CONVERSATIONAL ANALYSIS OF "CONFLICT TALK" EXCHANGES

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ABSTRACT

The presenter advances the position that "conflict talk" exchanges may be instrumental in enhancing children's knowledge of the structure, meaning, and usage of language.

Theory and research supporting the notion that conflict is a catalyst for development of young children is highlighted.

Assessment strategies and protocols for analyzing "conflict talk" exchanges arising during conversational interactions are explained. Coding systems for analyzing "conflict talk" are featured.

The presenter believes that language development scholars and Speech-Language Pathologists should take great interest in children's "conflict talk" exchanges.

READING LIST:

Email Presenter for her reading list.

BACKGROUND

Experts recognize that threads of development (social, emotional, cognitive, and language) exist simultaneously and interweave (Kostelnik, et al., 2016).

As conflict is believed to be an impetus for development in several other developmental domains (Erickson, 1963; Piaget, 1932, 1958; Schnewly, 1994; Kohlberg & Gilligan, 1972), scholars should be reflecting on how conflict may function as a mechanism for language learning.

QUESTIONS: Could conflict be a driver for language development? Might "conflict talk" exchanges act as a mechanism to help the child derive linguistic knowledge?

Conflict is universal across time and cultures, so it may be an important building block for language.

"Conflict is a social activity, created and conducted primarily by means of talking" (Garvey & C. U. Schantz, 1992, p. 93). It is a definable, entity manifested "when one person does something to which a second person objects" (Hay, 1984. p. 2).

CODING CONFLICT TALK EXCHANGES

PROCEDURE FOR CODING CONFLICTS ARISING IN DYADIC EXCHANGES

Scan the language transcript for oppositional moves: *denials, refusals, objections, disagreements, conflicting claims or intentions,* and *contradictions.*

Disagreement episodes include the initial opposing move and all interaction until one party submits, consensus is achieved, topic changes, or silence occurs for 30 seconds (Eisenberg, 1992).

The initial opposed conversational turn and final oppositional turn are numbered 0. The other turns are numbered 1, 2, 3, and so forth.

Conflict length is reflected in the number of conversational turns. Moreover, single turn "compliance exchanges" can be distinguished from longer mutual opposition.

Conflict initiating moves are coded: *Simple No, Indirect No, Justification, Alternative, Delay/Distract, Question/Challenge.*

CODING CONFLICT TALK EXCHANGES...

The conflict initiator can be identified as can who takes the last oppositional turn.

Disagreements arise in response to a partner's speech acts. Four types of speech acts can be coded: *requests for permission, requests for action, statement of intent, statement of fact.*

Presence or absence of negative affect during conflict exchanges can be noted. Presence or absence of justification during the conflict can also be detected.

Conflict outcomes include: *submission (by which speaker), standoff, compromise.*