
INSIGHTS TO YOUNG ADULT SINGAPOREAN CHINESE LEARNERS E-LEARNING EXPERIENCE COMPARED TO THEIR CLASSROOM LEARNING EXPERIENCE

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Abstract

This descriptive case study involved 20 young adult Singaporean Chinese students in a two-month Speakers’ Program (offered as blended learning) in a polytechnic in Singapore. The research question was “How were young adult Singaporean Chinese polytechnic students experiencing E-learning?” It attempted compare their online experience with their face-to-face experience. The study included a cultural dimension as it was surmised that the students’ culture might influence their learning experience. The participants were provided a variety of tasks online and face-to-face learning situations, and given opportunities to interact with the online content, each other and their training team (comprising an SA Trainer and seniors). Data was collected from three sources: their online discussion board contributions, home pages and email messages to the SA Trainer; observations of their behaviour during the face-to-face sessions in various interactive situations; and, individual and group interviews. Their online and face-to-face interaction patterns were compared. The findings suggest that the students’ culture at the national and ethnic levels had some influence on their behaviour online as well as face-to-face learning situations, but much depended on the learning context. Culture at the cyber level seemed to have less of an influence on online interaction.
INTRODUCTION

The online learning environment provides a new learning experience; it is vastly different from the face-to-face learning experience. Online learning is accessible 24/7 to anyone with network capabilities. Learning in the online or virtual environment is without face-to-face contact unless there is real time video conferencing. Learning online takes place through interaction with the materials and other participants (Garrison & Anderson, 2002; Moore, 1989).

Singaporeans who have grown up in highly networked Singapore with the widespread use of technology in everyday life (Corbett & Wong, 1999) and the schools (Hung, Tan, & Chen, 2003) would invariably be influenced by cyber culture. For instance, younger Singaporeans, namely single males in between the ages of 15 and 24, with at least junior college education and an income of $2000, were found to be the most E-orientated in Singapore (Kau, Kwon, Tambyah, & Tan, 2004). However, it is not known if the online behaviour of techno-savvy learners is similar to the behaviour in face-to-face learning situations or different, and if so, how.

Culture is known to influence how learners interact in the classroom (Hofstede, 1994) and their preference for certain teaching methodologies (Marquardt & Kearsley, 1999). Culture has been known to influence online learners in many areas: motivation (Lim, 2004), learning outcomes (Edmundson, 2004), reactions of first, second and foreign language learners (Treuhaft, 2000), user interface and usability (Adeoye, 2004; Evers, 2002). As it was surmised that the learners’ culture might influence the behaviour of Singaporeans in both online and face-to-face learning contexts, this study was viewed through cultural lenses.
Theoretical Framework

The study was based on two constructs: learning and culture (see Figure 1 below). Culture is said to exist at different levels (Marquardt & Kearsley, 1999; Trompenaars, 1993), the influence of culture at the national, ethnic and cyber levels were selected. While culture was assumed to influence the online learner online as well as face-to-face learning situations, only interaction online and in face-to-face situations would be studied.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

The research question was “How were young adult Singaporean Chinese polytechnic students experiencing E-learning?” This study was part of a larger study which considered how the students were learning and interacting, what they found enjoyable, effective and enjoyable, and what they would like enhanced (Fang, 2006). Only their behaviour in the online and face-to-
face learning environments would be reported in this paper. As the influence of three levels of culture was considered for the study, the following selection criteria for participants were used: Singaporeans, born in Singapore, lived in Singapore, and educated in Singapore national schools (National Culture); Chinese, any dialect group (Ethnic Culture); and younger Singaporeans who had been exposed to widespread use of computers in school, at home (Cyber Culture).

LITERATURE REVIEW

National Culture

Only two of Hofstede’s (1994) dimensions of culture, power distance and collectivism were considered in the study. Power distance influences how students regard their teachers, and it determines the type of learning environment. For instance, when there is large power distance, teachers are treated with respect, especially the older ones; they are considered “gurus”; they have personal wisdom; the educational process is teacher-centered; and students only speak up when invited and never criticize teachers. The converse applies to small power distance situations (Hofstede, 1994).

Students from collectivistic cultures are more reluctant to speak up in class. Instead, they try to preserve harmony and maintain ‘face.’ On the other hand, students in individualist cultures expect to be treated equally and fairly regardless of their backgrounds. Confrontations and open discussion of conflicts is often considered salutary and face-consciousness is weak or non-existent (Hofstede, 1994). Despite the existence of high power distance, (Hofstede, 1994) Singaporeans value warmth and relationships, but do not necessarily desire to belong to certain groups (Kau et al., 2004)
**Ethnic culture (Chinese)**

The Chinese place more emphasis on group over individual life, subsuming individual interests under group interests. Social harmony is valued over the exercise of individual rights. The understanding of “human feeling” or “face” is especially critical to understanding personal, corporate, ethnic and national identities among East Asian Chinese (Irwin, 1996).

**Cyber culture**

The digital, Internet or cyber culture which has changed our social, political and economic lives (Albarran & Goff, 2000; Khoon, 1999; Kiesler, 1997) allows millions to be part of a global virtual community (Bell, 2001; Gibbs & Krause, 2000; Negroponte, 1995). Learners comfortable with the latest Internet technology and cyber culture, having embraced the telemetric world, can easily adjust to the 24 hour, multi-dimensional, global view of the world and are capable of learning when they want to, where they want to, and at their own time and pace (Harking, Turner, & Dawn, 2001). A new cyber form of communication with its emoticons and netiquette has emerged, and for new net-generation adolescents, new friendships are built online; and cyber families and friends exist together (Tapscott, 1998).

**Online interaction**

Interaction with online materials results in the change in learners’ understanding, perspective, or the cognitive structures of the learners’ mind. Online interactions with the instructor (the expert) allows for the presentation of information, demonstration of skill or modelling of certain attitudes and values, and the shaping of learning. In huge classes, online interactions with other learners at the group level can lead to learning (Moore, 1989).
Chinese Learners

For the Chinese, classroom behaviour serves to maintain face and prevent shame. For instance, students “lose face” for misconduct and poor performance (Chan, 1999). That explains the passive and compliant behaviour of Chinese students in class performance (Biggs & Watkins, 1996). As Chinese culture values modesty, Chinese students in the past would regard themselves “not worthy before their teachers”. This causes students not to express their true opinions so as not to embarrass or offend others. As teachers are highly respected, they are the deciding authority and power on what knowledge to teach. Students readily accept the information and rarely question or challenge teachers in the classroom (Chan, 1999).

Online, Chinese students are more comfortable communicating in a smaller group as there is more trust (Tu, 2001, 2005); this “inner circle” in the Chinese culture provides care and protection (Bond, 1991). Over time as they become better acquainted, more would be incorporated into the inner circle. Chinese learners have been known to avoid confrontation as well (Tu, 2005).

Singaporean Learners

Studies have identified some online characteristics of the Singaporeans learner. They have been found to be quiet, do not ask questions, reluctant to keep discussion threads, task orientated, and prefer information acquisition to constructivism (Hew & Cheung, 2003; Myint & Yeap, 2004). Critical thought (Myint & Yeap, 2004) and creative thought (Soo, 2003) were observed to be lacking, and tended to be more collectivist in online communication (Tan, Wei, Watson, Clapper, & McLean, 1998).
METHOD

The study involved 20 young adult Singaporean Chinese learners who were enrolled in a two-month Speakers’ Program (offered as blended learning) in a polytechnic in Singapore. Hence, a single case study approach was used (Yin, 2002). Because it aimed to capture the learners’ experience, the emic, a qualitative descriptive study (Merriam, 1998) was conducted.

Learners were provided a variety of tasks online and in class and given opportunities to interact with the content, each other, their SA Tutor and eight Student Ambassadors. Data came from three sources: their online work, observation of their behaviour in the classroom and lecture theatre, and the individual and group interviews. Their online discussion board contributions, home pages and email messages to the SA Tutor were collected. Online interactions, which were the number of times the trainees responded to the materials and activities, each other and the SA Training team and the manner in which they responded, were analysed. Their classroom behaviour in various interactive situations were also noted, analysed and compared to their online behaviour. Individual interviews at the beginning of the program and group interviews (comprising the four members of each project team) at the end of the program were conducted to understand the participants as learners and explain how they chose to interact, with whom, their reasons. The data from the three sources was then triangulated.

FINDINGS

The behaviour resulting from online and face-to-face interactions are reported here. There are with the content, participants and SA Training team (SA Trainer, Student Ambassadors who also acted as online coaches and online chat leaders).
Online Interaction

The participants seemed generally quiet online. Closer examination revealed how sensitive they were to the learning environments. Their behaviour depended on the size of the group and type of activity. A total of five interaction patterns and four levels of chattiness were identified.

With content

The participants proved to be obedient learners, reading their materials and dutifully attempting the online tasks. They never questioned the need for any assignment, as they trusted the SA Trainer’s instructions and usually did what they were told to do, namely, to follow instructions. While completing assignments was the norm, the participants responded according to their perception of what was important, regardless of whether they responded as an individual, pair or group. Their online submission rates ranged from 100% - 80% for what seemed to them essential work to below 50% for what seemed to be more optional activities, which involved the provision of advice and spontaneous sharing.

Generally, there would be a slow start for each activity, especially those at the beginning of the program. Participants would submit their work in the later part of the teaching week, and beyond, often in the early hours of the morning. The rate tended to increase exponentially after the first submission because they waited for someone to be the first to respond, and to be sure that they were on the right track.

The tone of submissions varied, from serious to playful, from confident to hesitant. Submissions for the general assignments reflected a serious tone, written in Standard Singapore English, and carefully answered. There were times when they responded in a playful way. For instance, they
were surprisingly open when disclosing their personal aspects of their lives; e.g., interests, hobbies, contact numbers, personal numbers, zodiac signs, birth date and sounded eager to meet others. While each participant had an “official” electronic photo taken, many used photos from their private collection. Three used Japanese comics personas instead. One included music for his home page, while another included trees and stars in the background. They generally exuded vigor and creativity in their subject headings.

There were times when the participants sounded hesitant, more noticeably at the beginning of the program. When it came to forming groups, online submissions was an initial silence when they were asked to submit their event-planning sheet and storyboard for their presentation. Towards the end of the program, the participants gained more confidence. More personal responses were submitted e.g reflections as to how they did as a group.

*With Other Trainees*

Generally, the trainees claimed that they were too shy to interact with each other online (in public) and hence their interaction ranged from non-existent to moderate. There were moments where interaction was promising. Successful interaction took place during the “Introduction” discussion thread. Out of the 73 submissions in the “Introduction” discussion thread, 27% of the initial submissions were from participants and 36% of the responses were to each other. They responded to whom they knew well, for instance, most messages were addressed to 60% of the participants, those who formed their inner circle. Their tone was extremely relaxed, friendly and warm, laced with a social agenda. They communicated to those they were intending to work with for their project. There were attempts at establishing group cohesiveness with comments
like “looking forward to working with you in the group.” Apart from generating a feeling of inclusion, there were forays at reaching out, for example, repeated good wishes to know the others better. Others, targeted at specific individuals, referred to common interests and invitations to chat, resulting in a few chatting privately on MSN. The activity that generated spontaneous interaction was the Organized Online Chat using the Blackboard 6 chat facility. This was held on campus in a free-access laboratory, just before the face-to-face class. The SA Trainer was deliberately absent from this activity. The participants, placed in two chat groups, had no problems interacting with those from other groups and their Online Chat Leaders, Student Ambassadors they had met for the first time minutes before the chat. Each SA Online Chat Leader had faithfully followed instructions and a set of questions from the SA Trainer and was able to guide their group skilfully though the chat; yet, the participants were often unfocused, distracted and chatted with abandon.

There were occasions when the participants were uncomfortable commenting on the individual participants’ work in public. They either avoided the issue or circumvented it. Because they were not familiar with each other, they were wary about hurting others. They were worried about the impact of their comments, as they were unable to “read” their reactions in the absence of face-to-face contact. When they had to identify on the speech structures used by other participants, no one did so. When they had to highlight the positive impressions of individuals from their introductions, they answered in a general, vague way. One participant said, “i have seen many positive vibes such as warm greeting [sic] and nice and warm smiles. From some of their greeting i cant [sic] tell that some of them are very friendly and nice people”.

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The secret life of the participants was revealed in the second interview. Communication went “out of sight” when the project groups used the MSN chat facilities. The participants claimed that they were more familiar with MSN, but on probing further, the issue of being comfortable communicating with their own group and privacy were mentioned. That was why they avoided using the chat rooms on Blackboard 6, even when one group took the initiative to schedule a chat. While chatting existed within most groups, chatting between groups on MSN was non-existent. However, there were a few occasions when individual trainees from different groups chatted. One extremely shy male trainee reported making some headway with two female trainees online he did not have had the courage to speak to in person. Much of the invisible private exchange also took place via email.

With SA Trainer

Their behaviour with the SA Trainer changed in different circumstances. In private, they were open and communicative and were responsive for administrative matters e.g. notices, reminders in their email as well as on Blackboard 6. They often sent personal emails to the SA Trainer to acknowledge, reply, query, ask for advice or make requests. In public, the trainees were reserved. They were often silent after feedback was given; neither did they ask any questions. The SA trainer had to initiate an interaction. For instance, for “Introduction” which received 73 submissions, 7% were in response to the trainer’s 30% responses. The few who responded did so to comply to a request, or answer a query. However, they did so cheerfully. The only time they responded actively to the SA Trainer was when they had to submit their re-scripted speeches based on the SA Trainer's individual feedback.
Generally, they were rather timid in any discussion. The discussion thread for “Best and Worst Story” was most promising and turned lively for a short while when a few trainees wrote rather spontaneously in response to the SA Trainer’s two stories, submitted as discussion prompts. One trainee offered a parallel story of his own in response to the first story. Two trainees picked up the courage to express their opinions on an issue raised in one of the SA Trainer’s story and in the process provided wise, personal insights.

With SA Online Coaches and Online Chat Leaders

In public, the participants did not seem to communicate online with the SA Online Coaches. Apart from their reminders and requests, they remained silent despite the friendly self-introductions, helpful comments and warm words of encouragement from the SA Online Coaches for their group projects. However, two groups interacted with their assigned SA Online Coaches on MSN, in private. This was because they were familiar with them. The only time a few participants tried to encourage communication was with their SA Online Chat Leader. A few participants in one group devised an ingenious strategy to get their SA Online Chat Leader to interact with them. They deliberately acted as if they did not know enough for the activity and to their delight, he responded to their ploy.

Summary of interaction patterns

Interaction varied according to group size and purpose of interaction (see Table 1).
Table 1

*Online Behaviors with Different Persons and Group Sizes*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interactions</th>
<th>Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>With content</td>
<td>Responded dutifully to required tasks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With SA Trainer</td>
<td>Responded occasionally to SA Trainer’s comments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Asked questions, mainly on administrative matters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With other participants</td>
<td>Limited response for introductory messages aimed at reaching all trainees;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>responses mainly from those trying to connect with them or were familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with them</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With nine other participants and SA</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Online Chat Leader</td>
<td>Exuberant, chatty, relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>With project group and Online Coach</td>
<td>Limited communication in public; more communication in private if familiar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>with SA Online Coach; limited only to project group if unfamiliar with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>SA Online Coach</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Five patterns of interactions with the content, other participants and the SA Training team emerged. These reflect the participants’ frames of mind when responding in different situations.

i) Respond when required: this was for the content, the SA Trainer and online coach

ii) Respond when certain: they rarely showed their work in progress

iii) Respond when others have responded: the “wait and see” pattern was noticeable for interaction with the content
iv) Respond by avoidance or silence: this was when they were uncomfortable commenting on the work of others in public

v) Respond spontaneously: for the organised online chat activity; it could be assumed that this also happened during their private chat sessions on MSN.

Online Chattiness

The online medium seemed to influence the way individual trainees reacted to the type of activities. Four different levels of chattiness were observed of the whole cohort, ranging from “serious” for formal training sessions, “relaxed and chatty” for group communication, “poised and confident” for presenting themselves, to “relaxed and personal” when talking about themselves (see Figure 2).

![Figure 2. Levels of Chattiness](image)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Least Level of Seriousness</th>
<th>Most Level of Seriousness</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>Confident</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confident</td>
<td>Personal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Personal</td>
<td>Relaxed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Level of Chattiness

Figure 2. Levels of Chattiness

i) Formal: When participants were assuming their future role as student ambassador, they were polite, distant, formal, focused, and on their best behaviour. One participant was
serious and formal despite starting started off on a personal note, “I would strongly suggest … Since you are open to any engineering course, I assume you do not have a clear sense of which field of engineering you want.” He went on to describe the various courses offered at the polytechnic, and how these could lead to the degree courses at the two local universities, providing their ranking, and giving the assurance that she would get “quality education in Singapore.”

ii) **Confident:** Not only were the participants sure about what they wanted to say, they also spoke from their hearts and had stories that they call their own. A shy participant wrote:

> Now, I am in this course doing well and have never regretted of choosing it. … I have never realized Engineering can be actually so interesting … This is a school that is full of caring friends and lecturers. [proceeds to illustrate her point]

An all male group, pleased with their performance, was ready to improve:

> Overall, we felt that the presentation was fine. Everyone did their part and everything went smoothly. Nevertheless, we feel that there is still some room for improvements. Firstly we felt that we could further work on the transition from one speaker to another. We realized that while we were kind of akward [sic] when changing speaker. Secondly, we felt that our slide show could be further improve [sic]. We should add more visual-audio aids to keep the audience excited. On that day itself we were betting only on our speech to keep the audience in anticipation. Lastly, we felt that we could add in more ‘punch’ into our speeches. We found that we could further improve on our charisma and connection with the audience.

iii) **Relaxed:** When participants went on their organized online chat on Blackboard 6, they were most vocal, distracted and unfocused. Chatting informally seemed to break communication boundaries for mixed groups. The use of Singlish helped.

iv) **Personal:** They were extremely warm and friendly when it came to talking about them selves. Here is a sample introduction from on participant:

> Basically, I am a rather noisy person !! .. I love to spread happiness to people around me because it makes me happy too. I was from Chinese Orchestra and I hope to have more friends of the same interest from SA. Hope to know friends from SAs [sic] and looking forward to the upcoming training. *cheers*
**Face-to-face interactions**

Generally, the participants seemed well behaved and shy, inhibiting their communication in class. However, group size, and the context also influenced their behaviour.

*With other participants in classroom*

Despite the ice-breaking activities and repeated opportunities to introduce and present themselves in class, they remained reserved, keeping to their project group. They communicated with those they were familiar with at the commencement of the program. They had yet to feel comfortable interacting in a group of 20 by the time the program ended. They took over a week to form their project groups comprising four members as it meant having to break up their existing friendship groups or find new trainees to join them. During discussions, participants interacted with their group noisily, especially when the SA Trainer stepped out of the classroom.

*With SA Trainer in classroom*

The participants were reserved and well behaved in class with the SA Trainer. They were obedient, and respectful, rarely speaking out of turn or asking questions in front of the whole class; if so questions focused on clarification of tasks. They would respond when called upon by the SA Trainer. For group activities, one member answered on behalf of the group. One participant explained that the teacher, the authority figure influenced the way he acted in class. He disclosed, “Usually, we feel more afraid, as if we are holding back something, just a mental barrier. I wouldn’t like to interact in a classroom. In the Singaporean classroom, when the teacher is asking a question, there is silence.”
With Student Ambassadors in classroom

In the presence of the SA trainer in class, the participants showed deference to the Student Ambassadors. They were more spontaneous when activities were conducted by the Student Ambassadors, in the absence of the SA Trainer. During the “ice-breaking” activity, the participants, placed in groups of seven, were relaxed and rather noisy. During a session on how to take good photographs, participants asked the Student Ambassador presenter many questions and applauded at the end of his session.

With everyone in the lecture theatre

The lecture theatre setting seemed to transform their behaviour at the group and individual level. Generally, they were chatty, not at all shy and more relaxed with the SA Trainer on a one-to-one basis and with their project group. During rehearsals, they were articulate and expressive. During the presentations, the participants hid their coyness, exuded warmth, personal charm, and were more “extraverted”. They were poised, confident, and comfortable with their role as presenters, eager to project their selves in public. In the first group, a soft-spoken participant “found his voice”, projecting it to the whole lecture theatre; a serious participant switched on” his charm and became very people-cantered; two shy trainees, presented wonderfully scripted speeches. Members of the second group brought in props, and engaged their listeners in a presentation followed by an interesting quiz and a role-play. The third group put up a play scripted as a conversation between four friends. The bubbly members of the fourth group presented a skit and an interactive game. The fifth group a well-researched presentation that involved four confident speakers. All groups provided their own exciting visuals.
Summary of Face-to-face Interactions

Generally, the trainees were shy, preferring to interact with their group. However, it was observed that the context, the presence of the SA Trainer, the size of the group affected the way the participants behaved in face-to-face interactions. These different behaviours, categorised as quiet, noisy, relaxed and exuberant, are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Persons Present</th>
<th>Behaviour</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>in class of 20 with SA Trainer</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in groups in class with SA Trainer</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in groups in class without SA Trainer *</td>
<td>Noisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in groups in class, with SA Helpers and SA Trainer</td>
<td>Quiet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with Student Ambassadors *</td>
<td>Noisy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>individual with SA Trainer</td>
<td>Relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with SA Trainer at group rehearsal</td>
<td>Relaxed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>with other trainees and SA Training Team (presentation)</td>
<td>Exuberant</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: * Tutor stepped outside classroom

DISCUSSION

Some commonalities emerged. Interactions seemed to be influenced by the learning context, the presence of the authority figure, group size as well as the nature of tasks. Much depended on the type of activity, and whom they were communicating with.
**Influencing Factors**

Firstly, the formal setting in classroom and on Blackboard seemed to induce quieter, more compliant behaviour compared to other settings. The presentation setting in the lecture theatre and the informal setting in the organised online chat encouraged interaction. Secondly, the presence SA Trainer in formal learning settings seemed to encourage obedience, conformity, and “good behaviour”; in a personal setting, participants were not afraid to communicate with the SA Trainer. Thirdly, participants were not comfortable commenting in large groups and preferred communicating within their inner group (project group and friends), or with the SA on a one-to-one basis. It could also be the nature of the tasks. Those that were more personal like introductions, chat, allowed participants to be more spontaneous.

**Cultural Interpretations**

The influence of culture seems to be more evident in a formal learning setting. Evidence of collectivism (Hofstede, 1994) was revealed when online participants were reluctant to respond first, waited for each other, and tried to see if they were on track, and in class with their collective group work response. Power distance (Hofstede, 1994) was evident when participants did not respond spontaneously in class or online with the SA Trainer online. They also considered the SA Trainer as an authority figure, and conformed to what was required without question in class as well as online (Chan, 1999). In an informal setting or a one-to-one basis with the SA Trainer, this was not always evident. The presentation mode (in the lecture theatre) also had less of the influence of national or ethnic culture.

The influence of ethnic culture was evident with the preference for working in groups online and in the classroom. Participants preferred communicating with their inner groups and in private
(Tu, 2001, 2005). In a large group, they avoided commenting on others' work in public, not wanting to hurt others (Irwin, 1996). The influence of national culture also was evident, being collectivist, they tried the harmony (Hofstede, 1994). Despite the one-time spontaneous interaction experience that helped participants interact with others, cyber culture did not help the shy participants forge friendships with the whole the group. At best, it facilitated friendships within the inner group. However, it did emerge in their use of emoticons, particularly in their introductions (Tapscott, 1998).

CONCLUSION

The findings seem to suggest that similarities between the learners’ behaviour online and in the classroom (in a face-to-face situation) were influenced to some extent by culture and the context of the learning experience. Further work could be done with different learning situations for instance, problem-based scenarios, where there is a need to communicate and collaborate.

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