

Reading with Machines: Artificial Intelligence and the Future of Literary Competence in the Classroom

*Asma Djaidja - Zakaria Mohy Eddine Youcef**

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Abstract:

Introduction: This study investigates the implications of artificial intelligence (AI) on the pedagogy of literature at the university level.

Methods: Over a four-week period, students collaborated in groups to analyse, summarize, and reflect on selected literary texts using AI tools. Classroom observations, student reflective writing, and informal interviews with ten literature instructors from various Algerian universities were sources of qualitative data.

Results: The findings highlight that AI tools boosted in-depth understanding of texts, writing fluency, and facilitated the revision of students' written work.

Discussion: However, depending on AI outputs still figured as a threat to the innovativeness, as well as the ability to critically evaluate it autonomously, thus pointing to problems while employing literature as a means of education.

Limitations: The research was confined in terms of its time span, the number of participants, and the AI tools chosen for the study.

Conclusions: AI can enhance literary competence; nevertheless, its integration must promote students' critical thinking and authenticity in their responses.

Key words: artificial intelligence, literature pedagogy, literary competence, critical thinking, higher education.

* Asma Djaidja, University Center of Barika, Barika, Algeria; asma.djaidja@cu-barika.dz; ORCID: 0009-0001-8350-0654

Zakaria Mohy Eddine Youcef, University Center of Barika, Barika, Algeria; zakariamohyeddyne.youcef@cu-barika.dz; ORCID: 0009-0008-1120-3491

Introduction

Rapid growth in AI has deeply changed various segments of society, one of them being education. Employing AI tools in the education sector not only allows us to change the way we learn but also to rethink academic domains that were considered immune to technology, such as the humanities and literary studies. In literature classrooms, where human interpretation, empathy, and creativity have been intuited to be central to the educational experience, we may use AI as an unsettling opportunity.

Educators know that the question is not whether automated language models, such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot, can assist in the enhancement of students' literary competence; the crucial question is how they are specifically engaged within educational paradigms in order to enhance critical thinking, facilitate textual analysis, promote collaboration, while still maintaining the importance of the human dimension of literature. As the AI phenomenon continues to permeate our everyday functioning as humans, and conceptions of AI continue to evolve in serving our purposes, it has been clear for some time that the tools of AI can present unique ways to engage with the complexities of teaching and learning about literature.

Teaching literature challenges instructors by asking them to support students in interpreting texts and to draw on their lived experiences. Central to that is the importance of differentiating one's thinking as a human in exploring literary texts. There are potential benefits, but there are just equally pressing questions too: Is it possible for AI to actually enhance students' understanding of literary texts, or are students learning how to use AI to configure literature into an algorithm, and oversimplified analyses? Can AI represent a key engagement in developing the same interpretative skills that have long been the aim of literary competence, or does this potentially erase the complex, nuanced human-centered approaches of rich experiences with literature?

This research aims to address those questions in an actual classroom, specifically the use of AI in teaching literature at the university level. The research was conducted at the University Center of Barika, Algeria, and involved students from the Master One students enrolled in the Educational Technology module. The intent of the study was to assess the effect of digital learning tools on students' interaction with literary texts, specifically short stories, which are valued for their brevity and meaning. The students enrolled in this research were in advanced English programmes, and AI technology had been incorporated into their degree programmes in order to toy with ideas of AI to analyse, summarise, and critically engage with the literary content.

Although using AI in literary studies is not a new technical or procedural area, it has the potential to shift students' approaches and processes and versatility. AI-supported applications can do more than replace the teacher or take the students'

place; generative systems can act as partners, offering alternate forms of noticing, providing diverse claims and interpretations, and organising and refining ideas. As AI advances, its use and role in education will become new again, and, just like new teaching and learning paradigms have changed notions of student development, education in the humanities must also be cognizant of AI's influence on student learning and learning goals.

The overall intention of this paper is to investigate whether AI (in a specific sense) enhances students' literary competences by offering more in-depth readings of texts and promoting a more interactive and collaborative learning environment. Furthermore, this study examines what AI means for the future of literary didactics more broadly, asking questions of how human interpretation and machine assistance, being suggested, encourage the development of a reflective, imaginative, critical approach to literature as it is presented.

The study aims to evaluate the pedagogical affordances and implications of technology in a concrete classroom setting, and it does so while linking the experiences of students and teachers around an essential question about whether AI educational resources could improve the engagement of students' relationship with texts in ways that keep (or enhance) the kinds of intellectual and emotional processes that are normally structured through close reading and discussion.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

- To what extent does AI-supported instruction improve students' literary analysis skills?
- Does the integration of AI tools enhance students' academic writing performance?
- How do literature instructors perceive the pedagogical value and challenges of AI integration in the classroom?

1 Literature review

Currently, the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in education has been widely recognized. Language teaching is the main domain where AI has been experimented with greatly in the last several years. The AI influence on educational reform is already known and is at the center of educators' discussions about the future of teaching methods, student engagement, and innovative educational tools. AI in education can take several roles, from content generation, assessment, to personalized learning, all of which can be regarded as improvements for literary studies (Holmes et al., 2019).

1.1 AI tools in literary education

The employment of AI for the purpose of literary study is a novel field that gets more attention to invest AI into different sectors of literary analysis. Numerous software products such as ChatGPT, Grammarly, and QuillBot have been

launched to promote text creation, editing, and analysis; thus, the students can be more confident in comprehending a literary piece of work and have greater engagement (Bocquet, 2023). Selwyn (2019) finds that AI tools mainly serve to simplify our lives by taking over repetitive tasks like grammar correction and summarization, but they go on to say that the potential of these tools extends far beyond their simple utility, allowing us to reinvent our relationship with texts and thus reach a deeper understanding of the texts.

According to some recent research, AI can be a great catalyst for the educational process in the classroom for extending the critical thinking and writing abilities of the students. One of the examples is that the implementation of AI-based chatbots, such as ChatGPT, for interpreting literary texts has made it possible for students to not only discover more than a single interpretation but also to take part in the discussions that lead to the material being understood on a deeper level (Holmes et al., 2019). The capability of AI to make available an instant response on a piece of writing, e.g., pointing out the mistakes in grammar and making suggestions, gives students a great opportunity to work on the improvement of their writing without the teacher having to be there all the time (Bocquet, 2023).

Moreover, AI can be a source of support that gradually helps students improve their analytical capacities, as shown in the work of Holmes et al. (2019), which underlined the importance of AI for differentiated learning as well as for individualized feedback. So, for instance, AI has the possibility to prescribe a student some tailored pieces of advice that are consonant with his or her writing style and congenialities, and this is a way for students to practice and to develop their interpretation skills individually (Luckin et al., 2016).

Recent empirical research further supports the pedagogical potential of generative artificial intelligence in higher education contexts. A systematic review conducted by Dwivedi et al. (2023) emphasises that tools such as ChatGPT can enhance student engagement and personalised feedback when integrated within structured instructional designs. Similarly, Baidoo-Anu and Owusu Ansah (2023) found that generative AI systems may improve students' analytical writing performance when used as scaffolded support rather than autonomous content generators. These findings reinforce the argument that AI-assisted applications function most effectively as complementary pedagogical instruments within guided learning environments.

1.2 Challenges of integrating AI in literature education

Despite the potential benefits of artificial intelligence integration in the classroom, several challenges remain. A major issue might be that students and teachers are not on the same page initially. According to Chtioui (2024), it is a fact that there are the students, especially those who are used to traditional pedagogical methods, who can perceive AI as something that will negatively affect the learning process

or a way to cheat if they do not recognize themselves as that and work. Besides that, a few students can also be quite greatly challenged by the technical aspect of AI since they have to make an effort to use new tools, for which, at the beginning, they may not feel natural.

Teachers also have some issues that are in connection with school management and making sure students use AI tools in a correct manner. Jabraoui and Vandapuye (2024) maintain that the rapid growth of AI in the educational market has brought about the creation of "technological divide" conditions in numerous classrooms. Situations in which some students are at ease while using automated language models, whereas others are not so lucky, lead to an uneven comfort level, which in turn can cause problems when trying to establish collaboration and make sure that all the students benefit from the tools equally.

On top of that, there is the issue of over-trusting AI by students who might come to rely on the tools only for the tasks of analysis and writing, preventing their development of critical and independent thinking skills. One of the participants in this project, Dr Ahmed, was very clear on this; he said, "*Some students were overly dependent on the technology, which affected their ability to think independently.*" Concerns regarding over-reliance and epistemic dependency have also been documented in recent scholarship. Susnjak (2022) argues that AI-generated academic content poses risks to assessment validity and intellectual authenticity if institutional frameworks are not adapted accordingly. Moreover, Perkins (2023) highlights that generative AI may inadvertently reduce cognitive effort when students substitute algorithmic outputs for interpretative reasoning. These perspectives underscore the necessity of integrating AI within clearly defined ethical and pedagogical boundaries.

1.3 Theoretical perspectives on AI in education

The use of constructivist and socio-constructivist theories is important for understanding how to integrate AI in the classroom. Learning, according to Piaget (1952), is a cognitive process of constructing knowledge through active interaction with the environment. Learning, for Vygotsky (1978), is social and has to do with the use of tools in the culture to assist students in learning. In this light, AI can be seen as a digital tool that facilitates learners to make sense of what they are learning through guided interaction.

On the other hand, Smith, Jones, and Lee (2019) warn against the assumption that technology automatically leads to cognitive development. They are clear that while learning can be personal through the use of technology and the feedback given from the AI technology, the benefits come from the use of a human structure as a guide. Similarly, Kasneci, Schmidt, and Tagliatalata (2023) note that large language models can be used to produce unique and coherent text; however, they lack meaning and definitional significance. In this regard, those who use AI as a

tool for education should follow the principle that any use of AI in education must be based on guiding principles of constructivism rather than the philosophy of technological determinism.

1.4 AI in collaborative learning

AI's role in the collaborative learning aspect of literature education is the most positive feature of it. Technological tools provided by Artificial Intelligence, and studies show that these tools are perfect for collaborative activities. The students cannot only share but also compare among themselves various AI-generated responses, thus expanding and deepening their comprehension of the topic. Research by Holmes et al. (2019) is clearly behind this thesis as it demonstrates that AI can become a facilitator in the students' discussions, thus giving them a turning point to more profound engagement and debate.

This research has been based on the typical implementation of AI resources in conjunction with jointly performed jobs. For instance, students could discuss short stories together and write essays based on their collective understanding of the texts. AI applications like QuillBot can be used by students to paraphrase and Grammarly to check grammar, thus they will be able to concentrate on the cognitive part of the assignment and not on technical mistakes. Such a procedure is in line with Luckin et al. (2016), who are of the opinion that within collaborative learning environments, AI can lead students to higher-level thinking by interacting with each other's ideas more effectively.

1.5 Generative artificial intelligence and cognitive mediation

The recent literature on generative artificial intelligence (GAI) in the context of education has broadened the perspective of understanding digital devices from being an assistive technology to one where they are viewed as cognitive mediators in educational settings. Generative AI algorithmic systems, such as large language models, do not just provide information. They can also act as a dialogic partner producing structured textual outputs, responding to questions, giving feedback, and providing multiple interpretations (Kasneci et al., 2023; Rudolph, Tan & Tan, 2023). Because of this shift, there is a need to theorise how machine-generated discourse is interpreted alongside human cognition.

When viewed through a socio-constructivist lens, technology artefacts can serve as mediators of learning that extend cognitive activity for learners (Vygotsky, 1978). This aligns with AI being included in the zone of proximal development by supporting learners' interpretative processes and analytical reasoning. Unlike traditional scaffolding provided by a human instructor, though, the generative AI-generated output has no epistemic accountability, so it may lead to over-reliance and shallow engagement with the knowledge content produced by the generative AI (Selwyn, 2019).

Additionally, recent discussions highlight the introduction of epistemological problems by generative AI into higher education, especially in relation to authorship, originality and critical thinking (Zhai, 2022; Cotton, Cotton, & Shipway, 2023). Scholars also cautioned against the risk of relying solely on AI-generated material as being linguistically accurate or structurally cohesive, but not being able to reflectively interpret the content in ways that promote a more informed analysis of the material. Consequently, researchers need to look at the application of AI to the field of literature from two perspectives: as a cognitive assistance tool for literature and as an impediment to independent analytical reasoning.

2 Methodology

This study aims to explore the use of artificial intelligence (AI) tools in the EFL classroom, specifically with regard to short story analysis, and how the use of AI-assisted systems impacts students' literary competence. It was conducted at the University Center of Barika, Algeria during the 2024-2025 academic year. A full description of the methodology is given below.

2.1 Participants

The participants in the study were 60 Master One students in the Educational Technology module at the University Center of Barika, Algeria. The students were aged between 21 and 25 years old and had an upper-intermediate to advanced level of English, based on placement tests and past coursework. This group was selected because they were very familiar with most digital tools and could potentially the AI applications generate in and to improve their literary competence for full literary analysis and document redaction/writing.

Alongside the students, there were also ten teachers of literature from three Algerian universities (University of M'sila, University Center of Barika, and University of Ouargla). The teachers shared in the study and were able to provide a range of suggested pedagogical uses of AI tools, and some of the other issues of migration strategies from the traditional literature curriculum.

Participants were selected through convenience sampling, as they were enrolled in the researcher's module during the academic year 2024-2025. All participants provided informed consent prior to participation, and ethical considerations were observed throughout the study.

2.2 Research design

This study adopted a mixed-methods quasi-experimental case study design. The quantitative component consists of a comparison of students' pre-test and post-test literary analysis and writing performance after receiving instruction assisted by AI. A variety of qualitative components were included in this study to understand

the engagement and perception of students and instructors regarding this type of instruction. The qualitative components included classroom observations, reflective journals submitted by students, and semi-structured interviews conducted with literature instructors to explore the pedagogical implications of using AI in their classrooms.

Three specific technological platforms were used in the classroom activities:

1. ChatGPT: It was used primarily for generating summaries, alternative points of view on literary texts, and providing generators related to drafts of analytical essays. Students were prompted to use ChatGPT to observe other perspectives on short stories, in addition to using the AI's feedback to revise.
2. QuillBot: which was used to paraphrase and rephrase students' sentences in order to help with fluency and clarity of students' writing. This was especially useful when students were struggling with language, with an eye on mechanics, so it allowed them to consider ideas and writing instead of thinking about grammar and syntax.
3. Grammarly: to help proofread and edit students' writing. Grammarly provides feedback in the moment, formative feedback about grammatical and spelling errors, as well as suggestions for language style, allowing students to remediate their papers and work towards improving their writing.

The AI-based instructional sequence lasted four weeks. During that time, students were put into groups of approximately five to six students per group, and they worked through a series of tasks to develop opportunities to use AI tools in studying short stories. The activities that were completed were:

1. Literary analysis: Students analysed one or more short stories, such as O. Henry's "The Last Leaf", Kate Chopin's "The Story of an Hour", and Langston Hughes' "Thank You, Ma'am." The students first generated summaries and were able to explore meaning through different interpretations of the text with the use of AI-supported applications, such as ChatGPT. Students collaborated and generated collective reflection summarizing three of the most significant points of meaning through theme, symbols, and character development.
2. Text summarization: Students used digital learning tools to create concise summaries of each short story after having analysed the texts and provided these fully put-together summaries to their classmates. Importantly, this activity developed students' skills in summarizing literary texts while maintaining the work's meaning.
3. Essay draft and editing: During this activity, the classmates were required to draft analytical essays based on their chosen short stories, while considering assessing their own presentational format in each of their essays. It is intended to improve the overall organisation and clarity of their argument, supported by the evidence in the text, and incorporate textual evidence in support of their textual analysis. Students used Grammarly for grammar checks, and QuillBot

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for paraphrasing/rephrasing to clarify and enhance the fluidity components of their writing. Their final drafts of the essays were submitted for evaluation.

4. Collaborative learning: In each of these activities, students were working in small groups, sharing, discussing, or debating their findings and giving feedback on one another's work. The desire for students to engage in some peer learning and for us to create some opportunities for deeper discussion of the text were the goals.

2.3 Data collection

Data were acquired using a triangulated data source approach and collected using the following methods:

1. Classroom observations: The researcher observed classroom interactions with the AI-supported applications during the four-week instructional cycle. Observations concentrated on how students engaged with the technological platforms, how they interacted with each other while working in groups, and how the teacher facilitated the use of the AI-assisted systems in literary analysis.
2. Student reflections: The final data source was from student reflections. At the end of each week, students submitted reflective journals to report on their experiences with the AI tools. The reflective journals reported their perceptions of how AI supported their literary analysis, how it changed the writing process, and the difficulties they experienced while using the tools. The reflective journals also provided great qualitative data on students' learning experiences and attitudes toward generative systems.
3. Teacher feedback: The researcher conducted informal interviews with 10 literature teachers about their experiences and perspectives using AI in the classroom. The teachers were asked to observe classroom activities and provide feedback on the effectiveness of AI-assisted systems in supporting students' literary competence.
4. Pre- and post-assessment: Pre- and post-assessments consisted of an analytical literary task requiring students to interpret a short story and produce a structured analytical response. Students' work was evaluated using a standardised rubric assessing:
 - Understanding of themes
 - Identification of literary devices
 - Analysis of character development
 - Coherence and organisation
 - Language accuracy

Each criterion was scored on a 20-point scale, resulting in a total score out of 100. The same rubric was applied consistently in both assessments to ensure comparability.

2.4 Data analysis

Student reflection journals, classroom observational notes, and teacher interview transcripts were analysed using thematic analysis (TA). The data was coded inductively to identify recurring themes of engagement, collaboration, critical thinking, and either the perceived advantages or disadvantages of AI integration. Once the pattern of coded data was identified, it was categorised and interpreted to relate to the original research questions. Statistical tests, including descriptive statistics and paired-samples t-tests, were used to evaluate quantitative data from the pre- and post-assessments. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$; thereby providing evidence of measurable gains in literary competency after the AI-supported instructional intervention.

3 Findings

The findings are presented in alignment with the research questions, focusing first on measurable improvements in literary analysis and writing performance, followed by qualitative insights into student engagement and teacher perceptions. The purpose of this study is to investigate the use of AI tools such as ChatGPT, QuillBot and Grammarly along with their application within a literature context at the University Center of Barika. The findings show improvements in performance among students related to their understanding of the literary texts, writing ability, subject content, and collaborative learning and teacher perceptions related to the technological platforms. The data in the next section will be presented in detail, including examples from teacher interviews and qualitative descriptions.

3.1 AI tools and literary analysis

The main intention of integrating AI-supported applications into the curriculum was to improve students' literary analysis skills as they read this choice of short stories. Students benefited from AI-generated feedback and automated analytical suggestions.

Table 1

Improvement in literary analysis skills (pre- and post-assessment results)

<i>Task</i>	<i>Pre-assessment</i>	<i>Post-assessment</i>	<i>Improvement</i>
Understanding themes	65%	82%	+17%
Identifying literary devices	58%	75%	+17%
Analysing character development	62%	79%	+17%
Overall literary analysis score	61%	79%	+18%

A pre-assessment indicated moderate proficiency in literary analysis with an average mean score of 61%. After a 4-week instructional period utilizing artificial

intelligence, the post-assessment average mean score rose to 79%, representing an 18% increase. A paired-samples t-test determined that this difference was statistically significant. An overall improvement in overall literary analysis performance was evidenced by the p-value being less than .05, which supports a statistically significant change.

Increases of 17% in knowledge of literary devices and the ability to interpret the theme of the story were the largest changes under investigation. These results indicate that using artificial intelligence to provide assistance during instruction may lead to improved analytical processing of information and greater engagement with the text being analysed. Additionally, the ability to provide immediate feedback along with providing multiple ways to interpret a given text has likely contributed to students' developing a deeper understanding of the content of what they are reading and continuing to be flexible in their interpretation.

Excerpt from teacher interview:

One of the teachers commented, "*AI tools, like ChatGPT, gave students a new perspective on how to interpret the same literary device. Students would often find a perspective previously unnoticed and have interesting discussions on the differences. It was as if it provided them an avenue to move to the next level in their analysis.*" This comment was consistent across colleague interviews, indicating AI-assisted systems were a meaningful way to cultivate critical thinking and diverse interpretations of literary texts.

3.2 Student perceptions of AI tools for literary analysis

A survey was given to gain a better understanding of students' perceptions of how AI instruments could affect their use of interpretive skills when they analyse literature. The results revealed a large measure of positive feedback and buy-in from students, with the majority agreeing that generative systems had a considerable effect on their skills in analysis.

Table 2

Student perceptions of AI tools for literary analysis

<i>Question</i>	<i>Strongly agree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Strongly disagree</i>
AI tools helped me better understand literary themes	38%	42%	15%	3%	2%
AI tools made it easier to identify literary devices	40%	45%	10%	3%	2%
Using AI tools improved my ability to analyse characters	35%	50%	12%	2%	1%
I felt more confident in my literary analysis after using AI tools	34%	50%	10%	4%	2%

According to survey results, students have a very high opinion of using AI to help them learn. Over 80% of participants agreed or strongly agreed that the use of AI improves their understanding of literary themes and supports students in identifying various literary devices. With almost all of the responses indicating this benefit, students view AI as providing a form of cognitive scaffold, and not a replacement for their own analysis.

Additionally, there is a combined 84% agreement that the AI-enabled student had increased confidence in their ability to perform literary analyses. This increase can contribute to other factors related to the student's academic self-efficacy (the degree of perception that the student is capable of improving their skills). The increased level of confidence can also help shape the willingness to participate as actively as possible in the interpretative process and encourage more written analyses of literary works.

Most students reported that technological platforms considerably strengthened their understanding of literary themes, analysis of characters and identification of literary devices. One student noted in the original reflection: "ChatGPT helped me find different perspectives on the theme of isolation in the story we read. I ended up adding these to my analysis, and it strengthened my argument." This aligned with most of the comments where students expressed a newfound confidence in their analytical skills, particularly when AI was used as a complementary tool.

3.3 Collaborative learning and AI

AI tools also promoted collaborative learning with students working together in groups to complete a task, such as to analyse short stories and draft essays. Observations indicated that students were more animated and communicative in group elements and used AI-assisted systems as a platform for discussion.

Table 3

Frequency of group interactions during AI-assisted activities

<u>Type of interaction</u>	<u>Frequency (pre-AI)</u>	<u>Frequency (post-AI)</u>	<u>Change</u>
Sharing ideas	65%	90%	+25%
Peer feedback	60%	85%	+25%
Collaborative problem solving	55%	80%	+25%

The group interaction increase of 25% across all collaborative indicators indicates that the AI tools were acting as mediating tools in the learning environment. The structured output produced by the AI provided students with a shared frame of reference for discussions, which, in turn, led to increased peer exchange and deeper levels of engagement. The integration of AI did not reduce the interaction, but instead enhanced both collaborative problem-solving and collaborative idea-sharing.

This finding contradicts concerns that AI could reduce interaction in the classroom, and instead, indicates that AI can facilitate dialogic learning, given that they are designed with a pedagogical purpose.

The application of artificial intelligence also resulted in an apparent uptick in student exchanges, especially when sharing observations or working through a problem together. For example, one of the students reflected, “*At first, we were not sure how to tease out an analysis of the story; however, when we started applying QuillBot to summarize and Chat GPT to think of discussion points, it was so much easier to communicate with one another and argue over themes of the text.*” From the teachers’ interview, one participant from the University of Ouargla remarked, “*I could see that the students were supporting each other, but they weren’t just relying on the AI - they were discussing the content of their ideas deeper than I had previously observed. Students questioned each other’s ideas, and AI gave space for a deeper collaboration.*” This indicates that AI-assisted systems were helping students build on each other’s ideas and to create richer discussions, but also develop tighter group action.

3.4 Writing skills and AI

In addition to analysis, the study explored whether or not artificial intelligence tools had any effects on student writing skills. For instance, the students used Grammarly to polish their essays and QuillBot was used to paraphrase and utilize sentence structure. The results showed significant improvement across all students' writing.

Table 4

Improvement in writing skills (pre- and post-assessment results)

<i>Writing aspect</i>	<i>Pre-assessment</i>	<i>Post-assessment</i>	<i>Improvement</i>
Clarity of ideas	68%	85%	+17%
Grammar and syntax	70%	90%	+20%
Textual Coherence and organisation	72%	88%	+16%
Overall writing score	70%	87%	+17%

Substantial improvements to writing performance were achieved through the use of AI writing support tools. While grammar/syntax improved from 70% to 90% (20% gain), the same as 17% and 16% gains in clarity and organisation, respectively, mean scores continue to show statistically significant improvements ($p < .05$).

These findings imply that students are likely to experience decreased cognitive demands due to surface-level language problems by using AI-supported editing tools, which will enable greater focus on argument construction/textual coherence. Additionally, further teacher support is needed for developing critically original

ideas despite having substantial advancement in linguistic accuracy. A student reflection read: "Grammarly got rid of all my repetitive mistakes! QuillBot helped me clarify my sentence structure! I think my essays became more cohesive, and I felt like my overall writing level improved."

A teacher remarked, "I noticed that students seemed much less concerned about making basic grammatical mistakes and became much more focused on the content they were writing. The use of AI tools allowed students to focus on developing their ideas and did not get stuck worrying about technical mistakes." This shows that AI appeared to allow students to focus on improving the quality of their arguments rather than a primary focus on the structure of their sentences.

3.5 Feedback from teachers

In addition to the student data, teachers' feedback was an important aspect of the assessment of the overall efficacy of the AI-supported applications for improving literature teaching and learning. The teachers brought valuable information, especially in terms of the way technological platforms affected their teaching and their students' reading engagement, or even their approaches to classroom contexts. Their feedback indicated both ways in which this was beneficial and the ways that it was challenging. We elaborate on the responses of the teachers below by discussing some of the main aspects of their experiences and points of view. The teachers who were a part of this study provided both quantitative and qualitative feedback regarding their use of automated language models for the study, since it was an indication of its possible value in literature education. The following survey summary captures their feedback:

Table 5

Teacher feedback on AI integration

<i>Teacher feedback</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Neutral</i>	<i>Disagree</i>
AI tools effectively enhanced students' literary analysis	85%	10%	5%
AI tools facilitated more efficient writing	80%	15%	5%
AI integration posed challenges in classroom management	50%	30%	20%
AI tools should be integrated into future literature courses	90%	10%	0%
Students were engaged and motivated by the use of AI tools	75%	20%	5%
AI helped students develop critical thinking skills	70%	25%	5%
Students' understanding of literature was enhanced with AI	80%	15%	5%
AI created new opportunities for collaborative learning	85%	10%	5%

The teacher's feedback further reinforces the quantitative findings. The high percentage of agreement regarding enhanced literary analysis (85%) and collaborative learning (85%) suggests a strong perceived pedagogical value of AI integration. However, the 50% agreement concerning classroom management

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challenges indicates that AI implementation requires structured guidance and institutional support.

The 25% of neutral responses regarding AI's role in fostering critical thinking reflect a degree of professional caution. This suggests that while AI may support analytical processes, it does not independently guarantee higher-order critical interpretation without deliberate instructional mediation.

The responses from teachers indicate positive perceptions of AI integration in the literature classroom overall, with strong agreement that it had improved the students' literary analysis, writing efficiency and collaborative approach to learning. However, there are challenges, in particular, classroom management for the teacher and the change required to bring these new forms of technology into a routine as a teacher.

Teachers have highlighted the following perceived benefits of AI implementation:

1. **Literary analysis and writing efficiency:** A large percentage of teachers (85%) agreed that AI tools, such as ChatGPT and QuillBot, significantly improved students' literary analysis skills, especially in textual analysis, identifying themes and more advanced literary techniques. For example, one teacher stated, *"Students were able to see multiple interpretations of a text, something they previously struggled with, which gave them a more layered understanding of the literacy."* Teachers also perceived that digital learning tools had the capacity to allow students to write more efficiently. Another teacher stated, *"By using AI to draft essays, students were able to get focused on improving meaning and structure and not be concerned about grammar or repetitive writing."*
2. **Increased engagement and motivation:** 75% of teachers agreed that generative systems enhanced students' engagement and motivation. Students were actively involved in the hands-on nature of discussions when they used an AI tool to create summaries or offer different perspectives on a story. A teacher from University of Ouargla noted, *"The students found the AI-generated summaries amusing and would often disagree with the AI and have discussions. They then explored the summaries more actively."*
3. **Expanding collaborative learning:** Teachers also found that AI-supported applications offered more opportunities for collaborative learning. Automated language models gave students common starting points to use in discussions and ways to compare and contrast their ideas. One participant stated, *"The collaborative work was more productive when students had AI-generated drafts to critique; it kept the discussion focused and gave students the opportunity to build on each other's ideas."*
4. **Support for critical thinking and literary understanding:** While 70% of teachers agreed with the idea that AI helped students with critical thinking skills, there were a few teachers (25%) who leaned to a neutral position on the issue, which

suggests that AI-assisted systems would not cultivate fully critical analysis in students. As a participant mentioned, *"AI had some good features, but it also took numerous context and nuance for the higher-level critical analysis. It is good for a first phase, but we ought to use traditional tools as well."*

In addition to the benefits, teachers reflected on the challenges they experienced with the use of AI in their classrooms:

1. Classroom management and resistance to AI: The most significant challenge highlighted by the study was classroom management. Although 50% agreed that generative systems brought challenges to classroom management, 30% were neutral. Some teachers expressed concern about the initial stages of the AI technology integration into their classrooms. For example, a teacher stated, *"Out of the gate, students were distracted by the newness of the AI tools, and they did cause some issues; they continued to be distracted by them, but when the students understood the value of the tools, they focused much better."* This would indicate that the resistance was more related to something new than to the AI experiences.
2. Over-reliance on technology: Some of the educators expressed reservations about learners taking too much advantage of AI-supported applications. A participant from the University of Ouargla commented, *"AI tools are great for efficiency, but I worry about students' abilities for literature analysis, if they are too reliant on them."* This aligns with concerns by previous studies (Chtioui, 2024), who raised caution about over-reliance on AI at the cost of critical thinking and independent learning skills.
3. Variability of student exposure to artificial intelligence tools: Yet another challenge raised was the differing exposure of students to technological platforms. A teacher from the University of M'sila noted, *"Some students were already familiar with tools like Grammarly and QuillBot, which made integrating them easier. Some others needed longer to get to terms with them, and I had to give them extra support at the outset."* This highlights the need for slightly different training or orientation prior to introducing AI-assisted systems in literature courses.

Notwithstanding the previously stated challenges, all the teachers (100%) reported their strong enthusiasm regarding the use of AI-supported applications in future literature courses. One teacher summarized, *"AI tools have the potential to reinvent what we do in the teaching of literature, but we need to acculturate the tools and train the students and teachers first."* Teachers also stated that the tools should be introduced to the students earlier in their programme of study, so that they are used to the tools and their possibilities before they carry out more challenging literary analytical tasks.

Another teacher concluded, *"AI may not do the deep thinking for the students on what it means to read literature, but it will definitely help students with the difficult*

and very difficult texts and give them additional possibilities on how they may engage."

Overall, the quantitative results indicate statistically significant improvement across literary analysis and writing performance measures following AI-assisted instruction. The combined quantitative and qualitative findings suggest that AI tools function most effectively as complementary pedagogical supports rather than autonomous instructional agents.

4 Discussion

The study's outcomes show that AI tools can positively impact student engagement and understanding of language arts materials if they are used responsibly and with a clear aim.

The increase in means of literary analysis score was statistically significant and, as seen through a socio-cultural lens (Vygotsky, 1978), cognitive development is mediated by cultural tools and social interaction. In this instance, generative AI served as a mediating artefact that provided students with structured prompts, interpretive alternatives and immediate feedback to help them progress through their zones of proximal development (ZPD). The increase in student collaborative interactions is consistent with this interpretation, suggesting that collectively created AI outputs became common reference points for dialogic meaning-making.

Conversely, the data are also aligned with recent critiques of generative AI's role in the higher education sector. Both the linguistic and structural characteristics of students' writing had improved over the period of study; however, the feedback provided by teachers indicated that the development of students' deeper critical autonomy raised concerns for teachers as well. This finding parallels the argument made by Cotton et al. (2023) regarding the capacity of generative AI to improve performance at the surface level of writing, while higher-order cognitive independence may be compromised without intentional scaffolding. Consequently, the results of this study neither celebrated nor rejected the integration of AI; rather, they positioned it as a tool used in pedagogy requiring intentional instructional design.

AI's role in this research was to provide differentiated learning as one of its greatest contributions. The digital learning tools served the needs of students of different proficiency levels; thus, the students could have more personalized learning experiences.

In this case, the students who were weaker found QuillBot and Grammarly very suitable for them, as these two tools could help them improve the quality of their written responses. At the same time, stronger students used ChatGPT to go deeper into the interpretation of the texts.

On the other hand, the research also identified some problems with generative systems. At the same time, while technological platforms sourced a variety of information and gave students a chance to express their thoughts clearly, they were not always the sources that stimulated the kind of thinking that is at the core of literary analysis.

Whilst AI-created content may be factual, it is still devoid of the human-driven, deep understanding of the interpretation. This shows the educators' imperative of striking a balance between the employment of AI-assisted systems for practical tasks (e.g., summarizing texts, checking grammar) and the emphasis on the nurturing of students' own critical thinking and interpreting skills.

In addition, the teacher's function in an AI-powered room of instruction is no less significant than before. The teacher has to perform the role of a guide, motivating learners to challenge and improve the answers given by the AI instruments instead of just accepting them as true. With the ongoing development of AI, its use in learning should go hand in hand with a well-defined educational framework that is consistent with the objectives of critical and creative literary studies.

Conclusions

The integration of artificial intelligence in literature classrooms presents measurable pedagogical benefits while simultaneously raising epistemological and ethical considerations. Although statistically significant improvements were observed in students' analytical and writing performance, sustained critical engagement remains dependent upon structured teacher mediation. This research illustrates that the students can be helped by AI in strengthening their writing and becoming more familiar with the texts, but it must not be the case that the intellectual processes which underlie the study of literature are overshadowed by it.

Furthermore, the study draws attention to the necessity of the teacher's involvement as a means of guaranteeing the appropriate use of AI. The educators have to think over and decide the best way to mix AI-supported applications with the traditional pedagogical methods in such a manner that the students' abilities to think critically, be deeply engaged with the material, and create their original work are not affected negatively. Thus, the subsequent studies may fathom the impact of AI on the students' literary analysis and writing skills in the long run, as well as the possibilities for technological platforms' intervention in the teaching of more difficult literary genres, such as poetry or drama.

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