American English LIVE!

Digital Literacies: Practical Approaches for the ELT Classroom

September 4th @ 8 am or 1 pm EDT

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Digital Literacies: Practical Approaches for the ELT Classroom

This session aims to clarify the multi-skill “digital literacies” construct and explores how and why these skills can be integrated into English language instruction.

This presentation will:

• explore models for thinking about digital literacies
• examine benefits and challenges associated with systematically addressing a selection of digital literacies in ELT settings
• review adaptable activities designed to help ELLs develop the 21st-century skills that will serve them in the classroom and beyond
Heather Benucci

Heather is an EFL teacher educator and materials development specialist who has led virtual professional development programs for teachers from over 100 countries. She has been a U.S. Department of State English Language Specialist for projects in Russia and Brazil, and she has also worked with teachers and students in South Korea, England, and the United States.

Heather holds master’s degrees in TESOL and in International Relations with an emphasis on Intercultural Communication. She serves as Co-Chair Elect of TESOL International Association’s Computer-Assisted Language Learning Interest Section (CALL-IS) and is a Contributing Editor for *English Teaching Forum*.
Digital Literacies:
Practical Approaches for the ELT Classroom

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Agree or disagree?

1. Being digitally literate is knowing how to operate a computer, tablet, smart phone, or internet-connected device.

2. My students know how to use digital tools better than me, so there isn’t much for me to teach them.

3. My syllabus is full with language content. I don’t have time to teach digital literacy skills, too.
Today’s learning path

1. What are digital literacies?
2. Why include digital literacies in the EFL classroom?
3. How can we incorporate digital literacy skills in ELT?
4. What activities can support digital literacy skills development?
Before we begin....

1. Today’s focus = general digital literacies concepts, not how to use tech tools

2. Tech access varies—don’t let that stop you!
   Think about how to adapt now or use in the future
What does it mean to be “literate”?
“Literacy is the ability to...understand, interpret, create, compute, and communicate using visual, audible, and digital materials across disciplines....”

– International Literacy Association
What does it mean to be “digitally literate”?

What skills might be involved?
Learning how to:

**Cultural**
- behave in different digital contexts

**Cognitive**
- think about digital spaces and patterns

**Constructive**
- responsibly use and build upon the work of others

**Communicative**
- to communicate for a purpose

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The 8 Elements of Digital Literacies

**Confident**
- solve problems and manage learning

**Creative**
- make things and add value

**Critical**
- evaluate and analyze

**Civic**
- participate, engage, and act

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Focus 1: LANGUAGE

Focus 2: INFORMATION

Focus 3: CONNECTIONS

Focus 4: (RE-)DESIGN

DIGITAL LITERACIES

Dudenny, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014), p.6
Focus 1: LANGUAGE

Text Literacy
Hypertext Literacy
Multimedia Literacy

americanenglish.state.gov
Focus 2: INFORMATION

Tagging Literacy
Search Literacy
Filtering Literacy
Information Literacy
Focus 3: CONNECTIONS

- Personal Literacy
- Network Literacy
- Participatory Literacy
- Intercultural Literacy

NETIQUETTE

Personal Learning Networks (PLN)
Focus 4: (RE-)DESIGN
Remix Literacy
Focus 1: LANGUAGE
- Text Literacy
- Hypertext Literacy
- Multimedia Literacy
- Mobile Literacy
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Focus 4: (RE-)DESIGN
- Remix Literacy

DIGITAL LITERACIES

Dudeney, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014) p.6
Digital literacies: summing up

• No simple definition; a collection of skills and mindsets
  
  Technological + Communicative + (Inter)cultural + Creative

• Becoming digitally literate is a process, not an endpoint
  • Technologies change constantly
  • You can be a novice in one area and an expert in another

• Not just knowing how technology functions
  • Thinking about technology in our society
  • Using technology appropriately to achieve a goal
1. What are digital literacies?

2. Why include digital literacies in the EFL classroom?

3. How can we incorporate digital literacy skills in ELT?

4. What activities can support digital literacy skills development?
Why incorporate digital literacy skills in the EFL classroom?

What are the benefits?
Why incorporate digital literacy skills in the EFL classroom?

ELLs can....

- interact with English-language digital content
- express themselves for real audiences beyond teachers
- communicate digitally with all types of English users
- create a digital identity in English
Why incorporate digital literacy skills in the EFL classroom?

ELLs can....

• further develop and repurpose existing tech skills
• build 21st-century skills to support career and education goals
• experience increased motivation
What are some challenges to focusing on digital literacies in the EFL classroom?
Today’s learning path

1. What are digital literacies?

2. Why include digital literacies in the EFL classroom?

3. How can we incorporate digital literacy skills in ELT?

4. What activities can support digital literacy skills development?
Preparation

Things to learn at the start of a new class:

• Student interests and goals
• Tech access - in and out of class
• Digital literacies - students’ and teacher’s prior knowledge and skills
Digital literacies skills inventory

I can....

- write mobile phone text messages in my language(s) and in English
- recognize when it’s appropriate to use mobile devices in class
- combine media (images, audio, and video) into a digital product

- find online images that I am free to use
- use a variety of online search engines for different types of searches
- filter online information to find what is useful to me

- deal with difficult people or situations online

- create a meme, mashup, or remix by combining or editing existing digital content

Adapted from Dudeney, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014) – Activity 1, Digital Skills Worksheet
Planning

• Technology use needs context and purpose

• What do you want you and your students to gain from tech use?
  • Efficiency
  • Input
  • Communication
  • Problem-solving
  • Self-expression
  • Skills development
### Planning

Add “digital literacies” sections to course outlines or lesson plans

- Identify places where you can adapt content to support digital literacies

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Week</th>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Language Focus</th>
<th>Vocabulary</th>
<th>Texts</th>
<th>Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Around my town</td>
<td>Simple present; descriptions</td>
<td>Tourism words (landmark, must-see, etc.)</td>
<td>Textbook reading: Visiting Washington, D.C.</td>
<td>Ss write a paragraph for tourists about visiting their city.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>There is/there are...</em></td>
<td>Location names and adjectives ancient monument</td>
<td>Textbook audio track: The Smithsonian Natural History Museum</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Planning**

Add “digital literacies” sections to course outlines or lesson plans

- Identify places where you can adapt content to support digital literacies

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<td>3</td>
<td>Around my town</td>
<td>Simple present; descriptions</td>
<td>Tourism words (landmark, must-see, etc.)</td>
<td>A. <em>The Globetrotter</em> travel blog: “Washington, D.C.”</td>
<td>Hyperlink evaluation exercises</td>
<td>hypertext literacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td><em>There is/there are...</em></td>
<td>Location names and adjectives ancient monument</td>
<td>B. Podcast: “Inside the Smithsonian” with Becky Dewitt</td>
<td>Ss write a travel blog article (with images &amp; links) about a site in their city.</td>
<td>multimedia literacy, search, filtering, and information literacy</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
What are options for overcoming limited access to technology in class?
Overcoming tech access challenges

• One networked computer + projector
  • Teacher demonstrates
  • Hardcopy student preparation
  • Connected computer = learning station

• No internet/computer access
  • Hardcopy examples
  • Discuss, draft, or plan in class
  • Practice/create out of class (if possible)

• Students BYOD; work in teams

• Technology as the content topic
Today’s learning path

1. What are digital literacies?

2. Why include digital literacies in the EFL classroom?

3. How can we incorporate digital literacy skills in ELT?

4. What activities can support digital literacy skills development?
Classroom Activities

1. **Mini-Debates**
   - Technology as the topic
   - No online tech required

2. **Advice Columns**
   - Technology as the topic
   - Online creation with technology optional

3. **About Me 2.0 Digital Posters**
   - Technology is the creative medium
   - Considering technology use is part of the process
   - Offline option available
Mini debates

Sequence

• Class selects two topics from a set
• Group debate preparation
• Debate lines
• Panel debates (optional)

Materials

• Writing tools + paper
• Board + pens/chalk
• Timer

"For" "Against"

(Benucci, 2017)
Technology as the topic: mini-debates

- **Language skills**: speaking, listening, vocabulary, grammar
- **Language focus**: agreeing/disagreeing; using evidence to support opinions

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**Functional Language Chart**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agreeing</th>
<th>Disagreeing</th>
<th>Contrasting opinions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• I (absolutely) agree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I agree completely.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• On the whole, I agree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I see your point.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You have a point there.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I couldn’t agree more.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I see what you mean.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I’m sorry, but I can’t agree with that.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I’m afraid I disagree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• That’s not how I see it (the situation).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I don’t entirely agree.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The facts don’t support that position.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Yes, but on the other hand …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• That may be; however …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I see your point, but …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• You raise an interesting point; however, …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• I agree to an extent, but …</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Perhaps, but don’t you think … ?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Technology as the topic: mini-debates

- Would students find these topics relevant?
- Would they generate meaningful debate?
- Would they be developing digital literacy skills?
Which digital literacies can this activity address?

Focus 1: LANGUAGE
Text Literacy
  Hypertext Literacy
  Multimedia Literacy
Mobile Literacy
Gaming Literacy
  Code Literacy

Focus 2: INFORMATION
  Tagging Literacy
  Search Literacy
  Information Literacy
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Focus 3: CONNECTIONS
  Personal Literacy
  Network Literacy
  Participatory Literacy
  Intercultural Literacy

Focus 4: (RE-)DESIGN
Remix Literacy

Dudeney, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014)
Advice columns

- **Activity**: Groups respond to problems

- **Language skills**: reading and writing, grammar, vocabulary [listening + speaking]

- **Language focus**: giving advice with imperatives, modals, or conditionals
  - Don’t… Ask her…
  - You could… You shouldn’t…
  - If I were you, I wouldn’t…
Technology as the topic: advice columns

• **Tech topics:** create problem prompts
  • Cyber bullying
  • Technology use + effects on relationships
  • Information overload
  • ... other ideas?
Technology as the topic: advice columns

• Technology-based variations
  • Digital discussion board
  • Blog + comments
  • Digital voice questions + voice or video responses
• Groups can comment on others’ advice
About me: 2.0

• **Activity**: Create a digital poster about yourself

• **Language skills**: writing, grammar, vocabulary [reading, speaking, listening]

• **Language focus**:
  • descriptions: simple present, simple past
  • vocabulary: likes, dislikes, hobbies, interests, family, etc.
  • *I would*... statements

Activity adapted from Dudeney, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014) – Online Me, p. 233 – 239
Image: Missouri River Regional Library, 2009, **CC BY-NC 2.0**; image cropped
About me: 2.0

1. Share an example About Me e-poster.

2. Ask students to consider what they would include in their digital posters.

3. Discuss online audiences.
   - Ask students to identify different groups that might see their digital poster if it were online.
   - Would their content change depending on the audience?
## About me: 2.0

4. Complete audience grid; discuss with partner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Audience</th>
<th>Personal Information</th>
<th>Photos</th>
<th>Links/Audio/Video (optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Friends</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English classmates + teacher</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School admissions officer</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Boss or future boss</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Whole world</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Grid adapted from Dudeney, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014) – Online Me, p. 233 - 239
About me: 2.0

4. Students identify an audience and build posters using desired tools.

- Ideas and Text: prepare in advance
  - Template
  - Graphic organizer

- Images & Multimedia content: open source or own
  - Pixabay
  - Photos For Class
  - Skuawk

- Creation tool: online, offline, or hardcopy
  - Paper
  - PowerPoint
  - Canva
  - Glogster EDU
About me: 2.0

5. Display or digitally share posters.

6. Students give each other feedback about appropriateness of content included for the specified audience.

Extension: Discuss how this project relates to
- creating online profiles
- sharing content online
- managing privacy settings
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Focus 4: (RE-)DESIGN
- Remix Literacy (?)

Which digital literacies can this activity address?

Dudney, Hockly, & Pegrum (2014)
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3. My syllabus is full with language content. I don’t have time to teach digital literacy skills, too.
References

• Belshaw, D. (2104). The essential elements of digital literacy. [e-book]


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1. Becoming digitally literate is a process. What are your digital literacy goals? What actions might you take to build your own digital literacy skills?

2. What are the benefits of incorporating digital literacies in your classroom?

3. What are potential challenges that you and your students might experience when incorporating digital literacies into instruction?

4. How might you adapt your lessons to incorporate elements of digital literacies into instruction?
Thank you!

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