

DIGITAL ERA: FROM TRADITIONAL CLASSROOM TO LABORATORY FOR MEDIA LITERACY

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The transformation of education from traditional to digital mirrors a progressive nation, yet it demands a higher level of awareness from educators. In a world where online content is everywhere, a critical eye is the strongest defense against the rampant spread of misinformation. Learners must recognize that digital and media literacy are not just "extra" skills; they are fundamental to the development of English proficiency. If used responsibly, it can be a positive force for change. If not, it may affect the education we once stood for.

With the demand for technology integration, the 21st-century classroom can no longer be limited to the study of classic novels. Instead, it must welcome a dynamic change. Creating an English laboratory enables learners to critically analyze and interpret content from social media such as TikTok videos, memes, and news feeds. As the NCTE (2021) emphasizes, media literacy is essential for students to study how media shapes power, culture, and social ideas. The classroom is no longer a space for passive reading, but a four-wall that invites active scrutiny of contents and information. It is a place where teachers incorporate traditional teaching methods with modern media. This approach prepares students for real-life situations where they transition from being mere consumers of content to responsible creators of multimodal projects.

Since the classroom has evolved, our strategies and assessments must adapt as well. We can no longer contain modern learners with the traditional type of tests like multiple-choice, identification, or rote memorization. Instead, we must employ assessment tools that align with the diversity of digitalization. This involves modified rubrics that assess

students' skills and performances, incorporating technology such as media analysis, reflection journals, or student-led podcasts. Digital portfolios that monitor a student's progress from identifying "fake news" to creating balanced and ethical content provide a comprehensive and effective view of their development. This transition does not only give quantitative data, but it also reflects students' creativity and develops practical skills for real-world applications (Römhild & Sgolik, 2025).

Educational evolution is a collective responsibility of all the principal members of the educational ecology. Curriculum developers, school heads, and leaders must support and lead teachers in maximizing the media tools available for language instruction. Simultaneously, school leaders must address gaps in technological access and teacher training to ensure competencies when it comes to technology. As UNESCO (2025) promotes Media and Information Literacy (MIL) that aims to combat misinformation and hate speech, the direction ahead is clear. Almost anything can now be "faked", but not learners who are molded to be resilient and independent thinkers from a strong educational support.

The Official Website of DepED Division of Bataan

References:

- NCTE 21st Century Literacies Definition and Framework Revision Committee (2021). Definition of literacy in a digital age. [Position statement]. National Council of Teachers of English. <https://ncte.org/statement/nctes-definition-literacy-digital-age/>
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