

Social networking and second language acquisition: Exploiting Skype™ Chat for the purpose of investigating interaction in L2 English learning

by

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES	iii
LIST OF TABLES	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	v
ABSTRACT	vi
CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION	1
Research Questions	3
Organization of the Study	4
CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW	5
SLA Using an Interactionist Framework	6
Strengths of Using Synchronous CMC	11
Interlocutor Native Language	20
CHAPTER 3. METHODS	23
Participants	23
Materials	25
Procedure	30
Analysis	33
CHAPTER 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	36
Research Question #1	36
Research Question #2	45
Research Question #3	47
CHAPTER 5. CONCLUSION	49
Implications	49
Limitations	52
Conclusion	53
APPENDIX A. JIGSAW TASKS	55
APPENDIX B. QUESTIONNAIRE	73
REFERENCES CITED	77

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE 2.1 Basic components in the SLA process in interactionist research	7
FIGURE 3.1 Skype™ Chat window	26
FIGURE 3.2 Main page of the Moodle online course	28
FIGURE 3.3 Group 1 jigsaw task instructions and audio files	29

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE 3.1 Summary of Analysis	35
TABLE 4.1 Average and Frequency of Conversational Turns Resulting from Skype™ Chat Sessions	37
TABLE 4.2 Negotiations of Meaning and Frequency of Negotiations of Meaning	38
TABLE 4.3 Total Conversational Turns Resulting from and Time Spent Engaged in Skype™ Chat Sessions	42
TABLE 4.4 Participants' Perceptions of Skype™ Chat and Noticing of Errors	46

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines interaction in a second language (L2) and its effectiveness in pushing the learner's interlanguage, or maturing language system, toward the target language, or L2; specifically, it seeks to determine whether those interactions considered to be most helpful in L2 development are more readily incited between two nonnative speakers (NNS-NNS) or between a nonnative speaker and a native speaker (NS-NNS) of the particular L2. Interactions between four NNS-NNS pairs and five NS-NNS pairs, where English was the L2, took place across three sessions and were structured using communicative tasks. Rather than conversing face-to-face, participants conversed through the medium of synchronous computer-mediated communication, using Skype™ Chat. The participants' attitudes toward the technology used for interaction and their attitudes toward their interlocutors' native languages were addressed in addition to the central question regarding the type of pairing most effective for L2 interaction. The findings sustain previous conclusions of L2 acquisition theorists and researchers; NNS-NNS pairings were found to be more effective in stimulating the kinds of interactions deemed fruitful for L2 growth. The findings also offer pedagogical suggestions for L2 instructors, weighing the distinct but comparable benefits of L2 interaction that uses both pairings for different purposes in language learning classrooms.

CHAPTER 1.

INTRODUCTION

With the perpetual expansion of broadband Internet around the globe – expounded upon in the findings published on October 18, 2010 in the third annual Said Business School Oxford University study (Cisco) – the possibilities for language and culture transmission are progressively becoming less constrained; notably, the opportunities for language learners to interact in the second language (L2) with native speakers, as well as with other language learners sharing the same or belonging to different native language backgrounds, have burgeoned beyond what could have ever been possible prior to the advent of the Internet. This increased propensity for interaction in the L2 has stirred great interest in the field of applied linguistics, given that, since the publishing of Long’s (1983) Interaction Hypothesis, theorists in the field have looked to meaningful interaction in the target language as a key means of facilitating second language acquisition. One of the modes of communication afforded by the Internet that has captured the attention of applied linguists and language-teaching practitioners alike is that of synchronous computer-mediated communication in the form of instant messaging, or “chat” (henceforth referred to simply as *SCMC*); such linguists and practitioners have highlighted the way in which this mode offers those benefits attributed to interaction in the L2 that are thought to encourage second language acquisition, as well as numerous additional benefits unique to the mode (Beauvois, 1992; Chun, 1994; Kelm, 1992; Kern, 1995; Payne & Whitney, 2002; Sotillo, 2000; Warschauer, 1997).

In his article, “Computer Mediated Communication: A Window on L2 Spanish Interlanguage,” Robert Blake (2000) presented research supporting the notion that *SCMC*, in tandem with communicative tasks in a second language (L2), affords an environment rich in elements that assist the growth of a learner’s developing L2, or interlanguage, toward the target language. Blake (2000) concentrated upon a specific element thought to bolster this development: negotiation of meaning resulting from a breach in communication between interlocutors, likely due to a “linguistic deficiency” (p. 120) on the part of one or both interlocutors; interactionist theorists have placed importance on these negotiations since the 1980s (Gass, 1997; Krashen, 1985; Long, 1983; Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 1993; Pica, Young & Doughty, 1987; Swain & Lapkin, 1995).

The negotiations of meaning arising from interactions between two nonnative speakers of the target language, who together form a nonnative speaker – nonnative speaker dyad (NNS-NNS), were of primary interest to Blake (2000). He included an interactive task in his study involving a native speaker – nonnative speaker dyad (NS-NNS) and reported that the task completions on the part of the dyads were less effective in fueling negotiations, reasoning that the NS-NNS dyads were unequal in respect to “power and authority...since the native speakers were much more in control of the conversation” (p. 128). However, the task employed was designed separately from the interactive tasks involving NNS-NNS dyads, and, according to Blake (2000), the task structure itself, which took the form of an interview, may not have been as conducive as hoped in fostering the negotiations thought to be fruitful for interlanguage development; therefore, given that there was no control for the task design, his findings could not speak directly to which kind of dyad proves more efficacious in rendering the kind of communication and negotiation that interactionist theorists assert to be most beneficial in encouraging a learner’s interlanguage toward the target language.

Thus, questions remain concerning the potential benefits associated with interactions among NS-NNS dyads instituted upon the same tasks that produced favorable interactions among the NNS-NNS dyads; the basic constitution of these tasks, which Blake (2000) found incited the greatest number of negotiations among NNS-NNS dyads, necessitate a two-way exchange of information between the dyad members. Although researchers have investigated interaction between native-speaking and nonnative-speaking interlocutors (Lee, 2008; Toyoda & Harrison, 2002; Tudini, 2003), research employing the specific task skeleton entailing a two-way exchange of information within NS-NNS dyads has not been widely propagated; likewise, a direct, controlled comparison between communication within NS-NNS dyads and communication within NNS-NNS dyads, particularly in terms of the resulting negotiations, has yet to be executed and commented upon.

The NS-NNS learning arrangement demands further examination, not only in the pursuit of finding efficacious methods by which to learn a second or foreign language, but also due to the latent cultural exchange opportunities that could surface in SCMC between native speakers and nonnative speakers; communication with native speakers could expose

nonnative speakers to cultural elements ascribed to places in which the language is spoken natively. Furthermore, as Tudini (2003) commented in her study, interaction with native speakers could also lend nonnative speakers insight into, as well as opportunities for rehearsal of, the casual conversational discourse features of the target language, which could be helpful for nonnative speakers in second language settings.

Research Questions

With multiple interests in mind surrounding dyad configurations and task-based interactions through SCMC, this study has a few ends, but only one driving purpose: to compare interactions amongst NNS-NNS dyads and NS-NNS dyads, examining their propensities to engender the negotiations of meaning theorized to support L2 acquisition. Beyond this primary motivation, this study includes investigation into how the employment of a specific social networking tool for interaction in the L2 is perceived by learners, as well as investigation into how learners perceive the role of their interlocutors' native languages in their interactions in the L2.

Primary Research Question

The central aim of this study is to determine whether learners of a language profit most from interactions with fellow learners or from interactions with native speakers of the target language. In the context of this study, the fruitfulness of interactions is assessed in two ways: first, in terms of the degree to which the dialogues co-constructed by the interlocutors are truly interactive and collaborative, as measured through the number of conversational turns; second, in terms of indicators suggesting second language acquisition processes are at work, as measured by the number of negotiations of meaning surfacing during dialogue co-construction. Thus, the primary research question is as follows:

- 1) Which dyad configuration (NNS-NNS v. NS-NNS) gives rise to greater number of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning?

Secondary Research Questions

This study regards the efficaciousness of language learning methods as palpable not only through quantitative analysis and examination of the methods in action, but also through investigation of language learner attitudes toward and assessments of their experiences with the methods. As such, this study secondarily involves qualitative analysis of such attitudes

and assessments, particularly regarding two of the principal features of the study: the SCMC tool and the native language of participants' interlocutors. The secondary research questions are as follows:

- 2) How do participants perceive Skype™ Chat as a SCMC tool?
- 3) How do participants perceive the role of the language background of their interlocutors?

It should be noted that the first of the secondary research questions does not exist as an endorsement for Skype™; rather, it serves as a means of addressing my interest in the use of a popular social networking site for language learning purposes with respect to learner motivation and attitudes.

Organization of This Study

So as to provide appropriate context for the primary and secondary research questions, the theoretical framework supporting this study, as well as the relevant research pertaining to this study will be presented in the literature review, found in Chapter 2. Chapter 3, "Methods," will delineate the methodological considerations structuring this study; this includes descriptions of participant population, data-gathering tools, procedures followed, and analyses applied. Chapter 4, "Results and Discussion," communicates the findings of the study and provides relevant commentary in light of the foundational research questions. Finally, Chapter 5, "Conclusion," makes suggestions for future research, as well as for language instructors, with regard to the findings.

CHAPTER 2.

LITERATURE REVIEW

By the mid-1990s, computer-assisted language learning (CALL) practitioners had pioneered studies that led them to discuss the way in which synchronous computer mediated communication seemed to foster interaction in the learning of a second language (L2) (Beauvoir, 1992; Kelm, 1992; Kern, 1995). These early studies demanded further investigation on the part of the applied linguistics community into the ability of SCMC to act as a tool for language learning; since then, the applied linguistics field has witnessed the publication of a great deal of literature suggesting the way in which second language acquisition theories do in fact undergird the appropriate use of SCMC in language learning, along with the publication of a large volume of studies entailing the implementation of SCMC in language learning. Since the mid- to late-1990s, the rapid growth of the Internet on a global scale has necessitated the parallel growth of the field of CALL and of the quantity of voices participating in the ongoing discourse concerning SCMC, as well as of the theoretical considerations broached.

The promise contained within the use of SCMC for language learning purposes was described by Warschauer (1997) as an unprecedented union of two crucial elements of learning according to the Vygotskian sociocultural perspective: interaction and reflection. He explained the way in which speech had traditionally been viewed as the means for interaction in learning, while graphic communication had traditionally been viewed as the means for reflection in learning; SCMC fused the two because of the way in which interaction can occur almost as if interlocutors are speaking, due to the pace of the communication, yet reflection can occur if students need to pay closer attention to the linguistic or semantic elements of what has been communicated. Warschauer (1997) wrote,

The historical divide between speech and writing has been overcome with the interactional and reflective aspects of language merged in a single medium: CMC. For the first time in history, human interaction now takes place in a text-based form – moreover, a computer-mediated form that is easily transmitted, stored, archived, reevaluated, edited, and rewritten. (p. 472)

This “text-based form” of an inherently interactive communication medium prompted the publication of literature examining the way in which interaction in second language acquisition, which had hitherto been considered only in the context of spoken use of the interlanguage, applied to employment of SCMC. Spring-boarding off earlier studies involving SCMC-facilitated class discussions, which had proposed the relevance of SCMC from an interactionist standpoint (Beauvois, 1992; Chun, 1994; Kelm, 1992; Kern, 1995), CALL practitioners in the late 1990s and into the twenty-first century answered the call first issued forth by Doughty (1987) and echoed by Ortega (1997) for the use of SCMC in language learning “to be evaluated not only from a pedagogical standpoint but also in light of [the] most current knowledge about how languages are learned” (Ortega, 1997, p. 84). The majority of these practitioners adopted Long’s (1983) Interaction Hypothesis and corollary theories. Throughout this chapter, I will present the Interaction Hypothesis, along with Krashen’s (1981, 1985) Input Hypothesis and Swain’s (1985) Comprehensible Output Hypothesis, as they were originally conceived; I will then discuss some of the ways in which use of SCMC in an L2 fulfills some of the salient conditions for L2 acquisition, as put forth by the aforementioned leaders in the interactionist perspective. Finally, I will review matters raised concerning the use of SCMC in language learning that are particularly relevant to this study.

Second Language Acquisition Using an Interactionist Framework

Second language teaching throughout the majority of the twentieth century was characterized by one-dimensional methodologies that betrayed a rather provincial view of language itself. The main thrust in second language learning was found in mechanical memorization of grammar rules, rote pronunciation drills, and de-contextualized learning of lexical items in the L2. But with the late-1970s publication of Soviet sociocultural theorist Lev S. Vygotsky’s English-translated works on psychological development and learning, shifts in pedagogy across the education field as a whole began to work their way into second language acquisition theory in the form of what would later be known as the interactionist perspective. Kitade (2000) summed up the widely regarded truth underscoring sociocultural theory as it applies to second language learning by stating, “socialization and language acquisition cannot be separated from the interactive linguistic contexts in which they occur”

(p. 145). She expounded upon this by explaining that, according to the sociocultural approach to language learning, a second language develops through socialization, where meaning making is engaged in by an L2 learner through collaborative learning.

Within the decade following the publication of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspectives on learning, the interactionist perspective in second language acquisition had not only come into being, but had experienced rapid growth in its development. The interactionist perspective of the processes involved in second language acquisition comprises an amalgamation of ideas put forth by various linguistic theorists; Chapelle (1998) illustrated these processes, drawing from the multiple theories, in the following condensed model (Figure 2.1):

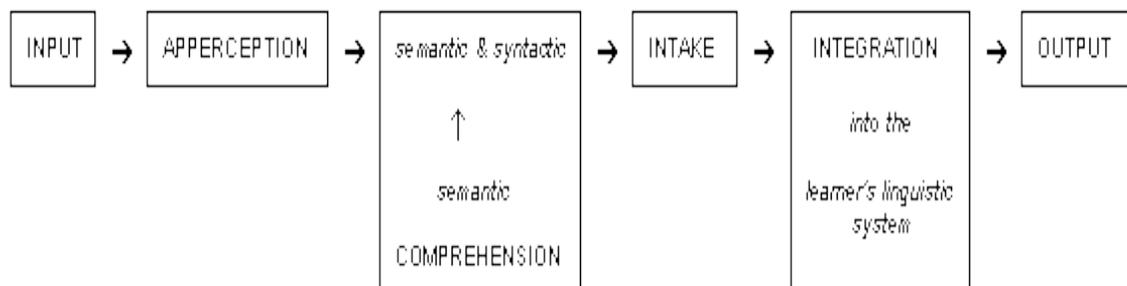


Figure 2.1. Basic components in the SLA process in interactionist research (p. 23)

This model succinctly demonstrates the way in which input, or “the target language [L2] that the learner is exposed to” (Chapelle, 1998, p. 23), must undergo a substantial progression in order to become integrated into the learner’s interlanguage such that it is independently produced as language output on the part of the learner.

Following the initial exposure, the learner must accomplish apperception of the input. Gass (1997) explained that apperception, or noticing, is comprised of attention and awareness in the learner; a learner must be aware of the linguistic forms present, and must be lending attention to them in order to be aware of them in the first place. The attention that necessarily must be present to assist the noticing of different aspects of the L2, and the ways in which to encourage attention and subsequent awareness of the L2 on the part of the learner have been the focus of numerous studies since Schmidt (1990) concisely stated, “If noticed, [input] becomes intake” (p. 139).

However, Chapelle's (1998) model suggested that comprehension, or understanding, must occur prior to the noticed input becoming intake. By way of explaining the presence of the words "semantic" and "syntactic" with "comprehension" in her model, Chapelle (1998) asserted the following:

...understanding of the semantic content of a message can be accomplished either with or without any comprehension of the syntax. Semantic comprehension is not expected to help in the acquisition of the syntactic system because it may be accomplished through the recognition of isolated lexical items and interpretation of non-linguistic cues. (p. 23)

Therefore, the kind of comprehension that leads to input becoming intake, or "comprehended language that holds the potential for developing the learners' linguistic system" (Chapelle, 1998, p. 23), must include not only semantic processing, but syntactic processing as well; only this kind of comprehension can benefit the process that presses the interlanguage toward the target language.

Krashen (1985), who, in part, laid the groundwork for the second language acquisition model presented by Chapelle (1998), referred to this intake as comprehensible input and further developed this notion with the submission of his Input Hypothesis, which "claims that humans acquire language in only one way – by understanding messages, or by receiving 'comprehensible input'" (p. 2). The Input Hypothesis further proposes that input must consist of structures, whether grammatical or lexical, "that are a bit beyond [the language learner's] current level of competence"; this is expressed through the formula $i+1$, where i represents the current level of competence, such that $i+1$ input, if understood by the learner, bears the potential to move the learner to "the next level along the natural order" (Krashen, 1985, p. 2). This hypothesis echoes the core notions of Vygotsky's (1978) Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD), which Vygotsky (1978) defines as "the distance between the actual development level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem solving under adult guidance or in collaboration with more capable peers" (p. 86). Both theories emphasize the necessity of disparity, and ultimately, Vygotsky's (1978) emphasis on meaning making through

collaborative learning provides the bridge between comprehensible input in theory and comprehensible input in practice.

Comprehensible Input, Comprehensible Output, and Interaction

The Interaction Hypothesis, which embodies the second language acquisition manifestation of Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural perspective on learning, and which built upon Krashen's (1985) emphasis on comprehensible input, was published by Long in 1983; this hypothesis argues that interaction in an L2 creates ideal conditions for input to become comprehensible. It points out that a communication breach of meaning in L2 interaction due to a linguistic deficiency on the part of one of the communicators necessarily requires the kind of negotiation of meaning prescribed by Krashen (1985). Although a breach of meaning, or a miscommunication, "conjures up negative images – images of basic information gone awry" (Gass, 1997, p. 104), this breach of meaning in fact provides the fertile environment for negotiation of meaning, a kind of collaborative learning, to take place. The environment is fertile not only due to the incomplete understanding on the part of one or both interlocutors, but because the instance of language itself is authentic and relevant due to the communicative context; this corresponds to Doughty and Long's (2003) universal methodological principle in language teaching of elaborate input, or input that is neither genuine (inaccessible to most L2 learners) or simplified (unnatural, unrealistic), but rather maintains L2 grammatical and syntactic structures learners must encounter in order to learn, while accommodating the use of non-initial simplifications, elaborations, confirmation and comprehension checks, clarifications requests, or recasts in order to transform input to intake.

Beyond the authentic nature of both the input and output of the language, negotiation as a result of interaction seems to provide a more efficacious means of transforming L2 input to intake due to the way in which meaning making occurs by learners exerting agency in the creation of their own comprehensible input. In their study comparing the effectiveness of pre-modified input and interactionally modified input, where premodified input consists of linguistically simplified input and interactionally modified input allows for the learners to ask questions of the interlocutor for the purpose of clarifying meaning, Pica, Young and Doughty (1987) found that interactionally modified input bore the most promising results for transforming input to intake.

The picture for interaction as a means of promoting second language acquisition was balanced by the Comprehensible Output Hypothesis in 1985, put forth by Swain. This hypothesis suggests that comprehensible input is not sufficient for second language acquisition, but that language learners must be “pushed toward the delivery of a message that is not only conveyed, but that is conveyed precisely, coherently, and appropriately” (p. 249) by producing output “that extends the linguistic repertoire of the learner” (p. 252) in the L2 so as to “test out hypotheses” he or she maintains regarding the linguistic features of a language and to “force the learner to move from semantic processing to syntactic processing” (p. 249), which Chapelle (1998) emphasizes as being key to comprehension. Swain and Lapkin (1995) lend further consequence to comprehensible output by stating that L2 output in interactional settings provide learners with opportunities to notice non target-like linguistic forms (problems) in their production due to the feedback provided by interlocutors or by subsequent misunderstandings in communication resulting from the non target-like forms; ultimately, “noticing a problem 'pushes' the learner to modify his/her output. In doing so, the learner may sometimes be forced into a more syntactic processing mode than might occur in comprehension” (p. 373, as cited in Chapelle, 1998, p. 24), or in comprehensive input alone.

The alleged benefits of interaction in language learning form the basis for the present study; specifically, the authentic nature of the L2 input, as well as the collaborative effort in the construction of meaning making required by the learners is hoped to stimulate interest and motivation in the learners regarding the L2 use itself – interest and motivation that has the potential to fuel ambition for the learning and ensuing application of accurate language structures. However, the gains of interaction in an L2 are not understood apart from some qualifications – namely that it is oftentimes not enough for students to merely interact without a framework in place to promote the kind of breaches in meaning that necessitate negotiations; the present. Blake (2000) addressed the need for an underlying structure in L2 interaction when he explained

students must first focus on their own linguistic deficiencies vis-à-vis the target language – what some researchers have described as ‘noticing the gap’...in order to stimulate a change in their interlanguage. One way of provoking students to develop this sense of what still needs to be learned consists in having them attempt

communication tasks that require them to negotiate the meaning of the message in order to succeed at exchanging information. (p. 120-121)

Thus, Blake (2000) recommends that language learners must engage in communication that exposes the cavities in their interlanguage, and he further stipulates that this kind of communication can be manipulated through use of communicative tasks designed to engender the optimum environment for negotiation of meaning. In line with his recommendation, communicative tasks were created for the L2 interaction on which this study reports.

Communicative task design.

The question remains, what kind of communicative tasks best stimulate the kind of breaches of communication, noticing the gap, and negotiations of meaning deemed necessary for creating comprehensible input and output through interaction? In their chapter that supplies theoretical rationale for communicative tasks, as well as “a framework through which communication tasks can be characterized and differentiated” (p. 10), Pica, Kanagy, and Falodun (1993) predicted information-gap and jigsaw tasks would be most effective in promoting negotiations of meaning. They define an information gap task as one in which “one participant holds information that the other does not already know, but needs to know in order to complete a task” (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 1993, p. 21); conversely, they define a jigsaw task as one in which two “interactants...hold portions of a totality of information which must be exchanged and manipulated, as they work convergently toward a single task goal” (p. 20). Blake (2000) investigated their prediction in his CMC research and ultimately found jigsaw tasks to be superior to other tasks – including information gap tasks – in terms of “stimulating” negotiations of meaning (p. 132). Based upon his findings and recommendations, jigsaw tasks requiring a two-way exchange of information were created and employed in this study.

Strengths of Using SMC for L2 Interaction

Interactionist theorists originally focused on oral communication as the means by which to realize the potentials for second language acquisition through interaction; before the advent of the Internet, communication paced quickly enough so as to carry the proposed benefits of interaction in an L2 could only be found in the speaking mode. However, early

impressionistic studies involving L2 learning and SCMC began pointing out that the interactions using this new communication medium seemed to resemble speaking (Beauvois, 1992; Kelm, 1992); on the heels of these seminal studies, Chun (1994) described the way in which “interactional speech acts,” such as question-asking, clarification-requesting, feedback-giving, and so on, were performed, and she suggested that the competence developed using SCMC could be transferred to competence in L2 speaking (p. 17). Compounding on the presence of speech acts, Sotillo (2000) remarked that SCMC “seems to encourage communicative fluency, which is generally understood as a quality of oral communication that expresses itself in coherence, fluidity, and appropriate lexical choice” (p. 102).

Beyond its likeness to the surface structure of speech, SCMC seems to create among learners the same kind of conversational, collaborative spirit that sociocultural theory proponents deem invaluable. Kern (1995) noted in the first experimental study to employ SCMC in language learning that the transcripts generated from French language learners using SCMC were “chatty” in nature, and he pointed to Tannen’s (1988) argument that the graphic form of language does not presuppose its classification in the written mode (Kern, 1995, p. 460). In a more definitively sociocultural vein, Peterson’s (2009) study of the presence of learner strategies in completion of SCMC language tasks offered an examination of those strategies that fall in line with the sociocultural perspective to learning. He noted the presence of communication aimed solely at “the establishment and maintenance of supportive relationships based on the exchange of interpersonal information” (Peterson, 2009, p. 318). In this way, SCMC can be compared to the speaking mode of language not merely in its syntactic elements, but also in its deeper semantic elements.

SCMC Versus Face-to-Face Interaction

The undisputed similitude between the discourse and interaction produced in speaking and in SCMC has led CALL practitioners to conduct both qualitative and quantitative investigations comparing face-to-face interaction and SCMC-facilitated interaction. These investigations have compared the efficacy of the two L2 interaction conditions in terms of a number of different language learning ends: the volume of output produced (in light of the theoretical benefits for second language acquisition associated with

output) (Kern, 1995); the acquisition of pragmatic competence (Sykes, 2002); the development of oral proficiency (Payne & Whitney, 2002); the acquisition of receptive and productive vocabulary in both the graphic and aural forms (Fuente, 2003); the use of reception strategies in building common ground between interlocutors (Vandergriff, 2006); and the noticing of linguistic mistakes (in accordance with the theoretical role of apperception in second language acquisition) (Lai & Zhao, 2006). In each of these studies, the researchers ultimately determined that the use of SCMC rendered an L2 interaction condition either equal or superior to that rendered through the use of speaking in an L2.

Of greatest consequence to the present study, particularly in relation to the first research question pertaining to the volume of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning present in the interactions, were those studies that dealt with output using the employment of SCMC, which bears significance when Swain's (1985) Comprehensible Output theory is taken into consideration. By tallying the number of conversational turns resulting in each communicative setting, Kern (1995) found that the discourse produced by French language learners engaged with each other in language learning interaction using SCMC contained two and a half to three times more conversational turns than that produced by French language learners engaged with each other in face-to-face language learning interaction. Early L2 SCMC researchers hypothesized that the increase in L2 output they observed resulted from the reduced anxiety experienced on the part of language learners who typically feel a significant degree of pressure when attempting to communicate in an L2 in a face-to-face setting (Beauvois, 1992; Kelm, 1992), and this hypothesis was echoed by Kern (1995) in his discussion of his findings. Warschauer (1997) expounds upon this idea that SCMC offers a less stressful environment by suggesting that it also gives women, minorities, and those with more reserved or shy personalities a more level role in L2 communication, thereby enabling increased output on the part of these L2 learners.

Using a different method of measuring output in which words rather than conversational turns were tallied, Lai and Zhao (2006) found that English language learning participants interacting using SCMC produced an average of 33 fewer words than those interacting in a face-to-face setting; however, the researchers do not point to this as detracting from the efficacious nature of SCMC in L2 learning, because they hypothesize that

the fewer words produced result from the capability of the participants to better plan their language use, which Kern (1995) argued might lead to “greater precision and sophistication of expression” (p. 461). In her investigation of L2 pragmatic competence development entailing invitation refusal strategies, Sykes (2002) also pointed to the greater opportunity for language planning as a central benefit of using SCMC over face-to-face communication in honing the speaking skill; she states, “Interlocutors are able to formulate a plan before ‘speaking’ (Pellettieri, 1999), thereby lessening the pragmatic pressure...participants had time to respond with more complex, written refusal strategies and, therefore, did not feel as much pressure [when refusing] the inviter” (Sykes, 2002, p. 419). Therefore, the planning involved in CMC enables the utilization of structures in the L2 that might not be present in spoken, face-to-face interaction; moreover, these structures may be more likely to constitute the *i+1* input Krashen (1985) argues is necessary for interlanguage development.

SCMC as rehearsal for producing spoken output in the L2.

Due to the context within which this study was conducted, a listening and speaking language course offered through an intensive English language program, it is necessary to mention Payne and Whitney’s (2002) study of the development of speaking proficiency using SCMC versus face-to-face oral interaction; I felt it crucial to ensure that the experimental tasks not only elicited rich data for the study, but also satisfied the learning objectives of the listening and speaking course. Much like those studies comparing the two language learning conditions in terms of the volume of output generated, Payne and Whitney (2002) found that the interactional benefits realized in SCMC for the growth of the speaking skill were noteworthy. They suitably illustrate the relationship between L2 SCMC and L2 speaking by invoking the concept underlying the use of a flight simulator in pilot training. Payne and Whitney (2002) suggest that SCMC

may well serve as a *conversation simulator* for foreign language learners. The notion that learners can practice “speaking” in an environment where affect and rate of speech are minimized is very appealing. Possibly more important is the realization that if we as second language instructors assume that face-to-face speech is the only way to develop conversational ability, we may in fact be disadvantaging a significant portion of our students. For students who find L2 oral production an overwhelming

task and tend to tune out when the linguistic data generated in face-to-face conversational settings becomes too great, the online synchronous interaction appears to give them a leg up on developing L2 oral proficiency. (p. 25)

According to their claims concerning SCMC as rehearsal for L2 speaking, it seemed justifiable for this study to be carried out in the listening and speaking course offered through the intensive English program.

Text-based Input in Place of Aural Input: Noticing and Negotiation

With the knowledge that SCMC can in fact stimulate the kind of conditions necessary for second language acquisition as put forth by interactionist theorists, a critical facet of the utilization of SCMC for interaction in an L2 must be explored in order to gain a more complete picture of the advantages that could be wrought from this technology: the text-based nature of the L2 input, as opposed to the aural nature of the input. First, a number of researchers have pointed to the way in which the text-based input facilitates the kind of noticing, or apperception, that Schmidt (1990) suggests is necessary for transforming mere language input to comprehended intake (Kitade, 2000; Lai & Zhao, 2006; Payne & Whitney, 2002; Tudini, 2003).

Lai and Zhao's (2006) examination of the differences in noticing that occur with graphic input and aural input serves as a cornerstone for this particular argument in favor of the use of SCMC for interaction in an L2. Using stimulated recall following task completion by L2 English learners, the researchers sought to determine whether the face-to-face condition or the SCMC condition proved more conducive for the noticing of linguistic mistakes on the part of learners made during communication. Lai and Zhao (2006) ultimately concluded that the SCMC condition better enabled noticing of linguistic mistakes due to the graphic form of the language, stating,

Text-based online chat made it possible for the participants to go back to read their output and make revisions as they saw fit. This self-editing capacity afforded by text-based online chat increased the learners' noticing of their own errors. Furthermore, the greater saliency of errors in text-based online chat might have also enhanced the likelihood the participants noticed their own errors. (p. 112)

Moreover, the researchers suggested that the way in which interaction in the L2 occurred in written form induced greater self-monitoring on the part of the learners; they suggest that the “relative permanency [of the L2 communication text] might have given the learners a stronger sense of it being a representation of their ability, and thus they might have been more conscious about its correctness and monitored it more frequently” (Lai & Zhao, 2006, p. 112). This premise is echoed in Yamada and Akahori’s (2007) findings that, in comparison with learners participating in voice and video online communication, learners that participated in text-based communication “seemed to be conscious of accuracy in communication” (p. 61) due to the salient nature of errors committed in graphic form.

Because of the way in which interactionist theorists view noticing as crucial for advantageous negotiation of meaning, the heightened noticing with text-based L2 input as opposed to aural L2 input has subsequent positive implications for negotiation of meaning in L2 interaction using SCMC, which was first observed by Beauvois (1992), and has since been asserted by a number of CALL practitioners (Kitade, 2000; Lai & Zhao, 2006; Payne & Whitney, 2002; Smith, 2003; Toyoda & Harrison, 2002; Tudini, 2003). Moreover, Kitade (2000) observed in the negotiations made by language learners in her study that negotiations using SCMC could be accomplished in a completely novel way because learners can copy and paste parts of their interlocutors’ utterances for which they are needing clarification, or they can use quotation marks in order to draw attention to the fact that they are recasting a previous statement in the discourse.

However, due to a significant marked difference in SCMC discourse, the lack of turn taking as experienced in spoken exchanges, researchers have pointed out that some negotiations are hindered. Kitade (2000) noted that interaction in SCMC is devoid of turn-taking competition, given that interlocutors cannot interrupt each other in the same way that they can in speech; because they cannot interrupt each other, there can be overlap in conversational topic, and “such juxtaposition of a topic’s threads may cause misinterpretation” (p. 150) and subsequent failed negotiations. Lai and Zhao (2006) expand upon the issue of turn-taking and the way in which it can thwart negotiation of meaning by pointing out observations drawn from their own data: indicators that did not directly follow their respective triggers, due to the way in which the interlocutor unknowingly submitting a

trigger had moved on to a new subject, were left untreated, and were therefore not negotiated. Despite this turn taking issue, however, both Kitade (2000) and Lai and Zhao (2006) confirm that negotiations of meaning were made more possible using the text-based medium characteristic of SCMC. This study was founded on the supposition that the graphic form of interaction mediated by SCMC acts superiorly to the aural form of interaction mediated by speech, and seeks to substantiate this supposition.

Negotiated linguistic forms.

Early in the life of SCMC for L2 interaction, Ortega (1997) asserted, “the language produced in electronic synchronous discussions can be expected to be more complex and formal than in face-to-face discussions” (p. 84). Kern (1995) buttressed this assertion in his explanation of the way in which “students’ language output in InterChange was of an overall greater level of sophistication than in oral discussion, in terms of the range of its morphosyntactic features and in terms of the variety of discourse functions expressed” (p. 470). However, the enhanced sophistication does not detract from the way in which the discourse produced is nevertheless much more close in nature to informal spoken discourse than to written discourse. As such, in comparison to L2 planned writing, there is a “loss of syntactic complexity,” as observed by Sotillo (2000; p. 105), as well as of grammatical accuracy, as observed by Kern (1995). Although this decline in grammatical accuracy may be predicted to induce negotiations of meaning pertaining to grammar, this is not the case; Pellettieri (1999) explains, “the morphosyntax carries a relatively low communicative load and thus understandably triggers fewer instances of negotiation” (p. 70-71). Lee (2008) extends this explanation to account for the way in which the majority of negotiations in CMC interaction pertain to lexicon, stating, “It is logical that learners solve semantic problems before they attend to syntactic errors because lexical items are meaning-oriented and have more communicative value than syntactic forms” (65-66). Interestingly, Pellettieri (1999) ultimately concluded that CMC “can play a significant role in the development of grammatical competence among classroom language learners” (p. 83) due to the way in which CMC pushes learners to focus on the form of their output, but her conclusion was not based upon the quantitative results stemming from the number of negotiations.

In fact, researchers who have conducted quantitative analyses as well as researchers who have conducted qualitative analyses agree that, on the whole, linguistic forms learners negotiate while using SCMC for interaction in an L2 are not grammatical in nature, but are rather lexical or content-based in nature (Blake, 2000; Jepson, 2005; Kern, 1995; Kessler, 2009; Kitade, 2000; Lee, 2008; Pellettieri, 1999; Sotillo, 2000). When questioned about the lack of attention to grammatical structures during task completion, Kessler's (2009) participants responded in a way to suggest that "the informal context of the [interaction] and the perceived low-impact nature of the errors themselves" (p. 91) led them to feel less pressure in producing accurate output. In line with these findings, it was hypothesized that the majority of negotiations of meaning rendered in the transcripts of interaction in this study will have arisen from lexical and content-based breaches in communication; however, this hypothesis is not intended to discount Pellettieri's (1999) belief that CMC can facilitate grammatical development, and so the transcripts will be further analyzed for evidence of form-focusing, specifically in the appearance of self-monitoring and self-repair.

Pedagogical and Research-oriented Benefits of Text-based Input

Beyond the capacity of text-based input in L2 interaction to enhance those conditions thought to be beneficial for second language acquisition, the text-based medium in SCMC also allows for the interlanguage produced by the learners to strengthen teacher awareness of students' language proficiency levels; Toyoda and Harrison (2005) put forth the notion that SCMC texts offer a more practical means by which second language instructors can measure the efficacy of their teaching and detect whether there are aspects of the L2 that they are not sufficiently covering. Furthermore, the text-based medium in SCMC allows for the interlanguage produced by the learners to serve as a platform for further language learning activities. As mentioned previously, Warschauer (1997) suggested that one of the advantages of using SCMC in language learning is the capacity for interaction to be "reevaluated, edited, and rewritten" (p. 472). Sotillo (2000) more fully develops this notion by stating that SCMC discourse has a place in the ESL writing classroom "to encourage self-correction and accuracy in writing" (p. 103); she suggests that ESL instructors "distribute transcripts from synchronous discussions and ask the learners to study and critique their own and others' use of the L2" (p. 103). More specifically, Toyoda and Harrison (2002) propose that the

transcripts learners produce from SCMC be utilized as tools to reveal to learners the way in which to successfully request clarification in the L2, as well as the way in which to successfully shift conversation topics using conjunctive words; because these two particular discourse functions comprise “typical causes for communication difficulty” (p. 97), the researchers view the text rendered by the communication to be of particular value to the learners, who have experienced these communication difficulties firsthand. Much in the same way that communicative contexts bear more relevance for language learning due to the way in which learners must negotiate language for the purpose of meaning-making, tasks founded upon texts produced by the learners themselves bear more relevance for language learning because of the way in which learners have a direct relationship to the text and can testify to the original communication evidenced by the text. Although the chat logs from this study were not used for further learning purposes, their content seemed to lend itself specifically to exercises in correcting grammar for enhanced accuracy; therefore, language teachers employing SCMC in their classrooms are encouraged to look to the chat logs as means by which to integrate teaching of form into communicative contexts.

The potential for the output generated by language learners to serve purposes beyond the original communication also extends to research in second language learning. While detailing his experimentation with the use of SCMC as the medium for L2 Spanish tasks carried out by native English speakers, Blake (2000) commented, “chat programs with log-keeping capabilities...provide a window that lets [second language acquisition researchers] track the painfully slow development of interlanguage” (p. 133). Jepson (2005) proved more critical of such chat programs, pointing out that, in his own research using SCMC, “it was not possible to observe if participants edited their own messages before they sent them. Therefore, some self-correction repair moves may not have been measurable...” (p. 85). However, screen-capturing technology like TechSmith Corporation’s Camtasia has since allowed for the observation of the pre-sent edited messages that concerned Jepson (2005); along with keystroke logs of the machines mediating the SCMC and other forms of data-enriching methods, O’Rourke (2008) proposed the use of screen-capturing technology for a more complete picture of SCMC use, which Smith and Sauro (2009) implemented in order to examine the effect of interruptions in SCMC in terms of the subsequent learner output. This

kind of technology is not employed in the present study due to the more narrow interest in the negotiations provoked between interlocutors, resulting from that which is put forth by each interlocutor, rather than from that which each interlocutor *nearly* put forth. This study is conducted on the grounds that the transcripts produced in the research do in fact create a window into the development of the learner interlanguage, even if its limitations make it a translucent window as opposed to a more idealistic transparent window; simply put, the SCMC texts offer a practical means by which to investigate L2 interaction, both for researchers and for language teachers.

An Additional SCMC Consideration: Interlocutor Native Language

In light of the research questions presented in the opening chapter, attention must be paid to previous studies pertaining to the native language of the interlocutors engaging in SCMC with each other. From a sociocultural perspective on language learning, Kitade (2000) made the assertion that in collaborative learning like that which is done in task-based SCMC, “the range of contexts are restricted according to factors such as the psychological degree of intersubjectivity (i.e., shared knowledge, social status, and the type of topic)” (p. 145), but that the L2 interaction that occurs during collaborative learning can amplify this degree of intersubjectivity through negotiation if the L2 interaction “contain[s] linguistic forms or topics unfamiliar to learners” (p. 146); importantly, this amplifying of the degree of intersubjectivity requires a spirit of cooperation on the part of both interlocutors, and so, in this sense, native language is not the ultimate determinant of successful interaction in the L2 on the part of interlocutors. However, if a spirit of cooperation is taken as a given in motivated language learners and their interlocutors, the variable of native language necessarily becomes of interest to CALL practitioners investigating SCMC for interlanguage development toward the target language; this interest gave rise to the final secondary research question regarding native language in this study.

When L2 interaction as a means of facilitating second language acquisition was first proposed, the focus was on the importance of interaction between L2 learners and native speakers (Long, 1983). However, focus has since shifted toward the NNS-NNS configuration in interlocutors, and a great deal of research exploring this potential has been carried out (Long & Porter, 1985; Swain, Brooks & Tocalli-Beller 2002). In his study primarily

involving NNS-NNS SCMC, Blake (2000) included one activity in which nonnative Spanish speakers interacted with native Spanish speakers. He counted more conversational turns during this activity than during others, but he noted that fewer negotiations occurred, which he attributed to the way in which, “In terms of power and authority, the learner/native speaker pairing was unequal, since the native speakers were much more in control of the conversation,” which Blake (2000) believes “could have increased the fear of embarrassment for the L2 learner and acted as a damper to noticing and repairing any miscommunications” (p. 128). However, Kitade (2000) gives an altogether contrary account of NS-NNS interactions using SCMC; she suggests that such interaction stimulates in language learners “an awareness of difficulties [and] a self-comparison and internalization of rules” (p. 146). Furthermore, Kitade (2000) reasons that in peer to peer or NNS-NNS SCMC interactions, the development of grammatical knowledge is limited by that which both learners have learned up to the point of the interaction, and so grammatical negotiations would naturally be sparse.

Tudini (2003) promoted native speaker interaction in her study involving NS and NNS interaction for the purpose of Italian language learning, though she calculated fewer turns involving negotiation of meaning than those recorded in previous studies with NNS-NNS dyads. She pointed out that the kind of negotiations taking place must be taken into account, and that the quantitative information transmitted about negotiations of meaning cannot be taken at face value alone. Tudini’s (2003) findings revealed that the majority of negotiations in NNS-NNS dyads were self-repairs, whereas “in NS-learner chat interactions, only two self repairs by learners were present and a more varied picture of negotiation and modified output was present, with the NS as a key figure for both solicited and unsolicited feedback” (p. 156). She added in her discussion of her findings that learner interaction with native speakers of the L2 is useful in providing “a valuable connection to the target language and culture which can provide learners with the opportunity to develop colloquial interactive language which is rarely found in textbooks” (Tudini, 2003, p. 155). Given Tudini’s (2003) examination of the qualitative nature of negotiations in both NS-NNS interactions and NNS-NNS interactions, my analysis will also examine the kind of negotiations present.

Tudini’s (2003) is one of a limited number of studies that directly compares the volume and characteristics of output generated by NNS-NNS and NS-NNS dyads; even so,

her study did not employ the kind of tasks thought to facilitate negotiations of meaning. Instead of using tasks aimed at a definite, common goal entailing a specific solution, it employed open-ended questions with a rather loose goal of merely completing the discussion the questions provoked. I argue that there exists a breach in communication of sorts regarding the effectiveness of more structured, solution-oriented tasks in producing negotiations in NS-NNS dyads as opposed to NNS-NNS dyads. This study seeks to bridge the breach so as to put forth a response as to whether native speaker-learner interaction in L2 chat or learner-learner interaction in L2 chat is more effective in producing negotiations through the completion of jigsaw tasks. Although this question will be answered from a quantitative standpoint, the qualitative analyses presented will serve to examine some of the more complex issues addressed in the literature as to the nature of the negotiations or repairs themselves.

CHAPTER 3.

METHODS

This chapter will delve into the various resources and methods employed in this study. It will provide general profiles of the two participant populations, describe the materials used to elicit and record the data, and explain the research procedure and subsequent analyses conducted. The analysis is provided in light of the research questions introduced in the first chapter.

Participants

I recruited thirteen nonnative speakers (NNS) and five native speakers (NS) of English to engage in the SCMC interactions that supplied the primary data for this study. The participants were paired at random, such that there were four NNS-NNS pairs, and five NS-NNS pairs; each interlocutor in each the pair was then randomly assigned to either Group 1 or Group 2, which determined which information they would have access to and be responsible for within each jigsaw task.

Nonnative English-speaking Participants

The nonnative English-speaking participants (n=13) for this study were students enrolled in an intensive English program at a large midwestern research university. The majority of students in the intensive English program are young adults who have completed secondary education in their home countries and hope to pursue undergraduate studies at the university through which the intensive English program is offered; it is most often the case that the students have not yet obtained a high enough score on the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL®) or on the International English Language Testing System's (IELTS™) test in order to gain admission to the university, and so they opt to attend the intensive English program with the goal of obtaining scores that meet university standards for undergraduate study. The program requires students to attend four, fifty minute classes – grammar, reading, writing, and listening/speaking – five days each week; it employs English placement tests in the four language skill areas at the beginning of each semester in order to place students into the level for each class that is most appropriate in terms of their proficiencies. The program offers six levels for each class, where level one serves the least

proficient English students in a given language skill, and level six serves the most proficient English students in a given language skill.

The thirteen students in a level five, listening/speaking class comprised the nonnative English-speaking participant population; thus, the participants can be assumed to have possessed high intermediate to advanced English listening/speaking proficiency at the time of data collection. The nonnative-speaking participants ranged in age from eighteen to twenty-nine years; two were female and eleven were male. A few native languages were represented among the participants: Arabic (n=2); Bahasa Indonesia (n=2); Korean (n=1); Mandarin Chinese (n=8). Though the NNS-NNS pairings were made at random, the majority of such pairs consisted of speakers of different native language backgrounds; of the four NNS-NNS pairs, three did not share the same native language. I saw the existence of NNS-NNS data where different language backgrounds were at play, along with NNS-NNS data where the same language background was at play, as a strength in the data set itself; it offered me a glimpse into differences in findings that could arise based upon this variable, though no conclusive statements can be made regarding this.

Native English-speaking Participants

The five native English-speaking participants for this study were volunteers who were interested in one of the basic premises of this study: interaction with a native speaker of a language could aid in developing the interlanguage of a learner. These native-speaking participants were recruited based on the researcher's knowledge that each participant had been or was currently involved with various programs, such as Friendships International, that serve to connect international university students with American friends. The native-speaking participants ranged in age from nineteen to fifty-one; four were female and one was male. Each had either already obtained an undergraduate degree or was working toward an undergraduate degree. Though the native-speaking participants had been introduced to the basic purposes of their interactions with the nonnative-speaking participants, they were not instructed as to how to most helpfully complete the tasks from a second language acquisition standpoint; therefore, the discourse they built with their interlocutors was not contrived to fit the researcher's hopes or expectations.

Materials

This study is mixed methods in nature, and so the materials used include tools designed to elicit quantitative data as well as tools designed to elicit qualitative data. These will be discussed in detail throughout this section, along with the primary instrument used to facilitate data gathering.

Synchronous Computer-mediated Communication Tool

Although many different SCMC tools exist within programs specifically designed for pedagogical purposes, I employed Skype™, a program originally purposed for online social networking. According to Skype's™ “About” webpage, the SCMC tool “had an average of 124 million connected users per month in the second quarter of 2010,” and at peak times during the day, as many as 23 million Skype™ users are online (*About Skype*). My decision to use Skype™ was twofold: first, I suspected that the use of a social networking tool could heighten learner motivation, especially given that this particular social networking tool maintains worldwide popularity; second, I hoped that using a social networking tool with which participants are familiar and which participants can access using personal computers might encourage learner autonomy, such that second language learners can exercise agency in furthering their second language development beyond classroom activities.

Much of its widespread use can be attributed to the fact that the use of Skype™ is free of charge if both parties engaging in communication use Skype™ as the channel of communication; however, those with a Skype™ account may communicate with others not using Skype™ for a charge – for example, Skype™ users may call landlines or cell phones across the globe, but must first credit funds to their Skype™ accounts. The communication potentials offered through the use of Skype™ are varied: Skype™ users can communicate aurally, similarly to the kind of communication offered through traditional telephone usage; Skype™ users can communicate audio-visually, through the use of webcams, such that interlocutors can both hear each other and see each other; and Skype™ users can communicate through synchronously-transmitted typed text using the Skype™ Chat function.

The Skype™ Chat function is that communication option which will be employed in this study. This function is straightforward in nature: after adding a Skype™ user's interlocutor as a contact, the Skype™ user must simply initiate communication with his or her

intended interlocutor by double-clicking the interlocutor’s Skype™ name as it appears in the program window once the user has signed onto the program, typing a message in the text box that appears, and striking the “Enter” or “Return” key on the keyboard so as to send the message. Communication ensues in this manner as the interlocutors take turns building the discourse. The Skype™ Chat function not only enables typed messages to be instantaneously sent, but also displays the time at which messages are sent, which is of great help for one analyzing the discourse – the turn-taking patterns are better understood through the record of the timing of sent messages. A screen shot of the window Skype™ Chat users view and interact in can be seen in Figure 3.1.

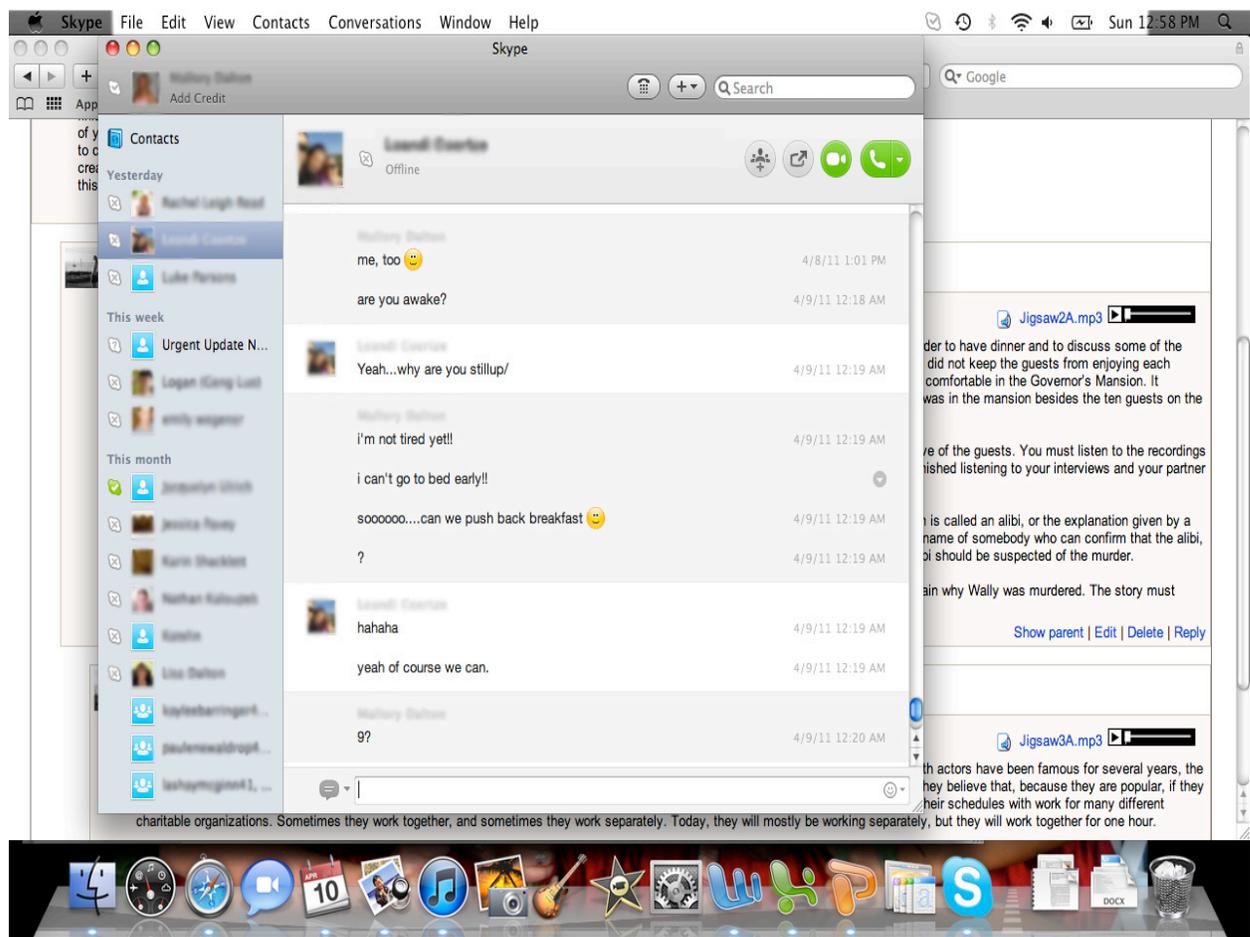


Figure 3.1. Skype™ Chat window.

As can be seen on the left side of the window in the foreground, Skype™ users are able to view a list of their contacts and simply click on a contact in order to begin Chat. The text box

in which users create messages can be seen at the very bottom of the window. Finally, the log of the time at which messages are sent can be seen on the right side of the window.

Skype™ Chat users have the ability to access logs of their chat sessions, regardless of the time that has elapsed since any given chat session; the only limitation of using Skype™ Chat is that the Skype™ Chat users must be using the same computer on which the chat session occurred in order to view that session again – thus, data could be lost if users are unable to work with the same computer previously used. The lab in which the Skype™ Chat sessions took place for this study already had the Skype™ program loaded onto the computers; the participants sat at assigned computer monitors in the lab, such that the dyads could access their previous communications if needed.

Jigsaw Tasks

I formulated the jigsaw tasks with two ends in mind: first, to realize the salient advantage of such tasks – the provision of a communicative environment ripe with opportunity for negotiation of meaning; second, to meet some of the “learning outcomes” of the level five listening/speaking classes through the intensive English program, such that nonnative participants had the opportunity to make the same kind of language skill gains as those afforded in the regular class sessions. Specifically, I hoped to develop tasks that met two of the level five listening/speaking learning outcomes, which proposed that, upon completion of the semester, students should be able to distinguish main ideas, major supporting points, and details in listening texts, and they should be able to take organized notes in accordance with the organization of the listening texts. Because of the condition that the tasks develop the listening skill, the jigsaw tasks were founded upon aural input.

The tasks were stored and accessed by the students in an online course site that I set up for the study; the course site was powered by Moodle, “a course management system” (*Moodle Services*) that is employed by the English department of the university at which this study took place. A screen shot of the Moodle course site accessed by students can be seen in Figure 3.2.

The screenshot shows a web browser window displaying the Moodle course page for 'Mallory Dalton's Research Project'. The browser is Safari, and the URL is <https://courses.isucomm.iastate.edu/course/view.php?id=1438>. The page has a red header with 'IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY ISUComm Courses' and a user login status: '(Mallory Dalton) You are logged in as Yuhao Lu (Logout)'. The main content area is divided into a left sidebar with navigation links (People, Activities, Search Forums, Administration, My courses) and a central 'Weekly outline' section listing activities from January 9 to February 13. A right sidebar contains 'Latest News', 'Upcoming Events', and 'Recent Activity'.

Figure 3.2. Main page of the Moodle online course.

From this page, participants could access jigsaw tasks and auxiliary materials, as well as upload their Skype™ Chat dialogue. Each of the tasks adhered to the same basic model, with the hopes that participants would become comfortable with the structure of the tasks as the study progressed. After accessing the online course, participants were required to listen to one audio clip containing information necessary for completing the tasks; audio clips for each task ranged in length from two minutes and thirty seconds to five minutes. The interlocutors were privy to different information than that which their partners listened to so as to satisfy the specification of jigsaw tasks as two-way exchanges of information (Pica, Kanagy & Falodun, 1993); Moodle enables the course instructor to group participants such that different groups have access to different files, which was especially helpful in ensuring

that interlocutors listened to only that portion of the information for which they would be responsible in their Skype™ Chat conversations. These files were updated weekly for the duration of the study, so as to enable the addition of each new jigsaw task. A screen shot of the information made available to half of the participants (those in Group 1) can be seen in Figure 3.3; this page contains the instructions and Group 1 audio files for each of the jigsaw tasks.

The screenshot shows a Safari browser window with the address bar displaying <https://courses.isucomm.iastate.edu/mod/forum/view.php?id=71836>. The page title is "Mallory Dalton's Research Project: Group 1 Files". The main content area contains a forum post titled "Group 1 Files" by Mallory Dalton, dated Tuesday, 22 March 2011, 07:08 PM. The post includes the following text:

of you has collected, you must match locations with travel dates, and agree on the one city and country President Obama must visit to conclude his travels abroad. Once you have agreed on President Obama's final destination, work with your Skype Chat partner to create his final journal entry about his final destination. This entry should contain three or four clues about the final destination. Include this at the bottom of your materials worksheet.

[Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Group 1 Files
by Mallory Dalton - Tuesday, 22 March 2011, 07:08 PM

[Jigsaw2A.mp3](#)

Ten Iowans spent the evening at the Governor's Mansion in Des Moines last night. Iowa's leader, Governor Culver, had invited each of them in order to have dinner and to discuss some of the issues that face the state of Iowa. Unfortunately, right after dinner, Governor Culver had to leave for an emergency meeting. However, his leaving did not keep the guests from enjoying each other's company – many had not known each other before the party, and so they spent time getting to know each other while making themselves comfortable in the Governor's Mansion. It seemed like the perfect dinner party, but the night ended with a terrible event – one of the guests, Wally Shamburger, was murdered! Nobody else was in the mansion besides the ten guests on the guest list, which means that it had to have been one of the guests who murdered Warren Shamburger.

You are one of the two police detectives working to solve this murder. You interviewed five of the guests and your partner interviewed the other five of the guests. You must listen to the recordings of the interviews in the audio file and take notes over what you hear in the chart given to you. Write down key words and ideas. Once you have finished listening to your interviews and your partner has finished listening to his or her interviews, you must use Skype Chat to share the information you have gathered with your partner.

Use the chart that has been given to you to write down where each person was and what they were doing throughout the evening. This information is called an alibi, or the explanation given by a person to communicate that he or she was somewhere else at the time a crime was committed. There is a space in the chart for you to write the name of somebody who can confirm that the alibi, or explanation, is true. Each alibi must be confirmed by one other person; if there is an alibi that nobody can confirm, the person who gave the alibi should be suspected of the murder.

You and your partner must decide who murdered Wally and determine what time he was murdered. Then you must create a story together to explain why Wally was murdered. The story must explain the motive, or the reason that the killer did not want Wally to be alive. It should be at least five sentences long.

[Show parent](#) | [Edit](#) | [Delete](#) | [Reply](#)

Re: Group 1 Files
by Mallory Dalton - Wednesday, 30 March 2011, 11:13 AM

[Jigsaw3A.mp3](#)

Since the release of their recent film, "The Tourist," Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie have been even more busy than usual. Even though both actors have been famous for several years, the film caused their popularity to rise around the world; both Johnny and Angelina have decided to use their popularity to help people in need. They believe that, because they are popular, if they volunteer to help people in need, then others will want to volunteer to help people in need. Therefore, Johnny and Angelina have been filling their schedules with work for many different charitable organizations. Sometimes they work together, and sometimes they work separately. Today, they will mostly be working separately, but they will work together for one hour.

The bottom of the screenshot shows a dock with various application icons including Safari, iCal, iPhoto, iMovie, iTunes, iChat, iWork, and iLife.

Figure 3.3. Group 1 jigsaw task instructions and audio files.

Both interlocutors in each pair had to listen closely to the material presented and had to communicate that information to their partner so as to successfully complete the task. The task also entailed note taking over that which participants heard in each audio clip; charts were provided to the participants for each task so as to aid in the organization of the

information they received. The next phase of the jigsaw tasks required interlocutors to exchange information in order to solve the central puzzle underlying the task. Finally, each task involved some kind of extension of the solution at which the pairs arrived. It was hoped that this extension would push the participants to use the language at their disposal in a more inventive manner than simply regurgitating facts stated in the listening script. The first task required students to determine the final destination of President Obama's month-long diplomatic travels and write a journal entry recounting his time at his final destination; the second task required students to solve a murder mystery and write an account of the killer's motive; the third task required students to compare two celebrity's schedules during a particular day and write a news article about the single coinciding appointment of their day. The tasks, including instructions, listening scripts, and auxiliary participant materials, can be found in Appendix A.

Questionnaire

The qualitative aspect of this study was satisfied in part through the use of a questionnaire that was completed by the nonnative English-speaking participants following the final Skype™ Chat session. The primary purpose of the questionnaire was to seek insight into participant feelings concerning Skype™ Chat as a SCMC tool and as a language development tool; moreover, the questionnaire elicited impressions of the nonnative-speaking participants concerning their interactions with either fellow nonnative speakers or native speakers of English. The questionnaire also gathered more detailed demographic information concerning nonnative English-speaking participant sex, age, native language, years of English language instruction, and time spent in an English-speaking country. The feedback given in the questionnaires was used to balance the quantitative findings of my study. Twelve of the thirteen nonnative-speaking participants completed and returned the questionnaire, which can be found in Appendix B.

Procedure

Prior to the commencement of the study, I piloted the first task created for the study so as to gauge task difficulty and to become aware of any logistical difficulties in using the materials discussed above – specifically the data-gathering tool, along with the website from which the tasks were accessed. The piloting of the first task entailed its employment during a

computer lab session for one of the grammar classes in the intensive English program. During the pilot, I provided the students with a list of the key words that they would hear in the listening script; it became evident that the provision of these words actually inhibited negotiation because of the way in which students were able to arrive at the central solution with great ease by simply restating to their partners that which they had heard in the listening, using the word list as a skeleton. Because I hoped that these very words might in fact induce negotiations, the decision was made to exclude key-word lists from the tasks employed in the study.

After gaining information about the study and deciding to participate¹, the nonnative-speaking participants underwent an initial learner training session. First, they became acquainted with the program by creating user names if they had not already joined the Skype™ network. The course instructor had already enrolled each of the nonnative-speaking participants in the online course so that they could access the tasks; it was assumed that the students were considerably familiar with the interface of the online course, given that most of their intensive English program courses utilized the Moodle course management system. The participants had a short amount of time to explore the Skype™ Chat function, which allowed them to gain knowledge of the mechanics of the SCMC tool. The learner training not only pertained to the practical knowledge critical for successfully using the technology, but also skimmed the surface of the theoretical underpinnings of engaging in computer-mediated communication; it was my hope that such information would encourage the participants to actively strive for the comprehensible input and output that purportedly promotes second language acquisition.

The native English-speaking participants were also introduced to the premises driving the study. However, I made the conscious decision not to instruct the native speakers as to how they should interact with the nonnative speakers, particularly in terms of lending corrective feedback. This was done because of the way in which the focus of the tasks was first and foremost meaning making. In fact, Lee (2008) found in her study that employed

¹ Each of the students was required to complete the tasks as part of their listening/speaking course work; however, students were notified that the supplying of their Skype™ Chat transcripts, along with subsequent completion of the questionnaires, was wholly voluntary. All thirteen students in the level five listening/speaking class agreed to participate.

Focus-on-Form tactics in SCMC, that nonnative English-speaking participants could tend to be put off by the scaffolding techniques employed and the corrective feedback given by their native English-speaking interlocutors; the English language learners were concentrating on fluency in communication and on meaning making, and so when their interlocutors intervened to offer grammar corrections, for example, they experienced frustration at the break in the flow of the conversation. In light of these findings, I simply informed the native English-speaking participants that their primary objective was to engage with the nonnative English-speaking participants in the Skype™ Chat sessions for the completion of the jigsaw tasks; the nonnative English-speaking participants were similarly instructed such that interaction instruction was purposefully omitted during learner training.

The Skype™ Chat sessions were carried out once per week across a three-week period in the middle of the Spring 2011 semester. They occurred during the listening/speaking class meetings, which lasted for fifty minutes, and which took place in a campus Apple® Mac computer lab equipped with enough machines such that each student could work on his or her own machine. The native English-speaking participants were not present in the computer lab during the Skype™ Chat sessions, but they carried out the interactions with their interlocutors remotely, using their personal computers. During class meetings dedicated to the Skype™ Chat sessions, the nonnative English speakers first completed the listening and note-taking phase of the jigsaw tasks; this typically occupied the first twenty minutes of class time². For the last thirty minutes of class time³, the NNS-NNS dyads and NS-NNS dyads engaged in the information exchange phase of the jigsaw tasks, using the SCMC tool, Skype™ Chat. Each dyad worked together for the duration of the study so as to build familiarity with one another. The typed dialogues produced by the dyads of participants during each task completion served as the data I analyzed for conversational turns, negotiations of meaning, and so on. So as to avoid lost data, the Skype™ Chat users copied

² The native English-speaking participants were able to access the task for each week 24 hours in advance of the Skype™ Chat session, such that they could elect when to spend the time accessing and taking notes over the information for which they'd be responsible for the completion of each task.

³ The average time taken by each dyad to complete the Skype™ Chat sessions varied with each task; average times ranged from 21 to 35 minutes.

and pasted their communication into a Microsoft®Word document, which they uploaded onto the course website prior to exiting the computer lab at the close of each Chat session. As mentioned previously, the nonnative English-speaking participants completed a questionnaire at the close of the data collection to satisfy the qualitative facet of the study.

Analysis

To respond to the first research question, “Which dyad configuration (NNS-NNS v. NS-NNS) gives rise to the greater number of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning?”, the data were analyzed in terms of the number of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning that occurred. The number of conversational turns is relayed in the following ways: the total number rendered from each task, as well as the total number rendered from NNS-NNS dyads and NS-NNS dyads for each task; and the average number rendered from each task, as well as the average number rendered from NNS-NNS dyads and NS-NNS dyads for each task. Finally, the frequency per minute of conversational turns rendered from each task, as well as the frequency per minute of conversational turns rendered from NNS-NNS and NS-NNS dyads for each task are reported; these frequencies must be calculated and reported, given that dyads spent differing amounts of time on task completion.

I had originally intended to relay the findings surrounding negotiations in the form of relative frequency as opposed to absolute frequency such that those interpreting the findings have knowledge of the number of potential instances in which negotiation could occur. I postulated that a potential instance constitutes a point in the dialogue in which a misunderstanding has occurred, most likely due to the fact that an error has been committed on the part of the producer of the output in question, or due to the fact that the interlocutor has not understood a target-like production and requires the producer of the output to clarify the meaning; these potential instances could give rise to negotiations of meaning, to attempted negotiations in which the interlocutor indicates a misunderstanding but receives no response, or to no acknowledgement of a misunderstanding whatsoever. However, it was found that potential instances were difficult to identify, given that I could only conjecture as to those points at which misunderstandings had occurred that didn’t result in negotiations; oftentimes severe misspellings or grave grammatical errors did not lead to the breach in communication I expected. The total number of negotiations for each task and for NNS-NNS

and NS-NNS dyads is reported; furthermore, negotiations are reported in terms of percentage of total conversational turns.

When searching for negotiations of meaning, I looked for triggers, indicators, responses, and reactions. In his article, "Computer Mediated Communication: A Window on L2 Spanish Interlanguage," Blake (2000) identifies a trigger as a linguistic feature that causes a communication problem. He identifies an indicator as the conversational turn that indicates a breach in understanding, while he cites the response as the conversational turn that attempts to clarify the misunderstanding. Last, he defines the reaction as the closure of the negotiation, or the affirmation that the clarification indeed helped. The trigger-indicator-response-reaction model follows an A-B-A-B pattern, such that the interlocutors alternate conversational turns; I understood that it would be unlikely that this pattern would be precise in each negotiation of meaning, however, it provided a guideline for discerning negotiation of meaning.

I intended to categorize identified negotiations of meaning according to their linguistic classifications: lexical, morphological, and syntactical. However, the identified negotiations were solely lexical in nature; this was somewhat to be expected given that previous research suggests that the overwhelming majority of negotiations are lexical in nature (Blake, 2000; Jepson, 2005; Kern, 1995; Kessler, 2009; Kitade, 2000; Lee, 2008; Pellettieri, 1999; Sotillo, 2000). The negotiations were finally categorized in terms of the type of dyad in which they occurred (NS-NNS or NNS-NNS). Due to the limited scope of the data, statistical significance of the quantitative findings could not be supplied. However, a discussion of distinct features observed in the output rendered in the two different dyad settings broadens an understanding of the meaning making engaged in during the chat sessions.

The secondary research questions, which pertained to participant perceptions of the SCMC tool and of interlocutors' native languages, are addressed through the use of the questionnaire that was distributed to participants at the close of the study. Descriptive statistics, specifically means and standard deviations, were calculated for the responses to portions of the questionnaire that employed the Likert scale. Open-ended questions were coded according to response theme and were used to supplement the statistical data presented

over the Likert-scale portion of the questionnaire. A summary of the analysis can be viewed in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1

Summary of Analysis

Research Question	Analysis
1) Which dyad configuration (NNS-NNS v. NS-NNS) gives rise to a greater number of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning?	Comparison of the number of conversation turns and the negotiations of meaning produced during the interactions for the NNS-NNS dyads and the NS-NNS dyads.
2) How do participants perceive Skype™ Chat as a SCMC tool?	Determine descriptive statistic of participants' responses to the Likert-scaled questionnaire items; categorize open-ended items.
3) How do participants perceive the role of the language background of their interlocutors?	Determine descriptive statistic of participants' responses to the Likert-scaled questionnaire items; categorize open-ended items.

CHAPTER 4.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The transcripts of the dialogues produced by each of the dyads while carrying out each of the three tasks, in addition to questionnaire responses, supplied the data analyzed so as to address the three research questions. This chapter will communicate the results of the analysis as they pertain to each research question, discuss the findings in relation to past research findings, and, finally, relay relevant observations made during the analysis of the transcripts.

Research Question #1

This study was founded on the premise that synchronous computer-mediated communication facilitates the kind of interaction in an L2 that encourages an L2 learner's development of his or her interlanguage toward the target language and, more specifically, supplies a fruitful environment for turn taking and for negotiations of meaning characteristic of such interaction. In order to answer the first part of the first research question, which seeks to determine which dyad configuration renders a greater number of conversational turns, the average number of conversational turns that constructed the dialogues, as well as the average time during which these conversational turns amassed and the average number of conversational turns produced per minute, were determined; this information gives a quantitative picture of the interactions carried out and is displayed in terms of dyad configuration in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1

Average and Frequency of Conversational Turns Resulting from Skype™ Chat Sessions

Week/Task	Number of dyads		Average number of conversational turns per dyad		Average time spent on task in minutes per dyad		Frequency of conversational turns per minute (standard deviation)	
	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS
Week 1 / Obama Speech Tour	8		44.13		26 min.		1.7/minute (SD=.88)	
	3	5	55	37.6	25 min.	28.6 min.	2.2/min.	1.3/min.
Week 2 / Murder Mystery	8		37.63		35.13 min.		1.14/minute (SD=.65)	
	3	5	41.3	35.4	37 min.	34 min.	1.12/min.	1.04/min.
Week 3 / Celebrity Schedules	7		20.14		20.57 min.		.96/minute (SD=.23)	
	3	4	19.3	20.75	20.3 min.	20.75 min.	.95/min.	1/min.

Notes: NNS refers to nonnative speakers, while NS refers to native speakers.

Table 4.1 reveals the way in which, on average, the NNS-NNS dyads produced a higher frequency of conversational turns per minute than did the NS-NNS dyads, though the NS-NNS dyads produced a slightly higher frequency of conversational turns per minute while engaging in the final task. These averages solicit deeper investigation into the raw count from which averages were derived; some of the factors contributing to the differences in conversational turn frequency, which entail dyad behavior, will be discussed at a later point in the chapter.

So as to answer the second part of the first research question, which investigates which dyad configuration renders more negotiations of meaning, the absolute frequencies of the negotiations are displayed in Table 4.2 in terms of the task engaged in and the type of dyad producing such negotiations. Furthermore, the percentages of conversational turns

related to negotiations are listed, again, in terms of the task engaged in (refer to Appendix A for task instructions and materials) and the type of dyad producing such negotiations¹.

Table 4.2

Negotiations of Meaning and Frequency of Negotiations of Meaning

Week/Task	Number of dyads		Total number of negotiations		Conversational turns of negotiation / total number of conversational turns		Frequency of negotiations (% of total conversational turns)	
	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS	NNS-NNS	NS-NNS
Week 1 / Obama Speech Tour	8		1		3 / 353		.85%	
	3	5	1	0	3 / 165	0 / 188	1.8%	0%
Week 2 / Murder Mystery	8		0		0 / 301		0%	
	3	5	0	0	0 / 124	0 / 177	0%	0%
Week 3 / Celebrity Schedules	7		1		7 / 141		4.96%	
	3	4	1	0	7 / 58	0 / 83	12.07%	0%

Note: NNS refers to nonnative speakers, while NS refers to native speakers.

As can be seen in Table 4.2, only two negotiations of meaning could be identified in the dialogues constructed by the participants during the Skype™ Chat sessions. Both negotiations were rendered in NNS-NNS dyad configurations; this finding fits with Blake's (2000) belief that negotiations would be more likely to occur in NNS-NNS dyads due to the shared lack of expertise on the part of the interlocutors; he suggested this shared lack of expertise could lessen the gravity of the inherent face-threatening aspect of negotiations.

¹ In spite of the few occasions of negotiations, percentages of conversational turns related to negotiations are reported so as to enable a comparison between the findings of the present study and those of previous studies, which delivered findings in terms of percentages rather than absolute frequencies.

Negotiation Characteristics

In accordance with literature suggesting the rarity of morphosyntactic or grammatical negotiations (Blake, 2000; Jepson, 2005; Kern, 1995; Kessler, 2009; Kitade, 2000; Lee, 2008; Pellettieri, 1999; Sotillo, 2000), the negotiations arising from the interactions engaged in during this study pertained to lexical items. It should be noted that the absence of morphosyntactic or grammatical negotiations does not indicate an absence of morphosyntactic or grammatical difficulty within the dialogues constructed by interlocutors; in fact, the majority of the transcripts produced using Skype™ Chat were rife with grammatical and morphosyntactic errors. However, these errors did not give rise to negotiations because the meaning of the messages containing such errors were not compromised or obstructed; had such errors directly affected task completion, they likely would have resulted in negotiations, but this was never the case.

The first negotiation, which occurred during the first task, accounted for .85 percent of the total conversational turns produced by all dyads during the completion of that task, and accounted for 1.8 percent of the total conversational turns produced by NNS-NNS dyads during the completion of the task. This lexical negotiation was carried out across three conversational turns instead of the four conversational turns prescribed by Blake (2000), which include the trigger, indicator, response, and reaction; it lacked the reaction. The portion of the dialogue containing the negotiation can be seen below; at this point in the interaction, the dyad was trying to determine where President Obama had been giving a speech on a particular date, June 17th, using clues that had been given one of the interlocutors, 1A, in the listening:

[3/9/11 2:46 PM] 12C: how about 17th?

[3/9/11 2:46 PM] 1A: where the catholic celebrations take place? (**TRIGGER**)

[3/9/11 2:46 PM] 12C: catholic? (**INDICATOR**)

[3/9/11 2:47 PM] 12C: What's that (**INDICATOR CONTINUED**)

[3/9/11 2:47 PM] 1A: it kind of religious events (**RESPONSE**)

[3/9/11 2:47 PM] 12C: Turkey??

It is apparent that 1A's interlocutor, 12C, did not find it necessary to give a reaction so as to clearly voice consent with the explanation given by 1A as to the meaning of "catholic"; rather, 12C indirectly voices consent by attempting to apply the explanation in arriving at a solution for President Obama's whereabouts on June 17th.

The murder mystery-themed task completion did not render any negotiations of meaning, but the completion of the final task concerning celebrity schedules resulted in the second and final negotiation of meaning. The negotiation accounted for 4.96 percent of the total conversational turns produced by all dyads during the completion of that task and for 12.07 percent of the total conversational turns produced by NNS-NNS dyads during the completion of the task. Contrary to the first negotiation, this negotiation, which was also lexical in nature, included the four conversational turns prescribed by Blake (2000); however, the negotiation was carried out across seven conversational turns. At the particular point in the interaction during which the negotiation occurred, 11C was communicating to 5K that which she had heard in the audio file, which detailed different parts of Angelina Jolie's schedule for a certain imaginary day. As can be seen below, 11C did not seem to notice that 5K had interrupted the stream of information she was supplying, and 5K had to deliver an indicator three times.

[3/30/11 3:03 PM] 11C: 2pm, in boy and girl club, she printed with family without munch money (**TRIGGER**)

[3/30/11 3:04 PM] 11C: 3pm, in local school, she help children learn English

[3/30/11 3:04 PM] 5K: printed ? what? (**INDICATOR**)

[3/30/11 3:04 PM] 11C: 4pm, house, she pick up children from school to go to the house

[3/30/11 3:05 PM] 11C: 5pm, aunt home, visit her aunt and drink tea withe her aunt

[3/30/11 3:06 PM] 5K: 2pm what did she print? (**2ND INDICATOR**)

[3/30/11 3:07 PM] 11C: drew picture (**RESPONSE**)

[3/30/11 3:08 PM] 5K: painting? (**3RD INDICATOR**)

[3/30/11 3:08 PM] 5K: godcha (**REACTION**)

[3/30/11 3:08 PM] 5K: gotcha (**REACTION CONTINUED – Self-correction**)

[3/30/11 3:08 PM] 11C: yes (**2ND RESPONSE**)

In the case of this negotiation, the trigger represented a conversational turn in which a lexical item had been incorrectly applied; as such, it was the second interlocutor, 5K, who determined the lexical item, “painting,” that the first interlocutor, 11C, needed to use in the place of the incorrectly applied lexical item, “printed,” which served as the trigger. Interestingly, 5K proceeded to deliver the reaction signaling the completion of the negotiation prior to a final response from 11C, which would affirm that 5K’s interpretation of her meaning in the trigger and ensuing response had been accurate.

Although the frequency of negotiations of meaning occurring within the dialogues may seem low, they are comparable to previous research findings; for example, the greatest frequency of negotiations that Blake (2000) found when he employed jigsaw tasks in a second language learning setting was 3.8 percent. The frequencies arising from this study, however, are notably lower than those arising in Tudini’s (2003) study, which employed open-ended questions as the skeleton of the SCMC interaction; she found that 9 percent of all conversational turns were negotiations of meaning.

Dyad Behavior

Although the averages provided in Table 4.1 lend a general quantitative representation of the way in which the different dyad configurations engaged communicatively across the three different tasks, the accessible volume of data allowed for deeper investigation into the conduct of specific dyads during specific task completions. Thus, to better understand the averages provided in Table 4.1, the behavior of each dyad in terms of conversational turns is displayed in Table 4.3.

Table 4.3

Total Conversational Turns Resulting from and Time Spent Engaged in Skype™ Chat Sessions

Dyad	Configuration	Total time spent on tasks in minutes			Total number of conversational turns (frequency (CT / minute))		
		Obama speech tour	Murder mystery	Celebrity schedules	Obama speech tour	Murder mystery	Celebrity schedules
1	NNS - NNS	40 min.			53 (1.325/m.)		
		20 min.	*	20 min.	42 (2.1/m)	*	11 (.55/m.)
2	NNS - NNS	64 min.			73 (1.14/m.)		
		23 min.	22 min.	19 min.	22 (.96/m)	30 (1.4/m.)	21 (1.11/m.)
3	NS - NNS	79 min.			77 (.97/m.)		
		26 min.	35 min.	18 min.	31 (1.19/m.)	27 (.77/m.)	19 (1.05/m.)
4	NNS - NNS	70 min.			60 (.86/m.)		
		*	48 min.	22 min.	*	34 (.71/m.)	26 (1.18/m.)
5	NS – NNS	97 min.			57 (.59/m.)		
		33 min.	48 min.	16 min.	30 (.91/m)	15 (.31/m.)	12 (.75/m.)
6	NS – NNS	80 min.			112 (1.4/m.)		
		25 min.	28 min.	27 min.	45 (1.8/m)	37 (1.32/m.)	30 (1.11/m.)
7	NNS - NNS	73 min.			161 (2.21/m.)		
		32 min.	41 min.	*	101 (3.16/m.)	60 (1.46/m.)	*
8	NS – NNS	57 min.			142 (2.5)		
		24 min.	33 min.	*	63 (2.63/m.)	79 (2.4/m.)	*
9	NS – NNS	73 min.			60 (.82/m.)		
		25 min.	26 min.	22 min.	19 (.76/m)	19 (.73/m.)	22 (1/m.)

Notes: Those spaces marked by an * indicate that the dyad did not supply the data to be represented there; such instances were results of absences during Skype™ Chat sessions.

Those frequencies that have been italicized were done so because the values fall outside one standard deviation of the mean.

Table 4.3 reveals some interesting behavior on the part of a few particular dyads, which accounts for some of the differences in averages concerning conversational turns. I determined the standard deviation value for the frequency of conversational turns per minute for each task; after determining this value, the transcripts for those frequencies that fell outside one standard deviation of the mean were examined so as to gain an understanding of what had occurred within the interaction to account for particularly high or particularly low frequencies of conversational turns per minute.

There were three instances of frequencies of conversational turns per minute falling below one standard deviation of the average frequency for a given task, and the transcripts for each of the instances reveal different hypothetical causes for the low frequencies. The first resulted from a NS-NNS interaction during the first task, and seemed to occur due to inattentiveness to the listening task on the part of the nonnative English-speaking interlocutor; although he had been present during the twenty minutes set aside for completing the listening portion of the jigsaw task, he did not have any information to offer his interlocutor during their Skype™ Chat session. As such, it seems as though a great deal of time during the session was spent idly, given that only one interlocutor could meaningfully contribute; during this session, the dyad had an average of .76 conversational turns per minute, whereas the average frequency for all dyads had been 1.7 conversational turns per minute.

An absence of the very cooperation in which Kitade (2000) posited great worth for successful interaction resulted in the second instance of a notably low frequency of conversational turns per minute. Similarly to the first instance, it resulted from interaction within a NS-NNS dyad; this particular dyad was of great interest to me throughout the study – the lack of cooperation, motivation, and interest in the tasks, as well as in the Skype™ Chat, on the part of the nonnative English-speaking participant in this dyad was evident from the beginning. The apparent disinterest in task completion was somewhat surprising in and of

itself, but the obvious disinterest in the native speaker was truly unexpected; during the second task completion in which the frequency of conversational turns per minute was markedly low, the nonnative speaker left his machine for fifteen minutes in the middle of the Skype™ Chat session, without notifying his interlocutor of his intent to disengage for a considerable amount of time. This session rendered a frequency of .31 conversational turns per minute, while the average frequency for all dyads was 1.14 conversational turns per minute. During the next session, the same nonnative English-speaking participant decided that he was done with the interaction without communicating this to his interlocutor, and abruptly exited the Chat. In the case of this dyad, a spirit of cooperation seems to have never been forged between the two interlocutors; I question whether the nonnative speaking interlocutor had been able to conceptualize his interlocutor as an actual individual, and if not, whether this might have been remedied through an initial Skype™ Chat session dedicated solely to allowing interlocutors to get to know each other.

As opposed to the first two cases of particularly low frequencies, the final case was the outcome of an NNS-NNS interaction. It occurred during the final task and was due to the way in which the interlocutors communicated less conversationally and more as one might while participating in asynchronous communication; each interlocutor delivered his or her information within one lengthy conversational turn as opposed to seeking agreement and evidence of understanding from the other interlocutor. The average frequency for all dyads for this particular task was .96 conversational turns per minute, and this dyad averaged .55 conversational turns per minute.

Although some dyads generated lower frequencies of conversational turns per minute, some dyads also generated considerably higher frequencies of conversational turns per minute; there were three cases of frequencies falling above one standard deviation of the average frequency for a given task. Two of these cases resulted from interaction during the first task; one of the dyads producing these high frequencies of conversational turns per minute was an NS-NNS dyad, while the other was an NNS-NNS dyad. For this particular task, the average frequency for all dyads was 1.7 conversational turns per minute; the NS-NNS dyad rendered a frequency of 2.63 conversational turns per minute, while the NNS-NNS dyad rendered a frequency of 3.16 conversational turns per minute. The final instance

of frequencies of conversational turns per minute falling above one standard deviation of the average frequency for a given task resulted from interaction during the second task; the dyad producing this high frequency was the same NNS-NNS dyad that had produced a high frequency during the first task. This session rendered a frequency of 2.4 conversational turns per minute, while the average frequency for all dyads was 1.14 conversational turns per minute. Upon examination of the three transcripts capturing these interactions, it became clear that an outstanding feature among all three was the volume of back-channeling that the interlocutors employed; oftentimes throughout the dialogue constructions that rendered high conversational turn frequencies, the interlocutors receiving information from their partners responded with “okay,” “good,” or alternate phrases to communicate that they were tracking with their partners. This observation runs contrary to Kitade’s (2000) observation that SCMC users tend to omit “unnecessary linguistic materials” for the sake of efficiency (p. 147). The participants in these dyads seemed to consider back channeling as wholly necessary for cooperatively constructing their dialogues.

Research Question #2

Through the use of a questionnaire, found in Appendix B, the second research question sought to investigate participants’ perceptions of Skype™ Chat as a SCMC tool. By electing a number on a Likert scale, where 1 indicated “strongly disagree” and 5 indicated “strongly agree,” participants responded to the statement, “Compared to other Internet instant messaging programs, like AOL, Inc. Instant Messenger or Gmail™ Chat, I think Skype™ Chat is a good instant messaging program,” (item 10 on the questionnaire). The mean response given by the twelve nonnative English-speaking responders was 3.92, with a standard deviation of .79. Although the responders seemed to respond positively concerning Skype™ Chat as a SCMC tool, when asked on item 21 of the questionnaire whether there were things about Skype™ Chat that participants preferred or disliked in comparison to other SCMC programs, several responders made references to SCMC programs that they preferred to Skype™ Chat, such as Yahoo!® Messenger or MSN® Messenger; these responders argued that they were more comfortable with these programs because more of their friends use these programs regularly for Internet chat. Nonetheless, a third of the responders answered that

they were unaware of positive or negative differences between Skype™ Chat and other SCMC programs.

Skype™ Chat and Noticing

The questionnaire also included items pertaining to whether Skype™ Chat was conducive to nonnative English-speaking participants' noticing their own errors, as well as errors committed by participants' interlocutors. This portion of the questionnaire (items 15-18), much like the portion addressing Skype™ Chat as compared to other instant messaging programs, employed the same Likert scale as that discussed above. The Likert-scaled items relevant to noticing of errors, and the mean responses and standard deviations are displayed in Table 4.4.

Table 4.4

Participants' Perceptions of Skype™ Chat and Noticing of Errors

Statement	Mean Response	Standard Deviation
"It was easier for me to notice errors in my English when I used Skype™ Chat than when I speak out loud."	3.67	.78
"If I noticed an error in my English, I corrected it by sending my partner another message with the correction."	4.17	.72
"When I used Skype™ Chat, it was easy for me to notice my partner's English errors."	4	.95
"If I noticed an error in my partner's English, I sent a message to make him or her aware of the error."	2.75	1.14

Interestingly, in terms of participants engaging in self-correction and interlocutor correction, participant responses to the second and fourth items in the table reflected what I observed in the transcripts: if inclined to make corrections at all, participants were much more likely to make self-corrections. This most likely can be attributable to the way in which the errors

participants noticed in the discourse of their interlocutors did not thwart the meaning of the discourse, and therefore did not affect task completion.

The responses selected by participants for the first and third items in the table indicate that they believed this medium of communication enhanced the saliency of errors, thereby making them more noticeable. The descriptive statistics relating to noticing were further supported by positive responses to the following open-ended question (item 22): “Do you believe that using an online instant messaging program like Skype™ Chat helped you to practice the English language in some way?” Responders seemed especially convinced of the value of being able to plan their communication, the graphic form of their communication, and the permanency of the dialogue they constructed with their interlocutors on Skype™ Chat. For example, one responder suggested that synchronous chat was an effective way to integrate new lexical items into his English because of the way in which he could go back in the dialogue to the point at which a lexical item was first used by his native-speaking interlocutor, so as to reread the item in context and ensure that he used it correctly in messages he was constructing. Responses such as this supported the foundational research concerning the benefits of using SCMC for interlanguage development due to the lessened pressure of the environment, along with the written form of the communication (Kitade, 2000; Lai & Zhao, 2006; Payne & Whitney, 2002; Pellettieri, 1999; Sykes, 2002; Tudini, 2003; Warschauer, 1997).

Research Question #3

The third research question, also addressed through use of the questionnaire found in Appendix B, sought to investigate participants’ perceptions of the role of the language background of their interlocutors. Using the same Likert scale as those discussed previously, participants responded to the statement (item 25), “I think my partner’s native language – either English or another language – affected my English language practice, either positively or negatively.” The mean response given by the twelve nonnative English-speaking responders was 3.75, with a standard deviation of .97. This suggests that, to a moderate level, the nonnative English-speaking participants believed that the native language of their interlocutor was of consequence to their own language production and practice during the Skype™ Chat sessions.

Interestingly, when asked in the questionnaire to explain whether they felt their partner's native language affected their English practice, and if so, whether that effect was positive or negative (item 27), those paired with fellow nonnative English-speakers generally communicated that they did not feel as though their partners' nonnative status hindered their own English language learning; one participant stated, "we can do the work together very well so I think my partner [does] not affect my English practice." However, this sentiment was not shared by all those paired with other nonnative English speakers; one participant asserted that his pairing with another nonnative speaker had a negative effect because he didn't "know if she/he used the right word, right [structure], or right meaning." This reveals that, at least on the part of this particular participant, there was some degree of wariness as to whether the task completions with another nonnative English-speaker were truly fruitful for his English language learning.

On the other hand, those paired with native English speakers delivered only positive feedback about their interactions and the way in which their interlocutor's native language affected their English practice. One such participant remarked that his interlocutor's standing as a native English speaker pushed him to "use correct sentences so that [his] partner [easily understood] what [he] wrote down." Although this response does not precisely reflect Kitade's (2000) notion that interaction with a native speaker produces "a self-comparison and internalization of rules by the NNS," it reveals the same underlying enhanced self-awareness suggested by Kitade (2000), which is attributed to the dynamic of communicating with an expert speaker. Another participant in an NS-NNS dyad made reference to helpful feedback given by the native speaker, stating, "the native language speaker [does] not have mistakes in her sentences and she always correct[ed] my mistakes, which is good." Though these corrections did not necessarily come about due to negotiations of meaning, this participant did not seem to mind that his interlocutor disrupted the flow of the communication in order to offer corrections for his English.

CHAPTER 5.

CONCLUSION

The present study provides a more substantive basis for the claim that the NNS-NNS dyad configuration is more fruitful than the NS-NNS dyad configuration in terms of negotiation of meaning and frequency of conversational turns. Although the data set for this study was too small to assert statistical significance for the findings, the findings nonetheless lend more credence to the suggestions made by past research and possess certain pedagogical implications. The qualitative findings also possess pedagogical implications due to the way in which they are able to offer a balanced perspective of the advantages associated with both the NNS-NNS and NS-NNS dyad configurations. While the study entailed certain limitations, these limitations inevitably bear valuable recommendations for future research; this chapter communicates these recommendations, as well as the pedagogical implications of the findings.

Implications

A narrow, more controlled comparison of the conversational turns resulting and negotiations of meaning arising from interactions between NNS-NNS dyads and NS-NNS dyads tentatively supports previous literature that suggests a greater volume of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning can generally be ascribed to NNS-NNS interactions; where earlier studies had not controlled for the task design, this study afforded control in that aspect. These findings advise the use of NNS-NNS dyads in L2 interactions specifically for the purpose of spurring the acquisition process of lexical items. Undoubtedly, from a practical standpoint, launching interactions among NNS-NNS dyads is much more feasible for the second language instructor than launching interactions among NS-NNS dyads, given that interlocutors beyond the bounds of the class need not be sought.

However, second language instructors should not discount the value of learner interactions with native speakers using a SCMC tool. In the present study, questionnaire responders paired with native speakers voiced a great deal of enthusiasm about the opportunity to engage with native speakers of the language and expressed the way in which their awareness of the native, or expert, status of their interlocutors pushed them to pay more attention to their own language use, as well as to the language use of their interlocutors.

Furthermore, the NS-NNS dyad configuration afforded language learners rare exposure to conversational English in a graphic form; this linguistic input, which most often occurs in an aural form, allows learners more time to process characteristics of the conversational, informal language, and thus, it is more likely that they will integrate the language into their own L2 output.

Given that the data set revealed only two more negotiations among NNS-NNS dyads than among NS-NNS dyads, the relevance of L2 interactions among NS-NNS dyads in relation to negotiation of meaning should not be disregarded. However, the jigsaw format for tasks might not be the most conducive for learner interaction with native speakers; jigsaw tasks as they were formulated in this study require a two-way exchange of information supplied to the dyad members, rather than a two-way exchange of information generated by the dyad members. This was done, in part, so as to control for as many aspects as possible outside of the actual interactions among the dyads. As such, the only true benefit of the interaction was language practice for the nonnative speaker; the native speakers received no benefits, nor were they given occasion to transmit any aspects of culture that might be of interest or consequence to the nonnative speakers. I suggest that there could be pedagogical value in pairing nonnative speakers with native speakers for tasks involving a two-way exchange of information generated by the interlocutors themselves; the tasks could be constructed purposefully for the exchange of cultural information, thereby allowing both interlocutors to engage in cultural learning, as well as lending the nonnative interlocutor the opportunity to be exposed to culture-specific lexical items that have not yet been acquired, which could give rise to negotiations.

The way in which negotiations solely stemmed from lexically induced breaches of communication, as opposed to grammatical or morphosyntactically induced breaches of communication, also serves to buttress previous findings concerning the lexical nature of the majority of negotiations in L2 interaction. Grammatical and morphosyntactic errors were simply not severe enough to provoke misunderstandings. Thus, while I cannot conclusively assert that L2 interaction using SCMC does not encourage the acquisition of grammatical or morphosyntactic structures in the L2, observable elements of acquisition of these structures is altogether absent from the present data set and is meager in past data sets (Blake, 2000;

Jepson, 2005; Kern, 1995; Kessler, 2009; Kitade, 2000; Lee, 2008; Pellettieri, 1999; Sotillo, 2000). The findings of this study in and of themselves do not advocate use of SCMC in an L2 for incidental acquisition of non-lexical structures; however, I propose that jigsaw tasks designed to target particular non-lexical structures, such as unreal conditionals, for example, might be fruitfully carried out using SCMC, providing opportunities for rehearsal of the targeted non-lexical structure and, more importantly, opportunities for producing contextualized output containing the targeted non-lexical structures.

In a broader sense, the transcripts of the Skype™ Chat sessions, along with responses from the questionnaires, persist in supporting the use of SCMC for the facilitation of L2 interaction; the multiple benefits put forth by interactionist theorists and CALL practitioners alike, which were expounded upon in Chapter 2, surfaced in some form throughout the collaboratively constructed dialogues. I noted numerous self-corrections, which indicate the presence of noticing on the part of the language learners; this was supported by participant responses to items on the questionnaire pertaining to noticing. Responses on the questionnaire also shed light on participants' appreciation of the inherent output planning opportunities present in SCMC, as well as the graphic form and permanency of the interactions. Lastly, with the exception of one NS-NNS dyad, the interactions were exemplified by a strong sense of cooperation and collaborative effort, in accordance with the framework for learning established by Vygotsky (1978).

In consideration of the use of Internet in this study, researchers have hailed the way in which the time- and location-independent characteristics of SCMC – especially in regions in which wireless Internet access is common – allow for learner autonomy to a greater extent than ever before (Blake, 2000; Sykes, 2002); this study certainly took advantage of the time- and location-independent characteristics of SCMC, given that native English-speaking participants accessed Skype™ remotely. Although the language learners did not experience these characteristics within this study, there are extensive possibilities for use of SCMC outside of the language-learning classroom. For example, instructors could assign task completion using SCMC for homework and ask students to follow the procedure employed in this study for cataloging the dialogues generated by dyads; this would allow for instructors to give marks for homework completion. Even beyond its value in course curricula,

interaction wrought through SCMC possesses great value for independent learner language development; this stresses the necessity for language learners to be instructed in how to exploit the abundant resources and tools available on the Internet – namely SCMC tools based in social networking sites.

Limitations

A central drawback to this study was the limited number of Skype™ Chat sessions in which participants engaged. Although the data collected from the three sessions were able to illuminate the kinds of interactions that different dyad configurations could be expected generate, the data set was too small in scope for me to be able to offer statements of significance pertaining to differences between the two dyad configurations in terms of resulting negotiations of meaning and conversational turns. Furthermore, the limited number of Skype™ Chat sessions hindered me from establishing task completion and communication patterns of certain dyads; while patterns could be faintly seen in some dyads across the three sessions, these patterns could have been elucidated and confirmed across more sessions. A clearer image of dyad interaction patterns, which I believe would have resulted from more Skype™ Chat sessions, could have allowed me to more confidently offer commentary as to underlying causes of the disparity between the conversational turn frequencies and negotiations of meaning put out by the different dyad configurations. With these considerations in mind, it is recommended that future research into dyad configurations allow for a more generous number of task completion sessions.

The thematic variation among the three different tasks employed may have also skewed the numbers of conversational turns and negotiations of meaning appearing in the transcripts of the Skype™ Chat sessions. Although each task adhered to the same basic framework – two-way exchange of information between interlocutors – the tasks varied in terms of lexical difficulty. The first task, which pertained to President Obama's tour of the world, contained lexical items highly specific to certain cultures and geographical locations, whereas the other two tasks, which pertained to a murder mystery and a comparison of celebrity schedules, contained more commonplace, widely employed lexical items. Tasks holding to a common theme might inherently hold to a common lexicon-difficulty level as

well, providing more control for researchers investigating conversational turns and negotiations of meaning between different dyad configurations.

Finally, though technology has undoubtedly expanded the possibilities of language learning and language research, the reality is that technology is far from being wholly dependable. The capricious side of technology revealed itself during the final task completion when the Skype™ server went down and participants were unable to communicate using the social networking tool for that particular session; although data collection was not completely obstructed due to the messaging option within the course management domain through which participants accessed task materials, the problem with Skype™ detracted significantly from the time interlocutors could spend exchanging information. The sheer popularity of Skype™, which I view as mostly profitable in stimulating learner motivation, might have actually become a limitation in this circumstance, given that the reason for the server failure could have been heavy usage. I recommend that future researchers and language instructors who employ social networking sites always maintain access to a backup instant messaging program so as to prevent total collapse of the activity.

Conclusion

Despite the limitations presented above, the findings of this study give greater consequence to previous findings surrounding the more numerous occurrences of negotiations of meaning in NNS-NNS dyads than in NS-NNS dyads. Furthermore, they provisionally support the benefits unique to using SCMC for interaction in an L2. Apart from the way in which this study speaks to inquiries concerning interaction in second language acquisition, it also offers valuable methodological considerations for future research; it communicates the importance of task design control so as to isolate causes for differences in interactions amongst NNS-NNS and NS-NNS dyads. At the same time, this study expresses the necessity in future research for a greater volume of SCMC sessions, which would allow for the possibility of stating statistical significance in the findings.

Given the qualitative findings in support of both types of dyad configurations, my endorsement for including interactions with both nonnative speakers and native speakers in language course content should resonate with instructors. While NNS-NNS dyads possess a

more natural propensity for collaborative language learning, NS-NNS dyads evoke a heightened degree of both motivation and attention to language use on the part of language learners; interactions among these two dyad configurations might have different ends, but their worth for language learning purposes and otherwise is irrefutable. Additionally, it should be noted that the research potential and language learning possibilities explored in this study hinge entirely upon the advancement of technology; without the proliferation of the Internet and subsequent synchronous computer mediated communication tools, researchers could not so readily get a glimpse into the second language acquisition process, nor could language learners so effortlessly engage in valuable interaction in the target language with native speakers and fellow learners alike. The positive findings of this study in relation to second language acquisition translate into a responsibility on the part of language instructors to exploit the numerous arenas for language learning supplied by the Internet and to, in turn, impart knowledge of these arenas to language learners in an effort to help them exert more agency in their own language education than those before them.

APPENDIX A.

JIGSAW TASKS

Jigsaw Task 1

Instructions

The United States president, Barack Obama, is spending a month traveling abroad to meet with the leaders of nine different countries. He has made it to eight of his destinations; he has one more stop to make before he completes his overseas diplomatic tour. You have two tasks: first, complete the travel schedule chart in your materials by determining which cities and countries the President visited on which dates; once you have completed the chart for the first eight destinations, you should be able to determine which location the President has yet to visit before he can return home to Washington, D.C.

Use a list of the nine cities and countries and the audio recordings of President Obama's personal journal, or diary, to successfully complete your tasks. The President never uses the names of cities and countries in his journal; he only gives clues as to where he has been. Your partner will listen to half of the audio recordings of his personal journal entries while you listen to the other half of the audio recordings of his personal journal entries. As you listen, make sure to take careful notes of the information you hear. Write down key words and ideas. Once you and your partner have finished listening, you must use Skype™ Chat to share the information you have gathered with your partner. Using the information each of you has collected, you must match locations with travel dates, and agree on the one city and country President Obama must visit to conclude his travels abroad.

Group A Listening Script

June 1 – I have officially begun my month of overseas travels! When my plane landed this morning after crossing the Atlantic Ocean, I felt so excited about finding an outdoor café at which to eat breakfast – I had been craving the pastries and other bakery items for which this country is famous. After eating breakfast, I went on a tour of the most famous art museum in the world. I especially loved seeing Leonardo DaVinci's "Mona Lisa" in person. This evening I plan to meet with the president and enjoy a glass of the country's most famous red wine.

June 12 – As my plane was landing in this beautiful city, I was amazed by the view of the Atlantic Ocean. I wish that it were warm enough to go for a swim – how strange to be in the middle of summer at my last destination, and to all of a sudden find myself in the middle of winter in this destination! Today I plan to go on a tour of Robben Island and see the place where so many people were imprisoned – people who simply desired for their race to have the freedom and rights enjoyed by white people. This city is a wonderful example of the progress that can be made when people fight for equality.

June 20 – After a long flight across the Pacific Ocean, it was so nice to look out the window of my plane and see the famous Opera House. I had seen views of the city several times on TV – especially when the city hosted the 2000 Summer Olympics – but it was so different to see the city in person. I must admit that one of the things that surprised me most when I first arrived in the city was hearing the English language being spoken all around me. It's been nearly three weeks since I've been in an English-speaking country!

June 23 – I am completely overwhelmed by all that there is to do in this city! I arrived here just in time to have one of the city's most famous dishes for lunch – Peking Duck. After eating all that I could and enjoying a glass of rice wine, I immediately asked the President if it might be possible for us to make a trip to a portion of the most massive wall ever constructed in all history. He told me that he planned for us to make the trip tomorrow, but for today, we were to visit the Forbidden City, the imperial palace of emperors from centuries ago. I had seen images of the Forbidden City during the 2008 Summer Olympics, but the pictures could not compare to seeing the city in person – the buildings seemed to never end!

Group B Listening Script

June 5 - Today I arrived in one of the most historic cities in the world. This city has been important to some of the largest world religions – Islam, Christianity and Judaism; in fact, it has been so important to people who practice these religions, that many people have died in wars fought over this city throughout history. Today there is no war; instead, there are beautiful buildings and people with a rich culture. Although this city is not on the Mediterranean Sea, I am really enjoying the amazing Mediterranean climate.

June 8 – After a plane ride of only a few hours, I landed in a city that has always interested people around the world. It's become a popular destination for many tourists because it's close to the famous tombs, or burial sites, of the rulers of the ancient civilization that once enjoyed prosperity here. I had planned to visit those tombs today, but this afternoon I was too interested in walking along the longest river in the world. It was so strange to see a river that flows North instead of South! The President has promised me a personal tour of one of the tombs tomorrow; this particular tomb is the only remaining structure of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World.

June 17 – Today I crossed the Atlantic Ocean for the second time this month, and found myself in the largest city in the Southern Hemisphere. I will be spending as much time as I can exploring the amazing rain forests that surround the city. The president of this country has much planned for us during the next couple of days: the majority of the country practices Catholicism, and so we will be attending the celebration of a Catholic holy day; we will also be visiting several of the sites that the country plans to use for hosting the 2014 FIFA World Cup. I think I will enjoy my stay here – I love hearing the beautiful Portuguese language spoken all around me.

June 26 – It was absolutely incredible to view the elaborate architecture of Eastern Orthodox churches and the colorful towers of the Kremlin, the seat of the country's government, as my plane landed in this huge city. During the drive from the airport to my hotel, it was incredible to me to think of all of the difficulties this city has faced. Because this country's government has been through a few major changes over the past 150 years – from the ruling of the tsars to communism to a representative democracy – the people of this city have seen much violence and hardship. I look forward to visiting with the President some of the sites mentioned in the works of one of my favorite authors, Leo Tolstoy.

Auxiliary Participant Materials**What is President Obama's Next Stop?****Destinations:**

Mecca, Saudi Arabia

Beijing, China

Paris, France

Moscow, Russia

Cape Town, South Africa

Sydney, Australia

Istanbul, Turkey

Sao Paolo, Brazil

Cairo, Egypt

Notes:**Travel Schedule:**

DATE OF ARRIVAL	DESTINATION
June 1	
June 5	
June 8	
June 12	
June 17	
June 20	
June 23	
June 26	
June 29	

Final Destination Personal Journal Entry:

Jigsaw Task 2

Instructions

Ten Iowans spent the evening at the Governor's Mansion in Des Moines last night. Iowa's leader, Governor Culver, had invited each of them in order to have dinner and to discuss some of the issues that face the state of Iowa. Unfortunately, right after dinner, Governor Culver had to leave for an emergency meeting. However, his leaving did not keep the guests from enjoying each other's company – many had not known each other before the party, and so they spent time getting to know each other while making themselves comfortable in the Governor's Mansion. It seemed like the perfect dinner party, but the night ended with a terrible event -one of the guests, Wally Shamburger, was murdered! Nobody else was in the mansion besides the ten guests on the guest list, which means that it had to have been one of the guests who murdered Warren Shamburger.

You are one of the two police detectives working to solve this murder. You interviewed five of the guests and your partner interviewed the other five of the guests. You must listen to the recordings of the interviews in the audio file and take notes over what you hear in the chart given to you. Write down key words and ideas. Once you have finished listening to your interviews and your partner has finished listening to his or her interviews, you must use Skype™ Chat to share the information you have gathered with your partner.

Use the chart that has been given to you to write down where each person was and what they were doing throughout the evening. This information is called an *alibi*, or the explanation given by a person to communicate that he or she was somewhere else at the time a crime was committed. There is a space in the chart for you to write the name of somebody who can confirm that the alibi, or explanation, is true. Each alibi must be confirmed by one other person; if there is an alibi that nobody can confirm, the person who gave the alibi should be suspected of the murder.

You and your partner must decide who murdered Wally and determine what time he was murdered. Then you must create a story together to explain why Wally was murdered. The story must explain the motive, or the reason that the killer did not want Wally to be alive. It should be at least five sentences long.

Group A Listening Script

My name is Leigh Reid, and I absolutely did not murder Wally! Right after the governor left for his meeting at 8:30, Chris Rodsies and I decided to play some card games. Of course, I won every game, and so after an hour, he no longer wanted to play. At 9:30, I started to feel hungry and went into the kitchen, where I found Joe Coal eating some dessert. I got a plate of dessert, too, and we ate and had some good conversation until 10:30, when I went outside to join Eliza Murphy in the hot tub. The water was much too hot, however, and so at 11, I went back inside and began to sing karaoke with Manny Pinson. To be honest, Manny is not a very good singer, and so I was relieved when Wally's body was found shortly after 11 and the police were called, because I didn't want to have to hear Manny sing another song. But that doesn't mean that I'm glad Wally's dead or anything...

My name is Jay Law, and just because I was in the Governor's Mansion when Wally was killed, doesn't mean that I killed him! From 8:30 until 9:30, I sipped an excellent glass of Pinot Noir wine with Emma Lewis, while discussing my travels through California wine country. Then at 9:30, Emma and I wandered into the art gallery of the Governor's Mansion, where we found Manny Pinson examining a modern painting. After spending half an hour with them in the art gallery, I walked to the living room, where I played cards with Katherine Deano from 10 until 11. Then at 11, Eliza Murphy convinced me to show her the girls that I thought were pretty on Facebook – she's trying to find me a girlfriend, but honestly, I think I can find one without searching through Facebook. It was at this time that the police arrived because Wally's body had been discovered.

My name is Joe Coal, and I think it's such a pity that poor Wally was murdered! After the governor left at 8:30, I joined Katherine Deano on the front porch to do a little dancing – she and I actually met in a ballroom dancing class, so we wanted to practice our dance moves. I got really hungry after dancing for an hour, so at 9:30 I went to the kitchen where I ate some dessert with Leigh Reid and we talked about different things. Leigh left after an hour, but I stayed in the kitchen, and at 10:30 I began to help Emma Lewis with preparing a late night snack for the other guests. I would have stayed to help her finish the snack, but at 11 Allie Cluck invited me to go look at the stars with her on the second-story

balcony of the mansion – of course I wanted to look at stars with a beautiful girl! I was on the balcony with Allie when Wally’s body was found.

My name is Manny Pinson. It’s a real tragedy that Wally was killed tonight. Poor guy. I started the evening off at 8:30 by playing pool with Patch Williams. He beat me at pool in no time, and so at 9:00 I convinced Allie Cluck to go explore the basement with me. But she became frightened by the dark very quickly, and so we went back upstairs at 9:30. Then, at 9:30, I went to the art gallery, and was looking at a beautiful painting when Jay Law and Emma Lewis came in, and we began looking at the art together. Although I really like art, I became bored after half an hour, and so at 10:00 I went to the music room where I found Chris Rodsies taking a nap. I felt sleepy, too, so I slept from 10 until 11. I woke up with lots of energy, and so I found Leigh Reid and sang karaoke with her until we received the news that Wally had been killed.

My name is Patch Williams, and it’s true – I was in the Governor’s Mansion when Wally was murdered. After the governor left for his emergency meeting at 8:30, I challenged Manny Pinson to a game of pool. I happen to be an excellent pool player, and so by 9:00, I’d beaten him and had wandered into the library to look through some of the books with Eliza Murphy. Although the governor has a wide selection of books, I couldn’t find any that interested me, so at 9:30 I went to the music room to play piano with Katherine Deano. She seemed to prefer to play the piano by herself, however, and so after just half an hour, at 10, I went into the kitchen to help Emma Lewis prepare a late night snack for the other guests. She ended up cooking a complicated dish, and after half an hour of helping her, at 10:30, I took a walk through the hallways with Allie Cluck. At one point, Allie and I heard a gunshot, but we didn’t really think anything of it - I don’t know why. Once Emma finished preparing the late night snack, I convinced her to go explore the basement with me. While we were in the basement, we found Wally’s body and called the police.

Group B Listening Script

My name is Eliza Murphy, and I am just so upset that Wally was murdered! I can tell you that I had no reason to murder him, and I spent the entire evening with the other guests, so they can tell you that I didn’t murder him. Right after the governor left for his meeting at 8:30, I went to the music room and played the piano while Allie Cluck listened. At 9, Patch

Williams convinced me to explore the library with him. After thirty minutes of looking at books, I became bored, and all I wanted to do was jump on the beds in the upstairs bedrooms of the Governor's Mansion. Allie wanted to jump on the beds, too, and we ended up jumping on the beds from 9:30 until 10:30! Please don't tell Governor Culver that I was jumping on his beds! At 10:30, my body was tired from jumping, so Leigh Reid and I went outside to sit in the hot tub. After half an hour, at 11, I joined Jay Law in the living room to look at pictures on Facebook of girls he wants to date. We were on Facebook when we got the news that Wally had been killed.

My name is Chris Rodsies, and I feel bad that Wally was murdered, but I really don't have time to do a long interview. I played cards with Leigh Reid from 8:30 until 9:30, which really wasn't very fun. She thought she was really good at the card games, but I was really letting her win. Once I became bored with playing cards at 9:30, I went to the music room to play piano while Manny Pinson listened. After half an hour of playing the piano, I became tired, and I realized that Manny had fallen asleep while I was playing the piano. So I fell asleep in one of the chairs in the music room and the two of us slept from 10 until 11. Once I woke up at 11, I wandered into the dining room, where Katherine Deano and I began to have a political conversation about the upcoming elections. We were interrupted with the news that Wally had been murdered. That's all I have to say – clearly, I'm not the murderer.

My name is Allie Cluck, and I'm so surprised that Wally was murdered tonight! Who would want to kill him?! Anyways, I can tell you that from 8:30 until 9, I sat in the music room and listened while Eliza Murphy played the piano. Then at 9, I decided to go explore the basement with Manny Pinson. But the basement was so dark and it really scared me, so I left the basement at 9:30 to go to the upstairs bedrooms to jump on the beds with Eliza. We jumped on the beds for a whole hour – please don't tell the governor we were jumping on his beds! Once we were tired of jumping at 10:30, I walked around some of the hallways with Patch Williams, and while we were walking, we heard a gunshot, but we thought that maybe somebody had decided to go hunting. I became bored of being indoors, and so at the end of the night, at 11, I invited Joe Coal to look at the stars with me on the balcony. That's where we were when we received the terrible news of Wally's murder.

My name is Katherine Deano, and I just cannot believe that Wally is dead! After eating a lovely dinner, at 8:30, I joined Joe Coal on the front porch to practice the dance moves we've been learning in our ballroom dancing class. We danced for about an hour, and then at 9:30, I went into the music room to play duets on the piano with Patch Williams. Sadly, we only knew a few piano songs that two people can play together, so we left the music room after only half an hour, at 10. I joined Jay Law in the living room for about an hour of card games. Jay taught me some really fun card games, but by eleven, I was tired of playing cards, and so I met up with Chris Rodsies in the dining room, where we began to have a conversation about politics. We were talking about politics when we were interrupted by discovery of Wally's body.

My name is Emma Lewis, and I just want you to find Wally's murderer as soon as possible! After our delicious dinner, at 8:30, I joined Jay Law for a glass of extraordinary Pinot Noir wine, and listened to him tell all about the knowledge of wine that he gained when he traveled through California wine country. At 9:30, Jay and I went to the art gallery, where we found Manny Pinson already looking at the governor's collection of paintings. After half an hour, at 10, I became hungry, and decided that I'd try to cook a late night snack using a new recipe I'd found. Because I'd never cooked this snack before, it took me an entire hour – Patch Williams helped me cook from 10 until 10:30, and then Joe Coal helped me finish cooking from 10:30 until 11. Once I got the snack in the oven, Patch convinced me to go downstairs to explore the basement. I was already scared of the basement, but then I became truly horrified when we found Wally's body.

Auxiliary Participant Materials

Who Murdered Wally Shamburger?

Guest List

Allie Cluck
Manny Pinson
Eliza Murphy
Joe Coal
Lee Reid
Jay Law
Patch Williams

Emma Lewis
Chris Rodsies
Katherine Deano

Group 1 Interviews:

LEE REID

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was she doing to make it impossible for her to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with her story to show that she's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30	Playing card games	Chris Rodsies
9:00	Playing card games	Chris Rodsies
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

JAY LAW

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was he doing to make it impossible for him to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with his story to show that he's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		

11:00		
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JOE COAL

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was he doing to make it impossible for him to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with his story to show that he's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

MANNY PINSON

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was he doing to make it impossible for him to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with his story to show that he's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

PATCH WILLIAMS

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was he doing to make it impossible for him to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with his story to show that he's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

Group 2 Interviews:**ELIZA MURPHY**

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was she doing to make it impossible for her to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with her story to show that she's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30		
9:00		
9:30	Jumping on beds, upstairs bedrooms	Allie Cluck
10:00	Jumping on beds, upstairs bedrooms	Allie Cluck
10:30		
11:00		

CHRIS RODSIES

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was he doing to make it</i>	ALIBI SUPPORTER
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	<i>impossible for him to murder Wally at this time?)</i>	<i>(Whose story agrees with his story to show that he's telling the truth?)</i>
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

ALLIE CLUCK

TIME	ALIBI <i>(What was she doing to make it impossible for her to murder Wally at this time?)</i>	ALIBI SUPPORTER <i>(Whose story agrees with her story to show that she's telling the truth?)</i>
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

KATHERINE DEANO

TIME	ALIBI <i>(What was she doing to make it impossible for her to murder Wally at this time?)</i>	ALIBI SUPPORTER <i>(Whose story agrees with her story to show that she's telling the truth?)</i>
8:30		

9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

EMMA LEWIS

TIME	ALIBI (<i>What was she doing to make it impossible for her to murder Wally at this time?</i>)	ALIBI SUPPORTER (<i>Whose story agrees with her story to show that she's telling the truth?</i>)
8:30		
9:00		
9:30		
10:00		
10:30		
11:00		

Why was Wally murdered?

Create a story with your partner to explain why Wally was murdered. The story must explain the motive, or the reason that the killer did not want Wally to be alive. It should be at least five sentences long.

Jigsaw Task 3

Instructions

Since the release of their recent film, “The Tourist,” Johnny Depp and Angelina Jolie have been even more busy than usual. Even though both actors have been famous for several years, the film caused their popularity to rise around the world; both Johnny and Angelina have decided to use their popularity to help people in need. They believe that, because they are popular, if they volunteer to help people in need, then others will want to volunteer to help people in need. Therefore, Johnny and Angelina have been filling their schedules with work for many different charitable organizations. Sometimes they work together, and sometimes they work separately. Today, they will mostly be working separately, but they will work together for one hour.

You and your partner are working for a newspaper editor who wants to write a story about the work Johnny and Angelina will be doing together today, but you cannot find any information about when or at what charitable organization they will be working. You only have their individual schedules for the day. You have access to one of their schedules, and your partner has access to the other’s schedule; Johnny and Angelina’s personal assistant created these schedules in audio format, and they are contained in the audio file at the top of the box. You must listen to the schedules, taking note of key words and phrases, and compare the information you have with the information that your partner has. Find the hour when Johnny and Angelina will be volunteering together and find the place where they will be volunteering together. Then, you and your partner must work together to write the newspaper article about the volunteer work that Johnny and Angelina do together.

Group A Listening Script

From eight o’clock until nine o’clock in the morning, Johnny will do his morning routine, which includes having breakfast with his kids and taking them to school on his way to his first appointment of the day. At nine o’clock, he will visit a local market and give a short speech on why it is important to purchase products from small farms in the region. At ten o’clock, Johnny will go to one of the Hollywood film studios to meet with the director of the next film in which he will be acting. At eleven o’clock, after he has finished discussing his next acting job, Johnny will visit the Boys and Girls’ Club of Los Angeles, where he will

play basketball with children who come from families that don't have much money. After he has played basketball for an hour, at noon, Johnny will take a break for lunch. At one o'clock, he will be busy again doing volunteer work, because he will visit a local nursing home in order to read to the elderly living there. At two o'clock, he will go to the hospital to visit and play with ill children who enjoyed his movie, "Pirates of the Caribbean." At three o'clock, he will go to a local school for Hispanic children who need help learning English; he enjoys allowing the children to practice their English speaking with him. At four o'clock, he will take his own children to the park to play on the playground. At five o'clock, he will go to the animal shelter, and choose a homeless dog to walk. After that, he will return home to spend time with his family.

Group B Listening Script

From eight o'clock until nine o'clock, Angelina will be getting her kids ready for school – this includes waking them up, giving them breakfast, and making sure they've brushed their teeth. At nine o'clock, Angelina will go to the gym, where she runs on the treadmill for half an hour everyday, and then quickly showers. At ten o'clock, Angelina will visit an orphanage, or a home for children who don't have parents; she will give a short speech about the joy she has experienced from adopting her children. At eleven o'clock, Angelina will visit the Los Angeles City Hall to discuss with the mayor her wishes of building an art school for children who come from poorer homes in Los Angeles. At twelve o'clock, Angelina will go to the hospital to visit some of the sick children and read books to them. At one o'clock, Angelina will take a break from her busy schedule in order to eat lunch and take a nap. After she's awoken from her short nap, at two o'clock, Angelina will go to the Boys and Girls' Club of Los Angeles and where she will paint and draw pictures with kids who come from families without much money. At three o'clock, Angelina will go to a local school for Hispanic children who need help learning English; she enjoys allowing the children to practice their English speaking with her. She won't be able to stay at the school for very long, though, because at four o'clock she must pick her children up from school and take them to a neighbor's house to play. Finally, at five o'clock, Angelina will go to see her aunt in a nearby nursing home, and she will have tea with her aunt and her aunt's friends.

Auxiliary Participant Materials

Johnny Depp's Personal Schedule for March 30, 2011

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY
8:00 AM		
9:00 AM		
10:00 AM		
11:00 AM		
12:00 PM		
1:00 PM		
2:00 PM		
3:00 PM		
4:00 PM		
5:00 PM		

Angelina Jolie's Personal Schedule for March 30, 2011

TIME	PLACE	ACTIVITY
8:00 AM		
9:00 AM		
10:00 AM		
11:00 AM		
12:00 PM		
1:00 PM		

2:00 PM		
3:00 PM		
4:00 PM		
5:00 PM		

NEWS ARTICLE:

APPENDIX B.

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Participant,

Thank you for your time and willingness to participate in this study. Please understand that although this is a voluntary study, your cooperation will be greatly appreciated. This survey should take about 20 minutes to complete. There will be no further surveys.

The purpose of this survey is to find out the participant beliefs of the use of Skype™ Chat as a communication tool for practicing the English language.

The information supplied in this survey is anonymous. If you have any questions relating to any aspect of the study, please feel free to contact me. The results of the study could also be made available to you upon request.

Thank you,

Mallory Dalton, MA Candidate, TESL/Applied Linguistics, Iowa State University

The Use of Skype™ Chat for English Language Communication

SECTION 1: Biographical Information

Please complete the following questions.

1. Your sex: Male Female
2. Your age: _____
3. Your native language: _____
4. Time spent in a country in which English is the first language: _____ months.
5. Years of formal English instruction: _____
6. Have you used Skype™ Chat before this course: Yes No

SECTION 2: General Aspects of Skype™ Chat

Please circle your level of agreement with each statement on a scale of 1(I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

Number	1	2	3	4	5
Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

7.	I found it easy to log in to Skype™.	1	2	3	4	5
8.	It was easy to find my partner on Skype™ and add them as a contact.	1	2	3	4	5
9.	I didn't have any trouble beginning Skype™ Chat with my partner.	1	2	3	4	5
10.	Compared to other Internet instant messaging programs, like AOL, Inc. Instant Messenger or Gmail™ Chat, I think Skype™ Chat is a good instant messaging program.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 3: Skype™ Chat and Communication in English

Please circle your level of agreement with each statement on a scale of 1(I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

Number	1	2	3	4	5
Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

11.	Using an instant messaging program like Skype™ Chat was a good way to practice my English.	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Using an instant messaging program like Skype™ Chat was a good way to practice speaking English.	1	2	3	4	5
13.	I plan to use an instant messaging program like Skype™ Chat to practice speaking English in the future.	1	2	3	4	5
14.	I plan to use an instant messaging program like Skype™ Chat to practice my English in the future.	1	2	3	4	5

15.	It was easier for me to notice errors in my English when I used Skype™ Chat than when I speak out loud.	1	2	3	4	5
16.	If I noticed an error in my English, I corrected it by sending my partner another message with the correction.	1	2	3	4	5
17.	When I used Skype™ Chat, it was easy for me to notice my partner's English errors.	1	2	3	4	5
18.	If I noticed an error in my partner's English, I sent a message to make him or her aware of the error.	1	2	3	4	5
19.	There were times when I couldn't understand what my partner was telling me on Skype™ Chat.	1	2	3	4	5
20.	If I couldn't understand a message sent by my partner, I let him or her know.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 4: User Behavior™

21. Do you find Skype™ Chat *similar to* or *different from* other online instant messaging programs, such as AOL, Inc. Instant Messenger or Gmail™ Chat? Compared to the other programs, are there things about Skype™ Chat that you *prefer* or *dislike*? Please explain your answers. _____

22. Do you believe that using an online instant messaging program like Skype™ Chat helped you to practice the English language in some way? Please explain why or why not.

SECTION 5: Tasks and Partners

Please circle your level of agreement with each statement on a scale of 1(I strongly disagree) to 5 (I strongly agree).

Number	1	2	3	4	5
Statement	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree

23.	As the weeks passed by, I became more comfortable with the tasks.	1	2	3	4	5
24.	As the weeks passed by, I became more comfortable communicating with my Skype™ Chat partner.	1	2	3	4	5
25.	I think my partner's native language – either English or another language – affected my English language practice, either positively or negatively.	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION 6: User Impressions

26. Did you notice a change in your comfort with the tasks or with your partner between the first week of completing the communication task and the last week of completing the communication task? Why or why not? _____

27. Do you feel that your partner's native language affected – negatively or positively – your English practice? Please explain why or why not.

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