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SKYPE™: A PORTAL INTO THE 21ST CENTURY IN A SECONDARY SPANISH
CLASSROOM (270 pp.)

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The purpose of this research study was to examine the experience of the high school students' use of synchronous computer mediated communication (CMC) as they learn a second language. Six high school Non-Native Speakers (NNSs) of Spanish were paired with six middle school Native Speakers (NSs) of Spanish. The study addressed the primary research question, "How do Novice Non-Native Speakers (NNSs) who are learning Spanish in a Midwestern high school experience synchronous video chatting with middle school Native Speakers (NSs) of Spanish from a neighboring community?" These six NNS/NS dyads met once a week for twelve weeks. The students communicated through Skype, a free online communication application, to complete various communicative tasks. Data from interviews, student journals, teacher journal and videos were gathered and analyzed. Three findings emerged from the data: 1) the students experienced a variety of feelings that evolved over the course of the study, and these feelings were tied to their relationships with their NS partners and their own knowledge of the second language, 2) the students acquired the second language by taking ownership of their own learning and by using specific learning strategies, and 3) the students developed relationships with their NS partners that contributed to their feelings about the project and to their second language acquisition. All of the findings were interconnected.