

Linking Second Language Acquisition Research and Digital Language Learning

Detmar Meurers (University of Tübingen, Germany)

With digital devices permeating many aspects of our daily lives, there are also high hopes that digital tools will give education a big boost. Focusing on second language education, we will argue that in order to fulfil those hopes, digital tools should be more systematically grounded in the general learning and language acquisition mechanisms established in psychology and second language acquisition (SLA) research.

We will sketch a broad range of opportunities for adaptive digital tools grounded in SLA research, from providing motivating, meaningful input that is rich in developmentally proximal forms, via facilitating noticing through input enhancement, to supporting practice and pushed output with scaffolded feedback on form and meaning in a context that functionally links such practice to genuine language tasks. For each of those opportunities, we will showcase digital tools integrating artificial intelligence methods that successfully foster language learning - as confirmed by large-scale field studies in authentic learning settings. By adaptively taking the prevalent individual differences into account, such digital tools also readily complement traditional classroom-based instruction.