

Original Paper

A Review of Research on the Influence of
Chinese Senior High School Chinese Drama Teaching
on Students' Aesthetic Psychological Cognition (2023-2025)

Zhigang Guo¹ & Huan Liu^{2*}

¹ No. 44 Secondary School of Dalian, Dalian, China

² Central Hospital of Dalian University of Technology, Dalian, China

* Corresponding Author, E-mail: linwaitian@163.com

Received: January 19, 2026

Accepted: March 06, 2026

Online Published: March 26, 2026

doi:10.22158/wjeh.v8n1p120

URL: <http://dx.doi.org/10.22158/wjeh.v8n1p120>

Abstract

Guided by the core literacy of “aesthetic appreciation and creation” in the new senior high school Chinese curriculum standard, drama teaching, as a core carrier for implementing Chinese aesthetic education and cultivating students' aesthetic psychological cognition, has become a research hotspot in Chinese education from 2023 to 2025. Using the literature research method, this paper systematically sorts out domestic research findings in this period, focuses on analyzing drama teaching's impact on students' four-dimensional aesthetic psychological traits (perception, empathy, thinking, creation), compares cultivation differences of different teaching modes, summarizes research consensus and existing shortcomings, and provides theoretical and practical guidance for follow-up research and teaching optimization.

Keywords

senior high school Chinese, drama teaching, aesthetic psychological cognition, aesthetic psychological development, research review

1. Introduction

With the in-depth implementation of China's Curriculum Standard for Senior High School Chinese (2017 Edition, Revised 2020), “aesthetic appreciation and creation”—a key dimension of Chinese core literacy—has become increasingly prominent in educational value. Cultivating students' aesthetic psychological cognition, the key to achieving aesthetic education goals, has become a core topic in Chinese teaching research (Xie, 2023). Senior high school Chinese drama teaching, with its situational,

emotional and conflicting characteristics, can trigger students' aesthetic psychological mechanisms through diverse activities, promoting the coordinated development of their aesthetic perception, empathy, thinking and creativity, and its unique value is widely recognized by the education sector (Chen, 2025).

From 2023 to 2025, Chinese academics have conducted a series of studies on the correlation between drama teaching and aesthetic psychological cognition, forming valuable achievements that generally focus on practice, connotation and path exploration. Most existing studies focus on drama teaching's macro impact on aesthetic literacy and the application of teaching modes for classic texts, gradually shifting from "knowledge imparting" to "psychological cultivation" (Hu, 2024). However, there is a lack of systematic reviews targeting this field in the past three years; most reviews have a long time span or focus on teaching practice, with insufficient analysis of aesthetic psychological cognition's connotation, failing to fully present research's overall picture and shortcomings.

Based on this, this paper takes domestic literature from 2023 to 2025 as the research object, uses the literature research method to sort out core achievements, clarify influence dimensions and teaching mode differences, summarize consensus and deficiencies, and put forward prospects. This fills the gap of existing reviews and provides accurate guidance for academic research and teaching practice. The research framework is: defining core concepts → sorting out influence dimensions → comparing teaching mode differences → summarizing consensus and deficiencies → putting forward future prospects, ensuring the review's systematicness and rigor.

2. Core Concept Definition

2.1 Senior High School Chinese Drama Teaching

Combined with 2023-2025 research, senior high school Chinese drama teaching is an important part of Chinese teaching. Its core is a literacy-oriented teaching activity that takes unified textbook drama texts as carriers, integrates text interpretation, situational experience and stage practice, and guides students to perceive drama charm, understand text connotation and improve aesthetic literacy (Tang, 2023). Its scope includes in-class close reading, character analysis, and after-class textbook drama adaptation and fragment performance, with the core goal of cultivating aesthetic psychological cognition and realizing "educating people with beauty and cultivating people with culture" (Wang, 2023)—a core path for implementing Chinese aesthetic education.

2.2 Students' Aesthetic Psychological Cognition (*Micro-Enhanced Psychological Attributes*)

Psychologically, students' aesthetic psychological cognition is a comprehensive psychological process and ability of perception, empathy, judgment and creation formed toward aesthetic objects such as drama. It is a core component of aesthetic literacy and the key goal of Chinese aesthetic education (Xie, 2023). Its development follows the progressive logic of "perception–empathy–thinking–creation": aesthetic perception is the foundation for capturing external forms and emotional signals; aesthetic empathy is the emotional core for resonance; aesthetic thinking is the rational core for dialectical

analysis; aesthetic creation is the practical externalization of internal cognition (Yang, 2024). These four traits progress hierarchically, and drama teaching promotes this process through targeted activities (Hou, 2023).

2.3 Intrinsic Connection between Drama Teaching and Aesthetic Psychological Cognition (Micro-Enhanced Psychological Compatibility)

There is a natural psychological compatibility between the two, reflected in the high adaptability of drama's stylistic characteristics to students' aesthetic psychological development (Chen, 2024). Drama's situational nature creates an immersive atmosphere to activate perception; its emotional nature transmits signals to deepen empathy; its conflict nature stimulates thinking; its performative nature provides a platform for creation (Zeng, 2024). This connection enables drama teaching to meet students' aesthetic needs and achieve systematic cultivation, making it a core carrier of Chinese aesthetic education.

3. Core Influence Dimensions of Drama Teaching on Students' Aesthetic Psychological Cognition

Drama teaching's influence on aesthetic psychological cognition centers on "perception–empathy–thinking–creation", forming a progressive system that acts on different aesthetic psychological levels and promotes all-round development from basic perception to advanced creation.

3.1 Aesthetic Perception: Activating the Initial Information Capturing Ability of Aesthetic Psychology

Aesthetic perception is the basic link of aesthetic psychology, and drama teaching effectively activates it through diverse means (Shi, 2024). Relevant studies note that drama texts' linguistic, image, situational and conflict beauty provide rich aesthetic stimulation, and targeted teaching guides students to capture these signals, activating perceptual psychology (Xie, 2023). In teaching, teachers use close reading, multimedia, scene restoration, role dubbing and fragment reading to strengthen perception (Chen, 2024). For example, in *Injustice to Dou E (Excerpts)*, teachers use opera fragments and scene simulation to guide students to perceive tragic atmosphere and character emotions, activating aesthetic perception (Wang, 2023).

3.2 Aesthetic Empathy: Triggering the Emotional Connection and Experience Mechanism of Aesthetic Psychology

Aesthetic empathy is the emotional core of aesthetic psychology, and drama teaching triggers it through its emotional characteristics (Hou, 2023). Drama's rich emotions, distinct characters and tortuous fates meet students' emotional needs, and role substitution and emotional perception guide students to resonate with characters (Chen, 2025). In teaching, teachers use character analysis, role-playing and textbook drama rehearsal to let students experience characters' joys and sorrows, deepening empathy (Zeng, 2024). For example, in *Thunderstorm*, guiding students to analyze Zhou Puyuan and Lu Shipping's emotions and fates triggers emotional resonance and human nature reflection, promoting aesthetic psychological development (Yang, 2024).

3.3 Aesthetic Thinking: Cultivating Critical and Diversified Judgment Ability of Aesthetic Psychology

Aesthetic thinking is the rational core of aesthetic psychology, and drama teaching exercises it through conflict speculation and diversified theme interpretation (Hu, 2024). Drama's complex conflicts and diverse themes provide carriers for cultivating thinking, helping break single aesthetic cognition (Tang, 2023). In teaching, teachers guide students to sort out core conflicts, analyze their causes, and interpret themes from multiple perspectives to cultivate diversified thinking (Wang, 2023). For example, in *Hamlet (Excerpts)*, guiding students to explore Hamlet's "revenge vs. hesitation" conflict and diverse themes improves aesthetic judgment and promotes rational aesthetic development.

3.4 Aesthetic Creation: Stimulating Practical Externalization and Innovative Expression of Aesthetic Psychology

Aesthetic creation is the ultimate embodiment of aesthetic psychology, and drama teaching stimulates it through practical activities (Yang, 2024). Drama's performative and creative characteristics match students' creative needs, and activities like textbook drama adaptation, stage performance and aesthetic comment writing provide creative platforms (Hou, 2023). In teaching, teachers guide students to integrate their aesthetic understanding into adaptation, realize personalized interpretation through performance, and transform perceptions into written expressions through comments (Chen, 2024). For example, in *Teahouse*, guiding students to adapt and rehearse scripts stimulates creativity and achieves comprehensive aesthetic sublimation.

4. Research Differences in the Influence of Different Teaching Modes on Aesthetic Psychological Cognition

Differences in drama teaching modes lead to varied cultivation effects on aesthetic psychological cognition. Due to different teaching logic and implementation methods, modes focus differently on the four aesthetic traits. Experiential and situational modes have more significant effects, while the traditional lecturing mode has obvious limitations.

4.1 Limitations of the Influence of Traditional Lecturing Teaching

Traditional lecturing, dominated by teachers' explanation and students' memorization, focuses on knowledge transmission and ignores aesthetic experience and psychological participation, affecting only shallow aesthetic psychology (Chen, 2025). Studies show that teachers under this mode focus on author background and plot, while students passively accept knowledge without aesthetic experience, failing to activate deep psychological mechanisms (Hu, 2024) and hindering empathy, thinking and creativity development. It only enables superficial aesthetic information memorization, lacks emotional substitution and practical participation, and restricts thinking activities, resulting in low cultivation efficiency.

4.2 Advantages of the Influence of Situational Immersive Teaching

Situational immersive teaching creates real drama situations to guide active participation and in-depth experience, targeting aesthetic perception and empathy with prominent effects (Zeng, 2024). Studies

indicate it uses multimedia, scene restoration and role substitution to create an immersive atmosphere, activating perception and improving information capture sensitivity (Chen, 2024), while guiding role substitution to deepen emotional resonance (Hou, 2023). In practice, lighting, sound and props restore scenes to enhance perception and text understanding; role dubbing and simulation transform aesthetic psychology from passive acceptance to active experience, laying a foundation for thinking and creativity development.

4.3 Characteristics of the Influence of Task-Driven/Embodied Experiential Teaching

Both are practice-oriented modes centered on students, activating aesthetic thinking and creativity through task design and practical participation, with advantages in advanced aesthetic psychology cultivation (Hou, 2023). Task-driven teaching uses stepped tasks (“text decoding–character analysis–conflict speculation–practical performance”) to guide text exploration and exercise speculative ability (Wang, 2023); embodied experiential teaching promotes aesthetic cognition externalization and creativity through role-playing and textbook drama rehearsal. These modes emphasize both aesthetic experience and thinking/practice, cultivating critical thinking through tasks, stimulating creativity through participation, and deepening empathy to achieve all-round aesthetic development, with better advanced cultivation efficiency than traditional and pure situational modes.

4.4 Boundaries of the Influence of New Media-Assisted Teaching

New media-assisted teaching enriches forms through short videos and VR, activating aesthetic perception but having limitations in deep cultivation (Hu, 2024). Studies show it helps students quickly capture aesthetic information and reduce understanding difficulty through intuitive presentation (Tang, 2023), expanding online resources to enrich experience. However, excessive use leads to focus on shallow audio-visual experience, ignoring text interpretation and emotional perception, which is harmful to deep empathy and thinking; some low-adaptability resources distract attention. Thus, it should only be an auxiliary tool combined with other modes for optimal effect.

5. Research Consensus (2023-2025)

Sorting out 2023-2025 studies reveals four core consensuses, clarifying drama teaching’s educational value, orientation and practical problems, providing guidelines for follow-up research and practice.

First, there is consensus on drama teaching’s positive value in cultivating students’ four-dimensional aesthetic traits (Xie, 2024). Academics unanimously agree that drama’s situational and emotional characteristics match students’ aesthetic laws, effectively activating perception, triggering empathy, exercising thinking and stimulating creation—an irreplaceable value making it a core carrier of Chinese aesthetic education (Chen, 2024).

Second, experiential and situational modes better conform to students’ aesthetic development laws, with better effects than traditional lecturing (Zeng, 2024). Literature shows traditional modes only achieve shallow knowledge transmission, while situational and task-driven modes realize deep psychological participation through situation creation and practice, with higher efficiency. Academics

advocate shifting drama teaching to “experiential and situational” orientation.

Third, cultivating aesthetic psychological cognition should be a core goal of drama teaching (Shi, 2024). Studies emphasize that drama teaching’s core is implementing “aesthetic appreciation and creation” literacy through aesthetic psychological cultivation, not knowledge imparting or exam ability improvement. Misplaced teaching goals ignoring aesthetic cultivation have become an academic consensus.

Fourth, urban-rural and inter-school resource gaps affect the balance of aesthetic cultivation (Chen, 2025). Studies find urban and key middle schools have richer resources and professional guidance for effective experiential teaching, while rural and ordinary schools mostly use traditional lecturing due to resource shortages, leading to unbalanced urban-rural students’ aesthetic development. Narrowing resource gaps is key to balanced development.

6. Prominent Problems in Existing Research

Despite existing consensus, shortcomings in research methods, content, subjects and normativity—especially in aesthetic psychological connotation—restrict research depth and practical guidance.

6.1 Research Methods: Lack of Empirical Research and Absence of Psychological Evaluation

Most studies rely on theoretical sorting and experience summary, lacking empirical and quantitative research and professional aesthetic psychological evaluation, reducing conclusion scientificity and persuasiveness (Xie, 2023). Most lack rigorous empirical designs, classroom observation or questionnaires, failing to quantify drama teaching’s impact on aesthetic dimensions (Hou, 2023); without standardized evaluation tools, psychological changes are only qualitatively described, making it hard to capture development differences. Conclusions mostly stay at the empirical level without data support.

6.2 Research Content: Inadequate Analysis of Psychological Mechanisms and Insufficient Differentiated Research

While recognizing drama teaching’s positive value, studies insufficiently analyze the internal psychological mechanism between drama teaching and aesthetic cognition, and weakly research differentiated impacts of teaching modes and text types (Hu, 2024). Most literature elaborates macro overall impact without clarifying specific paths of drama teaching on aesthetic psychology, especially the correlation between teaching links, text types and aesthetic dimensions (Tang, 2023). Differentiated research is also insufficient: insufficient attention to aesthetic differences of students in different stages and academic levels, and unsystematic research on differentiated effects of texts and teaching links, leading to general and untargeted content.

6.3 Research Subjects: Imbalanced Group Coverage and Insufficient Representative Conclusions

Research subjects are mostly urban key middle schools, ignoring rural, ordinary schools and different academic groups, reducing conclusion universality and representativeness (Chen, 2025). Most studies

take urban key schools as samples, neglecting rural and ordinary students' aesthetic characteristics and teaching reality (Hu, 2024), failing to analyze urban-rural resource gaps' impact on aesthetic development or pay attention to differentiated cultivation effects for different academic levels, resulting in impractical conclusions.

6.4 Research Normativity: Inconsistent Evaluation Criteria and Vague Concept Definition

Existing studies have inconsistent aesthetic psychological cognition evaluation criteria and no unified system, making it hard to compare and integrate conclusions and affecting research normativity (Tang, 2023). Researchers differ in evaluation dimensions, indicators and methods; some only qualitatively describe psychological changes without clear indicators (Chen, 2024). Meanwhile, some studies vaguely and inconsistently define aesthetic psychological cognition's connotation, further reducing research rigor.

7. Future Research Prospects

Based on existing consensus and shortcomings, combined with Chinese aesthetic education and educational psychology integration, future research should focus on "filling gaps, deepening depth, pursuing balance and promoting standardization", moving toward empirical, refined, balanced and standardized development to better support teaching practice.

First, strengthen empirical and quantitative research and improve the psychological evaluation system. Increase empirical research intensity, use classroom observation and questionnaires to quantify drama teaching's impact on aesthetic dimensions (Hu, 2024); combine educational psychology achievements to build a standardized evaluation system, clarify indicators and methods for the four psychological traits, enhance conclusion scientificity, and promote research transformation from experience summary to scientific empiricism.

Second, deepen psychological mechanism research and strengthen differentiated analysis. Explore the internal path between drama teaching and aesthetic cognition, clarify specific mechanisms of different teaching links and text types on aesthetic dimensions (Yang, 2024); combine senior high school students' cognitive laws to analyze drama teaching's differentiated impact on different academic levels, systematically study text and mode differences, and promote refined research.

Third, expand research subject coverage and promote balanced development. Break urban key school sample limitations, focus on rural and ordinary students' aesthetic status (Chen, 2025), analyze resource gap impacts, and explore suitable teaching modes; pay attention to different academic groups, design layered strategies, and promote balanced aesthetic development.

Fourth, unify research norms and build an evaluation standard system. Clarify aesthetic psychological cognition's connotation and unify concept definitions (Tang, 2023); unite researchers to establish a unified evaluation system, clarify dimensions, indicators and methods, and realize conclusion comparison and integration; strengthen achievement exchange, promote academic-research integration, and make research serve aesthetic education goals.

In summary, future research should focus on the core line “drama teaching → aesthetic psychological cognition cultivation”, follow students’ aesthetic development laws, fill gaps, enhance practicality, and promote coordinated development of academic research and teaching practice.

8. Conclusion

This paper systematically sorts out 2023-2025 domestic research on senior high school Chinese drama teaching’s influence on students’ aesthetic psychological cognition. Studies show that in the past three years, Chinese academics have clarified drama teaching’s positive value in cultivating four-dimensional aesthetic traits, formed consensus on teaching mode optimization, and confirmed its status as a core aesthetic education carrier. Meanwhile, shortcomings remain, including lack of empirical evidence, insufficient psychological mechanism analysis, unbalanced research subjects and inconsistent evaluation standards.

This review clarifies the field’s overall research picture, fills the gap of time-targeted reviews, provides theoretical reference for follow-up research, and practical guidance for drama teaching to achieve aesthetic cultivation goals and improve aesthetic education effectiveness, helping students’ sound aesthetic psychological development and Chinese core literacy improvement.

Acknowledgement

The authors would like to express their gratitude to all researchers whose works are cited in this paper and to the relevant institutions for their support.

References

- Chen, L. (2025). *A Study on the Teaching of the “Literary Reading and Writing” Learning Task Group in Senior High School Chinese from the Perspective of Aesthetic Education* (Dissertation). Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University.
- Chen, Y. H. (2024). Observing, Analyzing, Reading and Performing to Educate People with Beauty: A Study on Aesthetic Education Strategies of Senior High School Drama Works Taking Injustice to Dou E (Excerpts) as an Example. *Chinese Language Teaching Communications-D Journal*, (13).
- Hou, Y. H. (2023). Optimization Strategies for the Classroom Introduction Link in Senior High School Chinese Online Teaching. *Chinese New Reading and Writing*, (8).
- Hu, Y. C. (2024). *An Exploration of Senior High School Chinese Drama Teaching Strategies Oriented by Aesthetic Education* (Dissertation). Central China Normal University.
- Liu, T. W., & Shen, Q. Z. (2025). Educating People with Beauty: Aesthetic Education in Senior High School Chinese Drama Teaching. *Jiaying Literature*, (17), 158-160.
- Shi, Y. X. (2024). *Optimization Strategies for Cultivating Students’ Aesthetic Ability in Senior High School Drama Teaching* (Dissertation). Shihezi University.
- Tang, X. Y. (2023). Characteristics and Teaching of Drama Selected Texts in the Unified Senior High

- School Chinese Textbooks. *Middle School Chinese Teaching Reference*, (48), 30-32.
- Wang, X. D. (2023). *A Study on Strategies for Cultivating Students' Aesthetic Literacy in Senior High School Chinese Drama Teaching* (Dissertation). Huaibei Normal University.
- Xie, L. L. (2023). Exploration of the "Five-Education Integration" Model Pointing to the Core Literacy of Chinese Subject. *Middle School Chinese Teaching Reference*, (32), 69-71.
- Xu, C. (2024). *A Study on Senior High School Drama Teaching from the Perspective of Chinese Core Literacy* (Dissertation). Qinghai Normal University.
- Yang, Q. (2024). *A Study on Thematic Learning of Unified Senior High School Chinese Drama from the Perspective of Situational Teaching* (Dissertation). Ningxia University.
- Zeng, A. L. (2024). *A Study on Senior High School Chinese Drama Teaching under Embodied Cognitive Theory* (Dissertation). Jiangxi Normal University.