

Editorial / Éditoiral – Special Issue / Numéro spécial

ICT-Mediated Language Task in CALL / La tâche langagière médiatisée par les TIC en ALAO

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Le concept de tâche langagière est clé en enseignement et apprentissage d'une langue qui privilégient une approche communicative (Nunan, 1989; Ellis, 2003), voire actionnelle (Cf. Rosen, 2009). Une telle tâche peut se définir comme « une activité cohérente et organisée [...], interactive ou non, où il y a gestion du sens, lien avec le monde réel, objectif défini, et où le résultat pragmatique prime sur la performance langagière » (Narcy-Combes, 2006). La tâche langagière prend tout son sens en contexte d'apprentissage des langues assisté par ordinateur (ALAO) où les technologies de l'information et de la communication (TIC) facilitent son exploitation, permettant via Internet et ses multiples applications, l'accès à la langue authentique, l'interaction et la production langagière signifiante. Dans ce contexte, il s'agit de concevoir des scénarios (Mangenot et Louveau, 2006), des trames pédagogiques (Guichon, 2012), composés de macro et/ou micro cybertâches (Mangenot et Soubrié, 2010) qui offriront idéalement à l'apprenant des occasions 'outillées' (Nissen, 2011) de s'exercer en situation authentique, seul ou avec d'autres, de participer à la réalisation d'un vrai projet, de s'investir dans son apprentissage de la langue et de développer son autonomie langagière. Pour les enseignants, une approche par la tâche langagière médiatisée par le TIC permet d'opérationnaliser des concepts véhiculés par des courants théoriques, de structurer les enseignements. Elle est en ce sens encadrante, en particulier pour les apprentis, les futurs enseignants (Guichon, op. cit.).

The goal of this special issue of CJLT was to take stock of the language task in CALL and to offer an overview of the types of language tasks preferred in this context, through these themes:

- The analysis of the place and relevance of the ICT-mediated language task in language curricula (K-12, college and university), its goals and characteristics, the language components to which it gives priority (comprehension, production, oral and/or written communication, vocabulary, grammar, culture, etc.);
- The theoretical underpinnings of the concept of the ICT-mediated language task;
- Teaching and learning forms and schemes through which language tasks are realized (distance teaching, online, hybrid, (a)synchronous, collaborative, etc.), including a review of the types of platform, tools, resources and the support required for its successful implementation;

- The evaluation of ICT-mediated language tasks, measurement of “task-learner-ICT” interaction quality by means of qualitative and quantitative analyses of the process as well as the result of the ICT-mediated language task (Hamel, 2012);
- A reflection on the role of teachers – their training on how to design meaningful tasks – and the role the learners – their motivation and autonomy in the context of ICT-mediated language tasks.

Six articles (one in French, five in English) have been gathered which address some of these themes.

Le premier article nous provient de deux chercheurs français de l’Université de Grenoble, **Charlotte Dejean-Thircuir et François Mangenot**. Le nom de ce dernier résonne avec ‘scénarios d’apprentissage’. Ses nombreux écrits ont marqué le domaine de l’ALAO et en particulier, ceux ayant trait à la formation des futurs maîtres à l’enseignement en ligne. Intitulé *Apports et limites des tâches Web 2.0 dans un projet de télécollaboration asymétrique*, l’article s’interroge sur la valeur ajoutée de tâches exploitant le web social dans une perspective actionnelle de l’apprentissage des langues. À travers l’analyse d’un corpus de tâches conçues par des tuteurs-apprentis - dans le contexte de la recherche-action [Le français en première ligne](#), les auteurs proposent une caractérisation de ces tâches selon leur finalité : ont-elles donné lieu ou non à une diffusion, à des interactions publiques sur le web; qui étaient les destinataires visés. Une étude croisée des consignes de tâche et des synthèses réflexives des apprentis-tuteurs fournissent des pistes réflexives permettant de comprendre ce qui a mené au semi-échec participatif du projet d’échange en ligne. La conclusion nous ramène vers la littéracie numérique.

The second article, by **Juliana Chau and Alfred Lee** from the Hong Kong Polytechnic University, is titled *Technology-enhanced language learning (TeLL): An update and a principled framework for EAP courses*. It focuses on devising a comprehensive, “holistic,” principle-based framework to guide the design of English for Academic Purpose courses. To achieve this, the authors conduct a meta-analysis of major studies (78 articles) published (between 2007-2011 in 9 scientific journals) on the topic of TELL (for English as a second, foreign or additional language). Emerging from their analysis is the context-specificity of each study and the need to “re-conceptualize technology as a context-creating, context-shifting, and scoping changing tool, and to re-frame TeLL as a socio-cognitive system, a dynamic infrastructure for negotiation, and a socio-psychological structure” (p. 17).

The third article, *Implementing tasks with interactive technologies in classroom CALL: towards a developmental framework*, by **Shona Whyte and Julie Alexander** from the Université de Nice, in France, also seeks to devise a framework, this time to support teachers in their emergent use of the IWB (Interactive White Board) for language teaching and learning. The study presented by the authors took place in the context of the European project [iTILT](#) and seeks to describe, through videos, semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and focus groups, the characteristics of classroom activities designed and conducted by EFL junior (*collèges*) and high (*lycées*) school teachers in France; whether these bear or not a task-based orientation. As it turns out, IWB use is cautious, fairly conservative and teacher-controlled. The authors conclude on a need: to develop a classroom-based framework for teacher development with technology; to

approach learning technology based on their affordances; to put pedagogy first, using a task-based approach to learning with technology.

The fourth article, signed by **Hetty Roessingh** from the University of Calgary, investigates *Teachers' roles in designing meaningful tasks for mediating language learning through the use of ICT: A reflection on authentic learning for young ELLs*. The author, through task models (and their outcome) provided to her pre-service teachers as examples of successful practices, gives them insights on how a meaningful exploitation of ICT can positively transform the learning experience of young learners of English in the elementary school setting. Combining language through content and task-based language teaching and learning approaches with technology (Thomas & Reinders, 2010), she conducts her becoming teachers to reimagine vocabulary task design in this potentially enhanced context.

To follow suit with young learners, the fifth article, signed by **Martine Pellerin** from the University of Alberta, explores *Language Tasks and Mobile Technologies: A Paradigm Shift in Designing Task-Based CALL for Young Language Learners*. For several years now, the author has been invested in a collaborative action research (CAL) initiative investigating the creative use by primary school French immersion pupils of iPads for oral communication activities. Rejecting positivist, experimental and quantitative research paradigms, the framework she adopts is constructivist, critical, qualitative. Triangulating data from various sources (*Capsules orales* i.e. digital artefacts longitudinally collected from learners, interviews with learners and teachers an her own classroom observations), the author presents a deep layer analysis of her rich corpus, identifying how empowered young learners redesign language learning tasks and concludes on the added value of a such a learner-centered approach to using mobile technologies for language learning.

The sixth article, *From First Life to Second Life: Evaluating task-based language learning in a new environment* signed by **Min Jung Jee** from the University of Texas, brings us into the world of virtual reality. Through an empirical study, the author investigates the effect of task type on students' interaction in Second Life. The context is that of intermediate (high and low) ESL learners at university level. The author first provides a comprehensive overview of the benefits and drawbacks, the effectiveness of using Synthetic Immersive Environments (SIEs), like Second Life, for educational purposes and namely, for SLA. The experiment focused on three types of tasks: decision-making, jigsaw and discussion. The results focusing on avatar use, telepresence and affordances are mixed and indicate that these were underexploited for task completion. With further training, however, because of its capacity to render various types of tasks, Second Life can offer an environment for meaningful exchanges between language learners.

Voici donc un portrait de ce numéro spécial sur la tâche langagière en médiatisée par le TIC en ALAO. En espérant que la lecture des articles qui le compose éclairera certains aspects de votre recherche et inspirera votre pratique en tant qu'enseignant/e de langue, que formateur/trice.

I would like to thank all the external reviewers for their time and constructive evaluation.

Bonne lecture!

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Biography / Biographie

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