

# Integrating Moral Education into Korean Literature Courses: A Pedagogical Focus on Ethical Literary Interpretation

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**Abstract:** In the context of the diversified development of education, Korean literature courses, as a vital medium for cultural heritage and education, play a significant role in integrating moral education. This paper focuses on the core teaching focus of interpreting ethical literature, exploring the theoretical foundation for integrating moral education into Korean literature courses. It aims to uncover the educational resources of Korean ethical literature, set teaching objectives from three dimensions—knowledge, skills, and emotions—carefully design teaching content, adopt diverse teaching methods and strategies, and construct a scientific teaching evaluation system. The goal is to shape moral values through the interpretation of ethical literature, enhance cultural identity, and provide new insights for the integration of Korean literature teaching and moral education.

**Keywords:** Korean literature courses; Moral education; Ethical literary interpretation; Teaching strategies; Cultural identity

## Introduce

The global concept of education is continuously evolving, with a growing emphasis on the all-round development of students. The deep integration of subject teaching and moral education has become a significant trend in education. Literature, which embodies social values, ethical and moral concepts, and cultural spirit, holds a special place in moral education. Korean literature, with its long history, is rich in ethical and moral content and cultural heritage. It serves as an important course for language learning and cultural inheritance and is also a valuable resource for moral education. However, traditional Korean literature courses often focus on imparting literary knowledge and language skills, with insufficient exploration and application of moral education value. Integrating moral education into Korean literature courses, with a focus on interpreting ethical literature, has significant practical significance and value. This approach can enhance educational quality and foster students' moral qualities.

## 1. Theoretical Basis for the Integration of Korean Literature Courses and Moral Education

### 1.1 The Connection between Literature and Moral Education

As a significant carrier of human spiritual civilization, literature and moral education are closely intertwined. Literary works are the crystallization of writers' observations and reflections on social life and human nature. By creating vivid characters and dramatic plots, these works reflect the moral values and value orientations of their time. Readers can appreciate the beauty of language while being subtly influenced by the moral sentiments and ethical principles conveyed in the works. The characters and their fates often embody virtues such as justice, kindness, and honesty, while also criticizing ugly and hypocritical behaviors. This unique aesthetic experience makes literature an effective medium for moral education, capable of evoking emotional resonance in readers, guiding them to reflect on morality, and achieving the subtle yet profound effect of moral education.

### 1.2 The Value of Ethical Literature in Moral Education

Ethical literature focuses on the exploration of human moral behavior and ethical relationships, serving as a typical example of the integration of literature and moral education. By deeply portraying moral dilemmas and ethical conflicts, it offers readers diverse perspectives on moral considerations. The intricate character relationships and moral choices in ethical literature encourage readers to transcend personal limitations, understand and analyze moral issues from multiple angles, and develop critical thinking and moral

judgment skills. Ethical literature also carries cultural heritage value, as it integrates the long-accumulated moral norms and values of a nation into literary narratives. This enhances readers' sense of identity and belonging to their own culture through reading. Introducing ethical literature into moral education enriches educational content with profound humanistic elements, deepens the impact of moral education, and helps readers establish a correct moral cognition and value system.

## **2. Characteristics and Educational Resource Exploration of Korean Ethical Literature**

### **2.1 Core Themes and Forms of Expression in Korean Ethical Literature**

Korean ethical literature is characterized by its distinct national traits, with core themes closely tied to traditional Korean social ethics and cultural values. Family ethics is a significant theme, often depicting emotional conflicts, intergenerational disputes, and reconciliation within families, highlighting the Korean emphasis on family unity and the inheritance of filial piety. For instance, 'The Chronicles of the Imjin War' illustrates the intertwining of family responsibility and patriotism. Social ethics is another common theme, exploring class relations and social justice, reflecting the moral standards of Korean society across different historical periods. In terms of form, Korean ethical literature combines various genres, including poetry, novels, and folk tales. Traditional forms such as quatrains and songs convey moral insights through concise and elegant language; novels use grand narratives to depict complex social ethical landscapes; folk tales, with their vivid plots and profound meanings, convey simple moral wisdom, providing rich material.

### **2.2 Moral Education Elements in Korean Ethical Literature**

Korean ethical literature is rich in moral education elements. In terms of personal virtues, it promotes qualities such as honesty, resilience, and humility. For instance, the protagonists in classical novels remain honest and tenacious in the face of adversity, guiding readers to establish correct personal moral standards. On the social moral level, it emphasizes a sense of social responsibility and collectivism. Many works depict protagonists sacrificing personal interests for the collective good, fostering a sense of social responsibility among readers. Korean ethical literature also emphasizes the inheritance of traditional virtues, such as respecting the elderly, caring for the young, and mutual assistance among neighbors. Through detailed emotional descriptions and vivid storytelling, it helps readers deeply understand and identify with these traditional moral norms while enjoying the literary charm, providing vivid and persuasive examples for moral education.

## **3. Setting of Teaching Objectives with Ethical Literary Interpretation as the Focus**

### **3.1 Knowledge Objectives: Construction of a Korean Ethical Literary Knowledge System**

The teaching objectives aim to help students systematically construct a knowledge framework of Korean ethical literature. Students should clearly understand the development of Korean ethical literature from ancient to modern times, including the early forms of poetry in the Goryeo period, the rise of novels during the Joseon Dynasty, and the diverse modern creations. They should also gain a deep understanding of the lives and creative styles of representative writers from different historical periods, such as the philosophical thoughts in Li Kui-ba's poetry and prose, the narrative techniques in Kim Man-gi's novels, and contemporary writers 'modern deconstruction of traditional ethics. Students should be familiar with the creation background and cultural context of classic works like 'The Tale of Chunhyang' and 'The Tale of Sinsan.' They need to be well-versed in the core themes of Korean ethical literature, such as filial piety, social justice, and human nature, and master various forms of expression, including poetry, novels, and folk stories. They should understand the artistic features such as symbolism, metaphor, and temporal interweaving, and accurately grasp the cultural connotations of Confucian and Taoist ethics, as well as folk morals. Through this systematic knowledge construction, students can grasp the overall development framework of Korean ethical literature from a macro historical perspective and analyze the moral texture and artistic characteristics of specific works from a micro textual perspective, thus laying a broad and deep knowledge foundation for future in-depth exploration in areas such as ethical literature interpretation and moral philosophy research.

### **3.2 Competency Objectives: Cultivation of Ethical Literary Interpretation and Moral Reasoning Skills**

The focus is on developing students' skills in interpreting ethical literature and reasoning morally. In literary interpretation, students should be able to use literary theories and methods to analyze texts, explore themes, and interpret the character images in Korean ethical literature, accurately understanding the moral messages conveyed. In terms of moral reasoning, students are guided to analyze the moral dilemmas and ethical conflicts in the works, fostering critical thinking. They should learn to consider moral issues from multiple perspectives, weigh the pros and cons of various moral choices, thereby developing independent and rational moral judgment skills, and applying these skills to real-life moral decisions.

### **3.3 Affective Objectives: Shaping Moral Values and Enhancing Cultural Identity**

Interpreting ethical literature as an opportunity to shape students' correct moral values and enhance their Korean cultural identity,

we delve into the reading and analysis of Korean ethical literature. This allows students to experience the positive moral values such as justice, kindness, and friendship promoted in these works, guiding them to resonate emotionally and consciously accept the influence and education of these moral concepts<sup>[2]</sup>. By understanding the traditional cultural connotations embedded in Korean ethical literature, we aim to deepen students' appreciation and understanding of Korean culture, promote cross-cultural communication and understanding, enhance their cultural tolerance and identity, and help them uphold correct moral values in a multicultural context, thereby building cultural confidence.

## 4. Teaching Methods and Strategies for Ethical Literary Interpretation

### 4.1 Teaching Method Combining Close Reading of Texts with Moral Analysis

By integrating close reading with moral analysis, the teaching method guides students to deeply understand Korean ethical literature. During close reading, teachers lead students through a word-by-word and sentence-by-sentence study of the text, analyzing its language style, narrative structure, and rhetorical techniques to grasp its artistic features. Combined with moral analysis, this approach helps students explore the moral elements within the works and discuss the moral concepts and value orientations conveyed<sup>[3]</sup>. For example, when interpreting "The Story of Shen Zhong," the text's plot where Shen Zhong is willing to sacrifice himself to save his father is analyzed in detail. This guides students to understand the importance of filial piety in Korean culture and the spirit of selfless dedication promoted by the work. This not only deepens students' moral understanding but also enhances their literary appreciation skills.

### 4.2 Application of Context Creation and Role-Playing in Teaching

By creating situational and role-playing teaching strategies, teachers can enhance students' experience and understanding of ethical literary works. Teachers can simulate moral conflicts and recreate character dialogues based on the content of the works, allowing students to take on roles and personally experience the moral dilemmas and emotional experiences of the characters. When studying works that reflect social class conflicts, role-playing debate scenarios can be set up, where students represent different social classes to express their views and demands. Through this method, students can gain a deeper understanding of the complex ethical relationships and moral conflicts in the works, develop empathy and moral judgment skills, and increase their engagement and interest in learning.

### 4.3 Group Discussion and Case Analysis to Promote Moral Reasoning

Organize group discussions and case analysis activities to stimulate students' moral reasoning skills. Teachers select controversial moral issues from works or real-life moral cases, guiding students to discuss in groups. During these discussions, students are encouraged to express diverse viewpoints and actively engage in debates. This process of intellectual exchange helps deepen their understanding of moral issues. When the protagonist in a work faces a choice between personal interests and morality, students are encouraged to analyze similar real-life cases, exploring the consequences and impacts of different choices. Through group discussions and case analyses, students' critical thinking and teamwork skills are developed.

## 5. Conclusion

Integrating moral education into Korean literature courses, with a focus on interpreting ethical literature, represents an innovative practice that aligns with the evolving trends in education. This teaching model, which encompasses theory, content, methods, and evaluation, forms a comprehensive system. It not only enhances students' literary appreciation but also aids in shaping moral values and deepening cultural identity, providing a valuable reference for the integration of Korean literature education and moral education.

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