TREND 2: BRING YOUR OWN DEVICE (BYOD)

Teachers looking to use technology in the classroom can face difficulties, especially if your students don't have regular access to a computer. However, as smartphones and tablets become more common, we can take advantage of them for classroom activities. This bring-your-own-device (BYOD) approach can help incorporate technology into our classroom practice without the need for every student to have a personal computer.

In this week's Teacher's Corner, we will explore a variety of Internet-based tools that can be used in the BYOD classroom. Each of these tools has their own strengths and weaknesses, so it is important to explore them thoroughly before using them in the classroom. The benefits of each can be hard to determine as it will depend on your classroom context, learning objectives, and student needs. However, Chapelle (2001) outlines six criteria for evaluating technology tools for the classroom. These six criteria can be an effective way of thinking about technology tools and whether or not you should use them in your classroom.

Chapelle's (2001) criteria for evaluating technology for the language classroom are:

1. *Language learning potential*: Does the technology allow for my students to acquire language or use the language in practice?

2. *Learner fit*: Does the technology match my students' needs and abilities? Will it be easy for them to use and understand?

3. *Meaning focus*: When using technology, the teacher must decide how to use the technology to teach specific language material. Be sure to ask yourself: how can I use this

technology to deliver learning to my students? What do I want to teach with this technology?

4. *Authenticity*: Does the technology let my students use their language in creative ways? Do they get to see and use language in a specific context?

5. *Positive Impact*: Using technology in class should help our students become successful. Be sure to evaluate all technology on its ability to motivate and encourage students.

6. *Practicality*: Can I use this in my classroom? After positive impact, this is the most important criterion for technology in the classroom. Think about ways you may need to change approaches depending on your students and classroom. Not all students may have a smartphone they can use in classroom activities, so consider having students do the activities in pairs or small groups.

SOFTWARE FOR THE BYOD CLASSROOM

A wide variety of digital tools exists for increasing classroom participation for students. Each of the tools listed below take advantage of the BYOD approach to encourage all students to ask and answer questions. By interacting through their own phone, tablet, or computer, students can participate at the same time instead of one-by-one when they raise their hands to answer questions. The BYOD approach can also assist less confident students or shy students by giving them a chance to ask and answer questions without having to speak to the entire class.

It is important to consider how each of these tools can benefit the classroom as well as encourage students to be more active in class. To do this, think about how each type of tool may fit into your lesson plan or classroom objective. This requires we take our time by experimenting and exploring with a variety of these tools before using them in a class

setting. Each of the specific tools listed below have excellent tutorials on their websites that can guide you through learning how to use them and implement them in class.

The tools are grouped based on the *Before*, *During*, and *After* approach to classroom instruction. In the *Before* stage, we want to draw students' attention to the topic and activate their background knowledge on the topic. In the *During* stage, we want to teach the material of the day, for example grammatical forms or specific vocabulary. Finally, in the *After* stage, we want to evaluate our students' understanding of the material presented in the *During* stage.

***Before* - Polling Software**

PollEverywhere – PollEverywhere provides teachers a platform to create questions to ask students during class. Teachers can create multiple-choice questions, open-ended questions, or ranking questions. Students answer using their own device with their responses displayed on the teacher's screen. Ideal for large classrooms, this software can help students that are shy or quiet in class become more interactive by providing them a space to ask and answer questions.

Socrative – Socrative lets teachers ask questions to students and see their results instantly. As each student answers the question, the teacher's screen gets updated, automatically allowing them to see how each student has understood the material.

Micropoll – Micropoll is a platform for creating questions that can be added to websites or an online course management system, such as Moodle or Blackboard. Students can then access the class online and answer the questions via a multiple-choice format.

Polls – Polls is an extremely basic polling software. On the homepage, teachers can create a question and then a unique web address is created. This address can then be shared with students.

***During* - Presentation Software**

Delivering lectures or information in class can often be a passive experience for students. However, with new tools and software, students can become more active participants in your lectures. The following tools make classroom presentations more interactive and collaborative:

Google Slides – Similar to traditional PowerPoint slides, Google Slides allows many people to join a presentation and work on it together. In classrooms without a projector, or that use a television monitor, students can join the presentation through their phones and follow along making it easier to see the information being presented.

Prezi – Prezi is a story-focused presentation system. In Prezi, slides are created individually and then linked together to create presentations which are more story-like. Students can also join Prezi via their own device to follow along or even add slides or information.

Nearpod – Nearpod is similar to a traditional PowerPoint but adds a layer of interactivity. In the presentation, teachers can add quizzes which can be scored in real time. Students can follow the presentation using their phones and answer the quiz questions as well. Videos, interactive pictures, and audio can also be added to the presentations to make them more interactive.

American English App - The American English app allows students to access American English website materials without an advanced smartphone. Students can listen to music, play games, and read the news on Voice of America.

***After* - Quizzing Software**

Kahoot – Kahoot takes classroom quizzes and turns them into a game. Questions are presented on the teacher's screen and students can answer via their cell phones. Once the question has been answered, students get feedback on their screen and the teacher can see how many students got each question correct or incorrect.

Quizlet – Quizlet allows teachers to create quizzes and tests that students can then access and complete on their own device. As students complete the quiz, it is graded automatically and the results are delivered to the teacher.

Google Forms – Google Forms can be used to create quizzes and tests that students can access via their devices. Once students complete the form, teachers can see graphs and charts that students answer including percentages of correct and incorrect answers.

Plickers – Plickers allows teachers to create multiple choice questions which students can answer using QR codes. These QR codes are images that can be read by the teacher's smartphone to get students' answers instantly.

All the tools listed above use a *freemium* approach. Freemium tools are free to use for the basic version of the software. If the user wants added features, they can pay a monthly subscription fee and gain access to more advanced features. Each of the tools highlighted this month can be used with a basic account.

Reference

Chapelle, C. (2001). *Computer applications in second language acquisition: Foundations for teaching, testing, and research*. Cambridge, MA: Cambridge University Press.