



# Teaching Tools and Media Competencies for a 21st Century Classroom

## KEYWORDS

Virtual media platforms, social media competence, Web 2.0 tools

**Sandhya Kumar**

Assistant Professor, NSS Training College Ottapalam, Palakkad

## ABSTRACT

*In the present day society, social media platforms and digital technologies are powerful pedagogical resources; but, they require special teacher training. Through the special training in using this technology effectively, teachers can create a multifaceted impact on student learning. The special training increases the social media competence of the teachers and hence makes them proficient in handling the Web2.0 tools and other virtual media platforms which can serve helpful in student learning and also in their professional development. This paper theoretically analyzes the competencies and some effective teaching tools which serve helpful in the 21st century digital class rooms. Teachers must possess some essential 21st century skills required for teaching the "tech savvy" students of the modern world. The emergence of the internet, and Web 2.0 resources, in particular, has created new areas for virtual communication exchanges. In this current scenario, and with support of the Web 2.0 resources, social networking has expanded to its zenith. Such resources have given way to new modes of relationships, regardless of time and space, by means of the so called internet social networks. In this scenario, it is essential to investigate the pedagogical use of these social networks. The competencies that are needed to merge these pedagogical uses are to be studied and implemented for better teaching and learning process in the present day tech world.*

## INTRODUCTION

Educational systems around the world are under increasing pressure to use and apply the emerging technologies to teach students the knowledge and skills they need to possess in the 21st century. Education is at the convergence of powerful and rapidly shifting educational, technological and political forces that will mould the structure of educational systems across the globe for the rest of this century. Many countries are involved in a number of efforts to result changes in the teaching/learning process and to prepare students for an information and technology based future society. Due to the industrialization and globalization of countries and the knowledge society, people of present day live in a world characterized by constant change brought in to effect by the media boom.

Zwaneveld and Bastiaens (2010) reports that using the term 'media' means that it is about means that support the teachers' main professional task in the classroom: supporting the learning processes of the students by his or her teaching. (Media is the Latin word for means.) Teachers in the present day are to possess individual media competence, critical media competence, lifelong learning competence, competence to guide teaching and learning and competence to design teaching and learning materials.

## Defining Social Media

According to the Merriam-Webster dictionary, the word social is "of or relating to human society, the interaction of the individual and the group, or the welfare of human beings as members of society. The word media means a medium of cultivation, conveyance, or expression. Media is also a plural form of medium and a medium is a particular form or system of communication."

## Classification of social media

By applying a set of theories in the field of media research, Kaplan and Haenlein (2010) created a classification scheme, with seven different types of social media:

1. collaborative projects (for example, Wikipedia)

2. blogs and microblogs (for example, Twitter)
3. Social news networking sites (for example, Digg and Leakernet)
4. content communities (for example, YouTube and Daily-Motion)
5. social networking sites (for example, Facebook)
6. virtual game-worlds (e.g., *World of Warcraft*)
7. virtual social worlds (e.g. *Second Life*)

## Social Media in Classroom

Social media typically deal with the personal situation and lifestyle of a student. Few social media have proved to address the situations of a group of students like a class. Social media makes the children aware of the current happenings, concerns, issues, social activities and prospective employment. Thus the relationship between classrooms based learning and social media is significant in the fast pacing modern day world.

## SOCIAL MEDIA COMPETENCE

Nowadays not only ICT but more generally the use of all modern media plays a prominent role. So, if we make an overview of the competences of the teacher, we prefer to speak of media competences instead of ICT competences. Of course we restrict these to the modern digital media, and then not only the use of (educational) software, but also (new) hardware.

## UNESCO ICT Competency Framework 2011

This discusses the framework in which the teaching learning processes in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must proceed. The framework tells the teacher competencies in technology which is very much essential in the present day and future.

|                                | Technology Literacy | Knowledge Deepening   | Knowledge Creation       |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|--------------------------|
| Understanding ICT in Education | Policy Awareness    | Policy Understanding  | Policy Innovation        |
| Curriculum and Assessment      | Basic Knowledge     | Knowledge Application | Knowledge society Skills |

|                                 |                      |                         |                          |
|---------------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|
| Pedagogy                        | Integrate Technology | Complex Problem solving | Self Management          |
| ICT                             | Basic Tools          | Complex Tools           | Pervasive Tools          |
| Organization and Administration | Standard Classrooms  | Collaborative Groups    | Learning Organizations   |
| Teacher Professional Learning   | Digital Literacy     | Manage and Guide        | Teacher as Model Learner |

The Framework is intended to inform educational policy makers, teacher-educators, providers of professional learning and working teachers on the role of ICT in educational reform.

### Teaching tools for a digital classroom

There are many resources through which the teaching learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century can be made interactive and interesting. Below are some resources that the teachers may find useful when attempting to implement the technology into their classrooms, separated by five common areas that are increasingly important for the teachers, and for an effective learning environment: - Classifying and Organizing, Project method of learning, Managing Classrooms, Educational Designing and finally Assessment and evaluation.

### Classifying and Organizing

#### 1. The Together Teacher

Here the teachers can find multiple resources that help them stay organized in their classrooms. Teachers after registering to the site can access lesson plan templates, to-do lists, subject plans, project ideas etc.

#### 2. My Big Campus

This gives teachers, students, parents, and administrators ample access to an endless amount of powerful resources to enhance the level of student achievement through an interactive platform which can be accessed through mobile devices and tablets.

#### 3. Engrade

This innovative platform offers teachers with an all-in-one grade book which offers attendance charts, grade books, calendars, seating charts, behavior tracking and much many. It also provides the teachers with an ability to create custom tests aligned with common standards, and a way to track individual student progress.

### Project method of Learning

#### 1. Glogster EDU

It is a global education platform to empower students and educators to create interactive online posters that include text, photos, videos, graphics, sounds, and much more. Glogster encourages students to have control in their own learning in a fun manner by promoting independent thought, creativity, critical thinking, and problem solving.

#### 2. Mindmeister

Mindmeister is a great mind-mapping tool that can help students develop and organize project ideas. This free app encourages collaborative brainstorming, where students can work together to plan and analyze potential projects.

#### 3. SonicPics

SonicPics is a great app that allows students to combine pictures with recorded narration into a threaded story. Students can share personal narratives, review curriculum, or create custom presentations for class through this.

### Managing Classrooms

#### 1. Collaborize Classroom

This free online platform allows teachers to quickly launch an independent personalized learning site which addresses student concerns outside of the classroom, leaving students more prepared for inside the class activities. This platform gives teachers the ability to better identify and accommodate different learning styles by incorporating visual and audio into their lessons, and grouping students according to learning habits.

#### 2. Edmodo

This social platform, allows teachers to continue classroom discussions outside of the classroom, check for student understanding, and get students excited about coming to class to learn. Teachers can connect students to resources and tools that will help them better understand classroom material, personally measure student progress, and enhance learning though integrating apps that amplify their lesson plans.

#### 3. Socrative

Socrative is a great way for teachers to engage their students inside and outside of the classroom, as they can send out quizzes or other educational exercises that can be used to measure student understanding. Teachers can also take advantage of Socrative's "Exit Tickets" which require students to answer a quick question before they leave the class that focuses on how comfortable they are in understanding the day's material.

### Educational Designing

#### 1. Brickflow

Brickflow is an app where teachers and students can create presentations using content collected from social media. By searching the web, teachers and students have the opportunity create a visual summary of a topic, building stories with content from Instagram, Twitter, YouTube etc. This can be a fun and innovative way to spruce up classroom presentations and keep students up to date with current events.

#### 2. Empressr

Empressr is an easy to use presentation generator that allows users to easily incorporate flash and other media into their presentations. This is a free online application that can be used to help teachers and students create visually rich presentations.

#### 3. Present. me

Present.me is a great tool for teachers and students that allow them to record presentations, lectures, or projects, and accompany them with visual content. This is a useful tool for teachers who wish to flip their classroom, and a fun way to encourage students to get involved in their own learning by creating their own visually rich presentations.

### Assessment and Evaluation

#### 1. ClassMaker

Through ClassMaker, teachers can create secure online quizzes and exams that feature multiple question types, such as multiple choice, short answer, and essay. Tests are automatically graded and are perfect for classrooms, online courses, E-learning, and study groups.

#### 2. Mentimeter

Mentimeter enables teachers to send out questions to students and allow them to instantly vote on them or send

feedback through mobile phones or tablets. This is a great way to democratize the classroom by voting on topics or activities, and a very effective tool for issuing pop quizzes.

### 3. Gknowledge

Teachers can create and share tests with not only students, but with other teachers as well. This gives teachers multiple test resources and also promotes student understanding, as it randomizes test questions and answers, allowing students to take tests multiple times without making the material stagnant.

### CONCLUDING NOTE

In spite of the many drawbacks in our society, it can benefit from the wide horizon of expanding knowledge available on the internet and other media without falling prey to its anti ethical measures. This increases the collaborative skills of the students and can help increase productivity which thus help them learn how to work well in groups. Networking skills and ability to create new relationships can be increased to a great rate. With the increased focus on technology in education and business, this hopefully will help the 21<sup>st</sup> century "tech-savvy" students build skills that will aid them throughout their lives. This networking helps the students to decide what career path they may want to pursue. These all are possible only through the judicious use of social media by the students and judicious application of social media by the teachers in the process of efficient teaching and learning.

### REFERENCE

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