Adult upper secondary school level students’ lexical inferencing
Investigating the effects of collaboration, global L2 proficiency and patterns of interaction
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Results

- No statistically significant effects of Lexical Inferencing task type (individual vs pair) and Order of task were observed using omnibus data.

- Significant correlations were found between the participants’ global L2 English proficiency scores and their Individual Lexical Inferencing task scores as well as their Pair Lexical Inferencing task scores.

- A division into HIGH, MID and LOW global L2 proficiency groups, and a comparison of the mean scores on the Individual Lexical Inferencing task and the Pair Lexical Inferencing task showed that the HIGH group improved their score on the Pair task, whereas the MID and LOW groups performed worse on the Pair task (see Figure 1). However, only the MID group difference was statistically significant.

- Pairs with a ‘collaborative’ approach performed better than pairs that were characterized by ‘expert/novice’ or ‘dominant/passive’ interaction patterns (Storch, 2002).

Methods and Materials

Participants:
Upper secondary school level ESL students (N = 22) from an intact class in Sweden, taught by the teacher-researcher. Mean age: 23.0 (SD: 3.5).

Materials:
L2 proficiency was determined through a series of 5 task-based proficiency measures illustrated below. Then, the 2 LI tasks were administered: Individual (ILI) and Paired (PLI).

Conclusions

- The results corroborate earlier studies indicating that high proficiency learners are more successful than lower proficiency learners when inferring lexis.

- The lack of statistically significant positive effect of collaboration is somewhat surprising, but may depend on the task format and learners’ ability to collaborate efficiently (Leeser, 2004).

- Further studies are needed of individual and paired LI performance. The research could be conducted by researching practitioners (cf. Erlam & Ellis, 2018).

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Reference


