

ESL and Online Learning

Annotated Bibliography of Distance Education and ESL Learners

This project was first proposed at the DLS Instruction Committee meeting at the 2010 ALA Annual Conference in Washington, D.C. At the committee's ALA Midwinter virtual meeting on December 7, 2010, the committee members Mona Anne Niedbala and Andrew Lee volunteered to work on this project, starting with the creation of an annotated bibliography. Andrew Lee (co-chair of the committee then) would be the contact person if anyone else in the committee wanted to join the project.

In the spring of 2011, Mona and Andrew did a preliminary literature search on articles about issues related to English as a Second Language (ESL) students in the distance-learning environment. *ERIC*, *Linguistics and Language Behavior Abstracts (LLBA)*, *WilsonWeb Education Full Text*, and *Library/Information Science & Technology Abstracts with Full Text (EBSCOHost)* databases were searched, and eight articles were selected to be included in an annotated bibliography. It was decided that more articles would be added as future literature searches were completed. After 2011 ALA summer conference, Mona left the committee.

In the spring of 2012, two more committee members, Carrie Bertling Disclafani and Robert Morrison, joined Andrew to update the preliminary bibliography. *ERIC*, *JSTOR ASC*, *Sage Teacher Reference Center*, *Communication & Mass Media Library*, *Information Science & Technology*, and *Linguistics & Language Behavior* databases were searched and 14 additional articles were selected for the bibliography.

Borham-Puyal, Miriam, and Susana Olmos-Migueláñez. "Improving The Use Of Feedback In An Online Teaching-Learning Environment: An Experience Supported By Moodle." *US-China Foreign Language* 9.6 (2011): 371-382.

This article reports on a study conducted at the University of Salamanca that analyzed the role of technology-supported learning and assessment (ICT: Information and Communication Technologies) in providing feedback in a competency-based teaching-learning process in an online environment. The literature on the competency-based approach that is transforming the teaching-learning process and impacting learning processes and assessment stresses formative over summative assessment. The study was conducted in online English and cultural courses using Moodle. The goal was to enhance reading comprehension and critical analysis in English studies. Tools included questionnaires, reading journals, databases, glossaries, written assignments, and wikis that allowed for instructor feedback. Moodle allowed for immediate (formative) feedback and created space for students to conduct their own self-assessment. The use of ICT in the classroom encouraged dialogue between students and the instructor. Formative feedback contributed to students developing competencies in reading comprehension and critical analysis.

Bulu, Saniye Tugba, and Zahide Yildirim. "Communication Behaviors And Trust In Collaborative Online Teams." *Journal Of Educational Technology & Society* 11.1 (2008): 132-147.

This case study investigated group trust and communication behaviors of online teams. Qualitative methods were used to analyze online discussion archives and open-ended questions from a questionnaire. Participants were third year foreign language education students attending an IT course at the Middle East Technical University in Ankara, Turkey and were competent in English. Questions guiding this study were: what is the distribution of online posts of the groups at different trust levels and what are the collaborative communication behaviors of online groups at different trust levels. Participants spent fifteen weeks developing a technology supported project for foreign language learners, using the "Learning to Teach with Technology Studios" (LTTS), developed by Indiana University. Data was collected from a questionnaire and from the discussion forum archives. The results found that groups did develop trust with some groups achieving a higher level of trust than others. The groups also demonstrated different communication behaviors. Regular communication was a major factor in forming and strengthening trust. The group exhibiting the lowest level of trust experienced negative leadership. Social interaction can build trust but it must be continuous. Different learning styles may explain the differences in the social interaction and enthusiasm reported by participants and through the analysis. Trust is a critical component in online learning groups, as are positive social environments and social interactions.

Campbell, Nittaya. "Bringing ESL Students Out Of Their Shells: Enhancing Participation Through Online Discussion." *Business Communication Quarterly* 70.1 (2007): 37-43.

This paper contains the author's experience using online discussions to effectively engage and to facilitate participation by ESL students. Their experiences in the classroom and in the literature found that east and Southeast Asian students do not participate in classroom discussions; the most significant reason is cultural: challenging authority and debating is part of Western education and foreign to Asian students. The author found that Asian students actively engaged in online discussions. Student comments supported their observations by noting that they were not interrupted online and ESL speakers did not have confidence to debate; the author described these as an "equalizing effect." The author provides several tips for designing effective online discussions: small class sizes, use a case study to ensure enough students participate to supply data, use guidelines and rules (post limits: 1—150 words), and the instructor's role can be flexible but a nonparticipatory role can be helpful as Asian students do not like to challenge the instructor's authority.

Campbell, Nittaya. "Online Discussion: A New Tool For Classroom Integration?" *Communication Journal of New Zealand* 5.2 (2004): 3-24.

This article reports on the results of the use of online discussions in three intercultural communication classes to demonstrate the impact of technology on group discussions that integrated Asian students. The benefits of online discussions include more time to think through ideas, participation by all students, and lack of time constraints. Asian students are more culturally reticent than Western students to engage in class discussions and to ask questions. Collaborative learning, online and face-face is not part of the traditional Asian education that emphasizes lectures where the teacher is a trusted source. The study was conducted in undergraduate and graduate classes with Chinese, Thai, and Malaysian students. Students used an electronic discussion board in ClassForum to discuss different assignments. The instructor and a tutor observed and monitored discussions to facilitate student discussions without leading or taking over. Students also wrote a short reflection paper on their assignments. Results supported the benefits of online discussion where every student could contribute without making mistakes or being criticized. Time to thoughtfully consider writing in English without the pressure of a face-face environment was also cited and contributed to an increase in student discussion posts. Student interactions were also higher than the traditional classroom which is limited by set times. The online environment is not encumbered by visual and other expressions that can be culturally different and misinterpreted. This study showed that using online discussions may be more effective for Asian and international students before they take face-face classes. The author provides a list of helpful guidelines for online discussions based on student comments.

Chen, Rainbow, Susan J. Bennett, and Karl A. Maton. "The Adaptation of Chinese International Students to Online Flexible Learning: Two Case Studies." *Distance Education* 29.3 (2008): 307-323.

This article illustrates two Chinese students' online learning experiences at an Australia university. The study was guided by John W. Berry's acculturation framework (1980, 2005), which explains different individuals' intercultural contact, potential conflicts during the cultural interaction, strategies to cope with the acculturative stress, and behavioral changes in cross-cultural adaptation. Specifically, the two students reported the challenges they encountered in an online flexible delivery environment and their coping strategies and patterns of adaptations. The challenges of online learning perceived by the two students include reduced input from the teacher, absence of teacher-student relationship, absence of learning community, and no enforcement of learning from teachers. Both students feel less satisfied compared with their perceptions of face-to-face learning experience, and they are more critical of student-centered pedagogies and exhibit a stronger preference for the teacher-in-charge approach. The two students' reflections may help designers of online courses understand international students' perceptions of and adaptation process to Western-style online learning and make certain changes accordingly.

Chiu, Yi-Ching Jean. "Facilitating Asian Students' Critical Thinking In Online Discussions." *British Journal of Educational Technology* 40.1 (2009): 42-57.

This study explored critical thinking from the perspective of Asian students from a Confucian Heritage Culture (CHC). Critical thinking in the Western definition and perspective differs from CHC students who learn social harmony, conflict avoidance, and respect for the teachers' authority. The CHC context focuses on affective and cultural factors. The teacher in the CHC model has a moral role with students that can conflict with using critical thinking to voice opposing or contrary views. Participants were third-year equivalent university students in an intermediate reading course at the Wenzao Ursuline College of Languages. The study's purpose was to determine if culturally appropriate online practices are effective through the "shepard leadership" model; the "shepard leader" focuses on students affective needs. This study utilized multiple methods but limited findings from the student focus groups. There were two focus groups conducted. The first was held after the first synchronous online chat, where participants were asked how the facilitation influenced their participation and discussion frequency. The second focus group, held at the end of the term, explored students "perceived effectiveness of different facilitating skills." Results showed that students experienced "cognitive breakthrough" and were more willing to share ideas when the "shepard leader" provided a high level of affective support. The absence of negative body language resulted in students perceiving higher affective support. The sheparding role was also effective in helping students actively participate in critical thinking activities that crossed the CHC cultural barrier and provided an effective pedagogy for bringing these students into "a culture of interactive thinking and dialogue."

Dekhinnet, Rayenne. "Online Enhanced Corrective Feedback For ESL Learners In Higher Education." *Computer Assisted Language Learning* 21.5 (2008): 409-425.

This case study investigated the value of OECF (online enhanced corrective feedback) for ESL students. The study used quantitative and qualitative tools: an analysis of conversations (online discussions) and an end-project survey of students and peer tutors. Dekhinnet noted that the literature supports using technology to enhance language learning but few studies reported on the quality of interaction for ESL learners. This study was designed to examine the quality of online interactions, student perceptions and their challenges. Participants were recruited from the Language Centre of the University of Dundee, comprising Chinese Italian, and Indian students. Tutors were recruited from the University of Dundee, most from Scotland and experienced with technology and online courses. Studies have demonstrated that more social interaction is necessary to support language acquisition. OECF supports tutoring for students to develop language skills, through employing Vygotsky's theory where competent learners scaffold weaker learners. Online tools include instant messaging and email. Instant messaging employed (MSN messenger) strategies from "negotiated meaning", where students and peers reach understanding through "modified interaction";

tutors ask questions and correct spelling and grammar mistakes through a conversation. Conversations are tracked and visible to demonstrate progress and to facilitate interaction and learning. The survey was used to gather data on students' perspectives and attitudes. The results demonstrated a positive experience for students that to practice language skills and the text-based medium improved their writing skills. The study was limited by drop outs ("attrition of participants") and misunderstandings of the project's goals and time expectations. The conversation analysis established that students were actively involved in processing the English language through interactions with the tutors. In the future, studies like this can be improved by incorporating face-face social training sessions and stipends for tutors.

Hughes, Hilary. "Actions and Reactions: Exploring International Students' Use of Online Information Resources." *Australian Academic & Research Libraries* 36.4 (2005): 169-179.

This article discusses research into the use of online resources by international students attending an Australian university. It describes the participants' actions online, their affective and cognitive reactions, what difficulties they encountered, and what types of help they sought. The researcher found that international students generally demonstrated proficiency with ICTs (information and communication technologies), but limited information literacy skills. They experienced a range of difficulties when using online resources associated with 1) English language limitations, 2) differences in approaches to learning, and 3) unfamiliarity with online scholarly resources. Linguistic difficulties tended to have a greater adverse effect when using online resources for searching and information retrieval, while cultural differences appeared to have a greater impact on student-teacher relationships and resource evaluation. The researcher concludes with a discussion of how the online experience of international students could be enhanced through information literacy lessons and online resource design that celebrate linguistic and cultural diversity.

Lanham, Elicia, and Wanlei Zuou. "Cultural Issues in Online Learning – Is Blended Learning a Possible Solution?." *International Journal of Computer Processing of Oriental Languages* 16.4 (2003): 275-292.

In this article the researchers argue that students from diverse cultures have varying compatibility with different learning environments. They suggest that as institutions of higher education move more course content online, these compatibilities/incompatibilities become more apparent. They assert that while at present we have the technology to provide global education; our efforts must now focus on ensuring that the educational resources and content we create can be used by all students. They suggest that through the creation of flexible online environments that balance new and traditional instruction, the blended learning approach allows accommodations to be made for all cultures. They conclude that through the blending learning approach we will be able to provide all students,

regardless of location and culture, with dynamic learning environments that allow them to personalize content to fit their unique learning styles.

Liu, Xiaojing, Shijuan Liu, L., Seung-hee Lee, and Richard J. Magjuka. "Cultural Differences in Online Learning: International Student Perceptions." *Journal of Educational Technology & Society* 13.3(2010), 177-188.

This article describes a case study of international students' perceptions and experiences of an online MBA program. Cultural differences may influence students' participation in online education, so the designers of online courses should try to remove potential cultural barriers. Eastern education is often seen as a group-based and teacher-dominated pedagogy with students revealing modest and face-saving personalities in the group work, while Western education emphasizes self-development that encourages dialog, interaction and challenges in pedagogy with students as being more assertive, confident and independent. The study finds that language barriers, communication tool use, plagiarism, time zone differences and a lack of diversified cases may negatively influence international students' performance. Students particularly express the need of more diversified cases in the MBA program because of too many U.S.-based cases. But the study also finds that while they prefer to maintain a continuity of their own culture of learning, students also want to engage in a new culture of learning and thinking, which is seen as a potential factor to obtain more culturally rich learning experiences. To ensure international students' participation in online learning, the designers of online courses should create diversified and culturally inclusive learning environment. Online instructors should be more culturally sensitive, provide scaffolding for international students to reduce cultural and language barriers, and foster flexibility and variability in online courses.

Long, Gary L., Karen Vignare, Raychel P. Rappold, and James R. Mallory. "Access to Communication for Deaf, Hard-of-Hearing and ESL Students in Blended Learning Courses." *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 8.3 (2007): 1-13. Directory of Open Access Journals. Web. 18 June 2012.

This article examines student perceptions of communication in blended (online and traditional) learning environments and reports on different perceptions found among hearing, deaf (D), hard-of-hearing (HH), and English as a second language (ESL) students. The researchers found that while the hearing and ESL students were positive about the blended experience, the greatest benefit to communication access was observed by students with hearing loss. They explained that in traditional classes, D/HH students are faced with challenges when communicating through a third party (interpreter or captionist) who may not have the content knowledge or signing skills needed to accurately convey lecture content. They found that the addition of discussion boards and other online communication tools provided platforms for D/HH students to interact directly with their hearing instructors and peers. The D/HH students reported that both the quality and quantity

of their interactions with instructors and fellow-students was greatly improved by the inclusion of online components.

Moore, Sarah Catherine K. "Uses of Technology in the Instruction of Adult English Language Learners." *CAELA Network*, February 2009.

This is a brief aimed at teachers, program administrators, education researchers and policy makers that describes examples of using technology in order to facilitate the acquisition of English for adult English language learners. Some of the benefits of using technology in the instruction of adult English language learners are the flexibility to extend learning beyond formal programs, dynamic opportunities for interaction between teachers and students, the reduction of digital divide, and the facilitation of progress toward proficiency in English. Three models of integrating technology are described: onsite, blended, and online. Examples of onsite technology that can be used for working with adult English language are computer-assisted instruction (CAI), computer-assisted language learning (CALL), and software programs designed for language learning. Some products are *The New Oxford Picture Dictionary CD-ROM*, *Rosetta Stone* (K-12, adult education, postsecondary levels), and the *English Language Learning and Instruction System* (ELLIS, a learning package to support adults learning English in England). Technology that is used in a blended learning environment could be CAI, CALL, computer-mediated communication (CMC), and web-based learning. Three models of web-based learning are offered: project-based web learning, webquests, and web-based games such as crossword puzzles (<http://iteslj.org>), grammar, vocabulary, and spelling (www.free-english.com/Games.aspx), matching games (www.englishclub.com/esl-games/matching.htm), and hangman (www.englishclub.com/esl-games/hangman.htm). Three examples of online learning are presented, *English for All* (www.myefa.org/login.cfm), *USA Learns* (www.usalearns.org), and *Learner Web* (www.learnerweb.org). Recommendations for using technology to support instruction in adult education programs and considerations for future research are provided.

Murugaiah, Puvaneswary, and Siew Ming Thang. "Development of Interactive and Reflective Learning among Malaysian Online Distant Learners: An ESL Instructor's Experience." *International Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning* 11.3 (2010): 21-41.

The article describes two ESL instructors' attempt to foster interactive and reflective learning among distance learners at a public university in Malaysia. The authors state that online learning for ESL students must incorporate social interaction, collaboration, and reflection. Based on Salmon's model (*E-moderating: The key teaching and learning online*, 2004), the authors provide an example of organizing an online writing activity based on five stages: access and motivation, online socialization, information exchange, knowledge construction, and development, where the instructor plays pedagogical, social, managerial, and technical roles. Some of the findings indicated challenges faced by the instructor

and learners, but also that social interactions and reflections benefited students. In order to overcome the challenges, the authors recommend ensuring instructor guidance, enforcement of compulsory participation, addressing technical problems quickly, starting strategic training prior to the beginning of the task, and implementing team teaching with each instructor taking on certain roles.

Roessingh, Hetty, and Carla Johnson. "Online Teaching and Learning in TESL Professional Development." *Quarterly Review of Distance Education* 6.2 (2005): 107-115.

This article discusses the five phases of the transition from a face-to-face to an online teaching and learning environment for the MEd TESL, a course-based master's degree in Teaching English as a Second Language offered at the University of Calgary. The five steps include the exploratory phase, the course design of EDER – designing ESL curricula, the shift to preparing for distance delivery, becoming an online teacher, and monitoring and supporting students' activities. The author emphasizes the role of the discussion board to connect geographically-disconnected learners through reflection and inquiry. Among the lessons learned are the fact that online students expect learning to be efficient, well-managed, organized, and convenient; curriculum design is an integrative endeavor that assumes the ability to draw on foundational learning from materials, methods, and second language learning theory. Based on this experience, two more online courses were developed, ESL Materials Development and Language Teaching Methods.

South, Joseph B., Bruce Gabbitas, and Paul F. Merrill. "Designing Video Narratives to Contextualize Content for ESL Learners: A Design Process Case Study." *Interactive Learning Environments* 16.3 (2008): 231-243.

This article introduces a video-based language-learning model that uses dramatic narratives to help English-as-the-second-language (ESL) learners. The videos were produced by the Brigham Young University Technology Assisted Language Learning Group. The authors of the article first emphasize the importance of context in the language learning and criticize the decontextualization that appears in a variety of disciplines. Then they compare non-narrative and narrative language models and point out the limitations of short, non-narrative videos used in current language education. To overcome these limitations, the authors experiment with producing dramatic narratives in two videos, which contain rich contextualization and greater depth in the content, high engagement of learners, and authentic language and culture. The response from target audience of the videos is overwhelmingly positive. The authors also provide guidelines for producing such videos and using them in pedagogical settings or incorporating them into the language training software. This article not only has positive implication in ESL education but also in that of every discipline, which suffers from negative impact of decontextualization.

Tan, Fujuan. "Tri-fold Transformation: An International Adult Student's Reflections on Online Learning." *Adult Learning* 20.3/4 (2009): 38-40.

The article describes the changes that an ESL graduate student from China studying in the USA experienced when taking the first online learning course. The multi-fold transformation affected three areas, language, culture, and technology. In regard to the language transformation, the author considers that online learning favors two basic language skills, reading and writing. The online learning environment lacked being able to listen and speak which caused lack of confidence and uneasiness. The author states that international students commonly experience culture shock when coming to study in the United States. The asynchronous nature of the online learning environment does not provide cultural understanding or sharing, reduces the sense of community, and prevents fostering personal relationships. Conversely, the face-to-face model offers immediate and interactive discussions which allows questions and provides immediate feedback. In regard to technology, the author describes her struggle with different functions and operations of the online format and with submitting assignments. Taking other online courses and practice helped the problems dissipate in time. Among the author's suggestions for instructional designers and online instructors to improve the online learning experience for international students are beforehand preparation of students for working with technology and commitment to support students' technological needs during the course; awareness of cultural diversity; increasing the use of audio and video features; clear and detailed description of expectations for course assignments; using the online journal; providing alternate means of communication such as face-to-face meetings.

Tan, Fujuan, Lee Nabb, Steven Aagard, and Kim Kioh. "International ESL Graduate Student Perceptions of Online Learning in the Context of Second Language Acquisition and Culturally Responsive Facilitation." *Adult Learning* 21.1//2 (2010): 9-14.

Little research exists regarding how cultural differences and student perceptions affect online learning, especially for ESL students. This study discusses ESL graduate student perspectives concerning the way online learning affects the development of English language skills. Seven international ESL graduate students were asked eight open-ended questions about likes and dislikes in regard to the online learning experiences, the effects of online learning on English language acquisition, the effect of online learning on learning styles, individual attitude, motivation, and anxiety toward learning, and about how cultural differences affect online learning in comparison to face-to-face experiences. Some of the findings were that language and culture differences presented challenges in online learning situations; online learning motivate and accommodate the development of vocabulary and the use of standardized English and have a positive effect on English writing and reading skills; learning how to use the technology and time management were difficult; online learning does not promote cultural understanding as the face-to-face model does. The authors offer suggestions for

minimizing challenges in order to make online learning experiences for non-native ESL students effective. Among these are direction for learning technology and technological procedures provided by instructors, use of standard English, and fostering communication, community building, and cultural understanding.

Twigg, Carol A. "Using Asynchronous Learning in Redesign: Reaching and Retaining the At-Risk Student." *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks* 13.3 (2009): 147-155.

The first year of college is the most critical to college students, but the failure rates in general education courses in the first year are extremely high. The high rates of failure are correlated with the most common instructional style in such courses: lectures, which treat all students as having the same preparation, ability, motivation, and learning styles. This article introduces the Program in Course Redesign supported by an \$8.8 million grant from the Pew Charitable Trusts. The grant supported 30 institutes to develop different models to redesign the first year introductory courses. The characteristics of these models include 1) whole course redesign, 2) active learning, 3) computer-based learning resources, 4) mastery learning, 5) on-demand help, and 6) alternative staffing. The author uses the University of New Mexico, the University of Idaho, Rio Salado College, Tallahassee Community College, Florida Gulf Coast University, and Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis as examples to show that drop-failure-withdrawal rates in these institutes have dropped dramatically after implementing newly designed introductory courses. This redesigning program has demonstrated that a good combination of information technology, asynchronous learning strategies, and proven pedagogies can serve at-risk students more effectively, including English-as-second- language students.

Wang, Chun-Min, and Thomas C. Reeves. "Synchronous Online Learning Experiences: The Perspectives of International Students from Taiwan." *Education Media International* 44.4 (2007): 339-356.

The article discusses how Taiwanese students adjust to the synchronous online environment in the U.S. from the physical classroom settings. The study finds that the Taiwanese students prefer face-to-face courses rather than online courses. They find the synchronous online course "good enough," but they also meet with some challenges. For example, the participants of online courses could be distracted easily by emails, online chatting, and internet surfing; online communication lacks "facial expression" which is important for people to better understand one another; and the language barrier makes it difficult for international students to concentrate on the teacher's lecture, read messages, and take notes simultaneously in an online class. Cultural aspects of online learning and teaching are addressed as well. International students could not understand some examples or conversations by American students when the content is based on the background knowledge of American culture and education. That Taiwanese education is more focused on exams requiring reading and writing skills is contrasted with the American

education that emphasizes students' way of thinking and expression of their thoughts. The study also suggests that the instructional design of an online course should interact with cultural issues instead of technological aspects only, such as setting up some face-to-face meetings, identifying techniques to help international students get involved in more group activities of the online classroom, and researching how to balance online and face-to-face components in online courses.

Yeh, Shiou-Wen, and Jia-Jiunn Lo, "Using Online Annotations to Support Error Correction and Corrective Feedback." *Computers & Education* 52.4 (2009): 882-892.

For instructors of second language (L2) writing courses, giving corrective feedback to students is a challenging task, especially when L2 students do not understand or process the feedback. Motivated by the increasing need for effective writing feedback in online composition classes, the authors of this paper introduce a computer-mediated corrective feedback system called "online annotation technology," based on an experiment on 50 freshmen in a university in northern Taiwan. This annotation system includes: 1) highlighting key words, which helps draw the readers' attention; 2) structuring a system that generates a list of related annotations; and 3) managing annotations by editing their content. This computer-based corrective system includes such features as Document Maker, Annotation Editor (error correction marking), Composer (displaying annotation marks based on user query), Error Analyzer, and Document Viewer and Analyzed Result Viewer, aiming to help students detect and recognize errors in their writings and provide them with effective error-correction prompts. The results of the experiment reveal that the students who used this online annotation system effectively identified more errors than the control group did. This paper also provides limitations of this online system and future research directions.

Yildiz, Swbwn, and Barbara A. Bichelmeyer. "Exploring Electronic Forum Participation and Interaction by EFL Speakers in Two Web-based Graduate-level Courses." *Distance Education* 24.2 (2003): 175-193.

This article describes the online forum participation of international graduate students in two Web-based graduate courses with the focus on how linguistic and cultural differences influence their classroom participation. Data was collected from surveys, interactive entries of students and instructors in the course forum, face-to-face and email interviews, and the researcher's observations and field notes. The data was then analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The results show that linguistic barriers such as reading comprehension and writing difficulties prevent international students from actively participating in online forums. Cultural differences as revealed in students' less comfort with learner-oriented discussions as opposed to teacher-delivered course lectures also impact students' participation and make them avoid public questioning or challenging to show their disagreement. Despite these difficulties, however, the results also show

that the unique characteristics of Web-based forum discussion provide students with a more equal opportunity to vocalize.

Zhao, Shuo, and Xue-ai Zhao. Talents Oriented Strategy of Online Learning in Universities. *Canadian Social Science*, 6.1(2010): 33-39.

The authors emphasize the importance of interactive learning activities in online EFL classes. The success of an online class lies in learners' self-perception of a part of learning community and learning activities are one of the best ways to engage students. Despite a lack of face-to-face interaction in online education, instructors should continue to design activities to support learning objective, such as tests and quizzes, readings and case studies, online discussions, and writings. The authors list seven strategies that could encourage students to actively participate in online learning, 1) making the class interactive, e.g., showing students how knowledge is interrelated and associated; 2) engaging and motivating, e.g., incorporating the discussion of interesting and related social events or problem-solving activities; 3) putting things in context, using knowledge and skills in daily context; 4) maintaining diversity of different learning modes and channels; 5) using collaborative skills such as students' engagement in a coordinated effort to solve a problem together; 6) reducing cognitive load by chunking information into smaller pieces to prevent information "overload;" and 7) providing adequate scaffolding by teaching students problem-solving strategies to gain independence in learning and critical thinking. To achieve these goals, the facilitators, learners, and the content of an online class play equally important roles. These strategies are applicable to all other types of online learning as well as online EFL classes.