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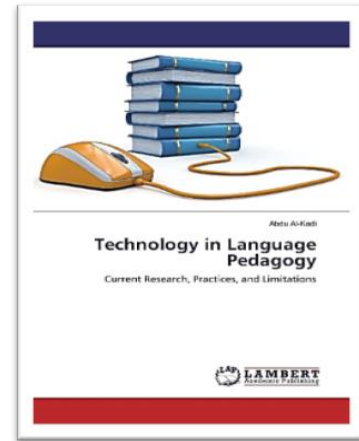
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Book review: Technology in language pedagogy: Current research, practices, and limitations

*Technology in Language Pedagogy:
Current Research, Practices, and Limitations (2017)*

Abdu Al-Kadi
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The book *Technology in Language Pedagogy: Current Research, Practices, and Limitations* (ISBN-13: 978-6202008556), by Abdu Al-kadi, was published in August, 2017. The authors' academic record on <https://orcid.org/0000-0003-3805-7507> shows that he is well-suited to tackle the topic under consideration. He is an assistant professor of Applied Linguistics. Apart from teaching ESP and EFL at the university level, Al-kadi has authored and co-authored other publications of similar themes. The foreword of the book was written by Professor S. Mohanraj, former dean of the School of English Language Education English and Foreign Languages University Hyderabad, India. In the foreword, Mohanraj contends that the book advances the existing body of research as its theme is compatible with the worldwide clamor for technology-enhanced language learning (TELL). The book sketches technology as the mainstay of ELT. It primarily considers (a) learning English through technology and (b) using technology informally to enhance formal instruction. About half of the book considers theoretical issues which pave the way for pedagogical implications and practices. It highlights linguistics and pedagogical advantages such as L2 acquisition, acculturation, motivation, feedback, and so on. This background is foundational for L2 pedagogues to set out their technology-based teaching. The author alleged that practice without a theoretical background is like shooting in the dark.

The book was written in three parts. The first part comprises the first three chapters, and it lays down the background of the book. Following the introductory chapter, the second and third chapters provide a snapshot of technology-integration in ELT. This overview makes it easy to understand the contributions of technology to L2 language pedagogy throughout the method and post-method eras. It touches on learning and teaching theories, approaches, and methods paralleled with development in technological innovations. The author argued that in all stages of this integration, ICT assists- but not replace- teachers to deliver their teaching more effectively. The second part (written in three chapters) delved into the current status of ELT with special reference to ICT-based language learning modes. It shows how such learning styles are fostered in ESL or EFL contexts by modern technology- the force that has given electronic directions for language learning and teaching. In light of this discussion, the status of English and its relation to modern ICT is discussed. In addition to experimental studies, literature reviews, and meta-analysis studies, this part brings examples to illustrate English learning through digital technologies. The discussion relates to many contexts which have produced research on the issue in question. Since students' lives are permeated with a wide range of ICT resources, the author argued, it is useful to understand how this electronic engagement helps them learn better and faster beyond the classroom. The third part, which was written in two concluding chapters, illuminates limitations and future perspectives. It chiefly outlines the challenges that thwart successful integration of technology in situations where English is not an L1. It demonstrates that while ICT poses intricate challenges to language learners and teachers in terms of accessibility, reliability, and technological expertise, it increases engagement, interactivity, and motivation for learning inside and outside classroom. It also suggests how to alleviate such limitations, bringing to the foreground some ideas for further investigation.

The book covered theory and practice of the subject in a balanced fashion. It is a useful summary of the contributions of technology in L2 pedagogy. Researchers, teachers, university students, and policymakers can find it a valuable resource. For researchers, it is a useful literature review on TELL and teaching in contexts where English is not the native language of learners.

Researchers may plan their future studies on the basis of the findings presented in the book. It also serves as a guide for novice researchers who intend to pursue their research within this area of inquiry. The book can be used by teachers, as well. It shows how to direct accessible ICTs towards English learning within and beyond the traditional classroom confinement. It also suggests new channels of English input showing how informal exposure enhances formal instruction and ultimately boosts English proficiency. Understanding how L2 learners and teachers apply ICTs may not only downsizes random uses of electronic devices but also provides implications for the vested interests to adopt or adapt new techniques of TELL. Policymakers, too, can find insightful ideas in the book; important issues within the framework of computer-assisted language learning (CALL), mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) and informal language learning can be food for thought to rectify the current integrations at the formal level. By reading the book, teachers and decision-makers may ensure that their efforts are grounded on research and practice rather than intuitions. It helps them elucidate how technology enables informal language learning and how informal uses of ICT maximize language intake.

Notwithstanding the above-mentioned merits, the book undergoes some shortcomings-like many other scientific studies. To begin with, technology does not work like a Swiss watch. Infusing technology in language learning and teaching is an endeavor that requires an overall plan, theories, and appropriate environments to back it up. The book relied on evidence from EFL contexts in the Third World Countries which were not fully ripe for technology-integration. Adding evidence from countries where TELL is well-established would deepen the investigation. Further, the suggestions the book has provided seem to be rather broad and general. Actually, technology-integration in L2 pedagogy has intricacies that may affect its integration; more detailed and focused recommendations would be an advantage. Also, it would have been better if the author highlighted the extent to which specific forms of technology foster specific language aspects rather than discussing technology in its generic concept. Though I agree with the main thrust of Al-kadi's contribution, a more fine-grained perspective might look into what is lost and what is gained in language-enhanced learning. The book touched on this point briefly leaving room for future researchers to continue research and provide a more critical discussion.

Despite these limitations, Al-kadi managed to provide an understandable and well-informed description of how technology has been glued to L2 education. The book covers larger scope than that of most books of this nature. It is must-read before reading other books of complicated and multidisciplinary themes. The book is strongly recommended as a useful resource to the ESL and EFL library. It may also be used as a textbook that university students and teachers will find readable and engaging. Those seeking elaborated critique of technology-integration, I kindly refer them to further reading that the author of the book listed in the reference list. I have selected from the list some worthwhile resources on the topic; they are cited herewith.

Suggestions for further reading

- Blake, R. (2008). *Brave new digital classroom: Technology and foreign language learning*. Washington, DC: Georgetown University Press.
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