

**LEARNING THROUGH SHARING :
OPEN RESOURCES, OPEN PRACTICES, OPEN COMMUNICATION**

Out-of-class language learning through CMC:

Creating a system for face-to-face interaction using open practices

Nathan P. Krug

Saitama University

Abstract

Computer-mediated communication (CMC) provides tremendous potential and versatility for language learning in the foreign language context where, typically, learners scarcely have opportunities to interact using the second language (L2) in authentic situations. However, major challenges for many learning institutions include the setting up of systems or the allocation of resources for CMC-based learning tasks, especially those tasks which occur outside of or in addition to the language classroom. As a means of providing an alternative or one possible solution to some of these difficulties, this presentation will outline the creation and design of a straight-forward CMC-based language exchange system for English as a foreign language (EFL) students at a university in Japan. The system makes use of open resources which are readily available to educators the world over. In addition, this presentation will demonstrate one approach to incorporating learner-generated content into language curricula, focusing here on learning opportunities which occur out of the traditional language classroom environment and, at a later date, incorporating elements of the interactions into classroom language learning tasks. In doing so, this presentation will make the point that educators and learning institutions ought to examine the possibility of using technology to provide additional opportunities for students to practice a variety of types of interaction, including conversation-for-learning. After all, it is known that both 'ordinary conversation' (e.g., the locus of interaction in this project) and 'institutional talk' (e.g., classroom interaction) each provide important opportunities for language learning (Markee, 2000). Specifically, this presentation will outline participant selection and organization, the software utilized, the tasks students engaged in, the management of data collection, data transcription, and any relevant preliminary findings arrived at through conversation analytic techniques. Importantly, student reactions to the language exchange system will also be discussed, indicating that students overwhelmingly enjoy and find rewarding CMC-based language learning tasks that incorporate 'non-formal institutional talk' (Drew and Heritage, 1992).

References:

Drew, P., and Heritage, J. (Eds.) (1992). *Talk at work: Interaction in institutional settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Markee, N. P. (2000). *Conversation analysis*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
