To investigate the opportunities for eighth-grade students to communicate their ways of thinking during seatwork, we examined how tasks influenced classroom discourse. The goal was to examine how tasks (a) influenced interactional exchanges between teacher and student(s) during seatwork; and (b) provided opportunities for assistance and learning. The data included five lessons each from Germany, Japan, and the United States that contained at least one seatwork segment. Findings indicated that the more open-ended tasks led to more thought-generating interactions that were characterized by a greater degree of co-participatory organizational structure, struggle, and negotiation.

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