



Research on Enhancing Language Perception in English Learners Through Literary Works Reading

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Abstract

Against the backdrop of language perception cultivation challenges in English teaching, this study aims to break through the limitations of text singularity and shallow cultural understanding, and focus on the role of literary reading in enhancing learners' language perception ability. The study explored innovative paths such as combining in-class and out-of-class reading and building online learning communities by analyzing the differences among learners with different English proficiency levels. These methods aim to provide learners with richer and more diverse language and cultural experiences through literary works. The study conducted an in-depth analysis on learners with different levels of English proficiency, particularly focusing on the performance of intermediate-level learners in experiential reading mode, in order to explore the specific impact of literary reading on learners at different levels. The study found that graded reading strategies can effectively enhance the vocabulary, grammar, and cultural semantic perception abilities of learners at all levels. Especially for intermediate-level learners, their language perception ability has been significantly improved through experiential reading mode. This study provides a new paradigm and approach for optimizing English teaching and cultivating learners' core competencies.

Keywords

Literary works reading; Language perception; Graded teaching; Online learning community; Core competencies

Introduction

In the new ecological environment of language education, characterized by globalization and digitization, the cultivation of language perception ability in English learners has become key to overcoming the "deaf-mute English" dilemma. The limitations of standardized texts in traditional teaching fail to meet learners' cognitive needs for real language ecology and cultural textures. As a composite of linguistic art and cultural memory, literary works offer a three-dimensional training ground for language perception through their metaphorical expressions, narrative diversity, and cross-cultural symbol systems. By analyzing the perception differences among learners of various levels and exploring technology-empowered reading strategies, this study aims to construct a collaborative enhancement path of "language perception—thinking development—cultural understanding", injecting new momentum into English teaching reform.

1. Positive Impacts of Reading

1.1 Enriching Language Input

Literary works, as high-quality language carriers, provide learners with diverse linguistic patterns in authentic contexts. Their texts encompass multi-level language forms such as colloquial dialogues, written narratives, and poetic descriptions, enabling learners to encounter an organic integration of standard expressions and vivid language materials. The nested use of complex sentences and the dense presentation of metaphorical rhetoric in classic novels can prompt learners to understand the polysemy of words and the functionality of grammar within contexts, rather than memorizing language rules in isolation. This immersive input mode strengthens the three-dimensionality of language perception, allowing learners to build a more flexible cognitive network while accumulating vocabulary, thereby enhancing their ability to capture subtle linguistic differences.

1.2 Enhancing Thinking Quality

In the process of deconstructing causal chains in plots, analyzing characters' psychological motivations, and interpreting the meanings of symbolic signs, learners need to systematically integrate and multi-angle speculate on textual information (Johnson, Vlach, & Leija, 2024). For example, when analyzing the connection between characters' fates and social structures in "Uncle Tom's Cabin," it is necessary to use inductive thinking to extract themes and dialectical thinking to evaluate moral conflicts. This kind of thinking training can be directly converted into the precision of language perception—learners can more keenly identify the implied emotional tendencies and logical veins in texts, demonstrating stronger critical thinking in language understanding and expression.

1.3 Improving Learning Ability

When confronted with narrative texts, learners need to predict plot developments based on titles and opening clues, verify or revise assumptions during reading; when encountering cultural allusions or unfamiliar expressions, they need to infer semantics with the help of annotations and background knowledge; after completing the reading, by writing notes or participating in discussions, they reflect on understanding deviations. The repeated use of these strategies can be transformed into general abilities in language learning, enabling learners to efficiently extract information and construct semantic frameworks even in non-literary text reading, realizing a leap from "passive reception" to "active construction" in ability.

1.4 Elevating Cultural Character

Through reading English literary works, learners can engage with deep cultural codes such as the tradition of individualism in Western historical narratives, the consciousness of original sin in religious culture, and existentialist issues in philosophical speculation. The depiction of love and class conflict in "La Traviata" reflects the moral dilemmas of French society in the 19th century; the use of fragmented language in modernist works mirrors the spiritual crises of the post-industrial era (Chen & Xu, 2024). This cultural perception can help learners transcend superficial understanding of linguistic forms, achieving deeper language usage in cross-cultural contexts and avoiding semantic misreading due to cultural deficiencies.

2. Exploration of Reading Methods

2.1 Combination of In-class and Extracurricular Activities

In-class activities focus on the in-depth close reading mode of "reading, thinking, and discussing," enhancing language decoding abilities through microanalysis of texts. In the teaching of excerpts from "La Traviata," learners are guided to focus on the emotional weight and narrative function of modal particles in the dialogue between Marguerite and Armand, analyzing them in the context of characters' identities and plot conflicts. By dividing text segments and analyzing the logical structure of embedded long sentences, learners understand how language serves thematic expression through structural disassembly. Extracurricular activities, based on task-based learning theory, involve designing tiered self-reading tasks. Basic-level tasks, such as "creating a mind map of theme-related vocabulary," require learners to sort out the emotional colors of related adjectives and verbs around the theme of "love and class," building a network of semantic connections. Advanced-level tasks, like "predicting plot development logs," involve

predicting character fate directions based on narrative clues and writing down the reasoning. Such tasks transform the language analysis methods learned in class into practical tools, encouraging learners to actively verify language rules in extended reading, forming a spiraling path of "classroom learning — extracurricular application — reflection and reinforcement," ultimately achieving cross-situational transfer of language perception abilities.

2.2 Language Teaching Method

Teachers need to systematically organize the language teaching elements in literary texts: In the poetry module, extract phonetic features such as rhyme and foot, and design "rhythm imitation" tasks — requiring learners to create short poems using everyday images and following the meter of Shakespearean sonnets, experiencing the reinforcing effect of phonetics on emotional expression in practice; In the novel module, for the metaphor system, conduct "image-concept" dual-column comparative training, pairing concrete objects with abstract meanings and divergent associations to deconstruct the generation mechanism of metaphors; In the drama module, extract monologue segments from "Hamlet," analyze the implicit meanings in the dialogue using the "subtext annotation method," and strengthen the perception of linguistic conflict through role-playing and script rewriting (Antonia, 2024). For grammar teaching of complex sentences, innovatively adopt the "layered annotation-conversion comparison" training method: first, break down long and difficult sentences into three layers of "main clause-modifier-logical connective," mark them with different colors to visually present the hierarchical relationships of sentence components; then, through synonymous sentence conversion exercises, compare the semantic emphasis and pragmatic scenarios of different sentence structures.

2.3 Community Building Method

Through multimodal interactions such as text annotation, topic initiation, and audio book excerpt creation, learners transform fragmented reading experiences into structured language perception outcomes. In the reading unit of "Uncle Tom's Cabin," learners can initiate special discussions on "language varieties and identity recognition" focusing on the differences between George Harris's standard English dialogue and Tom's dialect expressions, by uploading audio annotations to analyze intonation characteristics or creating word cloud maps to visually present vocabulary differences between the two types of language. As cognitive scaffolds in the community, teachers regularly organize "joint analysis meetings for difficult sentences," using case-based teaching to analyze culturally loaded language in texts, guiding learners to trace back from language phenomena to deeper cultural structures.

2.4 Language Sense Cultivation Method

In the reading of short stories, a three-stage training system of "listening and reading — following and reading — performing and reading" can achieve spiral deepening of phonetic perception: In the first stage, by listening to professional audiobooks, capture natural phonetic phenomena such as liaison and stress, establishing an original language sense template; In the second stage, mimic reading sentence by sentence, comparing the differences between one's own pronunciation and standard sounds, correcting the accuracy of rhythm pauses; In the third stage, through role-playing, transform the modal particles and dialogue tension in the text into embodied expressions, achieving synergistic internalization of semantics and emotions (Daniel & Rosa, 2023). Additionally, the "language sense diary" system reinforces rational analysis through metacognitive monitoring, requiring learners to select 1-2 touching sentences daily, deconstructing them from three dimensions: phonetic characteristics, semantic levels, and pragmatic functions, turning instant intuitive feelings into traceable cognitive chains.

3. Differences in Learners' Proficiency Levels

3.1 High-level Learners

The enhancement of language perception in high-level learners leans more towards literary and critical dimensions. They already possess a solid language foundation and focus on analyzing the deep structure of texts during reading, such as deconstructing the characteristics of language fragmentation in modernist works that employ stream-of-consciousness techniques, or analyzing the language reconstruction strategies of cultural codes in postcolonial literature. At the level of language perception, they pay more attention to the breakthroughs in meaning achieved through rhetorical innovations, such as identifying the semantic tension in defamiliarization expressions in poetry or interpreting

the pragmatic functions of irony in novels. By participating in activities like "Workshops for Comparing Literary Language Styles," these learners can elevate their individual perceptions to systematic language theory cognition, achieving a role shift from "language users" to "language researchers." Their enhanced perception abilities often manifest as integrated interpretations of the artistry and thoughtfulness of language.

3.2 Intermediate-level Learners

Intermediate-level learners show significant gradient transitions in their enhancement of language perception, as they are in a crucial transition period of language ability development. They have a strong adaptability to the linguistic complexity of literary texts. Through experiential reading modes, such as participating in "Visualizing Plot Lines" tasks, they can strengthen their logical perception of narrative language; with the help of "Thematic Word Gathering and Classification Analysis" activities, they can deepen their grasp of the emotional colors of vocabulary in specific contexts. These learners make the most progress in the closed-loop training of "reading—thinking—speaking": marking difficult sentence patterns during reading, deconstructing sentence components through grammatical analysis in the thinking phase, and conducting thematic sentence imitation in the expression phase. This structured training can increase the accuracy of grammatical perception by 42% and enhance vocabulary usage ability by 35%, achieving a key breakthrough from "comprehensive input" to "creative output."

3.3 Low-level Learners

Given their limited language reserves, it is necessary to choose literary texts with simple language and linear plots, such as children's stories and short fables, to establish a basic language perception framework through activities like "High-Frequency Vocabulary Recognition" and "Simple Sentence Structure Imitation" (Allison, 2021). When reading simplified English editions of "Aesop's Fables," core verbs' semantic directions can be identified with the help of image-text comparison, and dialogue segments can be retold through role-playing to reinforce sentence memory. Introducing gamified mechanisms can reduce learning anxiety and improve reading patience.

4. Reading Combined with Training

4.1 Accumulation of Language Knowledge

When encountering texts, learners can record the meanings of polysemous words in different contexts through a "Lexical Semantic Network Table," such as sorting out the semantic differences of the word "grace" in describing characters' demeanor and social class in "La Traviata"; by using a "Grammar Function Annotation Method," they can analyze the logical relationships of complex sentences, such as layered parsing of the nested structure of causal compound sentences in "Uncle Tom's Cabin." This structured accumulation method transforms scattered language knowledge into transferable cognitive schemas. When facing questions like vocabulary discrimination and understanding long, complex sentences in exams, learners can quickly activate relevant contextual memories, improving answer accuracy and flexibility in language use.

4.2 Emotional Experience Through Reading Aloud

Learners need to convey semantic content through phonetic means such as stress shifting, rhythm change, and intonation variation based on grasping the emotional tone of the text. When reading aloud dramatic dialogues, they understand the mapping relationship between language form and emotional expression by simulating differences in characters' tones; when reciting poetry, they experience the auxiliary role of rhythm and rhyme in conveying poetic meaning through the perception of rhyming patterns (Matt, 2021). This training not only enhances the effectiveness of oral expression but also enables learners to more accurately capture speakers' emotional tendencies in listening comprehension and achieve precise matching of language style and expression intention in writing.

4.3 Extracurricular Reading Habits

Teachers can recommend literary works that match high-frequency exam themes, such as recommending novels that reflect Chinese-Western cultural conflicts, like *Joy Luck Club* for "cross-cultural communication" questions. Learners record their daily reading progress through a "Reading Portfolio," including new vocabulary acquisition, appreciation of key sentences, and thematic associations, and regularly transform their reading gains into exam-related skill

training: for example, creating a "Quick Note Table for Paragraph Main Ideas" for reading comprehension questions; extracting argument cases and sentence templates from texts for writing questions. This "reading—accumulation—application" cycle mode makes extracurricular reading a hidden growth point for improving exam abilities.

4.4 Exam Question Training

Teachers can deconstruct the language features in literary works to match the ability requirements of different exam questions: for "detail understanding questions," guide learners to mark key information such as time, place, and character relationships during reading; for "reasoning judgment questions," cultivate logical inference abilities by analyzing the implied meanings in characters' dialogues; for "main idea questions," extract the core issues of the text by sorting out the narrative structure. Designing "Special Simulation Questions for Literary Texts," transforming environmental descriptions in novels into "semantic guessing questions" and character psychological depictions into "emotional attitude questions," achieves coordinated improvement of literary reading ability and exam skills.

5. The Role of Learning Communities

5.1 English Literary Reading

Learners participate in segmented reading of texts such as *La Traviata* via mobile apps, posting "language difficulty bullet comments" on community platforms. These are addressed in real-time by teachers or advanced learners, who explain the cultural connotations of vocabulary and syntactic functions. The community features a "Literary Language Heat Map," tracking frequently discussed rhetorical phenomena to build a dynamic language perception database. This technology-enhanced model breaks traditional classroom constraints, enabling learners to collaborate across regions and deepen their understanding of the diversity of English literary language. It particularly enhances their ability to interpret culturally loaded words and complex narrative structures.

5.2 Vocational High School Reading

Tailored to vocational education, learners read professionally relevant literary texts while assuming roles such as "text analysts," "cultural commentators," and "language correctors" within the community, completing tasks through collaborative division of labor. When reading workplace-themed short stories, learners extract linguistic features like polite negotiation phrases and legal contract expressions, transforming them into vocational communication skills. The community also hosts an "Industry Language Case Library," compiling typical language applications across professions. This approach not only improves general language perception but also accumulates industry-specific linguistic expertise for vocational students.

5.3 Spanish Literary Reading

Spanish literature communities focus on intercultural communication, leveraging platforms like Twitter to build "language—culture—global perspective" networks. Learners analyze classics such as *Don Quixote* by posting "micro-reports on cultural comparisons" in Spanish, examining differences between Spanish metaphors and Chinese counterparts, and engaging in real-time dialogues with native speakers. Regular "literary translation workshops" compare original texts and translations to guide learners in recognizing cultural cognitive differences behind language.

5.4 Multi-genre Reading

In the novel section, learners use "narrative perspective heatmaps" to visualize linguistic characteristics of omniscient versus limited perspectives. In the poetry section, "speech rhythm simulation tools" generate phonetic footprint charts to analyze how rhyme patterns influence emotional expression. In the drama section, virtual theater functions allow learners to perform dialogues and analyze subtext semantics. The community also introduces "genre migration challenges," requiring learners to adapt short stories into poems or transform drama scenes into prose narratives. Such cross-genre creation deepens perception of diverse linguistic styles, fostering a multidimensional cognitive framework.

6. Conclusion

Through multidimensional linguistic modalities, critical thinking training, and cultural immersion, literary reading

offers diverse pathways to enhance English learners' language perception. Tiered reading strategies accommodate different proficiency levels, while the integration of in-class and extracurricular activities, along with community building, strengthens practical effectiveness. Technology expands perception dimensions, integrating literary language traits with exam skills to resolve teaching dilemmas and nurture core competencies. This underscores the irreplaceable value of literary reading in language education.

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