

## 13 | INTRODUCTION

We do not aggrandize the notion of partnership between networked technology and human beings to indulge in the language of cyborgs or cybernetics-even thought we remain open to the notion of the continuous development of some quite astounding technical aids to human processes, many of which will be neurologically linked directly to our bodies. Although much of the context of networking focuses on communication among network users, we also do not use the term *computer mediated communication*. The Net provides access to data, virtual environments, textbook, and many other nonhuman reference sources

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Our discussion of terminology underscores the multiple functions of the Net. At one level the Net is merely a technology, one that is based on digital transmission, routing, error checking, and sending and receiving of data in many formats. The Net is also a business in which fortunes are made and lost. Finally the Net is a repository, providing means and tools to store and retrieve a host of cultural, academic, commercial, and technical data. Thus, when we are discussing non-networked activity or contexts we usually refer to them as "face-to-face" or "traditional" and in their educational sense as "classroom" or "campus-based."

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We used the Net to scour the ERIC database and Google (a search engine) to search for related terms like *peer moderators* and *peer teaching*, and we ordered texts not available in our university library using online interlibrary loan request forms. We created a research plan and shared it with a colleague for critical review. We then downloaded and completed the research ethics forms from our faculty Web page and, of course, submitted them electronically. We then developed a short Net-based survey on the elements of teaching presence. These results were triangulated with information from a transcript analysis.

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During the six weeks of the experiment, we emailed each of the students reminding them of the day they were to complete the weekly online questionnaire. After the course completed, we conducted semi-structured telephone interviews with a sample of the students, applied our transcript analysis instrument with two independent coders, and reflected on our own experiences of the course. From these data sources, we drafted and revised a paper and emailed it to the students for comments(as a member check). after a final revision, we submitted the paper to the *Journal of Interactive Media in Education*(<http://www.jime.ac.uk>)-a non-blind, peer-reviewed, online journal.

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Theses skills are twofold: Internet skills (self-efficacy, mental models, access, terminology, experience, and trouble shooting) and research skills (problem statement, literature review, data collection, data analysis, and dissemination).