

Original Paper

Reading Literary Classics and Cultivating Humanistic Literacy in University Language Programs

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to discuss the significance of reading literary classics in university language courses for the cultivation of humanistic literacy and its realization path. It analyzes the multi-level reasons for college students' alienation from literary classics through the re-understanding of literary classics, and then elaborates on the important role of reading literary classics in the enhancement of college students' humanistic literacy in terms of increasing humanistic knowledge, establishing life ideals, and improving moral cultivation. This paper emphasizes that university language courses should give full play to its humanistic features, and through guiding students to read literary classics in depth, promote students' all-round development and become new-age talents with noble sentiments and profound cultural background.

Keywords

Literary classics, humanistic literacy, university language

1. Introduction

With the rapid development of society and the rapid change of science and technology, the importance of humanistic literacy in the cultivation of talents is becoming more and more prominent. As a basic subject in higher education, university language courses bear the important mission of inheriting Chinese culture and cultivating humanistic literacy. As the treasures of human culture, literary classics contain rich historical, philosophical, moral and aesthetic values, which are valuable resources for improving the humanistic literacy of college students. Therefore, an in-depth exploration of the relationship between reading literary classics and cultivating humanistic literacy in university language courses is of great significance for promoting the reform of higher education and cultivating talents with all-round development.

2. Re-understanding of Literary Classics

2.1 Connotation and Characteristics of Literary Classics

Literary classics refer to literary works with exemplary, authoritative and eternal values that have been widely recognized and passed down through time in the long course of history. They not only have superior artistic skills and profound ideological connotations, but also carry the cultural spirit and values of a specific era. The characteristics of literary classics can be summarized as exemplary, universal and original. Exemplary means that classics have reached the peak of contemporary works in terms of artistic performance and depth of thought; universal means that classics can cross the boundaries of time and space and touch the hearts of readers in different cultural backgrounds; and originality is embodied in the innovations and breakthroughs of classics in terms of themes, styles and techniques.

2.2 Value and Significance of Literary Classics

The value of literary classics lies not only in their artistic achievements, but also in their far-reaching influence on the spiritual world of mankind. They guide readers to think about major issues of life, society and the universe by molding typical characters, showing complex human nature and exploring the meaning of life. At the same time, literary classics are also an important carrier for passing on national culture and promoting national spirit. Through reading literary classics, readers can gain a deeper understanding of a nation's history and culture, values and spiritual pursuit, thus enhancing national pride and cultural identity.

3. Exploring the Multi-level Reasons for College Students' Alienation from Literary Classics

3.1 Influence of Social and Cultural Background: The Prevalence of Consumerism and Mass Culture

In the current society, the wave of consumerism is sweeping across the world, and the cultural field is also characterized by the prevalence of mass culture. With its popularity, entertainment and popularity, popular culture quickly attracts a large number of young people's attention and becomes an important part of their daily life. In contrast, classic literature, due to its profound ideological connotation, complex character relationships and deep historical background, often seems relatively obscure and difficult to understand, making it difficult to grab readers' attention in a short time. In this social background of consumerism and mass culture in parallel, college students are more inclined to choose easy and pleasant reading methods, such as online novels, short videos, etc. These emerging media satisfy their instant entertainment needs with their rapid consumption, thus neglecting to a certain extent the in-depth reading and thinking of literary classics.

3.2 Impact of the Digital Era: Changes in Reading Habits and Information Acquisition Methods

The arrival of the digital era has completely changed people's reading habits and information acquisition methods. The popularization of the Internet, smart phones and other new media has made information spread at an unprecedented speed, and people can obtain massive information anytime and anywhere. However, this convenience of information acquisition also brings the problems of shallow

and fragmented reading. College students often find it difficult to concentrate on in-depth reading in the face of massive information, and prefer to choose short, intuitive and easy-to-digest ways of obtaining information. This change in reading habits makes it difficult for them to sink their hearts into reading and understanding those contents in literary classics that need to be savored and deeply thought, thus adversely affecting the reading of literary classics.

3.3 Influence of Personal Cognitive Biases: Erosion of Pragmatism and Fast Food Culture

Some college students have cognitive bias on the relationship between literary classics and personal growth, and they tend to regard reading as a means of acquiring practical knowledge, while ignoring the important role of reading in nourishing the spiritual world and shaping personality. In their view, literary classics lack practicality and cannot directly help them solve real-life problems, such as further education and employment. Therefore, when facing the pressure of reality, they are more willing to choose those fast-food reading methods that can produce practical benefits, such as test-taking counseling books and vocational skills training. This pragmatic reading concept makes college students' interest in reading literary classics gradually weaken and even produce a sense of alienation. In addition, the prevalence of fast-food culture further aggravates this cognitive bias, which makes college students more inclined to pursue instant gratification and pleasure, while neglecting the far-reaching significance and value contained in literary classics.

4. The Significance of Emphasizing Reading Literary Classics for the Enhancement of College Students' Humanistic Literacy

4.1 Examining Literary Classics to Increase Humanistic Knowledge

Humanistic knowledge, as the cornerstone of humanistic literacy, covers many fields such as history, literature, politics, law, art, philosophy, morality and language knowledge. Literary classics, as the bright pearls in the treasury of human culture, carry a wealth of humanistic knowledge, which is an important way for college students to broaden their horizons and increase their knowledge. Through reading literary classics, college students are able to cross the boundaries of time and space, and deeply understand the social landscape, cultural characteristics and values of different historical periods, so as to build up a comprehensive and profound humanistic knowledge system.

Specifically, literary classics provide valuable knowledge resources for college students with their unique artistic charm and profound ideological connotation. For example, reading *Dream of Red Mansions*, college students can appreciate the customs, family ethics and complex network of interpersonal relationships in Qing Dynasty society, and deeply understand the rise and fall of feudal society; while *Journey to the West*, with its fantastical myths and legends and vivid folk beliefs, shows the rich imagination and creativity of the ancient Chinese people, so that college students, while enjoying the charm of myths, can also feel the Chinese culture's The myths and legends and vivid folk beliefs show the rich imagination and creativity of the ancient Chinese people, so that college students can appreciate the charm of myths and at the same time feel the depth of Chinese culture. In addition,

classical literary works such as “Poetry and Classic of Poetry” and “Chu Ci” are the treasures of Chinese culture. Through reading these works, college students can gain a deeper understanding of the origins and development of ancient Chinese culture, and enhance their sense of identity and pride in Chinese culture.

Through reading classical literature, college students can not only obtain rich humanistic knowledge, but also develop sensitivity to culture and critical thinking ability in the process of reading, laying a solid foundation for future academic research and life development.

4.2 Drawing Energy from Classics and Establishing Life Ideals

Literary classics not only have artistic value, but also contain profound ideological connotation and philosophy of life. They guide readers to think about the meaning of life and the pursuit of value by modeling typical characters and showing complex human nature, providing valuable spiritual food for college students. In the process of reading literary classics, college students can draw positive energy from the works to stimulate their motivation and ambition, so as to establish correct life ideals.

Take *How Steel is Made* as an example, this classic literary work has inspired generations of young people with its vivid characters and profound ideological connotations. Paul Kochagin, the main character with his perseverance and selfless dedication, has become a model in the hearts of countless young people. Through reading this work, college students can deeply appreciate the value and meaning of life, inspire their own spirit of struggle, and make unremitting efforts to realize their personal ideals and social values.

Another example is *The Ordinary World*, a novel that shows the indomitable struggle of ordinary people in the face of adversity with its real-life scenes and profound characterizations. Sun Shaoping, the main character, has touched countless readers with his desire for knowledge and pursuit of ideals. Through reading this work, college students can deeply realize the hardship and difficulty of life, but at the same time, they can also see the hope and light, so that they can be more determined in their beliefs and ideals.

4.3 Learning the Qualities of Classic Characters and Improving Moral Cultivation

Characters in literary classics often have distinctive personalities and noble qualities. They show the beauty and greatness of the human spiritual world through their words and deeds. In the process of reading literary classics, college students can learn the qualities and spiritual demeanor of the classic characters, so as to improve their moral cultivation and charisma.

Take *Romance of the Three Kingdoms* as an example, this classical literary work has become a treasure in the treasure house of Chinese culture with its vivid characters and rich storylines. Guan Yu, the famous general of Shu Han, has become a model of loyalty and righteousness for future generations. Through reading this work, college students can deeply realize the importance of loyalty and righteousness, so that they can pay more attention to their words and deeds in daily life and try to become a moral and responsible person.

Another example is *Water Margin*, a novel that shows the bravery and justice of the ancient Chinese

people with its vivid descriptions and profound ideological connotations. The Liangshan heroes have won wide acclaim for their behavior of eliminating violence and protecting the good and righteous. Through reading this work, college students can deeply realize the importance of justice and courage, so that they can face difficulties and challenges more bravely in their daily life and try to become a responsible and courageous person.

5. Implementation Strategies of Reading Literary Classics in University Language Programs

5.1 Optimize the Curriculum and Highlight the Core Status of Classical Reading

As an important position of humanistic education, university language courses should give full play to its unique humanistic characteristics and put the reading of literary classics at the core of course teaching. In the curriculum, careful planning should be made to reasonably increase the proportion of classical reading and class time arrangement to ensure that students have enough time and energy for in-depth and systematic reading. Specifically, the following measures can be taken:

Setting up a special reading unit for classics. In the course system of College Language, a unit of “classic reading” is clearly set up, and a number of representative and far-reaching literary classics, such as *The Analects of Confucius*, *Mencius*, *Dream of the Red Chamber*, *Journey to the West*, etc., are selected as compulsory reading, and students are required to carry out in-depth study and discussion.

Personalized Recommendations and Differentiated Teaching: On the basis of respecting students' individual differences, a personalized list of recommended classical works is provided, taking into account students' professional backgrounds, interests and reading levels. At the same time, differentiated teaching strategies are used to provide different levels of reading guidance and support for different students' reading needs and abilities.

Interdisciplinary integration, broadening reading horizons: actively explore the teaching mode of combining the reading of literary classics with other disciplines (e.g., history, philosophy, art, etc.), deepen the understanding of classics through an interdisciplinary perspective, and broaden students' reading horizons and breadth of thinking.

5.2 Innovative Teaching Methods to Stimulate Reading Interest and Deep Thinking

In order to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning and enhance the teaching effect of classical reading of literature, university language courses should constantly innovate teaching methods and means, make classical reading more vivid and interesting, and guide students to participate in classroom discussions and thinking in depth.

Thematic discussion and group cooperative learning, focusing on the theme, characters and plot of classic works, organizing students to group cooperative learning, encouraging students to put forward their own views and insights, and promoting the understanding and enlightenment of classic works through the collision of thinking and in-depth exchanges.

Role-playing and situational simulation teaching, through role-playing, situational simulation and other interactive ways, allows students to personally experience the characters and plots of classic works, and

deepen their understanding and feelings about the works. At the same time, this teaching method can also effectively improve students' language expression ability and teamwork ability.

Multimedia-assisted teaching, enhance classroom interest: make full use of multimedia technology means, such as playing classic film and television clips, displaying related picture information, making exquisite PPT courseware, etc., so that classroom teaching is more intuitive and vivid. Through multimedia-assisted teaching, it can effectively stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning and improve the teaching effect.

5.3 Strengthen the Construction of Teachers and Improve the Teaching Level and Professionalism

Teachers are the key to the teaching of literary classics reading. In order to improve the teaching effect and quality of literature classics reading, it is necessary to strengthen the construction of teachers and improve their teaching level and professional quality.

Regular teacher training and exchanges are organized, and well-known scholars and experts are regularly invited to the university for lectures and exchange activities to provide teachers with the latest teaching concepts and methods. At the same time, teachers are organized to participate in activities such as academic conferences and seminars at home and abroad to promote academic exchanges and cooperation and broaden their academic horizons.

Encourage teachers to participate in academic research and practical exploration: Teachers are encouraged to carry out academic research in conjunction with their teaching practice and explore new modes and methods of teaching literary classics reading. Through academic research and practical exploration, teachers can continuously improve their professionalism and teaching ability, and provide more powerful support for the teaching of literary classics reading.

Establish incentive mechanism to stimulate teachers' enthusiasm: Through establishing scientific and reasonable incentive mechanism, such as setting up teaching excellence awards and scientific research achievement awards, teachers' enthusiasm and creativity will be stimulated. At the same time, strengthen the assessment and evaluation work of teachers to ensure the quality and effect of teaching.

5.4 Create a Strong Reading Atmosphere and Cultivate Good Reading Habits

A good reading atmosphere is an important condition for cultivating students' reading habits and improving their reading ability. Universities should actively create a strong reading atmosphere and cultural atmosphere to provide students with good reading environment and conditions.

Improve reading facilities and provide convenient services: Increase the construction and investment in reading facilities such as libraries and reading rooms to ensure a rich collection of books and perfect facilities. At the same time, provide convenient lending services and management system to meet students' reading needs.

Organize colorful reading activities: Regularly hold reading festivals, classic recitation contests, book sharing sessions and other activities to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in reading. Through the activities organized, communication and cooperation among students can be promoted, and they can share their reading experiences and insights together.

Strengthening publicity and promotion efforts to improve the recognition of classical reading: Using campus radio, bulletin boards, network platforms and other media platforms, the importance and value of classical reading are widely publicized. Through publicity and promotion activities, students can be guided to establish correct reading concepts and values and actively participate in classic reading activities. At the same time, well-known writers and scholars can be invited to the school to hold lectures and exchange activities to further improve students' reading interest and cognitive level.

6. Case Analysis

6.1 Reform Practice of University Language Curriculum in a Certain Higher Education Institution

In the reform of university language curriculum of a university, the reading of literary classics is taken as one of the core contents of course teaching. They promote the implementation of literary classics reading by optimizing the curriculum, innovating the teaching methods and strengthening the construction of teachers. In terms of curriculum, they increased the proportion of classic reading and class time arrangement, and selected a series of representative classic works for intensive reading and discussion; in terms of teaching methods, they adopted a variety of teaching methods such as seminars and group discussions to stimulate students' interest and enthusiasm in learning; in terms of teacher training, they organized a series of teacher training activities to improve the teaching level and professionalism of teachers. After a period of practical exploration, the university language course reform in this university has achieved remarkable results: students' reading interest and enthusiasm have been effectively stimulated; the teaching effect and quality of classical literature reading have been significantly improved; and students' humanistic literacy and comprehensive quality have been comprehensively improved.

6.2 The Far-reaching Influence of Classical Literary Works on College Students' Humanistic Literacy

Take *Dream of the Red Chamber* as an example to analyze the far-reaching influence of classical literature on college students' humanistic literacy. As the pinnacle of Chinese classical novels, *Dream of Red Mansions* not only has superb artistic skills and profound ideological connotations, but also contains rich humanistic knowledge and values. Through reading *Dream of Red Mansions*, college students can gain a deeper understanding of the customs and habits, family ethics and interpersonal relationships of the Qing Dynasty society; at the same time, they can also think about the meaning of life and the pursuit of values through the characters and plot development in the work. For example, Jia Baoyu in *Dream of Red Mansions* has become a model for future generations with his rebellious and uninhibited character and pursuit of freedom and equality, while Lin Daiyu has won wide acclaim for her outstanding talent and delicate feelings. These characters and plot developments not only let college students feel the charm of literature and art; more importantly, they draw positive energy from them and inspire their own motivation and ambition, which promotes the overall improvement of their humanistic and comprehensive qualities.

7. Conclusion and Prospect

Literary classics reading is one of the important ways to improve college students' humanistic literacy. Through in-depth reading of literary classics, college students can increase their humanistic knowledge, establish life ideals, and improve their moral cultivation and other abilities. Therefore, the implementation and promotion of literary classics reading should be fully emphasized in the teaching of university language courses. In the future, we can further explore and innovate the teaching methods and means of reading literary classics; strengthen the cross-fertilization and synergistic development with other disciplines; and also pay attention to the challenges and opportunities brought by the digital era to the reading of literary classics and other issues. Through these efforts, we can promote the in-depth development of university language curriculum reform and make greater contributions to the cultivation of all-round development of talents.

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