INTEGRATING DIGITAL RESOURCES IN LITERATURE PEDAGOGY: AN EXPLORATORY STUDY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE UNDERGRADUATE CLASSROOMS IN NAGALAND.

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Abstract: This paper explores the transformative potential of digital resources in the context of literature education in Nagaland, India. In a region where traditionalism has long defined the educational landscape, the integration of digital tools presents a paradigm shift that promises to enrich pedagogy and empower students. Through an investigation of the implications and benefits of this integration, this paper advocates for stakeholders to recognize the importance of investing in ICT infrastructure and teacher training. To strengthen its argument, this paper outlines a case study involving the teaching of Virginia Woolf's "Mrs. Dalloway" in a college in Nagaland. Integrating digital resources such as WhatsApp, YouTube, and PowerPoint presentations, the teaching approach involved audio book sharing, comprehension questions, movie adaptation viewing, and reflective discussions. Student feedback elicited after the teaching revealed the benefits of this approach, including flexibility, enhanced engagement, and a deeper understanding of the text.

Key Words: Digital resources, constructivism, transformative pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of education, the integration of digital resources has emerged as a transformative force, redefining traditional pedagogical methods. Since the 1990's, the integration of the new technologies in the educational process has been a growing trend. There has been a growing number of studies that affirm the role of new technologies in bringing about significant outcomes in the education process. (Karantalis&Koukopoulos, 2022). In the modern educational landscape, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has emerged as a powerful catalyst for transforming the way literature is taught and learned. In an era bombarded by digital forms of communication in almost all spheres of life, the incorporation of ICT tools and resources becomes a necessary paradigm shift in education. In the domain of teaching literature, the introduction of ICT has the potential of expanding the horizons of literary instruction, offering educators and students a dynamic palette of possibilities. Peer (1992) has rightly opined that teaching and learning literature is not easy as it is an open-ended subject which provides you with no ideal answers and *"is far more often taken for granted than explicitly justified"*. In this light, this paper presents a discourse on how integrating digital resources in the teaching of literature can profoundly impact the teaching-learning process, with particular focus on the Undergraduate classrooms in Nagaland.

EDUCATION SYSTEM IN NAGALAND

Nagaland, a land of diverse cultures and languages, possesses a robust literary tradition deeply rooted in oral narratives and written works. However, the contemporary educational landscape in Nagaland still grapples with the concerns of traditional system of education which often features teacher-centered classrooms and lack of student participation and voice. In teacher-fronted classrooms, the teacher is the primary source of information, and students are expected to listen, absorb, and memorize the content presented. According to Dar (2017), "*The traditional education focuses on rote learning and memorization. It is more often teacher centered, that is, the teacher delivers the lecture and students hardly put forth their views regarding the delivered topic*". Traditional education often relies on note memorization, where students are expected to memorize facts, formulas, and information without necessarily understanding the underlying concepts. This can stifle critical thinking and creativity. Students are expected to passively receive knowledge rather than actively engage in shaping their educational experiences or expressing their opinions. Students in traditional classrooms may struggle to stay engaged, as passive learning can lead to disinterest and a lack of motivation.

The above characteristics of traditional system of education define the educational landscape of Nagaland. Having said thus, it may be noted that there is a compelling need to shift towards learner-centered approaches, particularly the pedagogy of literature as literature is a subject that thrives on critical thinking and interpretation and a teacher-fronted classroom would stifle the true essence of literature. A learner-centered approach empowers students to think critically about literary works, characters, and themes, leading to a deeper understanding and appreciation of the subject. Actively involving students in literature classes can enhance their engagement with the subject. Discussions, debates, and interactive activities can make literary works more relatable and interesting. Given the importance of digital resources in modern education, learner-centered classrooms can introduce students to digital tools and resources that can enrich their exploration of literature.

In the light of the above, the main objective driving this discourse is to unravel how digital resources can affect student motivation in the context of the literature classrooms in Nagaland. The significance of this discourse lies in its potential to illuminate a path towards the transformation of literature education in Nagaland. By engaging in a thoughtful analysis of the impact of digital resources, this paper aims to contribute to the ongoing discourse on the integration of technology in education.

THEORETICAL UNDERPINNING FOR THE INCORPORATION OF DIGITAL RESOURCES IN EDUCATION

In the evolving landscape of education, the integration of digital resources has ushered in a transformative era, redefining the paradigms of teaching and learning. Central to this transformation are the theoretical foundations that underpin the rationale for harnessing the power of digital resources within educational contexts. This section delves into the theoretical underpinnings that not only justify but also celebrate the integration of digital resources in education. By examining key educational theories and frameworks, this section of the paper attempts to highlight the ways in which digital resources align with established principles of effective teaching and learning.

The theoretical support is in constructivism which posits that learners actively construct knowledge by building on their prior experiences and interactions with their environment. It has been influenced by philosophers like John Dewey and Jean Piaget. Jean Piaget's work on cognitive development and Lev Vygotsky's socio-cultural theory significantly contributed to the development of constructivism. Constructivism recognizes the importance of social interaction and collaboration in learning. It views learning as most meaningful when it occurs in real-world or authentic contexts, connecting knowledge to practical applications. Rather than passive learning, constructivism places importance on learning through exploration and inquiry.

The relevance of constructivism in the context of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) lies in its alignment with the transformative potential of digital tools and resources. Within ICT, constructivist principles highlight the active role of learners in using technology to construct knowledge, solve problems, and engage with authentic, real-world scenarios. This approach underscores the importance of hands-on, interactive experiences that allow students to explore, experiment, and discover, mirroring the ethos of ICT

where learners often navigate digital landscapes and applications independently. Additionally, constructivismin ICT education emphasizes the collaborative nature of technology, encouraging peer interactions and online communities that facilitate social learning and knowledge construction. By integrating constructivist principles into ICT pedagogy, educators harness the power of technology to empower students as active constructors of their digital literacy and technological understanding.

In the same vein, researchers have suggested that constructivist strategies exploit technologies for the greatest impact on learning (Duffy and Cunningham, 1996). According to Garrison and Kanuka (2004) the utilization of digital resources in education has the potential to foster the development of a "community of inquiry." The "community of inquiry" entails that learners need cognitive presence to engage with content, social presence to connect with peers and feel part of a learning community, and teaching presence to receive guidance and support from educators. Digital resources are instrumental in enabling and enhancing all three aspects by providing platforms for communication, collaboration, content delivery, and interactive learning experiences which is in close alignment with constructivism. Brush, Glazewski and Hew (2008) have also affirmed that using digital resources in education can encourage students to discover learning topics and engage in problem-solving tasks making learning more meaningful. Further, Khan et.al (2012) have also stated that digital resources can provide a platform for collaborative learning activities which would help in improving students; academic performance while giving them a sense of self-efficacy.

Koc (2005) pointed out that the utilization of digital resources empowers students to engage in communication, collaboration, and knowledge sharing irrespective of their location or time constraints. To illustrate, a virtual classroom equipped with teleconferencing capabilities can unite students from various corners of the globe in real-time discussions on specific topics. This environment provides them with the chance to collectively dissect complex problems, brainstorm innovative ideas, and cultivate new concepts. In this dynamic learning setting, students not only acquire knowledge collectively but also exchange diverse learning experiences, enabling them to express their thoughts and engage in reflective learning practices.

SIGNIFICANCE OF DIGITAL RESOURCES IN THE LITERATURE CLASSROOMS OF NAGALAND

This paper delves into the imperative need for the integration of digital resources in the teaching of literature, particularly in the context of Nagaland. It posits that the incorporation of digital resources in education stands as the paramount pedagogical innovation for Nagaland. In an era where nearly all students are deeply immersed in technology, it is only logical that their learning processes become intertwined with it. This integration promises to infuse learning with a sense of enjoyment and engagement, ultimately motivating students to take charge of their own educational journey.

Within the literature classrooms of Nagaland, the entrenched traditional system permeates the entire spectrum of the teaching-learning process. Unfortunately, this often results in students displaying a notable lack of interest in reading literary texts, with literary analysis remaining largely absent. Many students tend to rely on readily available guidebooks or depend on prefabricated notes provided by educators. In certain institutions, administrators even insist that teachers supply notes to ensure favorable grades for students. Regrettably, this situation has led to instances where literature students complete their academic courses without having read a single novel in its entirety. This state of affairs is undeniably disconcerting. In the same light, Kapfo (2023), observes that, "*in the Nagaland context, undergraduate students are expected to express their thoughts using their own words, considering that their previous education has equipped them for higher learning. However, the present state of affairs is disconcerting, with numerous undergraduates across Nagaland's colleges struggling to articulate their ideas effectively in written form. Instead, they often rely on provided notes from instructors*".

The utilization of digital resources, however, has the potential to rekindle students' enthusiasm for literary analysis, a critical facet of literary studies. By offering engaging, interactive platforms and materials, digital resources can serve as catalysts, inspiring students to delve deeper into literary works, thereby enriching their academic experience and nurturing a genuine appreciation for literature. Having stated the above, the next section presents an account of a classroom experience that integrated digital resources in the teaching of literature to further attest to the need for integrating digital resources in the literature pedagogy.

AN ACTUAL CLASSROOM ACCOUNT

In the context of the B.A Fifth-semester literature classroom at PfutseroGovernment College, Nagaland, the teaching of Virginia Woolf's "*Mrs. Dalloway*" was enhanced through the strategic use of digital resources, including WhatsApp, YouTube, and PowerPoint Presentations (PPT). The pedagogical process unfolded in several phases:

Phase 1: Introduction and Background: The initial phase involved the teacher providing an introduction to the novelist, Virginia Woolf, and offering insights into the historical and literary background of the novel. This served as a foundation for students' understanding.

Phase 2: Audio Book and Comprehension: To immerse students in the narrative, an audio book of "Mrs. Dalloway" available on YouTube was shared with the class via WhatsApp. To ensure comprehension, the teacher shared simple objective-type comprehension questions through WhatsApp. These questions were designed to keep students focused on the audio book and to assess their understanding. Due to time constraints, the listening was divided between in-class sessions and take-home assignments.

Phase 3: Movie Adaptation Viewing: The third phase involved the screening of the film adaptation of "Mrs. Dalloway," which was available on YouTube. Following the movie viewing, students were encouraged to engage in reflective discussions, which were structured as follows:

Whatsapp Discussions: The teacher facilitated interactive discussions on Whatsapp.

Discussion Prompts: The following discussion prompts were provided to guide their reflections:

1. *How did the characters in the movie compare to your mental imagery while listening to the audio book?*
2. *How effectively did the movie capture the setting and atmosphere of the novel compared to your mental imagery from the audio book?*
3. *Identify scenes or elements from the audio book that were omitted or condensed in the movie.*
4. *Did the movie convey the same symbolism and themes present in the audio book effectively?*
5. *In your opinion, which medium (audio book or movie) captured the essence and message of "Mrs. Dalloway" more effectively, and why?*

Topic Assignments: The students were then divided into groups and each group was assigned specific topics, such as themes, characters, or symbolism, and tasked with creating PowerPoint Presentations (PPTs).

In-Class Presentation: Students presented their findings and analyses using the PPTs, facilitating an in-depth exploration of various aspects of the novel.

By integrating these digital resources and a structured approach, the teaching of "Mrs. Dalloway" at Pfutsero Government College encouraged students to engage deeply with the novel, explore their interpretations, and develop critical thinking skills, thereby enriching their literary learning experience.

STUDENT REFLECTIONS

"I found the audio book and comprehension questions shared through WhatsApp incredibly helpful. It made the novel more accessible, especially for those of us who struggle with dense texts. Watching the movie adaptation afterward allowed me to visualize the story". (Student 1)

"The division of listening to the audio book both in class and as homework was practical, given our limited class time. I liked how the discussion groups allowed us to share our different interpretations and observations. It was interesting to see how some scenes I imagined while listening to the audio book differed from how they were portrayed in the movie." (Student 2)

"The WhatsApp discussions were engaging, and the discussion prompts helped us focus our thoughts. The group presentation on different aspects of the novel was a great way to consolidate our understanding. It's clear that the audio book provided a more detailed narrative, but the movie helped us see the emotional depth of the characters." (Student 3)

"I appreciated the flexibility of this approach. Being able to listen to the audio book at my own pace and discuss it on WhatsApp made the learning experience comfortable. The movie was a visual treat, but it made me realize the importance of imagination while reading the novel. It's fascinating how different mediums can bring out varied aspects of the story." (Student 4)

"The PPT presentations were a creative way to explore different themes and characters. I felt that the audio book allowed us to delve deeper into the characters' thoughts, while the movie brought out the social aspects of the story. Comparing both mediums helped us appreciate the nuances of Woolf's writing."(Student 5)

IMPLICATIONS

One of the most compelling implications arising from the benefits of digital resources in education is the urgent need for stakeholders to acknowledge their pivotal role. To prepare students for a globally competitive future, there is an imperative to expose them to digital tools and resources. Consequently, stakeholders must prioritize investments in ICT infrastructure to empower students with the essential skills required to excel in a technology-driven world.

Another crucial implication underscores the necessity of prioritizing teacher training aimed at equipping educators with innovative pedagogical skills. In many colleges across Nagaland, a noticeable gap exists in teachers' proficiency with basic technological tools. This gap is particularly evident in government colleges, where experienced educators often rely on outdated teaching methods and may exhibit discomfort with technology. It is incumbent upon stakeholders to facilitate the adaptation of these teachers to the evolving needs of students by providing timely and relevant training opportunities. This investment ensures that educators can effectively harness digital resources to enrich the learning experiences of their students. In short, the benefits of digital resources in education clearly imply the critical importance of providing infrastructure and teacher training in ICT. These investments are essential for delivering high-quality, equitable, and future-ready education that prepares students for success in an increasingly digital world.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this paper has attempted at highlighting that transformation of education through digital resources is not a mere option but a necessity. It is a dynamic journey that fosters equitable access, ignites creativity, and cultivates the skills required for the future. The literature classrooms of Nagaland, like those worldwide, can reap the rewards of this transformation by embracing digital resources as catalysts for enhanced learning, deeper understanding, and the nurturing of a generation poised to thrive in an ever-evolving, technology-driven world. One undeniable implication that underlines this paper is the pressing need for stakeholders, including educational institutions, policymakers, and communities, to acknowledge the pivotal role that digital resources play in the pursuit of a globally competitive future.Moreover, the emphasis on teacher training stands as a testament to the essential role educators play in this transformation. As we navigate the nexus between traditional teaching methods and the digital age, prioritizing the professional development of teachers is paramount. Stakeholders must provide timely, comprehensive training to educators, empowering them to harness digital resources effectively and engage students in innovative ways.

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