

## Abstract

This study investigated the characteristics of adult-child disputes in Mandarin-speaking families in Mainland China. Naturalistic interaction between caregivers and 2-year-old toddlers in ten families were analyzed by coding the occurrence of disputes, the context of disputes, and the dispute strategies used by caregivers and toddlers in each of their utterances. Results showed that the context of a dispute has an effect on the strategies used by both caregivers and children. Also, in the dispute process, both caregivers and children had an effect on the responses of the other side. Preliminary observation of the use of verbal responses versus silence revealed differences between the two and that silence, even for 2-year-olds, was meaningfully used and played a unique role in their disputing strategies.