

PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology

TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY IN UPSICLASSROOMS

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Franklin Thambi Jose. S, J. Preethi, P.Vijaya. TEACHING WITH TECHNOLOGY IN UPSICLASSROOMS--Palarch's Journal Of Archaeology Of Egypt/Egyptology 17(7), 10744-10751. ISSN 1567-214x

Keywords: technology, Logia, inventions.

ABSTRACT

Technology is one of the inventions in the world. The word 'technology' is derived from the ancient language, Greek. According to Greek language, this word has two parts such as *techne* and *logia*. In which, *techne* refers to 'art' or 'skill' and *logia* refers to 'collection of techniques, methods, processes used in the production of scientific items'. *Logia*, literally means words or discourse about the way things are gained.

1. INTRODUCTION

Technology is the knowledge or art of techniques, processes, skills, methods, etc. to produce new devices or goods. It consists of the facts and procedures necessary to order matter and information, and also how to discover new means for such transformations. It is not a latest invention. The word can be latest, but the technology is not. It came to exist when humans invented fire by the friction of rocks approximately 40,000 years ago (Ambrose, 2001).

Technology has hit all the aspects of our daily life. It can be seen in all the fields of this century. It didn't leave the field of education especially classroom.

Classroom is a room where usually teaching takes place. According to Braff (2009) 'classroom is a large surface in which instructors and students share their ideas through notes, and experiences with others'. Classrooms are found in all kinds of educational institutions such as training institutes or

organisations, schools, colleges and universities(Thambi Jose,2015). Usually classrooms are closed rooms in order to avoid outside distractions which interrupts the teaching or learning processes. But still open air classrooms are found in some countries. It can have an intake from small group of 2 or 3 to big group of more than 100s of students. Traditionally, classrooms have blackboard or white board, markers, chalks, books, references, etc. It is also equipped with all the facilities like fan, air condition, chair, table, writing pads, micro phone, speaker, etc. Such classrooms can be seen in the Sultan Idris Education University, Malaysia of which the author is going to focus about.

2. SULTAN IDRIS EDUCATION UNIVERSITY (UPSI)

Sultan Idris Education University is situated in a calm and quiet town Tanjung Malim, Malaysia. It is shortly called as UPSI. It is one of the oldest higher educational learning institutes in Malaysia. In the year 1922 on 29th November, the government started a training college at Tanjung Malim and named 'Sultan Idris Training College' (SITC). It was named after the 28th Sultan of Perak, late Sultan Idris MurshidulAzam Shah. In the beginning the training course was for three years. After the 'Education Committee Report' in 1956, commonly called as 'Razak Report', the training course was extended to five years and new courses were introduced (Thambi Jose, Samikkanu& Kingston, 2015). Officially SITC came to be known by its Malay name, 'MaktabPerguruan Sultan Idris' (MPSI). In English it is known as 'Sultan Idris Teachers College'. Later in 1976, MPSI became co-educated college with the admission of 150 female students. In the first batch itself the college got 150 female students. In 1987, MPSI was upgraded and renamed 'InstitutPerguruan Sultan Idris' (IPSI). In English it is known as 'Sultan Idris Teachers Institute'. Also new courses were introduced and this lead to a degree conferred by 'UniversitiPertanian Malaysia' which is now known as 'Universiti Putra Malaysia' (UPM). On the 1st May in the year 1997, IPSI was again upgraded to a full university called as UniversitiPendidikan Sultan Idris (About UPSI). Due to the requirement of many teachers in primary and secondary schools in Malaysia, many subjects and new courses at Diploma, Degree, Masters and PhD levels were introduced. The graduated students were appointed in the primary and secondary schools of various parts of Malaysia.

3. TEACHING IN CLASSROOMS

Classroom teaching or learning is based upon three important aspects. They are:

1. Lectures
2. Tutorials and Discussions

3. Laboratory

3.1 Lectures

Lecture is an educational talk to the students in a university or college or any higher educational institutions(Bowen, 2012)

Usually students in a classroom will be from different backgrounds and have different expectations and awareness. Hence the lectures should include text based teaching, images, audio visual, slides, etc. in the classroom. All the lectures should be prepared for teaching sessions. Handouts can be prepared from the lectures. Furthermore, lectures should be based on the curriculum and the teaching and learning methods.

3.2 Tutorials and Discussions

Tutorial is an instruction given by a lecturer to the university or college students in individual or a group. In a classroom teaching situation, tutorial is must. It can be given to the average and weak students separately.

Discussion is the process of talking about some subject matter usually in order to reach a decision or to exchange thoughts. Students can be given opportunity to discuss on a particular topic which is very much related to that day's lecture or lesson.

3.3 Laboratory

Laboratory is a room furnished for scientific experiments, teaching, etc., in general. All the students in an educational institution should know about the use of laboratory. Hence students should be taken to the laboratory to make sure that they have understood the theories, concepts and processes. Further, scientific experiments can be conducted.

Language laboratory is also a room equipped with audio and visual equipment for learning languages. Language students should be taken to the language laboratories (Bowen, 2012). By this, students will know clearly about their pronunciation, accent, clarity, etc. over a language.

4. TECHNOLOGY IN UPSI CLASSROOMS

Now a day, technology is used in all the classrooms particularly in Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI). Technology is used here for lecturing, discussion, writing assignment, mark keying, results, etc. Also have various technological teaching equipments in classrooms.

Sultan Idris Education University has two campuses such as old and new. All the classrooms are furnished and equipped with foldable or cushion chairs, foldable tables, writing pads, air conditioners, white board, LCD projector,

projector screen, micro phone, speakers and computers. The electronic equipments are permanent in each and every classroom. In some classrooms like E-learning (1 to 15), Lecture halls (DKA to DKN) and Block-7 have theatre mode of seating.

5. TECHNOLOGICAL EQUIPMENTS AND USE

The teaching and learning processes in UPSI uses various technological equipments and these are useful for both teaching staffs and students. Some of them are discussed briefly.

5.1 Using Microsoft PowerPoint

Academic teaching staff uses slides i.e. Powerpoint presentations for teaching different subjects in the classroom. Though it takes extra time to prepare the slides, it becomes easy to explain the difficult concepts and principles with illustrations. They use light colors and necessary images in their slides.

Students are benefited much in this type of teaching. It attracts the students and also creates interest among them. Further, students easily understand the lessons taught in the classroom. Some students take snaps in their mobile phones and use them for further reading.

5.2 Using Software

Software is being used in the classroom to teach, especially languages and related subjects. For instance, to teach literature, literature software is used in the classroom. It is used only as a supplementary material.

The use of software in the classroom creates awareness and enthusiasm among the students. Due to the interactive facility found in the software, students are able to clarify and do the exercises very easily.

5.3 Using Youtube

Both the campuses of UPSI are equipped with free WiFi connections. The staffs download videos, video clips, pictures through youtube in the computer provided in the classroom. With these downloaded items teaching and learning has been carried out.

Students are attracted by this type of teaching and gets interested. They listen and take notes.

5.4 Other Facilities

5.4.1 Online Assignment

Assignments are divided into two parts such as group and individual assignments. Topics are uploaded in the myguru2 of the university website provided for the teaching staffs. Myguru2 is a part of university website which is provided for each and every staffs with their teaching subjects of one semester. Separate user name and password is provided for all teaching staffs by the university. The topics of the individual assignment will be uploaded with instructions and deadline. Students are requested to upload their assignment before the deadline provided, otherwise they cannot upload. The assignments can be uploaded even from outside the campus.

5.4.2 Online Discussion

Usually, discussion takes place in the classroom. In UPSI, apart from classroom discussion, online discussion is also possible. Topic for group and individual discussions will be seen in the student's myguru2. Like staffs, students also have myguru2 with separate username and password. Students can discuss with other students in the site. Replies and suggestions can also be given in the discussion part. Online discussion should be completed by the 13th week of the semester. After that the staffs will give marks for the discussion in the myguru2.

5.4.3 Online Quiz

Quiz has separate marks in UPSI. The questions of the quiz with answers and marks allotted will be given to the system. These quiz questions should be answered at any time of the semester by the students. The quiz should be answered at a stretch. That is, once the quiz questions are opened in myguru2, all the answers should be entered within a period of 20 minutes. Or else it will close automatically. The answers will be checked by the system and provides marks automatically.

5.4.4 Online Messages

The staff can send any number of messages to the class students individually through myguru2. The students can reply to these messages. Further, the students can ask any queries through this facility.

5.4.5 Online Attendance

Both the staffs and students can punch-in their attendance every day. Each and every classroom, student's attendance machine is provided. When the students enter the class, they punch-in in the machine for every class timings. Staffs can

punch-in in any attendance machines found in various blocks of the two campuses. Staffs should be in the office compulsorily for 8 hours per day.

5.4.6 Online Markings

Staff can mark or correct the assignments and discussions in the myguru2 and key-in the marks in the system. The marks of these can be released after the 13th week of the semester. The final exam answer sheets should be corrected manually and key-in in the system after 10 days of the exams.

5.4.7 Others

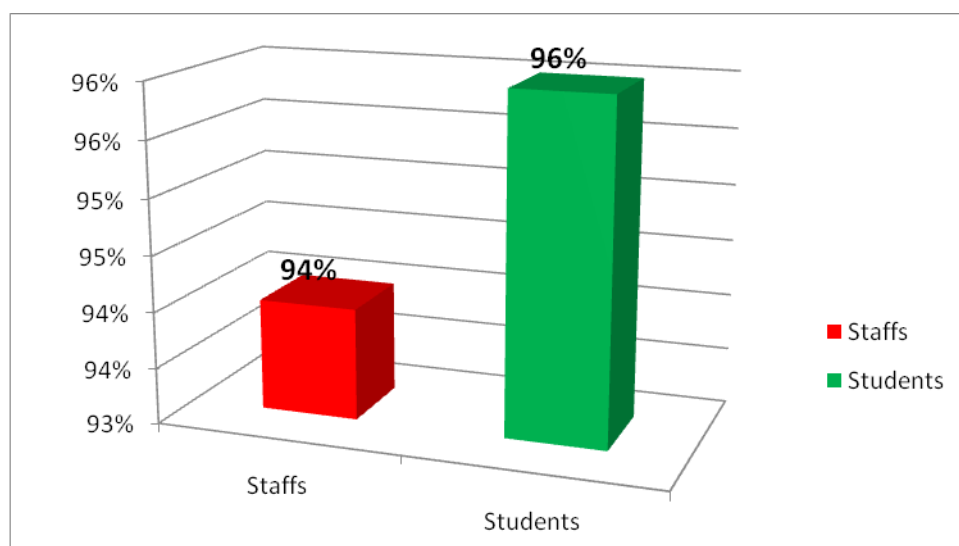
The curriculum, reference books related to the subjects, learning Outputs, 8 week monitoring, attendance, marks, etc. can be done through online.

Apart from myguru2 for staffs, there is MySis. Through this Mysis, marks can be key-in the system. Also, the details of the students, including their address, previous semester CGPA marks, time table, workload, students, attendance, etc. are visible.

6. SURVEY

A survey was conducted among the staffs and students of UPSI by the researcher. 96% of the students were satisfied and feel happy with the technology used in classroom where as 94% of the staffs were satisfied. Remaining percentage of staffs and students said that they are confused a little bit since they were using for the first time. Some staffs said that the technology sometimes fail to open certain files or related items in the classroom which creates stress and pressure. For instance, if the net connection is slow, then it takes time to download or doesn't open. That particular class hour will be spoiled because of this failure. Moreover, the system doesn't accept certain applications when the deadline is over.

The percentage of staffs and students are shown in the chart.



PERCENTAGE OF STAFFS AND STUDENTS SATISFIED WITH THE USE OF TECHNOLOGY IN CLASSROOM TEACHING

7. CONCLUSION

Sultan Idris Education University (UPSI) is one of the old education institutes in Malaysia. It changed its facilities according to the modern technology. Having modern technologies in teaching and learning processes will definitely create new thoughts and ideas among the students which will be the benefit of the nation.

Teaching and learning in classrooms with technologies will make the things easier. Teachers find easy to teach and students find easy to learn and understand even the tough concepts and formulae. Further, students are very much attracted by the internet technology in general. For instance, they use whatsapp, facebook, twitter, etc. to spend time as well as to get information by sharing.

The language laboratories are equipped with interactive facilities even in white boards. So such facilities create enthusiasm among teachers and students.

Also due to the advancement of technology in classrooms teachers and students become closer and closer. That's why critics say 'world has shrunk due to technology'.

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