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Title
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Permalink
https://escholarship.org/uc/item/1td7k3j6

Journal
L2 Journal, 9(1)

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Publication Date
2017

DOI
10.5070/L29131689

Negotiating Power In L2 Synchronous Online Peer Response Groups

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Many synchronous computer-mediated communication (SCMC) studies have been conducted on the nature of online interaction across a range of pragmatic issues. However, the detailed analyses of resistance to advice have received less attention. Using the methodology of conversation analysis (CA), the present study focuses on L2 peer review activities in a synchronous online context: that of giving and receiving advice based on participants' writing drafts. In L2 peer review activities, advice givers are momentarily positioned as the more knowledgeable party on the issue being discussed, while advice recipients can be viewed as having a subordinate status. I show that advice recipients invoke authority, provide a justification, or initiate inquiries to indicate resistance in a delicate manner. I argue that these resistance strategies cooperate to establish the recipients' identities as competent, independent participants and to assert their primary rights over their manuscripts. The study reveals that L2 SCMC peer response is not only a means for participants to develop rhetorical knowledge, but also to negotiate advice and manage interactional practices.

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INTRODUCTION

A growing body of SCMC text-based research has focused on the nature of online interaction across a range of pragmatic issues, including the use of typographic cues (Keng Wee Ong, 2011; Vandergriff, 2013), sequential development, turn-taking, and repair (González-Lloret, 2011; Jacobs & Garcia, 2013; Lazaraton, 2014; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003), communicative behaviors (Liang, 2010; Stommel, 2008), politeness (Tsai & Kinginger, 2015), and the maintenance of conversational flow (Todman & Alm, 2003). These studies have successfully applied various theoretical frameworks (e.g., conversation analysis (CA), contextual analysis, linguistic theory) to delineate how interactional structures, meanings, social behaviors, and identities are co-constructed by SCMC language users. However, relatively less attention has been given to advice receipt and resistance. In applying a CA approach, this study investigates the advice resistance occurring in four case studies of L2 synchronous computer-mediated peer response groups.

The solicitation and delivery of advice represent key elements in many peer review interactions in L2 classrooms. Advice on writing drafts includes both criticism and suggestions for future course of action. The ways in which advice is delivered and sought reflect the institutional nature of the activity: normativity and asymmetry (e.g., Hepburn, Wilkinson, & Butler, 2014; Heritage & Sefi, 1992). When a person advises another person on a desirable course of action, this brings with it the implicit assumption that the proposed action is better than available alternatives. The normative nature of advising invokes a preferred response: the recipient should accept the advice or carry out the proposed action.

Specifically, advising implies an asymmetrical relationship between advice givers and recipients: the advice giver is construed as more knowledgeable than the advice recipient on the issue that is being discussed. This asymmetry suggests acceptance as the preferred and normative response, while resistance is viewed as a dispreferred action.

Advice giving and receiving are complex interactional practices that include a variety of sequential interactions (e.g., assessing, giving advice, accepting or resisting advice, etc.). For example, advice givers often engage in identifying a problem and providing a solution. Advice recipients' resistance becomes highly relevant to participants in this exchange. By focusing on the practice of advice resistance in online peer response, the present study seeks to contribute to the emerging body of conversation analytic SCMC studies that seeks to advance our understanding of the properties of interactional practices (González-Lloret, 2007, 2009, 2011; Jacobs & Garcia, 2013; Keng Wee Ong, 2011; Kitade, 2000; Liddicoat, 2016; Liddicoat & Tudini, 2013; Schönfeldt & Golato, 2003; Tsai & Kinginger, 2015). In the following section, I first present existing research on advice reception with regard to acceptance and resistance. I also discuss the literature on L2 peer response and SCMC peer review.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Advice Reception and Its Preference Structure

Research has documented how individuals respond to advice in institutional contexts (e.g., Jefferson & Lee, 1992; Koenig, 2011; Landqvist, 2005; Limberg & Locher, 2012; Park, 2014; Pudlinski, 2002, 2012; Silverman, 1997; Stivers, 2005, 2006; Waring, 2005, 2007). Confronted with the complex nature of advice giving and receiving, the recipient demonstrates a normative orientation to advice acceptance. Specifically, the acceptance of advice is viewed as the interactionally preferred response in a large number of advice-giving settings (Limberg & Locher, 2012). This preferred action can be indicated, in part, by very minimal acknowledgements (e.g., 'okay'), or the action can be performed with more explicit indications of acceptance (Stivers & Robinson, 2006; Waring, 2007). On the other hand, resistance is presented and viewed as interactionally dispreferred (Heritage & Sefi, 1992), and it is often engendered by salient asymmetry in advice-giving episodes (Hutchby, 1995). The dilemma occurs when advice is not sought but given and the recipients try to deal with imposed advice, inevitably with some resistance (Waring, 2007). Moreover, as several studies have revealed, the advice recipient needs to assert competence, maintain his/her own agenda, display autonomy, or choose other priorities or constraints (Balfe, 2007; Heritage & Sefi, 1992; Jefferson & Lee, 1992; Waring, 2005, 2007). Confronted with these pressures, he/she may express resistance to advice. However, it has also been argued that resistance can be considered an interactional resource for recipients; resistance can compel advice givers to elaborate (e.g., health professionals) and to encourage advice givers to pursue acceptance (Stivers, 2006).

Withholding acceptance of advice when it is normatively expected is considered passive resistance (Heritage & Sefi, 1992). The recipient can use delay devices, including silence, partial reiteration, and requests for repetition or clarification to communicate passive resistance. For example, in a study on patient resistance to doctors' treatment recommendations, Koening (2011) reported three manifestations of advice resistance: unmarked acknowledgement tokens (e.g., 'mm hm'), stand-alone head nodding, or a gap of silence. In addition, Landqvist (2005) found that a caller resisted the advice of a pharmacist at

a poison information center by requesting repetition or asking a question that challenged the advice. Participants can also display resistance with over-rejection. Such resistance can take the form of direct rejection (e.g., 'no') (Pilnick & Coleman, 2003; Pudlinski, 2002), accounts of information known only to the advice recipient (e.g., 'well, it doesn't always work for me') (Jefferson & Lee, 1992), or assertions of competence (e.g., 'I know') (Hertiage & Sefi, 1992).

Moreover, a growing number of conversation analytical studies in academic contexts have demonstrated students' resistance to advice in pedagogical discourse (Vehviläinen, 2009; Waring, 2005). For example, Waring (2005) has shown that the tutor and tutee at a graduate writing center have competing areas of expertise. The tutor is equipped to offer advice on writing, while the tutee is more knowledgeable about the specific discipline in which she is formally trained. Therefore, the tutee resists advice on content-related matters by asserting her own agenda, invoking authority, or being irrational. Adding to the existing body of knowledge, the present study explores L2 learners' interactional practices of advice resistance and management in a previously unexamined context: L2 SCMC peer review activities in language classrooms.

L2 Peer Response and SCMC Peer Review

The major theoretical principles governing L2 peer revision practices are process writing, collaborative learning theory, Vygotsky's zone of proximal development, and second language acquisition theory (Hansen & Liu, 2005). In particular, the pedagogical discussion of L2 peer revision-related activities focuses on the collaborative learning process in which participants orient themselves to the rhetorical problem with the text and negotiate both the solution and the ongoing conversation (de Guerrero & Villamil, 2000; Villamil & de Guerrero, 1996). With regard to the individual development as described by Vygotsky's idea of zone of proximal development, researchers view peer response as a socio-cognitive activity that enables L2 learners to become aware of problems in the texts and make revisions in turn (e.g., Donato, 1994). Thus, the interactive nature of peer response appears to facilitate language practices (Lockhart & Ng, 1995; Mendonça & Johnson, 1994), encourage collaborative reading and writing (Tsui & Ng, 2000), enhance intercultural communication (Hansen & Liu, 2005), and promote interactional and writing abilities (Liang, 2010; Min, 2006, 2008).

More recently, SCMC peer review has become an alternative to face-to-face communication in language classrooms. SCMC peer review, which involves a mixture of spoken and written communication, can foster students' participation and collaboration (Warschauer, 2002), engage students in critical reflection about the linguistic and rhetorical features of writing (DiGiovanni & Nagaswami, 2001), and encourage mutual acceptance of peer suggestions in revision (Tuzi, 2004). More importantly, SCMC offers pedagogical advantages for L2 learners. Specifically, this online text-based communication allows L2 learners to review posted messages, and grants them more time to compose passages or correct errors, which may help achieve better mutual understanding (Chapelle, 2001; Liang, 2010; Liu & Sadler, 2003). For this reason, SCMC peer review is commonly used in writing classrooms. Advice given about peers' writing involves both forms of assistance and criticism, thus confirming the centrality of problem identification and suggestions in the SCMC peer review activity. Researchers have demonstrated growing interest in investigating SCMC advice-giving/receiving interactions. For example, Jacobs and Garcia (2013) examined repair sequences during online group peer response in computer-assisted English composition

classes. They found that students employ strategies used in face-to-face communication to avoid online interactional troubles. In addition, the authors show how students manage to achieve intersubjectivity by using resources available to them in the SCMC context. More recently, Tsai and Kinginger (2015) studied turn-by-turn interactions among three dyadic pairs in L2 online peer review activities. Their study reveals that advice givers employ complimenting as a strategy to mitigate the criticisms that they offer.

Despite robust discussions on a multitude of issues surrounding advice giving and receiving in institutional contexts and the need for more effective practices, we do not yet have a clear understanding of how advice resistance is actually managed in L2 SCMC peer review. The present study attempts to investigate how advice recipients perform advice resistance, a less preferred action in L2 computer-mediated settings. Specifically, this is examined within the context of L2 online peer review groups.

DATA AND METHODS

The data set consists of eight online peer review sessions in two writing courses at a large American university. A total of 40 transcripts were extracted from saved online multi-party text chats on Skype. The 30 first-year international undergraduate students who participated were divided into ten randomly assigned groups of three students. Major writing assignments included a definition essay, a comparison and contrast essay, an analytical essay, and an argumentative essay. For each assignment, students went through several writing stages, including brainstorming, prewriting/drafting, revising, and editing.

In peer review training sessions, the instructor led the class in a discussion of peer review tasks in order to help students understand how to provide advice for their peers' essays. Discussions on peer revision were organized around the following issues: (a) theses and topic sentences, (b) summaries, paraphrases, and quotations, (c) coherence and cohesion, (d) textual development, and (e) logic and reasoning. Students were asked to comment on essays with the following guiding questions in mind:

- Does the introduction include the thesis and a general overview of the topic/background information?
- Do body paragraphs contain topic sentences and sufficient examples?
- Does the conclusion review the points stated in the essay?
- Does the writer discuss important aspects of the issue?
- Does the writer use proper grammar, punctuation, and spelling?
- Does the writer use his/her own words and proper citations in the essay?

As practice, students were provided with a copy of an essay written by a former student and asked to suggest how the essay could be revised. The SCMC peer response sessions took place in computer labs during class time. Each group was in a separate chatroom. The participants took turns acting as advice givers and recipients; that is, all of the participants had the opportunity to engage in discussions with both roles. The peer review sessions were divided into two phases: first students read and evaluated peers' essays based on the guiding questions, and they then participated in the online discussion. The online discussion lasted 20 to 25 minutes on average. Students saved their online conversations in Word documents and

used them in making their revisions. Students also sent the documents to their instructor, who monitored their progress.

On Skype, participants wrote messages in the message entry box. Every time a participant posted a message, it appeared as the last line in the posting box, and his/her message composition box became blank. Each participant could only see his/her own message entry box. The transcripts (excerpts 1-4) include original messages as students typed them. Additionally, turn numbers show the actual turns taken in conversation. Even though the use of turn numbers indicates the sequential development of the SCMC interaction, the timestamps (indicting when the posts were submitted) are maintained in order to provide an additional point of reference, especially for moments when participants simultaneously contributed to conversations.

The online medium has its unique turn-taking system. First, there is a delay between each act of writing and posting (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999). Moreover, in text chat interactions, participants view posting as taking turns, and a posted message thus indicates that a follow-up post is anticipated (This is called a transition-relevance place. See the definition in the CA section). Another unique aspect of the online turn-taking system is the possibility of splitting one post over two messages (Tudini, 2014). Since participants lack access to their interlocutors' composition processes and can pose messages simultaneously, multiple threads of sequences frequently develop in online talk. However, participants can employ several mechanisms to achieve intersubjectivity such as addressing the interlocutor by name, posting a short or slip message, or checking the message board before posting (Jacobs & Garcia, 2013).

In this study, CA is employed to examine computer-mediated discourse and uncover institutional practice. CA allows for the turn-by-turn analysis of L2 peer review activities, and in particular, the components of resistance sequences adopted by participants in L2 computer-mediated peer response. An adjacency pair consists of two messages in which one participant produces the first pair with the expectation that another participant will produce an appropriate response in the next turn (Schegloff & Sacks, 1973). Typical adjacency pairs include questions and answers or assessments with agreements or disagreements. After the completion of the first pair of messages, the transition to follow-up communication occurs, which is called a 'transition-relevance place.' Due to the lack of nonverbal cues in SCMC contexts, the interlocutor can be self-selected in the transition-relevance place (Garcia & Jacobs, 1999). Even though the SCMC setting allows for multiple parallel threads, González-Lloret (2007) has argued that participants still produce pragmatic adjacency in multi-threaded SCMC discourse by reading and responding to previous messages, a phenomenon referred to as 'virtual adjacency' (Schönfeldt & Golato 2003). In other words, even though the messages are not adjacent to one other, the participants can reconstruct and build on the sequences (Tudini, 2014).

This study presents an analysis of four individual cases, selected from four different groups of advice givers and recipients.[1] The application of CA to applied linguistics is frequently discussed in L2 research. For example, Lazaraton (2003) stated that the purpose of CA "is to build a convincing and comprehensive analysis of a single case, and then to search for other similar cases in order to build a collection of cases that represent some interactional phenomenon" (p. 3). In other words, the goal of a CA study is to offer a convincing and adequate analysis of an individual case, and then to look for similar cases that can describe the same phenomenon and discuss its variations. Additionally, the analysis of these four cases can deepen our understanding of advice-resisting strategies used in L2 SCMC peer response

groups. The examination of the four episodes can also draw attention to L2 learners' resistance strategies that have gone unnoticed but can inform the practices of L2 educators who conduct SCMC peer response in language classrooms. Furthermore, the validity of a CA approach is not demonstrated by the frequency of cases but by the adequate and convincing analysis of a particular instance (Psathas, 1995, p. 50). As Benson and Hughes (1991) stated, additional instances may only provide "another example of the method in the action, rather than securing the warrantability of the description of the machinery itself" (p. 131).

The four excerpts were deemed significant to the present study since they shed light on how advice delivery and receipt are conducted in an institutional activity. The selection criterion used in my study (as in Li, 2013) adheres to Mori's (2004) argument that "the selection of a particular case for the publication of its CA-based analysis may be motivated by the significance of the case in a given field" (p. 539).

ANALYSIS OF RESISTANCE STRATEGIES

Invoking External Authority

All of the transcripts have not been modified. In the transcript, AG refers to an advice giver and AR designates an advice recipient. I first present a case in which AG1 (Ahmad[2]), AG2 (Sarah), and AR1 (Mike) both invoke an external authority (i.e., the instructor, May) in the advice-resisting sequence. Specifically, AG1 invokes the teacher's voice to support his negative evaluation when AR1 does not share his opinion about a particular revision (i.e., the discussion of both sides of an argument). AR1 signals his resistance to the advice by announcing that he will discuss the issue with the instructor.

Excerpt 1

```
45   6:41:52 PM   AG1        alright lets go to things that you can
                             improve
46   6:41:53 PM   AG2        lets then proceed to the improvement
                             part!
47   6:41:56 PM   AR1        ok
48   6:41:57 PM   AG2        yup:)
49   6:42:31 PM   AG2        I think with your examples you could
                             elaborate more and also consider
                             putting your thoughts into it.
50   6:42:42 PM   AG1  ->    okay, I'm not sure if I'm wrong or not,
                      ->    but it seems like your essay is biased,
                      ->    I mean you are stressing on the negative
                      ->    impacts of the social networking
51   6:42:51 PM   AG1  ->    what do you think Mike?
52   6:43:44 PM   AR1        for Sarah, I asked May for that, and
                             she said that we should not have
                             our own opinions in the essay but
                             to conclude other views
53   6:44:26 PM   AG1  ->    Mike? Haha
54   6:45:02 PM   AR1  ->    and for Ahmad, yeah, i barely mentioned
                      ->    the good side of the social networks,
                      ->    maybe i should change the topic to
```

```
                             ->   analyzing the negative consequences
                             ->   of using social networks then
55   6:45:30 PM   AG2             sounds good. I think you could
                                  include personal experiences because it
                                  says in peer review sheet!
56   6:45:35 PM   AG2             but may be not!
57   6:45:36 PM   AG1        ->   oh okay cool because I asked May
                             ->   about this and she said
                             ->   that our essay should be neutral
58   6:45:40 PM   AG2             haha
59   6:45:57 PM   AR1             oh yeah, my own experience, definitely
60   6:46:21 PM   AG1        ->   alright you should give both positive
                             ->   and negative impacts on each point.
                             ->   thats gonna work :)
61   6:46:23 PM   AR1        ->   right, maybe i should talk to her later
62   6:46:35 PM   AG1        ->   okay i encountered a few errors regarding
                             ->   your citations
```

In this excerpt, AG1 comments that manuscript seems biased before asking AR1 if he agrees (turns 50-51). Since AR1 does not immediately reply, AG1 pursues his response in turn 53. AR1 agrees with the AG1's criticism and then proposes a solution: changing the topic of the essay (turn 54). In turn 57, AG1 starts his turn by acknowledging AR1's proposed course of action with 'oh okay,' indicating that AG1 treats the reply as new information (Heritage, 1984). Then, AG1 provides a positive assessment: 'cool.' Since AR1's asserted agenda does not correspond to AG1's initial criticism, AG1 strengthens his argument by explaining why AR1 should revise the text. In other words, AG1 appeals to a second assessment from someone who has greater authority and for whom this essay is written. This recommendation draws on instructor's instructions and enhances the validity of AG1's initial negative evaluation. In addition, AG1's assertion (our essay needs to be neutral) implies that the essay cannot focus on one side of the argument. In turn 60, AG1 offers a possible solution, suggesting that AR1 discuss both sides of the argument. With regard to the timestamp, AR1's message in turn 61 responds to AG1's post in turn 57. AR1 first acknowledges AG1's response with 'right.' Moreover, AR1 seems reluctant to discuss both sides of the argument in the essay (turn 54) and consequently expresses mitigated resistance by indicating that he will consult with the instructor.

Because AR1's assertion (turn 61) evidences his resistance, he does not further respond to AG1's advice (turn 60). On the other hand, AG1 replies with the closing 'okay' and the initiation of another problem in turn 62. This response represents a transition: realizing that AR1 has received the desired information, AG1 turns his attention to a new aspect of the paper. Even though advice givers have the institutional power to offer advice in the L2 peer review activity, they do not have the authority to force a recipient to accept the suggested course of action.

Student participants are of similar age, academic status (i.e., undergraduates), and experience. Their relationship with one another is less straightforward or clear-cut from a hierarchical perspective compared to that between tutors and tutees or teachers and students. Specifically, their institutional roles are relatively fluid since participants take turns as advice givers and recipients in L2 peer response. Students may have similar knowledge and competence as their peers, and they do not have access to grading and gatekeeping as means

to exert power over one another (Waring, 2005). Therefore, when AG1 and AR1 have a different view on the appropriate course of action, AG1 is likely to invoke external authority to account for his assessment, thus affirming the legitimacy of his forthcoming advice. In particular, AG1's statements (turns 57 and 60) involving the auxiliary verb 'should' instead of alternatives like 'could' or 'may' give AR1 less freedom to revise his essay as he sees fit. These assertions serve to emphasize the need to implement the advised action. AG1's use of a smiley emoticon to punctuate his suggestion represents a mitigative strategy (Golato & Taleghani-Nikazm, 2006) that softens the imposition of the revision request and protects AR1's negative face (i.e., the need for non-imposition).

On the other hand, AR1's claim that he will discuss the matter with the teacher is used to resist AG1's suggestion. Specifically, AR1 appeals to the teacher, who, as the audience and ultimate evaluator of the paper, has more knowledge and authority to decide how to revise the text. In addition, with this comment, AR1 can shift the responsibility for dealing with the conflict from the present parties to a non-present authority (Nguyen, 2011). By assigning the right to decide to an authoritative individual, AR1 does not express outright rejection and avoids a class of solutions, effectively mitigating his resistance strategy.

Providing a Justification

In excerpt 2, the recipient (AR2) conveys mitigated resistance by providing a justification. AG4 finds that two paragraphs in the text in question need to be combined. However, AR2 and AG3 disagree with the proposed suggestion; they find that the combined paragraph would become too long and could frustrate the readers. In response to their resistance, AG3 withdraws his advice.

Excerpt 2

```
46  6:51:35 PM   AG3       the definition of game is comprehensive
47  6:51:44 PM   AG4       I think the topic sentences were good, and good
                           references too
48  6:52:49 PM   AG3       but i see the following two paragraphs are all
                           talking about the positive side
49  6:53:03 PM   AG3  ->   so you may want to write them as one
                           paragraph
50  6:53:14 PM   AG4       really?
51  6:53:22 PM   AR2  ->   it would be a very long paragraph
52  6:53:22 PM   AG4       i mean that would make the paragraph bigger
53  6:53:34 PM   AG4       ya, so its more organized that way
54  6:53:43 PM   AG3  ->   oh
55  6:53:46 PM   AG4       I think you need to include more real life
                           examples
56  6:53:47 PM   AR2  ->   that would make it frustrating for the reader
57  6:53:47 PM   AG3  ->   that is true
58  6:53:55 PM   AG4       to convince the reader
59  6:54:08 PM   AG3  ->   yeah maybe you can say that
60  6:54:34 PM   AG3       but dont forget to have the paragraph
                           which refuse the critics point
```

The sequence begins when AG3 offers a compliment, observes that two paragraphs share

a focus, and suggests combining them (turns 46, 48-49). However, AG4 questions AG3's advice with 'really?' and explains why the paragraphs should remain separate (turns 50 and 52). AR2 simultaneously provides the same argument (turn 51), and then justifies his resistance (turn 56) (i.e., the long paragraph would frustrate the reader). In response, AG3 recognizes the problematic nature of the advice (turn 54), which has been brought to his attention by AR2 and AG4, and comes to agree with them (turn 57). He accepts their account of why the text does not need revision in turn 59. AG3 then continues his advice turn by offering feedback on another issue. Therefore, this sequence comes to an end with the contrastive conjunction 'but,' followed by additional advice in turn 60.

AR2's resistance may challenge the validity of AG3's advice and increase the face threat. An account is often given to justify a dispreferred action and soften its face-threatening potential (Heritage, 1984; Waring, 2005). AR2 claims that a long paragraph can frustrate the reader (turn 56), thereby attributing the problem to readers rather than directly challenging AG3's advice. Furthermore, AR2 uses the hedge 'would' to soften his resistance (turns 51 and 56), and AG4 employs the same hedging device to mitigate his disagreement (turn 52). In this way, AR2 can resist advice without threatening the advice giver's social face.

The peer revision-related activity represents a negotiation between participants (Waring, 2012). Even though the task of advising is initiated by AG3, it is jointly negotiated by AG4 and AR2. Both AG4 and AR2 disagree with AG3's proposed advice; AG4 suggests maintaining the original paragraph structure (turn 53), and AR2 indicates the potential problem (turn 56). These assertions prompt AG3 to reconsider his initial suggestion. Peer response highlights differential expertise; L2 learners can present their complementary strengths and weaknesses (Ohta, 2001). Students may be novices when they work individually, but they can become experts by pooling their strengths to make greater expertise available (Donato, 1994). In this regard, even though AG3 is not immediately aware of the potential problem with his advice, participants in an advising sequence can delicately negotiate with one another to determine an ideal solution.

Initiating Inquiries

Excerpt 3 illustrates an advice giver (AG5) fluctuating in her negative evaluation. This enables the advice recipient (AR3) to resist criticism by launching an inquiry that acts as a form of disagreement. Specifically, AG5 points to the lack of discussion points in the thesis, but she quickly shifts her attention to comment on the insufficient information in the introduction. This gives AR3 (Jane) the opportunity to display her opposition to AG5's criticism by initiating an inquiry.

Excerpt 3

```
22   6:57:06 PM   AG5      Jane i think ur paper is good, well
                           developed, lots of information
23   6:57:19 PM   AG6      it was good, a lot of information, I think you
                           could give a forecast of what is going to
                           happen
24   6:57:29 PM   AG5      for the thesis part...I am not sure, should you
                           put ur "points" in the thesis?
25   6:57:41 PM   AG5      ya thats what I mean
26   6:57:51 PM   AG6      yes, you didn't
```

```
27   6:58:26 PM   AG5        I think you just need to add more on your
                             introduction and thats it
28   6:58:28 PM   AG6        you could also add a personal opinion
29   6:58:53 PM   AR3        okay thanks guys
30   6:59:10 PM   AR3   ->   Is my thesis statement clear?
31   6:59:20 PM   AG5        i think it is "clear"
32   6:59:29 PM   AG5        but it is not "enough"
33   6:59:30 PM   AG6        yes, it is
34   6:59:44 PM   AG5        not thesis, i mean, intro is not enough
35   6:59:52 PM   AR3   ->   oh ok. I was worried about that. Do you think
                             there is too much information in my essay?
36   7:00:10 PM   AG6        a think there is a lot, but it is not bad,
                             make it more interesting
37   7:00:14 PM   AR3   ->   I feel like it is a little complicated
38   7:00:20 PM   AG5        a little bit, but this is a tough topic
39   7:00:31 PM   AG6        i agree with that
40   7:00:58 PM   AR3   ->   Do you guys feel like I am taking sides?
```

In this excerpt, both AG5 and AG6 address AR3's thesis statement. They first positively evaluate AR3's essay as a good one and indicate that it contains a great amount of information (turns 22-23). AG6 proceeds to suggest that AR3 offer a preview to tell readers what to expect in the following paragraphs (turn 23). AG5 poses a question to signal, in line with AG6's advice, that the thesis statement does not include discussion points (turn 24). In the following turns, both AG5 and AG6 reaffirm the problem. Their negative evaluations may predict subsequent advice that AR3 add discussion points to the thesis statement. Rather, AG5 states that AR3 needs to include more information in the introduction (turn 27). AG6 also goes on to recommend that AR3 share a personal opinion (turn 28).

Since AG5 and AG6's advice does not seem to correspond to their initial criticisms (turns 23-24), AR3 may be confused about whether or not the thesis statement is in need of revision. After acknowledging AG5 and AG6's suggestions (turn 29), AR3 launches a repair, "Is my thesis statement clear?" (turn 30), and AG5 and AG6 respond affirmatively (turns 31 and 33 respectively). Moreover, AG5 shifts from her first evaluation (i.e., that the thesis does not include discussion points) to offer critical feedback on the scope of the introduction (turns 32 and 34).

AR3 initially responds to AG5's concern by treating her feedback as new information: 'oh ok' (turn 35). AR3 proceeds to express her concerns in apparent agreement with AG5's negative evaluation. The assertion of an intended course of action (e.g., I'll add more information in the introduction) may have been forthcoming. However, AR3 launches a question (i.e., "Do you think there is too much information in my essay?") that directly contrasts with the advice giver's assessment. Specifically, the mention of 'too much information' establishes disagreement with AG5's assessment ('not enough'). This represents weak resistance mitigated through the preceding agreement. Advice recipients have the legitimate right to initiate an inquiry, and such questions can help them to display resistance to the negative evaluation in an indirect way.

Even though the question anticipates a 'yes' or 'no' response, it conveys a preference for agreement or confirmation (Raymond, 2003). We can see that AG6 agrees that there is a lot of information (turn 36). At the same time, the problem has been reframed from 'not enough' to 'too much information.' AG6 continues to use the contrastive conjunction to downplay the seriousness of the problem ("but it is not bad") and then continues with the

advice. Turns 36-38 were generated simultaneously. In turn 37, AR3's epistemic statement "I feel like it is a little bit complicated" reinforces her resistance to AG5's criticism; that is, that the essay is complicated and contains enough information. In response to AR3's question in turn 35, AG5 produces an agreement token in turn 38. She continues to use a contrastive conjunction (i.e., 'but') to attribute the problem of too much information to an external factor (i.e., an essay topic), something that neither of them can control. Moreover, AG6's agreement (turn 39) seems to indicate the closure of this advice sequence. As a result, AR3 moves on to another issue by launching a question.

In the fourth excerpt, AG7 and AG8 advise AR4 to provide specific examples in the essay. However, AR4 prefers removing existing examples rather than providing additional ones. AR4 also employs advice-seeking questions to resist advice givers' suggestions.

Excerpt 4

```
76   5:19:23 PM   AG7       you use many points to prove your topic
                            sentence and it's supportive. maybe you can
                            develop a specific example
77   5:19:50 PM   AG8       you mean in the body part?
78   5:20:08 PM   AG7       yep
79   5:20:35 PM   AG8       yes, she has a long paragraph but no specific
                            examples
80   5:21:01 PM   AG8       or the examples are too general
81   5:21:18 PM   AG8       but the connections are good
82   5:21:24 PM   AG7       for example. you mentioned about science
                            students. maybe list a specific science
                            subject, like biology students, and how they do
                            research on topics like muscle, neuron,
                            or anything specific that appears in newspaper
83   5:22:53 PM   AR4   ->  do you think I should add details to my
                            examples or just shorten to one
                            example?
84   5:23:25 PM   AG8       specify examples
85   5:23:29 PM   AG7       i think you can add details
86   5:24:15 PM   AG8       you should talk some detailed facts
87   5:24:45 PM   AG7       add specific detail to your point when
                            support the topic sentence
88   5:24:50 PM   AG8       people, who, what happen, what's the result
89   5:25:10 PM   AG7       exactly
90   5:25:18 PM   AR4   ->  so leave only one example in each paragraph?
91   5:25:33 PM   AG8       and a relation between your topic and example
                            is also vital
92   5:26:16 PM   AG8       it depends on how many aspects you want to talk
                            to support your topic
93   5:26:32 PM   AG8       remember Yue's first paragraph?
94   5:26:38 PM   AG8       she chose two
95   5:27:07 PM   AR4   ->  what about the second body paragraph? it is
                            hard to make specific examples on jobs
96   5:27:09 PM   AG8       just make sure it is clear
97   5:27:40 PM   AG8       I think the second one is good
98   5:27:56 PM   AG7       i also think the 2nd one is good
99   5:28:09 PM   AG8       just add more connections between sentences
100  5:28:22 PM   AG8       maybe, I am not sure
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101  5:29:18 PM  AR4  ->   do you think i should add details related to
                           myself?
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Here AR4 uses inquiries to resist AG7's and AG8's advice. First, AG7 and AG8 suggest that AR4 provide more specific examples to illustrate her viewpoint (turns 76-82). In turn 83, AR4 uses her turn to inquire about whether to add detailed examples or remove some examples. Without any acknowledgment of acceptance and following a long pause (between turns 82 and 83), AR4 poses a question that appears to constitute a form of mitigated resistance to advice, not a genuine information-seeking act. Specifically, AR4's question first refers to the given advice (i.e., adding detail to the examples) and then presents her proposed revision (i.e., reducing the number of examples). Her verification of the suggested action can be viewed as a way of probing the advice to see if it need be followed (Landqvist, 2005). Additionally, by formulating the advice request in the form of two available solutions to be accepted or rejected by the advice givers, AR4 can introduce her preferred revision. AR4 agrees with the advice givers that the examples need further revision; however, she seems to prefer leaving off some examples rather than specifying alternate examples. Therefore, she designs the question in such a way as to propose her preferred action. AR4 may be expecting AG7 and AG8 to back down from their initial suggestion and take her proposed alternative action into account.

Secondly, AG7 and AG8 seem to fail to notice AR4's attempt to shift the focus of revisions and are more concerned with whether or not AR4 includes specific examples. AG7 and AG8 both agree that examples should be clarified rather than eliminated, which is consistent with their initial advice (turns 84-89). Instead of accepting the advice, AR4 again inquires into the possibility of reducing the text length by keeping only one example in each paragraph (turn 90). The absence of an acceptance token implies AR4's resistance to AG7 and AG8's advice (Pudlinski, 2002; Waring, 2005). Moreover, an inquiry is viewed as the recipient's legitimate task. Launching an advice-seeking request therefore does not pose a problem for any of the participants (Tsai & Kinginger, 2015). However, AG8 and AR4 do not see eye to eye with each other on this issue. AG8 first points out the importance of connecting examples with the writing topic and then refuses AR4's proposed action, explaining that it is not necessary to include only one example per paragraph (turns 91-94).

Finally, AR4 offers a reason for resisting the advice, noting the difficulty of its implementation in turn 95. Specifically, the AR4 requests advice on a portion of the text where she is not able to provide specific examples. In reply, by positively evaluating the second paragraph, AG7 and AG8 eliminate the need to clarify examples contained therein and legitimize their initial proposal. AG8 further provides his advice in turn 99; however, his uncertainty ("maybe, I am not sure") suggests that he may be unsure about the validity of his advice. Moreover, it is highly relevant whether AR4 accepts or rejects AG8's recommendation at this point. After a long pause, AR4's additional advice request ("do you think I should add details related to myself?" turn 101) indirectly communicates her resistance. In particular, this question not only frees AR4 from the obligation to accept AG8's advice, but also helps her manage to avoid disagreement with AG7 and AG8 by putting forth her own agenda.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Advice delivery in peer writing includes both criticism and suggestions. Therefore, acceptance

and resistance of negative evaluations and comments are central to L2 peer response. However, acceptance is considered a preferred response in advising episodes, while resistance is to be avoided. This study contributes to empirically grounded research on advice resistance in institutional interactions and builds on earlier studies concerned with how advice recipients employ interactional strategies to display resistance in pedagogical discourse. Though acceptance of advice is desirable in L2 peer response, the advice recipient has the last word on his/her paper as the writer who selects the topic, sets up the goal for the paper, finds relevant sources, analyzes references, and organizes paragraphs. The advice recipients need to maintain their own agenda, assert competence, and display autonomy. In the cases described above, the recipients of advice used resistance strategies to exert autonomy and claim primary rights to their drafts. Advice resistance in these peer response sessions was typically formulated in mitigated forms, and outright resistance seldom occurred. This may have resulted, in part, from the nature of peer response in which participants orient to their institutional roles; at the same time, they need to maintain social solidarity with their peers. Mitigated resistance allowed the recipients to assert their competence and independence without jeopardizing their relationship with advice givers.

In light of the data, I find three types of mitigated resistance practices employed in online peer response activities: invoking external authority, providing a justification, and using inquiries to express a contrary opinion or to resist advice. First, in doing resistance, the recipients must both manage their primary rights to the text being discussed and avoid face-threatening acts. AR1 and AG1, for example, did not agree on the way to revise the essay and both of them invoked external authority. Waring (2005) pointed out that 'invoking external authority' is used as a strategy by the tutee in peer tutoring sessions: the tutee brings in the voice of the teacher to support the assertion of her own agenda. Without involving the teacher into the discussion, AR1 invoked external authority, shifting the responsibility of solving the conflict from the current parties to the teacher. This finding is in line with Nguyen's (2011) study in which the pharmacist invoked a non-present authority (i.e., the doctor) to avoid a disagreement with the patient. Specifically, the pharmacist's action can license the patient as animator of the doctor's authority and thereby shift responsibility. Furthermore, in L2 peer review activities, an advice recipient's decision to bring in the voice of the course instructor as the individual who ultimately evaluates the paper is institutionally oriented. That is, the teacher has the final authority to decide on the future course of action. After AG1 first invoked the teacher's voice to support his criticism, AR1 followed suit and used consultations with the teacher as a way out of the conflict. Secondly, offering an account has a similar interactional function: it may enable the recipient to avoid opposing the advice giver directly. For example, AR2 explained why AG3's suggestion was incongruent with the rhetorical needs of the essay and resisted the advice to combine paragraphs. Such a resistance strategy can resolve the face-threatening aspect of resistance by attributing the problem to an external factor.

Third, when the advice giver produces criticism or advice, the recipient's acceptance or rejection becomes relevant in the next turn. An advice recipient's inquiries are viewed as the recipient's legitimate task and, consequently, do not pose a problem for either party. Specifically, the interjection of a question invites a response from the advice giver in the next turn (Vehviläinen, 2009). Recipients' use of questions as a resistance strategy was illustrated in excerpts 3 and 4, where AR3 and AR4 formulated their turns as direct questions to be answered. This strategy helps the recipients avoid threatening the advice givers' positive faces.

While questions used by a pharmacist-caller primarily served as an argument against advice

(Landqvist, 2005), their function differed in this context. I have demonstrated that advice recipients' questions resist the constraints exerted by advice giving in the following three ways: (1) the questions can act as arguments against negative evaluations; (2) the questions exert agency, with recipients proposing a solution to the problem rather than simply following an advice giver's recommendations; and (3) the questions can help the advice recipients depart from the current discussion and put forth their own agendas. For example, instead of directly disagreeing with AG5's negative feedback, AR3 formulated an argument in the form of the question. Since a question invites agreement as a preferred response, AG5 and AG6 both showed alignment with AR3 and further downplayed the seriousness of the issue. AR3 was then able to depart from the current issue by launching another inquiry. On the other hand, the lack of acceptance tokens and AR4's questions were inevitably understood as signs of resistance. More specifically, AR4 formulated questions that allowed her to resist advice and shift the conversation in order to pursue her own agenda. In other words, the advice recipient's questions can refocus the conversation to bring it into alignment with her own concerns and make an absence of compliance less noticeable during the interaction.

This study raises two implications for L2 SCMC peer response with regard to the implementation of peer review activities in general and advice delivery in particular. First of all, the advice giving sequences ended after advice resistance, as shown in excerpts 1 and 4. For example, when AG7 and AG8 failed to notice AR4's resistance, the latter had to engage in more interactional work to resist advice. More importantly, participants terminated the advice sequence by moving on to discuss another issue. As a result, advice delivery seems to represent information transfer. Since peer response is a form of scaffolding and support for student writers, the advice givers need to develop sensitivity to and awareness of the recipients' resistance. In the training sessions, we can teach students to take recipients' resistance into account when engaging in advising in an effort to find common ground with each other. With increased awareness, advice delivery can become less about information transfer and more about collaborative interaction.

The second issue concerns students' abilities as advice givers. Despite the obvious benefits of advice delivery, the actual practice may not be as straightforward as we expect. L2 learners are developing their linguistic knowledge and competence in L2 writing. Inevitably, students' negative evaluations and advice may fluctuate, as seen in the excerpts. For example, in excerpt 3, AG5 sent confusing messages, which led to resistance. This is a good example of the students' lack of experience in advising and their inability to clarify problems or provide good advice on certain rhetorical issues. However, L2 peer response is a negotiated phenomenon. Even though advice givers initiate the interaction by identifying problems and offering solutions, a joint understanding of advice delivery is delicately negotiated with advice recipients. For example, in excerpt 2, participants co-constructed solutions in which they contributed their expertise and negotiated the matter at hand. More importantly, practice in recognizing and negotiating problems and solutions can facilitate students' abilities to reflect on and evaluate their own rhetorical knowledge and writing skills, both of which are essential for their development as independent L2 users.

In short, through the application of conversation analysis, this study has shown that advice resistance is accomplished, displayed, and negotiated at the level of turn-by-turn interaction in L2 computer-mediated settings. Even though CA is only beginning to be applied in SCMC, it would be very beneficial when investigating how participants use delicate interactional strategies to manage their access to, or right to assess, an action, knowledge, or interactional

source. L2 computer-mediated peer response is not only a valuable tool for developing rhetorical knowledge, but also for learning to negotiate advice and manage interactional practices. I hope that the findings of this study have contributed to laying the groundwork necessary to understand advice resistance in L2 SCMC peer response. More specifically, this study provides a starting point for longitudinal studies that could collect more instances of advice resistance in order to examine its various manifestations in L2 computer-mediated peer response contexts. For example, future research could address the use of emotive expressions (e.g., emoticons and typographic markers) or gender differences in strategies for giving or resisting advice. This would help us better understand the management of advice resistance in L2 computer-mediated peer response contexts.

NOTES

1. One of the anonymous reviewers pointed out that the present study is technically not a single case analysis since it includes different groups. Although this study involves four groups of students, each excerpt represents a particular interactional phenomenon in which the advice recipient demonstrated a mitigated resistance strategy. The investigation is in line with Psathas's (1995) viewpoint that "because the researcher's focus is restricted to the description and analysis of a particular interactional phenomenon, further study may be oriented to a search for additional instances of the same phenomenon, so that its variations may be described (p. 49)." In other words, the present study presents four single case analyses that illustrate the use of advice-resisting strategies turn-by-turn in an L2 SCMC setting, and it can provide a starting point for future research.
2. All of the participants' names in chats are pseudonyms.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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