Statement on Teaching with Technology

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In my first college history class, our professor opened the class discussing *techne* - the skill, craft, or means by which something is done. The term *technology* has evolved from this to signify the application of *knowledge* or skill to reach a goal. We often view technology in a more limited scope, referring specifically to the digital realm, but following a holistic view, technology is any means by which we apply our knowledge to create something. As an instructor, I believe that technology can help us accomplish great things. It's growing inevitably as a tool available to students in our classrooms, thanks to the rise of accessible virtual learning and the advent of advanced artificial intelligence. Therefore, we as instructors and staff in higher education need to understand what it can do *for* and *with* us, rather than work against it.

To operationalize the use of technology in the classroom, we should think critically about how we integrate (digital) tools to enhance students' learning. Instructors of Spanish know that digital methods now represent the standard for teaching languages. For example, flipped formats introduce pre-class grammar and vocabulary review in units surrounding one sociocultural or media theme. This structure allows teachers to maximize class time for practice, rather than unidirectional lecturing, when applied practice is essential, but face-to-face time is limited. However, feedback from students reveals that they often find this structure impersonal, too intensive, and I have even had students admit on teaching evaluations that it was very easy to cheat (i.e., use Google Translate). So, where technological advancements have their benefits for maximizing in-class practice, the adoption of them might invite students to misuse technology and digital tools, which we want to mitigate.

One way to use digital tools is to meet students where their interests lie. For example, when teaching Spanish linguistic variation, I use Reddit posts about diminutive suffixes (e.g., *-ito*, *-ico*) to show students what Spanish speakers in different countries say about how those suffixes are used. We use digital tools such as open-access softwares to analyze data sets in Spanish, giving students control in the process of learning to apply the information we teach. For a more grammar-focused lesson, I have given students access to *La Vanguardia's* daily horoscope so they can engage with the future tense in a semi-customized format. In this way, students are engaged with content on a global scale, and learn how to answer their questions using different methods.

Of course, the practice of integrating technology into the classroom requires constant (re-)evaluation. If the goal of teaching is to awaken students' interest in learning, then digital tools should be used for that purpose. Nor should students be unilaterally punished for not understanding why instructors have such critical views of these tools. I believe that there are ways that digital tools can be presented in the classroom through a critical lens, and while teaching students respectfully about their appropriate usage. For instance, I view artificial intelligence and translator/generator models as useful for language assignments in which students' learning outcomes are focused around theories of translation, mastery of grammar, or lexical variation. Including digital tools also permits us to expand our assessments beyond essays and tests to show students' knowledge, such as through the publication of digital media, or through assisting them in non-digital methods such as speech or discussion preparation. Of the utmost importance, however, is the creation of a space where students feel they can explore with tools, learn about digital literacy, and open up when they feel the temptation of the use of technology to get ahead. In fact, in my current role, I am responsible for my understanding of digital tools and their usefulness in data interpretation. In this way, the evaluation of technology tools (in the classroom) will always be at the forefront of my mind.

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