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Editorial: Future of Technology in Language Teaching & Learning



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Ever since the technology found its way into language education during the 1980s and 1990s, discussions surrounding language teaching and learning with technology have manifested into an interdisciplinary field, bringing together the diverse groups of scholars to consider how best to support language learning with technology. In conjunction with the ongoing advancement of technology, the field has now expanded its avenue and established multiple sub-disciplines and special interest groups, such as Intelligent CALL, virtual-reality (VR) and language learning, digital game-based language learning, virtual world and language learning, computer-mediated communication (CMC), distance and blended learning, massive open online courses (MOOCs), and mobile-assisted language learning (MALL), with even more unique and innovative subfields such as robot-assisted language learning and speech bots emerging. To respond to the increasing interest, it has become apparent that creating open platforms for scholars and practitioners to share their research outputs and pedagogical reflections is critical in contributing to the long-term growth of the field.

As a kick-start, I would like to welcome you to the inaugural issue of *Technology in Language Teaching & Learning*. On behalf of the editorial board, we are excited to launch this international, peer-reviewed, open-access journal that aims to promote research excellence, collaboration, and practical applications pertaining innovative use of technology in and out of language learning classrooms. The aim of the journal is to offer the scholarly community a new avenue to disseminate their work involving technology in language, cultural, and intercultural learning, as well as policies, theories, and methods of technology integration into language education. The journal publishes original articles three times a year, and it is made openly available online for all scholars, educators, administrators and language learners who are interested in topics involving technology in language teaching and learning.

As Editor-in-Chief, my goal is to bring together the scholars from all related disciplines, including, but not limited to, the communities of linguists, educators, and computer scientists to think about one of the fundamental issues in CALL: how best to design, develop, and implement technology to maximize language learning outcomes. Despite the growing number of publications evaluating the use of technology in language teaching and learning, many researchers rationalize technology as an inevitable phenomenon (Thomas, Reinders, & Warschauer, 2013), thus generating a cohort of exploratory studies that integrate technology extrinsically to make their teaching “fun,” “motivating,” and “transformative,” rather than considering something that is inherent to successful language acquisition. Moving beyond

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the subservient use of technology, it is the time to critically examine how technology supports, provides, or even accelerates language teaching and learning by providing pronounced learning outcomes derived from empirical evidence.

In this inaugural issue of *Technology in Language Teaching & Learning*, we have featured the original work from the following leading scholars, reflecting the trends and issues to call for future studies in the field of CALL. The first paper by Nobue Tanaka-Ellis and Sachiyo Sekiguchi reports on the development, design, and implementation of an undergraduate global leadership program through a unique combination of educational technology. With an aim of fostering English as a Foreign Language (EFL) students' global leadership competencies, one of the focal points of this paper is to provide content instructions without implicitly emphasizing English language skills as an objective of the curriculum. Through the combined instantiation of flipped learning, ubiquitous learning, Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in addition to the materials delivered via MOOC, Tanaka-Ellis and Sekiguchi provide potential advantages and challenges in regards to how best to design, develop and deliver a course to maximize various cognitive and linguistic learning outcomes among language learners.

With reference to the increasing popularity of MOOCs, the second paper written by Napat Jitpaisarnwattana, Hayo Reinders, Pornapit Darasawang provides an overview of current MOOC research specifically for language education. While identifying some of the issues and challenges of language learning MOOCs (LMOOCs), Jitpaisarnwattana, Reinders and Darasawang provide a review of various underlying theories and applied studies, arguing that the potential benefits of LMOOCs outweigh its challenges if the courses are carefully designed by taking an account of both social and individual elements of learning. In order to optimize language learning experiences and outcomes through LMOOCs, the authors call for more research that involves learning analytics and educational data mining for the future directions of LMOOC research.

The third paper by Glenn Stockwell critically examines one of the most fundamental, long lasting questions in the field of MALL if not CALL: what contributes to sustained task engagement? In this paper, Stockwell argues that the primary studies conducted in CALL environments tend to be small-scale, which often lacks generalizability to larger audience. While recognizing some of the underlying institutional and pedagogical challenges, Stockwell synthesizes research on vocabulary and listening tasks carried out over an eight-year period, viewing the impact of the developments of technology, teaching approaches, and the language learning environment.

As the submissions critically examine the issues surrounding advantages, challenges, and potentials of language learning in and around various technological environments mentioned above, we hope that this serves as an open platform for further discussions as well generates motivation to participate in the co-construction of the future of technology language teaching and learning.

References

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Kasumi Yamazaki is Assistant Professor of Japanese at the University of Toledo, Ohio, USA. Her research focuses on a wide range of contemporary Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) pedagogy and integration, namely, the use of 3D simulation games and virtual realities (VRs), the development of intelligent CALL (ICALL) systems, and the effectiveness of hybrid teaching curricula. Her research also garnered attention through her series of presentations at international and regional conferences; she is also a recipient of multiple world language teaching and research awards.