



## STRATEGIES FOR TECHNOLOGY ENHANCED LANGUAGE LEARNING (TELL) IN LANGUAGE CLASSES

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### **Abstract:**

The tremendous evolution of technology and learning is opening new portals to represent knowledge practices, and new global communities of learning. Technology is no longer a fringe course enhancement, of interest to only enthusiastic 'technophile' teachers, learners and managers, but rather, it has an importance for everyone concerned in language teaching. The area of technology-enhanced language learning is highly controversial; there are so many ways of looking at technology in teaching. This paper explores opportunities that English teachers have created to help students meet English language literacy goals in technology enhanced language learning (TELL) classroom environments.

**Key Words:** CALL, TELL, CMC, Implementation, Manifestation, Evaluation & Activities of TELL

### **1. Introduction:**

It is rare to find a language class that does not use some form of technology. In recent years, technology has been used to both assist and enhance language learning. Teachers have incorporated various forms of technology to support their teaching, engage students in the learning process, provide authentic examples of the target culture, and connect their classrooms. Further, some technology tools enable teachers to differentiate instruction and adapt classroom activities and homework assignments, thus enhancing the language learning experience. In order to meet the reading needs of students in the 21st century, educators are pressed to develop effective instructional means for teaching reading comprehension and reading strategy use. In addition, technology continues to grow in importance as a tool to assist teachers of foreign languages in facilitating and mediating language learning for their students. Technology can play a vital role in supporting and enhancing language learning, the effectiveness of any technological tool depends on the knowledge and expertise of the qualified language teacher who manages and facilitates the language learning environment.

### **2. Literature Review:**

The difference between Computer Assisted Language Learning (CALL) and Technology-Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) is that the computer simultaneously becomes less visible yet more ubiquitous. The change in emphasis from computer to technology places direct importance on the media of communication made possible by the computer, which itself often remains unseen, rather than on the computer itself. Whereas in CALL, the computer assisted learning, it might be said that in TELL, the computer supports learning. This third phase of technology use in second- and foreign-language teaching is characterized by the use of multimedia and the Internet. It can also be characterized by a clearly delineated move away from behaviourist, drill and practice type software and a move towards more constructivist uses of the tool. Warschauer (1996a) refers to the third phase of use of computers in teaching second languages as Integrative CALL. He uses the term *integrative* to refer to efforts at developing models which would integrate various aspects of language learning for example using task- or project-based approaches. Multimedia computers can provide an accurate portrayal of the target language and provide learners with control and feedback. More importantly though they facilitate a methodological and theoretical advance that shifts the emphasis away from the traditional production of sentences common with CALL to an emphasis on "input and intake". Computer-mediated communication (CMC) using the Internet has the power to allow learners to collaborate and to construct knowledge together (Warschauer, 1997a). Online learning, explains Warschauer, breaks the pattern of teacher-centred discussion in the classroom. In his review of studies on CMC, the author notes that the social dynamics of CMC result in more equality of participation than what would be typical in face-to-face communication. Hanson-Smith (1997) examines the pedagogical practices that have benefitted or will benefit from technological enhancement. The World Wide Web allows for an instantaneous exchange of information to and from sites and between individuals. Use of the Internet demands a level of student engagement in authentic language encounters that would barely be possible face-to-face.

### **3. Manifestations of Technology:**

The pivot of technology is to direct, foster thinking and facilitate the acquisition of higher order skills. The challenge is to creatively use technologies by zero in on their affordances. In a perfectly patterned technology-enhanced learning environment, learners will incorporate in the process of manipulating information and critical thinking as well as expressing and sharing their knowledge to peer-learners. Several taxonomies of technologies for learning have been under discussion. The following methodologies consistently display the various ways the technology being conducive for learning.

- ✓ **Technologies as media for accessing and studying learning material:** Software systems like Learning Management Systems (e.g. Blackboard, Moodle) or Learning Objects Repositories (e.g. MERLOT) are being widely used for the dissemination/ acquisition of educational material in various formats.
- ✓ **Technologies as media for learning through inquiry:** STOCHASMOS is a web-based learning environment developed at the University of Cyprus, which allows learners to investigate, organise and interpret complex and diverse scientific data and phenomena (<http://www.stochasmos.org>). Of course, simulation environments like STELLA, Stagecast Creator, Cabri, have been effectively used in learning environments.
- ✓ **Technologies as media for learning through communication and collaboration:** Several computer-supported collaborative learning (CSCL) systems, such as CENTRA, Dim Dim, Synergeia, Cool Modes, have been developed to facilitate synchronous and asynchronous collaborative learning tasks. Nowadays, wikis, blogs as well as 3D shared worlds like Second life, Active Worlds are being extensively used in learning scenarios for various courses.
- ✓ **Technologies as media for learning through construction:** Various software tools have been developed for enabling learning by doing. Typical examples are Lego-like logo robots. Learners build robots out of LEGO pieces, using not only the traditional LEGO building bricks but pieces like gears, motors, and sensors. They also build complex computer programs by “snapping together” Logo commands thus adding behavior to the LEGO.
- ✓ **Technologies for learners’ assessment:** Several freeware and commercial self assessment tools (e.g. Hot Potatos, Question Mark Perception) have been designed for assessing learners’ knowledge. Nowadays, there is a tendency to build tools that allow new methods of evaluations such as Electronic Portfolios which offer capabilities for storing, displaying and reviewing/grading learners’ work in a variety of formats.
- ✓ **Technologies for digital and multimedia literacy:** Various tools have been designed for supporting learning through expression using multimedia such as tools for video editing and annotating, image processing, web comics creation, and so on.

### **3. Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL):**

Technology Enhanced Language Learning (TELL) deals with the force of technology on teaching and learning a second language also called the L2. Technology Enhanced Language Learning refers to the use of the computer as a technological innovation to display multimedia as a means of complementing a teaching method language teacher. What's important to note is that TELL is not a teaching method but rather an approach that can be used alongside a teaching method to help teach. TELL is very supportive of Computer Mediated Communication (CMC). CMC has been researched and supported as being very useful to helping students speak and write in a foreign language which is important to teaching process using TELL. The process can be described as effectively bridging the gap between written and oral expression for the linguistically limited student whose oral skills are not adequate to allow for full expression of ideas in the target language. By slowing down the process of communication and allowing the students to reflect and compose a message, electronic interaction in the classroom encourages student use of the target language. Technology-enhanced language learning uses computer technology, including hardware, software, and the internet to enhance the teaching and learning of languages by,

- ✓ Using a hand-held electronic dictionary to look up a word in class
- ✓ Chatting with a friend on Instant Messenger using a little English
- ✓ Reading news website
- ✓ Creating a video and posting it on Youtube
- ✓ Participating in an online discussion board
- ✓ Listening pop song and reading the lyrics online
- ✓ Doing a computer-based language exercise from the CD that comes with a textbook

**a. Approach & Design:** Technology is theoretically neutral, but a TELL activity: (1)reflects a theory of teaching, learning, and foreign language learning of the designer and/or instructor (2)reflects a theory of technology as:

- ✓ Drillmaster: *behaviorist*
- ✓ Tutor: *cognitive*
- ✓ Tool: *constructivist*
- ✓ Mediator: *socio-cultural*
- ✓ Part of an ecology: *socio-cognitive*

TELL activity has goals and objectives like any other language learning activity It can be integral or peripheral to the lesson or curriculum. It is an integrate skill and treat them separately

**b. Preparation & Implementation:** A TELL activity: requires instructor technological literacy, requires (but can also develop) student technological literacy, requires class access to technology, sometimes requires

technical support. During a TELL activity, the instructor may be monitoring, guiding, facilitating, assisting, and evaluating, the students may be working individually, in pairs, or in groups, the students are clicking, dragging, and scrolling, but also listening, speaking, reading, and writing.

**c. Assessment & Evaluation:** A TELL activity has processes, products, and actions that can be assessed. These should be assessed in a way that matches the activity objectives and approach. A TELL activity should be evaluated during and after implementation. It can be altered during implementation based on evaluation to meet student needs. It reflects principles of language learning

**Advantages of TELL:**

- ✓ Using TELL provides a lot more flexibility and caters to more learning styles of the language learners compared to traditional styles of teaching.
- ✓ TELL can be used alongside textbooks for a much more in depth learning experience
- ✓ TELL turns the classroom into a student centered environment. Students can:
  - *Select order in which material is presented to them* (ex. grammar program first and vocabulary building game last)
  - *Control the material presented to them* (ex. Visit the Coliseum in Rome, Italy on CD-ROM or learn about the 2006 Olympics in Torino, Italy)
  - *Control the pace of progress* (ex. students can work through level 1 & 2 on grammar today and then level 1 on vocabulary the following day)
- ✓ TELL improves motivation and develops better attitudes in students towards learning.
- ✓ Learning is not confined to the area within the classroom environment, it is enlarged. Students can learn about language at home and practice language in class.

**Disadvantages of TELL:**

- ✓ Cost of technology
- ✓ Cost of training
- ✓ Cost of media
- ✓ Teacher or instructor must be comfortable with using technology
- ✓ Technology not 100% fault proof
- ✓ Access issues outside the classroom
- ✓ Problem of too much work done by the computer. The language student must not rely entirely on the help system of language software to guide them through exercises but must make conscious effort to attempt exercises for a better learning experience.

**Main Types of Media Using TELL:**

**1. Sound (audio)**

- ✓ Radio broadcasts
- ✓ Recorded playback of speeches
- ✓ Recorded storytelling

**2. Films (video + audio)**

- ✓ Short films
- ✓ Interviews
- ✓ Full length full feature movies

**3. Images/Graphics**

- ✓ Charts
- ✓ Paintings
- ✓ Photos

**4. Texts**

- ✓ Essays
- ✓ Journals
- ✓ Articles
- ✓ Email
- ✓ Chatting
- ✓ Books

**Examples of Activities Using TELL:**

Type of Activity	Individual?	Group?	Areas of language learning
Dialogue (Audio)	No	Yes	Pronunciation, vocabulary, context
Audio Recording Playback(Audio)	Yes	Yes	Pronunciation, vocabulary, context, comprehension
Film (video)	Yes	Yes	Nonverbal communication, pronunciation, context, vocabulary

Online Journal (text)	Yes	Yes	reading, writing, syntax, spelling, vocabulary, context, comprehension
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**4. Conclusion:**

New technologies have made possible innovative learning environments for students that may lead to enhanced and more efficient learning at less expense. This paper has attempted to outline some of the trends developing in technology-enhanced language learning. With increasing sophistication in both the technology and the users of that technology, it is sure that more appropriate technology-based second language learning systems will emerge as a high strategic tool in future.

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