Integrating Media and Digital Culture into ELT Classroom

Dr Challa Venkata Lakshmi [1], Dr. P Sudhakara Rao [2]

[1] Asst. Prof, Department of English, Bapatla Engineering College

[2] Asst. Prof, Dept of Humanities (Management) Bapatla Engineering College.

Abstract: The integration of media and digital culture into the English classroom offers a dynamic approach to language teaching, responding to the realities of students' lives and the omnipresence of digital culture. Students' immediate reality embraces both media and digital culture. Digital culture is a pervasive influence that is no more bound within public and private distinctions and using such applications in the ELT classroom is a present-day challenge. This paper aims to review the theory and practice of using media and digital culture in the ELT classroom. Furthermore, it identifies some effective techniques for using media and digital culture texts in the English classroom. At length, the paper discusses useful strategies like making use of conversation on social media, analysing song lyrics, investigating social movements online, and using code-mixed texts, comic strips, and ethics in advertisements in connection to pedagogical objectives and also illustrates examples of teaching language materials in which digital culture and media texts are well made and consistent with the language learning objectives of the 21st century.

Keywords: Digital Culture, Effective techniques, Pedagogical Objectives.

Introduction

Students in the 21st century are immersed in media and digital culture. Many students' everyday lives are shaped and influenced by social media, online music, viral videos and activism. Simultaneously, within these contexts, languages are being used and negotiated and remixed differently. Thus, the teaching of English must equip learners to master the language as well as analyses media input critically. There is no doubt that teaching students the ability to critique and engage in the digital culture is necessary. In teaching English through media and digital culture, English learning is connected to the lived experiences of learners, and learners become literate in these different media forms (Mendelsohn et al., 2024; Park et al., 2017). By integrating media and Digital culture into English language classrooms, learners learned the language as well as developed critical awareness and cultural knowledge through critical engagement.

The term Digital culture refers to the many forms of life and taste taken for granted in everyday life. You can become acquainted with another person's tastes, such as music, leisure activities, or festivals. This paper references personal communication and popular music included in social media. Different media artifacts may be designed and used differently, and for specific sectors beyond risk and pleasure, these artifacts also become an important site for identity. Digital culture impacts the youth significantly for it provides a space for the young to use their cultural resources. For example, the messages on social media, the lyrics of songs, and the activities of online activists, all provide sites of language that are dynamic, creative, and shaped by global and local forces.

Literature Review

Including digital culture and other medium in classroom content makes educational content more relevant and thus learning more interesting and worthwhile. Students likely to engage fully and persistently in educational tasks when they encounter texts, themes, and genres, which reflect their interests and identities such as music, trending social media platforms issues in the news, etc. (Park et al., 2017)

Cultural relevance is important in diverse classrooms where students bring heterogeneous and specific cultural backgrounds and experiences to school, likewise, incorporating media and digital culture helps students gain critical media literacy, which is the ability to analyses, evaluate and create media messages. Furthermore, Mendelsohn and others (2024) maintain that social media enables new "discourse sites" and "participatory publics" where users collectively construct/contest "networked master narratives".

In the same vein, the idea of increasing evidence leads to give the students the tools they need to move in this media landscape to be able to engage critically with a multiplicity of discourses, framing and persuasion

Methods for using media and digital culture in the classroom.

Students can study current English, popular slang, code-switching and rhetorical devices from an impressive arsenal on Twitter, Instagram, TikTok, etc,

1 The evaluation of social media discourse.

• Shifting subjects and political bias.

Based on the work of Locatelli et al. (2024), students analyse how politicized 'non-political issues' are. As an example, having the students analyze comment threads from a news article allows them to practice identifying rhetorical moves, argumentation, shifts in register, and so on, learning about pragmatics and discourse analysis.

• Posts regarding mental health.

Ilia's and Askounis (2023) target posts that show signs of stress and depression on social media. Students might also be able to examine such posts (framing them carefully and ethically) and study their tone and use of figurative language with an eye on emotionality and identity.

2. Working with Songs and Lyrics: Ideas.

Music is a popular genre of digital culture that is widely generated and has great potential for producing and engaging learners on an emotional and linguistic level. The findings of Park and his co-authors (2017) display the varying musical preference of people, which is evident from the social media data, and classroom activities may include.

• Analysis of lyrics Students analyse and talk about the lyrics on a range of themes which can include different genres, lexicon, metaphor, narratives and culture.

English teachers should make use of different social media content to teach different skills. There is a rich resource of texts in social media. Students could choose texts on social issues, popularity contests, games and puzzles, sports events, interviews with eminent guests and celebrity interviews, etc. Students could discuss how language and content are used in an SMS message, an email message and a letter.

Utilizing social media simulations is an excellent way to bring social media into the English classroom. González-González and Waxman (2020) write about the classroom-based development of Fabula, a Facebook-style interface. It is an online tool for students to learn to analyse, negotiate and co-create a social media narrative through a composition with text, images and audio. Further, Internet users often communicate with several interlocutors. As a result, they must make a number of audience design decisions about the language and semiotic resources they use. Students also faced the challenge of a multifaceted space, reminiscent of the social media sphere. It aids in realizing the power of digital media and generating multiple audience responses themselves.

3 Rejoice common English phrases.

Wang et al., (2010) developed a system to measure the emergence and trending of topics for automatically detection of twitter topics in real-time. In 2014, Graham designed and evaluated a course entitled Popular English Expressions to use digital culture and social media to promote learner autonomy. Selected tweets containing expressions removed from their original context are analysed.

• Choose media texts that display complex grammatical features and ask learners to identify and justify the 'shift' or error in the interactional context.

• Learners can be motivated to produce their own code-mixed story or dialogue and reflect on how the code-mixed nature indicates identity and context.

4 Creating Assignments through media

Students become media producers can develop language and digital skills in schools. Projects can consist of-

• Students script, record and edit audio or video segments on topics of personal or social relevance. Thus, in the process, they hone their skills of speaking, writing and the multimodal.

• Designers and Implementers of Social Media Campaigns: Learner's design and implement campaigns (e.g., for school events or awareness-raising), through persuasive language, visual rhetoric, and collaborative planning.

5 Dealing with all kinds of people

Media and digital culture can authenticate the experiences of students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, when the materials reflect multiple identities, perspectives, and linguistic varieties (Park et al., 2017; Patel et al., 2016). This helps them feel more at home and encourages the exploration of language as a belonging of identity.

Multimedia and digital culture being key elements in our everyday life these days, it is only natural that we could use the same as aspects of the language classroom. People are using social media to consume daily news, entertainment and much more in these times. Thus, it is important to employ true materials from the social media in the classroom due to their immediate relevance for the students.

6 Music and activism through online protest.

Their use in the classroom is one of the types of authentic materials that are used. According to Ilias and Askounis (2023), the English classroom can be used by teachers to address issues concerning violence, racism, social exclusion, discrimination, cultural prejudice, and mental health. You must teach students the tone of each song. After that feel free to check out what each song references cultural meaning. Next, a teacher can elaborate on the contextual allusion. Go beyond lyrics and meaning. Ask students to think about what impact the song will have on its listeners.

Conclusion

Integrating media and digital culture in the English classroom enhances students' motivation, participation and critical thinking skills (in the English language). Students learn to enhance their critical thinking abilities through exposure to real-world texts and various text types, such as online ads (Mendelsohn et al., 2024).

Above all, the last point is about how a media and popular culture-related curriculum prepare students to control English and to participate confidently and critically in global digital culture.

References

1. Ilias, L., & Askounis, D. (2023). Multitask learning for recognizing stress and depression in social media. https://arxiv.org/pdf/2305.18907v2
2. Locatelli, M. S., Calais, P., Miranda, M. P., Junho, J. P., Muniz, T. L., Meira, W., & Almeida, V. (2024). Topic Shifts as a Proxy for Assessing Politicization in Social Media. https://arxiv.org/pdf/2312.11326v2
3. Mendelsohn, J., Vijan, M., Card, D., & Budak, C. (2024). Framing Social Movements on Social Media: Unpacking Diagnostic, Prognostic, and Motivational Strategies. https://arxiv.org/pdf/2406.13820v1
4. Park, M., Weber, I., Naaman, M., & Vieweg, S. (2017). Understanding Musical Diversity via Online Social Media. https://arxiv.org/pdf/1604.02522v2
5. Patel, R. N., Pimpale, P. B., & Sasikumar, M. (2016). Recurrent Neural Network based Part-of-Speech Tagger for Code-Mixed Social Media Text https://arxiv.org/pdf/1611.04989v2