Paper

# Introduction

When I communicate with others using computer mediated communication (instant messaging, sms, social networks, also known as cmc), I frequently notice that the conversation has a rhythm and pace. For example, responding quickly to messages says something different from responding slowly. Another example is that texting someone at 6 in the morning feels very different from texting them at midnight.

In interpersonal communication, this is called chronemics. The phenomenon I am choosing to investigate in this paper is chronemics in computer mediated communication. Given that people today are communicating with each other more than ever using social media and instant messaging, I think this topic is important to understand.

To define this cmc chronemics clearly, I mean the frequency of communication, the pacing of the conversation itself (which is sometimes the same as the frequency of communication), and the time at which it takes place. My personal belief as I explore this topic is that chronemics communicate a lot in computer mediated communication, and to some extent take the place of nonverbal cues. Additionally, I think chronemics can be used to pull empirical data about relationships out of individual and aggregated conversations. This paper will begin by examining the way researchers have studied the existence of chronemics in cmc, and then discuss the ways researchers have been able to put chronemics to use.

# Useful Theories

To start examining the literature on computer-mediated chronemics, we need to define and explain some general theories. The first and traditional theory is cues-filtered-out theory.

This theory was introduced by Sproull and Kiesler (1991), and is an extremely naive approach. It argues that cmc and cyberspace exist without

Sproull, Lee, and Sara Kiesler. 1991. *Connections: New Ways of Working in the Networked Organization*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.