DEVELOPING ENGLISH LANGUAGE SKILLS THROUGH INTEGRATION OF TABLETS AT JUNIOR SECONDARY LEVEL

A BRITISH COUNCIL PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROJECT AIMED AT SUPPORTING ENGLISH LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND SCHOOLS AND SUPPORTED BY THE QUALITY EDUCATION FUND
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Introduction: what you can find in this e-book

This e-book is aimed at English language teachers, coordinating teachers and panel heads working with junior secondary students in Hong Kong schools who are considering introducing learning technologies in the classroom and are looking to draw on first-hand experience specific to the local context.

The book begins by looking briefly at the rise of learning technologies in the modern educational context around the world, and also considers the growing need for students to develop digital literacy skills. It then provides an overview of a British Council-coordinated project to introduce tablets into the classrooms at three participating local schools, including a break down of an applied learning cycle process. Following this, it provides a possible framework that interested teachers and educational managers could apply in order to begin to experiment with new learning technologies in their own schools, as well as a range of sample applications and ideas. Finally, it documents the experience of the teachers from the three schools that participated in the project in order to provide an account of the successes and challenges that were encountered and how these were managed.

Context: education and learning technologies

The rapid development of information and communication technology (ICT) has become a defining feature of the modern educational context. More than ever before, schools are having to continuously seek out new ways of integrating e-learning into the learning process in order to ensure that students are fully equipped with the digital literacy skills that are likely to be demanded of them in the future. As a result, governments around the world - including the major cities and regions in the Asia Pacific[1] - have been developing e-learning integration policies to ensure that their education systems remain ahead of the curve. This policy direction has achieved such a degree of primacy that technology has been described as ‘one of the common “global trends” in education policy-making’. [2]

In addition to providing essential life skills, the integration of e-learning into a school’s curriculum may also boost academic attainment. In a survey by the UK charitable consultancy The Learning Foundation, 70% of parents whose children had been given access to computer learning for the first time reported improvements in their children’s academic skills[3]. The majority of these parents stated that their children received better marks, and also reported that they

[1] Siu Cheung Kong, Tak-Wai Chan, Ronghuai Huang, & Horn Mun Cheah (2014)
[3] Link
displayed higher engagement with learning, an improved study attitude, and increased IT skills.

It is widely agreed that how young people use technology is shaping their lives in new ways. Students now see and express ‘creativity, collaboration and community’ digitally[4], and they bring these ways of thinking and communicating with them to school. Acknowledging and exploring this reality, therefore, is increasingly a core focus for teachers and teaching teams.

The world of language learning and teaching, including English language learning, has similarly sought to fully utilise the new and diverse opportunities presented by technological advancements, with ICT now central to global modern language instruction[5]. However, in order for teachers to competently make the most of these innovations, and therefore ensure the maximum positive impact on their students’ learning outcomes, training and professional development in ICT is essential[5].

In step with these professional development requirements and the increasing pervasiveness of ICT, the Hong Kong Education Bureau (EDB) implemented, in 2011, an e-learning pilot scheme in schools as a result of recommendations made in a 2009 report by The Working Group on Textbooks and E-learning Resources Development. Following this, a two-month public consultation was conducted in May 2014 which led to the implementation of the EDB’s Fourth Strategy on IT in Education as a means of supporting Hong Kong school communities to continue to realise ‘the potential of IT in enhancing interactive learning and teaching experiences’[6]. In particular, the strategy is in place to support school teams in strengthening skills that, as well as being central to English language learning classrooms, span all subjects across the curriculum; skills such as:

- collaboration, creativity and problem-solving;
- self-directed learning; and
- whole-person development.

The British Council has been working closely with the EDB on teacher development in order to assist in the achievement of its e-learning priorities, and it has also worked directly with a range of local schools. Through this experience, we have seen that many Hong Kong schools have now invested in mobile devices, tablets, and other ICT technologies for e-learning, with the knock-on effect...
that existing teachers subsequently require training on how to successfully integrate these into classes on a regular basis in order to develop their students’ digital literacy skills.

The Project: integrating tablets at junior secondary level

This project provided the teaching teams and students at three participating secondary schools in Hong Kong with the opportunity to extend, refine, and hone their use of tablets for English language teaching and learning or the teaching and learning of other subjects through the medium of English over an 18-month period across two academic years (2015/16 and 2016/17).

Overview and Goals

Tablets present a key e-learning opportunity that can be a highly motivating tool for junior secondary students, particularly those with lower levels of English proficiency. Furthermore, many local secondary schools have invested in iPads and/or tablets as part of the IT resources that they make available to teachers and students. As a result, this type of digital technology was selected as the primary scope of the project, which set out with the following goals:

1) to motivate students to learn English;

2) to develop ideas of best practice with using tablets to support language learning;

3) to develop teacher collaboration within and between schools.
These were formulated with the following target beneficiaries:

- junior secondary English language teachers
- ICT teachers supporting English language learning
- junior secondary students

Over a period of two years, the project worked with the following three participating secondary schools from the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (SAR):

- CMA Choi Cheung Kok Secondary School, Tuen Mun, New Territories
- True Light Middle School, Tai Hang, Hong Kong Island
- St. Paul's Secondary School, 140 Leighton Road, Causeway Bay, Hong Kong Island

Each school was assigned a project consultant by the British Council who delivered workshops and consultancy sessions across each of the three learning cycles. The first two of these cycles culminated in an inter-school sharing and reflection session held in July 2017 which encouraged best practice sharing between schools from across Hong Kong. The key focuses of these activities were as follows:

- to develop collaboration between teachers using tablets to supporting language learning; and
- to develop teacher confidence with functions and apps for language learning
Learning Cycles

The learning cycles set out to promote familiarity and confidence among the participating schools with integrating tablets into the curriculum to support language learning and EMI subjects. All schools went through learning cycle processes which can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Cycle Overview</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Input and Support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Needs analysis</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting (English Panel Heads/core team)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meeting and/or online survey (teachers)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In total, three complete learning cycles were run by each school over the course of the project.

**Cycle 1**

This cycle began with a launch event, where all the participating teachers met and shared current practices and motivations for joining the project.

Subsequently, the primarily focus of this cycle was on regular consultancy, including optional observations, and workshops tailored to each school’s needs. The workshops were held both at the schools themselves and at the British Council’s teaching centre in Admiralty, Hong Kong, with the workshops that were held at the British Council providing an opportunity for teachers. These sessions aimed to allow teachers to collaborate in the process of increasing their knowledge of tablet functions and apps that could be integrated into their pedagogy to support English language learning and the use of English across the curriculum.

At the end of the cycle, a sharing session was held in which participating schools presented what they had learned and how they planned to move forward in Cycle 2.
Cycles 2 and 3

Through Cycles 2 and 3, the consultancy and workshop process continued as in Cycle 1. Cycle 2 ended with a conference that was open to all secondary school teachers [SB1] in Hong Kong. This session allowed the three participating schools, and the British Council, to share the learning outcomes and experience gained with the wider teaching community.

This was then followed by Cycle 3, comprising further workshops and consultancy, and the schools brought the project cycle process to a close with their final reflections.

Workshops and Consultation

The workshops took place separately at each participating school and were offered to the English teaching teams. The sessions began by introducing tablets as a potential language learning tool, and also developed the teachers’ skills in areas such as online child safety and classroom management considerations specific to the use of e-learning devices. Additionally, they introduced a range of potential apps and activities in order to provide a foundation of knowledge and skills that teachers could subsequently draw upon when adapting ideas to their own specific curriculums and their students’ learning needs.

Although the workshops began with a focus on the technical possibilities brought about by the use of tablets, a range of useful apps, and some broader pedagogical considerations regarding technology in classroom, a key distinguishing feature of the workshop and consultation process was that it was two-way; the teachers involved were encouraged to bring their own reflections and ideas to the sessions, with the specific goal of exploring the use of tablets within each individual school’s community.

Each workshop was followed by a formal consultation session at the individual participating schools, involving the project trainer and the lead teachers assigned by each school, as well as the English Panel Head (according to availability). These sessions initially focused on potential ideas for experimenting with the ideas generated in the workshops, discussing follow-up questions from the workshops in more detail, and predicting/troubleshooting potential problems that could arise during classroom implementation; then, as the project progressed through the learning cycles, the consultation sessions moved on to discussion regarding successes and practical difficulties that had been encountered, and reflection on the integration of tablets into each specific school community.
In addition to the formal consultation sessions, informal catch-up meetings between the lead teachers and the project trainer took place on an ad hoc basis. In line with the project's goals, these were often conducted using the video conferencing app Zoom, and generally focused on app demonstrations and example sharing.

The process culminated in a final teacher-driven workshop in preparation for a whole-school sharing session, during which the English teaching team shared key learning outcomes from their own implementation of tablets in the classroom with teachers from other subjects.

**Sharing Session (July 2017): open to all non-participating secondary schools**

A total of 53 teachers from 31 different schools around from around Hong Kong, Kowloon, and the New Territories attended the event at the British Council's teaching centre in Admiralty, Hong Kong Island. The session was built around presentations by students from the three participating schools, which focused on their experiences of and reflections on the introduction of tablets into their schemes of work during Learning Cycles 1 and 2.

**A snapshot of comments from attending teachers:**

- 'The students did very well and learning from them is like being given another kind of truth.'
- 'Very useful apps are introduced. Students are very helpful and teachers are well prepared for sharing their experience.'
- 'We appreciate students’ hard work and presentation.'
- 'I have learnt different kinds of apps and e-learning skills.'
- 'Useful apps introduced!'
Applying a Learning Cycle Process at your School

If you are considering taking either yourself or your teaching team through a learning process with the goal of integrating new learning technologies into the classroom, you could start by asking yourself the following questions:

- How could you find ways to engage students using technology?
- How could English language learning, or learning in general, be enriched by using technology?
- How could your scheme of work be enhanced with technology?
- How could you, your team, and your students learn through collaboration?

The successful introduction of any form of learning technology stems from considering an individual school’s specific community of teachers and students, its current technological capacity, and the degree to which the use of learning technologies have already been promoted by the leadership team. At the onset of any initiative to introduce learning technologies, teachers and leadership teams may consider the following factors:

- What experience do you and/or teachers at the school already have surrounding the use of technology to boost learning outcomes?
- To what extent have learning technologies already been integrated across the curriculum?
- What access to learning technology does the student community have in the classroom, outside the classroom, and at home?
- To what extent are parents able to be engaged in a learning process?
- What other factors specific to the school’s context need to be taken into consideration?
The answers from questions such as these can then inform a learning cycle process within which teachers are able to experiment with and adapt learning technologies according to their specific situation. In this way, the external factor of digital learning is taken through a process of localisation before it is internalised into a school’s curriculum.

**Sample Learning Cycle Framework**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Analyse needs</td>
<td>Up-skill</td>
<td>Experiment in the classroom</td>
<td>Reflect</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Panel Head/Lead Teacher</td>
<td>Meet with your team and/or survey them to ascertain their students’ needs, how technology may benefit them, their existing technological skill level, and expectations. Assess your school’s existing technological resources and support.</td>
<td>Have a technologically experienced teacher run a workshop on possible pedagogical uses in the classroom and/or assign teachers to research different ways of using technology and hold a sharing session</td>
<td>Encourage your teachers to plan a lesson that utilises technology and to try it out in the classroom.</td>
<td>What were the aims? What were the outcomes? How did the students respond? What challenges did you encounter? What will you need to consider in the future?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Teacher</td>
<td>Make a list of how your students could benefit from technology and assess your own knowledge level. Assess your school’s existing technological resources and support.</td>
<td>Carry out your own research and decide what you would like to try</td>
<td>Plan a lesson that utilises technology and try it out in the classroom.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Reflective Practice**

Reflecting on a learning cycle, either as an individual teacher or as a team, and then acting on this reflection, is key to ensuring that the use of learning technologies is adapted to suit a specific teaching situation. If done effectively, the use of technology to enhance learning outcomes can be successfully integrated into a curriculum.

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**Lawrence-Wilkes (2014): 'REFLECT' model**

- **Remember**
  - *Look back on the in-class experiences*

- **Experience**
  - *What did you try? What happened? What do you feel was important?*

- **Focus**
  - *Who was involved? What were their roles?*

- **Learn**
  - *What was and wasn’t successful? How did different people feel? What reasons can you identify?*

- **Evaluate**
  - *Causes, outcomes, successes, failures, challenges*

- **Consider**
  - *Assess your options, think about further needs, consider possibilities for change, ask ‘What if?’ questions*

- **Trial**
  - *Experiment further, implement changes*

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**Tablets: apps and ideas**

Here is a small selection of apps with potential educational uses. Each is accompanied with either an example, idea, or some further information, as well as questions for you to reflect on in order to assist you in assessing whether or not it could be used in your own teaching context (note: links to additional apps and ideas that participating teachers experimented with can be found in the teachers’ feedback section).
• Padlet

Padlet enables the creation of collaborative online bulletin boards. Read this article on using Padlet for teaching English. Could you use it in a similar way with your students? Would they find it engaging? What learning objectives could it enhance?

• HP Reveal

HP Reveal (formally ‘Aurasma’) allows teachers and students to create augmented reality environments. Watch this TED Talk on how the app can recognise images and link them to other forms of media.

What concepts might augmented reality help your students to grasp? What images would you like to bring to life in your lessons? Would your students benefit from creating their own augmented reality environments?

• Quizlet

Quizlet focuses on flashcards, games, and review activities. Read this article from the Quizlet blog on integrating review activities into an adult classroom using the app. Would this work for your students? How would you need to adapt it? What learning objectives could it enhance?

• Tellagami

Tellagami creates animated videos that can sync to student-generated audio. In the language classroom, students can record themselves speaking, watch a video featuring an animated version of themselves delivering what they recorded, and share this video with their peers. How might your students respond to this type of activity? What aspects of your curriculum could it support?

• Puppet Pals

Puppet Pals allows learners to record animated scenes using different characters and settings. Read the following quote from Lisa Stevens, primary languages educator and consultant:‘

Puppets are [a] very effective way for encouraging speaking as it gets over self-consciousness. Likewise, tools such as Voki and apps like Puppet Pals or Sock Puppets allow learners to rehearse, record, review and re-record their speech... ‘That’s not me. I sound Spanish,’ was the comment of one year 5 [student] when she heard herself played back. Having been a reluctant speaker, she began to volunteer answers in class and her confidence soared.’ [7]

How might your students respond to this type of activity? Would you need to adapt it for secondary ages?

• Comic Life

Comic life enables students to create comic strips using their own images. Read this article about the use of comic strips for different learning outcomes. Do any of the ideas discussed link to learning outcomes in the curriculum you teach? Would your students find comics engaging?

• Socrative

Socrative enables teachers to create cloud-based quizzes for review and for formative assessment. Read the following quote from Fabiana Casella on the TeachingEnglish.org.uk blog:

‘Students download the Socrative Student app and log in with the Classroom Name and start solving the activity... The great advantage here is that once they log in, you automatically see them in the ‘room’ as well as their score and progress. You can even make them race with color rockets, which is an extremely fun activity! I am proud to say that these children responded wonderfully! Almost all of them worked hard all year and completed all of the activities in the class... If they could not do so due to high data usage, they would complete them at home either with their phones or computers.’ [8]

How would your students respond to the competitive element this app can introduce? Would you potentially encounter data usage issues at your school? Would your students be able to access the app from home?
Participating Teachers' Feedback

The teachers worked with a broad range of junior secondary ages, English proficiency levels, and class sizes, as well as varied curriculums including English language and EMI subjects. Across the learning cycles, they kept a record of the digital tools they experimented with, how their students responded to them, and how successful they found these in terms of achieving learning aims. Additionally, they noted any technical challenges that they had encountered, as well as how they would resolve these in the future.

All the apps that the teachers tried have been linked.

Apps and Other E-Learning Activities

An app that several teachers worked with was Nearpod, which is an interactive assessment and presentation tool. One teacher used this to enable their students to draw a picture based on another student’s presentation. In this activity, students had to listen to one student describing something and draw what they heard, allowing ‘instant feedback’ for the speaker as they could immediately see gaps in their description from what their peers had drawn. The teacher found that the students were very engaged by this activity and generally stayed on task as a result. Another teacher also used this app with their students while working on a class project. Their students picked a country related to China’s ‘One Belt One Road’ initiative and researched it, then presented videos and websites using the app, before taking peer questions. This teacher gathered feedback from their students, who said they found the app ‘fun and cool’. The teacher also praised the screen lock function of the app for being beneficial in terms of ensuring all students were watching the correct video at the right time, thereby simplifying classroom management. However, they found that the open questioning feature limited students to a single response, even though some would have preferred to have added follow-up answers after reading their peers’ views.
Several teachers experimented with animation apps to bring things to life in the classroom. A teacher used an app called **Shadow Puppet** to assist their students in creating a video presentation for a new invention. Their students found pictures and then recorded themselves presenting the invention; the students then shared what they had made using **Dropbox** for peer review. One other teacher tried using **SonicPics** in the classroom but noted that their students found it challenging to use, so also switched to Shadow Puppet. Another teacher had their students imagine that they were a person living in a historical period and then to complete a worksheet from this perspective. They then shared the worksheet using **Edmodo**, so that their peers and the teacher could review it, before bringing their experience to life using **Tellagami**. An alternative use for Tellagami was found by a further teacher who used it to help students reflect on characters from a short novel by bringing them to life. This teacher was pleased to see some of their students use ‘vocal expression to speak like their character’, something which they had never done before. Generally, the teachers noted that using these apps proved to be ‘a great experience’ for students, who enjoyed the ‘collaborative’ aspect of working in a group and who were given ‘extra motivation’ by the fact that they were going to share their work with their classmates. One teacher felt that such tasks are successful as they create multiple forms of feedback, from both the teacher and from a student's peers.

**Keynote** is a presentation app that one teacher used to enable their students to write a witness account of a news incident. They then developed the task further by allowing their students to record eye witness accounts using the camera function on the tablets. They found that this ‘optimised’ the students’ participation, resulting in a successful ‘combination of e-learning and traditional teaching methods’.

Several teachers used a combination of apps, websites, and other audio-visual options available with tablets in order to enrich different parts of extended projects. For example, a teacher encouraged their students to use **Google Maps** and a range of websites for a travel itinerary project. The students were allowed to explore different tourist attractions around Hong Kong using Google Maps, then to prepare a presentation with additional information, something which they found very engaging.

More teachers began to experiment this idea of using a range of e-learning resources to enrich different task stages as they became more confident through Learning Cycles 2 and 3. One example included a teacher using Google Calendar, **Padlet**, **Quizlet**, **Toontastic**, and Shadow Puppet for a project related to festivals in Hong Kong in which students had to research one festival of their choice and then present it. This teacher involved two age groups, and found it very beneficial to allow the older students to make sample videos that could then function as models to help the younger students to ‘better understand the task before they actually did [their] preparation and recording’.

Overall, teachers noted a range of benefits from the introduction of tablets into their classrooms. Generally, they felt that the ‘learning atmosphere’ was improved and that more interaction between students took place as a result of the use of tablets, with students utilising websites and pictures to ‘assist with their communication’, thereby overcoming English language barriers. Specifically, when students were effectively paired, additional opportunities for language production appeared, with students being observed ‘negotiating their roles’, ‘planning’, and collaborating on ‘content’ in English. Furthermore, one teacher noted how motivating their students found the ‘tactile[,] interactive aspect’ of working on tablets, with students particularly enjoying ‘hunting for useful images’, while another highlighted the benefits of tablets enabling individual student access to media, and how this allowed lower proficiency learners to ‘re-visit and re-listen’ to audio and video to help them hear ‘the gist or phrases required’, thereby personalising the learning process.
## Classroom Management and Technical Challenges

Over the course of the learning cycles, the teachers encountered and worked through a range of classroom challenges related to the introduction of tablets and different apps into the classroom that needed to be taken into consideration for their specific school environments. These can be summarised as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Challenge</th>
<th>Details</th>
<th>Solution(s)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| WiFi connectivity issues                       | Several teachers experienced Internet connection drops mid-task (e.g. presentations); | • Having students share tablets to reduce the load on the school’s WiFi  
• Having students turn off tablets that are not in use during presentations |
| Tablet device availability                     | One teacher encountered this challenge when the school’s tablets were being used by another teacher | • Ensure a booking system is in place and is being used                    |
| Students using apps in languages other than English | Teachers reported instances of students searching for and viewing information in their native language (e.g. Google Maps) | • To set clear guidelines on language in instructions  
• Model how to change the language on a site/app if needed |
| Background noise when recording audio          | Several teachers found that large classes led to audio quality issues. | • Using other rooms/space in addition to the classroom  
• Using headphone microphones if this is allowed under the school’s policy |
| App and feature availability                   | Teachers found that apps were not installed/set-up at the start of class, meaning that time had to be spent doing this. Others encountered challenges using camera and microphone features as these had not been enabled | • Work with the IT department to discuss needs in advance  
• Check that the tablets have the relevant apps installed before the lesson  
• Ensure apps have been paid for before the lesson |
| Students spending too much time on non-relevant app features | Teachers reported that students spent time adjusting app parameters (e.g. an avatar’s appearance) at the expense of the learning task | • Set clear guidelines when giving instructions  
• Give students a strict time limit to complete each stage/task |
| Students needing technical support             | Some teachers were surprised that their students were not able to intuitively use apps by transferring existing digital literacy skills | • Demonstrate how to use the app.  
• Use examples created by other classes (e.g. older students) as a model |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Recommendations</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Students not staying on task</td>
<td>- Plan which students work together in pairs and groups</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Buddy higher-proficiency students with lower-proficiency students to assist</td>
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<td></td>
<td>with language and learning aims</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Consider letting students work alone, if possible, to avoid peer distractions.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Ensure that students are monitored.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>- Make use of any app features to manage tasks (e.g., screen lock in Nearpod).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Additional lesson planning time required to incorporate technology</td>
<td>- Focus on exploring one task or topic in-depth and avoid trying to cover too</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>much</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td>- Organise group planning among teachers teaching the same curriculum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Low teacher knowledge regarding apps</td>
<td>- Have a ‘clear, executable plan which is simple [and] concise’</td>
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<td></td>
<td>- Complete the task that students will be asked to do yourself before the</td>
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<td></td>
<td>lesson</td>
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<tr>
<td>Students deleting/editing peers’ work between classes</td>
<td>- Utilise cloud storage options (e.g., Dropbox) to ensure student work cannot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>be accessed by others.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

One teacher noted that their own knowledge of an app was not high enough to manage all the features that students wanted to use in the lesson. One teacher who taught a series of lessons using tablets found that work their students had saved directly on devices had been deleted and/or edited by another class between lessons.
Looking Back: one semester on

The lead teachers at True Light Middle School:

To equip students with language skills to cope with the fast-changing world, it is necessary for teachers to provide a variety of tasks to simulate real-life situations using English. Traditionally, there can be a lot of drilling and practice given to students in grammar-teaching and producing writing. However, if we want to encourage students to integrate the specific grammar items and sentence patterns in writing, steps are necessary to help students understand the functions and uses of grammar items in different text-types. Having e-Learning elements in teaching English provides students with better ways and tasks to learn grammar in context and acquire the use of grammar in writing.

Through our project with British Council, we were inspired to use technology to teach grammar and writing. The results were fruitful and effective because [our] students learnt in an innovative way that was different from a traditional classroom. Instead of doing drilling and approaching grammar like a formula, we engaged students in active learning lessons that allowed them to exercise various English skills. [The] [s]tudents’ feedback was also positive because, although they experienced learning grammar in an unusual manner, blending technology with the traditional way of learning made it easier for them to understand and use the grammar item taught.

The lead teachers at St. Paul’s Secondary School:

One of the biggest takeaways from our collaboration with British Council is that both students and teachers gained a lot more confidence in utilizing technology in the classroom. We specifically used technology to help instill confidence in students’ oral skills as well as to develop their fluency. Instead of just assigning a typical speaking question on paper, we utilized technology to give students an authentic task that really motivated them to try hard. The feedback from students were overall very positive and the consensus was they wanted us to continue using technology in the classroom and even expand the scope of our tasks.
Teachers have shown more confidence in using and exploring e-resources. They realise how IT and iPad activities do not have to be used in isolation but instead enhance their lesson by making the lesson more engaging. Teachers reflect on how well the students have recalled the content and recognise that it is an extremely useful teaching aide. They are more willing to share their experiences with other teachers. Students are also more motivated in lessons because they can see why the teachers have used the iPad during the lesson. Students find more freedom to express themselves and enjoy using the iPads as a learning tool. They like how it is non-judgmental and can be used to continuously practice a skill they are not so confident in.

The lead teachers at CMA Choi Cheung Kok Secondary School:

We were inspired how to integrate the use of iPads into the classroom teaching through this project. We adopted different approaches in our EMI and CMI classes. Students used apps such as Tellagami and Puppet Pals to speak as the character of the novel they read. This developed empathy and allowed my teachers to see their understanding of the story. The apps were also used as an integrated writing, drawing and speaking task. Students also learnt to write and dramatize their scripts. For generic skills, my students also had to work through negotiation, discussion, delegating jobs, appraisal and mutual encouragement. The project improved their sense of story and what worked and what didn’t.

In our Learning Cycle 3, we adopted a teacher-focused mode. A 2-hour session was conducted by our department. Teachers [ ] were invited to have hands-on experience on different apps and reflect how they could use the apps in their own subjects. The majority said that it was easier to explain a concept if tablets were used. In some subjects, they even tried out what they had learnt in the sharing session. Some subjects asked students to present using apps, which reduced their anxiety. However, before bringing tablets into the classroom, I suggest teachers [ ] think about the goal of the lesson. Effective use of tablets can transform and facilitate the teaching and learning, but should not be used to replace teaching and learning. Give students samples for them to have a base to move from, and have a clear sense of where you want the students to end up and what they should achieve.
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