

**Innovative strategies for the didactic updating of university professors of language and literature: challenges and possibilities in contexts of educational transformation**

Estrategias innovadoras para la actualización didáctica del docente universitario de lengua y literatura: desafíos y posibilidades en contextos de transformación educativa

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Esmeraldas, Ecuador**ABSTRACT**

This literature review critically analyzes innovative strategies for updating the teaching practices of university professors of Language and Literature in the face of digitalization and institutional vulnerability. The study stems from a clear need: to understand that innovation is not a purely technical matter, but rather a complex reconfiguration marked by the clash between disciplinary tradition, technological advancement, and the structural inequalities of Latin American higher education. Through a meticulous examination of the literature, three key areas are identified: the persistence of traditional, teacher-centered classes; the scope and limitations of active methodologies and virtual learning environments; and the material conditions that shape change in universities. Simultaneously, the article delves into pedagogical resilience in the face of emergencies, using Ecuadorian universities recently impacted by crises as a case study. The findings demonstrate that, although innovative strategies enhance student autonomy and collaborative learning, their actual success depends on fundamental factors: material support, teacher training, and institutional backing. Therefore, educational innovation is revealed as an unequal and situated process. It is concluded that updating this teaching method requires a critical and humanistic approach, capable of integrating pedagogical innovation with cultural mediation and addressing current social inequalities.

Keywords: educational innovation; language and literature didactics; higher education; digital teaching competencies; educational resilience.

RESUMEN

Esta revisión bibliográfica analiza críticamente estrategias innovadoras para actualizar las prácticas docentes de profesores universitarios de Lengua y Literatura ante la digitalización y la vulnerabilidad institucional. El estudio surge de una necesidad clara: comprender que la innovación no es una cuestión puramente técnica, sino una reconfiguración compleja marcada por el choque entre la tradición disciplinaria, el avance tecnológico y las desigualdades estructurales de la educación superior latinoamericana. Mediante un examen minucioso de la literatura, se identifican tres áreas clave: la persistencia de las clases tradicionales centradas en el profesor; el alcance y las limitaciones de las metodologías activas y los entornos virtuales de aprendizaje; y las condiciones materiales que configuran el cambio en las universidades. Simultáneamente, el artículo profundiza en la resiliencia pedagógica ante las emergencias, utilizando como caso de estudio universidades ecuatorianas recientemente afectadas por crisis. Los hallazgos demuestran que, si bien las estrategias innovadoras potencian la autonomía estudiantil y el aprendizaje colaborativo, su éxito real depende de factores fundamentales: apoyo material, formación docente y respaldo institucional. Por lo tanto, la innovación educativa se revela como un proceso desigual y contextualizado. Se concluye que la actualización de este método de enseñanza requiere un enfoque crítico y humanista, capaz de integrar la innovación pedagógica con la mediación cultural y abordar las desigualdades sociales actuales.

Palabras clave: innovación educativa; didáctica de la lengua y la literatura; educación superior; competencias digitales en la enseñanza; resiliencia educativa.

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The results highlight the need for universities to strengthen teacher training, promote critical digital mediation, and consolidate adaptable hybrid models, especially in educational contexts marked by pedagogical inequalities and institutional limitations.

INTRODUCTION

Today, teaching Language and Literature at the university level means running up against an invisible wall. On one side, there are the same old routines; on the other, digital pressure and the new ways in which young people read and write. We are not simply facing a change of tools or syllabus. What is really being discussed in higher education classrooms is what the humanities mean in the 21st century.

For decades, academic tradition has repeated the same model. The professor lectures, transmits the canon, and the student memorizes. This approach worked to maintain certain structures, but it neglected the student's real participation and their ability to communicate outside the classroom. Language is not static. It is a living social practice. Therefore, sociocultural and digital trends demand that we see literature as a cultural experience that generates meaning, not as a cold object of study.

However, modernizing higher education is not a linear process. Installing projectors or using virtual platforms does not change a teacher's mindset overnight. Often, supposed innovation remains superficial, confined to physical or digital formats, while the classroom structure remains hierarchical and authoritarian. Thus, two contradictory realities coexist: the official discourse of technological modernity and the same old traditional pedagogical practices.

In Latin America, this gap is much deeper. Structural inequalities and budget constraints limit any attempt at educational reform. Innovation depends not only on the teachers' enthusiasm but also on access to electricity, the internet, and the institution's actual organizational support.

The Language and Literature Pedagogy program at the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University in Esmeraldas perfectly reflects these tensions. Here, the historical problems of connectivity and teacher training were exacerbated by the recent local crisis. The emergency made clear the fragility of relying exclusively on a physical classroom. It also exposed the institution's inability to react in time. Far from being an isolated problem, this experience forced a shift in the focus of the discussion: it's no longer just about technology, but about resilience, about how to sustain classes amidst uncertainty, and about rebuilding the university from the ground up.

Updating the way university professors teach Language and Literature goes far beyond conducting technical workshops or learning to use new software. The real challenge lies in fundamentally rethinking how we understand written culture and how we mediate in the classroom. Therefore, innovation is not a magic formula that works the same everywhere. It is a situated process. It is directly conditioned by the clash between the traditions of each subject, digital transformation, and the reality of social inequality.

The success of a novel strategy depends not on the latest technological tool, but on real change in teaching practice and the support provided by the institution (Chiu et al., 2024; Runge et al., 2023). This is especially evident in our discipline. Authors such as Cassany (2012) and Colomer (2024) insist that it is urgent to rethink reading and writing from a multimodal perspective and considering the students' own cultural experiences. We must leave behind, once and for all, classes based on the simple passive transmission of theoretical content.

With this panorama in mind, this article critically analyzes how innovation strategies are being applied to update university teaching in this area. To achieve this, we opted for a narrative-interpretive literature review structured around three thematic axes: (1) the conflict between traditional models and new didactic proposals; (2) the material limitations that hinder change in vulnerable universities; (3) and the real impact of digitization combined with the capacity for resilience in current higher education.

METHODS

This research was structured around a critical literature review with a narrative-interpretive approach. Its central purpose was to evaluate the innovative strategies employed to update the teaching methods of university professors of Language and Literature, considering the demands of educational transformation, the vulnerability of institutions, and the digitalization of higher education. It is important to note that this design does not follow the logic of a systematic synthesis or the statistical procedures typical of a meta-analysis. On the contrary, it is based on a qualitative methodology that prioritizes theoretical debate, critical reading of sources, and argumentative construction. Following the position of Grant and Booth (2009), this type of review is fundamental for unraveling trends, frictions, and conceptual debates in complex educational disciplines. In this way, reflective approaches are achieved regarding how pedagogical knowledge evolves and is contested.

To enrich the analysis, the process was supported by a diachronic and comparative perspective. This perspective made it possible to thoroughly examine the evolution of teaching approaches, the clash between traditional models and innovative proposals, and the real impact of technology on the contemporary university. Thanks to this approach, it was possible to identify ruptures, continuities, and conceptual shifts within the scientific literature. Likewise, it allowed for mapping the different theoretical positions from which the academic community has addressed teacher professional development at the higher education level.

Document Search Strategy

Table 1. Summary of the documentary corpus used in the literature review

Author and year	Database	Main Topics	Source type	Contribution to the study
Cassany (2012)	Google Scholar	Digital Reading and Writing	Academic book	Theoretical foundation of digital literacy
Chiu et al. (2024)	Scopus	Digital Teaching Competence	Scientific article	Development of digital skills
Cisneros-Barahona et al. (2024)	Scielo	Digital Teacher Assessment	Scientific article	Assessment of digital skills
Díaz-Barriga (2021)	Redalyc	Educational Innovation	Scientific article	University pedagogical reflection
Runge et al. (2023)	Scopus	Technology and Teaching	Scientific article	Technology-mediated educational quality
Xu et al. (2025)	Scopus	Humanizing Digital Teaching	Scientific article	Transformation of teaching practices

Note: Prepared by the authors based on the consulted sources.

To structure the bibliographic corpus, a clear and explicit documentary search strategy was designed. The main goal was to ensure transparency, traceability, and rigor in the selection of each text. For this purpose, internationally and regionally recognized databases such as Scopus, SciELO, ERIC, Redalyc, and Google Scholar were reviewed. This selection combined high-impact indexed literature with Latin American scientific production and open access articles directly related to the topic.

The search was conducted using descriptors in Spanish and English, carefully chosen for their conceptual weight. The main terms were "Language and Literature Didactics," "university teacher training," "educational innovation," "digital teacher competence," "higher education pedagogy," "teacher training," and "educational innovation in higher education." These keywords were cross-referenced using Boolean operators (AND, OR) and adjusted iteratively. This allowed for a refined search, ensuring that the final material was relevant and consistent.

The time frame for the documents was set between 2021 and 2026. This delimitation responded to a clear methodological need: to capture the academic evidence analyzing the reconfiguration of universities after the pandemic, along with the current challenges of digitization. Setting this limit allowed for prioritizing the most recent research, while not neglecting foundational theoretical contributions that are vital for interpreting the problem.

The inclusion criteria were defined beforehand to reduce selection bias and maintain analytical consistency throughout the review process. Peer-reviewed scientific articles, academic books, and research chapters directly related to language and literature didactics, pedagogical innovation, and university teacher training were considered. Studies published in Spanish, English, and Portuguese were also included. On the other hand, documents without peer review, non-academic grey literature, duplicate records, and publications with little thematic relevance to the object of study were excluded.

The document selection process unfolded in three sequential phases: initial identification of records in the selected databases, refinement through reading titles and abstracts, and full-text analysis to determine the conceptual relevance, theoretical depth, and contribution of each source to the academic debate. This procedure strengthened the corpus's internal coherence and reduced the inclusion of marginal or redundant materials.

Finally, the theoretical corpus was structured by combining the work of classic authors in Language and Literature Didactics, such as Daniel Cassany, Teresa Colomer, Gustavo Bombini, Jorge Larrosa, and Carlos Lomas, with recent research on educational innovation, digital teaching competence, and university transformation (Chiu et al., 2024; Runge et al., 2023; Xu et al., 2025). This theoretical triangulation fostered a balance between conceptual depth, empirical updating, and epistemological continuity within the field of study.

The analysis of the information was carried out through a critical interpretive reading with thematic coding not assisted by software, organized around predefined analytical axes: a) epistemological transformation of Language and Literature Didactics; b) tensions between innovation and the persistence of traditional approaches; c) technological mediations and digital divides; d) redefinition of the teacher's role in hybrid environments; and e) pedagogical resilience in contexts of institutional crisis. This procedure allowed for the construction of emerging categories based on conceptual recurrences and discursive tensions in the reviewed literature.

Finally, the review adopted a situated contextual orientation, referentially linked to the Language and Literature Pedagogy Program at the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University of Esmeraldas, not as an empirical case study, but as a framework for interpreting structural problems in higher education within Latin American contexts. Within this framework, recent scenarios of institutional crisis were considered as contextual elements that allow us to understand the need for more

flexible, adaptive, and resilient pedagogical models.

RESULTS AND THEMATIC DISCUSSION

Consolidation of Language and Literature Didactics as a Disciplinary Field

When Language and Literature Didactics became established as a distinct discipline, the field of education underwent a significant transformation. This was no small change. For almost the entire 20th century, language and literature classes were limited to grammar and philology. Perfect spelling, rigid text analysis, and memorizing lists of facts approved by the educational system were paramount. The classroom operated under a predictable model: the teacher dictated the lesson from the podium, and the student simply listened and accumulated information in their notebooks. This static model began to crack at the end of the 20th century. Applied linguistics, cognitive psychology, and sociocultural approaches demonstrated that memorizing grammatical rules and dissecting texts in a purely mathematical way was not very effective. The change was profound. It affected the very foundation of how we understand language. From that moment on, classrooms began to prioritize the development of communicative, interpretive, and critical skills. The central objective was for students to be able to navigate successfully in real-life situations of social and cultural interaction (Lomas et al., 1996; Mendoza, 2004).

This transformation directly impacted literary education. The old obsession with historical timelines, endless biographies of authors, and the idea that a text has only one valid reading was abandoned. Instead, approaches based on the reader's experience, the personal construction of meaning, and the active participation of students in interpreting a work gained ground. Following Colomer (2024), true literary education must open the door to real reading experiences. Students need to appropriate culture, interpret for themselves, and construct their own meaning in relation to what they read. Literature thus ceases to be understood exclusively as an object of academic analysis and is also considered a cultural practice permeated by critical, aesthetic, and subjective dimensions of human experience.

The arrival of the digital age deepened these debates by radically altering how knowledge is produced, circulated, and assimilated. The rise of virtual platforms, multimodal narratives, and hypertextual structures forever changed our relationship with written culture. In this context, Daniel Cassany (2012) argues that digital literacy compels us to think about reading and writing outside the confines of paper and traditional school routines. Despite the force of this change, higher education has integrated these approaches very unevenly. Progress is slow. In many Language and Literature programs, older academic formats still coexist with new digital flows, creating constant friction between the discipline's tradition and technological advancements.

This problem becomes even more complex in Latin America due to the material, technological, and cultural gaps that hinder innovation in the classroom. As early as the 1990s, Bombini (1991) pointed out that it is impossible to separate the teaching of literature from the social context in which it is read. Although his position arose before the internet boom, the premise remains valid. It helps us understand perfectly why public universities struggle so much to update their teaching models.

Therefore, consolidating the Didactics of Language and Literature did not simply mean adding technologies or trying out trendy methods. The real change impacted the role of the teacher. The professor is no longer just a transmitter of theoretical content; now they must act as a pedagogical mediator who guides interpretation and designs real learning experiences. However, studies show that this transition is still only halfway complete in the region. Structural inequalities, a lack of institutional support, and the digital divide keep the process stalled.

Educational Innovation, Institutional Crisis, and Pedagogical Resilience in the Contemporary University

The debate on educational innovation in university-level Language and Literature programs is no longer limited to discussing the use of digital technologies or emerging methodologies. Today, innovation means auditing the forms of pedagogical mediation, the notions of reading and writing, and the academic hierarchies that have historically shaped higher education. From this perspective, innovation is not merely a technical matter. It is a profound cultural reconfiguration linked to new ways of interacting, producing knowledge, and constructing learning experiences.

Within language and literature education, contemporary trends have significantly eroded models based on accumulating grammatical or historiographical data. Lomas et al. (1996) argue that the future of teaching should be the development of communicative and cultural competencies that allow for the critical interpretation of social discourses. In line with this, Colomer (2024) points out that literary education acquires true meaning when reading connects with the student's cultural background and subjectivity. These positions clash directly with the reality of many university classrooms, where lectures, student passivity, and the rigid transmission of content still prevail.

The digital revolution accelerated these debates by shaking up the ways in which written culture is accessed, shared,

and appropriated. However, recent studies issue a clear warning: digitization is not synonymous with pedagogical innovation. Uploading files to a virtual platform or using technological tools can end up replicating the traditional model if classroom roles do not change. In the case of Ecuador, Roig-Vila and Sierra (2023) remind us that digital competencies are a cross-cutting theme for university professors. Despite this, serious gaps persist in the critical appropriation of these resources and in the institutional capacity necessary to sustain hybrid environments that function in the long term.

These obstacles become more acute in universities plagued by structural inequality and instability. Connectivity problems, infrastructure deficits, and gaps in teacher training hinder any attempt at pedagogical change in Latin America. Recent evaluations of higher education in Ecuador confirm that professors' use of digital tools remains highly uneven, especially in institutions where material scarcity prevents the sustained implementation of new pedagogical strategies (Mantilla et al., 2025).

The crisis stemming from the recent earthquake at the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University in Esmeraldas laid bare these tensions and exposed the fragility of a university system that depends exclusively on in-person instruction. The blow was not merely logistical or technological. It revealed the institution's severe difficulties in ensuring educational continuity amidst vulnerability and chaos. As a result of this event, discussing innovation in Esmeraldas ceased to be simply a matter of academic modernization. It became an urgent discussion about adaptability, institutional resilience, and reconstruction from the ground up, starting with pedagogical foundations.

However, crises can also become spaces for questioning and reconfiguring academic practices that have been taken for granted in higher education for years. Larrosa (2003) argues that the educational experience acquires true value when it directly impacts the individual, transforming their relationship with knowledge and their environment. From this perspective, pedagogical resilience goes far beyond ensuring that classes continue at an administrative level. The real challenge lies in rebuilding formative bonds to sustain deep and meaningful learning, even in environments affected by institutional fragility and social inequality.

Given this panorama, the pedagogical updating of university professors of Language and Literature requires understanding innovation as a situated process. It must respond to very specific sociocultural and institutional realities. The current challenge is not to mechanically add trendy technologies or methodologies. What is urgently needed is to design critical and contextualized pedagogical practices that reinforce the mediation of written culture, allowing us to react successfully to educational scenarios that are becoming increasingly complex and uncertain.

Persistence of Traditional Models in University Language and Literature Teaching

Although discourses on educational innovation saturate higher education, the reality in many Latin American universities is quite different. Pedagogical models based on the vertical transmission of knowledge, the absolute protagonism of the professor, and evident passivity on the part of the students continue to dominate. This traditional approach is particularly noticeable in Language and Literature classrooms. In these programs, dynamics focused on memorizing concepts, deconstructing texts in a purely formal way, and repeating content that, in most cases, is completely disconnected from the cultural practices of the contemporary world still prevail.

From the perspective of Language and Literature Didactics, the academic community has long questioned these outdated routines. Lomas et al. (1996) explain that language teaching carries a normative approach. This model prioritizes the formal mastery of grammatical rules instead of fostering real and contextualized communicative competence. Working under this logic diminishes language. It becomes an abstract system of technical rules, stripped of its social, cultural, and ideological dimensions.

Regarding the teaching of literature, Bombini (1991) points out a similar problem. Literary works are often reduced to simple mechanical exercises in textual analysis or to cold historical timelines that negate their interpretive and formative capacity. In line with this view, Colomer (2024) argues that the act of reading loses all its educational value when it is tied to memorization. Reading should be the opposite: a driving force that promotes cultural appropriation and the critical construction of meaning by the student.

These tensions intensify in the university context, where the lecture continues to be a dominant form of pedagogical organization. Although this format can provide expository rigor, in many cases it reproduces vertical dynamics that limit the active participation of students. Similarly, assessment practices tend to prioritize the reproduction of information over argumentation, critical writing, and the autonomous production of knowledge (Otto et al., 2024).

However, this persistence cannot be explained solely as individual resistance on the part of the teaching staff. It also stems from structural conditions such as excessive workload, insufficient infrastructure, limited ongoing professional development, and weak institutional policies for teacher support. In the Ecuadorian context, these limitations are compounded by technological inequalities that hinder the consolidation of hybrid and participatory learning environments. In this regard, Roig-Vila and Sierra (2023) demonstrate that digital transformation processes coexist with traditional practices

without generating substantive pedagogical changes.

Within the Language and Literature Pedagogy program at the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University of Esmeraldas, these frictions are readily apparent. Expository sessions and the purely theoretical transmission of subjects continue to be prevalent. Added to this situation are chronic connectivity problems, a lack of technological tools, and obstacles to maintaining well-functioning hybrid classrooms. All these factors combined have widened the gap between what the university offers and what students actually expect from their education.

To make matters worse, the recent institutional crises the university has experienced have exacerbated the situation. They have laid bare the limitations of a pedagogical model that depends entirely on the traditional physical classroom. The inability to react and reorganize classes during the emergency demonstrated the fragility of the university structure when things spiral out of control. Key tools were lacking: academic flexibility and genuine pedagogical resilience to cope with uncertainty.

At the same time, this upheaval has reopened the debate on how higher education should be taught today. Cassany (2012) reminds us that young people read and write in environments defined by multimodality and digital networks. This necessitates designing methodologies that speak the same language as these transformations. Innovation doesn't mean throwing away books to turn on a screen. The real challenge is redesigning the teaching of written culture while acknowledging our reality: a context marked by inequality, the vulnerability of institutions, and an educational transformation that never stops.

Innovative Strategies and Didactic Transformation

The urgent need to rethink how Language and Literature are taught in universities has given rise to several strategies that seek to break with traditional classroom dynamics. Despite this impetus, innovating in didactics is not simply replacing one method with another or blindly introducing technology into the classroom. Doing so reduces a profound pedagogical process to a matter of mere tools. True change is not about bringing in new resources; it is about fundamentally reconfiguring how university students read, write, debate, and interpret.

Within our discipline, experts agree on shifting the center of gravity of the classroom: we must move from simply downloading content to creating real communicative experiences. Cassany (2012) argues that language teaching should be tied to everyday communication practices. It is about fostering interpretation, argumentation, and writing in diverse contexts. This position directly contradicts old prescriptive manuals and defines language as a social and situated practice.

In the literary field, Colomer (2024) argues that reading truly educates when it becomes an experience of cultural interaction and personal appropriation of texts. From this perspective, dynamics such as dialogic gatherings, shared reading, creative writing workshops, and university book clubs acquire enormous value. These approaches shift the focus away from purely technical analysis and pave the way for a more participatory relationship with books. Here, innovation stems not from the medium used, but from how the roles of teachers and students change.

In recent years, universities have incorporated active methodologies such as project-based learning, teamwork, and the creation of multimodal content. In this regard, current studies indicate that blended learning represents a profound structural change, as it combines face-to-face instruction with student autonomy and teacher guidance (Park & Doo, 2024). Upon closer examination, Graham (2013) already cautioned that blended learning is not simply mixing face-to-face and virtual learning as if it were a recipe. Their true goal is to pedagogically reorganize classroom interaction, teacher mediation, and the learning process itself. These proposals seek to overcome student passivity in traditional models and promote the collective construction of knowledge. However, several studies warn that these methodologies can lose their transformative potential when applied as decontextualized institutional requirements or as formal indicators of curriculum modernization.

Lomas et al. (1996) point out that didactic transformation requires coherence among conceptions of language, pedagogical strategies, and assessment systems. From this perspective, it is difficult to consolidate innovation processes when active methodologies coexist with assessments focused on memorization or with vertical pedagogical structures. In many cases, emerging technologies and methodologies end up being incorporated superficially, without truly modifying power relations, communication, and interaction within the university classroom. These tensions become even more complex in Latin American contexts marked by institutional inequalities and persistent technological limitations.

The incorporation of digital platforms and hybrid models remains uneven, especially in public universities with infrastructure and connectivity constraints. In the Ecuadorian case, Roig-Vila and Sierra (2023) demonstrate that the development of digital teaching competencies faces both technical and pedagogical obstacles, particularly regarding the critical appropriation of technologies. At the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University in Esmeraldas, these problems have intensified in recent institutional crises that forced the reorganization of teaching processes under vulnerable conditions. These situations highlighted the fragility of traditional face-to-face models and the limited institutional capacity to respond to emergency contexts, thus contributing to the rethinking of various pedagogical approaches.

In response to this scenario, more flexible pedagogical mediation strategies began to consolidate, including the use of asynchronous resources, hybrid materials, collaborative activities, and forms of mobile communication. The most recent data demonstrate that hybrid classrooms enhance self-regulation and the active construction of knowledge. For this to occur, the teacher must act with a clear intention, guiding the process and stimulating complex thinking in their students (Lee et al., 2024). Seen in this light, innovation is not about buying the most expensive technology on the market. The true core of change is the teacher's ability to restructure their classes, adapting to the real conditions of their environment.

The current debate raises another urgent issue: humanizing virtual learning platforms. Xu et al. (2025) argue that university digitization should never neglect the relational, communicative, and emotional aspects of education. This warning is vital for the field of Language and Literature. In our discipline, learning and the construction of meaning depend entirely on constant interaction, open debate, and the experience of interpreting together.

Therefore, innovative strategies cannot be limited to simple technological modernization or copying current methodological trends. The challenge lies in combining innovation with critical thinking and the reality of each classroom. We must prevent the humanities from becoming trapped in mere educational technification. In a Latin America marked by inequality, innovation only makes sense if it is conceived as a situated, human, and profoundly critical process.

TAC, TEP and literary teaching in contexts of technological divide

In the area of Language and Literature, these shifts have opened new debates about how screens act as mediators of reading, writing, and meaning-making. However, in a Latin America marked by digital divides and institutional fragility, the analysis cannot remain superficial. It is not simply a matter of buying computers or modernizing campus infrastructure.

Faced with this panorama, the approaches of ICTs (Technologies for Learning and Knowledge) and ICTs (Technologies for Empowerment and Participation) help to challenge the technocentric obsession that dominates current educational discourse. These approaches argue that technology acquires real value when it fosters the collective creation of knowledge, active debate, and a critical perspective on data. Despite this, university bureaucracies often absorb these ideas to automatically link digitization and innovation. They forget that underlying inequalities completely condition the actual use of these tools. Selwyn (2021) issues a clear warning from a critical perspective: the digitization of classrooms is never neutral. If innovation is reduced to the forced introduction of technology, the process ends up replicating exclusion and reinforcing technocratic dynamics.

These tensions strongly impact the Didactics of Language and Literature. Our discipline is based on interpretive processes, the habit of reading, and discursive practices that can never be confined to a purely technical matter. Cassany (2012) reminds us that digital literacy brings with it hypertextuality, multimodality, and new discursive flows that change the relationship between the reader and the text. Even so, these tools do not guarantee more critical or democratic classrooms if reflective teacher guidance is lacking. Complementing this idea, Jenkins et al. (2009) argue that participatory internet cultures transform the way discourses are produced, disseminated, and interpreted, broadening the scope of teamwork.

In literary education, the virtual environment has paved the way for projects linked to digital humanities, multimodal storytelling, and collaborative learning. Georgopoulou et al. (2025) point out that these proposals expand the avenues of interpretation thanks to interactive and multimedia experiences. However, the same authors warn of a real danger: that the fascination with screens could end up stifling the deep reflection that literature demands, degrading the educational act to a fragmented and superficial digital consumption.

Similarly, Wessels (2025) notes that the incorporation of artificial intelligence in the humanities only acquires pedagogical meaning when it preserves the interpretive, critical, and humanistic character of education. This observation is particularly relevant in a context where the pressure to digitize education can lead to accelerated processes of technologization oriented more toward operational efficiency than toward educational depth. In many Latin American universities, especially in peripheral regions or those with strained budgets, the arrival of digital technologies clashes with reality. Infrastructure problems, unequal access to computers, and a lack of teacher training workshops hinder any progress. In this regard, the most recent studies on hybrid learning in higher education reach a compelling conclusion: technological tools are of little use on their own. They will hardly achieve profound pedagogical changes if they are not accompanied by a comprehensive didactic redesign and institutional support that teaches the critical use of technology (Park & Doo, 2024).

In Ecuador, these tensions manifest themselves heterogeneously. Roig-Vila and Sierra (2023) point out that digital teaching competencies constitute a cross-cutting axis within university training; however, difficulties persist related to the pedagogical appropriation of technologies and the lack of institutional support. Similarly, Mantilla et al. (2025) identify that the development of these competencies continues to be conditioned by both material limitations and the absence of sustained training processes. In this scenario, the real possibilities for implementing TAC and TEP are hampered by these same structural inequalities, where access and connectivity gaps limit the scope of any innovative proposal.

At the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University in Esmeraldas, these problems have intensified in recent contexts of

institutional crisis. The lack of infrastructure, intermittent internet access, and unequal access to computers ultimately stifled the continuity of classes. This situation exposed the fragility of a pedagogical model that only functions within a stable physical classroom. Therefore, the use of screens in classrooms did not arise from innovative and organized planning. It was, in reality, a desperate response of institutional adaptation to survive emergency situations.

Faced with these conditions, more flexible pedagogical practices began to consolidate, supported by asynchronous resources, mobile communication, and collaborative content production. These experiences show that the educational value of ICTs and ICTs does not necessarily depend on the degree of technological sophistication, but rather on their capacity to sustain pedagogical connections, promote academic continuity, and expand student participation in crisis contexts.

However, these transformations have also revealed significant limitations. Digital overload, inequalities in access, and teacher burnout challenge optimistic views that present digitization as an automatic solution to educational problems. Díaz-Barriga (2021) warns that university innovation cannot be reduced to the simple incorporation of technologies, but rather requires a critical review of educational goals and the institutional conditions that organize teaching processes.

Along similar lines, Engel and Coll (2021) argue that hybrid learning environments only acquire pedagogical meaning when they incorporate mediations capable of responding to students' real trajectories and needs. From this perspective, technologies do not replace teaching, but rather demand new forms of support, interaction, and the construction of meaningful educational experiences.

Xu et al. (2025) reinforce this position by insisting on the urgent need to humanize virtual environments. To achieve this, they propose designing practices based on genuine communication, empathy, and the creation of strong academic bonds. This goal takes on unique value in Language and Literature courses. In our discipline, the learning process cannot be automated; it depends directly on critical debate, open dialogue, and the experience of interpreting texts in community.

Therefore, integrating ICTs and ICTs in contexts marked by technological gaps requires overcoming both technophobic views and technocratic approaches to innovation. The challenge lies not only in digitizing education or incorporating platforms, but in building pedagogical frameworks capable of articulating critical thinking, humanistic education, and contextual sensitivity in scenarios marked by profound inequalities.

Teacher Resistance, Professional Identity, and Pedagogical Change

One of the greatest challenges in updating teaching in higher education is not the use of new technologies or methodologies. The real challenge lies in the impact these processes have on professors' professional identity. In Language and Literature programs, this clash is even more complex. This is due to the historical weight of academic traditions—humanistic, philological, and disciplinary—that have shaped teaching for decades.

Given this context, transforming university pedagogy requires much more than trying out new methods. It implies a fundamental rethinking of notions of knowledge, academic authority, and the very purpose of teaching at the university. For this reason, the well-known "resistance to change" should not be seen as a mere individual whim of the professor. It is a phenomenon conditioned by institutional, cultural, and emotional factors that structure teaching practice.

Ziliotto and Luiz-Poli (2024) argue that the identity of the university professor is currently under considerable strain due to the demands of innovation, productivity, and constant training that are redefining academic employment. In line with this, it is noted that the rush for technical or methodological updates can marginalize the interpretive and humanistic aspects of teaching (Wessels, 2025).

Despite this, the rejection by professors is not uniform, nor is it simply stubbornness. Often, it expresses a valid critique of innovations that prioritize educational technology without a sound pedagogical foundation. Díaz-Barriga (2021) points out that a large number of university reforms introduced digital tools without understanding their educational consequences. This leads to superficial changes that do not address the existing teaching structures but rather merely mask them in an instrumental way.

At the same time, there is resistance tied to institutional inertia, conservative academic cultures, and dynamics that link respect for teachers with traditional lectures. In certain humanities disciplines, active learning methodologies are often seen as a threat to academic rigor or intellectual depth. This misgiving hinders the adoption of more participatory learning approaches.

These frictions become critical in a Latin America marked by institutional instability, excessive workloads, and a lack of ongoing pedagogical training. García and Silva (2022) demonstrate that, in transitioning to online learning, many professors encountered insurmountable obstacles to using technology due to institutional neglect, physical exhaustion, and the absence of effective support programs.

In the case of Ecuador, current research demonstrates that developing digital competencies in teachers goes far

beyond simply providing them with internet access or computers. Attitudinal, pedagogical, and institutional factors all come into play. Cisneros-Barahona et al. (2024) and Chiu et al. (2024) agree that the assimilation of educational technology depends directly on teacher motivation, their perceived self-efficacy, and the organizational conditions offered by each university.

At the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University in Esmeraldas, this clash became much more acute as a result of recent institutional crises. Infrastructure deficits, unforeseen changes in academic processes, and connectivity problems maximized the demands for adaptation on professors. The faculty was forced to restructure their classes on the fly and in a context of total uncertainty.

Despite everything, this critical situation also served to highlight real processes of pedagogical resilience. Many teachers designed flexible teaching strategies, student support programs, and rapid curriculum adjustments. This demonstrates that innovation doesn't always stem from an official plan designed in institutional offices; often, it emerges as a situated and urgent response to survive adversity.

Ongoing teacher training plays a crucial role in this process. Gui et al. (2026) highlight that professional development directly impacts teachers' self-efficacy, attitudes, and skills in addressing the demands of contemporary education. However, updating teachers is not simply about providing technical software courses. It must open channels for critically reflecting on classroom dynamics and the material conditions of academic employment. Training with this approach not only improves digital skills but also strengthens the ability to maintain meaningful human connections in virtual classrooms, where the relational component is the true driving force (Xu et al., 2025).

On the other hand, O'Shea (2021) highlights the importance of distributed leadership when innovating in education. He argues that didactic change requires genuine institutional collaboration and the collective building of capacities within the university community. This perspective is vital in times of crisis: no educational transformation can be sustained if it depends solely on the isolated efforts of individual teachers.

Analyzed from this perspective, teacher resistance to change ceases to be a mere whim and reveals itself as a complex phenomenon. It involves frictions related to professional identity, working conditions, the institution's internal culture, and the very purpose of higher education. Far from being a simple obstacle, this resistance acts as a barometer, indicating the structural conflicts that plague innovation in universities.

Educational Resilience and the Reconfiguration of Learning Environments After Institutional Crises

The institutional crises of recent years have forced universities to shake up their structures. It is no longer just a matter of patching up the continuity of classes at the administrative level, but of rethinking the pedagogical foundations of higher education. In Latin America, these upheavals have laid bare deep-seated problems: profound social inequalities, a precarious technological infrastructure, and the inability of institutions to react to emergencies.

Faced with this reality, the concept of educational resilience has taken on undeniable importance. It should not be understood as a simple logistical or systems adaptation. It is a profound process of didactic reorganization to safeguard meaningful learning in the midst of uncertainty. Its true goal goes far beyond maintaining current plans. What it seeks is to protect human connections, classroom debate, and the shared creation of knowledge when the environment becomes adverse.

The transitions to virtual and hybrid learning in universities exposed both avenues for innovation and severe material fractures. Engel and Coll (2021) argue that hybrid classrooms open the door to more flexible and personalized learning. However, they issue a crucial warning: the true pedagogical value of these tools depends on professors guiding the process by considering the needs of their students and the limitations of their own institution. Without this analysis, digitalization becomes an empty shell. It is reduced to a change of format that masks classes without transforming old teaching practices.

Along complementary lines, Sirk (2024) points out that, in emergency contexts, educational institutions tend to develop adaptive strategies based on teacher collaboration, flexible reorganization of teaching, and the construction of collective responses. These dynamics show that pedagogical resilience is not a strictly individual process, but rather an institutional and community construct that emerges in the face of crisis situations. At the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University of Esmeraldas, these dynamics intensified in recent institutional crises marked by infrastructure damage, connectivity issues, and the reorganization of academic processes. These conditions highlighted the limitations of pedagogical models dependent on traditional in-person instruction and, at the same time, the need to strengthen institutional preparedness for potential emergency scenarios.

In the Language and Literature Pedagogy program, these difficulties acquired particular complexity due to the dialogic and interpretive nature of its educational processes. Teaching reading, writing, and literary interpretation requires sustained pedagogical interactions that cannot always be effectively transferred to improvised virtual environments or those

limited by technology.

Despite the difficulties, the crisis acted as a catalyst for pedagogical adaptation, forcing a redesign of educational mediation methods. The use of asynchronous resources, communication via mobile devices, the design of flexible materials, and collaborative tasks served as a lifeline for maintaining continuity amidst institutional fragmentation. These actions demonstrate that educational resilience is not solely dependent on having a robust technological infrastructure. It depends, above all, on the teacher's ability to creatively restructure their lessons.

However, these emergency exits also brought to light very serious structural frictions. The digital divide, the economic hardship faced by students, and the physical and mental exhaustion of teachers severely hampered the progress of classes. Seen in this light, resilience is neither a linear goal nor an idyllic state that everyone achieves equally. It is a complex practice, heavily influenced by long-standing social and institutional inequalities.

In this regard, Mendoza-Lozano et al. (2024) emphasize that resilience in higher education is strongly influenced by socioeconomic factors and material barriers. These elements determine both student trajectories and the institutional capacity to respond to uncertainty. Their analysis encourages us to understand academic continuity beyond mere logistics or immediate didactic urgency.

Alongside these material challenges, Xu et al. (2025) stress the urgent need to safeguard the human element in hybrid classrooms. They emphasize the value of assertive communication, empathy, and genuine support from the teacher. This requirement becomes paramount when teaching Language and Literature. In our field, learning does not occur in isolation; it is directly fueled by interpretive interaction and critical debate among individuals.

From this perspective, Larrosa's (2003) ideas take on special significance, reminding us that education is not about simply pouring content into the student's mind. It involves fundamentally transforming how the individual connects with knowledge and their own culture. During a crisis, these dimensions are subjected to extreme pressure, but they do not disappear. They are reconfigured to give way to new forms of pedagogical relationships.

Therefore, redesigning learning environments after an institutional collapse requires abandoning technocratic views of innovation—those that believe everything can be solved by turning on a screen. Díaz-Barriga (2021) issues a clear warning: introducing technology into the classroom does not guarantee any pedagogical change if the institution does not first reform its educational goals and the human interaction within the classroom.

Ultimately, educational resilience in university programs in Language and Literature is defined as a mechanism that unites methodological flexibility, critical teacher mediation, and the reconstruction of learning relationships. The experiences analyzed offer a powerful lesson. True transformations do not arise from the latest technological devices. They emerge from the capacity of teachers and institutions to sustain vibrant and contextualized teaching practices amidst uncertainty.

Lights and Shadows of Didactic Innovation in Higher Education

Educational innovation has firmly established itself as a central theme in contemporary university discourse. However, in classrooms where Language and Literature are taught, this process advances at uneven and contradictory paces. It is severely hampered by entrenched institutional structures, a lack of material resources, and a deeply ingrained tradition that is very difficult to break. Far from being a linear path to improvement, innovation reveals itself as a theoretical battleground. There, the urgency to transform pedagogy clashes with the stubbornness of old routines and the weight of social inequality.

The main achievement of these innovative proposals is that they have challenged traditional lectures based on the professor's monologue. Multiple studies demonstrate that teamwork methodologies, hybrid classrooms, and participatory dynamics enhance student autonomy, scientific debate, and the collective creation of knowledge. Wang et al. (2026) argue that blended learning schemes increase student engagement, provided they are combined with flexibility, clear teacher guidance, and active participation throughout the process. In our discipline, the digital revolution definitively broadened access to reading and writing. This technological shift completely reconfigured literacy habits, forcing us to interact with texts within multimodal environments (Cassany, 2012). Along the same lines, pedagogies linked to the digital humanities have expanded the possibilities of literary teaching through more interactive, interdisciplinary, and collaborative experiences, fostering processes of collective interpretation and new forms of cultural production (Georgopoulou et al., 2025).

One of the main problems identified in the specialized literature is the frequent confusion between innovation and digitization. Díaz-Barriga (2021) warns that numerous university reforms have incorporated digital tools without truly transforming pedagogical aims or teaching relationships. In line with this critique, Wessels (2025) argues that the incorporation of emerging technologies only acquires pedagogical meaning when it preserves the interpretive, critical, and humanistic dimensions of university education.

These tensions are especially visible in Latin American contexts marked by technological inequality and institutional fragility, where gaps in access, connectivity, and teacher training continue to limit the consolidation of sustainable hybrid

models (García and Silva, 2022). In this scenario, the demands of innovation have also impacted the professional identity of university faculty, generating tensions between institutional updating, workload overload, and the preservation of critical educational approaches (Ziliotto and Luiz-Poli, 2024).

At the Luis Vargas Torres Technical University in Esmeraldas, these tensions have intensified in recent contexts of institutional crisis. Although hybrid strategies have allowed for the partial maintenance of academic continuity, they have also highlighted inequalities in access, unreliable connectivity, and material limitations that affect the educational experience. These conditions confirm that pedagogical innovation depends not only on the incorporation of technology but also on the transformation of teaching practices.

In this scenario, emerging technologies, including artificial intelligence, introduce new dilemmas for humanities education. Wessels (2025) warns that their integration is only pedagogically meaningful when it preserves the interpretive and critical dimension of university education, avoiding the automation of academic thinking. Along complementary lines, Luckin (2018) argues that artificial intelligence in higher education acquires pedagogical value when it strengthens complex cognitive processes and expands the possibilities for teacher mediation within contextualized learning experiences.

Therefore, didactic innovation cannot be understood either as a replacement of tradition or as an uncritical adoption of digital technology. It constitutes a situated process that is built at the intersection of institutional conditions, teaching practices, and specific sociocultural contexts, in scenarios of high complexity and educational inequality.

The so-called "beacons" of innovation emerge when pedagogical strategies broaden student participation, strengthen the learning experience, and allow for the contextualized reorganization of teaching. The "shadows," on the other hand, appear when innovation is reduced to an instrumental logic, deepens inequalities, or weakens the humanistic dimension of university education.

Consequently, the didactic updating of Language and Literature teachers demands critical, hybrid, and contextualized pedagogical models capable of articulating technological innovation, cultural mediation, and humanistic education without reducing the complexity of the educational process to mere technical modernization.

CONCLUSIONS

This literature review demonstrates that updating the teaching methods of university professors of Language and Literature is not a technical or technological matter. It is a complex reconfiguration. It directly affects classroom practices, notions of knowledge, and the material conditions that shape current higher education. Therefore, educational innovation must be understood as a situated process, caught in the clash between the tradition of the subject, the digital age, and social inequality.

A central contribution of the analysis is to verify that, despite the strong official discourse on innovation, models based on delivering content, assessing through rote memorization, and maintaining the absolute protagonism of the professor persist in classrooms. This entrenchment is not simply an individual whim of teachers. It responds to institutional structures consolidated over time that continue to reward and legitimize traditional teaching.

At the same time, it was identified that innovative proposals such as active methodologies, hybrid environments, virtual screens, and teamwork have great potential to transform classrooms. However, this real impact only emerges when these strategies fundamentally transform teaching practices. It is crucial to avoid reducing them to mere technical embellishments or curriculum modernization goals.

The study also revealed an unavoidable material obstacle: in Latin America, innovation is impossible if economic conditions and campus support are ignored. The digital divide, infrastructure problems, and gaps in teacher training continue to hinder new pedagogical models. This results in uneven, incomplete, and fragmented university modernization.

Examining the reality of public universities in the region helps to better understand this problem. Recent institutional crises exposed the weakness of traditional classrooms but also highlighted the adaptability of teachers. Even so, educational resilience should not be used as an excuse for states to stop funding higher education. It does not replace public policies; it is merely a survival response to vulnerability.

Another key finding is that the shift in teaching methods directly impacts teachers' professional identity. Current transformations are redefining their roles, creating tension between the demand for constant professional development, the desire to uphold academic rigor, and the crisis of authority in the classroom. Viewed in this light, teachers' resistance is not merely an obstacle. It reflects a genuine epistemological debate about the nature of university education.

In line with this, the conclusion is that simply adding digital resources, including ICTs, IEPs, and artificial intelligence,

does not guarantee pedagogical improvement. Its true success depends on teacher guidance, the course objectives, and the institution's material context. Without a critical perspective, digitalization becomes a trap: it ends up simply repeating traditional classes, but disguised as innovative applications.

From a broader perspective, this review places Language and Literature teaching at a historical crossroads. They must choose between preserving their humanistic essence or transforming their classes to respond to a world filled with uncertainty and screens. This dilemma cannot be solved by erasing the past. It demands building critical bridges between innovation, cultural mediation, and the humanities.

With this idea in mind, we propose that updating teaching is a continuous exercise in pedagogical reconstruction. Here, innovation is not measured by the sophistication of the software projected in the classroom. It is defined by the real capacity to change human relationships in the classroom, the ways of interpreting knowledge, and the ways of learning together. Looking ahead, this work indicates the urgent need for future research that compares the realities of different campuses and provides empirical data on the actual use of these methodologies in Latin American higher education. Likewise, it is a priority to study the direct impact of artificial intelligence and virtual environments on humanities programs, focusing on how they currently affect the processes of reading, writing, and literary criticism.

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