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EFL Learners' Negotiation on Form During Synchronous Computer-Mediated Communication: The Role of Corrective Feedback in EFL Learners' Uptake

Sami Ali Nasr Al-wossabi
Department of Foreign Languages, College of Arts and Humanities, Jazan University, Jazan, Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

***Abstract*—The use of computer-mediated communication (CMC) in language learning, in a variety of forms, has expanded rapidly since the 1990s. It is well documented that computer-mediated communication (CMC) can create a positive learning environment in which learners engage in authentic communication and negotiate for meaning. However, limited research has examined how synchronous CMC (SCMC) helps EFL learners negotiate on form and how this interaction may impact learner uptake. This study addresses this gap by investigating 1) the extent to which EFL Saudi learners negotiate on form in an SCMC environment and 2) whether peer corrective feedback (CF) during SCMC leads to immediate uptake. Twenty EFL Saudi learners were divided into two dyads and asked to perform decision-making tasks in an SCMC setting. Participants were randomly assigned to either a "no negotiation on form" condition (peer interaction only) or a "negotiation on form" condition (peer CF interaction). The findings revealed that negotiation on form, prompted by peer CF, resulted in significantly higher instances of corrective feedback and immediate uptake compared to the "no negotiation on form" condition. The study concludes with practical implications for using SCMC to enhance EFL learners' linguistic accuracy and offers recommendations for future research to optimize corrective feedback strategies in digital language-learning environments.**

***Index Terms*—synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC), focus on form, negotiation of meaning, corrective feedback (CF), uptake**

I. Introduction

In a traditional language classroom, EFL students have limited opportunities to interact with native speakers or more proficient interlocutors. As a result, classroom interactions tend to be artificial and mainly guided by the instructor. Further, the feedback is often one-directional, with students generally playing a limited role. Students typically depend on their teachers to sustain the discourse, taking shorter turns and playing passive roles in the learning process (Warschauer, 1996, 2006).

The concept of online peer interaction offers an alternative approach to overcoming these challenges. When teachers view peer interaction as a tool for students to learn a language rather than merely a way to practice it, they can better design communicative classroom activities (Bueno-Alastuey, 2011; Lin et al., 2013; Kučerová, 2023; Samani & Noordin, 2013). Such interactions provide ample opportunities for students to explore and develop their language learning beyond the limited opportunities typically available during face-to-face interactions with teachers.

Many SLA studies have mainly focused on exploring the role of CMC in negotiated interaction as a tool for developing learners' oral output (Lee, 2007; Payne & Whitney, 2002; Zhao & Angelova, 2010). However, limited attention has been given to its potential in addressing linguistic forms. Specifically, previous research has not sufficiently examined how CMC can help learners identify the discrepancies between their interlanguage forms and the norms of the target language (Loewen, 2003). This study addresses this gap by investigating how SCMC can facilitate negotiation on linguistic forms and whether peer feedback promotes language uptake. It focuses on the Saudi EFL context, providing insights into how online peer interaction can enhance linguistic accuracy and foster more effective language learning. Therefore, the present study aims to address the following research questions:

RQ_1: To what extent do Saudi EFL learners negotiate form in an SCMC environment?

RQ_2: Does peer corrective feedback (CF) during synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) lead to immediate uptake?

II. Literature Review

A. Negotiated Interaction and Language Learning

Negotiated engagement is a key element that contributes to the creation of an ideal environment for L2 learning (Long, 1996). The relationship between interaction and SLA has been extensively studied across multiple dimensions.

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For instance, Ellis et al. (1994) examined lexical acquisition, while Loschky (1994) and Iwashita (2003) investigated morphosyntax and grammatical development, respectively. Mackey (1999) focused on question formation, and Swain (1985) emphasized how learners utilize linguistic resources in the L2. From a sociolinguistic perspective, Tarone (2007) proposed a model emphasizing social interaction, while Adams et al. (2011) and Bardovi-Harlig (2017) explored the effects of implicit and explicit feedback as well as L2 pragmatics.

Through mechanisms such as recasts, repetitions, and elaborations, learners can modify their speech, enhance their awareness of target language forms, and gain greater control over their language learning (Baralt et al., 2014; Jepson, 2005; Long, 1996; McDonough et al., 2015; Schmidt, 1990; Swain, 1985). In addition, such interactional tasks help learners notice the gaps between their output and the target language, which in turn leads to modifications in their linguistic performance (Boettinger et al., 2010; Schmidt, 1990).

B. Computer-Mediated Communication

CMC refers to any type of human communication conducted via computers that provide contexts for communicative interaction using text-based, audio, or video-conferencing (Payne & Ross, 2005; Sauro & Smith, 2010; Simpson, 2002; Yanguas, 2010). CMC is broadly categorized into two types: synchronous and asynchronous. Synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) is similar to spoken interaction, as it occurs in real-time and involves a variety of discourses and strategic functions during interaction (Abrams, 2003; Chun, 1994; Hirotani, 2009; Smith, 2003; Vandergriff, 2006). In the SCMC environment, learners are online simultaneously and can have opportunities for conversations and message exchanges back and forth. Sotillo (2000) and Pérez (2003) observed that learners in SCMC tended to use different discourse patterns and modified outputs similar to those of face-to-face interaction. A common example of SCMC is chat. The second type of CMC is asynchronous computer-mediated communication (ACMC), which represents the writing mode in which learners have more time to plan and may result in greater syntactic complexity (Kitade, 2006; Pérez, 2003; Sotillo, 2000). Unlike SCMC, ACMC does not require participants to be online at the same time. Examples include e-mails, bulletin boards, and discussion forums (Abrams, 2003; Skylar, 2009).

Interactive networked communication through CMC has many features of speaking and writing (Freiermuth, 2002; Lee, 2007; Smith, 2003). It takes place in real time, can foster the negotiation of meaning and incorporate the use of other distinctive communicative features among interlocutors (Kim, 2020; Vandergriff, 2006; Zhang, 2023). Through online chat in CMC, learners engage in negotiation, receive input, corrective feedback, and produce output, all of which are essential for language development (Lee, 2007, 2011b). Unlike traditional face-to-face interaction, online chat via CMC provides a slower self-paced learning environment where learners can read and type at their own pace and have better opportunities to prevent communication breakdowns (Barrs, 2012; Gilabert, 2007; Hung & Higgins, 2016).

Numerous studies have highlighted the positive effects of CMC in facilitating and supporting teaching and learning processes (Abrams, 2003; Beauvois, 1998; Lee, 2007; Pérez, 2003; Yanguas, 2010). Zeng and Takatsuka (2009) found that synchronous CMC fostered learners' collaborative dialogue and enhanced their language learning. Wang (2006) found that videoconferencing was of great value for learners' language acquisition. Moreover, learners who engaged in more focus-on-form strategies were more likely to notice their linguistic errors in synchronous CMC than in face-to-face environments (Lai & Zhao, 2006). In addition, CMC enables learners to express their emotions and feelings through the use of italics, bold text, and other textual formatting (Cheng et al., 2014; Smith, 2003). CMC text-based discourse may even surpass traditional writing by providing a context for using simpler syntax, tolerating surface errors, incorporating symbols and emoticons, and offering flexible methods for opening and closing discourse (González-Lloret, 2019). Recent research comparing synchronous and asynchronous written corrective feedback shows that the mode of delivery significantly affects learners' linguistic performance and perceptions (Cheng et al., 2023; Cheng & Zhang, 2024; Fu & Li, 2022).

C. Focus on Form and Corrective Feedback

Extensive research has investigated how learners' focus on form helps them notice the gap between their interlanguage and the norms of the target language (Ellis, 2002, 2015; Lai & Zhao, 2006; Mackey et al., 2000; Rosa & O'Neill, 1999; Williams, 1999). Studies have also examined whether learners produce better language when they notice this gap (Ellis et al., 2001). Ellis (2015) identified two types of form-focused instruction. The first type links learners' interlanguage developmental processes to intentional language learning, while the second implicitly encourages learners to notice language forms incidentally. Other SLA researchers have confirmed the positive effects of focus on form in second language acquisition. For instance, Doughty and Varela (1998) demonstrated the benefits of using recasts, Iwashita (2003) highlighted the impact of implicit negative feedback, and Mackey (1999) showed improvements in question formation through interaction.

In the field of CMC, many studies have shown that through CMC interaction, learners can negotiate meaning (Hung & Higgins, 2016; Jepson, 2005; Payne & Whitney, 2002; Plester et al., 2009; Smith, 2004, 2005; Zhao & Angelova, 2010).

However, fewer studies in SLA have investigated the use of CMC to enhance learners' negotiation on form, particularly in a meaning-based context. These studies have discussed various aspects such as the effects of task types (Stockwell, 2010; Yilmaz, 2011; Yilmaz & Granena, 2010), the role of recasts and noticing (Lai & Zhao, 2006; Sachs

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& Suh, 2007), discourse functions (AbuSeileek & Qatawneh, 2013), and corrective feedback (Loewen & Erlam, 2006; Samani & Noordin, 2013).

Corrective feedback (CF) is a responsive form of focused attention that takes place during both meaning and form negotiation processes. Among the various types of focus on form (FoF), corrective feedback has received significant attention (Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Mackey & Goo, 2007).

In terms of corrective feedback, when the CMC involves text-based communication, learners can visualize their errors and correct them, which raises their grammatical and lexical awareness (Young & Edward, 2013). This allows learners ample time to correct mistakes and revise at their own pace. In addition, learners can revisit their conversation scripts to identify the areas that need improvement. There is also less pressure associated with immediate correction compared to face-to-face interactions (Ho & Savignon, 2007; Savignon & Roithmeier, 2004).

Research on the relationship between CF types, noticing, and uptake in CMC contexts has yielded mixed results. Sotillo (2010) found that text-based chats provided more opportunities for error noticing and linguistic form awareness due to the use of more direct and explicit forms of CF by language tutors. Samani and Noordin (2013) investigated the effects of recasts and prompts on learning new grammatical forms in CMC and found similar results. Their study concluded that using both recasts and prompts was beneficial for learning new grammatical elements, with prompts being more effective than recasts in SCMC. Sotillo (2010) attributed the success of prompts over recasts to learners who were guided to produce modified output. These findings are consistent with Lyster and Ranta (1997), who pointed out that recasts were more prevalent than other CF types in CMC contexts.

D. Learner Uptake

Uptake, as defined by Lyster and Ranta (1997), is a student's response to teacher feedback highlighting an error. Thus, uptake is the student's response to information typically provided by the instructor in response to an incorrect linguistic form produced by the student or occasionally by other students. While a modified response may indicate awareness of the error (Schmidt, 1995), it does not necessarily mean the learner has fully internalized the correct form.

Gholami (2024) found that CF was more frequent for non-formulaic errors, with recasts addressing these errors and elicitations targeting formulaic ones. Uptake and successful uptake rates were higher for formulaic errors, likely due to their greater saliency and noticeability, highlighting the varying effectiveness of CF depending on error type.

A limited number of SLA studies have examined the effects of CMC on students' uptake of linguistic forms (Ene & Upton, 2018; Fiori, 2005; Lyster & Ranta, 1997; Pineda Hoyos, 2018). Research on the usefulness of corrective feedback suggests that teachers can encourage L2 noticing and acquisition by providing feedback that helps students recognize and retain target language forms (Mackey & Philip, 1998; McDonough, 2005).

Thus, the development of learners' grammatical knowledge within CMC contexts remains a critical area for further investigation (Lee, 2011a). A deeper exploration of this topic could provide valuable insights into how the system of language works and how learners' grammatical competence can be improved. Therefore, the present study aims to examine the occurrence of negotiation on form via CF and its impact on learner uptake.

III. Methodology

A. Participants

The study involved 20 male Saudi medical students in their first year of general English studies at Jazan University. Their language proficiency levels ranged from intermediate to high-intermediate. They were enrolled in Level 2 of their degree program. Ten dyads were formed. Each pair was asked to complete an information exchange task via online chat. The chat program used in this study was hosted on Blackboard, where students could exchange messages and negotiate assigned tasks.

B. Tasks

The study focused on the incidence of focus on form through CF in naturalistic conversation, using ten different topics to obtain a diverse sample of learner language. The tasks assigned to the participants were decision-making topics known to promote greater involvement, negotiated interaction, and to elicit pushed language output (Freiermuth, 2002; Jepson, 2005; Smith, 2003; Zhao & Angelova, 2010). The topics were carefully chosen based on measures of cognitive complexity to ensure a meaningful sample of learner language.

C. Procedure

Participants met with the researcher on campus during their regular class time. The 20 participants were randomly divided into two groups: an experimental group and a control group. The control group engaged in peer interaction without focusing on the negotiation of form. The experimental group incorporated negotiation on form through peer CF interaction. Both groups had two separate sessions to perform the assigned tasks, each lasting approximately one hour. Before the discussion session, the teacher familiarized the participants with the decision-making tasks. Participants were asked to read the topics and seek clarification if they had any difficulty understanding them. In the control group, students were instructed to focus only on completing the tasks without paying attention to or correcting errors. However, participants in the experimental group were asked to pay attention to grammar, lexis, spelling and punctuation in their

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written messages. They were also encouraged to identify errors collaboratively, discuss them, and attempt to correct them. The teacher explained the types of errors that may occur and how to recognize them.

The teacher's approach to corrective feedback reflected beliefs about its value, aligning with Asiri and Khadawardi (2024) and Uludağ (2024), who highlighted how such beliefs shape CF practices in SCMC. Accordingly, the teacher used oral prompts to promote self-correction while avoiding recasts to enhance learners' focus on form.

In addition, the teacher informed participants that oral prompts would be provided via a microphone so participants could notice their errors and reformulate their utterances. No recasts were provided by the teacher.

At the end of each discussion, the chat scripts of both groups were recorded for analysis. Each pair in each group was assigned one topic for discussion. Upon completing the tasks, the participants were interviewed to discuss their experience in online discussions.

D. Coding

Errors in the present study were broadly classified as lexical or grammatical. An additional category of errors, which included spelling and punctuation, was also included because of their high frequency in students' writing in class and their importance in adding clarity and precision in the medical field (i.e., writing medical reports). Each participant's turn was coded as either having an error or multiple errors (Lyster, 1997), as illustrated in the following examples:

(1) Group 2: Pair 3 - Maintain a friendship

S5: *I think **with** matching the **hoppies togeather** like playing video **games*** [Multiple errors: 1 punctuation, 1 grammatical, 2 spelling, 1 lexical]

S6: *That's a good way to **do** it*. [Error: 1 lexical]

For the experimental group, negotiated focus on form with peer corrective feedback was defined as any type of student-generated repair such as recasts.

Another type of corrective feedback was provided by the teacher in the form of oral prompts during participants' written interactions. This type of CF was usually given when both partners failed to correct an utterance or when there was a communication breakdown. However, the instructor's cues were occasionally missed by students or were addressed only after several failed attempts by the students.

(2) Group2: Pair 4 - Choosing the best job candidate

S7: ***g**reat **chose**.* [Multiple errors: 1 punctuation, 1 grammatical]

T's prompt: *Chose is not properly used here.*

S7: **choose*** [Error: 1 grammatical- failed self-correction]

S8: *Do you mean choosing?* [CF: failed recast]

T's prompt: *Again, the word 'choosing' is not the correct form to be used in this context.*

S8: Choice. [immediate uptake]

The analysis of the participants' written corpus involved counting the number of errors produced by the non-native speakers (NNSs), the number of types of corrective feedback provided by the participants (i.e., recasts), and the number of utterances repaired or requiring further repair (i.e., uptake). The instructor's CF was excluded from the analysis as it was limited to addressing communication breakdowns or unresolved errors.

E. Ethical Considerations

This study was approved by the Research Ethics Committee of Jazan University (Approval Reference No. REC-44/05/407). All participants provided informed consent prior to their involvement. They were informed of the study's purpose, their right to withdraw at any time, and the measures taken to ensure the confidentiality of their data. All chat transcripts were anonymized, and participants are identified by pseudonyms (e.g., S1, S2) in the presentation of findings.

IV. Findings and Discussions

Consistent with previous SLA studies, this study found that students using CMC showed instances of negotiation for meaning, initiation of new topics, peer corrective feedback, immediate learner uptake and self-correction either before or after sending messages (Ciftci & Kocoglu, 2012; Hung & Higgins, 2016; Smith, 2004, 2005; Sotillo, 2010; Zhao & Angelova, 2010).

A. Research Question 1

The first research question focused on the extent to which students would negotiate for form during SCMC online chat. In both groups, participants displayed clear instances of negotiated interaction by sharing opinions and ideas with their peers. Except for two instances of self-correction, the examination of the chat scripts showed that students in the control group did not independently attempt to negotiate for form.

(3) Group 1: Pair 5 - Planning to study abroad

S9: *What are the things you need to study **outside…*** [Error: 1 lexical]

S9: *abroad*? [self-correction]

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Despite being skilled at grammar in writing examinations and quizzes, most students in the control group did not revise their online messages. During interviews, they admitted that they were aware that many elements of their written outputs were incorrect.

A possible explanation for the control group's limited negotiation on form is that the teacher did not ask them to focus on form or provide peer feedback. Additionally, the high level of involvement in the discussion and the task's content should also be considered (Lin et al., 2013). In their attempt to accomplish the task, students in the control group paid more attention to negotiating meaning than to form. As a result, this intense focus on meaning may affect the quantity and quality of form negotiation. According to Ellis (2001), form focus can coexist with meaning focus. However, the results of this research indicated that when emphasis on meaning was overly dominant, students, particularly those in the control group who were not instructed to focus on the correct usage, failed to pay attention to form.

TABLE 1
NUMBER OF ERRORS IN SCMC (CONTROL GROUP)

		Grammatical	Lexical	Spelling	Punctuation	Total
Group 1						
	NNS-1	5	5	2	23	35
	NNS-2	6	16	0	25	47
	NNS-3	3	3	0	9	15
	NNS-4	3	3	2	7	15
	NNS-5	7	2	0	8	17
	NNS-6	5	4	0	15	24
	NNS-7	1	5	0	6	12
	NNS-8	1	0	0	10	11
	NNS-9	0	1	0	5	6
	NNS-10	1	1	0	7	9
	Total	32	40	4	115	191

As shown in Table 1, the first two participants (NNS-1 and NNS-2) made the highest number of overall errors in the control group, with totals of 35 and 47 errors, respectively. This is evident from the chat scripts, which show that these two participants were highly engaged in the task by understanding, exchanging ideas, and sharing opinions. They were also writing at a faster pace than others to include as many ideas as possible about the topic within the allocated time. The total number of errors in the control group was 191, with punctuation errors being the most frequent (115 errors). This issue is also consistent with challenges observed in students' writing assignments in class.

TABLE 2
NUMBER OF ERRORS IN SCMC (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

		Grammatical	Lexical	Spelling	Punctuation	Total
Group 2						
	NNS-1	1	2	1	2	6
	NNS-2	2	0	0	2	4
	NNS-3	2	4	1	4	11
	NNS-4	10	0	0	9	19
	NNS-5	3	5	0	7	15
	NNS-6	1	3	1	10	15
	NNS-7	2	0	0	5	7
	NNS-8	2	0	0	2	4
	NNS-9	11	0	1	10	22
	NNS-10	4	1	0	5	10
	Total	38	15	4	56	113

In the experimental group, the majority of participants demonstrated a high level of engagement in negotiating the meaning of the assigned topics. Notably, participants in this group made slightly more grammatical errors (38) compared to those in the control group (32). This may be attributed to the fact that participants exhibited more active negotiation of meaning during the chat sessions, resulting in the increased use of complex structures and a higher incidence of grammatical errors. Nevertheless, the quality and quantity of peer corrective feedback and uptake were significantly greater in the experimental group. Furthermore, participants in the experimental group made significantly fewer errors in lexis, punctuation, and total errors compared to the control group.

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TABLE 3
RECASTS IN SCMC (EXPERIMENTAL GROUP)

8		Grammatical	Lexical	Spelling	Punctuation	Recasts
Group2						
Pair 1	NNS-1	0	1	0	0	2
	NNS-2	0	0	1	0	
Pair 2	NNS-3	4	1	0	0	8
	NNS-4	3				
Pair 3	NNS-5	0	1	1	0	5
	NNS-6	2	1	0	0	
Pair 4	NNS-7	4	0	1	0	6
	NNS-8	1	0	0	0	
Pair 5	NNS-9	4	0	0	1	7
	NNS-10	1	0	1	0	
	Total	19	4	4	1	28

Most instances of the types of CF in this study were in the form of recasts. As displayed in Table 3 above, there were a total of 28 instances of recasts in the synchronous mode. Pair 2 and Pair 5 produced the highest number of recasts (8 and 7, respectively), while Pair 1 produced 2, Pair 3 produced 5, and Pair 4 produced 6 instances of recasts. There were many instances of delayed recasts, where students corrected their partners' errors at later stages of the online interaction. Interviews with participants further supported this, as some students reported scrolling up and down during the interaction to search for errors they had missed or left unattended. Most instances of recasts were grammatical in nature (19 out of 28).

With regard to CF for punctuation, it was rarely generated by the students, with only 1 instance recorded. This is more likely because online chat does not usually require punctuation to understand each other's messages.

The findings revealed a clear contrast between the two groups. Learners in the experimental group demonstrated a higher level of negotiation on form in the SCMC environment, actively engaging in peer corrective feedback, particularly recasts, and responding to teacher prompts. In contrast, the control group showed minimal negotiation on form, with only two instances of self-correction and no peer feedback, likely due to their focus on meaning and lack of explicit instruction. Overall, negotiation on form was more frequent and effective when learners were guided to focus on linguistic accuracy.

B. Research Question 2

The second question examined whether peer correction during synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) could facilitate students' uptake of second-language (L2) forms. Participation in the experimental group required students to engage in form negotiation through corrective feedback (CF) and to respond to teacher prompts aimed at directing their attention to previously overlooked errors. Analysis of the chat transcripts showed that while not all participants demonstrated immediate uptake, several did modify their output in response to peer feedback or teacher prompts. The majority of corrective feedback provided by participants took the form of recasts, with a few instances of clarification requests. These findings corroborate those of previous studies (e.g., Sauro, 2009; Sotillo, 2010), which identified recasts as the most frequently utilized type of corrective feedback within the SCMC context.

(4) Group 2: Pair 2 - Deciding on a specific specialization in medical college

S3: *why do you **want** be a surgeon?* [Multiple errors: 1 grammatical, 1 punctuation]
S4: *do you mean, want to be*. [Error: 1 punctuation – CF: recast]
S3: *Yeah.* [Uptake: acknowledgment]

(5) Group 2: Pair 4 - Choosing the best job candidate

S7: *If you are an employer, **wich** skills do you think **is important***. [Multiple errors: 1 spelling, 1 grammatical]
S8: *To select the best*.
S8: *Do you mean which skills **is** important.* [Error: 1 grammatical- CF: partially successful recast]
T's prompt: *The word Skills is plural!*
S8*: *Skills are*. [Uptake- Self-correction]

(6) Group 2: Pair 2 - Deciding on a specific specialization in medical college

S3: ***what** do you mean **with** specialty?* [Multiple errors: 1 punctuation, 1 grammatical
S4: *The major you will choose by the end of the **year***. [Error: 1 lexical: recast].

The findings showed instances of immediate uptake by participants of the experimental group through modification, acknowledgment of an error, or self-correction. For example, in (4), S3 acknowledges the recast provided by S4 ("Yeah"). In (5), S8 initially provides an incorrect response ("which skills is important") but successfully self-corrects after the teacher's prompt ("Skills are"). In (6), while no explicit uptake is mentioned, the recast provided by S4 ("The major you will choose...") suggests an opportunity for noticing the lexical error. These instances of recognition are considered uptake moves (Ellis et al., 2001; Smith, 2005), even if they are sometimes unsuccessful and not target-like.

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This is because the learner's response to feedback in any form could provide some evidence that the target utterance's mismatch with the learner's utterance has been observed (Schmidt, 1995).

To clarify, in this study, uptake refers to participants' responses to either their teacher's prompts or their peers' corrective feedback. These examples illustrate that uptake moves, whether immediate or delayed, play a role in facilitating language learning in synchronous communication contexts.

The following examples illustrate various forms of immediate uptake, highlighting acknowledgment or self-correction following corrective feedback (CF):

(7) Group 2: Pair 4 - Choosing the best job candidate

S7: ***g**reat **chose**.* [Multiple errors: 1 punctuation, 1 grammatical]

T's prompt: *Chose is not properly used here.*

S7: **choose*** [Error: 1 grammatical- failed self-correction]

S8: *Do you mean **choosing**?* [CF: failed recast]

T's prompt: *Again, the word 'choosing' is not the correct form to be used.*

S8: Choice. [Uptake: self-correction]

Uptake occurs as S8 successfully self-corrects after multiple failed attempts by S7 and a teacher's prompt. This demonstrates perseverance in correcting the grammatical error, showcasing productive interaction.

(8) Group 2: Pair 5 - Living in a big city vs a small town

S9: *what **are** you mean?* [Error: 1 grammatical]

S10: *What do you..* [CF: recast]

S10: *You are right, what do you mean?* **[**Uptake: acknowledgement]

Here, S10 provides a recast, and S9 immediately acknowledges it with a correct reformulation of the utterance. This acknowledgment demonstrates successful noticing and immediate uptake.

(9) Group 2: Pair 3 - Planning for an interview with an employer

S5: *Like yo**u I** think, I will collect information and **trying** to imagine myself **doing** the interview.* [Multiple errors: 1 punctuation, 1 grammatical, 1 lexical]

S6: and I will try to imagine… [CF: recast]

S5: *Oh thank you for correcting me.* [Error: 1 punctuation-Uptake: acknowledgment]

S6's recast leads to S5 acknowledging the correction with gratitude. Although the error remains partially uncorrected (punctuation), this demonstrates uptake through acknowledgment, which may facilitate future learning.

(10) Group 2: Pair1 - Starting a private business

S1: *When will you **star** implementing it*? [Error: 1 spelling]

S2: *Do you mean start?* [CF: recast]

S2: *Exactly that's what I meant.* [Uptake: acknowledgment]

S2 provides a recast, which S1 acknowledges with a clarification. This exemplifies a clear instance of noticing and uptake, characterized by acknowledgment rather than self-correction.

These examples underscore the importance of immediate uptake in recognizing and responding to errors. While uptake frequently involves acknowledgment instead of correction (e.g., Examples 8, 9, and 10), these instances demonstrate that learners are aware of their mistakes, a crucial step in language acquisition. Example (7) is particularly noteworthy, as it illustrates successful self-correction following repeated feedback, showcasing effective learner engagement.

(11) Group 2: Pair 4 – Choosing the best job candidate

S7: If you are an employer, wich skills do you think is important?

[Error – multiple: 1 spelling, 1 grammatical, 1 punctuation]

S8: Do you mean which skills is important?

[CF – recast; Error – 1 grammatical]

T's prompt: The word *skills* is plural!

S8: *Skills are.*

[Immediate uptake: self-correction]

S7: Exactly.

[Uptake: acknowledgment]

S8: I think *learnability* and *resilience*.

[Error – 1 punctuation]

S7: Sorry, I do not get it.

[Request for clarification]

S8: We'll begin with *learnability* because it is arguably the most important 21st-century skill you will need to succeed.

[Direct quotation from the internet]

S8: https://www.weforum.org/agenda/2016/08/this-little-known-skill-will-save-your-job-and-your-company/

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[Reference provided]

The findings indicate that peer corrective feedback (CF) during synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) led to instances of immediate uptake among learners, evidenced by acknowledgment, self-correction, and modified outputs following feedback. Most CF took the form of recasts, and while not all attempts resulted in accurate correction, they often triggered noticing and learner engagement. Examples from chat transcripts demonstrated that students responded to both peer feedback and teacher prompts, sometimes collaboratively clarifying meaning and form. Interviews and observations further revealed that learners used strategies such as self-editing, translation, and dictionary consultation to foster deeper negotiation of meaning. Overall, the SCMC context encouraged more autonomous and less intimidating peer interaction, facilitating uptake more effectively than traditional classroom settings.

C. Interviews

The interviews revealed that participants in the experimental group self-edited their messages before sending them and consulted a dictionary either before or after sending messages. All participants in the experimental group were content with the way their teacher approached their errors via the use of prompts as a form of corrective feedback. Some students admittedly expressed unease when teachers gave direct feedback in the form of recasts or repetition of ill-formed sentences.

Further, some students requested a copy of their online chat. They demonstrated a strong interest in reflecting on their performance. For most students, writing and discussing in English was their first experience, as they usually use Arabic when chatting. Overall, many students showed positive attitudes toward the online chat experience and considered it a turning point in their language learning.

The discussion on feedback and language uptake emphasizes the significance of corrective feedback and technology-enhanced learning in second language acquisition. Corrective feedback, whether through prompts, recasts, or peer negotiation, directs learners' attention to linguistic forms and encourages uptake. This finding corroborates evidence that underscores the essential role of corrective feedback in language teaching and learning, aiding in the development of both accuracy and fluency (Nassaji & Kartchava, 2021). In SCMC contexts, such as online text chat, learners frequently engage in self-correction, dictionary use, and meaning negotiation, improving their writing proficiency and supporting second language development (Jianling, 2018).

Additionally, the findings indicate that online platforms foster learner autonomy, enabling participants to take responsibility for their learning (Lai et al., 2016). Moreover, learners' positive attitudes toward digital communication tools are linked to a greater willingness to engage in digital contexts (Lee, 2019). Lastly, the use of recasts and feedback during interactions significantly enhances learner uptake, contributing to overall language development (Rassaei, 2019).

V. Conclusion

This study investigated whether students negotiate for form and whether their negotiation could ultimately lead to a greater uptake of correct language usage.

The findings demonstrated that CF had a considerable impact on target-language development. The effects were stronger for recasts and they were particularly noticeable on measures that elicit free-construct responses.

In sum, learner-learner online interaction proves to be beneficial to Saudi EFL learners. It provides students with valuable experiences where they can also review their recorded output and work on enhancing their oral or written discourse accordingly. This interaction promotes learner-centeredness, autonomous learning, and self-correction. However, as shown above, teachers continue to play a major part in providing sustainable feedback on students' written outputs. Text-chat-based sessions in SCMC make it easier for teachers to deliver brief feedback, such as prompts via microphone, to draw learners' attention to errors without interrupting their conversations.

As demonstrated in this study, CF plays a key role in fostering learner uptake and language development. Therefore, further research is needed to expand on these findings and enhance the integration of form-focused tasks in online interactions.

Specifically, future research could explore how learners negotiate language forms in SCMC over longer periods to understand the lasting effects of corrective feedback. It might also look at task designs that keep learners engaged with form, teaching approaches that help them notice and use negotiation strategies, and how their view of a partner's proficiency shapes their language use. Another valuable direction is finding ways to train students to negotiate more effectively and helping teachers participate in online interaction without making learners feel pressured or interrupted.

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Sami A. Al-wossabi is an associate professor of Applied Linguistics at the Department of Foreign Languages, College of Arts and Humanities, Jazan University, Saudi Arabia. He has written articles on different research topics about curriculum development, corrective feedback, second language teaching (SLA), and speaking skills development. He has also actively participated in academic and workshops, contributing to discussions on innovative teaching methodologies, language acquisition strategies, and the integration of technology in language education. His research often explores the intersection of linguistic theory and practical classroom application, aiming to improve pedagogical approaches in second language education. https://orcid.org/0000-0002-2179-2938

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