

CONNECTOR

Quarterly Newsletter of EdTech Society



MESSAGE FROM T4E CHAIRS

Shitanshu Mishra

Hello everyone, my name is Shitanshu Mishra. As a program chair of the T4E 2024 conference, I am delighted to announce that this year, the accepted T4E papers will be published in a Springer's lecture notes on educational technology. You can submit either full papers or short papers for the two main tracks of the conference. The first track will accept papers presenting original research work, while the second track will accept papers that provide experience reports. Additionally, T4E 2024 invites submissions for other tracks. These tracks include proposals for hands-on workshops, abstracts on best practices and teaching demos, and abstracts proposing tool demonstrations. Please visit the T4E website for details about these tracks and keep an eye on the website for any updates to the submission deadlines.

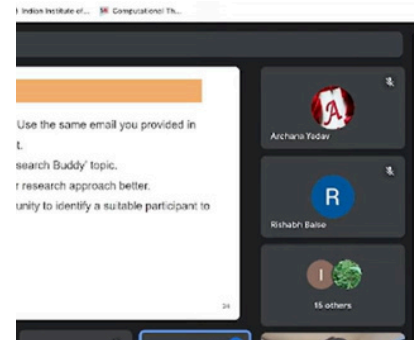
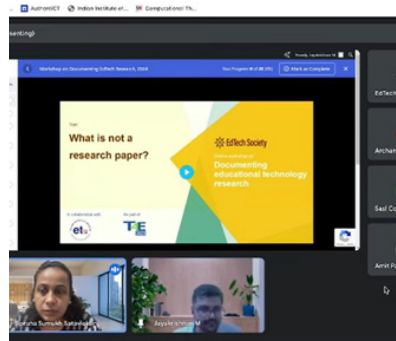
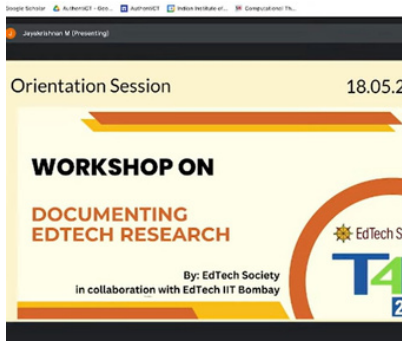


Aditi Kothiyal

Hello, I'm Aditi Kothiyal from IIT Gandhinagar. One of the program chairs of T4E 2024. Despite the growth of technologies and education, quality learning opportunities remain inaccessible to a large majority of our citizens. With this backdrop in mind, this year at T4E, we seek to push the boundaries of how we think of technological innovations in education and ask how can we leverage technologies, both big and small, to bridge the educational differences among diverse groups. In addition, we also encourage participants to think beyond the traditional curricular goals in education and ask how can we use technologies to foster the development of well-rounded and democratically aware citizens. To address these complex issues, we invite submissions from researchers, teachers, students, developers, entrepreneurs, policymakers and practitioners on the ground, all of whom are interested in understanding how teaching and learning is enhanced with technology and how we can reimagine the role of technology in education. We look forward to your submissions.



WORKSHOP ON DOCUMENTING EDUCATIONAL TECHNOLOGY RESEARCH



The EdTech Society's *Workshop on Documenting Educational Technology Research (DETR)* has successfully completed yet another impactful chapter in its journey of transformation and growth. The objective of the DETR workshop is to facilitate community building among teachers and EdTech industry practitioners to promote the scholarship of teaching and learning and support them in transitioning towards educational technology research.

The DETR workshop, first introduced in 2023, is a three-month-long programme conducted online annually, ensuring greater accessibility. The 2023 edition ran from May 10 to July 21, while the 2024 edition was held from May 10 to August 10. During the 2023 run, 11 dedicated learners from diverse fields such as Engineering, Liberal Arts, and School teachers, as well as EdTech industry professionals, who do not have prior research experience in educational technology participated in the workshop. Each learner was guided by one of the 18 research buddies. Research buddies are professionals who have either obtained a Ph.D. or have demonstrated expertise in publishing papers in peer-reviewed conferences or journals in the field of educational technology. In 2024, the workshop saw even greater participation, with 32 learners supported by 35 research buddies.

A Structured Approach to Learning and Research

The workshop spans a total duration of three months and has two distinct parts:

- **Learning Research Methods:** Learners engaged in intensive sessions covering fundamental research methods. The content was delivered via an LMS platform, complemented by weekly live sessions and continuous support through a dedicated Telegram group.
- **Conducting Studies and Paper Writing:** Learners then applied their newfound knowledge to conduct research studies, using templates such as the Idea Planning Template and the Study Planning Template to document their progress. During this phase, learners received personalized guidance and support from research buddies, ensuring learners' research endeavours are successful.

Comprehensive Support System

The workshop's success is underpinned by a robust support system designed to meet the diverse needs of participants. The key components of this system include:

- **Live Sessions:** Weekly or bi-weekly interactive sessions with coordinators and participants to ensure clarity and address challenges.
- **DETR Clinic:** A dedicated space to address specific challenges effectively.
- **Research Buddies:** Personalized mentorship from experienced researchers to guide learners through every stage of their research journey.
- **Discussion Forum:** A dedicated Telegram group for ongoing discussions, knowledge sharing, and peer support.
- **Individualized Support:** Coordinators provided one-on-one assistance to participants, ensuring their unique needs were addressed.

Key Achievements and Success

The workshop's approach has led to impressive achievements in both years. In 2023, out of the 8 papers submitted to the peer reviewed conference Technology 4 Education (T4E) 2023, 7 have been accepted. The 2024 batch set a new record, with 18 submissions, 15 of which were accepted for publication. Furthermore, 4 additional submissions were accepted under the Practitioner Research Idea Summit (PRISm) track, dedicated exclusively to DETR 2024 participants.



These milestones not only demonstrate the effectiveness of the workshop in fostering research skills but also highlight the commitment of learners and their research mentors.

Transformative Impact of the DETR Workshop

A noteworthy example of the workshop's transformative impact was seen in the 2024 run, where four learners from the 2023 cohort, who had successfully completed the workshop and published papers in T4E 2023, were invited back as research buddies. These individuals mentored the new learners, helping them to document their research effectively and publish their findings.

Leadership and Coordination

The workshop has greatly benefited from the guidance of esteemed advisors and coordinators. Prof. Sahana Murthy provided invaluable support as the advisor for the 2023 workshop, while Prof. Sridhar Iyer guided the 2024 edition. The coordination teams have ensured the success of each iteration, with Dr. Sameer Sahasrabudhe, Dr. Jayakrishnan M., and Nandan P. A. leading in 2023, and Dr. Jayakrishnan M., Nandan P. A., and Spruha Satavlekar in 2024.

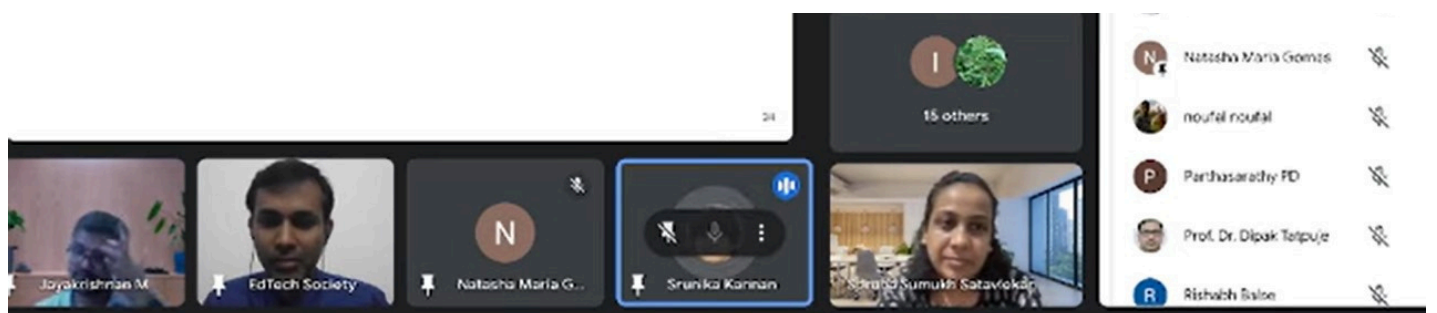
Acknowledgements

The majority of the video content was curated from the '2-day ISTE workshop on research methods in educational technology', conducted by Indian Institute of Technology Bombay as part of the National Mission on Education through ICT (MHRD, Govt. of India) during February 2-9, 2013. We would like to acknowledge Prof. Sahana Murthy, Prof. Sridhar Iyer and the ISTE workshop team for their intellectual contribution and effort in creating the learning content.

Conclusion

The success of the DETR workshop exemplifies the power of collaboration, mentorship, and structured learning in advancing educational technology research. By bridging the gap between theoretical knowledge and practical application, the workshop has paved the way for a new generation of researchers in the EdTech space. As these newly minted researchers move forward in their careers, their contributions will undoubtedly shape the future of education and technology integration.

The DETR workshop team extends congratulations to all participants and looks forward to future collaborations in this vital field.



AECT MEET AND GREET



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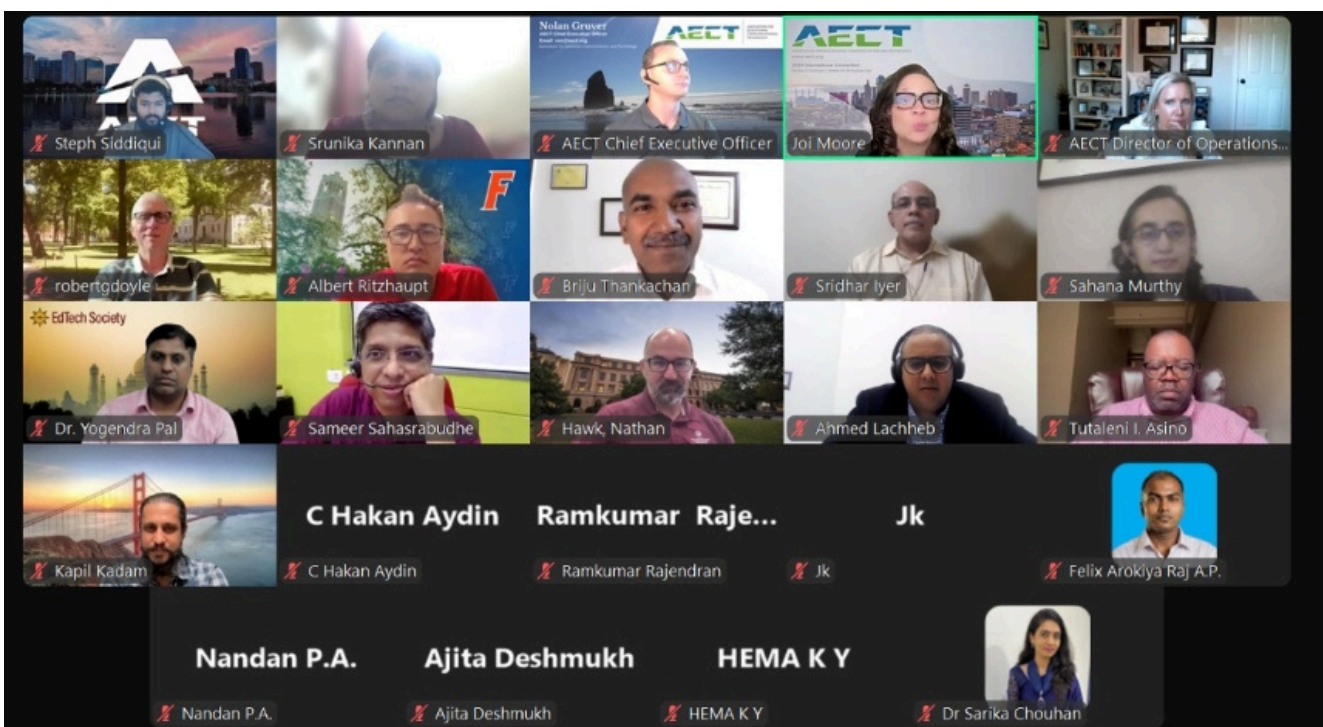
AECT & EdTech Society Affiliation: Meet & Greet

On June 22, 2024, EdTech Society signed an international affiliate agreement with the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT). This partnership opens doors for joint opportunities and collaborative initiatives between EdTech Society and AECT.

AECT, established in 1923, is one of the oldest professional associations in the field of educational technology. As described on their website, "AECT is a professional association of instructional designers, educators, and business professionals who provide leadership in the area of educational technology research and application to sustain a continuous effort to enrich teaching and learning within the United States and across the world." For more information about AECT, visit <https://www.aect.org/aect/about>.

On September 19, 2024, we organized a joint "EdTech Society/AECT Membership Meet & Greet." This one-hour online event was held from 6:30 PM to 7:30 PM (IST, India) / 9:00 AM to 10:00 AM (ET, USA). It provided an excellent opportunity for members of both organizations to connect and learn about the events, activities, and workshops hosted by EdTech Society and AECT.

In the future, we look forward to co-hosting AECT's Summer International Research Symposium in India.



IMPLEMENTATION OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020 IN TECHNICAL EDUCATION



ETSy Workshop with Gujarat Government

A half-day workshop titled "Implementation of National Education Policy 2020 in Technical Education" was organized by EdTech Society for Commissionerate of Technical Education (CTE), Gujarat.

The following were the learning objectives of the workshop:

- Understand and comprehend the key elements of NEP2020 with respect to technical education.
- Understand the need for curriculum redesign and multidisciplinary pedagogical approaches.
- Develop effective learner centric pedagogical strategies aligned with NEP2020 guidelines.
- Learn techniques to integrate digital learning tools and technology in the classroom.

This workshop took place on 23rd October 2024, from 12:00 PM to 4:00 PM at IIT Gandhinagar. The workshop was conducted by Prof. Mandar Bhanushe, Head of the Faculty of Science and Technology at the Centre for Distance Open Education (CDOE), University of Mumbai.

Total of 97 faculty members from 20 cities/regions across Gujarat including both urban and rural areas, have attended the workshop. Participants engaged in interactive discussions and hands-on activities designed to facilitate the integration of NEP 2020 reforms into technical education. Prof. Bhanushe shared valuable insights and strategies for enhancing teaching methodologies, encouraging educators to adopt a more innovative and student-centered approach.

The workshop also included a competitive element, with the top 10 participants selected by the speaker receiving a one-year membership to the EdTech Society.

Upon receiving feedback, participants rated the workshop an overall 8.5 out of 10. The qualitative feedback emphasizes the need for comprehensive workshops to support the implementation of the NEP 2020, particularly focusing on the integration of technology in education, such as AI and digital tools for teaching and assessment.

"More workshops are needed to implement NEP in future."

"Use of AI in teaching, AI in assessment, and designing assessment of the students at the age of AI."

Workshop team members:

- Workshop Coordinator: Dr. Sameer Sahasrabudhe
- Chairperson of the Program Committee: Dr. Sarika Chouhan
- Teaching Assistants: Dhairya Pandya, Garima Nagal, Devesh Jha
- Designer: Ananya Mitra
- Registration Portal Management: Dr. Yogendra Pal



CURIOSITY CORNER

RTF and CREATE: Prompting Techniques for Improving the Quality of Instruction

One of the key factors that influence learning is the quality of instruction. The quality of instruction depends on the effectiveness of instructional materials, methods, and assessments. With the introduction of generative AI tools such as ChatGPT, Gemini, Claude 2, and Copilot, educators can save time, increase productivity, and enhance instructional quality. However, many educators face challenges due to a lack of training on how to effectively and efficiently interact with these AI tools.

There's a well-known saying: "Garbage in, garbage out." This is especially true when using generative AI tools. If prompts are poorly structured or unclear, the quality of the output will suffer. As part of my ongoing professional development, I took the course "Talking to AI: Prompt Engineering for Project Managers" from PMI. Here, I share two key prompting techniques I have learned and applied in my daily teaching activities.

Role, Task, and Format (RTF)

Role: Define the role of the AI. For example: "You are a Botany professor."

Task: Specify the task you want the AI to perform. For example: "Explain the concept of photosynthesis."

Format: Indicate the desired format for the response. For example: "Provide a detailed explanation followed by bullet points and a summary."

CREATE (Character, Request, Examples, Adjustments, Output Types, Evaluation)

Character: Define the roles of both the user and the AI throughout the interaction. By assigning a persona to the AI, responses are tailored to the role, ensuring relevance and precision. For example, if the AI is assigned the role of an English language teacher, it will respond with the expertise and perspective of an English teacher.

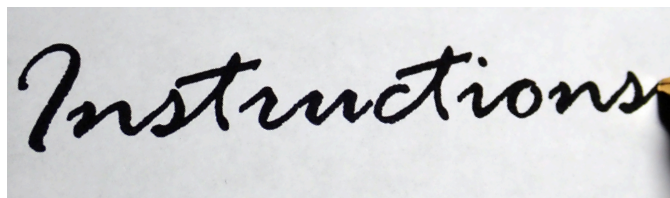
Request: Clearly articulate the AI's tasks. Specificity and clarity are crucial to ensure the AI understands the requirements. For instance, instead of vaguely asking for help with teaching strategies, specify: "Suggest active learning strategies to teach nouns."

Examples: Provide examples to guide the AI in producing the desired output. These can include templates or sample responses. For example, sharing a sample program can help the AI create similar outputs aligned with expectations.

Adjustments: Refine the prompt based on initial outputs. Iterative adjustments help hone the AI's responses to better meet requirements. Feedback loops are vital here, allowing prompts to evolve based on the AI's performance.

Output Types: Specify the format for the output. This could range from a text summary to a list, table, or other structured formats. For example, you might request: "Present the output in a table format."

Evaluation: Review the AI's output to ensure it meets the initial request and criteria. This step involves assessing the accuracy, relevance, and completeness of the response and providing feedback for further refinement if needed.



CURIOSITY CORNER

Next Steps: The Prompt Library

Share your prompts with other educators! What prompts have you found helpful in improving the quality of instruction? The Prompt Library will serve as a curated repository of prompts created and vetted by EdTech Society members. Selected prompts will be featured in our next newsletter to benefit the broader community.

To contribute, create a Google Doc with your prompts and share it via email at: brijuthankachan@gmail.com

For more information about prompting techniques, please contact:
Briju Thankachan, Ph.D.

References

- MIT Management. (2024, September 9). Effective Prompts for AI: The Essentials. MIT Sloan Teaching & Learning Technologies. <https://mitsloanedtech.mit.edu/ai/basics/effective-prompts/>
- White, J., Fu, Q., Hays, S., Sandborn, M., Olea, C., Gilbert, H., Elnashar, A., Spencer-Smith, J., & Schmidt, D. C. (2023, February 21). A Prompt Pattern Catalog to Enhance Prompt Engineering with ChatGPT. [arXiv preprint arXiv:2302.11382](https://arxiv.org/abs/2302.11382).

FEATURED MEMBER



Sagarika Prabhakar is an ed-tech professional and researcher with expertise in integrating AI into education to create impactful learning experiences. Having worked on AI-driven projects, she has witnessed the potential of technology to address gaps in accessibility and engagement. Her work includes contributing to the design of tutoring frameworks, automated assessments, and AI-driven content solutions. With a strong foundation in design thinking and instructional design, she strives to bridge the gap between technology and education to enhance accessibility and outcomes. She has been honored with scholarships such as the Erasmus Mundus Joint Master's Scholarship, Vrije University's Academic Excellence Award, and the SALON Scholarship, which have shaped her global perspective and reinforced her commitment to research and development in the field.

UPCOMING EVENT

Keep looking for social media updates on Master classes, panel discussions and NPTEL + workshops.

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EDITORIAL

Dr. T. G. Lakshmi

The December 2024 edition of our newsletter reflects a key highlight of the year - annual Technology for Education 2024 conference.

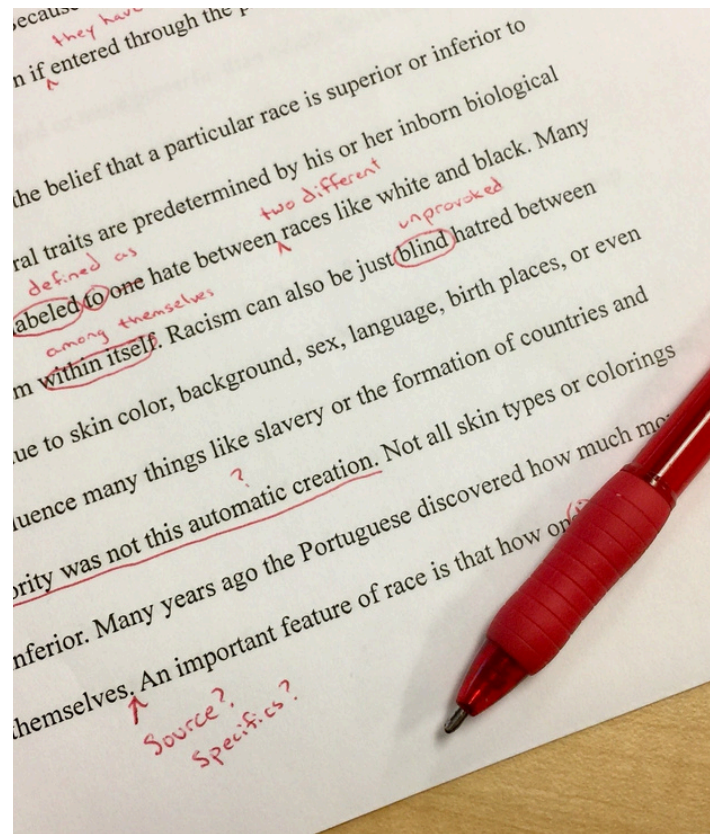
At the core of our mission lies a fundamental challenge articulated by Prof. Aditi Kothiyal - "despite technological advancements, quality learning opportunities remain inaccessible to a large majority of our citizens". This observation sets the stage for T4E 2024— where by leveraging technology we aim to bridge educational differences and foster human flourishing.

The Workshop on Documenting Educational Technology Research (DETR) stands as a testament to our commitment to this vision. In just two years, the workshop has demonstrated remarkable success, evolving from 11 participants in 2023 to 32 learners in 2024. The program's approach of combining structured learning with personalized mentorship has yielded impressive results, with 15 out of 18 submissions accepted for publication in the Technology 4 Education (T4E) conference.

Our recent partnership with the Association for Educational Communications and Technology (AECT) represents another significant milestone. This international affiliation opens new avenues for collaborative initiatives, bringing together diverse perspectives to advance educational technology research and application.

The workshop with the Gujarat Government's Commissionerate of Technical Education further underscores our practical approach to educational transformation. By focusing on the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020, we are directly supporting educators in adopting innovative, technology-integrated teaching methodologies.

The "Curiosity Corner" section on prompting techniques for AI tools is particularly timely. As generative AI becomes increasingly integrated into educational practices, understanding how to effectively interact with these tools is crucial. The introduction of techniques like Role, Task, and Format (RTF) and CREATE provides educators with practical strategies to enhance instructional quality.



EDITORIAL

Dr. T. G. Lakshmi

These initiatives reflect our broader commitment: to not just introduce technology into education, but to do so thoughtfully, inclusively, and with a clear focus on improving learning outcomes for all. We firmly believe in education's potential to create more equitable and sensitised citizens of the world.

As we move forward, we remain dedicated to pushing the boundaries of educational technology, fostering research, supporting educators, and ultimately, democratizing access to quality education

We believe that by fostering connections - between educators, learners, researchers, and industry leaders - we can create a vibrant ecosystem for EdTech innovation.






Bringing together Education, Technology and Community

Editorial team

- Dr. T. G. Lakshmi
- Ananya Mitra
- Aditya Maurya

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