



TRADITIONAL LITERATURE AND DIGITAL LITERATURE IN THE CONTEXT OF ENGLISH STUDIES

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ABSTRACT

Literature is the mirror of the society. Whatever is experienced by the people is generally expressed in the literature. There have been many changes in its form. Right from the oral stories told by grannies to digital text speak, all encompasses in the literature. A wide range of ideas, subjects are tackled by the scholars. The old traditional as well as the modern digital literature are all influenced by the perspectives of the scholars. The use of English language and literature is how focused in the present paper. The main objective of writing this paper is to focus on the importance of traditional as well as digital literature giving emphasis on English language and literature. The study will be on the literature available in traditional and digital form.

Keywords: Literature, digital, text, language, traditional, story.

Introduction

English studies are an academic discipline in education comprises of study of text created in English literature. Literature has stood the test of time with many changes in its form with the happenings of the society. It is moulded as per the trends of generations. The history and origin of literature is as old as humanity. It begins with classical writing and later became strands of literary roots. Traditional literature is then followed by printing literature. The literature includes novels, plays, and short stories mainly written by English people. It also includes English composition, essays, grammar linguistics etc. English or British literature focus on time periods, authors, genres or literary movements. All these literary pieces are available in oral or written form i.e. traditional literature. Such as story books, papers, periodicals, essays, articles, poems etc.

The main objective of writing this paper is to focus on the importance of traditional as well as digital literature giving emphasis on English language and literature. The study will be on the literature available in traditional and digital form.

Research Methodology

The descriptive method has been used for this paper. The primary sources, the critical reviews have been used for the purpose. The online websites, journals and books are referred for secondary data collection.



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Traditional Literature

Traditional literature mainly focuses on the oral and written stories that have been passed down through generations. Previously the literature used to be told and later written down. The stories are often changed slightly while retelling. For example, 'Cinderella's name changed to 'Zezolla' and 'Cindrillon'. Though the story remains the same. The story of 'Hare and the Tortoise' on the other hand has been modified recently and told as a motivational story. The purpose of this literature is that it should be relatable to everyone. It is generally comprises of universal themes, mostly of opposites; like good versus bad, weak versus strong, beautiful versus ugly and rich versus poor. The category of traditional literature encompasses proverbs, folklore, fairytales, fables, animal tales, myths and legends. Fairy tales are romantic tales with enchanted and happily-ever-after-endings. Fables are short stories with heavy allegorical themes and talking animals. Legends are exaggerated stories about real heroic people or events in recent history. While myths are the stories about the ancient past used to explain natural phenomena or religious practices. The characters are usually humans, gods, animals demonstrating human personalities. They are found in popular books like 'Paradise Lost', 'Animal Farm', 'The Odyssey', 'Snow white' etc.

Origin of Traditional Literature

The origin of this literature is speculative. Usually a traditional story is told to communicate beliefs, explain natural phenomena important to the culture. Sometimes stories begin in pre-literate societies, in which writing was not possible. In that culture writing is not common as a form of entertainment. Such as 'Johnny Appleseed' of United States explained prevalence of apples in certain place., and 'Hans Christian Anderson'.

Here are the examples of some popular Traditional literature in English Studies:-

- Folktales- Cinderella, Beauty and the Beast, Sleeping Beauty, Three little pigs, Rumpelstiltskin.
- Fables- Fox and grapes, Hare and the tortoise, Lion and the mouse, Wolf in sheep's clothing, Dog in the monger.
- Myths- Greek Myth-Zeus and Mt. Olympus, Roman Myth-Jupiter.
- Legends- Robin hood, Beowulf.
- Nursery Rhymes- Jack and Jill, Peter Piper. Three blind mice.

Digital Literature

Digital literature is also known as electronic literature. It is a style of writing which is created on digital platform device like computer and mobile phones. This literature can be created and read electronically. Generally it does not get printed. It would lose integral aspect of the work if printed.

Origin of Digital Literature

The inception of Digital literature is around 1975 with a programmer, Will Crothers's creation of computer game 'Colossal Cave Adventure'. It was a story oriented game that allowed the player to make decisions of choice of directions. It engages the reader in the



world and allows them to explore, coming to their own conclusions. Another story telling text adventure game was 'Zork'. They are created using digital tool hyper text.

Types of Digital Literature

- **Hypertext Fiction-** It is a genre about non-linear style of storytelling with the free will and choice of the reader. He can read story through his own way of making decisions with the help of hypertext links.
- **Interactive fiction-** it is software in which a reader can control and move a character through a story. It allows reader to make his own decisions and interact with the world. It contains only text.
- **Twitterature-** it is a newly invented term. It refers to the act of creating literary works through social media site, Twitter. It consists of style of prose and poetry but has a limit of 280 characters.
- **Generators-** Generators are something between technological coding and storytelling. With the help of algorithm, reader will be able to generate his own phrases, words and media.
- **Digital Poetry-** it is a form of digital literature that utilises electronic devices like computers, mobiles the written work in a new creative way. In this form of poetry there is a use of hypertext, coding and generators. These are helpful for art installations.
- **Twinkl-** Here students get different resources to learn about digital literature.
- **Wiki page-** It is also great for exploration of the written word, useful both for teachers and students. They can develop better understanding of literature such as prose, poetry, novel, short stories and autobiographies.
- **The Runaway-iceberg e-book-** which follows two penguins on a floating iceberg. This is a way to demonstrate surrounding literature in which students experience the story.
- **Text-speak-** It emulates the colloquial spoken language. Acronyms and spelling are used to facilitate efficient typing on mobile device.

The following table shows the words and phrases included in the Oxford online dictionary from text-speak.

Standard English	Text-speak
Me	meh
Cause	cuz
Oh my god	omg
Fight me	fite me
Never mind	nvm
Forgive	4give
About	about
The	da



People	ppl
Your	ur
Bring your own device	BYOD
Seriously	srsly
Dance to popular music	twerk
Too long didn't read	TL;DR
Great delight	squee
Photograph taken by oneself	selfie
Long distance relationship	LDR
Congratulations	grats
Time spent relaxing	me time
Laugh out loud	LOL

The Net generation has modified Standard English words using abbreviation, omitted non-essential alphabet, substituted homophones and de-emphasised appropriate punctuation and capitalization causing structural adaptations to the English language. This new language promoted by techno-savvy generation could be deemed as a newer dialect of English language. Interestingly researchers found that there is a positive relationship between frequent text messaging, reading fluency and spelling accuracy. (Adams-2007)

Fascination of Digital Literature

With the advancement of technology literature is also changing with the advent of social media, quick digital interactions appear to be the future of social communication. As readers emotional temporal and spatial relationship with books is changing rapidly.

Short digital stories are considered a new literacy genre with different aliases such as flash fiction, minute stories sudden fiction, hint fiction, mobile phone fiction and twitter fiction. It facilitate readers to filter out unnecessary information digressions, extraneous description and iterations while also compensating for the lack of details with acronyms, contractions, puns, alliterations, rhythms and even types.

Due to the decreasing attention spans of the readers the trend of sharing thoughts in miniature form is growing in demand. With the mite-sized attention span the authors aim to attach whatever amount of attention they can get from reader. The popularity of sharing short-short stories has increased manifolds with digital story telling.

Conclusion

Technology has phenomenally affected both language and literature. Language and literature will continue to evolve with further technology advancement and new dialects and literacy genre will appear. Literature will keep appealing as long as human race subsists and will help refine human sensibilities. Traditional literature has its own charm and connectivity