AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction 2010

Critical and Intercultural Theory and Language Pedagogy

Glenn S. Levine
Alison Phipps
Editors

HEINLE
CENGAGE Learning™

Australia • Brazil • Japan • Korea • Mexico • Singapore • Spain • United Kingdom • United States

HEINLE
CENGAGE Learning™

AAUSC Issues in Language Program Direction 2010: Critical and Intercultural Theory and Language Pedagogy
Glenn S. Levine
Alison Phipps
Editors

Publisher: Beth Kramer

Editorial Assistant: Laura Kramer

Senior Marketing Manager: Ben Rivera

Marketing Coordinator: Janine Enos

Marketing Communications Manager: Glenn McGibbon

Project Management: PreMediaGlobal

Print Buyer: Amy Rogers

Senior Rights Acquisitions Specialist/Text: Katie Huha

Rights Acquisitions Specialist/Image: Jennifer Mayer Dare

Cover Designer: PreMediaGlobal

Compositor: PreMediaGlobal

Library of Congress Control Number: 2010937494

ISBN-13: 978-0-495-80007-1

ISBN-10: 0-495-80007-4

Heinle
20 Channel Center Street
Boston, MA 02210
USA

Cengage Learning is a leading provider of customized learning solutions with office locations around the globe, including Singapore, the United Kingdom, Australia, Mexico, Brazil and Japan. Locate your local office at **international.cengage.com/region**

Cengage Learning products are represented in Canada by Nelson Education, Ltd.

For your course and learning solutions, visit **www.cengage.com**

Purchase any of our products at your local college store or at our preferred online store **www.cengagebrain.com**

Printed in the United States of America
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 14 13 12 11 10

Chapter 11

Collaboration and Interaction: The Keys to Distance and Computer-Supported Language Learning

James A. Coleman, Regine Hampel, Mirjam Hauck, and Ursula Stickler,
The Open University

Abstract

This chapter describes the very practical approach to distance and online language learning that has allowed the United Kingdom's largest university, The Open University (OU), to deliver effective language learning to tens of thousands of students over the past 15 years. It starts from theoretical underpinnings: critical pedagogy, the specifics of adult learners, the achievements and shortcomings of the communicative approach, sociocultural understandings of language learning, and the central role of interaction and collaboration in achieving both linguistic and intercultural outcomes. An enumeration of the particular challenges of learning languages at a distance—facilitating interaction, managing affect, and effectively integrating technologies—is followed by a concise review of the evolution of distance language learning and of relevant research. Issues such as evolving technologies, task design, and student anxiety are also addressed. Distance language education at the OU is conceived not just as a technical challenge but also as an undertaking that engages actively in social issues and the promotion of universal values. The student body is exceptionally inclusive, with a high proportion of disabled and otherwise disadvantaged learners. This social mission adds to the complexity of curriculum design and delivery; neither the materials nor the actual teaching follows conventional models. Providing opportunities for learner interaction is a pedagogic challenge that can be addressed by integrating telecollaborative activities into the language learning experience.

Introduction

Each year, the OU welcomes some 230,000 students, all of whom are part-time and distance taught. Since adding foreign languages to the course portfolio in 1995, the OU has become, through its innovative teaching informed by cutting-edge research, one of the world leaders in distance and online language learning. In addition to addressing the theoretical and practical approaches which together deliver successful language learning on a very large scale, the authors here outline the ways in which distance language learning (DLL) at the OU makes it possible to integrate the following successfully:

- The principles of open and distance education
- Cognitive and sociocultural approaches to language teaching
- Learner autonomy
- Intercultural communicative competence
- Educational inclusivity

- New technologies
- Collaboration

We first locate our work theoretically within critical pedagogy, adult learning, the recent history of language teaching, and the particular challenges of DLL. After reviewing research findings and our own specific context, we consider experiences of telecollaborative learning and the lessons that have emerged.

Critical Pedagogy

The founding principles, the ongoing ethos, and indeed the very name of the OU represent a view of education as a social process and one that is inseparable from social change. Building on the work of Paolo Freire (e.g., 1973, 1998), critical pedagogy is an approach to education that seeks to help learners not merely to absorb the knowledge and wisdom of their teachers but rather to encourage learners to use their learning to challenge existing social and political structures and understandings. The goal of education is not to reinforce but to question the status quo. The educational establishment, in the shape of traditional schooling, is seen by critical pedagogy as a means of reinforcing society's norms rather than encouraging learning (e.g., Illich, 1971). A similar approach to learning—but focusing on the individual's capacity rather than societal responsibility—is taken by humanistic pedagogy (e.g., Rogers, 1983).

Within applied linguistics, critical pedagogy has been defined by Pennycook (1990) as an approach that "seeks to understand and critique the historical and sociopolitical context of schooling and to develop pedagogical practices that aim not only to change the nature of schooling, but also the wider society" (p. 24). The issues have been addressed, among others, by Crookes (e.g., Crookes & Lehner, 1998) and Canagarajah (2005) as well as Pennycook (e.g., 2001). Critical pedagogy, through dialogue and inquiry, engages the learner beyond the classroom. There is thus a link to Barnett's (1997) call for education to foster citizens who possess the skills of criticality and are hence capable of independent thought and action. It has been shown through a detailed longitudinal study (Brumfit, Myles, Mitchell, Johnston, & Ford, 2005) that university language courses can develop precisely the skills and attitudes embraced by the term "criticality."

Adult Learning

The great majority of language learners at the OU are adults who build on an already existing and confirmed knowledge base. Adult learning can be seen as a challenge to teaching, as established ways of perception and cognition need to be questioned to allow for new input to have an effect. On the other hand, adult learning can also be seen as an advantageous position from which meaningful reevaluation of a person's interpretation of the world can be achieved (Mezirow, 1997).

Based on the three categories of learning developed by the German philosopher Jürgen Habermas, Mezirow (1981) develops his theory of "perspective transformation" as a form of learning only adults can achieve. He defines perspective transformation as

> the emancipatory process of becoming critically aware of how and why the structure of psycho-cultural assumptions has come to constrain the way we see ourselves and our relationships, reconstituting this structure to permit a more inclusive and discriminating integration of experience and acting upon these new understandings. It is the process by which adults come to recognize their culturally induced dependency roles and relationships and the reasons for them to take action to overcome them. (pp. 6–7)

For adult language learners, this is evidenced quite clearly in the cultural aspect of language learning, which often leads to students' questioning their own cultural assumptions and which—if successful—will reintegrate their worldview with newly acquired perspectives (see, e.g., Baumann, 2010; Stickler & Emke, in press; Taylor, 1997). Cultural differences, in turn, can be seen as catalysts for perspective transformation (Ziegahn, 2005).

Beyond the Communicative Approach: Language for Interaction and Collaboration

Thanks to the elevated status of the classical languages Latin and Greek, when "modern" languages were added to school and university curricula in the early twentieth century, they were taught in the same way—as dead languages. Although this approach, with an emphasis on learning grammar paradigms and on translation as the key exercise, survives in traditional university departments, the 1960s and 1970s saw a move toward the communicative approach, so called because communication was both the method and the desired outcome. Language was described in terms of the functions and notions it conveyed (Wilkins, 1976) rather than as an abstract system. The components of communicative competence were set out (Canale, 1983; Canale & Swain, 1980).

According to Hymes (1976, p. 281), the following judgments in relation to language are crucial:

1. Whether (and to what degree) something is formally *possible*
2. Whether (and to what degree) something is *feasible* in virtue of the means of implementation available
3. Whether (and to what degree) something is *appropriate* (adequate, happy, successful) in relation to a context in which it is used and evaluated
4. Whether (and to what degree) something is in fact done, actually *performed*, and what its doing entails

The communicative approach introduced the use of the target language in the classroom, with a focus on appropriate language use and meaning rather than

correct usage (Widdowson, 1978). Input, interaction, and output became central concepts in language acquisition. The use of authentic input materials became more central, as did the development of oral skills (fostered, e.g., by the use of the audio lingual method). As a result, certain task types, such as role plays or information gap activities, gained popularity to help develop students' functional communicative competence. Although there was more consideration of the learner and his or her needs, the focus remained on learning by teaching, and, in general, language learning was perceived as an act of individual cognition or a behaviorist process.

In contrast, socioconstructivist communicative concepts of learning do not follow the "transmission model" where knowledge is passed from an expert to a novice but rather describe learning as an attempt to reconcile the external world experienced through the senses and the internal world that the mind has created as a representation of reality (Glasersfeld, 2007). The sociocultural view of mental development is based on the psychology of Lev Vygotsky (Prawat & Floden, 1994; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch & Tulviste, 1992), who emphasized the role of tools that mediate our mental processes and our interaction with the environment. One of the most important tools is language (Vygotsky 1978; Wertsch, 2007); learning a new or second language (L2) makes the necessary mediation process more complex (Pavlenko & Lantolf, 2000).

Another tool that plays an increasingly important role in distance language education is the computer or, more specifically, computer-mediated communication (CMC). Planning a learning environment includes reflection on all the mediating elements that learners will have to cope with: a new and often unfamiliar language, learning materials, other learners to interact with, and—increasingly—new digital tools for communication and collaboration. It is today accepted that the Internet is by no means a "culturally neutral" environment where, as Kramsch and Thorne (2002) put it, language learners and native speakers can be in touch with each other "as linguistic entities on a screen, unfettered by historical, geographical, national or institutional identities" (p. 85). Thorne in particular has demonstrated in his work that the Internet itself is based on specific cultural principles and values and that its users are influenced by their own culturally specific communicative norms and modes of behavior that are sometimes not compatible with those of other online users. This learning environment provides the starting point for the language learner to make choices; engage with materials, tutors, and fellow learners; and create a learning event. "Scaffolding," a term based on further developments of Vygotskian thoughts, can be provided by various means: through the teacher, through the structure of the materials, and through support from peers.

Sociocultural theories have significantly informed research into language pedagogy. Instead of seeing language learning as an act of individual cognition or a mechanistic behaviorist process, sociocultural theories support a view of language as a vehicle to both convey information and situate people in a social system (Resnick, 1991). They oppose the idea of matching preset educational standards, for example, in terms of quantifiable linguistic skills, with the idea of the transformative power of learning (Kinginger, 2002; Phipps & González, 2004).

Sociocultural theories thus stress the pivotal role played by language and other tools in the meaning-making process and in the social construction of the mind and the self.

Knowledge, individual and social identity, the set of group-sanctioned conventional behaviors that we know as "culture"—all these are initially built and subsequently shaped by contact with others. So too are both the mother tongue(s) or first language(s) and new languages. In this view, although there is a role for individual study and private interaction with materials, linguistic input is not merely data for the individual mind to compute but also a vital, dynamic, collaborative process. Within a sociocultural approach, learner motivation is related to the idea of the L2 self and identity as a collaborative construction (Ushioda & Dörnyei, 2009).

Whereas in the cognitive paradigm interaction is seen as "the means by which input is made available to the black box [i.e., the human mind] or as an opportunity for producing output" (Ellis, 2003, p. 175), in sociocultural theories it is defined in social terms. Interaction can take different forms, one being collaboration, which allows learners to develop not only learners' linguistic skills but also their sense of community and their higher-order critical inquiry (Hopkins, Gibson, Ros i Solé, Sawides, & Starkey, 2008). Today, learners can collaborate beyond the walls of the traditional classroom, with new digital environments enabling interaction with other learners or speakers of the language.

Such collaboration can also promote intercultural competence, which is now widely considered as inseparable from language learning, and while there are many theoretical models of intercultural competence, the most influential in Europe, particularly through the collaborative work of the Council of Europe, has been the intercultural communicative competence (ICC) model of Byram (Byram, 1997, 2008; Byram, Zarate, & Neuner, 1997).

The Challenges of DLL

Learners and teachers of languages in a distance setting face the same issues as in a conventional classroom, plus some more. How far can the sociolinguistic, pragmatic, interactional, and sociocultural elements of communicative competence be integrated with the fundamental language skills? Are there other essential outcomes, such as cultural knowledge, intercultural competence, e-literacy skills, learning strategies, and the metacognitive competence that shapes a more reflective and effective learner? Paradoxically, distance learners have a need for increased autonomy but at the same time rely on the provision of carefully structured learning environments.

What practical skills and what theoretical understandings will distance teachers actually need? How can their initial training and ongoing support be best provided? What emotions will learners experience, and how can those involved optimize positive feelings and address the challenges of negative affect? How should feedback be provided to give learners an encouraging awareness of progress alongside the knowledge of areas of weakness to be addressed?

For distance learning providers, the three greatest supplementary challenges are facilitating interactions, managing affect, and integrating appropriate technologies. In both cognitive and sociocultural approaches, it is accepted that people learn a language by using it. Input and output are essential, but it is only in meaningful interaction with others that the mechanisms for acquiring, developing, and refining a new language system are fully activated. Additionally, physical isolation may be accompanied by emotional isolation—a feeling of loneliness that, if left unaddressed, can undermine motivation, self-efficacy, and success and heighten debilitating anxiety.

Which technologies maximize interaction while enhancing the distance learner's experience? From the rapidly evolving technical resources available, how do we select and integrate the many possibilities for CMC, both synchronous and asynchronous, and with a range of affordances from video to virtual whiteboards, which may be more or less suited to DLL?

Course design for distance learners needs to take account of such technological factors alongside human, institutional, logistical, and pedagogical concerns. In what follows, we attempt to address all these issues, reviewing how conventional challenges are addressed in distance contexts while giving more attention to the specific challenges of DLL.

Research into DLL

Simple presentation of subject matter at a distance is relatively straightforward. Complexity comes with the process whereby the interactions between materials, channels of communication, tutors, and students create effective learning. Holmberg's pioneering work (e.g., 1989) is complemented by four other major sources which together provide an overview of DLL: White's (2003) *Language Learning in Distance Education*; a special issue of the journal *Open Learning* (Shelley and White, 2003) that focuses on transferring good practices; the collection of chapters in *Distance Education and Languages* (Holmberg, Shelley, & White, 2005), which deals with the key issues of learner autonomy, learner perspectives and support, development of intercultural competence, methodology and course design, learning environments, and language teacher development; and White's (2006) state-of-the-art literature review.

White (2006) identifies four successive phases in technologies of bidirectional distance learning: print-based, broadcast, multiple-media, and Internet-based real-time interaction. She finds the whole domain undertheorized, arguing that "innovations in technology and practice have clearly outstripped theory development" (p. 250).

On both theory and practice, White (2003, 2005, 2006) eschews a focus on institutional concerns, program, and courseware development in order to foreground the real experiences of the distance learner. Her history of distance learning theories contrasts a socioeconomic analysis of DLL as an industrialized form of teaching with the humanistic views of Holmberg and others, who have emphasized the fostering through dialogue of learner independence and interdependence. The theory of collaborative control sees learner independence not

as a matter of organizing self-instructional materials but, in a constructivist perspective that is now widely accepted within DLL, as an ongoing process within a learning community where control is negotiated through interaction. White's own learner-context interface theory takes into account the perspectives of all the different participants in the DLL process.

Garrido (2005) provides a full account of the development and delivery of a distance language course at the OU, embracing the target language culture(s), varieties of global Spanish, uses of information and communication technologies (ICT), individual learner needs and differences, the development of intercultural competence (cf. Álvarez & Garrido, 2001), promotion of oral skills, assessment, and feedback inter alia. Informing all the contextual factors and key questions is the central problem of overcoming physical separation to ensure the essential interactions between students, teachers, and native speakers, which emerge, as the sociocultural paradigm would predict, as far more significant than interactions with materials (Fleming, Hiple, & Du, 2002).

Since distance language learners working independently at home are responsible for the pace and direction of their learning to a far greater extent than conventional students, autonomy—and in particular self-management—is also a central concern in DLL research and practice. The extent of supporting structures varies widely, and whereas for some providers self-pacing is an essential characteristic of all open learning, others insist on rigid study timetables. Hurd (2005a, 2005b, 2007) situates the autonomy debate and links it to other influential factors in DLL, including affect (notably motivation), previous learning, learning styles, strategies, and beliefs. She also outlines the Vygotskyan approach to learning through social interaction and the research underpinning the adoption of text-based and voice-based CMC. Students' active involvement equally dictates feedback. Ros i Solé and Truman (2005) advocate a form of marking that fulfills the three functions of assessing, communicating knowledge, and facilitating learning but also encourages learner reflection and self-evaluation.

Murphy (2005, 2007, 2008) describes experimental work at the OU to develop learners' use of critical reflection and metacognitive strategies. She finds distance learners to be already capable strategy users and reflective learners (cf. White, 1995), but their functional control can be extended by appropriately integrated support material or constrained by assessments. Distance learners are also distinguished by exceptional precourse knowledge of the target language community, which is enhanced by study. Cultural attitudes may appear to remain unchanged (Baumann & Shelley, 2003; Shelley & Baumann, 2005), but a more sophisticated research design can evidence movement toward greater intercultural competence (Baumann, 2010).

If open learning is especially suited to accommodating individual differences, it can nonetheless also promote interaction and collaboration as well as community building. The development of online communication tools in particular has enabled the OU to move toward a sociocultural approach that sees knowledge as socially constructed through interaction.

As White has noted, technology has multiplied still further the many forms of distance learning. Hauck and Hampel (2005) provide a clear and well-theorized introduction to the OU's *online* foreign language teaching, which then used the

original in-house audiographic tutorial environment known as Lyceum. Like many learning environments, Lyceum offered multiple synchronous audio channels and a synchronous text chat as well as three shared graphic interfaces: whiteboard, concept map, and document. The authors trace the intensive research that has explored successive technologies (telephone, e-mail, voice-over-Internet, and audiographic conferencing) in a desire to help students develop oral fluency and target language interactive skills (Hauck & Haezewindt, 1999; Kötter, Shield, & Stevens, 1999; Shield, Hauck, & Kötter, 2000; Shield, Hauck, & Hewer, 2001; Stevens & Hewer, 1998). Online meetings, together with forums and a dedicated Web site, build confidence and autonomy and encourage risk taking by providing shared image and text resources and authentic communicative settings for meaningful target language interactions. The synchronous conferencing tool currently used at the OU, Elluminate, has a single graphic interface but allows students to meet online at any time in the absence of a tutor.

Early exercises and role plays have given way to task-based approaches building on research into written (a)synchronous communication. Hauck and Hampel (2005) detail the features of task design for collaborative interaction, taking into account a typology of fluency-oriented online tasks (Shield & Hewer, 1999) grounded in the more generic task-based learning literature. Lamy and Hassan (2003), however, tested three different instructional designs with OU learners of French, concluding that psychological and sociocultural factors have a major impact on the degree of reflective interaction among learners. Their findings concerning the complexity of research in this domain are echoed in a later U.K.–German–Australian study (Hampel, Felix, Hauck, & Coleman, 2005). Experience to date underlines the cognitive and affective advantages of such an approach as well as the affective challenges of motivation and anxiety (Hauck & Hurd, 2005; Hurd, Beaven, & Ortega, 2001). De los Arcos, Coleman, and Hampel (2009) have looked beyond anxiety, using discursive psychology to show that other emotions, including regret and pride, play a role in language learning in online environments. DLL students demonstrate high autonomy (Vanijdee, 2003)—although this in turn has significant implications for the role of tutors, who require targeted training in the distinctive pedagogy of DLL (Hampel, 2003, 2009; Hampel & Hauck, 2006; Hampel & Stickler, 2005; Hauck & Stickler, 2006).

Studies from Sweden and Australia (Hansson & Wennö, 2005; Tudini, 2005) suggesting that DLL can attain similar learning objectives to face-to-face teaching, albeit through different mechanisms and structures, have been confirmed for beginner learners of Spanish at the OU (Coleman & Furnborough, 2010). Pedagogical designs must match the cultural educational context of the participants (Fay & Hill, 2003).

Teaching and Learning in the OU Context

The Department of Languages at the OU not only has been a unique leader in teaching languages to learners with a wide range of profiles but also has pioneered approaches to DLL, backed by pedagogical research. While we believe that many

of the principles that guide our work can be successfully applied to other contexts, our own university, which celebrated its fortieth anniversary in 2009, is unique as a consequence of its founding mission (http://www.open.ac.uk/about/ou/p2.shtml):

> The Open University is open to people, places, methods, and ideas.
>
> It promotes educational opportunity and social justice by providing high-quality university education to all who wish to realise their ambitions and fulfil their potential.
>
> Through academic research, pedagogic innovation and collaborative partnership it seeks to be a world leader in the design, content and delivery of supported open and distance learning.

Being "open to people" means that the OU has always attracted students who missed their first chance at higher education and those who are unable to attend conventional residential universities. Special provision is made each year for around 10,000 students with disabilities, while the student body also comprises the geographically remote or isolated, such as submariners, embassy staff, military personnel serving in Afghanistan, and some 2,500 prison inmates, alongside the majority whose professional or family commitments make a traditional, full-time university course unattractive or impossible. Being "open to people" also underlines that distance learning, unlike campus teaching, is infinitely scaleable: some of our language courses attract up to 2,000 students in a single year.

While openness of access may be considered a central concern of all distance education, the practicalities can prove extremely challenging, in particular for language teaching with its increased demand on interactivity. Provision is made at the OU for disabled students to access, for example, transcripts of audio materials, image descriptions, and alternative assessment materials. Students in prisons often have limited access to live online materials and are supplied with alternative formats such as offline DVDs or printouts of tasks. Such considerations, which routinely inform materials development and teaching and learning strategies at the OU Department of Languages, bring into focus still existing inequalities that might go unnoticed in a face-to-face context where some students are excluded from the start.

A further important consequence of inclusiveness is that there can be no admission criteria and no compulsory attendance at classes. However, studying at a distance does not mean studying without support, and students are offered extensive support to counteract the possible negative implications of distance learning. The OU, through its 13 regional offices, employs teams of selected tutors (around 700 in languages alone) whose task is to provide the necessary local support. This is fundamentally different from working in conventional teaching contexts, and the "change in mind-set" (Cheng & Myles, 2003, p. 36) required from tutors means that extensive initial and continuing training must be provided. But within the OU model of higher education, tutor–class contact is *limited*—typically to a short group tutorial each month, an occasional day school, and perhaps a one-week summer school—and *optional*. Individuals have e-mail and telephone contacts and receive individual, structured feedback on regularly submitted formative and

summative course work assignments. But because not all students are able to attend classes, the teaching materials themselves, created centrally by a team of academics, must be self-sufficient and as nearly error free as possible. The "teacher's voice" (Rowntree, 1994)—in other words, all the functions that we as teachers perform in a conventional classroom, from presenting new structures through building a group dynamic to constructing a coherent curriculum—must be integrated from the start into the course materials, which typically take the form of printed books, DVD-ROMs containing audio, video or CALL (computer-assisted language learning) materials, and a Web site. The course Web site includes written and spoken materials as well as assessments and discussion forums and links to authentic online resources. All are integrated within the open-source platform Moodle.

The target language is taught not as a single fixed code but in its global sociolinguistic variety. World Spanishes, authentic Austrian speech, different notions of Chinese language, and a section on *québécois* writing all figure in the materials. In a further rejection of traditional models that separate language learning from "content" classes, language is intimately integrated with material providing insight into the cultures (rather than Culture, though literature is neither excluded nor privileged) where the language is spoken. Learning strategies are acquired alongside target linguistic structures and vocabulary and activities designed to build intercultural awareness. Sample language course materials are freely available via OpenLearn (http://openlearn.open.ac.uk) or iTunes U (http://www.open.ac.uk/itunes): the former site has already achieved 10 million hits and the latter 24 million hits, of which seven out of eight are from outside the United Kingdom. In August 2010, the top four OU downloads were Beginners' French Introduction, Beginners' Spanish Introduction, Beginners' Chinese Introduction, and Beginners' German Introduction, with two other language tracks also in the top 10 (http://projects.kmi.open.ac.uk/itunesu/impact).

OU language students cannot be easily characterized since they embrace all ages, abilities, interests, and backgrounds. We have learners with postgraduate qualifications learning a fourth or fifth language and young men and women with no formal qualifications following their first-ever university course. However, the majority of students are adults and not in their first stage of education. About 70 percent are in full-time employment while taking a course with the OU.

While openness to people means social and educational inclusiveness, openness to places means supported distance learning, openness to ideas is essential to the ethos of all true universities, and openness to methods dictates a close relationship between teaching and research. Our pedagogy builds on and feeds into intensive research (nationally, the OU ranks third for educational research), with a particular focus on integrating new technologies.

North American readers will recognize the challenges faced by language teachers in a country that, despite the more complex reality, perceives itself as a monolingual community sharing a single standard variety of English—a language that the rest of the world seems to be adopting. Despite the societal, political, and media factors that undermine language learning in the United Kingdom (Coleman, 2009), the OU continues to grow its language student numbers and with around 9,000 students a year is the largest provider of university language courses in the country.

Indeed, while our society is typically portrayed as a monolingual one, dominated by speakers of English, the reality is very different: multilingual communication and collaboration are crucial prerequisites for human coexistence and economic success in today's globalized world. Developing linguistic and (inter)cultural competence is central, and a growing number of institutions are becoming committed to a view of language pedagogy that goes beyond the dichotomy of literature and language and sees language learning as a transformative process that helps learners become active agents who are able not only to understand but also to shape their worlds.

Telecollaborative Encounters

One way of engaging language learners beyond the classroom and to promote the aforementioned critical skills—both in face-to-face and distance settings—is through telecollaborative models of learning. Telecollaboration is one form of computer-supported collaborative learning and has been defined as the use of "Internet communication tools such as e-mail, synchronous chat, threaded discussion, and MOOs . . . in order to support social interaction, dialogue, debate, and intercultural exchange" (Belz, 2003, p. 2) among language learners from different parts of the globe. Apart from the linguistic benefits (e.g., in terms of linguistic accuracy and fluency; Kinginger & Belz, 2005; O'Rourke, 2005; Ware & O'Dowd, 2008), the main attraction of telecollaborations tends to be seen as the potential increase in the participants' intercultural competence—comprising skills, attitudes, knowledge, and critical cultural awareness as established by Byram (1997)—and awareness (Müller-Hartmann, 2000; O'Dowd, 2006; Ware, 2005) as well as autonomy (O'Rourke, 2007; Schwienhorst, 2000) and e-literacy (Hauck 2007). Telecollaborative activities seem particularly well suited to help achieve one of the key aims of the Europe-wide Bologna process (http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/about), which perceives "academic mobility" (both virtual and physical) as the main contributing factor to the development of intercultural competence, respect for diversity, and linguistic pluralism.

Over the past decade, the scope of these online encounters has been extended to include exchanges based on the use of a lingua franca (e.g., Guth, 2008) between participants who are not all language learners (e.g., Belz & Müller-Hartmann, 2003; Hauck, 2010; Hauck & Lewis, 2007) and who might not even be far away from each other (e.g., Fratter, Helm, & Whigham, 2005). At the same time, the arrival of tools and applications associated with networked digital technologies and online social networking such as media-sharing sites (e.g., *Flickr* and *YouTube*), social bookmarking (e.g., *delicious* and *connotea*), blogs, wikis, and multiuser virtual environments (e.g., Second Life) has considerably expanded the potential of first-generation CMC technologies in relation to telecollaborative exchanges (Thorne, Black, & Sykes, 2009).

The result is a wider understanding of telecollaboration that is probably best captured by Guth and Helm's (2010) concept of "telecollaboration 2.0." Derived from O'Reilly's (2005) use of the term "Web 2.0" to describe changes in the way people use and interact via the Internet, telecollaboration 2.0 identifies the shift

of focus to dialogue building and social networking. It encompasses the development of language proficiency, ICC, and new media literacy skills. Guth and Helm (2010) further conceptualize telecollaboration 2.0 based on what the aforementioned networked technologies allow learners to do, namely, generating, sharing, and jointly evaluating content and becoming part of online communities. This view is complemented by an understanding of knowledge as being collaborative—that is, the property of the social networks that created it—and of culture as participatory (Jenkins, Clinton, Purushotma, Robison, & Weigel, 2006; Pegrum, 2009).

While Web 2.0 technologies seem to be applicable to a range of disciplines in an educational context, they have been embraced by foreign language educators and researchers first and foremost (Thomas, 2009), particularly in distance learning contexts. This is not surprising given the reliance of online communities on asynchronous, near-synchronous, or even synchronous written and spoken communication. In the past, distance education used to be incompatible with collaboration, thus making it a rather solitary approach to learning languages. However, Web 2.0 and its gradual integration into formal language education contexts has changed this dramatically, taking "distance" out of distance language learning and teaching and making interaction with the tutor and with other students the rule rather than the exception.

Although telecollaborative activities are not necessarily unproblematic at the levels of learners, teachers, and institutions (O'Dowd & Ritter, 2006), the Department of Languages at the OU has been trying to integrate telecollaboration in various forms as supplement for distance language learners' notorious lack of direct contact. E-mail Tandem between German native speakers and OU learners was established in 2003 (Lewis & Stickler, 2007; Stickler, 2004; Stickler & Lewis, 2008). This small initiative was expanded to a multicultural European-funded project (LITERALIA 2006–08) that took place in multiple settings online and face-to-face. The project offered participants the opportunity to develop ICC and language competences in informal, nonformal, and formal learning (Stickler & Emke, in press).

Hampel et al. (2005) explored the benefits and pitfalls of using audiographic conferencing tools to facilitate collaborative language learning across time, geographical space, and individual difference. In the intensive exchange between learners from the United Kingdom, Australia, and Germany, critical success factors (see also Hauck, 2007) include participants' familiarity with the available tools and their ability to cope with the simultaneity of several forms of meaning-making processes as well as personality factors, such as tolerance of ambiguity and locus of control (White, 1999).

Further projects also broke away from the standard pattern of Tandem exchanges. With a wider range of participants, an attempt at a more dynamic, comparative approach to intercultural encounter was made (e.g., Hauck & Lewis, 2007; Hauck & Youngs, 2008). The *Tridem* pilot project, which linked three partner institutions, combined different tools for student collaboration, namely, blogs and audioconferencing, to enable students to socialize and interact together informally. The main findings showed that, although synchronous CMC tools enable students to establish direct real-time contact with native-speaker learning partners, asynchronous virtual spaces offer learners more time for reflective activities and give

them freedom to work in their own time and at their own pace. The project was followed by further three- and four-way exchanges that built on and expanded Byram's (1997) understanding of ICC (Hauck, 2010) by drawing on Guth and Helm's (2010) conceptualization of telecollaboration 2.0. Acknowledging that Byram's model was developed before the dramatic rise of ICTs but continues to be an important reference point for ICC in language learning and telecollaborative contexts, the authors seek to integrate ICC into their new framework for "the multifarious goals of telecollaboration 2.0" (Guth & Helm, 2010).

The Role of the Teacher in Online Interaction and Collaboration

Unsurprisingly, the role of language professionals in computer-mediated intercultural foreign language education has become a focus of CALL research: "the importance (but not necessarily the prominence) of the teacher and, ultimately, teacher education programs . . . increases rather than diminishes" (Belz, 2003, p. 92). Barney (2005, p. 111), for example, talks about the need for "critical technological literacy" for teachers.

As many studies on collaborative learning report problems with teachers not having the necessary skills to support collaborative learning (e.g., Engstrom & Jewett, 2005; Hampel 2009; Mangenot & Nissen, 2006; O'Dowd, 2006), a study was carried out at the OU in 2008 in order to (1) find out more about distance teachers' experience of facilitating online group work, (2) identify development needs in this area, (3) try out the potential of particular asynchronous and synchronous tools to support collaborative learning, and (4) test possible development activities. The study identified a range of skills that teachers require for collaborative learning to be successful (Hampel, 2009). Teachers need to be technically literate, employ tools best suited for the task, moderate activities, provide careful scaffolding of tasks, and give detailed instructions. Other studies have also shown that they have to motivate learners to participate, regulate learner emotion and affect, help students create a sense of community, and find a balance between encouraging learner autonomy and learner control (Hampel, 2009). In addition, telecollaborations across different countries require teachers to regulate learners' intercultural experiences and to work with other teachers across institutions and curricula.

Conclusion

This chapter has used the context of the OU to link open learning and distance language learning and teaching with the use of new technologies both at a theoretical and at a practical level. It has shown how a theoretical framework based on sociocultural theories and concepts like learner autonomy, ICC, interaction, and collaboration can be brought together to inform new approaches to learning and teaching, approaches that include, for example, telecollaboration.

We want to round off this chapter with some dos and don'ts for collaboration and interaction at a distance and online (Table 11.1).

Table 11.1. Dos and Don'ts for Collaboration and Interaction

	Dos	**Don'ts**
Learner aspects	Ensure inclusiveness of access	
	Avoid assumptions about "the learner"	
	Allow for different learner types	
	Encourage the development of an individual learning style (constructivist learning, adaptive learning)	
	Encourage peer learning and peer support (online communities)	
Environmental aspects	Structure the environment in a clear and meaningful way ("scaffolding")	Focus on technology to the detriment of language
	Make materials relevant to the learner	Overestimate the relevance the course/ learning has for the learner ("overcrowd the curriculum")
	Make materials "talk" to the learner ("tutorial in print")	
	Ensure flexibility of learning pathways, learning preferences	
	Support the acquisition of ICT skills through engaging learners in meaningful language tasks	
Teacher aspects	Support the learner where and when needed ("guide on the side")	Set rigid structures and pathways
	Supplement the learning materials	Assume your learners will learn like you would
	Treat students as adults with relevant experiences and varied backgrounds	Assume your learners are a monolithic unit
	Maximize student contribution, not "teacher talk" (learner centeredness)	Rely on "on-the-fly" feedback or support
	Integrate ICT training but don't teach ICT instead of language	Overtechnologize
	Measure outcomes on set tasks, not learners (i.e., assess not the person but the performance)	
	Provide feedback in a clear and meaningful way	
	Encourage collaboration between peers ("facilitator")	

Provided that learners, teachers, and course designers are well aware of the distinct challenges and advantages of learning languages at a distance and combine the best-available technology with the best-suited pedagogy, this form of learning can offer, through collaboration and interaction, the same—if not better—chances of success for the adult learner.

References

Álvarez, I., & Garrido, C. (2001). Strategies for the development of multicultural competence in language learning. In J. A. Coleman, D. Ferney, D. Head, & R. Rix (Eds.), *Language learning futures* (pp. 150–163). London: Centre for Information on Language Teaching and Research.

Barnett, R. (1997). *Higher education: A critical business*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Barney, D. (2005). The problem of education in technological society. *International Journal of Education Knowledge and Society*, *1*(4), 107–113.

Baumann, U. (2010). *Exploring intercultural communicative competence in a distance learning environment*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, The Open University.

Baumann, U., & Shelley, M. (2003). Adult learners of German at the Open University: Their knowledge of, and attitudes towards Germany. *Open Learning*, *8*(1), 61–74.

Belz, J. A. (2003). Linguistic perspectives on the development of intercultural competence in telecollaboration. *Language Learning and Technology*, *7*(2), 68–99.

Belz, J. A., & Müller-Hartmann, A. (2003). Teachers negotiating German-American telecollaboration: Between a rock and an institutional hard place. *Modern Language Journal*, *87*(1), 71–89.

Brumfit, C., Myles, F., Mitchell, R., Johnston, B., & Ford, P. (2005). Language study in higher education and the development of criticality. *International Journal of Applied Linguistics*, *15*(2), 145–168.

Byram, M. (1997). *Teaching and assessing intercultural communicative competence*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M. (2008). *From foreign language education to education for intercultural citizenship: Essays and reflections*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byram, M., Zarate, G., & Neuner, G. (Eds.). (1997). *Sociocultural competence in language learning and teaching*. Strasbourg: Council of Europe.

Canagarajah, A. S. (2005). Critical pedagogy in L2 learning and teaching. In E. Hinkel (Ed.), *Handbook of research in second language teaching and research* (pp. 931–949). London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Canale, M. (1983). From communicative competence to communicative language pedagogy. In J. C. Richards & R. W. Schmidt (Eds.), *Language and communication* (pp. 2–27). New York: Longman.

Canale, M., & Swain, M. (1980). Theoretical bases of communicative approaches to second language teaching and testing. *Applied Linguistics*, *1*, 1–47.

Cheng, L., & Myles, J. (2003). Managing the change from on-site to online: Transforming ESL courses for teachers. *Open Learning*, *8*(1), 29–38.

Coleman, J. A. (2009). Why the British do not learn languages: Myths and motivation in the United Kingdom. *Language Learning Journal*, *37*(1), 111–127.

Coleman, J. A., & Furnborough, C. (2010). Learner characteristics and learning outcomes on a distance Spanish course for beginners. *System*, *38*(1), 14–29. doi:10.1016/j.system.2009.12.002.

Crookes, G., & Lehner, A. (1998). Aspects of process in an ESL critical pedagogy teacher education course. *TESOL Quarterly*, *32*(2), 319–328.

De los Arcos, B., Coleman, J. A., & Hampel, R. (2009). Learners' anxiety in audiographic conferences: A discursive psychology approach to emotion talk. *ReCALL*, *29*(1), 3–17.

Ellis, R. (2003). *Task-based language learning and teaching*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Engstrom, M. E., & Jewett, D. (2005). Collaborative learning the wiki way. *TechTrends: Linking Research and Practice to Improve Learning*, *49*(6), 12–15.

Fay, R., & Hill, M. (2003). Educating language teachers through distance learning: The need for culturally-appropriate DL methodology. *Open Learning*, *8*(1), 9–27.

Fleming, S., Hiple, D., & Du, Y. (2002). Foreign language distance education at the University of Hawai'i. In C. A. Spreen (Ed.), *New technologies and language learning: Issues and options* (Technical Report No. 25) (pp. 13–54). Honolulu: University of Hawai'i, Second Language Teaching and Curriculum Center.

Fratter, I., Helm, F., & Whigham, C. (2005). Cross-cultural exchanges at the language centre of the University of Padua and the issue of language. In A. Moravìková, C. Taylor Torsello, & T. Vogel (Eds.), *University language centres: Broadening horizons, expanding networks. Proceedings of the 8th Cercles Conference. 9th–11th September, 2004*. Bratislava: Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovak Republic. (pp.177–195).

Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness.* New York: Continuum.

Freire, P. (1998). *Pedagogy of freedom: Ethics, democracy, and civic courage*. Lanham, MD: Rowan & Littlefield.

Garrido, C. (2005). Course design for the distance learner of Spanish: More challenges than meet the eye. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 178–194). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Glasersfeld, E. V. (2007). Learning as a constructive activity. In M. Larochelle (Ed.), *Key works in radical constructivism* (pp. 3–19). Rotterdam: Sense Publications. (Original work published 1983)

Guth, S. (2008, November 14). *The multi-faceted focus of international collaboration*. Paper presented at the COIL Conference, Purchase, NY. Retrieved from http://www.slideshare.net/lamericaana/the-multifaceted-focus-of-international-collaborations-presentation

Guth, S., & Helm, F. (2010). *Telecollaboration 2.0—Language and intercultural learning in the 21st century*. Bern: Peter Lang.

Hampel, R. (2003). Theoretical perspectives and new practices in audio-graphic conferencing for language learning. *ReCALL*, *15*(1), 21–35.

Hampel, R. (2009). Teaching languages in online environments: Fostering interaction and collaboration. *Innovation in Language Learning and Teaching, 3*(1), 35–50.

Hampel, R., Felix, U., Hauck, M., & Coleman, J. A. (2005). Complexities of learning and teaching languages in a real-time audiographic environment. *German as a Foreign Language*, 3. Retrieved from http://www.gfl-journal.de

Hampel, R., & Hauck, M. (2006). Computer-mediated language learning: Making meaning in multimodal virtual learning spaces. *JALT CALL Journal*, *2*(2), 3–18. Retrieved from http://jaltcall.org/journal

Hampel, R., & Stickler, U. (2005). New skills for new classrooms: Training tutors to teach languages online. *CALL Journal*, *18*(2), 311–326.

Hansson, H., & Wennö, E. (2005). Closing the distance: compensatory strategies in distance language education. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 278–294). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Hauck, M. (2007). Critical success factors in a TRIDEM exchange. *ReCALL*, *19*(2), 202–223.

Hauck, M. (2010). The relevance of multimodal communicative competence in telecollaborative encounters. In S. Guth & F. Helm (Eds.), *Telecollaboration*

2.0—Language and intercultural learning in the 21st century (pp. 219–244). Bern: Peter Lang.

Hauck, M., & Haezewindt, B. (1999). Adding a new perspective to distance (language) learning and teaching: The tutor's perspective. *ReCALL*, *11*(2), 39–46.

Hauck, M., & Hampel, R. (2005). The challenge of implementing online tuition in distance language courses: Task design and tutor role. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 258–277). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Hauck, M., & Hurd, S. (2005). Exploring the link between language anxiety and learner self-management in open language learning contexts. *European Journal of Open, Distance and E-Learning*. Available: http://www.eurodl.org/materials/contrib/2005/Mirjam_Hauck.htm

Hauck, M., & Lewis, T. (2007). The Tridem Project. In R. O'Dowd (Ed.), *Online intercultural exchange: An introduction for foreign language teachers* (pp. 250–258). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Hauck, M., & Stickler, U. (2006). What does it take to teach online? Towards a pedagogy for online language teaching and learning. *CALICO Journal, 23*(3), 463–475.

Hauck, M., & Youngs, B. (2008). Telecollaboration in multimodal environments: The impact on task design and learner interaction. *Computer Assisted Language Learning*, *21*(2), 87–124.

Holmberg, B. (1989). *Theory and practice of distance education*. London: Routledge.

Holmberg, B., Shelley, M., & White, C. (2005). *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Hopkins, J., Gibson, W., Ros i Solé, C., Sawides, N., & Starkey, H. (2008). Interaction and critical inquiry in asynchronous computer-mediated conferencing: A research agenda. *Open Learning*, *23*, 29–42.

Hurd, S. (2005a). Autonomy and the distance language learner. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 1–19). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Hurd, S. (2005b). Distance learning in modern languages. In J. A. Coleman & J. Klapper (Eds.), *Effective learning and teaching in modern languages* (pp. 142–147). London: Routledge.

Hurd, S. (2007). Anxiety and non-anxiety in a distance language learning environment: The distance factor as a modifying influence. *System, 35*(4), 487–508.

Hurd, S., Beaven, T., & Ortega, A. (2001). Developing autonomy in a distance language learning context: Issues and dilemmas for course writers. *System*, *29*, 341–355.

Hymes, D. H. (1976). On communicative competence. In J. B. Pride & J. Holmes (Eds.), *Sociolinguistics: Selected readings* (pp. 269–293). Harmondsworth: Penguin. (Original work published 1971)

Illich, I. D. (1971). *Deschooling society*. London: Calder & Boyars.

Jenkins, H., Clinton, K., Purushotma, R., Robison, A. J., & Weigel, M. (2006). Confronting the challenges of participatory culture: Media education for the 21st century. Chicago: MacArthur Foundation. Retrieved from http://digitallearning.macfound.org/atf/cf/%7B7E45C7E0-A3E0-4B89-AC9C-807E1B0AE4E%7D/JENKINS_WHITE_PAPER.PDF

Kinginger, C. (2002). Defining the zone of proximal development in US foreign language education. *Applied Linguistics, 23*(2), 240–261. doi:10.1093/applin/23.2.240.

Kinginger, C., & Belz, J. A. (2005). Sociocultural perspectives on pragmatic development in foreign language learning: Case studies from telecollaboration and study abroad. *Intercultural Pragmatics*, *2*(4), 369–421.

Kötter, M., Shield, L., & Stevens, A. (1999). Real-time audio and email for fluency: Promoting distance language learners' oral and aural skills via the Internet. *ReCALL*, *11*(2), 47–54.

Kramsch, C., & Thorne, S. (2002). Foreign language learning as global communicative practice. In D. Block & D. Cameron (Eds.), *Language learning and teaching in the age of globalization* (pp. 83–100). London: Routledge.

Lamy, M. N., & Hassan, X. (2003). What influences reflective interaction in distance peer learning? Evidence from four long-term online learners of French. *Open Learning*, *8*(1), 39–59.

Lewis, T., & Stickler, U. (2007). Les stratégies collaboratives d'apprentisssage lors d'un échange en tandem via Internet. *LIDIL*, *36*(2), 163–188.

Mangenot, F., & Nissen, E. (2006). Collective activity and tutor involvement in e-learning environments for language teachers and learners. *CALICO Journal, 23*(3), 601–621.

Mezirow, J. (1981). A critical theory of adult learning and education. *Adult Learning, 32*(1), 3–24.

Mezirow, J. (1997). Transformative learning: Theory to practice. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education*, *74*, 5–12.

Müller-Hartmann, A. (2000). The role of tasks in promoting intercultural learning in electronic learning networks. *Language Learning and Technology, 4*(2), 129–147.

Murphy, L. (2005). Critical reflection and autonomy: a study of distance learners of French, German and Spanish. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 20–39). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Murphy, L. (2007). Supporting learner autonomy: Theory and practice in a distance learning context. In D. Gardner (Ed.), *Learner autonomy 10: Integration and support* (pp. 72–92). Dublin: Authentik.

Murphy, L. (2008). Supporting learner autonomy: developing practice through the production of courses for distance learners of French, German and Spanish. *Language Teaching Research*, *12*(1), 83–102.

O'Dowd, R. (2006). *Telecollaboration and the development of intercultural communicative competence*. Berlin: Langenscheidt.

O'Dowd, R., & Ritter, M. (2006). Understanding and working with "failed communication" in telecollaborative exchanges. *CALICO Journal*, *23*(3), 623–642.

O'Reilly, T. (2005). *What is Web 2.0? Design patterns and business models for the next generation of software*. Retrieved from http://oreilly.com/web2/archive/what-is-web-20.html

O'Rourke, B. (2005). Form-focused interaction in online Tandem learning. *CALICO Journal, 22*(3), 433–466.

O'Rourke, B. (2007). Models of telecollaboration (1): eTandem. In R. O'Dowd (Ed.), *Online intercultural exchange: An introduction for foreign language teachers* (pp. 41–61). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Pavlenko, A., & Lantolf, J. P. (2000). Second language learning as participation and the (re)construction of selves. In J. P. Lantolf (Ed.), *Sociocultural theory and second language learning* (pp. 155–178). Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Pegrum, M. (2009). *From blogs to bombs: The future of digital technologies in education*. Perth: University of Western Australia Press.

Pennycook, A. (1990). Towards a critical applied linguistics for the 1990s. *Issues in Applied Linguistics*, *1*, 8–28.

Pennycook, A. (2001). *Critical applied linguistics: A critical introduction*. London: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.

Phipps, A., & González, M. (2004). *Modern languages: Learning and teaching in an intercultural field*. London: Sage.

Prawat, R. S., & Floden, R. E. (1994). Philosophical perspectives on constructivist views of learning. *Educational Psychology*, *29*(1), 37–48.

Resnick, L. B. (1991). Shared cognition: thinking as social practice. In L. B. Resnick, J. M. Levine, & S. D. Teasley (Eds.), *Perspectives on socially shared cognition* (pp. 1–20). Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Rogers, C. C. (1983). *Freedom to learn for the 80's*. New York: Macmillan.

Ros i Solé, C., & Truman, M. (2005). Feedback in distance language learning: current practices and new directions. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 72–91). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Rowntree, D. (1994). *Preparing materials for open, distance and flexible learning: An action guide for teachers and trainer*s. London: Kogan Page in association with The Open University, Institute of Educational Technology.

Schwienhorst, K. (2000). *Virtual reality and learner autonomy in second language acquisition*. Unpublished doctoral dissertation, Trinity College, Dublin.

Shelley, M., & Baumann, U. (2005). Assessing intercultural competence gain in a German distance language course for adults. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 119–139). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Shelley, M., & White, C. (Eds.). (2003). Language in distance education [Special issue]. *Open Learning 18*(1).

Shield, L., Hauck, M., & Hewer, S. (2001). Talking to strangers—The role of the tutor in developing target language speaking skills at a distance. In Kazeroni, A. (Ed) *Proceedings of Untélé 2000* (Vol. 2, pp. 75–84), Compiegne: Technological University of Compiegne.

Shield, L., Hauck, M., & Kötter, M. (2000). Taking the distance out of distance learning. In P. Howarth & R. Herrington (Eds.), *EAP learning technologies* (pp. 16–27). Leeds: Leeds University Press.

Shield, L., & Hewer, S. (1999). A synchronous learning environment to support distance language learners. In K. Cameron (Ed.), *CALL and the learning community: Proceedings of Exeter CALL 99* (pp. 379–391). Exeter: Elm Bank Productions.

Stevens, A., & Hewer, S. (1998). From policy to practice and back. In *Proceedings of LEVERAGE Conference Cambridge 1998*. Retrieved from http://greco.dit.upm.es/~leverage/conf1/hewer.htm

Stickler, U. (2004) ". . . And furthermore I will correct your mistakes": Kulturelle Unterschiede bei der Fehlerkorrektur im Tandem. *Theorie und Praxis. Österreichische Beiträge zu Deutsch als Fremdsprache*, *8*, 79–93.

Stickler, U., & Emke, M. (in press). LITERALIA: Towards developing intercultural maturity. *Language Learning and Technology*.

Stickler, U., & Lewis, T. (2008). Collaborative learning strategies. In T. Lewis & M. Hurd (Eds.), *Language learning strategies in independent settings* (pp. 237–261). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Taylor, E. W. (1997). Building upon the theoretical debate: A critical review of the empirical studies of Mezirow's transformative learning theory. *Adult Education Quarterly*, *48*(1), 34–59.

Thomas, M. (Ed.). (2009). *Handbook of research on Web 2.0 and second language learning*. Hershey, PA: IGI.

Thorne, S. L., Black, R. W., & Sykes, J. (2009). Second language use, socialization, and learning in internet interest communities and online games. *Modern Language Journal*, *93*(Suppl. 1), 802–821.

Tudini, V. (2005). Chatlines for beginners: negotiating conversation at a distance. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 212–229). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Ushioda, E., & Dörnyei, Z. (Eds.). (2009). *Motivation, language identity and the L2 self*. Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Vanijdee, A. (2003). Thai distance English learners and learner autonomy. *Open Learning*, *8*(1), 75–84.

Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society: The development of higher psychological processes*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
Ware, P. (2005). "Missed" communication in online communication: Tensions in a German-American telecollaboration. *Language Learning and Technology*, *9*(2), 64–89.
Ware, P., & O'Dowd, R. (2008). Peer feedback on language form in telecollaboration. *Language Learning and Technology*, *12*(1), 43–63.
Wertsch, J. V. (2007). Mediation. In H. Daniels, M. Cole, & J. V. Wertsch (Eds.), *The Cambridge companion to Vygotsky* (pp. 178–192). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
Wertsch, J. V., & Tulviste, P. (1992). L. S. Vygotsky and contemporary developmental psychology. *Developmental Psychology*, *28*(4), 548–557.
White, C. (1995). Autonomy and strategy use in distance foreign language learning: Research findings. *System*, *23*(2), 207–221.
White, C. (1999). Expectations and emergent beliefs of self-instructed language learners. *System*, *27*, 443–457.
White, C. (2003). *Language learning in distance education*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
White, C. (2005). Towards a learner-based theory of distance language learning: The concept of the learner-context interface. In B. Holmberg, M. Shelley, & C. White (Eds.), *Distance education and languages: Evolution and change* (pp. 55–71). Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.
White, C. (2006). Distance learning of foreign languages. *Language Teaching: The International Research Resource for Language Professionals*, *39*(4), 247–264.
Widdowson, H. G. (1978). *Teaching language as communication*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Wilkins, D. A. (1976). *Notional syllabuses*. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
Ziegahn, L. (2005). Critical reflection on cultural difference in the computer conference. *Adult Education Quarterly*, *56*(1), 39–64.

Web Sites

OpenLearn (http://openlearn.open.ac.uk)
iTunes U (http://www.open.ac.uk/itunes)
http://www.ond.vlaanderen.be/hogeronderwijs/bologna/about
Open University Mission (http://www.open.ac.uk/about/ou/p2.shtml)