

## From Brand to Space: Experiential Pedagogy and Sensory Cognition in Interior Architecture Education

Atike Öncü Akyazıcı<sup>1</sup>, Dilek Yasar<sup>2</sup>

### Abstract

This study examines how undergraduate interior architecture students translate brand identity into spatial experience through multisensory and morphological strategies within a reflective design-studio environment. Despite the increasing emphasis on experiential retail design in professional practice, limited academic research addresses how such sensory and narrative competencies are cultivated pedagogically. Bridging this gap, the study proposes an interpretivist framework that links brand semantics with experiential cognition in design education. Adopting a qualitative, multi-layered methodology, the research analyzes 15 flagship-store projects developed during the Interior Architecture Project II course at Istanbul Aydın University. Data were collected from conceptual diagrams, renderings, and instructor feedback, and analyzed through visual, morphological, and sensory coding. Findings reveal that students moved beyond representational branding toward embodied spatial storytelling, using light, form, color, and material as emotional and cognitive mediators. The results demonstrate that reflective and experiential learning fosters sensory awareness, conceptual depth, and narrative competence in design processes. The study contributes to interior architecture pedagogy by evidencing how neuro aesthetic and multisensory approaches can enrich cognitive-emotional integration, advancing both design education and practice. The proposed framework, supported by 15 design-studio cases, provides empirical grounding for integrating sensory-based pedagogy into interior architecture curricula.

**Keywords:** *Experiential learning; Interior architecture education; Sensory experience; Retail design.*

### Introduction

In recent years, architectural and interior design education has undergone a profound transformation, moving beyond the traditional studio centered paradigm toward a more dynamic, multilayered, and experiential learning model. This shift reflects a growing recognition that design learning encompasses not only technical and formal competencies but also emotional, perceptual, and contextual awareness (Iranmanesh & Onur, 2021). The paradigm of experiential learning situates students as active participants in iterative cycles of observation, reflection, and creation, allowing them to integrate knowledge through experience rather than mere instruction (Kolb, 2015; Schön, 1983). As a result, hybrid studio models, Virtual Design Studios (VDS), and Extended Reality (XR/AR/VR) tools have become increasingly embedded in design curricula, expanding the boundaries of the traditional studio into multisensory and digitally augmented domains (Khan, 2024; Prasetya et al., 2024; Fajari et al., 2023).

The integration of immersive technologies thus reframes the studio as a multi-experiential ecosystem, strengthening learner autonomy and accessibility. However, this digital expansion also entails new pedagogical responsibilities, including the development of transparent assessment frameworks, the implementation of structured reflection cycles, and the establishment of an equitable technological infrastructure. (Park, 2020; Saleh, Abdelkader, & Hosny, 2023).

Parallel to these pedagogical shifts, the relationship between brand identity and space has become a central theme in contemporary design discourse. When brand identity with its values, personality, and narrative is translated into spatial form, user experience and brand experience converge within a single architectural performance. (Schmitt & Simonson, 1997; Klingmann, 2007). Foundational studies on atmospherics and servicescapes demonstrated how physical environments

<sup>1</sup>Department of Interior Architecture, Istanbul Aydın University, Istanbul, Turkey, atikeoncu@aydin.edu.tr (corresponding author).

<sup>2</sup> Department of Interior Architecture, Istanbul Aydın University, Istanbul, Turkey, dilekyasar@aydin.edu.tr.

shape affective and behavioral responses (Kotler, 1973; Bitner, 1992; Turley & Milliman, 2000), while the Experience Economy (Pine & Gilmore, 2019) reconceptualized design as a staging of memorable experiences rather than a passive display of goods. Within this framework, spatial design becomes an act of storytelling that translates abstract brand values into tangible material, formal, and sensory expressions (Klingmann, 2007; Hultén, 2015).

The brand experience paradigm extends beyond aesthetics and emphasizes the orchestration of multisensory cues such as visual, auditory, olfactory, tactile, and even gustatory elements to evoke emotional and behavioral engagement (Krishna, 2012; Spence, 2019; Hultén, 2015). Bitner's (1992) *servicescape* model systematized these environmental variables, whereas Brakus, Schmitt, and Zarantonello (2009) later quantified brand experience across sensory, affective, and behavioral dimensions. Such insights have informed interior architecture, where the curation of light, color, material, and sound aims to elicit approach behaviors, brand loyalty, and emotional attachment (Mehrabian & Russell, 1974; Spence, 2021). In this sense, retail and brand-driven interiors function as cognitive environments that mediate between commercial intent and emotional resonance.

Recent pedagogical research in design studios reflects a parallel interest in the morphological and sensory dimensions of space-making. Spatial morphology, defined as the configuration of flow, perspective lines, and tactile proximities, shapes perceptual comfort and determines the memorability of interior experience (Bitner, 1992). When form, circulation, and material rhythm align with human sensory processing, the designed environment becomes both legible and affective. This aligns with insights from neuro aesthetics and emotional design, which reveal that architectural form, proportion, and light stimulate neural reward circuits associated with pleasure and meaning (Chatterjee, 2014; Chatterjee & Vartanian, 2016). Theoretical models of aesthetic experience, such as those proposed by Leder et al. (2004) and Desmet and Hekkert (2007), provide cognitive frameworks for understanding how emotion, memory, and perception interact in the evaluation of spatial beauty. Norman's (2004) emotional design theory further situates this process within the triad of visceral, behavioral, and reflective responses, reinforcing the role of affect in design education.

Although numerous studies have explored brand experience and sensory marketing, little attention has been given to how these concepts are internalized and operationalized within design education. Existing literature primarily focuses on user experience, brand perception, or consumer behavior, yet few studies investigate how students translate these abstract notions into spatial and experiential design thinking. Addressing this gap, the present research examines how the semantic values of a brand can be spatialized through sensory and cognitive strategies within an experiential learning framework.

Experiential learning theory (Kolb, 2015; Schön, 1983) conceptualizes the design process not merely as a transfer of knowledge but as a cyclical practice of meaning-making through experience. Within this context, neuroaesthetic theory provides a complementary framework, explaining how the sensory and emotional dimensions of spatial experience interact with cognitive processes (Chatterjee & Vartanian, 2016). Consequently, cultivating sensory awareness and spatial perception becomes a pedagogical imperative that enables students to develop not only aesthetic sensitivity but also empathetic and meaningful design decisions grounded in embodied cognition.

Within this multilayered context, the present study investigates experiential learning in interior architecture through the translation of brand identity into spatial form. It examines the outcomes of fifteen undergraduate "flagship store" projects in which students reinterpreted distinct brands such as Vespa, Babolat, Anita Ko, and Mikimoto through interior design strategies involving form, materiality, lighting, color, and circulation. The study aims to propose a pedagogical framework that integrates experiential learning, sensory awareness, and spatial storytelling, addressing the following research questions:

- How do students translate brand identity into spatial narrative?
- How do form, light, color, and material generate an experiential language of space?
- In what ways does the experiential design process enhance conceptual thinking and morphological reasoning?
- How does this pedagogical approach cultivate sensory awareness and narrative competence in interior architecture education?

This study thus situates sensory and morphological brand translation as a pedagogical experiment within the experiential learning paradigm.

## **Methodology**

### **Research Design**

This study adopts a qualitative, multi-layered research design combining visual analysis, morphological evaluation, and thematic interpretation. The research investigates how undergraduate interior architecture students translated brand identity into spatial experience within the context of a design-studio course. The methodological framework aligns with an interpretivist paradigm, emphasizing meaning construction through observation, comparison, and reflection rather than numerical measurement.

The study employs an embedded case-study approach, in which fifteen flagship-store projects completed during the Spring 2024–2025 semester of the undergraduate Interior Architecture Project II course at Istanbul Aydın University serves as individual cases. Each student designed a retail interior representing a specific international or local brand (e.g., Vespa, Babolat, Anita Ko, Mikimoto), focusing on the spatial translation of brand identity through form, material, color, lighting, and circulation strategies.

The selection of brands in this study was not random but derived from a curated brand pool provided by the studio instructors. This pool was intentionally designed to reflect cultural, typological, and symbolic diversity, allowing students to explore a wide spectrum of brand identities and their spatial narratives. It included luxury brands (e.g., Mikimoto, Anita Ko, Louis Vuitton), performance and mobility-oriented brands (e.g., Vespa, Babolat), as well as lifestyle and technology-oriented examples (e.g., Häfele, L'Oréal). By selecting from this pool, students were encouraged to engage with contrasting identity constructs ranging from craftsmanship to urban vitality and from serenity to dynamism, thereby enabling comparative insights into how different brand values can be translated into spatial form and sensory experience. This structured diversity also ensured pedagogical consistency, allowing for equitable assessment across projects while maintaining conceptual breadth in the analysis.

### **Data Collection**

Data were collected from the students' final presentation materials, which included:

- Design panels containing conceptual diagrams, plans, sections, and perspectives,
- High-resolution renderings and physical/digital models,
- Brief explanatory texts articulating concept development and brand analysis,
- Instructor notes and jury feedback sheets.

All projects were evaluated after the course submission period, ensuring that ethical considerations were met and that students' academic grading remained unaffected by the research. No personal data or identifiers were included; all materials were anonymized for analytical purposes.

### **Analytical Framework**

The analysis was conducted in three complementary phases:

**Phase 1: Conceptual Mapping:** Each project was first examined to identify the conceptual bridge between brand identity and spatial narrative. This involved coding recurring themes such as luxury, motion, elegance, urban vitality, and serenity, drawn from the brand's core values and student design statements. The process was informed by Kolb's (2015) experiential learning cycle and Schön's (1983) reflective-practice model, situating design iteration as a learning mechanism.

**Phase 2: Morphological and Visual Analysis:** A detailed morphological analysis was performed to assess spatial form, geometry, and flow. Parameters included:

- Spatial organization (plan typology, zoning, and circulation),
- Formal expression (organic, parametric, or modular composition),
- Lighting strategy (natural–artificial balance, highlight hierarchy),
- Materiality (texture, reflection, tactility),

- Color and atmosphere (chromatic harmony and emotional tone).

This phase relied on visual content analysis techniques (Rose, 2016), coding spatial elements according to visual syntax—shape, proportion, and alignment—and documenting how these elements embodied brand values.

Phase 3: Sensory and Experiential Evaluation: The final phase examined how design decisions created sensory experiences within the interior. Each project was analyzed for its ability to engage multiple senses, including sight, touch, and the perception of motion, within the framework of neuroaesthetic and emotional design theories (Chatterjee & Vartanian, 2016; Norman, 2004). Attention was paid to atmospheric qualities (light gradients, acoustic control, material warmth) that supported emotional resonance and brand recall.

**Evaluation Criteria**

To ensure analytical consistency, all fifteen projects were evaluated using a structured matrix developed for this study (Table 1).

**Table 1.** Evaluation Criteria

1. Criterion	2. Description	3. Indicators
4. Brand Identity Coherence	5. Alignment between spatial language and brand values	6. Concept diagrams, brand color integration
7. Morphological Integrity	8. Clarity and coherence of form and circulation	9. Plan composition, spatial hierarchy
10. Material and Lighting Articulation	11. Expressive and functional use of materials and light	12. Texture, luminance balance, reflectivity
13. Sensory Engagement	14. Capacity to evoke perceptual and emotional responses	15. Atmosphere, spatial rhythm, tactile contrast
16. Pedagogical Insight	17. Evidence of reflection, iteration, and learning growth	18. Design journals, revisions, critiques

The matrix allowed comparative assessment across projects, identifying common tendencies and unique interpretations.

**Validity and Reliability**

Credibility was enhanced through method triangulation: visual, textual, and morphological data were cross-referenced to ensure interpretive accuracy. Two independent faculty reviewers validated coding categories to reduce researcher bias. The study followed ethical guidelines for educational research (APA Ethical Principles, 2020), as all materials were produced within an institutional learning environment and did not involve direct human experimentation.

**Finding and Discussion**

*Conceptual Translation of Brand Identity: Spatial Narratives in Flagship Store Design*

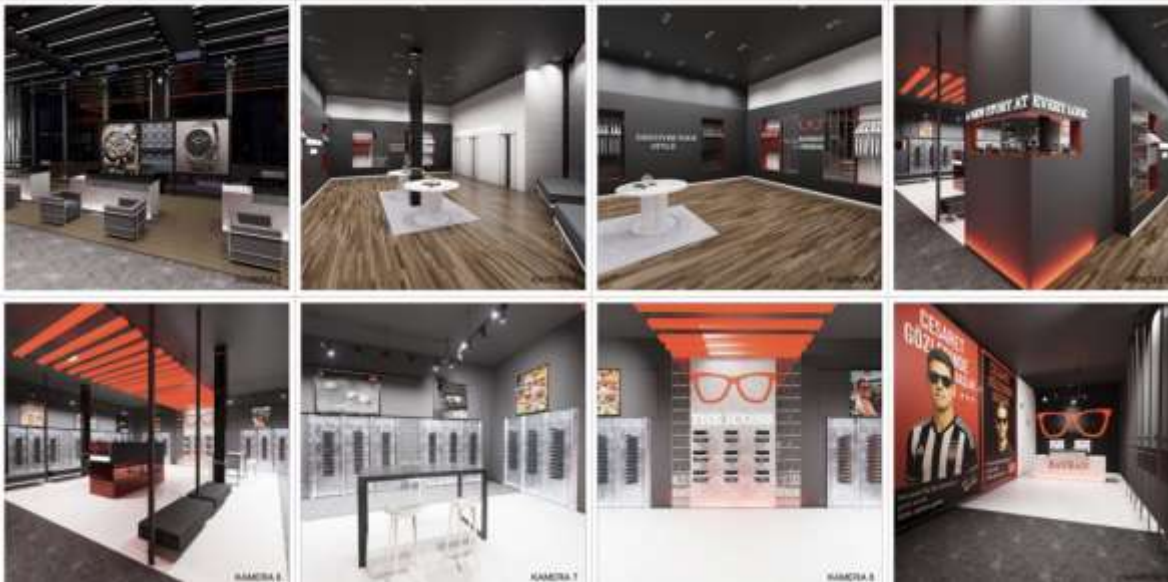
The flagship store projects presented by the students reveal how brand identity can be conceptually translated into spatial form, atmosphere, and user experience. Within these projects, interior architecture emerges not merely as a medium of display but as a strategic and narrative tool that transforms abstract brand values such as luxury, innovation, sustainability, or youthfulness into perceptible spatial experiences.

*Spatial Semiotics of Brand Expression*

Each design demonstrates that spatial composition functions as a semiotic system—communicating brand essence through geometry, materiality, and light. For instance, projects such as the Häfele (Figure 1) and Ray-Ban (Figure 2) stores construct strong visual hierarchies through bold linear geometries, color contrast, and material precision, embodying the brands’ technical and performance-oriented identities. The interplay between red and black tonal schemes, metallic surfaces, and directional lighting conveys dynamism, confidence, and innovation, translating corporate identity into an experiential syntax.



**Figure 1. Hafele Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025**



**Figure 2. Ray-ban Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025**

Other projects, such as L'Oréal (Figure 3) and Anita Ko (Figure 4), privilege emotional engagement through soft forms, pastel tones, and fluid spatial transitions. The use of curved geometries, glossy finishes, and gradient lighting creates a sense of sensuality and elegance aligned with luxury and beauty branding. Here, spatial design acts as a tactile and atmospheric translation of femininity and sophistication, reinforcing the affective dimension of brand experience.



Figure 3. L'oreal Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025



Figure 4. Anita Ko Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025

### ***Craftsmanship and Material Authenticity***

In contrast, the Mikimoto (Figure 5) and Babolat (Figure 6) stores embody the ethos of craftsmanship and material purity. The extensive use of natural textures, refined color palettes, and diffused daylight enhances perceptual calm and authenticity. These projects interpret brand heritage through material semantics, revealing how tactile quality and compositional order contribute to a sense of trust, timelessness, and artisanal excellence.



Figure 5. Mikimoto Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025



Figure 6. Babolat Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025

### ***Spatial Dynamism and Youth Culture***

Projects such as Vespa (Figure 7) and Jackson (Figure 8) Store reinterpret brand identity through spatial dynamism and energetic expression. The integration of flexible circulation loops, kinetic ceiling structures, and vibrant color coding collectively generates an environment charged with motion and social interaction. The interior thus becomes an extension of the brand's youthful, active, and community-oriented lifestyle narrative, transforming the commercial space from a site of passive consumption into an arena of engagement and participation.



Figure 7. Vespa Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025



Figure 8. Jackson Flagship Store 3D Renders – Student Work, 2025

The projects collectively illustrate how interior architecture serves as a critical interface between corporate identity and user perception. Through conceptual translation, brand narratives acquire spatial embodiment, transforming commercial environments into experiential ecosystems. The design strategies analyzed here reaffirm that a successful flagship store is not merely a retail venue but a spatial manifesto of the brand's ethos, values, and emotional language.

Conceptually, these design strategies revealed students' capacity to internalize the brand's intangible values and reinterpret them through spatial experience. This aligns with Schön's (1983) reflective practice model, where design thinking evolves through iterative reflection and adaptation. The projects further validated Kolb's (2015) experiential learning cycle: observation, conceptualization, experimentation, and reflection were all visible in the evolution from concept diagrams to final renderings.

### ***Morphological and Spatial Characteristics***

Morphological analysis revealed three recurring plan typologies: centralized, linear, and organic cluster organizations.



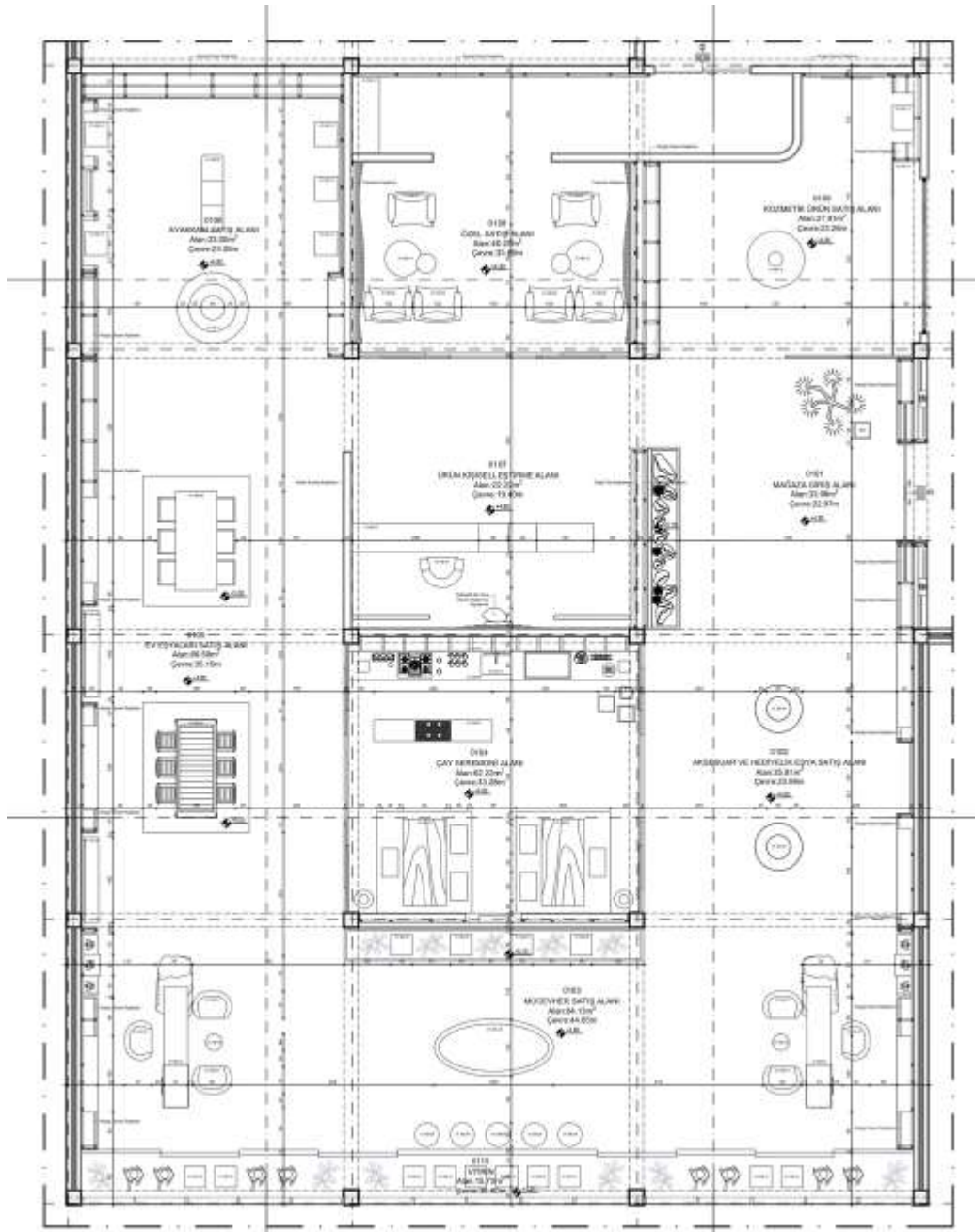
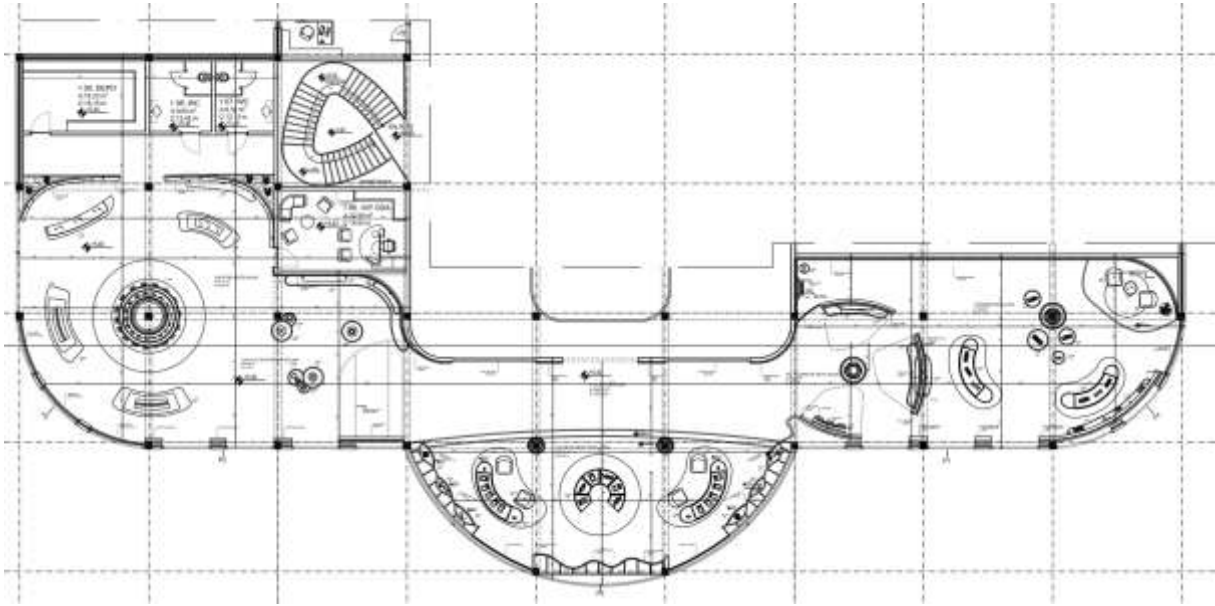


Figure 10. Mikimoto Flagship Store Plan – Student Work, 2025

Organic clusters (e.g., Anita Ko) emphasized discovery and spatial layering, inviting users to meander through differentiated zones linked by soft transitions (Figure 11).



**Figure 11. Anita Ko Jewelry Flagship Store Plan- Student Work, 2025**

The use of zoning diagrams across projects demonstrated students' growing awareness of spatial hierarchy and circulation logic. Most designs successfully balanced public and private functions, including display, experience, and service areas, creating coherent experiential flows.

### **Material and Lighting Articulation**

- Across all cases, materiality emerged as the most direct mediator of brand character. Natural materials (wood, stone, rattan, and linen) were prevalent in biophilic and luxury-focused brands, aligning with sustainability and sensory warmth.
- Reflective and metallic surfaces (brass, chrome, lacquer) were strategically used in jewelry and technology-based brands to evoke precision, clarity, and value.
- Contrasting tactile textures, such as polished marble juxtaposed with matte plaster, served to balance visual richness with sensory comfort.

Lighting strategies followed two paradigms:

- Highlight lighting, emphasizing product hierarchy through accent spots and concealed LEDs.
- Atmospheric illumination, diffusing daylight or soft artificial light to establish immersive ambiances.

These findings resonate with neuroaesthetic principles proposed by Chatterjee & Vartanian (2016), suggesting that light gradients and material tactility influence affective well-being and cognitive engagement.

### **Sensory and Experiential Dimensions**

The sensory and experiential analysis revealed that the projects collectively transcended representational design by creating multisensory atmospheres that engage users on perceptual, emotional, and cognitive levels. Across the 15 examined cases, students employed light, material, form, and chromatic modulation not only as visual strategies but as embodied design tools that evoke mood, tactility, and memory. Within the framework of neuroaesthetic theory (Chatterjee & Vartanian, 2016), sensory engagement emerged as a key mechanism through which spatial experience became aligned with each brand's emotional identity.

Materiality further deepened the sensory dimension of design. One student's Vespa Concept Store exemplified playful tactility through glossy polymer surfaces, soft vinyl seating, and pastel hues, creating a youthful and touch-friendly atmosphere that reflected mobility and spontaneity. In contrast, another student's Häfele Store utilized high-gloss metals, angular trusses, and cool luminance to communicate precision, strength, and industrial discipline aligned with the brand's mechanical identity. A third student's L'Oréal Store explored material sensuality through velvet-textured walls, polished

marble floors, and diffused pink illumination, constructing a refined yet emotionally charged environment. The tactile warmth of these interiors reflects Norman's (2004) notion of visceral design, where sensory cues evoke affective attraction prior to rational interpretation.

Color palettes across the projects functioned as emotional indicators, reinforcing brand narratives. Warm spectrums dominated luxury-oriented spaces such as Anita Ko, employing gold, beige, and rose hues to convey comfort and exclusivity. Cool tonalities in performance-driven interiors such as Häfele, and Ray-Ban intensified clarity and alertness through high contrast and reflective surfaces. Across all cases, color was consciously used to regulate emotional tone and cognitive engagement, evidencing the students' ability to manipulate atmospheric valence.

The synthesis of light, material, and form generated immersive environments where users engaged beyond the visual. L'Oréal emphasized sensorial dramatization through reflection, enclosure, and contrast. Several projects, including D&R and Louis Vuitton, integrated acoustic absorbents and textured surfaces to temper reverberation, demonstrating a growing understanding of sensory coherence and spatial well-being (Pallasmaa, 2012).

Ultimately, the experiential dimension across all projects revealed a strong alignment between brand semantics and sensory orchestration. Students demonstrated that retail interiors achieve memorability and emotional depth when atmospheric design transcends decoration to become an embodied narrative. The interplay of illumination, tactility, and chromatic nuance transformed spaces into affective environments where perception and emotion coalesced. This finding supports recent research in interior neuroaesthetics, showing that multisensory design enhances user satisfaction and brand recall (Chatterjee & Vartanian, 2016; Norman, 2004). The students' capacity to consciously manipulate light gradients, material temperature, and textural contrast marks a pedagogical progression from formal representation to experiential cognition within interior architecture education.

**Comparative Tendencies and Pedagogical Insights**

When viewed collectively, the projects revealed an evolution from representational to experiential design thinking. Early-stage concept diagrams focused primarily on visual branding, while final outcomes embodied spatial storytelling—the transformation of brand identity into a sensory narrative.

The evaluation matrix (Table 2) facilitated cross-case synthesis, revealing common tendencies:

High coherence between brand and space in 12 of 15 projects, with strong conceptual articulation in material–color selection.

Morphological integrity was consistently achieved, though a few cases exhibited limited spatial hierarchy due to overuse of symmetry.

Lighting articulation emerged as a key pedagogical achievement, with most students effectively integrating light as an experiential tool rather than a technical requirement.

Sensory engagement showed remarkable growth compared to earlier studio iterations, indicating improved awareness of multisensory experience in interior design education.

Pedagogically, the projects validated the effectiveness of a reflective, experiential learning model within design studios. The process encouraged students to oscillate between conceptual reasoning and embodied experimentation, bridging cognitive and sensory domains. This iterative engagement fostered not only aesthetic maturity but also design empathy—the ability to imagine user experiences through spatial atmospheres.

**Table 2. Comparative Tendencies and Pedagogical Insights Across Projects.**

19. Criterion	20. Cross-Case Observation (n=15)	21. Representative Evidence	22. Pedagogical Interpretation
23. Brand–Space Coherence	24. 12 of 15 projects achieved strong conceptual alignment between brand	25. Consistent material–color logic reflecting brand semantics (e.g., luxury,	26. Demonstrates students' advanced capacity for translating abstract brand values into

	identity and spatial language.	motion, naturality).	spatial form and atmosphere.
27. Morphological Integrity	28. Majority of cases presented clear spatial organization and circulation hierarchy; minor over-symmetry in 3 cases reduced dynamic perception.	29. Balanced zoning and experiential sequencing observed in Babolat, Mikimoto, and L'Oréal stores.	30. Indicates maturity in spatial reasoning, though highlights need for improved asymmetrical composition and spatial rhythm.
31. Lighting Articulation	32. 10 projects effectively used lighting as an emotional and spatial structuring device, not merely functional illumination.	33. Integration of ceiling geometries and accent lighting to express brand tone and sensory contrast.	34. Confirms pedagogical progress in understanding light as a neuroaesthetic and narrative instrument within interior experience.
35. Material–Tactile Expression	36. Materiality increasingly used as an affective and conceptual medium rather than surface finish.	37. Contrast between soft and reflective materials creating emotional resonance (e.g., Anita Ko, L'Oréal, Häfele).	38. Reveals heightened awareness of multisensory perception and haptic communication in spatial design.
39. Chromatic Atmosphere	40. Color deployed strategically to modulate psychological tone—warm palettes in luxury, cool palettes in performance, biophilic tones in restorative brands.	41. Chromatic coherence across Mikimoto, Louis Vuitton Nature, and Vespa projects.	42. Illustrates comprehension of color as a neurocognitive trigger influencing user emotion and attention.
43. Sensory Engagement	44. Notable improvement from previous studio cycles; multisensory integration evident in at least 9 projects.	45. Combination of lighting, material tactility, and acoustic moderation.	46. Validates experiential learning outcomes, reinforcing embodied cognition as a pedagogical goal.
47. Design Empathy and	48. Students demonstrated enhanced	49. Integration of user-centered scenarios and	50. Confirms the success of reflective

Reflective Practice	ability to anticipate user emotions through sensory environments.	experiential zoning strategies.	studio pedagogy (Kolb, 2015; Schön, 1983) in developing empathetic design thinking.
51. Overall Pedagogical Outcome	52. Transition from representational to experiential thinking; synthesis of conceptual, morphological, and sensory dimensions.	53. Progressive sophistication in brand translation and atmospheric coherence.	54. Establishes experiential learning as a transformative framework for interior design education, merging cognition, perception, and emotion.

## Conclusion

This study investigated how undergraduate interior architecture students interpret and spatialize brand identity through sensory, morphological, and conceptual strategies within a reflective studio framework. The findings illuminate a pedagogical shift from representation to experience, revealing how design education can foster sensory literacy and narrative competence when brand-driven spatial storytelling becomes the central design problem.

The projects demonstrated that students successfully transformed abstract brand values such as luxury, motion, serenity, or authenticity into tangible spatial narratives through coherent manipulation of form, light, and material. Rather than reproducing logos or surface aesthetics, they encoded identity in the atmosphere and behavior of space. This outcome underscores that the narrative translation of brand identity relies not on visual mimicry but on phenomenological embodiment, where emotion and perception become the medium of design communication.

Across all cases, the analysis revealed a growing capacity among students to construct spatial meaning through multisensory orchestration. Lighting functioned as an emotional structure, modulating rhythm and affective tone; materials embodied tactile contrast and sensual resonance; color operated as a psychological register, shaping cognitive and emotional responses. Together, these elements constituted an experiential language of space, a syntax in which sensory elements act as words and atmospheres as sentences that convey narrative depth.

Engagement with the experiential design process led students to approach form not as static geometry but as a cognitive construct shaped by experience. Through iterative sketching, modeling, and critique, morphological reasoning became intertwined with sensory awareness. This integrative process supported higher-order conceptual thinking as students began to reason about why forms evoke particular emotions rather than only how they appear. The findings thus validate that experiential design pedagogy cultivates analytical reflection alongside creative intuition.

Pedagogically, the studio environment functioned as a cognitive laboratory for embodied learning. Students' engagement with sensory phenomena such as light gradients, material tactility, and chromatic balance enabled them to imagine user experience empathically and narratively. The reflective cycles embedded in the process (Kolb, 2015; Schön, 1983) nurtured design empathy and narrative coherence, bridging sensory experience with conceptual reasoning. The outcome suggests that cultivating sensory literacy should be recognized as a central component of interior architecture curricula, especially in the context of experiential and brand-oriented design education.

This study was limited to one institutional context and a specific course level, restricting the generalizability of findings across broader educational settings. The analysis relied on visual and morphological interpretation rather than empirical user feedback. Future research could integrate mixed methods such as post-occupancy evaluation, eye-tracking, or physiological measurements to

empirically assess emotional and cognitive responses to interior atmospheres. Comparative studies across institutions and cultures would further clarify how pedagogical and cultural frameworks influence the development of sensory and narrative design literacy.

The study confirms that experiential learning in design education bridges the gap between cognition and perception. By engaging students in multisensory exploration, educators can move beyond formalist teaching toward emotionally intelligent design pedagogy. Embedding neuroaesthetic and sensory-design principles into studio curricula can enhance empathy, reflective practice, and creative autonomy, qualities that are increasingly vital in contemporary design professions.

In sum, this research demonstrates that when students are guided to *think through experience*, they begin to design not merely objects or interiors but affective encounters. This transformation marks an essential pedagogical evolution in interior architecture education: from spatial representation toward embodied understanding, from visual composition toward experiential cognition.

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