Book Review

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Technology-Enhanced Language Teaching and Learning: Lessons From the COVID-19 Pandemic

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ABSTRACT

COVID-19 is a global outbreak that utterly immobilized all sectors, including education. With the advent of technology and internet connectivity, however, educators from all over the world constructively attempted their best endeavor to keep teaching and learning process going. *Technology-Enhanced Language Teaching and Learning: Lessons From the COVID-19 Pandemic* is an elaborate collection of second language teachers' experiences and insights that harnessed various available technologies in their classes in order to achieve the learning objectives during the pandemic. This review provides an overview of the book that offers invaluable lessons learned from the unprecedented event of human history and recommends forward-thinking perspectives on language education in this increasingly digital world.

KEYWORDS

Book Review, COVID-19, Language Education, Remote/Hybrid Learning

Technology-Enhanced Language Teaching and Learning
Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic
Edited by Karim Sadeghi, Michael Thomas, Farah Ghaderi
©2023 by Bloomsbury Publishing
US$130.00 (hardcover)
ISBN: 978-1-3502-7101-2

INTRODUCTION

In early 2020, COVID-19 struck the entire world. As a consequence, our education was on a momentary break as schools shut down and forcibly shifted from in-person to virtual instruction (Adnan & Anwar, 2020; Cucinotta & Vanelli, 2020; Dhawan, 2020). To weather the storm, teachers rapidly adapted to fully remote and/or hybrid learning. Online instructions during the pandemic constitutes brand new experience of learning for most students (Adnan & Anwar, 2020). However, such forcibly online instruction remained challenging for teachers and instructors (Mukhtar et al., 2020). In addition to scarce digital resources (Dhawan, 2020), teachers need to grapple with anticipated issues concerning student engagement (McBrien et al., 2009), assessment (Mukhtar et al., 2020), student's readiness and acceptance to fully use technology in learning (Aguilera-Hermida, 2020) during online instructions.

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This edited text *Technology-Enhanced Language Teaching and Learning: Lessons From the COVID-19 Pandemic* appears as a beacon of insights, shedding light on abrupt and innovative ways that language teachers have leveraged existing technologies to teach their classes in such a pressing time. This book meticulously curates experiences, practices, and reflections of second language teachers across the globe. These inspirational teachers offer pedagogical innovations as this text also weaved together the narratives from diverse linguistic backgrounds. We delve into each part of this text as we embark on such a transformational journey through teachers' challenges, triumphs, and profound transformation due to technology affordances on language teaching in times of COVID-19.

This text is structured into two chapters. In the first chapter, the authors introduce and explore a multitude of research informed options and issues in Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL). They further elaborate the goal of the edited volume for readers, brief information of CALL history and its developmental stages as a subfield of discipline. In addition, the chapter provides an account of CALL affordances and reports evidence-based challenges in enacting remote virtual language learning. The second chapter of the text is divided into five specific parts as follows:

Part I: Emergency CALL at the Time of a Pandemic

This part of the text delves into the challenges that emerged when language education had to rapidly transition to using online modalities. To begin with, LaFond's study highlights students' cognitive difficulties in synchronous online courses. In a similar vein, Ferrari's work sheds light on the challenges faced by Italian as second language teachers, centering around technology adoption, student preparedness, and teaching strategies. In addition, Meskill, Kusumastuti, and Guo's research explores experiences of English language teachers from different countries as they transitioned to online instruction amid the pandemic. This chapter offers invaluable information for educators and school administrators on how to address and mitigate challenges related to emergency remote learning.

Part II: Responses to CALL During the Emergency

In this part, a collection of research studies examines students' attitudes and emotional experiences during online learning. First, Cox and Song's case study on adult English learners explores their emotional reactions and attitudes toward online instruction, particularly for those with immigrant and refugee backgrounds. Moreover, Sasaki and Takeuchi study Japanese ESL learners' development of learner autonomy in a virtual study abroad program. Their work sheds light on the benefits and drawbacks of online language learning. Meanwhile, Torsani surveys advanced language learners focusing on the importance of technology in promoting learner autonomy during the forced online lectures. Lastly, Morcom and Liu, in their research, they explore media representation of EAL (English as an additional language) students which adds a critical perspective on the challenges language learners had during the lockdowns. The purpose of this section of the text is to how responsive the second language learners to the so-called emergency transition which reinforces autonomous learning, understands technology role, and reports challenges in fully online CALL practices.

Part III: Technology Integration into Teaching at the Time of the Pandemic

The integration of technology into language teaching practices is the center of this part of the text. Alm's research on students' social engagement with language through a Spanish TV series and writing online blogs highlights innovative approaches to language learning during total lockdowns. Similarly, Liontas explores online learning practices through critical participatory action research. His study looks at the important roles of technologies such as Learning Management Systems (LMSs) played on online instructions. Further, Morgana and Thomas experiment with technology-mediated writing tasks (e.g., Videoconference/Google Meet, Google Docs, Google Classroom) which showcases the potential of technology in improving writing skills. This section provides and elaborates hand-on technology integration in language class for teachers to consider in their individual contexts.

Part IV: E-Assessment During the COVID-19 Pandemic

This specific section of the text addresses the challenges and opportunities in terms of designing and implementing effective assessment during the pandemic. Carrio-Pastor's exploration of formative assessment in online synchronous Spanish courses reveals insights strengths, weakness, and opportunities for improving assessment practices. Lam and his colleagues' research on e-portfolios as an assessment tool highlights its positive impact on students' motivation and agency. Davidson and Coombe's discussion on preventing academic misconduct in online contexts offers practical strategies for language teachers to maintain integrity in assessment. In addition to delving into the essential realm of assessment, this part offers insights on formative assessment (e.g., e-portfolio) and approaches to prevent academic misconduct in online language learning.

Part V: Beyond Emergency CALL, Post-COVID-19 Lessons

The final part of the textbook looks at the post-pandemic landscape of language education. Dooly discusses dramatic changes in teaching and learning in response to post-COVID 19 situation. She asserts the need for language teachers to adapt to blended learning, telecollaboration, and other high-tech approaches. Yet, Thomas examines the "normalization" of technology use in language teaching and its potential consequences. This particular part encourages educators to embrace technology and adapt to the evolving landscape of language education today.

In the conclusion part, the editors revisit and highlight digital platforms used from most contributors of this book. They also reemphasize the challenges reported in each part of the text for readers to recall and relate to their shared experience during pandemic. Further, the editors set forth what educational institutes and practitioners should learn and address in their professional development agenda and curriculum as they reflect from the "collective experiment" (p. 246). A change in education is inevitable and pandemic is one of the many factors. Accordingly, teachers need to be proactive to take immediate yet considerate actions for effective online instruction in the future.

The textbook offers a comprehensive overview of how technology affected language teaching and learning practices during the COVID-19 pandemic. The book thoroughly highlights the challenges encountered by both language teachers and learners, provides useful insights into emotional experiences, technology integration, and assessment practices. The inclusion of case studies and research findings from a variety of language learning contexts, levels of education ranging from primary school through university and various geographical settings add more depth and diversity to the book. This text serves as an outlook for future digital pedagogical practices as current teachers and pre-service teachers should be aware of and responsive to the anticipated changes in curriculum, digital platforms usage, and immersive pedagogy which can potentially benefit students across the globe with seamless interconnectedness, broad cross-cultural awareness, outstanding language proficiency, and optimal engagement.

Nevertheless, the text can benefit from a more cohesive narrative. It is structured in parts that are somewhat disconnected, which eventually makes it challenging for readers to follow a logical progression of ideas. For example, technology integration (Part 3), and assessment (Part 4) are in tandem as pedagogical aspects because these parts offer research-informed practices by considering useful pedagogical approaches in virtual space, accessible and freely available technologies, type of assessments that can be used for online instructions. However, emergency CALL (Part 1), responses to CALL (Part 2), and post-COVID situations (Part 5) center around students' emotional responses, attitude, and teachers' perspectives which are psychological aspects but equally vital to support continued online instructions. If put in such cohesive order, the flow of narration can be reasonable. The contributing authors indeed acknowledge that virtually remote instructions are the option to save both student and teacher well-being in such testing time of human history. Yet notably, most parts of the textbook discuss various technology uses in online teaching (e.g., blog, videoconference, LMSs), and how learners' autonomy, interests, and language skills are negotiated and promoted to keep students engaged optimally and learn effectively. These are practical ideas for teachers who aspire

to teach online. Regardless of a thorough exploration of the challenges and lessons learned during the pandemic, the textbook can add a stronger focus on language skill-focused learning strategies, distinguishing the functions of digital tools as instructional media, language learning resources, or assessment tools for other language educators, in area or educational institutions with limited technology access particularly, to adapt and navigate in their own contexts.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the textbook *Technology-Enhanced Language Teaching and Learning: Lessons from the COVID-19 Pandemic* is a valuable and additional resource for teachers, teacher educators, and researchers in language education. It effectively explores obstacles and opportunities that technology presented during the pandemic and offers a broad perspective on the evolution of language field has reached to date. However, a more organized and practical approach to addressing those ongoing challenges in various contexts would contribute much greater values for language teachers and teacher educators seeking to adapt to the post-pandemic education landscape.

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