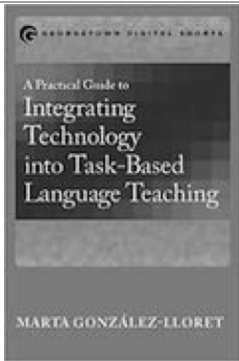


A Practical Guide to Integrating Technology into Task-Based Language Teaching		
Author:	Marta González-Lloret (2016)	
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Pp. xiii + 73	978-1-62616-357-7	\$12.95 U.S.



In recent years, technology has become an integral part of teaching and learning. This technologization pushes language teachers to integrate modern educational technologies into their practice. With that being said, it is crucial for teachers to be guided in this process by existing methodologies. Marta González-Lloret’s (2016) *A Practical Guide to Integrating Technology into Task-Based Language Teaching* is a thorough handbook for teachers who are interested in incorporating technology into task-based language teaching (TBLT) classrooms. This book introduces the main principles of designing, sequencing, and implementing technology-mediated tasks and materials, and it also informs teachers and task designers on how to conduct a needs analysis (NA) of tasks and evaluate technology. Each of the book’s four chapters includes numerous examples of technology-mediated tasks, reflective questions, activities, and recommended readings aligned with the chapter’s main topic. The main topics covered in this book are: 1) theoretical underpinnings of TBLT, 2) conducting a NA, 3) creating tasks, and 4) performance assessment and curriculum evaluation.

The role of technology in task-based environments is examined in the first chapter by displaying TBLT as a framework for the implementation of technology in language learning curricula. This chapter is useful for novice and expert designers of traditional and technology-mediated tasks. It introduces the key concepts of TBLT by first defining the notion of a task (e.g., Ellis, 2003), and then by presenting Willis and Willis’s (2007) Pre-tasks, Tasks, and Post-tasks Model alongside Long’s (2015) Model of Sequenced Tasks. The author explains the conditions that have to be met for a beneficial implementation of technology-mediated tasks. Finally, the author details some of the recent technologies and available digital resources with examples of their successful use in various foreign language classrooms.

Chapter 2 focuses on conducting a NA in the classroom. González-Lloret emphasizes the importance of carrying out a NA as a prerequisite to learners’ motivation and engagement. The main goal of the NA is to find relevant tasks that require the use of the target language in real

life (e.g., finding a job, travelling, watching TV). A NA places a student in the center of the learning process and reveals to the teachers and task designers what knowledge students want to acquire. By determining learners' needs and wants, this analysis enables teachers to create the communicative tasks and teaching materials necessary to meet the learning objectives. Moreover, a technology-mediated TBLT NA aims to determine the level of students' digital literacies, access to technologies (e.g., home, school, library), and the type of available technology support. This chapter also presents several triangulation methods such as interviews, questionnaires, and observations for a NA alongside instances of their use.

In Chapter 3, the author describes the principles of task creation, organization, and sequencing. The chapter starts with an outline of the most important theoretical and methodological principles of TBLT followed by detailed and practical steps in developing task-based curricula. Based on Long's (1985) methodology and task complexity theory, this chapter offers a guide for the shift from pedagogic technology tasks (what students do in class) to target tasks (what students do in real life), allowing teachers to become competent in technology-mediated TBLT task construction. Skehan's (1998) Limited Capacity Hypothesis and Robinson's (2001) Cognition Hypothesis of task complexity mentioned in this chapter can be used to guide the reader through the process of sequencing the tasks according to the level of cognitive complexity. The chapter concludes with three examples of existing technology-mediated TBLT materials (an online course *Chinese for All*, a technology-mediated Spanish literature course *Crítica Poética*, and a Web-based module for business language in twelve European languages *Eurocatering Language Training*) with overt discussion of their development.

To further develop the topic of technology-mediated TBLT application, Chapter 4 discusses two challenging aspects of developing TBLT curricula: student assessment and program evaluation. González-Lloret suggests the integration of performance-based learner assessment in the form of checklists and grids that reflect students' ability to use the target language while completing meaningful, communicative tasks. Additionally, this chapter presents technological tools (i.e., computer-mediated communication, virtual environments, internet searches, and interactive maps) that language teachers can use to facilitate the assessment of their students. Finally, the chapter outlines effective ways of evaluating TBLT materials and offers a detailed checklist that teachers can adapt and use in this process.

González-Lloret argues that TBLT is the ideal approach to curriculum design, as it allows teachers to fully incorporate technological tools into language classrooms. Thus, the *Practical Guide* will provide teachers and general readers a useful resource for creating authentic tasks that engage second language learners in authentic language use, while facilitating digital literacy.

The book's content reflects its title, illustrating how to introduce technology into language learning. In addition, the *Practical Guide* provides an overview of TBLT and stipulates why tasks are considered the best means for syllabi organization in traditional, blended, and online learning. Therefore, it will not disappoint language teachers searching for guidance in establishing a bridge between technology and TBLT. In particular, the book guides task designers and teachers in a step-by-step process of creating technology-mediated tasks and supplementary materials. While combining theory and practice, the guide highlights the most essential characteristics of tasks followed by detailed descriptions of how to organize and sequence them. Additionally, González-Lloret emphasizes the importance of conducting a NA to inform teachers about their learners' goals, preferences, and desired outcomes. Finally, the

book targets student assessment and task evaluation, which are considered debatable aspects of TBLT. González-Lloret approaches common criticisms of TBLT by suggesting detailed criteria for performance-based assessment. The appendix contains scales, rubrics, and checklists that not only evaluate the completion of tasks and the use of language skills, but that also assess students' ability to use technology and employ their socio-pragmatic knowledge.

Although concise, because of its size, the book is limited in the number of and the target languages of (e.g., English, Spanish, French, and Chinese) technology-mediated task examples provided. To overcome this limitation, the author lists recommended readings at the end of each chapter to supplement the chapter's content. Despite this limitation, the *Practical Guide* is an invaluable handbook for designing technology-supported activities or building a course curriculum based on technology-mediated TBLT. This book can be adapted to a particular teaching context or used for professional development. I recommend *A Practical Guide to Integrating Technology into Task-Based Language Teaching* as this comprehensive guide can be a welcome resource for experienced and novice teachers who want to keep up with recent trends in the fields of second language acquisition and computer-assisted language learning.

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