



Reminiscence on the evolution of my teaching tools:

1989 TO 2021

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I stumbled on this idiom “Old habits die hard” and was curious about the origin. Upon searching the internet, I found the origin from a Polish proverb; and Meriam Webster dictionary defines it as “...hard to stop doing things that one has been doing for a long time.” How would this be applied to teaching and learning? Traditional educators have been challenged to keep up with the integration of ICT in teaching and learning. Hashim et. Al (2010) claimed that the influence of ICT is affecting the direction of instructional technology in Malaysia. This writing would highlight my experience of adapting my teaching tools throughout my more than 30 years teaching in Institute Teknologi MARA @ Universiti Teknologi MARA.

I was educated in the traditional way from primary to tertiary education in the 1980s. When I joined Institute Teknologi MARA in the late 1980s the teaching tools were predominantly the blackboard (even though it was green) and chalks. After finishing every class, you will be covered with the chalk dust. Writing on and erasing the board was no joke because at the end of every class you will be exhausted.



In the mid-1990s, visual aids in the form of overhead projectors (OHP) started to be used in the classroom. Initially the images were projected to the wall and eventually to the whiteboard and white projector screen. The



blackboard and chalks were ultimately phased out and replaced with the whiteboard and markers. During the initial usage of the OHP, the number of projectors and screens were limited; you must book and be lucky to enable one of your students to carry both to the classroom. As time passed, 90% of the classrooms were equipped with the OHP. The blackboard and chalk usage were minimized. You just need to buy your own transparency film and pens; then spend time writing your lecture notes on the film. Pre-planned the preparation of lecture notes would reduce writing on the transparencies during class session. Most of the transparency pens are permanent ink, so you must write carefully to minimize wastage of transparency.

By the end of the 1990s the blackboards were replaced with the whiteboard. Goodbye chalk dust; welcome messy hand. To minimize the cost of whiteboard markers, the refillable markers were purchased. Among the drawbacks of using the whiteboard were the occasional incidence of having to erase the whiteboard written by the previous users or much worse if they had used the permanent markers. Then, the OHP was replaced with the video projector enabling the use of audio-visual in teaching and learning.



The onset of the 21st century precipitated rapid changes in the use of technology in the classroom. Traditional classes were converted into technology enabled classrooms, which were equipped with direct projector, liquid crystal display (LCD), desktop computer, whiteboard, and

electric projector screen. The old OHPs became obsolete and joined the likes of typewriters. The availability of computer and LCD in the classroom enables the use of Microsoft Office such as PowerPoint and Excel, which have tremendously contributed to the ease of teaching and learning accounting. Gradually the LCDs were replaced with TV projector; personally, I prefer the LCD due to the ability of projecting larger and clearer images on a bigger screen. Alas, the cost of maintenance becomes the deciding factor.



By 2018 or 2019 lecturers must bring their own laptop to class; thus, we must carry many bags: laptop bag plus laptop, teaching materials; handbag, water bottle etc. At most, the average weight would be around 4 to 5 kg. Stay knowledgeable, stay fit.

In March 2020, the announcement of the MCO1 due to the rise of Covid 19 cases posed a challenge as teaching and learning must be conducted online via Open and Distance Learning (ODL). The UiTM Centre for Innovative Delivery and Learning Development (CIDL) defines it as “...the provision of flexible educational opportunities in terms of access and multiple modes of knowledge acquisition. Flexible means the availability of choices for educational endeavors anywhere, anytime and anyhow.” Tips and support from colleagues tremendously help through the initial journey to the unknown during the initial implementation of ODL. Once sceptical of online purchases, Shopee and Lazada became the norm of acquiring gadgets to assist teaching online. Days and nights browsing YouTube and ‘uncle’ Google to seek new knowledge and skill. Shifting from one learning platform to another – WhatsApp, Telegram, UFuture, Google Meet and finally Microsoft Team. The progression from printed textbook/modules, printed notes/slide notes and ultimately paperless dissemination of teaching materials through various platforms. Come what may, teaching and learning must go on.

Technology has made learning easy, interactive, and interesting with a multi selection of teaching tools to choose from. With the advancements in technology, education is seeing a 180-degree shift. It's no longer lecturer-centred approach but student-centred virtual learning. In my opinion, technology still cannot replace the humanity of lecture-student bond. So, I guess old habits die hard but will eventually die at your choice to stay abreast with the development especially in teaching and learning. I am waiting for artificial intelligence in teaching and learning.

Who teachers are and who they teach remains the same.
What teachers stand for and what they aim to accomplish hasn't altered.
Where teachers work and why they do what they do remains steadfast.
It is simply the how teachers teach that has changed.

<https://resourced.prometheanworld.com>

References:

Hashim, Yusup & Gapor, Abd. (2010). The Evolution of Instructional Technology in Malaysia. *International Journal of Instructional Media*. 37: 229-238.

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