



AI in Literature Classrooms: A Humanistic Pedagogical Framework for Using AI as an Aid Rather than a Replacement for Literary Interpretation

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Abstract:

This is an AI haunted era! Rapid expansion of Artificial Intelligence (AI) technologies has transformed contemporary educational practices, particularly within language learning and academic writing instruction. While AI-driven tools provide innovative opportunities for improving accessibility, linguistic support, and research efficiency, their integration into literature teaching raises significant pedagogical and ethical concerns. Literature as an academic discipline is inherently interpretative, subjective, and deeply rooted in human experience and creativity. Consequently, the growing dependence on AI-generated summaries and interpretations poses challenges to the development of independent critical thinking and literary engagement among students. This paper examines the role of AI in literature classrooms and argues that AI should function as a pedagogical aid rather than a replacement for human interpretation. Drawing on humanistic learning theory, reader-response criticism, and recent scholarship on AI in education, the study develops a conceptual pedagogical framework for responsible AI integration in literature teaching. Through qualitative analysis of contemporary academic discourse on digital pedagogy, the research highlights both the pedagogical advantages and ethical limitations of AI-assisted literary learning. The study ultimately proposes a balanced model in which AI enhances comprehension and accessibility while preserving the interpretative autonomy of students. By emphasizing responsible technological integration, this paper contributes to ongoing discussions on the future of humanities education in the age of artificial intelligence.

Keywords: *Artificial Intelligence, Literature Pedagogy, Reader-Response Theory, Digital Humanities, Humanistic Education, AI Ethics, English Studies*

Introduction:

AI technologies are increasingly used to facilitate personalized learning, automated assessment, and digital content generation across academic disciplines. The integration of Artificial Intelligence (AI) into educational systems has become one of the most significant developments in contemporary pedagogy. In language education, AI-powered tools assist students in grammar correction, vocabulary development, translation, and academic writing support. Such tools have significantly expanded learning

opportunities, particularly for students from linguistically diverse backgrounds.

However, the incorporation of AI into the teaching of English literature presents unique pedagogical complexities. Literature is fundamentally different from many other academic subjects because it is grounded in interpretation, imagination, and emotional engagement. Literary texts do not offer singular or fixed meanings; rather, they encourage readers to engage in critical dialogue with the text and construct meaning through personal and cultural perspectives.

Recent advances in AI have made it possible for digital systems to generate literary summaries, thematic analyses, and even critical interpretations of texts. While these capabilities can support learning processes, they also raise critical questions regarding the potential displacement of human interpretation in literary studies. If students rely heavily on AI-generated interpretations, the essential pedagogical goal of literature education—developing critical and creative thinking—may be undermined.

Scholars in the field of AI in education emphasize that technological innovation must be integrated carefully within pedagogical frameworks that preserve intellectual autonomy and ethical learning practices. The present study therefore argues that AI should be understood as a supportive pedagogical tool rather than an authoritative interpretative agent in literature classrooms.

By examining the opportunities and challenges associated with AI-assisted literature teaching, this paper proposes a humanistic pedagogical framework that integrates technological innovation while safeguarding the interpretative and creative dimensions of literary education.

Literature Review:

Recent scholarship on Artificial Intelligence in education has explored its transformative potential for enhancing teaching and learning processes. Research suggests that AI technologies can support personalized learning environments, provide adaptive feedback, and facilitate efficient knowledge acquisition (Zawacki-Richter et al. 2020). In language education, AI applications have proven particularly effective in assisting learners with grammar correction, vocabulary acquisition, and automated writing feedback.

Holmes, Bialik, and Fadel emphasize that AI has the capacity to support teachers by automating routine instructional tasks while enabling more individualized learning experiences. Similarly, Luckin argues that AI-driven systems can complement human instruction by offering intelligent learning assistance and data-driven insights into student performance.

Despite these promising developments, scholars have raised concerns regarding the implications of AI for humanities education. Selwyn notes that the increasing automation of knowledge production may lead to a mechanization of learning processes that traditionally rely on human creativity and critical reflection. In literary studies, the interpretative nature of texts makes the role of human readers particularly central.

Within the field of digital humanities, computational methods such as sentiment analysis and algorithmic text mining have been used to analyse, organise large literary corpora. However, these approaches primarily focus on identifying structural patterns rather than interpreting meaning at the level of individual reader engagement.

Recent studies have also highlighted ethical concerns surrounding AI-generated academic writing. Cotton, Cotton, and Shipway argue that generative AI tools pose challenges for academic integrity, particularly when students submit machine-generated content without critical engagement.

Although existing research provides valuable insights into AI-assisted learning, there remains a significant gap in the literature regarding the pedagogical integration of AI in literature classrooms. Most studies focus on language learning or technical disciplines, while relatively few address the interpretative and humanistic dimensions of literary education.

This paper seeks to address this gap by developing a conceptual framework that situates AI within a human-centred model of literature pedagogy, emphasizing its role as a supportive learning aid rather than a replacement for interpretative engagement.

Theoretical Framework:

The theoretical foundation of this study is informed by three complementary perspectives:

1. Humanistic Learning Theory: Humanistic education emphasizes the development of creativity, emotional awareness, and personal growth in learning processes. Scholars such as Carl Rogers argue that meaningful education must engage the whole person rather than simply transmitting information. Literature teaching aligns closely with this perspective because it encourages students to explore complex human experiences and ethical questions through narrative and poetic forms.

2. Reader-Response Theory: Reader-response criticism, developed by theorists such as Louise Rosenblatt, Wolfgang Iser, and Stanley Fish, emphasizes the active role of the reader in constructing literary meaning. According to this perspective, meaning emerges through the interaction between the reader and the text rather than residing solely within the text itself. This theoretical approach reinforces the importance of human interpretation in literary studies.

3. AI-in-Education Framework: Recent educational research conceptualizes AI as an augmentation technology rather than a replacement for human intelligence. Zawacki-Richter and colleagues suggest that AI should support teaching processes by assisting with routine tasks while leaving complex cognitive and interpretative activities to human learners.

Combining these perspectives, the present study proposes that AI can enhance literature teaching when it functions as an interpretative

support system rather than an interpretative authority.

Main Idea: A Humanistic Model for AI-Assisted Literature Pedagogy:

The central argument of this paper is that AI technologies can enrich literature teaching if they are integrated within a pedagogical framework that prioritizes human interpretation. AI tools can provide several forms of support that enhance students' engagement with literary texts.

First, AI can assist with linguistic accessibility. Many students encounter difficulties when reading complex literary works due to unfamiliar vocabulary or archaic language. AI-powered tools can provide explanations, paraphrases, and contextual definitions that help learners approach texts more confidently.

Second, AI can facilitate contextual understanding by providing background information about historical periods, cultural settings, and authorial contexts. Such information can deepen students' comprehension of literary themes and narrative structures.

Third, AI can support preliminary textual exploration by identifying patterns such as recurring motifs, stylistic features, or thematic elements. These insights can serve as starting points for classroom discussion rather than definitive interpretations.

However, the integration of AI into literature classrooms must be guided by clear pedagogical principles. Teachers should encourage students to critically evaluate AI-generated responses rather than accepting them as authoritative interpretations. Classroom discussions can involve comparing AI-generated analyses with students' own interpretations, thereby fostering critical reflection.

Moreover, literature assignments should emphasize process-oriented learning, requiring students to demonstrate their interpretative

reasoning rather than merely presenting final conclusions. Such approaches help ensure that AI functions as a supportive research tool rather than a substitute for intellectual engagement.

Conceptual Model:

This paper introduces a three-layer AI-assisted literature pedagogy model:

Layer 1: AI Support

- Vocabulary explanation
- Contextual research
- Structural analysis

Layer 2: Human Interpretation

- Emotional engagement
- Thematic interpretation
- Symbolic analysis

Layer 3: Collaborative Learning

- Classroom discussion
- Peer debate
- Critical reflection

This model demonstrates that AI supports the reading process but human interpretation remains central.

Conclusion:

Artificial Intelligence is rapidly transforming educational practices, offering innovative tools that enhance accessibility, efficiency, and research capabilities. In the context of literature teaching, AI technologies can provide valuable assistance in language comprehension, contextual learning, and preliminary textual analysis.

However, literature as a discipline fundamentally depends on human interpretation, imagination, and emotional engagement. AI systems cannot replicate the subjective and experiential dimensions of literary reading. Excessive reliance on automated interpretations therefore risks undermining the development of critical thinking and independent analysis among students.

This paper has argued that AI should function as a pedagogical aid rather than a replacement for human interpretation in literature classrooms. By adopting a humanistic pedagogical framework that integrates AI responsibly, educators can harness technological innovation while preserving the intellectual and creative foundations of literary studies.

Future research should explore empirical investigations of AI-assisted literature pedagogy in classroom settings to better understand its impact on student engagement, interpretative skills, and academic integrity.

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