BOOK REVIEW

CALL TEACHER EDUCATION:
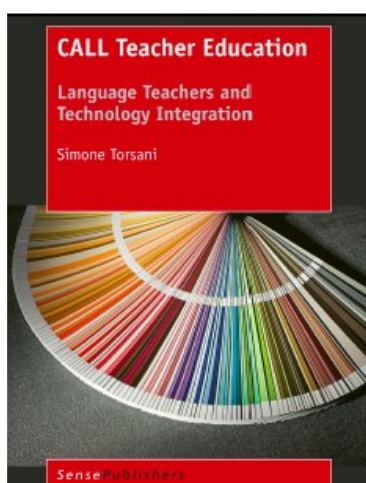## LANGUAGE TEACHERS AND TECHNOLOGY INTEGRATION
Written by Simone TORSANI

Yildiz TERZIOGLU
Department of English Language Teaching
Graduate School of Educational Sciences
Near East University
Nicosia, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus

ISBN	**978-94-6300-475-6 (paperback)** **978-94-6300-476-3 (hardback)** **978-94-6300-477-0 (e-book)**
Publication Date	**2016**
Publication Formats	**Hardback, paperback and e-Book**
Publisher	**Sense Publishers**

INTRODUCTION

As the title suggests, Simone Torsani's book sets out to bridge the gap that exists between the theory and the practice about the integration of technology in distance language learning. The book is comprised of ten chapters with two sets of aims which are raising teachers' awareness to computer-assisted materials and procedures about the integration of technology in distance language teaching. The chapters are structured to address different topics such as Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) training activities, designing a computer assisted language learning course and processes in Computer Assisted Language Learning Teacher Education (CTE) for the internet. Above all, the technologically skilled teachers are associated with "the mythological character of Daedalus" in the introductory section (p. xvi). The book calls for all teacher trainers to put themselves in language teachers' shoes in order to see computer-assisted language learning not independent from the language acquisition theory. Therefore, language teachers need to implement and practise developing online materials to address their learners' linguistic difficulties.

The introductory chapter provides an overview that CALL teachers, trainers and practitioners need to see technology as an experimentation of an application rather than a simple tool for teaching. Torsani highlights the importance of the Web 2.0 applications in providing learners with a constant everyday language contact for communication. He also warns against the technical problems with the interactive whiteboard, Wi-Fi connection and technological unavailability that untrained language teachers might face in their classrooms. The introductory chapter makes the case that CALL teacher education can be seen as a separate field in language teaching. Thus, computer mediated

instruction requires a successful language lesson plan and didactic approaches in order to use computers in class. Furthermore, Torsani closes the introductory section by discussing the integration of computers not only as grammar teaching tool. But he also encourages language teachers to adopt a more learner-centered approach by taking the pedagogical, the institutional and the personal factors into account in the classroom. Torsani ends the introductory chapter by quoting a few crucial lines of the researchers about computer assisted language learning. In other words, the main purpose of this book, as Torsani explains, is to develop teachers' knowledge of the options about technology that are available for the benefit of learners.

Torsani distinguishes between two broad facts about the definition of computer assisted language learning in order to explain his theory. Firstly, he identified the technology application by which teachers can develop the lesson content by organizing and supporting skills for the learner autonomy. Secondly, the focus is on the learning process where linguistic activities are designed for the CALL curriculum. Then, he proceeds to wander through the history about the development of CALL. Torsani quotes from Warshauer (1996) about the three phases of computer assisted language learning (pp.4-5). Firstly, Behaviourist (structuralist) phase of CALL (1950s-1970s) examined language structures and grammatical accuracy. Secondly, Communicative phase took place between 1970s and 1990s with the simulation of interaction by computers. Finally, the Integrative phase focused on Task Based Learning from 1990s onward.

REVIEW OF THE BOOK

Chapter 1, *Computer Assisted Language Learning as a Study Branch,* sets the tone of the book by discussing how the social network, the sociocultural and the social interactionist approaches led to the present status of computer assisted language learning. Torsani also mentions how the diffusion of mobile devices, online interaction and social networks can contribute to the second language development. This dynamic nature of computer assisted language learning is followed by a suggestion of a vast number of research themes such as "(a)synchronous courses, Virtual Learning Environments (VLEs), Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL) and long-distance courses" (p.12). One of the real strengths of the book is that it draws the readers' attention to the relationship between software applications and Computational Linguistics.

Torsani advanced one of his main ideas that computers play a vital role in providing automatic and immediate feedback. Computer-aided instruction also has the potential to increase the motivation of anxious language learners who learn the target language at their own pace. This is what Torsani called "Intelligent CALL" (p.13). Teachers' roles have shifted to the supporters of the learning process. He also suggested how the content delivery with projects assists learners by having a great control on their language production.

Chapter 2, *Technology and Language Education*, sticks to the relationship between the technology and the language pedagogy. Torsani emphasizes that CALL pedagogy does not differ from the language teaching pedagogy. The same chapter is dedicated to the benefits of asynchronous communication tools of blogs and wikis which assist reflective writing. Teachers can maximize learners' communication opportunities with native speakers by synchronous tools of Instant Message (IM) and chat rooms. Learners can also create comics using Pixton and infographics with Piktochart.

Chapter 3, *The Integration of Technology into Language Teaching*, is indispensable as it defines the reconstruction of teachers' teaching practice in terms of the integration and the normalization of CALL in the classroom. The term 'normalization' is described as an "ongoing use of technology in the daily work" (p.49). Integration is defined as a process in teaching and this chapter draws attention to the complexity of technology integration in learning. Hence, economic and social factors, geopolitical, institutional, contextual and human factors are identified as barriers to the integration of technology in the classroom.

Nevertheless, Chapter 3 establishes the idea of not taking technology for granted just for its efficient use in class. Therefore, CALL teacher education which is an essential part of an effective training needs to meet various teachers' and learners' needs and expectations in the language classroom.

In chapter 4, *Foundations of CALL Teacher Education*, the author states the causes and the remedies for the lack of digital competence and standards. For instance, a good CALL teacher education model involves a careful needs analysis of the context, learners, appropriate methods, standards and online tools, i.e. blogging, dictionaries, discussion forums. Torsani is concerned that CALL teacher education research needs to focus on measuring teachers' habits, perceptions and abilities for improving their teaching practice.

Torsani's book succeeds at being what it was written to be in chapter 5, *CTE from Theory to Practice*, which provides a guide for two models of CALL teacher education, i.e. Technological Pedagogical and Content Knowledge (TPACK) and CALL Competences. Here, the online pedagogy is stated to be a crucial factor in determining a unique computer-assisted language learning curriculum. The readers' attention is also drawn to the technical area where the theory and the practice are linked by linguistic and didactic procedures.

In chapter 6, *Approaches and Processes in CTE*, teachers are advised to take the advantage of the situated learning where learners are immersed in real contexts in order to practise everyday language with authentic tasks. In depth approach is investigated with the demonstration of online applications, i.e. Web Quest and project-based learning.
This book is unique with its focus on raising the issue of the web pedagogy. So, different domains of networked CALL are examined in chapter 7, *CALL Teacher Education for the Internet*. Teachers are encouraged to adopt a pyramid of skills model and experiment mobile technologies for improving their information skills and their knowledge about various computer applications.

Chapter 8, *Procedures*, contextualizes learning activities by grouping them in three main areas of knowledge which are "linguistic, procedural and technical skills" (p.144). This section covers a wide range of effective Distance Training tasks, CALL training activities and procedures, i.e. tutorials, video demonstrations, designing a Moodle cloze test and complex activities (multiple choice tests).

The most prominent contribution is devoted to the designing of a computer assisted language learning course and curriculum in chapter 9, *The CALL Course*. The author offers a series of suggestions about the curriculum not only as a general course for pre-service teachers, in-service teachers and CALL specialists but also as a course for researchers, experts and instructors. This chapter places a focus on the key issues such as the diversity of CALL processes and evaluations. Torsani advises that teachers should interpret their context before they design and evaluate the feasibility of practical online exercises on Virtual Learning Environments, i.e. Hot Potatoes, gap-filling, online vocabulary matching exercises and guided tutorials. This book adds richness to the computer assisted language learning field with especially chapter 9 with different proposed designs on computer assisted language learning curriculum. Further explanations of notes about the research literature are also listed at the end of each chapter.

The book is well written in the sense that it links the web-based teaching and learning theory and practice. Torsani concludes in chapter 10, *Conclusions: The Future of CALL Teacher Education*, that the integration of technology can only take place with the normalization, transfer and the reconstruction of knowledge by teachers. As the author reconfirms, the future of successful computer assisted language learning activities depends on a careful needs analysis, effective strategies for observation and reflection and second language teacher education for developing a better CALL curriculum and Distance Education. The appendices section of this book includes a list of skills for using a Virtual Learning Environment (Moodle), six criteria for computer assisted language learning tasks evaluation and computer assisted language learning applications.

CONCLUSION

On the one hand, it is easy as a reader to focus on Torsani's work on CALL teacher education. On the other hand, one can miss the fact that Torsani also spends a great deal of time in his book explaining the main goals of integrating the digital media applications into the language education. The author never loses steam in the book. He succeeds in weaving his integration theory into succeeding chapters by encouraging the readers to stay focused and alert throughout the book.

In summary, the book provides a positive contribution to why computer assisted language learning teacher education is crucial for developing online pedagogies in the language classroom. The author places a special emphasis on the matrix of the linguistic knowledge, the procedural knowledge and the technical skills. Torsani proposes a theoretical framework for the computer assisted language learning syllabus design on three areas of expertise. Firstly, the linguistic experience is based on the knowledge about the second language acquisition and language education. Case studies which involve simulations of activities provide trainee teachers with an opportunity to compare their experience with the research literature. Secondly, the procedural knowledge defines how to use technology effectively by getting familiar with the online tools. Therefore, online tutorials can take place in language laboratories in order to foster trainee teachers' motivation about using technology. Lastly, the technical knowledge is described as the combination and the integration of two different tools such as the HotPotatoes match exercises and Hypertext Markup Language (HTML) codes on the Learning Management Systems.

Taken as a whole, the book is well worth considering for postgraduate students, computer assisted language learning teacher trainers as well as in-service teachers who are interested in improving their ability to embed technology in their language teaching curriculum design.

BIODATA and CONTACT ADRESSES of AUTHOR
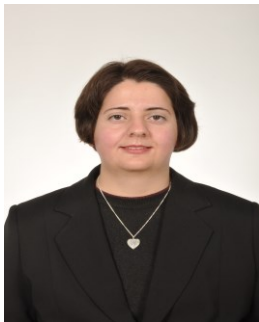
Yildiz TERZIOGLU is a PhD candidate in the Department of English Language Teaching at Near East University in Nicosia, Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. She previously completed her MA and BA in Teaching English as a Foreign Language at Essex University in Colchester, England. Her primary research interests include Computer Assisted Language Learning and Teaching, mobile technologies, Virtual Learning Environments, Massive Open Online Courses and Web 2.0 tools for the development of listening and speaking skills. She has been teaching English for nine years in Nicosia. She wrote a Vocational English coursebook for Accounting and Finance under the English language commission of the Ministry of Education in the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus. She is also a runner-up in the British Council's 2013 Blog writing competition amongst English language teachers in Europe.

Yildiz TERZIOGLU
Department of English Language Teaching
Graduate School of Educational Sciences
Near East University 99138 Mersin 10- Turkey, Nicosia, TRNC
Phone: +90 5428507387
E-mail: yildiz86terzioglu@gmail.com

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