

# Exploring Conflict Dynamics Model in Second Language Collaborative Writing Classrooms

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## Abstract

Global pioneers had done quite a lot of theoretical and pedagogical research on peer conflicts, among which they considered Second Language (L2) peer assessment, teachers' assessment, and the classification and identification of conflicts. While few scholars stand in L2 collaborative writing classrooms in early attempts to witness the conflict dynamics that learners confront in producing peer feedback. Therefore, this study gathers data from a Chinese university and seeks to expose the dynamic development of the conflict in peer interaction and characterize the intragroup conflict phase model. It is of great reference value for teachers to enact much of the teaching design in China since the data was initially extracted from Chinese classrooms. Implications for teaching are addressed, along with recommendations for future research.

**Keywords:** second language education, writing, peer conflict, conflict avoidance, Asian culture

## 1. Introduction

Collaborative writing (CW) refers to two or more writers engaged in substantial interaction to compose a jointly produced text (Lunsford & Ede, 1990). Recent empirical and theoretical publications on face-to-face collaborative writing demonstrated considerable attention to the outcomes that collaborative writing produced, ranging from the effects on students' writing fluency (Pham, 2021), the value of peer reflective practices (Herder et al., 2018), how dialogic feedback is constructed in tasks (Alharbi & Alqefari, 2022). However, the present research failed to illustrate the approaches used by the collaborators to push forward the de-escalation of disagreements or potential intragroup conflict in the collaborative writing classroom. What has been confirmed is that conflict in peer interaction in collaborative writing does constitute an interactive and dynamic system as the writing process progresses from drafting to prewriting to the revision session.

Although rules for explaining strategic changes in response to intra-group conflict during interaction from a social constructivist's learning perspective of the individual and surrounding environment as a linked system have only reaped trace attention, most recently from Chen and Lee (2022). A surefire way to move from disagreement to consensus in collaborative writing is to deal with in-group conflict. In this vein, a multi-level model that integrates individual conflict behaviors over time, the moderators, and the antecedents of the different types of group conflict will be discussed in this study.

### 1.1 The Statement of the Problem

Conflict experts agree that peer interaction in collaborative writing groups is fraught with conflicts, which are not only destined to occur but also continue to develop as the writing process progresses. Pondy (1967) provided the conceptualization of conflict development and its dynamics of flourishing and annihilation, which considered the three types of conflict (task conflict, relationship conflict, and process conflict) as a whole and provided guidance for the subsequent theory of conflict development stages. Five stages of conflict were well documented in the literature: 1) Latent conflict: the source of the conflict; 2) Perceived conflict: perception only, when conditions of latent conflict do not exist; 3) Felt conflict: tension, anxiety, dissatisfaction, and perception; 4) Manifest conflict: behaviors that impede the achievement of another person's goals; 5) Conflict aftermath: post-conflict behaviors that are either resolved or suppressed. Jeong (2008) discussed the dynamics behind conflict development, including emergence, persistence, and transformation. He noticed that conflict systems

change through a cycle of expressing discontent: the inhibiting escalation and the action-reaction process are cyclically intermittent and balanced. While how conflict patterns change and evolve over a series of successive CW tasks has not been discovered.

An ever-increasing body of literature has elucidated what kind of transformation and evolution took place among task conflict, relational conflict, and process conflict. These three types can interact with each other, with one type evolving into another or stimulating another. Individuals who dispute with others over task procedures may attribute the cause of task disputes to inconsistencies in personal characteristics (Somaraju et al., 2022). In this way, task conflict increases relational conflict. Empirical evidence for this relationship was presented by Yu and Zellmer Bruhn (2018), who found that task conflict can predict social disruption through relational conflict. The case study by Chen and Lee (2022) has led to a more profound understanding of conflict dynamism. They trapped the conflict pattern development in three steps of collaborative writing (planning, drafting, and revising). Promising results showed that cognitive/task conflict continued to accumulate and intensify socio-emotional/relational and process conflict throughout the three stages, ending with cognitive/task conflict being relatively less and socio-emotional/relational and process conflict remaining at high intensity. Therefore, this study aims to try and ascertain a series of adjustments, changes, strategies, and triggers of recent Chinese L2 writing (English) collaborators who experienced intragroup conflicts. The results are expected to unleash pedagogical implications that maximize the efficiency of collaborative writing, rather than one-sidedly encouraging or combating the growth of conflict.

## 2. Literature Review

Intragroup conflict is defined as the degree to which members experience real or perceived incompatible goals or interests (De Wit et al., 2012). Scholars' efforts directed toward methods of conflict resolution have soared. The conflict in group collaboration was viewed as merely destructive to the overall group's performance, efficiency, and satisfaction when the term popped up in academia. Wall and Callister (1995) even refuse to acknowledge the feasibility of moderate conflict and deny leaders' initiatives to promote conflict to get closer to organizational goals. Instead, they would rather allow the conclusions to fall within the realm of conflict resolution, which involves the reduction or termination of conflict. Over the time, the dynamic nature of conflict was already in heated debate, constantly being constructed and overthrown.

### 2.1 *The Dynamic Nature of Conflict*

Despite the existence of a tripartite classification of conflict, researchers have long focused more on task conflict and relationship conflict, continuing to ignore the process conflict (Behfar et al., 2011). Indeed, process conflict is a unique type of conflict with its own dynamics (Jehn & Mannix, 2001). More research has begun to reveal complex relationships between process, task, and relational conflict, suggesting that it may be foremost to think about when each type of conflict occurs. As Greer et al. (2008) declared, the process conflict may lead to task conflict because disagreements over task performance can interfere with task completion. Similarly, task conflict can lead to process conflict because different views of goals bring about disagreements about how to pursue them.

These three types can interact with each other, with one type evolving into another or stimulating another. When individuals do not have the necessary cognitive resources to distinguish between person-related and task-related stimuli, disagreements about tasks may be mistaken for criticisms of personal competence and personality (Tidd et al., 2004; Choi & Cho, 2011). Jehn and Chatman (2000) noted that substantial cognitive resources are required to distinguish whether the conflict is task-driven or interpersonal disagreement-driven. Thus, individuals who dispute with others over task procedures may attribute the cause of task disputes to inconsistencies in personal characteristics (Somaraju et al., 2022). In this way, task conflict increases relational conflict. Empirical evidence for this relationship was presented by Yu and Zellmer Bruhn (2018), who found that task conflict can predict social disruption through relational conflict. The case study by Chen and Lee (2022) has led to a more profound understanding of conflict dynamism. They trapped the conflict pattern development in three steps of collaborative writing (planning, drafting, and revising). Promising results showed that cognitive/task conflict continued to accumulate and intensify socio-emotional/relational and process conflict throughout the three stages, ending with cognitive/task conflict being relatively less and socio-emotional/relational and process conflict remaining at high intensity. Individual moderators, including writing beliefs, interaction strategies, past English language learning experiences, and personality, as well as sociocultural moderators, such as the traditional Chinese culture's reverence for harmonious relationships, all play a role.

## 2.2 Escalators and De-escalators in Conflict Development

For several years, great effort has been devoted to the comprehensive examination of the moderators in the conflict's development when writing collaboratively (e.g., Greer & Dannals, 2017). The findings of the educational research on conflict are quite convincing, and it is possible to conclude that moderators can be divided into escalators in the rising stage of conflict and de-escalators for conflict resolution.

The gap in the second language's (English) competence or proficiency is deemed to be one of the culprits in initiating conflict and catalyzing it. Radwan (2011) suggested that there is a statistically significant difference in the overall use of strategies between students who are proficient in English and those who are less proficient. Another escalator is negative emotions, since they produce students' reluctance to engage in collaborative essays. Van Lier (2014) defined emotions as an emerging source of motivation, the pleasure of exploration or collaboration, and natural curiosity. Complaints, embarrassment, disapproval, and anger among members caused collaboration to fail in reaching consensus at the outset (Wang, 2019).

So far, it has become commonplace to consider culture as one of the de-escalators behind intra-group conflict. Harmony, face (*mianzi*), and relationship (*guanxi*) are key carriers of the culture of frequent Chinese classroom conflict; these are evident in the conflict literature all the time (Hwang, 1998; Chien, 2007; Li et al., 2020), providing additional support for the idea that culture buffers the conflict process in subtle but essential ways, such as explicit statements (Liu & Furneaux, 2014). The third-party intervention turned out to be another de-escalator, and in the collaborative writing classroom, it is exactly the intervention from the teacher. Quantitative research conducted by Lin and Yang (2013) authenticated that a large proportion of students attributed authoritative images to their teachers and perceived them as more competent and qualified than their peers. To some extent, it can prevent students from having conflict with their partners (Kuscenko, 2018).

## 2.3 Research Questions

This study seeks to expose the dynamic development of conflict in peer interaction and characterize the intragroup conflict phase model, capturing relationship expectation, personality, higher-level intervention, and cultural principles. It contributes to conflict processing theory in two ways.

First of all, it sheds light on the conflict dynamics model to explore a systematic pattern between conflict management approaches and perceptions of conflict type among Chinese university students in collaborative English writing courses. Second, this study investigates holistic factors that formed students' strategies over the duration of a collaborative writing event. Furthermore, the analysis of peer interaction in collaborative writing is as strongly backed as ever by the Social Constructionism Theory. It answers the following questions:

RQ1. How did the conflict model, which originated in L2 collaborative writing tasks in China, evolve over time?

RQ2. What sociocultural and personal elements governed students' conflict management strategies?

## 3. Methodology

Most studies have measured conflict based on behaviors and potential strategies for conflict resolution. And the conflict cycles and evolutionary models in university collaborative writing classrooms remain insufficiently elaborated. Consistent with the theoretical and research context of conflict models provided in the review above, this study uses case studies designed to fall back on individual data to visualize the conflict flow. The case study is an in-depth investigation of a specific individual with specific challenges and goals, group, time period, or event to build a detailed understanding of the topic, providing social proof in an original way (Yin et al., 2012). In the end, a robust model from which to probe into the factors in more detail that influenced the case study will be built.

### 3.1 Research Design

This mixed study starts with a pilot questionnaire of 163 English majors from S University. The questionnaire helps the researcher to get to know a general image of students who had conflict experience in English writing classroom. Eventually six interviewees entered the separate interviews. Before all the six sessions begin, each participant will be given a Likert 5 questionnaire (see Appendix). The Likert 5 questionnaire will not be quantified but will be used as a reference for the design of the interview outline. Then participants' excerpts are coded independently at the next step.

### 3.2 Participants

In this study, the S University from the Chinese mainland was picked (n=6). Below is the interviewees' anonymized personal (and course) information, which was ethically approved by the participants prior to the start of the study. Similarly, they went through a complete argumentative writing procedure as presented in

figure 1. All the semi-structured interviews and questionnaire data were collected online through Tengxun Meeting (an online meeting application) and Wenjuanxing (a website designed to share and cumulate questionnaires). This study promises that six different conflict story lines will be drawn down to the paper while the interview is undergoing and that is how the conflict model come out in this study.

The coded semi-structured interview text captures a range of perspectives, allowing the researcher to delve into complex phenomena within a specific context. Collaborative writing principles has integrated into the instructions of courses that apply English as a medium, such as Academic Writing, Essay writing for English Majors, and Creative Writing. This study mainly relies on the interview for case description. The coded, semi-structured interview text captures a range of perspectives, allowing the researcher to delve into complex phenomena within a specific context.

Table 1. Profile of interviewees

Pseudonym	Biological gender	Grade	Major	Course taken	English proficiency
Alice	Female	Junior	English	Academic Writing	CET 4, TEM 4
Billy	Male	Freshman	English	Academic Writing	CET 4
Camila	Female	Freshman	English	Academic Writing	CET 4
Dora	Female	Sophomore	Business English	Creative Writing	CET 4, CET 6
Elle	Female	Junior	English Teaching	Academic Writing	CET 4
Frank	Male	Senior	English	Academic Writing	CET 6, IELTS 6.5

Note. CET refers to China's College English Test. TEM refers to China's Test for English Majors.

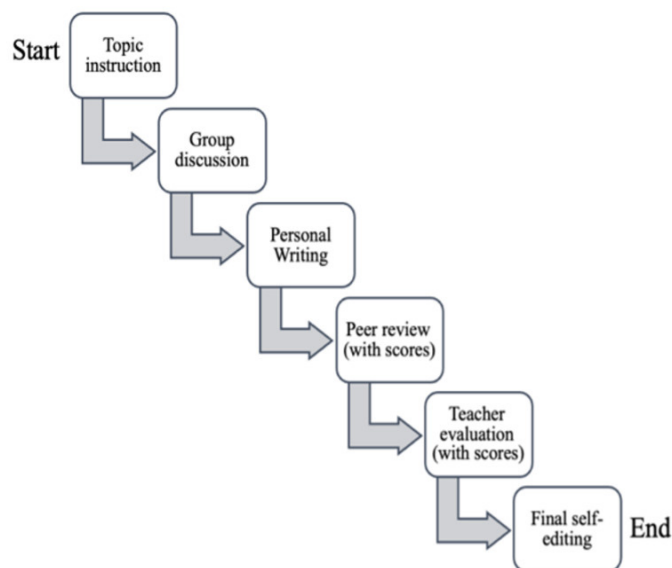


Figure 1. Process of participants' collaborative writing class

### 3.3 Data Collection

Students' individual interviews (n = 6) were content analyzed to determine the challenges they faced as a result of conflict and the factors inserted into their coping strategies when they got a handle on collaborative writing tasks. Tengxun Meeting saved the interview videos and exported them in the form of text. Later on, the researcher directly processed the data in open coding to decompose and analyze it, initially through open coding to generate core categories and related concepts to ensure reliable coding and a consistent understanding of the codebook.

### 3.4 Reliability of the Coding

This study ensures its coding reliability by employing authentic interviewee's feedback and the assistance of a qualitative analysis software NVivo. During the process, six separate excerpts are incorporated into one document to create a pivotally encoded relational network. After searching for conceptual categories from the collected textual materials to take out the keywords and name them, ultimately the dynamic interaction model in unveils the consequences that come with the process.

## 4. Results

This study distilled each interviewee's storyline and conflict self-report in the scripts and produced a novel phase model declaration that is not limited to only one particular conflict but rather collectively blends the overlapping characteristics of six conflict experiences. In other words, this study reconceptualized three phases of conflict growth with different emphases and characteristics.

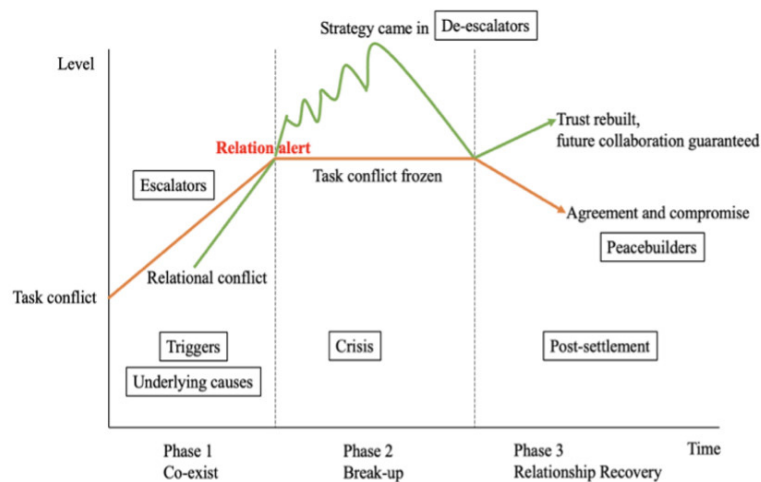


Figure 2. The dynamic evolution

### 4.1 Three Phases of Conflict Model

The dynamic model containing three phases of conflict development in the collaborative L2 writing procedure was drawn out.

**Phase 1 Co-exist:** The topic was assigned by the course instructor, and then students formed groups of 4-6 people. Their ideas popped up and soon collided in the class. Any element can pose threats to their existing relationship and further discussion, such as an aggressive attitude, verbal attack, disagreement in grammar, task allocation, etc. These elements are treated as triggers. The relational conflict does not show up together with the task conflict. Instead, it occurred at the moment when team members shifted their attention from the assignment itself and their disagreements to personal emotional tension, and it continued to climb until the breakthrough point released the alert.

**Phase 2 Break-up:** When the students came to the second stage, they showed skepticism about suggestions from their team members and only retained recognition of their own logic. As a result, here comes the crisis. They no longer trusted each other. Students employed their strategies urgently to prevent relationship breakdown when it reached its climax. For example, they chatted after class or took the teacher's advice as the correct answer to end the argument between them so that they could cool down the heat as soon as possible. And although their conversations still concerned the task conflict, it remained "sleeping" during the whole of Phase 2. Because students were no longer meant to touch on who was absolutely wrong or right. Instead, the real ultimate goal was to fix their emotional impairment and relationship bonds.

**Phase 3 Relationship recovery:** The collapse of a trusting relationship alerted them. They then take a series of remedial measures, such as after-school negotiations, asking for intervention from their course instructor, or jumping to the conflict that previously prevailed, just so that the atmosphere can quickly return to peace as if the conflict had never happened. So, agreement and compromises turned up. They still held a positive vision for future collaboration. Researchers, using both qualitative (Barker, 1993) and longitudinal quantitative (Langfred, 2007) approaches, have found that conflict within teams can reduce trust. Rebuilding trust here marked the relationship's recovery and settlement successfully.

#### 4.2 *The Progress of Conflicts' Aggregation to Exclusivity*

Students were reported to come up against frequent task conflict and relationship conflict before they eventually put together a writing draft of their own. Although they adopted peer suggestions, the criteria used for editing text are quite subjective and random. And the process of conflict persisted in the invisibility of intragroup conflict. Video records implied that students viewed the writing schedule as a constant dogma, so they took it as it meant to be like that. The teacher's authoritative figure prevented them from even entertaining the slightest thought of questioning the whole writing process.

AMY: 'The teacher told us the rules and what we should do first in class and after class, and[...]I just think she is totally right'.

CAMILA: 'I don't think anything's wrong with the teacher, I listened to all she told us'.

It is common that traditional communities, including these classrooms, small group discussions, lectures, teacher-student conferences, and written assignment genres support a traditional hegemony in which the teacher determines appropriate discourse and routines. Cooper and Selfe (1990) worried that this could hinder the intellectual accommodation of students, discourage intellectual resistance, and therefore severely limit students' understanding and effective use of a language.

This study would rather define the beginning stage, the first moment that any group member detected signs of the three conflicts (task conflict, process conflict, and relational conflict), as a fusion of subjective efforts. Within Phase 1, the topics assigned by teachers are usually two-dimensional, which means that students need to take one of the two positions to develop their thinking and build an outline. And in most cases, the two perspectives on the topic exist in opposition to each other. Thus, group discussions provoke students to throw opposing comments on the table. Behind their statements are often multidimensional elements working together, such as upbringing, private stereotypes, and past friendships. This stage is more akin to a powder keg of orientated conflict. The text box for the process conflict is dotted due to its absence from classroom conflicts. But it is still clear that task conflict and relational conflict took their responsibilities, exhibiting various internal frictions.

Students unconsciously voiced disagreements and aggressive expressions, which they later realized that it constituted some kind of conflict.

FRANK: 'She (one of the group members) kept attacking me at that time, in an indifferent manner. [...] I did not want to take any arrogant advice from her at all. It would have been nice if she had a milder tone'.

BILLY: 'We were not even willing to stay on the same boat. He (one of the group members) is as baffling as his views. [...] I felt it was pointless to carry on our discussion'.

Therefore, enough time was left for the conflict to escalate until the discussion came to a head. The collaboration went nowhere.

DORA: 'At that time, I just focused on elaborating why I thought that way, but in the end, I was disappointed because nothing changed'.

Soon, they traced the origins of the conflict and assigned blame. In the statements of the six interviewees, it is self-reported that they did not mobilize a coping strategy in the first place, out of an attempt to defend their own point of view but also containing the negotiated goal of assimilating their peers.

CAMILA: 'He (one of the group members) certainly could not understand my writing thoughts and logic, it was generated in my own brain'.

AMY: 'I feel like I went to great lengths to explain to her, but she still insisted on her criticism of me. I should have known I didn't have to try so hard to get her to believe me'.

This sort of disorder was not expected to last long before they detected possibilities for relational conflict to climb higher. Out of concern for the maintenance of interpersonal relationships, all other conflicts must give way to relational conflicts. This is the new perspective of this study. I divorced relational conflict from the three conflicts (see figure 2) because the next stage is entirely a model that only serves the relational conflict. The previous literature review already examined the extreme pursuit of a harmonious atmosphere among students in Chinese classroom contexts, and it was verified in this study to be the exclusionary nature of relational conflict, which came up only in the second stage.

More conflict coping strategies were attached to the relational conflict since it relied heavily on its priority status in the Chinese students' thinking system in the coming stage. The first stage was open and allowed multiple

conflicts to co-exist, as this study demonstrated, and did not require any deterrent measures or interventions against conflict escalation. By the next stage, on the other hand, students were clearly warned by the “lightning bolt” when the bonds of friendship and collaboration were threatened, leaving them with very little time to unite before the storm hit (relationship breakdown). With the very limited conflict buffer in Stage 2, they urgently embarked on relational conflict. Dora and Elle both made it clear that they tried to pretend to forget the previous unpleasantness and then started negotiating to repair their friendship.

DORA: ‘So I talked with him. And we did not mention our debate before, or not possible will the argument come to an end’.

ELLE: ‘I guess we need to say bye-bye if we continued to be hostile’. But obviously, this is done with a harmonious orientation. And at the outset, it is predetermined that someone is bound to compromise between the two people who initially disagreed.

FRANK: ‘Then I was like, okay, you can still have your own comments, I will never tell you that I listen to it as if it is the wind’.

CAMILA: ‘I only took the advice that I thought it is right, but I would not persuade him to accept my advice anymore’.

And the task conflict? Interviewees did not welcome it within their teams as much as they did in the first phase. There is a natural tendency for members to avoid problems with their tasks when a relationship conflict arises. The compromise of the group members was based on the prediction that a hot debate or a prolonged cold war had a high probability of ending in a terrible relationship breakup.

#### 4.3 Conflict Coping Strategies

Synthesizing the excerpts from the six interview texts, this study addressed three conflict coping strategies that are frequently employed in Chinese university English writing classrooms: negotiating, seeking the teacher’s intervention, and jumping over the conflict.

Table 2. The strategies

Who said	What is said	What is done
Amy	I found her, we had conversations in our dorm. We could skip to the next part.	Negotiate + jump over the conflict
Billy	We were discussing in the class, but it was useless that time. I cannot imagine our collaboration in the future without our teacher...she saved the team.	Negotiate + teacher’s intervention
Camila, Elle	I turned to the teacher when our conversations did not make any sense.	Negotiate + teacher’s intervention
Dora	The disagreement itself does not matter.	Negotiate + jump over the conflict
Frank	She has her own opinions, and I have mine. That’s all, we do have to cling to the argument...or ever look back.	Negotiate + jump over the conflict

It is worthy of notice that this trio of tactics emerged in the second phase of the stage model and served to repair the relational conflict. Just as the exclusionary nature assigned to relational conflict in the Chinese classroom above, relational conflict is the real center of the sudden surge of attention and intense strategy in this stage. It belongs to the only category of privileged conflict that enjoys the consciousness to be dealt with (see figure 3).

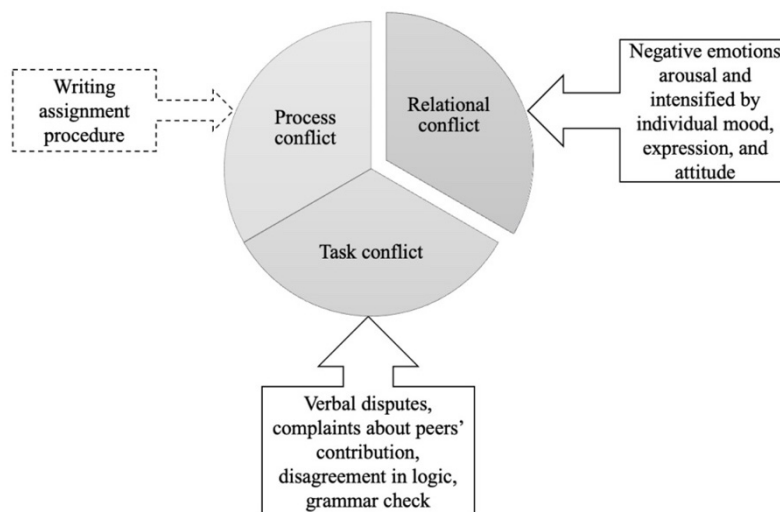


Figure 3. Co-exist model

4.4 Culture behind: Peace-oriented Process

Generally speaking, the interviewees can finally achieve their goal of quelling the relational conflict, regardless of any means used. However, it must be pointed out that sociocultural factors play the leading role as a dominant ideological position in their decision-making, although this study acknowledges that higher-level interventions (e.g., teachers) as well as personalities take effect (see figure 4). Four elements were found in the students’ strategies for pursuing relationship recovery. They are personality, family values, specific cultural norms, and higher-level intervention.

ELLE: ‘It would be embarrassing if we allow the conflict to take down our relationship’.

BILLY: ‘Objections should not always occupy the center of our negotiations. And I’m far from alone in emphasizing this point’.

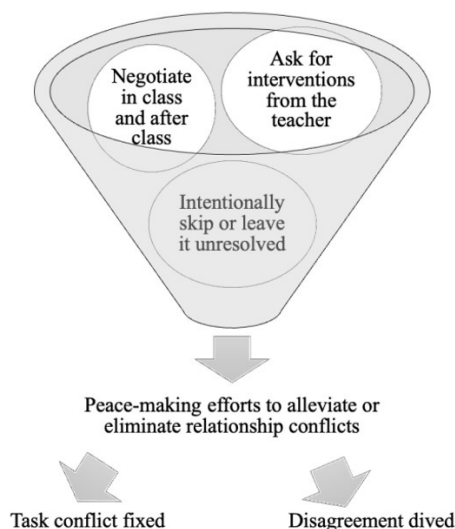


Figure 4. The relationship-centered model

The choice of conflict style pines for face negotiation needs, which vary from culture to culture (Ting-Toomey & Kurogi, 1988). In Chinese, it is mianzi, or social capital; a broken promise or display of anger or aggression causes mutual loss of face and is disastrous to any party (Graham & Lam, 2003). This is one of the driving forces behind Chinese students’ conflict coping strategies (Guan & Ploner, 2020). So even though their negotiations were actually directed toward task conflict at the beginning, it did not matter whether the task conflict was resolved or not at the end; they were only concerned with the return of interpersonal relationships and peace



within the group. Put differently, the de-negotiation toward task-conflict resolution is essentially a decent excuse to repair a relationship on the verge of collapse.

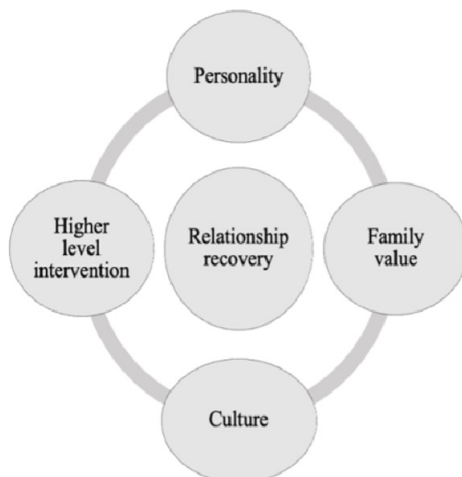


Figure 5. Relationship recovery circle

The reason we set family values and social culture apart from each other is that there is no research to ensure that the tentacles of traditional culture reach into every family’s education, although they do overlap sometimes. For example, family inheritance leads to peace (or harmony) in many cases.

Table 3. It is always “no need.”

Who said	What is said
Billy	There’s no need to keep arguing. [...] Both sides will be speechless and bye bye. (“Bye bye” means?)  We will not review and circulate our writing samples again, nor seek opinions from the other party. I may still do it in the future, but the discussion is over this time.
Dora	It’s just a group assignment. Can it have any significant long-term impact? Who dares to polish your composition in the future?
Elle	We discuss a certain issue and persuade each other in the class. [...] If we cannot persuade each other in the end, just let it go.
Frank	Whether it’s a boy or a girl, there’s no need to hate for love. There is no need to have an enemy. If we are good friends in our daily life, there is no need to allow this little thing just to hurt the group harmony.

DORA: ‘My mother always taught me that the maintenance of relationships between classmates must be based on peace. [...] I remember when I used to take classes, the course instructor said that we Chinese are generally reluctant to break up with others. Instead, we want the collective good to be achieved, and a slight loss of personal gain is totally fine’.

FRANK (spoke in support of the uniqueness of family education): ‘People in my family are straightforward and kind, and rarely do they take their own interests so seriously. I don’t necessarily want to fight with others for my own interests’.

Therefore, as the conflict evolved, the consideration of future cooperation, the compromise of relationship maintenance, and the trade-off between individual and collective interests went far beyond the classroom’s writing development goals.

**5. Discussion and Conclusion**

This study constructs a stage model to explain how and when different individual interactions in classroom conflict scenarios lead to intragroup conflict, the final two directions (disappeared or dived), and how social structure and situational factors influence students’ social behavior. In addition, this study empirically validates the role of subjective dynamics from a coping strategy perspective. By engaging in conflict situations throughout their lives, people exhibit behaviors and perceptions that enable them to regulate the situation and weigh up the

gains and losses. It may be mutually beneficial to tolerate or resolve conflict at a lesser cost than to risk conflict and damage to relationships for Chinese students. So eventually they reached harmony, even though the disagreement was still buried deep inside and never spoken out.

What made this study stand out is that it visualized the exclusionary nature of relational conflict embodied in the second stage, the relational breakdown model, and it greatly contributes to the field of Chinese conflict research. In Chinese classrooms, students push relational conflict to the forefront out of concern for Mianzi (face, social capital) and Guanxi (relationships). Guanxi can be translated as strong relational ties. The reasoning suggests that Chinese conflict avoidance stems from social norms regarding relationships and the maintenance of harmony. Rošker (2013) emphasized that harmony in Confucianism is "most valuable" in relationships among people and with the outside world, due to the fact that harmony represents a genuine concern for intimacy, trust, compatibility, and mutually beneficial behavior. As collectivists, theoretically, the Chinese place a high value on de-escalation of conflict in order to maintain interpersonal harmony and avoid aggressive ways of working with others (Yang, 2016).

For solutions, classroom observations and office hours are available as gateways linking teacher and student communication, and students thus have the opportunity to report to the teacher on conflicts and negotiation dilemmas that they encountered in the group's writing progress. In this way, teachers coordinate, guide, supervise, set the assignment schedule, and encourage students to interact with each other in group activities. Only when conflicts are put on the table and negotiated sensibly and as equals can they finally be sorted out to implant new content and help students acquire writing skills and ingenuity in their Zone of Proximal Development. More than that, teachers should take into account that each academic level of student has its own features and learning preferences, so they can ensure that every student is aware of their roles as both readers and writers and help lay out clearly the learning outcomes of group work. The teacher coordinates, guides, supervises, sets the framework, and encourages students to communicate openly in groups to make them understand the nature and purpose of the collaboration they will be doing. From the student's perspective, scaffolding support can come from peers or teachers. Both parties should be on the verge of taking collaborative L2 writing to the next level, rather than being viewed as hostile. The writing task provides them the opportunity to jointly construct the text, to pool linguistic resources (collective scaffolding), and thus to write texts with more linguistic complexity and more grammatical accuracy. Peers can also share explanations with each other, collaborating with others for additional editorial advantage.

## 6. Recommendation for Further Research

This study portrays a model of conflict dynamics in Chinese-English collaborative writing classrooms, constructing empirical evidence of the processes behind the conflict. It also highlights the privileged role of relational recovery in students' conflict strategies when warnings show that relationships are on the verge of disintegration. This study extends theories related to harmony culture and conflict decision-making, although the empirical support for the model in this case study cannot be applied to every major. Future research is encouraged to investigate the effects of gender differences on conflict strategy styles since the current study recruited a gender sample that was singularly biased toward women. English majors or similar groups with an overly exaggerated ratio of men to women are believed to offer new insights into this area. Besides, it is recommended that researchers compare writing goals, peer evaluations, and teacher ratings to explore the different outcomes of relationship conflict and task conflict on students' writing development.

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## Appendix A

### Questionnaire on How you Perceive your Peers' Performance

Notice: Questionnaire on how L2 learners consider their peers' performance, especially their conversations, and the nature of conflicts at the time when they were generating peer assessment will be English Version ONLY since the participants understand English items well. It is a 5-item Likert Scale for participants to choose one for each from Strongly Disagree/Disagree/Neutral/Agree/ Strongly Agree.

Items	Factor 1: Personal Views	Strongly Disagree/Disagree/Neutral/Agree/Strongly Agree
1	I can recall many scenarios about conflicts in the past in my writing courses.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
2	I think that the peer assessment produced more conflicts than group discussion.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
3	I rejected or ignored most of the suggestions that my peer raised up.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
4	I trust advice from teachers more than peers.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
5	I think my peers are not authoritative enough to make revisions to my writing sample.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
6	I can feel emotional conflicts while discussing.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
7	I was often frustrated by the resolution of conflicts.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
8	I think peer feedback can always help me find out the grammar mistakes that I ignored.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
9	The conflict was always not resolved successfully in the end.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
10	I think the remaining conflicts will have a negative impact on my writing in a long time.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
	Factor 2: Elements	Strongly Disagree/Disagree/Neutral/Agree/Strongly Agree
11	I think conflicts in group discussion led to positive effects for my writing development.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
12	I think the conflicts result from the personality differences of each group member.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
13	My English proficiency has caused a barrier to better writing performance.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
14	I think it was my peer's attitude, tones that catalyze the conflicts.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
15	I think conflicts in group discussion have negative effects for the whole team spirit and cooperation.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
16	I think emotional conflict is based on the team members' distrust of my English proficiency.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
17	I have tried to negotiate with the team members to resolve the conflict.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
18	Controversial topics make our conflicts more frequent.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
19	I will choose to be silent or compromise with my team members to avoid conflicts.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>

20	I think conflicts occur less when my team members possess higher English proficiency.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
21	I think I am the one who really know the logic of my own composition best, but my team members interfere with me.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
22	I was dissatisfied with the low participation of the other team members.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
23	Our writing feedback was not planned in advance, so the messy process confused all members.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
24	I want to create a harmonious cooperation environment, so I try to avoid disagreement and oral conflicts.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
	Factor 3: L2 Teachers' Instruction	Strongly Disagree/Disagree/Neutral/Agree/Strongly Agree
25	I think the lack of teachers' guidance is the main reason for the disagreement between students.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
26	I often feel stressed and anxious when learning a second language. I hope I can get the teachers' help psychologically.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
27	I think teachers' authoritative intervention accelerates the resolution of conflicts.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
28	I hope the teacher can assign some topics for critical thinking.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
29	I think teachers' guidance is more helpful to my writing development than peers'.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
30	Teachers' suggestions have less affinity than those of my peers.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
31	All the time, the serious image left by the teachers kept me away from consulting him/her.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
32	I think teachers should emphasize in the group that members should respect the ideas of others and treat topics critically.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>
33	I don't think teachers can empathize with my ideas like my peers.	Strongly Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Disagree <input type="checkbox"/> Neutral <input type="checkbox"/> Agree <input type="checkbox"/> Strongly Agree <input type="checkbox"/>

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