Situational Teaching Design and Application Effects in the Cultivation of Aesthetic Literacy for Vocational Students: A Case Study of the "Tea Art" Course

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Situational Teaching Design and Application Effects in the Cultivation of Aesthetic Literacy for Vocational Students: A Case Study of the "Tea Art" Course

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Abstract

With the gradual improvement of living standards, the tourism industry places greater emphasis on products with aesthetic value. Vocational education is employment-oriented, and its skill training tends to be mechanized, which to some extent neglects aesthetic education. This study aims to explore methods for cultivating students' aesthetic literacy through situational teaching methods. The paper first reviews the literature to understand the research progress on situational teaching methods and aesthetic literacy. Secondly, NVivo was used to extract and analyze keywords of aesthetic education policy texts and teacher interview texts to refine the dimensions of aesthetic literacy goals. Building on Du Wei's three dimensions of aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, and aesthetic awareness, a dimension of moral cultivation is added, and the specific aesthetic literacy embodied in the six elements of tea art is analyzed and presented. Finally, the paper constructs a model for cultivating aesthetic literacy by combining the types of situation creation with the unique advantages of situational teaching. A six-step teaching process of "stimulate, teach, practice, integrate, showcase, evaluate" is proposed, and two rounds of action research are conducted to explore the effect of situational teaching on cultivating the aesthetic literacy of tourism major students. The study concludes the following: (1) Situational teaching methods can promote the integration of tea art courses and aesthetic education, providing a reference for integrating aesthetic education into other professional courses; (2) The teaching process design of situational teaching methods for enhancing students' aesthetic literacy is feasible; (3) Situational teaching methods have a significant effect on cultivating students' aesthetic literacy.

Keywords: situational teaching method; aesthetic literacy; tea art course; secondary vocational education

Introduction

Research Background

In the historical process of advancing educational modernization, aesthetic education in our country's schools has made significant progress. *"The Decision on Deepening Educational Reform*

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and Comprehensively Promoting Quality-oriented Education" (1999) reviewed and approved at the Third National Education Work Conference in 1999, established for the first time the "comprehensive development of morality, intelligence, physical fitness, and aesthetics" as the core connotation of quality-oriented education. This institutional breakthrough highlighted the intrinsic connection between quality education and aesthetic education. The *"Notice of the State Council on Issuing the National Vocational Education Reform Implementation Plan"* (2019) issued by the State Council in 2019, clearly stated that vocational education and general education are equally important, representing two different types of education. The 2019 *"Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era"* (2019) set out the main goals for aesthetic education, aiming to achieve breakthrough progress in school aesthetic education by 2022 and to basically form a modern school aesthetic education system with Chinese characteristics by 2035. However, overall, aesthetic education still faces challenges of marginalization and uneven and insufficient development, remaining a weak link in school education. Vocational education is perceived by society as a lower tier compared to general education and as non-typical education. As China's tourism industry transitions from "high-speed growth" to "high-quality development," the industry's requirements for practitioners have shifted from single-skill talents to multi-skilled talents. Cultivating students' aesthetic literacy is not only essential for their comprehensive development but also a crucial path to resolving the talent supply-demand imbalance in the tourism industry and promoting industrial upgrading. This research adopts situational teaching as the primary method for cultivating students' aesthetic literacy and explores its implementation in classroom teaching.

Research Purposes and Questions

The research aims to analyze the objectives of students' aesthetic literacy and explore cultivation process for enhancing it through situational teaching methods. It proposes a practical teaching process, teaching designs, implements, and evaluates the effectiveness of situational teaching methods in cultivating students' aesthetic literacy.

The research questions are as follows: (1) What are the objectives of students' aesthetic literacy? (2) What is the teaching process for cultivating students' aesthetic literacy in the "Tea Art" course? (3) What is the effect of the situational teaching methods in cultivating students' aesthetic literacy?

Literature Review

Aesthetic Literacy

There is no clear definition of the connotation of aesthetic literacy, but it generally involves aesthetic knowledge, ability, creativity, and concepts. This study mainly refers to Du Wei's viewpoint, who considers aesthetic literacy as the quality and cultivation accumulated by individuals based on aesthetic experience, including aesthetic knowledge, ability, and awareness (Du, 2014).

Western thought on aesthetic education can be traced back to ancient Greece and Rome, where thinkers focused on exploring the interactive relationship between aesthetic education and other forms of education, although the ontological foundation of the discipline had not yet formed (Su, 2004). In the 18th century, Immanuel Kant, the founder of German classical aesthetics, formally

proposed establishing aesthetic education as a discipline, advocating for the unification of cognition and practice through aesthetic emotions (Zhu, 2017). Schiller(1984) defined aesthetic education as "education that can enhance appreciation and aesthetics," placing it alongside moral, intellectual, and physical education, indicating that aesthetic education has gained an independent status within the educational system. Since the 20th century, Western thought on aesthetic education has involved multiple fields such as pedagogy, psychology, and philosophy. Frois and Eysenck (1995) studied the increase in visual aesthetic sensitivity in adolescents and adults with age, stabilizing at age 14. Acer and Ömeroðlu (2008) researched the impact of aesthetic education on the development of aesthetic judgment in six-year-old children and recommended specific aesthetic education activities. Marković (2012) argued that the aesthetic process includes input, evaluation, and emotion. In the 21st century, Western thought on aesthetic education is facing a new developmental environment——artificial intelligence, which will undoubtedly present new developmental trends (Xu, 2021).

Domestic research focuses on the functions of aesthetic education, aesthetic education courses, evaluation research, influencing factors, and enhancement strategies. *"Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education"*issued the functions of aesthetic education, it not only enhances an individual's aesthetic literacy but also subtly influences a person's emotions, tastes and temperament, inspiring the spirit and nurturing the soul. Good aesthetic quality is a necessary condition for a well-rounded psychological personality (Ning, 2004). In terms of aesthetic education courses, research mainly focuses on arts appreciation and arts skills courses in colleges, showing a trend of interdisciplinarity trend. However, there are issues such as the limited number, fragmentation, and disorder in the overall course setup (Sun & Wang, 2014), as well as problems of teachers lacking aesthetic literacy and the homogenization and rigidification of aesthetic education course content (Guo, 2020). In terms of aesthetic education evaluation, current scholarly perspectives adhere to the principles of combining standardization with individualization, objectivity with subjectivity, and outcomes with processes. For example, Ran (2008) categorizes aesthetic education evaluation methods into four forms: situational evaluation, self-evaluation, peer evaluation, and test-based evaluation. In terms of factors influencing aesthetic literacy, they can be divided into subjective and objective aspects. Students' aesthetic literacy is closely related to their personal physical and mental development levels and cognitive abilities; meanwhile, school-based aesthetic education, changes in the social environment, and family atmosphere can also lead to variations in students' aesthetic literacy (Li, 2017; Tang, 2021; Yi, Xu, & Du, 2023). Regarding improvement strategies, existing literature identifies three major agents in research on strategies for enhancing aesthetic literacy. Centered on educators, Li and Wang (2018) suggest that approaches to developing teachers' aesthetic literacy mainly include proactive self-improvement by teachers, schools cultivating an environment conducive to aesthetic education, and teacher training institutions improving aesthetic training programs. Luo (2018) proposes recommendations such as strengthening ethical cultivation among teachers, emphasizing the study of aesthetic theory and practice, enhancing professional skills, and promoting self-reflection. Focusing on students, Tang, Luo, and Wang (2016) argues that aesthetic education should begin with cultivating students' aesthetic experiences, upon which efforts should be made to actively build an aesthetic campus culture and curriculum system. Li (2017) suggests that, against the background of widespread entertainment culture, schools should enhance students' ability to make aesthetic judgments and

foster an elegant aesthetic environment on campus. Regarding the population as a whole, Yi and Du (2015) propose three suggestions: providing aesthetic education through existing school art education systems, offering lifelong art education services to citizens via social cultural and art institutions, and encouraging governments to focus on improving the aesthetics of living environments. Liang, Li, and Yang (2020), taking Hanfu aesthetics as an entry point, recommend adjusting the proportion of aesthetic education within school curricula, establishing rational cultural confidence, regulating and guiding extreme online discourse, and fostering a sense of "community" among citizens.

Situational Teaching

In 1986, Professor Li Jilin from China provided an initial definition of situational teaching, describing it as a pedagogical approach in which typical instructional scenarios are constructed by teachers to stimulate students' emotions, thereby integrating affective activities with cognitive processes.

Research on situational teaching abroad can be traced back to the views of American educator John Dewey. He argued that learning should originate from real-life experiential contexts and pointed out in his work "How We Think" that the initial stage of knowledge construction must be rooted in concrete practical settings (Dewey, 2015). In 1996, the book "Perspectives on Situated Learning" was published, integrating situational cognition theory with practical applications at multiple levels and further advancing the development of theoretical frameworks (Clancey, 1995). In 2000, "Learning Environments" included discussions on situational cognition theory, clarifying the direct relationship between situational cognition theory and both learning and practice (Jonassen & Land, 2000). This theoretical breakthrough propelled research on situational teaching into deeper application areas such as educational technology and vocational training, ultimately forming an interdisciplinary integrated system.

Domestic research on situational teaching can be divided into three stages. Stage One: Initial Exploration Period (End of the 20th century). In 1978, Li (1995) conducted experiments on the situational teaching method in China, marking the beginning of situational teaching research in the country. Stage Two: Rapid Development Period (End of the 20th century—2015). Around the turn of the century, the new curriculum reform emphasized the "three-dimensional objectives," focusing on enhancing abilities and cultivating emotional engagement, which aligned with the fundamental connotations of situational teaching; consequently, situational teaching experienced significant growth. He (2004) proposed a five-step situational teaching model centered on educational theory, which includes: Situation First, Entering the Context with Reasoning, Clarifying Reason through Context, Analyzing Context with Reasoning, and Continuing the Context to Cultivate Emotion. Chen (2012) emphasized "creating learning situations and bringing students to real-life settings," aiming to enhance students' hands-on skills and teamwork spirit through situational teaching. Stage Three: The High-Quality Development Phase (since 2015). With the arrival of the digital era, competencies such as critical thinking and digital literacy have gained significant attention. In the context of situational teaching in tourism English, Chen (2017) suggested that teachers should employ modern educational technologies, such as electronic whiteboards, recording systems, and WeChat, to stimulate students' interest in learning English.

Aesthetic Literacy and Situational Teaching

Research has shown that Li (2010) frequently highlighted the connection between situational teaching and aesthetic education. She believed that developing students' ability to perceive beauty forms the foundation of aesthetic education. Beauty exists objectively, without the ability to recognize beauty, one cannot appreciate or create it. Situational teaching can effectively foster students' aesthetic and moral emotions. In beautiful and enriched environments, students feel joyful, which accelerates neural connections, leading to happy and efficient learning (Li, 1987). Teachers use beauty to evoke emotion, use emotion to stimulate intelligence, and integrate emotion and intelligence to stimulate students' "internal motivation" for active development. This is the highest level of situational education (Li, 2016). From the perspective of embodied cognition, the situational teaching method creates immersive and interactive learning environments that enable students to convert abstract aesthetic concepts into tangible bodily memories through physical participation, emotional resonance, and sensory experiences (Gong, Jia, & Liu, 2018). From an interdisciplinary integration standpoint, situational teaching acts as a "bridge", addressing the challenge of integrating knowledge across disciplines through scenario design and emotional engagement (Jin & Li, 2024). The application of situational teaching to cultivate aesthetic literacy among secondary vocational tourism students not only enriches theoretical research but also provides educators with new practical opportunities.

Research Design

Case Site Selection

Zhuhai First Vocational School is a full-time public national key secondary vocational school. The school upholds the educational philosophy of "cultivating people through beauty," guided by its "Harmonious and Joyful Culture," and integrates aesthetic education throughout the entire student development process. Modern teaching facilities such as posture training rooms, art studios, and photography studios have been established, and over 50 student clubs focused on aesthetic education have been created, providing students with an excellent environment for aesthetic learning and offering abundant resources for research in this field.

Research Methods

Semi-structured Interviews: Before instructional design began, teachers were interviewed to understand the current state of students 'aesthetic literacy development and related educational objectives.

Questionnaire Survey: This study designed an "Aesthetic Literacy Evaluation Scale" based on four dimensions——aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, aesthetic awareness, and moral cultivation. Students were assessed before and after instruction, and the results were analyzed and compared to explore the effectiveness of aesthetic literacy cultivation.

Action Research: Situational Teaching methods were applied to the "Tea Ceremony" course in secondary vocational education through four stages: planning, action, observation, and feedback. Two cycles of instructional design and implementation were carried out.

Research Design

Aesthetic Literacy Objectives: NVivo software was used to extract concepts from literature, policy documents, and teacher interviews related to aesthetic education, identifying key dimensions of aesthetic literacy objectives. These dimensions were then used to develop a Likert-type measurement scale tailored to the "Tea Art" Course.

Instructional Design: Situational Teaching methods were employed to design the instructional flow of the "Tea Art" Course. Two tea lessons were selected for instructional design and implementation to evaluate the effectiveness of Situational Teaching in fostering students 'aesthetic literacy.

Teaching effectiveness: This study integrates qualitative and quantitative analyses. Quantitative analysis is carried out through comparisons of pre- and post-tests as well as practical assessment scores, while qualitative analysis is based on feedback from teaching faculty and students.

Aesthetic Literacy Objectives

This study is grounded in national policies on aesthetic education and addresses the practical needs of secondary vocational education. Drawing upon the foundational structure of aesthetic literacy proposed by Du (2014), The dimensions of aesthetic quality objectives were extracted using the qualitative analysis software NVivo: first, the policy texts on aesthetic education were encoded; Second, in-depth interviews were conducted with five full-time teachers from the Tourism Department to extract aesthetic literacy objectives from frontline teaching practices. Ultimately, a four-dimensional framework of aesthetic literacy objectives was synthesized: "Aesthetic Knowledge—Aesthetic Ability—Aesthetic Awareness—Moral Cultivation."

Literature Perspective Analysis

Du Wei posits that aesthetic literacy primarily consists of three components: aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, and aesthetic awareness. Aesthetic knowledge serves as the foundation of aesthetic literacy and includes knowledge of aesthetics and art; aesthetic ability represents the core and encompasses aesthetic sensibility, appreciation, and creativity; aesthetic awareness functions as the soul of aesthetic literacy and comprises aesthetic taste and values (Du, 2024), this study draws on Du Wei's framework, identifying aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, and aesthetic awareness as the fundamental elements of aesthetic literacy.

Aesthetic Education Policy Analysis

This study is grounded in the Chinese government's specific requirements for aesthetic education and adopts a policy-oriented approach. NVivo software is utilized to analyze original texts of relevant aesthetic education policies, identifying key elements essential for fostering students' aesthetic literacy. To ensure the objectivity of the research, this paper focuses on documents officially issued by the Ministry of Education. By searching for the keyword "aesthetic education" on the Ministry's official website, sequentially browsing and organizing publicly available policies, and excluding those unrelated to the topic, five representative policy documents from 2014 to 2024 are selected. Relevant statements concerning aesthetic literacy are extracted and analyzed to

identify initial concepts, as presented in Table 1, which illustrates part of the coding process.

Table 1
Policy Document Analysis

Policy	Original Policy Text	Initial Concept
Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education	*Aesthetic education is not only aesthetic cultivation, but also emotional and spiritual education. It enhances individuals' aesthetic literacy and subtly influences their emotions, tastes, dispositions, and outlooks, inspiring the spirit and nurturing the heart...*	Aesthetic education, moral cultivation, spiritual development enhances aesthetic literacy, subtly influence, emotions, tastes, dispositions, outlooks, inspiring the spirit, nurturing the heart...
Notice on Carrying Out the Sports and Aesthetic Education Immersion Action Plan	*Uphold the principle of educating and cultivating people. Based on the characteristics of physical and aesthetic education as well as the laws of students' physical and mental development, promote Chinese excellent traditional culture, inherit and develop revolutionary culture, and spread advanced socialist culture through physical education and aesthetic influence, aiming at every student. Guide students to establish correct outlooks on life, values, health, and aesthetics...*	China's excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, advanced socialist culture, outlooks on life, values, health, and aesthetics...
Opinions on Effectively Strengthening Aesthetic Education in Higher Education Institutions in the New Era	*School-based aesthetic education carries strong ideological attributes. It should be guided by socialist core values, promote Chinese excellent traditional culture, inherit revolutionary culture, and develop advanced socialist culture, thus fostering a new awareness among college students of enhancing cultural subjectivity and assuming cultural responsibilities...*	Socialist core values, Chinese excellent traditional culture, revolutionary culture, advanced socialist culture, cultural subjectivity...

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Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in Schools in the New Era	*Beauty is a vital source for purifying morality and enriching the spirit. Aesthetic education encompasses aesthetic, emotional, and moral education; it is also education that nurtures imagination and fosters innovation. It enhances aesthetic literacy, cultivates sentiments, nurtures the heart, and stimulates creativity...*	Purifying morality, enriching the spirit, encompasses aesthetic, fosters innovation, cultivates sentiments, nurtures the heart, and stimulates creativity...
Notice on the Comprehensive Implementation of the School Aesthetic Education Immersion Action	*Promote the spirit of Chinese aesthetic education and strengthen cultural confidence. Regard immersion as the goal and approach of aesthetic education, integrating it into all aspects of teaching and learning activities. Subtly demonstrate its educational effectiveness in improving aesthetic literacy, cultivating sentiments, nurturing minds, and stimulating creativity, thereby cultivating well-rounded socialist builders and successors with moral integrity, intelligence, physical fitness, aesthetic appreciation, and a strong work ethic...*	Cultural confidence, nurturing minds, stimulating creativity...

Analysis of Teacher Interviews

To explore the objectives of cultivating students' aesthetic literacy, semi-structured interviews were conducted with teachers from the Tourism Department at Zhuhai First Vocational School. The participants included four teachers from the department and one external teacher, assigned codes T1 to T5. Details of the interviews are provided in Table 2.

Teachers' backgrounds involve expertise in tourism and aesthetic education:

T1: Host of the Guangdong Province Model Principal Studio, research focus on "Virtue Integration".

T2: Tea Art Instructor, teaching the course "Chinese Tea Art".

T3: Deputy Director of the Tourism Department, Senior Lecturer, teaching the course "Hotel Services".

T4: Pearl River Scholar, part-time master's supervisor at South China Normal University, research focus on wine tourism.

T5: Tea Art Instructor, teaching the course "Chinese Tea Art".

After the interviews, the author compiled 24383 words of raw text. Initial concepts were identified from the interview text, as shown in Table 3, which displays some of the coding results.

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Table 2
Interview Information

Number	Date	Interview Location	Courses Taught	Recording Format
T1	2024.04.25	Famous Head Teacher Studio	Physical Education Class	Audio Recording
T2	2024.04.23	Office of the Tourism Department	Tea Art Class	Audio Recording
T3	2024.04.28	Office of the Tourism Department	Hotel Services	Notes
T4	2024.04.22	Master's Studio	Mixology class	Audio Recording
T5	2024.04.28	Office of the Tourism Department	Tea Art Class	Notes

Table 3
Initial concepts from teacher interviews

Number	Specific description	Initial concept
T1	"Our hotel management students are highly sought after by employers at campus job fairs. This is mainly reflected in three areas: first, their overall image and demeanor; second, their language skills and communication abilities; and third, their overall cultural literacy and sophistication."	Image and demeanor, language skills, communication abilities, perfect posture, cultural confidence...
T2	"We also provide students with opportunities to create and design tea ceremonies, including clothing coordination, hoping that they will exercise their creativity in courses that meet the basic requirements of tea art."	Creativity, tea ceremony design, clothing coordination...

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T3	"Just like Western-style dining service, it is first and foremost about the beauty of language and physical appearance, followed by the professionalism demonstrated throughout the service process. In the front of house, you always need to look your best with makeup, and when setting up the dining area for Western-style meals, you must be thoroughly familiar with the entire workflow."	The beauty of language, physical appearance, professionalism, image, makeup, job responsibilities...
T4	"In course design, the focus is on etiquette and personal image. As vocational school students, they have basically mastered these skills, such as makeup application, hair styling, posture while walking and sitting, and proper attire. However, they lack the ability to appreciate and create beauty, so they often end up imitating others without truly creating beauty themselves."	Personal image, posture, grooming, aesthetic appreciation, creative ability, imitating others...
T5	"Students are able to notice details such as room layout and the cleanliness of public areas, which are all manifestations of moral cultivation."	Attention to detail, room layout, cleanliness of public areas...

Aesthetic Literacy Objective Dimensions

A total of 121 initial concepts were extracted from the original texts of policy documents and teacher interviews. Considering the redundancy and overlap among the initial concepts, the author refined them to obtain 28 initial categories. To further explore the relationships between the initial categories, they were grouped into subcategories and main categories, ultimately yielding 10 subcategories and 4 main categories. The main categories include aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, aesthetic awareness, and moral cultivation, as detailed in Table 4.

The logical connection among the four is manifested as a dynamically generated structural relationship. Aesthetic knowledge provides the cognitive foundation for the development of aesthetic abilities, while the practice of aesthetic abilities in turn feeds back into the iteration of knowledge. Aesthetic awareness determines how students select their focus within the complex knowledge system, and moral cultivation represents the stable professional competencies and moral qualities that students gradually develop throughout this process. The parallel arrangement of moral cultivation alongside aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, and aesthetic awareness signifies that aesthetic education is not limited to the training of artistic skills, breaking through the previously fragmented state of aesthetic education and moral education.

Table 4
Categories of aesthetic literacy

Table 4

Categories of aesthetic literacy

Main category	Subcategory	Initial category	Initial concept
Aesthetic knowledge	Aesthetic Knowledge	Aesthetic knowledge	Knowledge and skills, aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic experience, cultural understanding, spiritual beauty, visual beauty, linguistic beauty, behavioral beauty, discovery of beauty
	Tea Culture Knowledge	Tea culture knowledge, historical knowledge	Promoting and preserving China's excellent culture, China's excellent traditional culture, the spread of Tea, The origin of Tea
Aesthetic Ability	Aesthetic Sensitivity	Subtle influence, cultural environment, aesthetic experience, aesthetic perception	Subtle influence, affecting one's emotions, elegant taste, aesthetically pleasing campus cultural environment, aesthetic experience, aesthetic perception, experiencing beauty
	Aesthetic Appreciation	Aesthetic judgment, aesthetic appreciation	Appreciation of beauty, appreciation ability, image aesthetics, judgment of dress style, identification of special attire
	Aesthetic Creativity	Imagination, innovative thinking, creative ability, expressing beauty, outputting beauty	Stimulating imagination and innovative thinking, enriching imagination, cultivating innovative thinking, stimulating innovative vitality, innovative ability, cultural innovative thinking, creative practice, creativity, creative ability, imitating others blindly, artistic expression, expressing beauty, embodying aesthetic sense, verbal expression, actively outputting beauty, enhancing aesthetic output attitude, willingness to output expression

Aesthetic Awareness	Aesthetic Concepts	Aesthetic views, cultural views	Moral education, spiritual education, establishing correct aesthetic concepts, possessing a broad perspective and open mind, historical views, ethnic views, national views, cultural views, aesthetic views
	Aesthetic Taste	Interests and hobbies, personality traits	Influences a person's taste, temperament, layout, interests and hobbies, personality traits
Moral Cultivation	Professionalism	Dedication to one's job, professional competence, craftsmanship	Passion, commitment, providing the best service, extra effort, personal demeanor, communication skills, manners and etiquette, customer service, personal demeanor, manners and etiquette, eloquence, professional conduct, professional appearance, makeup, personal image, posture and demeanor, grooming, job responsibilities, respect for others, impartiality, tea ceremony design, clothing coordination, attention to detail, room arrangement, cleanliness of public areas, etiquette exercises
	Moral Cultivation	Personal cultivation, high moral character, cultivation of emotions, nurturing of the soul	Worldview, values, pure morality, enrichment of the spirit, cultivation of emotions, nurturing of the soul, inspiration of the spirit, nurturing of the soul, beauty of the soul, beauty of music and dance, beauty of order, beauty of health, beauty of diligence, beauty of art, character cultivation, artistic expression, physical and mental well-being, vitality, sound character, beauty of moral character, gratitude activities, themed class meetings
	Cultural Confidence	National culture, traditional culture, cultural Identity	Rooted in the excellent traditional culture of China, drawing on the outstanding achievements of human civilization, nurturing deep national emotions, cultural identity, and cultural innovation consciousness, the core values of socialism, the genetic heritage of China's excellent traditional culture, cultural identity, cultural confidence, historical culture, confidence introduction, cultural confidence, national dance learning, classical dance learning, cultural accumulation

Aesthetic Literacy Objectives in the Tea Art Course

The vocational education course "Tea Art" incorporates rich aesthetic literacy objectives. Based on the "National Vocational Skills Standard for Tea Artisans (2018 Edition)" and the "14th Five-Year Plan" textbook "Tea Art Fundamentals", this study uses the six elements of tea art as a basis for classification and summarizes the aesthetic literacy objectives of the vocational education course "Tea Art," as shown in Table 5.

Table 5
Aesthetic Literacy Goals

Tea Art Six Elements	Aesthetic Literacy Dimensions
The Beauty of Tea Leaves	**Aesthetic Knowledge:** Understand the brightness and color tones of dry tea and tea soup; Understand the types, origins, history, and cultural background of tea, as well as tea processing techniques. **Aesthetic Ability:** Be able to taste and distinguish the different flavors of tea, and evaluate its quality; Be able to identify the quality of tea samples by observing the shape of dry tea and tea leaves. **Aesthetic Awareness:** Being able to appreciate the natural beauty and craftsmanship of tea; Having a deep understanding of the taste of tea and being able to appreciate its layers and changes. **Moral Cultivation:** Cultivating a keen sense of observation and a craftsman's spirit through tea aroma appreciation activities.
The Beauty of Tea Masters	**Aesthetic Knowledge:** Understand the requirements for appearance, attire, and language in tea art performances; Master the cultural connotations of social etiquette. **Aesthetic Ability:** Reasonably control posture, sitting posture, walking posture, hand gestures, and facial expressions; Choose appropriate attire, makeup, and hairstyle. **Aesthetic Awareness:** Appreciate the fluidity of the tea master's movements or the elegance of their speech at the tea ceremony. **Moral Cultivation:** Cultivate an awareness of proper etiquette in daily life.

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The Beauty of Tea Utensils	**Aesthetic Knowledge:** Understand the materials, craftsmanship, and cultural significance of tea ware; Learn about the history of tea ware. **Aesthetic Ability:** Be able to select appropriate tea ware for brewing tea and tea art performances. **Aesthetic Awareness:** Have a basic understanding of the aesthetic value and cultural significance of tea ware; Understand the balance between functionality and aesthetics in tea ware. **Moral Cultivation:** Cultivate one's character through the use and appreciation of tea ware; Develop a respect for tradition and a commitment to excellence.
The Beauty of Tea Water	**Aesthetic Knowledge:** Understand the impact of tea-to-water ratio, water temperature, and water quality on the quality of tea soup. **Aesthetic Ability:** Be able to optimize the taste of tea soup by adjusting the tea-to-water ratio and water temperature. **Aesthetic Awareness:** Recognize the impact of water quality and water temperature on tea soup. **Moral Cultivation:** Develop rigorous and standardized operating habits; Cultivate keen observation skills through tea brewing activities.
The Beauty of Tea Ceremony	**Aesthetic Knowledge:** Master the techniques and steps of tea ceremony performance and understand the cultural connotations behind them. **Aesthetic Ability:** Be able to independently perform tea ceremony using a glass cup, purple clay teapot, or covered bowl; **Aesthetic Awareness:** Appreciate the three stages of tea ceremony performance: skill through practice, standardization and refinement, and expression of spirit and charm. **Moral Cultivation:** Strengthen a sense of professional mission and awareness of traditional cultural heritage.

| The Beauty of Tea Ambiance	**Aesthetic Knowledge:** Understand the impact of environment, artistic conception, and state of mind on the tea tasting experience. **Aesthetic Ability:** Be able to choose the right environment and atmosphere to enhance the tea tasting experience. **Aesthetic Awareness:** Have a basic understanding of the aesthetic value of the tea tasting environment. **Moral Cultivation:** Cultivate a harmonious attitude towards life by creating a suitable tea tasting environment.

Situational Teaching Design Oriented Toward Cultivating Aesthetic Literacy

Teaching Design

A Model for Cultivating Aesthetic Literacy in Situational Teaching. This study reviewed Li Jilin's literature on the relationship between Situational Teaching methods and aesthetic literacy. By combining the types of situational teaching and the four characteristics of authenticity, emotion, beauty, and thought, a model for cultivating aesthetic literacy through situational teaching has been constructed, as shown in Figure 1. Situational teaching methods for cultivating aesthetic literacy can be divided into three major stages.

Figure 1

Model of Situational Teaching for Cultivating Students' Aesthetic Literacy
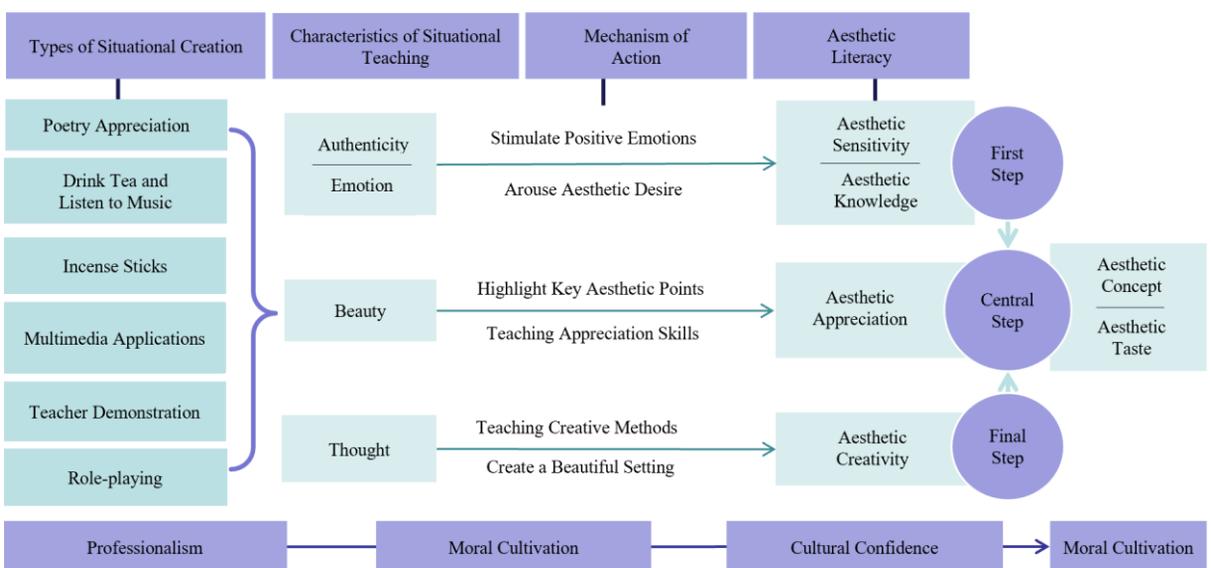
The first step is to focus on cultivating students' aesthetic sensitivity. Without the ability to perceive beauty, one cannot appreciate it, let alone create it. Therefore, cultivating students' ability to perceive beauty through its outward manifestations is the foundation of aesthetic education (Li, 2010). How can students be made to feel deeply involved in the learning process? First, the imagery must be vivid (authentic), visible, and audible, so that students can form a genuine sense of connection. Second, teachers should use sincere emotions to move students (emotion), reducing psychological distance and fostering emotional resonance, thereby achieving emotional engagement. This process enhances students' aesthetic perception. In the context, students develop positive emotions, which stimulate their aesthetic desires. This not only accelerates their understanding and internalization of knowledge but also provides a solid foundation for transforming learned knowledge into practical action.

The central step is to enhance students' aesthetic appreciation. To make the content of situational teaching richer and more in-depth, teachers need to start from the teaching objectives and carefully design each aesthetically pleasing situation (beauty) in the teaching process, ensuring that they all closely revolve around the teaching objectives. Teachers should highlight the key points of aesthetics, impart appreciation knowledge, and better guide students to deeply understand the teaching content, thereby enhancing their aesthetic appreciation.

The final step is to enhance students' aesthetic creativity. A broad and profound artistic conception can stimulate students' imagination (thought). Students can provide feedback on their imagination to teachers during the learning process. Teachers can then teach students creative methods based on their feedback, strive to create beautiful contexts for students, and engage in innovative practices to enhance students' aesthetic creativity.

From these three stages, it is evident that students' learning is not merely about acquiring knowledge but also involves cultural cultivation and emotional immersion (Li, 1997). Students gradually internalize what they have learned and experienced, enriching their spiritual world and forming relatively stable aesthetic views and tastes. The development of moral cultivation also depends on teachers' guidance and example. As cultural bridges and value guides, teachers integrate aesthetic education with moral education, enabling students to enhance their moral cultivation through subtle influence.

The teaching process of aesthetic literacy in situational teaching. In the overall structure of the teaching process, the three stages of pre-class situational preparation, in-class situational experience, and post-class situational extension are closely linked, together forming a complete chain of teaching processes, each of which plays an irreplaceable key role, as shown in Figure 2.

Pre-class situation preparation consists of three main parts: collaborative division of labor, post task, and create situation. Collaborative division of labor refers to students clarifying their tasks before class. Post task refers to teachers assigning specific tasks to students via the Learning Pass app, guiding them to engage in independent learning before class. Create situation refers to creating an aesthetically pleasing teaching scenario that facilitates students' acquisition and internalization of knowledge in class.

In-class situation experience includes six parts: stimulate, teach, practice, integrate, showcase and evaluate. Stimulation and introduction refers to teachers introducing course content in an interesting way at the beginning of class to stimulate students' positive emotions and arouse their aesthetic desires. Teaching refers to teachers highlighting aesthetic points and imparting appreciation

knowledge during the explanation process. Practice guidance refers to students practicing according to the teacher's explanation and demonstration, with teachers providing guidance and promptly correcting incorrect operations. Integration involves students enhancing their cooperative skills through group role-playing. Showcase involves students demonstrating their aesthetic output through performances. Evaluation and summary involve teachers and students providing diverse feedback on the presented content and summarizing key aesthetic knowledge and skills.

Post-class situation extension includes three parts: assignment feedback, exhibiting works, and sharing. Assignment feedback refers to teachers providing targeted comments on students' homework. Exhibiting works involves showcasing students' work in campus cultural settings such as classroom cultural walls and bulletin boards to create an "aesthetic" atmosphere. Sharing refers to utilizing third-party platforms for learning exchanges with more people to broaden aesthetic horizons.

Figure 2

Teaching Process Design Diagram
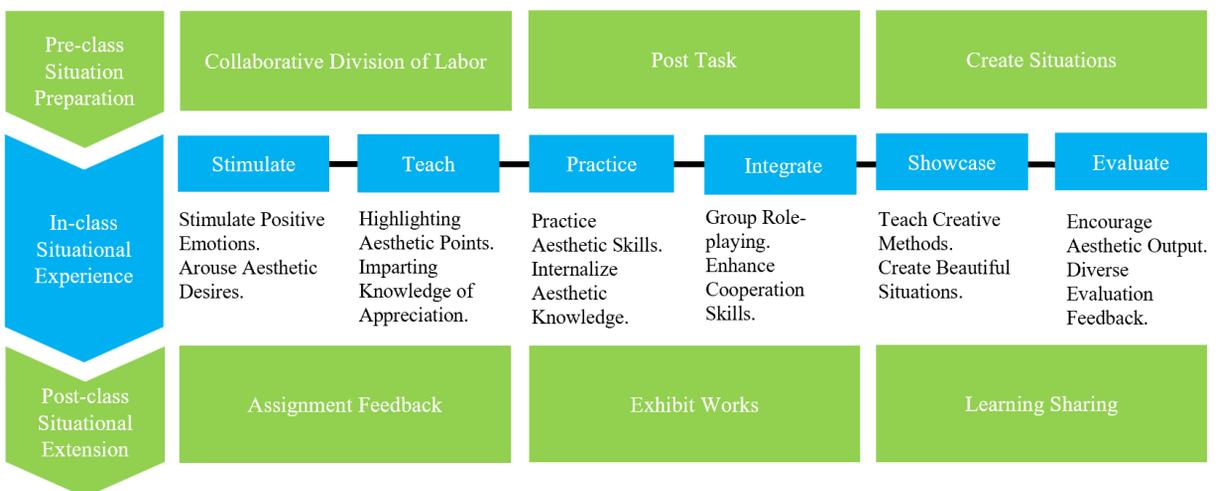
Teaching Implementation

The "Tea Art" course is a required professional course for the Tourism major at Zhuhai First Vocational School and a general elective course for the entire school. It is typically offered in the second year of vocational school and is equipped with a tea art training room for students to practice hands-on skills. This study focuses the instructional content on the final four class periods of this course, specifically Project 8 Task 4: Tea beverage mixing, and conducts two rounds of action research. The two rounds of action research were used to verify the effectiveness of the teaching models and processes in cultivating aesthetic literacy.

First round of action research. Class Information: The teaching content is creative fruit tea beverage mixing. The class time is 2024.06.07, 90 minutes.

Teaching Objectives: In Knowledge and Skills: Students will master the usage method of the cocktail shaker and the production process of mixed tea beverages. In Process and Methods:

Students will experience the process from creative conception to practical production. In Emotion, Attitude, and Values: To cultivate students' interest in and respect for Chinese tea culture, and enhance cultural confidence. In Aesthetic Literacy: Students will understand the visual effects of different colors in mixed tea beverages and be able to create aesthetically pleasing mixed fruit tea beverages from aspects such as color coordination and flavor balance.

Key and Difficult Teaching Points: The key points are the usage method of the cocktail shaker, and color coordination and flavor balance in mixed tea beverage production. The difficult point is guiding students to create aesthetically pleasing mixed fruit tea beverages from aspects such as color coordination and flavor balance.

Second round of action research. Class Information: The teaching content is creative milk tea beverage mixing. The class time is 2024.06.14, 90 minutes.

Teaching Objectives: In Knowledge and Skills: Proficiently master the judgment methods for black tea infusion quality, including the tea sommelier evaluation method and the international milk-addition evaluation method. In Process and Methods: Review black tea evaluation methods and experience the aesthetic norms of tea art operations in practice. In Emotion, Attitude, and Values: Stimulate students' strong interest in tea culture and enhance cultural confidence. In Aesthetic Literacy: Guide students to explore and enhance aesthetic creativity.

Key and Difficult Teaching Points: The key points are enabling students to master the judgment methods for black tea infusion quality, explaining the specific methods from creative source to transformation, and improving students' aesthetic creativity. The difficult point is stimulating students' innovative thinking and enabling students to organically integrate cultural elements, personal creativity, and tea art aesthetics.

Implementation Results

Pre- and Post-Test Comparison. To verify the effectiveness of cultivating students' aesthetic qualities, questionnaires were distributed to students before and after the two rounds of action research. Forty-two evaluation forms were collected online. After matching the pre- and post-test data, the sample size was 41 people. The data analysis is shown in Table 8.

As shown in the table, prior to the teaching practice, the mean aesthetic knowledge score of the students was 3.89. After two rounds of teaching practice, the mean score was 4.51, representing a significant increase of 0.62. Tea culture knowledge increased by 0.51, with $p < 0.05$, indicating a significant difference. This suggests that the students' aesthetic knowledge has been effectively enhanced. In terms of aesthetic ability, aesthetic perception, aesthetic appreciation, and aesthetic creativity increased by 0.34, 0.63, and 0.61, respectively, with $p < 0.05$, indicating significant differences. This suggests that students' aesthetic abilities have improved. In terms of aesthetic awareness, aesthetic taste increased by 0.39, with $p < 0.05$. In terms of moral cultivation, professional spirit and cultural confidence increased by 0.53 and 0.39, respectively, with significant differences. However, students' aesthetic concepts and moral cultivation did not increase, with $p > 0.05$, indicating no significant differences.

Table 6
Results of paired sample T-tests

Dimension	Test Variable	Sample Size	Mean		Mean Difference	P
			Pre-Test	Post-Test		
Aesthetic Knowledge	Aesthetics Knowledge	41	3.89	4.51	0.62	0.011
	Tea Culture Knowledge	41	3.95	4.46	0.51	0.001
Aesthetic Ability	Aesthetic Perception	41	4.12	4.46	0.34	0.037
	Aesthetic Appreciation	41	4.00	4.37	0.63	0.007
	Aesthetic Creativity	41	3.88	4.49	0.61	0.003
Aesthetic Awareness	Aesthetic Concepts	41	4.49	4.34	-0.15	0.393
	Aesthetic Taste	41	4.05	4.44	0.39	0.041
Moral Cultivation	Professional Spirit	41	3.88	4.41	0.53	0.000
	Moral Cultivation	41	4.41	4.37	-0.04	0.767
	Cultural Confidence	41	4.02	4.41	0.39	0.014

Practical Assessment Score Comparison. In both teaching practices, the same scoring sheet was used for the practical assessment, consisting of two scoring sheets: one for intergroup scoring and one for teacher scoring. The intergroup scoring sheet was out of 70 points, and the teacher scoring sheet was out of 100 points. By measuring the group score difference, the overall change in the aesthetic literacy of the group members was determined.

The groups with the largest score differences among teachers were Group 8 (10 points), Group 1 (9 points), and Group 9 (9 points). These three groups also made significant progress in peer

evaluations between groups (with score differences of 9 points, 10 points, and 11 points). This indicates that these groups gained a deeper understanding and practical application of the aesthetic-related knowledge emphasized by the teacher in the "Tea Art" course during the second class. The groups with smaller differences in teacher scores were Group 2 (5 points), Group 4 (4 points), and Group 7 (5 points). The intergroup peer evaluation score differences for these three groups were 9 points, 3 points, and 3 points, respectively. All nine groups showed improvements in both intergroup peer evaluation and teacher evaluation scores, indicating that the use of situational teaching methods in the "Tea Art" course to cultivate students' aesthetic literacy is highly effective.

Table 7
Practical Assessment Score Comparison

Scoring Sheet	Intergroup Scoring			Teacher Scoring		
Group	First Lesson Score	Second Lesson Score	Point Difference	First Lesson Score	Second Lesson Score	Point Difference
Group 1	52	62	10	81	90	9
Group 2	59	68	9	83	88	5
Group 3	50	62	12	79	86	7
Group 4	48	51	3	77	81	4
Group 5	55	66	11	85	92	7
Group 6	52	59	7	81	88	7
Group 7	55	58	3	80	85	5
Group 8	57	68	9	86	96	10
Group 9	49	60	11	79	88	9

The groups with the largest score differences among teachers were Group 8 (10 points), Group 1 (9 points), and Group 9 (9 points). These three groups also made significant progress in peer evaluations between groups (with score differences of 9 points, 10 points, and 11 points). This indicates that these groups gained a deeper understanding and practical application of the aesthetic-related knowledge emphasized by the teacher in the "Tea Art" course during the second class. The groups with smaller differences in teacher scores were Group 2 (5 points), Group 4 (4 points), and Group 7 (5 points). The intergroup peer evaluation score differences for these three groups were 9

points, 3 points, and 3 points, respectively. All nine groups showed improvements in both intergroup peer evaluation and teacher evaluation scores, indicating that the use of situational teaching methods in the "Tea Art" course to cultivate students' aesthetic literacy is highly effective.

Teaching Optimization Recommendations.

In terms of Pre-class situation preparation. Systematically organize teaching materials. Teachers should prepare a list of materials for each group in advance and set up a supply of spare materials on the workbench to meet unexpected needs, ensuring the smooth running of the practical session. Establish a group leader responsibility system. Group leaders should supervise group members in preparing materials, cultivating a sense of responsibility and teamwork habits.

In terms of In-class situation experience. Enhance students' emotional experiences. Teachers should use hand gestures to illustrate key operational points during explanations and use eye contact to identify signs of confusion among students. During practical sessions, teachers should increase patrols, immediately use hand gestures to point out minor errors, pause for collective demonstrations when common issues arise, and immediately praise innovative approaches. Reasonably adjust each stage of the teaching process. Teachers should increase the time allocated for group cooperative exploration, invite tea art instructors into the classroom to create a dual-teacher classroom, and ensure that teaching content meets both curriculum standards and industry demands.

In post-class Post-class situation extension. Set up a "mobile aesthetics wall" in the classroom, rotating group works weekly, with QR codes linking to detailed explanatory videos, and interacting with other works on Xiaohongshu.

Regularly organize students to visit industrial bases for on-site inspections, transforming industry-standard aesthetic criteria into learning outcomes.

Conclusions and Prospects

Research Conclusions

This study investigates the teaching design and application of situational teaching methods in the cultivation of students' aesthetic literacy in vocational school tea art courses. After exploring the cultivation model and teaching process of aesthetic literacy under situational teaching, two rounds of action research were conducted to investigate the teaching effectiveness of situational teaching methods in cultivating students' aesthetic literacy. The following conclusions were drawn:

First, the aesthetic literacy assessment scale was improved. Previous studies primarily borrowed Du Wei's proposed structure of aesthetic literacy for questionnaire design, which included three dimensions: aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, and aesthetic awareness. This study found that China's aesthetic education policies frequently mention expressions related to moral cultivation. Using NVivo to analyze aesthetic education policy texts and teacher interview texts, the dimension of moral cultivation was added, forming four dimensions: aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, aesthetic awareness, moral cultivation. These four dimensions are further broken down into ten sub-dimensions: aesthetic knowledge, tea culture knowledge, aesthetic sensitivity, aesthetic appreciation, aesthetic creativity, aesthetic concepts, aesthetic tastes, professionalism, professional spirit, moral cultivation, and cultural confidence.

Second, the situational teaching method is practical for designing teaching processes aimed at enhancing students' aesthetic literacy. By reviewing relevant literature by Li Jilin and combining the unique advantages of situational teaching with different types of situational creation, a model and teaching process for cultivating aesthetic literacy through situational teaching were established. After two rounds of action research in teaching design and implementation, it was verified that this teaching process provides clear design guidelines for teaching and is highly practical.

Third, the application of situational teaching methods in tea art courses has a significant effect on enhancing students' aesthetic literacy. Through pre- and post-survey comparisons and comparisons of students' practical assessment scores across two rounds, it was found that students achieved improvements in all four dimensions: aesthetic knowledge, aesthetic ability, aesthetic awareness, and moral cultivation.

Research Prospects

This paper validates the teaching effectiveness of situational teaching in cultivating students' aesthetic literacy, but there are still areas for further research.

First, the study only used one class as the research subject, resulting in a small sample size. In future research, it is necessary to conduct teaching practices in multiple classes across several vocational schools. Second, teaching outcomes do not show significant changes in the short term. In future research, it is essential to increase the duration of teaching practices, with at least half a semester dedicated to teaching design and implementation. Third, the scale development methodology requires refinement. In the preliminary phase of this study, NVIVO was used to conduct three-level coding of aesthetic education policy texts and teacher interview texts, resulting in the preliminary construction of four dimensions of the aesthetic literacy scale. However, the singularity of qualitative coding may limit the validity of dimension construction. Future research could employ the Delphi method to conduct three rounds of expert consultations to refine the indicator system, ultimately developing an assessment tool that combines theoretical depth with statistical reliability.

Declaration of competing interest

The authors declared no potential conflicts of interest with respect to the research, authorship, and/or publication of this article.

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