



CALL RESEARCH BRIEF

Fall 2020

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Title: Summary of Disagreement in peer interaction: Its effect on learner task performance
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Original Text: Chen, W. (2020). Disagreement in peer interaction: Its effect on learner task performance. <i>System</i> (89), February. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.system.2019.102179
Rationale/Overview of the study In this descriptive study, the researcher hoped to expand upon SLA research in language-related episodes and negotiation of meaning by examining disagreement resolution in collaborative dialogs and its effect on task performance. Much research has centered around learners' focus-on-form — grammar or vocabulary negotiation in writing tasks. This study also considers language-related episodes but through spoken as well as written learner interactions and disagreement resolution.
Research methods Participants: Drawing from a larger study, this smaller study focused on 8 out of 16 dyads of Chinese English as a second language learners, specifically those showing conflict and resolution. These specific dyads also showed a change in interaction over the course of 3 tasks. Data collection tools and analysis: The dyads were instructed in the use of dictogloss and then used it to listen to a passage and then work together to attempt to reproduce it as written text as close to the original as possible. The dyads performed 3 such tasks. This study focuses specifically on tasks 1 and 3, which show a change in negotiation and disagreement resolution in these dyads. The student interactions were recorded and transcribed.
Results – In non-technical terms, what does the study show/suggest? How sure can we be? The results show that disagreement resolution when students were fully engaged with each other and the task led not only to better language production by students but also better task performance. The combination of spoken negotiations between students along with written task products presented the students with richer opportunities for negotiating meaning and improving language skills.
Practical Implications – What are the implications for learning and teaching? What pedagogical suggestions are there that apply the results? • Previous researchers have discouraged conflict, believing it would hinder negotiation and task performance. This study shows it could be an integral aspect of language acquisition.

- The dyads all showed better disagreement resolution in task 3 than task 1. Though not mentioned by the researcher, this implies student familiarity with each other plays an important role in disagreement resolution and leads to better language production, and improved task completion. Learners should work together more than once for this affordance.
- The dyads and tasks which did not specifically support the researchers' focus were not included. It is unclear whether those dyads had not shown conflicts or meaningful negotiations. Those unmentioned interactions could outline important differences.
- As mentioned by the researcher, a task which specifically involves problem solving, such as a puzzle, might elicit more disagreement and therefore more opportunities for student discussion, negotiation and language learning. Task type will impact interactions.

cite as: Horn, E. (2020, August). Summary of Disagreement in peer interaction: Its effect on learner task performance by W. Chen. *CALICO CALL Research Briefs*. Retrieved from <http://www.calico.org/CALL-research-briefs>
