

# LANGUAGE TOOLS

USE DIGITAL DEVICES PURPOSEFULLY TO SUPPORT LEARNING OF MOTHER TONGUE LANGUAGES.



ICT tools can make language learning more fun and create opportunities for social interaction

**D**igital devices can make mother tongue languages (MTLs) come alive, but they cannot replace quality interactions between a child and a teacher, says Mdm Corinne Fan, Lecturer at the National Institute of Early Childhood Development – Ngee Ann Polytechnic Campus.

Information and communications technology (ICT) tools should be used moderately to create authentic learning opportunities that complement the MTL curriculum. "ICT should allow children to apply what they have learnt in class and relate it to everyday life. This makes the language functional and purposeful," she adds.

## ICT IN TEACHING PRACTICES

Mdm Fan offers some examples of how ICT can be used. Content can be presented through augmented reality apps, where computer-generated images and words are superimposed on views of the real world to build children's vocabulary on a specific topic, such as fruits or animals. Reading activities can be supplemented with a stop-motion app that allows children to record

selected scenes from the story and narrate it using words and sentence structures they have just learned. Outdoor walks can be captured in photos and audio recordings and turned into interactive presentations where children practise new words.

She recommends the A to G guide when using ICT for MTL learning:

- **A**lign with planned learning objectives.
- **B**ring children together and promote interactions among children or between children and teacher.
- Promote **C**reativity.
- Promote **D**iscovery learning.
- Be **E**asy for children to use.
- Be **F**un and engaging for children.
- Be **G**uided by teachers throughout the process.

## CONNECT WITH CARE

At PCF Sparkletots @ Chua Chu Kang Blk 10, Tamil Language Teacher Mdm Balamurugan Shanthy makes lessons fun and engaging with technology. She created riddles that children could solve by scanning QR codes with an iPad. To motivate children to speak up, she devised an online spin-the-wheel game, projected from a laptop to a screen.

## TIPS FOR TEACHERS



- ➔ **Familiarise yourself** with the selected ICT device/resource. Ensure it is safe, age-appropriate and easy for preschoolers to use.
- ➔ **Don't leave children unattended** when using ICT tools. Give clear instructions, guide their learning and affirm their efforts.
- ➔ **Teach children healthy habits** such as adopting a good sitting posture and limiting time spent on devices.
- ➔ **Don't use too many devices/resources** and stress yourself out. Stick to the few you are familiar with.

Mdm Shanthy notes that incorporating ICT tools in the classroom has improved children's attention and engagement. "Ensure that the content engages children meaningfully. Think about the types of social interactions that will happen when using the device, and whether it complements their learning experience. The technology should match their needs, abilities and interests at each stage of development, and ICT use should be closely supervised by adults," says Mdm Shanthy.

At home, she recommends that parents supervise, schedule and limit screen time. "Do not let children use devices as and when they like. Mealtimes and family time should be solely for interacting and communicating with one another, and devices should be put away." ●



Photos of outdoor walks can be used to deliver engaging presentations



## DON'T BE TONGUE-TIED!

Educators, parents and children can discover ways to make language learning fun at the **Mother Tongue Languages Symposium 2022**. Starting on 27 August, highlights include online sharing sessions, interactive workshops, storytelling sessions, an Online Quest and an Explore@MTLS activity package. Visit [www.mtls.edu.sg](http://www.mtls.edu.sg) for more.