

BOOK REVIEW

Technology Enhanced Language Learning (2013)

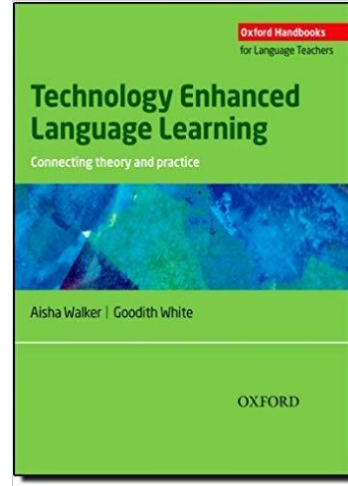
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The use of technology for language learning and teaching purposes has become a trending issue for the last few decades in particular. As such, we have witnessed the transition from computer-assisted language learning (CALL) to technology-enhanced language learning (TELL) and mobile-assisted language learning (MALL). However, the main concern is not whether to integrate technology into language learning and teaching practices, but how to integrate it in a pedagogically sound way. As Lewis (2010) puts it, 'New technologies open up possibilities unheard of in previous eras. But these Technologies will have only limited impact if the pedagogy behind their application does not keep pace' (p. 9). Therefore, bridging the gap between theory and practice is crucial if the aim is the effective use of technology. *Technology Enhanced Language Learning (Connecting Theory and Practice)* by Oxford University Press aims to bring together theory and practice in the field of technology integration in language classes.

The book consists of twelve chapters that focus on both theoretical and practical aspects of technology integration in language learning and teaching. It starts with an introduction part explaining the objectives of the book and rationale behind writing such a book. Later, the organization of the book is presented through outlining each chapter in a clear way.

The first chapter dwells on the 'learning' concept and scrutinizes the process of the transition from CALL to TELL. The relationship between communicative and digital competence is also covered in the chapter. Likewise, chapter 2 focuses on the concept of 'communication' and context - communication relationship. The historical development of digital communication (Web 1.0 and Web 2.0) is also highlighted. The chapter provides some sample texts to indicate the language change in digital communication as well (see p. 21 and 22).

The book starts to explain how to integrate technology into learning and teaching language skills with Chapter 3. Listening and speaking skills constitute the main issues of this chapter. The chapter firstly sheds lights on different sorts of spoken language available on the Internet and goes on explaining the new skills appeared with the new communication technologies such as multitasking skills. How to use technology to learn and teach speaking and listening skills is covered through



different tasks which can be regarded as the most useful sections of the book. The book provides some tasks for each language skills, as in the case of listening and speaking skills, in which language teachers can apply the procedures for preparing their own digital materials. This chapter presents seven tasks to the readers with a step-by-step approach which makes it quite reader-friendly.

Chapter 4 deals with reading skills emphasizing some specific strategies. Important aspects of reading in a first and second language are mentioned and how technology has changed the ways in which we read is highlighted through five effective tasks. Readers are recommended to see the Internet sites and some applications provided on the web site www.oup.com/elt/teacher/tell. This web site is comprised of the web addresses (URLs) suggested for the teachers conducting each task. Similarly, chapter 5 focuses on writing skills suggesting extremely beneficial eight tasks indicating how new writing genres are created by the internet and how technology is providing new opportunities for learning to write in a second language.

Apart from the language skills, the rest of the chapters in the book dwell on different dimensions of language learning and teaching. For instance, chapter 6 is about using visual materials for language learning and teaching. The chapter provides some possibilities of how technology can be used for sourcing and producing visual materials emphasizing multimodal literacies. With the help of nine tasks suggesting the use of some web sites for *online slideshow creators, online photo editing, Comic strip creators, and online animation creators*.

Chapter 7 mainly focuses on virtual learning environments and online platforms for sharing assignments and documents particularly in higher education context. This chapter has seven tasks which contain collaborative learning activities, blog and social media use, and some tools facilitating academic writing like *CiteULike* (p. 101).

Chapter 8 is devoted to young learners and appropriate digital tools for them. The chapter touches on the relationships between technology and children through highlighting the nature of children learning language. Some useful web sites are also recommended through seven tasks. Likewise, chapter 9 focuses on another important dimension, *assessment*, in language learning and teaching process. After some theoretical information about the types of assessment and how technology affects assessment in general, the chapter provides highly practical applications and web sites for interactive multimodal assessment.

Chapters 10 and 11 present some suggestions for teachers about how to choose and use technology effectively. Deciding on the right material, searching for new opportunities for language learning and teaching, professional development in terms of technology use and evaluating language learning software are among the issues covered with the help of various tasks in the chapters. The last chapter of the book (Chapter 12) serves as a summary of the previous chapters and provides considerable foresight on the future of technology and language learning and teaching.

One possible criticism for the book is about the web sites and applications suggested through the tasks available in each chapter. The list of these useful web sites and applications, which are available only on the given web site, as well as more detailed procedures in the format of lesson plans would have been provided at the end of each chapter or as a whole at the end.

In a nutshell, the book is a valuable resource for language teachers, teacher candidates, teacher educators, graduate students, and those who are interested in integrating technology into language learning and teaching process. Especially the teachers who would like to use technology but do not



have any ideas about how and where to start can benefit from the book which will help them raise their awareness about technology for pedagogic purposes in language classrooms.

References

Lewis, G. (2009). *Bringing Technology into the Classroom*. Great Clarendon Street: Oxford University Press.

