



The Role of Technology in 21st Century Education

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Abstract:

Web-based communications systems are playing an ever-growing role in education, the most highly used of which are: HTML forms or scripting language forms, podcasts, audio, video, blogs, RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feeds and browser-based digital storage systems. These interactive, web-based technologies offer unprecedented access to learning, and require only that you have access to a computer connected to the Internet. Using this format, you can receive assignments, complete and return them almost entirely electronically, which in turn cuts down on paper waste. Paperless technology sustains the wonder of education. Now the education comes nearest to us via technology in 21st century. Education becomes easier now. Therefore the learner easily gets their esteems if he/she knows the use of technology. Hence if we define who is called 'Educated Person' now a day? The old answer of this question is not sufficient today. In the times of Globalization the person who does not know the terms 'computer', 'Internet', 'e-mail' etc. is called 'illiterate' in modern times.

Keywords: *Communication, Education, Educated Person, Globalization, Technology, 21st Century*

1. Introduction

Ever since 2000, educators and education reform folks have been quick to refer to “21st century education.” For over a decade, this term has been used to describe the changing landscape for educators. What it has become is another one of the many catchphrases (e.g. “differentiation,” “rigor,” “personalized learning”) thrown around by educators, reformers and anyone, really, who feels they know enough about education to talk about it.

But what do we really mean by “21st century education?” What makes education in this century so much different than the last? Does anyone remember saying “20th century education” back in the 1990s?

Most people argue that we are at transitional time for education — that with the incredible rate at which technology is advancing and entering the classroom, and with the amount of information available at our students’ fingertips, educators need to change how they teach to best prepare students for the future.

Technology has changed, and we are no longer concerned with our students finding information, but rather what to do with it all, but does teaching itself really need to change in drastic ways? Here I discuss about 21st century education.

2. Flipping the Classroom

One of the biggest trends right now is the flipped classroom model. In this model, the traditional teacher lecture during class is moved to at-home viewing through recorded videos. Class time is, instead, dedicated to guiding students through deeper understanding of content and to helping students with concepts with which they are struggling.

The flipped classroom model is a return to the idea that students need to build knowledge, and that knowledge cannot be poured into a child's head but must be created. By flipping their classrooms, educators have found that they are able to meet students where they are and provide more personalized learning experiences. While this model relies heavily on fairly new technologies (streaming video, DVDs), the concept is nothing new. John Dewey, back in the 19th century, argued that school put too much focus on the teacher and that the teacher should play more of a guide rather than a trough of knowledge for the child.

3. Preparing Students for the Future

Many conversations about 21st century education focus on preparing students for a job market and a world that don't exist yet. Technology is evolving at breakneck speed and schools are often lagging. How can we prepare our students for the future if our classrooms are stuck in the 20th or 19th centuries? While I would agree that this is a huge problem, and that it saddens me how slow schools are to catch up with the times, I have to believe that this is nothing new.

I'm sure, that with the advent of the ballpoint pen, many schools lamented the change, citing that without using ink to craft their words, students' handwriting would become sloppy and careless, and that students themselves would become lazy or careless. Schools have always been preparing their students for an unknown world, and they have often trailed the innovations of the day. This is not to say that it is acceptable for schools to be laggards. There is no reason that schools cannot get with the times.

As such, this is not a "21st century" problem. The technological advances that our students face are reflective of those all students have faced since the start of public education in this country.

4. What Makes "21st Century" Education Different?

While the core pedagogical beliefs communicated through discussions of "21st century education" are nothing new, this surge of conversations around "student-centered classrooms," "personalized learning" and "technology integration" (was there ever a "pencil integration" movement?) is a knee-jerk reaction to a decade of teach-to-the-test, drill-and-kill practices that have stripped the student out of the equation.

What we are seeing now is a new Progressive Era for education, with the focus less on compulsory schooling and expansion of access to education and more on redefining school based on pre-Progressive Era models such as apprenticeships, internships and school-as-real-life. 21st century education has also come to mean preparing students for life (as Dewey would have wanted) rather than preparing them for work at the factory or placing them on a

track that would define the rest of their adult life. It has also come to mean putting students back into the equation, offering choice and multiple paths for success.

What truly make education in the 21st century different from earlier iterations are the Internet and the ease at which it enables participatory learning and real-world experiences for learners, whether they are in school, home-schooled or unschooled.

5. Conclusion

21st century learning refers to the skills, technologies and insights that leading-edge educators, companies and organizations are using to create learning systems that are better suited to the emerging challenges of the 21st century. As such, the emphasis tends to be on new approaches which transcend and outperform older methods of teaching and learning.

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