Abstract for CALL conference

Willingness to Communicate Online--Asian students in a cross-cultural English learning project

Recently, web-based collaborative projects designed for educational purposes have become prevalent. Factors affecting communicative competence in second language (L2) learning are believed to directly influence the outcome of these programs. McIntyre’s (2007) willingness to communicate (WTC) model emerged from a concern with the functions of L2 use. In the WTC model, perceived L2 competence and anxiety affect willingness to communicate, ultimately impacting frequency of communication. However, the success of a web-based English project is also partially affected by levels of computer-mediated competence. Spitzberg (2006) proposed the computer-mediated communication competence (CMC) model as a scale measuring individual success using the computer and subsequent perceived competence. Motivation and knowledge based on individual CMC build on the learner’s skills of online communication; when applied to media and message, influenced by contextual factors, these factors would contribute to communicative competence. The purpose of this research is to examine and compare student achievement in an online collaborative program, implemented through a web-based environment, with a sample of 300 university students in Taiwan, Japan, and South Korea. McIntyre’s WTC (2007) and Spitzberg’s CMC (2006) are adapted and combined to consider both L2 and computer competence variables. Analyses support a model in which both L2 and computer competence are critical determinants of a successful web-based project. (word count:209)

Keywords: computer-mediated communicative competence, willingness to communicate, communicative competence, collaborative learning, Asian students

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