

**GENDER INTERACTION IN NEGOTIATION OF MEANING
AMONG HIGH PROFICIENCY ESL LEARNERS**

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Abstract

It is claimed that the augmented use of electronic communication has fully embraced and hampered Generation Y interactions (Wei Liu, 2012, Punitha 2008). Due to prolonged use of high technology tools (Punitha, 2008), leading them to rely on e-communication as a preferred tool of communication and somehow isolate them to a new environment (Black, 2010), an environment away from social and learning activities. It rather seems that face to face interaction tend to occur less frequent than e-communication.

This study analyses the linguistic output produced by high proficiency ESL learners during face-to-face interaction, focusing on the Generation Y participants born in the year of 1990 – 1996 who have just completed secondary or higher secondary schools. Generation Y consists of those who were born in the year of 1980 – 2000 and are also known as ‘digital natives’ (Prensky, 2001). They are labelled as ‘digital natives’ (Prensky, 2001) because they are the first generation who grew along with the evolvement of high technology, naturally perceptive of digital language (Black, 2010) and highly involved in interacting with advanced technology tools and are used to interacting with their peers within a computer – mediated environment. Currently there are limited studies on negotiation of meaning that have focused on this particular group of learners (Kotter, 2003; Tam, 2009; Bower & Kawaguchi, 2011). Because of this less is known about the patterns of interaction of this particular group of ESL learners in face to face environment. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap (patterns of interaction) by analysing how high proficiency Gen Y learners negotiate meaning. whether gender plays a role in the interaction.

The participants involved in the study were 15 females and 15 males, 30 in total and paired in a single – gender matched dyads and mixed – gender dyads. Studies have suggested that the familiarity of participants with each other could affect the output of the interactional patterns (Boulima, 1999; Robinson, 2000; Varonis & Gass, 1985b). For this study the familiarity among the participants are considered moderate as they were in their first 6 months of their course and are constantly engaged in group activities. A decision making two – way tasks were utilized to elicit the data and the analysis of the data was based on a framework by Varonis and Gass (1985b) and Pica et. al's (1989) schema on negotiation routines.

The results revealed that the males took greater advantage of the conversation by producing semantic modification as in more 'talk' for comprehensible output especially in a mixed – gender dyads as opposed to in the single matched dyads. In terms of number of words and number of turns within the negotiation routines, the males again tended to produce more than the females in both dyads setting. The females, however, have been shown to utilize the conversation for comprehensible input. The evidence points out that the females have greater tendency to acquire the language in signalling during the negotiation of meaning. Hence it can be concluded that the males from Generation Y tend to dominate the language through comprehensible output whereas the females prefer to request for more input in the conversation.

Keywords: Generation Y, interaction, negotiation of meaning, gender

Abstrak

Ia didakwa bahawa penggunaan berlebihan komunikasi elektronik telah sepenuhnya menjiwai dan menghalang proses interaksi generasi Y (Liu Wei, 2012, Punitha 2008). Oleh kerana penggunaan alat-alat berteknologi tinggi (Punitha, 2008) yang berpanjangan, membawa mereka bergantung kepada e - komunikasi sebagai alat utama komunikasi dan telah mengasingkan mereka dalam persekitaran baru yang terpencil (Black, 2010), persekitaran berjauhan daripada pembelajaran and aktiviti sosial. Ia seolah-olah interaksi bersemuka semakin kurang kerap berbanding dengan e – komunikasi.

Kajian ini menganalisis output linguistik yang dihasilkan oleh pelajar ESL berkemahiran tinggi semasa interaksi bersemuka, khasnya menumpukan peserta generasi Y lahir pada tahun 1990 – 1996 yang telah tamat sekolah menengah atau menengah tinggi. Generasi Y yang terdiri daripada orang-orang yang lahir pada tahun 1980 – 2000 juga dikenali sebagai 'digital asli' (Prensky, 2001). Mereka dilabelkan sebagai 'digital asli' (Prensky, 2001) kerana mereka adalah generasi pertama yang membesar bersama-sama dengan evolusi teknologi tinggi, secara semulajadi dengan Bahasa digital (Black, 2010) dan sangat terlibat dalam berinteraksi dengan alat-alat teknologi yang canggih dan digunakan untuk berinteraksi dengan rakan-rakan mereka dalam komputer – persekitaran diantarai. Pada masa ini terdapat kajian yang terhad mengenai rundingan makna yang memberi tumpuan kepada golongan pelajar ini (Kotter, 2003; Tam, 2009; Bower Kawaguchi, 2011). Oleh kerana itu, corak interaksi golongan pelajar ESL dalam persekitaran semuka kurang diketahui. Justeru itu, kajian ini bertujuan untuk menangani jurang ini dengan menganalisis bagaimana mereka berunding makna berdasarkan tugas yang diberikan. Ia juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui sama ada jantina

memainkan berdasarkan tugas yang diberikan. Ia juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui sama ada jantina memainkan peranan dalam interaksi.

Peserta-peserta yang terlibat dalam kajian ini adalah 15 perempuan dan 15 lelaki, berjumlah 30 dan berpasangan dalam satu – jantina dyads padan dan bercampur – jantina dyads. Kajian telah mencadangkan bahawa kebiasaan peserta antara satu sama lain boleh menjejaskan hasil corak interaksi (Boulima, 1999; Robinson, 2000; Varonis Gass, 1985b). Kebiasaan dalam kalangan peserta kajian ini adalah dianggap sederhana kerana mereka berada dalam 6 bulan pertama kursus dan sentiasa terlibat dalam aktiviti berkumpulan. Dua – cara tugas membuat keputusan telah digunakan untuk mendapat maklum balas data dan analisis data adalah berdasarkan satu rangka kerja oleh Varonis Gass (1985b) dan Pica et. Al's (1989) skema pada rutin rundingan.

Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa lelaki mengambil kesempatan yang lebih besar daripada perbualan dengan menghasilkan pengubahsuaian semantik dalam lebih banyak 'bercakap' bagi output difahami terutama dalam campuran – jantina dyads yang menentang dalam dyads padan tunggal. Dari segi bilangan perkataan dan nombor giliran dalam rutin rundingan, lelaki lagi cenderung untuk menghasilkan lebih daripada perempuan dalam kedua-dua dyads yang menetapkan. Walau bagaimanapun, perempuan telah menunjukkan menggunakan perbualan untuk difahami input. Bukti-bukti telah menunjukkan bahawa wanita mempunyai kecenderungan yang lebih besar untuk memperoleh bahasa berkenaan dalam isyarat semasa rundingan makna. Oleh yang demikian maka dapatlah disimpulkan bahawa lelaki dari generasi Y cenderung menguasai Bahasa melalui output, difahami sedangkan wanita lebih suka untuk meminta lebih banyak input dalam perbualan.

Kata kunci: generasi y, interaksi, rundingan bermakna, jantina

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List of terms

CALL	Computer-assisted language learning
CLT	Communicative language teaching
CMC	Computer-mediated communication. The term is used for synchronous and asynchronous computer-mediated communication involves emails and chat rooms
ESL	English as second language
F2F	Face to face
Gen Y	Generation Y. The term is used for those who were born between 1980-1999
L2	Second language. L2 is the English language
NNS	Non-native speakers of English
NS	Native speaker of English
SCA	Synchronous computer assisted
SLA	Second language acquisition
M1	Refers to male participant in the dyadic interaction, The first male participant to be paired with
F1	Refers to female participant in the dyadic interaction, The first female participant to be paired with

CHAPTER ONE

Introduction

1.1 Introduction

Interaction is known to facilitate second language acquisition (Long, 1996). It is perceived to provide learners opportunities to connect with input, output and notice on form in language learning (Long, 1980; Krashen, 1983 & Swain, 1985). In other words, through an interaction, learners are involved in the process of receiving comprehensible input, producing comprehensible output and also noticing lexical forms which can aid second language acquisition (SLA). According to Long (1983), there is a great deal of modification features found in an interaction and they actually promote negotiation of meaning (Ellis, 1991).

In this study, interaction is used as a form of activity to examine and elicit data on negotiation of meaning. In particular, it looks at gender interaction among female and male interlocutors in face to face interaction. This study also focuses on analysing conversational exchanges that arise from the language (Ellis & Barkhuizen, 2005), identifying a certain pattern or system produced by gender-matched dyads. It aims to classify whether gender differences occurred among the learners in this study especially from Generation Y or 'Gen Y'. Gen Y is classified as a generation of learners who were born between 1980 and 1999 (Liu, Pasman, Stappers & Taal-Fokker, 2012). This particular generation is recognized as high users of technology especially for finding information, sending text messages and communication. This chapter aims to provide the background and rationale for this study. It also comprises the research questions, the significance of the study and the limitations of the study.

1.2 Background and rationale of study

One of the prominences in the development of second language is communicative language teaching (Savignon, 1991), where active and passive learners are encouraged to participate in communicative events such as conversation and interaction which are common ways to facilitate the learning process. In this process, communicative language practise is incepted and with constant drilling, repetition, practice and experiencing in real-life situations, learners will mature and their competency in communication will grow (Savignon, 1991). According to Savignon (2007), the main aim of communicative language practise is to assist learners achieve their goals in the development of functional communication skills. This could happen immediately or for long-term social interaction. This aim also supports Hymes (1972) theory of 'Communicative Competence'. Through this process, a competent communicative user would eventually be able to perform well in any specified situation or environment.

Studies have shown that interaction promotes the development of second language acquisition (Long, 1983, 1986; Gass & Varonis, 1984). This is because interaction acts as an ongoing discourse where the interlocutors are required to recognize the speech before continuing to partake and sustain the discourse. Through this flow of discourse, learners are given the opportunity to frame an understanding of the meaning of the interlocutors' utterances. In addition, the data derived from the interaction will allow the formulation of a theory based on the construction of language and pragmatic rules (Gass & Varonis, 1984). Research in interaction have highlighted the role of comprehensible input (Krashen, 1985), comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) and Interaction Hypothesis (Long, 1996) in second language acquisition.

The process within the learner-learner interaction indicates that learner receives comprehensible input that promotes negotiation of meaning. In this process, learners also have the opportunity to produce output after receiving each other's feedback (Varonis & Gass, 1985b). This indicates that in an interaction, learners are offered the opportunity to experience the processes of receiving input and producing output. Further, the feedback received in the interaction will, then, reflect the comprehensibility and grammatically on their language production. Thus, learners will be able to notice the differences that occurred in the discourse (Feldman, 2007). The processes involved in an interaction can therefore promote learner's second language acquisition (SLA).

Studies in negotiation of meaning initially focused on examining the interaction between native-speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NSS), where trouble of understanding would occur within the communication exchange (Long 1981, 1983; Pica 1994; Gass & Selinker, 2001). Nevertheless, this type of study is considered a lopsided relationship between the interlocutors (Wilberg, 2003) because a native speaker is believed to be more dominant in the target language, with more control in turn taking which indirectly provides a threatening environment to a non-native speaker (NNS). This particular environment affects a non-native speaker's ability to express their thoughts and ideas. Therefore, investigations on non-native speaker (NNS) and non- native speaker (NSS) interaction are essential to see the communication development that aids SLA (Varonis & Gass, 1985). Within a non-threatening environment, learners who are non-native speakers (NNS) would be more involved in the interactions and use the opportunity to receive input, produce output and focus on form in negotiation of meaning. As such, communication language skills would develop along with enhancing the proficiency of English language.

In the literature of SLA, studies in interaction have long been initiated and dealt with intervening variables involving groups of undergraduates, teachers-students, students-students, children, professionals and many more. With the inception of electronic communication, more research on learner interaction has been conducted particularly within a CALL (computer assisted language learning) environment (Ortega, 1997; Warschauer & Healey, 1998; Chapelle, 2005 & Hampel, 2006). Simultaneously, the use of English Language in the advancement of multimedia technology and Internet has also increased; and learners begin to experience language learning beyond the classroom environment (Warschauer, 1996b). Thus, a 'new variety of language' emerged (Collot & Belmore, 1996) as more users utilize the Internet as a tool of communication. Therefore, research in face to face interaction has been left idle.

Gen Y is the first generation (Prensky, 2001) to have grown up with modern and advanced technology and it is a norm for them to interact using advanced technology. These 'Digital Natives' (Prensky, 2001) are considered to be versatile and savvy with the usage of advanced technology but oblivious when it comes to face to face interaction (Punitha, 2008). Their confidence of communication lies in networking, texting and chatting via social media. This is due to prolonged exposure to technology leading them to rely on electronic communication. They preferred instant messaging as a tool of communication instead of face to face interaction. In addition, emoticon is notably utilized to signify real-life emotions to express one's feelings instead of relying on gestures and body language. Research indicates that Gen Y is most content engaging their professional and personnel lives through electronic communication (Gratton, 2013). However, in order to evaluate the performance and progression of Gen Y in the professional development, face to face discussion is still the most preferred process (Gratton, 2013). As such, face to face interaction is essential in the professional field for growth and promotion.

In view of the above, face to face interaction investigation among Gen Y learners would contribute to our understanding of SLA. Analysing the interactions of this particular generation is especially important given that their face to face interactions tend to be less frequent than electronic communication. The data analysis and the findings may tell us how these groups of learners negotiate meaning and whether patterns of their interactions are similar to the patterns found in previous research.

1.2.1 Gender difference

Females and males interact differently in a language. The interaction formed by these two genders seems to be reconstructed based on their partner's gender. Research show that there have consistently been gender differences in the conversational interaction produced in patterns and style (Tannen, 1990). These differences are visible during the paired discourse either in matched-gender or mixed-gender discourse. In a matched-gender discourse, the language produced was different in terms of number of talk, types of talk and topics (Tannen, 1990). As for mixed-gender settings, men have more variation in their interpersonal styles and increase the amount of talk in the conversational interaction (Aries, 1976). Men also tend to increase the quantity of talk. It seems that dominance, power and status intensify the performance ability of men. Women, however, prefer to concentrate on the clarity and the comprehension of their conversation (Shehadeh, 1999).

Rationalization indicates both females and males tend to alter their interactional features in a conversational interaction based on the gender of their partners (Feldman, 2007). Nevertheless, further research is required before constructing a generalization on gender and second language. Just as Holmes (1993) cautiously formulates six universals concerning language and gender and recommends it to be tested thoroughly in every aspect. The six universals formulated are as follows:

1. Women and men develop different patterns of language use.
2. Women tend to focus on the affective functions of an interaction more than men do.
3. Women tend to use linguistic devices that stress solidarity more often than men do.
4. Women tend to interact in ways that will maintain and increase solidarity, while men tend to interact in ways that will maintain and increase their power and status.
5. Women use more standard forms than men from the same social group in the same social context.
6. Women are stylishly more flexible than men.

These universals are attestable or questionable. Holmes (1993) confirmed that the first universal is attestable especially from western country societies. Yet consideration should be given in correlating a cross-cultural research or subcultures, educational background and status before making an assumption. In the study of Gen Y learners, it will be interesting to discover whether the first and second universals are attestable or disputable. The findings of the study would reveal common assumptions that would support some underlying linguistic patterns or features that vary in the world of man and woman, especially among 'Gen Y' where woman and man are considered equal partners in education, employment, job opportunities and the command of language. This perspective becomes one of the primary focuses of this study.

1.2.2 Negotiation of meaning

Negotiation of meaning is a process that involves speakers undergoing a series of talk before accomplishing a transparent understanding of each other. It activates when a native speaker (NS) and non-native speaker (NSS) involved in an interaction where comprehension breakdown occurs and they are required to make attempts to resolve and arrive at a solution. The attempts made can go back and forth by checking for comprehension, requesting for clarification and checking for confirmation (Pica, 1988). These features come with modification or alteration and restoration (Pica, 1988).

The construction of negotiation of meaning or negotiation routine (NR) entrenched within the frequent occurrences of signalling for incomprehensibility, requesting for clarification and modified responses produced by the interlocutors. These negotiations arise from an interaction routine in daily activities or in any environment or given task and they are crucial. Negotiation of meaning happens when there is a trouble in the conversation (Long, 1981) and a great deal of modification featured in the interaction. The interaction activates when the indication of comments or questions signal (trigger) a response. When the message has not been successfully conveyed, the listener then reacts by repeating or modifying the message (Pica, Lincoln-Porter, Paninos & Linnell, 1996). These adjustments or attempts made by learners to follow the moves alternatively until the meaning of the message are resolved. These moves actually connect with comprehensible input and comprehensible output in SLA.

A subconscious process assumed to be a part of the cognitive process in negotiation of meaning (Varonis & Gass, 1985a, 1985b). This particular claim is made because the occurrences of utterances are shown to be modified and pushed out for the interlocutor's comprehension (Varonis & Gass, 1985a, 1985b). In other words, learners are found to

be responsive to notice the linguistic problem and thus ‘push’ them to modify their utterances (Swain & Lapkin, 1995). This shows that the cognitive process is taking place during the negotiation of meaning. These modified utterances comprise either of replacing; rephrasing, adding lexical items to the phrase or acting as a substitution of its original form in responses signalling non-understanding. These moves support Krashen’s comprehensible input hypothesis (1980) and Swain’s comprehensible output hypothesis (1985) because learners begin to develop and understand the linguistic features in a language. These interactions are most worthwhile as they offer learners the opening to focus on form in the language (Long, 1983). An example of negotiation of meaning is as below:

NS: Do you wanna hamburger?

NNS: Uh?

NS: What do you wanna eat?

NNS: Oh! Yeah, hamburger

Long, 1981, p.269

The above example shows that negotiation in SLA means working towards recognizing the missing gap that occurs in the comprehension of a conversation. It also shows that more turns take place in order to resolve the message meaning. At the same time, learners are able to make efforts to produce additional lexical linguistically. Thus, more opportunities are given to negotiate in terms of comprehensible input and comprehensible output.

There are four interconnected categories suggested by Pica (1989; 1994) in the course of negotiation of meaning. These categories are used in quantitative research as the fundamental resource in interaction and negotiation of meaning. The non-understanding portion which appeals to the learner pushes for different types of

indicators such as clarification requests, confirmation requests and comprehension checks. Trigger, signal, response, reaction to response and back and forth moves are the linguistic features used to serve as a source of L2 data and the descriptions are completely described in Pica et al. (1989), Pica et al. (1991) and Pica (1994). An example of the interconnected categories is as below:

NNS: the windows are crozed
NS: the windows have what?
NNS: closed
NS: crossed? I'm not sure what you're saying there
NNS: windows are closed
NS: oh the windows are closed oh OK sorry

Pica, 1994

The above example indicates the occurrences of comprehensible breakdown which gives the interlocutors the opportunity to 'push out' or produce modified output. The modified version was taken a number of times with different types of responses before the meaning of the negotiation was able to be resolved. Therefore, the modification functions as a utility in the negotiation gap as in maximizing the potential of comprehensible input, output and attention to form.

The effectiveness of negotiation of meaning lies within the task design involving the variables, in this case the interlocutors. Task is commonly used for experimental design and it encourages learners to interact (Ellis, 2003). This leads to a real communication that will develop learners' communicative competence. The type of task used will also reflect on learners' output production. For example, learners are more conscious of the linguistic formation in order to fill the missing gap of negotiation. This means learners will begin to notice and focus on form (Long, 1991). Noticing on form not only gives learners the ability to identify the gap but also gives them the opportunity to produce linguistically to resolve the message meaning. Therefore, task design does not only

promote learner's interaction but also serves to demonstrate the role of input and output in SLA. Some of the examples of tasks that are commonly used to elicit data are jigsaw tasks, information gap, problem solving, decision making and opinion exchange (Ellis, 2003).

In brief, negotiations of meaning have long been focused on oral interactions and then left idle when synchronous computer-mediated interaction came on board. Learners are engrossed with the use of advanced technology and have become dependent on them. In most cases, learners eventually begin to lose their expression of conveyance in face to face interactions. Hence, by replicating and adopting some of the theoretical framework formulated by the researchers in the field of SLA, the investigation and findings of this study will be an added contribution and in line with the evolvement of negotiation of meaning. This study intends to investigate and find out the comprehension breakdown that occurs during communication exchange among 'Gen Y', especially within high proficiency learners so as to know the frequency of occurrences.

1.2.3 The Malaysian context

Due to the globalization of Malaysia as an educational hub promoting English Language as a tool of communication, more programmes are found to engage various associations in teachers' training and learners' workshop. The main aim of these programmes is to develop learners' communication ability. This ability also involves learners' ability to negotiate meaning. This is a critical communication skill and is among the focus of language programmes given that it is essential for local and international communication scene.

To date, there are no studies on interaction by genders that investigate negotiation of meaning in face to face interaction in Malaysia. However, this study is closely related to Tam (2009) as in adoption of framework and replication. Tam (2009) investigated the comparison of face to face (F2F) and computer-mediated communication (CMC) between the high and low proficiency learners while looking into the negotiation routines embedded in these two environments. Other studies are closely examined on the pedagogical purposes in negotiation activities between teacher and learner (Cho, 2004), and the effects of negotiation in a classroom (Pung, 2003). While another looks on professional features in negotiation at the workplace as ethnography research (Thi, 2008).

Hence, there are minimal well-documented studies on negotiation of meaning in face to face interaction in Malaysia. The face to face environment of the group of learners in this study is active on social media. In this case, interactions in this study will give another perspective of SLA to develop the communicative language ability.

1.3 Problem statement

‘Ironically, Gen Y may be simultaneously the most socialized generation in the digital world and the most-isolated generation in the physical world, in other words isolation in social and learning activities’.

Black, 2010 p. 96

The above quote relates well to the Gen Y in the Malaysian context especially among the participants for this study. The lack of face to face interaction causes the participants to have low confidence especially in an employment interview setting. Face to face interaction is necessary especially for in-flight attendant interview. There are three or four stages of interviews in an in-flight attendant interview.

The interview comprises direct behavioural questions, situational questions, group discussions and debates in which the candidate's communicative competence is assessed. Due to the high turnover among in-flight attendants, more and more candidates between the ages 18 and 28 aspire to apply for the position. As this involves 'Gen Y', it has become customary for these candidates to engage in a preparatory course to understand the interview process. This preparatory course will not only enhance the language competency but also expose them to multi-tasks design interaction, one-way task and two-ways tasks. Thus, the lack of face to face interaction is the problem statement for this study.

1.4 The purpose of the study

This study aims to investigate the interactional features of Gen Y ESL learners mainly on the negotiation of meaning or negotiation routine that arises from the interaction between gender-matched dyads i.e single-gender matched dyads and mixed-gender dyads in a single environment which is face to face environment. As these learners are labelled as digital natives, it is the interest of the study to investigate whether face to face has become one of the implications of their interaction pattern. Although studies on negotiation of meaning in face to face interaction have been documented, the gap in the literature is the investigation of gender interaction in the Malaysian context. Therefore, the study wishes to discover the patterns, lexical produced for nonunderstanding that arises from the interactions between male-matched dyads, female- matched dyads and male-female matched dyads among Gen Y.

1.5 Research questions

The study seeks to provide answers to the following questions. The questions are adapted, replicated and modified from the study of Tam (2009) in comparison of negotiation of meaning in face to face interactions and synchronous computer-assisted learning. The research questions for this study are:

1. What are the differences in the number of turns and number of words of negotiation routines in face to face interaction between the gender of Gen Y learners?
2. How do patterns, indicators and responses of negotiation routines in face to face interaction differ between gender of Gen Y learners?
3. How do the direct and indirect indicators of negotiation routines in face to face interaction differ between gender of Gen Y learners?

1.6 Significance of the study

To date, there are no studies on gender interaction that investigate negotiation of meaning in face to face interaction in the Malaysian ESL context. The current group of learners of Gen Y which is the focus of this study are regular users of e-communication and tend to communicate more often using e-communication than face to face communication. In this case, analysing the interactions in this study will give another perspective of second language acquisition in terms of how this group of learners develop their communicative language ability in a face-to-face environment.

The participants that have consented for this study belong to Gen Y, specifically born between 1990 and 1996. It is a research that utilizes task to elicit interactions, widely used and carried out on mid-proficiency learners particularly in native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) involved interactions. Thus, the task based pairing activities between non-native speaker (NNS) and non-native speaker (NNS) of language would be a significant study in contributing knowledge on learner variables. The findings in this study may support or contradict the anecdotal claims that male-matched dyad produce higher linguistic output than female-matched dyad.

Besides, the findings would also create awareness of the importance of face to face interaction as an instrument of communication, second language learning and pedagogy. The findings can also inform policy makers and be applied in designing effective language development programmes in the future (Tam, 2009).

1.7 Limitation of the study

Swain and Lapkin (1995) argue that cognitive processing takes place among participants involved in communicative task in SLA. Due to the output produced by learners, it is said that learners are able to notice the gap thus forcing them to make necessary linguistic changes in order to be understood. Although the data supports the argument, there is no strong evidence indicating the accuracy of variable assessment. Thus, it is understood as a research design problem.

An experimental design is adopted in this study to enhance the internal validity as the focus of the study is the comparison between two genders in a single learning environment. Thus, the finding would not be generalized to signify the classroom population.

The tentative procedure used as purposive sampling involving a small number of participants. Therefore, the results could not be inferred to a larger population which is the limitation of this study.

Other sources of limitation are related to social stratification, ethnic-group differentiation and geographical differentiation. This study does not cover all ethnic groups and does not look into their social class. Thus, the findings cannot be generalized to represent Gen Y on the whole.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter provides the background, significance and justification for this study. It emphasizes the importance of conducting research into gender interaction among Gen Y learners. The study will give an insight into communication in face to face environment and how language is acquired in the context of Gen Y. This will also contribute to the body of knowledge on gender interaction in instructed SLA context.

CHAPTER TWO

Literature Review

2.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the literature that assists in shaping the various frameworks developed by researchers in SLA. It begins with a focus on the role of communicative competence in second language learning and teaching; highlighting how the ability to communicate is tested and hypothesized through various frameworks. This is followed by a review of the literature on gender and Gen Y to provide the context in discussing the development and communicative competence. Next, the theoretical framework of Interactionist Hypothesis in second language acquisition (SLA) is examined, specifically on the negotiation of meaning as a notion to evaluate interaction among Gen Y, L2 learners of different genders and the related studies in this area.

2.2 Communicative competence and second language learning

This section looks at the different components of communicative competence in communicative language ability as the main objective of second language learning and teaching and considers the different definitions of communicative competence. It also examines the notion of communicative task and the effect of task variables on the learners' language construction.

2.2.1 Defining communicative competence

The primary aim of language teaching is to develop the learners' ability to communicate; in this case to recognize the competency of communication among the learners (Hadley, 2001; Underwood, 1984). It is suggested that most teachers and researchers acknowledged that the main objective in language teaching and learning is to develop

and acknowledge learners' competency in communication (Hadley, 2001; Underwood, 1984).

The definition of communicative competence varies among scholars. Noam Chomsky's (1965) interpretation of competence in a scientific structural form gives importance to the linguistic elements of the language where grammar, syntax and structure are the constitution of the language. He (Chomsky, 1965) emphasized learners to use the constitution of the language concretely for all situations and proposed that it be examined according to the linguistic system of an ideal speaker. In other words, a L2 learner's competency is examined according to the linguistic system of a native speaker of English. This view was challenged by Hymes (1972) who highlighted that competency should be emphasized on the ability to create and understand utterances for contextual situation within the particular society (Yano, 2003). Hymes (1972) also proposed that the determination of one's competency level should be based on the consideration for their capability, skill, understanding, the non-cognitive factors in the interactional events and that it be non-limited to its linguistic functions.

Canale and Swain (1980) further investigated the notion of competence and developed a well-known framework for communicative competence. They (Canale & Swain, 1980) suggested that communicative competence can be broken into three components. The first component is the grammatical/ linguistic competence, followed by sociolinguistic competence and the third, strategic competence. Much later, discourse competence was discovered and proposed. These components helped researchers and teachers to focus on different sections of communicative competence. Grammatical or linguistic competence refers to Noam Chomsky's rules, structure towards a constrained usage where knowledge is important. Sociolinguistic competence denotes the suitability and understanding of the language for various socio-cultural context that used in a specific

communication convention in a more pragmatic aspect (Canale & Swain, 1980; Hadley, 2001; Savignon, 1997). Strategic competence refers to a contracted version that fragmented down into the verbal and non-verbal strategies, a consciousness of production of utterances where the involvement of understanding the missing gap, guessing and self-correction. In other words, to enhance the effectiveness of communication is to link to strategies in negotiation of meaning (Canale & Swain; 1980, Savignon, 1997). Finally, discourse competence which came later discusses the knowledge of the combination of both grammatical and appropriateness of communicative functions in attaining cohesion and coherence (Canale & Swain; 1980; Savignon, 1997).

Communicative competence is not easily measured as it is 'relative not absolute' and it is fully dependable on other elements such as learners, subject and location to produce the outcome. Therefore, the concept of communicative competence can only be assessed at the 'degree of communicative competence' (Savignon, 1972, p.15). And because of this, learners' degree of competency is normally assessed based on their grammatical competence; a notion developed by Canale and Swain (1980). Therefore, this study employs a more general and comprehensive term of language (Chapelle, 2003), focusing mainly on grammatical competence.

2.2.2 Communicative tasks

A task is an activity that involves learners to use the language (Ellis, 2003) and it is believed that it encourages learners to work in pairs or in groups in order to focus on exchanging communicative ideas (Prabhu, 1987; Nunan, 1989). This approach is reflective of a communicative language teaching approach and acts to stretch learners' limited linguistic resources. In other words, the employment of tasks somehow demands

learners to stimulate and correspond differently and this facilitates the cognitive process of second language development and production (Robinson, 2001). As a result of its nature, task is mainly administered by researchers in SLA in methodology and pedagogy to examine learners through interactions and language production (Chapelle, 2003). And up to more recently, task-based language made a drastic move from the pedagogy and methodology paradigm towards task-based learning and this directs methodologists to focus around the language developed by the learners through examining interactions among learners to learners (Candlin & Murphy, 1987; Ellis, 1990; Chapelle, 2003). Therefore, the focus of task used is specifically on knowing how learners acquire the language and not how teachers teach.

There are a variety of descriptions given for task definition. One of which is a simplified version from Long (1985) who sees a task as "...hundred and one things people do in everyday life, at work, at play and in between". Long added that task is engaged in a non-technical and non-linguistic way (Nunan, 2004) and it is commonly done by everyday people for everyday purpose. From a pedagogical description, a task constitutes 'an activity which requires learners to arrive at an outcome of given information through some process of thought and which allows teachers to control and regulate that process' (Prabhu, 1987). After which Nunan (1989) adds by defining it as "a part of classroom work which involves learners in comprehending, manipulating, producing or interacting in a target language". Duff and Coughlan (1994) propose task as a "behavioural blueprint", observing it in a linguistic point of view where task produces linguistic data. Breen (1987) sees it as "...a variety of work plans to facilitate language learning from simple to brief, more complex, lengthy activities which involves problem solving and decision making and states task has an overall purpose to facilitate language learning" (Candlin, 1987). In view of this, there are common concepts included

in the description of task by these researchers; which are “goal oriented” and “specific setting” (Tam, 2009). In other words, all task employed have their own task goals that are goals to be achieved from engaging activity for the participants (Hampel, 2006) and learners will learn to co-construct in the particular activity with a determined goal (Ellis 2003).

In task-based research, various investigations were conducted for different purposes and from different perspectives (Chapelle, 2003). For example, from the interactionist perspective, the utilization of task is observed for the interactional features of the tasks where Robinson (2001) calls it “task conditions”. The cognitivists observed task complexity and task difficulty (Robinson, 2001) in examining the outcome of the language learner, the structure of the task and other transforming information for selecting, reasoning and classifying which involve cognitive factors. In task conditions, participation factor plays the main role which produces the outcome of the interactional features of the task, whether it is a one-way or two-way information flow (Robinson, 2001) and to meet its communicative goal (Long, 1989). However, there are other factors that could affect task outcomes. Gender, familiarity with each other, task role (Plough & Gass, 1993), task goals and task interpretation (Coughlan & Duff, 1994) are some of the participants’ contributing factors towards affecting task outcomes. Both participation and participant’s factors are the set conditions which affect the outcome of the development of the learner’s language.

Other characteristic that affects the development of language production is the type of tasks utilized by the researchers during the investigation. For example, in task conditions there are certain types of tasks used i.e. convergent and divergent tasks (Duff, 1986), one-way or two-way tasks (Long, 1985) and closed and open tasks (Long, 1989)

These tasks are utilized and observed for the interactional features that activate negotiation of meaning (Pica, 1987) which is also closely linked to Long's Interaction Hypothesis and this study.

One-way tasks and two-way tasks are categorized and labelled as information gap activity (Ellis, 2003) where the "information exchange" (Long, 1980) is mutual and split either by a single person or between two or more people. One-way task is controlled and dominated by one participant where all information on communication is held within even though other participant (s) may contribute to the task activity but they do not hold any of the information. In contrast, two-way tasks are controlled by two or more participants where they are obliged to complete the task and the information on communication is shared equally among themselves. In view of this, Long (1989) investigates and distinguishes between the one-way and two-way task and claims that two-way task produces greater number of interaction or negotiation in terms of turns.

The other influential factor is open and closed tasks. This is a term labelled by Long (1989) and Ellis (2003). In open tasks there are no predetermined solutions for the activity, giving the participants the autonomy to choose the topic for discussion. For example, opinion-gap tasks involve making choices, surveys, general discussion where the degree of openness varies. On contrary, closed tasks expect the participants to reach a single accurate solution and set some form of solutions. Many information gap activities are closed. Long (1989) again rationalizes the use of these tasks and recognizes that closed tasks are more useful for language acquisition where as participants are required to persevere in the topic and comprehend it so greater amount of precision of the language is achieved whereas open tasks create a needless effort to communicate where participants can have the autonomy to continue or to switch conversation if they encounter difficulty in completing a task (Ellis, 2003).

In order to support his claim, Long (1989) refers to a study by Duff (1986) on divergent and convergent tasks. These tasks are also a part of the contributing factor for effecting the language development production. Divergent task is an opinion gap activity where participants will be able to defend their own viewpoints on current issues and contest their partner's opinion. During this activity, learners will be exchanging information without reaching a consensus. In other words, learners need not mutually come to an agreement but can have their independent views. An example of divergent activity is a debate where learners express their individual viewpoints (Duff, 1986). Convergent task, however, requires the participants to arrive at a mutual consensus, looking for one ultimate solution for a problem. This type of task involves simulations, discussions and problem-solving activities. During this time, Duff (1986) realized that convergent tasks produce more turns in talk, more questions, confirmation checks which lead to modified interaction and comprehensible input. Some of the examples of convergent tasks are jigsaw tasks and decision-making tasks. According to Duff (1986), jigsaw tasks promote more opportunities for negotiation of meaning and are beneficial for language development in SLA. Examples of jigsaw tasks include describe the picture; spot the difference and 'old man out' (Duff, 1986). In contrast, decision-making tasks promotes the tertiary setting, for example, 'decide the items required to bring to a remote land', 'discuss the ways to reduce stress', and shows that the demands of the linguistic and cognitive are ultimately at a higher level.

Therefore, from the task-based literature, it has been indicated that there is an extensive range of factors that could affect the task outcomes and task parameters. As the aim of this study is to investigate the language produced by the participants, the researcher had to carefully design and set the activities of the study. This is because there are factors and variables that are found to be directly influencing the language production.

2.3 Gender and language

Over the past decades, researchers on gender and language have constantly attempted to synthesize them with second language acquisition (Kubota, 2003). One of them is Sunderland (2000) who gathers many articles and reviews them in a wider field of SLA and states that language has seen gender mostly as a binary category, even though there have been new theories of gender with specific focus on alternative concepts (Butler, 1990) This is because the male/female category perceived in the ‘gender differences’ method-to-language use has reinforced a fixed and stagnant concept of ‘female deficit’ and ‘male dominance’ or authority-in-language use between the genders (Sunderland, 2000). This problem is also raised by Ehrlich (1997) who argues that the fixed and stagnant concept limits research in SLA. Ehrlich (1997) points out that the fixed and stagnant concept is created based on the language used related to behaviours whilst ignoring the social, cultural and situational contexts which is acquired and used predominantly. Therefore, the construction of gender differences is formed by the historic, cultural, societal and interactional factors, in other words social and linguistic factors (Ehrlich, 1997). This view is strongly supported by Pavlenko (2001b), elaborating further that there are several assumptions of feminist poststructuralist approaches to the investigation of language and gender that conceptualized gender as a system of societal relations, robust, subject to change and context dependent. Another assumption is that gender irregularities are created and exchanged in discourses, creating an identity with the characteristics of gender hierarchy entrenched in the use of language that challenges and reinforces the production which will reflect upon the predominance notion of gender (Pavlenko, 2001b).

Another researcher, Weedon (1999), notices a form of pattern in men’s language and views that women’s language is more mediocre than men’s. This view is in line with the traditional view of gender difference which is after summarizing the different approaches

to gender difference in feminism and is seen through the studies by focusing on the same-sex interactions that criticizes the traditional view and at the same time matches the liberal feminism view that advocates the gender equality (Weedon, 1999).

With a plethora of factors conceptualizing the gender system of language production (Pavlenko; 2001b, Erlich; 1997 & Butler; 1990), studies on the interaction can further explain the implications on the gender asymmetric system and the concept of 'difference' is formed (Cameron; 1992 & Wareing; 1994) and shifting its focus to 'relation' instead (Connell, 2002). Such investigation on interaction among genders will benefit the scholars, researchers and policy makers and further research in the field of pedagogy where the knowledge gained will sustain innovative practices, (Davis & Skilton-Sylvester, 2004) and help to modify the changes required (Ridgeway 1997).

2.3.1 Gender and interaction

Interaction plays an important role in the gender system where it sustains and modifies the changes required in the conditional situations (Ridgeway, 1997). It is through interaction that a salient distinction is created which becomes the source of inequality, and in where 'difference' is identified. (Ridgeway, 1997) One of the forms of inequality is gender status beliefs (Carli, 1991 & Ridgeway, 1993). Gender status beliefs refers to an expectation where one gender is far superior to the other or more competent than another and is a cultural perspective practised for many years and it is considered to be a typical gender stereotype (Carli, 1991 & Ridgeway, 1993). This stereotype becomes salient as it is well-documented and incorporates the assumptions stating that men's traits are better than women's, men's views are more valuable and diffusely arbitrated to be more competent (Broverman et al., 1972; Deaux & Kite 1987; Eagly 1987). Thus, this perception is an immeasurable advantage to men over women as it is predominantly

favouring men (Ridgeway & Balkwell 1997).

Another aspect which favours men is gender classification during an interaction process. According to Ridgeway (1997), during an interactional process, a communication gap may occur prompting cultural schemas of physical gender criteria that reinforce continual gender classification. The criterion includes physical personal appearance of an individual such as clothing or hairstyle that the audience presume (West & Zimmerman, 1987). Studies show that this act is natural and unconscious behaviour when one has to relate to another (Brewer & Lui 1989, Stangor et al., 1992). Thus, it becomes a habitual perception act and people just cannot initiate an interaction without gender classification (Ridgeway 1997).

Studies of gender and interaction indicate that there are other factors that may contribute to this gender system. One of them is gender status belief which refers to the construction on gender hierarchy which is applied during employment deliberation (Ridgeway, 1997). This belief favours men's input during interaction and women find difficulty in altering the lower expectations created for them, thus promotes biases of choice in comparison. This conventional perception created over the years on 'gender stereotype', 'gender status belief' and 'gender hierarchy' are less likely to be accepted because of the resistance given by one dominating gender (Ridgeway, 1997).

Therefore, more evidence, more documented interaction, background investigation such as organisational changes in economy, technology that will contribute to the disconfirming information and then, will probe for changes of the gender status belief (Harris & Rosenthal 1985, Miller & Turnbull 1986, Rothbart & John 1985 in Ridgeway, 1997). In this manner, further studies are required to support, validate and be the contributing factors to modify the undermining gender system or gender difference.

There are other influential characteristics such as race, status, cultural beliefs and behaviour patterns considered to be involved in the gender system (Ridgeway & Correll, 1999). Although they play a minor role, they still contribute to the concept built in the gender system. According to Ridgeway and Smith-Lovin (1999), gender system involves processes that distinguish men and women as socially and significantly different in organizing relations of inequality. In gender system, it involves the experiences and cultural beliefs shared by both genders in everyday routine which rationalizes that men and women are significantly different in habits and thus, this justifies men's greater influence and greater privilege. The uniqueness of gender is that it comprises cultural beliefs and supporting knowledge that has to be sustained within the context of continuous interaction, amongst those who are privileged and underprivileged by the system. Therefore, interaction is the main factor in providing information towards the preservation or the modification of gender system, as a whole in the face of continuous changing environment and situational context (Ridgeway, 1997).

2.3.2 Gender difference

Men and women interact differently and there are many reasons for them to be in contact with. This is due to the availability and familiar intersection such as family members, relations, friends and working colleagues that causes high frequency rate in interaction (Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin 1999). This makes interaction the primary field for gender system and affects the basic rules that people use to frame interaction (West & Zimmerman, 1987 & Ridgeway, 1997). Since interaction is fast, direct and habitual, one tends to automatically classify the other i.e. as male or female (Brewer & Lui 1989). There are other contributing factors in gender difference such as appearance and behavioural (Kessler & McKenna 1978, West & Zimmerman 1987). These are culturally

accepted, thus becoming one of the 'primary' social categories embedded in our culture that is necessary to make one adequately functional in order to proceed with the interaction (Brewer & Lui 1989).

Therefore, interaction makes gender difference easily available, implicit at times, noting the dissimilarity at home, school or workplace and by forcing people to continuously make sex classification is to assist in maintaining, modifying or reducing gender differences. Therefore, the data from the investigations on men and women interaction will continuously assist in the modification of embedded structure of interactions. For example, more hypotheses and theories can arise from the data that could assist in the framing of interaction structures.

2.3.3 Men-women interactions

It is known that men and women interact frequently but only a marginal of these interactions occur within cross-sex i.e. men and women, with the exception of gender, or else with peers where power and status are linked with their ranks and positions (Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). Studies indicate that the propensity of chain connection interactions is in favour of same-sex than cross-sex and this happens immediately when children are able to pick their friends to play with (Block 1979; Level 1978; Eder & Hallinan 1978 cited in Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). Here is where children begin to develop the understanding of sex as a permanent individual character, perhaps because of the formation of identity processes (Kohlberg, 1974; Block, 1979). The activities that children commonly participate in have contributed to the construction of gendered knowledge, strengthened the perception of gender differences and at the same time created a peer friendship relationship between men and women that develops into adulthood (Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999).

According to Fischer (1982) and Marsden (1987) adult men and women have similarities in their patterns of interaction particularly when they are young and single. Married women and mothers, however, develop changes in the chain connection of interaction. These changes draw them to interact within their own gender and create a sense of belonging and lead to a higher percentage of links compared to men (Fischer & Oliker, 1983; Marsden, 1987). Married men and fathers also have this similar chain connection of interaction as they participate well and play an active role in family-oriented network (Fischer & Oliker, 1983; Marsden, 1987). This pattern stays even after the birth of a child but eventually fades when the child ages (Munch et al., 1997). Women, however, continue to expand their chain connection through kinship and workplace.

Workplace is another division where adult men and women would frequently make contact, be it is blue-collar, white-collar or managerial level (Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). It is through workplace that sex discrimination often occurs especially in distribution of work that creates opportunity for biasness in interaction. Reskin (1993) found that women often ended with less attractive jobs than men and this type of discrimination stands firmly strong where workers often interact (Bielby & Baron, 1986). Even though workplace interaction is actively participated by both men and women, in most cases cross-occupation interactions (e.g. nurses with doctors, secretaries with managers) distinguish men with a higher hierarchy level, higher authority and higher income (South et al., 1982). Therefore, same-sex group interaction is highly favoured in workplace with the exception of cross-occupation or hierarchy levels.

Studies show that in a mixed-group interaction, men tend to be the main focus, they demonstrate great participation (James & Drakich, 1993; Dovidio et al., 1988), by giving opinions and task suggestions (Wood & Karten, 1986), by displaying influential elements (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983; Lockheed, 1985; Wagner et al., 1986) and exposing leadership qualities which will be likely to be nominated as a leader compared to women (Eagly & Karau, 1991; Fleischer & Chertoff, 1986; Nyquist & Spence, 1986; Wentworth & Anderson, 1984 cited in Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999). However, no differences seem to appear between men and women in same-sex group participation, giving opinions and task suggestions (Carli, 1991; Johnson et al., 1996; Wagner & Berger, 1997) or readiness to be influenced from others (Pugh & Wahrman, 1983). In a study by Wood & Karten (1986), men's propensity to actively participate in a mixed-group interaction in terms of communicating more and engaging in task behaviours was arbitrated by status-based assumptions; that men are more competent than women. On the other hand, when performance expectations in conditions are made even for both men and women, gender differences in behaviour seem to fade away (Ridgeway & Smith-Lovin, 1999).

In summary, interactions which occur between men and women are often situated within the family, school, workplace or even leisure activities, whether it is same-sex or cross-sex, shaped and developed with the influence of culture, thus creating a pattern of interaction (Carli, 1989). As we observe further, most research is conducted from the linguistic aspects, identifying the changes, style, effect and the formation of structural pattern. Thus, the employment of activities is conducted on match/mixed-sex dyads and same/mixed-sex groups. The following section will briefly explain the language used by men and women.

2.3.4 Men's language

Weedon (1999) notices that men's language has a pattern and labelled it as more dominant or superior than women's after summarizing the different approaches to gender difference in feminism. There are many factors underlying this concept of superior and mediocre language and gender which are based from past investigations. Research shows that from the etymological aspect, in a mixed-group interaction between men and women, men show tendency to talk more than women (Eakins & Eakins, 1976; Reis, Senchak & Solomon, 1985), they have high tendency to interrupt (Baird, 1975; Eakins & Eakins, 1978; Hall, 1984; West & Zimmerman, 1983; Zimmerman & West, 1975), which creates a higher rate of overlapping (Zimmerman & West, 1975) and utilize more justifiers in the conversation (Mulac & Lundell, 1986). Evidence shows that the high frequency rate of interruptions and overlaps are a form of assertion of power that the men is in control of the conversation; a cue of dominance (Zimmerman & West, 1975).

2.3.5 Women's language

Since men are more dominant in the language, women become more vigilant in their speech. Women prefer a courteous form of speech especially in the vicinity of men and that makes the speaker less convincing (Lakoff, 1975). Studies show that women prefer to use an array of linguistics features that demonstrate them to be 'superpolite' hypercorrect grammatical constructions (Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Lakoff, 1975, Mc Millan et al, 1997). Among them are tag questions (Brouwer et all; 1979; Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Eakins & Eakins, 1978; Mc Millan et all, 1977), hedges and disclaimers (Bradley, 1981; Crosby & Nyquist, 1977; Eakins & Eakins, 1978), intensifiers (Lakoff, 1975; Mulac et all, 1988; Schultz, Briere & Sandler, 1984; McMillan, Clifton, McGrath & Gale, 1977) and asking questions (Fishman, 1978; Smythe & Huddleston, 1992).

These linguistic arrays of features are mainly used in a mixed-sex group discussion (Carli, 1990) and appear to be more supportive and less dominant in their speech styles (Maltz & Borker, 1982; Tannen, 1990). Along with the frequent usage of tag questions shows a sign of uncertainty, displays a courteous form of speech and much less power over the conversation. In addition, the use of intensifiers and agreement act to compensate feelings of powerlessness (Turner, Dindia & Person, 1995). Yet where men often interrupt women disruptively, women prefer not to discriminate to whom they interrupt (Smith-Lovin & Brody, 1989). In other words, women tend to interrupt men and women equally whether in same-sex dyad or mixed-sex dyad. This could possibly be due to the style of interaction seeking for relationship, aiming for proximity and solidarity by using more supportive and cooperative features (Tannen, 1992).

Taking these into consideration, women's language is classified as a submissive act when in contact with men, displays the 'nurturant' quality (Haslett, 1983 p. 128) and exhibits positiveness in communication especially in initial interactions (Turner, Dindia & Pearson, 1995). To justify further, they (Turner, Dindia & Pearson, 1995) noticed that women appear to be more participative, more involved in a conversational interaction regardless of the sex of their partner and distinguishes that verbal behaviour should be further investigated.

Alternatively, Tannen (1986) views the linguistic features as indicators in a conversation, signalling for confirming responses, construed as errors in turn-taking which require additional participation in the conversation. Besides, interaction that associates with task problem solving discussion will only entice more overlaps and interruption and these are highly predicted in mixed-gender dyads, female-male and male-female than same-gender dyads (Tannen, 1986) as men and women construct their own rules of interaction (Tannen, 1993). To conclude, Cameron (1992) states that

women and men have their own strategies in their conversation style and women are prone to cooperation and men to competition.

2.3.6 Same-gender interaction

In a study of same-gender dyad or in single-gender group interaction, Hirschman (1994) reflected that women are easy to talk to, even when the group may consist of strangers. Women tend to be effortless in their interaction, speak fluently that demonstrate a sense of comfort with each other and the usage of politeness strategies in leading to pleasant conversations (Holmes, 1995). In their interaction, they are inclined to have a high fraction of affirming responses, a lower number of fillers that displays confidence in their speech and a propensity to construct each other statements which leads to a longer talking time (Hirschman, 1994). The use of hedges, boosters and compliments are also some of the functions used to intensify and maintain the bond of their conversation (Holmes, 1995). Hedges and boosters are added elements which serve to alter the dynamic of the statement. Hedges are used to intensify the language by being less rigid and certain whilst boosters show interest and enthusiasm (Talbot, 1998). Tag questions (e.g. isn't it?, wouldn't we?, can't we?) are at times used as hedges too and compliments function to create and maintain the relationship in the conversation. The frequent use of these functions portrays the strategies for an on-going conversation for women in a female-female interaction.

On the other hand, Holmes (1995) found a distinguished pattern in men in the male-male interaction, centering the referential function of language i.e. obtaining information. Men seek for solid information and purposeful conversation that demonstrates their expertise in the field. Their conversation is a battle field of knowledge and skill. The pattern includes humour, narrations and art of conveying messages

(Tannen, 1993). Therefore, the utilization of forms and functions in the language are based more on the frequency and this is less among women (Hirschman, 1994). The inconsistency in frequency of affirmative responses and fillers used are also much lower in figures among women (Hirschman, 1994) and there is no significant difference in the interruptions and overlapping between men and women (Turner, Dindia & Pearson, 1995). In other words, in the same-gender dyad interactions men do not interrupt more and women do not get interrupted more.

Another interesting hypothesis suggested by Hirschman (1994) is related to the role as the facilitator in a conversation especially in question-and-answer pattern. It is found that females usually ask the question and males answers. This seems untrue for both single-gender conversations. Males are inclined to either disagree or disregard the other's statement; whereas females tend to acknowledge each other or continue to sustain the conversation.

Thus, in the literature of male-female interactions, the limited data obtained necessitate further investigation especially in the same-gender dyads/groups where gender difference is probably larger (Carli, 1989). For this study, too, the researcher intends to investigate interactions based on a single-gender dyad, male-male and female-female and seek to hypothesize from the collected data.

2.4 Interaction and negotiation in second language acquisition

This section gives an overview of the role of interaction and negotiation in SLA especially on gender differences among Gen Y. It starts off with a brief explanation on the role of interaction in instructed SLA and then, an examination of the theoretical claims on the concepts of input, output and interaction, specifically comprehensible

input hypothesis by Krashen (1980), comprehensible output hypothesis by Swain (1985) and interaction hypothesis by Long (1980). This is followed by a close observation of theoretical claims focusing on the breakdown of communication or communication trouble in SLA literature known as negotiation of meaning. Negotiation of meaning has been recognized as the feature, examined to provide evidence, act as an aid, firstly, for SLA and SLL and continues with its limitations.

2.4.1 Interaction in instructed SLA

In a conversation, there is a system of turn taking adopted by the interlocutors. And it is necessary for learners to understand the speech prior partaking and sustaining the discourse. When learners are immersed in interaction, it is through this flow of discourse that learners are given the opportunity to 'formulate short-term' and 'long-term' hypotheses (Gass & Varonis, 1984). According to Gass and Varonis (1984 p.66), 'short-term hypothesis' actually provides learners the ability to understand the meaning of their interlocutors' utterances whilst 'long-term hypotheses' refers to the linguistic, semantic and the pragmatic rules of the language. This is also provided with the appropriate data. Both hypotheses provide learners to ability to understand the message meaning, forming linguistic features in particularly to negotiation of meaning.

Initially interaction in language learners begins through communicative approach to teaching and not with SLA. Methodologists hypothesize that through interaction language learning is taking place and suggested a variety of communicative curricula as a significant element in communicative approach (Richard & Rogers, 1986; Crookes & Gass, 1993). Although researchers have long recognized the importance of communication in SLA, it only became the main focus of study recently (Pica, 1994).

There is a contrast of views on the role of conversation in language learning. Previously, based on the structuralist view it was claimed that grammatical rules and structures are learnt first by learners; followed by an unusual mode integrate these structures to execute the conversation (Day, 1986). Other researchers namely Wagner-Gough and Hatch (1975) and Hatch (1978) proposed a diverse role for interaction and language learning. According to them, it is through conversational interaction that syntax is formed, developed and became the foundation (Boulima, 1999; Pica 1994), instead of practising grammatical structures designed for conversation. They also claimed the acquisition of syntax derived more out of conversation than conversing and practising the grammatical rules and structures. By doing conversation, various aspects of language development have been investigated, researched and Krashen's (1980) notion of comprehensible input is the first influential aspect from the interactionist tradition.

2.4.2 Comprehensible input hypothesis

Krashen's (1980) notion of comprehensible input hypothesis accentuates that it is essential for linguistic input to be comprehensible before encoding the message. The hypothesis emphasizes the need for the message meaning to be understandable so that L2 learners are able to internalize the forms and structures. Without comprehensible input the exposure of input data alone is not adequate enough for learners to access and internalize the L2 rules, forms and features (Krashen 1980; Pica, 1994). In this aspect, the attention is more on the 'meaning' than the 'form', when the meaning of the communication is focused, the acquisition of structures is enveloped (Pica, 1994, p. 500). Therefore, meaning is necessary before acquisition of structures.

There are critiques and arguments on the role of comprehensible input in SLA, claiming that SLA is not achieved just by input alone (Gibbons, 1985; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991). However, the role of comprehensible input as a significant factor in language

development (Hadley, 2001) especially when learners put effort in comprehending input specifically, in face-to-face interactions is widely agreed and accepted. This makes interactions productive for SLA (Allwright & Bailey, 1991).

2.4.3 Interactionist hypothesis

Long's (1980) interactionist hypothesis claims besides receiving input, there is modification input that produces the interactional structures of the conversation. Long (1983b) concludes that when input is made comprehensible, it simultaneously assists the development of SLA (Long, 1983b). This distinction was made while examining the modified input and interaction structures between native speakers (NS) and non-native speakers (NNS) (Long, 1980). According to Long (1983b), 'modified input' refers to the input made for the learner to comprehend after few attempts of modifying the speech. In other words, the focus in this type of research is on the speech by the native speaker (NS) that is directed to the learner which is the non-native speaker (NNS).

In his study (Long 1983, p.127), Long examines the 'modified input' by NS in modified interaction and observed the learner's (NNS) participation and takes this into account. He found some modified interaction that were more on confirmation checks, comprehensive checks, clarification requests, self-repetitions, other-repetitions and occurrence of expansions (Long, 1983, p. 130). It is claimed that these interactive modifications assist in the development for L2 acquisition. Upon closer examination, the occurrences of these modified interactions actually emerged from conversation trouble, either to repair or to avoid the discourse (Long, 1983, p. 131) In his finding, it is also found that feedback was given by NS in the interaction (Long, 1983). The feedback given allows learners who are non-native speakers (NS) to discern their

output and make the necessary adjustments that aids SLA (Schachter, 1984). More examples can be found in a study by Varonis and Gass' (1985b) which utilised Long's Interactionist hypothesis and focused on NNS-NNS involved interaction. In this study, Varonis & Gass (1985b) discovered an input resulting from negotiation work and refer to it as 'optimal' input that is simplified.

In summary, Interaction hypothesis involves both of the interlocutor participants, emphasizing on the ongoing interactional adjustments, which contrasts from Krashen's Comprehensible input. Further, Interaction hypothesis emphasizes the interactional adjustments made by both interlocutors making it central in a work which involves negotiation of meaning.

2.4.4 Comprehensible output hypothesis

In the literature of SLA in the field of interaction, another theoretical claim was made by Swain (1985, p 269) in which comprehensible output is the key to successful SLA. In her paper, Swain (1985) acknowledged that the role of input is necessary. However, she argues that comprehensible input (Krashen 1981b, 1982) alone is not sufficient for the development of SLA. Comprehensible output is also necessary. Swain's (1985) comprehensible output hypothesis proposes that learners are not only able to understand new forms but also able to produce output. Learners have the opportunity to modify semantically their output while in conversation with others. In other words, learning takes place when a learner notices a gap, is aware of his or her linguistic difficulty and makes attempts to modify output in order to learn something during the discourse (Swain & Merrill, 1995, p. 371). This claim derived and emerged from the findings of French immersion context study using Canale & Swain's (1980) components of communicative competence for analysis (Swain, 1985).

In her study of learners' discourse in the French immersion contexts, Swain (1985) unexpectedly found that learners' performances in grammatical and sociolinguistic competencies are off target, less native-like and clearly identifiable as non-native although learners' grammatical competency are as equal as native speakers. The outcomes contest both the comprehensible input and interaction hypotheses as the underlying variables in SLA (Swain, 1985). In her view, although interaction makes learners receive and comprehend input by the meaning-negotiated conversation in the development of SLA, it was limited under the condition that linguistic input is simplified, paraphrased and expanded (Swain, 1985, p. 247). To further justify, limited opportunities were given to learners for comprehensible output (Swain, 1985, p.249).

With only two-way interactions in the French immersion programmes, the result contradicts findings of previous studies on acquisition of discourse competence. This is because two-way interaction exchanges enable learners to receive input, comprehend input and push for output in order to get the message across. Learners' message basically consists of grammatically deviant forms in a sociolinguistic way that pushes the message to be precise, coherent and appropriate (Swain, 1985, p. 249). With this, Swain (1985, p. 248) hypothesizes that comprehensible output is the main key that completes the whole picture of negotiation in interaction.

The hypothesis states that comprehensible output provides learners the opportunity to expand and extend their linguistic knowledge and create meaningful messages that are precise, appropriate and coherent. Here, learners not only need to comprehend the language but are forced to move from semantic processing to syntactic processing (Swain, 1985, p. 249). This shows that comprehensible output plays a substantial role in SLA, a parallel concept to comprehensible input.

In view of all this, it is recognized that participating in a conversation can result in language development. It is claimed under the interactionist hypothesis that conversation that involves negotiation of meaning provides optimum conditions for SLA because of the linguistic modifications for comprehensible input. Also, comprehensible output hypothesis helps to expand it further by including linguistic modifications for semantic and syntactic acquisition. This shows that investigation on negotiation of meaning would provide learners an additional opening to interlanguage development where studies of comprehensible input and comprehensible output in the interactions can be examined further. Therefore, a closer look at negotiation (Long, 1981) as a facilitative feature for SLA and its role to stimulate comprehensible input, comprehensible output and some of its limitations will be shown on the next section.

2.4.5 Negotiation in SLA

Negotiation, negotiation of meaning or negotiated interaction in the literature of SLA (Boulima, 1999; Gass & Varonis, 1985; Larsen-Freeman & Long, 1991; Varonis & Gass, 1985a; 1985b among others) are terms used by Long (1980) after investigating a conversational discourse of non-native speakers (NNS) and native speakers (NS). Based on this research, an important distinction is made between modified input and interaction, what Long notices NS and NNS do to avoid and repair impasses made in their conversational discourse as interactional modification (Long, 1980, 1981, 1983a).

Later on in 1996, Long defines negotiation as;

[n]egotiation of meaning is the process in which, in an effort to communicate, learners and competent speakers provide and interpret signals of their own and their interlocutor's perceived comprehension thus provoking adjustment to linguistic form, conversational structure, message content, or all three, until an acceptable level of understanding is achieved.

Long, 1996, p. 418

In order to observe the role of negotiation that facilitates SLA, Pica (1994) applies three theories of SLA. They are comprehensible input (Krashen, 1980), comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) and attention to L2 form or noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990).

The first theory applied was Comprehensible input by Krashen (1980) widely promoted to be beneficial to SLA. According to the theory, negotiation, interlocutors are able to comprehend message meaning. During the process learners are able to internalize the form and structures that encode the message (Pica, 1994). In the example below the question by NS “Do you wanna Hamburger?” was not understood by NNS. When NNS uttered “Uh?” indicating a problem, the message was received and relevant response was offered.

NS: Do you wanna hamburger?

NNS: Uh?

NS: What do you wanna eat?

NNS: Oh! Yeah, hamburger

Long, 1981, p 269

This was followed by the second theory applied by Pica (1994) and put forward by Swain (1985). Swain (1985) suggested that opportunities should be given to learners to produce comprehensible output; that is, a chance to organize and restructure their output syntactically. From the example below, the initial output by NNS “the windows are crozed” was not comprehensible to NS. The response given by NS was incorrect and it indicates non-comprehensibility by NS that follow-on to a modified comprehensible output from NNS:

NNS: the windows are crozed
NS: the windows have what?
NNS: closed
NS: crossed? I'm not sure what you're saying there
NNS: windows are closed
NS: oh the windows are closed oh OK sorry

Pica, 1994

Both comprehension and modified production are firmly tied to each other to learners' attention to L2 form, where comprehension is perceived as the "entrance requirement for access to form" and modified production is the "context for learners to draw on their current system of interlanguage forms" (Pica 1994, p. 501). In other words, negotiation of meaning provides learners the opportunity to access and practise the interlanguage forms. Besides, Pica (1994) points out when both comprehensible input and output are achieved; the occurrence reflected to another theoretical claim i.e. the noticing hypothesis (Schmidt, 1990). Noticing hypothesis is a term put forward by Schmidt (1990), interprets that learners are conscious on the attention to or noticing of L2 forms, forced upon them as they make attempts to process input and output that are meaningful. An example is shown below:

NNS: but I didn't know how drew so we are very confused
NS: to draw?
NNS: yeah

Pica et al., 1989, p. 89

It was claimed that L2 form must come to learners' attention as they process input which also relates back to Swain's (1985) suggestion on the importance of production as a more direct means than comprehension for learners to focus on form (Pica, 1994). Therefore, according to Pica (1994), the input processes in modification of negotiation plays a significant role in successful comprehension of message meaning in

communication and for second language learning. This is evident in negotiation when the input modifications of negotiation are broken down into segmentation structure that helps direct learners' attention to L2 form (Pica, 1994, p.506). Hence, Pica claims the "probability link between negotiation and learners' attention to L2 form extends the work of negotiation beyond to helping learners with comprehension of message meaning, and this makes negotiation a potentially powerful contributor to other dimensions of the L2 learning process" (Pica 1994, p. 506).

Clearly, negotiation plays an important role in SLA as it can provide opportunities for language learning through learning sequences. The study of negotiation begins with focus on comprehensible input and language acquisition as studied by Krashen (1980), Long (1983b), followed by Allwright and Bailey (1991) and Pica (1994). Krashen (1980) believes that comprehensible input is the key for language acquisition progress and language output occurs only after language competence is acquired (Tam, 2009). In Krashen's learning sequence (illustrated by Pica, 1994), it is through negotiation that can lead to comprehension of meaning but then it is comprehension of meaning that leads to a focus on L2 forms and eventually acquisition of L2 forms as shown in the model below:

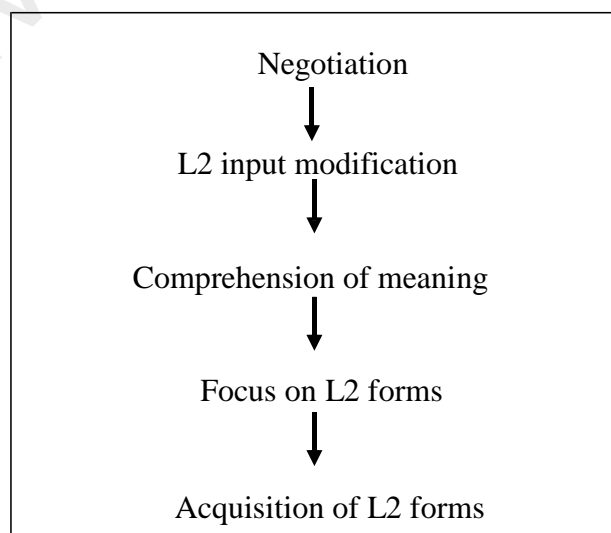


Figure 2.1: Krashen's (1980) acquisition model (illustrated by Pica, 1994, p. 507)

Long's model (1983) shows the importance of conversation and its role in SLA as it enables learners to acquire comprehensible input. His model is based on interaction involving two-way task exchange information which shows how learners produce feedback for comprehensible input that leads to language acquisition. Long's model, however, does not illustrate in what way focus on form plays a role in the learning sequences (Figure 2.2) and this seems to be similar to Krashen's learning sequences.

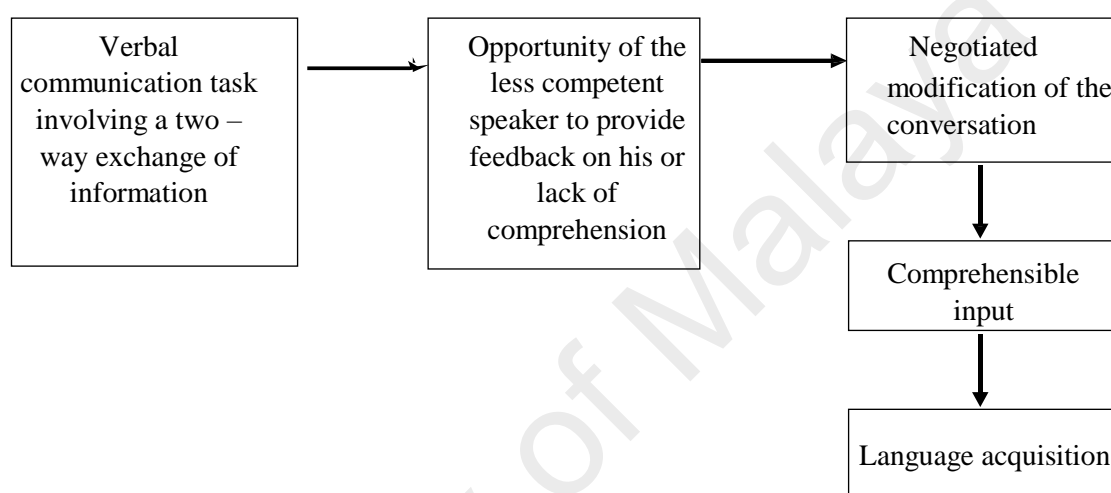


Figure 2.2: Long's (1983b, p. 214) model of the relationship between type of conversational task and language acquisition

Allwright and Bailey (1991) proposed an alternative model to state the relationship between negotiation and language acquisition. They (Allwright & Bailey, 1991) highlighted that language acquisition can hypothetically transpire without comprehensible input. In other words, comprehensibility of message is not always the intended outcome. Allwright and Bailey (1991) also indicated there is a favourable amount of work required to negotiate interaction that prompts language acquisition, instead of the intended outcome of the work which is the comprehensible input. The types of work they refer to (Allwright & Bailey, 1991) are the interactional adjustments, the number of attempts to understand and to be understood. These interactional adjustments refer to the important processes of negotiated interaction, a form of request by the speaker to the interlocutor. They are comprehension checks, confirmation checks

and clarification checks (Long, 1983b). An example of ‘comprehension check’, “Do you understand?” refers to whether the interlocutor understood what has been said by the speaker. “Oh, so are you telling that you lived in London”- an example of ‘confirmation check’ – is an expression by the speaker to ensure the meaning is correct. And ‘clarification check’, “What do you mean?” is a request for more input as in assisting to understand what the interlocutor has previously said. The definition and examples explained by Allwright and Bailey (1991) are taken and paraphrased from the studies of Long (1983b, p. 218) and Chaudron (1988). These interactional adjustment processes as claimed by them provides learners the opportunity to negotiate meaning in a form of request for additional input. The subsequent diagram displays Allwright and Bailey’s (1991, p. 123) interpretation of the alternative model.

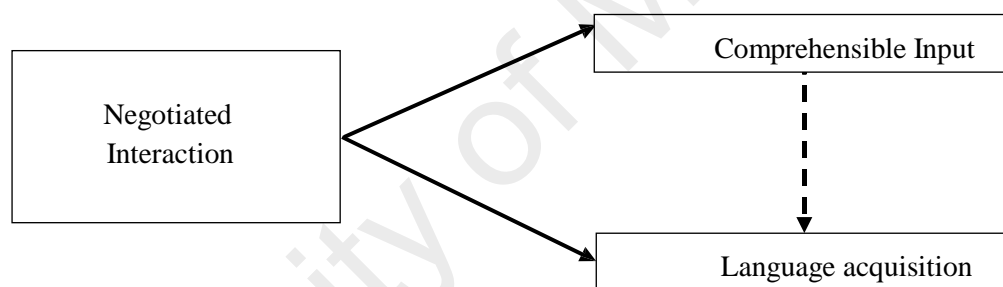


Figure 2.3: An alternative model of the relationship between negotiated interaction and language acquisition by Allwright and K.M. Bailey (1991, p. 123)

In this model, the broken line denotes the probability of direct contribution of comprehensible input to language acquisition (Allwright & Bailey, *ibid*). Further, the above model illustrates that comprehension can transpire directly from negotiation work without any form of language acquisition.

To investigate negotiation closer, Pica (1994) suggested a sequence that signifies the importance of attention to form in comprehension, where it is entrenched in the steps of acquiring comprehension. In her alternative sequence, according to Pica, focus on form is the most pertinent role for comprehensibility of message. This is because in

conversation, it is predicted that one will be able to hear the message repeated, segmented and rephrased, especially during negotiation. This gives the learner the opportunity to process the message especially by giving attention to form prior to comprehending its meaning (Pica, 1994). Pica (1994, p. 508) believes that the negotiation data shows learner's comprehension of meaning is a result of the access to L2 form rather than its precursor. A diagram representation of Pica's (1994) alternative learning sequence is portrayed in Figure 2.4:

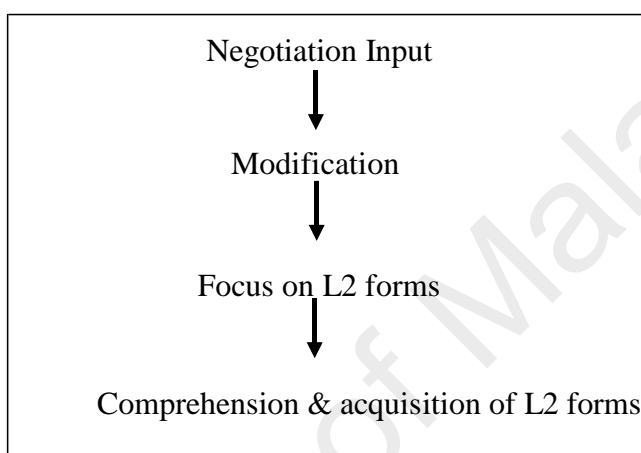


Figure 2.4: An illustrative representation of Pica's (1994) learning sequence

In her paper, Pica (1994) reveals two logical explanations on the significant role of negotiation in SLL. Pica (1994, p. 508) observed that there are “too much manipulation of form during the negotiation process which makes L2 input comprehensible to learners to afford negotiation as the secondary role in the learning process”. The other explanation is that “negotiating does not always lead to immediate comprehension of meaning but does get learners to manipulate form”. With this dual potential explanation on the role of negotiation, in assisting L2 comprehension and directing attention to L2 form makes negotiation a powerful role in L2 learning than has been claimed so far (Pica, 1994, p. 508).

In summary, the SLA theories and research presented so far in relation to interaction particularly in negotiation of meaning provide learners the opportunity to comprehend message meaning, drawn to focus and notice forms and produce comprehensible modified output that actuate the development of language structures and acquisition of L2 forms. Although there are various learning sequences suggested for certain acquisition pathways, there is no inherent evidence as it is a mental process that is challenging to access and measure correctly.

Having highlighted the important role of negotiation for SLA from the theoretical perspective, we now look at the following range of reactions that will give a closer view of negotiation routines in real conversation. Below is a list that demonstrates the behavioural reaction by one of the interlocutors in a miscommunication of conversation.

Any one of the following is possible:

1. Immediate recognition of problem but no comment.
2. Immediate recognition of problem and make a comment.
3. Later recognition of problem but no comment.
4. Later recognition of problem and make a comment.
5. Recognition after conversation but no comment.
6. Recognition after conversation and make a comment.
7. No recognition.

Varonis & Gass, 1985a, p.328

The above is a range of reactions following recognition of miscommunication in a conversation. In a miscommunication of conversation, it is known to the speaker to recognize and either to make comment or no comment. In case of no recognition at all, no comment is also made. The 'no comment' response could either mean that the interlocutor is able to identify the problem but for no apparent reason wishes not to comment or leave the problem unrecognized. These possible reactions are illustrated in a form of flow chart in Appendix B. These reactions are important as they provide

learners the ability to identify the gap, delay and noticing on form. Besides, it also assists researchers to observe any miscommunication in an interaction and with an appropriate framework, to analyse the interaction data.

To further investigate the process of how negotiation aids SLA, the following section will explain the factors involved in negotiation of meaning that are found in the negotiation frameworks and the evidence of SLA.

2.4.6 Negotiation frameworks

To further investigate the negotiation routines, we now refer to Varonis and Gass' (1985b) widely quoted framework. In their framework, the negotiation routine consists of a Trigger (T), an Indicator (I), a Response (R) and an optional Reaction to the Response (RR) as shown below:

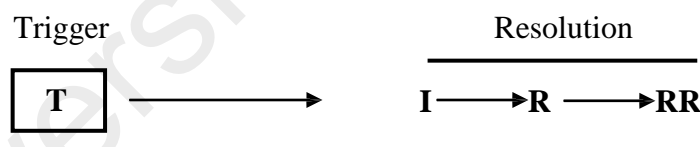


Figure 2.5: Proposed model for non – understandings by Varonis & Gass (1985b, p. 74)

Negotiation routine as defined by Varonis and Gass (1985b) is activated with a signal of non-understanding by the hearer during the communication exchange. This causes a temporary halt of the discourse that provides opportunity to the interlocutors to resolve the problematic part of the conversation and then turn back to the main stream discourse. The temporary halt or the incomprehensibility of message is caused by a trigger or a lexical trigger. The trigger consists of unfamiliar words that prompt doubts or uncertainties. When this happens, it gives interlocutors the opportunity to focus on new

or unfamiliar words through clarification request or confirmation checks such as “What do you mean?”, “What? I don’t understand?” (Varonis & Gass, 1985b). These are also referred to as Indicators in the framework of negotiation of meaning. Table 2.1 explains the framework of negotiation of meaning with the example provided in Pica (1994).

Table 2.1: An example of the application of Varonis and Gass’ (1985b) coding framework

Speaker	Utterance	Negotiation Framework	Description
NNS	The windows are crozed	Trigger	Non-understanding causes a trigger
NS	The windows have what?	Indicator	The trigger prompts an indicator of non-understanding
NNS	Closed	Response	An indicator calls for a response in the form of modified output by the NNS but it still lacks comprehensibility
NS	Crossed? I’m not sure what you’re saying there?	Indicator 2	Feedback is provided but in the form of wrong words The 2 nd indicator prompts the NNS to focus on the right form and pushes to provide modified and comprehensible target-like output
NNS	Windows are closed	Response 2	Indication of comprehension
NS	Oh the windows are closed oh OK sorry	Reaction to response	

Table 2.1 clearly shows that the aim of negotiation of meaning is to identify the missing link in communication in order to achieve comprehension of message meaning. It also illustrates that there is more work involved, more turns in negotiation in order to resolve the message before it can continue with its routine in the flow of the discourse (Varonis & Gass, 1985b). Through this negotiation, more opportunities are available for comprehensible output, comprehensible input and finally noticing of form.

In a study by Pica et al. (1989), it is found that there are different types of indicators and responses in the interactions generated by NS and NNS. And this validates the theoretical construct of comprehensible output during incomprehensibility of message meaning. With the results, a category of indicators and responses are developed that are worth observing during negotiation of meaning. They are as follow:

The NS signal: a total of partial understanding (types of indicators) are as follows:

1. Explicit statement or request for clarification e.g “Is what?” or “I still don’t know what the word is.”
2. Request for confirmation through repetition of NNS
3. Request for confirmation through modification of NSS
4. Request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of NNS

The NNS’ response categories developed by Pica et al.’s (ibid) study are as follows:

1. Switch to a new topic
2. Suppliance of information relevant to topic, but not directly responsive to NS signal
3. Repetition of NS modification of trigger
4. Self - modification of trigger (Production of modified i.e. comprehensible output)
 - a. Phonological modification
 - b. Semantic modification, through synonym, paraphrase, or example
 - c. Morphological modification through addition, substitution, or deletion of inflectional morpheme (s) and / or functor (s)
 - d. Syntactic modification through embedding and elaboration in clause (s)
5. Repetition of trigger
6. Confirmation of acknowledgement of signal only
7. Indication of difficulty or inability to respond

According to Pica et al. (1989), by employing the above presented categories of indicators and responses, there seems to be some mechanical changes made to the early trigger that started the supposed problem. These modification or changes varies in range: from simple syntactical changes towards form and meaning (Pica, 1994).

In their study (Pica et al., 1989), the findings reveal that there were some influential factors on the produced responses by learners. It is surprising to know that the learners' (NNS) responses toward NS's indicators are greatly modified compared to NS's responses toward learners' (NNS) indicators. It appears that learners' types of responses are influenced by the use of NS's types of indicators (Pica et al., 1989). Upon closer observation, it is noted that NS's types of indicators prompt learners for instant modifications which happens to be modified message in meaning and form. This happens especially when it comes to open questions. The questions include "Is what?" or "I still don't know what that word means?" or "Can you describe what that means?" This type of questions prompts learners to respond with great modifications instead of repeating the indicators (Pica et al., 1989).

There is also a common type of response given by learners by uttering "yeah" or "yes" towards NS elaboration of their message (Pica, 1994). These types of responses are based on the type of NS indicator used and regardless of task type (Pica et al., 1989).

Another interesting finding in Pica et al.'s (1989) study is that in comparison of the types of tasks used, the discussion tasks produced the highest percentages of clarification requests which drove more modified output from the NNS compared to jigsaw and information gap tasks. Particularly in the modified output, NNS produced greater syntactic modifications. Thus, this type of indicator – clarification request – encourages

greater modifications of comprehensible output than any other type of indicators as categorised by Pica et al. (1989). This is also found in the interactions for both NS and NNS regardless of the type of tasks as well as generating the highest percentages of occurrences.

In the study of Gass and Varonis (1991), a study of negotiation in particular discloses some examples of self-correction. Self-correction or self-repair is a target-like modified output derived from negotiated interaction with a native speaker (NS). Most of these self-corrections occur not only once but several times or by attempts after the negotiation. It shows an internalization of linguistic knowledge produced during the negotiation sequence (Gass & Varonis, 1991). And these features are repaired by lexical, phonetic and syntactic modifications. An example of self-correction or self-repair as shown below:

Chinatsu: ...woman has a [dɔk]
Yoko : duck? (surprised)
Chinatsu: [dɔk]
Yoko : [dɔk] ah, I see-
Chinatsu: a [dɔk]
Yoko : What kind of dog? (eight turns)
Chinatsu: The dog wear s- some clothe...

Gass & Varonis, 1989 p.78

The above example shows a self-correction of phonetic modification. It clearly shows that attempts were made to utter “dog” but it sounded like “duck” in English. After few turns, Yoko finally understands and provides a corrective feedback (Long, 1996) “what kind of dog?” Eight turns later, Chinatsu finally uses the word again with the correct pronunciation. Self-repair or self-correction occurs in an interaction not only provide learners the opportunity to focus on meaning but also on linguistic aspect and this enhances SLA.

In view of the above, the findings appear to support the role of conversational interaction in SLA. In addition, the uses of tasks for negotiation of meaning have heightened learners’ opportunities for language acquisition. As for internalization on learners’ linguistic output through negotiation, the record shows that “different parts of learners’ grammar” are likely to be prone to external influence (Gass & Varonis, 1989, p. 82).

In summary, this section has reviewed studies on negotiation of meaning by providing adequate examples to indicate that the works of negotiation which emphasize on focus on form. Focus on form has a great potential of bringing positive and encouraging results to SLL and SLA. Thus, further insights in learners making use of interaction, specifically in acquiring the target language through negotiation of meaning can be enhanced in a different context, in this case among the high proficiency learners among Gen Y.

2.4.7 Studies on negotiation of meaning

Over the years, several frameworks have been proposed and utilised by researchers to examine the process of negotiation of meaning. The proposed framework of miscommunication (1985) and model of non-understanding or negotiation routines by Varonis and Gass (1985b) have been widely used and employed in studies of face-to-face interactions (Oliver, 1998; Nakahama, Tyler & Van Lier, 2001; Yufrizal, 2009) and in the CMC (computer-mediated communication) environment (Lee, 2001; Kim, 2004; Wang, 2006; Bower & Kawaguchi, 2011; Tam, Kan & Ng, 2010). In addition, Pica et al.'s (1989) schema of indicators and responses enable researches to investigate the breakdowns and categories of the modified interactions (Wang, 2006; Nakaham, Tyler & Van Lier, 2001; Yufrizal, 2009; Tam, Kan & Ng, 2010).

For example, in face-to-face environment, Oliver (2002) studies the patterns of negotiation for meaning in child interaction and found that primary school learners are aware of their problematic part of the communication and make attempts for a mutual understanding. It appears that these young learners participate in turn-taking for requesting input and modified interaction. Similar to adults, negotiation of meaning provides children the opportunity for comprehensible input, output and notice on form that aids SLA. Another study by Yufrizal (2009) was on undergraduate EFL Indonesian students. In his study, three types of tasks were utilized to elicit interactions and found that information gap generates the highest negotiation routines in terms of number of words, number of turns, number of indicators and responses and productive modified interaction. In his findings, the same gender and proficiency dyads produce greater modified interaction especially in information gap task and jigsaw task activities. In a more recent study by (Paloma, 2014) was on high-proficiency learners but on an EFL

setting. Her paper was a replication on Foster's (1998) investigating the interactional adjustment on negotiation of meaning utilizing the different types of tasks. Paloma also utilized four different tasks to elicit data; 2 tasks were on one-way information exchange and the other 2 tasks were on two-way information exchange. These tasks were divided and administered to learners; pair-work (dyad) and group-work. In her study, she found that there was high frequency of communication trouble and required the participants to engage in turn-taking, signaling for incomprehensibility, producing modified output and her results showed the two-way information exchange generated the highest frequency especially in the group discussion. Her findings also reveal that the high-proficiency learners shown to demonstrate grammatical consciousness specifically in the past tense verb.

Another researcher, Cook (2015) investigated negotiation of meaning in a different angle. Besides than examining the communication trouble and attempts for comprehension, Cook (2015) found out that learners are able to notice on use, form and meaning. Her findings reveal that learners are able to focus on the pragmatic features, linguistic and the nonlinguistic elements could be the cause of communication breakdown. Therefore, she suggests that negotiation of meaning provide learners ample of opportunities to communicate in a natural order. In other words, learners used the opportunity to use language as a communication tool instead of focusing on content only. Thus, it is evident that negotiation of meaning provides learners the opportunity to modify input, output and notice on form (Yufrizal, 2009) which enables learners to acquire the language. Although the literature shows there were studies of negotiation of meaning specifically in the face-to-face context, the number of documented studies seem to be low, in other words there were minimum studies in this environment.

Since the inception of CMC (computer-mediated communication), research in face-to-face interaction has been left idle and more research was conducted in the CMC environment. This is because CMC provides opportunity for communicative practise among passive and active learners in a lesser threatening environment than face-to-face (Tudini, 2007). For example, in a study of Bower and Kawaguchi (2011) on negotiation of meaning between Japanese and Australian learners, the findings reveal that learners utilized the opportunity to solve the problematic part of the chat exchange. This is beneficial to SLA as learners developed to recognize the linguistic gap in the chat and attempted to correct with modifications. Besides, the feature of corrective feedback was found and learners were able to notice on form (Bower & Kawaguchi, 2011). This indicates learning in progress.

Another interesting study was by Tam, Kan and Ng (2010) on low proficiency learners in two environments; face-to-face interactions and SCA (synchronous computer-assisted). The findings reveal that there were more occurrences of negotiation routines in face-to-face environment despite the learners' linguistic ability. The SCA environment, however, is shown to provide learners the opportunity for syntactic and semantic modifications. This is beneficial for low proficiency learners as they are able to notice on form and negotiate for comprehensible input. Thus, SCA environment can be an additional learning platform for language learners for communicative language practise.

Both environments have shown to be beneficial in SLA where learners are provided the opportunity for comprehensible input, output and focus on form and notice on form (SCA). It is predicted there will be more research in the SCA environment because the development and evolvement of e-communication may encourage teachers, learners and researchers to investigate. Nevertheless, investigation on face-to-face interaction may be

neglected with the advent of new technology. Therefore, it is important to continue with this line of research in order to understand how this current generation of learners interact face-to-face.

2.4.8 Relevant studies on negotiation in gender interaction

Studies related to gender differences in interactions were initiated a few decades ago. These studies found several interesting findings. For example, Pica, Holliday, Lewis and Morgenthaler's (1989) study found that after comparing NNS male/NS female dyads and NNS female/NS male dyads, NNS males happen to produce strong morphosyntactic modification in the output. In their study, three oral communication tasks were used; "information-gap" task, "jigsaw" task and "discussion" task. They found that discussion task actually encouraged learners to produce a higher percentage of modified output. The findings also show that gender affects the outcome of the results. Pica, Holliday, Lewis and Morgethaler's (1989 p.83) study discovered that NNS male produced greater modified output compared to NNS female. In this case the NNS males preferred to modify their output for comprehensible output.

Another example is from the study of Gass and Varonis (1986 p. 346) whereby an investigation on the NNS and NNS involved interaction benefitted NNS males as it allows them to utilize the conversation to produce greater amount of comprehensible output whilst NNS female utilized conversation to acquire greater amount of comprehensible input. In their study, the participants were from middle proficiency level and utilized communication and picture description tasks. The findings revealed that communication tasks allow learners to practise and generate syntactic structures which provide opportunities for comprehensible input and output.

In a similar study, Shehadeh (1994) discovers that in a mixed-group interaction, the males provided better context in terms of producing comprehensible output whereas in the same-sex gender dyadic it was the females who produced greater comprehensible output. These findings supported Gass and Varonis (1986) and Pica et al. (1989) that males (mixed-gender dyads) seem to take greater opportunity in utilizing the conversation, appreciating the amount of talk, hence producing more comprehensible output than women. However, Shehadeh's (1994) findings disclosed that in same-gender dyads, the women took greater advantage in producing comprehensible output.

Thus, this study is closely related to Pica et al (1989) and Shehadeh (1994) which involves investigating the gender differences in face-to-face interactions in negotiation of meaning. It is also suggested by Gass and Varonis (1986) to investigate further among the genders by applying Gass and Varonis (1985) framework in analysing the interactions data.

2.5 Generation Y

Generation is a demographic term used to cover a period of roughly twenty years, in which during this time of period a particular population is born (Sayers, 2007; Zemke, Raines & Filipczak, 1999). Most generations take around 20 years to reach maturity to penetrate into economy, for example, a child born in Malaysia in 1980 is anticipated to penetrate into the economy as a worker and a complete consumer around 2000. With the assumption of an ordinary working life, that same child will reach at his or her mid-point of career and life in 2020 and potentially have an early retirement in 2040 (Sayers, 2007).

The terminology used for labelling the generations is not standardised because of the variety of different names to label the generations were given by different authors. In fact, there is disagreement among the authors themselves on the duration of years that should be covered within one generation (Sayers, 2007; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). Table 2.6 below displays a comparison of authors in categorizing the various generations and assigned years given to a generation in dissimilar chronological schemes taken from Sayers (2007).

University of Malaya

Table 2.2: Generation labels, different authors and assigned years

Authors	Generation Labels				
Howe & Strauss, 1991	Silent Generation 1925 – 1943	Boom Generation 1943 – 1960	13 th Generation 1961 – 1981	Millennial Generation 1982 – 2000	
Lancaster & Stillman, 2002	Traditionalist 1900 – 1945	Baby Boomers 1946 – 1964	Generation Xers 1965 – 1980	Millennial Generation Echo Boomer Generation Y Baby Busters Generation Next 1981 – 1999	
Martin & Tulgan, 2002	Silent Generation 1925 – 1942	Baby Boomers 1946 – 1960	Generation X 1965 – 1977	Millennials 1978 - 2000	
Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005	Matures < 1946	Baby Boomers 1947 – 1964	Gen Xers 1965 - 1980	Gen Y NetGen Millennials 1981 - 1995	Post Millenials 1995 - present
Tapscott, 1998		Baby Boom Generation 1946 - 1964	Generation X 1965 - 1975	Digital Generation 1976 - 2000	
Zemke, Raines & Filipczak, 1999	Veterans 1922 - 1943	Baby Boomers 1943 - 1960	Gen – Xers 1960 - 1980	Nexters 1980 - 1999	
Learning Solutions, 2008	Veterans 1925 – 1945	Baby Boomers 1946 – 1964	Generation X 1965 – 1979	Generation Y 1980 – 1995	

The main focus is on Generation Y, Gen Y or Millennials. This is because this particular generation is currently in the working environment and will continue to sustain and later on dominate the workforce. Thus, an investigation on their interaction feature is worthwhile.

2.5.1 Defining Gen Y

There are a variety of labels given to this latest and youngest generation in the workplace. Among them are Millennials (Howe & Strauss, 1991; Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Martin & Tulgan, 2002; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005), Digital Generation (Tapscott, 1998), Nexters (Zemke, Raines & Filipczak, 1999), Echo Boomer & Baby Buster (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002) and finally, Gen Y or Generation Y (Lancaster & Stillman, 2002; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005; Learning Solutions, 2008). The term Generation Y is labelled after Generation X and known to be the biggest generation after Baby Boomers (Solutions, 2008). What makes Gen Y unique is because their arrival coincided with the development of high technology tools (Nimon, 2007). Along with the rise of computers, worldwide web (www), mobile phones and instant messaging created an extraordinary capacity for prompt interaction among Gen Y (Nimon, 2007).

In 2001, Prensky came up with distinct term for Gen Y that is 'digital natives'. This is because Prensky (2001) believed that Gen Y is the native speakers for digital language in smart phones, computers, internet and video games. Other than growing up with the development and evolvement of high technology, they are able to constantly access and process information and to communicate (Prensky, 2001; Oblinger & Oblinger, 2005). The development of mobile technologies such as iPad, iPhone, tab or tablets and smart phones expands the concept of thinking, processing and exchanging information.

In view of the above, it is assumed that Gen Y has the upper hand on accessing information, gaining knowledge and is very familiar with the advanced high technology tools and creating more possibilities in professionalism and social life (Nimon, 2007). With the prolonged exposure to technology, this has led them to rely on the phenomenon of technology development, which is also a setback on this particular generation. Thus, it becomes a limitation for Gen Y.

2.5.2 Generation Y interaction

According to Nimon (2007), the impact of these technologies have affected and shaped Gen Y style of interaction with others. Having easy access to information, it makes them evidently different from previous generations' in terms of the way of negotiating in the society before the development of these tools. Punitha (2008) emphasized that this particular generation relied too much on electronic communication where this has somehow hampered their face-to-face interaction. It seems that Gen Y preferred instant messaging as their tool of interaction instead of face-to-face interaction. In addition, the emergence of emoticon gives superfluous preference to users by inserting the icons into their interaction as a sign of expressing one's sentiments and thoughts. With this the number of interactions has increased but the meaningfulness of each interaction has decreased (Nimon, 2007).

Therefore, it is predicted that the addiction to advancing technology has demonstrated a culture that fully envelopes a technology that is still evolving. And this is the part where it overlaps and interfere in our everyday life, routine, habits and interaction (Punitha, 2008).

In a most recent report by Gratton (2013), it was accentuated that Gen Y people are very much comfortable in interacting through electronic communication whether in the working environment or in a social context thus, leading them to interact less in face-to-face interaction. The same report emphasized that face-to-face discussion is still given the utmost priority and preference when it comes to evaluating the competency and progression of Gen Y in the working environment. As such, it is evident that face-to-face interaction is essential in the professional field for growth and promotion.

2.6 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a number of elements that have helped to form this study. One of which is the communicative language ability; the definition of communicative competence widens as it does not only emphasize the grammatical competence, it also looks into the sociolinguistic, strategic and discourse competence. With the different competencies, communicative language ability is encouraged and developed in the second language classroom under the communicative language teaching (CLT) approach.

The next element is the communicative task which is found to be one of the characteristic principles of CLT. A task has its goal; goal oriented because during an activity, participants are engaged in goal-oriented behaviours. For this study, the communicative task was selected to be utilized to elicit interactions from the participants. This is because performing a task enables participants to produce language and the language produced can be examined. The feature of a task can also be viewed from different perspectives such as interactionist and cognitive perspectives, learner factors and variables. These contributions gave a substantial impact on the task outcome specifically affecting SLA's comprehensible input, comprehensible output and interactional modifications. These

features and factors have been carefully looked into by the researcher when designing and setting up the tasks for this study. Details for the study are provided in Section 3.7 under research instruments.

Another element that assisted in the shaping of the study is the recognition of negotiation of meaning as a feature particularly in advancing the comprehensible input (Krashen, 1980), comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) and attention to form (noticing hypothesis). These features appear in SLA. To analyse further on non-understanding routine or negotiation of meaning, Varonis and Gass' (1985b) framework is proposed and widely used to analyse the occurrences of negotiation. This framework consists of a trigger, an indicator, a response and an optional reaction to the response.

In a face-to-face environment, studies have used Varonis and Gass' (1985b) schema to identify and label the components of the negotiation routines of negotiation of meaning. And this is used to examine the number of occurrences found in the negotiation with different types of tasks, types of triggers, types of indicators, feedback and self-correction or repair. In the literature of negotiation, it was found that task type affects the quantity of negotiations. Jigsaw tasks are found to encourage learners to produce more negotiations. However, Pica et al. (1989) concluded that it is the type of indicators (clarification requests) that regulates the type of output predominantly comprehensible output for SLA. Although this was mainly explored in gender interactions among previous generation of learners (Gass & Varonis, 1986; Pica et al., 1989; Shehadeh, 1994), this is yet to be explored among the Gen Y participants.

CHAPTER THREE

Methodology

3.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to investigate gender interaction in negotiation of meaning in face to face interaction among 'Gen Y' high-proficiency learners, as in single-gender matched dyads and mixed-gender matched dyads. This study adopts a mixed method design (Creswell, 2010) where quantitative and qualitative procedures were applied to examine different negotiation routines, linguistic features and to what extent they aid SLA. According to Creswell (2010), mixed-method design provides a better understanding and gives strength to the study. During the investigation, communicative decision making tasks were used to elicit the interactions. The features emerged from the data will first be quantified, observing the number of turns, words, indicators and responses. Later the same features will be observed qualitatively; where the modified interaction will be examined. Finally, it was also the interest of the researcher to compare and contrast between these two genders in terms of patterns, linguistic features derived from the interaction for nonunderstanding and resolving the meaning of the message in the context of current Gen Y learners.

In this chapter, the design of the study will be described. This is followed by the procedures in collecting data and analysis of the data.

3.2 Research questions

This study aims to investigate the interactional features found among Gen Y ESL learners. It attempts to provide answers to the following questions:

1. What are the differences in the number of turns and number of words of negotiation routines in face to face interaction between the gender of Gen Y learners?
2. How do patterns, indicators and responses of negotiation routines in face to face interaction differ between gender of Gen Y learners?
3. How do the direct and indirect indicators of negotiation routines in face to face interaction differ between gender of Gen Y learners?

3.3 Research Design

According to Brown (1988, pg. 9), it is important for a researcher to understand the classified variables and manipulate them to improve understanding in language learning research. For this study, there are four variables involved: independent variables, dependent variables and control variables.

The independent variables comprise two different communicative tasks. Learners were required to interact face to face in a single environment based on the two communicative tasks provided. The selected dependent variables are the quantitative and qualitative measures of the negotiation routines of negotiation of meaning. The quantitative features measured include the number of turns and words whilst the qualitative features measured were the patterns, indicators and responses found within the routines. The qualitative

features also inclusive of the linguistic output found in the routines; features indicating non-understanding and features indicating for comprehensibility.

The other independent variable for this study is the gender of the participants. According to Pica et al., (1989), Shehaded (1999), there are differences in the linguistic output performed by different genders. For this study the main purpose was to explore the interactions between genders among Gen Y learners. Hence, females and males were selected as participants in this study.

Lastly, in order not to have an effect on the study, the researcher had to control the variables by choosing to retain them constant, neutralize or eliminate (Brown, 1988 p. 11). The control variables selected for this study consists of language proficiency, age, familiarity with each other, planning time, types of tasks and dyad format.

The first control variable was the language proficiency among the participants. Prior to the study, an English language proficiency placement test was conducted consisting of 120 multiple choice questions. To qualify as high proficiency level, each participant had to score 76 – 95 for upper intermediate and 96 above for advanced level. In this study, the participants involved had high proficiency level which is the advance level.

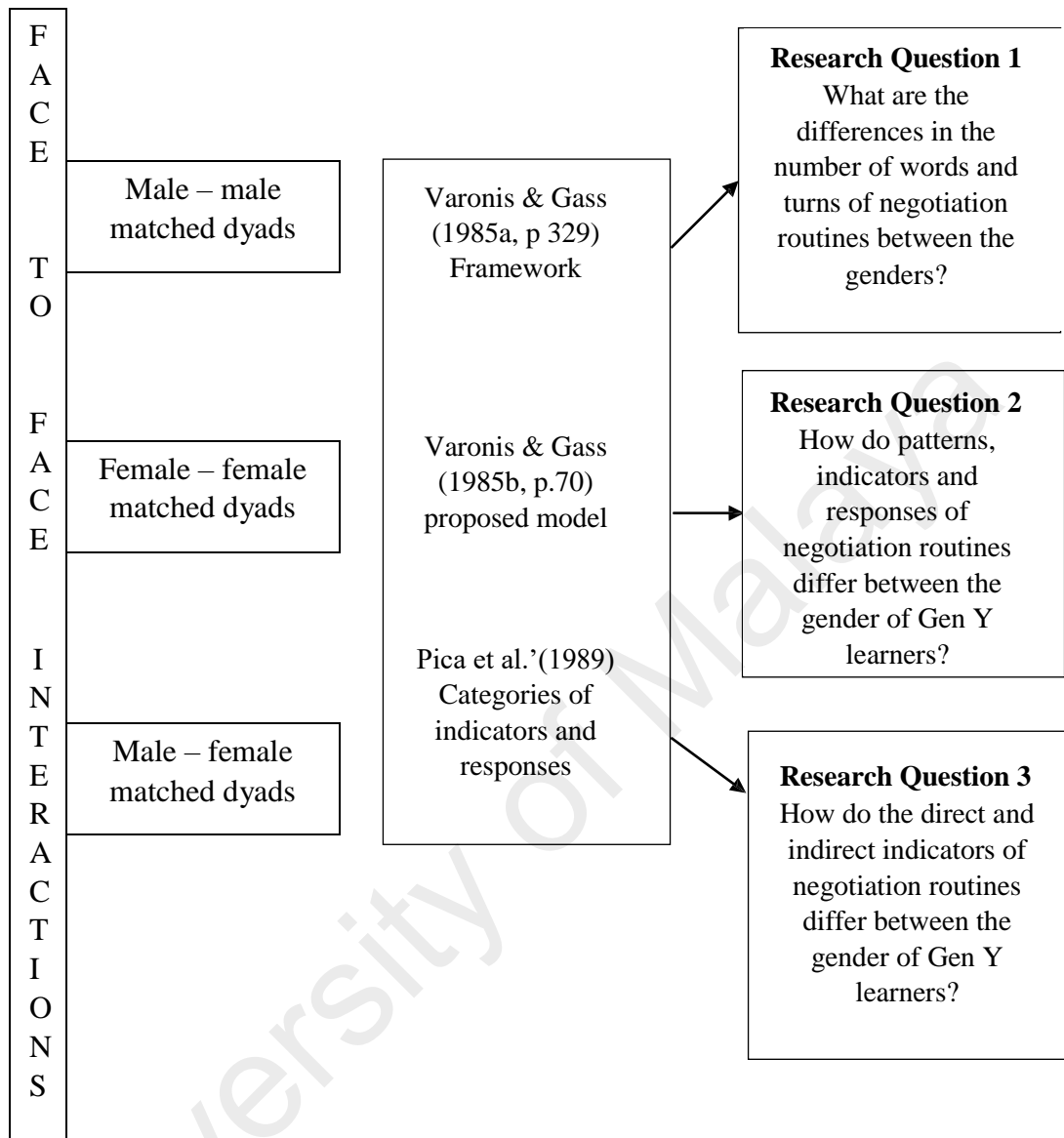
The next control variable was the learners' age factor. The participants had to be born between 1990 and 1996 under the category of Generation Y (1980 – 1999), and be between 18 and 24 years old. Out of the 30 participants, 19 were aged 18, 8 were 19 and 3 were 21.

Studies have considered that the familiarity of participants with each other could affect the output of the interactional patterns (Boulima, 1999; Robinson, 2000; Varonis & Gass, 1985b). Hence the third control variable selected was the familiarity with each other. The participants were in their first 6 months of the course and they were actively engaged in group work and constantly met after class. It was assumed that the familiarity with each other is moderate.

During the selection and matching process of the participants, ethnicity was another factor. Although majority of the learners were Chinese, only 7 were selected as participants because of poor language proficiency. The rest of the participants include 14 Indians, 4 Punjabis (Sikhs), 3 Malays, 1 Eurasian and 1 mixed parentage of Chinese and Indian. It was the intention of the researcher to pair the participants with different ethnic backgrounds but the attempts proved to be challenging. This was because the participants were not consistent in their attendance and the centre was quite strict on data collection, only one pair of interaction was allowed to be recorded in a week.

Task variable was another control factor. This study selected decision making tasks, a two-way exchange information that is likely to produce interactions. It is known that the aim of using decision making tasks is to provide equal opportunity for both participants to negotiate meaning, and to arrive towards a consensus (Ellis, 2003). Each participant was given a planning time of 10 minutes for each task and since it was a learning activity, no time frame was given to complete the task. Further, the participants will benefit from it as a learning practice to improve their communication skills. For further details, please see *Section 3.8: Research instruments* and *Section 3.9: Data collection procedures*.

Figure 3.1 Conceptual framework as in research design for this study



3.4 Location

The study was conducted at Centuria Education Counselling & Training Centre. It is a centre that conducts certificate course for cabin training and it is recognized as an Aviation Man Power Company for airlines namely Malaysia Airlines, Fire Fly, Air Asia, Malindo Air, Tiger Airways, Singapore Airlines and Air Emirates. The researcher is also a free-lance trainer for the centre based on the working experience with Malaysia Airlines as a flight attendant. This centre offers a comprehensive preparation program to equip learners prior to applying for an in-flight attendant position in various airlines. The program offers interactional activity, behavioural interview questions practices and situational practices; in other words, soft skills. English language is one of the subjects taught in the program.

3.5 Ethical Consideration

For ethical reason, there were two types of consent letters obtained by the researcher to conduct the research and collect data. The first written letter was from the centre itself, hence the accessibility; cooperation and obtaining permission were feasible. However, the interactions were only recorded outside the classroom environment to avoid interference with on-going classes. More specifically, they were recorded at the office.

The second were from the participants. Consent letters were given and filled by the participants for this study (*See Appendix B*)

3.6 Participants

The participants involved in this study were at the time of study undergoing a certificate course at Centuria Education Counselling & Training centre. These participants had high aspirations for employment opportunities as in-flight attendants. With constant high turn-over in the in-flight attendant position, recruitment increases year after year. By enrolling in this particular course, the participants will be well equipped and prepared for the interview process.

3.6.1 Sampling procedures

Purposive sampling method was utilized in the selection of participants. Prior to the experiment, an English Language proficiency placement test (*See Appendix A*), a test by the English Unlimited Cambridge University Press was conducted. It had 120 multiple choice questions that had to be completed within 40 minutes. This was to filter and determine the participants' proficiency level. It is also the focus of this study to investigate the high proficiency level which is the advanced level. Table 3.1 illustrates the score and level for the placement test:

Table 3.1: Illustration of the placement level

Starter	Elementary	Pre-intermediate	Intermediate	Upper-intermediate	Advanced
0 - 15	16 - 35	36 - 55	56 - 75	76 - 95	96 +

Out of the 64 participants who sat for the placement test, only 31 were of advanced level. The remaining 33 are from various levels; 6 at pre-intermediate level, 20 at intermediate level and 7 at upper-intermediate level.

For this study 30 participants were selected; 15 males and 15 females. These participants were born between 1990 and 1996 and aged 18 to 24 at the time of this study. Majority of them were aged 18 (19 participants), followed by 19 (8 participants) and 21 (3 participants). The breakdown of the participants according to ethnic groups is as follows: 14 Indian participants, 7 Chinese, 4 Punjabis (Sikhs), 3 Malays, 1 Eurasian and 1 mixed parentage of Chinese and Indian.

Further details are illustrated in Table 3.2 and 3.3. These participants were paired into male-male dyads, female-female dyads and mixed gender dyads as in male-female dyads. The reasons for these pairings are to examine whether there are similarities or differences in terms of the interactional features and to identify the patterns derived from the interaction data based on different dyads.

Table 3.2: Single gender matching criteria

Pair No	Participant	Participant
Pair 1	Female 1 18 years Mixed-parentage (Chinese & Indian)	Female 2 18 years Chinese
Pair 2	Female 3 19 years Indian	Female 4 19 years Punjabi
Pair 3	Female 5 19 years Indian	Female 6 19 years Punjabi
Pair 4	Female 7 18 years Indian	Female 8 18 years Indian
Pair 5	Female 9 18 years Chinese	Female 10 18 years Chinese
Pair 6	Male 1 18 years Indian	Male 2 18 years Indian
Pair 7	Male 3 19 years Indian	Male 4 19 years Punjabi
Pair 8	Male 5 19 years Punjabi	Male 6 18 years Malay
Pair 9	Male 7 18 years Malay	Male 8 18 years Chinese
Pair 10	Male 9 21 years Indian	Male 10 21 years Indian

Table 3.3: Mixed-gender matching criteria

Pair No	Participant	Participant
Pair 11	Male 1 18 years Indian	Female 1 18 years Chinese
Pair 12	Male 2 18 years Malay	Female 2 18 years Indian
Pair 13	Male 3 18 years Eurasian	Female 3 18 years Indian
Pair 14	Male 4 19 years Indian	Female 4 19 years Indian
Pair 15	Male 5 19 years Chinese	Female 5 19 years Chinese

3.7 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted to pilot the instruments and try out the procedures prior to the study. Three matched dyads participated in the pilot: male-male matched dyads, female-female matched dyads and male-female matched dyads. All of them performed two decision making tasks in a single environment which is the face to face interaction.

The procedures went well and the interactions were recorded, transcribed and analysed. It was found that the interlocutors, whether in a single-gender matched dyads or mixed-gender matched dyads, gave each other equal opportunity to interact. It was more of a balanced and equal such as turn taking took place. In terms of language output, the male participants seemed to be slightly more dominant in the single-gender matched dyads than in the mixed-gender matched dyads. There were no changes made in terms of procedures for the actual collection of data.

3.8 Research instruments

Two decision making tasks were utilized for obtaining the data. To enhance the reliability of the findings, the design of the tasks was replicated and modified from MUET 2010 model papers speaking test (Naginder Kaur, Hemalatha Bala Subramaniam & Asha Latha Bala Subramaniam, 2013). The modifications were necessary as the original tasks were meant for four participants in a discussion. The topics are common, neutral and based on general life experiences for learners. The topics include making a decision: Task A-planning a farewell dinner for a friend and Task B-introducing Malaysian delicacies to a visitor (*See Appendixes C & D*). Since it is a learning activity there is no time frame given to complete the task. However, ten minutes were allocated so participants could prepare before the discussion began.

In order to elicit the data, an audio digital recorder was utilized as an instrument for the study. This recording device is light, sensitive and has the ability to pick up voice conversation easily. The recorded interactions were downloaded to a laptop and headphones were used. Scribe Transcription software, was utilized to assist in the transcribing section as it allows playing forward, backward, repeating and control the speed for better precision.

3.9 Data collection procedure

The data collection took place from 2nd August to 30th December 2014, more than 4 months in total. The English language proficiency test was conducted on 2nd August, 16th August and 28th August 2014 and the experiments commenced on 29th August 2014. A cubicle at the office was offered for the participants to perform the tasks. However, at times there were people coming in for inquiry, auto music was played so it was not possible to control voice deduction for certain interactions.

This was followed by the pairing procedure. Although initially the aim was to randomize the participants but because of inconsistency of attendance, the participants were paired based on their availability, attendance and consent to participate in the study. Attempts were also made to make appointments but they failed. Prior to each dyad's first experiment, they were introduced to an example of a decision making task to familiarise them, i.e decide sightseeing options for a visitor in Malaysia. Then, the researcher made an appointment with the centre on the days to be made available for the recording session.

The pairing was arranged in the following way; Pair 1: Female 1 (F1) – Female 2 (F2) dyads. Each pair was given Task A and subsequently Task B to perform in face to face interaction, in other words each dyad would complete 2 experiments. Due to some logistic restrictions, some of the female and male participants were not able to perform the experiments in a mixed-gender as in female-male matched dyads. Thus additional two pairs were selected later on. The centre allowed one pair to perform the tasks in a day and the recordings were made twice in a week. During the same period, there were a number of airline interviews and therefore the centre was meticulous in preparing the participants adequately. Only one pair was selected to perform the experiments each day, and it took 15 days to complete 30 experiments in total.

During the audio recording process, the researcher was present for all interactions. Her presence was in an unobtrusive manner, in other words she sat at a distance from the participants. Despite the sitting position, it is noted that the researcher's presence may have some influence on the outcome (Labov's observer's paradox). All the interactions were recorded audio digitally and transcribed. They were labelled by experiment, pair and tasks to prepare for data analysis.

3.10 Data analysis procedure

All interactions in face to face environments were transcribed and labelled accordingly. The gender of the speakers was identified and labelled as M – Male and F – Female. Non-verbal communication that took place during the face to face interaction was not included. Likewise, the hesitation markers in the content such as ‘ahs’, ‘uhms’, ‘erms’, ‘mms’ and the inflection of ‘la’ found in the utterance were not analysed. The study only focused on the linguistic output in the form of interactional features during face to face contact and did not focus on the paralinguistic features resulting from the interactions.

This study utilized Varonis and Gass’ (1985a, p. 329) framework design for non-native/non-native conversation to analyse the data on communication breakdown. Based on Varonis and Gass’ (1985b, p. 74) proposed model for non-understanding, the number of turns and words was analysed from the abstracted negotiation routine. In other words, this model assisted in identifying the negotiation routines from the transcribed interaction, followed by the calculation of turns and words. To answer the first research question which is ‘What are the differences in the number of words and turns of negotiation routines in face to face interaction between the gender of Gen Y learners?’, the number of turns in the negotiation routines was tabulated and comparisons were made between the two genders. Then, the number of words was counted and compared. Words that were contracted as in ‘don’t’, ‘can’t’ were counted as one word. Repetitive words were counted as well. Figures 3.2 and 3.3 illustrate the different types of communication breakdown.

Figure 3.2: Negotiation Routine Flowchart Varonis and Gass (1985a, p.329)

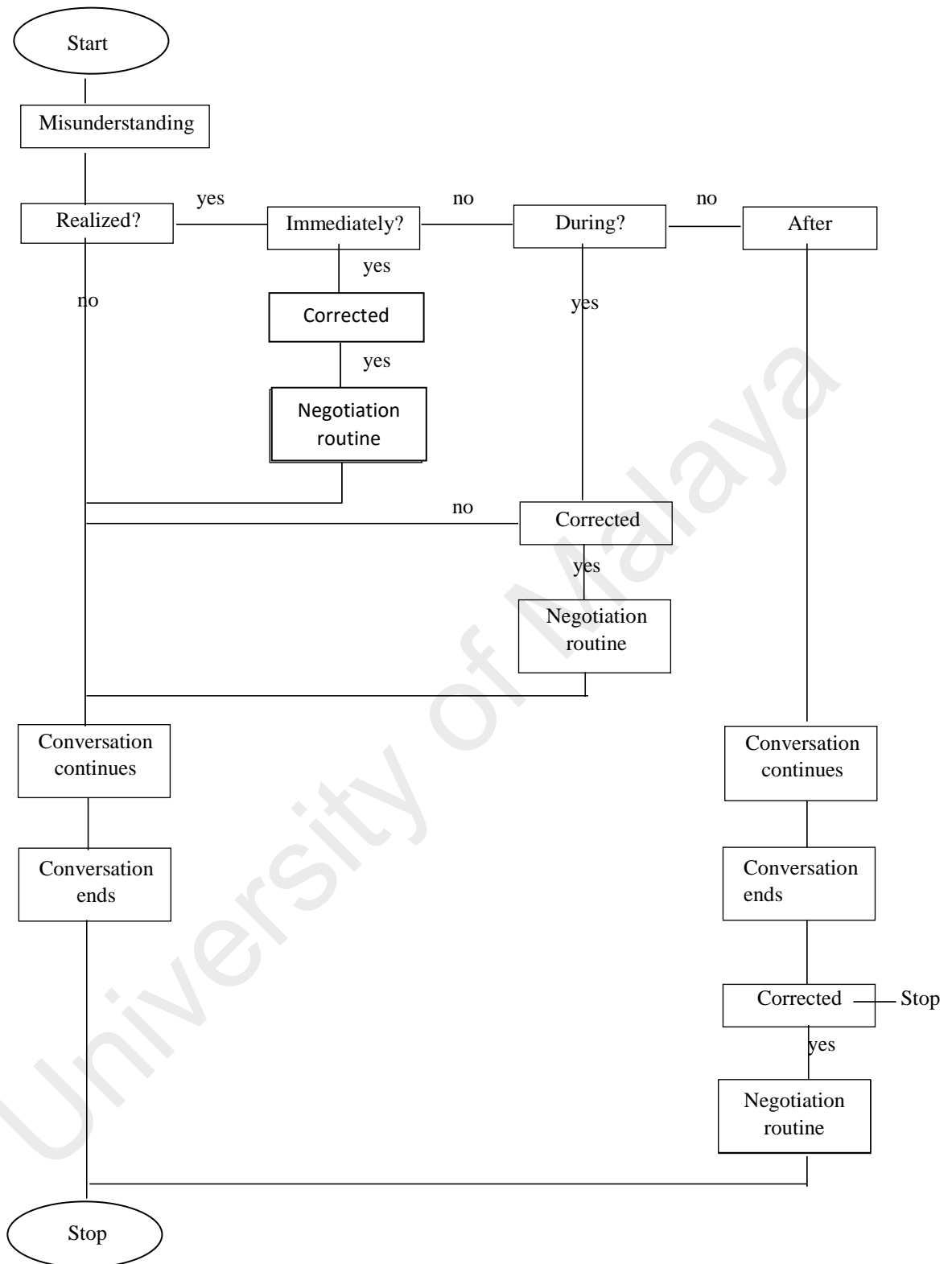


Figure 3.2 illustrates the attempts to negotiate meaning, where the participants may or may not realize that a problem has occurred. The realization may occur immediately or sometime later or even at the end of the conversation. When this happens, the participants may choose to comment or not to comment on the misunderstanding. If the

participants choose to comment, the conversation is put on hold until the other participants attempt to resolve the misunderstanding and the conversation continues. Analysing the data based on this framework provides a broad overview of the communication trouble that occurs in the interactions. Using the flowchart, the analysis focused on the non-understanding routine or the negotiation routine (Varonis & Gass, 1985b).

Negotiation routine consists of a Trigger (T), an Indicator (I), a Response (R) and an optimum Reaction to the Response (RR), a proposed model for non-understanding by Varonis & Gass (1985b, p.74) as shown below:

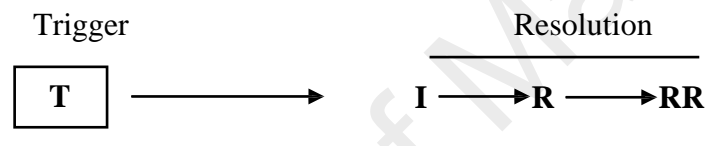


Figure 3.3: Proposed model for non-understandings by Varonis and Gass (1985b, p. 74)

The transcript was then further examined and the relevant negotiation routines were extracted, coded and labelled as (T) for trigger, (I) for indicator, (R) for response and (RR) for reaction to response. The negotiation routines (NR) between the genders were then counted, tabulated and the percentages were calculated. These frameworks were employed to provide the answer for research question 1. An excerpt of the study is presented to demonstrate how the data was analysed in order to answer research question 1:

- | | | |
|------------|---|------------------------|
| 3. Male | : so how about to have a-obviously we have to do a farewell for her | |
| 4. Female: | definitely it is lik- | |
| <hr/> | | |
| 5. Male | : yeah...so ok...I've suggested a spot (7) | (Trigger) |
| 6. Female: | spot? (1) | (Indicator) |
| 7. Male | : yeah ...for our location for the farewell. (19) | (Response) |
| | Ok I think if you ask me I will say Marina Island | |
| 8. Female | : yeah, I like [that place] (5) | (Reaction to response) |
| <hr/> | | |

The above excerpt shows that there are 6 turns (turn 3-turn 8). The data was analysed to identify the negotiation routines occurred in the study. A trigger occurs in turn 5 which led to an indicator '*spot*' to indicate incomprehensibility. This indicator induces for a response; thus a modified response was uttered in turn 7. This was followed by a reaction to response '*yeah, I like [that place]*' and the discourse goes back to the main stream. In this excerpt, we note that there are 4 turns dedicated to negotiation routines, 2 by females and 2 by males. In terms of negotiated words, 32 words were dedicated to negotiation routines, 26 negotiated words by males and 6 negotiated words by females. From this excerpt alone, it is noticeable that the number of negotiated turns is equal for both genders and the number of negotiated words produced by males was higher than the females. This analysis was applied to the rest of the transcribed data. The excerpts of negotiation routines were extracted, counted and tabulated with percentage score. The findings will answer research question 1.

To answer research question 2, 'How do patterns, indicators and responses of negotiation of meaning in face to face interactions differ between the gender of Gen Y learners?', Pica et al.'s (1989) schema was applied. After examining the transcript, it was found that there were some basic patterns of Trigger – Indicator – Response (T-I-R) and or Reaction to the Response (T-I-R-R). There was also another lengthy pattern. The basic pattern in the negotiation routines consists of 3 or 4 moves. If it has more than four moves, it is considered a lengthy pattern. The lengthy pattern is labelled as the extended pattern (Smith, 2003). After identifying the patterns, they were then tabulated and the percentages were calculated.

With the schema in mind, further observations were applied to the data on the categories of indicators and responses. (Please refer to *Chapter two, 4.6: Negotiation frameworks* for Pica et al.'s (1989) categories of indicators and responses). According to the study

(Pica et al.'s, 1989), the findings reveal that the types of responses were considerably influenced by the type of indicators. This implies that if the indicators are employed as a form of repetition, the responses are likely to be modified and elaborated. This is beneficial for SLA. This feature is examined in this study and comparison is made between the male and female participants. These qualitative set of measures were further quantified for comparing and contrasting the two genders. An example of the negotiation routine from the present study is presented:

92. Female 8: Err and I think something that be made from orang asli (Trigger)
93. Female 7: huh? for example? (Indicator)
94. Female 8: a necklace... (Response)
95. Female 7: oh ok ...yeah (Reaction to response)

The above excerpt was taken from the female-female matched dyad transcript. This excerpt is an example of a basic pattern which consists of 4 moves; trigger, indicator, response and reaction to response. It is noted that the indicator '*huh? for example?*' demonstrates incomprehensibility and induces a response. A modified response of 'a necklace' was uttered and this response was more comprehensible. The reaction of response '*oh ok...yeah*' resolves the meaning of the message and dissolves into the main stream of the discourse. According to Pica et al.'s (1989), the types of responses are considerably influenced by the type of indicators. In other words, the type of indicators somewhat affects the type of responses. And this is evident in the excerpt. The indicator, '*huh? for example?*', shows that an input was requested especially in a lexical form. Thus, the '*a necklace*' utterance provides the opportunity for the interlocutor to notice on form and comprehensible input. Hence, in this excerpt comprehensible output, comprehensible input and noticing of form are evident and these provide for SLA.

After categorizing the indicators and responses from both the male and female participants, further analysis was conducted on the types of indicators as in direct indicators and indirect indicators. Findings from the analysis provide answers to research question 3, ‘What are the differences in terms of direct and indirect indicators of negotiation routines between the genders?’ Gass and Varonis (1986) highlight that the most crucial part of the non-understanding lies within the signal which is labelled as ‘Indicator’(I). According to them (Gass & Varonis, 1986), there are two types of indicators: direct indicator which is commonly used with “what?” or “hunh?” and indirect indicator which is usually a repetition of a part of or the entire interlocutor’s preceding utterance. Some examples of direct and indirect indicators are shown in Figure 3.4.

Figure 3.4: Indicators of non-understanding (Varonis & Gass, 1986, p.329)

A. Direct

Negotiation routine	Excerpt
T (Trigger)	Hiro: What type of chair?
I (Indicator)	Nobue: Hmm?
R (Response)	Hiro: What type of chair? Nobue: Like this one. Hiro: Oh

B. Indirect

Negotiation routine	Excerpt
T (Trigger)	Nobue: uh...uh, there’s uh two people.
I (Indicator)	Hiro: Two people?
R (Response)	Nobue: ummm
RR	Hiro: Uh-hmmm

The same application was made on the data. Some of the examples of direct and indirect indicators from this study are presented:

Direct Indicator:

Male : before that ah we have to think about the details right? (Trigger)
Female: **what details?** (Indicator)
Male : for the restaurant, which restaurant all that ... (Response)
Female: ah...ok. (RR)

The above example illustrates the question form of ‘*what*’ and shows the female was unable to receive any input and experienced total lack of comprehensibility. And this induced an explicit response. A modified and elaborated response was produced by the male who gave a comprehensible meaning to the female with the reaction ‘*ah ...ok*’.

Indirect Indicator:

Female7: *Jengga* (Trigger)
Female8: ***Jengga?*** (Indicator)
Female7: *Jengga* is like a stack of block [and] (Response)
Female8: [Awww] ok (RR)

In this example, the indicator ‘*Jengga*’ is a repetition of the initial trigger and it is considered as an indirect indicator. This indicator signals that a partial lack of understanding has occurred, requesting for more input as in completing the sentence. A modified response was uttered in a form of completing the initial trigger sentence and this was comprehensible. This detailed analysis was then applied to the rest of the data.

After classifying the direct and indirect indicators between the genders, this set of measures was further quantified, and calculated with percentages. Similarities and differences were then identified and the results will be presented in *Chapter Four*.

For statistical testing, paired t – tests were conducted on the number of negotiated turns, words, patterns, indicators, responses and direct and indirect indicators. This is to examine whether the findings are significant.

CHAPTER FOUR

Results and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

The main aim of this study is to investigate the interactional features, linguistic output produced by the high proficiency Gen Y learners in a single environment i.e. face to face interaction. A mix-mode design is used to compare and contrast gender interactions and to determine the extent to which face to face interactions enhance second language acquisition (SLA) especially among the Gen Y learners.

This study utilised Long's (1985) interactionist hypothesis of negotiation of meaning as a framework to evaluate the interactions. According to the interactionist hypothesis, negotiation of meaning takes place when there is a breakdown in communication, which necessitates the negotiation routine, providing an opportunity for input and output modification that facilitates a greater understanding of the message meaning (Long, 1985; Pica et al. 1989; Pica 1996, Varonis & Gass 1985b).

This study also employed Varonis and Gass (1985b) widely quoted framework of negotiation of meaning to code the negotiation routines and to analyse the quantitative features as in number of turns and words. In addition, Pica et al.'s (1989) schema of indicators and responses were applied to give a detailed, qualitative analysis of the negotiation routines. This study is also interested to investigate the linguistic output produced by Gen Y participants born between 1990 and 1996, to see whether negotiation routines occurred frequently among high-proficiency learners specifically in the Malaysian context.

Therefore, thirty out of sixty-four students were selected to participate in the study. They were selected based on the English Language Proficiency placement test; advanced level (please refer to *Chapter Three, Section 3.4: Data collection instrument for the rationale*). These learners were, then, paired in single-gender dyads, mix-gender dyads and communicative decision-making tasks were designed to elicit the interactions. Each dyad performed two different tasks in a single environment, thus resulting in 30 experiments.

Data for face to face interactions were audio-recorded and transcribed before the analytical frameworks were applied to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the differences in the number of words and turns of negotiation routines in face to face interaction between the gender of Gen Y learners?
2. How do patterns, indicators and responses of negotiation routines in face to face interactions differ between the gender of Gen Y learners?
3. How do direct and indirect indicators of negotiation routines in face to face interaction differ between the gender of Gen Y learners?

4.2 Quantitative features of negotiation routines

Research question 1:

The first research question focuses on the features of the negotiation routines derived from the data i.e. the number of turns and number of words. The first feature presented is the number of turns.

4.2.1 Number of turns

According to Varonis and Gass (1985b), the number of turns within the negotiation routines demonstrate the effort and volume of work involved in a negotiation before the message meaning is resolved. When the negotiation routine gets more complicated, it implies that more opportunity is available for learners to acquire comprehensible input and output.

In this study, a total of 3465 turns occurred and 26% or 891 turns are dedicated to the negotiation sequences. The results reveal that the learners were engaged in negotiated interaction slightly more than a quarter of their total turns within a face to face environment. Thus, the remaining three quarter of the interaction is focused on task goal completion. The findings support that of Tam (2009) which is 28%; 1219 negotiated turns out of 4312 total turns for face to face environment although the participants are paired in a mixed-ability dyads comprising learners of high and low-proficiency levels.

The number of turns between the genders is examined next. Table 4.10 illustrates the total numbers of turns found in the study, the negotiated routines and the percentage of negotiated turns for both genders in the whole study.

Table 4.10**Distribution of total turns and negotiated turns in a face to face interaction**

Gender	Negotiated turns	Total turns	Percentage
Female	461	1948	24%
Male	430	1517	28%
Total	891	3465	26%

From the table above, it can be observed that the negotiated turns contributed by females is 24%, 1% less to a quarter of the total turns of the study. Males contributed 28% of negotiated turns, slightly more than a quarter of the total turns. The difference of negotiated turns between the genders is 4%. The result also suggests that the occurrences of conversation breakdown are almost parallel for both females and males Gen Y learners. However, the percentages differ when comparison was made among the dyads; single-gender matched dyads and mixed-gender matched dyads. A further breakdown among the dyads is illustrated in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11**Distribution of breakdowns of total turns and negotiated turns in face to face interaction**

Dyads	Negotiated turns	Total turns	Percentage
Female (single)	313	1289	24%
Male (single)	272	857	32%
Female (mixed)	148	659	22%
Male (mixed)	158	660	24%
Total	891	3465	26%

The above breakdowns demonstrate that males take greater advantage i.e. producing greater number of turns in single-gender matched dyads than females, a difference by 8%. Females produced 24% of negotiated turns, a quarter of the total turns while males produced 32% of negotiated turns, one-third of the total turns in the study. The additional negotiated turns occurred in the male-male single matched dyads could mean that there were more communication breakdowns that require clarification of the message (Varonis & Gass, 1985b) and comprehension checking. In the mixed-gender dyads,

the results indicate a small difference of 2%, showing an equal opportunity taken by both females and males. It seems that in the mixed-gender matched dyads of high-proficiency learners, each gender gives each other the same opportunity to negotiate, allowing to respond as in seeking for clarification or checking for comprehension although overlapping occurs. In other words, the act of dominance was not shown but equality was given by the genders when they were paired. For statistical testing a paired t-test was conducted and the result is shown in the following tables.

Table 4.12

Comparison of negotiated turns between males and females' in single-gender matched dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Turns	4.100	.548	9	.597

From table 4.12, it is noted that there is no significant difference in negotiated turns between the female and male participants, $p = 5.97$ ($p > 0.05$) in single-gender matched dyads. It was more of an equal opportunity given by both genders to their interlocutor of the same gender. Meanwhile Table 4.13 illustrates the differences of negotiated turns between the genders in a mixed-gender dyad. The results reveal that there is a significant difference between the genders, $p = .022$ ($p < 0.05$). In other words, in the mixed-gender dyads setting, males are more prone to negotiate meaning, utilizing the turns or opportunity to respond to resolve the message meaning.

Table 4.13

Comparison of negotiated turns between males and females in mixed-gender dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Turns	2.000	3.651	4	.022

In a negotiation routine, the greater number of negotiated turns leads to a greater conversational trouble that requires clarification of meaning (Varonis & Gass, 1985b).

This means that there is more opportunity for signalling or comprehension checking. For this study, the language proficiency of the participants is at the advanced level, therefore it was initially predicted that their interaction flow would be smooth and with little communication trouble. However, the result indicates that a quarter of their interaction flow is devoted to negotiation routines, which means communication problems do occur among the high-proficiency learners. It is also plausible that the negotiation routines involved them seeking for clarification request, checking for confirmation and checking for confirmation by elaboration. When compared to the study by Tam (2009) where participants were paired in mixed-ability dyads i.e. high and low proficiency, the finding was 28%. The difference is 2% compared to the current study. The higher negotiated turns occurred in the study of Tam (2009) is predicted because of the pairing of mixed-ability dyads, however, for this study it was not predicted since the pairing of high-proficiency dyads. This indicates that one cannot assume that high-proficiency learners do not have any difficulty comprehending message meaning even though they are familiar with each other.

4.2.2 Number of words

The number of words is another feature measured in this study as it gives another perspective on negotiation routine. According to Duff (1986) and Van Lier (1988), the total number of words derived in the target language signifies that the interactants were willing to take part in communicating and to continue the discourse. The greater number of words produced within the negotiation routines indicate the willingness to 'talk' more in order to negotiate meaning. Thus, creating ample opportunities for comprehensible input and output, noticing of form and SLA.

The framework for counting the number of words has been presented previously in *Chapter 3, Section 3.9: Data analysis procedure*. For non-verbal communication, the hesitation markers found such as ‘ahs’, ‘uhms’, ‘hmmm’, ‘erms’, ‘mms’ and the inflection of ‘la’ were omitted and were not analysed for this study. The analysis only focused on the linguistic output and did not focus on the paralinguistic features resulting from the interactions.

Out of a total of 26,187 words produced in the whole study, 18% or 4,761 words are dedicated to negotiation sequences towards comprehension of meaning. This result suggests that the amount of talk in terms of number of words dedicated to negotiation in this study is lesser than the number of negotiated turns. It was found that the number of negotiated words uttered within the negotiated turns is very small. Table 4.20 shows the total number of words, the number of words negotiated within the negotiated routines and the percentages of words within the negotiated routines for both genders.

Table 4.20
Total words and negotiated words among the genders in face to face interaction

Gender	Negotiated words	Total words	Percentage
Female	2073	12750	16%
Male	2688	13437	20%
Total	4761	26187	18%

The above table reveals that males contributed slightly more in producing the amount of ‘talk’ or negotiated words than females by a difference of 4%. Males contributed 20% of negotiated words and females contributed 16% of negotiated words, a difference of 615 negotiated words. In terms of the total number of words, the males, again, produced slightly more than females, 13437 words by males and 12750 words by females. Therefore, from the tabulated results males are more eager to negotiate meaning as in giving more ‘talk’ than females. Upon closer observation of the number of

negotiated words among the gender dyads, the results favour males again and this can be seen in Table 4.21.

Table 4.21
Distribution of breakdowns of total words and negotiated words in face to face interaction

Dyads	Negotiated words	Total words	Percentage
Female (single)	1525	8804	17%
Male (single)	1617	7257	22%
Female (mixed)	548	3946	14%
Male (mixed)	1071	6180	17%
Total	4761	26187	18%

Table 4.21 reveals that males once again dominate the number of negotiated words compared to females. This is evident especially in a single-gender matched dyads and mixed-gender matched dyads by an increment of 3% to 5%. In the single-gender matched dyads, males contributed 22% of negotiated words while females contributed 17% of negotiated words, a difference of 5%. In the mixed-gender matched dyads, the negotiated words are twice the amount produced by males compared to females. Males contributed 1071 of negotiated words while females contributed 548 of negotiated words. However, in percentage score, it was 3% of difference. It appears that males used the opportunity to comprehend for message meaning and work towards the goal-oriented task. For significant difference, a paired t-test was conducted and the results can be found in the following tables.

Table 4.22
Comparison of negotiated words between females and males in single-gender matched dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Words	9.200	.273	9	.791

The above figure indicates that the mean difference between the genders is 9.200; a higher number by males. However, $p = .791$ ($p < 0.1$, * bonferroni adjustment) indicates

that there is no significant difference. This indicates that males and females contributed the same amount of ‘talk’ in single-gender matched dyads. In other words, both genders preferred to negotiate meaning, produce great number of ‘talk’ within their own genders. In the mixed-gender dyads, however, it is noted that $p = .087$ ($p < 0.1$). This tells us that there is a significance difference between females and males which can be seen in Table 4.23. This shows that males are willing to contribute more ‘talk’, more eager to negotiate meaning when paired with females.

Table 4.23
Comparison of negotiated words between female and male in mixed-gender dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Words	104.600	2.253	4	.087

4.2.3 Summary

Based on the findings on the quantitative features, it can be said that there are significantly more turns dedicated to the negotiation routines by male participants from Gen Y. Likewise, for the findings on the number of words, males are in favour to produce more words, willingness to ‘talk’ within the negotiation routines. This is obvious as there are more turns and words dedicated within the negotiated routines in the mixed gender- matched dyads. However, in the single-gender dyads setting, the statistical testing results indicate there is no significant difference in the number of turns and words within the negotiation routines. In other words, both females and males produced an equal number of negotiated turns and words. This indicates that males from Gen Y have a greater tendency to use the opportunities in the interaction for modified comprehensible input, output and noticing of forms throughout the negotiation of meaning especially when paired with the opposite gender.

4.3 Qualitative features negotiation routines

Research question 2:

Aside from observing the quantitative aspects of the negotiation routines, this study is also interested in the differences from the qualitative aspects of the negotiation routine between male and female interactions. In order to answer research question 2, that is ‘How do patterns, indicators and responses of negotiation routines in face to face interactions differ between gender of Gen Y learners?’, the study examined the qualitative features of the interactions. The features examined are the patterns, indicators and responses of negotiation routines which are the constituents of the negotiation framework. The findings will be first presented in quantitative measures, the number of indicators and responses. Then the qualitative features will be presented as in lexical units, modified utterances that comes in a form of key indicators for nonunderstanding, types of responses to resolve the meaning of the message. These features will be discussed in the following sections.

4.3.1 Patterns

In the literature of negotiation of meaning, Varonis and Gass (1985b) developed a schema of the pattern of Trigger-Indicator-Response which is derived from the negotiation routines. This classic model presented by Varonis and Gass (1985b) shows the amount of work involved in the negotiation of meaning for the resolution before the routine finally dissolves to allow the conversation to continue. The model consists of the category of trigger (T), indicator (I), response (R) and optional for reaction to response (RR) which are considered to be the basic moves in the negotiation routine. In other words, the pattern of T-I-R or T-I-R-RR constitutes the basic moves for the negotiation routines. For this study, this model was applied to the data to examine the pattern after the negotiation routines are identified and extracted. This basic pattern is

found in both of the gender interactions. Examples of the basic pattern for both genders are as follows:

Excerpt 1

Female (F) – female (F) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework

T (trigger) F2: number one will be nasi lemak.

I (indicator) F1: famous breakfast? ((giggle))

R (response) F2: of course, yup

Excerpt 2

Male (M) – male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework

T M4: curry puff I think normal same. One for three..

I M3: one for three? One for three?

R M4: three for one ringgit la....

RR M3: ok. Three for one ringgit.

(Reaction to response)

Excerpt 3

Male (M) – female (F) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework

T F1 : I think I agree to that place ((laugh))

I M1: Marina island too?

R F1 : Yeah, coz I've made ah party for my sister there before....

RR M1: Yeah, I know that... I saw that before

Excerpt 1 was taken from the data of female-female matched dyads. It shows the minimum moves of basic pattern, 3 moves that consist of T-I-R. It initiates with the utterance of '*number one will be nasi lemak*', the trigger of negotiation routines. This is followed by an indicator of '*famous breakfast*', a signal to the speaker as a form of clarification request. Thus, prompted for a response '*of course, yup*' that indicates the meaning of the message is resolved. Excerpt 2 and excerpt 3 are the examples with 4 moves including the reaction of response. In excerpt 2, the indicator signals for incomprehensibility was a part of the utterance of the trigger. This prompted the initial speaker to make syntactic modification response thus lead to a reaction of response '*ok..three for one ringgit*'.

In excerpt 3, the utterance of ‘Marina Island too?’, an indicator in a form of requesting for confirmation by completion or elaboration of the initial utterance. This prompted for an elaborated syntactic response that comes with a reaction of ‘*yeah...I know that...I saw that before*’ to continue its flow to the main stream of the discourse. The above excerpts of examples of basic patterns also demonstrated that there are different forms of indicators to signal the incomprehensibility of the message meaning, induces for a response that comes with modification or elaborated utterances. This shows with minimum moves, learners were provided the opportunity to negotiate meaning, to experience comprehensible input and comprehensible output in SLA.

Apart from the classic model, there is another extended model introduced by Smith (2003) who expanded the classic model developed by Varonis and Gass (1985) after comparing and contrasting his data for both synchronous computer- assisted (SCA) and face to face (F2F) environments. He found a variation of types and frequency and these variations are categorised and labelled as basic and extended pattern. The extended pattern labelled by Smith (2003) greatly supports Varonis and Gass’ (1985b, p. 83) claim that great amount of work is involved in a resolution before the routine snaps and continues with the flow of the conversation, thus providing opportunities for comprehensible output, input and noticing of form.

To describe further, the extended pattern involves an additional move on top of the basic moves in the classic pattern. For instance, there will be an additional trigger or indicator that occurs before the closure of the routine in an extended negotiated routine. In other words, a trigger may appear in several turns before it is acknowledged as a non-understanding; a delay between the trigger and indicator may lead to unanswered trigger and getting side-tracked, additional indicators and additional responses would occur

before and even after the reaction to response. This is possibly due to switching back to the old topic and responding to the unanswered trigger (Smith, 2003). The extended pattern is also found in this study and is shown below:

Excerpt 4

Female (F) – female (F) matched dyads (6 moves)

Negotiation Framework

T	F2: any special drinks other than just desserts.....
I	F1: teh tarik?
R	F2: teh tarik and then what else? Actually there's one but I forgot the name.....they have it in-
I	F1: have it in?
R	F2: I can't remember the place of the name ((giggle))
RR	F1: ok ((giggle))

Excerpt 5

Male (M) – male (M) matched dyads (7 moves)

Negotiation Framework

T	M4: normally in Malaysia nasi lemak will cost two – fifty
I	M3: two – fifty?
R	M4: ah ha...
I	M3: with the chicken sambal or without the chicken sambal?
R	M4: ah actually is with the chicken not chicken sambal...
RR	M3: ok. Two – fifty ah...
RR	M4: yeah man...

Excerpt 6

Male (M) – female (F) matched dyads (7 moves)

Negotiation Framework

T	F4: then what about the drinks?
I	M4: ah..?
R	F4: what about the drinks?
R	M4: drinks maybe ice blended? Err maybe any ice blended...chocolate ice-blended
I	F4: milo ice.....
R	M4: ah can
RR	F4: milo ice....ok

Excerpt 4, 5 and 6 are the examples of extended pattern found in this study. As explained by Smith (2003), an extended pattern involves additional moves of i.e. indicator or response of top of the basic pattern that consist of 3 or 4 moves. For example, excerpt 4 has 6 moves, T-I-R-I-R-RR, additional of indicators and responses were found. The negotiation routine triggered with '*any special drink other than just desserts*' by female 2. This caused an incomprehensibility and an indicator was signalled in a form of confirmation check '*tea tarik*' by female 1. To compliance the indicator, a response was produced by female 1 in a form of self-modification. However, the elaborated and modified response lead to another attempt of incomprehensibility of the message. An additional indicator was signaled '*have it in?*' to induce the other interlocutor to complete the initial utterances, thus an additional response was produced and the reaction of '*ok*' demonstrate the meaning of the message has been resolved. Excerpt 5 pattern is similar to excerpt 4.

Excerpt 6 shows a slightly different pattern with 7 moves, T-I-R-R-I-R-RR. In this excerpt, the non-lexical of '*ah..*' act as an indicator and signals for more input. The response produced was a form of repetition of the initial trigger. The speaker which was female 4 repeated the utterance by emphasizing the whole utterances to the hearer. The hearer which was male 4 then continued to respond with semantic modification by producing examples that caused for another incomprehensibility of the message meaning. Then the utterance of '*milo ice*' demonstrates as an indicator in a form of clarification request that led to a response of '*ah can*', and a reaction of '*milo ice...ok*' to indicate the message is finally understood.

Besides than the above extended patterns: T-I-R-I-R-RR and T-I-R-R-I-R-RR types, there were 3 other types of extended patterns with 8 and 9 moves. The patterns are T-I-R-I-R-R-I-R, T-I-R-I-R-I-R-RR and T-I-I-R-R-I-I-R-RR. The study also found the maximum moves engaged in the negotiation routines was 9 moves and are found in single-gender matched dyads and as well mixed-gender matched dyads.

This study is more interested in the allocation of basic and extended patterns that are found between the gender interactions. The basic pattern refers to a short and simple negotiation routine whereas the extended pattern refers to a complicated and complex negotiation routine. This study observes and finds that these patterns i.e. basic and extended occurred in male and female interactions, single-matched and mixed-matched dyads as shown in Table 4.30.

Table 4.30
Distribution of patterns of negotiation routines

Patterns	No of occurrences	Percentage %
Basic	96	56
Extended	75	44
Total	171	100

The above table illustrates the number of occurrences of the basic pattern of negotiation routines which total 96 (56%) and the extended patterns of negotiation routines total to 75 (44%) out of the total data found in the study. It can be said that the basic patterns in the negotiation routines are slightly more than the extended patterns. In other words, simpler patterns are found to be generally more than the complicated patterns of negotiation routines in this study. These findings support that of Tam (2009) who found that the occurrences of basic pattern appeared to be slightly higher than the extended pattern between the high and low- proficiency dyads. The result of the paired t-test conducted can be found in the following table.

Table 4.31
Comparison of basic and extended patterns

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Basic - extended	1.400	1.742	14	.103

The above figure indicates that the mean difference between the basic and extended patterns is 1.400, which is a slight difference. Although $p = .103$ ($p > 0.1$), indicates no significance difference, the tabulated numbers shown in Table 4.30 reveals a small variance.

Other than identifying the number of basic and extended patterns, this study made a further observation on the distribution of patterns among the gender dyads and noted some interesting findings in Table 4.32.

Table 4.32

The breakdowns of the distribution of basic and extended patterns among the gender dyads

Dyads	No of occurrences of basic pattern (%)	No of occurrences of extended pattern (%)	Total
Female – female	36 (38%)	27 (36%)	63 (37)
Male – Male	29 (30%)	21 (28%)	50 (29)
Female – Male	31 (32%)	27 (36%)	58 (34)
Total	96 (100%)	75 (100%)	171 (100)

The results as shown in Table 4.32 reveal that the highest number of occurrences of patterns found to be contributed by the female-female matched dyads with 63 occurrences out of 171. This is followed closely by female-male matched dyads with 58 occurrences and finally, male-male matched dyads with 50 occurrences. The results show that when the interactions involved females, there are more occurrences of patterns of negotiation routines, 37% for female-female matched dyads, 34% for female-male matched dyads and 29% for male-male matched dyads. This indicates that females are immersed in negotiation routines working towards a consensual agreement. In terms

of differences between the basic and extended patterns, the results display a minimal difference; between 2 % and 4%.

With the results presented earlier, it can be said that the high-proficiency learners are able to negotiate meaning with simple routines; only 3 or 4 moves were required before continuing with the flow of the discourse. It is noted that 44% of their occurrences are devoted to a more complex or complicated routine. As claimed by Varonis and Gass (1985b, p.83), a complex routine gives the interlocutors the opportunity to put additional effort in the resolution before the routine dissolves into the main stream of the conversation which is more significant in contributing to SLA. In this study, although the extended pattern occurred only 44%, almost reaching half of the total occurrences of negotiation routines, it signifies the contribution towards SLA. With this, we can conclude that Generation Y's high-proficiency learners are able to negotiate meaning with simple routines but in certain cases a more complex routine is evident which requires more than 4 moves to resolve the message meaning.

Another finding worth noting is that the errors made by the high-proficiency learners during negotiation of meaning led them to self-correct or self-repair and give feedback in the negotiation routines. These self-corrections or self-repairs and unrepaired in the negotiation are bound to be useful for SLA (Varonis & Gass, 1989). These occurrences are likely to be found in the SCA environment (Pellettieri, 2000; Tam, 2009) due to typing or spelling errors. Errors are also bound to happen in face to face environment when paired between the high and low-proficiency learners are paired together or low-low proficiency learners are paired together. This is because of grammatical and lexical non-understanding (Tam, 2009). In this study, the high- proficiency learners were not expected to produce a lot of errors due to the language proficiency, however, the evidence indicates contrary. The present study found a number of self-corrections/repair

as attempts to replace the lexical unit using pronunciation, calculation error or the word itself. These self-corrections or repair are found in both dyads settings; female-female matched, male-male matched and female- male matched dyads as seen in the following examples:

Example 1

- F4: maybe, maybe some kind of you know those kind of gifts
that they sell in central market...
F3: mmm mmm...
F4: which they can **crave**, I mean they can **write**...
F3: mmm mmm...

The above example is an extract from the female-female matched dyads. There were 10 experiments conducted and only three are in the negotiation routines. The above excerpt clearly demonstrates an attempt at self-correction during the same turn. It demonstrates Female 4 intend to use the lexical 'engrave' or 'carve' but 'crave' was produced and this immediately made her realised and uttered 'write' instead.

Example 2

- M7: but uhm I, I, I'm guessing he doesn- he doesn't eat **meat**,
he doesn't eat **fish**, he's he's only **meat guy**...
M8: oh...

Example 3

- M4: normally ten persons, [depends la]...
M3: [ok] ten persons I think one person must give **fifty ringgit** ah...
M4: fifty ah?
M3: eh eh eh no no no, **five hundred** ringgit...
M4: yeah...

Examples 2 and 3 are extracts from the male-male matched dyads. Among the 10 experiments, it is interesting to discover there are thirteen excerpts found on self-corrections in negotiation routines. Example 2 is similar to Example 1 in which another lexical unit is uttered as an attempt to replace the previous lexical for the purpose

of better understanding or expressing actual intention by the interlocutor during the same turn itself. Example 3 illustrates that the self-correction is made after the second turn-taking. The realisation happens when M4 (male 4) seeks clarification on the number fifty, which is supposed to be five hundred.

Example 4

F5: the room will be big....I think we need like fifty?

M5: fifty?

F5: fifty **ringgit**....I mean fifty **balloons**....

Example 4 is an extract from the female-male mixed gender dyads negotiation routines. From the 10 experiments conducted, the study found six excerpts of self - correction from the females and twelve excerpts of self-correction from the males. The above example shows an attempt of self-correction to replace the word '*ringgit*' with '*balloon*' in the same turn.

The occurrences of self-correction that are taken from the basic and extended patterns in the negotiation routines are found in the single gender-matched dyads and the mixed-gender matched dyads. However, the numbers are too few to make a comparison. It will not be emphasized, however, the fact is that these self-correction or self-repair do occur during interaction among the high-proficiency learners.

4.3.2 Indicators

Examining the indicators found within the data is important. According to Pica et al. (1989), indicators have an impact on the type of linguistic responses produced. In other words, the utterance of an indicator depends on the linguistic form or non-linguistic form which will trigger for a response with linguistic modification.

In a negotiation routine, the ‘indicator’ is the key component that signals non-understanding of a message. It is the step to indicate the lack of comprehensibility and at the same time prompt the other interlocutor to repair or modify their speech for better understanding. In this study, there is a great deal of indicators that occurred among the dyads. Table 4.40 illustrates the distribution of indicators among female and male participants. Five types of indicators are adapted from Pica et al. (1989, 1994) and one type is adapted from Pellettieri (2000) and Tam (2009) to categorize the transcript data. Upon comparing and contrasting the male and female indicators, the results reveal that females have the highest number of occurrences (170 occurrences out of a total of 278) which takes up 61% of the total indicators. Males contributed 108 occurrences; 39% of the total indicators.

Table 4.40
Distribution of indicators of negotiation routines

Indicators	No of occurrences	Percentage %
Female	170	61
Male	108	39
Total	278	100

A paired t-test was conducted and the result is shown in the following table.

Table 4.41
Comparison of indicators between females and males in the study

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Indicators	4.400	1.713	14	.109

The result shows $p = .109$ ($p > 0.1$) indicating there is no significant difference but the tabulated numbers from Table 4.40 shows a substantial difference in percentage.

From the number of occurrences, the study examines the different types of indicators next. Pica et al.’ (1989, 1994) categorises 5 types of indicators that are originally meant for native speaker-non-native speaker interactions. For this study, all 5 types were adapted and an additional one was adapted from Peletierri (2003) and Tam (2009)

which are necessary for the present study given that this study examined non-native speaker-non-native speaker interactions.

The categories of indicators are as follows:

- Type 1: explicit statement or request for clarification
- Type 2: request for confirmation through repetition
- Type 3: request for confirmation through modification of trigger or the previous utterance
- Type 4: request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger or the previous utterance which can be another indicator or response when it is an extended negotiation
- Type 5: request for confirmation through comprehension check, for example, Do you understand?
- Type 6: inappropriate response (Pelletieri, 2003 & Tam, 2009)

After applying the categories of indicators in the data, the results give an interesting figure of the preferred types of indicators by gender which is shown in Table 4.42. The table shows the distribution of types/categories of indicators of this study. It is found that the most preferred indicator type is type 2. This finding is similar to the findings of Pica's (1994) face to face interaction and Tam's (2009) findings in face to face and synchronous-assisted computer environment. In this study, there are 90 occurrences of type 2 indicator or 32% of the total number of occurrences. This is followed by type 4 i.e. with 85 (31%) number of occurrences. The third most common type is type 1 with 59 occurrences (21%) which is similar to Tam's (2009) findings.

Table 4.42
Distribution of different types/categories of indicators

Type/Category of Indicator	No of occurrences	Percentage %
Type 1	59	21%
Type 2	90	32%
Type 3	18	6%
Type 4	85	31%
Type 5	4	2%
Type 6	22	8%
Total	278	100%

A further analysis of the indicator types between the genders give an interesting distribution as shown in Table 4.43.

Table 4.43

Distribution of indicators among female and male participants

Type of indicators	Female	%	Male	%	Total (%)
1. Explicit statement or request for clarification	30	(18)	29	(27)	59 (21)
2. Request for confirmation through repetition	51	(30)	39	(36)	90 (32)
3. Request for confirmation through modification of trigger	16	(9)	2	(2)	18 (6)
4. Request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger	59	(35)	26	(24)	85 (31)
5. Request for confirmation through comprehension check e.g. 'Do you understand?'	3	(2)	1	(1)	4 (2)
6. Inappropriate response	11	(6)	11	(10)	22 (8)
TOTAL	170	(100)	108	(100)	278 (100)

Upon observing the distributions of indicators by both genders, it is interesting to know that the most common type of indicators slightly differed between males and females' participants. Females prefer to signal the lack of comprehensibility by employing type 4, which is 'Request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger'. The following is an example of this type of indicator.

Type 4 indicator by female

F1: grandmother's house some more-

F2: **right before leaving?**

F1: yeah....somewhere she grew up and every.....

F2: so grandma's place it is then.....

The second most preferred type of indicator is type 2 with 51 occurrences (30%) which is 'Request for confirmation through repetition'. This is followed by type 1 indicator with 30 occurrences (18%) which is an 'Explicit statement or request for clarification'.

Examples of type 2 and type 1 indicators as presented below.

Type 2 indicator by femaleF4: and that should be good and ah yes roughly around how many of them? I think it's aboutlet's see six of us?F3: **six of us?**

F4: yes...including both of us...six

F3: six la.....

Type 1 indicator by female

F6: ais batu kacang.....

F5: **what's that?** ((whisper))

F6: ais batu kacangla, abc la....((whisper))

F5: kacang not 'k' meh.....((whisper)) ((giggle))

When comparing the occurrences from male participants with female participants, interestingly, the most preferred type of indicator is type 2, followed by type 1 and type 4. The hierarchy of most preferred indicators deferred between the genders. Examples of type 2, type 1 and type 4 indicators from the male data script as presented below.

Type 2 indicator by male

M1: maybe we can have performance.....

M2: **[ah performance]**....

M1: [in the stage]...

M2: oh course performance oh course..... we can have a decorated stage....

Type 1 indicator by male

M3: ok. grand seasons hotel. ok. ah then how you want to celebrate farewell day?

M4: **what do you mean by how I'm going to celebrate?**

M3: ok, by cake cutting or.....

Type 4 indicator by male

M6: I think in Klang it's quite cheap.

It's like eighty cents for one roti canai....It's quite cheap

M5: **roti canai is eighty cents for one?** ((ball bouncing))

M6: for one yeah

Type 3 indicator which is 'Request for confirmation through modification of trigger' accumulated only 16 (9%) occurrences among females and 2 (2%) occurrences among males. The fewer occurrences of this type seem to show less preference to signal lack of understanding, especially in the content of male, attempts to modify the trigger is less than females. Finally, the least common indicators for both genders are type 5, 'Request for comprehension' and type 6, 'Inappropriate response'. The low occurrences of these types of indicators tell us that a need to check for comprehension among high-

proficiency learners is not really necessary and this has been predicted. However, type 6 indicator, ‘Inappropriate response’ was not predicted to occur in this study due to participants’ level of proficiency, yet the evidence indicates contrary. Example of type 6 indicator is presented below.

Type 6 indicator by male

M8: so ah our family’s friend from Europe is coming for a visit...
Let’s introduce her some Malaysian delicacies....

M7: girl?

M8: **ahh....**

M7: Is it a her? ((laugh)) a girl?

A further breakdown of the indicator types between the genders within the dyads gives an interesting distribution and this is shown in Table 4.44.

Table 4.44

Distribution of breakdown of indicators within the dyads

Type of indicators	Female (single)	Male (single)	Female (mixed)	Male (mixed)	Total (%)
1. Explicit statement or request for clarification	18 (17)	19 (25)	12 (18)	10 (31)	59 (21)
2. Request for confirmation through repetition	30 (29)	26 (34)	21 (32)	13 (41)	90 (32)
3. Request for confirmation through modification of trigger	8 (8)	0(0)	8 (12)	2 (6)	18 (6)
4. Request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger	37 (35)	19 (25)	22 (34)	7 (22)	85 (31)
5. Request for confirmation through comprehension check e.g Do you understand?	2 (2)	1(1)	1 (2)	0 (0)	4 (2)
6. Inappropriate response	10 (9)	11 (15)	1(2)	0 (0)	22 (8)
TOTAL	105 (38%)	76 (27%)	65 (23%)	32 (12%)	278 (100%)

The above table reveals the distribution of indicators within the dyads. It clearly shows that compared to males, females contributed a greater number of indicators i.e. seeking for more input in both dyads; single-gender matched dyads and mixed- gender matched dyads. For statistical testing, a paired t-test was conducted and the results are in the following tables.

Table 4.45

Comparison of indicators between females and males in single-gender matched dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Indicator	3.200	1.143	9	.283

The above table shows $p = .283$ ($p > 0.1$) which means no significance difference between the females and males in single-gender matched dyads. As for the mixed-gender dyads, the statistical results from Table 4.46 indicate that there is no significance difference either as $p = .129$ ($p > 0.1$).

Table 4.46

Comparison of indicators between females and males in mixed-gender dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Indicator	7.000	1.905	4	.129

Both tables show that there is no significant difference. Therefore, the results cannot support the findings of Shehadeh (1999) which states that females are eager for more clarity and comprehension of input of the message meaning.

Another interesting point to take note is type 1 indicator. Upon closer examination, type1 indicator actually gives optimum opportunity for modified interactions e.g. syntactic and lexical morphosyntactic. Although, the results indicate that females provide greater number of occurrences of indicators as a signal of non-understanding in terms of percentages, the indicators employed by males provide greater opportunities

for modified interactions. Males are shown to have higher percentage for both dyads in providing type 1 indicator within the negotiation routines. Hence, in terms of indicators, both females and males have their own preference types of indicators, different form of linguistic pattern to induce modified responses. The following section will present the linguistic feature ‘Response’ examined in the study.

4.3.3 Responses

‘Response’ plays a key role in modified interaction as it serves to indicate that learners comprehend the meaning of a message. In other words, ‘Response’ provides maximum opening for the interactant to modify their previous utterance so that the hearer would have a clearer understanding (Varonis & Gass, 1985). The move of a response is basically an attempt to reply to the indicator. These attempts are generally modified or altered utterances. Each occurrence of a response is preceded by an indicator. These occurrences of responses are also found in female and male data script, as shown in table 4.50.

Table 4.50
Distribution of responses of negotiation routines

Response	No of occurrences	Percentage %
Female	152	47
Male	170	53
Total	322	100

Table 4.50 illustrates the distribution of responses from both genders. Out of 322 occurrences of responses, 170 occurrences belong to males (53%) and 152 occurrences belong to females (47%). The result shows that there is a marginal difference of 6%, indicating that males contributed higher number of responses in negotiation routines.

For significant difference, a paired t-test was conducted and the results is presented in the following table.

Table 4.51
Comparison of response between female and male participants

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Response	1.200	.611	14	.551

The above table gives a view on the statistical testing of occurrences of responses within the negotiation routines among the genders. It is found that there are no responses recorded for one case in one of the female-male matched dyads. The mean difference between the male and female response is 1.200, $t = .447$, $p = .551$ ($p > 0.1$). This indicates no significant difference. Thus, the study cannot conclude that males contributed more responses than females as shown in the tabulated results.

The following section will present the different types of responses examined in this study.

Based on Pica et al.'s (1989) schema of responses, there are certain types of responses that are shown to be beneficial for linguistic development. This schema is applied at the present study to categorize the transcript data from the genders. In this schema (Pica, 1989), there are seven types of responses as follows:

- Type 1 : switch to a new topic
- Type 2 : suppliance of information relevant to topic, but not directly responsive to indicator or previous utterance
- Type 3 : repetition of indicator
- Type 4 : self - modification of trigger
- Type 5 : repetition of trigger
- Type 6 : confirmation or acknowledgement of indicator only
- Type 7 : indication of difficulty or inability to respond

The distribution of types/categories of responses of this study is found in Table 4.52. It is found that the most preferred response type is type 4. This finding is similar with Pica's (1994) face to face interaction and Tam's (2009) F2F and SCA environment.

In this study, there are 167 occurrences or 52% of the total number of occurrences for type 4 response. The results reveal that there is an implication of incomprehensibility of the message meaning (Tam, 2009). In other words, the interactants are willing to put more effort in modifying their triggers, making it comprehensible for greater input and output which is beneficial for SLA. The second most common type of response is type 6 (confirmation or acknowledgement of indicator) i.e. with 50 (15%) occurrences, similar with the findings from Tam (2009). It appears that the interactants preferred to give plain or basic confirmation and acknowledgement towards an incomprehensible indicator. The third most common type is type 3 (repetition of indicator) with 49 occurrences (15%). This type of response, a repetition of the indicator is usually uttered as a sign of seeking for clarification or confirmation.

Table 4.52
Distribution of different type/category of responses

Type/Category of Response	No of occurrences	Percentage %
Type 1	3	1
Type 2	23	7
Type 3	49	15
Type 4	167	52
Type 5	16	5
Type 6	50	15
Type 7	14	5
Total	322	100

The study finds that the type 1 response ('Switch to a new topic') has the least number of occurrences, garnering only 3 (1%). This may be due to their ability to respond to the indicators produced by the other interactant and possibly due to their high proficiency level of English language therefore preventing the need to switch topic. Type 7 ('Indication of difficulty or inability to respond') garnered only 14 (5%) occurrences, followed by type 5 ('Repetition of trigger') with 16 (5%) occurrences from the total study. The occurrences for these two types of responses are also predicted based on the proficiency level of the participants. The interactants are shown to have the capability to respond and need not repeatedly utter the initial trigger.

Another interesting finding that emerged from the study is the scores or percentages of modified responses occurrences from the genders. In the study of Pica (1994), 35% of modified responses are found in the corpus of face to face interaction. Foster (1998) found 23% of modified responses in the SCA environment. These percentages are relatively lower than the study of Tam (2009), with 40% found in face to face environment and 42% found in the SCA environment. Tam (2009) claims that the differences of percentages is due to the choice of task utilized and the pairing of mixed-ability proficiency levels that prompted the participants who are non-native speakers' dyads to produce diverse and modified responses.

The findings from a different study by Tam et al. (2010) reveal that 32% of modified responses are from low-proficiency females while 46% are from high-proficiency females. The present study, however, finds 52% of modified responses, the highest so far compared to the studies of Pica (1994), Foster (1998), Tam (2009) and Tam et al. (2010). A plausible reason for this high percentage is the linguistic ability of the participants and the willingness or the eagerness to put more effort into modifying the response for a more comprehensible message. Thus, the proficiency levels of the participants enable them to produce greater modified responses, making more attempts and more comprehensible output. Further analysis of the category of responses between males and females give an interesting distribution as shown in Table 4.53.

Table 4.53
Distribution of responses among female and male participants

Type of responses	Female	%	Male	%	Total (%)
1. Switch to a new topic	1	(1)	2	(1)	3 (1)
2. Suppliance of information relevant to topic, but not directly responsive to indicator	11	(7)	12	(7)	23 (7)
3. Repetition of indicator	19	(12)	30	(18)	49 (15)
4. Self-modification of trigger (Production of modified i.e comprehensible output)					
a. Phonological modification	2	(1)	3	(2)	5 (2)
b. Semantic modification, through synonym, paraphrase or example c. Morphological modification through addition, substitution, or deletion of inflectional morpheme (s) and/or functor(s)	29	(19)	22	(13)	51 (16)
d. Syntactic modification through embedding and elaboration in clause (s)	21	(14)	31	(18)	52 (16)
5. Repetition of trigger	7	(5)	9	(6)	16 (5)
6. Confirmation or acknowledgement of indicator only	22	(14)	28	(16)	50 (15)
7. Indication of difficulty or inability to respond	12	(8)	2	(1)	14 (5)
TOTAL	152	(100)	170	(100)	322(100)

Among all the types of responses listed in the table, type 4 ('Self-modification of trigger) is shown to contribute the highest occurrences for both genders. This is because type 4 response has four sub-categories. Under the Self-modification of trigger, sub- category A refers to phonological modification as in pronunciation, B entails the semantic modification, through synonyms, paraphrasing or examples. Next is C, which denotes morphological modification through addition, substitution or deletion of inflectional morpheme (s) and or functor (s). Finally, sub-category D refers to syntactic modification through embedding and elaboration in clause (s). In fact, these sub-categories assist greatly in the input of the modified interaction, enabling learners to develop linguistically and the ability to notice forms. Table 4.54 gives a closer view on type 4 sub-categories for both genders.

Table 4.54
Distribution of type 4 responses among female and male participants

Sub-category of type 4 response	Female	%	Male	%	Total (%)
Self-modification of trigger (Production of modified i.e. comprehensible output)					
a. Phonological modification	2	(1)	3	(2)	5 (3)
b. Semantic modification, through synonym, paraphrase or example	29	(19)	22	(13)	51 (31)
c. Morphological modification through addition, substitution, or deletion of inflectional morpheme (s) and/or functor(s)	21	(14)	31	(18)	52 (31)
d. Syntactic modification through embedding and elaboration in clause (s)	28	(19)	31	(18)	59 (35)
TOTAL	80	(48)	87	(52)	167 (100)

There is a total of 167 occurrences, 80 (48%) produced by females and 87 (52%) produced by males. Based on the results, sub-category 4D has a total of 59 occurrences (35%), the highest number of occurrences. This finding substantiates the study of Tam (2009) pointing out that sub-category 4D gives a greater potential for SLA. Two examples of 4D are shown the following:

4D Response

M5: we call it dinners.....
 F5: sorry?
 M5: **err....so we go for dinner.....**
 F5: ok.

4D Response

M4: curry puff I think normal same...one for three
 M3: one for three? one for three?
 M4: **three for one ringgit la.....**
 M3: ok... three for one ringgit.

The first example shows that ‘*we call it dinners*’ was incomprehensible for F5 which led to the indicator ‘*sorry*’. Then, M5 made syntactic modification ‘*so we go for dinner*’ which was comprehensible. The syntactic modification made was the grammatical change in the structure of the utterance which was clearer than the initial trigger. This indicates the potential for second language acquisition for both interactants to acquire

the language. Similarly, the second example response was syntactically modified from the former *'one for three'* which was incomprehensible. The response *'three for one ringgit la'* was shown to be clearer and more comprehensible. The reaction to the response, *'ok. three for one ringgit'* which indicates the response was comprehensible so the discourse continues. Thus, this study also finds the sub- category 4D assists the interactants to notice on forms in SLA.

The second highest is sub-category 4C which has 52 (31%) occurrences, followed closely by sub-category 4B with 51 (31%) occurrences and finally, sub-category 4A with only 5 (3%) occurrences. Sub-category 4A ('Phonological modification') as anticipated is quite low among the genders given their linguistic ability. Whereas 4B and 4C are almost equal in number of occurrences, involving some linguistic modification which is claimed to give great contribution for SLA. Examples of sub-categories of 4B and 4C are shown in the following.

4B Response

- M5: yeah so..so payment actually be...coz we have to make errr
advance payment first
F5: advance payment?
M5: **so....that means some kind of deposit**
F5: how much? ((shh))
M5: that will actually divided by half...will be nine hundred....

4C Response

- F2: any special drinks other than desserts....
F1: teh tarik?
F2: **teh tarik and then what else? actually there's one but I forgot
the name.....they have it in-**
F1: have it in?
F2: I can't remember the place of the name ((giggle))

Upon closer examination of the occurrences of type 4 sub-categories, it seems there is a slight difference of preferences between the genders. It is found that type 4B response is the first preference for females with 29 (19%) occurrences, followed closely by type

4D response with 28 (19%) of occurrences. As for males, type 4C and 4D responses appeared to be favoured with 31 (18%) occurrences for both types and type 4B is prevalent. Then again, sub-category 4C is prevalent among females. The results point out sub-category 4A associated with sounds modification, the least favoured by both genders with only 2 (1%) produced by females and 3 (2%) produced by males. The total distribution of responses between the gender-matched dyads is shown in the following table.

Table 4.55

Distribution of breakdown of responses among the gender-matched dyads

Type of responses	Female (single)	Male (single)	Female (mixed)	Male (mixed)	Total (%)
1. Switch to a new topic	1 (1)	2 (2)	0 (0)	0 (0)	3 (1)
2. Suppliance of information relevant to topic, but not directly responsive to indicator	8 (7)	9 (10)	3 (7)	3 (4)	23 (7)
3. Repetition of indicator	15 (14)	22 (24)	4 (10)	8 (10)	49 (15)
4. Self-modification of trigger (Production of modified i.e comprehensible output)					
a. Phonological modification	1 (1)	0 (0)	1 (2)	3 (4)	5 (2)
b. Semantic modification, through synonym, paraphrase or example	16 (15)	10 (11)	13 (31)	12 (15)	51 (16)
c. Morphological modification through addition, substitution, or deletion of inflectional morpheme (s) and/or functor (s)	11 (10)	9 (10)	10 (24)	22 (28)	52 (16)
d. Syntactic modification through embedding and elaboration in clause (s)	23 (21)	18 (20)	5 (12)	13 (16)	59 (18)
5. Repetition of trigger	6 (5)	1 (1)	1 (2)	8 (10)	16 (5)
6. Confirmation or acknowledgement of indicator only	20 (18)	18 (20)	2 (5)	10 (13)	50 (15)
7. Indication of difficulty or inability to respond	9 (8)	2 (2)	3 (7)	0 (0)	14 (5)
TOTAL	110 (100)	91 (100)	42 (100)	79 (100)	322 (100)

Based on the tabulated results above, it is found that in single-gender matched dyads, females produced relatively higher number of responses with 110 occurrences compared to males with 91 occurrences. This contrasts with the findings in Table 4.53. In this elaborated breakdown of responses, type 4D seems to be preferred by the female-female matched dyads, followed closely by type 6 and type 4B. Whereas type 3 response is highly preferred in the male-male matched dyads, followed by type 4D and type 6. This trend is almost the same for both single dyads with type 4D and type 6 response being the preferred responses. Both dyads have contributed significantly to syntactic modifications that are essential for SLA and preferred to respond by acknowledging the indicator that was non-understanding. Further, in the female-female matched dyads type 4B response is apparently common and this is beneficial in the linguistic output where the females intend to modify semantically. A comparison of the three most common types of responses between the single-gender matched dyads are extracted and presented in Table 4.56.

Table 4.56
Three most common response types among female and male-single gender matched dyads

Most common response types by Female-female matched dyads	Most common response types by Male-male matched dyads
Type 4D	Type 3
Type 6	Type 4D
Type 4B	Type 6

Although the females are shown to put more effort in the modified responses, there are also instances where they were unable to respond or had difficulty responding to their own gender. This particular response is type 7. It is found there are 9 occurrences of type 7 responses among females and 2 occurrences among males; much lower than females. Overall, in single-gender matched dyads, the result demonstrates that females contribute slightly more modified output than males.

In the mixed-gender matched dyads, however, it is found that males produced greater number of responses than females. With a total of 79 occurrences by the males, a figure which is almost twice the number by females (42 occurrences). The most common type of responses by males is type 4C, followed by 4D and 4B. These types belong to sub-category type 4 i.e ‘Self-modification of trigger’ which is believed to be potential for SLA. This trend is almost identical to the females except for the preference type. Females preferred type 4B followed by 4C and 4D. The only difference is the number of occurrences produced. A comparison between the genders most preferred types of responses are presented in the following table.

Table 4.57
Three most common response types in mixed-gender matched dyads

Most common response types by females Mixed gender matched	Most common response types by males Mixed gender matched
Type 4B	Type 4C
Type 4C	Type 4D
Type 4D	Type 4B

From the table above, it can be concluded that in mixed-gender dyads, both female and male interactants preferred to modify their speech when responding to a non-understanding, a great deal of modification was made either semantically, morphologically and syntactically that increases their linguistic ability. This is significant to benefit SLA. The results also reveal that neither gender in the mixed-gender dyads tend to switch topic when non-understanding occurs instead they have responded utilizing the rest of the types of responses. There is also no indication of occurrences contributed by males for type 7 response i.e. indication of difficulty or inability to respond, while there were 3 occurrences by females. This shows that males anticipate responding to females’ signal of indicators without showing any sign of difficulty to reply.

With the evidence presented earlier, it is concluded that in a single-gender matched dyads, females tend to produce more ‘talk’ with their own gender, maximizing the ‘talk’ with great modification that assists in their linguistic output. While males produce the amount of ‘talk’ with a slight difference, preferred to stress the initial indicator as responses and modified utterances within their gender. In mixed-gender dyads, however, males demonstrated a great modification of responses, capitalizing in the linguistic output by dominating the conversation whereas females responded less. This is also due to females initiating the indicator ahead in order to seeking more input. Thus, it can be said that the production of responses seems to be influenced by their partner’s gender.

4.3.4 Summary

To sum up, based on the findings of qualitative features, both basic and extended patterns of negotiation are found in the genders interaction. Considerably, there are slightly higher occurrences of the basic patterns in both genders. The extended pattern though as claimed by Varonis and Gass (1985b, p.83) is more conducive in SLA. In this study, it occurred similarly for both genders dyads as well. The occurrences of the extended pattern are almost equal with the basic pattern, with only 3 to 5% differences in percentages. The statistical results also show there is no significance difference between the basic and extended pattern. It seems that high-proficiency learners in the present study would prefer to negotiate meaning with minimum moves but yet get into a complex situation which leads to an extended version of negotiation.

In terms of types of indicators, it is found that the most common types of indicators in the study are types 1, 2 and 4. These types of indicators are found to be significantly higher among females than males, whether in a single-gender dyads or mixed-gender dyads. The only difference is the most preferred types between the genders. In the female context, the preferred types are types 4, 2 and 1 while in the male context they

are types 2, 1 and 4. Type 4 ('Request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger') occurred significantly higher among females; two times more than males. The other two types of indicators are type 2 ('Request for confirmation through repetition') found to be slightly higher in occurrences and type 1 ('Explicit statement or clarification of request') found to be in parallel with males. In addition, it is type 1 which commonly occurred in the present study that is more relevant in SLA. This is because the interactant with the indicator prompts for modified responses and the other responds it with modification of the trigger.

As for the types of responses, the most common types of responses among females are types 4D, 6 and 4B while males are types 3, 4D and 6. This is based on the general comparison. The results reveal differently when it is viewed closer on the distribution of breakdowns among the gender dyads. The most common responses on the general comparison between the genders are the same for single-gender matched dyads. On the other hand, in mixed-gender matched dyads, females prefer types of 4B, 4C and 4D whereas males prefer types 4C, 4D and 4B. These are the types that have been claimed to be beneficial for SLA (Pica et al., 1989; 1994). They are the syntactic modifications (4D), morphological modifications (4C) and semantic modifications (4B). The results indicate that the syntactic modifications and morphological modifications produced highly by males but the semantic modifications are lower than females, in terms of percentage scores. Based on the occurrences, it is parallel between males and females. However, the statistical results indicate there are no significant difference between the males and females in terms of producing modified responses.

Thus far, based on the findings on the qualitative features of the negotiation routine, it can be said that whenever a negotiation routine occurred in face to face environment among the genders, there seem to be a high probable of maximising the interaction for

SLA. This is evident with the occurrences of extended patterns in negotiation routines, the utterance of indicators with modification of triggers and the occurrence of responses with syntactic, semantic and morphological modifications. Hence, it provides the additional knowledge on the gender acquiring comprehensible input and output in this study. Next, a detailed observation on the direct and indirect indicators will be presented in the following section.

4.4 Quantitative and qualitative features of indicators

Research question 3:

The final research question of the study ‘How do the direct and indirect indicators of negotiation routine in face to face interaction differ between gender of Gen Y learners?’ was to examine further on the categories of indicators produced by the interactants in the negotiation routines. The instances of these indicators are extracted, analysed, categorised and tabulated. Varonis and Gass (1986) differentiated these indicators and label them as direct indicator and indirect indicator. The different labels of indicators show the level of input by the interactants that prompt for modified responses which would benefit second language acquisition.

4.4.1 Direct indicators

According to Varonis and Gass (1986) direct indicator expresses the lack of comprehensibility as in unable to receive any input which requires a further clarification of the message. In other words, the definition of a direct indicator signals immediate incomprehensibility of message prompting the other interlocutor for an immediate response. In this study too, there are instances of direct indicators found in the dyads; female-female matched dyads, male-male matched dyads and female-male matched dyads. Examples of the direct indicators found in the excerpts are presented below:

Excerpt 7

Direct Indicator Female (F) – female (F) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	F8: Uhm how about the arrangement?
I (indicator)	F7: for?
R (response)	F8: the arrangement for the farewell dinner....
I (indicator)	F7: Ah... what do you mean by arrangement?
R (response)	F8: I don't know....what we plan to do for this evening?
RR	F7: hmmm we can sing....

Excerpt 8

Direct Indicator Male (M) – male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	M6: how about the side dish?
I (indicator)	M5: what do you mean by side dish? [Do you like to suggest-]
R (response)	M6: [like to suggest something] like how about ABC? like Malaysia is extremely hot and.....
RR	M5: aah this is ah ABC can only get in Malaysia you know

Excerpts 7 and 8 direct indicators are quite similar; the utterance '*for?*', '*what do you mean by arrangement?*' and '*what do you mean by side dish?*' give explicit hints to the speaker a lack of comprehensibility in the message, ultimately signalling that the hearer is unable to receive the input. In excerpt 7, the lack of understanding occurred twice. The first indicator '*for*' produced by F7 shows the inability to receive the input and thus signal for an output. F8 responded by elaborating semantically the initial trigger hoping that F7 could comprehend. However, the response was insufficient for F7 to comprehend and lead to another direct indicator with a question form of '*what do you mean by arrangement?*' The question form that begins with '*what*' is a form of direct indicator which signals lack of comprehensibility and/or requesting for immediate response from the interlocutor. This prompted a response that comes in the form modified output '*I don't know...what we plan for this evening...*' This utterance was comprehensible input for F7 and the ability to notice the form of '*plan for the evening*' which led to the reaction '*hmmm...we can sing*'. The direct indicators, responses and reaction to response

occurred in excerpt 7 show that comprehensible input, comprehensible output and noticing of form took place thus giving the opportunity for language to be acquired. Similarly, in excerpt 8 the direct indicator of question forms ‘*what do you mean by side dish?*’ produced by M5 signals the lack of understanding of the utterance ‘*side dish*’. M6 realised this and took the opportunity to produce modified output from the initial trigger ... ‘*like how about ABC...like Malaysia is extremely hot*’ This output was clear for M5 that led to a reaction to the response ...‘*aah this is ah ABC...*’, shows that M5 has received a comprehensible input and notice the form of ‘*ABC*’ as a dessert in Malaysia and the discourse continues. Hence, this shows comprehensible output, comprehensible input and noticing of form are evident in the excerpts.

Excerpt 9

Direct Indicator Female (F) – male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	M5: mmm that’s it...I personally suggest Lavish Jane...
I (indicator)	F5: sorry?
R (response)	M5: ah Lavish Jane I mean the café name.....
RR	F5: ah ha....

Another good example of a direct indicator is the word ‘*sorry?*’ which is found in excerpt 9. This lexical unit indicates that when no input is received, the hearer is unable to comprehend the message meaning and a longer response is expected. A response of ‘*...ah Lavish Jane I mean the café name...*’ was modified and elaborated for the hearer to comprehend. The utterance of ‘*ah ha...*’ by F5 indicates a reaction to respond that the response was comprehensible.

There is also a different form of indicator which appears in negotiation routines and this happens to induce a modified response. This indicator which is not similar to a lexical unit is categorised as a hesitation marker (Fox, 2010). This refers to the utterances of the sounds of ‘*hmm*’ and ‘*mmm*’. According to Clark and Fox Tree (2002), hesitation marker is known to fill a gap before the noun or to act as fillers in a conversation (Fox,

2010). The articulation sounds of *uh*, *err*, *umm* and *hmm* function to fill the pauses which arise in the interaction (Fox, 2010). Another researcher, Firscher (2000) explains that the function of a hesitation marker is to signal the other interactant whose thinking is in progress, indicating there are some thoughts going on of what to say. Clark and Fox Tree (2002), however, claim that hesitation marker is also used to indicate the willingness to give up in the turn taking, expecting the other interlocutor to continue with the flow of the speech. On certain occasions, it can also be a signal to the interlocutor to complete the utterance, as in acquiring for more input (Clark & Fox Tree, 2002). This particular role or act is similar to the definition of an indicator from the schema of indicators and responses by Pica et al. (1989) that an indicator induces for a response. In addition, Varonis and Gass (1986) find the occurrences of hesitation marker in the findings function to be a direct indicator requiring a response and the findings of this study supported as well. In other words, the occurrences of hesitation markers are found to be embedded in the negotiation routines. These hesitation markers of '*hmmm*' and '*mmm*' that occurred in this study can be categorised as direct indicator in negotiation routines. This is also because it signals of lack of understanding and explicit request for more input. Based on the function, these signals could only be clear if the utterance of hesitation markers occur solely on its turn and not at the beginning of the turn taking followed with the utterance of lexical units.

A closer observation is made and found that these instances occur relatively high in the negotiation routines and deemed to act as an indicator. Examples of '*hmmm*' and '*mmm*' found in the excerpts are presented next.

Excerpt 10

Direct Indicator Female (F)-male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	F5: roughly how many people should we invite?
I (indicator)	M5: hmmm...
R (response)	F5: Do you think there'll be more than twenty?
RR	M5: yeah, should be more than twenty...hopefully...

Excerpt 11

Direct Indicator Female (F)-female (F) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	F6: abc?
I (indicator)	F5: mmm...
R (response)	F6: ais batu kacangla....

*abc = a type of dessert

Excerpt 12

Direct Indicator Male (M) -male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	M7: so where we want to bring him to the finest nasi lemak we can get?
I (indicator)	M8: hmmm.....
R (response)	M7: do you know ah nasi lemak 2.0 at Penang?
RR	M8: yeah I know...((giggle))

*nasi lemak = coconut milk fragrant rice with condiments

Excerpts 10, 11 and 12 are the examples of 'hmm' and 'mmm' found in the negotiation routines were categorised as direct indicator. The findings reveal that the instances have prompted for an output and the output seems to be modified, paraphrased and expanded. These instances are found in all dyads among the genders. Thus, for the Gen Y participants, the instances of 'hmm' and 'mmm' apparently is understood as a sign of lack of understanding and played a significant role of a direct indicator in negotiation routines.

The hesitation markers in the negotiation routines were attention-grabbing and induced the interlocutors for modified responses. Thus, in the present study the hesitation markers of 'hmm' and 'mmm' are included in the percentage score of direct indicators.

A tabulated number of direct indicator occurrences is presented in Table 4.60.

Table 4.60
Total direct indicators occurrences among the genders

Gender	Direct Indicator	Percentage (%)
Female	52	59%
Male	36	36%
Total	88	100%

The above table illustrates the total number of direct indicators in negotiation routines occur in the study. The results reveal that there were 88 instances of direct indicators, where female contributed 52 instances and the males contributed 36 instances. Once again females demonstrate the willingness to receive input as in comprehensible input, a need for information in the study. A further observation is made to analyse the breakdowns of the distribution among the dyads which can be found in Table 4.61.

Table 4.61
Distribution of breakdowns of direct indicators among the dyads

Dyads	Direct Indicator	Percentage (%)
Female (single)	3	36
Male (single)	2	28
Female (mixed)	2	23
Male (mixed)	1	13
Total	8	100

The distribution of breakdowns illustrates the instances of direct indicators among the dyads. The table reveals that in single-gender dyads, females contributed 32 instances while males only 25 instances, a rather slight difference. Similarly, in mixed-gender dyads, females contributed more than twice the number of instances compared to males, although the number is relatively low compared to the single gender dyads. For significant difference, a paired t-test is conducted for statistical testing and the results are as follows.

Table 4.62
Direct indicator between the female and male in single-gender matched dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Direct Indicator	.500	.557	9	.591

The mean difference between female and male direct indicator is .500, $t = .557$, $p = .591$ ($p > 0.1$), which reflects no significant difference. It would seem that the occurrences of direct indicators are almost the same for both genders especially when their partner is of the same gender.

The next table demonstrates the comparison of direct indicators for mixed-gender dyads.

Table 4.63
Direct indicator between female and male in mixed-gender matched dyads

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Direct Indicator	2.000	2.390	4	.075

As for mixed gender dyads, the $p = .075$ ($p > 0.1$), indicates that there is a significant difference between the males and females. This shows that females contributed significantly higher number of direct indicators especially when paired with an opposite gender. The next feature to be examined in the study is the indirect indicators.

4.4.2 Indirect indicators

It is claimed that the indirect indicators occur in the negotiation routines comes in a form of expression of politeness (Varonis & Gass, 1986). These expressions of linguistic utterances point out that there is a lack of comprehension or the message is incomplete. This type of indicator actually signals and induces the hearer to complete the initial message (Varonis & Gass, 1986). In this study too, these instances of indirect indicators are found in the negotiation routines and are found in all dyads. Examples of excerpts of indirect indicator are presented below.

Excerpt 13

Indirect Indicator Male (M)-male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	M5: yeah, so I guess that the maximum people that will come is thirty.....
I (indicator)	M6: thirty??
R (response)	M5: because her friend and our friends from-

In the excerpt above, the repetitive word ‘*thirty*’ is uttered as an indirect indicator, a polite form of indicating the message may not be complete and yet is a form of invitation for more input from the speaker. This particular indicator provides opportunity for modified interactions and would also be beneficial for SLA.

Another example of indirect indicator is seen in excerpt 14 where the confusion of ‘*any club*’ a repetitive form from the initial trigger. It is a phonological lexical confusion that led to the repetitive utterance. In other words, more input was requested by F6 to comprehend the message meaning. This utterance led F5 to modify her speech with an attempt at self-correction ‘*sorry any park*’ and continues with the flow of discourse. Thus, comprehensible input and output are apparent in the excerpts.

Excerpt 14

Indirect Indicator female (F)-female (F) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	F5: KLCC or lake club, or any club
I (indicator)	F6: any club?? You just-
R (response)	F5: any clark...any park, <u>sorry any park.</u> We can make surprises, make a cake, ask her to come.....

Excerpt 15

Indirect Indicator female (F)-female (F) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	F7: Jengga
I (indicator)	F8: Jengga??
R (response)	F7: Jengga is like a stack of block [and]
RR	F8: [awww] ok

Excerpt 16

Indirect Indicator Female (F)-male (M) matched dyads

Negotiation Framework	
T (trigger)	M2: ahhh I think I can get fifty ringgit?
I (indicator)	F2 : fifteen??
R (response)	M2: no...fifty ringgit...

Excerpt 15 illustrates the repetition of ‘*Jengga*’ as an indirect indicator to prompt the previous speaker to complete the utterance for a more comprehensible meaning. The evidence indicates the induced response has been modified and elaborated for the hearer’s understanding, which ultimately results in a reaction of response. Another excerpt from the study which is excerpt 16, the lexical ‘*fifteen*’ is uttered as an indicator for partial lack of non-understanding with a phonological error. This has immediately prompted the interlocutor to respond with the right sound and utterance, thus the incited response serves as an indirect indicator. By observing the excerpts presented above, the evidence indeed shows there are more opportunities utilized for linguistic modification for comprehensible input and output that facilitates SLA. The following table illustrates the total of indirect indicators that occurred among the genders.

Table 4.64

Total indirect indicators occurrences among the genders

Gender	Indirect Indicator	Percentage %
Female	117	63%
Male	70	37%
Total	187	100%

The significant difference of indirect indicators found in the study seems to be interesting. It shows that females have 117 instances while males have 70 instances, a rather huge difference. To have an in-depth understanding, a breakdown among the gender dyads is presented in the following table.

Table 4.65

Distribution of indirect indicators among the gender dyads

Dyads	Indirect Indicator	Percentage
Female (single)	71	38%
Male (single)	49	26%
Female (mixed)	46	25%
Male (mixed)	21	11%
Total	187	100%

The above table reveals that females dominate in contributing the indirect indicators for both types of dyads; single-gender matched and mixed-gender matched. The evidence indicates that in mixed-gender dyads, females contributed two times more than instances males. Thus, this shows that females preferred to signal their lack of non- understanding using a much polite expression which is through articulating the indirect indicators. A paired t-test is conducted for statistical testing which is presented below.

Table 4.66**Indirect indicator between female and male in single-gender matched dyads**

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Indirect Indicator	2.400	1.043	9	.324

The above table shows the statistical results of paired t-test of indirect indicators by the genders. The mean difference is 2.400; a significant difference. The $t = 1.043$ and $p = .324$ ($p > 0.1$) indicate no significant difference between females and males from single- gender matched dyads. As for mixed-gender dyads, Table 4.67 illustrates the $p = .170$ ($p > 0.1$), indicate there is no significant difference between females and males from mixed-gender dyads.

Table 4.67**Indirect indicator between the female and male in mixed-gender dyads**

Negotiation Routines	<i>M</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>Sig. (2-tailed)</i>
Indirect Indicator	4.800	1.672	4	.170

A closer observation is made to compare and contrast between the direct and indirect indicators that will be presented in the following section.

4.4.3 Direct indicators vs Indirect indicators

It was found that among the high-proficiency ESL learners, the indirect indicators were highly favoured by both genders. The results that are found in this study (Table 4.68) support the findings from Varonis and Gass (1986), where the indirect indicators occurred significantly higher for both genders of Japanese speakers. A contribution of 187 (68%) indirect indicators out of 275 indicators in the whole study whereas the remainder 88 (32%) on direct indicators. This shows that high-proficiency learners preferred a polite expression of indicating lack of comprehensibility during the task discussion. This can be predicted as the proficiency level exposes them to a variety of expressions signalling incomprehensibility. An observation on the distribution of breakdowns among the dyads is examined and featured in Table 4.69.

Table 4.68
Total direct and indirect indicators occurrences among the genders

Gender	Direct Indicator (%)	Indirect Indicator (%)	Total (%)
Female	52 (59%)	117 (63%)	169 (62%)
Male	36 (41%)	70 (37%)	106 (38%)
Total	88 (100%)	187 (100%)	275 (100%)

Table 4.69
Distribution of breakdowns of direct and indirect indicators among the dyads

Dyads	Direct Indicator	Indirect Indicator	Total
Female (single)	32 (36%)	71 (38%)	103 (38%)
Male (single)	25 (28%)	49 (26%)	74 (27%)
Female (mixed)	20 (23%)	46 (25%)	66 (24%)
Male (mixed)	11 (13%)	21 (11%)	32 (11%)
Total	88 (100%)	187 (100%)	275 (100%)

The distribution of breakdowns exemplifies there is a higher occurrence of indirect indicators for all dyads, single-gender and mixed-matched dyads by more than twice the number. The direct indicators occurred were less than half of the total amount of indicators uttered. Therefore, the preference of indicators, the indirect indicators, the expression of signalling lack of comprehensibility are equal for both genders among the Gen Y participants.

4.4.4 Summary

Generally, there are direct and indirect indicators found in the negotiation routines among the genders. The preference of signalling lack of non-understanding is similar between the genders and the dyads types, which is the indirect indicator. The difference is rather huge, twice the amount of instances of indirect indicators. Both genders seem to be natural in signalling, expressing in a polite way for indicating the lack of comprehension. This also shows that a majority of non-understanding occurred due to partial lack of comprehensibility or incomplete input that lead for modified responses, and thus beneficial to SLA.

The gender that contributes significantly higher instances of indirect indicators is females for single-gender matched dyads as well as for mixed-gender matched dyads. This could also be because of the significant numbers of indicators provided by females that could be the determining factor for the higher instances of direct and indirect indicators. (See Section 4.3.2). Nevertheless, the statistical results specify that there is no significant difference in terms of indirect indicators between single-gender matched and mixed-gender matched dyads. Likewise, for direct indicators for single-gender matched dyads. As for mixed-gender matched dyads, the result indicates that females produced higher number of direct indicators than males. With the tabulated

results presented, this concludes that females from Gen Y are enthusiastic for greater input as in comprehensible input.

4.5 Conclusions

This chapter has presented and discussed the findings on the occurrences of negotiation routines, the differences in terms of quantitative and qualitative features of the negotiation routines among the genders of Gen Y. These findings will have implications on the theory of SLA and, future research in negotiation of meaning, particularly in face to face environment and they will be discussed in the final chapter.

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CHAPTER FIVE

Conclusion

5.1 Introduction

Within the literature of second language acquisition and Interaction tradition, it was observed that negotiation of meaning frequently happens in an interaction. Researchers claimed that this particular feature is worthwhile as it provides learners the opportunity to acquire the second language (Long, 1980; 1985; 1996; Pica, 1989, 1994; Varonis & Gass, 1985a; 1985b; among others). Through negotiation of meaning, a learner is given the conditions to maximise the potentials for SLA through comprehensible output, input and noticing of form (Hegelheimer & Chapelle, 2000; Pica, 1994) and these conditions provide a channel for SLA.

The present study offers additional observations by presenting data from face to face interactions among the dyads of high proficiency levels. More specifically, using the Interactionist framework, the analysis of the data focused on the interactions among the genders from Gen Y especially those who were born between 1990 and 1996.

A mix-mode design was utilized to compare and contrast the interactional features between the genders. The quantitative measures investigated were the number of turns and words and the qualitative measures investigated were the patterns in the negotiation routines, the types of indicators and the categories of responses within the negotiation routines. This study also observed in detail the category of indicators in terms of direct and indirect indicators produced by gender-matched dyads and presented the linguistic features that indicates for incomprehensibility and responses.

This study utilized the purposive sampling method to select the participants. The participants were familiar with each other and were placed in pairs; female-female matched dyads, male-male matched dyads and female-male matched dyads. They performed two tasks in a face to face environment. Prior to the data collection, they were exposed to similar tasks during their class activity as part of their course.

There are limitations found in the findings of this study and this is stated in Chapter One, Section 1.7: Limitations in the study. These shortcomings are bound to occur and may affect the linguistic output in the interactions especially in the background of the participants; social-stratifications, ethnic-group differentiation and these will be taken into considerations.

5.2 Summary of findings

In general, it was apparent that negotiation of meaning or negotiation routines transpired in this study. This is evident from the observation of turns that went back and forth in the interaction in order to resolve a problem in the interaction. The amount of linguistic features occurred also pointed out that learners showed enthusiasm and effort to solve the problematic part of the discourse.

The present study observed the linguistic output produced within the negotiation routines by the genders and whether the output has potential for SLA. With regards to research question 1, the number of turns and the number of words that occurred within the negotiation routines were used as a measure to identify the potentiality for SLA. The higher the number of turns and words within the negotiation routines, indicates more opportunity for second language acquisition. In terms of number of turns in the study, overall both genders produced slightly more than a quarter of their total turns in the

study, and the males took considerably more turns to negotiate meaning, putting more effort to go back and forth in the negotiation routines. As for the number of words, males produced more than females. The evidence indicates that males took the opportunity to produce more 'talk' as in negotiated words for both dyads, single-gender matched and mixed-gender matched dyads. Males were shown to be capitalizing the conversation, willing to talk more than females. The statistical results, however, provide a more detailed explanation of the output produced. The statistical difference was clearly evident for the number of turns and words, showing that males dominated the conversation but only in one dyad which is the mixed-gender matched dyads. The single-gender matched dyads however did not indicate any differences between males and females.

Research question 2 refers to the qualitative features of the negotiation routines. The first feature observed was the patterns of negotiation routines in basic and extended patterns. The basic pattern consists of three or four moves and the findings reveal that the basic pattern was favoured by both genders. Both genders preferred to negotiate meaning within 3 to 4 moves. Nevertheless, the extended patterns were also favoured in a way because the percentage was slightly lower than the basic patterns. The extended patterns refer to additional work involved to resolve the problematic part of the conversation. The extended patterns found in the study consists of 5 moves, 6 moves, 7 moves and 9 moves. Learners maximise up to 9 moves to negotiate meaning when in involved in a complex situation. The study reveals that both genders were able to negotiate meaning with minimum moves but there were occasions where more than 4 moves were required to resolve the message meaning. In addition, the breakdowns of distribution of basic and extended patterns among the dyads indicated that the highest occurrences of patterns were within the female-female matched dyads, followed

closely by female-male matched dyads. The occurrence of patterns within the male-male matched dyads was shown to be the least among the rest. It would seem that when a female is involved in an interaction, there are more occurrences of patterns in negotiation routines. The females appeared to show more enthusiasm, grabbing the opportunities to work on the problematic part of the conversation.

The other qualitative features in research question 2 observed was the type of indicators that occurred within the negotiation routines. In an interaction when there is a problem in the communication, the interactant will give a signal or indication. This signal is called an indicator. In this study, there were more indicators produced by females than males. The three top preferred types of indicators were type 4 (request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger), type 2 (request for confirmation through repetition of trigger) and followed by type 1 (explicit statement or request for clarification). The types of indicators preferred by males were slightly different from the ones preferred by females. They are type 2 (request for confirmation through repetition), type 1 (explicit statement or request for clarification) and followed by type 4 (request for confirmation through completion or elaboration of trigger). Although the percentage scores and the tabulated occurrences were shown to be higher for females, the statistical results show conflict. Statistically, there was no significant difference of indicators for the overall indicators between the genders, in single-gender matched dyads and mixed-gender matched dyads as well. Even though the distribution of breakdowns of indicators illustrated that females have contributed greater number of indicators by a difference of 11%, the results could not support the findings from Shehadeh (1999) that females were more eager for information, clarity and comprehension, inducing the other interlocutor for more comprehensible input.

As for responses within the negotiation routines, which is the other qualitative measure in research question 2, generally there were more responses produced by males than females. The three most preferred types of responses were type 4C (morphological modification through self-modification of trigger), type 4D (syntactic modification through self-modification of trigger) and followed by type 3 (repetition of trigger). The response type which would be more beneficial for SLA is type 4C and 4D because of the linguistic modifications were in syntactic and morphological forms. Whilst females generated type 4B (semantic modification through self-modification of trigger), type 4D (syntactic modification through self-modification of trigger) and type 6 (confirmation or acknowledgement of indicator only). As for females, response type 4B and 4D would have most potential for SLA due to its linguistic modification semantically and morphologically (Pica et al, 1989; 1994). The statistical results show a significant difference between males and females, with the males producing more responses. The preferred types of responses summarised earlier are the same in a single-gender matched dyads but not the same for the mixed-gender matched dyads.

In mixed-gender dyads, the preferred types of responses were the sub-category of type 4 (self-modification of trigger). The most preferred types of responses for males were 4C, 4D and 4B whilst females were type 4B, 4C and 4D. Both genders seem to contribute a huge number of responses through linguistic modifications that aids SLA. When paired with the opposite gender, both males and females appeared to be putting more effort in producing modified responses for each other's comprehension of the message. In this case, males took advantage of the opportunity to produce more output as in comprehensible output.

The final research question was to observe in detail the category of indicators in terms of direct and indirect indicators. Generally, it was found the indirect indicators occurred highly for both genders. In other words, the additional indicators signalled by the gender for non-understanding is because of partial lack of understanding or waiting for the other interlocutor to complete the utterances (Gass & Varonis, 1986). The direct indicator demonstrates a complete lack of understanding or inability to receive the input and it occurred less than one-third compared to the indirect indicators produced by both females and males. The findings for research question 3 shows that females produced more indirect indicators, especially in the mixed-gender dyads setting. This particular finding supports the qualitative findings for the number of indicators (research question 2) that females are more eager for more input, inducing for modified responses for a better comprehensible input in terms of percentages and scores. The statistical results also indicated that females contributed greater number of direct indicators only but not indirect indicators. The findings appear to suggest that Gen Y females tend to utilize and maximise the interaction for a greater input.

5.3 Conclusions and implications

Based on the findings summarised above, it can be concluded that learners' communicative language ability can still be enhanced in face to face interaction, in this case through the use of communicative tasks. The present study investigated the features of negotiation routines or negotiation of meaning for SLA. The findings provide evidence that face to face environment offers a communicative language practice and opportunities for SLA particularly for the high proficiency learners. Even though they are considered 'digital natives' and tend to use technology highly for communication, the findings found there was no particular lexical units emerged from the data that may relate to Gen Y. There is only one non-lexical unit shown to be utilized is the particle

'ah' seems to be frequently used as a sign of indicator for nonunderstanding of message as well as a sign of comprehension. The findings also indicate that providing these learners with communicative tasks within a face to face environment can help learners enhance their communication skills. The experiments point out that negotiation of meaning do occur highly within the high proficiency learners and the role of input and output were identified between the genders. As such, the findings of this study have implications for theory, research and pedagogy.

5.3.1 Implications for SLA theory

The study attempted to contribute to the body of knowledge on conditions that provide opportunities for second language acquisition. The study found that the opportunities that exist in face to face interaction can benefit the high proficiency ESL learners. To a certain degree, the occurrence of hesitation markers played a role to induce for continuous modified output from the learners which enhance the opportunity for SLA specifically in face to face environment. Furthermore, the findings show that different types of indicators emerged to support and assist the high proficiency learners in noticing of form. For example, in terms of indicators, Pica et al' (1996) proposed a schema of indicators and responses. In this schema, examples were given to guide researchers to analyse and categorise the different types of indicators. The examples given can only be applied to mid-proficiency and low-proficiency learners and not to high proficiency learners. The indicators emerged from this study managed give a different perspective on how high proficiency learners indicate non-understanding, induces for comprehensible input and the opportunity for comprehensible output in language acquisition. Besides, the findings validate the occurrence of hesitation markers proving to act as an indicator that prompts for input, enhances learners' capability to produce output and notice form (Gass & Varonis, 1986).

5.3.2 Implications for research

This study found that gender differences exist within Gen Y interaction but only minimal. The interaction patterns produced by the genders have slightly changed over the decades. Males and females from Gen Y are shown to produce great instances of ‘talk’ especially among their own gender. When they are paired with the opposite gender, males tend to increase the instances of talk (Aries, 1976). The evidence also shows that males and females tend to alter their interaction style based on the gender of the partners (Feldman, 2007). Based on Holmes’ (1998) six universal formulations on gender and language (See Chapter 1.2.1 Gender Difference), the present study wishes to attest the five universals by Holmes, except the first one which is disputable (Women and men develop different patterns of language use). The findings of the study indicate there are not much difference in terms of patterns between females and males of Gen Y. There were no indications or special lexical uttered by the genders. In fact, the current generation of females would give an indication when a non-understanding occurred while males tended to be the information providers.

The frameworks that were employed in this study – negotiation of meaning (Varonis & Gass, 1985b; Pica et al., 1989) – have provided evidence especially in measuring the quantitative and qualitative features of negotiation routines. The evidence shows that these frameworks could further be applied and developed in SLA research. The schema introduced by Pica et al. (1989) provides a deeper insight and assists in the investigation of measuring the qualitative features of negotiation routines. Furthermore, this particular schema may be used in other similar studies.

In the Malaysian context, there are limited studies in negotiation of meaning particularly among genders of Gen Y high proficiency learners. Gender interaction in negotiation of meaning could be further explored in CALL research, job interviews and school setting using other forms of communicative tasks and the frameworks applied in this study.

5.3.3 Implications of pedagogy

The empirical findings from this study demonstrate that the practise of face to face interaction is still essential for learners today. This researcher believes by consistently providing learners with face to face interaction practise would give them wider exposure to language learning. This particular environment will not only provide opportunities in language practice to improve communicative language ability but, also prepare learners in a tertiary and workplace setting. Thus, face to face interaction provides awareness of language, opportunities for language acquisition and advancement in language through negotiation of meaning.

The selection of decision-making task or discussion task in the present study has overall assisted in delivering the interaction and the occurrence of negotiation of meaning (Long, 1980). The nature of this task itself is to provide equal opportunity for both interlocutors to negotiate meaning, come to a mutual agreement by understanding each other's linguistic production. This type of task could also assist the passive learners; giving them the opportunity to practice, motivating them to interact in a real-like conversation and gradually seeking opportunities for linguistic output. Therefore, both passive and active learners could benefit from language production in face to face interaction. As a result, learners are able to notice on forms through the production comprehensible input and comprehensible output. Thus, decision-making or goal-

oriented tasks should be utilised and explored in language teaching to understand their role in enhancing the learners' oral production.

5.4 Reflections

The present study examined 30 participants, each pair of participants participated in two different but parallel decision- making tasks. They were paired into 5 female-female matched dyads, 5 male-male matched dyads and 5 female-male matched dyads; totaling 30 experiments on interactions. Although the number of experiments for face to face interactions observed was sufficient, in terms of the occurrences of negotiation routines, some of the findings, especially in the quantitative features, were unable to provide a significance difference in the statistical results. The study was more of a qualitative design where, the score and percentages were visible through tabulation. Hence, a larger sample size would have been able to provide significant differences statistically and to validate the findings. Further, the limitations for this study were also highlighted in Section 1.7: Limitations of the study which could be further improved on.

This study was an extended investigation of Pica et al. (1989) and Gass & Varonis' (1986) work on negotiation routines among the genders. Comparative research among the different proficiency levels; mid-proficiency and low-proficiency levels in a face to face environment would be worth exploring in the future. A study like this would not only benefit the learners but also contribute to the existing knowledge of SLA. It is also worthwhile to explore the negotiation routines among the genders within a computer-mediated communication (CMC) as suggested by Tam (2009). This environment may provide some interesting findings as it will encourage the passive learners to interact as it is less threatening. It would be interesting to know which gender would benefit in the input and output of the language in the CMC context.

Another area that is worth exploring is the direct and indirect indicators of negotiation of meaning (Gass & Varonis, 1986). To date, there has not been any additional investigation in this context. It will be interesting to investigate some of the key words uttered by learners to indicate incomprehensibility of the message meaning. Future research may also produce a list of lexical for direct and indirect indicators which will contribute to this area of SLA research.

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