

Reflections on language and literacy teaching in the age of modernization and social media disruptions: a report

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Abstract

Language and literacy instruction among schools is not as easy as it was before. Perceived challenges and transitions are experienced by teachers themselves such as attention span of learners, complexity of tools and technologies, and confusion brought about by the ill effects of globalization. Hence, this perspective paper aims to respond to the challenges by offering reflective and thoughtful ideas that may alleviate or lessen the perceived burdens. Through powerful and effective critical introspection, the language and literacy teachers can squarely handle the tough situations in the classroom context. It is evident that more learners are attached to social media interaction and socialization that both of their affective and cognitive aspects are disrupted. When they are tasked to do their homework, many could not beat or follow the deadline of submission due to lack of time on their part to finish the assigned task. Moreover, learners are spending more time on playing online games and socializing with peers through messaging and other applications.

Introduction

In the age of social media and technology-centered platforms, language and literacy teachers are challenged by the predominant issues and concerns that hamper the education process such as lack of focus/concentration among students, rapid evolution of machines for teaching, past-paced movements of ideas, technological dependence of numerous employees and so much more. More than ever, learners should not only take language lessons for the sole purpose of passing the course or get a high mark, but emphasis should be realized and pondered on by them leading to the application of language skills in actual workplace or worksite. It is a challenge for the language and literacy teachers to create a forceful, engaging, and supportive learning environment that can unleash the skills of learners as they develop and foster eagerness and enthusiasm to incorporate the (language) skills.

How does language teaching serve as an effective tool to spark interest of learners driving them towards embarking on the real world and fixing future problems using the skills they have developed and acquired.

The questions and concerns about language and literacy teaching have ceaselessly stressed-out teachers but answers to the problems have yet to be probed and proven effective.

How do language and literacy teachers facilitate quality language instruction and how can they make students realize the importance and place of language in their lives especially when they reach job-hunting stage?

It has been turning into bigger changes as years pass by. Now that artificial intelligence is around and emerged as widely used tools to gather or collect information, language teachers should be cautious of their important roles that are supposed to be irreplaceable amidst rapid rise of technology and modernity.

Literature review

In the fast face innovation and advancement in science and technology, it is pivotal that students be taught how to use the products and tools offered by digital literacy. Digital literacy is sometimes called 'new literacies' depends heavily on the traditional practices of activating stock knowledge, previewing,

inferring, summarizing, and evaluating. Learners should be taught how the strategies and practices of reading can be practically applied to online learning (Gunning, 2020).

In an inquiry conducted by Dalton and Smith (2012), they opined that websites can be difficult as shown by average difficulty of 6.1 for students in grades 3-5. Further sites for learners in grades 6+ had an average readability of 8.7.

Gunning (2018) suggested NetTrekker (Knovation) which provides access to 300,000 standards-specialized digital materials that have been reviewed by experts. Articles have been assigned components that can offer read-aloud, text-to-speech, and dictionary-translation capacity and safe picture search.

Gunning also underlined the use of digital devices as powerful electronic tools in literacy learning. They are helpful in locating data, retrieving information, organizing data, composing messages, and presenting information.

The internet requires high level skills although its function and importance are highly respected and regarded. Through internet, the questions you have in mind are answered. While browsing on the internet, someone may plan his search. You can also determine the most plausible source of information. You can check if the information is reliable and accurate while determining if it is also sufficient for your study. One of the time-tested approaches that guide students when they conduct internet inquiries is the WebQuest (Leu, Forzani, & Kennedy, 2014).

In producing and sharing information, reliable tools such as blogging, wikis, and podcasts can be used by teachers. A blog is a website on which the creator may periodically upload a content, having the latest content uploaded first. The striking advantage of blogs is that viewers and readers may respond by posting their comments. In addition, blogs have been very useful forums for sharing ideas and discussing issues. Many teachers who used blogs noted that they have been very helpful and motivational (Boling et al., 2008). Meanwhile, wikis can be used as a database of information such as listing scholarly books, examples of misleading agencies, glossary of concepts, findings of inquiries, and list of approved websites. Wikis can either be open or private. Finally, podcasts offer video or auditory digital files. Some of the informative and commercial organizations, such as PBS, the Discovery Channel, and the International Literacy Association, share and offer podcasts.

From the reflections of language and literacy instructors, they create actionable plans that can upgrade teaching methods, learning assessments, and empower other teachers not just in the field of ELT but also other subject areas.

Since changes and innovation have massively shaped and influenced the landscape of language and literacy instruction, language teachers may take actions to facilitate and engage in instruction more effectively without being lost. They can use technology and materials that are proven useful and functional in the literacy environment. Chat GPT and artificial intelligence would not go away, and they are around us, but we can use them in getting information. While these products of technology are useful, nothing could ever replace teachers in doing many tasks like patient and reflective research, counseling and guiding students, and flexible assessment of learning performance. Language and literacy teachers have the time and opportunity to retool and upgrade themselves by reflecting on their reflections, engaging in seminars and trainings, involvement in literacy action research, and sharing their literacy practices with other professionals.

Conclusions and reflections (insights)

The need to do critical reflections in assessing the needs of learners is crucial in the success of language and literacy teaching. In a world where innovation, modernity, globalization are prevalent, it is high time that literacy coaches and language teachers are well-oriented and adept in the linguistic issues, theories, perspectives, and practices that can shape and elevate the landscape of English language learning environment across grade levels. Gone are the days when traditional teaching was the key to educating the minds and upgrading the skills of learners. The world is characterized by complexity and disruptions

today; hence, language and literacy teachers need to be prepared and cautious of their actions and through reflections and introspections, they can achieve their goals and make a difference. As global education is rapidly changing, literacy instruction is evolving in the same way. As teachers engage and live in this complex and dynamic changing learning environment, they too should be reskilled, upskilled, and leveraged. Through professional development programs, actionable plans, reflective practices, language and literacy teachers have the power to shape and nurture the language and literacy environment by fostering responsive, inclusive, equitable, and supportive classrooms. Language and literacy educators and specialists are essentially needed in this world where proliferation of fake news and misinformation is rampant and prevalent. Through collaboration and participation of practitioners and experts, problems in literacy in the age of modernization and globalization can be gradually addressed. Likewise, government should support projects and programs that aim to upgrade the capacity of teachers who are always the front runners and frontliners of literacy development and instruction. Through the reflections of language and literacy teachers, more ideas and concepts can be examined and shared that can help others achieve directions in teaching, assessment, and research. They can also tie up with other organizations to discuss issues and challenges that are connected.

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