

The Impact of Digital Humanities in the Teaching- Learning Process of English Language and Literature: A Perspective

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Abstract

The teaching of English Language and Literature has undergone a noticeable transformation with the introduction of digital tools and innovative pedagogical approaches. Among these changes, the shift from the traditional classroom model to the flipped classroom model represents a significant development. While both approaches aim at effective learning, their structure, roles and outcomes differ considerably. "In the flipped classroom model, what is normally done in class and what is normally done as homework is switched or flipped" (Herreid and Schiller 62), "It inverts traditional teaching methods, delivering instruction online outside of class and moving homework into the classroom" (Du et al. 17).

Keywords: Flipped Classroom, English Language Teaching, Digital Pedagogy, Blended Learning, Student-Centered Learning, Educational Technology, Active Learning

Review of Literature:

Bishop and Verleger describe the flipped classroom as a model that combines video-based instruction at home with active learning in class. They review existing studies and observe that most research focuses on student perceptions rather than actual learning outcomes. They therefore call for more systematic and evidence-based research to measure its effectiveness.

Ozdamli and Asiksoy, in "Flipped Classroom Approach," describe the flipped classroom as an active, student-centred method designed to improve the quality of classroom time. Their study explains the concept, technological models,

advantages and limitations of the flipped classroom, aiming to increase awareness of its educational potential among teachers and researchers.

Herreid and Schiller, in “Case Studies and the Flipped Classroom,” and Du, Fu, and Wang, in “The Flipped Classroom—Advantages and Challenges,” both examine the strengths and limitations of the flipped classroom model. They highlight its benefits such as increased student participation, flexible learning and more time for active classroom engagement. At the same time, they point out challenges including students’ lack of preparation, overreliance on video lectures, technical difficulties and the need for careful planning and greater responsibility from both teachers and learners to ensure effective implementation.

Unlike many studies that discuss the flipped classroom or digital technology in general education, the present study specifically examines their impact on the teaching–learning process of English Language and Literature. It focuses on how Digital Humanities influences literary interpretation, classroom interaction and the roles of teachers and students. By connecting technology with critical thinking and interpretative skills in literature, the article offers a clear perspective on digital transformation in literary studies.

In a traditional classroom, the method of teaching is largely teacher-centred. The teacher explains the text in detail, provides interpretations and highlights important themes and critical points. As observed, “In a typical classroom, teachers are obsessed with ‘covering’ the syllabus and refuse to devote time to students’ interaction”(Dorairaj). In this process, students tend to wait for the teacher’s explanation rather than engaging with the text independently. Many students hesitate to ask questions either due to lack of confidence or because the classroom environment does not always encourage open discussion. As a result, learners become dependent on the teacher’s interpretation and may not develop their own analytical perspectives.

In contrast, the flipped classroom model is a modern teaching approach that brings in a phenomenal contribution to the traditional pattern of instruction. In a conventional classroom, the teacher explains the lesson during class hours and students revise or complete assignments at home. However, in a flipped classroom this process is reversed. Students first engage with the learning materials at home through recorded lectures, presentations, podcasts, or educational videos. They come to class already having a basic understanding of the topic. Classroom time is then

used for discussion, close reading of texts, group activities, interpretation and critical analysis. As a result, the classroom becomes a space for interaction rather than passive listening. Students actively share their interpretations, question different perspectives and engage in meaningful discussions. They become active stakeholders in the learning process, taking responsibility for their preparation and participation. As observed, “In flipped classroom approach student transforms from passive receiver of knowledge to active promoter of knowledge”(Ozdamli and Asiksoy 101). This student-centred method not only improves engagement but also strengthens critical thinking, analytical skills and confidence in expressing ideas about literature.

Digital Humanities plays an important role in supporting the flipped classroom model, especially in the teaching of English Language and Literature. Through digital platforms, students can access online resources that deepen their understanding of literary texts. They can listen to lectures more than once, pause and reflect and read additional materials according to their learning pace. Students “surf” through these resources, compare viewpoints and build their own understanding. This flexibility helps students prepare more effectively before attending class and strengthens their interpretative skills. However, the flipped classroom does not eliminate the importance of the teacher. Rather, it transforms the teacher’s role. In the digital age the teacher is no longer just a knowledge transmitter but a facilitator and guide who provides access to authentic digital resources and encourages independent analysis. With vast digital information available, students need guidance to identify reliable sources and meaningful interpretations. The teacher helps authenticate information, clarify misconceptions and deepen analysis through structured discussion. The classroom thus becomes more interactive and discussion-based.

In this context, Joseph Dorairaj in his article “What Makes a Teacher Great?”, identifies ten important characteristics of an outstanding teacher. According to him, a great teacher is self-reflective, multidisciplinary, research-oriented, experimental, technologically competent, interactive, encouraging, socially committed, and committed to constant learning and improvement. These qualities are highly relevant in the digital age. Today, a teacher must not only have strong subject knowledge but also be willing to adapt to new technologies and innovative teaching methods. Technology, as Dorairaj suggests complements learning rather than replacing traditional teaching. A teacher who is comfortable using digital tools can guide students towards authentic resources, create interactive learning environments, and encourage independent thinking. Thus, Dorairaj’s characteristics clearly support the

idea that the modern teacher is no longer just a lecturer but a facilitator, mentor, and lifelong learner who continuously improves and adapts to the changing educational landscape.

One of the most important contributions of Digital Humanities to the teaching of English Language and Literature is the development of critical thinking and interpretative skills. Literature does not present a single, fixed truth. Instead, it offers plurality and multiple layers of meaning. Different readers may interpret the same text in different ways depending on their perspective, context and experience. This plurality of truth is one of the strengths of literary studies. The inclusion of the flipped classroom model further facilitates this heterogeneity of interpretations. This method “promotes thinking inside and outside of the classroom” (Herreid and Schiller 62). In any classroom, students possess varied capacities, backgrounds and levels of understanding. Technology helps address these differences by allowing students to learn at their own pace. Through digital platforms, students can access critical essays, recorded lectures, online discussions and global interpretations of literary texts. This exposure broadens their understanding and introduces them to diverse viewpoints.

When students engage with these materials before coming to class, they learn to compare, analyse and evaluate different interpretations. Instead of passively accepting a single explanation, they begin to question and form independent opinions. The flipped classroom strengthens this process because classroom time is devoted to discussion, close reading and critical analysis rather than basic explanation. Students are encouraged to support their arguments with textual evidence and to respond thoughtfully to others’ viewpoints. It is evident “that students learn in flipped mode just as well, and usually better, than they do if they are simply attending a lecture” (Reidsema et al. 7). Moreover, digital tools also improve communication skills. As a result, students gain not only a deeper understanding of literary works but also the confidence to engage critically and meaningfully with texts and with one another.

The pandemic further accelerated this transformation. Before the pandemic, traditional classrooms were not heavily dependent on digital technology. Although online tools existed, they were not regularly integrated into everyday teaching. Most learning took place within the physical classroom. However, the pandemic completely changed this situation. Online classes became the main mode of education, and platforms such as Google Meet, Google Classroom and Zoom became

the new virtual reality. Digital resources which were once optional became essential for continuing academic activities.

During this time, students were exposed to numerous online materials, but many struggled to identify which sources were reliable and authentic. Here the teacher's role became more important than ever. Teachers guided students in selecting trustworthy resources and helped them use digital tools effectively. As observed, "good teachers ensure that technology assists and complements their teaching" (Dorairaj). Communication platforms like WhatsApp groups and online classrooms became central to academic interaction. Even after returning to offline classes, many of these digital practices continued. Teachers still share materials online and students use digital resources for preparation. This shift strengthened the foundation of Digital Humanities and made the flipped classroom approach more practical and widely accepted in English Language and Literature classrooms. Therefore, the flipped classroom should not be seen as a replacement for the traditional method. Instead, it acts as a supplement that enhances and strengthens it. The traditional classroom becomes more dynamic and effective when supported by digital tools. Technology empowers both teachers and students by making learning more interactive, accessible and analytical. When combined thoughtfully, traditional teaching methods and flipped learning create a balanced and enriched educational experience in the study of English Language and Literature.

A recent example of this broader digital transformation is the announcement that the British Council Library will no longer function as a physical library and the "digital-only model will come into effect on March 31, 2026". It is also said that, "this digital transformation mirrors the reading preferences of members" (Thomas). This shift reflects the growing preference for online access over traditional physical spaces of reading and research. Libraries, once identified with printed books and physical study spaces, are increasingly moving towards digital platforms. While this transition ensures wider accessibility and convenience, it also signals a significant change in how knowledge is stored, accessed and experienced in the digital age.

The teaching of English Language and Literature is not witnessing a replacement of traditional methods but rather an expansion of possibilities through technology. The flipped classroom model and Digital Humanities do not diminish the value of conventional teaching; instead, they enrich, support and supplement it. Technology acts as a facilitator that enhances accessibility, encourages independent

inquiry and creates space for meaningful discussion and critical engagement. The role of the teacher remains central and pivotal, but it evolves into that of a guide, mentor and authenticator in an age of abundant information. Technology does not replace the teacher or the traditional classroom. Rather, it acts as a catalyst that enhances the learning process. Similarly, students become more responsible and participative learners. When thoughtfully integrated, digital tools complement classroom teaching, making it more interactive, analytical and inclusive. Thus, the future of literary studies lies not in choosing between tradition and technology, but in harmoniously blending both to create a balanced, dynamic and intellectually vibrant learning environment.

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