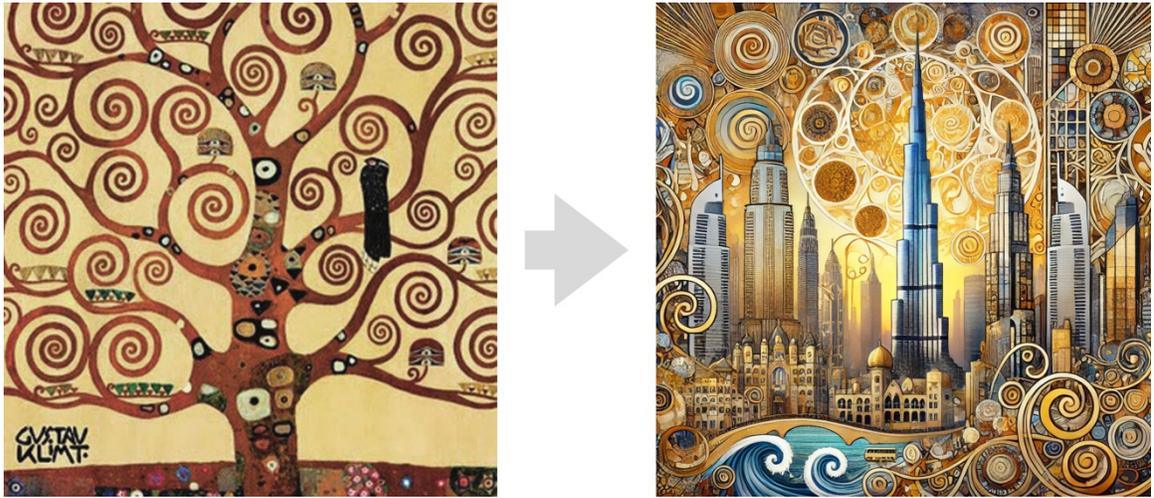


Figure 6. Copilot-generated image based on the prompt: “Create an image of downtown Dubai inspired by Gustav Klimt’s *Tree of Life* (1907).” Stoclet Palace, Brussels, Belgium.

Van Gogh-Inspired Transformation: Swirling Kuwait Towers

To merge Vincent van Gogh’s expressive brushwork with the Kuwait Towers, the students iteratively refined their prompts (Figure 7). Stronger results emerged when terms such as “swirling brushwork,” “vibrant colors,” and “layered textures” were included. Initial outputs often appeared chaotic, requiring refined language to improve color balance and compositional clarity.



Figure 7. Copilot-generated image based on the prompt: “Create an image of Kuwait Towers inspired by Van Gogh’s *The Starry Night* (1889).” Museum of Modern Art, New York City.

Cézanne-Inspired Transformation: Still Life with a Modern Twist

Inspired by Paul Cézanne's *Still Life with Jar, Cup, and Apples* (1877), students explored how Copilot could reinterpret traditional still life compositions with modern objects (Figure 8). Descriptive prompts emphasizing "balanced composition," "soft tonal gradients," and "contrasting textures" improved Copilot's ability to maintain Cézanne's geometric precision while introducing contemporary elements, such as a Coca-Cola can. The inclusion of Coca-Cola demonstrates Copilot's ability to integrate modern objects within a classical artistic framework while maintaining aesthetic balance and visual coherence.



Figure 8. Copilot-generated image based on the prompt: "Create an image of a still life with a soft drink inspired by Paul Cézanne's *Still Life with Jar, Cup, and Apples* (1877)." The Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York City, USA.

Rembrandt-Inspired Transformation: Dramatic London Bridge

Inspired by Rembrandt's *Landscape with a Stone Bridge* (1638), students prompted Copilot to capture Rembrandt's chiaroscuro lighting (Figure 9). Effective prompts included terms such as "moody ambiance," "deep shadows," and "warm highlights." Without these specifications, earlier results lacked depth and coherence.



Figure 9. Copilot-generated image based on the prompt: "Create an image of London Bridge inspired by Rembrandt's *Landscape with a Stone Bridge* (1638)." The Rijksmuseum, Amsterdam, Netherlands.

Prompt Design and Visual Outcomes

Prompt engineering, which involves refining text instructions, is crucial for achieving accurate visual outcomes. Advancements from DALL·E 2 to DALL·E 3, powering Microsoft Copilot's image generation, have improved image quality, coherence, and prompt responsiveness (Çeken & Akgöz, 2024; Hwang & Wu, 2025; Ramesh et al., 2022). These advancements enabled students to experiment with sophisticated prompts that guided Copilot's creative interpretations.

The visual outcomes show how students used Copilot to merge classical artistic styles with contemporary themes. Prompt engineering strategies are vital for ensuring stylistic fidelity, aesthetic coherence, and cultural relevance. Instances of prompt failure and visual inconsistencies emerged, particularly in cultural representations, enhancing students' understanding of Copilot's creative limitations. This aligns with research highlighting AI's struggle to accurately represent regional and cultural motifs (Foka & Griffin, 2024; Sukkar et al., 2023).

As shown in Figure 10, the students refined their prompts iteratively to better align with Dalí's surrealist language. Terms such as melting clocks, distorted sands, and dreamlike horizons improved visual fidelity, enabling Copilot to better replicate Dalí's symbolic motifs. By emphasizing surrealist elements such as warped structures and desert landscapes, the students successfully captured Dalí's distinctive visual language.



*Figure 10. Surrealistic interpretations of the Pyramids Inspired by Dalí's *The Persistence of Memory* (1932).*

This process aligns with Cotroneo and Hutson's (2023) findings that prompt refinement is essential for maximizing the creative capabilities of AI tools. AI's expanding role in supporting creative ideation and visual diversity has been emphasized in recent studies (Rosa & Cetinic, 2024). Through iterative experimentation, the students achieved deeper artistic coherence beyond surface-level mimicry. These results highlight the potential of Copilot as a dynamic creative partner, reinforcing the notion that deliberate prompt design enhances technical precision and creative exploration.

Evaluation Scores and Performance Analysis

The evaluation of Copilot-generated artworks was conducted using five core criteria: Artistic Fidelity, Aesthetic Coherence, Prompt Accuracy, Creativity & Originality, and Technical Quality. To enhance clarity, this section integrates multiple visualizations to highlight the performance trends and patterns.

The line chart (Figure 11) offers a concise visualization of Copilot's overall performance across five evaluation criteria. As shown in the chart, all six artistic styles — Dalí, Miró, Klimt, van Gogh, Cézanne, and Rembrandt — consistently scored within a narrow range between 4.5 and 5 on the Likert scale. This tight clustering reflects Copilot's ability to maintain a high standard of artistic fidelity, aesthetic coherence, and technical quality regardless of stylistic complexity. Notably, this consistency underscores the reliability of Copilot in producing visually convincing interpretations across diverse artistic styles.

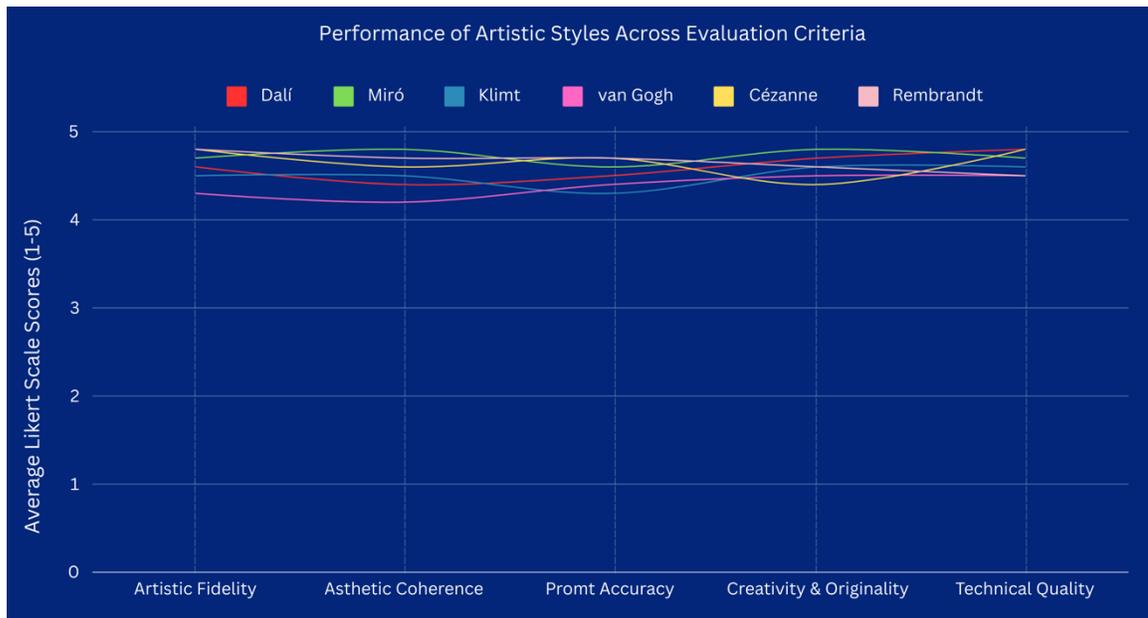


Figure 11. Performance of Artistic Styles Across Evaluation Criteria.

To complement the visual overview, Table 3 presents the precise numerical scores for each artistic style across the five criteria. The table reveals minimal variation in the scores, reinforcing Copilot’s consistent ability to balance technical precision with artistic creativity. While slight differences emerged, with Dalí and Klimt receiving slightly higher ratings for aesthetic coherence and van Gogh scoring marginally lower in artistic fidelity, these variations were minor and did not significantly impact the overall assessment.

Table 3

Evaluation Scores for Copilot-Generated Artistic Styles

Criteria	Dalí	Miró	Klimt	van Gogh	Cézanne	Rembrandt
Artistic Fidelity	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.8
Aesthetic Coherence	4.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	5.0	4.7
Prompt Accuracy	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.0	5.0	4.7
Creativity & Originality	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.0	4.6
Technical Quality	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	5.0	4.5

The heatmap (Figure 12) offers a visual representation of the performance intensity. Stronger colors indicate higher scores, which help identify Copilot’s strongest areas. Notably, the heatmap underscores Copilot’s reliable technical quality, which consistently received the highest ratings across all six styles. Additionally, the heatmap highlights areas where prompt accuracy exhibited minor fluctuations, particularly when synthesizing intricate stylistic details, such as Rembrandt’s chiaroscuro and Van Gogh’s expressive brushwork.

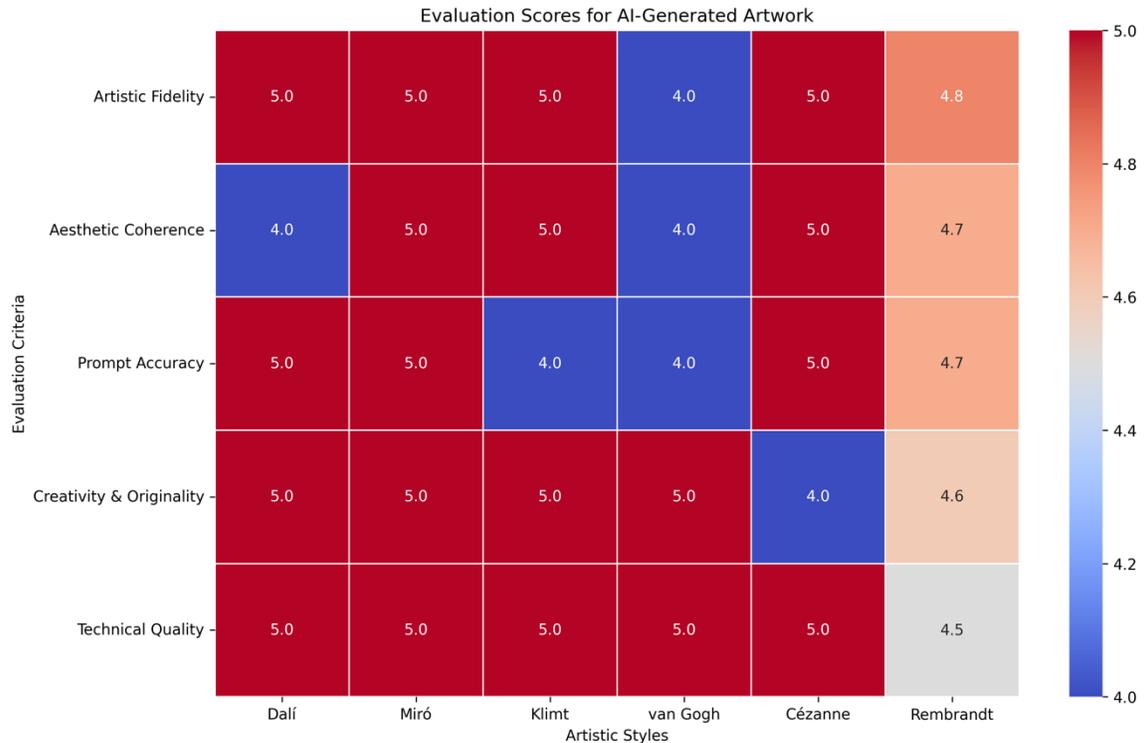


Figure 12. Heatmap Displaying Evaluation Scores for Copilot-Generated Artistic Styles.

Together, these visualizations provide a comprehensive picture of Copilot’s strengths in generating AI-assisted creative output. The combination of a line chart for performance trends, a table for precise numerical data, and a heatmap for visual emphasis ensures that key insights are conveyed effectively. This multimodal presentation underscores the strengths of Copilot while drawing attention to the subtle nuances of its creative interpretations.

Discussion

Creative Flexibility and Adaptive Learning

Figures 4–9 demonstrate Copilot's versatility in reinterpreting classical artistic styles while enabling creative flexibility. By allowing students to manipulate prompts and explore multiple outcomes, Copilot functions as a co-creative partner. This adaptability encouraged students to iterate designs, refine prompts, and evaluate visual outcomes. Students have reported that Copilot's flexibility allows them to explore unconventional ideas and alternative compositions (Evangelidis et al., 2024; Harun et al., 2024; Fathoni, 2023; Silvennoinen et al., 2024). In Figure 4, Copilot's surrealist reinterpretation of the Great Pyramids blended Dalí's melting clocks with contemporary architectural motifs. Figure 7 shows how Copilot incorporated van Gogh's swirling brushstrokes into the Kuwait Towers scene. These outcomes highlight Copilot's ability to merge algorithmic spontaneity with student creativity.

This adaptability encourages the iteration of designs and refinement of prompts. As students explored multiple iterations, Copilot's flexibility enabled unconventional ideas and alternative designs. This aligns with research showing that AI tools foster creative risk-taking through real-time visual feedback (Evangelidis et al., 2024; Harun et al., 2024). By combining Copilot's suggestions with human direction, students achieved greater creativity and originality.

Learning Classical Techniques Through AI

The study's use of Dalí, Miró, Klimt, Van Gogh, Cézanne, and Rembrandt allowed students to engage with traditional artistic styles dynamically and practice based. Copilot's ability to emulate stylistic elements—such as Klimt's gilded patterns (Figure 6) or Rembrandt's chiaroscuro lighting (Figure 9)—provided students with an immersive, hands-on experience of classical techniques. Bloomer (2024) discusses AI's application in design curricula, particularly how students can use AI for ideation and rapid prototyping in classical art styles.

By observing Copilot's interpretations, students gained insights into the compositional logic, color schemes, and textural nuances that define historical art movements. This process aligns with constructivist learning principles, wherein active experimentation and reflective inquiry deepen conceptual understanding (Piaget, 1970). Moreover, the opportunity to manipulate Copilot's outputs allowed students to expand their learning beyond replication and actively reimagine classical elements in modern contexts. This reflective engagement with AI-generated content aligns with Schön's (2017) Reflection-in-Action model, which emphasizes iterative assessment, modification, and refinement in creative practice.

Pedagogical Implications for Art Education

Microsoft Copilot has significant potential to enhance art education by fostering creative exploration, adaptive learning, and technical growth. Its flexibility allows students to refine prompts, experiment iteratively, and engage with unconventional ideas, thereby promoting creative risk-taking and problem-solving (Evangelidis et al., 2024; Harun et al., 2024). By blending historical artistic techniques with modern subjects, Copilot enables students to reimagine classical traditions in contemporary contexts (Fathoni, 2023; Silvennoinen et al., 2024).

Students also gained insights into compositional logic, color theory, and textural nuances — key features of historical art movements—by observing and manipulating Copilot’s visual outputs. This hands-on engagement aligns with constructivist learning theories that emphasize active experimentation and reflective inquiry (Piaget, 1970; Schön, 2017). The process moved beyond replication, encouraging students to recontextualize classical motifs through iterative design, which aligns with Schön’s (2017) reflection-in-action model. Ezhilmurugan (2024) similarly emphasized AI’s potential to deepen engagement in visual arts education through iterative design.

In addition, Copilot contributed to enhancing students’ visual literacy and technological fluency. As highlighted by Sims (2024) and Hwang and Wu (2025), AI is reshaping creative curricula in higher education. The ability to merge traditional artistic values with emerging digital competencies is becoming increasingly important for preparing students for future creative industries.

Ethical Considerations and Broader Implications

Beyond pedagogical benefits, this study highlights the ethical dimensions of using AI in art education. Structured reflection activities prompted students to critically assess AI-generated outputs and evaluate the balance between algorithmic automation and human creativity. These practices promote transparency and accountability, especially in the context of authorship and originality (McLoughlin, 2024).

As the U.S. Copyright Office (2023) clarified, works created solely by AI are not eligible for copyright protection without meaningful human authorship. This underscores the importance of prompt engineering as a deliberate, human-led creative process. Accordingly, students were instructed to include attribution statements acknowledging Copilot’s role in their work, promoting responsible and transparent AI use (Deckers et al., 2023; Bendel, 2023; Shaw et al., 2024).

By integrating ethical awareness into artistic practice, this study addresses broader concerns regarding digital authorship, originality, and cultural representation. These findings align with the growing body of literature advocating for critical digital literacy and ethical engagement with AI tools in creative fields (Ramos-Vallecillo & Murillo-Ligorred, 2024; Harun et al., 2024).

To equip students for AI-enhanced creative fields, art education should include instruction on prompt engineering, visual analysis, and ethical reflection. These skills empower learners to navigate stylistic complexity, critically evaluate AI outputs, and balance human creativity with computational input (Sims, 2024; Hwang & Wu, 2025). Embedding such competencies into curricula supports creative autonomy while preparing students to engage responsibly with emerging digital tools.

Limitations

While this study provides valuable insights into the educational potential of Copilot, several limitations should be acknowledged.

- **Prompt Dependency:** Microsoft Copilot's performance depends on students' ability to craft effective prompts. Students often need multiple attempts to achieve the desired stylistic and cultural outcomes, highlighting the importance of prompt engineering.
- **Evaluator Subjectivity:** Despite using Cohen's Kappa for inter-rater reliability, subjectivity remained in the evaluation of creative dimensions. While the rubric helped maintain consistent scoring, artistic evaluation posed challenges to objectivity.
- **Cultural Representation Challenges:** Copilot may struggle to accurately represent regional and cultural motifs, necessitating further refinement of AI models for cultural diversity.
- **Technological Accessibility:** The study did not address equal access to the required technology. Device compatibility, Internet connectivity, and AI tool familiarity can impact usability.
- **Ethical Concerns:** The risks of overreliance on AI tools, including diminished creative autonomy and attribution issues, require further exploration.
- **Sample Size and Generalizability:** The study's focus on 30 undergraduate students in Kuwait may limit its generalizability to other contexts.
- **Long-term Impact:** The study did not examine the long-term effects of AI tools on students' artistic development and independent creation abilities.

These limitations emphasize the importance of providing structured guidance on prompt design and critical evaluation in AI-enhanced learning environments.

Future Research Directions

Building on the findings and limitations of this study, several avenues for future research can deepen our understanding of AI integration in art education. Longitudinal studies could explore the long-term impact of sustained AI tool usage on students' independent artistic development and the evolution of their creative styles. Given the challenges observed in cultural representation, further research is needed to enhance AI models' ability to accurately depict regional and cultural motifs and ensure alignment with diverse artistic traditions. Equally important is the development of ethical guidelines for attribution, artistic integrity, and intellectual property rights in AI-assisted creativity.

Studies examining accessibility, such as disparities in device compatibility, Internet access, and digital literacy, could offer critical insights into the equitable use of AI in classrooms. Expanding research to include diverse educational contexts would improve the generalizability of the findings and inform broader pedagogical applications. Additionally, investigating teacher training in areas such as prompt engineering and ethical engagement with AI content would support more effective classroom implementations. Finally, assessing the influence of AI tools on students' creative autonomy and their capacity to develop original ideas will help educators balance technological assistance with authentic artistic growth. These research directions are essential for ensuring the responsible, inclusive, and pedagogically sound integration of AI into art education.

Conclusion

This study examined the potential of Microsoft Copilot as a creative partner in art education, exploring its ability to merge classical artistic styles with contemporary themes. The findings revealed that Copilot enabled students to experiment with diverse artistic styles, refine their outcomes through prompt adjustments, and develop critical awareness of AI's strengths and limitations.

By integrating insights from Constructivist Learning Theory (Piaget, 1970), Reflective Practice Theory (Schön, 1991), and Augmented Creativity Theory (Boden, 2004), this study emphasized the role of adaptive learning and active experimentation (Harun et al., 2024; Enrique & DesPortes, 2024). The structured process — from prompt engineering to reflective refinement — aligns with Schön's concept of Reflection-in-Action, enabling students to modify their creative decisions in response to feedback.

Teacher involvement played a crucial role in guiding students' exploration of Copilot. Through structured feedback, peer critique, and calibrated assessments, teachers ensured that students effectively refined their visual ideas (Caudillo, 2024; Sims, 2024). This highlights the

need for teacher-supported frameworks that integrate AI as a co-creative tool, rather than as a passive generator.

The study also addressed ethical concerns by requiring students to credit Copilot's role in their creative process, thus promoting awareness of authorship and originality (Deckers et al., 2022; Epstein et al., 2020; Foka & Griffin, 2024; McLoughlin, 2024). As AI continues to influence creative education, structured frameworks that balance artistic autonomy, teacher guidance, and reflective practice are essential for fostering responsible AI engagement.

This study underscores that while AI tools, such as Microsoft Copilot, offer powerful creative potential, their successful implementation relies on human artistic judgment, critical thinking, and ethical responsibility (Harun et al., 2024; McLoughlin, 2024).

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About the Author

Dr. Muwaffaq Abdulmajid is an Associate Professor of Graphic Arts at The Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in Kuwait. He holds a Ph.D. in Electronic Art from Middlesex University London (1999) and a Master's degree in Visual Communication from the University of South Florida (1985). With over two decades of teaching experience, Dr. Abdulmajid specializes in art and design pedagogy, digital creativity, and the integration of emerging technologies in higher education. His research explores the intersections of cultural identity, visual communication, and generative AI, with a current focus on AI-enhanced collaborative learning models in the Gulf region.

Email: ma.abdulmajid@paaet.edu.kw

Website: www.muwaffaq.net