

# **A Research of Art Action Curriculum which Applied Problem-Based Learning Strategy for Building Civil Aesthetic of Universities' Students**

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## **Abstract**

Concept of “Civil Aesthetics” has been called out attentions to the public in recent years in Taiwan due to constructing a wonderful visual environment needs involvement of individual citizens. However, for general college students, who may have potential motivations to practice and further revolutionize the concept of “civil aesthetics”, how to make them to deeply root this concept through art curriculums becomes an important issue for studying. By taking college students as subject and a hundred-year-old street as research site, as well as using method of action research, this study aims to 1) design action art curriculums related to theme of artistic implementation in communities, through investigating an old street's various cultural images, and 2) discover possibilities of artistic implementation in communities by taking “Problem-Based Learning” as teaching strategy. Results of this study include 1) action art curriculums of artistic implementation in communities may be able to reflect college students' concern and

willing of making revolutions about community environments, and 2) teaching strategy of “Problem-Based Learning” may be able to initiate students’ motivations in multiple directions in learning how art can make a change for communities.

*Keywords: Art Education, Problem-Based Learning, Civil Aesthetics, Action Research, Art Action Curriculum*

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## 1. Research Motivation and Objective

Nowadays, in the society of Taiwan, the publicity of art is constantly discussed. The issues of art and public domain are getting more attentions. Art gradually merged into communities, which solicited a series of problems regarding art industry development, urban plans, ecological landscapes, sustainable management, aesthetic ethics (Art and Public Domain Conference, 2007). In Taiwan, the “National Development – Challenging 2008” project listed “cultural and creativity industries” as the main item for development (cultural and creativity industries official site, 2007), hoped to add cultural and art elements to product development through knowledge and creativity, and to build up new values and competitiveness of the society. Basically, the concepts of art publicity, cultural and creativity industries, or civic aesthetics, etc., all focus on art learning, perception of art, and living apprehension. Based on the stance of art education, it was considered that university education generally focused on the development of “professional” fields, and limited art and cultural cultivation to general education courses. The art courses of general education mainly belong to appreciation domain. University students living in this versatile atmosphere of art trends are facing the art living phenomenon: many art festivals, deserted spaces transformed into exhibition locations, street art performances, etc. Can students internalize their art learning? Can they become living art practitioners? These are the issues fairly concerned by teachers.

Featherstone (1991) suggested that modern cultural consumption has an important attribute, which implies “the aestheticization of everyday life”. The aestheticization of everyday life includes three

sociological meanings: 1. art can appear in any place, any thing, any product in public culture; 2. individuals mold their daily lives into works of art, they are interested in aesthetic consumption life and the pursuit and perception of taste; 3. the daily life in a modern society is full of various symbols and images. Art can be the produce and reproduce processes. It can not be excluded from the everyday life (Liu, 2000: 95–104). Under the concept of cultural consumption, the researcher of this study considered university's art education course should move towards the development of “the aestheticization of everyday life” proposed by Featherstone. We should look for art learning subjects in our everyday lives. The art aesthetic attitude should be applied directly to the ordinary life. In other words, it is an attitude taken from and applied to our everyday lives.

We opened a “culture and art: creativity industry” course in the general education in art in the university, which has continued for 4 semesters. In one hand, we accumulated many practical experiences. On the other hand, we also felt that students had the needs for art and culture experiences in their practical livings. So we proposed an art action curriculum, hoped to integrate the resources of art, culture, and local industries through community art, and to connect with local historical and cultural groups. With the problem-based learning teaching strategy, we hoped to lead students to explore and experience community culture more deeply, and to make art learning no longer a “smart ambience” but a better chance to apply theories to living environments.

Based on the above backgrounds and reasons, the motivation and objective of this study are as follows:

## **1.1. Research Motivation**

### **1.1.1. To Cultivate Students' Civic Aesthetics Consciousness**

Council for Cultural Affairs once proposed to activate the “cultural civic right” movement, and pursued the reconstruction of a culture and aesthetic civic collective society (Chen, 2004a). The “civic aesthetics” promotion is the concept extended from the “civic cultural right”. We can find various visual images existing around us in our daily lives. Either in the form of software or hardware, two- or three-dimensional,

small or large, the meanings of their existence seem to decide the aesthetic taste and level of the public. A wonderful construction of visual environment needs the attribution from all students, they should even see this as their compulsory commitment, and fulfill it through the concern and practice of “beauty”.

### **1.1.2. To Experience Living Aesthetics of Local Community Life**

Lefebvre (1991:144) mentioned that place is not only a natural location, it is pervaded by the relationship between society and culture as well. London (1994) further pointed out that, school education nowadays depended overly on expensive visual equipment to introduce things happening outside classrooms, but rarely took students outdoor to experience and explore their living environments. These living environments actually have more resources and are more inspiring than those clapped-out, segmented, and distant second-hand information. Klein (1992) pointed out that many educational problems were formed because school education could not connect students with their living environments properly. Many scholars of art education advocated that art education courses must promote community participation more aggressively, and it is necessary to apply community resources to increasing the variety and diversity of the activities.

## **1.2. Research Objectives**

Based on the above backgrounds and motivation, the objectives of this study are:

- (1) Design the Art Action Curriculum Based on the Issue of “Art involvement Community.”
- (2) Use “Problem-Based Learning” as the Teaching Strategy to Investigate the Possibility of “Art Involvement Community.”

## **2. Literature Reviews**

### **2.1. Civic Aesthetics Consciousness**

Council for Cultural Affairs proposed “cultural civic right” movement which pursued the reconstruction of a culture and aesthetic

civic collective society (Council for Cultural Affairs, 2004). What is the so-called “cultural civic right”? Chen (2004a) mentioned three main pursuits: 1. the allegation of every citizen on culture and way of living should be respected; 2. all citizens should share and maintain social resources of culture and art; 3. all citizens have the duties to promote their qualities of culture and art. From the view point of cultural civic right, we can find that Taiwan has practiced so called economical citizen and political citizen either economically or politically. Only the practice on the “culture” level is still an issue being neglected.

The promotion of “civic aesthetics” is the concept extended from “civic cultural right. The practice of “civic aesthetics” is to promote the taste of living aesthetics of visual environment and to integrate art and cultural ecology (Chen, 2004b). Indeed, the whole environment in Taiwan still lacks of a taste of living aesthetics for visual environment. People in Taiwan are lack of the pursuit for environmental living aesthetics. Moreover, there is still not enough population of art and culture consumption to integrate the art and cultural ecology. Many people are art illiterate. The key point is the lack of popularity of self consciousness on civic aesthetics.

Due to this reason, we set up this art action curriculum to promote the “civic aesthetics movement”, hoped to lead students to learn how to organize appropriate culture visiting routes by themselves, to practically promote the fine culture aesthetic experience, and to merge art and cultural experiences into everyday lives. We also hoped to provoke students’ aesthetic consciousness through latent culture indulgence and to internalize their perception of the outer environment into a civic responsibility.

## **2.2. Application of Teaching Method**

This course applied “built environment art education” teaching method and “problem-based learning” teaching strategy. The content is introduced below:

### **2.2.1. Built Environment Art Education Teaching Method**

The “built environment art education” teaching method combines art, aesthetics, architecture, technology, material, design, history, ecology, and philosophy, and sees the design environment as a

performance of social meaning (Hicks & King, 1999). The environment art education has been practiced for years in U.S.A., U.K., or Canada. They focused on infusing the views of art involvement environment education course. During the process, art education played a constructive role which helped communities to develop with the perception of local areas. We integrated teaching methods of Guinan (1999), McFee & Degge (1977), and Guilfoil (1986) to provide references for curriculum design.

### **(1) Guinan's Narrative Teaching Method**

Guinan (1999) proposed the "narrative" teaching method for environment art and curriculum design. Narration means to express an event or an experience, uses a story as a platform, and provides texts relating to history, politics, society, or daily conversation for discussion. This study applied Guinan's narrative teaching method to surveying the elderly in the community. Students were divided into groups to interview owners of the 100-year old stores in the Old Street. They collected the development history of the Old Street, and built the original feature of the Old Street with the process of interviews.

### **(2) Mapping and Building Teaching Methods of McFee & Degge and Guilfoil**

McFee & Degge (1977) and Guilfoil (1986) suggested, the process of art education is derived from the experiences of "mapping" and "building". The process includes: observation-oriented activities, history research, and collection of documents of community changes. The experience of "mapping" aims to lead students to search the landmark and the symbolic imagery of the community, and to organize the relationship between themselves and the community environment. "Building" is to transform an abstract criticism into a concrete building through the concept of architecture, and to present it with the three-dimensional architecture method.

#### **2.2.2. "Problem-Based Learning" Teaching Strategy**

Problem-based learning<sup>1</sup> (PBL) is a type of teaching strategy. Chen (2007) argued, the teaching strategy could be divided into 6

1 Problem-based learning began from Case Western University, USA, in 1950s and McMaster University, Canada, in 1960s (Barrows & Tamblyn, 1980). The bases of PBL are discovery learning and case-study. PBL created a more appropriate learning goal for learners and was gradually promoted to other countries during the period of 1970 to 1980.

steps in the practicing process: learners are required to solve a real problem, to carry out group discussions and analyses, group members collect and share relevant information, group members propose feasible solutions, group members submit problem reports, and to learn to assess and reflect, etc. Many scholars (Barell, 2006; Edens, 2000; Tandogan & Orhan, 2007) argued, PBL is to place learners in a meaningful learning context, and the learning focus is to solve problems in the authentic context.

Relevant documents (Tanner, 1997; Townsend, 1997; Wilkerson & Gijsselaers, 1996; Woods, 1994; Young, 1998) on PBL learning suggested there are several features regarding instructors, learners, and learning process:

- (1) instructors—playing the role of “catalysis”,
- (2) learners—emphasizing on their “activeness”,
- (3) curriculum design—the learning focus is “problem” design,
- (4) teaching style—emphasizing on group discussion,
- (5) learning process—emphasizing on “dialogue”.

Integrating the above teaching features, which were applied to the curriculum design of our course, we considered: 1. the instructor is also the researcher, who plays the role of a course leader; 2. students are the learning subjects of the course, it is necessary to communicate thoroughly with them and require them to avoid traditional pattern of passive thinking; 3. the curriculum design uses problems in authentic context to stimulate students to analyze problems and to learn how to solve; 4. the major teaching style will be group discussions and emphasize inter-group discussions; 5. the learning process will focus on discussions and interactions of students.

### **3. Research Method and Process**

#### **3.1. Research Method**

This study referred to the action research process proposed by Tsai (2000) as the development framework. Action research is a research method full of development and application potentials in the modern curriculum and teaching field. It is a “practice-oriented”

course teaching method, which is highly emphasized and affirmed by researchers in the education field (Jen, 2003). The features of action research are “action practice”, “criticism and reflection”, “cooperation”, “practice and improvement”, which intend to reduce the diversity between “theory” and “practice. The purpose of using action research in this study was because that the course was an exploratory course, and the researcher hoped to practice the theory continuously to examine the fitability of this course by reflecting the process.

## **3.2. Research Subjects**

### **3.2.1. Teaching Subjects**

The subjects were the students who selected the freshman course of general education of art taught by the researcher. There were 55 students in the class, and they were divided into 6 groups. The students came from different academic backgrounds, such Science, Engineering, and Arts.

### **3.2.2. Teaching Locus**

Chung-Shan Road was called the “First Street” in the Japanese colonial time. It is about 100 meters away from our school. This Old Street was the origin of Hu-Wei town, and it was an important sugar manufacturing center at that time. The scale of this Old Street although is not as large as those in Ta-Si in Tao-Yuan County or in San-Sia in Taipei County, it still holds the importance and research value in the modern township development history of Taiwan. Since our school is located nearby the Old Street, its development has been an important issue that teachers and students of our school all care about.

## **3.3. Research Procedure**

### **3.3.1. Plan a Feasible Teaching Project**

The course lasted for 17 weeks. This course emphasized the problem presentation in the real context. Students had 4 weeks time to walk around the Old Street and carry out interviews. They were required to submit practical solutions based on the thinking of “art involvement”, “culture and creativity”, and “industrialization”. The following chart shows the practice logic and acting features of this course:

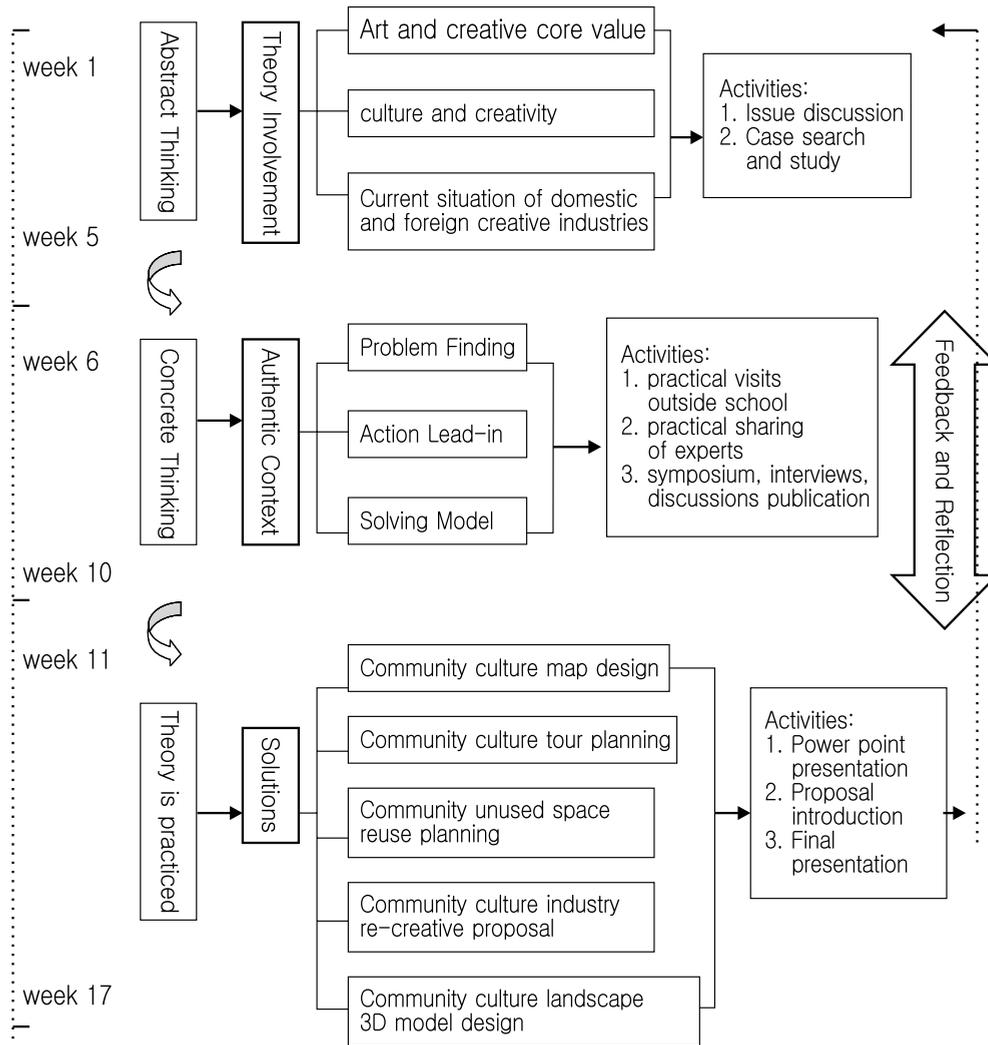


Figure 1 Development Diagram of Curriculum Concept

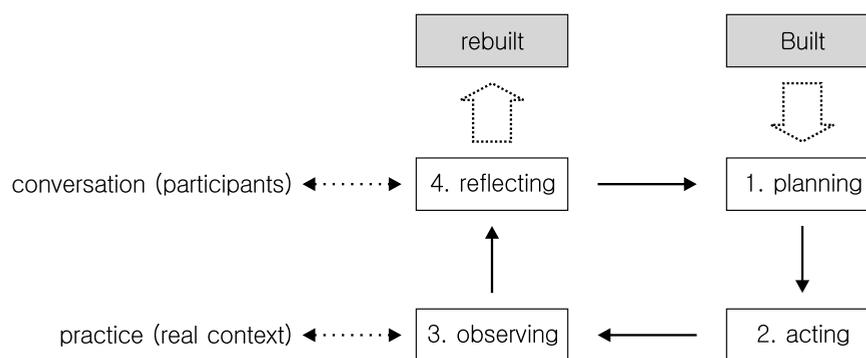
### 3.3.2. Search for Supports from School Team

Because this course was a general education course, which used large class teaching, it was confusing to the researcher that how to refine the course instruction and take care of the learning conditions of all students in class, while facing such a large amount of students. Fortunately, the school was promoting the teaching excellence project, and encouraged teachers to apply for teaching assistants (TA). Therefore, there were two TA who were graduate students from the art

and culture related fields assisting this course. They were in charge of: leading group discussions, assessing students' assignments, regularly interacting with students on the blog, doing class observation and recording, assisting pre- and post-class data collection.

### 3.3.3. Practice Action Plan

An action research is a "spiral and circular" model, which comprises 4 basic elements: planning, acting, observing, and reflecting. After reflecting, it will return to the planning stage (re-planning). The relationships among the 4 elements are shown as Figure 2. There were 4 important modules in this course when it proceeded to the real problem locus. Through the process of planning, acting, observing, and reflecting, the 4 modules proposed a series of feasible solutions to each problem locus. The acting points in the real context are shown as Table 1:



**Figure 2 Relationship among elements in the process**

Source: adopted from Grundy & Kemmis, 1981:32

**Table 1 The acting, observing, reflecting points in the real context of this course**

Sites	acting/observing point	Problem solving point	Reflecting point
Hu-Wei International Pi-Li Puppetry	1. Investigate the current situation of International Pili Puppetry. 2. How did International Pili Puppetry revive the traditional industry?	The successful model of International Pili Puppetry. How to apply its success to other declining industries of Hu-Wei Town?	To use the successful model of International Pili Puppetry to the 100-year old stores in the Old Street.

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North Old Street	1. Investigate the development of the three art and cultural museums located in the North Old Street. 2. Investigate their future development and possibilities for reuse.	Refer to domestic and foreign cases, plan a suitable imagery space for Chung-Shan street in Hu-Wei Town.	Propose improvement projects to the three museums for the reference of next action plan.
South Old Street	1. Investigate the deserted space of Taiwan Sugar Plant. 2. Interview the staff of TSP, consider feasible strategies to reform TSP industry.	Think how to use "art involvement" method to operate the deserted space of Taiwan Sugar Plant.	The improvement proposal of using tourism to rebuild TSP industry can be used for the reference of next action plan.
Central Old Street	1. Interview 100-year old stores. 2. Understand industry features of the 100-year old stores and suggest street-building model.	How to build the Old Street? The practical method and strategy.	The 100-year old stores on the Old Street are waning. They can be revived by creativity.

Source: this study

### 3.3.4. Assessment, Record, and Data Analysis

The data of this study was encoded according to their attributes. They were used for qualitative analysis and the basis of improvements for future courses. The data were categorized into: 1. TAs' observations; 2. students' discussion records; 3. students' group assignments.

### 3.3.5. Publication

After the course finished, the students held their final presentations in the courtyard of the art center of the school, so as to let other students have the chance to observe and learn. This curriculum design was also sponsored by Ministry of Education under the project of the 2007 Excellent General Education Courses. The course outline and teaching results would be shared with other university teachers in the General Education Courses Meeting of Ministry of Education.

## 4. Results and Suggestions

The data was cross-investigated by the research problems with the triangulation method, and made conclusions on “evaluation and reflection on teaching effects” and “solutions and future efforts to teaching problems”.

### 4.1. Evaluation and Reflection on Teaching Effects

#### 4.1.1. The Action Art Curriculum of “Art Involvement Community” Could Reflect the Concerns for Community Environment and the Revolutionary Power of University Students.

In general, university students felt the learning of art provided by general education was too distant and too serious. They could not learn art from everyday lives, and could not apply what they learnt to their everyday lives either, not to mention to practice living aesthetics. The action art curriculum “art involvement community” helped students to practice theories, to face real life problems, to exercise the art concepts they learnt to the real environment, to care for the community environment, and to perform the innovating power. The qualitative data were extracted and cited below as the proof.

##### (1) TAs' Observations

TAs expressed on their class teaching diaries, that there were actual benefits from the course, and they also quoted some thoughts about how art could be practically applied. For instance:

This is my first time to be a TA .....but it is a precious opportunity. In the past, we rarely had the chance to face the problems of art industry so directly, to get involved in the community life, and to face the problem in the real context (Source: TA-1-20070315).

Through the practical visits, discussions on real problems, in general, students felt art learning could be very lively ...we searched all domestic and foreign cases of art rebuilt streets, integrated all feasible schemes, hoped to apply those successful schemes to rebuilding the Old Street around us (Source: TA-2-20070315).

##### (2) Students' Discussion Records

Many records were collected from students' group discussions and community field works. Here were the extracted records of the

SWOT analysis of the Old Street (Table 2 and 3), which indicated the detail observations and solutions of the students:

**Table 2 Student group assignments – SWOT analysis of Old Street**

<p>internal inspection--Strengths</p> <p>1. <u>there are many historic landscapes in Chung-Shan Road.</u></p> <p>2. the culture history is very intensive in the Old Street.</p>	<p>internal inspection--Weakness</p> <p>1. <u>the historic monuments are not preserved and seriously damaged.</u></p> <p>2. residents are pessimistic about rebuilding the street.</p>
<p>external inspection--Opportunities</p> <p>1. <u>use the imagery of puppetry to create the unique feature of the Old Street.</u></p> <p>2. <u>use the marketing of puppet festival, sugar industry culture festival, and mid autumn culture festival of Yunlin County to promote the features of the Old Street.</u></p>	<p>external inspection--Threats</p> <p>1. too many famous Old Streets in Taiwan, and this one is rarely known.</p> <p>2. <u>surrounding traffics are lack of planning, disconnection between sightseeing spots, difficult to have a whole plan.</u> (Source: SD-B-20070416)</p>

**Table 3 Student group assignments – resource analysis for rebuilding Old Street**

<p>Analysis of Reusable Resources of Old Street</p>
<p>1. Taiwan Sugar Plant's old dormitories: <u>transform the space to B&amp;B, to make tourists stay longer and promote the fashion of weekend break.</u></p> <p>2. Taiwan Sugar Plant: <u>publicize the sugar manufacturing process, tourists can DIY to make sugar or ice.</u></p> <p>3. railway and deserted station: <u>reform the small train railway, tourists can come and enjoy a railway journey.</u></p> <p style="text-align: right;">(Source: SD-E-20070416)</p>

### (3) Students' Group Assignments

From students' group assignments, it was found that they walked through the street, visited and interviewed the elderly and the 100-year old stores, and then proposed some projects intending to transform the current situation in their conversation process. For example:

Today we interviewed Mr. Cheng Ching, he was once a famous film sign painter in Hu-Wei area. .... Currently, he runs a traditional gallery (Figure 3), which is a bit messy and clapped-out, but it could be changed into a film sign museum after some reorganization. It could be transformed into a part of the ecological museums after rebuilding the Old Street. (Source: SW-B-20070423)



**Figure 3** A view from the gallery of Mr. Cheng (Source: SW-B-20070423)

Today, the 100-year old store which we interviewed was the signet store on the North Old Street. This store was very famous in the Japanese colonial time. ... Nowadays, computer lettering has replaced traditional lettering, there is nearly no space for this 100-year old store to survive. ... Our group investigated and discussed the case, and considered that the store could be transformed into a tourism style signet store. It can carve seals with puppetry patterns to match the theme of the puppetry museum (Figure 4). In one hand, this can show off the feature of the store, on the other hand, it creates a brand for the store. (Source: SW-C-20070423)



**Figure 4** Stamp with the puppetry pattern (Source: SW-C-20070423)

#### **(4) Instructor's Reflection**

The creation and learning of art is also a process of technology integration. The art experience can integrate learning in different

fields. Using “community’s old street” as the teaching material, directly applying the thinking of art industry, art creation, and “art involvement community”, all these can derive art into a public issue. The perception of art for students can be living. The value of this course was to promote their taste of living aesthetics. More importantly, apart from the aesthetic value, it could also generate a social revolutionary power. Such revolutionary acting power can keep the society moving.

#### **4.1.2. “Problem-based Learning” Teaching Strategy Could Induce Diversified Discussions of Students on How Art Changes the Forms of the Community.**

##### **(1) TAs’ Observations**

TAs played the role of observers from the stance of assistants. From their records, it was found that students proposed diversified solutions with the problem-based learning strategy. For instance:

..., This week, we discussed how to build up the imagery for the Old Street. Every group used methods, such as interviews and surveys, and proposed models like “puppetry”, “Taiwan Sugar Plant”, “iron bridge”, etc., to represent the spirit of the Old Street (Source: TA-2-20070416).

The issue for this week was the renovation of the deserted space of Taiwan Sugar Plant’s Japanese style dormitories. All groups presented their concepts very well, they proposed their reconstructive methods, some groups thought the Old Street could be built into an art village, invite resident artists; others considered these Japanese style dormitories could be transformed into tourism B&Bs by thorough refurbishment and landscaping, ...(Source: TA-2-20070430).

##### **(2) Students’ Discussion Records**

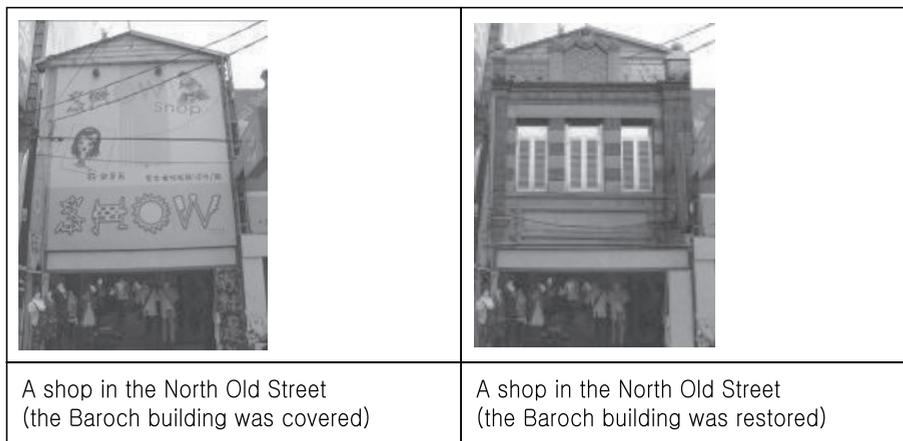
Different groups of students had different viewpoints on how to transform the features of the Old Street thoroughly. Using the Old Street as the core of design, they proposed many thoughts, such as:

Group A: we think the concrete strategy is to “push down the walls, reconstruct Taiwan Sugar Plant’s deserted trains”, and the essential functions are: A. establish a green leisure space, reveal the meaning of a stage; B. break down the walls, provoke the dialogue between the residents and the history of Taiwan Sugar Plant; C. reuse Taiwan Sugar Plant’s deserted trains, reconstruct the story of sugar industry (Source: SD-A-20070521).

Group C: we think the concrete strategy is to “pave a sleeper path all the way to the iron bridge”, and the essential functions are: A. increase the leisure function of walking; B. enhance the narrative function of the story; C. use the iron bridge as a beginning or an end (SourceSD-C-20070521)

### (3) Students' Group Assignments

Regarding “art built street”, students of different groups proposed all sorts of possibilities. For example, a group suggested to refurbish the Japanese style Baroch building, to tear off unnecessary advertisements to reveal the Baroch surface (Figure 5); another group suggested the signs in the Old Street were too messy and scattered, and they proposed to use the imagery of “puppetry” to redesign the signs (Figure 6); other groups suggested to transform the parking lot in the North Old Street by landscaping into a life park to enhance its leisure functions (Figure 7). These reconstructive proposals showed how different groups of students made use of their backgrounds and observations to redesign many feasible plans, which also revealed their aesthetic viewpoints.



**Figure 5 The photos before and after the restoration of the Baroch Building (Source: SW-B-20070528)**

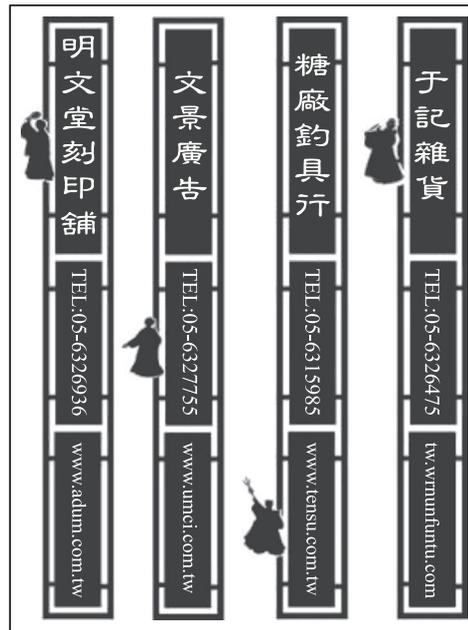


Figure 6 Street Sign designed on the imagery of puppetry (Source: SW-C-20070528)

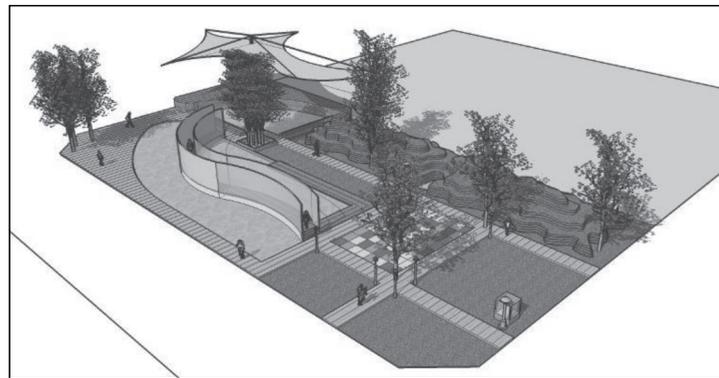


Figure 7 Simulative blueprint of the life park in North Old Street (Source: SW-D-20070528)

#### (4) Instructor's Reflection

The "problem-based learning" teaching strategy was fully applied in this course. During the process, students were highly interactive, and they aggressively searched domestic and foreign cases to solve problems in the current situation and tried to analyze and investigate all sorts of possibilities. The researcher felt a well-designed problem

could evoke many possibilities. Through the problem-based learning course design, students could establish their own “culture landmark” and plan their own “culture maps”. The instructor also witnessed how art transformed the features of an Old Street.

## **4.2. Solutions and Future Efforts to Teaching Problems**

The course content was a topic integrated with theory and practice. It involved attributes such as value finding, self-recognition, and cohesion of culture affections. The results of the teaching and the goal for future directions are as follows:

### **4.2.1. The Curriculum Design could Cultivate Active Participant for Social and Cultural Caring**

The cultivation of aesthetic ability is to build up an invisible competitiveness. However, where is aesthetic sense? Where are teaching materials? Do we really have to find them in Museums of the Fine Arts or in galleries? In fact, there are abundant teaching materials all over our daily lives. Using this course as the example, we organized many on-site visits, i.e. International Pili Puppetry, museums of culture and history transformed from reusing the deserted space, etc. These people, things, and events were all encompassed within the living sphere of students of our school, but their past and future were rarely noticed nor paid attention to. These teaching materials can provoke students' concerns to “art” and “culture”, and make them try to find new lives for local industries by combining “creativity”. This process could lead students to truly internalize and absorb their caring for culture and society, and become practical actors and carers.

### **4.2.2. The Course Content Comprises both Formal and Informal Learning Attributes**

The instructor argued the art course of generation education in the past tended to be overly elitist. For example: art appreciation, visual art appreciation, etc. After learning for one semester, ordinary students might elevate their abilities of art appreciation, but they still could not apply the abilities to lives as what they learnt had no connection to their lives at all. Therefore, the instructor suggested, the objective of general education is not to produce art professionals, but to make students have the important ability to “use knowledge practically”. This

course meant to use “art” as the window, “local culture” as the bridge, “living environment” as the material, so learners can propose possible approaches to improve the current situation of living art environment. And the value of the course implies both the formal learning and the informal learning.

#### **4.2.3. The “Problem-Based Learning” Teaching Strategy could be Widely Applied to Art Teaching**

This study applied the “problem-based learning” teaching strategy to general education course in art field. This was a brand new challenge both for the instructor and the learners. The learners were allocated in the problem context, while the instructor had to look for the locus and understand problem locus. Therefore, during the practice process, the most difficult part was to investigate and understand the locus. However, in a course full of challenges and creativity, which was completely different from the systematic teaching style, both the instructor and learners had to put in quite a lot of efforts. From this course, the researcher had a strong feeling that the “problem-based learning” teaching strategy could be widely applied to art teaching, and to make art learning more valuable and more influential.

Notation: this curriculum design was funded in the first semester by the “2007 Excellent General Education Courses” program.

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