

National Workshop on New Technologies for 21st Century Teachers

Gen Z learns effectively and quickly using new technology enabled learning tools such as blogger, digital quizzes, nearpod, scoopit, participate, infographics, etc. A two day national workshop organized by Department of English, Loyola college in collaboration with Language Teachers' Association of India (ELTAI) on December 06 & 07, 2019 at Loyola College trained college and university professors from Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Tamil Nadu on curating, organizing and sharing digital resources and using these learning platforms to help learners develop thinking skills, make learning and teaching becomes more student-centered, promote learners' autonomy and help them feel more confident, and increase learners' motivation to learn effectively.

Inaugurating the workshop, Mr. Muthu Singaram, CEO, Incubation at Healthcare Technology Innovation Centre (HTIC), Indian Institute of Technology Madras observed that the advent of new technologies is beginning to redesign the curriculum and hence, the teaching strategies need to be updated and match with internet teaching and learning tools. The following is the excerpt from his inaugural address:

Strategies to manage the 21st century classroom

We have all seen the black and white images of the one-room schoolhouse. Students sit in perfect rows that face a teacher who is writing on a chalkboard. Until the last decade, our classrooms have not drastically differed from those 100-year old images. We are so fortunate to be living and teaching in a time of rapid educational change. Instead of personal student chalkboards, a number of students now have access to electronic tablets. Many teachers can now use smart boards instead of dry-erase boards. The limits of the central textbook have transcended the limitless information gathered online. Although these changes are exciting, using technology in the classroom can seem overwhelming when you have multiple objectives to achieve each day and 30 - 35 students to engage simultaneously. So how do we manage the advancing 21st century classroom environment? Here are eight real- world strategies to slay the daunting, technology classroom dragon.

Start with your classroom setup

1. Make digital citizenship a priority
2. Teach mini lessons before using devices
3. Use the power of choice
4. Remember that sharing is caring
5. Conduct teacher check-ins
6. Build in breaks from devices
7. Software tools are your friends

A time traveller from the mid-20th century would probably have a heart attack if they walked into a modern classroom during a lesson. Gone are the days when teachers stand in front of the classroom and talk at their students all day. Now, you will likely find students working together using various forms of educational technology. In this context, the term ‘technology’ refers to any device used to supplement and enhance student learning. The various types of devices that fall under this umbrella are

1. Computers
2. Interactive Whiteboards
3. Tablets
4. Cameras
5. Electrical outlets and USB ports
6. Wi-Fi
7. Term paper review tools

With the advent of new technologies being infused in school curricula, educators and school leaders are beginning to rethink all facets of data in the classroom. New, innovative methods of data collection are continually being developed, which offer new options for ongoing formative, culminating summative and alternative assessments. Although challenges in curriculum design may arise due to advanced technology integration, schools are nonetheless embracing the future. Here are five emerging trends for 21st century classrooms:

1. App innovation and Gamification
2. Digital Literacy
3. Library Media Specialists
4. Self-directed Professional Development
5. Collaborative Learning

Dr. K. Elango, National Secretary, ELTAI, cautioned the participants not to be carried away too much oblivious of the human touch as a teacher while advancing to new strata of teaching techniques. He asked the participants if the learners are better today in the world of technology. He implicated the necessity to comprehend language, retain its characteristics and develop sensibility to apply clearly the same in real life situations. He statistically enumerated that the World Bank came up with the data where learning poverty had soared so high to 55% in recent times. He further asserted that learners should make prudential use of technology refraining from technological aids, whenever necessary.

Dr. K.S.Antonysamy, Head, Department of English, Loyola College and coordinator of the workshop advocated the use of new technologies as they provide interaction between teachers and learners, comprehensible input and output, and promote cooperative learning. He also highlighted the transformative power of technology and its capacity to act as a bridge to overcome the generation gap in the world of teaching and learning.

As the resource person, **Dr P.N. Ramani**, English studies Consultant demonstrated the methods to create presentations that are interactive and engage the attention of the audience using tools such as *Zoho* and *Prezi*. Participants were given hands on experience to create and edit audio clips. Attitude towards presentation in conferences as well as the need to grow professionally was also talked about in length.

Digital technology is moving at such a fast pace with new services being rendered continuously that provide a platform for open access to learning. **Dr Revathi Viswanathan**, ELT Consultant & Teacher Trainer expounded the ways to curate, organise and share digital resources through sites such as *Digigo* and *Scoop-it* as they prove useful to the educational needs of students. Further, *blogging* was proved to be an interactive space for the students to develop writing skills and creating a digital classroom through digital portfolios such as *seesaw* to be platform for active participation of both the student and the teacher.

Another trainer for Educational Technology, **Dr Xavier Pradheep Singh**, St. Joseph's College, Trichy stressed the need for *gamification* to encourage the learning process, *digital quizzes* to test the knowledge of the students in a competitive manner using *nearpod* and interactive video content through *edpuzzle* focusing upon audio-visual aspect of learning. The rationale behind creating posters and infographics and their learning appeal to 21st century learners was explicated in detail.

At the end of workshop, the participants strongly felt that the firsthand experience of the technological tools would boost of their technical skills and enable them to be better prepared for the challenging tasks ahead in the 21st century classroom.