



TECHNOLOGY IN CLASSROOMS: A GO OR A NO GO?

LOIDA G. LAINEZ-LAGRISOLA, PhD.

Quillbot, PhotoMath, Speechify, Grammarly, ChatGPT. Are you familiar with any of these artificial intelligence tools? The world has evolved so much today that things have been made quite easier than how they used to be. In education, several applications and programs have been created for the specific purpose of maximizing technology for the ease of education. Although critics of AI have been vocal on the utilization of these tools which can hamper the development of students' essential skills, no one can deny the fact that they are quite beneficial, not only for the students but the teachers, too. Incorporation of technology in education opens opportunities for the development of global skills of communication, collaboration, creativity, and critical thinking.

Several applications that aim to enhance communication are easily accessible through the internet. In fact, according to Verma (2023), ChatGPT is one of the commonly used AI tools of students, second to Rytr.me, which is another tool that helps in any kind of writing requirement. A teacher might worry that these AI tools tempt students to overuse them by submitting its actual product. However, given the right prompts, clear and specific instructions, and elaborate questions, a student might not get the desired outcome. Thus, for teachers, instead of making these writing tools that improve communication our enemies, why not maximize them in the classroom? Teachers can utilize these applications in enhancing lessons, improving assessment and encouraging higher order thinking skills (Wilichowski, & Cobo, 2023).

Collaboration and creativity are other benefits of technology integration. The pandemic forced people to immediately adapt to distance learning, and even though the experiences of schools and students were widely varied, it is undeniable that it brought out opportunities for adaptation and innovation. Zoom, Google Meet and the likes allowed organizations to work

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together despite the distance. Padlet, Google Slides, Canva, and Google Docs made it easier for learners to collaborate as well in producing outputs. A teacher who recognizes these advantages would never neglect these collaborative and creative platforms that can still be carried on even after the pandemic. Going back to the old and traditional ways of the education practices is a waste of betterment opportunities for the community and school stakeholders.

Finally, critical thinking is undoubtedly improved with the use of technology in education. One must realize that the internet has its highs and lows. According to Dans (2023), "The use of ChatGPT as a search engine has made the need for critical thinking more pressing than ever." This is absolutely true, for technology, given its purpose of making things easier for everyone, can be misused. One might think that the product is already okay since an intelligent robot created it, but one must remember that they can still have some lapses. Therefore, critical and analytical thinking are essential to maximize technology's full potential. On another note, educators can make use of technology to improve the aforementioned skills. Brainstorming platforms like Mentimeter and Jamboard are only two out of a thousand examples one can use for educational improvement.

Times have changed drastically and abruptly, and it is imperative that educators are well equipped with all the things needed to perform excellently in a 21st century classroom. Gone are the days of traditional chalk and board talk. Now is the time for creativity, exploration, and adaptation. In a blink of an eye, our current practices with the help of technology may change, but at least, before it evolves into another form, we can proudly say that we chose to bend and not break amidst the storm.

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