

Development Status and Systematic Optimization of Literature Education in Higher Education in the Era of Information

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ABSTRACT

With the vital significance of cultivating personality for individuals and bringing reforms to society, literature education is one of the most indispensable parts of the domestic and oversea higher educational systems, undertaking arduous tasks of conveying composite talents for various industries. Meanwhile, the practice of applying Internet technology in literature education in higher education has given new impetus to its transformation and development. Based on the era of information, literature education in universities and colleges has indeed made a variety of advances. Notwithstanding, it cannot be negligible that literary education in higher education faces serious challenges that bring about a large number of related problems. Under this new situation, although the practice of applying Internet technology in the teaching work of relevant subjects has brought new thinking to curriculum reform work of literature education in higher education, the overall development pattern is not optimistic enough. This paper uses surveys and qualitative analysis of teachers and students to demonstrate major and critical development status facing literature education in higher education. Results suggests that their main actions should be token to reform the literature educational systems due to its great significance.

Keywords: *Development status; Systematic optimization; Literature education; Higher education; the era of information*

1. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century, which is characterized by cutting-edge technologies such as information and big data, there is a huge reform happening in education. The emergence of electronic media has increasingly challenged textually and literally driven forms of culture, so that theorists such as Marshall McLuhan (1962) have argued since the 1960s that we have left the 'Gutenberg galaxy' behind us and that the engine of cultural development is now electronic communication rather than print media. 0.

As for literature, having a form of artistic expression based on emotions and values, including novels, poems, plays and essays, is the treasure of all humankind. Therefore, as one of the dispensable subjects of the educational system, much more attention needs to be paid to literature education in the digital age. It is undeniable that the era of globalization, the Internet, the information explosion and the emergence of consumer

society have a profound impact on college students today and bring countless merits to learning. Notwithstanding, the author finds that the professional quality of teachers, various conflicts between traditional aesthetics and literature education in the information era as well as changes in ways of learning literature for students are major problems facing literature education all over the world. Previous studies have reported advantages that the information age has brought to literature education and several attempts have been made to analyze one or two typical major issues concerning the development status of literature education in global higher education. Meanwhile, researchers have not treated critical challenges in literature education based on the information era in much detail and previous studies of these problems have not dealt with enough practical solutions and references for society. Moreover, far too little attention has been paid to fostering strengths and circumventing weaknesses from countries that have already gained success in reforming literature education in tertiary

education. Comparing findings in different journals, this paper will review the research conducted on serious problems existing in literature education in a large number of universities and colleges and investigate incentives and related effects. And this study attempts to remedy these problems by making suggestions systematically concerning these challenges while providing feasible suggestions for educators. In addition, the purpose of this study is to propose systematic optimization for critical challenges as well as to introduce practical solutions, based on the information and digital ages, and then provide references for literature education system reform all over the world. In the future, attention should be paid to further promoting the optimal reform of the actual teaching work and thus creating a new pattern of literature education in higher education.

2. ANALYSIS ON THE SIGNIFICANCE OF LITERATURE EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Literature is the core of the human spirit and life. While absorbing the latest research results of domestic and foreign literature in recent years, it combines the editor's own years of teaching and research experience. It is based on the principle of student selection and typical commonly used works. The development of literature is compiled and selected representative works of major writers in various historical periods. In terms of genre, attention should be paid to the proper proportion of poetry, fiction, drama and prose. The content of each chapter includes several aspects: historical and cultural background, author introduction, selected works, notes and thinking questions, etc. Compared with other similar books, the literature education course expands the selected authors, adjusts the selection of books, and increases the learning questions. While enriching the course content, the language narrative is made more concise, thereby reducing the difficulty of book selection accordingly, which is conducive to students' understanding and mastery of knowledge. Literature education can be used as professional teaching materials in ordinary colleges and universities, as well as for independent colleges, colleges of education, radio and television universities, adult higher education and self-taught English learners in society.

Notwithstanding, in the contemporary world of science and technology, most people today are after money. In the era of information, people engage in activities that bring them material benefits. They also want their children to be equipped with the skills to meet their needs and adapt to survive in this technological world. Parents want their children to be either doctors or engineers. Pupils want to choose subjects from life sciences, computer science, biotechnology, business management, and so on.

Among the chosen population, only one minor class appeals, which is English literature. Therefore, due to the great significance of literature education, the aim of this chapter is to arouse people's attention in the era of information by enumerating the significance of literature education, especially in higher education.

2.1. Improve the overall foreign language speaking level of students

In China, English and American literature education is the main part of the foreign language literature curriculum in universities and colleges. With the development of globalization, social needs for international talents increase rapidly and the demand for English is also rising in China, which can be seen in the growth of the volume of vocabulary and the difficulty of words in English textbooks. Besides, the external environment faced by English as a second language, which is inherently difficult to learn, is also a major problem. To be precise, students often find it is not only time-consuming, laborious and brain-racking, but also do not get good learning results. And there is also a worry for both students as well as teachers. Moreover, due to the huge demand for talents in science and technology, less attention has been put on liberal arts subjects in tertiary education, especially English courses. As a result, the overall English speaking level of students in universities and colleges is relatively low. However, it is hard for them to find good improvement measures to change this phenomenon. This vicious cycle of learning is a constant source of frustration for most students, teachers and parents, which causes psychological pressure, external pressure, competition among peers, etc.

For educators, tertiary educators in particular, in the face of these shortcomings inadequacies, English and American literature education can fill these gaps and deficiencies. The reasons why it has sufficient merits are that it contains many words and phrases that can increase the vocabulary and the reading level can be expanded, which gradually makes language learning more efficient. And it also invariably increases the objective conditions for students to learn English knowledge or scientific basis, gradually improving their overall level of foreign language skills and learning abilities, which will inevitably lay the foundation for students' later life path.

English and American literature education is just a basic and typical case for literature education in higher education. However, it is clear that foreign language teaching does indeed play an integral role in the foreign language learning process and facilitates students' educational development. Overall, this is a great way for students to develop their foreign language speaking skills.

2.2. Helps to cultivate students' humanism spirit

Literature education can be regarded as a kind of humanistic education by developing students' humanistic ideas, so that students can cultivate positive ideas and contribute to society by forming a socially positive understanding of the correct outlook on life and the world. Pursuing the dignity, value and destiny of human beings, humanism is a universal human self-care. It is the affirmation and shaping of a fully developed ideal personality, with high regard for the various spiritual cultures and virtues left behind by humanity 0. At its root, it is the inner soul and life of a person, a nation and a cultural activity. The core of humanism is 'people-centered', and it is in line with the core of the philosophy of literature education, as both are concerned with the humanities, the inner world, the deepest understanding and evaluation of the real society. In particular, living in the era of information, professors in universities and colleges put more emphasis on science and technology courses in order to keep up with the times, which means the importance of humanism education is decreasing. The phenomenon nowadays is that student-related challenges are quite prevalent. According to the survey conducted by The University of Hail (UoH), students' incomplete knowledge of the language and ignorance of the cultural and social context of the text are two of the main bottlenecks in the UoH in 2015.0. Therefore, the cultivation of the humanistic spirit in literature education is a necessity of higher education and a requirement of social progress, which can also exceedingly improve student-related challenges in contemporary ages. In conclusion, literature education deserves more and more attention as it can benefit students by helping them foster the humanist spirit that is indispensable in a student's life.

2.3. Contribute to cultivate students' correct understanding of outlook on life, world and values

The development of literature education in universities and colleges involves a large number of reflection questions, which means the content of the literature course is more substantial and extensive. Consequently, the spirit of humanistic care in all aspects of society is incisively and vividly displayed. Students in their 20s are usually immature mentality, and thus it is crucial for them to form the correct ethos towards life, the world and values. For instance, by providing students with films in different genres in optional courses in universities and colleges, students can have a better understanding of righteousness meanings displayed in the film that are full of positive energy based on the premise of understanding the historical and cultural background. Literature education in higher education also improves their understanding of the

social positive energy and promotion step by step. Shown with a positive, optimistic and cheerful attitude towards life, students may not only have a better mental health condition but also gain a correct understanding of outlook on life, the world and values. Besides, in this way, teachers and professors can educate and guide students to go higher and farther 0. It is believed that under the guidance and education of the new educational concept, students will develop rapidly and in a balanced way. This also invisibly cultivates a group of new talents with knowledge, literacy, vision, ambition and ideals for society.

3. ANALYSIS OF THE DILEMMA OF LITERARY INSTRUCTION FOR HIGHER EDUCATION ON INFORMATION AGE ISSUES

3.1. The professional quality of teachers needs to be improved

In a modern multimedia landscape, literary studies can remain relevant in a world that is going digital, but this requires it to enter into an open dialogue with cultural and media studies. It is fundamental to pay more attention to contemporary literature as well as to new media, which offer significant pedagogical opportunities that should be more effectively recognized 0

Even if reforms in literature education have gained great progress based on the information era, there are still a large number of problems existing when it is applied to higher education systems. First of all, for those teachers with rich teaching experience but relatively old, compared with literature education based on Internet technology, the traditional teaching model is more conducive to improving teaching status and overcoming teaching shortcomings. Therefore, they are resistant to the application of Internet technology in daily teaching practice. Secondly, those young teachers who have just started their jobs and are active in thinking may choose to apply Internet technology in daily teaching and try their best to create a brand new teaching experience for students. However, due to the lack of clear and rigorous teaching objectives, a series of hidden dangers appear in actual teaching and teaching quality is always difficult to improve. In addition, the problem that the professional quality of university and college teachers needs to be improved is also reflected in the information technology application ability of teachers.

The table below is presented the results of the surveys that were carried out on the basis of a questionnaire sent to 12 men and 10 women instructors. They represent all instructors who were delivering literature courses at DoEs and UoH at the time of the

survey. The table depicts the specialty, academic rank, the number of years teaching literature before joining UoH, and the years the faculty members have taught literature at UoH. It is worth noting that even though

some instructors who taught literature had higher academic ranks, there are that specializations did not include teaching methods based on the contemporary media landscape 0.

Table 1 Demographics of the participants 0

		<i>Female</i> <i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Male</i> <i>N</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>Total</i>
<i>Area of specialization</i>	Literature	6	60.00%	11	54.55%	17
	Linguistics	1	10.00%	1	91.67%	2
	Teaching methods	2	20.00%	0	8.33%	2
	Translation	1	10.00%	0	0.00%	1
<i>Academic rank</i>	Full professor	0	0.00%	1	0.00%	1
	Associate professor	0	0.00%	2	8.33%	2
	Assistant professor	4	40.00%	5	16.67%	9
<i>Years of experience teaching literature at university teaching level prior to joining UoH.</i>	MA holder	6	60.00%	4	41.67%	10
	More than 6 years	2	20.00%	4	33.33%	6
	3-6 years	1	10.00%	4	33.33%	5
	1-2 years	0	0.00%	3	33.33%	2
	none	7	70.00%	1	25.00%	8
<i>Years of experience teaching literature at UoH</i>	More than 6 years	0		2	16.67%	2
			0.00%		0.00%	

In conclusion, in recent years, colleges and universities around the world were actively promoting the training of high-quality literature teachers, but the actual training effect is not ideal. This is related to the fact that colleges and universities have not established a perfect incentive and guidance mechanism. Moreover, it is teachers that have not correctly recognized the significance of promoting and applying Internet technology.

3.2. Conflicts between the traditional aesthetic and literature education

Most definitions of the traditional aesthetic exclude reactions to utilitarian things or events in everyday life, since these responses are not generated by intellectually or spiritually "elevating" 0Compared with the past, universities and college students living in the information era, especially in the twenty-first century, have a completely different and diverse value concept as well as ideologies. Take China as an example. TV dramas, mobile phones, Micro-blog, WeChat and other applications have occupied every corner of universities and college students' campus life. With the gradual

convenience of communication, students' thinking patterns have undergone significant changes.

However, universities and college students began to promote "decadent culture", "consumption culture" and other negative value concepts, which can be greatly seen in literature education. Their attitudes towards famous literature work have changed a lot. To be specific, their perception has changed from "literary acceptance" to "literary consumption". For universities and colleges students, most of them nowadays are generation Z and are called "digital natives". They are reluctant to analyze the text in a traditional aesthetic way and some of them even do not attach enough importance to traditional literature classics; instead, they are more likely to apply them to the information era. For example, using Internet platforms like TikTok to share their views on literary works can help them gain more attention from the public. Consequently, teaching literature in higher education has become increasingly tricky.

The above-mentioned phenomenon can show a trend that there are conflicts between the traditional aesthetic and literature education. In a word, the traditional aesthetics of universities and college students are being

eroded, and they have few opportunities and are not willing to settle down to read.

3.3. Changes of students' learning methods in the information era

Thanks to the great changes that the information era has brought to universities and colleges, students' learning methods in the field of literature have also switched from traditional paper textbooks to enormous innovative ways. One of the cases of changing is E-learning.

The university or college experience for many students has been altered significantly by E-learning.

Instead of sitting in college courses and taking notes, tech-savvy online students are taking online courses and other forms of online learning. The study designed a questionnaire that was distributed to a variety of American college students and the results were evaluated. The results demonstrated that e-learning has a favorable impact on students' academic performance. Notably, traditional learning is correspondingly expensive and time-consuming. In the case of e-learning, it delivers an alternative that is faster, cheaper and potentially superior. It is estimated that e-learning needs to be implemented and made easily accessible to all. Given the wide range of advantages, changes in literacy education are inevitable.

Nevertheless, literature education and teaching in most universities do not truly apply this kind of method to their daily teachings. In China, literature teaching is mainly based on the traditional teaching mode, and students can only passively accept knowledge presented on textbooks, while those with humanities connotations and artistic appreciation class literary works are seldom involved. It is worth noting that in this kind of teaching mode, students' academic thinking becomes solidified, and unable to truly realize the literature to pass by the emotional content and value. This will affect the adverse effects of students' aesthetic ability and literature. With such a huge gap between the traditional learning methods and innovative changes, students' actual desire to learn literature may be affected. Facing the situation that students lack the desire to explore and do not pay attention to literature education, it is very necessary to optimize and innovate literature education in colleges and universities.

4. SOLUTIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

4.1. Promoting an ICT-based integrated learning approach to literary studies

In order to address the challenges and problems of teaching literature in the information age, it is generally well established that Information and Communication

Technologies (ICT) can be implemented in the teaching of literature in universities and colleges. The integration of ICT in literature lessons is of high priority to empower students to learn to act in the information age. According to research, the main barriers facing ICT are lack of confidence, lack of competence and lack of accessible resources. As high confidence, authority and accessibility have been found to be essential components in integrating technology into schools, teachers need to be provided with ICT tools, involving software and hardware, effective professional development, sufficient time and technical support. An analytics approach to ICT in literacy education can help university teachers overcome these barriers and become successful technology adopters in the future. No single component alone is sufficient to ensure good teaching. Yet the presence of all components increases the possibility of excellent integration of ICT into learning and teaching opportunities.

Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) offer new and innovative ways of learning, but educators have to examine the numerous issues surrounding the trustworthy integration of ICT tools in schools. One innovative way is to promote ICT-based integrated learning environments. In Hong Kong schools, the implementation of promoting an ICT-based integrated learning environment has been shown to involve, firstly, the effective integration of ICT, which requires deep thinking and a rethinking of curricula and educational practices. Furthermore, inevitably, time and effort will be consumed if teachers are to develop a critical understanding of ICT as a vehicle for information and value. In one of the main objectives of the Lisbon strategy is to provide students with a range of experiences and contexts to integrate their skills and knowledge, both at school and outside school, through the appropriate use of ICT. In parallel, true cross-curricular integration can only be implemented in schools if teachers appreciate the rich potential of ICT to promote more effective learning, where ICT is subordinated to the learning objectives of the school. Ultimately, teachers would critically select the appropriate digital content, based on the needs and learning styles of their students, and incorporate it into the program.

In the area of higher education literacy teaching, an ICT-based integrated learning environment is one of the most effective ways of adapting traditional literacy teaching to modern advances, especially in the information age.

4.2. Finding a new literary discourse in higher education in the global online world

In contemporary ages, online resources and technology based on the Internet deserve exploring, especially facing problems such as conflicts between

traditional aesthetics and literature education. Different discussion areas are dedicated to literary themes, often focusing on specific authors or texts. Online literary magazines that have been contributing articles and literary criticism are quite useful in the information age, especially for universities and colleges - "for illustrations, there is the Finnish online magazine *Kiiltomato*, whose objective is to publish criticism of books that don't get wide coverage in the mainstream media 0." In parallel to journals, professors will also have to pay close attention to the rise of literary blogs. "Blogs offer an opportunity for literary dialogue in the peculiar temporal framework of blogging, where publication is instantaneous (once the author clicks 'submit', the submitted text is immediately available to web readers) and where comments and discussion are possible in near real time 0." It is to be pointed out that a particular debate can go on for a long time and gather comments long after its initial emergence. As such a literary blog is an asynchronous communication that at times approaches real-time communication. 0. In the context of literary blogs, the discourse is often essayistic or otherwise "poetic", in sharp contrast to the information-oriented discourse online. Specialists or practitioners of literary blogs and discussion forums both have great potential for literary pedagogy, as they allow students to engage in discussion with the authors whose works they are studying. Specialists or innovators in particular literary subjects can also have a kind of informal peer review of their initial ideas on certain topics.0. Capitalizing on these two new areas in higher education, literary education is being reformed.

5. CONCLUSION

Given the current situation in the 21st century, where new directions in the development of higher education are being sought, attention is increasingly being drawn to the potential of "literature" as a subject. This attention is evidence of the historically fixed central position of literature in the global educational paradigm. As scholarship develops, the methods and techniques of teaching literature are changing rapidly, and the methodology of teaching continuity is changing. In this process, it is important to identify the potential problems underlying contemporary eras of literature teaching in universities and colleges, together with the contemporary achievements of methodologists. In the meantime, there is a new drive to discover more innovative and more effective means of engaging students in the study of literature, one of which could be to innovate the way literature is taught in universities and colleges. Building on traditional education systems, as well as searching for new content and methodologies, will help to ensure the compliance and national harmony of the emerging continuous literary education system, in order to provide a theoretical basis for defining contemporary strategies in the teaching of literature 0.

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