



普通高等教育“十五”国家级规划教材

新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材

总主编 戴炜栋

英美戏剧：作品与评论

**BRITISH AND AMERICAN DRAMA:
PLAYS AND CRITICISMS**

主编 刘海平
朱雪峰



上海外语教育出版社

SHANGHAI FOREIGN LANGUAGE EDUCATION PRESS



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总 序

随着改革开放的日趋深入,社会各界对外语人才的需求持续增长,我国英语专业的招生规模逐年扩大,教学质量不断提高。英语专业本科生教育的改革、学科建设及教材的出版亦取得了巨大的成绩,先后出版了一系列在全国有影响的精品教材。21 世纪的到来对英语人才的培养提出了更高的标准,同时也为学科建设和教材编写提出了新的要求。随着中国加入世界贸易组织,社会需要的不是仅仅懂英语的毕业生,而是思维科学、心理健康、知识面广博、综合能力强,并能熟练运用英语的高素质的专门人才。由于中学新的课程标准的颁布,中学生英语水平逐年提升,英语专业本科生入学时的基础和综合素质也相应提高。此外,大学英语(公外)教育的迅猛发展,学生英语能力的提高,也为英语专业学生的培养提出了严峻的挑战和更新更高的要求。这就规定了 21 世纪的英语教学不是单纯的英语培训,而是英语教育,是以英语为主体,全面培养高素质的复合型人才。教材的编写和出版也应顺随这种潮流。

为了迎接时代的挑战,作为我国最大的外语教材和图书出版基地之一的上海外语教育出版社(外教社)理应成为外语教材出版的领头羊。在充分调研的基础上,外教社及时抓住机遇,于新世纪之初约请了全国 25 所主要外语院校和教育部重点综合大学英语院系的 50 多位英语教育家,在上海召开了“全国高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材编写委员会会议”。代表们一致认同了编写面向新世纪教材的必要性、可行性和紧迫性,并对编写思想、教材构建、编写程序等提出了建议和要求。而后,外教社又多次召开全国和上海地区的专家、学者会议,撰写编写大纲、确定教材类别、选定教材项目、讨论审核样稿。经过一年多的努力,终于迎来了第一批书稿。

这套系列教材共分语言知识和语言技能、语言学与文学、语言与文化、人文科学、测试与教学法等几个板块,总数将超过 150 余种,可以说几

乎涵盖了当前我国高校英语专业所开设的全部课程。编写内容深入浅出,反映了各个学科领域的最新研究成果;编写体例采用国家最新有关标准,力求科学、严谨,满足各门课程的具体要求;编写思想上,除了帮助学生打下扎实的语言基本功外,还着力培养学生分析问题、解决问题的能力,提高学生的人文、科学素养,培养健康向上的人生观,使学生真正成为我国 21 世纪所需要的外语专门人才。

本套教材编写委员会由我国英语界的知名人士组成,其中多数是在各个领域颇有建树的专家,不少是高等学校外语专业教学指导委员会的委员。教材作者均由编写委员会的专家在仔细审阅样稿后商定,有的是从数名候选人中遴选,总体上代表了中国英语教育的发展方向和水平。

鉴于该套教材编写理念新颖、特色明显、体系宏大、作者权威,国家教育部已经将其列入了“十五”重点教材规划项目。我们相信,继“高等院校英语语言文学专业研究生系列教材”之后,外教社该套教材的编写和出版,不仅会满足 21 世纪英语人才的培养需要,其前瞻性、先进性和创新性也将为外语乃至其他学科教材的编写开辟一条新的思路,拓展一片新的视野。

戴炜栋

上海外国语大学校长

序 言

《**英**美戏剧：作品与评论》是在1992年南京大学出版社出版的《英美戏剧》教材的基础上扩充、更新、修订而成的。原书稿曾通过当时国家教委高校外语专业教材编审委员会的审稿，定为全国推荐教材。十年后的今天，经过大幅度增容、修改后，此书又被列入教育部“普通高等教育‘十五’国家级规划教材”中的“新世纪高等院校英语专业本科生系列教材”，由上海外语教育出版社出版。

《英美戏剧：作品与评论》以戏剧体裁的特征、要素、种类和风格为基本知识，精选英美主要剧作家的代表作品，通过指导性的阅读、讨论、看录像、甚至自己演出，来培养学生理解、赏析和批评英美戏剧作品的基本能力和必要技巧。

全书由导论、剧本、评论和附录组成。

“导论”力求用简洁通俗的语言说明戏剧的本质、结构、类型、流派。这些概念、术语和有关知识是深入学习戏剧作品必不可少的准备。

第一部分“剧本”是本教材的主体。英国和美国的戏剧分别有着近七百年和三百余年的发展历史，作品汗牛充栋，上乘之作亦为数不少，要从中选出几部能在一个学期中上完、多少能反映英美戏剧全貌和发展、又能引起学生学习兴趣的作品来，无疑是个挑战。所选作品要符合我们办教育的根本目的和英语专业学生的实际需要，同时我们还得考虑学生的语言水平、理解能力以及很少有机会观看这些剧本的正式演出等因素——写剧本，脑海中不能没有剧团和观众，编戏剧教材，自然也得时时刻刻想到教师和学生。选择这里的十个剧本正是综合考虑上述诸因素的结果。取此总会为舍彼而惋惜，这兴许是所有编者的同感。但令我们感到宽慰的是，原书中所选的七个剧本经多次试用证明能在教学中取得较好的效果，可使学生多方面、多层次地获得收益。这次我们又把剧目扩充到十个，增加了：爱尔兰剧作家 Oscar Wilde 的名剧 *The Importance of Being*

Earnest; 美国剧作家 Thornton Wilder 的经典作品 *Our Town*; 以及美国当代著名女剧作家 Marsha Norman 的代表作 *'Night, Mother*, 她也是这个选本中惟一一位女性剧作家。增加这些剧本一方面是为了使所选作品更贴近当代, 另一方面也是想让教师和学生有更多的选择空间。

每篇作品前都配有剧作家的生平简介, 剧本中的一些语言难点和社会文化背景用中文或英文作了简要的注释, 作品后面附带的思考题可以帮助教师组织课堂讨论或布置课外写作。另外, 这十部剧本, 除贝克特的独幕哑剧外, 其他都可以找到相关音像资料供选择使用。

第二部分“评论”收集了近三十篇戏剧评论或专著中的选段。每个剧本都有二、三篇出自英美著名评论家之手的剧评, 或从相反的角度, 或从不同的侧面剖析作品。这对于开拓学生的思路、活跃课堂讨论气氛应该是有益的, 但我们鼓励学生不受这些专家评述的束缚和限制, 根据自己的文化背景、阅读积累和生活经验作出自己的解读和评判。

“附录”因囿于篇幅, 只能以极其简略的提纲方式对英美戏剧各发展阶段的重要流派、主要作家和代表作品、以及英美戏剧在发展过程中与欧洲戏剧的联系作一些粗线条的归纳, 以帮助学生见“木”亦见“林”。

《英美戏剧: 作品与评论》的编写、使用和修改都离不开南京大学英语专业许多届学生在课堂内外的参与和演出, 他们的意见——无论是口头表达的还是通过面部表情反映的——都是我们修改和作注的主要依据。教材编写还得到南京大学黄仲文、北京外国语大学袁鹤年、北京大学陈瑞兰和华东师范大学孙梁等教授的支持。在编写过程中我们参考了不少国外戏剧读物和学术著作(见“导论”后所列)。上海外语教育出版社的庄智象社长、汪义群总编和编辑谢宇、杭海等对此教材的再版给予了热情的支持和关照。我们还特别感谢程爽、王鹏、朱丽田、王世文、张敏、凌建娥、张金良、周敏等博士和硕士研究生十分认真仔细地审读了校样。我们藉此对以上人士和单位表示由衷的感谢, 并希望使用本书的教师和学生不吝赐教, 以利今后修订改正。

编 者

2002 年 7 月于南京

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INTRODUCTION TO DRAMA AND DRAMATIC THEORY

The Nature of Drama

The play is a form of literature to be read and judged in itself like poetry and fiction, but it is also, or even more, meant to be performed on the stage. Because of this dual nature, there are inevitable differences between the methods in creating and interpreting drama and those involved in the other literary forms.

Through drama writers can present experience more vividly and more intensely than through other literary forms, but on the other hand, with the exception of stage direction, they have basically only one means of expression; dialogue. Unlike poets or novelists, who can make extensive use of description and discussion and present their ideas in a variety of ways from different points of view, dramatists must express all their ideas through their characters' words and gestures.

Because a play is designed to be performed on the stage, its time scope and setting are necessarily limited; it must cover more events more quickly making fewer changes of location than does the epic or novel. Usually, plays limit digression and require singleness of focus. Playwrights must also translate thoughts, feelings and psychological conditions of their characters into the concrete and tangible, into dialogue and action.

Play readers, too, must work within a certain context. They must make full use of their imagination, their perception, and their own experience in reading and analyzing the play. They must visualize the play in the context of theater. In their mind's eye they should follow its progress as if seeing it played on a real stage by actors moving,

talking and gesticulating. To obtain maximum enjoyment and understanding, readers of a play have generally more work to do on their own than do readers of a novel or a poem. This limitation is in another sense an advantage, for the play's lack of description and authorial presence offers its readers greater opportunity to exercise their own judgment.

The Elements and Structure of Drama

Aristotle, the great Greek philosopher and drama theoretician, categorized drama into six elements, which are listed in his *Poetics* in order of importance as he viewed them:

Plot
Character
Thought
Diction
Music
Spectacle

And today we find them still a useful starting point for our discussion of drama.

1. PLOT

Aristotle places plot foremost in his list of elements that compose drama, for it provides the basic framework of the action. "Plot" is basically another term for structure, the things that happen in the play and the ways in which those incidents connect. The "plot" of a play is different from the "story" of a play. Plot is the way the story is told. Different ways of arranging the same story often yield different plays. The weakest type of plot, according to Aristotle, is the episodic plot where one event follows another with little or no causal effect or relationship. The strongest is the involved plot, such as the plot of *Oedipus Rex*, where each action flows out of some preceding action, where the very struggle of the tragic heroes or heroines to free themselves becomes the force that destroys them. We should know, however, there

are good plays that use the episodic plot. The relation between plot and drama is often compared to that between skeleton and body. And just as we are only consciously aware of the skeleton beneath the skin, in the same manner should we be aware of dramatic structure.

Any plot of a dramatic work necessarily has to do with **conflict**. The two sides of the conflict, the pros and cons of the argument, are usually represented by the protagonist and the antagonist in the play. The protagonist may be one person or many, and the antagonist may be a person, a group, or a force — social, natural, or supernatural.

The first thing the dramatist has to do is to establish what is going on, what has happened, and who is involved, through the technique of **exposition**, the exposing of the facts. This can involve a variety of approaches, from the servant and visitor telling each other what the basic situation is to the direct and immediate involvement in fast developing action as in the opening scenes of *Macbeth*. Exposition must be revealed clearly and slowly enough for the audience to get the necessary information in order to relate it to subsequent scenes. Dramatic exposition can continue well into the play, through several scenes, as the past is revealed, the present explained, and characters introduced and assimilated.

While playwrights must furnish their audiences with background material through exposition, they also have the task of preparing their spectators for future developments. They do this by **foreshadowing**. They make the subsequent action credible by supplying clues which they carefully insert in early parts of the play. Foreshadowing has several purposes. Besides making the events appear believable, it builds suspense and creates tension. It may reveal character, and aid in the development of complications. It may be used to build up an entrance or to create atmosphere. Playwrights generally value **suspense** more than they do **surprise**, as good craftsmanship requires that the chain of events be foreshadowed.

Once the dramatists have provided sufficient background to hold their audiences' attention, they proceed with the **complications** that provide the conflict with its depth and breadth. The first complication is the **point of attack**, which refers to that moment in the play at which the sense of balance existing at the rise of the first curtain is disturbed;

Professor Higgins says he can pass the flower girl off as a duchess after three months of training in phonetics, Robert Mayo says he wants to leave the farm and rove on the sea. These are characteristic points of attack — when an inciting force triggers the course of action.

Complications proceed through the **rising action**. It is time for plottings and counterplottings, accumulation of incidents and development of characters, carrying the conflict forward to the play's high plot, its **climax**. **Climax** is the point at which everything has aimed. It is a turning point, after which nothing new can be added. Any high point in the story hereafter becomes **anticlimactic**. Climax can be but a moment very late in the play.

Following the climax everything heads downward in **falling action**. Things fall into place, and the play heads toward the conclusion, or **denouement**. Then it's all over, the bodies are removed, the lovers embrace, and everybody goes home.

A great number of plays follow the exposition-to-denouement routine in almost perfect balance, capable of being graphically illustrated, scene by scene, act by act, in a uniformly parabolic curve. Such plays have been given the label "**well-made**," and because the structure rather than the theme or idea or character became the predominant aspect, emphasizing mass popular entertainment rather than good dramatic literature, the term "**well-made**" has long been used to denote critical disfavor. But, on the other hand, many great plays are essentially "**well-made**," as we will discover in the structure of some of the plays collected in this anthology.

Plots have varied from the tightly knit, simple structure of Greek tragedy, to the loose episodes of medieval drama, bound together by a theme, to the complicated action of the Elizabethans, employing several sets of characters involved in overlapping situation, and from the naturalist's attempt to avoid all semblance of structure in "slice-of-life" plays, to contemporary experiments in expressionistic, "absurd" and "epic" drama which have little regard for disciplined construction.

2. CHARACTER

In placing character as the second element, Aristotle started an endless

argument. Many critics and playwrights insist that character is the most important element of drama. The controversy will perhaps never be solved as there are valid arguments on both sides, and, as a matter of fact, the two should not be seen as mutually exclusive, for in the last analysis plot is character in action.

The nature of drama and the conventions of the physical theater exert great influence on characterization. Dramatists must select a few key incidents occurring in a short space of time and in a few locales, and they must reveal character by speech and behavior. Dramatists usually have no means of commenting directly on character. As a result, the characters in plays must be simplified, their qualities made clear in a few telling scenes.

During the last quarter of the 19th century, under the impact of the scientific method and the new developments in psychology, the playwright became concerned with delineating characters with rich inner lives and complex motivations. Ibsen, Strindberg, and Chekhov, the three masters of modern western drama, were particularly successful in creating life-like figures. Dramatists in the 20th century have continued to strive for the creation of solid characters whose motivations are subtle and complicated.

Character may be portrayed in four ways. First, character is delineated by appearance. The actor's physical qualities give an immediate stimulus to the audience. Many modern playwrights have a very specific image in mind, describing the character's appearance in considerable detail.

Second, character is revealed by speech. The kind of language employed by the personae, their manner of speaking, their voice quality and so on, all say something about them. The dramatist takes great care to write dialogue that makes an immediate impression about the characters.

Third, character is established by action. A character's external actions give us clues to his or her inner motivations. Sometimes, the playwright may create a misleading or ambiguous impression of a character at the beginning of the play and then gradually reveal the truth as the play progresses. In the opening scene of Ibsen's *A Doll House*, Nora's initial appearance and actions suggest a doll-like character, but

the first impression is changed by her subsequent course of action. Action is a fundamental technique for depicting character.

Fourth, character may be revealed by what others say about and how they react to the person. Often, dramatists use other people's comment as a method of revealing the truth about an absent character. Dramatists may deliberately mislead or perplex their audiences by having characters say ambiguous or controversial things, as in *Death of a Salesman*, Linda and her two sons and their neighbor Charlie each has a different story or opinion about Willy, the salesman. In some cases, it is the writer's purpose to leave the audience in a state of confusion. However, the more usual practice of most dramatists is to reveal the genuine nature and background of character through the speech of others.

The sharpness of a character's image has a lot to do with the structure of the drama. Plays written for a theater which permit most of the essential action to appear on stage give the playwright a greater opportunity to create a more vivid, complex character than those plays which were confined to minimum of action. For instance, one reason that Willy Lowman is such a rich and interesting character is that we see him through many acted out scenes of his memory of the past.

The rounded, or three dimensional characters who are neither wholly good nor wholly evil, but wholly human, are certainly the most convincing and rich characters. But because of the compression of the form, drama usually cannot afford to fully realize all its characters. The minor roles of most plays tend to be flat, one-dimensional, or stereotyped. Characters who change and develop as the play progresses are called dynamic ones as opposed to those whose character traits remain static throughout the play.

3. THOUGHT

The third element, thought, refers to the reasoning aspect of drama. Thought, however, is more than the intellectual content, since one's reasons for behavior are bound up with one's emotions. Characters in drama make subjective decisions under pressure, caught in conflicting emotional entanglements. In this respect, dramas are like the