

Researcher

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**Title of Project**

A Corpus-Based Comparison of Phraseological and
Interactional Competence in Learner-AI, Learner-Learner,
and Learner-L1 Spoken Interaction

Research Supervisor

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TIRF Research Topic Investigated

Artificial Intelligence

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Bio

Soyeon Sim is a Ph.D. candidate in Applied Linguistics and ESL at Georgia State University. Her research interests include learner corpora, technology-enhanced language learning, second language acquisition, and usage-based linguistics. Her dissertation compares L2 learners' spoken interactions with AI, fellow L2 learners, and L1 English speakers, focusing on phraseological patterns and interactional behaviors.

Project Summary

Generative artificial intelligence (GenAI) is rapidly emerging as a conversational partner in second language (L2) learning. Recent advances in large language models and automatic speech recognition technologies now allow AI conversational agents to engage in spoken interaction that increasingly resembles human conversation. As educators and institutions begin integrating AI-based speaking partners into language learning contexts, empirical evidence is needed regarding how learner-AI interaction compares to human-human interaction and whether AI-mediated interaction supports authentic communicative language use. The proposed dissertation investigates how different interlocutor types influence Korean learners' spoken English production across three interactional conditions: learner-learner (L2-L2), learner-L1 speaker (L2-L1), and learner-AI (L2-AI). Adopting a repeated-measures corpus-based design, the study will compile a spoken learner corpus consisting of interactions from 201 Korean university students learning English as a foreign language. Participants will complete three communicative problem-solving tasks with the three interlocutor types, including a custom-designed voice-based AI conversational agent powered by OpenAI's GPT-5.2 model. The study focuses on two dimensions of spoken communication: phraseological competence and interactional competence.

Phraseological competence will be examined through learners' use of phrase-frames and verb-argument constructions, while interactional competence will be analyzed through topic management and active listenership behaviors during interaction. The findings are expected to contribute to current



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understandings of AI-mediated communication in language learning and provide empirical evidence for the responsible integration of GenAI into L2 speaking practice and language assessment contexts.