

# **On the Integration of British and American Literature Reading into College English Teaching**

**Wenyi Pan**

Jiangxi Vocational Technical College of Industry&Trade, Nan Chang, Jiangxi, China

pac\_pwy@126.com

**Keywords:** College english, British and american cultural works, Reading

**Abstract:** British and American literary works contain rich English culture and knowledge, which is the most basic form of expression. Applying them in college English teaching can effectively improve the shortcomings of traditional teaching, enrich the teaching content in the classroom, stimulate students' interest in reading, lead students to explore the cultural connotation of British and American literature, carry out spiritual and cultural experience, improve students' understanding ability, help students master appropriate learning methods and improve their English comprehensive quality. Therefore, college English teachers should recognize the educational value of British and American literature works, carry out thematic reading activities, guide students into classroom activities, set questions, stimulate students' thinking to make them analyze the culture and value of British and American literature from multiple perspectives, enrich students' knowledge reserve and promote their rapid development.

## **1. Introduction**

Leading students to analyze British and American literary works in college English class is an effective way to understand British and American culture. Through literary works of different ages, students can also understand the social environment at that time and its influence on later generations. It is convenient for students to master certain English cultural connotation and lay a certain foundation for students to carry out cultural exchange between China and foreign countries in the future. When reading and analyzing British and American literary works, teachers should give students enough time and space, guide them to analyze in combination with the characteristics of western culture and feel the contained cultural connotation, improve students' appreciation ability and literary literacy, and help students better understand the contents of teaching materials.

## **2. Importance of Carrying out British and American Literature Reading in College English Teaching**

### **2.1 Conducive to Stimulating Students' Interest in Learning English**

British and American literary works are rich and diverse. Applying them to college English classroom teaching can not only supplement the contents of teaching materials, but also break through the limitations of the traditional classroom, providing students with rich learning materials and developing their thinking. Students can choose their favorite articles according to their own interests and hobbies, and share the characteristics of the articles for teachers and students. In this process, students' subjective initiative has been fully developed, and they no longer passively accept knowledge in the classroom, which helps students establish their interest in English learning.

### **2.2 Conducive to Excavating the Cultural Connotation of English**

The famous British and American literary works contain rich cultural connotations. Students need to dig deeply to understand the feelings and thoughts that the writers permeate. These contents are hidden in the description of the articles. In the process of teaching, teachers lead the students to

read the fragments of literary works, analyze the English descriptions in the works, connect with the context, and feel the contained emotion and culture. After a period of training, students' English reading ability can be improved, and the related knowledge reserves are also more abundant, beneficial for students to tap the cultural connotation in the textbook content while learning English, improve their understanding and analysis ability, and further master English culture.

### **2.3 Conducive to Cultivating College Students' Humanistic Spirit**

British and American literary works not only reflect the civilization of the time, but also reflect the social characteristics. By reading these works, teachers can lead students to review the history. In different historical environments, literary works show unique characteristics. Famous works have left a profound influence in the history of literature. By reading these works and feeling the contained humanistic spirit, students' spiritual thoughts can be edified to achieve the goal of cultivating college students' humanistic spirit.

## **3. Effective Measures to Integrate British and American Literature Reading into College English Teaching**

### **3.1 Carry out Thematic Reading Activities to Stimulate Students' Interest in Reading**

According to the characteristics of the teaching materials, English teachers can select several British and American literary works with the same historical background or the same theme to carry out thematic reading activities, use this theme to stimulate students' reading interest and guide students to actively participate in reading activities. Teachers should give students enough time to guide them to read and analyze by themselves. After reading, students can discuss on this theme, analyze the deep implication hidden in the article content, and talk about their own views on this theme, so as to improve the quality of reading activities. For example, the teacher chooses fragments which describe the heroines of Jane Austen's *Pride and Prejudice* and *Sense and Sensibility*. Although the heroines were living in medieval Europe when women were oppressed to a certain extent, they were strong and brave, had their own opinions, and were clear about what they wanted and were not bound by the social environment at that time. Before reading the chosen fragments, teachers can lead students to understand Jane Austen's life and the background of the story creation, and then carry out thematic reading activities. In the reading process, students can seek the help of teachers when encounter some grammar or description they can't understand, so that the reading activity can be carried out smoothly under the guidance of teachers. After reading, students can discuss their views on the fragments of the two masterpieces and analyze the deep implication contained in them, so as to improve their understanding ability. After the reading activity, the teacher can guide students to accumulate the vocabulary, sentence patterns and grammar encountered in reading and apply them to their English writing, so as to improve their English level.

### **3.2 Carry out Flipped Classroom and Cooperative Inquiry Activities**

In college English teaching, teachers can construct flipped classroom to reflect students' dominant position and guide students to carry out cooperative inquiry activities. Before class, the teacher can arrange tasks in advance, asking students to read a certain British and American literary work, analyze the plot, grammar, thoughts and feelings, etc., and introduce their own problems into the classroom, carry out cooperative inquiry activities with group members, analyze and discuss the work. Students can burst out new ideas and put forward new opinions in the exchange, so as to improve the reading efficiency of literary works. For example, teachers can ask students to read the world-famous work *The Old Man and the Sea* after class and talk about the image of Santiago in the work. When reading after class, students can extract some descriptions about Santiago according to the task proposed by the teacher, including the relationship between Santiago and the boy Manolin,

as well as the spirit of Santiago not accepting defeat in the face of dangerous situations. Hemingway mentioned in his book, “His hopes and messages never revealed”. Students can integrate these key messages into the flipped classroom. In formal teaching, teachers can ask questions, such as what is the relationship between the old man and the sea and what role does Manolin play in the book. Then teachers guide students to discuss, analyze the two questions and share their reading accumulation with other members, so that they can find the key information from these messages and talk about their own feelings after reading. Some students think that Manolin is the spiritual successor of Santiago. Other students continue this idea and read the article again to find several key descriptions. Through this cooperative inquiry learning, students can establish the awareness of cooperative learning and autonomous learning, carry out efficient reading activities through a variety of learning methods, absorb more English knowledge, and deepen the understanding and cognition of English culture.

### **3.3 Analyze Literary Works from Multiple Perspectives**

When leading students to read and appreciate British and American literary works, teachers should pay attention to analyzing the works from multiple perspectives. Different perspectives can produce different problems, which can stimulate students' thinking and generate more new ideas. Teachers can also use the grammar sentence patterns in the works to carry out knowledge teaching and improve the teaching efficiency. For example, teachers can appreciate a work from the perspective of its genre and literary form. In the novel *Gone with the Wind*, the heroine's image is very eye-catching. By depicting this image, the real American life under the background of the story is showed. Analyzing this literary form can help students master the story background of *Gone with the Wind* and consult the historical and social environment at that time. Only when they have a certain understanding of the American society at that time, can they be clearer about some of the descriptive purposes. Teachers can also appreciate literary works from the perspective of literature and culture. *Gone with the Wind* describes the civil war in the United States and reveals the social phenomenon at that time, with a certain irony. Students should analyze the characteristics of this work from the perspective of the features of American literature and recognize the differences between Chinese and Western cultures. By analyzing some dramatic language, forms, story plots and so on, students can feel the strong literary effect of the work and improve their literary literacy. Or teachers can lead students to read the work intensively, divide the work into several parts, set each part with different themes, guide students to read the part in detail and feel the national thoughts, so that students can dig out the thought, emotion and cultural connotation that the writer wants to express from the surface plot development of the story. Only by appreciating works in this way can students more carefully excavate the main line and emotion in literary works, master the literary trend of thought, enrich their knowledge reserve and improve their cultural literacy.

## **4. Conclusion**

In a word, college English teachers should be aware of the educational value contained in British and American literature. In classroom teaching, teachers should select appropriate literary works according to students' interests and teaching requirements and bring the works into the classroom to carry out thematic reading activities or flipped classroom, so as to guide students to appreciate the works from various perspectives, excavate the cultural connotation and literary thoughts, and master certain reading and appreciation skills. After a period of reading training, students have established an interest in English learning, realized the English culture in different periods reflected in British and American literature works, and also improved understanding and absorbing ability, so as to enrich students' English knowledge and cultural reserves, and lay a solid foundation for future development.

## **References**

- [1] Xie Hongjun. Discussion on British and American Literature Reading and English Teaching. *Friends of Humanities*, vol.15, no.15, pp.192, 2019.
- [2] Chen Lijing. A study on the Reading and Appreciation Strategies of College Students' British and American Literary Works. *Northern Literature* (middle ten days of a month), no.10, pp.191-192, 2019.
- [3] Xu Changmei. A study on the Application of British and American Literature in Reading Teaching for Junior Undergraduates in English Major. *Overseas English* (last volume), no.6, pp.221-222, 2020.