

## From Page to Screen: Digital Strategies for Teaching Literature in the 21st Century

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### **Abstract:**

This study discusses recent developments in foreign language teaching and English literature teaching among the so-called "digital non-natives" of the present time. Students who grow up in today's media-saturated environment require a new teacher with innovation and flexibility meeting ever-demanding academia. This research gives insight into how digital tools, social media, and online platforms can be used toward innovative analyses of contemporary and classical works of literature across diverse university environments. As digital technologies integrate rapidly into education, important questions about effectiveness and challenges arise, especially regarding literature instruction. Educators are eager to progress in both literary analysis and appreciation in a digital world, but it will be critical that competence in the pedagogical use of these technologies be acquired. To meet this need, the study aims to explore how the digital technologies in question have been put into actual practice in teaching literature and the broader pedagogical implications this has. Based on a qualitative approach adopted a number of important findings reveal that: First, student involvement is greatly enhanced through the use of such digital media as video games, graphic novels, and interactive hypertexts, making studies of literature more interactive. Also, critical skills developed by students in the course of analysis of digital media are quickly transferred to traditional literary analysis. Moreover, in teaching literature, using and creating texts with the help of social media allows students to develop media literacy and reflective thinking. Finally, the pedagogical effect of using digital means brings development in cognition, emotion, and ethos. In sum, most importantly, with digital technologies, renewal of practices within literature education could be made more attractive and up to date for students native to the digital culture.

**Keywords:** Critical thinking, digital non-natives, digital tools, literature, social media

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## Introduction :

The fast-evolving world faces both challenges and opportunities in using digital tools within the framework of literature education. Technology is now playing a major role in teaching literature in relation to the 21st-century classroom, and hence, educators are forced to revise more traditional pedagogical methods. Digital tools will range from online reading platforms and collaborative tools to interactive writing software that will enrich engagement in literature and serve diverse learning styles. But the secret of how they will function well lies in thoughtful implementation and aligning them with educational goals. In fact, a teacher today should be aware of the role that information and communication technologies currently play in education, let alone language teaching. Expanding the use of digital tools and online sources such as social media and the Internet may help students to raise knowledge, improve cognitive functions, and even develop team-building ability. Research evidence has established that the application of frameworks like Bloom's Taxonomy, in combination with online educational tools such as Popplet, Facebook, Voicethread, Google Search, and Trello, is effective for higher-order thinking. This becomes particularly important in today's digital era; whereby digital literacy is no longer an advantage but an essential requirement<sup>1</sup>.

## Literature Review

Technologies in teaching refer to the use of digital tools and resources to enhance the learning experience and improve educational outcomes. This can include the use of devices such as computers, tablets, and smartphones, as well as software and applications that facilitate student engagement, collaboration, and personalized learning. Technology-based tools like wikis and Google docs allow students to collaborate on group projects, breaking down the physical barriers of the traditional classroom and enabling new ways of learning, communication, and collaborative work<sup>2</sup>.

A modern classroom is an educational setting that integrates various technologies, digital tools, and resources to enhance teaching and learning experience. It goes beyond traditional methods of instruction to promote student-centered learning, active participation, and collaboration among students and teachers. A modern classroom is designed to be flexible and adaptable, encouraging creativity, critical thinking, and problem-solving skills. It also emphasizes the development of digital literacy and information fluency, preparing students for the demands of the 21st century workplace.

Currently students have access to a broad array of online resources and are actively involved in creating personal information networks and engaging with learning communities. Their ability to multitask and quickly process information necessitates more advanced teaching techniques. Language teaching is highly adaptable to new technologies due to its interdisciplinary nature, but teaching literature within language teaching presents a unique challenge in reconciling the love of technology with appreciation for the written and spoken word as an art form.

Digital tools can enhance the study of literature, and Tsourapa (2018) highlights innovative ways that teachers across American universities have utilized them. This paper focuses on the use of story maps in literature classes, specifically as implemented by Fagan at James Madison University in Virginia during a course on literature about undocumented immigration. Although we cannot provide a detailed procedure in this paper, we will briefly explain how the web tool works in context<sup>3</sup>.

Recent literature has pointed out how digital technologies can actually reshape literature education. For instance, McNair and Hardin (2020) highlight that access to literary texts may be democratized through digital platforms, thus enabling students from diverse walks of life to engage with diverse voices and perspectives<sup>4</sup>. Similarly, Liu (2021) holds that the interactive digital environment provokes critical thinking and closer text analysis on the part of their students, thus allowing them to creatively interact with literature<sup>5</sup>. It can also further the possibility of cooperative learning experiences, as was shown in a study by Johnson et al. (2019) in which online discussions via forums and social media platforms supported students in stating their meaning and developing other students' ideas<sup>6</sup>. Moreover, modern students have been exposed to a myriad of online resources and actively contribute by creating personal information networks and connecting with learning communities. This multitasking and rapid processing capability calls for more sophisticated learning methodologies that can match the learning style of the students. The intrinsically interdisciplinary nature of language teaching lends itself easily to the incorporation of new technologies. But teaching literature in this kind of environment brings special challenges in bridging the gap between a love for technology and the appreciation for the written and spoken word as art forms.

On the other hand, literature also raises some pivotal issues that are related to overdependence on technology. While digital tools enrich learning, according to Boruszko (2022), they are easily becoming the source of distractions and superficial engagement with texts<sup>7</sup>. In addition, inequality in accessing technology, as pointed out by Starkey (2020), may reinforce existing inequalities in educational contexts. Hence, educators should bear in mind the need to critically judge the function of digital tools within literature education so that integration increases and does not decrease learning outcomes. This study explores the complex interrelationship between digital tools and education in literature, drawing on available research on how to best implement practices. The review of both the benefits and challenges associated with this integration will give us a wide-based understanding of how educators can be sure-footed through this shifting landscape to further assure that engagement in and learning of literature is enhanced for all students<sup>8</sup>.

### **Problematic and Research Questions :**

The rapid integration of digital technologies in education raises important questions about their effectiveness and the potential challenges associated with their use, particularly in literature education. As educators strive to engage students in literary analysis and appreciation, understanding how to navigate the digital landscape becomes critical. This study seeks to address the gap in literature regarding the practical application of digital tools in literature education and the pedagogical implications of their use.

To guide this inquiry, the following research questions have been formulated:

1. What digital tools are currently being utilized by educators in literature instruction, and how frequently are they integrated into the curriculum?
2. How do educators perceive the effectiveness of digital tools in enhancing student engagement and fostering critical thinking skills in literature education?
3. In what ways can the integration of digital tools bridge the gap between students' affinity for technology and their appreciation for literature as an art form?

By addressing these research questions, the study aims to provide valuable insights into the intersection of digital tools and literature education, ultimately contributing to the development of best practices for educators in the 21st-century classroom.

## Methodology Design :

This study adopts a qualitative thematic approach to the conceptual setting. The methodology features existing literature and theoretical frameworks as perspectives which analyze the integration of digital tools into literature education. As such, this paradigm does not involve the collection of primary data, but rather synthesizes information from past studies, academic discussions, and theoretical models about current teaching practices in the face of the digital era. The current research provides an integration of established theories of technology-enhanced learning and pedagogical innovation in literature education. The review explores how digital tools, such as e-books, interactive platforms, social media, and multimedia content, are put to work to increase the level of students' engagement with the subject matter, develop critical thinking skills, and support the interpretation of both contemporary and classical literary works.

Thematic coding was applied in identifying the recurring themes of effectiveness of the digital tools to be used to enhance students' engagement, the development of critical thinking skills through the digital platforms, and the pedagogical approaches that are necessary in embedding these tools within learning environments effectively. Other issues to be explored in the analysis are challenges related to aligning such digital tools to more traditional curricula and the potential of these technologies to change how literature will be taught in the 21st century. The nature of this conceptual paper ensures validity through a critical review of renowned sources, in addition to well-established theoretical frameworks. It also means findings are based on a wide variety of academic discussions for a broad and balanced perspective on the topic<sup>2</sup>.

## Main Findings

### 5-1. Modern Ways of Reading and Interpreting Literature

The integration of new media forms such as video games, hypertexts, and language platforms in teaching literature can enhance critical thinking skills, which can be applied to traditional texts. Using new media forms can also provide fresh interpretations of traditional texts, such as "To Be or Not to Be," a choose-your-own-adventure-style game based on Shakespeare's Hamlet. The game features different characters and allows players to make choices that affect the narrative, while incorporating elements of time travel, piracy, and murder investigation, and uses specially composed music and sound effects. The game encourages players to learn new words and phrases and has features to aid those with dyslexia. Using such media forms can generate new discussions and interpretations of classic texts.

The internet can be a valuable resource for promoting creativity and encouraging discussion of moral dilemmas found in literary works. A forum or comment section can be set up for students to freely discuss and ask questions about the books being studied. The teacher can assign problem-solving tasks related to the book and save time by replying to comments and posts. Access to the forum should be restricted to students and privacy concerns should be emphasized by encouraging the use of nicknames and limited personal information.

The "Actively Learn" platform is a language tool that enhances traditional reading experiences through e-books. It allows teachers to embed comments, questions, and annotations into the e-book text, which can be sent to students' copies of the e-book.

Students can also write their own notes, ask questions, and comment on other students' notes, fostering strong student-teacher and student-student relationships<sup>9</sup>. It extends learning beyond the classroom and allows teachers to embed notes and annotations in e-books, while students can also add their own notes and questions, creating a collaborative learning environment (Nikolić,2018).



**Figure :(01) Actively Learn Platform Homepage\***

The teacher can insert questions, notes, and even media into the text to build greater reflection and higher-order thinking while reading. It allows educators to tailor content to diverse learning needs and promotes collaboration through peer discussions and real-time instructor feedback. Actively Learn helps teachers follow the progress and understanding of their students with assessment tools included. The platform supports resources across subjects with a huge library of digital texts and provides reading in an interactive way that fosters active learning and critical analysis in literature, among other subjects (Boumediene,2022) Furthermore, E-clicker questionnaires have become a popular tool in literary classes for their ability to save time and encourage student participation. By allowing students to answer questions anonymously and providing quick feedback, e-clickers have challenged traditional approaches to literary review. However, because e-clickers only allow for simple responses, it is important to use them in conjunction with other tools that encourage critical thinking<sup>10</sup>.

## 5-2. Social media In Teaching Literature

Teachers can use social media to engage students in gathering information about contemporary literary authors and their works. By following an author's posts and activity on social networks, students can gain insight into the themes that interest the author and that serve as inspiration for their fiction. For example, Margaret Atwood's concern for the environment and global warming is apparent in her Facebook posts, where she promotes the use of the "Ecosia" search engine that donates profits to organizations focused on reforestation. Teachers set an assignment that helps students develop critical thinking skills about media consumption by participating in literary communities and exploring new writing venues.

Task 1 of the assignment requires students to use their smartphones to access social media sites and analyze posts made by contemporary writers. Over a period of six weeks, students are to participate on a social media site of their choice (e.g. Facebook, Twitter) and follow an author who frequently posts content. Students are encouraged to choose an author they

\* **Source:** Actively learn Platform,2024

like and focus on their posts, interactions with followers, and engage with others on the site. For instance, a fan of Margaret Atwood may choose to follow her on Facebook, Twitter, or visit her website. Similarly, a fan of Harry Potter may explore 'Pottermore'. (<https://www.wizardingworld.com/>)

To complete the assignment, students need to document their observations and reflections about the author's social media site, and evaluate its purpose, audience, genre, style, and cultural context. They should write a one- to two-page analysis of a specific aspect of the social site, or the author's use of it. The teachers may also guide the students in an in-class writing activity or organize small and large group discussions to help the students share their findings. Finally, students will present a five-to-seven-minute portfolio with screenshots or artifacts to support their observations, which will be translated into a PowerPoint presentation.

Also, The Timeline feature on Facebook is helpful for analyzing literary works and visualizing plot events, author background, and socio-historical context. In a course on Victorian literature at Laghouat University in 2019, second-year students of EFL were assigned to create a Facebook page for a literary character, including necessary information about their life. This was easy to do with the Timeline feature, which tracks plot developments, turning points, and character interactions within the socio-historical context of the work .

The second task was given as a substitute for oral presentations and was completed in groups of 4-5 students over a two-week period (Wilde,2016). The students selected a literary character from a book they were reading, created a profile for the character on Facebook, added information and connected with other fictional characters to interact. Specifically, students chose the main characters from Oscar Wilde's novel, "The Picture of Dorian Gray," and were encouraged to watch one of two film adaptations to make their characters more convincing<sup>11</sup>.

To fill in the information section of a character's profile, students had to conduct research to find concrete facts about the character's life, such as Basic Info, Work and Education, and Relationship Status, and decide what information to reveal and conceal from the public. This allowed students to engage with the characters and create a more convincing profile. However, other characters could potentially reveal damaging information about a character, which could lead to unexpected narrative developments.

The assignment required students to create a Facebook page and decide what the character would like, add to their favorites, and interact with them. This allowed the students to delve deeper into the analysis of the text and construct the character's identity in the context of social media behaviors. This feature also encouraged students to search for information to support their decisions on what to include on the character's page. The students had to find ways to express their character's dislike or antipathy towards certain characters since some of the options that Facebook offers are unavailable to character pages.

In one of the versions created by the students Dorian Gray's photo that revealed his moral deviance, the students created a version where James Vane, seeking revenge for his deceased sister Sybil, exposed a photo of Dorian Gray revealing his moral deviance on his Facebook Timeline during a party. As Dorian's followers and friends were constantly online, they immediately saw the post, damaging Dorian's reputation irreparably. Although Dorian deleted the photo, his dark secret was revealed, resulting in shocked and disgusted reactions from people and characters leaving comments or emoticons. The profile picture

of the once young and beautiful Dorian was changed to the portrait of an old, gruesome, and despicable man, whose soul was as rotten as the face on his profile picture.

According to Wiseman & Wagler (2016), the students are encouraged to discuss complex literary perspectives and add new meanings to the literary works by translating them into the language of social media, which is familiar to them. This invites them to interpret the works from multiple perspectives. The use of “Actively Learn Platform” (see figure1) assist them in fulfilling their duties and homeworks<sup>12</sup>.

### **5-3. Modern Technologies Benefits in Literature Class**

Modern technologies can facilitate the study of literature in several ways. For example:

**Digital texts:** The availability of digital texts can make literature more accessible to students, allowing them to access and read texts on their computers or mobile devices.

**Multimedia content:** Modern technologies allow for the integration of multimedia content into literature instruction, such as videos, images, and audio recordings, which can enhance understanding and engagement with text.

**Online discussion forums:** Technologies such as online discussion forums and social media platforms can facilitate asynchronous and synchronous discussions among students, allowing for collaborative learning and the exchange of ideas.

**Text analysis tools:** Digital tools such as text analysis software can assist in analyzing literary texts, including identifying patterns in the text, tracking character development, and identifying literary devices.

These are the features of a modern literature class:

- **Use of technology:** Modern literature classes utilize technology in various ways to enhance learning, such as using e-books, online discussion forums, virtual reality and interactive media.
- **Multicultural and diverse readings:** Modern literature classes incorporate diverse voices and perspectives, including works from various cultures and minority groups, to provide a broader understanding of human experiences.
- **Student-centered learning:** Modern literature classes place emphasis on student-centered learning, which allows students to take an active role in their own learning, participate in discussions, and explore their own interests and creative expressions.
- **Interdisciplinary approach:** Modern literature classes often have an interdisciplinary approach that draws on different fields of study, such as psychology, history, philosophy, and media studies, to enhance literary analysis and understanding.
- **Critical thinking and analysis:** Modern literature classes emphasize the development of critical thinking skills and encourage students to analyze and interpret literary texts in their historical, cultural, and social contexts.
- **Creativity and innovation:** Modern literature classes encourage students to think creatively and use innovative approaches to engage with and respond to literary texts, such as through creative writing, digital media project, and performance.

## Discussion

Education in the 21st century has taken a complete turn, and technology has started to play a very important role in the classrooms. As educators seek to engage students who have grown up immersed in digital culture, the challenge of how to effectively bridge the gap between students' affinity for technology and their appreciation for literature as an art form has become increasingly pressing. The thoughtful integration of digital tools offers a way out for the challenges traditional approaches face in literature education due to the tech-savviness of learners today. Engaging students through digital platforms and multimedia resources opens new dimensions for educators to interact with literature, access, and present the work of literary analysis in an enjoyable fashion. This essay explores how digital tools bridge this gap and help students connect their technological interests to a deeper appreciation for literature.

Arguably, one of the most important ways in which digital tools can bridge the gap is by appealing to students on familiar platforms. Students today are at ease using social media, playing video games, and using other forms of digital media part of their everyday life. These platforms offer educators a venue to introduce ideas of literature to students in a way that speaks best to them. For instance, digital modes of interactive storytelling or graphic novels will more easily capture students' attention and introduce them to literary themes through a medium they already like. Literature, then, may not seem as foreign, for it reaches students in their comfort zone, probably even genuinely introducing them to the love of art. This way, digital platforms bridge students' experiences with technology in everyday life and the world of literature.

In addition, engaging students with platforms with which they are already familiar, digital tools amplify the visual and interactive aspects of literature, creating an interactive experience. Traditional print literature can seem sort of dead to those who have become used to the multimedia scape of today. The new digital tools, from multimedia presentations to video production and even into virtual realities, make new life possible regarding literature. Students can finally engage in the depth of such a literary text through those visual and aural sensations that grow in their perception of narrative structure, character development, and symbolism. These digital tools make the work of literary analysis more interactive and help students appreciate the artistic details that occur within a work of literature which might have been totally missed if only a no-text medium had been used. In this way, technology has become a literary enhancer, enabling students to view texts through a new set of lenses.

Besides, digital tools allow students to show their creativity not just as passive recipients of literature but rather as contributors to it. Digital storytelling, blogging, and creation of multimedia projects will enable students to express perceptions of the literary work in forms representative of one's personal connection to the material. This act of active participation nurtures an even deeper appreciation of the creative process behind works of literature. For example, when students develop their own digital stories or visual renderings of a literary theme, they begin to appreciate the difficulty in developing a narrative with character development. This activity makes students understand that literature is not just something to be studied as an artifact, but it is a living, dynamic entity to which they might contribute themselves. By positioning them as both consumers and creators, digital tools encourage students to approach literature on a deeper and more personal level.

Another critical advantage of the integration of digital tools into the education of literature is how they promote critical thinking and discussion. Indeed, online platforms, such as forums, social media, and interactive websites, provide places for students to hold conversations about literary works. These topics also allow students to share their interpretations, ask questions, and debate with their colleagues, which further enables critical thinking. Such collaborative discussions deepen the understanding of literature in a way that the variety of perspectives opens students' vision to view the same material from different angles. In addition, if these discussions can be made to occur in digital forms, it makes literature more current and connected to the lives of students. In this way, students begin to envision literary analysis as an entertaining, active activity rather than a passive one.

Finally, digital tools introduce the possibility of connecting traditional literature to contemporary contexts in a way that no other resource does. The other side of teaching classic literature is helping the students apply it to their lives. Digital tools can bridge that divide, enabling educators to connect classical texts with digital culture today. For example, a teacher can ask students to envision modern scenarios for characters in Shakespearean plays using social media or to consider and post about how the themes in 19th-century novels are related to issues experienced today. This helps students see that literature is a vibrant, living art form through which their experiences may well be reflected today. These connections, with the help of digital tools, will make students realize that literature is timeless and continues to influence culture.

### **Conclusion:**

There is a dire need in today's learning for educators to provide a learning environment that accommodates students who are accustomed to utilizing digital technology to access information, communicate, and consume online media. A teacher's effectiveness in using technology to improve learning is contingent upon their preparedness and proficiency with the tools, as well as the sophistication of the learning content and the availability of instruction resources. Researchers have used the term "transliteracy" to describe the capacity to read, write, and engage in a range of platforms, tools, and media. Interactive media as a pedagogical tool in literature classes can be an invigorating and captivating method of tackling the communication challenges of the 21st century.

This study investigates new approaches to reading and analyzing literary texts that engage students and make them aware of contemporary issues. Use of online forums and comment boxes allows active participation in problem-solving exercises. Websites like Actively Learn allow embedded discussion, questions, and annotation within an e-book's text to facilitate learning, and Esri's Story Map connects literature with daily life.

The application of activities designed from social media, including the analysis of recent writers' updates and the production of Facebook pages based on literary characters, has been extremely effective in a Victorian Literature course at Laghouat University.

Together with these findings, this study reiterates the necessity of incorporating social media within the teaching of literature in order to urge students' active participation as both producers and readers of digital content. This practice promotes critical thought and analytical inquiry, which results in a better comprehension of literature and digital discussion.

## Recommendations

- **Teacher Training and Digital Literacy:** Educators require continuous training to become more digitally literate and able to use technology in teaching literature. Professional development workshops and programs must be on digital pedagogy, media literacy, and interactive learning methods.
- **Institutional Support:** Universities and institutions of learning need to invest in digital infrastructure and offer access to interactive learning platforms that enrich literary studies. Resources, training, and policy support are required to encourage innovation in teaching practices.
- **Curriculum Adaptation:** Literature curriculums must incorporate digital media and media literacy components to aid students' shifting learning habits. This includes the utilization of e-books with extra features, integrating the analysis of social media, and using story platforms that harmonize traditional and digital storytelling.
- **Promoting Student Creativity and Engagement:** Teachers must design assignments in such a way as to allow students to engage with literature creatively using technology. Digital storytelling, role-playing through social media, and multimedia projects can enhance engagement and supplement literary analysis.
- **Encouraging Ethical Digital Practice:** While students engage with digital media, it is essential to instruct them in ethical digital citizenship, such as critical evaluation of online resources, ethical information creation, and courteous interaction in digital communication.

In particular, the use of digital media in the teaching of literature offers a high level of possibility of connecting students' love of technology with their appreciation of literature as an art form. The development of rich digital forums mirroring the digital behavior of users enhances the visual and interactive aspects of literature. It encourages innovation, supports analytic thinking, and enables classical texts to be reanalyzed through digital prisms. Digital instruments don't diminish literary analysis but enhance it, rendering literature more accessible, interesting, and pertinent to the digital era. As instructors traverse these shifting educational landscapes, the strategic and purposeful utilization of technology will continue to be crucial to fostering a greater appreciation of literature in the 21st century.

## Footnotes

<sup>1</sup> Julia Kristeva, *Time and Sense: Proust and the Experience of Literature* (New York: Columbia University Press, 2025).

<sup>2</sup> Houda Boumediene, "The AI Evolution in Higher Education: Enhancing Teaching with ChatGPT," *Journal of Studies in Language, Culture, and Society (JSLCS)* 8, no. 1 (2025): 15–29.

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