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Cultural Memory and National Values in Contemporary Art Education through Transdisciplinary Digital Practices

[1]Aimbetova Ulbossyn Utegenovna, [2]*Kakimova Laura Sh., [3]Ibrayeva Kamarsulu E., [4]Kosherbayev, Zhanbolat, [5]Kaldayakova Aisulu, [6]Balagazova Svetlana T., [7]Kassimov Nurzhan A.

[1]Doctor of Philosophy PhD, Associate Ulytau National historical cultural natural museum Professor Astana international University, ORCID 0000-0002-5504-3679
[2]Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences (PhD), Acting Professor, ORCID 0000-0003-3687-1329, corrsponding author, aim_bat@mail.ru
[3]Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences (PhD), Acting Professor, ORCID 0000-0002-4165-003X
[4]PhD, ORCID ID 0000-0001-7333-2661
[5]Phd, associate professor, Abai Kazakh National Pedagogical university
[6]Candidate of Pedagogical Sciences (PhD), Associate Professor, ORCID 0000-0001-9498-938X
[7]Master of Pedagogical Sciences, doctoral student of the educational program "8D01402- Music Education"

ABSTRACT: This conceptual research examines how transdisciplinary approaches can connect cultural memory, contested interpretations of national values and digital representation in contemporary art education. Drawing on scholarship in cultural memory, art education, identity studies and curriculum design, the paper proposes a source-to-interpretation-to-digital-artefact model. Ten comparative matrices and five conceptual visualizations articulate the model's instructional and evaluative implications. Numerical illustrations are design scenarios, not empirical observations. The contribution lies in identifying safeguards against decontextualization, tokenistic representation and uncritical technological determinism, while proposing an assessable learning sequence for art educators.

INTRODUCTION

The contemporary art classroom. The central concern is the coexistence of physical heritage collections, circulating social-media imagery and locally situated cultural practices. Rather than assuming that exposure to culturally significant images produces identification or understanding, this study treats meaning-making as a sequence of accountable intellectual actions. Learners encounter multiple versions of an image, establish their historical contexts and examine the institutions and communities through which they circulate. This is especially consequential in teacher preparation, where future educators must make curricular selections that are simultaneously historically grounded, pedagogically defensible and responsive to cultural diversity.

Cultural memory as a pedagogical question. The central concern is the selective and negotiated processes by which societies make the past meaningful. Rather than assuming that exposure to culturally significant images produces identification or understanding, this study treats meaning-making as a sequence of accountable intellectual actions. Learners encounter multiple versions of an image, establish their historical contexts and examine the institutions and communities through which they circulate. This is especially consequential in teacher preparation, where future educators must make curricular selections that are simultaneously historically grounded, pedagogically defensible and responsive to cultural diversity.

National values and interpretive plurality. The central concern is the differences between official narratives, everyday cultural experience and minority perspectives. Rather than assuming that exposure to culturally significant images produces identification or understanding, this study treats meaning-making as a sequence of accountable intellectual actions. Learners

encounter multiple versions of an image, establish their historical contexts and examine the institutions and communities through which they circulate. This is especially consequential in teacher preparation, where future educators must make curricular selections that are simultaneously historically grounded, pedagogically defensible and responsive to cultural diversity.

The central concern is platform formats, algorithmic ranking, metadata and the visual conventions that influence attention. Rather than assuming that exposure to culturally significant images produces identification or understanding, this study treats meaning-making as a sequence of accountable intellectual actions. Learners encounter multiple versions of an image, establish their historical contexts and examine the institutions and communities through which they circulate. This is especially consequential in teacher preparation, where future educators must make curricular selections that are simultaneously historically grounded, pedagogically defensible and responsive to cultural diversity.

The central concern is the absence of explicit bridges between heritage interpretation, digital production and assessable learning outcomes. Rather than assuming that exposure to culturally significant images produces identification or understanding, this study treats meaning-making as a sequence of accountable intellectual actions. Learners encounter multiple versions of an image, establish their historical contexts and examine the institutions and communities through which they circulate. This is especially consequential in teacher preparation, where future educators must make curricular selections that are simultaneously historically grounded, pedagogically defensible and responsive to cultural diversity.

The central concern is a transparent instructional framework connecting provenance, critical interpretation, production and reflective evaluation. Rather than assuming that exposure to culturally significant images produces identification or understanding, this study treats meaning-making as a sequence of accountable intellectual actions. Learners encounter multiple versions of an image, establish their historical contexts and examine the institutions and communities through which they circulate. This is especially consequential in teacher preparation, where future educators must make curricular selections that are simultaneously historically grounded, pedagogically defensible and responsive to cultural diversity.

Halbwachs-inspired scholarship examines the social structures that shape what communities remember and transmit. This perspective encourages students to trace an object's circulation and ask whose recollections inform its contemporary interpretation. (Assmann, 2011)

Dialogic approaches emphasize the interplay of authorial perspectives, institutional narratives and learners' interpretations. Accordingly, classroom dialogue should distinguish a historical source from later institutional commentary and student response. (Bakhtin, 1981)

Arts-based inquiry treats creative practice as a method of producing and questioning knowledge, rather than merely illustrating conclusions. For art educators, the resulting creative artefact should be accompanied by an account of the questions, sources and choices that shaped it. (Barone & Eisner, 2011)

Museum and heritage studies reveal how institutional classifications determine which objects and histories become visible. Digital collections therefore require scrutiny of cataloguing practices, missing provenance and uneven representation. (Bennett, 2004)

Interdisciplinary assessment scholarship asks how students can demonstrate meaningful integration of distinct fields of knowledge. Assessment should examine whether learners connect disciplinary insights in a defensible argument rather than simply juxtaposing them. (Boix Mansilla & Duraisingh, 2007)

Relational aesthetics highlights participation, encounter and co-creation as constitutive dimensions of artistic experience. This view suggests evaluating the quality of collaboration and negotiation as well as the finished digital exhibition. (Bourriaud, 2002)

Research-design literature insists on distinguishing theoretically plausible mechanisms from claims established by observed evidence. It follows that proposed learning benefits must be tested in future classroom studies rather than inferred from attractive visualizations. (Creswell, 2014)

Experiential theories of art education locate learning in reflective engagement with artistic processes and their consequences. The model consequently includes structured reflection on encounters with artworks, archives and cultural stakeholders. (Dewey, 1934)

Work on artistic cognition foregrounds perceptual discrimination, informed judgment and the interpretation of visual form. Tasks should elicit justified visual interpretations and not reward surface-level reproduction alone. (Eisner, 2002)

Qualitative methodology emphasizes auditable analytic categories and explicit documentation of interpretive choices. The proposed coding framework should record uncertainty, conflicting sources and revisions made during analysis. (Flick, 2020)

Studies of nationalism investigate the institutions and social processes through which shared cultural narratives are assembled. Teaching materials should therefore present national values as historically situated interpretations rather than timeless uniform attributes. (Gellner, 1983)

Historical research on invented traditions shows that apparently continuous customs can acquire new functions and meanings over time. Learners can compare archival evidence with contemporary adaptations to identify both continuity and deliberate change. (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983)

Analyses of national identity underline the coexistence of competing historical memories within a single political community. Instruction must allow students to compare well-supported interpretations without reducing cultural plurality to a single official story. (Hutchinson, 2005)

Ethno-symbolic perspectives explore how myths, collective memories and symbols are preserved yet repeatedly reinterpreted. This approach supports the study of symbols as resources for cultural dialogue rather than fixed markers of belonging. (Smith, 2009)

Political philosophy of recognition draws attention to the ethical responsibilities involved in representing cultural differences. Ethical curation requires attention to consent, attribution, accessibility and the voices excluded from a digital narrative. (Taylor, 1994)

MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study employs conceptual synthesis and comparative curriculum modelling. It does not claim a newly recruited participant sample, classroom intervention or statistical significance. The source corpus consists of the theoretical works listed in the references and the conceptual distinctions elaborated in the accompanying matrices. Analysis proceeded through construct identification, alignment of constructs with possible learning activities, development of observable assessment indicators and critical review of potential failure modes.

Five visualizations and ten matrices are retained as design instruments. Their illustrative numeric values are not observed outcomes and must not be interpreted as measured improvements, effect sizes or validated scales. A future empirical study would require a documented sampling plan, instrument validation, consent procedures, preregistered comparisons where appropriate and transparent reporting of missing data.

Results and Conceptual Model

The principal result is an instructional architecture linking cultural evidence to interpretive dialogue and to digital production. The architecture distinguishes what learners encounter, how they transform it, and what an assessor may reasonably infer from the resulting artefact.

Dimension	Educational task	Evidence
Historical	Trace object provenance	Archive metadata
Aesthetic	Interpret visual language	Annotated artwork
Social	Compare community narratives	Discussion transcript
Digital	Curate linked collections	Versioned catalogue
Entity	Core attributes	Validation
Artifact	ID, date, medium	Source inspection
Context	Place, period, actors	Cross-reference

Interpretation	Claim, author, date	Evidence link
LearningTask	Prompt, rubric, level	Expert review
Stage	Student action	Output
Observe	Describe without judgment	Observation log
Contextualize	Locate sources	Evidence map
Interpret	Compare narratives	Argument essay
Reconstruct	Produce digital exhibit	Curated collection
Reflect	Audit uncertainty	Reflection memo
Criterion	Basic	Advanced
Source accuracy	Unverified attribution	Triangulated provenance
Context sensitivity	Single narrative	Multiple grounded views
Artistic reasoning	Descriptive summary	Formal and cultural analysis
Digital ethics	Missing rights notes	Documented permissions
Layer	Function	Risk control
Repository	Preserve source objects	Backup and provenance
Semantic graph	Connect people and themes	Relationship audit
Authoring studio	Create multimodal tasks	Version history
Analytics	Review learning evidence	Privacy by design
Mode	Strength	Limitation
Museum exhibit	Material context	Access constraints
Digital archive	Search and reuse	Metadata bias
Interactive map	Spatial relationships	False precision
Narrative timeline	Temporal ordering	Linear simplification
Competency	Observable action	Evidence
Critical inquiry	Check competing claims	Source commentary
Cultural literacy	Explain symbol context	Interpretive note
Collaboration	Negotiate descriptions	Edit history
Digital curation	Publish rights-aware exhibit	Metadata record
Concern	Design response	Review question
Consent	Opt-in collection	Can users withdraw?
Attribution	Source and creator fields	Who is credited?
Sensitive heritage	Restricted access rules	Who may view?
Algorithmic bias	Human editorial review	Which voices are absent?

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Phase	Data	Inference
Pilot	Usability interviews	Feasibility
Baseline	Interpretation rubric	Initial proficiency
Implementation	Task logs and artifacts	Process description
Follow-up	Rubric and interviews	Possible change, not causality
Milestone	Deliverable	Quality gate
Curriculum mapping	Competency map	Faculty review
Metadata pilot	Sample collection	Provenance audit
Learning pilot	Three project tasks	Accessibility review
Evaluation	Mixed-method report	Transparent limitations

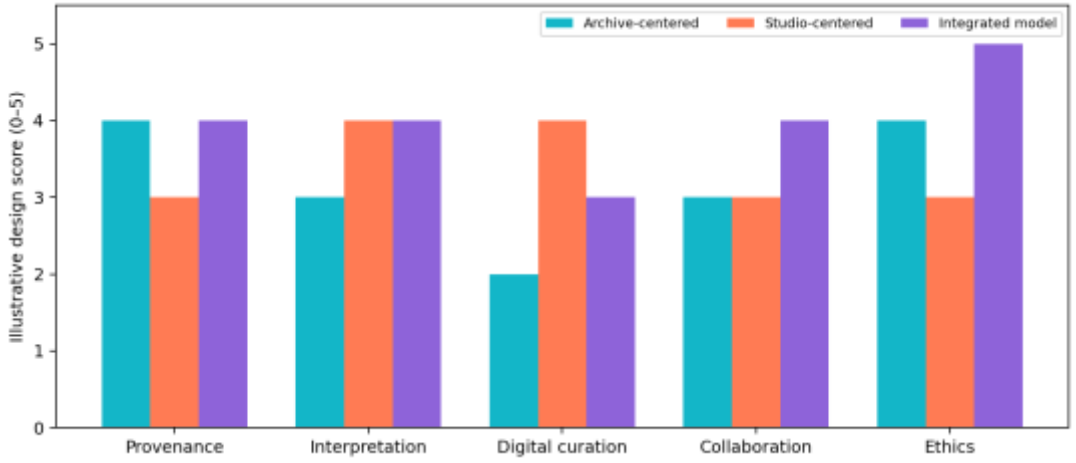


Figure 1. Conceptual visualization (illustrative values; not empirical measurements).

This visualization should be read as a heuristic for discussing relative relationships among instructional design dimensions. Its geometry and colour coding provide a comparative view of the proposed framework but do not establish observed changes in learner outcomes. A robust classroom evaluation would compare documented artefacts and independently assessed reflections before drawing any effectiveness claim.

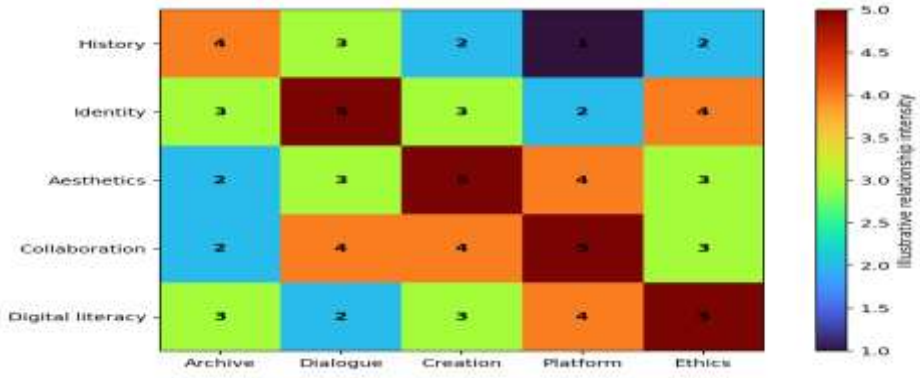


Figure 2. Conceptual visualization (illustrative values; not empirical measurements).

This visualization should be read as a heuristic for discussing relative relationships among instructional design dimensions. Its geometry and colour coding provide a comparative view of the proposed framework but do not establish observed changes in learner outcomes. A robust classroom evaluation would compare documented artefacts and independently assessed reflections before drawing any effectiveness claim.

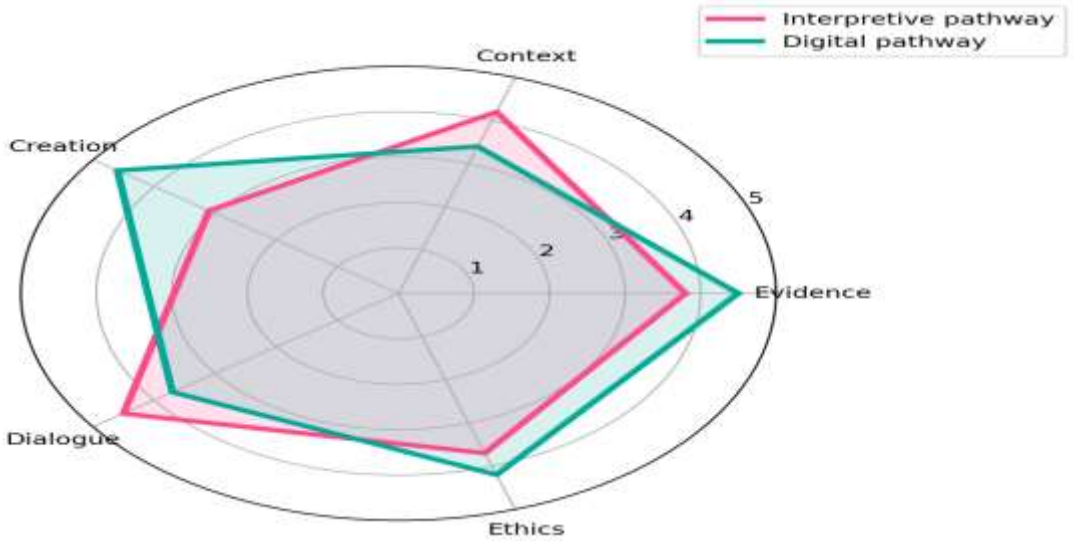


Figure 3. Conceptual visualization (illustrative values; not empirical measurements).

This visualization should be read as a heuristic for discussing relative relationships among instructional design dimensions. Its geometry and colour coding provide a comparative view of the proposed framework but do not establish observed changes in learner outcomes. A robust classroom evaluation would compare documented artefacts and independently assessed reflections before drawing any effectiveness claim.

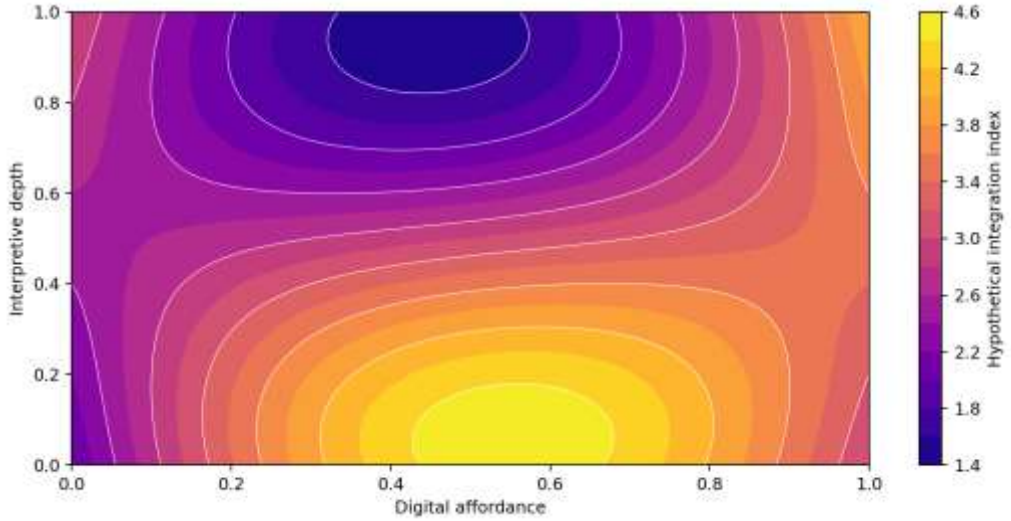


Figure 4. Conceptual visualization (illustrative values; not empirical measurements).

This visualization should be read as a heuristic for discussing relative relationships among instructional design dimensions. Its geometry and colour coding provide a comparative view of the proposed framework but do not establish observed changes in learner outcomes. A robust classroom evaluation would compare documented artefacts and independently assessed reflections before drawing any effectiveness claim.

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Figure 5. Conceptual visualization (illustrative values; not empirical measurements).

This visualization should be read as a heuristic for discussing relative relationships among instructional design dimensions. Its geometry and colour coding provide a comparative view of the proposed framework but do not establish observed changes in learner outcomes. A robust classroom evaluation would compare documented artefacts and independently assessed reflections before drawing any effectiveness claim.

DISCUSSION

The principal contribution of the proposed framework is its treatment of cultural memory as an interpretive practice rather than a fixed inventory of exemplary objects. A cultural artefact enters education through selection, description and contextualization; each operation changes what can be known about it. Consequently, a lesson devoted to national values should not begin by assuming that an image possesses one stable cultural message. Students should establish when and why an object was made, how it was used, and which later institutions assigned it symbolic significance. This approach connects cultural memory theory with practical curricular decisions and makes the reasoning behind cultural selection visible (Assmann, 2011).

The tension between shared national narratives and internal cultural diversity is particularly consequential in art education. National belonging may be communicated through familiar motifs, commemorative forms, architectural imagery or performance traditions, yet the significance of these forms varies by region, generation and community. Pedagogy becomes reductive when it treats this variation as an obstacle to be eliminated. An academically defensible curriculum instead places historically grounded interpretations in dialogue and asks students to distinguish an official commemorative account from the lived meanings attached to the same object. Such comparison need not deny collective heritage; it strengthens understanding of how heritage is negotiated and sustained (Hutchinson, 2005).

Transdisciplinarity also requires a more demanding account of integration than the mere coexistence of art history, sociology and digital design in one project. Each discipline contributes different kinds of evidence and different standards of justification. A historical attribution may depend on archival provenance; an aesthetic reading on formal properties and material technique; a sociological interpretation on participation and institutional authority. A student who combines these claims without explaining their relationships has assembled information, not integrated knowledge. Assessment must therefore evaluate the quality of connections between disciplinary perspectives and the limits of each inference (Boix Mansilla & Duraisingh, 2007).

An important implication concerns the status of creative production. Digital storytelling, interactive exhibitions and visual reconstructions can function as research practices when artistic decisions emerge from questions about sources and interpretation. For example, a student may construct two alternative exhibition sequences to demonstrate how ordering affects a viewer's understanding of a historical event. The resulting artefacts are not merely illustrations of prior knowledge: they expose assumptions about relevance, continuity and omission. However, the creative outcome must be accompanied by process

documentation explaining what evidence supports the chosen representation and what remains speculative (Barone & Eisner, 2011).

The architecture of a digital heritage platform introduces a second layer of interpretation that is often hidden from learners. Search categories, subject tags, image resolution, recommended items and interface language determine which objects appear prominent and which remain difficult to locate. A collection may therefore reproduce institutional inequalities even when its files are technically accessible. In teacher education, metadata should become an object of critical analysis: students can compare catalogue descriptions, identify absent creator information and document how classification decisions influence cultural visibility. Such work develops both digital literacy and an understanding of museums as knowledge-producing institutions (Bennett, 2004).

The proposed semantic relationships among artefacts, places, creators, practices and historical periods offer educational advantages, but their precision must not be overstated. A database can reliably store an archival date or catalogue identifier while representing disputed cultural affiliations only as qualified interpretations. Treating all links as equally certain risks converting provisional scholarship into apparently objective facts. The framework should therefore include source fields, confidence notes, alternative descriptions and revision histories. These elements make uncertainty legible to learners and prevent the visual authority of a network diagram from substituting for historical evidence.

The conceptual diagrams in this study are valuable as tools for planning and comparison, not as measurements of student achievement. A coloured heatmap can help an instructional team notice that a proposed module gives more attention to digital production than to historical source criticism. A radar diagram may prompt discussion of the balance between ethical reflection and artistic experimentation. Neither visualization, however, establishes that one educational pathway is more effective than another. Such a conclusion would require defined outcomes, validated instruments and observations from actual teaching contexts (Creswell, 2014).

The interpretation of national values through artworks also raises the question of who is entitled to speak for a cultural tradition. Collaborative digital projects should not assume that publicly available photographs, performances or oral histories are unrestricted educational resources. Consent, appropriate attribution and community expectations may impose legitimate conditions on reproduction. When students engage with culturally sensitive materials, instructors should model consultation and explain why some materials may be described without being published. Ethical curation is thus part of disciplinary learning rather than an administrative step completed after the exhibition is finished (Taylor, 1994).

The learner's reflective experience deserves attention alongside the quality of the finished product. A polished virtual exhibition may conceal weak interpretation if students simply reproduce catalogue descriptions. Conversely, an aesthetically modest artefact may document substantial conceptual growth through revisions, peer critique and a carefully reasoned explanation of competing sources. Assessment should therefore combine the artefact, an annotated bibliography of source materials, a design log and a reflective account of decisions. This multidimensional evidence is consistent with the view that artistic understanding develops through experience and reflective judgment (Dewey, 1934).

For future teachers, the framework offers a practical sequence that can be adapted to different artistic media. A unit might begin with close observation of a textile motif, musical composition or public monument; proceed to historical and social contextualization; introduce comparison across representations; and culminate in a digitally curated interpretive product. The teacher must make the learning purpose of each stage explicit. Without such sequencing, digital tools can divert attention toward software features while leaving students unable to justify their cultural interpretations.

Institutional feasibility presents a distinct challenge. Universities and schools vary in their access to digitized collections, specialist equipment, stable internet connectivity and staff training. A robust curriculum should not depend exclusively on immersive technology or costly proprietary platforms. The same interpretive sequence can be implemented through low-bandwidth image collections, annotated slides, audio narratives or paper-based exhibition prototypes. Designing equivalent routes to the learning objective is important for accessibility and for preventing technological resources from becoming a proxy for academic quality.

Another consideration is the temporal dimension of cultural memory. Contemporary digital adaptations often present heritage as an uninterrupted continuity between past and present, even when particular practices were revived, reorganized or assigned new public meanings. Historical inquiry should examine these transformations explicitly. Comparing early documentation with

recent representations helps students recognize the difference between cultural persistence and retrospective reconstruction. This distinction supports a more precise discussion of national values and discourages claims of timeless uniformity (Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983).

Collaboration can strengthen interpretation when learners are required to negotiate disagreements rather than merely divide production tasks. In a team exhibition, one student may prioritize formal artistic features while another emphasizes community history or platform accessibility. Structured discussion should require participants to state the evidence behind their choices and record how a joint description was reached. The resulting revision history becomes a trace of intellectual exchange. In this sense, participation is not simply a social benefit of group work; it can become a visible dimension of the artistic inquiry process (Bourriaud, 2002).

The framework further suggests that the assessment of cultural literacy should distinguish recognition from interpretation. Identifying a familiar national symbol is a relatively limited achievement. A stronger performance involves explaining its material form, tracing a credible historical context, comparing plausible meanings and acknowledging the perspective from which a conclusion is offered. Rubrics should make these levels observable and should avoid rewarding conformity to a single preferred interpretation. Artistic cognition includes perceptual sensitivity and reasoned judgment, both of which require more than the memorization of cultural labels (Eisner, 2002).

Future empirical research could examine whether this instructional architecture improves the quality of students' source use, interpretive reasoning and ethical digital curation. A pilot phase should first test task clarity and the usability of assessment criteria. Subsequent studies could collect portfolios, observation records, interviews and independently rated artefacts across several courses. Where comparative claims are intended, researchers would need to specify allocation procedures and relevant contextual differences. Reporting disagreements among raters and negative cases would be as important as presenting aggregate results (Flick, 2020).

The transferability of the model should also be examined across different cultural contexts and artistic disciplines. A method designed around museum objects may not adequately capture the collective authorship of oral performance or the changing status of community rituals. Likewise, a workflow that works for university students may require substantial simplification for younger learners. Rather than presuming universal applicability, future projects should identify which components remain stable and which require local redesign. Such an approach would protect the model from turning transdisciplinarity into a standardized template that suppresses cultural specificity.

Overall, the discussion indicates that the educational value of digital transdisciplinary practice depends on the quality of interpretive mediation. Technology can widen access and support complex representations, but it cannot independently verify cultural claims, resolve ethical disagreements or produce historically informed judgment. Those achievements depend on teaching strategies that connect evidence, dialogue, artistic decisions and reflection. The proposed framework should accordingly be understood as a set of testable design principles whose effectiveness remains open to empirical examination.

CONCLUSION

The analysis supports a distinction between cultural memory as a repertoire of sources and cultural memory as an ongoing practice of interpretation. It follows that cultural representation should not be evaluated solely by its visual appeal, technological complexity or alignment with a prescribed narrative. More defensible educational judgments ask whether learners can situate an artefact historically, consider competing interpretations, recognize their own choices and explain the ethical consequences of dissemination. The proposed model is therefore best treated as a testable curricular framework rather than an already proven intervention.

The analysis supports an explicit alignment among evidence, interpretive tasks, digital artefacts and assessment criteria. It follows that cultural representation should not be evaluated solely by its visual appeal, technological complexity or alignment with a prescribed narrative. More defensible educational judgments ask whether learners can situate an artefact historically, consider competing interpretations, recognize their own choices and explain the ethical consequences of dissemination. The proposed model is therefore best treated as a testable curricular framework rather than an already proven intervention.

The analysis supports a staged curriculum that includes provenance verification, comparative reading, collaborative production and reflection. It follows that cultural representation should not be evaluated solely by its visual appeal, technological complexity or alignment with a prescribed narrative. More defensible educational judgments ask whether learners can situate an artefact

historically, consider competing interpretations, recognize their own choices and explain the ethical consequences of dissemination. The proposed model is therefore best treated as a testable curricular framework rather than an already proven intervention.

The analysis supports the absence of newly collected empirical data and the illustrative status of model diagrams. It follows that cultural representation should not be evaluated solely by its visual appeal, technological complexity or alignment with a prescribed narrative. More defensible educational judgments ask whether learners can situate an artefact historically, consider competing interpretations, recognize their own choices and explain the ethical consequences of dissemination. The proposed model is therefore best treated as a testable curricular framework rather than an already proven intervention.

The analysis supports multi-site implementation studies, transparent rubric validation and attention to culturally diverse learners. It follows that cultural representation should not be evaluated solely by its visual appeal, technological complexity or alignment with a prescribed narrative. More defensible educational judgments ask whether learners can situate an artefact historically, consider competing interpretations, recognize their own choices and explain the ethical consequences of dissemination. The proposed model is therefore best treated as a testable curricular framework rather than an already proven intervention.

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