DIGITAL LITERATURE: PRESENT AND FUTURE

MS. POOJA R. NICHOLE
Research Scholar,
Dept. of English,
JDMVP's Arts, Commerce and Science College, Jalgaon
poojanichole@gmail.com.

PROF. DR. INDIRA S. PATIL
Professor,
Dept. of English,
JDMVP's Arts, Commerce and Science College, Jalgaon
prof.dr.indirapatil@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Digital literature is the convergence of traditional literature with digital media through the medium of electronic devices such as computers, smartphones, tablets etc. to reach the e-readers. It is also known as 'Electronic literature' or 'Three-dimensional literature'. It incorporates elements such as hypertext, multimedia, interactivity, virtual reality etc. In simple words, it is a change from pen to pixel.

Key Words: Digital Literature, Electronic Literature, Three-dimensional Literature

Digital Literature: Present and Future

If we observe from the past, literature has come a long way. From the very ancient time, knowledge has paved the path by many means. The oral tradition got the permanent mark of existence through the experiment of writing. The skill of writing became a boon to preserve the knowledge. It opened the way for literature, too. The main thing which plays a crucial role here is need. It was the need of time to transfer the verbal knowledge into a written format, so that, it could persist for ages. The same thing applies to 'Digital Literature'. It is the need of this hour that all types of literature, which are already in existence should get an updated form of existence. It will also help it to get propagated extensively.

The invention of the phonograph gave way to spoken word recordings that allowed people to engage with story-telling in new ways dating back to 1877. Talking books were recordings that contained short stories and chapters of larger works, which then developed into audiobooks on cassette tapes, finally, the first e-book was created in 1930 by Bob Brown.

When a programmer called Will Crowther created the game Colossal Cave Adventure in 1975, digital literature's first iteration came into existence. This was a story-oriented game that allowed the player to make decisions on where they went which was operated using text.

Literature is limitless and such limitless texts need timeless solutions. There are so many perspectives that show us the importance of 'Digital Literature. It becomes difficult to store books and that too in a readable situation. Digital literature helps to store any form of knowledge for ages that too in a better situation than offline format. Physical material cannot

be re-generated if missed once. But, on the other hand, online material, is more easy and safe to store. From the point of view of Umberto Eco, "Electronic communication travels ahead of you, books travel with you at your speed."

The very interesting fact here which draws attention is its availability. Another interesting fact, we can find is, that it is more accepted and appreciated by the new generation, especially Gen Z's. It is becoming difficult to handle the screen time of children as well as adults. At least, if knowledge is made available on online sources, it will benefit the masses for their betterment only.

Digital literature opens up with many features. The creativity, experimentation and challenge to traditional notions can be observed easily. It paves a new way for new generations and many generations to come with many facilities. Some of the significant features of digital literature that can be stated as present digital literature can be figured out as given below:

- E-books

The very primary online face of books plays a significant role in digital literature. The availability of books from any corner of the world many times free of cost is a game changer for world readers.

- Generative Literature

The dynamic form of literature that can be produced to get a unique experience is a feather in the hat of digital literature. It involves algorithms that create text based on some rules or patterns.

- Interactivity

To make the experience of reading more experimental, dynamic and engaging, digital literature allows readers to interact with the text in various ways.

- Hypertext and Hypermedia

It helps readers navigate through the text by clicking on hyperlinks that lead to different parts of the narrative.

- Multimedia Integration

The overall experience of storytelling can be enhanced by many multimedia elements like images, video, audio and animations.

- Electronic Creation

Various visual and audio elements are used to enhance the overall experience of various forms of literature like poetry, story, narration etc.

- TwitLit (Twitterature)

Literature presented on social platforms like Twitter also comes under the heading of Digital Literature.

Special Issue   104   6th and 7th Oct 2023

Website: www.langlit.org   Contact No.: +91-9890290602
Two Day National Level E - Conference in English on the topic 'Digital Literature: Present and Future' organised by Dr S. C. Gulhane Prerna College of Commerce, Science and Arts, Nagpur
Indexed: ICI, Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia.edu, IBI, IIFC, DRJI

- Virtual Reality (VR) Literature and Augmented Reality (AR)

Digital Literature got the name of three-dimensional Literature because of these interactive tools.

- Various Websites

Different websites offer readers to access the literature and even encourage them to write and publish their work.

- Educational and learning tools

Digital Literature helps students in education and enhances their critical thinking power.

- From local to global approach

It has distributed things from local to global. It follows the term 'VasudhaivKutumbkam' by making 'All world is one's home'.

- Availability and Inclusivity

The availability of literature was not this way easy before. Technologies like the text to speech and vice-versa, adjustable features like fonts, colours and many other things beckon large-scale audience

Digital literature tries to make a good amalgamation of readers and writers. It enhances the overall literary experience. There are many perspectives from which future directions in Digital Literature can be seen. Some of them are given below:

- Literary Analysis with the help of AI

To explore more on things and to get a good analysis of literary works Artificial Intelligence helps a lot. It elevates the depth of understanding.

- Environmental and Interactive Literature

To provide a personalized and vivid reading experience, environmental and other interactive technologies play a significant role. It gets adapted according to the factors like reader's emotions, location etc.

- Block-chain and Digital Ownership

The block-chain system helps distribute the work of art properly and get it paid too. It is used to maintain authenticity and establish ownership of digital literary works.

- Virtual Reality Narratives

Virtual Reality Narratives allow the readers to get the story and help to engage with the characters and the environment in a more enthusiastic manner.

- Inclusive and Accessible Literature

The accessibility of literature is widely affected by technological advancements. Better accessibility helps digital literature to be inclusive and, hence, to spread among more audiences.

- Crowd-sourced and Collaborative Literature

Platforms like Digital Literature become a good medium among creators and consumers by providing various facilities like storytelling etc.

- Personalized content

With the help of AI, it has become easy to create personalized content based on individual choices.

- Integration with Education

It can be integrated with education by making it a part of curricula. This way, it can provide more interactive learning experiences through engaging various sessions for students.

Digital Literature is beneficial from many perspectives. Some of the pros of Digital Literature can be stated as follows:

- Innovation

The innovation of Digital Literature has changed the conventional way of literature. It encourages writers to experiment with new narrative styles.

- Availability and Accessibility

The readers can access the sources available all over the world through the medium of digital literature. This access is boundaryless, timeless and limitless throughout the globe.

- Amalgamation with Education

The online availability of sources helps to make learning interactive. Thus, digital literature through the face of digital learning can facilitate educators through such experiences.

- Environmental Sustainability

This paperless type of literature is highly eco-friendly. The traditional format of paper publishing is almost replaced by digital options.

- Dynamic Content

Digital literature can be revised and updated according to the needs of the reader. Authors can sense the choice of the readers according to trends.

- Cost-Effectiveness

The online publication can cut costs of many upcoming processes like printing, distribution and storage of physical copies. Thus, in this way, it becomes more affordable for both creators and customers.

- Global Reach and Audience Engagement

Digital platforms like social media and online options help to get a global audience regardless of region, time and environment.

- Adaptive reading experiences and navigating tool

The small things like sizes, colours and background settings can be adapted through adjustable options. To enhance the reading experience, digital literature allows for navigating tools like easy searching, highlighting, bookmarking and annotating.

As we know, every coin has two sides, with benefits, there are some drawbacks of digital literature too. So, some of the cons of digital literature are given below:

- Too much Confusion

Too much availability creates too much confusion too. As we know the Idiom, 'Too many cooks spoil the broth'. There is no particular authentic source but rather we can find many fragments which make us more confused.

- Too many Distractions

The distractions of all apps can interrupt the reading experience. It can make a person more addicted to other things than the useful ones.

- Economic and Environmental Concerns

Electronic devices need a lot of energy. They generate electronic waste in much extent. The essential procedures like production, distribution and disposal of electronic devices are the point of concern from the point of view of not only the economy but also the environment.

- Health Issues

Extended screen time can cause serious health issues like eye strain and disturbed sleep patterns. The prolonged condition and excessive seating create dangerous health issues like heart disease and diabetes.

- Copyright and Digital Rights Management (DRM) Issues

The issues related to copyright, piracy, and DRM can be seen in digital literature.

- Impersonal Experience

The lack of direct connection to the material can fail to give the authentic experience of reading. Many readers feel it is less personal to read digitally.

- The Problem of Data Loss

Data loss is the main problem in such digital formats. Many factors like technical failures, malware, and accidental deletion can risk the permanent deletion of the content.

- Technology Dependent

Digital literature requires continued access to electronic devices. So, it can be useless for the ones who do not have access to these devices or the ones who cannot handle these devices.

The nature of longevity is an issue concerning digital literature. Many find that after a decade, the text becomes unplayable. However, this does not apply to all works. With the ever-growing improvements and innovation of technology, Digital literature as many still have the capability of being played on modern browsers, especially HTML hypertext fiction.

Many organizations are concerned with the preservation of digital literature. Preservation of the history and legacy of digital literature is as important as preserving physical, printed works. Many organizations like Electronic Literature Organization, a company that created the PAD (Preservation, Archiving and Dissemination) initiative to ensure digital literature is preserved aim to preserve digital literature.

The initiative sought to ensure its lifespan by finding ways to overcome the issue of it not translating over to new technologies with archiving digital literature.

Electronic Literature Organisation tackled the issue of digital literature archiving with the creation of a collection of digital literature to preserve it over time i.e., The Electronic Literature Collection.

Conclusion

It is always good to move forward and to see things from a futuristic point of view. If we see the positive side of digital literature, we will always be beneficiaries. The future is beckoning with all its possible ways to make change from all perspectives. Digital literature is the future rather it is the key by which we can make a tremendous change in future literature. So with all precious attempts, we should always welcome this new genre of literature.

REFERENCES

1. What is Digital Literature?.Twinkl.
   https://www.twinkl.co.in/teaching-wiki/digital-literature
2. Digital Literature. ILR MAGAZINE.
   https://www.ilrmagazine.net/digital-literature/

Special Issue   108   6th and 7th Oct 2023
Website: www.langlit.org   Contact No.: +91-9890290602
Two Day National Level E - Conference in English on the topic *'Digital Literature: Present and Future'* organised
by Dr S. C. Gulhane Prerna College of Commerce, Science and Arts, Nagpur
Indexed: ICI, Google Scholar, Research Gate, Academia.edu, IBI, IIFC, DRJI