

TECHNOLOGY IS NOT PEDAGOGY



The priority for educators has always been to create a learning environment where learners are able to experience a successful learning process. As educators they have a strong motive towards designing, engaging and motivating lessons aiming to improve their art of teaching. This effort is the main reason that resulted in pedagogic research and experimentation on methods and activities for effective teaching (Pecorino, 2004). With the development of educational technologies (edtech), that has been supported by research in boosting engagement levels of students (Brown, 2020), allowed educators to integrate technology in teaching and learning practice and are constantly striving to adopt the next-best methods and strategies. But it needs to be taken into consideration that simply using technological components in the class does not equate to digital pedagogy (Research Guides, 2021).

Many claims on the use of technology in their classrooms. From the use of PowerPoint or websites and computer research techniques to use of Google Classroom, Learning Management Systems (LMS) and other devices to attract and maintain attention, educational institutions are demonstrating their applications of

technology in teaching and learning. Brian Croxall states, “just because you are using digital technology in your teaching, does not mean that you are practicing digital pedagogy, especially if you are not reflecting on pedagogical change.” It goes along with the statement of Paul Fyfe; “if the tool you have is a hammer, it is tempting to treat problems as nails,”. It simply means that incorporation of PowerPoint in a lecture without thinking about how the pedagogical approach to the lecture should change as a result, is same as a lecture without even using the PowerPoint!

Pedagogy represents the science behind teaching. An accomplished teacher should not only master in the content and curriculum but also should be able to adapt instructional methods according to the learners’ needs (Brown, 2020). So, a teacher should know the purpose of teaching before choosing a method (e.g., lecture, tutorial, simulation, essay, exam) (Fawns, 2020). Then, there should be the search for educational drivers that would keep the learners engaged in the learning process to achieve the purpose. The choice of technology then becomes shaped by what is possible and available in this already-constrained conception of teaching (Fawns, 2020).

The main focus should always remain on effective teaching. Steven Anderson who is the co-founder of Web20Classroom states; “if we focus on strong pedagogy, they’ll have no choice but to be engaged.” Hence, before using a certain tool or technology, teachers should have clear purpose and it should not be used simply because it’s available, nor because it’s ‘on trend’ (Brown, 2020). As per education professionals, learners should be exposed to variety of learning experience to support learning engagement. Thus, the use of technology should be transformational. It should allow students to do something they couldn’t do before.

It is the fact that the countless number of technological tools and devices have made the impossible possible, but when it comes to integration, careful consideration is required. While educational technology opens new opportunities for the educators to enable an effective teaching and learning process, it should always have a purpose. The effectiveness of edtech depends on the quality of pedagogy that drives it. Educators must ask the question; “Is the juice worth the squeeze?” before a certain tool or technology is employed. Afterall it is not the PowerPoint; it is about the pedagogy!

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