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ICT lets you study 'outside the box'



National Director of Expanding Learning Horizons, Travis Smith, said implementing ICT into education allows students to learn 'outside' of the classroom walls and do things that are realistically impossible. Picture: BT/Raul Padernal

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"PUTTING pen on paper" will bring endless possibilities to education in Brunei, experts from Microsoft Asia Pacific and ICT Education consulting group, Expanding Learning Horizons said yesterday.

At the THINKBIG Innovation Dialogue yesterday, Bruneian educators learned of the potential ICT programmes such as OneNote and Microsoft Lync can bring to enhance their pedagogical practices in school to enhance learning for their students.

Speaking to the press, National Director of Expanding Learning Horizons Travis Smith, said implementing ICT into education allows students to learn "out of the four walls of their classroom" and do things that are realistically impossible.

Implementing ICT into education opens a door for learning through connectivity and internationalisation of schools. With softwares like Microsoft Lync and Skype, Smith explained that students can easily interact with students from other countries.

"We're often very good in schools at teaching international content you know in learning about other countries, but we don't often enough give students international experiences."

With video and voice calling facilities easily available nowadays, students can learn international content with an almost first-hand experience through interaction with international students, he said.

Education Partner Director of Microsoft Asia Pacific Jason Trump, added that technology allows students to do things that are

wouldn't be possible due to safety or cost. With technology, students would be able to do impractical tasks such as flying a plane or doing an experiment on nuclear fission, he said.

"Think about getting students to fly a plane, it's completely impractical for students to learn to fly a plane, yet you could with flight simulator and so on."

Visual and practical learning can be provided with "a very realistic simulation" through multimedia assets and published content on computers, Trump said.

Smith added that teaching using ICT allows for personalised learning, which enables students to learn at their own pace and with their own learning styles; be it auditory, visual or practical.

The idea of personalised learning is, students make their own understanding and have their own level of success regardless of whether they are fast or slow learners in the subject matter, he said.

He added when all students learn at the same pace, there will be frustration on both ends of the scale of fast and slow learners.

"You're not challenged by the content that is being offered to you (as a fast learner), so you end up not reaching your potential. And similarly, students at the bottom end who are getting the same material as everyone else can't be slowed down enough for them to reach the standards."

The benefit of learning with technology, Smith said, is that it addresses all the different types of intelligences of the students.

In his presentation, he demonstrated how a planner and note taking software, Microsoft OneNote, which can capture text, images, video and audio notes with "pen-and-paper" concepts, can be incorporated into teaching and learning.

"They can all demonstrate understanding or aptitude in certain content by using technology because we can start to give them possibilities to use their own learning styles: sound, videos, typing, writing, drawing, sketching - all that is possible, especially if you're thinking about using tablet PC and what happens when you put a pen on a computer."

<http://www.bt.com.bn/news-national/2012/01/27/ict-lets-you-study-outside-box>