



Asia capable teacher

Illawarra Sports High School NSW

Jennifer Jurman

The most significant change for teachers was the confidence to use Web 2.0 tools in teaching the Asian Studies Enrichment Program. It has been a total change in mindset. We have moved away from teacher-centric lessons to more student-centric classes.

Jennifer Jurman, BALGS Project Leader, Indonesian language teacher

One perspective on 21st century pedagogies is that education must contain two strands: it must be humanising in that it improves learners' personal and social competence as active, global citizens; and, it must be socialising in that it must enhance 'the learners' communal and global consciousness and foster responsible citizenship' (Whitby, 2007, p. 2).

Digital pedagogies afford students opportunities to engage with new information and with others. These opportunities can be seen as purposeful activities, whereby students use ICT to build knowledge, represent understanding, and collaborate and communicate in community with others (Fisher, Denning, Higgins, & Loveless, 2012).

The BALGS project at Illawarra Sports High School involved a paradigm shift for teaching the studies of Asia. Jennifer Jurman, BALGS Project Leader, reported on the rapid transformation at Illawarra:

[The school] has come a long way considering that in 2011 no Asian languages were offered to students. In 2012, the study of Bahasa Indonesia became mandatory for all Year 8 students. In 2013, the Asian Studies Enrichment Program is being implemented for Year 7 students. This is significant and progressive for our school. Indonesian and Asian Studies are our most popular subjects as students are engaged in the use of ICT in lessons.

According to Jennifer, central to these changes was teachers' recognition of the potential of ICT to change the way that students learn and to bring 'the world into their classrooms'.

Focusing first on its Indonesian language program, the school utilised a combination of ICT tools, including iPads, Smartboard lessons, and collaborative learning tools, to engage with its BRIDGE partner school in Indonesia. In its Asian Studies Enrichment Program, the school placed emphasis on students as researchers, with a strong focus on independent investigation within the context of cross-curricular research topics.

Jennifer described the impacts of embedding ICT in the curriculum:

We are teaching the students how to research for themselves and to question information. The students are now organising the information and presenting it to the class, demonstrating logical thinking ... there is less focus on the teacher presenting content.

Another important motivator for teachers at Illawarra is the need to develop students' intercultural understanding. The use of ICT is allowing student to work collaboratively, to use animation and digital storytelling to communicate with students in their partner school in Indonesia. Students are encouraged to research the interrelationship between societies and cultures and to relate their understanding to their own social and cultural identities.

This integration of content knowledge, pedagogy and technology is at the heart of effective teaching with digital technologies (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). Embedding ICT in curriculum design changes the way teachers teach and how students learn. This view is supported by Fullan (2007) who describes the implementation of change in schools as using new materials, engaging in new behaviours and practices, and incorporating new beliefs

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