**Activity 2 Discussion (Transcript)**

Was there anything confusing?

Yes, the setup of the activity, I think, was quite confusing. Like, maybe it was just our understanding of it but, umm, it was quite confusing to know how to respond to a third person talking about something. You didn’t know if you should just take the topic and run with it, which is what, I think, we ended up doing and not really referring to anything that Hannah specifically said. Umm, to like, “I watched films recently” kind of thing, umm... or whether we should be responding specifically to that... That, that aspect was kind of lost.

Okay, so the activity could have been framed better essentially, as to how our communication should have happened?

That’s not respective of their language? So, if the same thing was in English, you’ll still have the same problem?

Yes, yeah.

In our group, we did a debate, which, I think, worked quite well in that you can quite easily just, like, disagree with someone, and then, I think, that kind of, that sets up as more like a dialogue...

[In Agreement]

What was your debate on?

Whether social media was useful for language learning.

And it was really nice too, really nice too, because the topic was assigned. So, I can imagine if we were doing it in a language that we were learning, that it would be quite impersonal, but also easy to think of what to talk about, so it’s kind of...

Okay, excellent. Umm... was there anything, to be on the negative side, was there anything difficult to achieve? Was there anything that you wanted to do that you didn’t know how or... you wanted to communicate and you couldn’t due to the limitations of how you were doing it?

I think we thought that it would have been a lot easier if it was umm... just a two person conversation, so, umm... it just felt a bit strange to have, like, someone come in with a topic and then just leave the conversation again because, like, the people texting kinda wanna respond to that or ask more questions, but then it was just suddenly they were not involved in the conversation anymore. And then, thinking of this, I then joined back in the conversation in the texting but umm... it’s quite difficult to have a group conversation in a second language when you’re all different levels. Cause some, or one person, might get left behind, or two people might talk too quickly, or... I don’t know. Like, there might be a mutual understanding between two people and someone else doesn’t understand what they’re talking about.

Because you can have a two-way conversation even if you are at different levels, because one person will sort of try to match the other person. But when there’s three people involved, it becomes really difficult.

Yeah.

Okay. You guys experienced that in this group as well?

I think, I just didn’t know what to say. I mean, like… Like I said, I don’t know if it’s a generational thing, but, I don’t text as much as most, so I don’t have an opinion on what people will say. It’s just not a thing that I do. Like, it’s easier for me to speak in person than it is to, like, put something down in words and send it, because... To me it doesn’t warrant, like, doing it. So I didn’t know exactly what to say throughout.

Yeah, as an audio conversation, I would have had it much easier, I felt really... and I think that might just be due to my ability in the language. So my spoken ability in Japanese is much higher than my written ability. There are a lot of times where I umm... I wanted to be like “Wait, what do you mean there?”, or “Can you explain this?”, or where I just, I had an instant, like, thought in my head in Japanese, but, like, the typing process just meant that, it kinda pulled me out of the conversation.

For sure. Because it was...

If... sorry... if you were given the option to, that in your case, just on, as in the audio...

Yeah, I would actually do that even, I would, I would, like, if I was recording the messages, I think it would be easier.

Okay. Is anybody else that feels otherwise, that it would have been easier by text rather than audio?

I feel easier via text just because my written Chinese is better than my spoken Chinese.

So it comes to your own personal...

[Mixed Chatter]

It’s probably better for my language to write.... So for me, it’d be the thing to improve, but also I think it was just the idea of, like, I don’t really chat via text, as you were saying. Like, I text because it’s functional, like, “Where do you want to meet up?” with the aim of seeing you. Like I don’t really chat via text, so it felt like, you know, like I was being assigned a task rather than I was having a conversation.

Yeah, okay.

Yeah. Because, I mean, also because, like, I haven’t actually written in Mandarin in, like, almost 15 years now. Like, it’s hard to remember the characters well. So I’m like, I don’t really know if I want to say that, I don’t know if I’m saying the right thing... umm... whereas it’s a lot easier to say it out because you don’t have to worry about how the character looks like, because it sounds correct, you know what I’m saying?

Yeah, I guess these are kind of a language thing.

It’s a very specific language, yeah, thing...

Something we... that we had, which would definitely exist in Korean as well, is this kind of, you have to negotiate politeness and... different forms for different... because [Mixed Chatter]... Yeah, yeah. We used very, we used a very generic kind of socially acceptable style which was very weird given that we were in a group chat and we were kind of like...

Texting.

... yeah, which would definitely, with Korean as well had we done the exercise in Korean, I think umm... we would have had a similar issue where it would be like, for example, I know it’s a simulation so you kind of have to put it all aside but, I, like, it would still be strange to kind of message in these formal styles, I find.

So just to clarify, so I get a clear understanding, right, there, you were using a more formal form of Japanese which is very unusual to find on Whatsapp.

Yeah!

Yes!

Yeah, yeah, yeah. It’ll be, like, completely the opposite...

It’s not natural.

Yeah.

Yeah. I think it’s cause it started from a, a message right? Cause I think you use “maskay”\* in that...

Yeah.

Because, because...

It’s quite a formal task wasn’t it?

It, yeah, it just felt...

Yes.

Yeah.

“Here is a topic, please discuss”.

Yes.

But actually, when we did the... So we actually did do like a simulation of meeting, of organising when to meet up for lunch and it...

[Mixed Chatter]

It got a little bit more casual...

It did get a little more casual, but it reminded me of, like, when I was in Japan and we were in a class of people from all over the place, and so we only communicated in Japanese. And I remembered, like, in a group chat organising, like, a lunch out and it felt very similar to that. With that, we do, we were using slightly more formal...

Slightly more formal because you didn’t know each other that well...

Don’t know each other that well.

Yeah, yeah.

Very well.

Even, like, in Chinese where you don’t really have the registers... like, it’s not a system... but we still, I remember, in that situation talking to people in my class in Beijing, you’d still use slightly more formal polite language just in general. Or, like, I find that in Chinese, I’m a very earnest person, like, nothing literally, nothing, like I am in English. Just because, in a second language you just are slightly more polite and slightly...

Because you’re worried.

Worried, yeah.

Worried of offending.

Well, that, and also learning a language, I don’t really have the faculties to add in humour, or, like the way I speak in English because it is so language based, like I, mainly use a lot of... but that’s not [Inaudible]

And sometimes you try and then you mess up, and it’s completely misconstrued, and you’re, you’re “but...”. You don’t, you don’t attempt again.

I was going to say “Oh no! I hate going out for Korean food”, and they’d be like, “Oh no, I’m so sorry!”.

[Laughter]

It’s true. Yeah, yeah, yeah.

\*It becomes a difference for us.

I’ll resort just to, more, emojis and stuff because it was a lot easier to, like, put out there without actually, like, saying anything because (a) I didn’t know what to say, and (b) it was a lot easier to just have a sticker out there saying, “Yeah, I’m seeing what’s happening, it’s just that I’m not really in this...”, if that makes any sense?

Is it right, is it right for me to assume that emojis are more informal as well?

Yes.

It feels...

We go quite informal in our chat.

Yeah.

Yeah, we just didn’t want to [Inaudible]

[Laughter]

Don’t want to glorify it with... by calling it a “chat”.

“Chat”.

The issue is that the first, in the first scenario, we focused more on, like, thinking about the answer than the language. So what we tried is something more casual so... don’t have to think about the topic just... But then, in the end, we said that because it was too casual, again, the language, the vocabulary was very limited. So you also didn’t gain a lot of...

Well, I mean, it depends on your, I think, definitely there was, there was a time when I was first in Japan where that would have been really beautiful language to pick up and that would have been, like, pushed you to a certain extent. And I think, but probably when we were organising where to meet, it’s pretty simple. It’s like, “Ah, what do you want to eat? Drink? Shall we get beer?” Umm… But, I mean, you could definitely have people come in to that conversation and learn something from that, but it would probably... wasn’t for us?

Probably not us, yeah.

Interesting, interesting.

Yeah, but then, there is the debate where, again, the focus is a lot on the idea rather than the language. It works perfectly in English because we were all, like, taught in English but when it’s another language [Inaudible]...

But I can imagine if, if we had been learners of English, and we had been given a similar task, like, how to debate about this using these different media of using the recorded one or the written one. I think it would have been quite helpful actually, because umm... it forces you to, it’s not just like, “Okay, have a conversation”, it’s like “Talk about this and give reasons why you like it and why you don’t”. It forces you to structure your thoughts and...

I mean, I agree to a certain extent, but I don’t know how useful it would be for actually learning the language, in the sense that, you have to have a certain level of proficiency to know what’s going on right? To begin with. And if you are lost in a conversation, how do you...

I mean, you couldn’t do it at the very beginning stages...

Exactly. So you would be in a position where, like...

You’re practising.

Yeah.

Yeah, at a basic level. I mean, I imagine if I was doing the same activity in Chinese, there will be a lot that I wouldn’t know how to say, but it would force me to figure out how to say using what I do know I think...

[In Agreement]

Yes.

The idea is like you are in a group, a safe environment, I mean the group is specifically about language learning where there are different ability levels in it. As long as you are aware that you are in this [Inaudible]

[Mixed Chatter]

I mean, in some sense, like, the text seems impersonal in that learning process. Because, like, when you’re thrown in, say, a classroom where, where you are picking up the language, and say, you don’t know what’s happening, there’s always the gestures that, that are involved in that speech, or in that learning, that you try and get the gist of what’s happening based on the way people, like, react, the way people describe situation, whereas in a text, you don’t get that sort of, like, visual cues to know what, where this conversation is going and what’s happening right? So... I don’t know, I mean to a certain extent...

I think it’s good for you though in a way. Sorry to interrupt you.

I mean... no, no, no. I agree it’s good, but at the same time, I feel like things like emojis help because it relates a sort of, like, visual, sort of, learning aspect.

It’s not like you have to use either-or.

Right, exactly, exactly. So I feel like... yeah...

I think it’s maybe like the difference between, if you are practising a language and you listen to radio in that language. At the start, it’s really hard, like, you pick up very little, umm... even if you are quite good at that language. But I think you progress much faster because you are forced to not get any other cues from facial expressions, or context, or anything else. And so you do improve a lot, so I think... But probably if you are thinking about things that people choose to do on their own initiative, if, if this was that hard or that, like, miserable as listening to radio originally is, umm... the people would never do it.

Yeah.

It’ll be a bit harder to sustain yourself [Inaudible].

Yeah, it’s like, well, it’s like making a game. You’ve got to make it challenging but not, like not too easy so you get bored, but not too hard so you get lost.

Yes, that’s why the emojis are quite good and things, that you can kind of chill a bit more.

Yeah.

Alright, brilliant. Umm, let’s talk now about every kind of configurations where that could have been better conveyed. So you talked about how some conversations didn’t really make sense in a group or would have been better on umm... face-to-face, or even just a one-on-one conversation? So... Would you, could you imagine an activity like this happening, not with peers but with, like, tutors, or language experts, or lecturers? Would you see... could you imagine that with...

What do you mean, what do you mean by tutors? You mean like someone who’s formally teaching you?

Yeah. Or at least somebody, maybe, who is doing a kind of a mentoring role.

As a remote language learning thing.

Yeah, is that something that makes sense?

Yes, the audio yes, but the texting I feel like you wouldn’t do.

You wouldn’t?

Yeah.

Okay.

In, in languages like Japanese or Korean where there’s register, it would probably have to be a more kind of role-playing situation where you are allowed to use slightly less formal language. Cause I feel like, normally with a tutor, you would use very formal language and that might not be...

Yeah.

... like, sending in email, like, I don’t know. Sending an email to a teacher in your target language is quite difficult cause you have to use a certain formal language...

And time consuming, like, every time I have to send an email about something...

Sending an email in Japanese. Yeah.

\*And I spend a lot of time thinking and, yeah, if you’re trying to use [Japanese phrase].

Yeah, but if it, but if it was in kind of more role-playing, like, “Imagine we’re the same age. Let’s have a conversation about this,” that might be slightly better, but also a little funny...

Well, maybe a little bit awkward as well.

Yeah.

Your teacher is your friend.

Yeah, okay.

How about, this might be a little bit off topic, how about we have some coded advisor so, like a chat-bot, so he can suggest me what to write for this case, if the advisor understands the context based on AI, if possible.

So a digital advisor.

Yeah, so, because even me, I mean, as a Korean person, sometimes I also feel difficulties to... what to... what and how to express in formal expressions in Japanese language. So, I mean, it’s a minor issue. Yeah.

Yeah.

Chat-bot could be quite a good way to...

Yeah.

Essentially, it’s like one of those, like the auto-complete things that when you’re writing emails even in English, they automatically complete your sentences. And I often find that it’s like better than what I was going to write. But some of it is... sometimes it’s bad but... but if that was a thing in the second language, if you were trying to type a response and it gives you suggestions that this would be a natural thing to say [Inaudible]...

Well maybe after you’ve done it, would be good in a way, because otherwise you just, you’d just type the first one and you’re like “Actually, that’s so much better”.

[Laughter, Mixed Chatter]

“You should have said this.”

“Oh yeah, I forgot how to say that.”

Yeah.

So the message essentially is replace your tutors with auto-complete, is that what you’re suggesting?

Yeah.

[Laughter]

Alright. So, what if you were in a big group? I mean, like, fifty people in a group. Imagine that, a hundred people in, like, a Whatsapp group. How would that, how would that change the kind of \*mentioned activity?

I would not really [Inaudible]...

[Mixed Chatter]

... I literally have a group that big.

But I think, I think, it can work because my, as I was saying earlier, one of the most useful things that I use for my practising my Japanese is I have, I am part of a group chat of about, maybe, seventy people...

Alright.

... who move between Japanese, English, and French. And, it does work. It’s like a mixture of organising to meet up to do things and talking about stuff like, “Ah, did you see the news this morning?”, or “Ah, there was an earthquake the other day. Is everyone okay?”. And it does, it does genuinely work because if you have that many people, there’s no pressure to really be in or out. So you can, kind of, add if you wished and, like, also practise...

You could think of it as a Feed, almost like...

Yeah, it’s almost like that. Like, you can scroll through for, like, if you’re not on it for a day, a lot has happened... and you can practise your reading a lot that way. So, also if you feel slightly uncomfortable, because there is enough people to carry the group... So I’ve been there since my Japanese was really crap to now, where, like, I can respond relatively okay. Umm... You can allow other people to carry the conversation, but as you also get more confidence and understand more of what’s going on, you can add more in and put more stuff into the group.

Yeah, brilliant.

I feel like I can understand that, but I would, but I would also think that for most people it would be more, it would make more sense to organise that as a Facebook group with, like, posts and comments rather than all in one block or chunk...

So why would that be? Why do you think... Overwhelming? Or...

Yeah, I think I would feel overwhelmed, and I wouldn’t, I wouldn’t want to scroll through and read everyone else’s conversation, like, if it’s a Facebook group with posts, then you can be like, “Oh, that’s relevant to me. I’ll comment on it.”

Yeah, because it’s this one topic. This is our topic...

Thank you very much.

I also think it’s...

Okay, umm... you had quite a strong negative reaction when I suggested the idea of a large Whatsapp group. Could you tell us a little bit about that? Or was it [Inaudible]...

Turn off notifications. Like, if you have notifications, it’s a nightmare. If you turn them off, it’s fine.

That’s correct.

[In Agreement, Mixed Chatter]

Any group over seven people is muted.

I was going to say, like, on WeChat you can be in groups of up to four hundred people.

What?

\*I’m in one group that is four hundred, then I’m in, like, two hundred, three hundred. So, I’m in a lot of groups with varying levels of people, and, like, I don’t use WeChat that often right now because I’m just not in China right now, so there’s not much point. But when I was, and even now I guess, like, it depends on how much you want to participate. Because you get all the notifications, eventually you mute them. And, like, if you want to scroll up and see what people have been saying, you can do that, but then, by the time you’d done that, like, there’s a new... ten new conversations would have begun, so there’s really no point.

Yeah, okay. But...

And it’s, like, purposed-based as well.

\*So, is that, is that a similar experience, do you do it? Or sometimes you do want to dip in and you do want to read, and it’s nice to have the option of to be able to...

I feel like I don’t dip in, if it’s too big it’s quite off-putting.

You just...

I think, over, over twenty it just becomes almost overwhelm... like, as overwhelming, and you’d just, you’re psychologically, kind of, just, switch off. It doesn’t seem like a social thing, it just feels like a...

Manic.

... manic, “What’s going on here?”.

That’s also if you are a start, like, a beginner language learner, when there’s that many people, then picture, like, “ping, ping, ping ping, ping” and you’re having a conversation and you can’t keep up.

Yeah, exactly. It’s too tangential sometimes. But that’s it...

When you try and go back, a new message comes in and it drags you back down, and as soon as you want to say something, you type it out, the conversation [Inaudible].

But it also depends on, like, what the conversation is about right? Because sometimes it’s, like, making a plan and if you don’t... like, if you’re not there then, then it doesn’t make... it’s irrelevant to a later date. So...

So, it’s rare that you would read it just to...

Just to know what’s... yeah, no. I doubt, I’m reading. That’s way too much work.

It depends on what it’s about. If it’s about a plan then no, but obviously if people are chatting about, like, gossiping about something, then...

Yeah.

[Laughter]

Alright. So, I’m aware of the time, and I don’t want to keep you guys longer than one-thirty, so I’ll just... Just a couple of questions, quick questions. Umm... what if the activity was more, like, a creative challenge so that you were working with people to create something, like, I don’t know, a news story, or a [Inaudible] of media, or a, a joint project and such a thing. Do you feel, like, that would work in the kind of set up that we have there? Or do you feel like...

I could see that, umm...

So, in China, I was quite [Inaudible] film club. So we would umm... like every week we would, like, the guy who was kind of, it was at his house, he would, like, umm... put three films in the group chat, and then we, like, “Okay guys, which one are we going to watch this week?”, and everyone would kind of comment with their opinions. And I think, it’s not, I mean... creative... it’s not really creative, but it is sort of a debate, and then you have an outcome of it which is like, which film you’re going to watch.

I guess, there is a purpose to be part of the chat as opposed to, like, having no purpose in having that conversation...

Yeah.

Not necessarily because it’s a project but because it’s giving you something to talk about.

Yeah.

\*And because when you care about, like, you could [Inaudible], you know, umm... films...

Given the option to pick, kind of, the conversations on topics, or about things that you were interested in, I think that would be quite good. Like, so, if you were given a kind of, you know, language level and subject, that might be quite a good way to do it.

Yeah.

Or you could choose [Inaudible] special [Inaudible]... almost, like, topical conversations [Inaudible]... Alright, okay.

What, what did you want to say Hannah?

I was just going to say that, I actually think that I would find it quite, diff-... if it was to create something, like, if it’s something like a, I don’t know, a group project or something, but like an assignment for school, or uni, or whatever, I think it would be quite difficult to convey ideas quickly enough, or like clearly enough through just texts. Like, I think that I would need to be, like, with the person...

With them in...

... in person, saying “I’ve got this idea. What do you think?” And then they can really understand what you’re saying and give you feedback quickly. Whereas, like, I mean I don’t really know what kind of project [Inaudible] I’m thinking of, but if have quite a complex idea, it’s going to take a long time to type it out explaining.

Especially in a different language.

Like the Japanese group projects at the end of every term in the first year, like the skits and the speech... Like, when we... So in, in our course, umm... at the end of every term, we have to produce with, kind of, for other people umm... or maybe just for two other people, a little skit for a presentation, or a play, or whatever else, and never when we’ve had to do that have we tried to do it separately. Or try, like, even if we’ve used something like Google Docs, where you can actually write in messages, or write in... simultaneously, we might be doing that on Google Docs, but we do it in the same place. We’ll meet at a coffee shop and all have access to that Google Docs because it’s so hard to explain.

Whether, like this project or you have this high-stakes because you are marked or versus something [Inaudible]...

That’s true. Yeah.

... where you know the emphasis is on learning from the discussion rather than what is discussed?

Maybe, yeah.

[In Agreement]

I think it’s also, is kind of practical versus not-so-practical, so, or like, conceptual, I guess? Cause if it’s... it depends on what kind of language you are trying to learn. \*Like, if you are trying to learn how to, like, organise a meet-up or whether you want to [Inaudible] you’re still doing great because it portrays female characters in a given... you know, it’s kind of like quite different... registers at like, contact.

Yeah.

Final question then just to clarify umm... [Inaudible]... I don’t know how it was, these role cards that we had. You all were given a specific role to play. Now, I had a feeling, by the feeling that you started with those roles but they quickly been... they kind of broke down and everyone just kind of joined in. Umm... do you want to... could we talk about that very briefly? Like, what did you think about the roles? You think they were a bit... they could be changed? Does it need to be too specific? Or they need to be less specific? \*Or [Inaudible] got rid off?

I just think that it is strange to have the Role 1 kind of... I guess it works if you are doing a debate because then you’re like, “Here is your topic. You’re on this team, you’re on this team.”, fine.

Yeah.

But if you’re like, “Hey guys! I like to be [Inaudible]”. Yeah, if you, if you come in being like, “Hey guys! I watched this film. What films have you seen recently? I really like this film because it was this bla-bla-blah”, and then you’re left with these two people who would have to back the conversation about...

[Mixed Chatter]

... That felt very unnatural.

Should be, yeah, that’s unnatural.

Maybe this specific [Inaudible].

Because of the roles, role-playing, we are more interested in [Inaudible].

I think if there was a bot, and they were talking, talking about things that I think might be really useful, and they’re talking about discussions and fixed topics. So I think that actually, rather than listening to someone speak about in general, if there was a bot that was, like, “The topic is... umm... the best film that you’ve seen in the last month”, and then people can have, like, somewhat of a debate, or, or maybe even make it more of a debate. So something like, “Is umm... is watching a Japanese dramas good for learning Japanese?”, and the bot beeps that out, I think that could work in terms of roles, but not if that’s an actual person, because, one, it’s not that helpful for their language learning, it’s really, feels very unnatural and slightly hard.

\*And people [Inaudible] like all of, like, some of our [Inaudible] our reactions to having to record our own voice and stuff like that, that was just like, meh...

And, someone taking that control, and having to pick a topic, and...

And I think, also, if I were doing that for people I didn’t know, I would just tap straight out.

Yeah.

I’ll be like “Nah, not for me.”.

[Inaudible] the bot was saying, saying, and then everyone can just discuss what the bot said.

Yeah.

It’ll just say “it’s beep”, like that.

That’ll be fun.

Yeah.

So, umm... comprehension passage right? You need something to tell me something, and then ask questions...

Yeah, the bot can [Inaudible] article, it’s like...

Right.

\*Er... “Starfish apparently can now speak Japanese”, and then everyone, like, you know, clicks on that, and they, like, react to that. Like, “Er... in fact, my dog only responds when I speak in Japanese [Inaudible]”.

[Laughter, Mixed Chatter]

Yeah, yeah, and then you have like an alliance...

“Why did he go to the hospital?”

It’s like camaraderie..

Against the bot.

This is the thing though, we don’t want to just replicate what you already... traditional ways of learning with just moving to Whatsapp because they work better in traditional...

Right.

There are things that Whatsapp do good, and there’s things that [Inaudible]. What we’re trying to find is, you know... So, so taking back to roles again, in that, in that concept. You came up with the idea... it was [Inaudible] over here about a role-playing activity. But maybe we’ll have a specific role umm... so kind of like this, but, like, maybe a little more anchored to something in real life. Do we, do you feel like that might work okay?

Well, like a game... Oh sorry.

Well, I, I, cause I think that messaging is a skill in its own in the same way that when you’re learning a language, you might have a letter writing class where the task is “Write a letter to your friend.”. I think it could be useful to, like... cause you never get taught how to text in your target language, that might be quite interesting to be like, “Okay, today’s class, we are going to use Whatsapp, and we are going to pretend that we are organising something.”...

That’s really interesting. So there’s a lack of formal education on how informal communication [Inaudible]...

Yeah, yeah. Totally.

\*To do, and it’s hard to negotiate umm... But that’s kind of... a bit weird...

I think it’s more fun. I don’t want to learn how to write an email.

[Laughter]

I don’t want to have to write to Takeshi-san about his holiday.

Yeah, yeah, yeah. \*My boss Takeshi-san.

I think it’s quite a, it’s quite a vital skill nowadays. Like, especially, if, if you are going to Japan and trying to make Japanese friends, they’re going to want to add you on one of the messaging thing, and then it’s feel, it feel, it would feel really embarrassing if you could talk to them very well, but then you don’t really know how to communicate with them...

Yeah.

And you don’t get their slang. I’ve also found that they will use things and I, I have to literally leave the app, go Google whatever that means, and then when I come back in and they’re like, you know, “Where have you gone? Disappeared for, like, twenty minutes.” I’ll have to, like, lie and I’m like, “Went to the toilet.”.

[Laughter]

\*There are more like registers within texting too, like, in Nam, in China, at least, there are lots and lots of professionals have WeChat, and will actually, like, communicate with you on WeChat. And so... it can, you can be like messaging your boss on social media versus messaging... Cause, I mean, obviously, we use Facebook Messenger but, like, still quite a lot of semi-professional things...

Yeah.

Colleague things.

... umm... maybe [Inaudible] China then.

Right.

[Mixed Chatter]

And it would make the most...

[Inaudible] on Facebook Messenger, like, with your manager, but in China, you kind of would use WeChat with your boss, like your actual boss.

Yeah.

So...

Which would, which is a natural progression because, when I was growing up, we learnt how to do letter writing, so there’s like a format that you have to follow and all the stuff like that and then, when I was about to graduate from, like, high school or something, then they switched it to, like, email writing which is a different format and a different kind of tone, and I think that would be a natural progression where people don’t use these apparatus to communicate... more... like messaging [Inaudible]... and then what is the “etiquette”, in, in, communicating in texts and how do you... yeah...

[Inaudible] distinguish this is your boss, not your friend.

[Laughter]

Just one briefly quick question, I’m sorry, I’m sorry. Umm... how... Do you guys all have experience of using these [Inaudible] in learned languages? And if it’s not taught formally, did you just do it on, like, as you, as you went?

Yeah.

[In Agreement, Mixed Chatter]

I’ve been like an idiot for a long time.

Yeah, sounding really dumb cause you only learned formal form, and your friends are like, “Why are you talking to me like we’ve never met before?”.

And your boyfriend’s like, “Why are you being so cold?”. “I just can’t use any other forms.”

“You sound like my professor.”

[Laughter]

But that’s what I found interesting for me, cause most of my students are English learners...

Yeah.

... It’s the everyday phraseology that completely, and they’d want to be talking to people [Inaudible] and they don’t understand. So I’d start with that.

Yes, yes. Yeah, absolutely.

That’s what I start with, so that they can communicate, because that’s the point, for them to interact with other human beings.

Yeah, yeah, yeah, absolutely.

To know how to be polite so they get, you know, whatever presence, cause they have to be asking a lot of questions, “How do I get this?”, “How do I order a cup of tea?”, or all that. But that is what I found really umm... and we, we did, we’ve got a Whatsapp group.

And I find that ties in quite interesting to what, to what you guys discovered as well, where the casual conversation felt more authentic and natural on Whatsapp than forced conversations. That’s really, really, really interesting finding, and, like, maybe that’s the point we can wrap things up here?

\* These sentences don’t quite seem to make much sense within the context of the discussion, and so there might probably be a problem with these transcriptions because of the available audio.