

An Analysis of the Application of Reading Classical English and American Literature in University English Teaching

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Abstract: With the harmonization and unification of the world economy, the international status of English is becoming more and more important. The reading of classical American literature has gradually penetrated into university English teaching, which can make students' understanding of British and American culture gradually deepen and form professional English language habits. In this regard, this paper analyses the advantages of classical British and American literature in university English teaching and discusses the relevant measures for its application in teaching, in order to improve students' overall English language skills.

Keywords: English and American literature; University English; Reading skills

1. Introduction

Nowadays, with the progress of the economy, China gradually attaches importance to the learning of English. For university English teaching, reading English and American literature can stimulate students' interest in reading English on the basis of improving their reading ability. Therefore, the actual English level of students should be taken as a premise to develop their interest and integrate listening, reading and writing skills training into daily teaching, so as to enhance students' ability to use English flexibly.

2. The Advantages of Reading Classical English and American Literature in University English Teaching

English and American classic literature occupies an extremely important and lofty position in the history of literature, and its elegant and professional literary beauty can help students cultivate their English sentiment and make them experience the charm of English. Unlike ordinary English textbooks, classical English and American literature is highly flexible, with a dramatic storyline and unique characters that make it highly valuable to read. When reading classical literature, students can learn more about the cultural strengths and history of Western countries, and thus better learn how English is used in everyday life. The structure of language in classic literature is relatively more creative and three-dimensional, and by reading it carefully, students can enhance their own language layout, deepen their learning of English vocabulary and grammar, and learn to analyse English from multiple perspectives on their own^[1]. In the learning process, through their own understanding of literary works, they form their own unique views and opinions, cultivate their artistic and cultural appreciation of literary works, and strengthen their ability to appreciate the beauty of the English language. The reading process is also a process of accumulating English vocabulary, which is the most basic condition for learning English, so reading literature is essential, as it contains a large number of excellent professional vocabulary compared to textbooks, and has a positive effect on the accumulation of good words and sentences. With the spread of English culture, simple English communication is the basis of business and social life. Through the reading of English and American literature, students can form their own unique ideas and opinions on things based on the variety of styles and content of literature, which will improve their comprehensive literacy skills and enhance their ability to compete in today's talent market. Therefore, the advantages of classic British and American literature in university English teaching are obvious, not only can improve students' enthusiasm for reading, enhance their English application ability, but also gradually improve their comprehensive quality, so that their physical and mental development is healthy^[2].

Second, the application of British and American classic literature reading in college English teaching measures

2.1 Clarify the Objectives of the Course

Teachers play an irreplaceable role in English teaching, creating a positive personality and healthy learning atmosphere for students has a certain guiding role. In integrating the reading of classical English and American literature with teaching programmes, teachers

should clarify the objectives of the curriculum and develop the design of teaching activities in a reasonable and standardised manner according to the characteristics of English learning and the comprehensive ability of students. English reading and writing skills are integrated into the whole process of learning English, so strategies to integrate classical English and American literature with the improvement of students' writing and reading skills should be fully considered in teaching. At the same time, the content of the course should be designed to meet the important and difficult points of the course objectives, and the students should be selected according to their actual situation. For example, you can select a classic dialogue from a work of literature and lead students to appreciate it while setting learning tasks, i.e. looking up the relevant literary work after class and reading it through, assigning afterthoughts, and then communicating with each other again between teachers and students about their learning experiences. You can also take clips from classic films of English and American literature and lead students to learn the English pronunciation and grammatical structures in the drama, so that they are fully engaged in learning English. Representative works such as *Paradise*, *The Bluest Eye* and *Song of Solomon* can also be studied to enable students to deepen their understanding of cultural conflicts when reading, broaden their horizons and provide them with good opportunities to understand the socio-political context. The interaction between teachers and students enables teachers to examine students' reading in great depth, which in turn deepens their sense of learning. Another example is the teaching of English, where teachers, having identified the shortcomings of the traditional teaching model, have strengthened the requirement for students to measure their English examinations by introducing classical literature reading into their teaching to enhance their English learning. Innovative teaching models are gradually being promoted in response to the specificities of their institutions' student population, thus enhancing students' actual English listening and speaking skills while improving the institutions' English teaching standards^[3].

2.2 Taking Students as the Main Subject

In the process of infiltrating classic English and American literature into English teaching, it should be based on developmental psychology, adhere to the teaching concept of taking students as the main body, differentiate from the traditional teaching mode, change the learning roles of teachers and students, and enhance students' conscientiousness in learning English. In the teaching process, effective methods suitable for modern university students' English teaching should be gradually explored, by starting from students' needs, cultivating their reading and learning of English and American literature, improving students' thinking skills while also focusing on the cultivation of their ability to distinguish and avoid assimilation into Western culture. Teachers can play an active role in guiding students through the process of learning English, cultivating students' ability to think for themselves so that they have their own understanding of learning in the process, thus bringing into play their own imagination, innovating in the learning process and forming their own rapid and effective learning methods. Fundamentally, the process of learning classic literature is a process of self-understanding for students, subconsciously enhancing their own literary qualities. In order to learn English well, and on the basis of increasing interest in learning, teachers should fully regulate students' accumulation of vocabulary and further expand their own vocabulary through word formation and inductive comparison when encountering new vocabulary. By memorising words in the context of specific storylines in literature, they can deepen their impressions and motivate their learning. This is why it is important for students to take the initiative to improve their English language skills and the sustainability of their English learning^[4].

2.3 Enhancing Reading Skills

In addition to creating a positive teaching atmosphere for students through clear teaching objectives and increasing their motivation, students should be provided with certain reading skills. As classical literature in Britain and America is relatively specialised and more difficult for university students than textbooks, if they start reading blindly, they will not only fail to keep up with the reading efficiency, but also waste their precious time costs. The analysis of summary and critical statements in the text will help students to better understand the theme and the author's intention. It is forbidden to read mechanistically, but rather to change the mode of reading and to summarise the central ideas of the text while reading. When you encounter vocabulary, you can make your own guesses by combining the context, the sentences before and after, and by analysing the organisation of words or the probability of their occurrence in the text, so that you can practise your reading habits and improve your reading efficiency. At this stage of change in the Internet era, the development of information technology also provides students with good learning channels, and students can access learning resources in a variety of ways to enhance their reading skills. For example, some of the all-English variety shows as well as classic movies can also provide students with learning skills ideas when helping them to learn, further tapping into their learning potential and thus enhancing their learning ability^[5].

3. Conclusion

In conclusion, the status of English is gradually increasing in today's social and economic market, both in terms of the demand for corporate talent and in terms of talent training, where English language skills are part of the students' own strengths on display. The gradual infiltration of the reading of classical English and American literature into teaching not only cultivates students' cross-cultural communication skills, but also enhances their ability to think for themselves, which has a positive effect on all aspects of their future studies and lays a good foundation for their future career development.

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