

# Preface

On the day that I finished submitting the book's content to IGI Global, my son Skyped me from Ghana, West Africa. In the background, my daughter was walking around talking on the phone to a coworker in the People's Republic of China. The moment struck me with a sense of appreciation and amazement for today's technology. Contemplating my personal communication through technology, I felt proud to be completing this edited volume about the use of technology in learning language and culture. I hope that you will find ideas that inspire you as they do me.

The fields of communication studies and language acquisition have many of the same goals, yet traditionally have been two separate academic fields. This book uses a case study approach to merge ideas from both fields by examining diverse perspectives of teaching communication, language, and culture.

These cases have a broad approach to scholarship, including adapting to students learning in a specific context, original research, and other projects. Content is written by scholars in communication studies, English as a second language, and foreign languages. The purpose of this book is to provide ideas to faculty for using technology to enhance education for students who are learning culture or a foreign or second language.

I want to particularly compliment our international authors. I would expect international scholars teaching English to communicate well, but I was surprised just how clearly their ideas were presented and how well these chapters are written. They provide such interesting perspectives to the content of this book.

This book is a blind, peer-reviewed, edited book, where all articles were looked at by two or more reviewers. The acceptance rate was 38%.

I am honored to present these perspectives through an international approach to communication technology, second language acquisition, and cultural learning. Below is more information about the book's contents.

## **PART 1: INTRODUCTION: MINI ARTICLES WITH BIG IDEAS**

This section is a unique section with multiple mini articles designed to generate teaching ideas. Instead of the case chapter approach of the rest of the book, this section is like a chapter with multiple authors contributing. As such, some additional information is offered here. The purpose of this section includes the following:

1. Generate ideas about new approaches to teaching and learning through technology.
2. Offer faculty-tested ideas that other faculty can adapt to their own context and content for learning language or culture.

### **Background for Part 1**

The basic college communication course is one of the largest courses in the country. The course is typically taught as a first year level course. In this section, rather than having full cases, there are mini articles of teaching ideas for teaching communication through technology.

The course is typically taught in one of three basic formats: An interpersonal communication course, a public speaking course, or a hybrid course that includes public speaking, group communication, and interpersonal communication principles.

For many colleges, the basic communication course is a general education or basic requirement. The justification for the basic course as a requirement is often that college students have not necessarily learned basic communication skills they need for their personal and professional life.

Often the teaching of communication is about the teaching of culture and environmental context. Each student enters the course with an ability to communicate. Sometimes there are large lecture courses or dozens of sections of the course at a particular university, which creates management challenges regarding consistency of teaching and learning. So in this section, we have ideas for using Facebook for large lectures.

## Solutions in Part 1

While attending the National Communication Association meeting in Orlando, Florida last fall, I heard Mridula Mascarenhas and Steven D. Cohen speak and realized that they and others at the convention were full of ideas for using technology to improve student communication skills. Listening to them prompted me to attend sessions differently, listening for ideas that might support the purpose of this book. I also liked the idea of beginning the book with a focus on teachers of communication as people with potential approaches for using communication technology. These ideas can be applied to learning language and culture. Thus, I asked these authors to contribute mini articles to a special introductory section to the book.

Thus, the first idea to launch the book is “The Digital Communication Journal: Building an Online COMMunity for Student Dialogue,” by Steven D. Cohen of the University of Baltimore. He challenges students to write and respond to online posts that examine the connections between course concepts and their own academic, personal, and professional experiences.

“Facebook, Identity, and Deception: Explorations of Online Identity Construction” is an interesting idea by J. Jacob Jenkins of California State University Channel Islands and Patrick J. Dillon of the University of Memphis, Tennessee. This learning activity uses the social networking site Facebook to explore notions of *personal identity* components of conception, construction, and expression.

“‘Yeah, There’s an App for That’: Using Mobile Applications in Public Speaking Instruction” is written by Matthew H. Barton, of Southern Utah University, and Kevin A. Stein, of Southern Utah University. The authors discuss how students can use communication applications to improve their communication skills. Although geared to Public Speaking or the Basic Communication Course, the suggestions could be useful in any course where students will need research and presentation skills.

“Six Points for Six Posts: Evidence for Using Facebook to Facilitate Learning in The Mass Lecture” is written by Nicholas David Bowman, of West Virginia University. Bowman discusses out-of-class communication opportunities for a large lecture course, specifically using Facebook. Facebook interaction helped student learning by creating persistent spaces of conversation.

And finally there is “Wearing Different Listening Hats: A Classroom Activity for Demonstrating the Effect of Listening Attitudes” by Mridula Mascarenhas of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. In this learning activity, students view and respond to a video of a political speech. This unusual speech provides much to discuss about listening.

This section discusses multiple teaching tips from various communication education contexts. The variety of ideas presented by the authors is used in different contexts, but could be adapted to any instructional context where students are seeking to learn language or culture.

## **PART 2: TEACHING**

This section emphasizes teaching language and cultural learning.

“Instructor Credibility: A Cross-Cultural Examination” is by Keith E. Dilbeck of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, Andrés Domínguez of the Universidad de Valladolid, Spain, Jon Dornaletext Ruiz of the Universidad de Valladolid, Spain, Martin McMurrich of Bangkok University, Thailand, and Mike Allen of the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee. This unique chapter will prompt faculty thinking in their comparison of Spanish and Thai students. Their findings suggest that instructor credibility is a unidimensional construct shared in common by both cultures, which combine the three factors of (a) competence, (b) trustworthiness, and (c) goodwill or caring.

“Web 2.0: The Influence of the Cloud in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century Classroom” is by Silvia Giovanardi Byer of Park University, Missouri. The chapter discusses how cloud-based technologies can strengthen classroom activities. Two beneficial, interactive, web-based learning platforms relevant to nearly any classroom setting and academic discipline include Edmodo and Google+.

“Effective Instruction within Online Educational Arenas: Implementing Multiple Instructional Strategies” was written by Ashley Drysdale of Illinois. This case describes faculty experiences in teaching an online communication course in the community college context.

“Technology Use and Acceptance among Pre-Service Teachers of English as a Foreign Language: The Case of a Learning Management System and an Educational Blog” was written by Mehrak Rahimi, and Seyed Shahab Miri of Shahid Rajaei Teacher Training University, Iran. This interesting chapter “reports two case studies done in a teacher training university to find the effects of two technology-based learning environments on learning and technology acceptance of pre-service teachers of English as a foreign language.”

“Factors that Contribute to Students’ Course Satisfaction While Attending Online or Distance Learning Courses” was written by Dinah A. Esquivel of Esquivel Consulting LLC, Texas. In this study, Esquivel analyzes instructor communication behavior related to student satisfaction. By identifying online teaching behaviors that increase a sense of nonverbal immediacy, Esquivel finds the specific factors that positively or negatively impact student satisfaction in an online course.

“The Use and Uptake of Information and Communication Technology: A Turkish Case of an Initial Teacher Education Department” was written by Yasemin Kırkgöz of Çukurova University, Turkey.

## **PART 3: USING TECHNOLOGY**

This section provides some unique and varied perspectives about using technology in learning languages and cultures.

“Teacher Competences in Telecollaboration: The Case of Web Conferencing and German for Professional Purposes” was written by D. Joseph Cunningham of Park University, Missouri. In this chapter, Cunningham examines Web-based desktop conferencing as part of a university-level German for the Professions course.

“The Language of Video Intimacy: Marital Satisfaction Associated with The Use of Web Camera Communication in Long Distance Relationships” was written by Heather Lee Strafaccia of North Dakota. Although this chapter is not specifically about learning language or culture, the analysis of video communication use in distance relationships has implications for “increasing the sense of connection in long distance teaching contexts.”

“Producing Pathways to Proficient Pronunciation with Learner-Designed Pronunciation Stations” was contributed by James Perren of Eastern Michigan University, Michigan. This intriguing chapter gives important details about creating learning stations designed by English as a second language students in order to improve pronunciation.

“Using Technology to Examine Cultural Learning of African-Americans: Verbal and Nonverbal Messages of Deception” was written by Michael L. Whitley of Texas. This chapter uses technology to study the nonverbal communication patterns of African Americans.

“Listening Tests: Pearson’s MyLab in Teaching Communication and Spanish” was contributed by Joan E. Aitken of Park University, Florida, USA, Andrew D. Wolvin of University of Maryland, Maryland, USA and Roy M. Berko of Communic-aid Consulting, Ohio. This chapter tells how the authors developed a series of online listening tests to be used as instructional tools for their basic communication course textbook.

“English Language Learners’ Online Science Learning: A Case Study” was written by Fatima E. Terrazas-Arellanes, Carolyn Knox, Carmen Rivas, and Emily Walden of the University of Oregon. This unique chapter discusses a project designed to help English language learners in science by constructing science knowledge, facilitating academic English acquisition, and improving their science learning.

## PART 4: LEARNING LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

This section offers ideas about learning both language and culture.

“Towards the Normalization of Web-Based Computer-Assisted Language Learning (CALL) in College English Instruction: Two Cases in China,” was written by Hongmei Wang of Shanghai University, Hui Yuan of Shanghai Ocean University, and Shanshan Zhang of Shanghai University, People’s Republic of China. This chapter analyses two cases regarding Web-based computer-assisted language learning. “The findings in the two cases show that lack of training for both faculty and students, technological defects of online systems, and hybrid levels of students’ English proficiency within one class have presented challenges to the implementation of the new mode of instruction.”

“Laying the Ground for Online English as a Second or Foreign Language (ESL/EFL) Composition Courses and University Internationalization: The Case of a U.S.-China Partnership,” was written by Estela Ene of Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. This important chapter considers online English language courses for students seeking to improve their English prior to arriving to the U.S. Ene provides a methodological model for assessing English as a Second Language (ESL) and English as a Foreign Language (EFL) composition and online learning needs and resources prior to developing courses for a new population; the potential for collaboration between partnering institutions; and the effectiveness of an online English composition course.

“Usage-Based Instruction: Enhancing Interpersonal Communication in Foreign Languages,” was written by Serafima Gettys of Lewis University, Illinois. This chapter describes the effort of a foreign language program to undertake a complete modification of traditional textbook-driven curriculum to develop an innovative approach to teaching interpersonal communication in foreign languages.

“Use of Facebook by Foreign Language Instructors” was written by Ilknur Istifci of Anadolu University, Turkey. Istifci recommends that faculty “insert Facebook in their teaching to motivate students to learn a foreign language. Thus, language teaching could be more dynamic, up-to-date and interactive. ”

“Integrating Chinese Community into Canadian Society: Podcasts, Technology Apprehension, and Language Learning” was written by Yuping Mao of Erasmus University Rotterdam, the Netherlands, Martin Guardado of the University of Alberta, Canada, and Kevin R. Meyer of Illinois State University. This impressive chapter examines how “podcasting enhances the English learning experiences of students in an English as a Second Language course offered by a non-profit organization that provides community services to immigrants in Canada.”

“Content and Language Integrated Learning in Higher Education: A Technology-Enhanced Model,” by Giovanna Carloni, of the University of Urbino, Italy. This final chapter is a fascinating examination of the online learning component in a blended context. Carloni examines technology-enhanced learning environments implemented across multiple university departments. This exemplary chapter makes an excellent capstone to the project.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, one of the exciting elements of editing a book is to see the kinds of works submitted and accepted. I have watched this work evolve from my conception to a contribution I find to be far more interesting. I enjoyed reading through these chapters, and I’m pleased about the content of our book. I like the variety of perspectives, and the fact that ideas are coming from very senior to brand new scholars. These contributors have opened my thinking, and I salute their many fresh ideas.

## ADDITIONAL READING

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