



The Role of Digital Technology in Enhancing English Literature Learning in ESL/EFL Contexts

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Abstract

Technology has transformed the way English literature is taught, making it more engaging, interactive, inclusive, and accessible for students from diverse backgrounds. Student understanding and the development of critical thinking skills are supported by digital gadgets, including multimedia, VR, and AR, as well as AI and digital platforms of various kinds. However, there are several constraints to the use of this technology, including a lack of teacher training, inequality in infrastructure, slow internet speeds, and restricted digital access, among others. The following research is based on the results of a Systematic Literature Review, which was carried out using publications from 2019 – 2024, primarily in scholarly journals, books, and conference proceedings. The research concludes that the technology encourages students to better understand, be more motivated, and become more interested in literary learning. In addition, findings demonstrated the necessity of methods that will help eliminate the digital gap and promote diversity. Moreover, lawmakers and educators should create more adaptable and flexible technological curricula that involve thorough professional training for teachers. Hence, it is believed that technology integration in learning English literature will provide equitable and sustainable access to education, apart from improving the quality of the learning.

Keywords: *Technology in education, English literature teaching, Virtual reality (VR), Digital divide, Teacher training*



Introduction

The meteoric rise of digital technology over the last two decades has transformed numerous spheres of human activity, and the educational system is no exception. Moreover, with such demands of the digital age as global connection, making information accessible increasingly faster, and the need for 21st-century skills, the inclusion of technology in learning has become less of an option and more of a pressing demand. Due to the use of technology in the learning process had also radically transformed the way English literature is implemented in the classroom, especially in ESL and FFL.

In general, traditional teaching is more focused on lectures, text analysis based on books, and structured class discussions. While these can create a foundation for understanding, they are less effective in engaging students or catering to the digital generation's modes of learning. According to Škobo, in teaching, the use of audiovisual media, including projectors and a phonograph for recordings, becomes an innovation in literary study and is a "special dynamic characteristic". However, with technological progress, numerous digital media and platforms have emerged that are much more interactive, including video-based multimedia, learning apps, VR and AR.

Modern technology promotes a deeper interaction of students with a literary work. Multimedia provides an opportunity for students to see the setting and characters and understand the storyline, which is generally a matter of text description or the reader's own imagination. For example, Kahoot, Quizlet, Google Classroom, and many other interactive apps make learning more enjoyable and motivate students (Aubakirova et al., 2024). In fact, VR and AR technologies open up new possibilities to present immersive experiences, where students can "enter" into the world of stories and understand the cultural context inherent in them (Altun & Ahmad, 2021; Ma, 2021). Thus, technology is not only an additional medium but also a means that is able to change the way students understand and appreciate literary works. Although it offers many opportunities, the application of technology in English literature learning cannot be separated from various obstacles. The digital divide is a major obstacle. Particularly in less developed regions, not all pupils have easy access to computers and the internet. (Aubakirova et al., 2024). In addition, the ability of teachers to integrate technology into the classroom is also still an obstacle. Many teachers have not received adequate training on the use of learning applications, text analysis software, or immersive technologies such as VR, so the potential of technology cannot be maximized (Shamshul et al., 2024).

Another limitation that often arises is the lack of digital content that suits the needs of literary learning. Not all literary works have supporting materials in the



form of videos, animations, or digital simulations. Yet, creating such content demands certain investment costs, time, and skills that may not always be available. Furthermore, using technology requires some technical proficiency from both the students and the teachers, which also creates barriers. On the other hand, “research demonstrates that incorporating technology in literary instruction boosts learners’ comprehension and performance in classrooms”. Shamshul et al. write in their article how “digital technology can improve students’ comprehension, interest, and engagement in literary studies,” especially in the ESL classroom. During the pandemic, Cheung used the online platform Zoom as the only opportunity for students to acquire a language while they could not meet physically in the classroom. Cheung claims that learning languages with Zoom classes also becomes a possibility, which proves that the solution through technology may not only be an accompaniment but a substitution in difficult situations.

Furthermore, technology, hence, impacts the role of the teacher and student. The role of the teacher is not limited to disseminating the teaching material. Teachers become facilitators, directing students to read various literature on the themes not only in library stacks but also in diverse digital forums. Moreover, students should also be proactive in finding information, developing statements, and discussing this information with peers in an online forum. This approach corresponds to 21 st-century requirements, focusing on critical and collaborative digital analytic skills.

Nevertheless, the critical issues of the gaps in access and insufficient teacher training supporting the tail of the same access must be solved. Therefore, only a comprehensive strategy, such as curriculum development based on technology, improvement of teachers’ preparation, and support from educational policies providing equal digital access, will assist in making integrated technology inclusive. Moreover, the future research represents the necessity to concentrate on empirical evidence obtained regarding the efficacy of particular tech upon literary learning due to the predominance of conceptual and general ways of inquiry is integrated so far (DerKhachadourian, 2023).

To conclude, the background of this research supports the idea that even though technology revolutionized and transformed the attitude groups of the searchers of English literature, the list of its benefits to be included to is long. This includes the availability of digital materials, teacher qualifications, and performance accessibility, among others, that need to receive adequate analysis and changes. In such a way, this study aims to examine the reliability of traditional and technology-based approaches to learning English literature with the primary focus on EFL. Specifically, it is focused on how technology can be successful in helping students to understand complicated literary works,



increase their understanding, and develop critical attitudes. However, at the same time, the challenges to the implementation of the interventions have been outlined to provide relevant recommendations for research.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The use of technology in English literature teaching and studying has changed the field, especially given the requirements of English as a Second Language and English as a Foreign Language Programs. Multimedia patterns, VR, and AR can make the learning process interactive and help students comprehend the phenomena of literature more visually approachable and immersive. Learning apps like Kahoot or Quizlet are interactive and increase students' engagement and motivation. However, the ethical, economic, and educational concerns are the digital gap, the lack of access to devices, instructor education, and the inability to find digital content suitable for literature are the most significant constraints under investigation.

METHODOLOGY

To gain insight into how digital technology can improve ESL and EFL students' English literature acquisition, a conceptual approach is integrated with the systematic literature review methodology. The technique will include research findings from various sources and present the latest scholarly articles that will help to identify the transformations, benefits, challenges, and impacts of technology implemented in literary classes.

Research Approach

As the current study does not aim to collect original data through surveys or experiments but critically reviews the existing scientific publications, a conceptual method was considered suitable. With this approach, scholars have an opportunity to bridge research gaps and develop a comprehensive theoretical basis for the use of technology in literary education.

Data Source

The sources of data in this research consist of scientific journal publications, conference proceedings, and research reports that have been produced over the period 2019-2024. The limitation on the age of retrieval of the data is essential for ensuring the relevance of the data used in this study to the current trends and existing issues in the application of educational technology, such as IMLs, VRs, ARs, AIs, and DLSPs. The sources which have well-cited and influential work to this research include reputable scientific international journal articles, proceedings on educational conferences, and research from indexed learning technology. Among the sources selected were works addressing the role of multimedia in grasping literary concepts, the ambitions of the use of technology to improve the performance of the student in the ESL performance, the

prospects of VRs and ARs on facilitating informed-learning, and the criticisms of the failure of the application of the technologies due to cultural limitations.

Research Procedure

The research includes the following main steps: Search for Literature: the researcher used the words digital technology in literature teaching, ESL/EFL learning, virtual reality in education, and educational technology to find the relevant sources of information. The sources of information reviewed in this work are articles published in the English and Indonesian languages and are available in relevant online academic journal databases.

Selection and inclusion criteria

As a result of the table, there is literature on the topic of the use of technology when teaching literature, from the period of 2019 – 2024. This literature discusses the benefits, challenges, and consequences of the use of technology. Articles that only touch on teaching a language but are not related to literature are omitted.

Contentanalysis

The collected literature is analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and key themes arising from the use of technology and how the analysis was undertaken by comparing the different approaches, effectiveness, and challenges occasioned in each study.

findings

Based on the results of the analysis, several categories were synthesized, including the benefits of technology use for enhanced literary understanding, the revelation of the challenges of technology integration in ESL/EFL classrooms, the description of the teacher's role in the process of using technology, and the explanation of education policies' implications.

Data Analysis

In the analysis, the literature was classified by topic and contribution, and a qualitative approach was used. In other words, the researchers found similarities and differences in the findings of various studies and synthesized a more comprehensive conceptual framework. For instance, while some works focus on the benefits of multimedia for visualizing literary concepts (Skobo, 2020), others propose that digital access barriers and unprepared teachers hinder the learning process (Aubakirova et al., 2024). Thus, the method enabled me to argue that technology becomes a driving force that contributes to the enrichment of literary studies and its limitations. As a result, the findings were used to provide possible practical implications and recommendations for the field's agents to develop more responsive and integrative environments.



Validity and Reliability

In light of the maintainability of the study, validity is supported in the extensive utilization of literature from highly regarded and indexed academic sources. Sustainability of reliability is through triangulation of data. This is the comparison of results from studies with varying contexts. The results obtained not only define one view but essentially exemplify differing perspectives in the field.

FINDINGS

In summary, it can be concluded that the literature review from different studies conducted between 2019 and 2024 on the application of digital technology in English literature learning gives a clear view of the influence of digital technology in ESL/EFL literature learning. Thus, the four main aspects of literature review include benefits, challenges, implications, and future recommendations.

Benefits of Using Technology.

Successful cases with the use of technological solutions for academic purposes enhance students' knowledge of complicated literary elements. Multimedia, VR, and AR facilitate understanding and visual representation of characters, plots, and storylines challenging for perception due to their exclusive description in a text. (Skobo, 2020; Altun & Ahmad, 2021). Serious digital applications such as Kahoot and Quizlet engage a student in the learning process and develop motivation, enthusiasm (Aubakirova et al., 2024).

Challenges in Implementation

The prime barriers are the digital divide, which is defined by limited access to the necessary devices, internet, and inadequate educational infrastructure. Moreover, the teachers' insufficient training in the utilization of advanced technology results in less optimal work of technology integration (Shamshul et al., 2024). Finally, the complexity of using both text and VR discourse analysis software needs additional technical skills (Altun & Ahmad, 2021).

Educational Implications

The process of technology integration is constructed on the redefinition of the role of teachers in learning from the transmitter of knowledge to the facilitator of the process. As a result, teachers are supposed to shape technology-mediated learning experiences characterized by interactivity, while students become more autonomous in exploring the materials through such platforms (Škobo, 2020). The issue of ethics and privacy of data obtained from students also becomes challenged (DerKhachadourian, 2023).

Overall, the literature reviewed indicates that teacher training to use it better, the development of a culturally supportive literary curriculum through technology, and the spread of digital access are critical. Furthermore, various technologies need further research to decide if some can be more accessible or useful elsewhere or in other cultural contexts (Djalilova, 2024; DerKhachadourian, 2023).

Table 1. of findings

Aspects	findings	Sources
Benefits	-Multimedia, VR, and AR improve the understanding of literary texts -Interactive app encourages student motivation and participation	Škobo (2020); Altun & Ahmad (2021); Aubakirova et al. (2024)
Challenging	- Digital divide (device access & internet) - Teachers lack training - Complexity of advanced technologies	Shamshul et al. (2024); Altun & Ahmad (2021)
Implication	-Changing the role of teachers to facilitators - Students are more proactive in digital learning - Ethical issues and data security	Škobo (2020); DerKhachadourian (2023)
Recommendation	- Inclusive and adaptive literary curriculum -Equitable distribution of digital access	Djalilova (2024); DerKhachadourian (2023); Shamshul et al. (2024)

DISCUSSION

The integration of digital technology into English literature study indicates a change in the paradigm in education. In ESL and FSL, such a change is particularly distinctive. According to findings concerning the literature review, the described achievements can result in more attractive, excellent, and motivated student-oriented teaching for the digital era. However, its application carries complexity constitute an inviolable part of the phenomenon; therefore, it is reasonable to analyze the value of findings for the development of literary pedagogy.

Technology as a Catalyst for Literary Learning

One of the most important achievements of technology is the ability to make students understand more theoretical literature. Multimedia, including video, animation, music, and various others, can help visualize topics that are hard to grasp through language only (Škobo, 2020). Through VR and AR, it is also possible for students to “get inside” the work, thus engaging in active learning. This fully supports the constructivist claim on the idea that students should participate actively in the making of knowledge (Altun & Ahmad, 2021; Ma, 2021). Therefore, technology is not just one more tool it is an instrument of literary pedagogy change.

21st Century Motivation and Skills Enhancement

Abubakarova et al. (2024) assert that students may improve their critical thinking, collaboration, and digital literacy skills via the use of interactive programs such as Google Classroom, Kahoot, or Quizlet. An interesting presentation may help students learn and remember things that they would find hard or unimportant in class. This aligns with the findings of Shamshul et al. (2024), which indicate that the integration of digital technology in English as a Second Language (ESL) lessons may significantly improve students' literary learning outcomes.

Implementation Challenges

Technology integration has a lot of potential, but it also comes with a lot of problems. The digital gap is a big problem, particularly in poor nations where people still don't have access to devices and the internet (Aubakirova et al., 2024). Teachers also have problems since they haven't been trained on how to use instructional technology. Because of this, technology's full potential is not being exploited (Shamshul et al., 2024). Also, using sophisticated technologies like VR and AR needs extra technical skills that not all instructors and students have (Altun & Ahmad, 2021). Another problem is that there isn't enough literary digital material that is relevant, and making it takes a lot of money and demands a lot of skill (Pallathadka, 2020).

Implications for Teachers and Students

The study's findings indicate a substantial transformation in the role of educators in literary education. Teachers must now be facilitators who can create technology-based learning experiences instead of merely giving out information (Škobo, 2020). Students are encouraged to be more autonomous, proactive, and collaborative when they use digital platforms to read and talk about literary works. This shift in role will affect the curriculum, teacher training, and education policy, which must all promote digital transformation. There are also ethical and data security problems that need to be thought about.

When children study online, their privacy must be protected so that technology may be a valuable instrument for education instead of a danger (DerKhachadourian, 2023).

Technology and Its Application in Teaching English Literature

The teaching of English literature has altered a lot because of advances in technology. With the support of current technology's numerous platforms and tools, kids may learn in a way that is more interesting and useful. Literary lessons have also become more important for multimedia techniques like video, music, and animation. This method helps pupils see things like locations, characters, and themes in a way that was hard to see with only words before (Skobo 2020). shows that multimedia may help students comprehend and enjoy abstract literary ideas. Also, learning tools like Google Classroom, Kahoot, and Quizlet let students study literature in a fun way. For instance, instructors may make quizzes or games based on literature to see how well students grasp a certain work. This not only boosts student involvement but also makes studying more fun (Aubakirova et al., 2024).

Continuous innovation is also required in teaching and education. As a recently developed educational technology, virtual reality (VR) can be a useful tool for teachers to implement immersion instruction. VR technology creates a virtual world that transcends time and space, allowing students to acquire fresh information in a brand-new "real" setting (Ma, 2021).

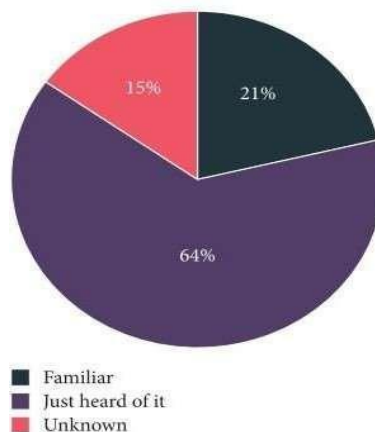


Figure 1. Students' understanding of VR technology in the comparison class (Ma, 2021)



Not to mention that AR and VR technologies let students "enter" the literary world via immersive experiences. Students may enhance their comprehension of literary works by using virtual simulations to delve into the story's origins and get a better grasp of the text and cultural context. A captivating learning experience is created when literature is taught using virtual reality (Altun & Ahmad, 2021). Students may also find a place to debate and share their thoughts on literary works on digital platforms such as Edmodo, Moodle, or other online forums. Important abilities for literary study include critical analysis and reflective thinking, both of which students may hone in group settings via these talks (Pallathadka, 2020). The next step is to use software for literary text analysis, such as Voyant Tools, which helps both students and instructors to statistically analyze literary texts. Consequently, it is becoming more and more important to educate teachers on these technologies within a well-defined educational framework that can adapt to different academic subjects. The pedagogical possibilities of VR in this regard will rely heavily on the motivation produced by students, as well as the ability to identify the required features to reach a sufficient degree of learning through VR (Rojas-Sánchez, Palos-Sánchez, and Folgado-Fernández, 2023).

With this technology, students can learn the patterns of word use, dominant themes, and narrative structure in a literary work, which enriches their understanding of the text (Shamshul et al., 2024). In addition, Digital Library and Access Global Learning Resources Technology also provide access to digital libraries such as Project Gutenberg and JSTOR, which contain thousands of works of classic and modern literature. Students can access literary works from different corners of the world without being limited by space and time, allowing for broader and deeper learning (DerKhachadourian, 2023).

Recommendations for Future Development

The results point to a number of key suggestions. First, teachers need to have a lot of training on how to utilize literary technology, from AI to multimedia. Second, a technology-based literary curriculum must be created inclusively to ensure that students from many cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds may experience its advantages. Third, governments and schools need to make it easier for people to go online so that the gap in education doesn't become worse (Shamshul et al., 2024). Moreover, subsequent study must investigate the efficacy of certain technologies across diverse cultural settings. For instance, research conducted in Lebanon indicates that comprehending cultural subtleties continues to pose a barrier, even with the use of technology (DerKhachadourian, 2023). This stresses that while integrating technology, local cultural factors must constantly be taken into account so that literary learning stays relevant.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, digital technology paves the way for British literary learning. It is due to the interactive and in-depth learning, more responsive to the demands of the century. However, the technology readiness, teacher competence, and education policy implementation are crucial for the successful adaptation of digital technology in the learning process. Despite advancing in technology, one's ability to fully benefit from it depends on its inclusivity. Therefore, the success of literary learning in the future calls for a successful combination of technology readiness, teacher competence, and equity in access to digital technology.

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