FROM THE EDITOR

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"Technology opens infinite opportunities for teachers" – this is a cliché which has been repeated over and over again for more than 30 years now. We are constantly seeking new and innovative tools and technologies to achieve whatever seemed impossible before. We hope to see technology help and assist not only in the general process of language acquisition, but also we strive to find more specific technology-based instructional procedures to tackle actual classroom problems.

At the same time, many teachers are still wary of the use of technology in language education, fearing that it will change the accepted teacher-learner balance, will undermine the position of the teacher or will expose learners to unwanted input from unsolicited interactions.

Therefore, what seems crucial after those thirty years of researching computer-based instruction is to help learners and teachers harness technology and to make them empowered in the learning and teaching processes via skilful mastery of selected tools.

Hence, the major topic tackled in contributions contained in the January issue of *Teaching English with Technology* is learner autonomy and empowerment in computer-mediated settings. To start with, it is useful to see how learners' independence and self-direction can and should be fostered in open and distance learning contexts, naturally inclined to fostering autonomous learning. This problem is tackled by **Daniel Ginting, Patrisius Istiarto Djiwandono, Ross Woods** and **Debra Lee** (Indonesia) in their article "*Is Autonomous Learning Possible for Asian Students? The Story of a MOOC from Indonesia?*" As the research proves, even though there is a correlation between autonomy and academic achievement, it cannot be taken for granted that autonomous environments such as MOOCs will naturally foster learners' self-direction. Much more is needed, most importantly, strategy training.

Hence, the concept of learning strategy training as essential in CALL and MALL research is addressed by **Gyoomi Kim** and **Jiyoung Bae** (South Korea). The authors clearly prove that understanding the learning process and strategy use patterns is critical to make

students strategic learners in a digital English learning context and eventually to develop their digital English abilities.

Some forms of technology-assisted learning make even greater demands on learners in terms of their awareness and self-management. This is the case not only with distance learning in MOOCs, but also flipped learning inside the classroom. **Yudhi Arifani, Slamet Asari, Khoirul Anwar** and **Langgeng Budianto** (Indonesia) pondered upon that issue in the context of English writing skills. The study showed the effect of flipping (i.e. reversing) individual and collaborative instruction using the *WhatsApp* application on the cohesive ability of learners. An interesting conclusion is that it is not only the tool or computer program (here, *WhatsApp*) that makes a difference, but rather an innovative instructional procedure (collaborative learning in flipped instruction) mediated via a particular technology.

Once learners grasp essential digital learning strategies and become aware of how learning can be enhanced by technology and media, we can see how their digital and media competences are growing. **Francisco Javier Palacios Hidalgo, M.ª Elena Gómez Parra** and **Cristina A. Huertas Abril** (Spain) reconsider the concepts of competences necessary for successful functioning in the digital world of today.

Even well-familiar tools such as Audacity, which have been with us for quite a few years, can find their innovative didactic application in the process of fostering learner autonomy and increasing their language proficiency. This is the case with the use of *Audacity* for pronunciation practice, as advocated by **Carmen Benitez-Correa, Paola Cabrera-Solano, Lida Solano** and **Veronica Espinoza-Celi** (Ecuador).

Similarly, the use of selected computer-based methods is advocated for teaching elementary writing skills (**Nasibeh Mahi Gharehblagh** and **Najmeh Nasri** from Iran) and incorporating learners with disabilities in English language instruction (**Leticia Blázquez Arribas, María Amor Barros Del Río, Elena Alcalde Peñalver** and **Concetta Maria Sigona** from Spain). These authors show how to effectively teach and empower learners in need, either due to low language level or special educational needs.

An incredibly rich mix of topics, approaches, technologies and procedures will surely satisfy the expectations of our readership all over the world, at all levels of education, practitioners and researchers alike. We wish you good reading!