I never said anything about the chat box

Problem with an "irc overlay" is that still involves hooking directx not to mention the actual drawing of whatever else you want on it. By drawing right into renegade using shaders I would think there's actually less overhead.

Also something like TS overlay conflicts with fraps and other direct-x hooking programs.

With a udp socket you can control what kind of data you want to send extremely easily (especially with mirc) and your limited only to the size of the ascii string you want to send (for example, mine is limited to 256 characters)