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The Effect of Task Type on Autonomous EFL Learners' Interactive Negotiations in a Text-based Synchronous Computer-mediated Context*

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Abstract

The importance of communicative ability in second language classroom context has increased the interest in interaction among foreign language learners. The quality of negotiations is influenced by so many factors that should be investigated in order to facilitate the process of second language acquisition. This study seeks to investigate the effect of task type on autonomous EFL learners' interactive negotiation in synchronous computer-mediated communication context. Total number of 60 pre- intermediate EFL learners were chosen from Iran Language Institute of Birjand based on their performance on the language learning autonomy questionnaire designed by Zhang and Li (2004). They participated in three types of tasks, including Decision making, Jigsaw, and Opinion gap tasks via Telegram Desktop. The chat history of EFL learners was analyzed in terms of the model of interaction proposed by Tsui (1994). Three main moves of *Initiating*, *Responding*, and *Follow-up* were included in her taxonomy of interaction analysis. The results suggested that the learners tried to utilize different frequencies of appropriate moves to achieve the goals of the specific task. Practically, this study presented a revised model that can be used as a frame work for designing suitable task types in the process of computer-mediated communication.

Keywords: communicative ability, autonomy, task type, interactive negotiation

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Introduction

Second language teaching and learning has paid a great deal of attention to fostering communicative ability which is an essential factor in successful second language acquisition. Reviewing different second language hypotheses, such as the interaction hypothesis, the noticing hypothesis, input and output hypothesis help the researchers to understand the importance of interaction as a determining tool in learning a language (Figura and Jarvis, 2007; Chen, 2005).

Second language teachers and learners have been willing to identify factors that account for success in learning a foreign language; therefore, by investigating the characteristics of EFL learners in terms of motivation, autonomy, risk-taking ability, researchers may provide the practitioners with beneficial findings in this field. With the introduction of learner autonomy as critical reflection and decision making by Little (1995), the effect of learner autonomy on learners' performance in the classroom has gained much attention in the last ten years. (Guevara de Leon, 2010). Just those students who possess a high degree of learning autonomy and devise some strategies have been able to learn this language in an effective way. English teachers have had an influential role in helping the learners learn English effectively and gain autonomy in their education (Akbari and Tahririan, 2009; jafari and Kafipour, 2013; Tabatabaei and Hosseini, 2014). Language learners should learn how to learn English since the task of learning have been considered as a complex one and the learners don't have enough time to handle the learning situation effectively. In other words, the learners won't be able to take responsibility in learning outside of school unless they are prepared to learn autonomously. (Dickinson and Carver, 1980)

The type of tasks utilized in classroom context has also been regarded as a contributing factor to the nature of negotiation for form and meaning as indicted in different pieces of research conducted by different scholars such as Gass and Varonis (1985) and Pica (1987). The research on different variables affecting the nature of negotiation for meaning and form facilitate the process of interaction. Considering the effect of task type on learners' performance, the methodologies and

measurement used in the studies vary from one research article to another. Although there have been many studies focusing on the effect of task type on learners' negotiations, the findings are still inconsistent since the methodologies are different (e.g. Yilmaz and Granena, 2010). The degree of production in case of interaction turns may be also altered by the type of task the learners performed (Pica & Doughty, 1985; Pica, 1987). These studies aimed at detecting the type of tasks that are essential in producing the sequences of interaction and negotiation of meaning. They found that the information gap task is the most productive one in classroom context (Ellis, 2003; Long, 1980). In another study investigating the effect of task type on learners' negotiations, Blake (2000) proved that jigsaw tasks yield the greatest amount of interaction; however, Smith (2003) claimed that a high degree of negotiation was provoked by decision making tasks.

Ku (2016) declared that among all types of tasks, the researchers mostly used decision making tasks (DMTs) and jigsaw tasks (JSTs). The advantage of JSTs in creating meaning negotiation has become clear to some CMC researchers. They concluded that this development in producing negotiation of meaning help to enhance the interaction turns. For instance, Pica, Kanagy, and Faldum (1993) showed that JSTs produced a greater amount of negotiation as compared with other types of tasks. Another group of studies maintained that DMTs generated a greater number of negotiations in contrast with other types of tasks. Smith (2003) conducted a study on low-intermediate ESL learners in task-based interaction context and detected that DMTs are more capable producing negotiation turns.

Conventionally, learners communicated in language classrooms through spoken language. Later on, synchronous computer mediated communication changed the situation and classrooms were conducted via online chat. As Nike (2010) expressed this kind of interaction is far from the limitations of face-to-face interaction such as issues related to time and place. As Ziegler (2016) revealed crucial benefits for different types of technology in task-based contexts, the scope of research in this study is limited to computer-mediated communication.

Earlier studies generally use some tools to examine the determining role of FTF communication in language learning. One such a tool is the one proposed by Varonis and Gass (1985) possessing two main parts of “trigger” and “solution”. The first part shows a kind of misunderstanding on the part of the hearer. The second part is made up of three other parts of “indicator”, “response”, and “reaction to response”. Some studies have implemented this framework in order to detect the nature of interaction in language learning context, especially those emphasized on task types (Nakahama, Tyler, and Vanlier, 2001).

In more recent studies, the researchers have drawn on chat soft wares as a medium of interaction so as to facilitate learners’ sending and receiving messages (Chu, 2004; Fernandez-Garcia and Martinez-Arbeliz, 2002). The focus of such studies may be similar to that of studies on FTF interaction in which the researchers try to understand how language learning is facilitated in such synchronous computer mediated communication context. (Abrams, 2003; Kung, 2004; Razagifard and Razzaghifard, 2011).

Almost no studies address the effect of task type on autonomous learners’ interactive negotiations, so we embarked on this study by implementing Tsui’s (1994) model of interaction on EFL learners’ chat history. The results of the study contribute to the designing classroom tasks in a way in which the instructors could elicit a high degree of interaction in the process of language learning and teaching. Finally a revised model for student-student interaction was proposed in order for the instructors to analyze the learners’ negotiation while performing different tasks.

Method

The present study aimed at investigating the effect of an independent variable, i.e. task type on one dependent variable including several moves and exchanges mentioned in Tsui’s (1994) interaction taxonomy.

Participants

Total number of 60 pre-intermediate EFL learners were chosen from Iran Language Institute of Birjand (Females' Campus), South Khorasan, based on their performance on the language learning autonomy questionnaire designed by Zhang and Li (2004). The learners with high degree of autonomy, at least 70 of 105 were considered as autonomous learners. Prior to the administration of learning autonomy questionnaire, a sample of piloted paper-based Oxford test of proficiency was administered to the learners to make sure that the learners have the same level of language proficiency. The learners performed three kinds of tasks including decision making (DM), Jigsaw (JS), and Opinion gap (OG). In order to assess the topic familiarity of tasks on the parts of the learners, a sample of teacher-made test was prepared to be administered before each task.

Design of the study

The design of the study was a quasi-experimental one consisting of 60 autonomous learners. The independent variable of the study was task type with three measures relating to different kinds of tasks including decision making, jigsaw, and opinion gap procedures. Table 1 shows the details on different tasks and activities during data collection analysis.

Table 1 *Different time groups of learners and activities*

Time	Task type/ Activity	Topic
Week 1	Orientation session	Informing the learners of different types of tasks and how to perform them
Week 2	Topic familiarity test	Franklin's expedition
Week 3	Unfocused decision making (UDM) task	Solving the mystery of Franklin's disappearing
Week4	Topic familiarity test	Problems for the environment
Week 5	Focused decision making (FDM) task (Focusing simple past tense)	Discussing the solutions to reduce the destructive dangers for the environment

Week 6	Topic familiarity test	People's personal information
Week 7	Unfocused Jigsaw (UJS) task	Working on Partially completed charts
Week 8	Topic familiarity test	Solar system
Week 9	focused Jigsaw (FJS) task (Focusing structures of <i>any</i> and <i>no</i>)	Comparing the planets
Week 10	Topic familiarity test	Differences between girls and boys (clothe and colors)
Week 11	Unfocused opinion gap (UOG) task	Discussing some predetermined questions
Week 12	Topic familiarity test	Making predictions
Week 13	Focused Opinion gap (FOG) task (focusing unreal conditional sentences)	Discussing some questions

Instrumentation

For the purpose of this study, the researchers designed six tasks to determine their possible effect on learners' interaction patterns. In order to determine the actual proficiency level of EFL learners (other than the one determined by the institute) a sample of piloted Oxford test of proficiency was administered among the EFL learners. This placement test helps instructors evaluate their learners on the level of proficiency; i.e. elementary, pre-intermediate, intermediate. It was proposed by Edwards (2007) with the purpose of determining which level of solution may be suitable for the students (Table 2).

Table 2 *The guideline for interpreting the scores on Oxford Placement Test*

Area of the test	Total	Elementary	Pre-intermediate	Intermediate
Grammar & vocabulary	50	0-20	21-30	31+
Reading	10	0-4	5-7	8+

writing	10	0-4	5-7	8+
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The participants filled out a previously validated Learner Autonomy Questionnaire (LAQ) designed by Zhang and Li (2004). It consists of two parts including 21 questions. It measured and determined the participants' autonomy with a maximum possible score of 100. To avoid confusion, the participants were given the Persian translated version of questionnaire (Appendix A).

Tsui's (1994) framework for conversation analysis was also utilized in this study. Based on Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) model and the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) exchange, Tsui (1994) devised a framework for classroom interaction analysis. Tsui (1994) develops her taxonomy on the three part unit (i.e., IRF) and then tried to add additional subclasses of the main acts. Three main moves of Initiating, Responding, and Follow-up were included in her taxonomy of interaction analysis. Different types of initiating acts were built to further discuss this move such as Elicitation, Requestive, Directive, and Informative. Subclasses of the Responding move were introduced as Positive, Negative, and Temporization. Three subclasses of the follow-up move were considered as Endorsement, Concession, and Acknowledgement (Appendix B).

Data Collection and Analysis

As previously stated, the design of the study was a quasi-experimental one in the sense that the participants were selected based on their performance on Oxford Placement test as well as their level of autonomy. The learners took an Oxford Placement test in order to be identified as real pre-intermediate level learners of English. The participants were requested to complete the survey so that their autonomy level was gained. The questionnaire took 30 minutes to be completed. Therefore, 60 EFL learners were selected randomly from among those having scored above 70 on the learning autonomy questionnaire designed by Zhang and Li (2004). As the EFL learners were going to participate in a process of interactive negotiation, they

needed to perform different tasks in the form of dyads, so the researchers randomly chose a partner for each learner.

Thus, the process of randomization yielded 30 dyads of EFL learners. In an orientation session, the learners filled out a background questionnaire in order to make sure that they had similar previous experience working with the computers as they are going to use instant messaging service of the computer called Telegram Desktop. The learners were asked to perform three types of tasks in both focused and unfocused format as discussed in table 1.

All the interactions were gathered in a synchronous computer mediated communication mode via Telegram Desktop chat program. The chat history of EFL learners' negotiations were inserted in a word file to be analyzed later. The quality and quantity of the negotiations were investigated by referring to some predetermined signals and indicators mentioned in Tsui'(1994) model of interaction. The peer interactive negotiations were interpreted in terms of the frequency of different negotiation moves and the existence of some additional items observed in the computer-mediated communication context.

Results and Discussion

Reliability analysis was conducted to determine the extent to which the data collected in the study represent the variables measured. Kappa statistic showed an acceptable degree of agreement between the two interpreters (table 3). Therefore, statistics showed the two raters highly agreed on the existence of different types of moves and categories in learners' chat history.

Table 3 *The strength of agreement via Kappa statistics*

Move	Category	Kappa value
Initiating	Elicitation	.67
	Requestive	.81
	Directive	.78
	Informative	.66

Responding	Positive	.84
	Negative	.77
	Temporization	.85
Follow -up	endorsement	.65
	concession	.79
	Acknowledgment	.62

Descriptive statistics were calculated regarding the data gained from the participants' performance on different types of tasks in both focused and unfocused format. Specifically, several One-Way Repeated Measure ANOVA Tests of SPSS (Statistical Procedure for Social Science) were conducted to the results obtained from the performance in different tasks (Decision making, Jigsaw, and opinion gap) in synchronous computer mediated communication mode.

Table 4 *Interaction turns across different tasks*

	Min.	Max.	Mean	SD
UDM Interaction turns	3	13	6.87	3.093
FDM Interaction turns	1	15	9.20	3.316
UJS Interaction turns	6	24	13.33	5.202
FJS Interaction turns	2	22	11.00	5.795
UOG Interaction turns	3	14	8.67	2.928
FOG Interaction turns	3	17	10.30	4.228

Learners having performed unfocused jigsaw task (UJT) yielded the greatest mean for the use of interaction turns. The results also showed that those learners having performed unfocused decision making task (UDM) yielded the lowest mean in the use of interaction turns in this study (Table 4).

According to table 5, different initiation moves (Based on Tsui's model) were used by language learners during different tasks. As the

table suggested there were significant differences among the six groups of learners performing different tasks regarding all types of initiation moves except Requestive one.

Table 5 *Initiation Moves across different tasks*

Initiation Moves	Sig. value	Eta squared	Sphericity
Announcement (New)	0.001	0.74	violated
Elicitation	0.001	0.72	violated
Requestive	0.10	0.20	Not violated
Dirrective	0.00	0.48	Not violated
Informative	0.001	0.62	Not violated
Suggestive (New)	0.002	0.47	violated
Narrative (New)	0.003	0.34	violated

The assumption of sphericity was violated for Announcement move, so the detailed comparison is essential to be reported using the post hoc tests. UJS task proved to be the most effective one in having the learners use announcement move in their chat history, as a result it became different from all other tasks. There was a statistically significant effect for task type considering the use of Elicitation move. UOG and FOG tasks were different from other tasks since they have the learners use fewer number of Elicitation moves in comparison to other tasks. Considering the Directive category of the initiating move of Tsui's model, there was a significant difference among the learners in different types of tasks (Sig = 0.000).

Another category which acts as an additional one for Tsui's model was "Suggestive" one. Such a new category proved to be used differently by the learners during the six types of tasks (Sig. =0.002) with eta squared value of 0.47). Detailed comparison suggested that FOG task was significantly different from all other tasks as the number of this category in FOG task was higher than any other tasks.

Another new move which was found in learners' chat history was "Narrative" one. There was a significant difference among learners with

regard to the use of Narrative move (Sig. = 0.003). The detailed comparison suggested that UJS and FOG tasks were different from other types of tasks in this respect. One example of narrative category in a focused opinion gap task is provided bellow:

Student 1: "I went hic in class and all laughed at me. So I decided not to breathe."

As the example shows, the learner tried to narrate a short happening of her own. In this way, she would explain the meaning of the word "hic".

The first category of the initiation move, the Elicitation Category, was rarely used in opinion gap tasks both focused and unfocused. This fact showed that the EFL learners performing OG tasks are not needed to elicit their partners' ideas on different subjects. They themselves tried to discuss the point and communicate their personal opinion.

Some Mandative Categories were found in learners' interaction indicating that they were willing to use the directive category of initiation move mentioned in Tsui's (1994) model of interaction. In the following example the student tried to make her partners imagine a specific situation; therefore, by "Mandative" we don't mean forcing someone to do an action.

"Imagine you are a lonely child and you miss the train and you are all alone and a child"

A strange function of the informative category existing in Tsui's (1994) model of interaction was *self-denigration* which was found in an opinion gap task where the EFL learner produced the following utterance:

"Poor girls, they are not allowed to do something on their own"

combined categories of initiation move was found in DM tasks where the students mixed the informative category with a degree of elicitation. Just like the case in jigsaw tasks, the first part acted as an introduction for the next part which functions as a trigger to elicit information, confirmation, agreement, idea, or clarification.

Although the informative category included several sub-categories, the most frequent sub-category of this category was *anecdotal* one in which the participants made an attempt to relate their lives to the characters in different tasks.

Table 6 *Responding Moves across different tasks*

Responding Moves	Sig. value	Eta squared	Sphericity
Positive	0.02	0.38	violated
Negative	0.001	0.65	violated
Temporization	0.001	0.81	violated
Informative (New)	0.001	0.79	violated
Exclamative (New)	0.2	0.10	Not violated
Suggestive (New)	0.3	0.20	Not violated
Ideological (New)	0.001	0.89	violated
Delay (New)	0.01	0.24	Not violated

Tsui's (1994) model of S-S interaction categorizes the second move, i.e. Responding, into three main types of replies including *positive*, *negative*, and *temporization*. Of course this study devised some other categories for the above move such as *delayed*, *modification*, *ideological*, etc. It should also be mentioned that there were some cases in which the interlocutors didn't provide any answers to the initiation move. As table 6 revealed, different responding moves were utilized by language learners. According to the statistics, there were significant differences among learners in using responding moves during different tasks except *exclamative* and *suggestive* types of responding moves. With regard to responding (positive) move, the descriptive statistics showed that all learners used the move in their chat history but they tried to use it mostly in UOG task. The post hoc analysis showed that FJS and UOG tasks were significantly different in containing the positive responding move (Sig. = 0.02).

The last category from the responding move was *Suggestive* one used in FOG and UOG tasks. There were no significant differences

regarding such move as the move was a new one added to the taxonomy proposed by Tsui (1994). Very few cases of *Suggestive* responses were found in opinion gap tasks; hence, we treated such a response as a devised category of Responding move added to Tsui's model. Another devised category for responding move was the *Delayed* category some cases of which were observed in DM tasks.

Combined categories were also observed in responding utterances produced by the EFL learners. Through the first category they corrected their peers' grammatical mistakes and then tried to focus on the context of the task and provide a negative or positive response as a reaction to the previous utterances. For instance, one participant made an attempt to provide a two-part response in FDM task:

Student 1: "I also think that maybe they froze !!!"

Student 2: "It is not true that they may have been frozen."

"No, but the ice was in the see"

Most cases of Informative category of this move were observed in UDM task as the students were supposed to come up with a pure discussion based on the information provided in the text.

Table 7 *Follow-up Moves across different tasks*

Follow-up Moves	Sig. value	Eta squared	Sphericity
Corrective (New)	0.01	0.27	violated
Suggestive (New)	0.1	0.12	Not violated
Endorsement	0.001	0.86	violated
Concession	0.001	0.83	violated
Acknowledgement	0.001	0.54	violated
Informative	0.001	0.74	violated
Ideological (New)	0.001	0.43	violated

Statistics on Follow-up moves in Table 7 revealed that there were significant differences among learners using different moves of follow

up category except for the suggestive move which was an additional move.

As the nature of all tasks necessitates the EFL learners to ask some sort of questions in order to perform the task efficiently, most of the follow up moves were of *informative* type no matter how completely the participants come up with the final goal of the task. Some cases of imagination were also found in another additional category of the follow up move, i.e. *ideological* one. This type of category has been seen in FJS task where the participants thought about an imaginary situation and tried to talk about funny things to move toward an informal chat.

The third additional category of the follow up move was called *corrective* as it deals with the modification of the previous move and also giving suggestion to edit the utterance. Such a category was just observed in DM tasks both focused and unfocused ones.

One of the main categories of this move appears to be the *endorsement* one through which the EFL learners made an attempt to declare their support of the previous utterance. The least cases of such category existed in FOG task maybe because the participants freely communicate their ideas during this task and were not forced to accept their partners' opinions on the topic.

The second main category of the follow up move based on the interaction model was *concession* in which the students let their peers handle the flow of the interaction and avoid approving their utterances. Such a category was not observed in UDM tasks as the participants actively took part in the negotiated interaction to solve the mystery; hence, they were not willing to hand over their turn to their partners. Of course through such category some of the partners are trying to smartly reject their peers' utterances.

The last category of this move existing in the model of interaction proposed by Tsui (1994) appeared to be *acknowledgement* one. Few learners had a desire to appreciate the partners' responses since they believe that it was their duty to perform their role in the respected task;

however, some inconsiderable cases were found in JS tasks perhaps with the purpose of signaling the end of a part in the task and moving on to the next part. Therefore, the nature of JS tasks necessitates the participants to use a signal in their follow up move in order to announce the end of a turn.

Conclusion

Considering Tsui's (1994) model of interaction, it became clear that there exist four main categories for the first move naming Initiating move. Each of these categories refers to different sub-categories which may be observed in EFL learners' chat history. Except these categories, the results showed that there may be some other categories found in learners' interaction such as *Announcement*, *Suggestion*, and *Narration*. Furthermore, the learners may use *reminder of negotiation* to focus more on their utterances. This type of interaction mostly observed in unfocused decision making tasks. As Samaan and Bernard (2004) suggested an adaptation motor forces the learners to use specific moves and exchanges in each type of task. As a result, the task designers should pay attention to the point that interaction patterns and the task type fit together; hence, they should embark on the task of designing materials with respect to dynamic adaptation to the new context.

An interesting finding of the study was that the interactive negotiations of the learners was not following a rigid Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) pattern which was in line with the findings of Rashidi and Rafieerad (2010) who claimed that some categories were missing in interaction that can be related to contextual factors and also there were some cases in which the interlocutors didn't provide any answers to the initiation move.

Furthermore, taking a general look at the statistics gained from learners' initiating utterances, it could be induced that a lot of *two-part initiation categories* existed in jigsaw tasks. The first part, which is informative category, gives information and the second part functions as an elicitation category which makes the partners give information so as to fill the gap. In addition, another type of combined move were also found in jigsaw tasks as the learners started to narrate a short story from

their own lives and tried to create a relationship with task characters; therefore, one part of the combined category was seen to be narration. Such category was regarded as a devised one in Tsui's (1994) model of interaction. Just like Pica, Kanagy, and Faldum (1993), this study showed that jigsaw tasks produced the greatest amount of interaction turns as compared with other types of tasks. Ku (2016) also proved the same statistics considering the amount of negotiation a task may produce.

The overall results showed that learners performing UDM task tend to produce negative responses rather than positive or temporization ones; however, they are willing to provide temporization responses in all other tasks. By temporization, Tsui (1994) refers to the act of answering the partners' questions by asking another question in order to distract the peers from the main question. This statistic proved the learners' less ability in providing positive or negative responses. Presenting negative responses was proved to be a more comfortable way to escape from justification or explanation given on a special issue.

Another point which was obvious during qualitative analysis of the EFL learners' presented responses was that they ignore spelling mistakes made by their partners and just focus on grammatical ones. Maybe, they were not paying attention to the errors existing in the text because they thought this kind of modifications doesn't affect the output of the tasks.

Overall, the subjects paid less attention to the use of Requestive category during all types of tasks as they didn't need to ask for permission or action in such tasks. EFL learners made an attempt to include more Elicitation categories in jigsaw tasks as well as more concession categories in different tasks as they tried to learn some points from their partners and then succeed in filling the gaps made in their minds.

An interesting point inferred from the statistics of *Follow-up* move was that partially none of the participants made an attempt to thank for their peers' responses and they thought that it is their duty to react to

the initiating move of the interactive negotiation. As mentioned previously, one of the devised categories for the present move was informative one. Whenever the responding move seems to be of negative type, it is likely that the follow up move appears in the form of an informative category in order to provide the missing information of the task.

Limitations and delimitations of the study

The study consists of both qualitative and quantitative analysis of the learners' interactive negotiation in text-based computer mediated communication. The primary data gathering method was recording and saving the process of interaction among learners in the classroom. The software used in the study is Telegram Desktop, a partially new chat program. The negotiation history of the EFL learners were analyzed by the researcher with regard to a model of interaction devised by Tsui (1994) based on Sinclair and Coulthard's (1975) model of interaction and the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) exchange in a descriptive and qualitative mode.

Synchronous computer mediated communication facilitate the EFL learners' negotiations in an environment not including the stress and anxiety present in face to face (FTF) mode of interaction. In a study done by Pellettieri (2000), it became clear that students participated in synchronous computer mediated communication produced a larger number of sentences, phrases, and words than those participated in FTF discussion. Therefore, the mode of interaction was determined to be the synchronous computer mediated communication in order to elicit more production in terms of moves of interaction on the part of the learners.

The study was limited to the pre-intermediate female learners of English since the researcher didn't aim at investigating the gender as a moderating variable affecting the nature of interactive negotiations. Tsouroufli (2002), Drudy and Chathain (2002), Duffy et al. (2002), and Canada and Pringle (1995) detected that gender had a role to play in the interaction patterns. Furthermore, the tasks performed by the learners during the main study were Decision-making, Jigsaw, and Opinion-gap tasks which are among the tasks usually done in real classroom context.

Therefore, most of the learners were familiar with the exact procedure of the tasks. Those learners with low degree of familiarity with the tasks were informed during an introductory session being held prior to the main study. In addition, Smith (2003) proved that the jigsaw task is the most influential type of activity that elicit negotiation of meaning.

In spite of the fact that the number of the research subjects is higher than many previous studies, it is probable that a sample of 60 students is not enough to show significant differences among different task types. If the study used a bigger sample, the results might be different.

The study lasted for only four months, which was probably insufficient to establish whether learners' autonomy had a relationship with students' interactive behavior in computer-mediated mode of interaction.

The negotiation among learners had several drawbacks. First, they were time-consuming and made the peers tired if identical errors were repeatedly made by students. If students see many errors in their utterances they may be embarrassed and lose confidence. Some students may lack the proficiency level in identifying errors and correcting them. (Bitchener and Ferris, 2012; Corpuz, 2011)

There are also some other limitations of the research reported above. The instruments used in the study needed the development of the scales because different aspects of learner autonomy should be considered.

We didn't observe the learners' classroom practices and had to rely on their reports in the questionnaire they submitted. The participants we chose for the study were of the same level of proficiency; therefore, the proficiency level of the learners could not be considered as a moderating factor in the study.

In addition, this study employed quantitative research design; further studies can employ qualitative research design. The questionnaires should be accompanied with other instruments such as observation and interview in order to get a complete picture of students' views and to achieve more reliable results.

Suggestions for further research

It will be productive for the next researcher to conduct the study not only about task interaction patterns but the whole classroom interaction patterns as well. Furthermore, it will be better for other researchers to conduct the study about EFL learners' interaction patterns in which other factors on classroom interaction such as risk-taking and learner motivation play a role. Then, Future researchers are expected to observe not only interactive negotiations among students but also negotiations between teacher and student.

Further investigations are needed to address the problem of Students' not performing communicative tasks at home. As Sussex(2012) emphasized the use of mobile devices has been regarded as an potential way in learning English as a foreign or second language. Instructors should provide an opportunity for the learners to use mobile systems specifically designed for educational purposes in order not to allow the learners to use them for entertainment. Therefore, whenever the learners can perform several tasks using their mobile devices, the researchers will have a larger mass of data on students' interaction turns. Kim and Kwon (2012) focused on the demand for improving more approaches and methods in designing tasks for Mobile Assisted Language Learning (MALL). The selection of suitable methods of technological development in instructional environments should be based on theory and research in language learning (Doughty & Long, 2003).

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Appendix A

The Learner Autonomy Questionnaire (designed by Zhang and Li, 2004)

Part I

(A. never B. rarely C. sometimes D. often E. always.)

1. I think I have the ability to learn English well
2. I make good use of my free time in English study.
3. I preview before the class.
4. I find I can finish my task in time.
5. I keep a record of my study, such as keeping a diary, writing review etc.
6. I make self-exam with the exam papers chosen by myself.
7. I reward myself such as going shopping, playing etc. when I make progress.
8. I attend out-class activities to practice and learn the language.
9. During the class, I try to catch chances to take part in activities such as pair/group discussion, role-play, etc.
10. I know my strengths and weaknesses in my English study.
11. I choose books, exercises which suit me, neither too difficult nor too easy. |

Part II

12. I study English here due to:

- A. my parents' demand
- B. curiosity
- C. getting a good job, help to my major
- D. interest of English culture, such as film, sports, music, etc.
- E. C and D



13. I think the learner-teacher relationship is that of:
 A. receiver and giver B. raw material and maker C. customer and shopkeeper D. partners E. explorer and director
14. I think my success or failure in English study is mainly due to:
 A. luck or fate B. English studying environment C. studying facilities (aids) D. teachers E. myself
15. Whether students should design the teaching plan together with teachers or not, my opinion is:
 A. strongly agree B. agree C. neutral D. oppose E. strongly oppose
16. When the teacher asks questions for us to answer, I would mostly like to:
 A. wait for others' answers B. think and ready to answer
 C. look up books, dictionaries D. clarify questions with teachers E. join a pair/group discussion
17. When I meet a word I don't know, I mainly:
 A. let it go B. ask others C. guess the meaning D. B and E E. look up the dictionary
18. When I make mistakes in study, I'd usually like the following ones to correct them:
 A. let them be B. teachers C. classmates D. others E. books or dictionaries
19. When I am asked to use technologies that I haven't used before (e. g. internet discussion),
 A. I usually try to learn new skills B. I learn them following others
 C. I feel worried, but anyway D. I put it off or try to avoid it E. I resist using them
20. I think the following way is most useful in my English study:
 A. taking notes B. mechanic memory C. doing exercises of grammar, translation, words etc.
 D. classifying or grouping or comparing E. group discussion
21. I usually use materials selected:
 A. only by teachers B. mostly by teachers C. by teachers and by myself D. mostly by myself
 E. only by myself

Appendix B

Tsui's (1994) Model for S-S Interaction

Initiating	Elicitation	Inform-confirm-agree-commit-repeat-clarify	
	Requestive	For action- for permission- Invitation- offer-propose	
	Directive	Advisives: advice- warning	
		Mandatives: Instructions- threat	
	Informative	Repeat	
Expressive			
Assessment: assessing- compliment- criticism- self-denigrate self-commendation			
Responding	Positive	Follow up	Endorsement
	Negative		Concession
	Temporization		acknowledgement