INTEGRATION OF TECHNOLOGY IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION (SLA)

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Annotation *This article explores the integration of technology in Second Language Acquisition (SLA), highlighting its theoretical foundations, benefits, challenges, and pedagogical implications. Drawing on established SLA theories such as Krashen's Input Hypothesis, Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory, and Long's Interaction Hypothesis, the article demonstrates how digital tools align with and extend core principles of language learning. Benefits include access to authentic materials, adaptive learning, increased motivation, and opportunities for global interaction. However, challenges such as the digital divide, teacher preparedness, and ethical considerations regarding data privacy are also examined. The article argues that effective technology integration requires pedagogically sound implementation, where digital tools supplement rather than replace human instruction. Ultimately, the integration of technology in SLA represents a dynamic partnership that enhances linguistic competence while fostering digital literacy for global communication.*

Keywords *Second Language Acquisition (SLA); technology integration; computer-assisted language learning (CALL); digital literacy; input hypothesis; sociocultural theory; interaction hypothesis; blended learning; online communication; language pedagogy*

Integration of Technology in Second Language Acquisition (SLA)

The integration of technology into education has transformed the field of Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Traditionally, language learning was centered on textbooks and face-to-face interaction; however, digital tools now provide learners with unprecedented access to authentic input, real-time communication, and adaptive feedback. When implemented thoughtfully, technology not only aligns with SLA theories but also opens new pathways for learners to engage with language in meaningful contexts (Chapelle, 2003; Warschauer, 1996).

Theoretical Foundations

Technology can be mapped onto established theories of SLA. Krashen's (1985) Input Hypothesis emphasizes the role of comprehensible input, which is now facilitated through multimedia resources such as podcasts, interactive texts, and subtitled videos. Vygotsky's (1978) Sociocultural Theory underscores the importance of social interaction and scaffolding, processes supported by collaborative online tools and digital communication platforms. Long's (1996) Interaction Hypothesis highlights the negotiation of meaning during interaction, which technology enables via real-time chats, video conferencing, and language exchange platforms. These theoretical perspectives illustrate that digital technologies are not pedagogical novelties but extensions of fundamental SLA processes.

Benefits of Technology Integration

The advantages of integrating technology into SLA are well-documented. Learners can access authentic materials that expose them to real-life language use (Gilmore, 2007). Adaptive learning platforms personalize tasks based on proficiency levels, offering tailored input and practice (Chapelle, 2009). Gamified applications such as Duolingo and Memrise sustain motivation through rewards and progress tracking (Munday, 2016). Additionally, AI-powered chatbots and automated feedback systems provide immediate responses, enhancing the effectiveness of practice (Li, 2022). Importantly, technology transcends geographical boundaries, connecting learners with native speakers and international peers, thereby enriching opportunities for authentic communication (Warschauer & Healey, 1998).

Challenges and Considerations

Despite these advantages, challenges remain. The digital divide continues to limit equal access to technological resources, particularly in under-resourced contexts (Warschauer, 2003). Teachers require training to integrate digital tools in ways that are pedagogically sound, rather than using them as add-ons (Hampel & Stickler, 2005). Over-reliance on technology risks reducing the cultural and interpersonal dimensions of language learning, while concerns over data privacy and the ethics of AI integration are increasingly significant (Zhao, 2003).

Pedagogical Implications

For technology to enhance SLA effectively, it must be integrated within robust pedagogical frameworks. Blended learning models—combining face-to-face instruction with digital tools—are often the most effective (Graham, 2006). Task-based learning, when paired with online simulations, virtual tours, or collaborative projects, allows learners to engage in meaningful language use (Thomas & Reinders, 2010). Social media platforms also provide authentic communicative spaces where learners can negotiate meaning and co-construct identities in the target language (Lamy & Hampel, 2007). Crucially, technology should supplement rather than replace skilled teaching, ensuring that digital resources enhance, rather than diminish, human interaction.

Conclusion

The integration of technology into SLA represents both opportunities and challenges. While it cannot replace the human interaction central to language learning, technology, when implemented thoughtfully, can extend the possibilities for input, interaction, and learner engagement. The future of SLA will likely be characterized by a dynamic partnership between teachers and digital tools, enabling learners to develop both linguistic competence and digital literacy for global communication (Chapelle, 2009; Warschauer, 2003).

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