Editorial

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Technology has opened up new ways for learners to interact with each other or with native speakers, and computer-mediated communication (CMC), whether synchronous or asynchronous, spoken or written, has been the subject of numerous studies in recent years. Very different contexts and objectives give rise to widely varying studies in the first group of papers here. **Fuchs**, **Snyder**, **Tung** and **Han** report an in-depth case study of tele-collaboration between English as a foreign language (EFL) teachers rather than learners. A novice EFL teacher in China guided 20 student teachers in the USA who, as part of their course, designed a series of technology-based reading and writing tasks for his intermediate/advanced students. Besides providing pedagogical, institutional and technical context in the design stage, he was instrumental in adapting the tasks to the context (implementation stage), and in providing feedback on how the tasks had actually worked in the assessment stage. Also featuring Chinese learners of EFL, **Zeng** compares synchronous written CMC with spoken face-to-face (F2F) modalities from the perspective of sociocultural theory. The results show that language-related episodes were relatively more frequent in CMC than F2F tasks, and were more frequently resolved successfully with more self-correction but fewer requests for assistance. These and other findings are taken to suggest that synchronous CMC can effectively foster collaborative dialogue.

Sociocultural theory was also used in a study by **Knight**, **Barbera** and **Appel**, whose Spanish EFL learners engaged in different tasks through spoken synchronous CMC. Transcripts were used for a discourse analysis of agency, i.e. the choices underlying learners' actions. Physical moves were found to be a product of the technology and to impact negatively on time dedicated to the target language (L2). Language moves were categorised as collaborative, individualistic, or self-talk, and functioned for self-organisation, strategic problem-solving or representing themselves, highlighting the multi-dimensional, complex nature of such interactions depending on task type. Proficiency was the focus of the study by **Liu**, who compared various combinations of high- and low-proficiency Chinese EFL learners with each other or with native speakers using written Facebook chats to answer reading questions. Among other findings, high-proficiency dyads were more likely to negotiate repairs and use more interactional strategies towards successful resolution – more even than when paired with a native speaker. The various features are illustrated by extracts of the Facebook chats. The conclusions are that such tools can promote CMC, but that learners may benefit from training in interactional strategies.

A second group of papers looks at how learners interact with technology for various language purposes – corrective feedback (CF), vocabulary, and grammar. **Ai** explores how learners respond to CF from an intelligent computer-assisted language learning (ICALL) tool, again from the perspective of sociocultural theory. Key here is accuracy in identifying errors in L2 Chinese, and provision of increasingly explicit CF until a correct answer is

arrived at. The system is found to be largely accurate in identifying errors and tailoring feedback; the learners were generally able to self-correct and provided positive evaluations, especially of the implicit CF received. Research on electronic vs paper dictionaries has produced surprisingly varied results, prompting **Dziemianko**'s methodologically rigorous comparison study. Polish EFL learners were given entirely comparable information, with the medium targeted as the sole variable. The two formats were found to be useful for both decoding and encoding, though an unexpected delayed test two weeks later showed that use of the electronic version led to significantly better retention. These results are compared against previous studies by the same author using different dictionaries, with implications for lexicographers as well as teachers. The final paper by **Hedjazi Moghari** and **Marandi** explored mobile-assisted language learning (MALL) for EFL grammar practice among Iranian schoolchildren. Over 12 weeks, the participants received daily SMSs each featuring a question on a grammar point covered in class, which they answered before receiving the correction later the same day. A post-test showed the MALL group improving and significantly outperforming a control group who had received unrelated messages but who had answered the same questions on paper. Subsequent interviews showed that use of phones not only promoted engagement with the tasks but also drove enthusiasm for learning English, and was supported by parents despite reticence from the teacher.