

Zoom or room: Investigating differences in on and offline interaction

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OUTLINE

- Welcome
- Interaction in EFL classes
- Values clarification task
- Comparing on-offline VC task performance
- Thoughts going forward (teaching and researching)
- Q & A
- YouTube version [here](#)

Interactive processes that lead to learning

AKA Assistance

Interlocutors

- Provide immediate feedback (e.g., ‘What?’ etc.)
- Are a source of information (either by task design, or individual learning history)
- Provide a realistic scenario for out-of-class language use (either through task design or individual learning history)
- Are an audience for whom the learner performs
- In language classrooms, they are a source of assistance to their peers

Assistance in collaborative interaction

1. Language related episodes (LREs) "where students reflect consciously on the language they are producing" (Swain 2001 p 53).
 1. Self correct, other correct, self talk
 2. Asking each other directly
 3. Continuing a partner's utterance when s/he couldn't
 4. Making suggestions
 5. Offering and accepting corrections
 6. **Waiting (for the other person to remember a word)**
 7. **Gesture and facial expressions** are other forms of assistance

- "Assistance that is offered, accepted and used creates a joint performance which can be seen as an important precursor of individual production." (Foster and Ohta, 2005, p.414)
- The ZPD in SLA: "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by individual linguistic production, and the level of potential development as determined through language produced collaboratively with a teacher or peer" (Ohta, 2001, p. 9).
- "Learning happens when learners do something with assistance that they were not quite capable of doing without help before" (Foster and Ohta, 2005, p.415)

- Students often want to communicate, whereas school systems typically want students to have accurate form
- In TBLT / CLT learners focus on meaning (and on completing the task) and unless a task is designed specifically to draw attention to form learners will typically avoid interacting about language form (Swain, 2001; Ellis, 2003; Willis & Willis, 2007; Manning, 2014, 2015, 2017, 2020)
- Task design can promote attention to form **during communication**
 - **Values Clarification task**; Reconstruction tasks; dicto-gloss, etc. (Manning, 2014, 2015, 2016; Wajnrib, 1988)

Values clarification task

Organize, understand, express, resolve, revise

Values Clarification Task

- Gower (1981) ~ revised by Manning (2014, 2018)
- Students are given a set of somewhat controversial prompts related to the topic of their lesson and that incorporate vocabulary / grammar targets for the lesson.
- Students read them silently and indicate their level of agreement (strongly disagree – disagree – agree – strongly agree)
- They may note down any reasons or ideas
- Move into groups
- Begin their conversation by choosing which prompt to begin with, stating their level of agreement, giving their reasons behind their opinions, listening to others.
- Finish each prompt by re-writing it into a newly worded version that all of them now strongly agree with

Example

	Statement	Level of agreement
1	The regional disparities in health care, education, and other services are inevitable because wherever there are fewer people, there is naturally less infrastructure.	SD - D - A - SA
2	Copyright infringement is not a serious problem. We are not undermining anyone if we copy a few movie scenes and talk about them.	SD - D - A - SA

- Statements allow for disagreement for various reasons
- Statements use vocabulary and grammatical structures covered in the lessons

Modifications

- In my work, the VC ends a lesson / topic
- They make good introductory activities too
- **Revising the statement to a mutually agreed-upon one and writing the new version** down promotes:
 1. Talk about the meaning of the sentence
 2. Talk about the words
 3. Talk about the grammar of the revised sentence
 4. Talk about spelling (sometimes)
 5. Coming to a consensus

Research on the VC (Manning, 2014; 2018)

1. Four phases (moves) of VC talk
 - A. Organizing: deciding which prompt to discuss, choosing roles (writer), etc.
 - B. Understanding the prompt
 - C. Expressing opinion
 - D. Negotiating a consensus (and writing it down)
2. While the group's writer is writing (negotiating a consensus), there is much more talk about grammar and wording than while expressing opinion

The study

Research questions

- Due to COVID-19, we were forced to do this online...
 1. Are there any differences in VC performance online and offline?
 2. Are the four phases of the VC still present online?
 3. Are there differences in assistance online and offline?

Participants and research context

- Freshman (first year) students
- English conversation class for English majors
- Each lesson is 100 min (2 X 50 min)
- First period: “Input”: vocabulary, reading, language awareness
- Second period: “Output”: Values clarification task followed by informal debate

Design

This looks quasi-experimental, but it is best to treat this as a comparison of two in

Transcripts made (2 VC tasks only) and examined for LREs, pauses, and phases (moves)

2019-2

- Offline
- Each semester: 2 classes, 16~20 students per class
- Some repeat students
- Readings were current-affairs related
- All classroom interaction recorded
- VC task = 20 min

2020-2

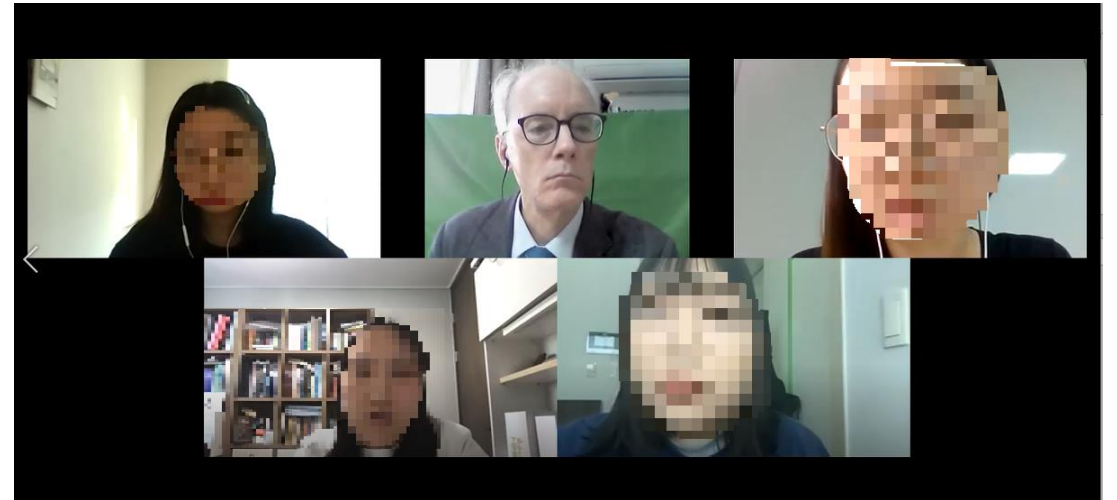
- Online
- Each semester: 2 classes, 16~20 students per class
- Some repeat students
- Readings were current affairs related
- All zoom breakout room activity recorded (but some tech issues)
- VC task = 20 min

Images...

Offline class



Online (Zoom) class



Results

1 week from each class of 2019-2 and 2020-2

Offline n=9 groups (20-minute task time)

LRE total	141
LRE ave*	15.7
Pause total (s)	480
Pause ave (s)	53.3 (0 min 53 sec)
Organizing talk (moves)	96
Organizing talk (ave)	10.6

* Average = per group per 20 min task

Online n=11 groups (20-minute task time)

LRE total	32
LRE ave	2.9
Pause total (s)	2112
Pause ave (s)	192 (3 min 12 sec)
Organizing talk (moves)	133
Organizing talk (ave)	12.1

Offline negotiating a consensus, focusing on words

turn	speaker	utterance
98	S4	Okay okay, so um, uh.
99	S5	Then I don't think, I think we should change the part that like 'I do not want to work' //but like 'I want to work'.\\
100	S4	//Yeah yeah yeah.\\ like //conditional\\, like if I HAD to work for a large conglomerate, uh something like that. So..
101	S5	//Yes\\
102	S6	Or like we can change the whole sentence like 'To adapt in any work culture,'
103	S4	Oh.
104	S6	We need-
105	S4	//Social skills? \\
106	S6	//Many skills\\ such as social skills, like that.
107	S4	Okay, okay so, how,how should we start?
108	S5	Uh.
109	S4	(2.5) Wait, what did you say?
110	S7	Like if we want to-
111	S6	Uh like, we need kind of social skills-
112	S4	Okay so you want to emphasize the social skills part?
113	S6	Yeah, because-
114	S5	But can we change that like the sentence that much? I mean.
115	S4	//I think-\\
116	S7	//You can change the whole sentence\\
117	S6	I think we can change-
118	S5	Okay, yeah.
119	S4	Okay so do you want to focus on like the importance of uh the social skills-
120	S6	The requirements //to\\ adapt in any work culture.
121	S4	//Yeah.\\ Okay. So how do you want to start the sentence?
122	S6	Mm, 'To adapt in-

turn	speaker	utterance
131	S7	//All kinds of skills? \\
132	S4	Okay maybe let's just do this- requirements such as social skills..
133	S6	Mmhm.
134	S4	Uh..
135	S6	Willpower.
136	S4	Willpower.
137	S6	And habits and rituals.
138	All	(Laughter)
139	S5	Or like personal struggles.
140	S4	//Yes.\\
141	S6	//Mmhm.\\
142	S4	So something that could keep you going, even if you don't want to work for that company.
143	S6	Mmhm.
144	S4	(2) Like a driving force, does that make sense?
145	S7	Okay.
146	S5	Motivation?
147	S4	Yeah yeah yeah, something like that.
148	S6	Or the (unint.) added.
149	All	(Laughter)
150	S5	Let's just say we need personal efforts.
151	S7	Okay.
152	S5	Comma, uh social skills, and personal efforts, comma social skills..
153	S4	And motivation?
154	S5	And motivation, yeah.

Online Negotiating Consensus, focus on content

turn	speaker	utterance
94	S1	Okay, so does anybody want to read the second part for me so I can write it down? Okay, they are, maybe we can say like, uh, "Even though the striking doctors are not wholly fulfilling their duty to the public, they are requiring the government to listen to their stand"? (8.5) What is this silence?
95	S2	Sorry, I thought it was my Wifi . Oh, thank you! // Thank you, can you... \\
96	S1	// So, ((names S3)) ... \\
97	S2	Can you like, uh, so like, can you put what you wrote on the word document here in the chat? So I can like, see the final version?
98	S1	Uh... So the version that I'm... that is still, uh, in editing is exactly like here.
99	S2	Oh okay, okay. Okay. Uh... hm....
100	S1	Though I said "Even though the striking doctors are not wholly // fulfilling \\ their duty to the public".
101	S2	Oh okay. "They are requiring the government..." (5) Um...
102	S1	(6) I... I actually would like to add my part in even though I don't think that it makes sense but I want to say like "Even though the striking doctors are not wholly fulfilling their duty to the public, they have the rights to require the government to listen to their stand
103	S3	Oh yeah. It's suitable.

Implications

- The online talk featured far fewer suggestions for wording or grammar than the offline talk
- Online talk had the option of using the chat function
 - Could potentially be used for ‘suggesting words’ but was not.
 - Students who used it used it to send completed sentences that others would approve or not ~ substantially changing talk patterns
- Far longer pausing in online condition could be due to participants using chat, wi-fi issues, distractions by other apps, etc.



Implications for research

- Students at the time these samples were taken were familiar with the VC task
- The samples were not matched for topic ~ which will affect vocabulary (and therefore talk about vocabulary)
- It's better to consider this two parallel case studies
- However, there is reason to believe that online and offline (VC) task performance differs due to the medium
- An *a priori* designed investigation is warranted (for the VC task and other tasks...)

Q & A

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