

Report

Forming Hermeneutic Connections: Students' Interpretations of an Arthurian Legend

James Leslie MYERS
Ming Chuan University, Taiwan

In this exploratory investigation, I attempted to demonstrate how a final-exam test question in a History of English course linked to a classroom activity opened up a hermeneutic passageway toward greater self-understanding of cross-cultural factors in language learning. The procedure involved provision of an in-class video presentation accompanied with a text (script) of Sir Gawain and the Green Knight from the video series The Power of Myth. I holistically analyzed Taiwanese university students' interpretations of the story and their efforts to think of stories from Chinese literature and history that make similar moral points. Results showed that most students were able to find some common values shared in both Western and Chinese literary culture traditions. At the same time, they practiced a variety of language learning skills and creatively engaged in reading. To a certain degree, students were able to construct their own textual interpretations although individual variations existed as to the extent students were able to provide autonomous readings of the text.