Second Language Learners’ Disagreement Sequences in Korean Conversation

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The L2 Learners’ Disagreement

• Pragmatic competence for successful communication (Kasper & Rose, 1999).

• The **difficulty of socially appropriate expression of dispreferred responses** such as rejection or disagreement.

• The **issue of timing** (hesitation) is particularly difficult for L2 learners because they are still struggling to comprehend a message as well as respond to it (Wang & Waring, 2014).

• Doing a **disagreement without any hesitation** can be seen as rude, aggressive, uncooperative (Wang & Waring, 2014).
The Current Study

• How English-speaking L2 learners of Korean sequentially express disagreement and its relation to their epistemic stances
• Compare those patterns with those of native speakers of Korean
Native Speakers’ Disagreement

Disagreement in Pragmatics and Conversation Analysis
• A negative-face threatening speech act (Brown & Levinson, 1987)
• **Sequentially delayed, mitigated, and delivered with accounts** (Schegloff, 2007; Pomerantz, 1984).
• [agreement] + [disagreement] (Schegloff, 2007; Pomerantz, 1984)

Disagreement in Korean Conversation
• The discourse marker **그런데**, the sentence ender **같은데**, repetitions, and questions in disagreement. Mitigation (silence) (Song, 1999)
• The connective –**는데** (Park, 1999).
• The self-reference form **나는** (Oh, 2007).
Epistemic Stance

- **Epistemic stance**: expression of knowledge
- **Epistemic gradient**: the degree of knowledge difference between speakers (Heritage, 2010, 2012)

Ex 1) Are you married?
Ex 2) You are married, aren’t you?
Ex 3) You are married.
(Heritage, 2012)

- Straightforward disagreement implies a strong epistemic stance and leaves a deeper epistemic gradient between the two speakers (Heritage, 2010, 2012).
- Delays and mitigations for social solidarity
Research Questions

A case study

1. The verbal and non-verbal mitigations and delays that are expressed in NS and NNS conversation
2. The disagreement sequences in NS and NNS
3. The presence/absence of mitigations and delays affecting epistemic gradient and social solidarity
4. Pedagogical implications of these results
Methodology

Data collection
1. Face-to-face conversation (video)
   • two hours of L1-L1 conversation
   • two hours of L1-L2 conversation
     (one hour of intermediate- and one hour of advanced-level learner)
   ➢ Topic was not given. Conversations were not controlled

2. Telephone conversation (audio)
   • The LDC corpus database
Methodology

Participants
Four Korean native speakers
Two English-speaking L2 learners of Korean:
• 1 intermediate-level learner
  (2 years of instructions in the U.S. and a one-year language study in Korea)
• 1 advanced-level learner
  (attended a college in Korea for 3 years)
Conversation among Native Speakers

Before excerpt (1), A had been telling C that B always liked to ask teachers questions at the end of class in high school and that teachers always took a long time to answer her, resulting in the class having less time to rest during the break.

(1) Good teachers

1 C 착한 선생님도 있었네요.
   I didn’t know there were some good teachers

2 (0.1) agreement preface

3 선생님도 -
   Teachers are-

4 A (((nodding)) 그쵸. 선생님은 질문 받으면 좋지 않아요?
   Right. Don’t teachers like students’ questions?

5 (0.2) delay

6 C (head tilt)

7 B 하하[하

assessment
Conversation among Native Speakers

5 (0.2)
6 C (head tilt)
7 B 하하[하
9 C [그런::가요? ((head tilt)) 난 모르겠는데. ((looking down))
10 선생님마다 틀리겠죠? ((looking at B))((looking down))

It depends on the teachers?

*disagreement (question)*
Conversation among Native Speakers

Before excerpt (1), A had been telling C that B always liked to ask teachers questions at the end of class in high school and that teachers always took a long time to answer her, resulting in the class having less time to rest during the break.

(1) Good teachers

1. C: 착한 선생님도 있었네요.
   I didn’t know there were some good teachers

2. A: ((nodding)) 그쵸. 선생님은 질문 받으면 좋지 않아요?
   Right. Don’t teachers like students’ questions?

3. A: 선생님
   Teachers are-

4. A: [assessment]
   …

5. (0.2)

6. C: (head tilt) 하하
   laughter

7. B: 하하
   head tilt

8. C: [그런::가요? ((head tilt)) 난 모르겠는데. ((looking down))
   Do they? I don’t know.

9. C: [gazing down]
   looking down

10. C: 선생님마다 틀리겠죠? ((looking at B))((looking down))
    It depends on the teachers?

Delays and Mitigations

silence
head tilt
laughter
repetition
disclaimer
gazing
interrogative
Conversation between a NS and an intermediate NNS

NS • She came to the U.S. two years ago

NNS • She grew up in America
• She has a Korean boyfriend and they are planning on getting married

Topic: American culture / American men

less knowledgeable < more knowledgeable
Conversation between a NS and an intermediate NNS

Before excerpt (2), the NS asks the NNS why she likes her Korean boyfriend. The NNS contrasts her Korean boyfriend to American men.

(2) American men
1 NNS 그리고 엄分辨率 한국 남자 남자는  가족 think about family
   Also um as for Korean men family think about family
2 NS 아 맞아 (nodding)
   Oh right
3 NS [family like-
       family like-
4 NS [어 근데 나는 미국이 그렇다고 생각했는데=.
   Yeah but I thought American think about family first.
5 NS 아니요 하하
   No haha
6 NS 아 진짜? (suspicious face)
   Oh really? (suspicious face)
7 NNS Like- Here- (0.2) When you are eighteen, go out home,
   Like- Here- When you are eighteen, (you) leave home
8 NS 아 맞아 맞아
   Oh right right

an immediate disagreement using “no” followed by an account

an immediate disagreement sequentially different disagreement

opinion

account
The LDC corpus database (977 tokens of *ani* )

| disagreement to assessments/opinions | - response to yes/no and wh- questions (Kim, 2014)  
| | - rejection to offer, other’s repair initiation, and self-repair, etc. |

| *Ani* ‘no’ | 1/100 | 99/100 |

Table 1. The Use of *ani* in the LDC corpus database

The particle *ani(yo)* “no” disconfirms the hypothesis advanced by the yes-no questions (Bolinger, 1978; Kim, 2014).

- Native speakers of Korean rarely use *ani* ‘no’ when they express disagreement.
The LDC corpus database (7 tokens of *aniyo*)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>disagreement to assessment/opinions</th>
<th>response to yes/no questions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Aniyo ‘no’</td>
<td>0/7</td>
<td>7/7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The use of *aniyo* in the LDC

- Native speakers of Korean rarely use *ani(yo) ‘no’* when they express disagreement.
Conversation between a NS and an advanced NNS

NS

NNS • He had lived in Korea for more than 3 years

Topic: Buying a used camera and getting discount as a foreign person in Korea

less knowledgeable < more knowledgeable
Conversation between a NS and an advanced NNS

Before excerpt (3), the NNS shares his experience about buying a used camera getting a discount in Korea.

(3) Discount to foreigners

1 NS 아 한국에서는 근데 해주죠.
   Ah, In Korea, they give (a discount).

2 NNS ((nodding)) 그쵸
   Right

3 NS 외국인이 오면 왜지 더 잘해 줄 것 같아요.
   I think (Koreans) will give more discount to foreigners

4 (0.1)

5 NNS 음- (0.2)(looking right and left) 그런가요?
   Umm- (0.2) do they?

6 NS [그치 hh [않아요?
   Don’t hh they?

7 NNS [모르겠어요. 모르겠어요. 하하
   I don’t know. I don’t know. Haha

Delays and Mitigations
silence
repetition
disclaimer
gazing
laughter
## Preliminary Findings

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Disagreement Sequences</th>
<th>Verbal delays and mitigations</th>
<th>Non-verbal delays and mitigations</th>
<th>Delivery of disagreement</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Intermediate</strong></td>
<td>immediate disagreement + account</td>
<td></td>
<td>laughter</td>
<td>아니요</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Advanced</strong></td>
<td>delays</td>
<td>-그런가요?</td>
<td>laughter</td>
<td>비(P)네</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 모르겠어요</td>
<td>silence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- [Agree first: 그렇죠, 맞아]</td>
<td>gazing left and right</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Native Speakers</strong></td>
<td>delays + disagreement</td>
<td>-그런가요?</td>
<td>laughter</td>
<td>나는</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- 난 모르겠는데</td>
<td>silence</td>
<td>(생각했)는데</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>- [Agree first: 그렇죠, 맞아]</td>
<td>nodding</td>
<td>근데</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>-</td>
<td>gazing down or gazing on a third person</td>
<td>(negative) interrogatives</td>
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</tbody>
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Table 3. The verbal and non-verbal mitigations and delays
The relationship between the degree of epistemic stance and social solidarity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Disagreement sequence</th>
<th>The epistemic gradient</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>intermediate</td>
<td>• The straightforward disagreement with “no” results in a deeper epistemic gradient.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• If this occurs too often, it could result in a negative impact on social solidarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Such responses can be interpreted as rudeness.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Table 4. The relationship between the degree of epistemic gradient and social solidarity
Pedagogical Implications

1. Disagreement sequences: [delay] + [disagreement]
   [agree] + [disagreement]

2. Linguistic forms
   [delay: 그런가요?] 
   [agree: 그렇죠, 맞아] 
   [disagree: 나는, (생각했)는데, 근데, (negative) interrogatives, question] 

3. Non-verbal delays and mitigations
   nodding, silence, laughter, gaze
• Such limited data cannot be generalized to all L2 learners’ disagreement sequences.
• Express disagreement using *aniyo* ‘no’ with limited language proficiency.
• A proficient learner is able to utilize delayed and mitigated responses in Korean.
• Teaching how to delay and mitigate with socially appropriate structures and expressions will be useful for L2 learners to assimilate in the L2 community.