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Developing English Language Curriculum for Online Delivery

Abstract

The E-Language Learning Project (ELL) is an ongoing collaborative effort between the US Department of Education and the Chinese (PRC) Ministry of Education. Its purpose is to develop a free, online language learning opportunity for millions of students in the two countries. Developers in the US are now in the process of creating a program to teach English to the Chinese, while the Chinese are simultaneously developing a program to teach Chinese to English speakers. Authors, who serve as the English Language Development Team for the US, describe the curriculum development process for the program, addressing issues in meeting the challenges of developing oral/aural proficiency in language using an online platform. These include making limited use of voice recognition technology for assessment, integrating cultural elements for the targeted audience, developing a program with optimal learning potential and best possible use of technology that is both technically and financially feasible. They also include clarifying learning goals and curriculum and providing means to track these to provide direction for program development, making careful research-based decisions to inform development, and providing careful and ongoing collaboration between technicians, content developers and language educators.