

A CASE STUDY OF L2 CLASSROOM DISCOURSE
ANALYSIS THROUGH DIALOGIC LENS

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FACULTY OF LANGUAGES AND LINGUISTICS

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A CASE STUDY OF L2 CLASSROOM DISCOURSE ANALYSIS THROUGH DIALOGIC LENS

ABSTRACT

Classroom discourse which is made up of spoken interactions plays an important role in facilitating second language learning and acquisition. It is also a crucial tool for collective thinking. From a socio cognitive perspective, classroom discourses which are dialogic contribute towards second language learning and acquisition and therefore the interactional opportunities influence the success of students' second language acquisition. Acknowledging the potentiality of dialogic classroom discourses in enhancing second language learning and acquisition (L2) amongst Malaysian students, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (MOE) designed and implemented a professional development programme known as Oral Proficiency in English (OPS-English) which focused on dialogic teaching in the teaching of English amongst lower secondary teachers in Malaysia. (Ministry of Education, 2013). This study explored and investigated the perceptions and classroom practices of eight Malaysian second language teachers on dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse in facilitating students' oral communication skills and acquisition as well as shaping students' cognitive development. The study adopted a qualitative approach which involved a case study design comprising semi-structured interviews and classroom observations. The interview findings were validated with classroom observations of four teachers to investigate the dialogic features prevalent in the discourse pattern used by the teachers. The Discourse Analysis (DA) method facilitated the identification and analysis of the dialogic features employed by the teachers. The findings of this study indicate that dialogic teaching was perceived as an interactive and meaningful discourse structure that affords L2 oral communication skills and acquisition. The adoption of dialogic teaching as a pedagogic discourse demonstrated the teachers' pedagogical shift towards a social process of learning which took advantage

of the dialogic features introduced during professional development. Nevertheless, the teachers were challenged with issues of students' proficiency that obstructed their effective intervention process. Hence, the teachers needed improvement in enacting the dialogical approach into their L2 practices. The findings have key educational implications in terms of teacher discourse patterns and for further research in terms of facilitating second language acquisition.

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A CASE STUDY OF L2 CLASSROOM DISCOURSE ANALYSIS THROUGH DIALOGIC LENS

ABSTRAK

Interaksi lisan yang dimanifestasikan melalui wacana bilik darjah merupakan faktor penting dalam proses pembelajaran dan pemerolehan bahasa kedua. Kajian membuktikan bahawa wacana bilik darjah berbentuk dialogik membantu dalam proses pembelajaran dan pemerolehan bahasa seseorang murid dari aspek sosial dan kognitif. Justeru, kejayaan murid dalam pembelajaran dan pemerolehan bahasa kedua banyak bergantung kepada peluang interaksi yang sedia ada. Menyedari potensi kesan wacana bilik darjah berbentuk dialogik dalam meningkatkan pembelajaran dan pemerolehan bahasa kedua (L2) dalam kalangan murid Malaysia, kajian ini dilaksanakan khususnya untuk mengkaji persepsi guru tentang wacana bilik darjah berbentuk dialogik dan penggunaan wacana bilik darjah berbentuk dialogik dalam kelas Bahasa Inggeris. Lapan guru bahasa Inggeris sekolah menengah di Malaysia telah dipilih dalam kajian ini untuk mengkaji secara mendalam peranan wacana bilik darjah berbentuk dialogik dalam mengupayakan penggunaan bahasa Inggeris murid dan perkembangan kognitif. Pendekatan kualitatif telah digunakan untuk pengumpulan data, yang terdiri daripada temu bual separa berstruktur dan pemerhatian bilik darjah. Kaedah kajian kes digunakan untuk meningkatkan kebolehppercayaan dapatan temu bual di mana empat guru diperhatikan dalam kelas masing-masing iaitu tiga untuk setiap guru. Pemerhatian bilik darjah telah dirakam, ditranskripsi, dan dianalisis untuk mengenal pasti ciri dialogik yang lazim dalam corak wacana yang digunakan oleh guru. Kaedah Analisis Wacana (DA) telah digunakan untuk memudahkan pengenalanpastian dan analisis ciri-ciri dialogik yang terdapat dalam pelajaran. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa guru mendapati penggunaan wacana bilik darjah dialogik telah meningkatkan pembelajaran bahasa Inggeris secara linguistik dan kognitif kerana ia berstruktur interaktif. Guru-guru telah memaparkan perubahan

dalam amalan wacana bilik darjah kearah dialogik berdasarkan latihan pembangunan professionalism yang mereka telah terima. Amalan wacana bilik darjah dialogik yang telah dipraktikkan oleh guru dalam kajian menggalakkan peluang pembelajaran, pembinaan pengetahuan secara kolektif di kalangan murid serta penguasaan bahasa kedua. Namun demikian, guru-guru memerlukan penambahbaikan dalam menggunakan kaedah pengajaran secara dialogik untuk direalisasikan dalam pengajaran dan pembelajaran seharian. Dapatan kajian ini memberi implikasi kepada pengajaran Bahasa Inggeris.

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LIST OF SYMBOLS AND ABBREVIATIONS

| | | |
|-------------|---|---|
| BPK | : | Bahagian Pembangunan Kurikulum |
| CE | : | Communicative Event |
| CEFR | : | Common European Framework of Reference |
| IPR | : | Interview Protocol Refinement Framework |
| KSSM | : | Kurikulum Standard Sekolah Menengah |
| L1 | : | First Language |
| L2 | : | Second Language |
| MEB | : | Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025 |
| MoE | : | Ministry of Education Malaysia |
| OPS_ENGLISH | : | Oral Proficiency in English for Secondary Schools |
| PD | : | Professional Development |
| SLA | : | Second Language Acquisition |

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

This chapter sets the development of the study. It briefly describes the background of the Malaysian education system in terms of second language (L2) learning and language acquisition. It then discusses the problem statement followed by a brief explanation of the teachers' professional development. The research objectives are then explained followed by the research questions, scope and the limitations of the study. The chapter ends with the organisation of the chapters.

Over the years, the learning of the English language in Malaysia has taken various forms and in the current millennium, the learning process has also acquired new dimensions. While previously, focus was set on the mental schemata of the learners, and their prior knowledge in language learning, today, other dimensions have been introduced. Interactions and dialogues are now part of the new elements being introduced into the language learning process. It is believed that such interactions and dialogues can help to stimulate students' oral proficiency, hence enhance their language learning. However, not much has been recorded on this aspect of language learning (R. Cui & Teo, 2021). Therefore, the idea of interactions and dialogues serving as a language learning enhancement approach has become an interesting area for investigation. It is good to examine these aspects of communication, so as to understand how spoken interactions contribute towards language acquisition and cognitive development, particularly among second language (L2) learners.

Swain and Watanabe (2012) state that classroom discourses albeit dialogues are essential for knowledge construction and second language acquisition. The interactions that take place aid language learning and knowledge construction and are a shared

experience. Nevertheless, one of the challenges of L2 learners is in spoken interaction (Lantolf, 2011, Gan, 2012; Tom et al., 2013). This is because for classroom interactions to be conducive, stimulating, and meaningful, the learners involved must be familiar with the sociolinguistic and sociocultural context. Consequently, it is also a challenge for teachers to prepare L2 speakers to construct the contextual foundations of their talk which leads to meaning making due to the diversity of the learners' mother tongue, competence in proficiency, topic exposure, and perhaps even confidence (Burns, 2017). Without a doubt, L2 learners require exposure to the linguistic environment manifested in the interaction between the participants in the context of a classroom (Doley, 2019). One form of linguistic environment is the discourse structure adopted by the teacher which is the utmost concern in an L2 classroom (Wilkinson et al., 2017).

Oral proficiency forms the foundation for literacy development and academic learning (Gupta A Lee, 2015). Burns (2016) and Hennessy et al. (2016) had also mentioned that spoken interactions are important elements in second language learning and acquisition. Perceived as a learning tool, spoken interactions stimulate collective thinking. This is clearly manifested during classroom discourses occurring among the learners themselves (Hennessy et al., 2016). However, without the language proficiency or the confidence to communicate, classroom discourses can be dampening, for the teachers as well as the learners because to interact in a language which they have no proficiency in can be too demanding for learners (Burns, 2016). Clearly, the learners need to have competence.

The spoken interactions between interactants enable the construction of knowledge where the one who knows more makes contributions to the knowledge of the one who knows less. Interactions between participants allow them to build on their experiences, thereby assisting learners to build on their language skills as well as their knowledge construction. However, not everyone who participates in an interactive exchange is able

to contribute to the dialogue or conversation because one may be inhibited by one's lack of confidence, lack of vocabulary, or lack of understanding about the topic. This inhibition, likewise, can also affect the L2 learners' classroom discourse attempts (Lantolf, 2011; Gan, 2012; Tom et al., 2013). Mother tongue interference can also influence second language learning, both positively and negatively (Ashairi, 2014). Since the teachers still need to conduct such classroom discourses, they need to have some idea how this can be performed. This study aims to address that gap of understanding.

A review of studies conducted on classroom discourses in Malaysian schools (Musa et al.; 2012, Hardman & A-Rahman, 2014; Tan, 2017) revealed that there is a lack of opportunities for students to use English during classroom interactions. Researchers involved in such classroom discourses, such as Aman, (2006), Noor (2014), Mustaffa et al. (2011), Hardman & A-Rahman, (2014) and Tan, Tee and Samuel (2017) had mentioned that these discourses had persistently been monologic - teachers seemed to dominate the classroom discourse, thereby hampering L2 learners' use of the English language. Evidently, this form of discourse does not encourage spoken interactions, nor does it allow for knowledge construction (Doley, 2019; Howe & Abedin, 2013). Moreover, the discourses implemented were also described as an exam orientated, hence prescriptive in nature (Koo, 2012). In this context, the L2 teachers were described as dominant in their discourses due to the emphasis on examinations. As a result, the communicative aspects of language learning were often neglected (Musa et al., 2012). This led to the minimal participation of students. The teachers were thus dominant and authoritative in the classroom whilst the L2 learners' use of exploratory talk became stunted (Hardman & A-Rahman, 2014).

To optimise spoken language learning opportunities, L2 teachers play a crucial role. They are responsible for creating the linguistic and social ambiance of the classroom

which aims to promote and develop the learners' efficient and effective use of the language (Doley, 2019; Gharbavi & Iravani, 2014; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Classroom settings illustrate how L2 learners get to use the language effectively. This was observed by Burns (2016), Mercer (2007), and Ong (2019) who mentioned that research on classroom discourses can be used by teachers to prepare their students for spoken language competency and cognitive expansion.

Malaysian classrooms can best be described as the main source of L2 language experiences, hence making L2 interactions should be the priority. Since the classroom functions as the main avenue for L2 learners to interact; it is thus crucial that they are facilitated in their capacity to engage in meaningful classroom discourses. Such an activity creates opportunities for learners to apply their L2 use as well as to construct knowledge collectively (Rusli et al., 2018). This is imperative because it is on the government's agenda, as part of nation building (Jantmary & Melor, 2014).

1.2 Research Problem and Significance of the Research

There is a need to conduct more studies on classroom discourse so as to examine and analyse the structure of L2 classroom discourses in the Malaysian context as it plays a crucial role in facilitating second language learning and acquisition. The need to examine was propelled by the inability of Malaysian students to speak in English (J. Hardman & A-Rahman, 2014; Rusli et al., 2018; Nijat, Atifnigar, Chandran, Tamil Selvan, & Subramonie, 2019). The inability of Malaysian students to speak and master English is a pressing need that requires attention despite given formal exposure to English language learning for a period of 11 to 13 years in school. Research indicates their language competence still falls below the satisfactory mark (Jariah Muhamad et al., 2013; David et al., 2015). One of the contributing factors is the classroom discourse. A review of studies on Malaysian classrooms found that the classroom discourses were persistently

monologic in which teachers were largely employing the triadic IRE interaction pattern (Tan, Tee and Samuel, 2017). Teachers dominated the discourse pattern and there was a lack of opportunities for students to develop their oral communication skills in L2. Acknowledging that the classroom is the main language environment for L2 learners (Goh & Burns, 2012), students require a classroom environment rich with classroom talk to facilitate second language learning and acquisition. Hence, to improve the oral communication skills and language acquisition of Malaysian students, there is a need to transform the current pedagogy from simply reproducing or delivering knowledge to collaborative production of knowledge.

In view of this concern, the Ministry of Education (MOE) initiated reforms on the English Language Education in Malaysia. One of the initiatives as part of the reform plan was the introduction of dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse or classroom talk to a group of lower secondary English language teachers. The aim was to equip the teachers with a pedagogical approach leveraging on classroom discourse to extend students' spoken English and second language acquisition by engaging them in dialogues. This dialogical approach which harnesses on talk among students and with teacher (Alexander, 2018 ; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019) is a new approach in the Malaysian context. Hence, this study aims to explore the teachers' understanding, perceptions, and beliefs of dialogic teaching and the enactment of the approach into L2 classroom practices following their professional development.

Specifically, there is a need to examine and analyse dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the context of L2 rural secondary classrooms and explore the perceptions of the teachers involved. A group of teachers were given professional development on dialogic teaching to be conducted in rural secondary schools with the aim of supporting students to enhance their oral communication skills in English. There is little evidence to

show that dialogic teaching was conducted in rural schools where learners' L2 competence may be low. Thus, this study is a preliminary effort to explore the perceptions of L2 teachers from the rural schools on dialogic teaching and investigate their practices of dialogic teaching in the L2 classrooms of rural schools following the professional development. The views of the L2 lower secondary teachers involved with dialogic teaching had also not been well documented post training, especially in terms of their competence and their training. In that regard, the gaps mentioned would be addressed by the current study.

There is also a need to examine how dialogic teaching is applied in real classroom practices among the lower secondary L2 teachers by adhering to the new secondary curriculum, the CEFR Standard-Based English Curriculum (SBELC) for Secondary Schools (BPK, 2017) which emphasises on communicative competence. It is deduced that communicative competence can be achieved through the inquiry-based learning approach, and the collaborative learning approach which focus on a classroom environment that is loaded with oral discourses. Hence, this new curriculum promotes dialogic teaching focusing on classroom talk to support the use of English as well as the co-construction of knowledge, simultaneously. Thus, this study would contribute to literature as to how the enactment of dialogic teaching is in accordance with the English language syllabus of the Form One and Two.

Additionally, this study also aims to enhance research by looking at the L2 teachers' discourse patterns when using the dialogic teaching approach since it is deemed as a tool which can develop and enhance students' L2 language learning and acquisition. To date, studies looking at teacher discourse from a dialogic lens in Malaysia has been scarce (Tan, 2017; Shaari et al., 2018). Based on this, it is deduced that this study contributes to the literature on teacher discourse. Detailed classroom evidence generated through video

observations could be used as tangible evidence to support the ministry when developing guidelines for teachers to follow.

The context of Malaysia has a fundamental bearing on this study because oral communications in L2 is largely influenced by the multilingual and multicultural setting of this country, where Malay, Mandarin, and Tamil serve as the dominant languages (L1) for the different ethnic groups of Malaysians. Thus, teachers' understanding about the dynamics of the classroom discourse is essential so that the students with different L1s can be given better scaffolding support. It goes without saying, that the implementation of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse offers students of different L1, socio and cultural background (Alexander, 2018) the ability to use L2 and the patterns of practices that encourage collective knowledge construction, oral proficiency and second language acquisition. Thus, this study strives to investigate the potentiality of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse for the Malaysian context in facilitating second language learning and acquisition.

1.3 The Malaysian English Education Background

The trajectory of the English Language Education in Malaysia indicates that it has gone through radical changes over the past 10 years (Hardman & A-Rahman, 2014). There has been a shift in teaching, moving from the conventional teacher-centredness approach to a learner-centredness approach within Malaysian classrooms (Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia, 2009). The Malaysian Education system aims to promote classroom practices that stimulate thinking. Meanwhile, the Malaysian Education Blueprint (MEB) 2013-2025 also emphasises on bilingual proficiency and thinking skills. To realize the aspirations of these policies, it would appear that every child in Malaysia needs to be proficient in English as well as Bahasa Malaysia, as stipulated in Shift 2 of the MEB.

The Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) aligned Standards-Based English Language Curriculum (SBELC) for Secondary Schools focuses on communicative competence (BPK, 2017). The curriculum emphasises the core strands, such as effective communication skills for articulating thoughts and ideas, inquiry based learning, and collaborative learning so as to stimulate learning (BPK, 2017).

One of the components which is emphasised in the curriculum is the speaking component which focuses on students' oral communication skills. The curriculum stresses the students' ability to communicate meaning, to use registers and communication strategies appropriately in small and large groups. The document also indicates that language learning has taken on a social dimension.

In relation to this, teachers are required to plan strategic student-centred activities with the focus on oral communication skills. These activities must be based on explorative learning. The aim is to actively engage students in the learning process so as to raise their overall language proficiency. Through the explorative learning approach, students are expected to become curious, proactive, critical and creative in their thinking which is reflected through their talk. Students would thus be guided on how to ask questions, how to provide ideas and views, gather, organise, and analyse information, be able to explore, make judgments, solve problems, apply learning to new situations, and to make reflections orally (BPK, 2017). For all these to be accomplished, teachers take on the role of facilitators and facilitate students throughout the learning process and in accomplishing the tasks (BPK, 2017). Teachers scaffold students' metacognitive skills so as to enable them to take charge of their own thinking.

The explorative learning experience is thus an approach for language teaching that is dynamic and effective. Through this approach, curiosity is cultivated, proactive attitudes are shaped and critical and creative thinking skills are instilled with the aim of enhancing

and sustaining pupils' interest. To implement this kind of teaching approach, the teachers play a vital role.

One important aspect is teachers' questioning skills. Teachers are expected to be able to constantly throw questions at the class so as to engage their thinking thereby, allowing them to be creative, critical, innovative, and logical in their responses. The teaching approach is also expected to enable students to evaluate their own learning process. Besides the questioning technique, other techniques such as the inquiry approach, project-based learning, brainstorming, demonstration, simulation, role-play, group discussions, drama, forums, and dialogues are also emphasised to engage students in the teaching and learning process (BPK, 2017). In this regard, L2 students are encouraged to use English in authentic settings verbally and in particular through small group discussions (Abdul Rahman et al., 2017). Specifically, the curriculum is interactive and communicative leveraging on conversations and dialogues, promoting dialogic teaching in the teaching of English (Hardman & Rahman, 2014).

To be able to deliver the aspired curriculum, teachers require professional training on the implementation of this new curriculum. One of the professional development training courses which the lower secondary L2 teachers underwent was on dialogic teaching. The course trains teachers in dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse which aims to enhance students' aural and oral skills. This was achieved through a programme known as Oral Proficiency in English catering to Secondary Schools (OPS- English). The programme is a form of intervention, designed specifically for lower secondary students, particularly, under-achieving schools located predominantly in rural areas of Malaysia. The programme was introduced to 2,600 lower secondary L2 teachers from the rural schools in Malaysia.

1.4 Oral Proficiency in English as Teachers' Professional Development

As part of the effort to equip teachers with pedagogical approaches aligned with the new Malaysian Curriculum for English and with the need to enhance oral communication skills amongst students, a specific professional development (PD) programme on dialogic teaching was designed known as OPS-English. The professional development utilised Alexander's (2010) dialogic teaching model and Nystrand's (1997) dialogically organised instruction model as the course framework. Alexander's (2010) dialogic model was specifically selected and adapted as it was considered a holistic model which embodied the linguistic and paralinguistic features of classroom talk. The model reflected the integration of the pedagogical, curricular and cultural dimensions which shaped policies and classroom practices (Alexander, 2018; Cui & Teo, 2021). Nystrand's (1997) model complemented Alexander's as the emphasis was on teacher questioning and uptake. As a matter of fact, Nystrand's model had largely influenced Alexander's model. Both models focus on the reciprocal element of teacher and students with the emphasis on higher order thinking (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Thus, both frameworks were applied with the aim to train teachers in dialogic teaching and the enactment of it in the English lessons for better second language oral communication skills and acquisition.

The training for the teachers involved both theory and practice (Ramasamy, 2023). The English Language Teaching Centre (ELTC), an in-service teacher training institute provided a two-week course to English language teachers on the underpinnings of dialogic teaching. The PD was structured in a manner that the teachers were given content knowledge on dialogic teaching which involved the principles, the talk repertoires and the indicators of dialogicity. The teachers were then given the skills to apply the dialogic principles, repertoires and indicators in practice. The teachers were also equipped with a module known as the 'Teacher Companion' (ELTC, 2013) to guide them in the

implementation process. This module was aligned with the curriculum and mapped to the syllabus of the Form One and Two English (Ramasamy, 2023).

The teachers' module emphasised on opportunities for student talk. The teachers were introduced to the concept of classroom talk prevalent through dialogues and types of talk proposed by Alexander (2010). In an effort to facilitate the transition from the deductive approach of teaching via the 3P stages - Presentation, Practice, and Production towards dialogic teaching, the structure was retained but elements of dialogic teaching were employed. For instance, the teacher input that is presented at the presentation stage was replaced with whole class discussion. Thus, the enactment of dialogic teaching by the teachers was performed via the lesson stages as noted in the 3P stages - Presentation, Practice, and Production as illustrated in the diagram below, see Figure 1.1.

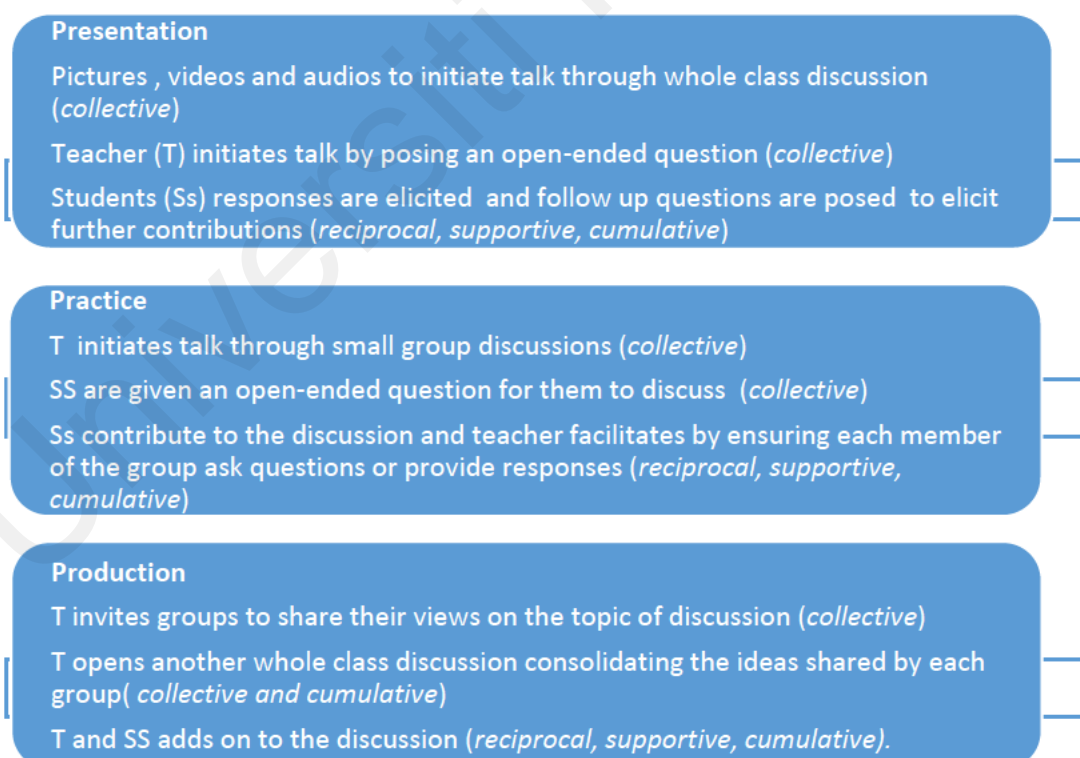


Figure 1.1: Dialogic Teaching as seen through the 3 P Stage Lesson Plan within a Malaysian L2 Classroom (Form One and Two)

Alexander's (2010) five dialogic principles and six talk repertoires were depicted in all three stages of the lesson (Figure 1.1). For instance, at the beginning of lesson, a whole class discussion was initiated depicting Alexander's dialogic teaching principle of collectiveness where students addressed the learning task together. This is particularly evident in the framing of an open-ended question by the teacher at the start of a lesson to allow students to address the task together. Nystrand's (1997) teacher questioning, and the importance of higher order questions were discussed and modelled during training. Teachers were also guided on how to pose open-ended questions spontaneously with the aim to frame and facilitate talk. Hands-on sessions were developed to provide teachers practice on posing open-ended questions spontaneously relevant to the topic given. In doing so, they would be able to pose questions to initiate talk amongst the students. The teachers were also introduced to the concept of scaffolding of talk through the use of open-ended questions. This would enable them to facilitate classroom talk by building on the students' responses. Aware of the L2 context, teachers were trained to scaffold talk through vocabulary and phrases which would allow students to learn and acquire vocabulary and phrases relevant to the topic so as to develop sentences that would generate talk pertaining to the topic.

Teachers were specifically introduced to Repertoire 4- teaching talk (Alexander, 2010) with the focus on discussions and dialogues as talk strategy for students to be engaged in talk (Ramasamy, 2023). Simultaneously, Repertoire 3 - learning talk (Alexander, 2010) was also introduced to expose teachers to the talk types expected of students. Students are to provide responses by narrating, explaining, exploring and justifying (Alexander, 2018). The talk types to demonstrate each of the principles such as collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful were emphasised during the PD. For instance, teachers were guided on how to get students to narrate, explain and justify (Repertoire 3)

as part of addressing the task together (cumulative principle) through whole class and small group discussions.

The principle of reciprocity was demonstrated through a group task during the course. Teachers were guided to initiate whole class and small group discussions which would enable students to interact. It is through the discussions, students would listen attentively to one another, share their views, and consider alternative viewpoints which support the dialogic principle of reciprocal. Students would apply talk type such as analysing, evaluating, questioning, arguing and justifying (Repertoire 3). The reciprocity of talk is further facilitated through teacher questioning.

Dialogic teaching principle of supportive was demonstrated to the teachers through a hands on-session where teachers were given a topic to discuss and were told to articulate their ideas freely and support one another in attaining a common understanding on the given topic. This was to guide teachers on how to apply the principle of supportive through dialogues. The principle of cumulative was also introduced and demonstrated through a discussion task where the teachers were told to build on the responses provided by their coursemates and chain them into coherent lines of thinking which indicates meaning meaning. Upon completion of the task, teachers were told to apply the principle through the discussions and dialogues which they would initiate in class. Finally, the principle of purposefulness was depicted through a sample lesson taken from the Form One syllabus to show the teachers how the classroom discourse can be purposeful in accordance with the demands of the curriculum.

Suggested strategies and activities for the language classroom were provided in the Teacher Companion to ensure that opportunities are created for L2 learning and acquisition. Teachers were also equipped with procedural guidelines and suggested questions which they could use to facilitate classroom talk. Meanwhile, a module was

also developed for students known as the 'Student's Handbook' consisting of pictures which served as a guide for students to talk. Teachers were also provided with audio-visual aids to be used to present the topic, and to initiate talk.

The teachers were also exposed to the Socratic style of questioning so that this could be used to help their students become more engaged in the learning process. The aim was to encourage the students to express their views, and to justify them. The teacher's role is to model the language and to engage students in talk through dialogues and open-ended questions.

The second stage was the practice which was in the form of group discussions. Here, the students discussed the topic by extending their talk or ideas developed during the presentation stage. Each student would be given the opportunity to talk, and thus, the right to participate. The teachers would then pose a question to the groups which they can then discuss the topic. This also encouraged the students to ask more questions. At this stage, the teachers would facilitate the group discussions; she would also pose questions with the aim of probing and facilitating talk. The third stage, production, is where the students shared their thoughts and ideas about the topic discussed, or their perspectives about the topic, with the whole class. These stages were modeled by the trainers for the teachers so that the teachers have an idea about the application when they need to implement it in their own classrooms.

Hence, this professional development equipped the L2 teachers with the ability to apply dialogic features and assist them to operationalise the five principles of dialogic teaching through oral discourses made up of discussions and dialogues so as to enhance student engagement and learning. It was with the intention to empower students to acquire English through spoken interactions, and to increase their cognitive ability. Upon receiving their professional development on dialogic teaching, the teachers then

implemented the pedagogical discourse in their own classrooms. Of course, this was based on their understanding developed through the training. From the onset, their practices were designed to facilitate second language use so as to enhance the aural and oral skills of the students. It is on this basis that the current study was conceptualised, which is to identify and examine the teachers' perspectives, and their implementation of dialogic teaching.

1.5 Research Objectives

The current study aims to explore and investigate the perceptions of dialogic teaching by Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers in facilitating L2 oral communication and acquisition. The study focuses on the teachers' practices of employing dialogic teaching in their English language classrooms.

The study also aims to capture the experiences of the teachers involved in the Oral Proficiency in English for Secondary Schools (OPS-English) programme as an exploratory attempt to identify their preference of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse, and the manner they use specific discourse strategies to facilitate classroom talk. The data retrieved could be used to explain how dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse contributes to students' L2 development within the lower secondary English language classrooms. In that regard, the main aim of this study is to examine the ways in which L2 teachers, through their choice of discourse, enhance or limit L2 students' participation in classroom talk.

1.6 Research Questions

1. How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers perceive dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition?

2. How do Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers translate dialogic teaching into real classroom practices following the professional development programme?
3. How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies influence learners' interaction pattern?

The research questions are premised on the notion that dialogic teaching is a classroom discourse that capitalises on talk which affords language learning opportunities to take place through social interaction and mediated learning. Teachers' discourse and the discourse strategies employed are crucial in endeavoring the learning to take place. This study takes the view that second language acquisition is a social process, and cognition is a key element achieved through social interactions and mediated learning. Learners are considered as members of a community therefore learning takes place collectively through the dialogic interactions happening in the classroom. It is situated in the education setting which examines classroom discourse.

1.7 Scope and Limitations of the study

Formulated as case study research (see section 3.2), this study comes with some inherent strengths and limitations. The study explores and investigates eight Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' perspectives and practices on dialogic teaching, a classroom discourse with more depth. Hence, the sampling cannot be generalised to a wider English teaching community in Malaysia. For the purpose of this study, the analysis of the classroom discourse was based on three aspects - the teachers' discourse patterns, teachers' questioning, and teachers' turn management. Thus, the outcome derived may not be comprehensive enough to be generalised as it did not investigate the other aspects in the enactment of dialogic teaching.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter has introduced the research issues by discussing the problem statement, and the significance of the study. Malaysian Education policies on learning English were explained and the background of the teachers' professional development was also given. This was followed by the research objectives, and then the three research questions. Finally, the scope and limitations of study were mentioned. The chapter ends with the organisation of this thesis.

1.9 Organisation of the Thesis

This thesis comprises seven chapters. Chapter One introduces the study and its background. The chapter focusses on the research problem, research objectives, research questions, and limitations.

Chapter Two presents the theoretical perspectives which underlie and inform this study. It reviews past studies pertaining to dialogic classroom discourse. The chapter also looks at language learning as a social process whereby classroom discourse becomes a tool that can be used to enable learners to use language socially among themselves. Dialogic classroom discourses are also seen as a mediational tool which helps the students to establish a connection between themselves and the social contexts in which language learning took place.

Chapter Three introduces the research methodology employed in the current study and discusses the rationale for using such a methodology. A detailed description of the entire research process is provided, which includes the context, the sampling, the data collection and data analysis.

Chapter Four presents the findings by giving a detailed account of the teachers' perceptions.

Chapter Five presents the findings by presenting a detailed account on how the teachers employed dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse.

Chapter Six draws on the findings presented in the previous chapters and provides a summary of the main findings of the study.

Chapter Seven brings the thesis to a close by offering implications for teachers, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the literature of past studies. It begins with a discussion of the pivotal role classroom discourse plays in second language acquisition (SLA) within the English language context. It also looks at the influence of classroom discourse on language learning and acquisition opportunities. The chapter then explores the link between interaction and second language acquisition in the context of second language (L2) classrooms as a social context. Following this, is a review of the dialogic models used for investigating classroom discourses indicating the convergence of it in terms of advancing students' reasoning and learning. The specific model of choice for the study which is the dialogic teaching model by Alexander (2010) is reviewed to provide the justification for the selection of it. The theoretical framework that underpins this study is then discussed. The review summarises recent investigations of classroom discourse through a dialogical lens. The convergence of language and cognition through classroom discourse is then discussed. The chapter concludes with a review of teacher professional development on dialogic teaching and the links to the present study.

2.2 Research on Second Language Acquisition through Classroom Discourse

Second language acquisition (SLA) is a highly interactive process involving students' cognitive process with the linguistic environment. This is reflected in the active participation of students with their peers and teacher when engaged in classroom discourse (Ahmadi, 2017, Loewen & Sato, 2018). Interaction is said to be effective in promoting L2 development (Zhang, 2009). Liu and Le (2012) assert that L2 learners' successful learning outcome is largely influenced by the quality of the classroom discourse. Research on classroom discourse has gained much attention in recent years

(Thoms, 2012, Ong, 2019). A current area of interest is to examine the influence of classroom discourse in enhancing L2 acquisition with a focus on the extent of learners' engagement and participation in classroom talk which leads to success in language mastery. Thus, researchers such as Alexander, (2018), Hardman, (2019) and Loewen and Sato, (2018) state that L2 acquisition is largely influenced by the type of classroom discourse shaped by the teacher. There is a need for L2 communities to understand the way teachers support and mediate second language learning and acquisition. The way students interact and engage in meaning-making largely depends on how the teacher constructs her/his own discourse socially and culturally. It is through such interactions that learners learn to use the language to negotiate meanings, thereby promoting SLA. Through interaction with others, learners learn to listen, and seek clarifications. They also learn to make speech modifications so as to ensure that understanding takes place (Loewen & Sato, 2018).

Linguistic models of second language emphasises both input and output in acquiring language and is reflected through the active participation of students with their peers as well as teachers in classroom discourse (Alahmadi, 2019; Loewen & Sato, 2018, Zhang, 2009). Output is the ultimate pedagogical goal in L2 acquisition. As L2 learners interact, comprehensible input is selectively 'absorbed' to enable them to use the linguistic forms correctly to express themselves. In other words, L2 learners are internalizing what they have learnt and experienced. Therefore, interactions are crucial which serves as mediating device in facilitating learning and second language acquisition (Congmin, 2013; Loewen & Sato, 2018; Morton, 2012).

Halliday (2004) argues that linguistic discourses facilitate meaning-making as it is considered a social phenomenon. Thus, dialogic classroom discourses which focus on talk are vital for students as the interactive sequences facilitate the construction of

knowledge collectively on the content as well as the linguistic aspects of a particular language (Alexander, 2018).

The study of classroom discourse, driven from the sociocultural orientation, has become an important theoretical perspective in guiding researchers towards investigating the role of interactions in classrooms, instead of just focusing solely on the learning outcomes (Cui & Teo, 2021; Alexander 2010; Howe 2010; Mercer 2004; Mortimer & Scott 2003). From a sociocultural perspective, the effectiveness of classroom discourse is evident through students' active participation in it. The ability of learners to share their thoughts, elaborate on their opinions, and build on each other's ideas enables the construction of knowledge collaboratively. (Alexander, 2018; F. Hardman & Abd-kadir, 2019; Mercer 2004; Michaels & O'Connor, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2017).

Classroom discourse is defined as interaction that takes place verbally between teachers and their students and between students themselves (Thoms, 2012; Walsh 2006; Walsh, 2020). Hence, classroom discourse refers to the oral language used within a classroom setting (Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014). It is crucial that students are provided with language opportunities for better reasoning (Chang & Chang, 2017; Díez-Palomar et al., 2021; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013 ;Tan, 2020). It was asserted by Jocuns (2021) and Jones (2013) that through classroom discourses, students gain a wider exposure to language.

Classroom discourse has been found to be positively related to students' oral proficiency. Oral fluency refers to the ability to express oneself by speaking accurately, with clear pronunciation, appropriate grammar, ability to recognise words and without hesitation (S. Zhang 2009). For the purpose of this study, oral fluency is known as oral proficiency and focuses on the ability of students to interact through discussions and dialogues, listening to the responses provided by peers and to respond accordingly with

continuity by producing coherent utterances as well as employing appropriate communicative strategies in instances when the appropriate vocabulary or grammar is not available (Haneda & Wells, 2008). Therefore, classroom discourses are vital as it allows for an advanced use of language among students and teachers.

Through long-term research interest (Alexander, 2001, 2006; Hall, 1998; Lemke, 1990; Littleton & Howe, 2010; Mehan, 1979; Mercer & Howe, 2012; Mesa & Chang, 2010; Nystrand, 1997), classroom discourse has emerged to be the main agenda in educational science, in the form of talk - classroom talk. Research on classroom discourse is pertinent in current times as it supports learning in educational, social and cultural contexts.

Classroom discourse has patterns which can be discussed from two key frameworks. The first, the initiation-response-evaluation (IRE) or initiation-response-feedback (IRF) triadic structure typically found in L2 classrooms is said to be the most prevalent form of classroom discourse. The second is dialogic teaching which capitalises on students' talk through discourse genres such as discussion and dialogues. Most researchers (Alexander, 2018; Behnam & Pouriran, 2009; Gillies, 2015; Khany & Mohammadi, 2016) have investigated and analyzed classroom discourse based on these two types in the manner it limits or enhances students' language learning and acquisition process. Both these instructional discourse patterns are described as below:

2.2.1 IRE & IRF the Monologic Discourse

The underlying structure of L2 discourse pattern which has been analysed constantly is the three-part IRE or the IRF structure (Lemke, 1990; Mehan, 1979 Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975; Waring, 2009). The IRF differs from the IRE in that the third turn is evaluative as in the feedback (Thoms, 2012). This F turn is by the teacher. The feedback

functions as a closure to the interaction. This becomes a continuous cycle moving towards another triadic interaction sequence. As for the IRE, the first turn (I) begins with the teacher initiating the interaction through a close ended question. The second turn (R) refers to the response by student and the third turn (E) concludes the interaction when the teacher provides his/her feedback. The feedback is evaluative often in the form of a confirmation as in 'exactly,' 'good point' or 'no, that's incorrect'. Thus, the teacher initiates (Turn 1) and concludes (Turn 3) the interaction structure while the second turn (response) is by the student.

The IRF sequence (teacher initiation–student response–teacher feedback) differs from the IRE where the third turn is no longer evaluative but instead functions to extend the interaction by probing students' opinion. It is on this basis that Waring (2009) noticed that it has the possibility of opening up the talk structure for more student responses or active participation from students should the teacher seek non-evaluative feedback by expanding and elaborating on their responses which may lead towards a collaborative or emancipatory form of discourse (Thoms et al., 2012).

Classroom discourse formed through the IRE and IRF sequence according to Sinclair and Coulthard, (1975; (IRE in Mehan, 1979) is a teacher centred discourse. This discourse pattern is often described as procedural (Nystrand & Gamoran, 1991) and monologic (Alexander, 2018, Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014; Khany & Mohammadi, 2016). According to Little (2007), Vasquez (2018) and Walsh (2006) monologic discourse predominantly shapes classroom discourse in which teacher autonomy is strongly exercised.

The speaking patterns are highly structured and the teacher focuses on transmitting knowledge, prescribing the direction of the discourse, acting as a gatekeeper to students' points of view, checking and correcting students responses and often posing close ended

questions which constrains the direction of the discourse (Thoms, 2012; Saglam et al., 2015; Khany & Mohammadi, 2016; Lee, 2016). In this manner, the IRF constrains students' ability to develop cognitively and linguistically since they have less talk time. (Doley, 2019 , Howe & Abedin, 2013; Khany & Mohammadi, 2016). The teacher is largely responsible for the limited utterances produced by students due to her discourse pattern. The close-ended questions posed by teachers seeking precise information or correct answers restrict students from speaking. The talk that is expected from classroom discussions and dialogues are stalled. Findings indicate that students' thought processes are affected where complex ways of thinking and communicating are not evident (Thoms, 2012). Researchers have noticed that the IRE sequence leads towards a hierarchical discourse pattern where the teacher controls the ownership of talk. Students are hindered from discussing topics of choice, self-electing nor negotiating the direction of instruction (Thoms, 2012).

Many studies have shown that the IRE sequence is a monologic discourse. Monologic means one voice and in the context of the language classrooms, this form of discourse is viewed as authoritative discourse where the teacher is the main voice. The IRE/IRF monologic discourse tends to develop unequal roles of participants in classroom discourse which affects the patterns of interaction obstructing L2 acquisition (Howe & Abedin, 2013). Pedagogically, students are disadvantaged as they lack the opportunity to nominate topics and take turns to express their viewpoints (Alexander, 2018; Gillies, 2016, Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Such discourse structure not only limits language acquisition but also the co-construction of knowledge (Alexander, 2018b) This kind of discourse structure had been utilised in the past by teachers who need to monitor learning as well as to check on students' memorised knowledge (Sedova et al., 2016).

Research (Saglam et al., 2015) looking at this form of discourse had indicated that students' responses do not even exceed ten or more words, with almost 91% of them using only short phrases. The underlying reason for this belief is undoubtedly because talk facilitates the transmission of words from instructor to students. A teachers' idea or worldview is often accepted even though it may not resonate with a particular student or even the entire group. Hence, this traditional discourse pattern has been criticised in terms of its rigidity being prescriptive (Congmin, 2013). With the world shifting its paradigm, there is now a need for the education setting to experience transformation too, from the monologic form of discourse to one that promotes student talks and thinking. This exercise would allow the distribution and ownership of talk more equitably (Alexander, 2018; Barekat & Mohammadi 2014; Morton, 2012).

2.2.2 The Influence of Dialogic Teaching on Classroom Discourse

Dialogic classroom discourses arose from the concept of dialogic teaching, a pedagogical approach which focuses on classroom talk (Alexander, 2018, Mercer, Dawes & Staarman, 2009; Boyd, 2012; Hennessy et.al., 2011; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). It harnesses the power of talk between teacher and students and in particular amongst students as a social mode of learning (Alexander, 2018; Boyd ,2015; Mercer, Dawes & Staarman ,2009 ; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). It is an interactive classroom discourse pattern formed through a set repertoires, principles and indicators describing the type of talk, function of talk and importance of talk (Alexander, 2018). 'Dialogic discourse' was introduced by Nystrand (1997) situating it as a classroom discourse. Discussions and dialogues are the main discourse genre and is discursive in nature (Alexander, 2018; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019 Mercer, 2004; Mercer et al., 2019). The discussions consist of continuous exchanges of ideas for the purpose of sharing and problem-solving while the dialogues are scaffolded through questions with the aim attaining a common

understanding (Alexander, 2018a; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Alexander (2018) states discussions and dialogues afford high cognitive potential which foster students' thinking and learning. Dialogic teaching encourages students to become engaged through discussions and dialogues in which knowledge is built collectively through authentic exchanges (Alexander, 2018; Böheim et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2018a; Zhang & Zhang, 2020). Hence, learning takes place through these discussions and dialogues (Sedova, 2017). In dialogic teaching, explanations, arguments and negotiations are commonly triggered by open-ended questions to reflect viewpoints rather than the universal truth. An idea or meaning is not static as it is influenced by the sociocultural events of the time (Keyser, 2014).

Mercer (2004) defines dialogic teaching as a pedagogical approach similar to Alexander (2010). He focuses on a particular talk type known as exploratory talk which leverages learner talk that leads to meaning making. In the context of a classroom, students engage in exploratory talk as a collective effort in constructing knowledge together. Nevertheless, his idea of cumulative talk slightly differs from Alexander's where students build on the responses but uncritically. His concept of dialogic teaching eventually became a dialogic model known as 'Thinking Together'.

Similarly, Sedova (2017) states that dialogic teaching is about the connection involving language and thought, it is the link bridging speaking, thinking, and learning as illustrated in the figure (Figure 2.1) below:

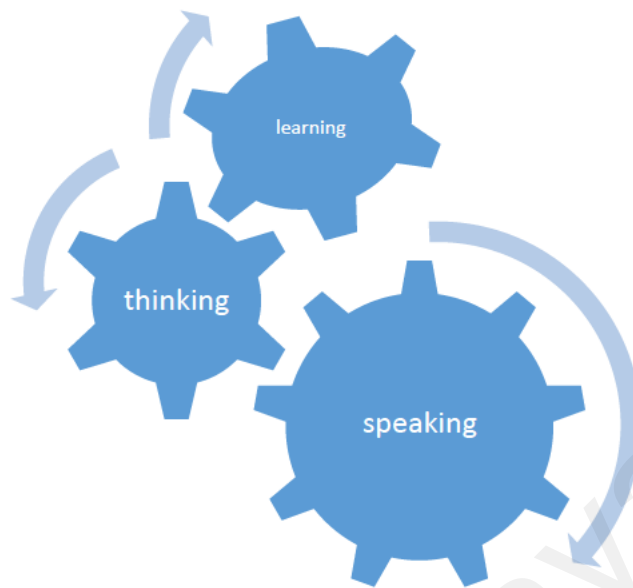


Figure 2.1: Dialogic Teaching

(Adapted from Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017)

Well's (1999) dialogic inquiry is a collaborative discourse and is viewed as an alternative to the conventional monologic discourse or transmissional way of teaching. Wells (1999) states that dialogic inquiry is a stance towards experience and information rather than a pedagogical approach (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Wells's (1999) focus is on the metacognitive aspect with the emphasis on co- construction of knowledge similar to Mercer and Dawes (2008) and Reznitskaya et.al (2012).

Dialogic teaching is not only considered a pedagogic discourse but in broader terms it is seen as an emancipatory, liberatory or an ontological approach. Boyd (2012) views dialogic teaching as a liberatory classroom discourse granting students equal rights to participate. The focus is on capitalising on talk to afford students learning opportunities and shaping the learning. Boyd (2012) states that the enactment of dialogic teaching requires a well thought plan which involves teacher understanding of the approach and teacher skills, constant reflection by teachers and flexible lesson planning to facilitate students learning. Hence, dialogic teaching is a form of collaborative classroom discourse which allows for the construction of meaning collectively and is characterized by shared

control over the key aspects of classroom discourse (Alexander, 2018; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Similarly, Freire and Shore's (1987) conception of dialogic teaching are seen as a liberatory pedagogy seeking to open students' mind and ways of thinking through talk. It also sought to transform the teacher student relationship and granting student empowerment (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

Burbules (1993) views dialogic teaching as an emancipatory approach which focuses on the role of dialogues and their communicative relation. Burbules's dialogic teaching stresses on to the affective domain of students. In his view, students must exemplify feelings of concern, trust and respect during the dialogues which display their genuine interest in the dialogue albeit talk.

Wegerif (2011) uses the term dialogic space which emphasises the importance of dialogues in reflection and exploration of new ideas during the dialogues. The concept of dialogic space is rather different from dialogic teaching as the focus is on differences or tensions between perspectives which occur from the participants in a dialogue that allows for meaning making. In other words, the talk that takes place amongst students allows them to explore various dimensions and perspectives and think critically. He views dialogic teaching from an ontological approach (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

Matusov's (2009) dialogic pedagogy is similar to Wegerif (2011) as it is an ontological approach to dialogue where it functions as a basis for communicating with one another. His ideology of dialogic pedagogy is founded on Bakthin's dialogism where the concept of dialogue differs from the pedagogical understanding of dialogue. Dialogic pedagogy is education for dialogue and as dialogue (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). This means that all education is dialogic because knowledge construction is dialogic. There is no end goal. Hence, in education, this form of dialogic concept is not applicable in terms of curriculum (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019) because there are no predetermined outcomes. Matusov's

(2009) dialogic pedagogy is largely influenced by the responsive questions and answers. meaning making is fluid and arises based on the responses provided which is largely influenced by the type of questions that was posed during the dialogues.

Three main sources of tension commonly arise in discussion of dialogic teaching as to whether to consider it as a classroom culture, does it emphasise form or function or is it a pedagogical approach instead of a specific discourse practice (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Nevertheless, most scholars on dialogic teaching have one main aim which is to extend the thinking of students, advance their learning and understanding through dialogues or better known as classroom talk.

Research on dialogic teaching has thus taken precedence in the past ten years and has been gaining ground in education (Alexander, 2018; Kerawalla, 2015; Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Cui & Teo, 2021; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019 ; Sedova, 2017; Vrikki et al., 2019)with a number of studies indicating that it has cognitive and linguistic potential on students. Researchers (Alexander, 2018; Mercer; 2004 Nystrand, 2002) have seen the pedagogical potential of this discourse pattern in contrast to the conventional “monologic” discourse. A notable number of empirical studies on dialogic teaching with the focus on core subjects, such as Science and Mathematics, had indicated that dialogic teaching increases engagement; it also raises standards. As a matter of fact, most research on dialogic teaching focused on primary education, such as Mathematics and Science whereby interventions were conducted as part of the professional development so as to promote dialogic pedagogy in the classrooms (Van de Pol et al., 2017).

Research on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse on subjects, such as Language Arts and History (Muhonen et al., 2018; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013a ;Teo, 2019; Wilkinson et al., 2017) revealed that students learn by interacting whereby they construct knowledge collectively. Nonetheless, in the context of English Language, research has

been scarce. To date, only three research on classroom oral communication skills has been done demonstrating the function of interactional structures in language learning (Jocuns, 2021; M. P. Boyd & Markarian, 2011b ; R. G. Cui, 2020). Studies conducted on dialogic teaching in the United Kingdom, United States and Australia (Hardman, 2019; García-Carrión et al., 2020) have shown promising results. The enactment of dialogic teaching in subjects such as Mathematics, Science, and Language Art demonstrated that high quality classroom talks were stimulated, thereby engaging and motivating the learners. The approach also helped to raise the learners' standard of attainment (Alexander, 2018 ; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019 ; Mercer & Howe, 2012; Vrikki et al., 2019).

Through this student centred approach, students become key players in the learning process; They co-construct knowledge within the social interaction which becomes an integral part of learning. Hence, dialogues take center stage to facilitate thinking and learning and language plays a crucial role in supporting the thinking and learning process. (Applebee et al., 2012a; Chang & Chang, 2017; Jocuns, 2021; Lloyd et al., 2016; Morton, 2012; Nystrand, 1997; Reznitskaya, 2012).

Dialogic teaching is supposed to be the vogue for classroom teaching and learning. It has been prescribed as a means for primary, secondary, and tertiary students to engage in meaningful learning (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). This form of classroom discourse is said to assist students to participate in elaborated talks (Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014; Boyd, 2016) such that it encourages them to expand on their ability to contribute further to the classroom. The respective students' output and contribution of ideas would then be used to further develop the talk hence, talk becomes the focus of the learning process. This practice is expected to enhance language learning and in particular students' second language acquisition. Nevertheless, dialogic teaching is an arduous task and research proves the enactment of dialogic raises a challenge to teachers partly due to the tensions

within the literature on concepts of dialogic teaching that can cause confusion and vague understanding amongst teachers (Reznitskaya et al., 2009; Sedova et al., 2014; Sedova, 2017; van de Pol et al., 2017; Asterhan et al., 2020). This gap between theory and practice has been a concern amongst scholars on dialogic teaching (Mercer & Howe, 2012).

From the perspective of language learning, dialogic classroom discourses provide students with opportunities to higher cognitive processing and language use. It is crucial to encourage students to use the language so that opportunities can be created to encourage them to acquire the form and function of the language as they deliver their views (Jones & Chen, 2016). Language learning and acquisition through dialogic teaching not only increases opportunities for students to talk, but also induces students to talk, something which students may need to think before articulating. Students' ability to talk and to construct knowledge collectively is thus made possible through the application of a few dialogic models within the classroom context.

For the purpose of this study, dialogic teaching shall be discussed from a classroom discourse perspective looking at the dialogic models and specifically drawing on Alexander's Dialogic Teaching model with the aim of facilitating second language learning and acquisition.

2.3 Dialogic Models

As a concept, dialogic teaching has extended the meaning of interactions by taking it into the classroom setting. Four models (Cui & Teo, 2021) are associated with dialogic pedagogy as an approach for teaching and learning. They are:

1. Dialogically organised instruction
2. Thinking together

3. Accountable talk

4. Dialogic teaching

The dialogically organized instruction model is the effort of Martin Nystrand (1997). The model was developed from the theory of dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981) which foregrounds dialogues as living entity among humans where the utterances are cycle of exchanges which is always in respond to a previous utterance and the following utterance. Nystrand extends this idea of dialogism into the classroom setting where the model is applied focusing on language as tool for the purpose of learning viewed as a social process through classroom discourse. It is with this view that he compares his model as not a recitation model albeit monologic discourse (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

Consequently, Nystrand (1997) highlights the teacher's discourse moves in facilitating the learning and making the dialogues discursive. It is these discourse features that function significantly in shaping students' understanding and learning. These are teachers' use of authentic questions, uptake and questions that promote high level thinking. These discourse features are used by teachers consistently to organise instructions coherently. When the teacher acknowledges students' responses and incorporate it through a follow up question or questions which lead to further contributions, this is termed as uptake. (Cui & Teo, 2021; Nystrand et al. 1997). On the other hand, authentic questions are questions that are posed to explore students' views and thoughts in an effort to facilitate talk instead of testing their knowledge. These questions are used by teachers to reflect their sincere interest to interact with their students establishing a dialogic classroom culture (R. Cui & Teo, 2021). High-level evaluation, the third discourse move is a form of acknowledgement of students' ideas which is strategically used by teachers to incorporate students' responses into the developing discourse. (Cui & Teo, 2021; Nystrand et al., 1997, p. 20). It differs from the low-level

evaluation in which teachers tend to repeat students' responses and provide praises. Hence, in this model, the questions used by teachers and students are paramount (R. Cui & Teo, 2021). Table 2.1 further illustrates.

Table 2.1: Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction

| | | |
|----|-----------------------|---|
| 1. | Authentic Questions | T poses open-ended questions which reflect teachers' genuine interest in interacting with students |
| 2. | Uptake | T validates particular students' ideas by incorporating their responses into subsequent questions thereby building upon and extending students' contributions |
| 3. | High level evaluation | T affirms students' contributions by incorporating their responses into subsequent discourse. |

T- teacher

Nystrand's (1997) focus was on teachers' questions and questioning skills. Aware that getting students to ask questions is a challenge that can be culturally influenced, another model was then developed by Mercer (2004). Known as the *Thinking Together* model (Cui & Teo, 2021; Mercer et al., 2019b), it prioritises student talk in which students use language as tool for collective reasoning and problem solving.

Thinking Together is underpinned by the theory of sociocultural – Vygotsky (1978) which leverages on a kind of talk known as exploratory talk for the purpose reasoning and meaning making (Mercer & Dawes, 2008; Murphy et al., 2018b). Mercer (2004) argues that teachers need to capitalise on classroom talk to leverage on the experiences of students to develop their knowledge and understanding over time. Through this model, students learn to think individually through the sharing of ideas and knowledge and then reason with others demonstrating their thought processes (Cui & Teo, 2021; Mercer et al., 2019). The gathering of ideas and knowledge enables students to think aloud together through their responses, they construct knowledge collectively.

Exploratory talk is a form of constructive talk in which students are actively engaged building on the critique of other's ideas. Students seek opinions, discuss the responses and suggestions given by others for collective consideration and decision making (Mercer, 2004, Murphy et al., 2018). The construction of knowledge becomes a joint effort and students' reasoning process is seen through talk. Hence, exploratory talk promotes joint reasoning, and the co-construction of knowledge (Mercer et al., 2019a). Higher thinking level and abilities of students are evident through exploratory talk (Mercer et al., 2019a). Littleton and Mercer (2013) summarises the participation in exploratory talk as in table 2.2 below:

Table 2.2: Features of Exploratory Talk

| | |
|------------------|--|
| Exploratory Talk | everyone engages critically but constructively with each other's ideas |
| | everyone offers the relevant information they have |
| | members of the group try to reach agreement at each stage before progressing |
| | partners ask each other questions and answer them, ask for reasons and give them |
| | everyone's ideas are treated as worthy of consideration |
| | to an observer of the group, reasoning is 'visible' in the talk |

(Adapted from Kim & Wilkinson, 2019)

For exploratory talk to take place, teachers play an important role in developing trust among students. Teachers need to establish ground rules in creating a conducive and safe discourse environment for students to share and be engaged in talk. Ground rules on participation rights, manner of talk and respecting of views or ideas of all peers would support and facilitate the classroom discussions. Prior to each discussion, teachers should state the objectives involved and facilitate the talk through specific discourse moves. Teachers adopting the Thinking Together Model gets students to abide by the classroom rules during the small group discussions (Cui & Teo, 2021; Sulzer, 2015).

The third dialogic model is Accountable Talk (Böheim et al., 2021; Hennessy et al., 2020; Murphy et al., 2018a; Sulzer, 2015; Vrikki et al., 2019) which is based on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. Accountable Talk was introduced by Resnick (1999) emphasising the importance of social interaction in developing one's thinking (Cui & Teo, 2021; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertsch, 1985). In other words, it emphasises the centrality of talk in facilitating reasoning. In other words, standards of reasoning and the construction of knowledge are attained by the learning community through classroom talk. Accountable talk is a form of classroom talk or dialogues that forwards one's thought processes (Alexander, 2010) and shall be discussed from three domains as below:

1. Accountability to the learning community
2. Accountability to accurate knowledge
3. Accountability to reasoning.

The Accountable talk model (2008) emphasizes the need for teachers and students to develop a sense of responsibility towards each other in demonstrating their reasoning and knowledge collectively. In adopting this model, students display their ability to listen carefully and respond, develop the ideas of one another and chain them into meaningful ideas or knowledge through the use of higher order open-ended questions. The focus is on ensuring that the teacher and students make an effort to help others in the group by paraphrasing, providing examples, listening attentively, and building on the ideas shared as a means to sustain the dialogues in place.

In terms of accountability to reasoning, students' thoughts are made visible during the dialogues and these ideas student thinking are further supported so that students make logical connections that would lead to proper decisions. On the other hand, accountability to knowledge implies students hold themselves responsible for grounding their claims in

knowledge. Similar to the Thinking Together model, students are expected to adhere to the ground rules or social protocols whilst engaging in accountable talk. Five productive talk moves have been proposed as effective tools of Accountable Talk (Cui & Teo, 2021; Chapin, O'Connor, & Anderson 2009). Table 2.3 illustrates.

Table 2.3: Five Productive Talk Moves of Accountable Talk

| | Talk Moves | Action by teacher |
|----|-------------------|---|
| 1. | revoicing | rephrasing a student's contribution in a tentative yet clearer way |
| 2. | repeating | asking students to paraphrase someone else's contribution |
| 3. | reasoning | asking students to apply their own reasoning to someone else's contribution |
| 4. | adding on | prompting students for further participation |
| 5. | wait time | using wait time |

Source: Cui and Teo (2021)

The three models above are described as a pedagogical approach viewed from a sociocultural stance and contains features of Bahktin's (1981) dialogism embedded. These features in the models are reflected in a comprehensive model known as dialogic teaching. All three models have one goal in mind which is to advance reasoning and learning through dialogues.

2.3.1 Dialogic Teaching Model

Alexander's (2018) dialogic teaching model was specifically selected for this study as it provides a comprehensive description of classroom talk which focuses on different types of talk facilitating student learning (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Similar to the models discussed above, Alexander's dialogic teaching model is founded on Vygotsky's (1962) sociocultural theory which views the relationship between language and thought and Bakhtin's (1981) perspective on dialogue. As compared to the other models discussed above, dialogic teaching encompasses five teaching principles, repertoires for talk and dialogic indicators. These principles, repertoires and strategies focus on students' oral discourse reflected through discussions and dialogues that promotes thinking and learning

(R. Cui & Teo, 2021). Through the application of this model, a wide spectrum of talk types is made possible for students to be engaged with which contributes to the learning process. In such classroom discourse, students are seen narrating, explaining, exploring, clarifying, justifying and arguing which advances their reasoning and supports learning. Five principles are advocated by Alexander (2018) for classroom talk to be considered dialogic. Figure 2.3 illustrates.

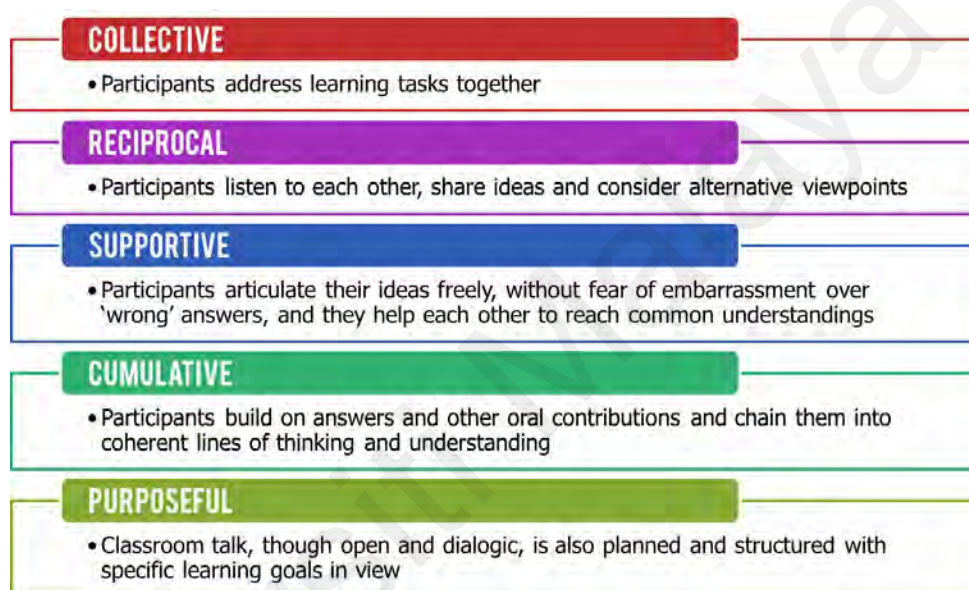


Figure 2.2: Dialogic Teaching Principles (Alexander, 2018)

As can be seen, the five principles of dialogic teaching proposed by Alexander (2018) support the enactment of dialogic teaching in the classroom. The first principle, collectiveness, shows both teacher and students addressing the learning tasks together (Alexander, 2018 ;Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Second, the discourse pattern is also reciprocal in which teachers and students asked questions and built on the responses, shared their views, considered each other's thoughts, and further extended the ideas towards the co-construction of knowledge. Third, it is supportive in creating a conducive environment for students to participate in the interactions and to express their ideas freely with no fear of 'wrong' answers and to assist one another to attain common understandings; Further, the dialogue must be cumulative in that the interactions of

teacher and students build on themselves and on each other chaining them into clear lines of thinking which lead towards the co-construction of knowledge. Finally, it is purposeful where the dialogic process fulfills the specific educational aim. The principle of collective, reciprocal and supportive exemplify the collaborative culture of the classroom to maximise student talk while the last two, cumulative and purposeful principle relate to the content of talk (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019a).

Alexander (2018) also asserts the importance of talk and the kind of talk for educational goals which a teacher should be aware of and be able to facilitate accordingly. Seven justifications are provided for talk to function as communicative, social, cultural, political/civic, psychological, neuroscientific and pedagogical. The communicative, social, cultural and political form of talk are intended to enable students to communicate, establish relationships, participate in their culture, value collective identity and become engaged and active citizens.

Being a comprehensive model in the enactment of dialogic teaching, Alexander (2018) emphasises talk repertoires to suggest and equip teachers with the kind of intended talk. The six repertoires for talk evident in the model makes it much more detailed for L2 teachers to facilitate talk and the kind of talk expected from students (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). These talk repertoires consist of talk types that would facilitate learning as well as pedagogical techniques for teachers to employ to facilitate talk. For instance, Repertoire 1 are interactive settings are made up of whole class discussions, group discussions and individual presentation which are reflected through teacher and students or pair work (Alexander, 2018). Repertoire 2 involves everyday talk which are transactional, expository, interrogatory, exploratory, expressive and evaluative. Repertoire 3 involves the kind of everyday talk expected from students known as learning talk such as narrating, explaining, speculating, imagining, exploring, analysing,

evaluating, questioning, justifying and arguing. In ensuring these learning talk, students listen and reason, provide time for their peers to think and respond and respect alternative viewpoints.

Repertoire 4 –focuses on the type of talk strategies to be employed by teacher. In facilitating learning through talk, teachers’ talk strategies should primarily involve discussions and dialogues although rote and recitation are part of the repertoire. Elicitation is fundamental in dialogic teaching. Thus. repertoire 5 involves questioning in which both teacher and students pose authentic questions (Alexander, 2018; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

Alexander (2018) also developed indicators of dialogicity. There are 61 indicators of dialogicity which assist teachers to operationalise the five principles of dialogic teaching. It involves classroom organisation that encourages the approach. Here are a few to illustrate the type of dialogic indicators as in table 2.4.

Table 2.4: Indicators of Dialogicity

| | |
|---------------------|--|
| Dialogic Indicators | teacher questions that elicit extended, thoughtful responses |
| | student answers that are built upon and elicit further questions |
| | teacher-student and student-student interchanges that are chained into coherent lines of inquiry. |
| | Interactions which encourage students to think and to think in different ways |
| | feedback which, as well as evaluating, leads thinking forward |
| | discussion and argumentation which probe, and challenge rather than unquestioningly accept |
| | scaffolding which provides appropriate linguistic and/or conceptual tools to bridge the gap between present and intended understanding |
| | time, space, organisation and relationships which are so disposed and orchestrated as to make all this possible. |

(Adapted from Alexander, 2018 and Kim & Wilkinson, 2019)

Alexander (2018) affirms that contexts and conditions are crucial in facilitating and supporting dialogic teaching. Firstly, the classroom setting must be appropriate to meet

the educational goals intended. Secondly, the classroom discourse involves student engagement as it is a prerequisite for learning. The right context and condition allow teachers to facilitate the development of students' communication and cognitive skills. In other words, dialogic teaching is a form of elaborated student talk (M. P. Boyd & Markarian, 2011; M. P. Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017) which provides students with the platform to generate talk because the contributions and exchanges made by the students create opportunities for more talk to incur, as opposed to the monologic discourse of Sinclair and Coulthard (1975). This form of discourse was described by Waring (2009) as a new participation structure which focuses on students.

Alexander (2010) asserted that the talk attained during the interactions is a process, moving from words to meaningful ideas. This claim was also supported by Mercer and his colleagues (Mercer & Sara Hennessy, 2019; Mercer & Howe, 2012a; Mercer & Littleton, 2007; Rojas-Drummond & Mercer, 2004) who discovered that the support for both oral competency and cognitive expansion is achieved in dialogic classroom discourses through the use of discussions and question-and answer sequences. Dialogic teaching is made visible through the turn management afforded to students in which students self-select to respond. The use of open-ended questions is also another means of generating talk, hence increasing students' talk time. Finally, the choice of topic generated for discussion also enabled students to serve as the interpretive authority (Boyd & Markarian, 2011).

The use of open-ended questions in dialogic teaching scaffolds students' talk, thus making it authentic, reciprocal, and cumulative (Bungum et al., 2018; Hajhosseiny, 2012; McNeil, 2012a;). Since dialogic teaching leverages on students' learning through talk, it positions students as thinkers, investigators, active contributors, co-creators, and

community members in a purposeful manner, linking language to knowledge (Alexander, 2018a; Hajhosseiny, 2020; Murphy et al., 2018a; Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017). The classroom discourse is shaped through moves in which students are positioned in the talk. The communicative acts of the teachers and students, during the classroom discourse, provides avenue for second language acquisition. Therefore, through the interactions, students can be supported to attain better outcomes in the spoken language.

The concept was also selected for the very reason that the cultural context (as evident in Alexander's comparative analysis of primary education in the UK, US, India and Russia) influences the learning process manifested through teachers' and students' talk. Alexander (2018) asserts that the teachers' and students' expectations of the talk are largely influenced by the cultural context. As dialogic teaching considers learning a social process through dialogues and conversations, the conversational mode allows for elements of students' socio background and cultural to appear in talk. The exchanges of students are largely influenced by their socio-cultural environment. This element makes it meaningful and authentic for students to indulge in talk (Alexander, 2018, Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Thus, as mentioned by Reznitskaya (2012), dialogic teaching is culturally responsive.

Alexander's dialogic teaching model encourages equity and equality in the classroom. Students are given the opportunity and equal participation rights to the classroom tasks which is reflected through the whole class and group discussions.

A consensus evolved concerning talk. The kind of talk consequential for learning is termed as productive talk which encompasses open exchange of ideas, joint and critical inquiry. Talk becomes essential because learners are granted greater control over their own learning which takes place through their contributions during the interactions (Díez-Palomar et al., 2021; Morton, 2012). Focusing on Alexander's (2010) dialogic teaching

principles and Nystrand's (1997) dialogically organized instruction, this study aims to provide an important vantage point for the review when identifying the features of dialogic classroom discourse. This study is thus premised on the sociocultural perspective which adopts sociocultural theory to examine classroom discourse from a dialogical lens.

2.4 Theoretical Framework: Sociocultural Theory

The theoretical framework used in this study is derived from the sociocultural theory which views language learning as a social process, hence it examines the links between dialogue, pedagogy, and cognition. The theory is predominantly used in the present study to examine dialogic classroom discourses. This theoretical framework is underpinned by two key frameworks: socio constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), and dialogism (Bakhtin, 1981). Vygotsky's zone of proximal development (hereafter referred to as ZPD) as well as Bakhtin's speech genres serve as the underpinnings of this study. Both theories overlap, either explicitly or by implication, in the context of classroom talk which has thus far, been supported by past studies (Alexander, 2018; Alexander, 2019; Gillies, 2014; M. P. Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2015 ; Rupert, 2018 ; Teo, 2016; van Compernelle & Williams, 2012). Figure 2.3. illustrates the theoretical framework:

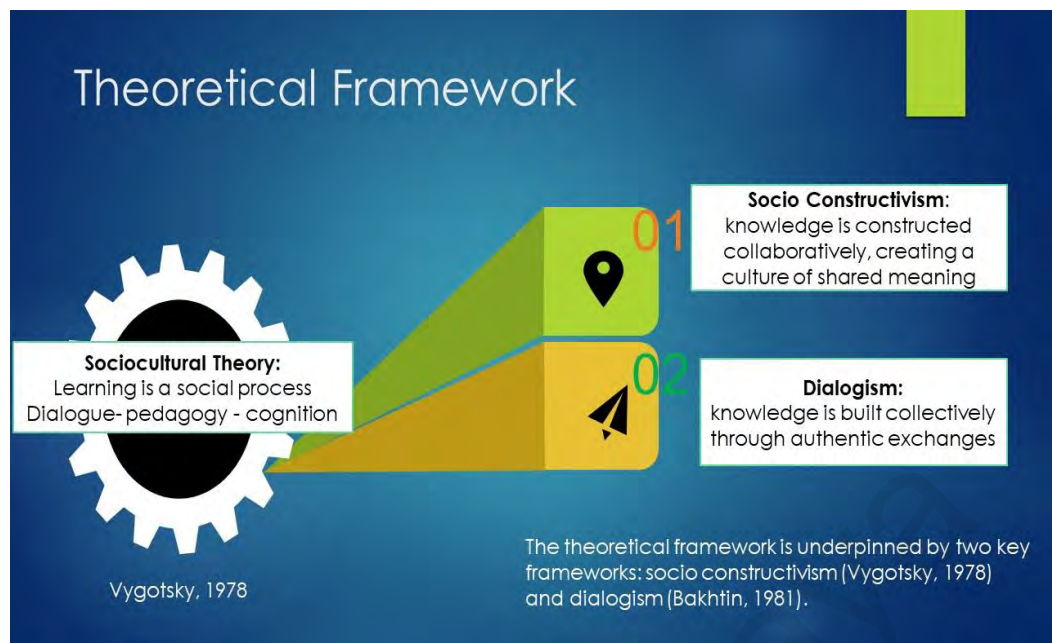


Figure 2.3: Theoretical Framework

The sociocultural theory (SCT) focuses on interactions occurring between people; it suggests that learning is a social process (Alexander, 2018). Grounded in the context of socio constructivism (Vygotsky, 1978), the sociocultural theory projects how cultural influences have an impact on the learners' language development, and that these cultural influences also enhance the learners' cognitive expansion of ideas. From the sociocultural theory, Vygotsky proposed that knowledge is constructed socially at first. When this has been acquired by the individual, then the individual is equipped to adopt and adapt the ideas and thoughts of others into his/her own thinking. This can also be applied to the individual's thinking process so as to construct knowledge, and to make meaning (Mercer et al., 2019; Fahim & Haghani, 2012; Palincsar, 1998). When the sociocultural theory is applied to the classroom context, it can be seen that students construct knowledge based on the social and cultural influence assimilated into their thinking which therefore, makes classroom talk essential for mediating learning (Mercer & Howe, 2012; Lehesvuori, 2013).

The sociocultural theory extends the concept of socio constructivism, where the social setting forms the premise for an individual or group to construct knowledge

collaboratively, thereby creating a culture of shared meanings (Fahim & Haghani, 2012; Murphy et al., 2018). Vygotsky noted that the co-construction of knowledge is a dialectical process in which higher mental functions are socially developed, and culturally imparted. This makes learning a process of change (Lefstein & Snell, 2011; Sedova, Sedlacek, & Svaricek, 2016).

The Vygotskian-inspired interest in language has also influenced linguistics (Alexander, 2010). The joint construction of knowledge supports the extension of one's linguistics development. This is because the structure of oral language is utilised through the conversational interactions (Mercer & Howe, 2012; Mercer et al., 2019b). Conversations are established based on common knowledge which leads to shared understanding. Thus, it is paramount to examine language use from a social and cultural perspective. This is known as discourse analysis (Adjei, 2013; Gharbavi & Iravani, 2014).

The sociocultural paradigm has provided a new dimension for research to examine the processes of teaching, learning, and learners' cognitive development (Cui & Teo, 2021; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013; Mercer, 2004). The reason is because the sociocultural paradigm acknowledges the complexity and the uniqueness of the learner. It also regards complexity as a fundamental aspect of the learning process. Consequently, the approach has been widely applied in the context of classroom discourses (Muhonen et al., 2018).

A key concept of the sociocultural framework is the Vygotskian zone of proximal development (ZPD) which describes a student's ability and her ability beyond support and guidance from a teacher or peers. Hence, through dialogic teaching, matters beyond a student's comprehension ability are discussed with the hope that teachers will scaffold the thinking process of their students to be internalised by the students which leads to the development of their cognitive abilities (Chang & Chang, 2017; Reznitskaya & Gregory,

2013). This development is achieved through collaborations with more knowledgeable members of the society (Boyd & Markarian, 2011).

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) is a form of support mechanism for learners to progress independently, or to develop themselves with the support of the knowledgeable other. The ZPD includes two levels of development which are the developmental stage attained through independent problem solving, and the stage of potential development attained through an adult, or a more knowledgeable other's intervention (Vygotsky, 1978; Compennolle & Williams, 2012). ZPD is created by social learning situations (Hennessy et al., 2020) where the internal developmental process of the learner functions only through interactions within a community of interlocutors.

In this study, dialogic teaching hinges on the concept of ZPD and scaffolding as proposed by Vygotsky (Alexander, 2018a; Böheim et al., 2021; Hardman, 2019). Both ZPD and scaffolding are highlighted through the manner teachers support students' learning of L2 oral proficiency. Vygotsky's ZPD is reflected in dialogic teaching through the teacher's scaffolding which creates educational experiences that fulfil the needs of the students in terms of their competence. It may also challenge them to higher levels of competence. Learners' interactions are scaffolded by the expert who supports the novice through a series of interactions until he/she is confident, whereby the expert gradually withdraws. Vygotsky (1978) had also affirmed that language development occurs through interactions. It is closely related to the social (intermental), and the psychological processes (intramental) of learning. Therefore, the social interactions created through dialogic teaching creates opportunities for learners to learn how to think, and to construct knowledge collectively. (Hurst, Wallace, & Nixon, 2013; García-Carrión et al., 2020). It also enables weaker students to acquire language, and to construct knowledge based on their constant engagement with others through interactions.

Vygotsky (1978) also mentioned that a student is able to understand and acquire school knowledge when that knowledge is linked to his/her existing knowledge and culturally related. In other words, scaffolding is provided based on the learner's existing knowledge. Scaffolding by the knowledgeable other enables the weaker learner to learn how to use language from the expert other, thereby utilizing it further until a new level of competence is achieved.

Scaffolding enables learners to perform beyond their ability (Hennessy et al., 2016; Fernández, Wegerif, Mercer, & Rojas-Drummond, 2015). It is a dynamic process that supports inquiry-based learning and is contextualized according to the student's needs (Van de Pol, Volman, & Beishuizen, 2010). Scaffolding through questions and students' existing knowledge allows teachers to guide learners to interact successfully, thereby leading to a higher quality of speech used within the classroom interactions (Hennessy et al., 2020; Vrikki et al., 2019).

In dialogic teaching, students' metacognitive skills are constantly applied as they become aware of their peers' thoughts, and learn from these thoughts so as to adapt them into their responses (Alexander, 2010; Hardman, 2019; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). These thinking processes are internalized and translated into independent practices (Vygotsky, 1978) of reading and writing. In this regard, more time for language use creates more opportunities for students to learn how to think and construct knowledge (Chow et al., 2021). Hence, when dialogic teaching was applied in the classroom context, it became dialogues between students and the teacher. The exchanges allowed students to explore, thereby positioning the students as co-constructors of knowledge. Students became active participants in the educational dialogue while teachers facilitated students in discovering meanings collaboratively (Keyser, 2014). Likewise, the exchange also allowed the students to develop a sense of

identity since the discussions also consisted of features of exploration and inquiry in which ideas were proposed, challenged, eliminated, or emerged.

Bakhtin's definition of dialogism is that language occurs as a dialogue which sees interlocutors shifting between their points of views and influencing one another (Sedova, 2017a). People are in constant dialogue with each other as well as with text read. The current text read may even be influenced by previous text from other time periods which is known as intertextuality. Thus, the meaning constructed are also influenced by the historical and social features of the time (Keyser, 2014).

The notion of dialogic teaching is derived from dialogism where there is more than a voice and not merely one voice and is discursive in nature leading to construction of knowledge collectively.

"Dialogism continues towards an answer. The word in living conversation is directly, blatantly, oriented toward a future answer-word: it provokes an answer, anticipates it and structures itself in the answer's direction" (Bakhtin, 1981, p.280)

Hence language learning takes place through dialogues among interlocutors (Sedova, 2017b). It assumes that knowledge is built collectively through authentic exchanges (Böheim et al., 2021; Murphy et al., 2018a; Zhang & Zhang, 2020). In dialogism, open-ended questions are posed which sees explaining, arguing and negotiating are common reflecting one's view rather than the universal truth. An idea or meaning is not static as it is influenced by the sociohistorical events of the time (Keyser, 2014). Hence, when the Bakhtinian concept of dialogic teaching was applied in the classroom context, it became dialogues between students and the teacher. This exchange of discourse allowed the students to explore, thereby positioning the students as co-constructors of knowledge. Students became active participants in the educational dialogue while teachers facilitated

students in discovering meanings collaboratively (Keyser, 2014). Likewise, the exchange also allowed the students to develop a sense of identity since the discussions also consisted of features of exploration and inquiry in which ideas were proposed, challenged, eliminated, or emerged.

Nevertheless, both Bahktin and Vygotsky emphasised the sociocultural situatedness of communication providing a comprehensive understanding of the discursive pattern of classroom discourse through dialogic teaching which aids in the construction of knowledge and student learning (Alexander, 2018; Pöldvere et al., 2016; Phan, 2012; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Thus, dialogic teaching allows for cognitive development, linguistic development, a transformation of teacher student relationship and acknowledgement of culture and identity where it is seen as a culturally responsive discourse. These areas are reviewed and discussed as below:

2.5 Dialogic Teaching and Learner's Cognitive Development

Research has shown that dialogic teaching enhances students' cognitive skills and is seen as one of the major goals of education. (Alexander, 2018, Davies et.al., 2019; Hardman, 2019; Mercer & Sara Hennessy, 2019; Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017a). The main implication of the dialogic teaching is that cognitive development is facilitated through dialogues and discussions (Al-Adeimi & O'Connor, 2021; Gillies, 2014; Murphy et al., 2018b). The co-construction of knowledge is evident through talk that takes place as dialogues and whole class and group discussions (Hardman, 2019). The discussions enhance students' thinking and learning as students learn to reason, discuss and argue. Jocuns (2021) found dialogic teaching facilitates the acquisition of 21st century skills such as critical thinking, problem solving, creativity, reasoning, and cross-disciplinary skills which inadvertently develops students' cognitive ability.

Dialogues have taken precedence in today's society due to the demand for negotiations in various realms of life, in particular, to build coexistence in different social spaces. Dialogues have implications in learning theories (Racionero & Padrós, 2011). Today, dialogic dialogues have become the focus in the way learning takes place. The process of interactions between individuals mobilises and produces knowledge. The findings of Kuhn and Crowell (2011) indicated that students' argumentative reasoning skills were enhanced through dialogic teaching. Through the dialogues, students explored and investigated the topics of discussion, considered alternative viewpoints, explained their thinking to arrive at a consensus. Thus, dialogic discussions stimulate and extend students' ability to comprehend and respond, to probe further, and to explore ideas which make this interactive discourse pattern genuinely reciprocal and cumulative (Alexander, 2017; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013).

The ability of students to participate and respond in discussions is known as active understanding. In this context, understanding is active and responsive because it enables the speaker to actively develop an understanding through the exchanges; it also enables the listeners to create an assimilation of new elements from the other's discourse. Thus, knowledge is constructed collectively through the reciprocal interactions. Hence, from a cognitive point of view, dialogic teaching helps to develop students' learning skills by improving their capacity for analysis and observation of the operations used in their own learning processes.

Cognitive development is also facilitated through the use of open-ended questions or authentic questions as Nystrand (1997) terms it. The higher evaluation questions proposed by Nystrand also facilitates cognitive development. As stated by Alexander (2018), dialogic teaching is about teacher and students posing authentic or rhetorical questions to build on responses that facilitates understanding and meaning making (Zhang & Zhang,

2020). Through the chain of question-and-answer sequences which involve the skills of analysing and synthesising, knowledge is constructed collectively. In other words, students' thinking capacity is enhanced through talk which also advances their learning. Students learn to engage critically and constructively with the ideas of peers during the discussions which improves their reasoning capacity. This is reflected in Alexander's dialogic teaching principle of reciprocal.

Dialogic teaching is supportive of inquiry-based learning (Gillies, 2014; Swan et al., 2019) in the context of knowledge. Understanding is attained through analyzing ideas, exploring values and testing the evidence (Alexander, 2018) which inevitably contributes to the students' cognitive development. Research has also shown the positive influence of dialogic approach on student achievement (Alexander, 2018). In an effort to show that dialogic teaching encourages divergent and critical thinking (Applebee et al., 2012; Cui & Teo, 2021; Elhassan & Adam, 2017; Gupta A Lee, 2015; Hajhosseiny, 2020), Nystrand and colleagues (Gamoran, A., & Nystrand, M., 1992; Christoph, J. N., & Nystrand, M. 2001) also focused on classroom talk among adolescent learners and teachers in America. It was disclosed that students learn by participating in communicative exchanges that lead to shared understandings, ultimately contributing to the students' learning process (Teo, 2016). This outcome was also supported by a report made by the University of York in 2017 which mentioned that dialogic teaching is an interactive approach that engages and motivates students' learning process, and raises their standards of attainment (Bungum et al., 2018; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017b; Wegerif, 2013). The findings thus imply that dialogic teaching can improve students' cognition abilities. Thus, it was made a curriculum goal in education (Fisher, 2011).

2.6 Dialogic Teaching and Learners' L2 Linguistic Development

Alexander (2019) also stated that dialogic teaching involves an interplay between linguistic and paralinguistic aspects. Grounded on the sociocultural stance, Vygotsky too mentioned that social interaction enables mediation and meaning making. Linguistic development is made possible; it is also fostered by meaningful exchanges between people. Students' linguistic system develops through their interactions with others as they consistently apply the structure of the language during the discussions, and eventually, they grasp how language is used (Wang, 2020). This process is known as linguistic mediation. In this way, learners develop linguistically, based on the common understanding of meaning contained in the speech of the interlocutors.

A number of researchers have focused on the relationship between open-ended questions and the linguistic characteristics of student responses to them. Boyd (2016) found that teachers who were trained to ask open-ended questions not only encouraged the construction of knowledge collectively but also the linguistic development of students in the target language. Teachers who posed open-ended questions encouraged longer responses consisting of complex sentences. In other words, students were 'pushed' for output through talk. Similarly, McNeil (2012) found that dialogic teaching creates opportunities for students to learn and improve their L2 through the use of referential questions. Through talk, students' awareness about the form and function of the language is raised. These interactional modifications of speech allowed the students to notice the language structure, thereby increasing comprehensibility that is beyond their current linguistic levels (McNeil, 2012b). In other words, dialogic teaching affords opportunities for second language learning.

The findings from Jocuns (2021) demonstrate that Thai students were able to 'stretch' their English through dialogic teaching. Students were able to speak English and new

vocabulary was acquired. Similarly, a study by Chow et al., (2021) showed that dialogic teaching improved the learning of English, in particular, vocabulary acquisition among Chinese children. The findings demonstrated the ability of Chinese students (EFL) to acquire vocabulary knowledge on textbook items post intervention. This finding concurs with the findings by Wasik et.al. 2016 where students acquired vocabulary through dialogic teaching. The extended illustrations, further clarification, repetition of vocabulary, and multiple exposures to new vocabulary over time during the dialogic dialogues enable students to acquire and increase their repertoire of vocabulary. The students' phonological awareness had also increased. Hence, dialogic teaching in the L2 and EFL classrooms have yielded positive outcomes.

Another study by Gupta (2015) demonstrated that dialogic teaching enhances the oral language skills among English Language learners. Three collaborative dialogic strategies were found to develop the primary school students' oral language skills. They were *Picture Description* which allowed students to build their repertoire of vocabulary and sentence structures by describing the pictures involved. The descriptions pertaining to the picture led to the development of oral language. The next dialogic strategy was: *Talk a Mile a Minute*. This strategy encouraged students to say aloud words related to a particular theme which increased the vocabulary repertoire and syntax. The third strategy was: *Puppet Role Play* which boosted the confidence of students who were hesitant to speak in class through the use of puppets. Students played the role of a character while "hiding" behind a puppet. Through the puppets, students felt confident in their conversation ability. The strategies above provided a good opportunity for students to improve, and to advance their lexis, semantic, syntactic, phonological and pragmatic use of language so as to attain fluency (Gupta, 2015).

Swingen (2014) in his studies found that the 'Think pair share' activity is another technique used in dialogic teaching to enhance both language and cognitive development. Students exchange thoughts and through the exchanges, language is used to express thoughts and thinking takes place. In the context of L2, this technique for students to be engaged in talk for learning promotes oral communication skills.

A study conducted by Jones and Chen (2016) investigated dialogic teaching in facilitating grammatical knowledge about English language. The study focused on Year 2 and 3 pupils constructing knowledge on grammar aspects through classroom dialogues. The teachers got students to learn grammar during literacy lessons by applying the dialogic principle of collective, reciprocal and cumulative (Alexander, 2018). This was in line with Halliday's notion of acquiring grammar which should be functional and semantic instead of being formal and syntactic. In other words, students learnt meaningfully through interactions with its application functionally. Alexander's (2018) learner talk and cumulative principle positively influenced students ability to construct knowledge on the grammar as they discussed and reasoned with language acquiring knowledge on the usage of grammatical items such as phrasal verbs, adjectives and prepositions.

In another study, Haneda and Wells (2008) noted that linguistic development among L2 students occurred when it is constantly practiced, thereby leading to their communicative competency. The teacher in the study purposefully modeled their language forms by embedding grammar skills through their discussions. Two of the students who were from China who did not know how to speak English were able to speak fluently with the other students by the end of semester. The findings of the study indicate that L2 learners learn best through inquiry in content areas. The desire to participate in the meaningful dialogues of the content being discussed enabled the L2 learners to

develop their language. Dialogic teaching as an inquiry-oriented approach provides a context with great potential for linguistic development among L2 learners. These studies illustrate the potential for dialogic teaching in enhancing students' linguistic ability.

2.7 Dialogic Teaching and the Role of Power in the Classroom

Dialogic teaching influences the power dynamics in the classroom (Alexander, 2018 ; Benson, 2007; Baxter, 2014; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019b; Sarid, 2014b). According to Marchenkova (2005), Mercer, Wegerif, & Major 2020; Reznitskaya et al., 2009; Sedova, Sedlacek, & Svaricek (2016), and Waring (2009), dialogic teaching creates the notion of equity and equality among the interlocutors. Waring (2009) further elaborated that dialogic teaching is a renewed participation structure of the IRF structure which focuses on student-initiated negotiations. Dialogic teaching provides students the central role and greater participation rights in the interaction (García-Carrión et al., 2020). Within the discourse, the role of power is significantly displayed in a few areas. A teacher's autonomy and power is reduced via the use of indirect speech acts, solidarity markers, appreciation, and encouragement (Alexander, 2018a; Benson, 2007; Böheim et al., 2021; Manzano Vázquez, 2018). Dialogic teaching provides students with more equitable interactional structures and discursive rights. They also gained the freedom to share ideas and views on subjects through the discourse conducted as a mode of teaching. This equal distribution of power amongst the students in classroom talk changes the power relation between teacher and student. Thus, it has become a powerful tool to bridge the inequalities of gender, race, and socio-economic background of students (Baxter, 2014; Mercer & Howe, 2012a). Students are willing to take risks and nominate themselves to provide responses. The teacher and students may reshape the power dynamics within the classroom setting so as to encourage a higher degree of participation from students.

In other words, dialogic teaching transforms the teacher-student relationship, readjusting the traditional power relation between them (Teo, 2019). It transforms teachers and students into a learning community acknowledging both the teacher and students are of equal status in terms of the learning process. Students play a crucial role in leading the classroom talk towards the intended aim. Students are given the interpretive authority (M. P. Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Reznitskaya, 2015). They take on the role of managing the interactions and evaluating the responses/answers which were previously reserved for the teacher (Reznitskaya, 2015). The teacher gradually releases control over the flow of discourse to the students, intervening where necessary. In this context, the scenario would be students asking questions, self-nominating, and evaluating each other's answers. There may be continuous exchanges from student without teacher interruption (Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2015; Wilkinson et al., 2017). The teacher refrains from telling students what to think but instead helps students to think (Reznitskaya & Wilkinson, 2015). Hence, dialogic teaching changes the cultural norms of teacher-student relationship.

Based on the transformation of role and relationships, dialogic teaching advocates learner autonomy. Learner autonomy is the ability of students to take charge of their own learning which is achieved through teacher guidance in a systematic and deliberate manner (Little, 2007). Harmer (2000) and Zhou (2002) argue that learner autonomy can be achieved by addressing the imbalance of classroom talk often dominated by the teacher as the voice of authority. Through dialogic teaching, multiple voices are acknowledged creating a conducive environment for students to engage in talk and construct knowledge collectively. When their voices are acknowledged, this allows for a sense of being valued and students become engaged in the learning. This has been echoed by Alexander, (2018) who made a call for teachers to provide more opportunities for students' voices to be heard.

This was echoed by Boyd (2012) and Freire and Shore (1997) who views dialogic teaching as a liberatory discourse, where power is distributed more or less equally between all students. Students attain discursive rights to influence the cooperative process and this power relationship can be negotiable. Bungum et al., (2018) states that small - group discussions exhibit this liberatory discourse structure where all students or each member of the group is granted the right to participate and actively engage in talk. The teacher supports the interactions by asking probing questions, providing guidelines on problem-solving and organising the interchanges of students' ideas to assist students to articulate their thoughts by constructing sentence structures verbally to keep the conversation or dialogue going. This would elicit more responses and encourage dialogic interactions.

Similarly, Resnick, Asterhan and Clarke, (2015) state that dialogic teaching affords students with greater authorship, meaning and equitable opportunities for learning. Sybing (2019) emphasises equitable balance in interaction between the teacher and her students for the teacher to gain idea on what the students might be thinking during classroom activity which leads to knowledge construction.

Students' active participation is largely associated with the concept of equality advocated through dialogic teaching. Researchers (Alexander, 2018; Mercer et al., 2019; Muhonen et al., 2018; O'Connor et al., 2015) demonstrate that the student-autonomy provided through this discursive structure supports students' active participation, thereby leading to a better attainment of standards. A recent synopsis by Böheim et al. (2021) strengthens the notion above that dialogic classroom discourses have positively influence student' learning and development.

2.8 Dialogic Teaching and Students' Background Knowledge

Thought and language combined can affect the emotional experience. Through dialogic teaching, the responses are to an extent, influenced by the social context of the discussion as well as the prior knowledge of the interlocutor, and this may influence the flow of the discussion (Murphy et al., 2018a). Creating a meaningful context for talk is crucial for students (Alexander, 2010a; J. J. Lee, 2011; Hennessy et al., 2020). The cultural aspects affecting the students' background, and knowledge would create certain identities which then shaped their interactions (Méndez & García, 2012); Haneda & Wells, 2010; McNeil, 2012b; Snell & Lefstein, 2018; Vrikki et al., 2019). These identities are formed based on their social status, gender, and race (Keyser, 2014b). In this context, the students who revert to dialogic interactions would undergo a change due to the teacher-driven instructions, and the result is they become active contributors of knowledge (Jocuns, 2021). From this activity, students develop the confidence to voice their thoughts and ideas, and to become less fearful of making mistakes. This activity is also less reliant on rote learning and memorisation (DeWaelche, 2015). Therefore, this form of discourse would help teachers to promote a classroom community of learning that fosters inquiry (Gillies, 2014; Mercer et al., 2019b, Wilkinson et al., 2017). Based on these, it is thus deduced that the socio-cultural aspects of the students can be the contributing factor to their discourses.

Hence, dialogic teaching is a form of culturally responsive discourse that takes into account the diverse socio cultural and economic backgrounds of students. The uniqueness of each learner in a classroom is also considered. The students' cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles make learning more relevant to and effective for them. Dialogic teaching meant to encourage participation by all students,

they intentionally incorporate students' personal lives into their lessons (Alexander, 2018; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019)

Dialogic teaching strengthens *vivencia*, Vygotsky's term, which emphasises the influence of psychological factors on the interaction of students. The students' state of emotion is reflected in their responses, and this changes along the way, with the discursive nature of the classroom discourse. This uniqueness makes dialogic teaching both interpersonal and intrapersonal where the link between emotional and interpretive transactions arises. The students' experiences and memories are part of the discourse they developed in contributing to the learning. This is accomplished by drawing from their own experiences and perspectives. The student's background, perspective of the world and life and past experiences influences his/her understanding of the interaction. Meaning is established through dialogues with other peers who also draw from their own experiences and perspectives. In short, dialogic teaching strategies used by the teachers can provide the efficient engagement of students in classrooms (Sedova et al., 2016). Thus, the transformation of classroom discourse is greatly influenced and orchestrated by the teacher (Murphy et al., 2018c).

Sedova, Salamounova, and Svaricek (2014) in their studies found teachers to have difficulty in integrating the content of subject with dialogic teaching approach. Similarly, Alexander (2010) acknowledged that his principle of cumulative was a challenge to achieve when attempting to link pedagogical forms to content matter.

Dialogic teaching can emerge as a result of a well-planned dialogic environment and the strategic application of the discourse moves which might appear as a difficult task to the teachers. For instance, the mapping of the form and function of discourse moves is neither singular nor arbitrary (Kim & Wilkinson 2019) and thus it could be a challenge for teachers to recognize the appropriate discourse moves. Teachers would need to be

aware as well as be equipped with this knowledge of discourse moves to ensure dialogic interactions take place. The application of specific discourse moves may support the creation of a dialogic environment for talk especially amongst students from certain contexts and cultures to be assimilated to this form of discourse. The enactment of dialogic teaching as classroom talk is definitely a huge task and may be time consuming as it entails a shift of classroom culture and for teachers, it is a pedagogical shift. Therefore, teachers are crucial in the enactment of dialogic teaching in the English language classrooms by facilitating and shaping the talk that takes place in the classroom.

2.9 Teacher's Role in Enacting Dialogic Teaching in the L2 Classroom

There is an increasing awareness about the pivotal role that teachers play in classrooms in shaping students' talk, and in promoting L2 acquisition (Alexander, 2018b; Hardman, 2019; Loewen & Sato, 2018). The teacher is instrumental in managing interactions, and is responsible for the organisation of the discursive flow of the interactions in the L2 classroom (Alexander, 2018b; Hardman, 2019; Loewen & Sato, 2018; Sedova, 2017a). Therefore, second language classroom discourse analysis is constantly applied when examining the quality of teacher talk which is said to have a considerable influence on learning (Gharbavi, 2014).

Research on classroom talk showed that the teachers' talk is a strong determiner of the talk that happens and thus it is recommended that open-ended questions, dialogues and other supportive uptake are utilised as instructional practices (Alexander, 2010; Juzwik et al., 2014; Mercer, 2004; Nystrand, 1997; Reznitskaya, 2012). However, based on the findings, dialogic teaching is not a simple task as it involves a change of classroom practice. The way teachers use talk becomes central in theorising, interpreting, and accounting for what students learn, and how much they learn.

The classroom becomes arguably crucial for the dialogic interactions to take place amongst students. Thus, its effective functioning needs to apply 21st century competencies, under the teacher's guidance (Gupta, 2015). Wan and Gut (2011) also stated that the 4Cs - collaborative, critical thinking, creative thinking, and cross-cultural communication skills are instilled and developed by the teacher during the interactions which enhances L2 acquisition and learning opportunities. Therefore, teachers need to have a comprehensive understanding of the teacher talk involved in dialogic teaching, the types of talk to afford learning opportunities and the manner teacher engages students through these talk types so that both can be linked appropriately. The role played by teacher talk and classroom oracy practices have a crucial impact in shaping teaching and learning. They are both multidimensional, multifunctional, and interconnected. The effectiveness of dialogic talk in terms of language and knowledge construction (Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Reznitskaya et al., 2009; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013) depends largely on the teacher.

Snell & Lefstein (2018) advocate that dialogic teaching supports learning in academically challenging classrooms through teacher intervention. As dialogic teaching promotes an egalitarian form of pedagogical approach that caters to diverse groups of students, the 'low ability' students are equally addressed. This is facilitated through the teachers' facilitation skills. Teachers are expected to clarify mistakes by providing constructive feedback during the classroom discourse which is seen as learning opportunities for the students (Resnick et al., 2015; Steen-Utheim & Wittek, 2017). By doing so, teachers develop a culture in which students become actively engaged in the discourse. Teachers should encourage students to ask questions, listen attentively and respond and provide responses that can lead towards the construction of knowledge collectively (Alexander, 2008, 2018a; Applebee et al., 2003; Khong et al., 2017; Michaels & O'Connor, 2015; O'Connor et al., 2015; Osborne et al., 2019).

Alexander (2018) also stated that dialogic classroom discourses are initiated by teachers and students. It is the teacher's talk which facilitates, mediates, and extends the students' talk. The teacher operates under the assumption that the learner has something to contribute to the discussion (Compernelle & Williams, 2012). This is crucial for establishing the different discursive patterns within the classroom which can enhance student talk (Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014). In an effort to enhance students' talk, the teacher ceases to play the role of a filter of knowledge. Instead, she facilitates students' learning (Mello, 2012; Muhonen et al., 2016). One of the main determiner of students' success in second language learning through dialogic teaching is the teachers' employment of interactive discourse strategies (Khany & Mohammadi, 2016b). Thus, the discourse features of a teacher practicing dialogic teaching would differ from that of a conventional form. Alexander (2010) had not specifically emphasised the teachers' dispositional, but it is encompassed in his dialogic teaching principles, repertoire and indicators. In the context of this study, Nystrand's dialogically organised instruction was utilised to complement Alexander's model. As Nystrand (1997) focused on the teacher discourse in the enactment of dialogic teaching, the dispositional features of a teacher employing the monologic and dialogic classroom discourse patterns are described in the table below. Table 2.5 below presents the differences between the dialogic teaching features and the monologic discourse approach.

Table 2.5: Features of Teacher's Discourse Pattern by Nystrand (1997)

| Monologic | Dialogic |
|---|--|
| Classroom talk follows strict IRE (initiation, response, and evaluation) discourse patterns. T+Ss+ T | Classroom talk and discourse boundaries are significantly relaxed with more student responses between teacher initiation and evaluation; also student responses occasionally build on previous responses (chained) and contributes to the construction of shared knowledge. T+ Ss+Ss +Ss /Ss +Ss + Ss +T/ |

| | |
|--|--|
| Teacher selects student speakers. | Teacher frames and facilitates the activity and can respond at any time, but keeps utterances and intervention to a minimum |
| Teacher shows little or no acknowledgement of students' self-selections | There is a minimal teacher selection of students; students either self-elect or select other students |
| Teacher initiates subtopics. | Teacher and students negotiate subtopics of discussion |
| Teacher discourages or ignores students' attempts to introduce other subtopics. | Teacher indicates implied goal as developing shared knowledge, but still includes a preference for correct information. |
| Student responses tend to be short (one word/phrase); teacher does not encourage response elaboration, and there is minimal expansion of students' responses by teacher. | Teacher and students initiate questions for which there are no specific correct answers as well as questions that are constructed from students' previous responses. |
| Teacher initiates test-like questions for which there is generally only one correct answer and indicates implied goal is to contribute specific right answers to teacher's questions | Teacher sometimes acknowledges students' topic expansions as well as teacher's and other students' incorporation of these expansions into the ongoing lesson. |

(Adapted from Khani, R., & Mohammadi, S., 2016)

Based on the features above, teachers enacting dialogic teaching are in contrast with those practicing the IRF structure or monologic discourse pattern. A teacher employing dialogic teaching exhibits her facilitation skills through a few features. Firstly, the teacher frames and facilitates talk through her use of discussions and dialogues. The discussion technique allows for the students to address the learning task together which reflects the first dialogic teaching principle of Alexander (2018) – collective. She retains her intervention and utterances minimally, with intention of providing learners with the opportunity to co-construct (Nystrand, 1997; Khany & Mohammadi, 2016 ; Sarid, 2014b; van de Pol et al., 2017). The teacher poses authentic questions and open-ended questions to initiate talk amongst students. In other words, he/she limits his/her intervention to posing open-ended questions. Students' responses are much more evident; their responses are built on their previous knowledge, contributing to the co- construction of knowledge (Chisholm & Godley, 2011; Haneda & Wells, 2010; Khany & Mohammadi, 2016;

Piliouras et al., 2021; Reznitskaya, 2012; Wang, 2020). A teacher's talk time is adherently reduced as he/she is seen posing a few probing questions as a measure to assist students to articulate their thoughts, and to be engaged in the talk. Teacher provides more turns to students which ultimately increases students' talk.

Secondly, minimal teacher selection of students as students nominates themselves or their peers. The reciprocity of this discourse structure – Alexander's dialogic teaching principle two allows for continuous exchanges amongst the students. Self-elect, known as uptake, refers to students expanding on a point said by another student (Ahmadi, 2017; Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Molinari & Mameli, 2010 Nystrand, 1997, Kim & Wilkinson, 2019). Specifically, teachers follow up on students' responses; the teacher triggers more discussions. In this context, uptake is crucial because it generates meaning since the interlocutors rely on the responses either as an elaboration or a follow-up question. This helps to build an understanding, and to construct knowledge collectively.

Thirdly, as stated by Nystrand (1997), teacher can create the atmosphere and classroom dynamic for dialogic interactions to take place in the form of dialogues and discussions making it a social mode of learning (Mercer, 2004) which allow students to self-elect, thereby reducing teacher selection. The conversational approach engages the students into the discussions which enables the interactions to be more discursive in nature. Specifically, teacher validates or follows up on students' responses by incorporating students' responses into subsequent questions which triggers further discussions (Nystrand, 1997) in which the ideas of the students are deliberated and collectively constructed (Mercer & Howe, 2012).

Fourthly, questions are initiated by both teacher and students for which the answers are not predetermined but constructed from students' previous responses (Gordon, 2018; Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Muhonen et al., 2016). Authentic questions do not provide

specific answers because the purpose is for teachers to know what and how the students think, and to elicit genuine responses as opposed to regurgitation of information (Nystrand et al., 2003). This form of questions employed by teachers allow students to discuss their views which may contribute to new knowledge.

Fifthly, teacher and students negotiate subtopics of discussion. These subtopics, introduced by the teacher or student, allow students to contribute new ideas and perspectives which contribute to new knowledge. The subtopics emerge through turns which comprise of questions, opinions, sharing experiences or factual information (Muhonen et al., 2018). It encourages the extension of talk whereby knowledge is constructed collectively through student responses (Khany & Mohammadi, 2016).

As a facilitator, the teacher no longer dominates the content, flow of talk, and participation of the students. Both are responsible for the flow of the lesson content. Teacher must allow students to discuss their experiences and backgrounds and embed these as part of the lesson content.

The amount and quality of teacher talk influences dialogic teaching. This is supported by a number of researchers (Alexander, 2018, Jay et al., 2017) They noted that in order to provide students with the opportunity to talk, teachers must reduce their talk and increase the amount of time allocated for student talk. By doing so, dialogic classroom discourses make it possible for students to engage meaningfully by responding and building on each other's responses. Therefore, the reduction of teacher talk and the empowerment of student talk is vital in the L2 context as it provides students with opportunities to construct knowledge as well as acquire language.

Through dialogic classroom discourses, teachers seek to make students' thinking visible. Teachers are able to gauge students' thinking as well as facilitate the discourse

appropriately. The metacognitive skill of the teacher is crucial in facilitating the students' talk (Hiver et al., 2021, Garcia, 2014). Dialogic teaching is considered a metacognitive activity as it involves students thought processing on their thinking. Metacognition involves being aware of the thinking of the particular person as well as her/his peers' thinking. The knowledge about the thinking of the individual as well as the others enables students to regulate these thinking patterns that increases their understanding and outcomes (Kuhn & Dean, 2004). Hence, the teachers' modeling of metacognition is crucial in achieving quality reasoning. This implies that in order to implement dialogic teaching, teachers need to employ appropriate discourse moves to facilitate talk (Wei, Murphy, & Firetto, 2016). Two types of discourse moves have been proposed: open-ended questions and discussions.

2.9.1 Teacher Questioning Through Dialogic Teaching

One of the fundamental factors in dialogic teaching is elicitation techniques. Understanding the manner teachers support student talk, mediate language learning and the construction of knowledge collectively through teacher questioning is crucial to L2 communities (Boyd, 2012; Boyd & Kong; 2015). Tan, (2017) found that teacher questioning promotes student thinking which enhances students' engagement and increase output (Boyd, 2016). As mentioned, metacognition is vital in dialogic teaching and one way of promoting metacognitive skills is through teacher questioning.

According to Cui & Teo (2021), open-ended question is an important tool that assist teachers in initiating, managing and sustaining interactions and simultaneously engaging students to extend their turns to talk in the L2 classrooms. Open-ended questions are employed as a powerful discourse strategy to initiate and scaffold students' talk (Bungum et al., (2018), Murphy et al., 2018a; M. Boyd, 2016; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). The aim of open-ended questions is to exploit student contributions (Alexander, 2018;

Hennessy et al., 2021, Kim & Wilkinson, 2019a). Thus, the questions are structured in such a way to generate meaningful responses. These responses trigger further questions (Murphy et al., 2018a; Sedova et al., 2016) which leads towards meaningful inquiries (Muhonen et al., 2016a, 2016b; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013a). Other than teacher input, students learn to negotiate among themselves and collaboratively construct knowledge, (Alexander, 2018; Hennessy et al., 2021; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019a; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Literature concerning dialogic teaching in classrooms has consistently displayed the inclusion of questioning as a when studying classroom interactions (Tan, 2017).

Open-ended questions are strategically used as part of the discussion or conversation by teachers to reflect her/his genuine interest in interacting with students (Hardman, 2019; Boyd & Markarian, 2015). Teacher questioning via open-ended questions regulates and directs the scope of students' talk which contributes to the learning process (Boyd, 2016). Open-ended questions function as a situational variable prompting students' understanding and responses which assist them to co-construct knowledge through the extended turns of talk Alexander, 2018; Gillies, 2015; Hennessy et al., 2021; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Therefore, responding spontaneously to open-ended questions leads to construction of knowledge collectively. Both the teacher and students pose open-ended questions to build on responses that facilitate understanding and meaning making (Zhang & Zhang, 2020). These questions are authentic in which the answers are not predetermined. Through the chain of question-and-answer sequences which involves the skills of analysing and synthesising, knowledge is constructed collectively.

As dialogic teaching promotes collaborative learning, open-ended questions allow for new topics of discussions to arise as part of talk, facilitating collaborative learning (Boyd,

2016). Nevertheless, students need the scaffolding questions posed by the teacher to further articulate their thoughts. Thus, teacher questioning is crucial in directing the learning intentions and expectations (Boyd, 2016). Through the use of open-ended questions, teachers support learning opportunities amongst their students by posing open-ended questions which is said to develop students' cognitive processes, advance their reasoning and enhance their understanding (Sedova et al., 2016). The teacher frames and facilitates talk during lesson through open-ended questions which leads to the construction of knowledge collectively. Hence, a dialogically informed questioning repertoire includes both teachers and students asking open ended questions, teachers encouraging students to ask open-ended questions and training them to do so (Boyd & Markarian, 2015).

From a sociocultural perspective, open-ended questions promote equitable participation in the discourse. Students become engaged through the use of open-ended questions which indirectly supports higher order thinking. Teachers' questioning moves is the single most used discourse strategy for assisting, maintaining, and advancing participation among students. Vygotsky's ZPD and scaffolding are applied using teacher's questioning moves which generate talk during the classroom dialogues and conversations (Estany & Martí'nez, 2014). Teachers pose a variety of open-ended, that include follow-up questions built on students' responses that elicit critical-analytic thinking known as teacher uptake (Sedova et al., 2016). As students respond to the probing questions, they also learn to elaborate on certain responses. In this regard, the teachers play a vital role in getting students to engage in reasoned argumentation through questions (Gillies, 2013). These discursive patterns develop students' communicative and academic competencies (Boyd, 2016).

Teachers facilitating dialogic interactions use probing questions to organise the interchange of student ideas; assist them to articulate their thoughts and help them to construct specific sentence structures verbally so as to keep the discourse going. The referential questions would generate longer responses which are more communicative. Dialogic classroom discourses are predominantly founded on interactive exchanges formed through open-ended questions posed during the discussion. It constructs the discursive sequence between the students and teacher. The turn-taking, length, and type of learner contributions are strongly influenced by the nature of the questions being asked.

Dialogic teaching positions the teacher as “substantively weak” but “procedurally strong” (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013; Kennedy, 2004). Taking on the role of a facilitator, they refrain from being the ‘transmitter of knowledge’ but instead elicit knowledge from the students allowing them to construct knowledge through the process of inquiry. Mistakes students make become their learning point. To do so, teachers use a variety of question types to engage students in talk. Hardman (2019) provides the repertoire of question types which is known as teacher talk moves to facilitate talk. Table 2.6 below illustrates.

Table 2.6: Teacher Talk Moves

| Teacher Talk Moves | Descriptions |
|---------------------------------|---|
| Initiation questions | |
| Teacher closed question | Teacher asks a closed/recall question - allows one possible response |
| Teacher open question | Teacher asks an open/authentic question - allows various responses Feedback/evaluation |
| Follow up talk moves | |
| Teacher add-on question | Teacher asks student to add on to another student’s contribution |
| Teacher agree/disagree question | Teacher asks if a student or students agree or disagree |
| Teacher expand question | Teacher stays with the same student and asks to expand |
| Teacher rephrase question | Teacher asks a student to repeat or reformulate his/her own or another student’s contribution |

| | |
|----------------------------|---|
| Teacher revoice question | Teacher verifies his/her understanding of a student's contribution, which requires a student response |
| Teacher why question | Teacher stays with the same student and asks for evidence/reasoning |
| Teacher challenge question | Teacher provides a challenge or counter example |

(Adapted from Hardman, 2019)

A key aspect of dialogic communication is that it leads to exploration of ideas (Gibbons, 2015; Kim & Wilkinson, 2019; Sedova et al., 2014). As a facilitator, the primary focus is in providing opportunities for learners to construct knowledge collectively through the interactions, and ultimately to empower students in the learning process.

2.9.1.1 The Role of Open-Ended Questions in Dialogic Teaching

From a sociocultural perspective, the social processes of language use and the discourse dynamics underlying how open-ended questions affect students' second language learning in classroom has become the current interest in the success of L2 learning. According to Alexander (2018), dialogic interactions are established through the open-ended questions posed either by the teacher or student which has a particular communicative function. These open-ended questions contribute towards L2 development which is attained through the complex utterances produced by students (Gillies, 2015). It constructs the discursive sequence between the students and teacher. Boyd (2016) found that teachers who were trained to ask open-ended questions encouraged linguistic development of students in the target language. Teachers who posed open-ended questions allow for longer responses consisting of complex sentences. The open-ended questions posed by teachers allow students for higher cognitive processing and language use. It is crucial to encourage students to use language extensively so that opportunities can be created to encourage them to notice and acquire

the form and function of the language in conveying their intended meanings more appropriately (Jones, 2013).

Open-ended questions are supportive of an egalitarian nature in which the questions enhances student talk as a wider range of responses are produced due to the various thoughts and perspectives on the topic discussed. The teachers 'open-ended questions assist, maintains, and advances participation among students (Davies et al., 2017; Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017). Simultaneously, this allows for language learning. Students become aware of the form and function of the language through the responses and as they respond to the probing questions; they learn to elaborate on the responses. In the effort to produce output, they acquire linguistic features. The need to respond and participate in the dialogues 'stretches' students' ability to learn the language involved. These discursive patterns develop students' communicative and academic competencies (Boyd, 2016).

2.9.2 Teacher's Turn Management in Dialogic Teaching

A teacher's turn management is equally important in dialogic teaching because it sets the parameter for the number of interlocutors to be involved, and how many interactions could take place. The interactions and the extent of the discursiveness is influenced by the teachers' ability to provide the management of turns to students (Kerawalla, 2015; Matusov et al., 2019; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013). Conversations proceed on the basis of one turn after another. These turns are negotiated and renegotiated by students during the discourse. The teachers' wise management of turns can improve the level of dialogicity (García-Carrión et al., 2020) whereby the teacher can hand over the floor to the student, and to continue to give the floor back by asking the students to modify or elaborate their responses. Alternatively, the teachers can give the floor to other students (Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014b). Teachers can also facilitate the development of oral communication skills of L2 students through careful management of turn-taking

sequences that occur during the whole class discussion, or group discussions. This is done by handing over the turn-taking management to students where they provide turns to other students, or to their teachers (Muhonen et al., 2018). Therefore, the turn-taking opportunities afforded by the teacher determine the amount of practice a student obtains (Wei & Murphy, 2017).

2.9.3 Discussion as Teachers' Discourse Strategy

Research has shown that classroom dialogues and discussions enhance students' language acquisition, thinking, and learning (Davies et al., 2017; Mercer & Sara Hennessy, 2019; Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017a). Through dialogic teaching, teachers employ dialogues and discussions to enhance students' cognitive, social, and linguistic skills (Alexander, 2018, Hardman, 2019). The main implication of the dialogic teaching is that learning is a social activity facilitated through dialogues and discussions (Al-Adeimi & O'Connor, 2021; Gillies, 2014; Murphy et al., 2018b). The co-construction of knowledge is evident through the talk that takes place through the whole class and group discussions (Hardman, 2019). Thus, the transformation of classroom discourse to a dialogic form is pivotal for better student outcome (Hennessy et al., 2016; Maureen P. Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Mercer et al., 2019a; Vrikki et al., 2019; Hennessy et al., 2021).

According to Mercer (2008), teacher who organises classroom discussions motivates students' learning, and raises their self-esteem. Rojas-Drummond, Torreblanca, Pedraza, Vélez and Guzmán, (2013) also stated that dialogic discussions in classrooms promote the emergence of new ideas and knowledge where the responses from the students are heard, taken up, and jointly considered for meaning-making. Teachers provide students with the interpretive authority to seek meaningful engagement. During the discussions, discursiveness is exhibited through teacher questions. As teachers facilitate the

discussions, they must have clarity of the content being discussed by interweaving students' individual experiences and background and culture so as to create a discourse with broader and richer perspectives.

Group discussions are essential in encouraging students to share their experience. This provides accessibility for the participants to interact with their peers in a comfortable environment. The non-threatening environment makes the students feel comfortable to talk about various topics which adds to interest of others in the discourse. This allows students have or develop different viewpoints on the topic discussed and in doing so students also learn to agree or disagree with the viewpoints of others.

By participating in class discussions, students develop their oral skills. As mentioned earlier, the discussions are an important feature that promotes and enhances thinking and inter-thinking (Murphy et al., 2018b). This discursive structure relies heavily on teachers and students to be agents of change in advocating dialogic teaching. Bungum, Bee and Henriksen (2018) observed that small-group discussions have the potential of advancing students' understanding on a particular subject (Abdul Rahman et al., 2017). Evidence also showed that the discussions facilitated students' understanding on the subject matter since they are actively engaged with the ideas articulated by their peers. In this manner, they all learn to construct knowledge collaboratively. In other words, the small-group discussions enabled students to explore, investigate, and to deliberate on ideas actively (Bungum et al., 2018). The discussions are initiated, managed, and sustained by both the teachers and students. Alexander's (2008) five dialogic teaching principles of collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful as well as the talk types are exemplified during the discussions.

Dialogic classroom dialogues have also been categorised into three main types of dialogues known as grounding dialogue, critical dialogue, and reflective dialogue (Chang

& Chang, 2017). Grounding dialogue is established through teachers' presentation of a topic in which students share their views of it. On the other hand, critical dialogues are dialogues that see students challenging one another's points of view which eventually leads to mutual understanding and knowledge construction. Reflective dialogue is an extension of critical dialogues in which students reflect on the different viewpoints argued and infuse them into their line of thinking to make them a joint understanding and meaning (Chang & Chang, 2017). The teacher supports this process of meaning making and ensures this particular form of dialogue is developed through the discourse to support the learning of her students.

Some sociocultural researchers (Darling-Hammond et al., 2019; Wegerif et al., 1999; Zuengler & Miller, 2006) have also investigated how discussions or a series of discussions progress, with students combining their knowledge to generate joint meaning. Things that are said may invoke knowledge from the students who are involved in the discussion (Bungum et al., 2018; Davies et al., 2017). Past studies (Chin, 2007; Delic, 2016) have also revealed that students who engaged in group discussions and Socratic dialogues attained deeper understanding of the task at hand. Findings (Bashir & Elhassan, 2017; García-Carrión et al., 2020; Zhang & Zhang, 2020) had also demonstrated that discussions stimulate students to enquire and to deliberate around the issue. The students achieve this by analyzing and evaluating their own point of views accurately, by defending their own views, or by criticizing other's views. This process reflects a higher-level of cognitive processing. Therefore, dialogic discussions help students to attain better reasoning (Bashir & Elhassan, 2017; García-Carrión et al., 2020; Zhang & Zhang, 2020).

A large-scale study by Alexander and Hardman (2017) found that dialogues had positively impacted students particularly primary pupils in terms of their engagement and learning outcomes. The study was derived from an intervention programme which was

designed for the professional development of teachers. This professional development is known as Dialogic Teaching. The intervention is made up of eleven cycles arranged in two phases. This was introduced as a 20-week intervention aimed at improving the quality of classroom discourse with the ultimate intention of increasing students' agency, engagement and outcome. The core strategies of the intervention programme encompassed mentoring, video and audio recording for reflection and development. This was followed by an iterative process of target-setting, action, recording, and review. All these were further supported by the availability of a detailed handbook, and planning/review forms which were used by the trainers and teachers, with prompts provided for each cycle. In other words, the training programme used videos, audios, print materials, and in-school mentoring. The intervention programme focused on the teachers' speaking skills, particularly questioning as well as the students' language abilities. This is because its goal was to develop students' oral skills. The programme also emphasised on discussions through which students learn to respond, reason, discuss, argue, and explain. All of these are expected to enhance the students' articulatory skills. The findings also revealed that after a 20-week intervention, 2493 Year 5 pupils performed better in English and Science than those who did not receive the intervention. Hence, the intervention on dialogic teaching yielded positive outcomes which suggest that dialogic teaching can transform learning in the classroom, and beyond.

To enable the enactment of dialogic teaching, teachers require both theoretical and pedagogical content knowledge. Teachers need to bridge the fundamentals of the pedagogical approach into real practices and one way is through professional development courses.

2.10 Teachers' Professional Development on Dialogic Teaching

Dialogic teaching is viewed as a transformative pedagogy. Through this approach, teachers are instrumental in making the change which is a rather difficult task (Wilkinson et al., 2017). Acknowledging that the enactment of dialogic teaching requires a deep understanding of the underpinning theory and translating into practice (Mercer & Howe, 2012), professional development programmes are designed to support the enactment process. The current literature on dialogic teaching reveals that many professional development programmes have shown positive outcomes in terms of students' learning although there are a few which did not indicate any change (Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013; Van den Bergh, Ros, & Beijaard, 2015). A few of these successful professional development for teachers involved introducing talk moves that support productive dialogues/discussions such as teacher questioning – open-ended questions ((Sedova et al., 2016), usage of classroom videos and transcripts as reflection and lesson study (Weil et al., 2018), Recognising the success of these PD programmes, it would be good to identify the strengths and structure involved. According to Osborne (2019), changing teachers' discourse practice towards a dialogic approach requires a well thought teacher professional development programme to facilitate change. Professional development (PD) approaches, in particular interventions, can help teachers to adopt a more dialogic practice (Böheim et al., 2021; Hennessy et al., 2021; Ruthven et al., 2017; Sedova et al., 2017; Sedova, 2017b).

A review on teacher professional development programmes on dialogic teaching have proven to have positive outcomes for both teacher and students. A particular programme (Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017) which involved lower secondary Czech teachers demonstrated higher engagement amongst students through discussions which led to better reasoning. Dialogic teaching stimulates student engagement more than other

communication forms, such as the prevalent situation in which the teacher calls upon individual students to respond (IRE script).

The intervention programme on dialogic teaching for low ability students in the UK (Snell & Lefstein 2018) also showed how students who were considered having lower ability manage to be engaged in the learning process. Dialogic teaching promotes equality and equity. The low ability felt comfortable to participate and be engaged in talk as the dialogic environment had been cultivated in this classroom. In a similar intervention programme, fourth-grade teachers participated in a year-long implementation of Quality Talk (QT), a teacher-facilitated, text-based discussion approach with the aim of transforming teacher and student discourse pattern. The findings show that both, teachers and students had to an extent changed their discourse pattern (Murphy et al., 2018c).

Similarly, Kuhn (2018) conducted an intervention programme for teachers in the US, specifically on the subject seminar for philosophy focusing on argument analysis. The findings of the intervention programme reveal that the argumentative dialogues as part of the seminar promoted the development students' critical thinking skills.

A few other studies (Alexander, 2018; Davies et al., 2017; J. Hardman, 2020 Hennessy et al., 2018; van de Pol et al., 2017) have also demonstrated the need for professional development to support teachers in the enactment of dialogic teaching. Thus, this study is intended to identify how teachers develop professionally by attending a teacher professional development on dialogic teaching in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition.

2.11 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive review on the vital role of classroom discourses in second language acquisition followed by the fundamentals of dialogic teaching as a pedagogical approach in second language learning and acquisition. The review specifically focused on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse which capitalizes on talk for learning and through talk for second language use and acquisition. The empirical and theoretical framework in which the study was positioned was outlined from the sociocultural perspective. Learning and language learning was viewed as a social process. The review further discussed the pivotal role of the teacher in facilitating and shaping talk through dialogic teaching. The support required to facilitate the enactment of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse through professional development is also reviewed. In summary the literature review informs us on the importance of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse informed by research which examined the relationship between language, thought and learning. It leverages student learning through interactions. The communicative acts of teachers and students through dialogic teaching provide students with the platform to generate talk which becomes an avenue for second language acquisition. Therefore, students can be supported through discourse strategies such as discussions and open-ended questions to attain better outcomes in spoken language. Based on these perspectives, it was thus deduced that dialogic classroom discourses are a collective effort between the students and teacher which contributes to the learner's linguistic and cognitive development. Hence, this study aspires to identify the enactment of dialogic teaching in the English language classrooms by the teachers and explore their perceptions this pedagogical discourse approach in the L2 classroom based on the professional development programme teachers had received. The following chapter discusses the methodology used for the study.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

As stated in Chapter 1, the aim of this study is to explore the perceptions and experiences of a group of L2 teachers on the role of dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse in facilitating students' second language use and acquisition. Thus, this chapter presents the main features of the research method adopted for the study. First, the philosophical background that underpins the research approach is discussed; This is followed by a detail description of the research design and instruments selected for this study. The selection criteria of participants for the study and the data collection methods that were employed are also presented. Finally, this chapter outlines the strategies used for data analysis process in the study.

3.2 Research Approach

The selection of the research approach for this study was primarily influenced by the nature of the research problem and the research questions (Creswell, 2013). The interpretive and the constructivist paradigm were adopted for this study for the purpose of examining the perceptions of the L2 teachers and their experiences of dialogic teaching, which was based on a real phenomenon, hence a reality, as opposed to experimentally.

3.2.1 The Interpretive Paradigm

The interpretive paradigm focusses on understanding a phenomenon or issue based on the subjective experiences of the participants involved in this study. In other words, the interpretive nature of the research questions which seek to gain insights into the perceptions on the role of dialogic teaching in the teaching of oral communication skills

and the experiences of employing it influenced the selection of this paradigm. This means that the meaning of a phenomenon or issue can only be understood through the input of the social entities involved as in the teachers and students. Hence data collection is purely qualitative in nature and was generated through the use of oriented methodologies, such as interviews, or participant observations. Analysis of such kinds of data thus stresses on the subjective relationship between the participants and the researcher. The interpretive approach was adopted for this study for the purpose of examining the interactions of the L2 teacher and the students in class since the observation was based on a real phenomenon, hence a reality, as opposed to experimentally.

3.2.2 The Social Constructivist Paradigm

The social constructivism further supports the interpretive paradigm as the former emphasises the subjectivity of meaning-making by one. This means one's perspective is recognized without rejecting some notion of objectivity. The social constructivism paradigm is based on the notion that reality is constructed socially. This privileges the researcher as he/she is able to establish a close relationship in which the participant is comfortable sharing his or her thoughts. The adoption of this paradigm allowed participants of this study to construct their self- meaning of the phenomenon (Cresswell, 2016). Through the responses attained from the teachers on their perceptions and lived experiences of employing dialogic discourse, the researcher was able to gain in-depth understanding of their ideas, feelings and beliefs on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse (Baxter Pamela & Jack, 1990). The method involved an in-depth understanding of the choices one makes and the reasons for it (Stake 1995) which was to investigate holistically the narratives and descriptions of the teachers' perspectives and their lived experiences of dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse. Utilising the constructivist paradigm for this study, a qualitative methodology was employed for this

research to investigate the perceptions and experiences of employing dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse among the Malaysian English language teacher educators. Therefore, the paradigm suggests that the current study was undertaken with the goal to provide a better understanding of teachers' views and experiences with dialogic classroom discourse.

3.3 Research Questions

1. How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers perceive dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition?
2. How do Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers translate dialogic teaching into real classroom practices following the professional development programme?
3. How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies influence learners' interaction pattern?

The research questions are premised on the notion that dialogic teaching facilitates second language learning and acquisition in which teachers' discourse and discourse strategies are crucial in endeavoring the learning to take place. As mentioned in Chapter 2, (2.2.2), dialogic teaching is about the close relationship between language, thought and learning (Sedova, 2017). Dialogic teaching is a collective effort and is concerned with promoting communication through authentic exchanges between teachers and students. It focuses on the power of spoken language to support and enhance children's cognitive development. (Alexander, 2018). Teachers create space for students through dialogues and discussions to critically be engaged and construct knowledge collectively.

Recognising the potential of dialogic teaching, Question I was to ascertain teachers' perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral

communication skills and acquisition. This was derived from their interview transcripts. Based on the responses obtained from the individual semi-structured interview transcripts, the teachers' understanding of dialogic classroom discourse, their experiences and their challenges in the enactment of dialogic teaching would determine their perceptions on the role of the dialogic teaching and their views as to whether the dialogic classroom discourses have changed the conventional classroom discourse. As mentioned above, this was based on Alexander's Dialogic Teaching (2010) model and Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction (1997) model. The frameworks above consist of various tools in the form of indicators, principles and methods of dialogic teaching. In identifying the features of a dialogic classroom discourse, the Sinclair & Coulthard IRF Model (1975) was applied to make the distinction. The IRF triadic pattern of interaction or also known as the monologic discourse was the existing form of discourse structure in the classroom prior to the introduction of dialogic teaching and therefore it was used to indicate if the teachers had displayed features of a dialogic pattern or was otherwise.

Question 2 was to investigate and answer in what ways real classroom practices of teachers reflect dialogic classroom discourses in facilitating L2 learning and acquisition. It was to identify if the teachers were employing dialogic features, the principles, repertoires, indicators and the instructional techniques in the teaching of spoken English based on dialogic teaching framework by Alexander (2010) and Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction (1997) and by making comparison to Sinclair & Coulthard IRF Model (1975). However, it must be noted that the research was not meant to be a comparative study between the discourse pattern i.e. dialogic vs monologic but merely to help the researcher to provide a comprehensive analysis of findings.

Table 3.1: Research Questions

| Research Questions | Data Form | Function of Data |
|--|---|--|
| <p><i>How do the teachers perceive dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition?</i></p> <p>Research question 1 is designed to ascertain teachers' perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition?</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Semi structured Interview Questions based on the Interview Protocol Refinement Framework (IPR). • Dialogic teaching features based on the dialogic teaching framework by Alexander (2010), and Nystrand (1997). • Observational field notes. • Transcriptions will be coded and analysed thematically. | <p>Obtain their perceptions on dialogic teaching and as to whether dialogic teaching has changed the conventional classroom discourse, their experiences with dialogic teaching and the difficulties they experience employing the pedagogical approach.</p> |
| <p><i>2. How do Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers translate dialogic teaching into real classroom practices following the professional development programme?</i></p> <p>Research Question 2 is designed to ascertain the implementation of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in real classroom practices of four secondary school teachers in the ESL classroom.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video recording of classroom observations transcriptions. • The interactions will be transcribed, coded and analysed thematically. • Dialogic classroom discourse features based dialogic teaching framework by Alexander (2010) and Nystrand (1997) • Observational field notes. | <p>To investigate and answer in what ways do real classroom practices of teachers reflect dialogic teaching in the teaching of spoken English. It was to identify if the teachers were employing dialogic features, the principles and the instructional techniques the teachers were adopting based on dialogic teaching framework by Alexander (2010), and Nystrand (1997) and making comparison to Sinclair & Coulthard IRF Model (1975).</p> |
| <p><i>How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies influence learners' interaction pattern?</i></p> <p>Research Question 3 is designed to find out how teacher's use of dialogic classroom discourse strategies support students' language learning opportunities.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Video recording of classroom interactions. • Transcriptions will be coded and analysed thematically. • Observational field notes. | <p>To identify as to whether students' opportunity to interact in English relates to the type of discourse in the classroom and how the teachers' discourse strategies supported students' interaction opportunities.</p> |

Question 3 was to identify whether students' interaction opportunities are influenced by the discourse strategies employed by the teachers in the study.

3.4 The Qualitative Approach

As the study adopted the constructivist paradigm, the research method employed was qualitative. The qualitative inquiry approach was selected because of its wide use with case studies (Creswell, 2016; Yin, 2009). Acknowledging that qualitative research involves an in-depth understanding of the phenomena or issue (Creswell, 2016; Yin, 2009), this study aims to holistically investigate the narratives, and descriptions of the teachers' perspectives and experiences of dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse. All six stages: a). exploring the research problem and developing an understanding, b). reviewing the literature to justify the problem, c). specifying the purpose and research questions, d). collecting data, e). analysing and interpreting data and f). reporting and evaluating research of the qualitative approach was adhered. These narratives offered a window into obtaining information demonstrated by their feelings, ideas, and beliefs on dialogic teaching. This implies that their input needs to be examined through interpretations and meanings from the analysis of their dialogic teaching. Most importantly, this qualitative approach permits the researcher to gather a broad range of data which could be analysed both deductively and inductively. By exploring the raw data obtained from the interviews, and the observations of the classroom-lessons, analysis was made both deductively and inductively by capturing the specific details of the data.

This approach therefore enabled the researcher to derive some pertinent themes based on the interpretations made (Creswell, 2013, Cohen and Manion, 2004). Following the explorations of the L2 teachers' perceived engagement of dialogic teaching for teaching

oral communication skills, some insights on how the dialogic classroom discourses had influenced students' spoken and learning opportunities were obtained. In that regard, this study was able to answer the research questions above thereby fulfilling the research objectives.

3.4.1 Naturalistic setting

This study employs the qualitative inquiry as it seeks to understand the phenomenon of the dialogic teaching within a naturalistic setting (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) which involves the teacher and the students who were interacting during a lesson within the classroom setting. Naturalistic means a real and authentic situation involving the actual people involved. The naturalistic environment permits the researcher to observe how the participants conduct themselves in real settings. It is deduced that the teachers' perceptions and experiences of their dialogic classroom discourses were based on their classroom experiences (Patton, 2002).

Most importantly, this research method has enabled the researcher to gather a broad range of data for both a deductive and an inductive analysis approach. The detailed readings of the raw data from the interviews and lesson observations enabled the researcher to derive some pertinent themes through the interpretations made. Through the deductive and inductive analysis of data, the researcher had the opportunity to conduct the study effectively and suitably. The researcher was able to explore the perceptions of lower secondary L2 teachers on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating second language learning and acquisition, how the teachers employed dialogic teaching in the English language classroom and how dialogic classroom discourses influenced students' spoken and learning opportunities. The study made use of teacher interviews and lesson observations in which the transcripts of the interviews and lessons were

analysed. The exploratory qualitative approach allowed for both analytic lenses and procedures.

3.4.2 Exploratory Qualitative Research Design

An exploratory qualitative method was used to examine the Malaysian English Language teachers' perceptions and experiences of employing dialogic classroom discourses, and to delve deeper into knowing whether they were incorporating dialogic teaching principles, repertoires and indicators into their teaching as intended by the curriculum planners. The exploratory qualitative research method was employed as it affords the researcher opportunities to explore and describe the teaching of oral English through dialogic classroom discourses (phenomena) in lower secondary classrooms (context) through data sources such interviews, fieldnotes and observations. This ensures that the phenomenon is explored through multiple lenses and not one. It was also meant to inform professional practice on teacher training by studying a group of teachers employing pedagogical discourse approach known as dialogic teaching to holistically understand exemplary cases which could provide evidence-informed decision on the current education policy. Hence, the present study aims to use interviews and observations to investigate the phenomenon. The social discourse analysis approach was then applied to analyse the transcripts derived from the interviews. This explains why the qualitative approach was utilized both as analytic lens and procedures.

3.5 Case Study Design

Using the case study as the research design, this study also aims to fulfil its exploratory nature by treating the phenomenon as a naturalistic inquiry. As proposed by Creswell, (2017), a case study involves looking at a particular issue by focusing on one or two cases within a bounded system. This study utilized the case study to explore the concept of

dialogic teaching by focusing on a group of ESL teachers who were teaching English as a second language (L2). Thus, this study only documents these ESL teachers' experiences that were captured within a specified time frame. The case study approach would thus emphasise the individual's uniqueness by attempting to understand the issue from their respective experiences. In this regard, the case study research design would offer a rich, intensive, and holistic input as advocated Merriam (1998).

Nonetheless, within the case study research design, multiple input was drawn from the participants and in this study, eight ESL teachers were interviewed with regards to their perceptions on the role of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the teaching of oral communication skills and observations on their experiences of enacting dialogic teaching within classrooms. Dialogic teaching was investigated based on experiences, implementations, and the challenges faced during the implementation process.

For the purpose of this study, Yin's (2014) definition of case study was applied. The selection of case study was based on nature of the inquiry, which was on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse, a new pedagogical discourse structure which was introduced to L2 teachers (scope) and how the teachers implemented the discourse in their effort to promote oral communication skills amongst students. Hence, the process and methodological characteristics were also applied. It aimed to explore and investigate L2 teachers' perceptions on the role of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse and document their lived experiences with dialogic teaching within a specified time frame. As the study is from a sociocultural stance, case studies are a characteristic of much recent empirical work which often provide considerable insights into the phenomenon being investigated.

Case study involves observing a phenomenon through a set of data (Yin, 2014). It attempts to investigate and provide findings to the "how" and "why" questions which

arose from the phenomenon taking into consideration the contextual conditions and the people involved. This is indeed the foundation and rationale of the current study where case study was employed because it ‘fitted’ the research questions as it provided a means of investigating how teachers who had been trained on dialogic teaching perceived the role of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the teaching of spoken English, how they used dialogic teaching to afford students with opportunities for talk and how did the dialogic classroom discourses influence students’ interaction pattern. This formed the unit of analysis of the case which consisted of multiple variables considered important in understanding the phenomenon- the perceptions of L2 teachers on dialogic teaching in facilitating L2 learning and acquisition and their practices of the discourse structure (Merriam, 2009). Each unit of analysis was vital in providing an in-depth understanding of their experiences.

Table 3.2: Elements That Inform the Critical Aspects of The Case Study Method

| Element | Description |
|--------------------|--|
| The Case | <p>Object of the case study identified as the unit of analysis.</p> <p>Individuals - 8 ESL teachers from the first cohort of teachers who underwent training on dialogic teaching.</p> <p>Social situation – rural schools</p> <p>Phenomena - dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse in Malaysian Lower Secondary ESL Classrooms</p> |
| A Bounded System | Bounded by time (2013-2018) in Lower Secondary EL classrooms in 8 rural schools |
| Studied in Context | <p>Studied 8 teachers in real life context and the classrooms they taught through semi-structured interviews and observations.</p> <p>Rural schools with low proficiency in English</p> <p>Contextual variables include socio-economic background and cultural norms of students</p> |
| In-Depth Study | Chosen for an intensive analysis of the phenomena which is dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse in the L2 classroom |

| | |
|------------------------------|--|
| Selecting the case | Based on the purpose of the study which was to ascertain teachers' perspectives on the role of dialogic teaching in the teaching of spoken English and their experiences with it. Secondly how do the teachers practice dialogic teaching in their classrooms- what are the dialogic classroom discourse strategies used. Single case – single case with embedded units |
| Multiple Sources of Evidence | Data was obtained through semi-structured interviews and observations and analysed thematically. |

(Adapted from Harrison, Birks, Franklin, & Mills, 2017)

The case study was built and developed based on the units mentioned above. The case was bounded by definition and context (Miles & Huberman, 1994) where eight teachers from the first cohort of teachers who underwent training on dialogic teaching were investigated on their perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse and their experiences with dialogic teaching. These teachers represented the rural schools in five different states which are Perlis, Pulau Pinang, Selangor, Johor and Pahang. Each teachers' conception of dialogic teaching and their experiences was explored according to their context which included the type of school, group of students and the locality. Their perceptions were further investigated through real classroom observations to identify how the teachers employed dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse to generate talk in the classroom. During the interview analysis, it was noted that among the eight teachers, four of the teachers had displayed their understanding and on the enactment of dialogic teaching clearly in terms of the principles, repertoire and indicators. Their responses to the questions posed regarding their understanding of dialogic teaching, the infusion of the dialogic principles, repertoires and indicators into their lessons influenced the selection of them for observation. The manner they had afforded students opportunities for learning and language learning was also taken into account. The consistency of the teachers to state the dialogic repertoires of talk such as questioning and whole class discussions and the descriptions of students' involvement through dialogic

teaching also indicated their understanding and implementation process which influenced the selection.

The exploratory single case with embedded units (Yin, 2014) was selected based on the purpose of study. The single case study allowed the researcher to explore and examine the perceptions and experiences of eight teachers in different schools while considering the influence of their teaching strategies, school locality and group of students. The analysis of data was a comprehensive process as this method allowed the researcher to examine the sub-units that were situated within the larger case and analyse it individually (within case analysis), to form a broader understanding derived from the cross-case analysis. Each teacher was a sub-unit that was compiled into a larger unit functioning as a single case.

This rich analysis provided a comprehensive finding of the case study. Hence, the single case study approach explored teachers perceived understanding, experiences and challenges of dialogic teaching in the teaching of English as L2 and documented their experiences within a specified time frame focusing on each participant to provide rich, intensive and holistic description as advocated by Merriam (2009). The object of the bounded system which was the single case study became the defining feature which focused on dialogic teaching and how the teachers perceived dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating spoken English and acquisition and how they had employed dialogic teaching features in real classroom settings enabling the investigation to be descriptive and heuristic in nature. As it was exploratory and descriptive in nature, it provided the researcher to gain insights into the complexities of each unit within the case and to augur similar findings in the studies as suggested by Yin, (2014). The use of case study in this research has enabled the researcher to understand the perceptions of dialogic classroom discourses in facilitating second language learning and acquisition.

It also derived analytical generalisation to theory providing a holistic, rich and meaningful data of teachers' use of dialogic teaching as a form of classroom talk (phenomena) to increase opportunities in speaking a second language by students and for second language acquisition. The findings were derived by converging the units and linking it to the concept of dialogic classroom discourse based on the theoretical framework that underpins the study. As it is a single-case study, interviews were selected as it was a viable method to elicit implicit and explicit data from the subjects. The knowledge gained from the analysis of each case was gathered and further analysed to gain a broader understanding of the case and was then triangulated with classroom observations to confirm the validity of the process and enhance data credibility. It contributed to and informed on theory development.

Yin (2014) taking on a realist approach, developed a structured process for case study research. The research structure is very much guided by the underpinning theories of the processes involved in analysing qualitative case study. In order for the researcher to set a limit to the scope of study, propositions are derived as means to ensure the completion of research. While still qualitative and inductive, cause and effect, confirming theories and the reliability of findings are equally emphasised (Yin, 2014). The proposition in this current study is that dialogic classroom discourses extend students' language use and acquisition through the constant dialogic interactions in English in which knowledge is constructed collectively both on content and language. The teachers' implementation process was inferred through each unit within the case. Therefore, a rich description of the subject was attained by examining the teachers in action.

From an educational research perspective, the analysis derived from the case study informed curriculum design and innovation and the socio-cultural as well as the sociolinguistic influence it had on second language learning and acquisition. As case

studies have been widely employed in second language research, it provided rich contextualisation that indicated some of the successes and challenges of second language learning and acquisition which is the ultimate aim of this research.

The key element of case study research is to gain an in-depth understanding of the issue from the perspective of the participants through a detailed analysis. The perceptions and interpretations of the researcher were attained from a subjective and interpretive stance (Creswell, 2013). To manage subjectivity, memoing and journaling methods were used by researcher as a reflexive stance (Yin, 2014). In other words, the knowledge gained from the single-case study analysis provided empirically rich, context-specific, holistic accounts which contributed to theory-building. Ultimately, it also developed the teachers' pedagogical content knowledge as well as procedural knowledge on classroom discourse, hence facilitating the teaching practice.

3.5.1 Research Participants and Sampling

The participants of the study comprised eight ESL teachers. The teachers were recruited from eight rural secondary schools (SMK) in Malaysia with students who had been identified as having low-proficiency in spoken English language. The teachers were specifically selected as they were the participants of the professional development and based on their willingness to participate in the study. Apart from their willingness, their selection was also based on their involvement and seniority in the professional development programme. The teachers were sourced from the first cohort of teachers who participated in the professional development programme.

The introduction of dialogic teaching as a pedagogic discourse to Malaysian L2 teachers was through a professional development programme known as Oral Proficiency in English (OPS-English). The professional development was designed by the English

Language Teaching Centre, an in-service teacher training institute, Ministry of Education Malaysia with the aim of supporting a group of Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers to adopt dialogic teaching in an effort to help students to attain better outcomes in the English language and specifically to enhance students' oral communication skills. The programme employed Alexander's (2010) dialogic teaching model and Nystrand's (1997) dialogically organised instruction model as the guiding framework. The professional development programme involved approximately 2600 teachers who were trained to employ dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse in the teaching of spoken English within the classroom setting. The OPS-English programme served as an intervention programme aligned with the English Language Curriculum for Lower Secondary English language classrooms in Malaysia (ELTC, 2013).

The eight lower secondary ESL teachers represented the rural schools in five different states which are Perlis (one), Pulau Pinang (two), Selangor (two), Johor (one) and Pahang (two) in which the programme was initially implemented. Pseudonyms were used rather than their names to protect the teachers' identity and privacy. Table 3.3 and 3.4 present the profile of the teachers who formed the main sample of study.

Table 3.3: Main Profile of Teachers

| No | Teachers | Gender | Ethnicity | Teaching Experience | Age |
|----|---------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|-----|
| 1. | Angeline (T1) | Female | Chinese | 34 years | 51 |
| 2. | Hanida (T2) | Female | Malay | 33 years | 55 |
| 3. | Rina (T3) | Female | Malay | 28 years | 48 |
| 4. | Lily (T4) | Female | Chinese | 26 years | 50 |
| 5. | Linda (T5) | Female | Chinese | 23 years | 48 |
| 6. | Nanthini (T6) | Female | Indian | 22 years | 46 |
| 7. | Sasi (T7) | Female | Indian | 20 years | 40 |
| 8. | Praveena (T8) | Female | Indian | 10 years | 35 |

Table 3.4: Core Sample of Teachers Observed

| No | Teachers | Gender | Ethnicity | Teaching Experience | Age |
|----|---------------|--------|-----------|---------------------|-----|
| 1. | Angeline(T1) | Female | Chinese | 34 years | 51 |
| 2. | Rina (T3) | Female | Malay | 28 years | 48 |
| 3. | Nanthini (T6) | Female | Indian | 22 years | 46 |
| 3. | Sasi (T7) | Female | Indian | 20 years | 40 |

The process was based on purposive sampling (Creswell, 2013; Seidman, 2006). According to Lincoln and Guba (1985), purposive sampling allows the full scope of issues to be explored. The sampling of teachers was believed to be adequate since past studies (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006) states that six to twelve participants are adequate samples to generate meaningful interpretations for a study. The criteria of selection are as follows:

- i. first cohort of teachers who were trained on dialogic teaching in the teaching of oral English in the lower secondary L2 classrooms. This was to ensure they received training and have experience with dialogic teaching.
- ii. volunteered to be part of the study to ensure they are willing to share their experiences.
- iii. qualified English language teachers with a degree in the teaching of English as a Second Language (TESL) and held C1 proficiency level based on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) to eliminate any issues of teacher proficiency.
- iv. teaching experience over 20 years, 11-20 and 10 years below to gain multiple perspectives of the discourse pattern.

Following the first cohort of teachers who were trained on dialogic teaching in the Form One and Two English language classes, these teachers were thus approached for participation in this study. In the selection of teachers, the teachers' proficiency level was also considered to ensure the expected teacher proficiency level by the Ministry of Education. The eight ESL teachers were qualified English language teachers with a degree in the teaching of English as Second Language (TESL) and held a C1 proficiency of the CEFR to ensure they were at the stipulated requirement of an English language

teacher in the context of Malaysia. Their teaching experience ranged from eight to 34 years indicating a rich description of experiences which would provide the researcher with multiple perspectives on the adoption of the approach. The teachers' years of experience became a criteria as previous research findings indicate that teachers with 1-3 years attain better outcomes in terms of students' achievement (Araujo et.al. 2016) and are willing to practice new approaches as this would influence their acceptance and ability to implement or adopt a new approach (Graham et al., 2020). The skills developed in teaching based on the number of years would also influence their implementation process.

The level of students taught by these teachers was those aged between 13 to 14 years and the approximate number of students was 27-30. Nonetheless, the students' ethnic and social background may be diverse, and their exposure to using the English language may also be different. In the context of looking at the English language usage of the students of these eight ESL teachers, it can be explained that the students' level of English was minimal because English was not their first language (L1) or second language (L2). Their profile showed that their socio - economic background did not motivate them to use it outside of the classroom.

The first participant was Ang (T1) who had 34 years of teaching experience in English in both the primary and secondary schools particularly in teaching rural students English. She was actively involved in several components including module writing, item building and assessment for students at the state and ministry level. She began her career as a primary school teacher before becoming a secondary school teacher. She participated in the interviews and observations. During the interview, she provided valuable insights regarding dialogic teaching and how her teaching style had undergone changes due to the introduction of dialogic classroom discourses in the teaching of spoken English. She was keen on the approach and thus participated actively in the research. As an interviewee,

she displayed her interest by answering all the questions posed during the interview confidently. Her vast experience in teaching enabled her to, very succinctly, elaborate on her understanding of dialogic teaching, her experiences with adoption of the approach and her role as a facilitator through dialogic classroom discourse.

As an English language teacher, Hanida (T2), the second participant is an experienced teacher with 33 years of teaching experience. She participated in the interview but not in the classroom observations. She has been actively involved in English language teaching programmes at the state level and was one of the respondents who was able to provide extensive elaborations on the role of the dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 in particular spoken English. She was able to relate her experiences and views through examples during the interview. However, due to health reasons, she was unable to participate in the classroom observations.

The third participant was Rina (T3) who has 28 years of experience teaching English. She participated in the interview as well as the observation although she had a tight schedule as the Head of Panel. She mentioned that she constantly compared her current and her previous style of teacher discourse which was monologic. She was aware of the benefits of dialogic classroom discourses towards students' L2 spoken opportunities as well as their cognitive expansion. Nevertheless, she did mention the challenges in enacting dialogic teaching due to students' language proficiency. Being an experienced English language teacher for more than 20 years, she was able to provide elaborated responses by providing examples to ensure what she explained was well understood. Her perspectives on dialogic teaching were also observed in real classroom practices. She is an advocate for dialogic teaching.

The fourth interviewee was Lily (T4) who was passionate about dialogic teaching. She mentioned that she had changed her style of teaching due to the positive reactions shown

by the students. She was explicit about the discourse features and shared on the ways she applied dialogic teaching to provide opportunities for the students to speak English throughout her lessons. During the interview, she shared a few positive experiences of employing dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse. Unfortunately, she was unable to be observed as she was on unpaid leave pursuing her studies.

Linda (T5), the fifth participant is an experienced teacher with 26 years of teaching English in the secondary schools. She also has rich experiences in teaching the rural students English. During the interview, she shared her experiences of employing dialogic teaching by providing a few examples including the challenges she had encountered. However, she appeared not to be in favour of the pedagogical approach and unsure of the features characterising dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse.

Nanthini (T6) was the sixth participant with 22 years of experience of teaching English in the secondary schools. Like the other participants, she was passionate about the dialogic approach and demonstrated a clear understanding of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse during the interview. She firmly believed that her students have gained opportunities practicing their oral English through this discourse pattern although she did mention about the challenges faced by some of her students due to language proficiency. This was observed during the classroom observations. She volunteered for the observation because she was keen to know her own performance.

The seventh participant was Sasi (T7). She was a supportive research participant. She provided many valuable insights and views regarding dialogic teaching sharing the changes that she had experienced in her teaching style due to the introduction of dialogic teaching. She too participated in the interview and classroom observation. During the interview, she talked about the importance of oral English skills and the strategies of the dialogic teaching which encouraged her students to speak English. She mentioned that

the discourse features enabled her to elicit responses from her students in English. She perceived the importance of her role in teaching spoken English to her students, as evidenced by the observation of her classroom practices.

Praveena (T8) was the final participant and had a teaching experience of 10 years. During the interview, she acknowledged the opportunities afforded through dialogic teaching with more highlights on the challenges she faced in the implementation, especially with lower proficiency students. Her interview responses indicated she was not keen in the adoption of dialogic classroom discourses and was more towards the triadic structure (IRF) which involves rote learning. She did not seem to be a proponent of the dialogic approach.

Upon agreement to participate in the study, the eight teachers were given (1) an information sheet (Appendix 3) to explain the purpose and procedures of the research; and (2) a consent form (Appendix 4) to gain their willingness and acknowledgement. All the teachers were able to provide different lived experiences that allowed for the phenomenon to be studied in depth.

3.6 Analytical Framework

Discourse analysis is the study of language in use and is constantly employed in qualitative research specifically looking at experiences of people and the study of social life gained through interactions (Gee, 2014; Potter, 2004; Widdowson, 2007). It is commonly used to examine the interactional features of teacher and students as it systematically investigates the structural patterns and functional purposes of classroom discourse (Potter, 2004; Yang, 2010). Discourse analysis attempts to identify the organisation of talk that influences a communicative event (CE).

Discourse analysis can be further categorised into two types of analysis which are cultural or social discursive practices and linguistic-based analysis (such as conversation). This study utilises the sociocultural discourse analysis framework for analysing data (Mercer, 2004). The framework is utilised quite broadly in linguistics, particularly when investigating organisational talks that could be framed with power, insinuations, identity and ideology. In other words, it investigates language beyond the boundaries of a sentence or an utterance with the focus on its relationships with society and the dialogic properties of everyday communication.

Specifically, sociocultural analysis views discourse as an interactive structure and emphasizes the social function of language (Mercer, 2004). The framework demonstrates how continuous texts articulated by the participants function within the discourse component. In other words, the purpose or function of the context, the language and kind of interaction that took place is emphasised in the analysis. Hence, the interpretation of data would involve understanding the setting, the participants in context as well as the wider discourses that influenced the context (Mercer, 2004; Wu, 2010). The socio-cultural theory of discourse analysis looks at language use as an interaction between two or more entities. In that regard, language interaction would involve all kinds of social and cultural context. The framework has also been utilised by research from within sociology, psychology, anthropology and education since the framework often looks at the context of social talks. Thus, the current study is premised on ‘discourse’ which refers to ideas derived socially regarding a topic instead of specific conversations.

However, for the purpose of this study, the sociocultural discourse analysis framework was concerned with the content, and the structure of talk, especially across the contributions made by of the individual speakers. The reason is because word choices, and cohesive patternings can represent ways showing how that knowledge is being jointly

constructed. Mercer (2004) stated that sociocultural discourse analysis differs from conversation analysis because cognition and the social and cultural context of talk are considered legitimate concerns. Dialogue is treated as a form of intellectual activity and as a social mode of thinking; it is concerned not only with the processes of joint cognitive engagement, but also with their developmental and learning outcomes. Thus, this study employs sociocultural discourse analysis for analysing the dialogues and discussions that took place in the L2 classrooms.

3.7 Data Collection Method

Case study research is distinct from other forms of research as it uses various data sources to enhance data credibility (Yin, 2014). The data collection took place from 2018 to 2019. In order to obtain rich insights and data that are expected of the exploratory qualitative research approach, interviews were utilised to gather the perceptions of the teachers following an interview protocol. The audio recorded conversations were also validated by the researcher's own notes taken during the interviews. The subsequent step was followed by classroom observations. These encompassed three sessions of observations per teacher; they were video recorded via a Sony videocam and accompanied by fieldnotes taken by the researcher during the observations.

3.7.1 Interviews

Interview was chosen as an approach to collect data because the current study is qualitative in nature (Creswell, 2013). In the first phase of the research, semi-structured interviews became the main source of data collection due to the flexibility in which the researcher was able to modify the questions so as to understand the phenomenon being investigated (Creswell, 2013; Seidman, 2006).

The interviews were administered with the aim to unravel the phenomenon of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse as perceived and experienced by the eight teachers. As has been noted by much research, the aim of the qualitative research instrument is to examine a phenomenon in detail and for such aims, only a limited number of participants can become involved due to the huge sets of rich data gathered. Further, interview data may also saturate over time, hence the limited number of in-depth interviews to be conducted (Mackey & Gass, 2005). Interviews need to follow protocol so that the participants are able to participate in the investigation willingly, and the researcher has to go into the issue without any form of prejudice or bias. Hence, a protocol was developed consisting of seventeen open-ended questions by adapting the Interview Protocol Refinement Framework (IPR) proposed by Castillo-Montoya (2016). The framework comprised of four phases which ensured that the interview questions were aligned to the study's research questions. As the interview protocol was developed, the order, quality and clarity of questions (Patton, 2015; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Seidman, 2006) were also adhered. The semi-structured interview questions were reviewed and piloted before actual interview sessions were held. The researcher was able to elicit additional information through the interviews because it was interactive which allowed for further probing if initial responses were vague.

Prior to the interview, the protocol was followed (Appendix 2). The venue was selected, and an email or telephone text was followed up in order to confirm the date and time. Upon arrival for the interview, the researcher explained the aim of the study, and the interviewees were told that they could withdraw from the study at any point of time during the process of data collection. The English language was used as the medium of interaction throughout this study, and participants were asked if the interview could be recorded. They were also told that they would be asked to verify the data upon full transcriptions being made. The time was set for no longer than an hour or so, but this

criterion would be based on the individual interviews conducted. Figure 3.1 below illustrates the IPR chart showing the four phases which were adhered to.

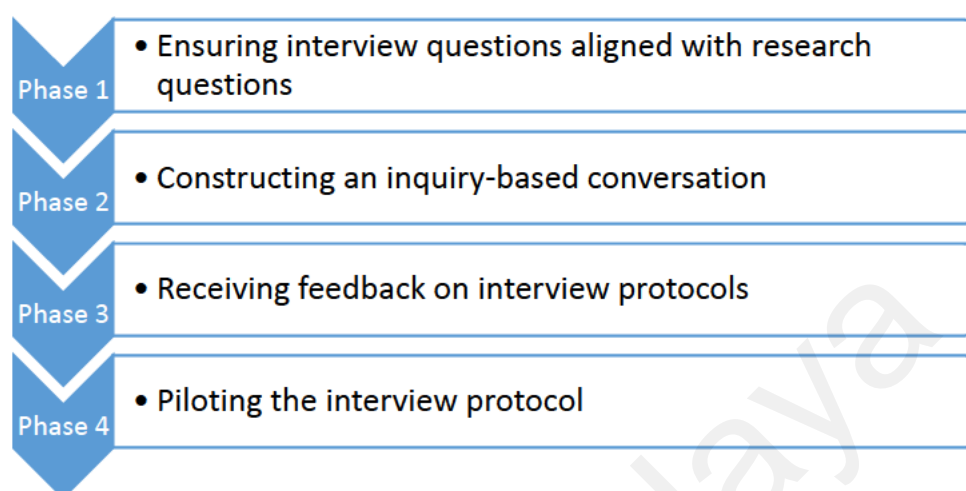


Figure 3.1: The Four-Phase Process to Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR)

Source: Castillo Montaya, 2016

Each of the four phases enabled the researcher to thoroughly decide and develop a research instrument that would be appropriate for the participants and aligned with the objective of research (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Congruency indicates that the interviews were developed based on the research questions and the overall aim of the study. To strengthen the reliability of the interview questions, the IPR framework was adopted. Further strengthening of the interview was processed by adhering to the four types of question set as illustrated in Table 3.5 below.

Table 3.5: Interview Protocol Refinement (IPR) Framework

| Type of Question | Explanation on Type of Question | Questions |
|------------------------|---|--|
| Introductory Questions | Questions that are relatively neutral eliciting general and non-intrusive information that can be non- threatening. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How long have you been teaching English? 2. When teaching English, which skill do you prefer to teach? |

| | | |
|----------------------|---|---|
| Transition Questions | Questions that link introductory questions to the key questions. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you conduct your lessons? 2. How do students share their views during class? 3. How much do you intervene in classroom talk? 4. How do you make your students share ideas in the class? 5. Do you ask your students to listen to their friends in order to follow their talk and respond? Why? |
| Key questions | Questions that are most related to the research questions and the purpose of the study. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. When do you normally ask questions? 2. What type of questions do you ask students at different stages of your lesson? 3. How often do you ask your students questions that need longer responses? 4. How do you get your students to ask questions? 5. Do you think their questions encourage discussion among peers? Why? 6. How do the questions influence the choice of topic and content? 7. What do you understand by the concept of dialogic teaching and how do you distinguish classroom talk from dialogic discourse? 8. What ideas from dialogic discourse/dialogic teaching have you employed in your speaking lessons? 9. Which features of dialogic discourse/ teaching have you found most effective for encouraging students to talk? |
| Closing questions | Questions that are easy to answer and provide opportunity for closure. | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. How do you give feedback and how often do you give feedback in terms of content rather than grammar? |

(Adapted from Castillo-Montoya, 2016)

The estimated time for each interview was noted to be approximately 90 minutes.

Table 3.6 shown below demonstrates the Interview Protocol Matrix that was designed to facilitate the analysing process.

Table 3.6: Interview Protocol Matrix

| | Background Information | Research Question 1 | Research Question 2 | Research Question 3 |
|----------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|----------------------------|
| Interview Q 1 | X | | | |
| Interview Q 2 | X | | | |
| Interview Q 3 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 4 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 5 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 6 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 7 | | X | X | X |
| Interview Q 8 | | X | X | X |
| Interview Q 9 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 11 | | X | X | X |
| Interview Q 12 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 13 | | X | X | X |
| Interview Q 14 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 15 | | X | X | |
| Interview Q 16 | | X | X | X |
| Interview Q 17 | | X | X | X |

The semi-structured interviews (Appendix 3) were conducted on a one-on-one basis with each of the eight participants, based on the time and venue agreed. Creswell (2013; Seidman, 2006) states that individual interviews are suitable for interviewees who are articulate and are open to share. Through the one-on-one individual semi-structured interview, a total of seventeen questions enabled this study to generate the data. These questions were based on the distinctions between the monologic (Sinclair & Coulthard, 1975) and dialogic classroom discourses (Alexander, 2010; Nystrand, 1997) - (the response to the first research question). The interview data was then digitally recorded using the Olympus voice recorders which was imported into a PC.

3.7.2 Classroom Observations

The second part of the research involved classroom observations when the L2 teachers were in action, and which were aimed at answering Research Question 2 and 3. This was conducted in order to obtain deeper insights into teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse and its influence on students' interaction pattern and engagement. As this study is premised in the social sciences, observations are considered as the basis of all research. (Creswell, 2013). 'Live' lesson observations were included as part of the data collection to provide a comprehensive description of the enactment process. This, it was felt, would give the reader a better understanding of 'being there'. The setting for the classroom observation was four public rural lower secondary English language classes at Koding in the state of Perlis, Bertam in the state of Pulau Pinang, Kg. Jawa in the state of Selangor and Skudai in the state of Johor. The teachers were purposefully selected based on their interview responses which indicated their practices of dialogic teaching in their oral English lessons.

I functioned as an observer, undertaking what Flick (2013) refers to as "focused observations that concentrate on aspects that are relevant to the research question". Creswell's (2013) guidelines on classroom observations were strictly adhered. The required permission, participant selection for observation, duration (90 minutes of class teaching), content (field notes to accompany video data) and how to be introduced (as an outsider) were obtained. The observations of the classes were preceded by asking the principal, and the class teachers for permission. Teachers were also requested to complete the consent form and a copy was given to the teachers.

Prior to the observations, the teachers were given a consent form (Appendix 1). This was to inform them of the observation procedures. Although the observation was not aimed at students, their reactions during class towards the teaching approach were noted.

Following the schedule set, the researcher observed the lesson from the back of classrooms, and the video recording equipment was set up to capture the dialogic teaching expected to occur. The observations were conducted by video recording the whole lesson.

During each classroom observation, the researcher used a classroom observation tool (Appendix 4) to identify if the teacher was enacting dialogic teaching based on Alexander and Nystrand's Dialogic Teaching Framework. The observation tool was developed based on the dialogic principles, repertoires and indicators. The tool consisted of 26 items which are divided into three sections – classroom discourse, the role of teacher and students' reaction. The tool adopted the Likert scale of 1-4. 1 – never, 2 – rarely, 3 – sometimes and 4 – frequently. The interactions that took place during the lessons as in whole class discussion (one for each observed teacher: total 3 classroom observations) and group discussions (one for each teacher, total of 3 groups) were recorded, transcribed and coded based on Alexander's Dialogic Teaching Principles, repertoires and indicators (2010) and Nystrand's (1997) features of dialogically organised instruction. The analysis was used to identify whether the teachers' perceptions were realized in their real classroom practices. A total of 12 classroom observations encompassing a total of 16 hours recording was conducted. Each class lasted for 90 minutes. The digital video recordings were downloaded into the MP4 format from a large external hard drive and then transferred into ATLAS.ti8 software for the purpose of viewing, coding and analysis. The observations were conducted for a span of six months beginning from April - September 2019.

Observations were made on the teacher's enactment of dialogic teaching in terms of translating the principles into activities, the talk repertoires as well as indicators of dialogicity which involved her actions and strategies. Particular attention was given to the teachers' discourse strategies such as questions, discussions and dialogues during their

interactions which involved open-ended questions, whole class and group discussions and dialogues to interact and engage students as well as their ability to incorporate the responses of students into their subsequent questions. The extent to which the teachers allowed a student's response to modify the topic of the discourse (uptake), and the type of questions were also recorded. Some fieldnotes were made during the observations in order to document some factual data, such as date and time, settings and actions.

Table 3.7: Details of classroom observations

| No | Teacher | Duration | Class |
|----|---------------|-------------|--------|
| 1 | Angeline (T1) | 240 minutes | Form 1 |
| 2 | Rina (T3) | 240 minutes | Form 1 |
| 3 | Nandhini (T6) | 240 minutes | Form 2 |
| 4 | Sasi (T7) | 240 minutes | Form 2 |

Conducting the observations provided the opportunity for the researcher to record information as it occurred in the classroom, acquiring open-ended, raw(firsthand) information by observing the teachers' discourse and the interactions that took place among the teacher and her students (Creswell, 2013). Observations also enabled the researcher to study the actual behavior and practices of the teachers who may have had difficulty verbalising their ideas during the interviews (Creswell, 2013). In other words, the data derived from the description, analysis, and interpretation of the observation data provided direct and real data (Creswell, 2013; Cohen & Manion, 2004). Most importantly, the observations offered a tacit understanding of the 'theory-in-use' and aspects of the participants' perspectives which were not revealed directly during the interviews (Maxwell, 2005). In this context, the classroom discourses that prevailed in the English lessons, in particular the teachers' discourse, was captured for analysis.

3.7.3 Video footage

The lessons were recorded via a SONY Videocam which was positioned at the back of the classroom. To ensure both teachers and students felt comfortable, the videocam ran for about 10 minutes prior to the actual recording. Each class lasted for 90 minutes.

The digital video recordings were downloaded into the MP4 format and then transferred into ATLAS.ti8 software to be viewed, coded and analysed. For the purpose of analysis, the video recordings served as a rich tool in capturing classroom data. (Sedova, Sedlacek, & Svaricek, 2016). Segments showing the dialogic features being employed from the video recordings were viewed and transcribed verbatim. The transcripts were then uploaded into ATLAS.ti8 for analysis. The purpose was to investigate how the teachers conducted dialogic teaching and applied the principles, talk repertoires and indicators. A set of codes was developed to enable the researcher to describe the teacher's enactment of dialogic teaching specifically, the discourse structure, teachers' questioning behaviour and turn management. The students' contributions to the discussions were also observed.

3.7.4 Field Notes of Classroom Observations

Bogdan and Biklen (1997) states that a comprehensive set of fieldnotes supports the success of an observation study. In the context of this research, the field notes referred to the data collected during the individual semi-structured interviews as well as in the classroom setting. The field notes captured the conversations between interviewer and interviewee, the teacher discourse, discourses between teacher and students as well as the discourses among the students. The field notes also documented the teacher's questioning behaviour, the lesson content and topics of discussion and the researcher's reflection and

analysis. All the data from the interviews and the observations were coded using both the interview protocol sheet and the classroom observation sheets (Appendix 3 and 4).

Field notes taken during the observations encompassed the length of lesson, class size, classroom management, strategies, activities and instructional materials. The notes provided a brief outline of the 12 lesson observations, the purpose of the discourse approach and to identify the phase of inquiry.

Field notes enabled the researcher to validate the analysis, and also to have a wider choice of the excerpts meant for whole-class discussions as further analysis. These were compared to the recordings made of each lesson. The field notes also provided the researcher with a clear description of the discourse contexts. Field notes consisted of tracking speakers' utterances, noting the dialogic principles, repertoire for talk and indicators involved, the students' responses – the choice of vocabulary, sentences, usage of L1 as well as the manner the activities were done.

Both the interviews and classroom observations as well as the fieldnotes added strength to the findings which increased the validity of the data and findings.

3.8 Triangulation

Triangulation enhances the credibility and trustworthiness of the results and is a powerful strategy in qualitative research (Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Patton, 2007). The triangulation approach was applied for data collection to ensure that the study carries the aspect of trustworthiness, reliability and validity. As proposed by Creswell (2013) it is a procedure for cross-referencing data collection and data reliability. In the context of this study, the individual semi-structured interview data were verified with the documented observations made during the interviews and triangulated with the classroom observations and fieldnotes, thereby providing more access to the teachers' interpretations of their own

perceptions and actions. The triangulation of the interview data, classroom observation data and fieldnotes improved the trustworthiness of the research.

3.9 Data Analysis Procedure

Creswell (2013) suggests that data analysis is done concurrently with data collection. Hence, the researcher meticulously read, transferred and transcribed all the interview data, fieldnotes and observation data onto Word document in the early stages of data collection to allow ongoing process of analysis. Once the data items were transcribed (eight interview transcripts, 12 classroom observation transcripts and 12 fieldnotes transcripts), these were uploaded onto ATLAS.ti, a qualitative computer software to facilitate the process of data analysis. Nevertheless, the comprehensive analysis was only done after all the data was collected.

3.9.1 Thematic Analysis

In all research, data analysis forms the core of a methodology (Creswell, 2013). Thematic analysis was chosen to identify, analyse, organise, describe and report the themes found within a data set (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Thematic analysis is widely used in qualitative research to identify patterned meanings across a dataset. Specifically, it is used to examine the various perspectives of the subjects in the study, drawing on the similarities and differences to generate in depth findings. In the context of this study, data were drawn from the interviews, observations and fieldnotes so that they could be verified and then classified respectively into themes. The current study adopted the Braun and Clarkes (2006) six step thematic analysis as the framework of analysis for all the three research questions.

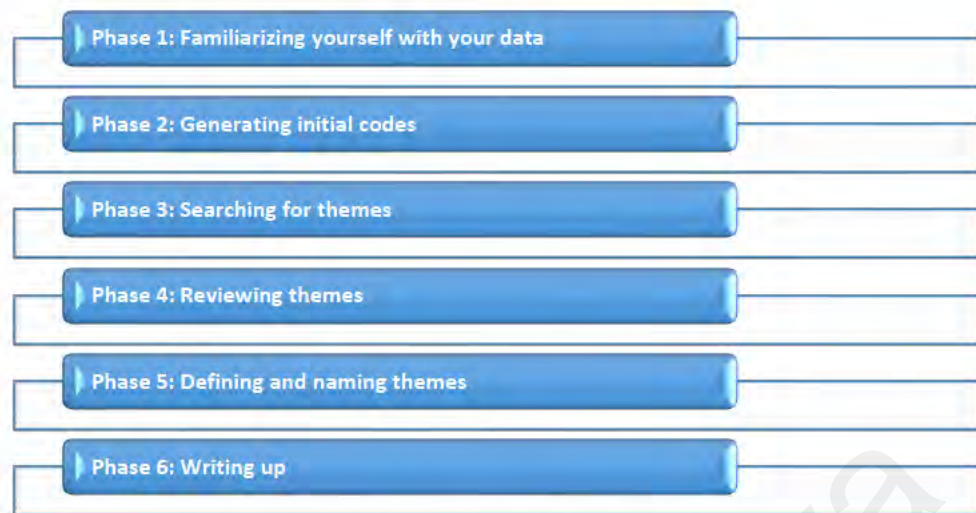


Figure 3.2: Braun & Clarke's Six- Step Phase

The six- step phase although sequential was a recursive, iterative, ongoing and an emerging activity.

Phase one began with the researcher familiarising oneself with the set of data. The recorded semi-structured interviews were carefully listened to and the transcripts were read several times while the transcription was going on. The same applies to the classroom observation transcripts. These transcriptions were then read and analysed in the same manner. The data were read, edited, checked paragraph by paragraph manually for accuracy and then imported into Atlas.ti 8 for coding. The identified patterns were then recorded as data. A coding framework was established based on the review of literature that underpinned the study.

In phase two, the data representing meaningful concepts related to the research questions were marked and categorised into open coding in Atlas.ti 8. which allowed for inductive analysis. In the open coding process, the first interview transcript was analysed and coded followed by the rest and the process was repeated for all the interview and observation transcripts. The main ideas were noted as codes and the codes which showed similar ideas were then merged into one code. Code is a word or a short phrase that

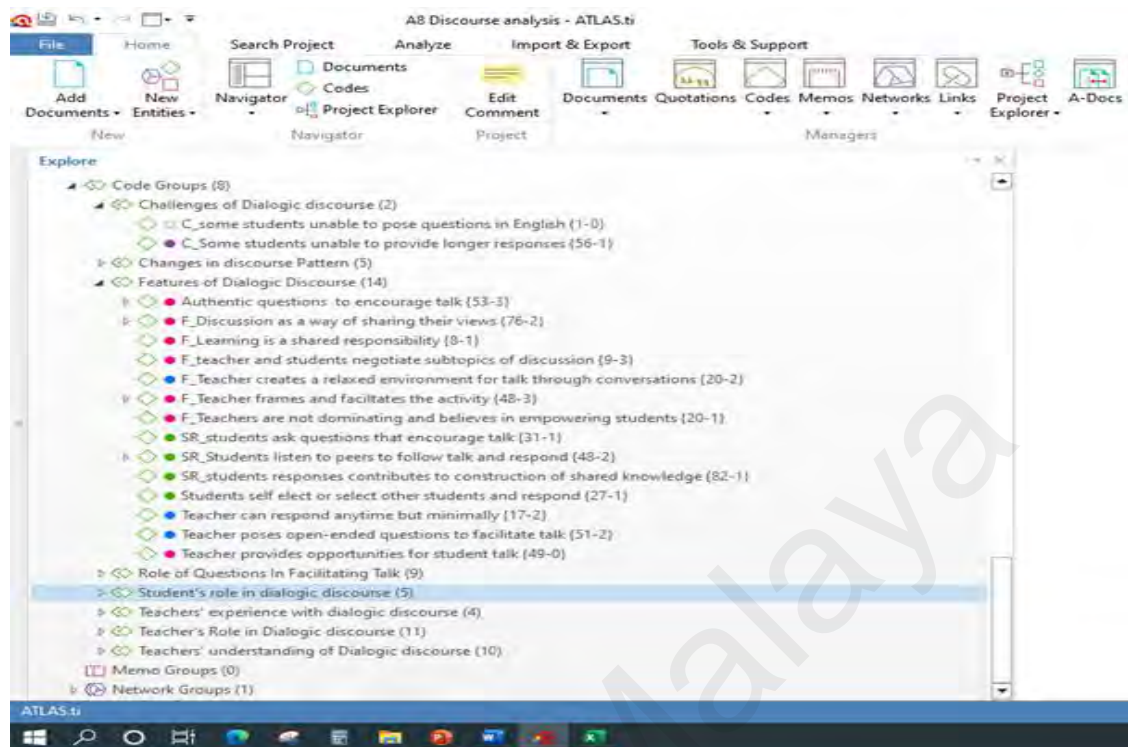
highlights the main aspect, an important point or a general idea captured in data. Therefore, a set of codes was initially developed based on the content of the interview and classroom observation transcripts. A total of 66 codes were generated through inductive coding.

Table 3.8: Initial Codes Extracted from ATLAS ti 8

| Code Label | Frequency |
|--|-----------|
| Authentic questions to encourage talk | {53-3} |
| authoritative in terms of discipline | {7-1} |
| C_minimal utterances during discussion | {3-1} |
| C_Some students unable to provide longer responses | {56-1} |
| Challenges in dialogic discourse | {5-2} |
| Changes in discourse pattern | {22-1} |
| Changes in Teachers' role as a facilitator (2) | {33-12} |
| F_Discussion as a way of sharing their views | {76-2} |
| F_Emergence of new ideas and knowledge through discussion | {27-1} |
| F_Learning is a shared responsibility | {8-1} |
| F_teacher and students negotiate subtopics of discussion | {9-3} |
| F_Teacher creates a relaxed environment for talk through conversations | {20-2} |
| F_Teacher frames and facilitates the activity | {48-3} |
| F_Teachers are not dominating and believes in empowering students | {20-1} |
| Features of Dialogic Discourse | {78-8} |
| feedback does not focus on grammar | {5-0} |
| gives feedback on content immediately | {3-0} |
| good students ask questions | {13-0} |

As the analysis proceeded with more codes emerging, the codes were further clarified. For further confirmation of the analysis, the field notes taken during the interviews and classroom observations were also applied. They were simultaneously used for identifying the possible coding categories. The relationship of the codes was analysed and then constructed as 'tree nodes' so that the connections between them could be identified and then clustered into meaningful and conceptual categories. During this stage, where required, new codes were added. Thus, the codes were constantly being refined to 34 codes and further refined to 22 codes which were subsumed under the main categories of themes.

Table 3.9: Refined Codes Extracted from ATLAS ti 8



The interconnected codes were grouped under the same subcategory to enable a systematic process of coding for the purpose of analysis and development of themes (Creswell, 2013). Thematic networks were used for the purpose of gaining deeper insights into the phenomenon through the transcripts (texts) to identify the emerging themes and the patterns involved.

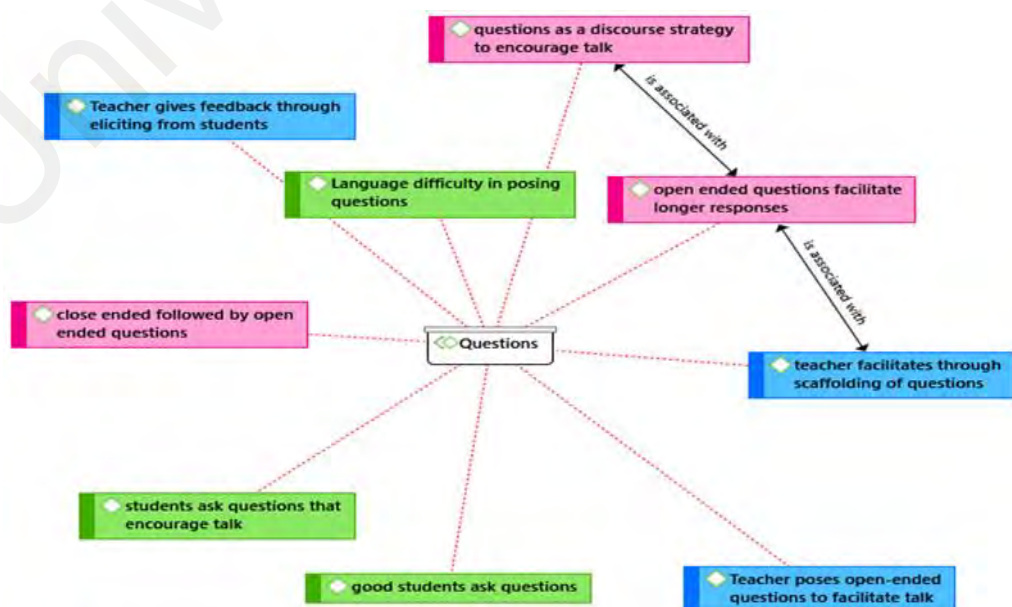


Figure 3.3: Thematic Networks from ATLAS ti 8

Deductive coding was applied in the process based on the features and principles of dialogic teaching which described teacher's understanding of dialogic discourse, their views, experiences, and challenges with dialogic discourse.

In phase three, all the transcribed data were collated so that they could be thematised accordingly (Braun & Clarke, 2006). During this stage, the triangulation of the observation transcripts was done to identify commonalities and differences in the codes that would contribute towards themes. A set of themes were brought together based on the collated codes. The themes were analyzed from a latent level which identified and examined the underlying conceptualisations and theories that shaped and informed the semantic content of the data. Diagrams were established showing the link between the themes.

Example: Theme 1: Interactive Classroom Discourse structure



The themes reflected Alexanders' Dialogic Teaching Model (2010 and Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction Model (1997) which included various conceptual tools such as the principles, repertoire and indicators of dialogic teaching. The Sinclair and & Coulthard IRF Model (1975) was simultaneously applied for the sake of making comparisons and distinctions. The IRF model served as the main classroom discourse structure prior to the introduction of dialogic teaching and therefore for the purpose of identifying if the teachers had adopted a dialogic approach, the model was compared.

In phase four, the existing themes and subthemes were refined to reflect a coherent pattern. The validity of the themes was verified to ensure accuracy of data (Braun &

Clarke, 2006). The transcripts were constantly reviewed to identify if any pertinent or relevant issue was overlooked or left out from the existing code and would require further coding. Throughout the analysis of this phase, the coding and recoding process constantly transpired so as to finetune the themes. A few new themes had also emerged during this process and these were further categorised and finetuned into broader themes that were representative of ideas captured. Data were also reduced into a manageable set of pertinent themes that summarizes the study. At the end of this phase, the researcher was familiar with the different themes and how each theme contributes to the overall findings (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

Table 3.10: Themes Derived from Interview Data

| No | Theme | Subthemes | Codes |
|----|---------------------------------|--|--|
| | Interactive Discourse Structure | i. Questions Permeate Talk ii. Discussions Generate Talk | C1: Open-ended question and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend the talk. C3: Teacher facilitates talk through scaffolding of open-ended questions. C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. |
| | Meaningful Discourse Structure | i. Learning Opportunities Afforded Through Talk ii. Transform Students into Active Learners | C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively. C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively. C9: new subtopics and knowledge emerge through discussions. C11: students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively. C16: Students self -elect or select other students. C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English. |
| | New Pedagogical Approach | i. Changes in Teacher's Role | C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk. C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students. C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions. C14: Teachers responds anytime but minimally C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer |

| | | | |
|--|-------------------------|---|--|
| | | | C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students. |
| | Arduous & Skillful Task | i. Challenges in Implementing Dialogic Teaching | C19: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English C20: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher |

Table 3.11: Themes Derived from Classroom Observation Data for RQ2

| No | Theme | Subthemes | Codes |
|----|---|--|---|
| 1. | Pedagogical Shift Towards Dialogic Teaching | i. Framing and Facilitating Talk ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy iii. Minimal teacher intervention | C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend the talk. C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions. C9: new subtopics and knowledge emerge through discussions. C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk. C11: students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively. C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students. C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions. C14: Teachers responds anytime but minimally. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. |

| | | | |
|----|--|---|--|
| | | | C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students. |
| 2. | Teacher Discourse through Questioning | i. Scaffolding talk through questions | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk C3: Teacher facilitates talk through scaffolding of open-ended questions |
| 3. | Learning Opportunities Afforded by Teacher | i. Construction of knowledge Collectively ii. Second Language Learning | C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively. C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively. C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English. |
| 4. | Challenging Task | i. Low Proficiency of students ii. Teacher skills in dialogic teaching | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher |

Table 3.12: Themes Derived from Classroom Observation Data for RQ3

| No | Theme | Subthemes | Codes |
|----|---------------------------------------|--|--|
| 1. | Equitable and Increased Participation | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> i. Discussions and Open-ended questions encouraged More Students' Uptake ii. Discussions and Questions facilitated Construction of Knowledge & Linguistic | <p>C1: Questions and answer sequences encouraged talk</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> |

During phase five, a detailed analysis was written for each individual theme and the process of peer debriefing was repeated to ensure that no related aspect of the themes and analysis were overlooked. It allowed the researcher to summarise the key features of the dialogic teaching which were attained from the interviews and classroom observations. Both the descriptive and interpretative approaches were employed in providing the interpretations during this phase.

At the final phase, the researcher was able to fully establish the themes and began the write-up of the findings. The write-up of a thematic analysis enabled the researcher to obtain patterned meanings within and across themes in examining the perspectives of ESL teachers on the role of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse thereby assisting the researcher towards the production a comprehensive thesis (Nowell et al., 2017) that is theoretically coherent and consistent. Direct quotes from participants were used during the writeup to support the findings. More extensive passages of quotation were also provided for clearer explanation of the matter discussed. Extracts from the transcripts were integrated in the writeup to demonstrate the complex story of the data to convince readers on the validity and merit of the analysis.

3.9.2 Data Analysis of Research Questions

Research Question I ascertained the teachers' perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition. This was derived from the eight individual semi-structured interviews and field notes. Based on the responses from individual semi-structured interviews, the participants' perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful pedagogical approach which facilitates L2 oral communication skills and acquisition based on their understanding, experiences and challenges. They perceived dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach that facilitates second language learning and acquisition but viewed it as an arduous and

skillful task. A total of 21 codes describing the perceptions of the teachers on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the interview transcripts are as below:

- C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.
- C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend the talk.
- C3: Teacher facilitates talk through scaffolding of open-ended questions.
- C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.
- C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.
- C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.
- C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.
- C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.
- C9: new subtopics and knowledge emerge through discussions.
- C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.
- C11: students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.
- C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.
- C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.
- C14: Teachers responds anytime but minimally.
- C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.
- C16: Students self -elect or select other students.
- C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English.
- C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.

Nevertheless, there were three codes derived that the teachers perceived to be challenges in dialogic teaching:

C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English.

C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English.

C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher

Research Question 2 identified teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse in the spoken English language lessons to create opportunities for talk and second language acquisition. This research question involves analysing the dialogic principles, repertoires, indicators and the instructional techniques adopted by teachers following the framework of Alexander (2018) and Nystrand (1997). As per Research Question 1 above, the analysis was compared to the Sinclair-Coulthard IRF model to distinguish the difference between dialogic features, thereby providing a comprehensive analysis of the findings. 22 codes describing the features of dialogic teaching employed by the teachers and students as identified in the 12 classroom observations are as below:

C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend the talk.

C3: Teacher facilitates talk through scaffolding of open-ended questions.

C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.

C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.

C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.

C9: new subtopics and topics emerge through discussions.

C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.

C11: students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.

- C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.
- C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.
- C14: Teachers responds anytime but minimally.
- C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.
- C16: Students self -elect or select other students.
- C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English.
- C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students
- C22: Teacher encourages student talk through familiar topics

Similarly, as in RQ1, two codes were derived that showed challenges in implementing dialogic teaching such as:

- C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English.
- C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English.
- C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher

Research Question 3 focused on how the teachers' discourse strategies supported the spoken opportunities of the students within classroom practices. Data for this research question was drawn from the classroom observations and then analysed accordingly. The process of coding as in research question 1 and 2 were applied and an extra code was developed. The codes are as below:

- C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.
- C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.
- C16: Students self -elect or select other students.

C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English.

C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English

3.10 Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness means that the research findings are worthy of attention which is established by the researcher through a process of ensuring the findings are credible, transferable and dependable (Nowell et al., 2017). It is similar to the notion of validity and reliability of quantitative findings. The credibility of a study is ensured when co-researchers or readers can relate to it (Guba and Lincoln, 1989). Peer debriefing and reflexive writing was also conducted as part of trustworthiness Lincoln & Guba, (1985).

3.11 Establishing Credibility

Credibility was attained through the process of member checking to verify the findings and interpretations with the participants. In establishing trustworthiness, credibility is crucial (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credibility was established through a series of engagements with the participants and data, constant observation, data collection triangulation and researcher triangulation. Theoretical and reflective thoughts were documented, and potential codes/themes were jotted on the transcripts. The data of the transcripts were manually reviewed, reflected and kept in folders and labelled before being uploaded into the analytical software, ATLAS ti.8. Data generated from eight individual interviews and 12 classroom observations were analysed based on deep and continuous scrutiny. The initial analysis was from the semi-structured interviews that were transcribed immediately after the interviews. Example of transcript which was initially documented with notes and potential codes or themes as in Table 3.13:

Table 3.13: Sample transcription

| | | |
|---|--|---|
| B | Okay, in the beginning, um... I think most teachers would focus on the teaching of writing. The same with me, I thought writing is the most important skill because that is what you've been told, that is the focus for SPM and PMR but along the way, I found that the most important skill would be talking. Speaking first. | <i>Change in preference of teaching language skill based on her experience with dialogic teaching</i> |
| A | Okay, why do you say that? Why, did you find speaking the most important skill? | |
| B | Because for me and through my experience, the first thing that we learnt is speaking, we learn from what we hear and then we speak and then later on we write. Umm... from my own experience, I learnt a lot through watching TV. So you watch, you hear what they say, you try to speak and then later on you write. It's not easy but... What we have been doing till now. We tend to focus on writing. Uh... which is good because of our exam-orientated way of accessing the students but in the long term, it does not benefit a lot of students when they go out to find jobs. | <i>Sharing the importance of speaking skill@ dialogues. Stating her stand on dialogic teaching.</i> |
| A | I think speaking is.... even if you...ah...introduce yourself the first time you meet a person, speaking is the first thing that the person will notice about you. | |
| B | Okay, so you mention that speaking is an important skill and you have given description as to how speaking plays an important role in language acquisition. So would you agree that speaking is actually the key skill or the foundation in acquiring language? | |
| B | Ya...for me...yes but it seems that in our education system, students are assessed more in writing as compared to speaking but once they go out to work, we want them to be good in speaking. So something is wrong there! So... definitely... Speaking is more important. | <i>Stating the importance of speaking L2 and SLA.</i> |
| A | Can you describe your teaching style? Would you describe it as teacher- centred or student- centred? | |
| B | Okay, that depends on the class. If the class, if the students are well- behaved, it would be more student centred. If I need to control the class, it would be teacher centred BUT once I can control the class, I will slowly back off and let the students control the class. I think you need to make sure the students ...ah... students know what to do ... not know what to do but students can pay attention to what you are going to do in class. If you can't control them, they'll not focus. | <i>Mix mode of teaching style but depends on type of class</i> |
| A | Meaning to say, you'll need to set some ground rules? | |
| B | Ya...ya...first. | |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| A | Classroom rules before lesson begins. Okay, so is it fine for me to say that you're more towards adopting a student centred approach? | |
| B | Yes | <i>More towards adopting student-centred approach</i> |
| A | Do you prefer to be authoritative and have power over class? If yes, why? If no, why? | |
| B | Okay, I would say for most of my classes, I'm not authoritative and I wouldn't want to be. I would let the students handle it. Why? Because for me, the classroom is something like a place that imitates the real world. You need to give them ownership. You need to guide them. for example give them a task, you need to elect whose going to be a leader so they know their role. Sometimes, if they don't know their role, they tend to go here and there. You set the rules, you set the roles, the boundaries for them and then you let them loose... | <i>Not authoritative</i> <i>Shared responsibility-empowering students</i> <i>Scaffolding, facilitating.</i> |
| A | So is this similar to you framing or providing a framework and then let them take the lead ..or empower them? | <i>Equity in participation</i> |
| B | Yes...but for the good classes, I would let them choose, or they pick, they discuss in class and I would give them more power. It really depends on the class. | |
| A | Can you share an example of how you would manage the task in the classroom? | |
| B | Okay, for example, if I teach literature, aah.. a poem... What I would usually do is to ask them to present the poem in a creative way but before that I would get them into groups and ask them to discuss. | <i>Group discussion as a way of getting students to speak</i> |

3.12 Consent

A detailed description and procedures of the research was developed. Consent forms were designed and prepared so that people involved in the research and the research sites would not face any risks. Informed consent for the study from the teachers were obtained in a meeting held with the school's principal as well as the teachers at the proposal stage. Each teacher was given a consent form (Appendix 1) to seek their voluntary participation and a copy of the completed forms were given to each participant while the original was kept by the researcher.

The teachers were also informed about the purpose of research, the duration of the research and the manner of research and their rights to withdraw from the study at any time. The informed consent form is always pivotal (Seidman, 2006) because during the process of interviews and observations, the participants may share aspects of their lives which are private and have the right to be protected against any disclosure of private information. The anonymity of participants was protected and respected throughout the research to avoid any disturbance or disruption. The researcher also shared her details – as a doctoral candidate and that the interviews would be the main data of her dissertation.

Ensuring the consent from the participants was the first step towards minimising potential risks participants may face during the interview or observations as the process of in-depth interviewing may cause emotional discomfort for the participants at a certain stage.

3.13 Conclusion

This chapter has described the methodology that was used to conduct the research. The methodological and analytical framework applied were also explained. The procedure of the data analysis following six phases were also described and supported by tables and figures. The reliability of the study and trustworthiness was also elaborated. The next chapter focusses on the analysis.

CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

Teachers' Perceptions of Dialogic Teaching as a Classroom Discourse

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the analysis of data obtained from the interviews conducted with eight Malaysian English language teachers on their perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the teaching of spoken English. As mentioned in the previous chapter, four main themes had emerged from the interviews (Chapter 3, section 3.9.1). The codes that had emerged from the data were scrutinized for recurring themes and grouped accordingly. The respondents' interview data were triangulated with the observations of real classroom practices and notes taken during the interviews. This chapter aims to analyse the data in response to Research Question 1.

Research Question 1:

1. How do Malaysian English Lower Secondary L2 teachers perceive dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition?

4.2 Teachers' Profiles

Eight English language teachers had volunteered to participate in the current study. Their profiles had been illustrated in the previous chapter and the criteria for their selection were also explained. (Chapter 3, section 3.5.1).

4.3 Overview of Themes

The first question aims to ascertain teachers' perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and language acquisition. As mentioned in Chapter 3 (section 3.9.1) this study adopted Braun and Clarkes (2006) six step thematic analysis as the framework of analysis for the research question.

To understand the teachers' perceptions of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition, their responses to the interview questions were analysed and categorised according to themes. The findings were analysed from three dimensions which were teachers' understanding and beliefs of the pedagogical discourse structure which they had employed in the teaching of oral communication skills, teachers' experiences with dialogic classroom discourses and their challenges encountered in an effort to explore the potentiality of dialogic teaching in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition. The analysis of data was guided by Alexander's Dialogic Teaching Framework (2010) and Nystrand's Dialogic Organised Instruction Model (1997) which included various conceptual tools such as principles, repertoires for talk and indicators were applied to the interview data. The Sinclair and Coulthard IRF Model (1975) was simultaneously applied for the purpose of making comparisons and distinctions as the latter was the discourse structure predominantly employed in the Malaysian L2 classrooms (Tan et al., 2017) .

The findings derived from their interview data demonstrate that the teachers found dialogic classroom discourses facilitate learning and encourages the use of English amongst students. Four broad themes emerged from the analysis of data in which the teachers perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful pedagogical approach which facilitates L2 oral communication skills amongst their students. They

also perceived dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach that facilitates second language oral communication skills and acquisition but viewed it as an arduous and skillful task in the context of L2 learners. The themes were supported with evidence drawn from their interviews. The total codes that reflected the themes below are 21. These 21 codes were then categorised into subthemes and finally four broad themes as seen in Table 4.1.

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Table 4.1: Findings from Interview Data

| Theme | Subthemes | Codes | Example |
|--|--|---|--|
| <p>Interactive Discourse Structure</p> <p>This theme was derived from their understanding on the concept of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in which open-ended questions and discussions play a vital role in creating an interactive discourse structure.</p> | <p>i. Questions Permeate Talk</p> <p>ii. Discussions Generate Talk</p> | <p>C1: questions and answer sequences encouraged and extend talk</p> <p>C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend the talk.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates talk through scaffolding of open-ended questions.</p> <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C9: new subtopics and topics emerge through discussions.</p> | <p>T1: So dialogic teaching is mostly about questions. Open-ended questions I would say. Through open-ended questions, we learn, we exchange ideas.</p> <p>T2: for me the concept of dialogic teaching is more than talk to me because it involves teachers and learners building on each other's ideas, you know...posing questions.</p> <p>T3: You'll raise the issue and then ask for their opinions.</p> <p>T4: we would ask a lot of questions, WH questions, open-ended questions to get the students to talk.</p> <p>T6: we just have to come up with one or two questions and then the students will talk among themselves.</p> <p>T7: I purposely ask these kind of HOTS questions to trigger their previous knowledge and also just to get them to talk, I want them to talk.</p> <p>T8: You have a question, and they are able to respond whether right or wrong because it's a matter of opinion and they are using the language.</p> <p>T1 It encourages students to feel comfortable to share. So they were not scared</p> |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|--|
| | | | <p>T2 when we have discussions, so they'll question each other, "why did you say that? I couldn't agree with you...you know...Once they start the ball rolling, agreeing and disagreeing...</p> <p>T3 I would get them into groups and ask them to discuss. I usually tell my students that the outside world there are people who would agree and disagree with you.</p> <p>T5 when they discuss, that is the time, they can share their views.</p> <p>T6: so it's like a dialogue session, more relaxed so they don't feel stressed and they don't have to answer the questions straightforward, so they can talk about a lot of things actually.</p> <p>T7: dialogic teaching is ah...discussion. This is how I perceive. Okay I would say...70% of my lesson are discussions.</p> <p>T8: Dialogic teaching gives free rein to the students to talk. The questions that the students ask form the flow of discussion.</p> |
| <p>2.Meaningful Discourse Structure This theme was derived from the teachers' perceived understanding and experiences with dialogic teaching</p> | <p>i. Affords learning Opportunities</p> <p>ii. Transform Students into Active Learners</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> | <p>T1 And through sharing, we learn, we exchange ideas. Not only the students, me myself. From the student's responses, sometimes, I gain knowledge myself.</p> <p>T2: Because they'll be proud to share what others think about their</p> |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| | | <p>C11: students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>knowledge in certain fields and this encourages them, builds them in both ways to become better learners.</p> <p>T3: They learn something, and they feel less shy to speak in English. You can see the enthusiasm in trying to find new things and getting opinions from their friends'.</p> |
| <p>3.New Pedagogical Approach that Transforms Learning</p> <p>This theme was derived from the changes in the pedagogical approach as a consequence of dialogic teaching introduced to the teachers. Many made a comparison to their previous teaching style and acknowledged that they had changed in their role as a teacher.</p> | <p>Changes in Teachers' Disposition</p> <p>iii.</p> | <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teachers respond anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is no longer dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> | <p>T1: I would intervene when necessary, and yes...minimally. I will let the students do...you know. I'll go in when necessary. I'll try to be disturbing them as little as I can.</p> <p>T2: I only intervene when there are commotions in class because the class becomes uncontrollable. So that's the only time I intervene during classroom talk.</p> <p>T3: Even if you want to speak, there are times for you to speak. For me now, I'm open to suggestions and actually we learn a lot from our students. Um...I'm no more the teacher that whatever I say is true...- Aah...one thing, I don't intervene for grammar mistakes. No. I would just let them talk.</p> <p>T4 Before this, classroom talk was mostly...I would be the one who did a lot of talking and sharing with the students but now I would most</p> |

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| | | <p>probably get all students involve with it.</p> <p>T6: I don't really intervene much because I let my students talk actually because I don't want to go and stop their ideas there. So I let them talk most of the time.</p> <p>T1 those who are weak, through this discourse, they are able to speak and gain some knowledge even though it's a little. where they'll be sharing ideas and they need to collect information from each group.</p> <p>T2 I can see that you know, some of them can do well in English, they are able to understand and able to respond to me in English. You know ... when I ask them to present and so on, I can see that they respond in English.</p> <p>T3: It takes a lot actually ... yes. The most important thing is they tried because many of them didn't dare to earlier due to the fear of making grammatical errors.... ...they feel less shy to speak in English</p> <p>T5 Coming from a rural area and English is not their first language, when they are sharing their views and all, they are actually improving their language. They had the chance and opportunity to talk, to share. So from there they built their confidence to speak English.</p> |
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| | | | <p>T6: I realize that actually the students' self-esteem is much better compared to the earlier one, the monologic discourse so I notice they're improving in English. Maybe, in the sense of vocab, has improved because they listen to their friends' opinions, they listen to the words used by their friends and that's one of the ways, they improve themselves.</p> |
| <p>4.Arduous and Skillful Task</p> <p>This theme was derived from the low competency level of students in English and teachers' conceptualisation of dialogic teaching.</p> | <p>i. Students' Lack of Proficiency</p> | <p>C19: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English.</p> <p>C20: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English.</p> <p>C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher</p> | <p>T1: "Those weaker students, Sometimes they don't understand my questions or instructions or the group leader's instructions". I have this one quiet boy who is reluctant to speak at the beginning of the year. He never did like to participate. When I asked him, he resisted but I notice that after 10 months, he has begun to participate.</p> <p>T2: "Teacher I wanna ask a question but don't know the word. Can you help me?"</p> <p>T3: Not all, but it's very hard. I did see a few of them. Even if it's one line, one sentence, two sentences, its good enough for me as a start. The weaker classes don't ask questions. You need to ask them questions.</p> <p>T5 Okay, you see... most of my students, they are... they don't speak the language at all so the only time they speak English is the time when they are learning English in the classroom.</p> |

| | | |
|--|--|--|
| | | <p>T5: They don't really give very long responses especially the weaker classes...the most they can give is maybe one or two lines</p> <p>T6: "I realize that most of our students um... they have a lot of ideas to share with their friends and teachers but it's just that limitation is the vocab. Language is a barrier there.</p> <p>T7: I realize during the dialogue sessions; the problem is that...the language.</p> |
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4.3.1 Dialogic Teaching an Interactive Discourse Structure

The teachers' perception of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse was attained by inferring to their understanding of dialogic teaching, their experiences and challenges faced during their implementation process. The analysis derived from their interview data indicated that all eight teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7 and T8) perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive classroom discourse which facilitated L2 oral communication or precisely spoken English among many of their students despite some of the challenges faced. In further inferring to the principles and features of dialogic teaching, the teachers viewed discussions and open-ended questions as important interactive features of dialogic teaching which they had observed to be most effective in the teaching of spoken English. Greater engagement and participation of students were perceived to have been obtained through the use of discussions and open-ended questions in the lessons. The teachers noticed that through dialogic teaching, students were engaged in the learning process. The whole class and group discussions encouraged sharing of views and students were said to be interested in talk. Equally, the teachers mentioned that the open-ended questions which they had posed consistently throughout the lesson allowed for better student engagement and participation. Hence, two subthemes emerged from the theme above which shall be discussed below:

4.3.1.1 Questions Permeate Talk

Dialogic teaching is a concept that emphasises the use of questions by both teachers and students as stated by Alexander (2018) and Nystrand (1997). The eight participants (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7 and T8) viewed questions as a fundamental factor and an interactive feature of dialogic classroom discourse because it generates ideas and perspectives from the students. The teachers stated that question is a core principle of dialogic teaching which permeates talk and functions as an interactive feature to gain

students' participation. The technique of using questions is important because questions are fundamental in the way teachers support the learning process by getting the students engaged in talk and to construct knowledge. The strategy of questioning, when used by teachers for a purpose, carry deep implications as questioning skills affect how students receive and process information that have been presented to them, and how they discuss such information among themselves in class.

The teachers perceived that through dialogic teaching, their talk was largely influenced by open-ended questions. Open-ended questions formed more than half of the teachers' utterances which functioned to facilitate talk and broadened the scope of discourse. The coding on all the eight semi-structured interview transcripts indicated that open-ended questions were constantly used to engage students in talk. The teachers acknowledged the importance of using open-ended questions to engage students in talk through whole class and small group discussions. The table below shows three codes that formed the first subtheme which was questions permeate talk. The highest number of counts came from code one (C1) followed by code two (C2).

Table 4.2: Questions Permeate Talk

| Questions Permeate Talk | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 | T8 | Total |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| C1: Question and answer sequences encourage and extend talk | 5 | 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 42 |
| C2: Teacher poses open ended questions that encourage talk | 5 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 2 | 19 |
| C3: Teacher facilitates talk through scaffolding of open-ended questions | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 18 |
| Total | 13 | 13 | 9 | 10 | 8 | 8 | 12 | 8 | 79 |

*C1- Code 1

T1- Teacher 1

The analysis of data reflected that the teachers found questions and answer sequences through dialogic teaching encouraged and extended talk in the classroom. For instance, Teacher 1 (T1) stated that she found that open-ended questions had the capacity to generate talk when she said "I would just pose an open-ended question just like... 'How was your weekend?' or how did you spend your holidays?" where they'll be sharing ideas and collecting information". The teachers noticed that the questions posed during the whole class discussion, in particular on topics that were familiar to the students, created a chain of responses and further questions. This interactive pattern encouraged extended talk. T1 posed a question during a discussion on places of interest, students were able to respond which led to more exchanges by students "It's like if the person has gone to that place, then others will join in...Oh...I've also been to...So once a person starts to talk, the rest will follow because they want to share their ideas". The students began responding and various exchanges took place because they were able to relate to the topic. The function of open-ended questions to initiate and generate talk made dialogic teaching an interactive classroom discourse.

Similarly, T2 mentioned that in her adoption of dialogic teaching, the questions and answer sequences encouraged and extended talk during her English lessons. The analysis of the semi-structured interview revealed that she found that open-ended questions posed during the whole class and small group discussions permeated talk as it allowed students to interact amongst each other in English. She realised that the open-ended questions played a crucial role in providing opportunities for students to interact in English. She affirms that the interactive structure of dialogic teaching which involves question-and-answer sequences created opportunities for talk when she says, "for me the concept of dialogic teaching is more than talk to me because it involves teachers and learners building on each other's ideas, you know...posing questions, asking questions, you know

actually constructing interpretations of what is trying to be conveyed”. Her statement above conceptualises dialogic teaching as an interactive classroom discourse.

T3 and T4 state that dialogic teaching involves asking open-ended questions as these questions are authentic and relate to students’ prior knowledge. The teachers believe that open-ended questions stimulate students into sharing their views as it creates an interactive platform for students to indulge in talk. For instance, T3 said that posing questions related to their background knowledge would encourage them to respond. Open-ended questions such as on the topic of pollution would encourage talk as students would be able to relate to it. Thus, she quotes - “Maybe if you talk about pollution, maybe you can ask them, “What do you think about Bertam compared to Bertam 5 years ago? and “how can we keep the place clean?” would allow for students to share.

T6 also acknowledges the importance of open-ended questions which functions as a vital tool in generating talk amongst students. She noticed that the teacher would only need to pose a question which then opens the space for talk. This was evident when she claimed, “we just have to come up with one or two questions and then the students will talk among themselves”. The extract here exemplifies the core role of questions in generating talk linguistically as well as cognitively.

Both T7 and T8 also agreed that the question-and-answer sequences encouraged talk in the classroom. For instance, T7 says that she poses open-ended questions which demands students’ higher order thinking to encourage diverse responses- “I purposely ask these kind of HOTS (Higher Order Thinking Skill) questions to trigger their previous knowledge and also just to get them to talk, I want them to talk”. Her statement “I want them to talk” clearly indicates the purpose of having this interactive discourse pattern in the classroom. T8 sums it up by saying ‘so there’s interaction between teacher and students”.

The teachers also mentioned the use of open-ended questions as a scaffolding technique in the classroom to support and promote more student interactions which was captured through code 3. All eight teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7 and T8) acknowledged that the open-ended questions posed by them facilitated classroom talk and created opportunities for students to engage in conversations and discussions. The teachers described how they have used open-ended questions to prompt students for responses and indirectly encouraged the use of English. For instance, T1 mentioned that she constantly facilitates students' talk through the use of open-ended questions. She claims she poses open-ended questions to prompt students for responses and to support their understanding - "I'll usually ask WH questions. I'll use questions as prompters. I'll pose a few questions for them to think, to know the focus of the talk".

T2 and T3 also found open-ended questions as a scaffolding tool to prompt responses. For instance, T2 posed a few open-ended questions to facilitate the discussion on the topic of food by linking it to the students' prior knowledge. She facilitated students' understanding of the topic and extended their thinking through her scaffolding of questions such as ... "so what's the famous dish in Malaysia? You know Malaysians love nasi lemak (glutinous rice) Do you think it is healthy? Why?" The three questions in the extract above functioned as a scaffolding tool which helped students relate to the main topic of discussion which was on the importance of food. By doing so, T2 was able to extend students' thinking and get her students to respond in the discussions. T3 also found that her scaffolding questions facilitated talk as students were able to understand the matter being discussed and participated when she states that "by asking them questions that would lead them to where they are going". This demonstrates the role of questions as a scaffolding tool which permeates talk.

Similarly, T4, T5 and T6 expressed their perceptions of dialogic teaching as an interactive approach through the use of open-ended questions as a scaffolding tool. The teachers felt that they were able to facilitate talk in the classroom through scaffolding of questions during the conversations and discussions. For instance, T4 states “When they are sharing their ideas, I would prompt the students through open-ended questions. I always ask open-ended questions during class”. She is also aware of the types of questions to ask for the purpose of facilitating talk when she says “sometimes we just ask about what...we get only one answer or information. Ask about why? How? The students talk more”. Hence, the concept of open-ended questions in dialogic teaching is clearly understood by T4. The teachers deliberately used open-ended questions to encourage talk in the classroom.... “Most of my questions are open-ended questions. Something like prompting questions...If they can’t, I’ll try to simplify the questions and make sure they talk in the classroom”.

Apart from questions functioning as a scaffolding tool for talk, T3 claims it also functioned as a linguistic strategy which supported second language development. For instance, T3 states, “First, we would ask a lot of questions, WH questions, open-ended questions... to get the students to talk”. “... in order for them to talk, you need to have the structures. For example, one person will ask questions and the other will answer. Then they will take turns.” The open-ended questions allowed for the exploration of language in terms of form and function.

The extracts above clearly indicate that the teachers viewed questions in dialogic teaching as a scaffolding tool to assist students to articulate their thoughts and to extract ideas from students with the purpose of permeating talk.

Although the respondents mentioned instances of their students’ using questions that permeated talk, these were rather limited. Apparently, the students were less comfortable

in posing open-ended questions in the classroom due to their lack of confidence in using the language. Instead, they were more confident in responding to the questions posed by their teachers. Only three out of the eight teachers had mentioned that their students were able to ask questions. For instance, T2 stated that “Ok...we can see that they will try to ask questions because they want their peers to respond, and the questions actually help their peers interpret... When they ask questions, we can have different interpretations from other students. I love to see the ingenious responses from the students”. The extract above shows that the questions were posed by the students in an effort to inquire about the topic being discussed.

T3 and T4 also stated that their students ask questions to inquire further on the topic of discussion and clarify their doubts on a particular matter. For instance, T3 says “they will ask questions. Anything they don’t understand during the discussion, they will ask questions”. Similarly, T4 also stated, “My students always ask questions to get more understanding about something”. They’ll keep on asking each other. There’ll be interaction between students and students”.

Respondent T6 observed that her students were able to ask questions that encouraged talk. This phenomenon was not observed before, prior to the adoption of dialogic teaching. It appears that most of the questions that they or their peers asked encouraged them to think and to respond accordingly.

From the extracts illustrated above, it can be deduced that the teachers perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive classroom discourse where open-ended questions were used to permeate talk. They were also aware of the appropriate time to initiate talk through the use of open-ended questions. This occurrence showed that the teachers’ understanding of the concept of dialogic teaching was very much associated with the idea proposed by

Alexander (2018). The purpose for using open-ended questions was obviously to create an atmosphere for talk.

4.3.1.2 Discussions Generate Talk

The second subtheme which emerged from the analysis of the interview data in which teachers perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive classroom discourse was discussions as a means of generating talk. All eight teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6, T7 and T8) had mentioned that discussions were their main technique in dialogic teaching. Whole class and small group discussions remained a consistent feature throughout the lessons. Based on the analysis of data obtained from the interviews, the majority of the respondents (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7) found discussions to be an interactive discourse feature which created space for students to share their views. The teachers emphasised the role of discussions as a constant feature in their lessons which generated talk. Table 4.3 illustrates four codes which emerged from the analysis of data that formed the subtheme above.

Table 4.3: Discussions Generate Talk

| Discussions Generate Talk | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. | 4 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 19 |
| C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions. | 2 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 12 |
| C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| C9: new subtopics and topics emerge through discussions | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 5 |
| Total | 9 | 4 | 7 | 5 | 9 | 6 | 8 | 48 |

The respondents (T1, T2, T3, T4, T6 & T7) had begun creating a relaxed environment for talk by employing discussions, conversations, and dialogues as a mode of instruction. This therefore transformed their teaching style towards a social mode of learning where talk was the focus. Data showed that both the teachers and the students had become accustomed to discussions which created a relaxed environment for talk in the classroom.

For instance, T1 found that discussions created a non-threatening environment for her students to share their views in English. She asserts that that a relaxed environment is crucial for learning- “Once their learning is relaxed, they are able to give their thoughts, students were given a chance to participate through listening and speaking. It encourages students to feel comfortable to share. So, they were not scared”. Realising that discussions created space for talk, T1 mentioned that her lessons were mainly made up of discussions as she wanted her students to be engaged in talk. For instance, she says “Most of my lessons, I will have discussions... “70% of my lesson is discussion. She comments that cooperative learning activities were employed as discussions to encourage talk. “I’d do the popcorn method where I get feedback from students. Then I will have activities like *Think, Pair, Share*...where they think and then they share with their partners and they will tell the class, what they have found out for that certain topic”. These activities served as discussions which enabled students to share information with their peers, whether working in pairs or in groups. Consequently, it ensured that learning took place. The cooperative learning strategies as mentioned above permitted the lower proficiency students to share as it was a guided form of discussion.

T2 also mentioned discussions generated talk. Through the infusion of dialogic teaching, she noticed that discussions created a non-threatening environment for students to share their views and thoughts as they were not compelled to provide correct or expected answers. She states that the discussions saw an increase in participation amongst

the students. As it was a conversational mode, the students felt relaxed to participate and to provide their thoughts through the chain of questions and responses which led to talk.”

She states the relaxed environment dismisses the fear of making mistakes. Sharing through the discussions does not pressure the student on accuracy and fluency as compared to the teacher-centred approach. She states that “Because you know, once you’re relaxed, you feel comfortable making mistakes in front of your teacher in the classroom”. She also highlights this environment as a distinct feature of dialogic teaching “I feel that this is the most positive aspect of this dialogic teaching which can be applied in all the subjects”.

T2:

... when we have discussions, so they’ll question each other, “why did you say that? I couldn’t agree with you” ...you know...Once they start the ball rolling, agreeing and disagreeing. I want the students to think and provide responses. I will try to involve them in providing the knowledge”.

T3, T5, T6 and T7 also stressed the ability of discussions to generate talk because of a relaxed environment and conducive learning environment for students. For instance, T3 asserts that students were able to participate in the discussions because they were in a relaxed environment and mentioned the importance of creating this environment - “We need a relaxed environment. You need to have the atmosphere for the students to feel they can share their ideas in class. She states that the non-threatening environment built through discussions is crucial for second language learning “I want them to feel happy to learn English”. The environment would then impact positively the students’ behaviour and attitude towards the learning of English as claimed by both T3 and T5 “they will make an effort to be on time for classes, they will make an effort to speak and write”. T7 mentioned that the relaxed environment through discussions contributes to the sharing of

others as “you are actually creating the environment and an opportunity for other students to open up as well...”

The teachers also noticed that the students were engaged in the learning process through discussions. The whole class and small group discussions encouraged sharing of views and students were said to be interested in talk. One of the teachers (T3) mentioned that ‘You can see the enthusiasm in trying to find new things and getting opinions from their friends’. Nevertheless, she stressed on the selection of topic for discussion- “we have to choose our topic wisely because they need to have prior knowledge about it before they can discuss”. This demonstrates that the topic selection determines the ability of students to be involved in the discussions.

T5 believes that whole class and small group discussions are one of the key elements of the dialogic approach and agrees that her students were able to share their views through this interactive classroom discourse structure. She states, “The small group discussions were effective because the students were able to say anything based on the topic given”.

Another teacher, T6 was also of the same view where she states that “dialogic teaching is giving a chance for the students to talk. They will share their ideas and actually they are very relaxed”. She stated that through the discussions, students developed confidence to speak as the non-threatening environment allowed for talk to take place. She emphasised this point by stating “So there’s no limitations and their teacher will just let them to talk and they will not emphasise grammar”.

Nevertheless, the teachers (T5, T6 and T7) did mention that being L2 learners, the students found it a challenge to interact in English and were not able to indulge in actual discussions. The students required support and encouragement to talk. Thus, these

teachers developed cooperative learning strategies which resemble dialogues or discussions to facilitate talk. The teachers' employment of cooperative learning techniques, such as *think, pair, share, lollipop stick, popcorn* and *talking chips* were techniques aimed at stimulating discussions, particularly in motivating students with lower proficiency to be involve or participate in discussions. T6 stated that she intentionally created the atmosphere for talk by employing cooperative learning strategies such as "Share & Turn" to encourage her students to discuss.

Similarly, T7 explained that her experience of initiating whole class discussions and small group discussions by using the cooperative learning strategy known as 'talking chips' generated talk on a particular topic. She claimed that by 'using the talking chips, I get them to talk in groups, in pairs and then present verbally'. Such an application enabled her students to participate in the discussions which she had stimulated, thereby getting them to be engaged in talk.

The extracts above indicate the teachers had generated talk through discussions. Teachers infused learner centred fun activities in the form of discussions like *lollipop sticks* and *think, pair share* to afford each group member opportunity for talk. These communicative activities are vital in facilitating talk. The discussions gave students confidence to speak and served as an interactive classroom discourse.

Further to the above information stressed on discussions as a way of sharing views, the teachers (T1, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7) also stated that discussions stimulated the emergence of new topics. Discussions permitted students to expand on the topic of discussion whilst also encouraging other students to explore and incorporate new ideas into the ongoing lesson. For instance, T1 states "So from one topic, we'll go to another sub-topic then in the end, there will be many other different topics to discuss, then during presentation, there'll be more information gathered. That's how the process is". The

teacher was able to lead the discussion into new topics which demonstrates the ability of students to communicate in real life.

T2 summarises her understanding on the function of discussions in generating talk by saying that the emergence of new topics occurs through dialogic teaching due to the nature of this discourse pattern.

“When it comes to dialogic teaching nowadays. I feel more relaxed. I only must prepare suitable questions to initiate a discussion. This is going to help my students to actually explore other possibilities. When they are discussing and suddenly someone came out with a different topic you know ...so this takes a different course of learning”.

In an effort to generate talk, T3 also states that the discussions allowed for emergence of new topics. For instance, T3 quotes that in one of her lessons, the topic of discussion was on occupation, but the discussion led to the topic of salary. The topic was relevant to the main topic - “we begin with occupation and later moved on to the topic of salary”. The chain of questions and responses from the students led to the emergence of a new topic which was on salary. This shows students are able to link the content to the main topic which reflects real world communication skills, such as the need to clarify, negotiate and justify a matter. She was also aware that the discursive discussions allowed for the extension of topics. “I didn’t intend to go further on salary you know... but since the boy brought up the matter on salary, we digress a bit from the main topic- occupation”. Her statement is evidence that discussions play a crucial role in generating talk.

T5 claimed that students were able to contribute to the discussion by expanding talk on topics related to the initial discussion or move to another topic during the discussion. The weaker students were said to be able to share despite language challenges. Questions posed by the teacher can change the direction of discussion to new topics. For instance, she stated that “during a lesson on the topic online shopping, so I asked them How do you

pay online’? So they told me that we can just order and get the barcode”. Hence, the topic of online shopping led to the topic of payment. She reiterates by saying “because sometimes we talk about this and then move to another ...it will change”.

T7 agreed that discussions were crucial in dialogic teaching because it generates talk. She acknowledged that new topics emerge through discussions which enables the continuity of discussion. She quotes an example “we talked about the disadvantages of internet and one of them prompted and said pornography. This is an indication of a new topic for discussion, and she elicited further as part of the discussion. And I said yes...its true...Pornography? And then I said, you know pornography, why is it a harm? I did go into that topic because I felt I had to touch a little bit on this because it’s something students need to know...”

T7 also states that students learn better through talking with others – “I realize during the discussions they have a lot of ideas to share”. However, she does acknowledge that there were language difficulties amongst some of the students that hampered their talk. – “it’s the just the language barrier” There seemed to be some interactions where there was a display of their ability to think and respond critically, ‘So I feel like...you know...it creates a platform for them to talk...So I find practically everyone is engaged and somehow or rather, even their friends will help the other friends’. The extracts above clearly indicate that dialogic classroom discourse allowed for the emergence of new topics amongst students that exemplified real life communication.

Based on the evidence provided above, the teachers were aware that both discussions and open-ended questions functioned as a means to promote and sustain and extend talk. Overall, the respondents had found discussions and open-ended questions to be the most effective features of dialogic teaching which made it an interactive discourse. The responses drawn from the individual semi-structured interviews showed that the teachers

understood the principle of using questions and discussions. The teachers were able to facilitate talk in the classroom through Alexander 's (2010) dialogic principles of collective and reciprocal. This outcome seems to be consistent with Alexander's Dialogic Teaching Principles framework (2010) and Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction Framework (1997) which had been introduced to all the respondents of this study.

The above input articulated by the respondents encapsulates the concept of dialogic teaching as an interactive classroom discourse which facilitates L2 oral communication skills and second language acquisition. It appears that dialogic teaching enabled the respondents to elicit more responses from the students, thereby facilitating their spoken skills in which the participation level of their students had increased through the use of open-ended questions and discussions. This concurs with the findings of Juzwik, Borsheim Black, Caughlan, & Heintz (2012) that authentic or open-ended questions posed during discussions increases student talk.

4.3.2 Dialogic Teaching a Meaningful Classroom Discourse

In the attempt to understand how the respondents perceived dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse, the teachers mentioned that dialogic teaching can be perceived as a meaningful classroom discourse that affords learning opportunities and transforms students' learning behaviour. The teachers perceived dialogic teaching as meaningful in terms of learning, particularly second language use. All eight teachers agreed that learning opportunities were afforded through dialogic teaching. They stated that questions posed during the discussions helped students to develop cognitively and linguistically as they deliberated on the topics discussed. The dialogic principles of collectiveness where students address the learning task together through discussions and the principle of reciprocal where students listen and respond to the open-ended questions posed were also

evident which made learning a meaningful process. This aspect of their observations was emphasised as “learning takes place”, thereby showing the importance of both second language learning and constructing knowledge collectively through discussions. This was in line with Alexander (2018) who asserted that dialogic teaching emphasises the importance of talk in enhancing cognitive and linguistic development. The teachers’ responses were further classified into three main codes: discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge; open-ended questions facilitate the construction of knowledge, and students’ responses contribute to knowledge construction. During such stages of engagement, student performance manifested more evidently because meaning was dialogically established. It seemed evident that the active agent of the action was the speaker who had actively constructed a dialogic bridge to enable the listener to build on the dialogues or conversations previously established. This is called the bi-directional and reciprocal interaction in which students construct meaning together which affords them learning opportunities. The table below illustrates the three codes which formed subtheme one.

Table 4.4: Learning Opportunities Afforded Through Talk

| Learning Opportunities Afforded Through Talk | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 | T8 | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively. | 7 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 38 |
| C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 11 |
| C11: students’ responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 7 |
| Total | 10 | 15 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 6 | 4 | 3 | 56 |

4.3.2.1 Learning Opportunities Afforded Through Talk

This subtheme was derived from the greatest number of counts on code seven (C7) which reflected the teachers' perception of dialogic teaching as a meaningful classroom discourse that affords learning opportunities. All eight respondents asserted that through dialogic teaching, both learning and language learning took place as students were able to construct knowledge collectively via the whole class and small group discussions. During such processes, the students appeared to be constructing knowledge individually and collectively based on the interactions. This was in line with Alexander's dialogic principle of collective and cumulative. For instance, T1 mentioned that the interactions enabled students to acquire new vocabulary. She claims "yes even new vocabulary is gained." T1 continues to emphasise that the sharing of knowledge by a student enabled the others to develop knowledge about the content being discussed. The interaction eventually encouraged them to watch the movie. Below is the extract to support the claim:

T1:

For example, this from one class, that day we were doing review, so different groups were doing different types of review, like food review, movie, travel, blog all this, so when they presented, so we learn more...especially movies. Some didn't watch the movies, so after their presentation of their movie review, we asked about the movie and they were able to give information about it which encouraged us to watch the movie in the end.

The construction of knowledge collectively by students was also noticed by T2 and T3. For instance, T2 stated "The questions posed made the students think. They will share their ideas and from there the others will gain knowledge." T3 also affirms that learning opportunities were afforded by stating "during the discussion, my students will share. Almost everyone in the group will share something. The others will listen and respond. Then, they gain new knowledge". Therefore, the interactions led to the construction of

knowledge collectively. T3 also mentioned that she noticed her students began to feel comfortable to speak in English. “Dialogic teaching allowed my students to share. They are no longer scared to talk. They feel less shy to speak in English. They can now speak English.”

T5 also affirmed that dialogic teaching was a meaningful classroom discourse structure as students were able to construct knowledge collectively through the small group discussions. “When we discuss a topic in groups, I will pose a question to the group and ask them to share about the topic and this is where they will gain more knowledge together.” She also affirmed vocabulary and syntax was acquired by students through the discussions which allowed for second language acquisition as in “Vocabulary is learnt...from there, we went on to sentences, right...okay then during the group discussions, I could see they use the language. They had a chance to use English.”

Students were able to relate to the topics discussed based on their background knowledge, social and cultural experiences despite having low language proficiency. The discussions held on topics such as movies, pollution and online shopping were related to their lives which made the talk meaningful.

The analysis attained from the interview data also indicated that majority of the teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, and T8) mentioned that the open-ended questions posed during the discussions facilitated the construction of knowledge collectively. The open-ended questions posed during the teacher-initiated discussions either whole class or in small groups helped students construct knowledge collectively (4.3.2.1). T1 acknowledged open-ended questions facilitated the construction of knowledge collectively when she states that... “through open-ended questions, we learn, we exchange ideas. Not only the students, me myself. From the student’s responses, sometimes, I gain knowledge myself”. Knowledge is constructed collectively which

includes herself being opened to meaning making. She states that she poses questions during the discussions to facilitate the construction of knowledge. “Most of my lessons, I will try to have discussions...where I will ask questions, even a simple question, I’d do the *Popcorn* method where I get feedback from students. Then I will have activities like *Think, Pair, Share*...where they think and then they share with their partners and they will tell the class, what they have found out for that certain topic”.

T2 emphasised that the open-ended questions posed by her afforded students learning opportunities. The questions posed contributed to students’ learning process in which the responses led to the co-construction of knowledge. She mentions “the thing is that why I pose open-ended questions is because I want them to be actively involved in the teaching and learning process”. She further elaborates that the open-ended questions posed during the discussions provoked the critical thinking and higher order thinking skills of her students which eventually led to construction of knowledge. She had intentionally posed open-ended questions during the discussions to raise their thinking ability. She became aware of their thinking capacity through the questions she posed. “So I feel that... you know... once I ask them this type of questions, it can actually reflect their mental state, how their thinking is...”

T3 also agreed that the open-ended questions posed stretches the thinking of students and gets them actively engaged in the meaning making process. She states that it was reflected in their responses. For instance, “When I pose open -ended questions, you can see their enthusiasm in trying to find new things and getting opinions from their friends. I think sharing about something is very important in developing knowledge.”

Similarly, T4 also shares those open-ended questions are regularly posed during discussions to facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively - I always give opportunities to the students to discuss. . . For example, I would just ask a few questions

get them to do *Think Pair Share*. ...they'll be sharing. When I see them sharing, it's very good. They can learn from each other and get more information".

T5 stressed that open-ended questions elicited responses from students which led to construction of knowledge collectively. She stated that open-ended questions were consistently used to trigger students' thinking and assist them in constructing knowledge collectively. For instance, she states "I will be forwarding questions to them during the discussions and asking for their opinion. So that's the time when they can express their views and gain knowledge". T5 also contends that the open-ended questions posed by either teacher or students to their peers encourages thinking and meaning -making. "Most of the questions that they ask their friends actually encourage them to think and respond to their friends' questions."

T6, T7 and T8 affirmed that open-ended questions facilitated the construction of knowledge collectively. The responses provided by the students allowed for the co-construction of knowledge. For instance, T8 also found that open-ended questions facilitated the construction of knowledge collectively as she described in the extract below:

T8:

Okay, for example, we were doing a topic on mobile phones, so I asked 'Why do think parents don't like their children having mobile phones? They were able to come up with responses. Knowledge is there and they are able to state opinions. Definitely learning is taking place and you see another side of the coin.

The extracts above indicate the teachers had afforded learning opportunities for students through discussions and open-ended questions making dialogic teaching a meaningful classroom discourse. As a result of dialogic teaching, some students were able

to offer input and information, hence opportunities were created for others to either contribute to the discussion with additional information or for the weaker ones to benefit from the discussion by constructing knowledge collectively. Thus, it can be said that the teachers were affording students learning opportunities by actively engaging students in discussions and posing open-ended questions that encouraged the co-construction of knowledge but there were some students with low uptake due to low proficiency level.

Nevertheless, the teachers did mention that some students were unable to contribute and most likely had not constructed knowledge because they lack understanding in English. Despite the transformation of students into active learners, there were some reluctant students who were hindered due to their language proficiency and cultural norms. These students were not accustomed to sharing their thoughts openly or arguing. Having experienced dialogic teaching, they were still adjusting to this new approach of learning.

4.3.2.2 Transforms Students into Active Learners

The analysis of interview data also indicated that teachers perceived dialogic teaching as a meaningful classroom discourse which had transformed students into active learners. The teachers perceived that through dialogic teaching, the approach had evoked a behavioural change in students' learning style. The teachers found that through dialogic teaching, the students had become active learners, taking ownership of their learning. Dialogic teaching tends to actively engage students in their learning; they are granted high levels of autonomy; and they are empowered to influence the development of the classroom discussion, to a certain degree. This subtheme was derived from the teachers' responses attained during the interview on students' behavioural changes.

Seven out of the eight teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7) interviewed had stated many of their students had transformed into active learners and users of English. In addition, they were also becoming contributors of knowledge. Two codes in the table below exemplify the subtheme.

Table 4.5: Transforms Students into Active Learners

| Transform Students into Active Learners | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 | T8 | Total |
|---|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| C16: Students' self - elect or select other students | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 3 |
| C17: Students' responses contribute to the use of English | 7 | 13 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 2 | 2 | 38 |
| Totals | 8 | 13 | 4 | 4 | 2 | 5 | 3 | 2 | 41 |

The students became active learners as they began to self- select and select others for various activities without teacher intervention. Four out of eight teachers (T1, T3, T4, and T7) noticed that their students were able to participate in the discussions and dialogues without much teacher intervention. One of the key features of dialogic teaching is there is a minimal teacher selection of students where they either self-elect or select other students (Khany & Mohammadi, 2016). T1 attributed this occurrence to the activities that permitted self-initiation, as is noted in discussions. "...we have this *ping pong* or *pop-corn* that means each student provides a response without teacher nominating". The activity leverages on the participation of each member and therefore does not require teacher intervention- So, I won't choose students..."

T2 and T4 also state that their students kept the discussions going by responding and posing questions to one another without teacher selection. For instance, T4 claims "students listen to their friends' share and automatically respond. I don't really ask them".

T6 and T7 attribute the change in students becoming active learners to the discourse structure that is non-threatening which revolves around discussions and dialogues. T6 states “because they are already used to dialogue sessions so automatically they’ll listen and respond to their friends and they would give their own opinions”....T7 also mentions the turn taking amongst the students take place naturally due to the discursive nature - “they take turns and they are really engaged just waiting to share”.

Respondents T1, T2, T3, T5, and T6 asserted that the adoption of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse had led to the usage of English. The discourse created the platform for their students to become engaged in talks, thereby improving their fluency. This was one of the many accomplishments they achieved because prior to the adoption of dialogic teaching, their students were unable to speak in English, lack the confidence and shy. The implementation of dialogic teaching had created opportunities for their students to use English consistently throughout the lessons. This therefore converted them from passive to active learners. For instance, T1 noticed that her students in particular those with low proficiency of English had begun to use in English during the whole class and small group discussions. The responses were said to be at word, phrase and sentence level for this group of students. Although the responses did not reflect a discursive nature as it is supposed to be, she claims “those who are weak, through dialogic teaching, they are able to speak”.

T2 was of the same opinion that her students had begun using English and some had shown potential to excel in English due to the consistency in usage. “I can see that you know, some of them can do well in English, they are able to understand and able to respond to me in English. You know ... when I ask them to present and so on, I can see that they respond in English”. Nevertheless, in terms of longer responses, respondent T2 stated that only those students with a higher level of proficiency can provide longer

responses in English, “When it comes to longer responses, it’s the good students, you know... those who have mastery of the language ...”

T3 found that students became active users of English although it was a challenge at the initial stage. The discourse structure was unfamiliar to students in the early stage of implementation and students were fearful of making mistakes. However, as they became accustomed to the discussions, the weak students also tried to respond in English. She mentioned “It takes a lot actually ... yes. The most important thing is they tried because many of them didn’t dare to earlier due to the fear of making grammatical errors.... ...now through dialogic teaching, they feel less shy to speak in English.

T5 also noticed that her students had begun to use English and become engaged in talk transforming them into active learners. The constant use of English through the discussions had improved students’ English language. She acknowledges their non-English background did not encourage the use of English outside the classroom and the classroom was the only source of English. T5 states as below:

Coming from a rural area and English is not their first language, when they are sharing their views and all, they are actually improving their language. They had the chance and opportunity to talk. So from there they built their confidence to speak English”.

The extract above demonstrates the crucial need to provide this form of classroom discourse with the aim of providing language learning opportunities for students and empowering them as learners.

T6 also acknowledges that students’ responses encouraged the use of English. She found her students’ self-esteem had increased through dialogic teaching. They were able

to observe the language being used as they participated in discussions and then produce language in the meaning making process as in the statement below.

T6:

“I realise that actually the students’ self-esteem is much more better compared to the earlier one, the monologic discourse so I notice they’re improving in English. Maybe, in the sense of vocab, has improved because they listen to their friends’ opinions, they listen to the words used by their friends and that’s one of the ways, they improve themselves”.

Respondent T7 also experienced an increase in student participation through the adoption of dialogic teaching, hence making them active learners. She claims “more students are responding ... ah...which I least expected because initially there’ll be only two or three. When they don’t agree, they start prompting “...Teacher I don’t agree with the answer” ...So these are cases where they are challenged by their friends, and they start talking because they don’t agree with the response, or they have their personal experience to share.”

It appears that with dialogic teaching, the students’ responses contributed to the use of English changing them from being passive to active contributors of learning. Overall, the opportunities afforded by dialogic teaching paved the way for students to participate in their classroom discourse transforming their learning capacity. This helped many of the students to develop their language, communicative and cognitive competence. It seems apparent that dialogic teaching encouraged positive change among the students, as noted in their responses. The promotion of active participation by students were noted by the majority of teachers which influenced their perception of dialogic teaching as a meaningful classroom discourse in the teaching of spoken English.

4.3.3 A New Pedagogical Approach

Many teachers perceived dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach leveraging on classroom talk that changed their teaching style and mindset. The teachers made a comparison to their previous teaching style and acknowledged that they had changed in their pedagogical approach. They were aware that a teacher's role in dialogic teaching differs from the conventional teacher's role prevalent in monologic discourse. Five codes below as illustrated in table 4.6 reflect the theme which emerge from the findings.

Table 4.6: Changes in Teachers' Disposition

| Changes in Teachers' Disposition | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 | T8 | Total |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk. | 4 | 4 | 6 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 20 |
| C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 3 | 0 | 10 |
| C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions. | 3 | 1 | 3 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 10 |
| C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally | 4 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 10 |
| C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | 1 | 1 | 1 | 4 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 9 |
| C18: Teacher is no longer dominating and believes in empowering students. | 2 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 14 |
| Total | 15 | 10 | 16 | 12 | 5 | 5 | 9 | 1 | 73 |

4.3.3.1 Changes in Teachers' Disposition

In exhibiting their perceptions of dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach, one of the subthemes that emerged was on changes in teachers' disposition. Through dialogic teaching, the majority of the teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T6 and T7) had changed in their teaching approach and reverted towards becoming a facilitator. The teachers had provided more student talk time through initiating different talk types to facilitate talk.

The teachers had initiated different talk types for their students through their questioning. Alexander's (2018) Repertoire 3- learning Talk was reflected in the discussions as students were seen explaining, exploring, justifying and arguing through their open-ended questions and discussions (4.3.1). T1 compares the previous discourse approach in an attempt to justify her changes in her disposition as in the extract below:

T1:

“Um...before we were introduced to OPS-English, lessons in class were teacher centered. Teacher is everything... teacher give instructions...So when we were introduced to OPS-English, the focus is listening and speaking, and that's where we found that students were able to speak, even those who didn't speak at all were able to utter short sentences through dialogic teaching because they were given a chance to participate through activities, peer encouragement, peer guidance and minimal intervention from teacher”.

Her statement here is evidence that she has realised the value of dialogic teaching that demands a change in her teaching approach. Similarly, T2 stated that her change was noticeable when she realised her open-ended questions allowed for diverse responses as there were no predetermined answers which encouraged talk.

T2:

“When it comes to dialogic teaching, we teachers will accept all responses from students and the students are free to talk. There's NO specific answers to the questions the teachers pose.” Previously, all the input was provided by the teacher through teacher talk, but as a facilitator, students contributed to the learning.

T3 and T4 also perceived that dialogic teaching is a new pedagogical approach that transformed their teaching or disposition. T3 stated that the fundamental principle of dialogic teaching allows for flexibility in terms of content delivery- “I think dialogic teaching is more open, the classroom talk can be anything”. T3 continues to state that open-ended questions can effectively create talk. Just an open-ended question - ‘Where

have you been during the last school holidays?’ and students will start talking about it...they’ll be sharing, and diverse responses will be gained”.

The teachers also mentioned that they had changed in their way of providing feedback. With the introduction of dialogic teaching, open-ended questions were used to elicit feedback instead of the teacher providing feedback. The aim was to encourage student talk and the usage of English among students. For instance, T1, T2 and T4 stated that feedback was given through eliciting from students. Questions were purposefully used to obtain feedback. The feedback on grammar mistakes was given by eliciting from students on the correct grammar. For instance, T1 says “I will...will pick up some of the grammar mistakes to be shared and ask the students what the right word or form should be. The feedback will come from the students”.

T2 also stated she uses open-ended questions to elicit feedback from students. Instead of her doing a summary of the discussion, she uses questions to get students to provide the intended feedback. For instance, “What did you learn from the presentation? What did they talk about? What other things you found?” In other words, she throws open-ended questions back to students for them to provide feedback and this indirectly creates opportunities for talk. The extracts above clearly demonstrate that the teachers used questions to provide feedback which generated talk in the classroom.

The teachers also posed open-ended questions to assess students’ understanding of the topic which was discussed as well as language aspects such as grammar. For instance, T4 states “maybe they have limited understanding or ideas and so I will prompt them through questions and others will give the feedback”. She also mentioned about questions posed to her students to identify the correct vocabulary uttered during the discussion “what’ s the suitable word for this?”

In an effort to exhibit their adoption of dialogic teaching, the next change was in the amount of verbal intervention made by teachers. The teachers mentioned that they had begun to intervene minimally to provide students with more learning opportunities. This is in accordance with the principles of dialogic teaching as proposed by Alexander, (2018). For instance, T1 says that she intervened minimally and when necessary to allow students to handle the task. She says “I would intervene when necessary, and yes...minimally. I will let the students do...you know. I’ll go in when necessary. I’ll try to disturb them as little as I can”.

T3 also agrees that through dialogic teaching, there is less intervening by teacher as compared to the previous teaching approach and reiterates that in employing dialogic teaching, teacher talk is limited with the aim of empowering students in the learning process. “Even if you want to speak, there are times for you to speak. ...,” She also stresses on the flexibility of grammar with the intention of affording the students talk time –“I don’t intervene for grammar mistakes. No. I would just let them talk”. This indicates her change in her pedagogical approach.

Similarly, T6 perceived dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach where she had begun refraining from intervening as compared to previous approach to provide students the chance of sharing. She purposefully does not intervene as she is aware that her intervening may hinder the students’ talk. I don’t really intervene much because I let my students to talk actually because I don’t want to go and stop their ideas there. So I let them talk most of the time. Dialogic teaching does not support intervening by teacher because then student won’t talk.”

Nevertheless, respondent T3 stated that her intervention is largely dependent on the proficiency level of the students when she comments “the good classes, you can just let them talk and maybe probe a little if you want more responses. Then you let them continue

with the discussion but for the weaker classes, it can take half of the time. Because they are weak, so sometimes, they cannot find the right vocabulary. I will need to teach them.”

The analysis of the interview data indicated that the teachers upon experiencing dialogic teaching had sought to achieve a more equal power dynamic with students through the adoption of a more learner centred approach. Seven out of eight teachers (T1, T2, T3, T4, T5, T6 and T7) stated that they were no longer dominating and preferred to empower their students. The adoption of dialogic teaching found them wanting to empower their students by making learning a shared responsibility which is in accordance with the concept of dialogic classroom discourse. The teachers emphasised the provision of opportunities for students to share their views during class time. They also asserted that they had developed teaching opportunities where the students were encouraged to vocalise their ideas and thoughts during whole class and small group discussions.

T1 justifies her reason for no longer wanting to be dominating by relating to the experience she had with dialogic teaching. She explained that learning was not likely to occur when students are fearful of the teachers’ manner of teaching. She realised that through dialogic teaching, learner autonomy is crucial. Students become the focus or centre of learning. Therefore, she grants learner autonomy through choice of activities. For instance, “when it comes to activities, I would prefer the students...they have the power to decide...I would just be there to guide them”. Her choice of words – power to decide and guide was a clear indication of her intent to provide learner autonomy by allowing students to choose or suggest their own activities which is accordance to the principles and indicators of dialogic teaching. She rationalised her action by adding,” I want to give them opportunities to be leaders and also to express themselves without fear”. She states that learner autonomy is granted to students in particular through small group discussions and exemplifies an instance “Okay, in each group there is a leader, and

the task is delegated among the group members”. This is indeed a clear manifestation of her intention to empower students’ learning. Nevertheless, she mentioned that she exerted autonomy in terms of discipline matters.

This stance was also shared by respondent T2 who chose to refrain from dominating. T2 considered her students as equal partners in the teaching and learning process. She relates this view to the implementation of dialogic teaching when she says “Okay, nowadays, I see my students as partners in the learning process. They’re no longer my...what you call this, ...I’m the ruler and they are my subjects” ... Classroom discourse is where all the students have the opportunity to share their ideas. It’s not only the teacher who talks. Students are given the opportunity. Every student is given an opportunity”. The extract indicates she has made a comparison to the monologic discourse where the teachers is the dominating figure in the teaching process. Through dialogic teaching, she realised that the conventional style of dictating to students does not produce successful student outcomes and there is a need for change when she states:

T2:

“I think what happened before was teachers are the authority in the class. He or she controls the pupils and then chooses which pupil to actually talk and so on and then besides yes or no, whether it is acceptable or not. The responses are usually short responses, close responses, and then teachers will have a specific set of answers for the questions they already thought of. That is what I did before”.

She also believes that teachers should not enforce autonomy and power in class by stating “you’re no longer controlling them. You’re no longer asking them to do this and that” and instead advocates learner autonomy for better learning outcomes in acquiring language and knowledge by stating “We are empowering them”.

T2 compares her teaching approach to rationalise her change in her disposition which she is no longer dominating and prefers to empower students. She states “if you compared

how we used to carry out the classes, it was really tiring...because everything they depended on the teacher. So now, if you know how to actively involve them in the teaching and learning process, you can actually see that they can actually take over the lesson. So mine is now..., you know..., student centered, because is they who are going to actually... you know... who usually undergo the learning progress more than me”.

T3 also expressed her perceptions of dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach which facilitates L2 language acquisition through her change in disposition. She now prefers not to be dominating and instead aspires to empower students in their learning. She states that “I do not want to be authoritative because I feel that learning does not take place fully when you are giving instructions all the time. The students fear learning English and they don’t dare to express themselves...you know... I want them to be relaxed and then able to express what they feel. Then there will be sharing”. In her adoption of dialogic teaching, she wanted students to be empowered in their learning through the classroom discourse.

In an effort to empower her students, T3 acknowledges that dialogic teaching is restricted to the good and average classes. For instance, she states, “If the good class, it would be dialogic teaching. It really depends on the class”. As for the weaker classes, she still practices teacher centred. Her rationale for adopting teacher centred approach with the weaker students is because they have very low command of English and are unable to contribute during dialogues and discussions.

Similarly, T4 emphasised that she was no longer dominating and instead aspires to empower students which indicates her change in her pedagogical approach. “Okay, I would say for most of my classes, I’m no longer authoritative and I wouldn’t want to be. She has admitted that she was previously authoritative having employed the monologic discourse pattern. Through the implementation of dialogic teaching, she has changed. “I

would let the students handle. Why? Because for me, the classroom is something like a place that imitates the real world. You need to give them ownership. She stressed on the need for learner autonomy, “You need to give them the ownership. You need to guide them”.

T4’s claim further illustrated her adoption of dialogic teaching provided opportunities for her students to share their views during class. Both teachers, and students have the flexibility to negotiate subtopics or topics of discussions. This demonstrates her intention of empowering students in their learning process. She affirms that she provides opportunities for talk by stating “Yes...yes...always...always. I always give opportunities to the students to share their views. She also mentioned that autonomy is given to students in the learning process where she allows them to decide on the type of activity and peers. “I will let the students choose their pair. I wouldn’t like ...you know, select as I don’t want to show power and because students like to share with their own friends as they feel comfortable. I like to let the students choose their own partner, so they are able to share”.

T5, T6 and T7 also stated their preference of not being dominating but instead empowering students. For instance, T5 says “Um... no more...” which shows her transition in her pedagogical approach. “I don’t like having authority and power towards students because I feel....er...that the classroom will be not so active. They’ll all be passive. They won’t even start talking. So I have to change...no more authoritative”. T5 continues to remind herself of not becoming authoritative. Both T5 and T6 also affirmed that they had reverted to dialogic teaching. T6 claims “Frankly speaking, earlier when I was not exposed to OPS-English, it was always teacher-centred because I’ll ask the questions and I’ll be waiting for the answers”. The extract above indicates that the type of question she had employed during her previous teaching approach was close ended.

This is inferred from the phrase - ‘waiting for answer’ which indicates her expectation of a correct answer. Thus, the students would not be able to respond if they did not know the answer. However, after the implementation of the dialogic teaching, the teacher changed her disposition to engage students in talk. She says “But after I went for OPS, I realised I can let them talk so that it would be dialogue sessions in the classroom rather than teacher centred as what I was teaching earlier.”

T7 also strongly expressed her preference of not being authoritative and relates to student outcome. She feels that students will not be active learners and their learning may be hampered. “I prefer not to be...I think based on my classroom teaching, if you’re authoritative, you would not get what you want. She has reflected on her previous teaching or discourse pattern and made a comparison. She is aware that the previous approach does not encourage participation from students because the input is controlled and provided solely by teacher. Hence, she claims “You would not get the response from students. It’s not going to be fun ...It’s a one-way track. and ah... I think at the end, I’m just gonna write for my self-satisfaction that the learning outcome is achieved in the reflection but in actual fact, students are not going to learn much.

T7 also states that her adoption of this approach is aimed at providing students more opportunities for talk through reducing her own teacher-talk time. Her attempt was an illustration of her desire to encourage learner autonomy “I would get them to discuss by employing *Lollipop Sticks* and all of that just to create the fun...so that they can talk”.

However, T3 and T5 mentioned that they would exert authority in their mode of teaching when it involves weaker and disruptive students. For instance, T3 states “I have to be very authoritative when it comes to end classes which have disciplinary problems”. This was also echoed by T5 “it all depends on the class that I go. If that class is an unruly class, I would prefer to be authoritative”. Both extracts indicate that teachers (T3 and T5)

are not well informed on the use of dialogic strategies to support low performing students and require training on facilitating these groups of students through particular dialogic strategies.

Nevertheless, the traditional teacher talk, and one-way communication that was previously used was now sparingly used in their current classrooms. This implied that the teachers made the conscious effort to reduce their talk time; they also made a deliberate attempt to hand-over the talk time to their students. This practice is evident that the teachers concerned were avoiding any instances of promoting their autonomy and power over classroom talk.

The findings show that they perceived dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach which requires a change in their disposition. Overall, majority of the teachers (T1, T2, T4, T6 and T7) found dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach which transformed their teaching causing a change in their disposition. As stated by Alexander (2017), a teacher employing dialogic teaching frames and facilitates the talk; responds at any time but keeps her responses and interventions to the minimum. The teachers had changed in their pedagogical approach upon the introduction and implementation of dialogic teaching. The extracts above demonstrates that all of them who were exposed to the concept of dialogic teaching made tremendous efforts to implement what they had acquired from the training as well as learnt in their teaching and learning process which had led to a change in their disposition.

4.3.4 Dialogic Teaching an Arduous & Skillful task

The analysis of interview data showed that teachers perceived the implementation of dialogic teaching as an arduous and skillful task. As mentioned, dialogic teaching was a new pedagogical approach introduced to L2 teachers and they were expected to leverage

on talk throughout the teaching process. Prior to dialogic teaching, they were very accustomed to the exam-based and integrated approach where the focus was more on reading and writing. Being in the context of L2, dialogic teaching would demand a certain amount of language proficiency by both teacher and students. The teachers were of the required proficiency but one of the challenges perceived by the teachers was the lack of proficiency amongst many of students that hampered the discursiveness as expected of dialogic teaching. Although the findings in the study demonstrate that students had become participative and active learners, their utterances were rather limited to phrase and sentence level. Dialogic teaching is a collective effort and promotes authentic exchanges formed through series of questions and responses encouraging student talk. In order for students to be discursive, language is a vital tool. English is not the students L1, and many were challenged to articulate their thoughts fluently, express their views and justify their reasons due to their proficiency level. Table 4.7 illustrates three codes that formed the theme above.

Table 4.7: Challenges in Dialogic Teaching

| Challenges in Dialogic Teaching | T1 | T2 | T3 | T4 | T5 | T6 | T7 | T8 | Total |
|--|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|--------------|
| C19: some students unable to pose questions and respond in English | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 6 |
| C20: Some students unable to provide longer responses | 1 | 1 | 2 | 1 | 6 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 20 |
| C21: lack in teacher understanding and skills | 3 | 2 | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 11 |
| Totals | 5 | 4 | 4 | 1 | 7 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 37 |

4.3.4.1 Challenges in Dialogic Teaching

The analysis of data derived from the interviews indicated that the teachers' challenge in employing dialogic teaching was in the lack of proficiency among some of the students. Five of the teachers (T1, T2, T3, T6 and T8) mentioned that some their students found it

difficult to speak in English which hampered the interactions. Thus, the low proficiency challenge tends to take more time and planning. Because English was not the students' first language or second language, it took more efforts from the teachers to get their students to interact and respond in English. For instance, T1 shares her experience with one of her students as below:

T1:

I have this one quiet boy who is reluctant to speak at the beginning of the year. He never did like to participate. When I asked him, he resisted but I noticed that after 10 months, he has begun to participate. So, due to his low proficiency, he was only able to develop confidence to speak and engage in talk after 10 months.

T2 also shares the same challenge in which some of her students found it difficult to pose questions in English during the discussions. She claimed that the intention was evident but the inability to structure the question in English made it a challenge for the students. For instance, she quotes an experience where the class was engaged in a discussion and the student prompted her "Teacher I wanna ask question but don't know the word. Can you help me?" The extract shows that the student lacked vocabulary.

The teachers (T1 and T2) also realised that some students were also struggling to comprehend in English. For instance, T1 mentioned that some of her students were unable to comprehend her instructional language- "Those weaker students, they don't understand my questions or instructions or the group leader's instructions". Their lack of ability to understand the content being discussed in English poses a challenge for them to be engaged in the classroom discourse. T2 identified the students' inability to comprehend through their facial expression when she comments "when you see that facial expression change as though you know...they are blur..." She uses a colloquial term "blur" to express the lost look when one cannot seem to understand which has affected their spontaneous responses during the interactions.

T3 also asserts that some of her students were unable to respond nor pose questions in English due to their lack of proficiency when she states “the weaker classes, they don’t ask questions. You need to ask them questions”. T3 also noted that many of her students were only capable of giving minimal responses in the form of words, phrases and sentences. Consequently, she had to re-model the structure of the classroom discourse so that her students were able to participate. For this purpose, she used repetitive drills to get the students to talk. She purposefully introduced the language form and function involved and provided examples for students to use “You need to do repetition ... repetition of the structure by students. For example, one person will ask questions and the other will answer. Then they will take turns. You need to give them the structure first and then it’s easier for them to talk in class on that particular topic”. She mitigated the issue but nevertheless the sentences used by the students may not be spontaneous.

Respondent T5 also mentioned that her students lacked the proficiency to respond or pose questions in English. She stated that she found them to be less exposed to English language due to their social environment and had less motivation to use English. The students rarely used the language and were not keen in using the language. She rationalises by saying “... most of my students, they don’t speak the language at all so the only time they speak English is the time when they are learning English in the classroom”. She stresses on the limited opportunities which students have that has caused the lack of proficiency by stating “So after school, it’s completely a NO! English environment. So, it’s quite hard to get them to speak”. She also attributes the lack of proficiency to the lack of motivation amongst these students “ ...they lack the motivation... actually there is an opportunity for them in the sense that they can read up, they can ... what you call that, watch English programmes, listen to radio, you know ... and even try speaking to friends but there is this lack of motivation in them....”.

Similarly, T6 also mentioned on the lack of proficiency in English among some of her students which affected the discursive nature of dialogic teaching. She laments her students have the knowledge and views on the topic being discussed but are challenged to articulate their thoughts in English - “I realize that most of our students um... they have a lot of ideas to share but it’s just that language is a barrier there”. Recognising the challenge, she states that it is her task to provide the students with the language structure to equip them with the ability to present their thoughts in English- “I think I should teach the students how to share their ideas briefly”.

All eight teachers stated that students were unable to provide longer responses as they were not eloquent in the language. The findings indicate that majority of the students provided responses at word, phrases, sentence level and found it a challenge to go beyond. For instance, T2 says “When it comes to longer responses, only the good students, you know...those who have the mastery of the language.” Equally, T3 and T5 state that it is a challenge for students to provide longer responses as required for a classroom discourse to be discursive. T5 states “They don’t really give long responses especially the weaker classes...the most they can give is maybe one or two lines.”

The above data showed that some of the students were unable to participate in dialogic classroom discourse due to their language incompetency. This therefore inhibited them from participating through the discourse structure.

The teachers were also new to this approach and were adjusting themselves to the features and the skills involved with dialogic teaching. Theoretically, they were given input on dialogic teaching through the professional development course they had attended but in practice, this was their first attempt and requires more practice in skills to effectively conduct dialogic teaching. Their need for a deeper understanding of dialogic teaching to be clearly translated into classroom practice were inferred through their

responses. For instance, T1 mentioned, “Depends on the class like sometimes you need teacher input first. But usually once the teacher input session has been done, I’ll focus on student- centered activities.” This shows her lack of understanding of dialogic teaching and the skills required to enact dialogic teaching. She then goes on to say that she provides examples- “Those weaker students I’ll give examples first. That’s where I go in and give them examples. So that it’s like a guide for me to check whether they understand what I’ve been talking so far. Her statement ‘to check whether they understand’ demonstrates her lack of understanding.

T2 has the idea of dialogic teaching but not so clear as she stated “I’ll move on to the comprehension part I will ask them comprehension questions whether they understand what was presented by their friends”. This demonstrates that T2 is unclear about the fundamentals of dialogic teaching. Similarly, T3 also displayed her insufficient knowledge on dialogic teaching when she stated, ‘I would begin with close-ended and then move on to open-ended. Sometimes, if you ask something that requires them to speak a lot, they may turn silent’. maybe at first you need to give them some examples and then ask them questions”. This could be the variation towards enacting dialogic teaching or considered as insufficient knowledge of the concept.

T8 also displays her lack of understanding as well as skills in implementing dialogic teaching when she states “I prefer to use the authoritative method where I’m in control because it is a necessity, we cannot leave the learning to the students because they are so weak in the language... nothing will come out...”.

The extracts above denote the challenges faced by the teachers in the enactment of dialogic teaching. Both the students’ lack of proficiency in the English language as well as the teachers’ lack of understanding and skills in dialogic teaching made the approach an arduous task.

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter is an attempt towards using the data derived from the study so as to answer Research Question 1. The chapter has outlined the findings which were generated from the interviews conducted of eight respondents who were teachers who had been exposed and trained to implement dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse. The findings derived from the semi-structured interviews conducted with the eight teachers indicate that all carried positive experiences with dialogic teaching which have transformed their teaching approach enabling students to become more interactive in their classrooms but nevertheless did face some challenges with students' low proficiency of English which stunted the discursiveness of the interactions.

Overall, the findings presented in this chapter illustrate how the teachers perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful classroom discourse in the teaching of spoken English in which positive changes were documented in terms of teachers' pedagogical approach and students' role which led to both second language use and language acquisition. The findings highlight the positive use of open-ended questions and the crucial need for this type of question to be used widely in classroom discourse for the purpose of generating talk. In order for the discourse structure to be implemented, the teachers were exposed to new concept of teaching largely formed through classroom dialogues and discussions which created a non-threatening environment for talk where both language was at practice (L2) and knowledge was constructed collectively. Both the use of open-ended questions and discussions as discourse strategies raised teachers' awareness on the learning opportunities which can be afforded linguistically and cognitively. In practicing dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse, the teachers to an extent had undergone behavioural and pedagogical change. The traditional teacher talk, and one-way communication that was previously used was not exactly in practice in

their current classrooms although there were a few instances of teachers nominating students to respond. This implied that the teachers made the conscious effort to move away from the conventional role of a teacher towards a facilitator through dialogic teaching.

Alexander (2018) had also asserted that teachers who employed dialogic teaching were more inclined towards empowering their students. This pedagogical shift testifies their evolvement, moving from the traditional monologic discourse towards dialogic classroom discourse. The teachers perceived the students had also become active learners through dialogic classroom discourse. Nevertheless, the challenge lay in students' language proficiency which was a hindrance to some students in terms of participation and the teachers' skills in enacting dialogic teaching in the L2 classroom.

The next chapter looks at the analysis of data for Research Question Two and Three.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS

Teachers' Enactment of Dialogic Teaching as Classroom Discourse

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the research findings based on the analysis of classroom observations of four Malaysian English language teachers who served as part of respondents in the study. These teachers were from the eight teachers who were interviewed on their perspectives of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the teaching of spoken English. As mentioned in the previous chapter, **four** main themes emerged from the observations (Chapter 3, section 3.3.1). The data were thematically categorised through the deductive and inductive approach. The process of classroom observation began with the recording of the teachers' talk in the target lessons as they interacted with whole class, small groups and individual students. The qualitative analysis consisted of a detailed examination of the video transcripts of each of the teachers' classroom discourse which formed the case study using ATLAS.ti 8, a qualitative analysis software. The video footage was an impactful in the way it captured the discourse practices which enabled the researcher to identify and observe the dialogic teaching principles, repertoires and indicators which were employed by the teachers to make connections to the teachers' practices.

5.2 The Analytical Framework

The data was analysed to answer the following research questions:

2. How do Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers translate dialogic teaching into real classroom practices following the professional development programme?

3. How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies influence learners' interaction pattern?

Research question two attempted to investigate and answer in what ways real classroom practices of teachers reflect dialogic teaching in facilitating L2 oral communication skills. It was to identify if the teachers were employing the dialogic principles, repertoires and the instructional techniques in facilitating spoken English or rather oral communication skills based on the dialogic teaching framework by Alexander (2008) and Nystrand (1997) which were introduced to the teachers through a professional development course and by making comparison to Sinclair & Coulthard IRF Model (1975) which was the predominant discourse pattern in the L2 classrooms. The interactions were transcribed and coded through ATLAS ti.8. The analysis of the data revealed the teachers' practices of facilitating spoken English through the language lessons via dialogic classroom discourses. It demonstrated teachers' understanding of dialogic teaching and how their understanding of the discourse features was translated into classroom practices. The analysis also identified as to whether the teachers involved in the case study encouraged second language use and learning through dialogic teaching and the challenges these teachers faced in the enactment of dialogic teaching.

Research question three attempted to identify as to whether students' opportunity to interact in English related to the type of discourse in the classroom and how the teachers' discourse strategies influenced the spoken opportunities among the students. The interactions were transcribed and coded through ATLAS ti.8. The data exemplified and described dialogic teaching strategies that had encouraged student talk and the challenges that were observed.

5.3 Data Analysis of RQ 2

The classroom observations focused on the teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse based on the professional development received. The teachers were observed as to how they applied the principles, repertoires and indicators of dialogic teaching into their spoken English lessons. The nature of the teachers' discourse pattern, teacher questioning as in the control and ownership of questioning, use of probes by the teacher, opportunities for second language oral communication skills and learning as well as constructing knowledge collectively were observed. The recording of lessons was transcribed inductively and deductively, specifically looking at the dialogic features employed by the teachers as proposed by Alexander and Nystrand. The analysis of the observations was done at a meso level examining the teacher-student talk exchanges and at a micro level of utterances specifically looking at how students make their contributions.

The data of the classroom observations was based on the codes attained from the transcripts of the interviews and an addition of a few other codes. 22 codes which were derived from the coding framework for the analysis of research question 1 were utilised as codes to analyse research question 2. The total codes that reflected the themes below were then categorised into subthemes and finally into four broad themes which demonstrated the teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching in their classrooms (Table 5.1).

Table 5.1: Overall Analysis of Themes of RQ2

| Themes | Subthemes | Codes |
|--|---|--|
| 1. A Pedagogical Shift Towards Dialogic Teaching This theme was derived from the teachers' adoption of dialogic teaching principles, repertoires and indicators in their lessons | i. Framing and Facilitating Talk ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy | C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions. C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk. |

| | | |
|---|--|--|
| | iii. Minimal teacher intervention | <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teachers respond anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> |
| <p>2. Teacher Discourse through Questioning</p> <p>This theme was derived from the teachers' constant use of open-ended questions throughout the lessons</p> | i. Open-ended questions scaffold and generate talk | <p>C1: Questions and answer sequences encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of open-ended questions.</p> <p>C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer</p> |
| <p>3. Learning Opportunities Afforded by Teacher</p> <p>This theme was derived from the teachers' actions in encouraging talk amongst students through the dialogic features</p> | <p>i. Construction of knowledge Collectively</p> <p>ii. Second Language Learning</p> | <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk</p> <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C9: new subtopics and knowledge emerge through discussions.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English.</p> |
| 4. Challenging Task | i. Lack of proficiency amongst students | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. |

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| | ii. Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: lack of understanding and skills by teacher. |
|--|---|--|

5.3.1 Pedagogical Shift Towards Dialogic Teaching

As explained in Chapter 2 (2.5) a teacher's role in dialogic teaching differs from a teacher's role in practicing monologic discourse. A key aspect of dialogic teaching is that the teacher does not provide immediate evaluation of students' ideas but instead frames and facilitates the learning process. Thus, dialogic teaching leads to exploration of ideas ((Alexander, 2018 ;Bungum et al., 2018).

The analysis of the classroom observations of the four teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) indicated that the teachers to an extent have adopted dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach by employing the dialogic principles and indicators in accordance with the dialogic model proposed by Alexander (2018) and Nystrand (1997). The findings support the analysis of data from the interview that demonstrated teachers pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching (refer 4.3.3). The teachers wanted students to become adept at using spoken English which is their L2 to express their views and engage with others in constructing knowledge collectively (Hardman, 2019, p.139). In demonstrating the shift, the teachers framed and facilitated the learning of English through whole class and small group discussions leveraging on open-ended questions. The teachers responded at any time but kept their utterances and interventions to a minimum. This was done with the intention of providing opportunities for learners to interact in English and construct knowledge collectively through talk. Their minimal intervention during the discussions had shown an increased students' participation and talk time.

The teachers had also created a new learning environment through discussions and open-ended questions in an effort to engage students in the learning process through talk. This non-threatening environment, which does not require students to provide correct answers but instead responses that leverage on their opinions and prior knowledge to an extent influenced the pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching. Thus, students had begun to participate voluntarily, electing themselves to respond which saw minimal teacher selection. This indicated that the teachers no longer dominated learners' participation opportunities as well as the content of talk. The questions were also constructed from students' previous responses.

In advocating dialogic teaching, the teachers believed in empowering students in the learning process and no longer functioned as an orchestrator and controller of classroom talk (Molinari and Mameli, 2010). Through the training received, the teachers were aware of the fundamentals of dialogic teaching and one of them is empowering students' learning through talk. This would only be possible if teachers changed their conventional role of being a teacher to a facilitator. Thus, they had exemplified changes in their role from an input provider to one who facilitates learning through the adoption of certain dialogic repertoires and indicators such as the use of open-ended questions and dialogues which was reflected in the classroom observations. Their perceptions and experiences with dialogic teaching which were mentioned during the interviews were also seen in real classroom practices. Each teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching in her classroom was analysed. Three subthemes emerged from the eight codes that reflected dialogic teaching as below:

- i. Framing and Facilitating Talk
- ii. Discussions as a Discourse Strategy
- iii. Minimal teacher intervention

Table 5.2: A Pedagogical Shift Towards Dialogic Teaching

| Teacher | Lesson | Topic | Language focus | Codes on Dialogic Features | Subthemes |
|---------|----------|------------------------------|--|--|---|
| T1 | Lesson 1 | All about Holiday and Health | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teachers respond anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |

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|--|-------------|--------------------|--|---|--|
| | Lesson 2 | Good Luck Bad Luck | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics | C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions. C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk. C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students. C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions. C14: Teachers respond anytime but minimally. C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students. C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics | i. Framing and Facilitating Talk ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy iii. Minimal teacher intervention |
| | Lesson 3 | Health is Wealth | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar | C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. | i. Framing and Facilitating Talk ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy |

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|--|----------|----------------|--|---|---|
| | | | <p>topics</p> | <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teachers respond anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |
| | Lesson 1 | Disable People | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |

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|----|----------|------------|--|---|---|
| T3 | | | checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | |
| | Lesson 2 | Occupation | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |

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|--|----------|----------|--|---|---|
| | | | | <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | |
| | Lesson 3 | Journeys | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |

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|----|----------|-------------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | | <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | |
| T6 | Lesson 1 | Robots: A friend or Foe | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |

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|--|----------|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics | |
| | Lesson 2 | Should students be allowed to bring handphones to school | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions. C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk. C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students. C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions. C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally. C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students. C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics | i. Framing and Facilitating Talk ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy iii. Minimal teacher intervention |
| | Lesson 3 | Online video games | <u>Speaking Skill</u> | C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions. | i. Framing and Facilitating Talk |

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|--|--|--|---|---|---|
| | | | <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |
|--|--|--|---|---|---|

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|----|----------|--------------------|---|--|---|
| T7 | Lesson 1 | Living in the City | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |
| | Lesson 2 | Different Strokes | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> |

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|----------|------------------|--|---|---|--|
| | | | | <p>C6: Whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> |
| Lesson 3 | Health Is Wealth | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C4: Teacher creates a non-threatening environment for talk through discussions.</p> <p>C5: Teacher frames and facilitates talk through discussions.</p> <p>C10: Teacher initiates different talk types to facilitate talk.</p> <p>C12: Teacher gives feedback through eliciting from students.</p> | <p>i. Framing and Facilitating Talk</p> <p>ii. Employing Discussions as a Discourse Strategy</p> <p>iii. Minimal teacher intervention</p> | |

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | | <p>C13: Teachers and students negotiate subtopics of discussions.</p> <p>C14: Teacher responds anytime but minimally.</p> <p>C18: Teacher is not dominating and believes in empowering students.</p> <p>C22: Teacher encourages talk through familiar topics</p> | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

5.3.1.1 Framing and Facilitating Talk

The teacher is vital in establishing talk through her facilitation skills. Based on the analysis of the data captured in all 12 recordings (three of each teacher), one of the subthemes that reflected the pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching was on teacher framing and facilitating talk amongst students through dialogues. All four teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) framed and facilitated students' learning of English through talk. The teachers facilitated talk through the adoption of Alexanders' (2010) dialogic principles. In the adoption of the dialogic principles, four out of five were evident. Alexander's collective, reciprocal, supportive and purposeful principles were mostly seen as compared to the cumulative principle. As the teachers framed and facilitated talk, the teachers had the students address the learning task together which was the whole class discussions and small group discussions. Most of the talk type consisted of Repertoire 2- everyday talk and Repertoire 3 – learning talk such as state, explain, express, elaborate and clarify as proposed by Alexander, 2018. These talk types were influenced by students' language competency as the majority of students were of low and average competency level in English.

The analysis of data from the classroom observations demonstrated that through the teachers framing and facilitating of talk, they were able to weave in the stipulated curriculum for English with everyday knowledge as stated by Boyd and Markarian, (2015) but with a lot of effort. This reflected Alexander's dialogic principle of purposeful. The framing and facilitating of each teacher were analysed to provide a detailed description of the implementation process.

Based on T1's perception of dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful classroom discourse, she was a strong proponent of dialogic teaching and understood the significance of it as a classroom discourse in enabling students learn English. She was

aware of her role in facilitating spoken English as well as learning English through open-ended questions during classroom discussion. Hence, T1 framed and facilitated students' oral communication skills in English (L2) and learning of English through talk by posing open-ended questions during the discussions despite knowing her students were rather weak in English. She was keen to adopt dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse to assist students develop their oral communication skills in English. T1 provided her students with the opportunity for talk through the whole class and small group discussions that took place in all the classes. Nevertheless, the uptake was brief in the form of words, phrases and a sentence to the most due to proficiency issues. The students addressed the learning task which was the whole class discussion together and shared their ideas freely without the fear of providing wrong answers which demonstrated the dialogic principle of collective and supportive. The teacher had created a non-threatening environment through her use of open-ended questions and discussions in which the students endeavoured to provide responses that built on common understanding. The talk type exemplified by the students consists of Alexander's (2018) repertoire for talk which are Repertoire 2 and 3- everyday talk and learner talk. The teacher's talk consisted of discussions and questioning.

In the first observation of T1's English language lesson, a low proficiency class, she began her lesson by framing the talk through a whole-class discussion. The whole class discussion reflected Alexander's dialogic principle of collectiveness where students addressed the learning task together. The whole class discussion was intended to build ideas on the topic of the lesson. She informed the students of the activity and employed questions to facilitate the activity. However, at the initial stage of lesson, her framing and facilitating was rather limited to posing a closed-ended question instead of an open-ended question which clearly restricted the responses from the students to a definite answer. For instance:

Lesson 1_ T1:

T1: Okay! Did you watch the video I sent through WhatsApp yesterday?

Ss: Yes

T1: Okay, good. Can you show me your bubble map?

Ss: Yes

T1: Okay which group are you?

Ss: Group 4

Both the questions above received responses such as 'Yes' and 'No' and a display of an action such as showing the teacher the groups' bubble map. The close-ended questions did not exhibit her facilitation skills as she was unable to elicit responses from students. It did not allow for the extension of talk but instead limited the talk of students. Aware of this, she then posed an open-ended question "So how did you find the video? Can you share something about it?" with the intention of facilitating her students to discuss the topic for the day which was on Holidays and Health. Her question had demonstrated the principle of supportive where the students were providing multiple responses to the open-ended question posed without fear of embarrassment over wrong answer or stating specific answers.

T3 also framed and facilitated talk through the whole class and small group discussions which took place during all three of her lessons. T3 allowed for exploration of ideas through open-ended questions which is a fundamental feature in dialogic teaching. However, her effort to get students to explore ideas and articulate their views was not taken up as they face language issues. The students were only able to provide responses at word, phrase, and sentence level. This had also affected the discursiveness because as stated by Alexander (2018), The talk attained during the interactions is a process moving from words into meaningful ideas. This was not clearly exhibited in her lesson but

nevertheless she endeavored to frame and facilitate by prompting and probing further through open-ended questions during the discussion. She had posed an open-ended question at the start of each lesson to initiate talk amongst her students.

Lesson 1: “Look at this sign, what’s this sign about? What can you tell about the sign?”

Lesson 2: “We are going to discuss occupations. You know what occupation is can you give examples of occupations you know?”

Lesson 3: “How do you feel when you see this sign?”

Her instructional mode, which was conversational indicated her change in disposition from the prescriptive or imperative mode of delivery. For instance, in lesson 1 of T3, T3 had posed an open-ended question to facilitate talk amongst her students on the topic of disabled people. She asked them about the possible actions they would take should they see a blind person. This type of question would encourage multiple responses from the students as it relates closely to their experience and background knowledge. To make the discussion meaningful, she relates the second question to their affective domain.

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: What would you do should you see a blind person?

T3: Does any of you have a relative or sibling who is disable? How do you feel about them?

S2: I feel sad.

S3: Feel sympathy.

T3: Okay, you feel sad and sympathetic. How else do you feel?

S5: Feel proud.

T3: You feel proud...good one. Why?

S6: Because they... don’t scared to make anything that they like they keep doing what they want, not thinking about their... weakness.

T3 demonstrates her facilitation skills by initiating the whole class discussion through an open-ended question. This shows her genuine interest in eliciting students' views and experiences and how it develops and shapes the whole class discussion. She continues to probe by posing further questions such as "How else you do feel?" and "Why?" which indicates a higher level evaluation rather than merely giving a low-level evaluation ('Good') in response to the student's contribution. These questions also function as her uptake or teacher talk that keeps the talk ongoing.

T3 had also framed and facilitated talk by asking follow-up questions incorporating students' previous responses. Her ability to pose follow up questions as in "why" reflected her framing and facilitating skills in which has the potential to gain students participation and engagement as well as modify the topic or affect the course of discussion in some way. She managed to get brief responses except for one student where the follow up questions enabled S6 to provide a longer response "Because they... don't scared to make anything that they like they keep doing what they want, not thinking about their...". The student was able to articulate her thoughts better as compared to the other students S2, S3 and S5. This was probably due to the prior knowledge of the student and better command of L2. Nevertheless, the talk type was predominantly collective and supportive.

As compared to T1 and T3, T6 was much more inclined into dialogic teaching based on her perceived understanding and beliefs of dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful classroom discourse in teaching spoken English. Her understanding and beliefs were clearly translated into her practices where she exhibited her pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching. T6 firmly believes that her students have gained opportunities for spoken English as well as for talk through dialogic teaching as mentioned in the interview and therefore employed features of dialogic teaching as in framing and facilitating talk in her classrooms through discussions and open-ended questions. She

was seen framing talk at the beginning of each observed lesson through an open-ended question. Nevertheless, it was noted that she had some variation to the process. T6 did some explanation at the beginning of all her lessons employing the teacher centred approach by providing direct input. She then moved on to framing and facilitating the talk through a pattern built in all three lessons where she had employed a puzzle. T6 wanted her students to guess the topic for the lesson by solving the puzzle. She facilitated talk by providing her students with a puzzle which contained pictures and keywords indicating the topic of discussion for the lesson. Her aim was also to engage students at the start of the lesson in the learning process by getting them to inquire and talk about the puzzle to solve it. As the students solved the puzzle, she had successfully attained various responses from the students by triggering their thoughts pertaining to the topic for the day. Through this activity, she had employed inquiry learning as advocated in dialogic teaching.

In her first lesson, T6 framed and facilitated talk through a small group discussion by incorporating a cooperative learning technique commonly used for practicing oral communication skills known as *Talking Chips*. She has adopted Alexander's dialogic principle of collectiveness where the students addressed the learning task together. As a facilitator, she was keen to inculcate the characteristic of dialogic teaching which is to provide a larger and equal structure of participation in classroom talk (Sedlacek & Sedova, 2017a) but with the emphasis on second language use. She endeavored to grant each student in her class a 30 second opportunity for talk through her facilitation strategy. She skillfully facilitated through a group activity by building on their length of responses as from nouns, phrases, sentences to meaningful paragraphs throughout the small group discussion. Each student was requested to take three chips indicating that they would need to speak for three turns. Students were seen responding beginning with phrases in the first round, followed by complete sentences and finally meaningful paragraphs. Students were also seen actively engaged in the discussion as the topic was of interest to them, which

was on Robots. The dialogic indicator of leveraging on students' prior knowledge and social experiences was reflected in her choice of topic. Alexander's dialogic principle of cumulative was also evident where the students were seen building on the responses to make meaning collectively as in the example captured in the lesson below:

Extract of Lesson 1_T6:

S1: Robots can help us with our chores.

S2: Robots can make our work easy.

S3: Robots help us clean our house.

During the discussion, she continues to pose open-ended questions to facilitate talk. T6 encourages critical thinking through her questions with the aim of enabling students construct knowledge collectively. For instance:

Extract of Lesson 1_T6:

T6: Do you think a robot can replace a son?

T6: If robots take over a human's job, what do you think will happen to humans?

T7 also demonstrated her adoption of dialogic teaching through her facilitation skills. T7 is seen framing and facilitating talk through whole class and small group discussions which is a fundamental feature in dialogic teaching. She was fortunate to have classes of students with average level of proficiency which had supported the implementation of dialogic teaching in accordance with Alexander's dialogic model. Students were able to construct knowledge collectively through the whole class discussion as depicted in the extracts above. She skillfully used open-ended questions to frame and facilitate talk amongst her students and also continued to pose questions as follow-up questions to raise the level of cognitive challenge for her class during the whole class discussion. The

excerpt below demonstrates her framing and facilitating skills that encouraged language use, reasoning and construction of knowledge collectively.

Lesson 1_ T7:

T7: What do you think are the advantages of living in a village?

S1: Traditional... (background voice while teacher is talking).

S2: Fresh air

S3: In a village you have more friends.

T7: Really? Interesting ...why do you say so?

S4: we can friendship with neighbours.

The extract above also denotes how she had framed a small group discussion and facilitated her students to use their prior knowledge and experiences in providing responses. In other words, T7 held her students accountable for working toward the learning goals of the lesson by framing and facilitating the talk through activities such as whole class and group discussions. She saw dialogues and discussions as a skill she needed to emphasise. She also showed consistent progress in her framing and facilitating the students' activity over the course of the three observations.

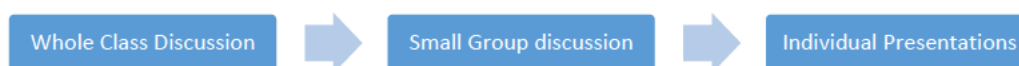
Overall, the extracts above demonstrate how the teachers had framed and facilitated talk in their classrooms through dialogic teaching which reflects their pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching. In adopting the features of framing and facilitating, the aspect of teacher autonomy was also indirectly shown. Teachers were no longer seen dominating talk but still had some control over the topics of discussions.

5.3.1.2 Discussions as a Discourse Strategy

In analysing the enactment of dialogic teaching by the teachers in this study, the second subtheme that emerged was on discussions as a discourse strategy. The teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) demonstrated their shift towards dialogic teaching through their adoption of whole class discussions and small group discussions throughout their lessons. The discussions that took place created a new learning environment for both the teachers and students in the context of this study. This was consistent with the findings on their perceptions of dialogic teaching. The teachers were not accustomed to having the whole lesson based on discussions as in the previous teaching style. This new learning environment was a non-threatening environment which encouraged students to be engaged in the learning process. Based on the perceptions of teachers on dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful classroom discourse to facilitate spoken English, the teachers perceived whole class and group discussions as an interactive feature that contributes to students' L2 oral communication skills and learning. The manner it was facilitated may differ to the actual form of discussions in dialogic teaching where students have the command of L1 to discuss on the content matter of disciplines such as Mathematics and Science. The discussions employed in the context of this study was scaffolded and strategically used by the teacher to facilitate the teaching of spoken English.

Whole class and small group discussions were consistently used in all the 12 classrooms observed by teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) to introduce the topic of the lesson and develop ideas pertaining to it. The teachers elicited students' understanding and ideas regarding the topic through whole class discussion and upon obtaining the relevant ideas and understanding of the topic, they strengthened students' ideas and understanding through small group discussions which encouraged construction of knowledge

collectively. In other words, the discussions were rather structured which was whole class- small group discussion -individual presentations. The structure was adapted to suit the context of L2 learners as illustrated below.



All four teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) provided their students with opportunities for talk through the structure above which involved whole class and small group discussions. Language use, language learning and knowledge construction were evident through both types of discussions held. T1, T3, T6 and T7 had their students discuss, think, and then share throughout the whole class and small group discussions.

Acknowledging her students are of lower proficiency, T1 initiated question and answer sequences very similar to a discussion structure. She was aware of the benefits of dialogues in learning and language learning based on the dialogic literature attained during her training and was determined to implement dialogues in her classes. She was unable to facilitate an actual whole class discussion as students largely depended on her scaffolding of questioning. Nevertheless, she was seen probing through her open-ended questions in an effort to get students' responses. T1 had employed discussions as her instructional mode for all three lessons observed. She had begun all three lessons by initiating the question-and-answer sequences replicating the concept of whole class discussions as a means of introducing the topic for discussion followed by small group discussions. The following excerpt demonstrates how she initiated a whole-class discussion to introduce the topic for discussion which was having a safety kit before going on holiday. The discussion was aimed at seeking participation from all students and affording opportunities for second language use. To engage students in talk, T1 scaffolded

the talk through open -ended questions. The excerpt below corresponds to Lesson 1 that took place on April 14, 2019.

Extract of Lesson1_ T1:

T1: What would you put in a first aid kit when you go on a holiday?

S1: Scissors.

T1: Okay, scissors. A pair of scissors.

T1: Ali, what would you put in your first aid kit?

(Nominates and scaffolds through questioning)

S2: plaster.

T1: Alright, plaster. What else?

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S3: Insect repellent.

T1: Louder...

S3: insect repellent

T1: okay, what else did you put in your first aid kit?

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S4: Aspirin (says it very softly)

T1: Sorry... [puts a hand near the ear as a gesture that she can't hear]

S4: aspirin

T1: Okay, how about Abdul Rahman, what did you put in your first aid kit?

(Nominates name and scaffolds through questioning)

S5: antiseptic cream

T1: Antiseptic cream. Very good...

T1: Laili, yes? what did you put?

(Nominates name)

S6: Cotton balls

(All names are pseudonyms)

The excerpt above indicates that T1 framed and facilitated the whole class discussion on preparing a safety kit prior to a holiday and made every effort to elicit responses from her students with the intention of providing students opportunities for talk and indirectly to use English. She used discussions to elicit and build students' knowledge of the content being discussed as well as to gain their participation. The utterances by students were not discursive as there was a question posed by teacher for each response as seen in the excerpt above. Nevertheless, Alexander's principle of collective and supportive were evident as the students built on the exchanges from each one as part of addressing the task together. T1 had posed open-ended questions to elicit information about the items they would put into their safety kit before going on a holiday and the responses contributed to the knowledge which was being developed. Second, the talk was supportive as the students' provided responses which did not require a definite answer, and this took away their fear of providing wrong answers. The responses led to common understanding. The responses were acknowledged and accepted by the students.

Although the responses were brief, in terms of turn management, she continued to facilitate talk through her questioning to afford more turns to students. The discussion exemplified the teacher and students listening and building on each other's contributions (Boyd, 2016). She facilitated talk through the discussion by acknowledging her students' responses for their willingness to participate when she states "okay... 'very good'... what else? how about...? The act of praise- "okay and very good" in this case is meant to encourage further participation and engagement with the knowledge being presented.

The small group discussions, which were a follow-up to the whole class discussion, was also rather guided to facilitate talk among the lower proficiency students. Both the

whole class and small group discussion did not conform to the actual dialogic discussions as proposed by Alexander (2018) nor Mercer (2004). However, T1 endeavoured to initiate small group discussions through the use of bubble maps to strengthen the understanding and ideas shared by the students. Knowing that her students would struggle to provide spontaneous responses, T1 asked students to use the keywords listed in the bubble map for each group to share their thoughts or ideas. The group discussions were founded on keywords such as *firstly*, *next*, *remove*, *solution*, *panic* written by the students in the bubble map. Students were given time to discuss and then were invited to share their ideas and views. T1 asked her students to present their views based on the keywords in the bubble map as in the extract below:

Lesson 1_ T1:

- S1: Good morning to our friends, teacher..., we're going to give you **solutions** about what you should do if a snake bites you. So the **solution** is...
- S2: **Firstly**, is ...do not **panic**.
- S3: **Remove** any rings or items
- S4: Try to move as little as possible and call 911
- S5: And the last **solution** is...do not apply ice. That's it!

Through the discussions, she has provided her students with opportunities for language use, language learning and knowledge construction. T1 got each group to discuss a topic for a few minutes and then share it with the class. She encouraged them to ask questions during the discussions by explicitly stating the intention. For instance, she states "Group 5, you need to think of the questions and ask Group 1 later".

T1 also wanted to empower her students to lead and take charge of the flow of the discussions through their responses and questions which indirectly provides practice for

the use and learning of English. She creates opportunities for students to present themselves as a group where each member is afforded a turn to share. The following excerpts were taken from the transcription of a video recording Lesson 2; it corresponds to class T1 that took place on May 5, 2019.

Lesson 2_ T1- Group presentation:

S1: Good morning my beloved friends and teacher, this is LV, this is Adnan, this is Ain and this is me, Azlin (all names are pseudonyms).

[students have pasted their bubble map with main ideas as a guide for them to speak]

S2: We are from group 1 and we are going to present on what you should put on a blister. Okay, firstly, you need to wash your hands carefully. Then, wash the blister with salt, soap and warm water.

S3: You have to swap the blister with Iodine.

S4: After that, you need to have a sharp needle and clean it with alcohol.

T1: Okay, thank you group 1. So, if you happen to have a blister on your hand or anywhere on your body, what should you do?

T1: Group 5, your questions to them...

S1: What is the colour of iodine?

S2: Have you applied iodine before?

T3 viewed discussions as a fundamental matter in creating opportunities for talk amongst students. Based on her perceived understanding and beliefs on dialogic teaching, she found that the conversational approach to teaching English had increased students' engagement and participation. As part of the training objectives, she was aware of the need to encourage spoken English amongst her students through dialogic teaching. Hence, she employed discussions and conversations in her role as a facilitator to provide students with opportunities for spoken English, learning and knowledge construction. She

engaged students in their learning by encouraging exchanges of ideas and sharing of thoughts. For instance, T3 begins her lesson with a whole-class discussion as in the extract below to initiate a talk on road safety.

Lesson 3_ T3:

T3: Look at these signs. What's this picture about? What can you tell me about this picture?

(Teacher begins a conversation on a road safety sign with her students)

S1: don't cross road.

T3: Okay, what else?

S3: no cycling

S4: traffic lights

S5: stop

S6: don't go fast

T3: What do you think these signs are telling us? [Repeat]

S7: be careful.

T3: Okay. Be careful. What else?

Similar to T1, the topic on road safety was more of question-and-answer sequences rather than a whole class discussion due to the students' proficiency level. It had created opportunities for spoken language but did not resemble a discursive discourse because the students were seen responding at word and phrase level. T3 continued to frame small group discussions to provide more opportunities for talk.

Lesson 3_ T3: Students are in groups to discuss the road safety signs to be placed in their housing area. Students are engaged in a discussion about road safety.

- T3: So in your groups, you are going to discuss about the road safety signs to be placed near your house. What are the road safety signs you will have.
- Gr1: [Is seen discussing the road safety signs they are going to have in their housing area].
- S1: We need a stop sign.
- S2: We need a traffic light sign.
- S3: We must have no cycling sign.
- T3: Okay...okay.
- S4: we can have go slow sign because car go very fast.
- T3: You mean speed limit?
- S4; Yes, we need that.
- Gr3: Students in group 3 are seen quiet.
- T3; What are the road safety signs you think you need in your housing area?
- (Teacher scaffolds by asking the question)
- S1: ah.... ah... stop
- S2: traffic lights...
- S3: Quiet

The discussion captured each group member taking turns to share their thoughts and ideas but the responses from the students were minimal. The extracts above show that the teacher in her capacity had employed discussions to facilitate talk. Nevertheless, the students responded in one word or phrases due to their lack of proficiency and a few remained silent due to their inability to speak in English.

In T3's second lesson, she continued to facilitate talk through small group discussions. However, the small group discussion was organised differently. Due to her students' level of proficiency, she encouraged small group discussions through a cooperative learning strategy known as *One stray, three stay*. She wanted her students to practice the skills of

elaborating, clarifying and justifying which she skillfully did through the activity. These skills demonstrated Alexander's (2018) Repertoire 3 which is known as learning talk consisting of the talk types of students such as above. In terms of teacher talk, Repertoire 4 – teaching talk consisted of the whole class and small group discussion. This supports the findings on teacher perceptions of dialogic teaching where the teachers mentioned that discussions were consistently held.

T3 requested students to discuss on a particular choice of occupation and then select a representative from each group to move to another group and share on the discussed occupation and convinced the group as to why the occupation needs to be paid a higher salary. Both Alexander's dialogic teaching principle of collective and reciprocal were evident as students were seen addressing the task together which was the small group discussions and responding in reaction towards one another. Nevertheless, there were no evidence of students providing alternative viewpoints or refuting responses provided by their peers. The topic of discussion encouraged the principle of reciprocal where they were required to justify their choice of occupation in terms of salary. The following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording; it corresponds to Lesson 2 of T3 that took place on September 17th, 2019.

Extract of Lesson 2_T3:

T3: okay for the next activity, it is going to be a description of an occupation but ...there's a twist. You will discuss your occupation and then you need to convince the other groups that your occupation needs to be paid a higher salary. Let's discuss. You can draw a simple mind map.

Group 1:

S1: why the doctor is highly paid?

S2: The doctor has to see many patients.

S3: medicine expensive.

Although T3 had facilitated small group discussions, the students were seen writing points before sharing which indicates their challenge in providing spontaneous responses. Nevertheless, they attempted to provide some form of response. As the discussion took place, each one in the group took turns to share his/her thoughts and ideas but the responses from the students were minimal with the exception of one or two who were able to provide longer responses. For instance, a particular student was able to reason his point by saying “the point is why nurses should be paid higher salary is because nurses work very hard to ensure that their patients are properly taken care”. Contrary to Lesson 1, T3 was seen allowing students to write points instead of sharing ideas spontaneously.

Dialogic teaching emphasises the need for students to listen, understand and respond that leads to meaning making. Discussions facilitate this process as students construct knowledge from the active listening that takes place followed by meaning making. T6 was aware of this feature and employed discussions as her discourse strategy to engage students in talk. The whole class discussions and small group discussions employed throughout T6’s lessons afforded students more opportunities for talk. It allowed for more student talk time and empowered them to be engaged in the learning of English. The students were seen rather engaged and participated actively by providing responses. Perhaps due to the type of responses which are opinions and ideas. Hence, there was no fear of students providing the wrong answer. The conversations and discussions had enabled emergence of new subtopics and knowledge emerge through the interactions. For instance, the topic on online video games led to the topic on crimes and meeting new friends as shown in the extract of Lesson 2 by T6 below:

Extract of Lesson 2_T6:

T6: so when you laugh at someone, ha...ha...ha... you look so bad, you look funny, what is that actually?

- S1: Bullying
- T6: Yes. Bullying. And bullying that happens on social media?
- S1: Cyberbullying. With Handphones, cyberbullying happens.
- T6: So, if you spent too much time on social media, what happens?
- S2: Hurt their body?
- S1: I can meet people online.
- S2: How does that happen?
- S1: when we play online games together, more friends I can get.

In her third lesson, discussions continued to be the discourse strategy. The discussions reflected the discursiveness where the students have become familiar with this form of discussion, and they were able to provide longer responses affirming their stand on a particular topic. The choice of topic, which was on 'online video games', had probably influenced the amount of contribution by students as it was a topic close to the hearts of many of her students. As the class consisted of fourteen-year-old boys, the responses gained were made up of longer sentences. Many of her students were able to relate to the topic and were opinionated. The discussions encouraged the practice of different talk types as proposed by Alexander (2018). There was evidence of negations, arguments, reasoning and justification. For instance, the following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording exhibits the reciprocal talk that was used by students; it corresponds to lesson 3 of T6 that took place on 26th of September 2019. As suggested by (Sedova, Sedlacek, & Svaricek, 2016), one of the indicators of dialogic teaching is that discussions which involve a 30 second or more sequence of interaction among three or more participants was evident in the discussion below:

Lesson 3_T6:

- S4: They say it cannot tighten relationship right, Well, that's totally a lie. For example, games that we play as a group such as Mobile legends, Rocket league and ...help you find your friends and play together. It will also make you have some sense of teamwork and also help you increase your leadership.

(Reciprocal talk)

- S5: I don't think you can make friends with them. Maybe they not good. We don't know. So how to make friends. Also sometimes, when, play games, they scold us. So, how to friend?

(Reciprocal talk)

- S6: so what he said is that the game is violent. But that's not true. The problem...is ...with the person. Okay, for me, I sometimes play violent games but I don't go around punching and killing people.

(Reciprocal talk)

T7 had demonstrated her enactment of dialogic teaching by employing whole class and small group discussions. In the first lesson, T7 was observed to have initiated whole class and small group discussions and probed effortlessly to elicit responses. T7 tries her level best to encourage student's responses and endeavours to encourage students to interact. Nevertheless, as the students warmed up, they began to contribute during the group discussions as they had developed ideas from the whole class discussion. The group discussions eventually enabled the emergence of new subtopics and knowledge through the interactions. This was evident in the extract of Lesson1_T7 Sep 2019 below:

Lesson 1_ T7:

Teacher initiates a small group discussion on the advantages of living in a city by posing an open-ended question.

- T7: Why do you think people like living in the city?

(Teacher gets students to discuss in groups)

Grp 1

S1: It's easy to travel.

S2: There's a lot of facilities.

S3: You can get many food. There are many restaurants.

S4: got internet. Better connect.

T7: Okay, yes...better connectivity

S4: [student calls out to her friend]

S5: Higher salary

(Supportive and collective talk)

The extract above shows how T7 employed a small group discussion to facilitate talk by getting her students to explain, clarify and justify the responses. Nevertheless, the teacher did not help the students to focus on their reasoning ability as the responses were not challenged as shown above. Considering her students were of lower proficiency in their L2, she was complacent with the responses provided by students. This should not be as students in dialogic classrooms are expected to provide elaborate explanations of their ways of thinking.

T7 had encouraged talk amongst students because she was able to relate the topic to their background knowledge. The topic was familiar to students, and they were able to respond but they struggled to articulate their thoughts in L2. Through the discussion above, Alexander's principle of collective, supportive and purposeful were evident but the talk type was limited to merely stating. Nevertheless, the discussions held in the classrooms had created a platform for talk. Students took the lead to discuss in groups which indicated she has reduced her talk time as well as empowered students to take

charge of their learning. While they discussed, each one in the group took turns to provide responses without any nomination by teacher.

The excerpts above (T1, T3, T6 and T7) demonstrate that the teachers enabled students to actively participate in and critically engage in discussions which is aligned with and situated within the pedagogic paradigm known as 'dialogic teaching' (Alexander, 2008; Burbules, 1993; Mercer & Littleton, 2007). The manner the whole class and group discussions took place indicates that the teacher is no longer the dominant person in the teaching and learning process and no longer the transmitter of knowledge but instead an elicitor of knowledge which is done through interactions. The discussions gave students confidence to speak and served as a dialogic space through which students' views were valued in the meaning-making process.

5.3.1.3 Minimal teacher intervention and selection of students

In adopting dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse, the third subtheme which emerged was on minimal teacher intervention and selection of students. The teachers intervened minimally in an effort to grant students more talk time and learner autonomy. This implies that the teachers have reduced their autonomy and power. The larger participation of students and their engagement through dialogic teaching was evident in the classroom, which allowed for students to self-elect during the talk. The utterances of the teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) were minimal with more student responses between teacher initiation and more group discussions and presentations. Students were seen providing responses and building knowledge collectively during the discussions demonstrating the principle collective, reciprocal, and supportive for the majority of the four hours observed on each teacher. Teachers had empowered students to discuss amongst themselves while she facilitated the session. Each teachers' intervention varied according to their group of students. T1 intervened on a more regular basis as compared

to T6 and T7 because her students were of lower proficiency. The excerpts of T1's lesson in the earlier sections (5.2.1.2) show that the teacher had consistently intervened by asking questions to elicit responses from students. She was also noted for nominating names in her attempt to encourage responses. Nevertheless, at the later stage of the class, her intervention had reduced where she had students through their groups, presenting their findings.

T3 was also seen to intervene minimally. Throughout the lessons, she did not intervene on grammar mistakes. For instance, a student in T3's class stated, 'You need to imagine mosque' when it should have a definite article 'a' as in 'you need to imagine a mosque'. The purpose of not intervening and correcting the grammar was because she did not want to stop the flow of discussion. As a facilitator, T3's reduced talk time denotes that she is not dominating and believes in empowering students. She is seen as not being the person of reference or input provider as stated by her in the interview when she allows for multiple responses for her open-ended questions from various students although it may appear irrelevant. For instance, the extract in Lesson 2:

Extract of Lesson 2_T3:

T3: What do you do if you see a wheelchair bound person at the supermarket?

S5: Ignore him

T3: Ignore [laughs] okay...why?

S6: ha..ha..ha.. *Gurau* teacher.... Help him

T3: Okay how do you feel?

S7: Sad.

T3: You feel sad...why?

S8: (Almost in tears) says...they can't walk.

T3: Ah...okay ... How else do you feel?

S9: Happy.

T3: May I know why you feel happy?

S9: Because I have a complete *tubuh badan* (body).

As a facilitator, T3 intervened minimally with the intention of providing opportunities for learners to use language and construct knowledge collectively through the interactions. This had ultimately reduced teachers' talk time. Having turned towards dialogic approach, her intervention was reflected through the open-ended question posed as in the extract below:

T3: **Okay, what do you think are the problems faced by disabled people?**

S1: They don't know how to interact with people around them.

S2: They find it difficult to go somewhere on their own.

S3: Difficult to find job.

S4: Why do you think it is difficult?

S6: Problems faced by disabled people and old folks is they have to work hard to get something's.

S7: Easy to get bullied by other people.

S8: They are being bullied like kids.

S9: They cannot socialize with normal people because they are disabled.

S10: They feel like they're unimportant.

S2: They feel disappointed because no one cares.

S3: They have no money to buy things.

S4: They are hard to work.

Based on the extract above, T3 no longer dominated in terms of content and procedures of talk as well as the learners' participation opportunities. She had applied the

indicators of dialogic teaching and believes in empowering her students in the learning of English by providing opportunities for talk.

T6 and T7 had also intervened minimally so as to provide students with opportunities for talk. All three of T6's and T7's lessons exemplified that the teachers had afforded opportunities for classroom talk through their probing questions. For instance, in one of T6's lessons, she posed only one open-ended question, and this encouraged talk amongst the students.

Lesson 2 _ T6: Teacher is eliciting from students on the negative effects of playing video games when she posed the question below.

T6: What negative stuff do people do?

S2: The relationship between family members become worse because...we are in front of computer for a long time... so we didn't have any communication.

S3: addiction and overplaying of videogames...it's the same thing as sport. If you play too much that's bad.

S4: I don't think you can make friends with them. Maybe they not good. Also sometimes, when, play games, they scold us. So, how to friend?

S5: someone who play videogames too much can become violent.

The extracts above are evidence of dialogic teaching which encouraged students to participate in classroom talk. Overall, T1, T3, T6 and T7 made every effort to shift their teaching approach towards dialogic teaching upon attending the professional development training. The teachers had created opportunities for students to interact in authentic and meaningful ways through their facilitation which demonstrated their effort to revert to dialogic teaching. Nevertheless, the interactions were largely influenced by students' level of proficiency.

5.3.2 Teacher Discourse through Questioning

The second theme that emerged from the enactment of dialogic teaching was questioning as teacher discourse. Teacher questioning in dialogic teaching plays a crucial role in mediating the process of second language learning through the exchanges between teacher and students. Teachers advocating dialogic teaching must understand the importance of questions in students' lives. One of the influential factors in creating dialogic interactions is the types of questions which are asked by the teachers. Based on the training received, the teachers conceptualised dialogic teaching through questioning. The teachers were observed to have employed open-ended questions as their uptake and posed higher order thinking questions as mentioned by Nystrand (1997).

The analysis of the classroom observations revealed that the teachers' (T1, T3, T6 and T7) discourse pattern was predominantly made up of questions. In the adoption of dialogic teaching, the teacher took on the role as an elicitor and thus posed questions consistently to facilitate talk amongst students. The teachers' (T1, T3, T6 and T7) questioning behaviour had undergone changes in which the teachers had begun to pose open-ended questions to facilitate and scaffold talk. The teachers prompted and probed students through open-ended questions.

Below is the table that illustrates the enactment of dialogic teaching with focus on teacher questioning that was evident in each lesson observed. Four codes formed the subtheme which was Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk.

Table 5.3: Teacher Discourse through Questioning

| Teacher | Lesson | Topic | Language focus | Codes on Dialogic Features | Subthemes |
|---------|----------|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| T1 | Lesson 1 | All about Holiday and Health | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding of what a speaker is saying.</p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of open-ended questions.</p> <p>C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.</p> | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| | Lesson 2 | Good Luck Bad Luck | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions.</p> <p>C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.</p> | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |

| | | | | | |
|----|-------------|------------------|---|--|---|
| | Lesson 3 | Health is Wealth | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| T3 | Lesson 1 | Disable People | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| | Lesson 2 | Occupation | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|--|--|--|---|
| | Lesson 3 | Journeys | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| T6 | Lesson 1 | Robots: A friend or Foe | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| | Lesson 2 | Should students be allowed to bring handphones to school | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|--------------------|---|--|---|
| | | | | C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | |
| | Lesson 3 | Online video games | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| T7 | Lesson 1 | Living in the City | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk. C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions. C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |
| | Lesson 2 | Different Strokes | <u>Speaking Skill</u> | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |

| | | | | | |
|--|----------|------------------|--|---|---|
| | | | Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying | <p>C2: Teacher poses open-ended questions to initiate and extend talk.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions.</p> <p>C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.</p> | |
| | Lesson 3 | Health Is Wealth | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C3: Teacher facilitates through scaffolding of questions.</p> <p>C15: Teachers and students pose open-ended questions which have no predetermined answer.</p> | Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk |

5.3.2.1 Open-Ended Questions Scaffold and Generate Talk

A key indicator of classroom learning intentions and expectations is the teacher question (Boyd, 2016). In dialogic teaching, the open-ended questions function as the most impactful discursive strategy which enables students to be thoroughly engaged. The teacher moving away from the IRF structure opens up the feedback (F)-move by using open-ended questions to probe student answers. Through her prompting and probing, she facilitates their thinking processes, helps the students to clarify and justify their opinions with evidence, getting other students to contribute building on the responses and turning them into subsequent questions.

The analysis of the classroom observations demonstrated that teacher questioning was consistent in all 12 lessons. As a facilitator, (T1, T3, T6 and T7) had skillfully scaffolded and generated talk through open-ended questions. Teachers also use questions to scaffold students' second language learning (Zhang, 2020). Dialogic interactions are established through the different types of questions posed either by the teacher or student which has a particular communicative function. As suggested by Hardman (2019), the scaffolding of questions was in form of 'add-on question' by teacher where she requests students to add on to another student's contribution, the teacher 'why question' where she asks for evidence/reasoning, 'expand question' and 'revoice question'. The analysis indicated that the 'why question' and 'revoice question' were more evident in the class discussions.

T1 had consistently posed open-ended questions to scaffold and generate talk among her students. She was observed to have used open-ended questions to initiate, scaffold and extend talk throughout her lessons. She used open-ended questions as described in (5.2.1.1) to initiate a discussion on the topic for the day and scaffold it through her open-ended questions as in the extract below:

Lesson 1_ T1:

T1: **What are you supposed to put in your first aid kit?**

S1: Scissors.

T1: Okay, A pair of scissors. **What else?**

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S2: bandage.

T1: okay good, bandage. **Okay, what else?**

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S3: Insect repellent

S4: Aspirin

S5: Antiseptic cream

T1: Okay, **how about Abdul Rahman, what did you put in your first aid kit?**

(Nominates name and scaffolds through questioning)

S5: antiseptic cream

T1: Antiseptic cream. Very good...

T1: **Laili, yes? what did you put?**

(Nominates name and scaffolds through questioning)

S6: Cotton balls

*All names in the excerpt above are pseudonyms

T1 was seen scaffolding the questions with the aim of providing opportunities for the students to be engaged in the conversation. She had moved away from the IRF structure by opening up the F move to probe students 'responses through open-ended questions as in 'What are you supposed to put in your first aid kit?'. She continued to scaffold the talk

by revoicing her question as in ‘what else did you put in your first aid kit?’ and ‘Okay, what else?’. As suggested by Hardman (2019), the scaffolding of questions was in the form of teacher revoice question.

Similarly, she had continued to pose open-ended questions to scaffold and generate talk amongst her students by using the ‘why question’ and ‘expand question’ as in the example below:

Lesson 1_ T1 B:

T1: Why must you not panic?

S2: Because... will turn red ...and venom.... faster.

S3: We will move when panic. We must not move.

T1: How to protect yourself from the sun?

S1: wear protective clothing...clothing.

S2: Always wear sunscreen or sun block.

S3: Wear sun specs.... UV protection.

The open-ended questions as depicted above facilitated classroom talk amongst the students as multiple responses were elicited. Teacher uptake (Sedova et al., 2016) in which the teacher builds on what has been said by the student was evident in the classes. This was done with the aim of seeking participation and extending the talk. Although the teacher was seen initiating the interactions as in (Lesson 1_T1) which is rather teacher led discussions but the uptake by students was evident. The students made an effort to respond despite the responses from the students being at word and phrase level. This is probably due to the fact that the students had language difficulties as English was not their first language (L1). The students may have thought of the responses but were unable to articulate their thoughts in English. Their opportunity to use English, although present,

is rather limited in this context. However, it helps to get more learners to participate in the discourse as the questions are not difficult questions and the learners can answer them.

To mitigate this issue, she intervened and scaffolded by posing more open-ended questions by nominating particular students to afford them a chance to participate and respond as in the excerpt below:

Lesson 1_T1:

T1: Okay, how about you Abdul Radzi, what did you put in your first aid kit?

S2: Antiseptic cream

T1: Laili, what did you put?

S3: Cotton balls

(all names are pseudonyms)

Overall, T1 was able to scaffold and generate talk through the whole class discussion. It was noted that the students developed the confidence to respond spontaneously although some had to discuss among their peers before responding to questions asked. She also requested students to ask questions as part of the task fearing that they may not utilise the opportunity given to ask questions and extend talk. For instance, in lesson 1, she is seen posing questions to encourage students to ask questions.

Lesson 1_T1:

T1: any questions from Group1? Yes Nadirah?

T1: Alia, do you have any questions for group 2?

T1: Liana, would you like to ask a question to group 4?

(Scaffolds through questioning)

The extracts above indicate T1 has effectively employed open-ended questions to elicit, manage and extend talk. These open-ended questions enabled students to contribute further where more responses were gained due to the various thoughts and perspectives on the topic discussed. This was seen in the excerpt above. T1 managed to elicit responses from her students through open-ended questions with the intention of scaffolding and generating talk. In an attempt to generate talk, the students had the opportunity to use English. The questions posed provided an avenue for students to use their L2. The findings also support the claim of T1 that questions facilitated talk as stated in the interview data. In terms of turn management, she had afforded more turns to students through her questioning.

Similar to T1, T3 also scaffolded and generated talk through her questioning. As a facilitator, she promoted dialogic teaching through open-ended questions. Open-ended questions functioned as the main dialogic feature to encourage and facilitate talk amongst her students. She was seen consistently posing open-ended questions to facilitate talk. For instance, she begins the whole class discussion by triggering the thoughts of students by asking ‘What’s this picture about? What can you tell me about this picture?’. Her open-ended question elicited responses from the students. Although the response was on one idea which was on “disabled people’ but said differently by the students as in the excerpt below. In actual sense of dialogic interaction, there was not much reasoning taking place from that question because the students only stated the noun involved. However, the concept of dialogue and probing similar to the characteristics of dialogic pedagogy was evident. The following excerpt was taken from the transcription of Lesson 1 of T3.

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: Look at this sign. **What’s this picture about? What can you tell me about this picture?**

(Teacher begins a conversation on a road safety sign with her students)

S1: OKU

T3: **Okay, what do you call OKU in English?**

S3: Handicapped

S4: Disable

S5: Disabled people

T3: **What makes you think that they're handicapped?** [Repeat]

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S6: They are wearing sunglasses.

T3: I guess that's not sunglasses. They're something to protect our eyes when we are blind. What else?

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S7: There's somebody who doesn't have hands.

S8: Running in a race. They don't have both their legs.

S9: Looks like there's someone who doesn't have legs.

S10: because they are sitting in a wheelchair.

T3: Okay good. **Where can you see them?**

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S6: Hospital

S3: Parking Lot

S7: Beside the road

S8: Toilet

S9: Bus Stop

T3: Okay, **have you seen these kinds of people before? Why can you see them?**

(Scaffolds through questioning)

S4: They just want to enjoy their life just like ours.

S5: They want to socialise, they have the courage.

S6: They want to communicate.

S7: Because they... don't scared to make anything that they like they keep doing what they want, not thinking about their... weakness.

T3 continued to pose open-ended questions with the intention of facilitating talk. Similar to T1, the classroom observations of T3 showed that she scaffolded the whole class discussion through open-ended questions such as 'What makes you think that they're handicapped?' 'What else?' and "where can you see them?" in an effort to encourage talk among the students. The teacher pursues the discussion with students and skillfully poses questions to extend the discursiveness of the talk. In other words, T3 had moved away from the IRF structure by opening up the F move to probe students 'responses through open-ended questions. Her open-ended questions consisting of 'why question' as in What makes you think that they're handicapped? and 'expand question' Where can you see them? and 'revoice question' as in "what else?" was utilised to probe and encourage talk.

The scaffolding of questions by T3 not only facilitated talk and construction of knowledge but also promoted students' higher order thinking skills in line with the objectives of dialogic approach. T3 was seen promoting students' critical thinking through her questions for instance "What makes you think they're handicapped?" and "why can you see them?" Both questions above require students to critically think and respond.

Unlike T1, T3 does not select any student to respond but instead her questions allowed students to self- select in providing responses. She has successfully encouraged talk and

more time for talk through her questioning. It was evident that her questioning had led to greater participation and engagement by her students as in the transcript above. Overall, as a facilitator, she was seen facilitating classroom talk through open-ended questions.

T6 also incorporated through her teacher discourse the use of open-ended questions to encourage talk. During the interview, T6 had emphasised the role of open-ended questions in generating talk and this was evident in her all three lessons observed. T6 was seen posing open-ended questions to scaffold and generate talk in all three of her classrooms. For instance, in lesson 1, T6 provided a puzzle to each group and posed a question - 'What's the mystery word'? which led towards discussion among her students. Similarly, in the following lessons, she posed open-ended questions to get students to think and initiate talk among her students. For instance, the following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording; it corresponds to lesson 2 that took place on September 26th, 2019.

Lesson 2_ T6:

T6: Class, look at the pictures on the screen. Can you solve the puzzle? **What do you think is the topic we will be discussing today?**

S1: Social

S2: Friends

T6: **Anymore? What do you think?**

(Scaffolds talk through open-ended questions)

S3: handphone

T6: very good. **What made you think so?**

In lesson 3, once again she gets her students to guess the topic for the day by displaying a piece of drawing that was done by a student.

Lesson 3_ T6:

T6: **What do you think this is? Try and guess what's this is about?**

S1: Gaming console

S2: controller

T6: Okay, **what do you play with this gaming console?**

S4: Video games

T6: Good. So **what do you think we are going to talk about today?**

T6 had also scaffolded talk through a few open-ended questions. Her scaffolding of questions was consistently seen throughout the discussions in all three lessons. For instance, in her lesson on the concept of Robots as a friend, she scaffolds students thinking and talk through questions as in the excerpt below:

Lesson 1_ T6:

T6: Now you all know what a friend is, so who can tell me what's the meaning of foe?

(Scaffolds talk through question)

S1: Enemy

T6: Allright, so who's an enemy?

(Scaffolds talk through question)

S2: Somebody we don't like.

T6; Ya, what do you all think?

(Scaffolds talk through question)

S3: Someone we hate.

Her use of open-ended questions has allowed her to scaffold and generate talk among her students. Through her probing, she has also created opportunities for students to contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively. This is a feature that was

mentioned during the interview where she no longer prefers to be the provider of knowledge and to be dominating but instead believes in empowering students. Hence, she has created space through her questioning technique for students to construct knowledge collectively. Nevertheless, in terms of turn management, she was seen nominating some students to respond.

T6: Jia Ye, what do you think?

T6: Amir, do you have anything to say to that?

The scaffolding of open-ended questions by the teacher had allowed for student uptake which provides opportunity for talk. The extracts above are evidence of students participating in classroom talk through dialogic teaching.

T6's focus was no longer as a provider of input but of an elicitor allowing students the autonomy to construct knowledge. Therefore, she continued to elicit responses by posing more open-ended questions throughout the lesson. This was evident in all three lessons where she engaged students in talk by asking their opinions. She used video clips to trigger the thoughts of her students in an effort to scaffold and engage them in talk.

After each video clip, she posed open-ended questions to initiate, scaffold and generate talk as in the example below:

Lesson 1: Do you think the robot was helpful to the old lady? Why?

Lesson 2: What do you think of the video? Why do you think so?

Lesson 3: What are the crimes that can occur from playing video games? Why do you think crimes can happen?

The extracts above indicate T6 has initiated an opportunity for students to engage in talk through the use of open-ended questions. She elicited a variety of responses from her students which led towards a chain of responses as shown in the extract below. Nevertheless, she was seen selecting some students as their uptake was low. The whole class discussion was initiated by the teacher which was gradually led by the students. For instance, the following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording; it corresponds to lesson 1 that took place on September 10th, 2019.

Lesson 1_ T6:

T6: **Do you think the robot was helpful to the old lady? Why?**

(Teacher begins a conversation on the topic which is robots)

S1: Yes, because the robot swept the floor.

S2: the robot helped water the plants.

S3: the robot covered the blanket for the old lady.

T6: Good **what else?** Now the old lady and the robot, **how was their relationship?**

(Teacher scaffolds the students through her questioning technique).

S5: It was like a mother and son.

S6: the robot ...her child

T6: Okay, so in this case, a friend or a foe?

(Encouraging talk through questions- sustaining the discussion)

S7: Friend

T6: **Was the lady really happy?**

S8: No...

T6: **Why No?**

S8: She misses her son.

T6: **Do you think a robot can replace a human?**

S9: No because they do not have any feelings.

T6: **where else can we use robots?**

S10: factories

T6: Interesting... **How do we use robots in factories?**

S7: to do jobs.

T6: Jobs like what?

(Scaffolds through questioning technique)

S8: pack things

T6: Yes...packaging things.... Okay **What happens to humans if robots do jobs in factories?**

(Scaffolds through questioning technique and corrects indirectly)

S9: Humans become lazy.

S10: robots are expensive.

T6: **Where else do we use robots?**

S3: Hospital.

T6: **How do we use robots in hospitals?**

S4: X- ray, surgery

T6: X- ray station, microsurgery, ... Now having robots in a hospital, could it be an advantage or disadvantage?

In the context of T6, the open-ended questions posed indicated her effort to get students to participate and be engaged in the discussion. Understanding the need for open-ended questions to ‘trigger’ the thinking, reasoning and meaning making which would lead to knowledge construction, she continuously posed them. The series of questions and

answers provided opportunities for language use, uptake as in more turns to her students as well as constructing knowledge on the concept of robot. Throughout the lesson, T6 listened in on students' conversations and got students to select their peers to share based on the ideas she knew would move the conversation forward.

T7, exhibits her enactment of dialogic teaching through open-ended questions and stated it as an important interactive feature which builds and extends talk. Thus, T7 was seen consistently posing open-ended questions to scaffold and generate talk in all three of her lessons. T7 was first observed teaching a lesson on the topic 'Living in the City' with a group of form two students. Similar to T1, T3 and T6, she began the class by posing an open-ended question which initiated a whole class discussion. This indicates she has initiated an opportunity for students to engage in talk through open-ended question. She elicited responses and in doing so achieved her goal of providing an avenue for classroom talk. The following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording; it corresponds to class 1 that took place on June 12, 2019.

Lesson 1_ T7:

T7: What comes to your mind when you hear the word 'city'?

(Teacher poses open ended question to facilitate talk)

S1 pollution

T7: Okay, **yes, anymore?**

(Scaffolds talk through question)

S2: Buildings

S3: Skyscrapers

T7: **what else?**

(Scaffolds talk through question)

S4: shopping malls

T7: Oh, good! **What else?**

(Scaffolds talk through question)

S5: Technology

T7: Okay, **you see technology in the city?**

(Scaffolds talk through open-ended question)

S7: Facilities

T7: **Facilities such as?**

(Scaffolds talk through open-ended question)

S8: Railway Station, police station

S9: Infrastructure

T7: **What else can you see in the city?**

(Scaffolds talk through open-ended question)

S10: Animals in the city

T7: Animals in the city? What do you think?

(Scaffolds talk through open-ended question)

S11: Cats, dogs and birds

T7: ah...what else besides animals?

S12: Humans, more people...crowded.

T7's effort of scaffolding talk through open-ended questions in her lessons enabled greater participation where almost ten students have responded in the whole class discussion as in above. Although the students' responses were at word and phrase level but at this juncture, she is seen getting them into an actual discussion or discursive chain of interaction through her scaffolding of questions.

Teacher questioning is crucial in second language learning and understanding how it supports L2 learning would require the teacher to pay attention to her type of questions and the context of the interaction. Her elicitation strategies to facilitate L2 learning is equally important. Nevertheless, the analysis above indicates that teacher questioning was used predominantly for language use and knowledge construction although it had the potential for second language learning. There were a few scenarios during the whole class discussion where the teacher could have taught the language and linguistics aspects through the interactions. The analysis shows that only the nouns and grammar were addressed during the whole class discussions. The open-ended questions functioned as an effective mediational tool which scaffolded student talk in second language learning by engaging students in dialogic interaction. The teachers were not only aware of the crucial role open-ended questions play in generating but also the need for it as a discursive structure. The ability to scaffold and generate classroom talk with regards to English was largely influenced by the teachers' questioning pattern which also reflects their understanding of the role of questions in dialogic discourse.

Overall, the teachers had created classroom talk which was more of a conversational mode through their questioning behavior which depicts to an extent a dialogic approach.

5.3.3 Learning Opportunities Afforded

Through dialogic teaching, the teachers were observed to have afforded learning opportunities. The whole class and group discussions contributed to the learning opportunities as students constructed knowledge collectively (Gordon, 2018). The teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T4) framed and facilitated classroom talk which supported students' thinking processes where they were able to reason and make meaning, contributing to their learning (Darling-Hammond et al., 2020).

Based on the analysis of the classroom observation data, all four teachers (T1, T3, T6, T7) had endeavoured to afford students with learning opportunities through dialogic teaching. Wells (1999) argued that an inquiry approach to conversation is critical in learning and should be authentic and meaningful to students. Inquiry is significant to the extent that the activity becomes real to participants and not a traditional question and answer session about facts in texts. Rather, inquiry is realised when teachers organise activities around relevant topics and familiar experiences.

The classroom observations demonstrated that the teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) have facilitated the construction of knowledge through the use open ended questions and the responses attained from students. Each teachers' adoption of the dialogic features in her ability to afford learning opportunities were analysed. Two subthemes emerged from the six codes that reflected the dialogic features which are:

- i. Constructing Knowledge collectively
- ii. Second Language Learning Opportunities

Table 5.4: Learning Opportunities Afforded

| Teacher | Lesson | Topic | Language focus | Codes on Dialogic Features | Subthemes |
|---------|----------|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| T1 | Lesson 1 | All about Holiday and Health | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics | C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively. C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively. C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively. C16: Students self -elect or select other students. C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English. | Constructing Knowledge collectively Second Language Learning Opportunities |
| | Lesson 2 | Good Luck Bad Luck | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics | C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively. C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively. C9: new subtopics and knowledge emerge through discussions. | Constructing Knowledge collectively Second Language Learning Opportunities |

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| | | | | <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students' responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | |
| | Lesson 3 | | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |
| | Lesson 1 | Disabled People | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |

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| T3 | | | <p>topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | |
| | Lesson 2 | Occupation | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |
| | Lesson 3 | Road safety | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas,</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> |

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| | | | <p>opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | Second Language Learning Opportunities |
| T6 | Lesson 1 | Robots: A friend or Foe | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |
| | Lesson 2 | Should students be allowed to bring handphones to school | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> | Constructing Knowledge collectively |

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|--|----------|--------------------|---|---|--|
| | | | <p>information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | Second Language Learning Opportunities |
| | Lesson 3 | Online video games | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |

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| T7 | Lesson 1 | Living in the City | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |
| | Lesson 2 | Different Strokes | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |

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| | | | | C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English. | |
| | Lesson 3 | Health Is Wealth | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C7: Discussions facilitate the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C8: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C9: new subtopics and knowledge emerge through discussions.</p> <p>C11: Students' responses contribute to the construction of knowledge collectively.</p> <p>C16: Students self -elect or select other students.</p> <p>C17: Students responses contribute to spoken English.</p> | <p>Constructing Knowledge collectively</p> <p>Second Language Learning Opportunities</p> |

5.3.3.1 Constructing Knowledge Collectively

Dialogic teaching encourages reasoning and the construction of knowledge collectively through interactions. As stated by Wegerif (2011) language becomes the medium for learning which is attained through the interactions that lead to construction of knowledge collectively. The class activity such as whole class and small group discussions aided by open-ended questions are centered on the students' knowledge turning them into meaningful interactions that support thinking and learning deemphasising the teachers' role as a transmitter of knowledge. Thus, learning opportunities are afforded via dialogic teaching. This supports the findings of the interview data which the teachers perceived dialogic teaching to be an interactive and meaningful discourse.

The analysis of data attained from the classroom observations indicate that all four teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) enabled students construct knowledge through the open-ended questions posed during the discussions. T1 was determined to involve her students in constructing knowledge collectively through dialogic teaching. T1's probing through open-ended questions had encouraged a series of responses amongst the students which enabled students to construct knowledge collectively. For instance, in Lesson 1 of T1, she wanted students to understand the importance of taking a safety kit during vacations. She had begun the whole class discussion with an open-ended question as in "What are you supposed to put in your first aid kit when you go on a holiday?" Students became engaged in the talk by sharing their ideas on the items they needed to have in their kit as precautionary prior to their travel. As a class, they constructed knowledge about the various items and the use of it in different situations. Although the responses were at word and phrase level but the repetition of questions posed by the teacher seeking further information enabled students to construct knowledge. The whole class and small group

discussions that took place in the class had allowed for the construction of knowledge collectively. For instance:

Lesson1_ T1:

T1: what would you put in your first aid kit?

S1: Bandage

S2: Plaster

T1: Okay, bandage, plaster... Okay what else?

S3: Insect repellent

S4: Iodine

S5: Aspirin

T1: Okay, what else would you put in your first aid kit?

S6: cream

T1: Antiseptic cream...good!

All these items mentioned by students as in the excerpt above enabled them to develop an understanding and knowledge of the items that should be in a safety kit. Their understanding was further developed on why these items are important and how each item functions during the whole class discussion as well as the group discussions. Hence, the co-construction of knowledge took place.

Similarly, T3 had also afforded learning opportunities through dialogic teaching where she was seen facilitating the construction of knowledge collectively through her use of open-ended questions during the whole class and group discussions. Similar to T1, T3 wanted her students to understand, make meaning and construct knowledge on the topic that was being discussed. T3 wanted her students to understand the life of a disabled person and construct knowledge on disabled people. She initiated a whole class discussion

to facilitate talk pertaining to it. At a certain juncture, she got her students to close their eyes and imagine being blind. She told them to imagine a blind person moving from their class to the next class and later walking to the canteen. She made the discussion meaningful to elicit their responses on being blind as in the excerpt below:

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: What can you see in this picture?

S1: Hobbies

S2: OKU

S3: There's somebody who doesn't have hands.

S4: Running in a race. They don't have both their legs.

S5: They are sitting in a wheelchair.

T3: Now, have you seen these kinds of people? They are disabled people.

T3: Okay, now, I want you to close your eyes. ...Imagine that you are a blind person. Try to walk around the school. Try to walk from class to the canteen. Now go to the next class. Try to feel how it is(pause)...Now open your eyes.

T3: How did you feel?

She enhanced students' understanding and knowledge through the small group discussions where she encouraged students to discuss the facilities required for a particular building to cater to the needs of disabled people. The understanding of a disabled person without the teacher having to explain the definition, their constraints and the special needs are collectively constructed by the group.

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: So in your groups, you are the engineers and the architects, you need to create a building, a new building and the building has to be disabled friendly. Each group selects a building and discusses what are the facilities you need to have in that building.

Gr1: [Is seen discussing the facility they are going to have in their new school].

S1: Think of our school building. How our friend want walk up stairs?

S2: We need a lift.

S4: we can have a special toilet.

The small group discussion linked students to their prior knowledge which in this context refers to the school and their knowledge of its features and extended their prior knowledge to new ideas about disabled facilities like lift and toilet to cater to the needs of disabled students in a school. In doing so, learning opportunities were afforded.

T6 advocates that learning is a shared responsibility and assists her students in co-constructing knowledge. The lesson observations indicated her use of open-ended questions has allowed her to scaffold and facilitate talk among her students. This is a feature that was mentioned during the interview where she does not prefer to be dominating and believes in empowering students. Hence, she has created space through her questioning technique for students to construct knowledge collectively. T6 's focus is no longer as a provider of input but of an elicitor allowing students the autonomy for constructing knowledge. In all three lessons, she employed videos to trigger the thoughts of her students in an effort to engage them in talk and construct knowledge collectively. For instance, the following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording; it corresponds to lesson 1 that took place on September 10th, 2019:

Lesson 1_ T6:

T6: Do you think the robot was helpful to the old lady? Why?

(Teacher begins a conversation on the topic which is robots)

S1: Yes, because the robot swept the floor.

S2: the robot helped water the plants.

S3: the robot covered the blanket for the old lady.

During the whole class discussion, she posed questions that encouraged students to employ critical thinking skills and construct knowledge collectively. For instance:

Lesson 1_ T6:

T6: **Do you think a robot can replace a son?**

S2: No

T6: **Why not?**

S4: because they do not have feelings.

S5: because they no emotions

T6: **If robots take over human 's jobs, what do you think will happen to humans?**

S6: Humans will become lazy.

S7; Humans will have no job.

S8: Humans no money

The questions posed by T6 during the whole class discussion enabled students to think and construct knowledge on the difference between a human and a robot. The questions had stretched students' thinking ability which resulted in responses as in the excerpt above in conceptualising their understanding of a robot. In other words, the teacher had

modelled critical thinking skills through her questioning. In dialogic classrooms, students benefit from the modelling of inter-thinking between teacher and students.

The whole class discussions in T6 classes had led to the emergence of new topics which afforded learning opportunities. For instance, in Lesson 3, the topic on online video games led to the topic on crime where students constructed knowledge through the interactions on the danger and repercussions of playing online games as in the extract below:

Lesson 3_ T6: Context- Whole class discussion on video games

T6: So when you laugh at someone, ha...ha...ha... you look so bad, you look funny, what is that actually?

S1: Bullying

S2: Yes. Bullying. And bullying that happens on social media?

S3: Cyberbullying...with handphones, cyberbullying happens.

The extracts above indicated she had initiated an opportunity for students to construct knowledge collectively on cyberbullying through the use of open-ended questions. She elicited a variety of responses from her students which led towards the construction of knowledge. The open-ended question posed by T6 had received a chain of responses beginning from S1. The response from S1 led to another response by S2 and this was followed by S3 who responded to S2. This is an example where the students built on each other's responses that led to the construction of knowledge collectively on the danger and repercussions of playing online games.

Similarly, T6 had also afforded learning opportunities through the group discussions as in the example below:

Lesson 3_ T6: Context - The class has been assigned into groups to discuss on the topic of online games

T5: What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of playing online games?

(In your groups, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of online games).

S1: Through video games, you can actually release stress and make friends. I can meet people online. Many people play at the same time so we can make new friends.

S2: ya, ya...you can say make friends ...but sometimes don't know if the friend is good or bad. And when you play, most of the games require you to fight in a team or groups such as Mobile legends and Rocket league. So when you lose, they call you stupid or idiot...And also always want to kill people.

S3: You will get addicted to online games and even if you want to stop you cannot. The others will force you and you will need to find money to buy internet line or go to cybercafe. Otherwise, they will send horrible messages to your sms

S4: Sometimes the online friends will hack your profile and FB and maybe our family and friend will be in danger.

Both the excerpts above illustrate Alexander's dialogic principle of reciprocal and cumulative. The exploratory talk which appeared through the discussions led to the construction of knowledge collectively by students. The excerpt demonstrates how the concept of cyberbullying is also constructed by students collectively through the discussion. The teacher's question 'What do you think are the advantages and disadvantages of playing online games?' prompted the students to consider different viewpoints. Alexander's principle of reciprocal is evident in the extract as students were seen refuting and providing alternative viewpoints. Talk types such as refuting, arguing,

justifying and clarifying were also evident where students challenge the views of other peers as evident by S2's response to S1's statement. S2 disagreed with his peers and provided justification for his disagreement. Vygotsky's (1978) zone of proximal development is applied when students use their prior knowledge on bullying extends to construct new understanding of cyberbullying. Knowledge on cyberbullying was continuously created and shared in the ongoing turns as the students focused on the disadvantages of playing online video games.

In enacting dialogic teaching, T7 was observed to have afforded learning opportunities consistently in all three of her classroom observations through her initiation of whole class discussions and open-ended questions. The development of joint understanding was pursued through the continuous interactions that took place as whole class and group discussions in the classroom observed. T7 demonstrated her understanding of dialogic teaching by providing learner autonomy to her students. She had facilitated the construction of knowledge through the dialogic strategies employed such as open-ended questions and discussions. For instance, in Lesson 2, she was seen posing an open-ended question to initiate a whole class discussion amongst her students. The responses attained from the students led to the construction of knowledge which afforded learning opportunities for the students involved.

Lesson 1 _ T7: Context – The teacher introduces the topic for discussion which is on living in a city and requests for whole class discussion.

T7: What crosses your mind when you see the word 'city'?

(Teacher initiates discussion amongst pupils to encourage co-construction of knowledge on living in the city by posing an open-ended questions)

S1: pollution

T7: Okay, yes, anymore?

S2: Buildings

S3: Skyscrapers

T7: what else?

S4: shopping malls

T7: Oh, good! What else?

S5: Technology

T7: Ok, ...you see technology in the city?

(Teacher creates opportunities for construction of knowledge)

S6: Facilities

T7: facilities such as?

Teacher facilitates construction of knowledge through questions on the availability of facilities in the city)

S6: Railway Station, police station, hospital,

T7: ok, great...anything else?

S7: Infrastructure

T7: Have you heard the word 'infrastructure'?

S8: Yes

T7: Yes, right. What else can you see in a city?

Lesson 1_T7: Context – Teacher gets students to strengthen their understanding and knowledge about the different lifestyle in a city and village.

T7: Why do you think living in a city is good?

(Teacher gets students to work in groups)

Grp 1

S1: It's easy to travel

S2: There's a lot of facilities.

S3: You can get work. There are many jobs.

S4: Higher salary

Grp 2:

T7: Why do you think living in a village is good?

S1: Traditional.

S2: Fresh air

S3: In a village you have more friends.

S4: we can ...strong friendship with neighbours.

The extracts above denote how T7 had skillfully employed open-ended questions to afford learning opportunities to her students. She also encouraged students to use their prior knowledge and experiences to respond to the questions posed which enabled them to construct knowledge collectively on the advantages of living in a city and village. Teachers were seen elaborating and reformulating the responses by students to the question posed as a way of making connections between the content of student's utterances to the curriculum.

Overall, the extracts above indicated the teachers had created learning opportunities for students through talk which facilitated the construction of knowledge. The teachers found dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful classroom discourse structure that encourages the co-construction of knowledge. The communicative acts of the teacher during the lessons provided students an avenue to construct knowledge collectively. Hence, the observations validate the current research that spoken interaction contributes towards cognitive development among learners (Alexander, 2018). It also affirmed the concept of dialogic teaching that learning is a social process which takes place through participation in a particular type of discourse (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

5.3.3.2 Second Language Learning Opportunities

The analysis of data demonstrates that through dialogic teaching, teachers have facilitated second language learning opportunities. The findings show teachers in facilitating talk had created opportunities for students to learn English. The form and function of English was indirectly learnt by students as they used English as the medium of talk. This finding validates the interview data which stated teachers found students had begun to use English and learnt grammar as well as vocabulary during the discussions.

T1 for instance, had indirectly introduced collective nouns to students during the whole class discussion. For instance, in Lesson 1, a student responded as *scissors*, and she reiterates by saying *Ah yes... A pair of scissors*. Similarly, she also facilitated the learning of a new vocabulary when one student responded as cream while another was precise to say antiseptic cream. Hence, the word antiseptic was learnt.

Lesson 1_T1:

S3: Scissors.

T1: Ah yes... A pair of scissors. Okay, what else did you put in your first aid kit?

S4: cream

S6: Antiseptic cream

T1: Antiseptic cream...good!

T3 had also encouraged second language learning through dialogic teaching. Her adoption of dialogic teaching in the L2 classrooms enabled second language learning, in particular vocabulary and grammar. The vocabulary of disabled person was acquired by students through the whole class discussion. For instance, one of the students responded “OKU” when the teacher asked what they could see in the picture displayed. The teacher

then poses a question to the class to infer the meaning of OKU in English “Okay, what do you call OKU people in English?” and students responded handicapped.

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: You see the picture over here, what can you see in this picture?

S1: Hobbies?

T3: Wait, the title is known as different strokes. But look at the picture.

S3: OKU

T3: Okay, what do you call OKU people in English?

S4: Orang Kurang Upaya

T3: In English

S5: **Handicapped**

Thus, the word ‘handicapped’ was learnt. Through the discussion, the understanding on the concept of disabled people/handicapped was collectively constructed as well. Similarly in the same discussion, another response was provided which indicated an omission of grammar element – “They want be socialize, they have the courage”. The verb ‘want to’ was missing. A student rectifies the omission by introducing the correct form in her response when she states, “They want to communicate”. The structure “they want to” is then applied in the following response by another student.

Lesson 1_ T3:

S3: They **want be** socialize, they have the courage.

T3: Very good answer. What’s the meaning of socialize?

S4: They **want to** communicate.

T3: What else?

S5: They **want to** enjoy their life like us.

S6: They **want to** earn money

T3 continues to afford second language learning opportunities through her probing skills. The interactions facilitated the correct form of adjective for the noun sympathy as in the excerpt below:

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: How do you feel about them?

S1: I feel sad.

S2: Feel **sympathy**.

T3: Okay, you feel sad and **sympathetic**. How else do you feel?

The adjective was introduced indirectly in response to S2's response. Second language learning is incidental but can be focused should the teacher take it up and continue discussing it. T6 continues to create language learning through her revoicing of responses given by students. For instance, in response to her question 'what do you do when you see a wheelchair bound person at the lift?' a boy states, 'they go first' and T3 reaffirms by stating 'let him or her go first'. She introduces the verb 'let' in her response to demonstrate the correct language structure.

Lesson 1_ T3:

T3: What do you do when you see a wheelchair bound person in front of the lift?

S2: Help him

S3: they go first

T3: Yes, **let** him or her go first.

T6 was also observed to have facilitated second language learning through dialogic teaching. She was seen facilitating second language learning, in particular the grammatical aspect through her questions to the class. For instance, in Lesson 2, T6 posed a question on what do you think the picture is? And the student responded *game* console. She rectified by saying ‘What do you do with a *gaming* console?’. However, in the context of T6, she had the opportunity to provide the correct linguistic form and language structure during the interactions that took place in lesson 2 but had not taken up the opportunity as seen in the extracts below:

Lesson 2_ T6:

- S1: Ah good morning everybody.... Today, I’m going to tell you all about the **good** in bringing hand phone to school.
- S4: Student always **want handphone** because it is important. **They want to bring to school.** They **want call** parents. **They want to check something.** maybe they want to download the textbook on the mobile phone.
- S7: I think it’s their problem la ...like...I’m playing the game and my mom suddenly stop me it’s like they stop me from playing the game and I suddenly go and punch them...so it’s not possible. **I think the person got problem.**
- S9: Not necessarily crimes because of video games maybe **they have stealing.**

T7 also was observed to have facilitated second language learning through dialogic teaching. For instance, T7 noticed a mistake or error in the past tense of strong as in the sentence “we can...strong...friendship with neighbours” and the correct form “strengthen” was stated incidentally by teacher through her rephrasing “yes... we definitely can strengthen our friendship with our neighbours”. T7 also is seen correcting indirectly the phrase ‘more hot’ to hotter through her response.

Lesson 1_ T7:

- S8: It’s **more** hot, no agriculture.

T7: Oh ya ...it's **hotter** and there's no agriculture. What do you all think?

Teachers repeating or paraphrasing what students say during the dialogues is known as revoicing (Hardman, 2019) and this demonstrates that the teacher is not only granting students authority and authorship of their contributions but also as a way of providing the correct language form and function while also acknowledging student contribution even if such acknowledgments are short such as "very good" or "wonderful." (reword).

The extracts above demonstrate that the learning is incidental and takes place in non-threatening environment. Almost every response generated by the students included further elaboration or explanation as a means to encourage talk. Overall, the teachers were seen to have afforded learning opportunities for their students through dialogic teaching. The teachers had used dialogic features such as authentic questions to encourage student responses which supports the meaning-making or knowledge construction. Thus, a dialogic teacher is crucial in expanding the capacity of students to collaborate in tasks that lead to the construction of knowledge collectively.

Active learning includes a broad range of pedagogies, such as problem-based learning, experiential learning, and collaborative learning. The teachers in the study were said to be able to promote active learning through dialogic teaching. The analysis of the classroom observation data concurs with the findings of the interview that teachers perceived students have become active learners. Experiential learning was taking place from the extracts in the sections above. Through dialogic teaching, students are experientially involved rather than receiving a transfer of information from the chain of responses seen via the discussions. The classroom observations demonstrated that students are becoming active learners. Through the discussions and teacher questioning, students became engaged in the learning process and were challenged to think about the meaning of their experience (Alexander, Hardman, Hardman, Rajab, & Longmore, 2017).

Nevertheless, affording learning opportunities and getting students to construct knowledge collectively through talk was indeed an arduous task which requires specific skills and more practice.

5.3.4 Challenging Task

The teachers in their enactment of dialogic teaching found it a challenging task in the implementation process as students' level of proficiency in the target language was low which hampered the discursiveness of the approach. The findings support the analysis of data from the interview in which teachers mentioned dialogic teaching as an arduous and skillful task due to students' low proficiency in English. As dialogic teaching leverages on classroom talk, the talk that was expected to take place through the discussions did not exactly exhibit discursiveness. Teachers found it a challenge to encourage talk amongst the students as their students found it a challenge to interact in English expressing their opinions and views. All four teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) experienced the challenge of facilitating talk amongst certain students due their lack of confidence to participate in discussions and provide responses influenced by their low proficiency level in English. They lacked the vocabulary and grammar to form complex sentences. The extracts as seen in the themes above clearly demonstrate the students' ability to provide words or phrases and simple sentences (5.3.1, 5.3.2 and 5.3.3). Only one extract (5.3.1.2- Lesson 3_T6) on online games and specifically cyberbullying saw students in an actual dialogic interaction or talk. Two subthemes emerged from the three codes that formed the theme above which are:

- i. Low Proficiency of students
- ii. Teacher skills in dialogic teaching

Table 5.5: Challenging Task

| Teacher | Lesson | Topic | Language focus | Codes on Dialogic Features | Subthemes |
|---------|----------|------------------------------|--|--|--|
| T1 | Lesson 1 | All about Holiday and Health | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |
| | Lesson 2 | Good Luck Bad Luck | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |
| | Lesson 3 | | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. Communicate information, ideas, | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |

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| | | | opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. | C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | |
| T3 | Lesson 1 | Disabled People | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |
| | Lesson 2 | Occupation | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |
| | Lesson 3 | Road safety | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|--|--|---|--|
| | | | Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. | C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher | |
| T6 | Lesson 1 | Robots: A friend or Foe | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding of what a speaker is saying | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher. | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |
| | Lesson 2 | Should students be allowed to bring handphones to school | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying. | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher. | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |
| | Lesson 3 | Online video games | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar | C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English. C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English. | Low Proficiency of students Teacher skills in dialogic teaching |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|--------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | <p>topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher</p> | |
| T7 | Lesson 1 | Living in the City | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English.</p> <p>C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English.</p> <p>C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher</p> | <p>Low Proficiency of students</p> <p>Teacher skills in dialogic teaching</p> |
| | Lesson 2 | Different Strokes | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English.</p> <p>C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English.</p> <p>C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher</p> | <p>Low Proficiency of students</p> <p>Teacher skills in dialogic teaching</p> |
| | Lesson 3 | Health Is Wealth | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings</p> | <p>C19: Some students unable to provide longer responses in English.</p> | <p>Low Proficiency in English among students</p> <p>Teacher skills in dialogic teaching</p> |

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|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| | | | <p>intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C20: Some students unable to pose questions and respond in English.</p> <p>C21: Lack of understanding and skills by teacher</p> | |
|--|--|--|--|--|--|

5.3.4.1 Low Proficiency in English Amongst Students

The teachers were challenged to apply the dialogic features as in whole class discussions and group discussions that exemplify discursiveness due to students' low proficiency in English. The findings on students' lack of proficiency concur with the findings from the interview data where the teachers mentioned students having proficiency issues. The students' responses were rather short as observed in the study as they had language difficulties. The students lacked the fluency to articulate their thoughts clearly and spontaneously due to their low command of English. These low proficiency students struggled to formulate responses consisting of complex sentences. The extracts as presented in the themes above show that although students were actively beginning to participate in the discussions and dialogues but their responses were rather limited to one word or phrase level. The ability to respond was also largely intervened by teachers scaffolding of questions such as 'what else', 'why', 'how do you feel' and "why do you think" in effort to get students to respond and engage in talk. The low level of proficiency had also affected their talk types as expected in a dialogic classroom discourse such as refuting, justifying and clarifying as this form of talks would require students to have a better command of the language.

Example: Lesson 2_ T3

T3: We're going to discuss professions or occupations. Do you know what occupation is?

S1: Yes

T3: What are the occupations you know? Can you explain? For example...

S3: like doctor

S4: Engineer

S5: Lecturer, teacher

S6: Nurse

S7: Policeman

The extract above shows the teacher had to compromise in her questioning just to get students to provide responses which do not exemplify a dialogic interaction. Seven students had responded at a one or two-word response and were unable to elaborate on the occupation which indicates the low proficiency of students. Similarly, T3's why question on the particular occupation or the kind of occupations did not lead and engage students in talk due to their proficiency as in the extract below:

Lesson 2_ T3:

T3: Why do you think doctors are highly paid?

S4: The doctor see many patients.

S8: Medicine is expensive.

S9: Maybe he want more money

T3: Why do you think nurses should get higher pay?

S7: Maybe because she work hard

S10: Because work night

S12: Because they will not leave their patient.

(Boy was reading the response from script).

The responses did not exactly exhibit features of dialogic talk because responses were limited due to proficiency level. A student was also seen not to have the confidence to speak but instead read aloud the response. Some of them had also reverted to their L1 as seen the excerpts earlier as they were lacking the vocabulary. (Lesson 1_ T3).

Dialogic classroom discourses entail students posing and responding creating the discursiveness of the talk. The classroom observations indicate that students were unable

to pose questions but instead were seen responding to the teacher questions. In the majority of extracts described in this chapter, it was the teacher questions that received responses and students hardly posed any questions. In one of the extract – Lesson 1_T1, the teacher had purposefully asked the students to pose questions as in the example below:

T1: Okay, group 1 when you are discussing, you need to think of questions to pose to your group members.

Overall, many of the students lacked the proficiency to provide extended responses or have a meaningful discussion due to their low proficiency level. Their low proficiency was due to their poor exposure to the language and their lack of practice of the language. Due to all the negative input, these students were also less motivated to learn the language. This lack of motivation can also hinder their acquisition of the language. A challenge of this nature may hamper the teachers' effective enactment of dialogic teaching. In contrast, students with a better command of the English language would also face difficulties when they want to engage their peers who speak minimal English, thereby causing an impasse.

5.3.4.2 Teacher Skills in Dialogic Teaching

The data analysis on the teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching in real classroom practices indicated that teachers require more understanding and skills in dialogic teaching to cater to the needs of L2 students due to their proficiency issues. The professional development received by teachers did see them making a pedagogical shift as explained in 5.3.1.- theme 1 but they did face some challenges in getting students to interact fluently in English.

The teachers' use of whole class discussions and small group discussions showed some variations or compromise from an actual dialogic classroom discourse or talk due to their lack of skills in facilitating talk amongst L2 students. In dialogic classroom discourse, language is the medium for talk and thus the language serves as an important semiotic

tool to generate talk. In the context of this study, English was not the main language of students and they found it a challenge to engage in talk.

The teachers had used close ended questions as evident in a few extracts instead of open-ended questions because they lack the skills to initiate talk. The interactions were normal question and answer exchanges rather than dialogic. The teachers also lack the scaffolding of questions to extend talk. The teachers were observed to have repeated their questions in an effort to scaffold students' talk. This probably happened as the teachers were lack of questioning skills to pose the kind of questions which would help encourage and extend talk. For instance, Lesson 3_ T3:

T3: What kind of road safety signs would you put at your housing area?

S1: Stop sign

S2: traffic lights

T3: **What else?**

S4: slow down

T3: Okay, **what else?**

In terms of discussions, the teachers also found that some of their students were having difficulty participating in small group discussions and infused cooperative learning strategies to involve students in the interactions. This does not reflect the true form of dialogic teaching as it is a very controlled way of discussion.

In summary, the enactment of dialogic teaching in real classroom practices of the L2 teachers in the study revealed that dialogic teaching did take place in the L2 classrooms but with some challenges. The teachers had applied the dialogic principles, repertoires and indicators as introduced to them during professional development. The teachers to an

extent had made a pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching but were challenged with students' low language proficiency and lack of practice in the dialogic teaching skills.

5.4 Data Analysis of RQ 3:

As mentioned in (5.1) Research question three explored the teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies and its influence on students' interaction opportunities. Research Question 3 focused on the teachers' use of dialogic features that influenced students' output. The analysis of classroom observations of the teachers (T1, T3, T6 and T7) indicated that students had gained interaction opportunities which led to knowledge construction and second language learning through dialogic teaching although it was a challenge for some students. The findings concur with the findings on teachers' perception of dialogic teaching where the teachers mentioned that through dialogic teaching, students were participating in the discussions and speaking in English. Two distinct discourse strategies employed by the teachers which are discussions or dialogues and open-ended questions facilitated talk and created learning opportunities and in particular second language learning.

The analysis of the classroom observations indicated that the dialogic teaching strategies did influence learners' interaction positively but nevertheless, a few challenges were encountered. Three codes were utilised from the coding framework established for the analysis of research question one and two and one new code was developed. Two subthemes emerged from the codes that reflected students' interaction opportunities through dialogic teaching as in table below:

Table 5.6: Findings from Research Question Three

| Themes | Subthemes | Codes |
|--|--|--|
| 1. Equitable and Increased Participation This theme was derived from the teachers' usage of dialogic strategies during the lessons | .Discussions and Open-Ended Questions Led to More Students' Uptake | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C16: Students' self-select or select other students. C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English. |

5.4.1 Equitable and Increased Participation

Resnick, Asterhan and Clarke, (2015) state that dialogic teaching affords students with greater authorship, meaning and equitable opportunities for learning. Sybing (2019) state that dialogic interactions emphasises on an equitable balance in interaction between teacher and student. The findings from this study demonstrate that teachers' practices of dialogic teaching allowed for equitable and increased participation among students. The dialogic strategies used by the teachers such as discussions and open-ended questions encouraged equitable and increased participation.

During data analysis, it was apparent to the researcher that the teacher had consistently organised whole class and group discussions to facilitate talk amongst students. The open-ended questions initiated, scaffolded, and extended talk. Through dialogic teaching, classroom talk became her main priority. The teachers aimed to encourage student talk by explicitly validating their participation, validating their knowledge, and relinquishing

their own role as an authority figure. Four codes were derived from the analysis which formed the theme below as illustrated in Table 5.6.

Universiti Malaya

| Teacher | Lesson | Topic | Language focus | Codes on Dialogic Features | Subthemes |
|---------|----------|------------------------------|--|---|---|
| T1 | Lesson 1 | All about Holiday and Health | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C16: Students' self-select or select other students. C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| | Lesson 2 | Good Luck Bad Luck | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C16: Students' self-select or select other students. C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| | Lesson 3 | | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|-----------------|---|---|---|
| | | | Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. | <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> | |
| T3 | Lesson 1 | Disabled People | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English.</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| | Lesson 2 | Occupation | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|--|--|--|---|
| | Lesson 3 | Road safety | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| T6 | Lesson 1 | Robots: A friend or Foe | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding of what a speaker is saying</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| | Lesson 2 | Should students be allowed to bring handphones to school | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |

| | | | | | |
|----|----------|--------------------|---|---|---|
| | | | Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying. | C16: Students' self -elect or select other students. C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English | |
| | Lesson 3 | Online video games | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by checking understanding of what a speaker is saying. | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C16: Students' self -elect or select other students. C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| T7 | Lesson 1 | Living in the City | <u>Speaking Skill</u> Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics. Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying. | C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk. C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk. C16: Students' self -elect or select other students. C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |

| | | | | |
|-------------|-------------------|---|--|---|
| Lesson 2 | Different Strokes | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |
| Lesson 3 | Health Is Wealth | <p><u>Speaking Skill</u></p> <p>Communicate information, ideas, opinions and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics.</p> <p>Keep interaction going in longer exchanges by understanding what a speaker is saying.</p> | <p>C1: Open-ended questions and answer sequences facilitate talk.</p> <p>C6: whole class and small group discussions encourage and extend talk.</p> <p>C16: Students' self-select or select other students.</p> <p>C23: Students listen to peers to follow talk and respond in English</p> | Discussions and open-ended questions led to more students' uptake |

5.4.1.1 Discussions and Open-Ended Questions Led to Students' Uptake

Based on the analysis of data captured in the teachers' practices (T3, T6 and T7), the teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies such as discussions and open-ended question led to equitable participation and increased engagement in the learning process. The whole class and small group discussions was one the contributing factors towards the equitable rights to participate and an increase in participation as stated by (Sedova, 2017a). The classroom data demonstrates that through the discourse strategies as in discussions and open-ended questions, the teachers provided equal participation chances to students which saw an increase in turns of the students. One dialogic indicator in terms of the uptake by students is that students self-elect and respond throughout the discussions and conversations. It was observed that T3, T6 and T7 lessons had shown students engaged in the whole class and small group discussions.

For instance, T3 had successfully increased the participation of her students through her initiation of an open-ended question which had led to nine responses.

Lesson 2_ T3:

T3: Okay, what do you think are the problems faced by disabled people?

S1: They don't know how to interact with people around them.

S2: They find it difficult to go somewhere on their own.

S3: Difficult to find job.

S2: Why do you think difficult?

S4: Problem faced by disabled people is they have to work hard to get something.

S5: Easy to get bullied by other people.

S6: They are being bullied like kids.

S7: They cannot socialize with normal people because they are disabled.

S8: They feel like they're unimportant.

S9: They have no money to buy things.

Similarly, throughout the lesson she posed open-ended questions during the whole class discussions to provide access to all students to engage in talk that demonstrated equitable participation of students. Through the discourse structure, which is conversational and persuasive, students were granted the autonomy to speak. There was no limitation nor nomination involved. The content and turn to speak was granted to students although the teacher facilitated the curriculum content. Students were seen to be self-electing themselves to provide responses in English consistently although at word, phrase or sentence level throughout the lessons. As they were engaged in talk, the students listened to peers to follow talk and responded in English.

T3 was also seen to have group discussions and had posed open-ended questions to ensure each student is given the right and opportunity to participate. She organised the groups by employing cooperative learning strategies to ensure all her students have the opportunity to contribute to the discussion. Repetitive drills in the form of cooperative learning activities were also introduced to cater to the needs of her lower proficiency students which increased the overall class participation. T3's ability to pose questions and modify these questions accordingly through the discussions invites participation from all level of students as demonstrated in the excerpt below:

Lesson 1 _ T3 Group discussion topic:

Group 1:

T3: what do you think are the problems faced by disabled people?

S1: They don't know how to interact with people around them.

S2: Yes, they find it difficult to go somewhere on their own.

- S3: Also, difficult to find job.
- S4: OKU easy to get bullied by other people.
- T3: How can we help the disabled people and old folks?
- S1: They feel alone. Menderma...(Background)
- S2: Treat them like friends...give them clothes.

Group 2:

- T3: what do you think are the problems faced by disabled people?
- S1: They cannot socialize with normal people because they are disabled.
- S2: Problems faced by disabled people and old folks is they have to work hard to get something's.
- S3: They feel like they're unimportant.
- S4: They feel disappointed because no one to care.

T3's strategy of having small group discussions as in the excerpt above exemplified that equitable participation is encouraged among the students so that each student has the opportunity to participate and use the language. T3 encouraged and increased the participation of students through her probing questions. Students were seen participating actively by providing responses in English. T3 has successfully employed open-ended questions and discussions as her discourse strategy to enhance the participation of students in all three lessons observed.

T6, through her whole class and small group discussions as well as her use of open-ended questions had also created opportunities for increased and equitable participation amongst her students. The open-ended questions posed by her allowed for student talk which provides opportunity for language learning and co-construction of knowledge. The series of questions and answers that took place during the whole class discussion and small group discussions provided access to all students to participate and afforded more

turns to her students. Students were seen participating actively by providing responses. The choice of topic had probably influenced the amount of contribution by students as it was a topic close to the hearts of many her students which was on 'Online video games'. As the class consisted of fourteen-year- old boys, the responses gained from them were far more compared to her two previous classes. Many of her students were able to relate to the topic and were able to form opinions on the topic. There was evidence of negations, arguments, reasoning and justification. The following excerpt was taken from a group discussion; it corresponds to Lesson 2 of T6 that took place on 26th of September 2019.

Lesson 2_ T6: group discussion on the benefits and disadvantages of bringing a mobile phone to school.

S1: Ah good morning, everybody.... Today, I'm going to tell you all about the good in bringing hand phone to school. First of all, teacher can assign homework in the internet. Then if student don't have enough time to copy something in class maybe essay or *karangan*, teacher can put them into internet so students can do it at home. Next, student can find the meaning of some phrase if they didn't understand in the class if they bring mobile phone to school.

S2: If they bring hand phone to school, then they will play games at school and then cannot pay attention in class. They'll be very loud...(pause)

T6: Loud? And why is that?

S3: Ah ...their hand phone game. If they take their hand phone to school, they can take a photo and put in the internet as cyberbullying.

S4: You can use hand phone to do our homework. When we are free we can do homework. So we should use a hand phone to do our homework and we can save our paper.

T6: Do you think students would like to study using hand phones?

S5: Yes... Because nowadays student huh...like their hand phone and then they cannot put their hand phone aside. So maybe using the mobile phone,download the textbook on the mobile phone

Lesson 3_ T6: A group discussion on the advantages and disadvantages of playing online

- S4: They say it cannot tighten relationship right, Well, that's totally a lie. For example, most of the games that require you to fight in a team or groups such as Mobile legends, Rocket league and ...help you find your friends and play together. It will also make you have some sense of teamwork and also help you increase your leadership.
- S5: ya, ya...you can say make friends ...but sometimes don't know if the friend is good or bad. And when you play, you lose, they call you stupid or idiot...And also always want to kill people.
- S6: so what he said is that the game is violent. But that's not true. The problem... is ...with the person. Okay, for me, I sometimes play violent games but I don't go around punching and killing people.

The excerpts above indicate that the teacher refrained from nominating any of the students which shows they did not hold the exclusive right to determine who talks. This demonstrates that T6 has encouraged equitable participation amongst students where students are encouraged to volunteer or otherwise influence the selection of speaking turns as stated by Sybing (2019).

Similarly, T7's use of dialogic teaching strategies such as discussions and open-ended questions has also encouraged equitable participation evident in all three lessons. The whole class and small group discussions aided by teacher questioning created opportunities for students to interact in authentic ways in which each student took turns, participating in talk. The following excerpt was taken from the transcription of a video recording; it corresponds to Lesson 1 of T7 that took place on 20th of July 2019:

Lesson 1_ T7: Group Discussion Topic- Why living in the city is better than living in a village?

Group 1: Why living in the city is better than living in a village?

- S1: (Girl)...I like living in the city, because there's railway station, so its easy to move.
- S2: (Boy)...Wow! Perfect answer, I like your answer... (teasing girl)
- S2: Do you think that in the city there are many jobs?

S3: Yes, because in the city, there are many high job... ah like ... more money high salary ...

(Discussions going on).

S4: There is a fast-food restaurant in cities.

Group 2: Why living in the city is better than living in a village?

S1: It is easy also to get transport.

S2: Why do you need transport?

S3: To go to school or to school or somewhere.

S1: Your answer?

S4: In the city, we have a lot of stronger connection. Connection is something important nowadays because we need decision, to connect with far people and do a lot of work with media and something like that.

The analysis of the excerpt above shows that small group discussions have influenced students' interaction opportunities positively. This resonates with the findings of the interview data where the teachers found that more students were participating and had become active learners. Most importantly the opportunity for spoken English was manifested through the two dialogic teaching strategies.

Overall, the students had wider opportunity to participate in classroom discourse by responding to the open-ended questions during the discussions in English. The reformulating of questions, probing questions and follow-up questions allowed for increased participation. The conversational mode of dialogic classroom discourse allowed for students' active participation- whole class discussions. Teachers' act of facilitating and requesting/allowing students to nominate themselves or friends increased the participation. The students were able to provide responses from one-word responses to short phrases, sentences and eventually complex sentences. The open-ended questions allowed for diverse and authentic responses. The discussions enabled students to take ownership of the lessons, and this contributed to the increased participation.

The teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies such as whole class discussions and open-ended questions had also influenced learner's interaction pattern in terms of second language use and learning. Apart from increasing the participation of students, the whole class discussions saw the students' gaining knowledge on language form and function. The constant interactions enabled students to form sentences using the correct grammatical structure and vocabulary. They were practicing spoken L2, and this was the ultimate aim of dialogic teaching. Linguistically, the interaction patterns formed through discussions and open-ended questions facilitated L2 acquisition.

The repeated structure as discussed in 5.3.3.2 allowed for students to acquire the correct form. Apart from the form, the function was also learnt as students employed the different talk types. The students became aware of the structure to present their arguments as in how to negate and refute a point. They learn to seek clarification through a particular structure. For instance, in lesson 1 of T3, the student posed a question "Why do you think difficult?" The phrase 'why do you think' was mentioned by teacher and the structure was learnt by student. The word 'difficult' was mentioned by a student as 'difficult to find job'. Constructing knowledge on this phrase and vocabulary enabled the student to use the phrase and vocabulary to pose a question.

Similarly, Lesson 1 _ T7: S2: "Do you think that in the city there are many jobs?" This form of question is seeking clarification and the student has attained the structure from the questions that was previously posed by T7: "Do you think students would like to study using hand phone?". The question structure Lesson 2 _ T7 S5: "Why do you need transport? was attained from the repeated structure by teacher and students "Why living in the city is better than living in a village?" Hence, linguistic knowledge in particular the lexis was constructed by students.

The recordings also captured the pronunciation of English words by students had developed through the interactions. The pronunciation of wheelchair - /wee// and /whae/. Another aspect of language that students constructed knowledge collectively was on the vocabulary learnt during the discussions as evident in section 5.3.3.2. Throughout the discussions, students attained new vocabulary. The analysis of classroom observations of T1, T3, T6 and T7 exhibited students' ability to acquire vocabulary and use it during the discussions. The module which was utilized by the students leveraged on vocabulary as key words for students to initiate discussions. The vocabulary aided their sentence structure. Students developed an understanding on how to construct sentences or responses using the vocabulary learnt. For instance, in T1 class, the vocabulary learnt were scissors, insect repellent, bandage, aspirin and cotton balls. This set of vocabulary was then used during the discussion on the items one needs to take in his or her first-aid kit during a holiday. The vocabulary was then embedded into responses by the students and further recycled throughout the discussion. This demonstrates that language learning has taken place.

Lesson 1 _ T1:

T1: Okay, what are the items that you put in your **first aid kit**?

S1: **Scissors.**

T1: **Scissors. A pair of scissors.** What did you put in your first aid kit?

S2: **Bandage**

T1: Okay, **bandage, plaster...** Okay what else?

S3: **Insect repellent**

T1: Louder...insect repellent. Okay, anything else?

S4: **Aspirin**

The extract above also indicates that the teacher has introduced another word for the meaning of bandage which is plaster. Hence, knowledge is constructed collectively by students on the vocabulary which is a homonym of bandage. The semantics of students also developed through the interactions. Learning is situation-driven when “the learning tasks arise out of the needs of the situation”. Engaged learning means that the discussions are authentic.

5.5 Conclusion

Overall, the findings from classroom observations had unearthed the practices of dialogic teaching by the teachers. From the classroom observations, the researcher identified cases where teachers were aware of the ways of talking, interacting, instructing to engage students in talk and establish understanding. They recognised and respected the students’ responses, which is an indicator of dialogic teaching.

T1, T3, T6 and T7 had embraced the role of a facilitator and incorporated many of the dialogic features as proposed by Alexander (2018), and Nystrand (1997) with some modifications to suit the context of their students. This indicates that the teachers have the ability of practicing dialogic classroom discourses in the teaching of English. All four teachers have gained a new perspective on their teaching approach. The teachers had acquired the skills of questioning to facilitate talk amongst the students. The culture of teacher centredness has gradually dissolved through their embracement of dialogic teaching. The adoption of teacher questioning has encouraged learner focus where they allowed for flexibility in terms of content delivery with the focus on language use and opportunities for Second Language Acquisition. Nevertheless, the teachers were faced with the need to facilitate students with lower proficiency as learners utilised discourse strategies to assist them.

On the whole, the analysis of the classroom observations has revealed some interesting findings to the new facet of teacher discourse which will be discussed in the following chapter.

Universiti Malaya

CHAPTER 6: DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses and provides a review of the main findings of the research in relation to the three research questions mentioned in Chapter 1. For this purpose, the three research questions are reiterated below:

Research Question 1: How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers perceive dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 learning and acquisition?

Research Question 2: How do Malaysian L2 lower secondary teachers translate dialogic teaching into real classroom practices following the professional development programme?

Research Question 3: How do Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' use of dialogic teaching strategies influence learners' interaction pattern?

The outcome of this study demonstrated the Malaysian Lower Secondary L2 teachers' ability in employing dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and L2 learning amongst students. The purpose of dialogic teaching was to enable the students to develop their spoken proficiency in English as well as their reasoning skills through oral interactions. Dialogic teaching was aligned with the Malaysian Lower Secondary English Language curriculum. This implementation showed the teachers' awareness about dialogic classroom discourse and its significance in second language acquisition (SLA). Findings of this study showed that the teachers were providing students with more opportunities for L2 oral communication skills through their participation in classroom talk. It was noted there was more participation, more effort to use the language, and also more learner autonomy. To some extent, the teachers

were also noted to be using some form of monologic discourse in their teaching. Acknowledging the fact that English is a second language (L2) or possibly foreign language for some of these students, it appears that dialogic teaching enabled the students to improve their spoken English. They were consistently using it in their discussions as was noted from their participation in the classroom discourses, such as dialogues and questioning. This is consistent with Elhassan and Adam (2017) who mentioned that dialogic teaching enhanced the Sudanese tertiary students' speaking skills and critical thinking.

Nevertheless, the enactment of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse was not easy since class participation may have been affected by the students' limited English language proficiency, or their socioeconomic background. Another obstacle to this could be the teachers' ability in framing and facilitating classroom dialogues. For dialogic teaching to function as an effective classroom discourse, the teachers must have the competence to apply and adapt the model, for example, Alexander's dialogic model, to suit the context of their L2 students. Moreover, other factors such as the teachers' professional development programme, the sociocultural aspect, sociolinguistic and pedagogical development could also affect the manner dialogic teaching is perceived and practiced. The findings of this study are thus structured and discussed according to these four developments of the teachers involved.

6.2 Teachers' Professional Development

The teachers' perception and practices of dialogic teaching was largely influenced by their understanding of Alexander's Dialogic Teaching Model (2008) attained during the professional development. The teachers' professional development can be traced to the two weeks' training provided by the English Language Teaching Centre, the Ministry of Education Malaysia (2012). To equip these teachers with the ability to enact dialogic

teaching into their classrooms when teaching English, emphasis was made on the speaking skills. This component of their competence is crucial because it is the tool they would be utilising in dialogic teaching as a pedagogic discourse. As mentioned before, dialogic teaching was introduced and implemented so as to enhance the students' oral communication skills, hereby also noted as aural and oral skills. This study had intentionally applied Alexander's dialogic teaching model and Nystrand's dialogically organised instruction model which had been selected by the Ministry of Education Malaysia for its pedagogical approach. The models were then adapted for training the teachers since it embraced features of classroom talk involving the linguistic and paralinguistic aspects as well as cultural which shaped policies and classroom practices (R. Cui & Teo, 2021). The concept of dialogue, and the use of open-ended questions were the core elements of the discourse features which were introduced to the teachers during the training. The aim was to enable the L2 teachers to use dialogic classroom discourse as an approach to create opportunities for oral communications in the classroom. Consequently, the use of open-ended questions and dialogues featured as data. Thus, the findings of this study indicate that teachers perceived dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful discourse that facilitated oral communication skills amongst students post the professional development.

After their professional development, the teachers then implemented the approach into their classrooms, based on their understanding. The teachers utilised the dialogic principles, repertoires and indicators which were provided in the teachers' guide as explained in Chapter 1. The teachers' guide, which contained the dialogic features, were then implemented so as to initiate classroom talk among the students. The practice was implemented based on the scheme of work and the existing syllabus. Alexander's Dialogic Principles (Alexander, 2018) was thus implemented as the model, and the teachers used it to facilitate dialogic classroom discourses through their English language

lessons, in particular, the lower secondary classes of Form One and Form Two. For the purpose of summarising, teaching is described as dialogic when the interaction is: collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative and purposeful (Alexander, 2018).

In this study, the findings from research question two showed that the teachers involved utilised open-ended questions in their dialogues when conducting lessons. This was used as an effort to engage the students in more oral interactions or talk. Focusing on Alexander's Dialogic teaching principles based on their understanding, the teachers then initiated the class discussions. They used open-ended questions as 'starters' to engage the students. The topic of discussion was then further consolidated through group discussions. The emphasis of the group discussion was to enable the students to interact among themselves through small group collaborative tasks. This was one of Alexander's Dialogic Principle of collectivity (Alexander, 2018). This principle appears to be well comprehended by the teachers as it was applied adequately. The teachers involved were aware that they needed to organise the learning tasks so as to enable the students to address the task as a group. Following the use of open-ended questions, the teachers then engaged the students further by building on their responses throughout the lesson. In doing so, the teachers were also addressing the lesson objectives of the day. The teachers applied these skills because they were convinced that every student who was exposed to the 'talk' opportunity was also given an equal opportunity to practice and to use the language. The reciprocal principle was also observed to have taken place through the dialogues in the classrooms, where the students listened to each other attentively, and then shared their ideas by considering alternative viewpoints. Observations however, indicated that this principle was not fully reflected as there were less argumentative responses stimulated by alternative viewpoints. This is probably due to the low proficiency of the students to express their thoughts and deliberate on the topic fluently. Instead, the responses comprised responses that supported previous responses.

Findings also illustrated that the supportive principle of dialogic teaching was also reflected. Through dialogic teaching, students were no longer having the fear to provide correct answers but instead responses that describe their views and opinions. Thus, they felt free to participate and engage in discussions. However, in the context of this study, the students involved were constrained by language proficiency. Consequently, they were less fluent in articulating their ideas freely. The articulation of their ideas was, in fact, scaffolded by the teachers' questioning tactics. Based on this, it can be said that although dialogic teaching empowered students in expressing their thoughts freely, and in justifying their views through reasoning, these aspects of the students were quite limited. It appears that the students' ability to express their thoughts through L2 was a challenge as they lack the proficiency to do so. The students were able to think and state their thoughts in L1 but were unable to state it in L2. The cumulative principle was also a challenge to be applied through dialogic teaching. Although the teachers posed open-ended questions to the class so as to help the students to build on the responses provided by others, the responses were rather limited and had not led towards coherent lines of thought and understanding.

Thus, in terms of the teachers' professional development, there was evidence to suggest that the teachers had utilised these dialogic principles but did face some challenges. The teachers had also applied dialogic features or talk repertoires such as dialogues and questions as the main source of facilitating students' talk. They were then used to stimulate dialogic interactions by applying Alexander's Dialogic Principles. By integrating dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in the lower secondary Form One and Two English Language's curriculum, the teachers' tasks became purposeful. The teachers had applied the discourse in the classroom by linking it to the learning objectives of the day as stipulated in the syllabus and curriculum of the schooling year (Form One and Form Two). Thus, Alexander's principle of purposeful was also integrated into the

teaching context. In this regard, it can be said that both the teachers and students constructed knowledge collectively, and spoken English was evident indicating that dialogic teaching did take place in a structured and purposeful manner as advocated during the professional development.

Nevertheless, dialogic teaching is far above and beyond just spoken language practices and L2 learning. This outcome could mean that the teachers' application of Alexander's Dialogic model (2018) in this study may vary from the actual dialogic model that was proposed by Alexander since the teachers implemented it had to cater to the objectives of the programme. It is possible that the teachers implementing the model may have been restrained due to their lack of proper understanding of the dialogic principles and the practices behind dialogic teaching similar to previous studies (van de Pol et al., 2017). The two week-long professional development on dialogic teaching focused on both the theoretical as well as the practical aspect which meant that teachers had to link broad theoretical ideas about dialogic teaching into classroom practices and thus it may have been insufficient for the teachers to have digested the underpinning of this new classroom discourse approach to be clearly translated into their classroom practices. Thus, an in depth understanding of its underpinnings and application is crucial for teachers 'effective implementation of dialogic teaching (van de Pol, Brindley, & Higham 2017).

The perception and practices of teachers of dialogic teaching in the study also reveal that the teachers' knowledge and skills about using open-ended questions were still inadequate despite the emphasis during the teachers' professional development. It appeared that as facilitators, the teachers were repeating the same questions lacking in the ability to facilitate talk among L2 students; they also seemed to be deficient in the ability to fully integrate the dialogic principles within their classrooms. This study showed that

the teachers lacked the ability to provide different types of follow up questions as a means of scaffolding the students' talk. It was evident that the follow-up questions as suggested by Hardman (2019) were not fully utilised by the teachers involved. It was apparent that the teachers focused on only a few question-types such as *teacher add-on questions*, *teacher rephrase questions*, *teacher why questions* but lacked in *teacher challenge questions*. *Teacher add-on questions* are considered questions whereby teachers encouraged the students to add on questions to another student's contribution. This was seen in the observations where the teacher posed the same question or a why question for the other students to respond. In other words, the teachers intentionally repeated the same type of questions with the aim of seeking more responses.

The teachers attempted to apply *teacher expand questions* where the teachers stayed with the same student by stimulating him/her to expand on the question form. The teachers also used *teacher rephrase questions* where the teachers requested students to repeat or reformulate each other's contribution. The teachers also used *teacher why questions to seek evidence/reasoning* from the students. However, this type of question was rarely used. For the principle of reciprocation to be effective, students need to provide alternate viewpoints, hence the *teacher's challenge questions* were crucial. However, findings showed that this question-type was rarely used. In advocating dialogic teaching, three talk moves must be seen to occur: teacher talk moves, feedback, and follow up moves (Hardman, 2019).

Observations derived from this study also showed that only the teachers posed questions; the students hardly asked any questions. The teachers' professional development is traced to the students' ability to ask questions. It appears that emphasis was placed on the students' ability to ask questions as their effort to maintain the discursive structure. This idea is in accordance with the skills required in the learning

curriculum, which is to keep the interactions on-going, and to make communications appropriate to a small or large group discussing familiar topics (BPK, 2017). However, the students rarely posed any questions and instead provided many responses to the teachers' questions. It appears that the teachers maintained their responsibility of keeping the discourse on-going throughout the classroom interaction by using certain types of follow up questions. From these observations, it can be said that in the context of serving as an L2 facilitator, there is a need for the teachers to use more follow up questions that can stimulate more discussions and more critical thinking among the students. This is one aspect that is vital for the teachers' professional development.

Dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse was a professional outlook rather than a specific method. It was an effort which required the teachers to rethink not just the teaching techniques they use in class, but also the classroom relationships they have with the students (Bashir & Elhassan, 2017). The findings of this study showed that the teachers' professional development had an impact on them because it evoked an attitudinal and pedagogical change in the teachers. This change was clearly reflected in their classroom practices. This is considered a radical change in the teaching approach of these Malaysian ESL teachers. Prior to the professional development, they had consistently focused on the reading and writing skills whilst using the monologic discourse which was due to assessment purposes (Mohamed et al., 2010, Hardman & A-Rahman, 2014, Tee et al., 2018). Prior to dialogic teaching, the teachers had never visualised learning as a social process and that social interactions as an approach which can enable knowledge construction and second language acquisition. This view aligns with Kasper and Wagner's (2011) notion of learning as a social practice - what is learned is the ability to interact effectively with others, which they termed as "interactional competence" (p. 118). This, therefore, affirms the view that dialogic teaching supports second language acquisition. This study noted that the whole class discussions and the

small group discussions provided support for L2 acquisition, with some of the students also benefiting in terms of language use, from the interactions that occurred. However, the teachers did not focus on L2 acquisition through dialogic teaching since they were focusing more on achieving the objectives of the lessons. In this regard, it can be said that L2 acquisition can be further emphasised through dialogic teaching when the teachers are able to use the interaction structures more efficiently.

Changing teachers' discourse practice towards a dialogic approach is a challenging task that requires a well thought teacher professional development programme to facilitate change (Böheim et al., 2021; Hennessy et al., 2021; Ruthven et al., 2017; Sedova et al., 2017; Sedova, 2017). Kennedy, (2016) and Wilson (2013) have developed a set of guidelines to be integrated in PD comprising of aspects as in pedagogical content knowledge and procedural knowledge, teacher beliefs, creating opportunities for experiential learning, active and collective participation, appropriate duration of programme and most importantly aligned with current curriculum policies (Böheim et al., 2021).

Acknowledging this guideline, the professional development course on dialogic teaching in the current study adhered to these guidelines but may have lacked in a few of them. It can be argued that in terms of subject matter content, the training focused on the topics and learning standards of the English curriculum but not much on second language learning explicitly and the duration of programme may have not been sufficient. Nevertheless, dialogic teaching can be effectively implemented in the Malaysian classroom provided teachers understood the fundamentals of dialogic teaching (Little, 2022; van de Pol et al., 2017) and are given sufficient training in the application of its features.

Overall, the fundamental principles that underlie the growth and sustenance of a dialogic classroom environment should be highlighted so as to deepen teachers' understanding on the benefits of dialogic teaching.

6.3 Sociocultural Perspective

From the sociocultural perspective, the findings of this study indicated that there was a shift in the role held by the teachers and the students. Dialogic teaching aims to engage students in classroom discourse tasked with the aim of promoting equality, collectivity, reciprocity and accountability (Alexander, 2018, Mercer, Wegerif, & Major 2019). In such a context, students are encouraged to express their own viewpoints, critique others' opinions, and thereby develop their mental capacities (Lefstein & Snell 2013). This is a new paradigm shift which the teachers need to adopt and embrace in their role as facilitators. As the teachers perceived dialogic teaching as a new pedagogical approach, it appears that the employment of dialogic teaching within classrooms developed a new classroom culture that changed the cultural norms of the teacher-student relationship.

The teachers' perceptions of dialogic teaching as an interactive and meaningful discourse followed by the practices was largely influenced by the curriculum. The introduction of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse is timely as it aligns to the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR) Standard-Based Curriculum (KSSM) Framework for Secondary Schools (2017). The CEFR framework emphasises the development of learner autonomy in particular through the concept of differentiation based on explorative learning. The students become the focus and the key player while the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator, facilitating the learning and use of English. Spoken interaction is particularly emphasised which clearly supports dialogic teaching. Learners provide information, express their views, ideas and feelings intelligibly on familiar topics through conversations and dialogues which makes the learning of English

meaningful. Students are expected to contribute to the dialogues and conversations. Students' voices are valued. Learning English and using English becomes one goal for the students. This new classroom culture is influenced by the change in teacher's disposition as discussed in Chapter 4 and 5 (refer to 4.3.4. and 5.3.1).

Dialogic teaching reflects a shift towards learner autonomy (Little, 2022), which is contrary to teach-centred learning emphasised in the past. This shift is consistent with dialogic teaching which aims at encouraging students to talk more, and to be more actively engaged during class interactions, whether through questioning, building on comments or making a comment on others' viewpoints (Little, 2022). The idea was to engage and to improve their language proficiency.

As stated, dialogic teaching is aimed at stimulating students' ability to reason and to think (Alexander, 2018), hence learner autonomy in learning (Sedova et al., 2016). The findings of this study showed that through the discussions used as communicative practices, the focus was on the students, assisting them to construct knowledge collectively whilst taking charge of the learning process. The teachers endeavoured to grant students ownership in learning. Both the teaching and learning process were constructed by the students assisted by the teachers, who no longer dominated the talk.

The teachers in this study were aware of their roles; they had markedly reduced their autonomy and power over classroom talk. The conversational tone of teaching as perceived and practiced in this context indicated that the teachers have shifted from the conventional norm of using imperative and prescriptive tones. This finding supports the claim made by Dass (2012) and Reznitskaya (2015) who asserted that through dialogic teaching, students are the key players in their learning while the teacher takes on the role of a facilitator (Sedova et al., 2016). This outcome indicated that the teachers were aware of their previous authoritative discourse patterns which may not enhance learning. In this

regard, both the findings from research question 1 and 2 indicate they willingly relinquished this power and authority in the teaching and learning process.

Dialogic teaching is based on a symmetrical relationship of power between teacher and students (Baxter 2014; Lefstein & Snell 2013; Mercer & Howe 2012). Both the teachers and students were seen as partners in their teaching and learning process as mentioned by one of the respondents in the analysis of the interview data. The symmetrical relationship is reflected through their engagement in the whole class discussions as described in Chapter 5. The teacher-built discussions or rather conversations in which questions were used to facilitate talk exemplified a real conversation. This also illustrated their interest in the interactions of their students. The use of questions like ‘what do you think of this sign?’, ‘What comes across your mind?’ and ‘Can you share about it?’ rather than ‘I want you to tell me about’ indicates a symmetrical power relationship. The teachers put themselves at the students’ level and this influenced the positive classroom culture for learning to take place.

The teacher-student relationship developed through dialogic teaching may have influenced the learning of English, as stated by Siti Sukainah and Melor (2014) and Syahabuddin et al. (2020). Observations showed that the whole class and small group discussions had changed from a threatening classroom atmosphere into a non-threatening learning environment where students interacted more freely sharing their views and thoughts rather than providing ‘correct’ answers. More importantly, they were beginning to use English. This finding is in line with the aspirations of the curriculum which aim to see students able to give opinions and suggestions, ask questions, gather, organise and analyse information, explore, make judgments, solve problems, apply learning to new situations and make reflections (BPK, 2017). In line with the tenets of dialogic teaching, students were not obliged to give a predetermined answer. Instead, they were to share

their ideas and thoughts that came to their mind. Students developed the ability to construct meaning collectively, to communicate through the use of register and communication strategies appropriate when speaking alone to a small or large group, as aspired by the curriculum (BPK, 2017).

Although the interactions were largely founded on words, phrases and sentences which one may argue that it is a resemblance of responses in a monologic discourse, they were meaningful responses influenced by the teacher-student relationship that created opportunities for second language use. The non-threatening classroom environment created through this teacher student relationship in the form of conversations and dialogues supported the learning of English This exemplifies the dialogic indicators as proposed by Alexander and concurs with the findings of Boyd and Markarian (2015) which state that creating a conducive learning environment that students feel comfortable to share is pivotal in the adoption of a dialogic instructional stance. Discursive risk-taking (Wells & Arauz, 2006) thrives when students feel comfortable with the discourse structure. The entire class discussions enabled the teachers to prepare L2 speakers to construct the contextual foundations of their talk which led to meaning making. Through their selection of topics developed based on the students' background knowledge and context of learning, the teachers were able to engage them meaningfully for the purpose of enhancing their oral communication skills. This supports the findings of Keyser (2014) that sociocultural events assist students in meaning -making. Nevertheless, creating and establishing a dialogic environment is an arduous task which is time consuming.

As stated in Chapter 1, the students lacked the opportunities for using English prior to the implementation of dialogic teaching while the classroom was the only source of English exposure for some of the students. Through dialogic teaching, the students gained the opportunity to use English. In response to research question 3, the findings of this

study showed that they used more English in the classroom as compared to the previous teaching approach. This showed that the objective of the training which was to infuse dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse to enhance student engagement and learning in the English language was accomplished. Thus, dialogic teaching supports the use, the learning, and the acquisition of English (Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014; Gupta & Lee, 2015; Reznitskaya & Gregory, 2013; Truxaw, M. P. 2015).

Dialogic teaching also focuses on the concept of equality; it provides opportunities for students' voices to be heard in the learning process. Alexander (2020) stressed that student voice is more of a stance rather than an act. Although the aim was to provide students with opportunities to speak and share their thoughts (Boyd & Markarian, 2011; Reznitskaya, 2015 Lefstein, Pollak, & Segal 2020), the notion of granting them the right to speak, and to be heard was more valuable. In this approach, students were taught to listen attentively to what others said, to show respect to others' responses, and to be able to offer feedback accordingly. In the context of this study, the findings showed that equality was attained as a result of the teachers' change in teaching and learning.

Equality in classroom participation was achieved when students listened attentively to their peers' views and ideas, respected their views and responses, and provided feedback during the course of the dialogic classroom discourse. This implied that the students were given interpretive authority to discuss the topics of the discussion since there was no one correct answer to the questions posed. This practice indirectly exhibited the students' voice in meaning-making. However, the findings also disclosed that the students' involvement in making rationalisations, or in providing alternative viewpoints were far in between. This was a new norm as students were not accustomed to providing viewpoints in previous approach and the difficulty of expressing their thoughts in English was a reason to be considered. The previous teacher-centred approach did not allow for

talk or sharing of viewpoints as the approach was more of information transfer. With dialogic teaching, students were beginning to share their viewpoints and the findings show they were more empowered now. In the context of this study, the shift towards dialogic teaching has raised questions pertaining to the impact of the monologic discourse pattern on students' learning of English.

Student empowerment is central to dialogic teaching because the idea is to increase engagement in terms of length of individual turns and number of voices which are vital in the learning process (Segal and Lefstein 2016). In this regard, students' thoughts are acknowledged and responded to by others creating a discursive chain of responses and should a person not contribute his idea not taken up by others, the person is left out. (Segal, Pollak and Lefstein 2017).

Most importantly, the opportunities for more talk time afforded by the teachers as shown in this study, verified Mercer's (2004) findings which mentioned that more time for student talk would allow students' language and thinking skills to develop and improve. Language development occurs when students respond to the thoughts and opinions shared by their peers. In this context, the findings showed that as the students responded in the interactions, their vocabulary and language structures also developed, thereby supporting second language development. Students were using or replicating the structures heard through the interactions, hence they had learnt to internalise these structures for their own use. This outcome accelerated their oral interactions and participation.

Dialogic classroom discourses also stimulated students' thinking when they made efforts to listen, understand, and make meanings from the responses shared by their peers. This process is termed active learning (Bakhtin, 1984). In the majority of the lessons observed, the students were seen to be involved with more talk time. This was noted in

the discussions and dialogues. The teachers were also more alert about their turn management skills - where the teachers had granted the management to the students giving students the ownership to select themselves to respond through the use of questions. The discussions stimulated by the teachers, and the use of open-ended questions enabled the students to have more turns to participate. The findings thus supported the claims made by Chow et al. (2021) and García-Carrión et al. (2020) who noted that dialogic models can have a positive impact on the students-students and the students-teacher relationship within the classroom. This reflects the sociocultural change of the classroom and the relationship.

Through dialogic teaching, the teachers had learnt to refrain from nominating students to respond; they also refrained from using imperatives. This was evident from the findings of the classroom observations which showed that the teachers intervened minimally and had reduced their authority over student talk. Instead, the teachers chose to empower their students in the learning process. This is a feature of dialogic teaching where the interactions are to be discursive in nature, and where questions are initiated to gather responses. In this regard, responses were attained from the students but did not exactly form the discursiveness and students were free to voice their comments without any being nominated. However, there were one or two instances during the discussion in which the teachers were seen to be nominating students in their effort to encourage student participation.

In the enactment of dialogic teaching, the teachers had allowed responses to be initiated by any of the students. This helped to make the learning process more engaging, relevant, and interesting to the learners (Sarid, 2014; Muhonen, Pakarinen, Poikkeus, Lerkkanen, & Rasku-Puttonen, 2018). The teachers were observed to be using indirect speech acts, solidarity markers, appreciation, and encouragement (Bungum et al., 2018),

all of which showed that they were minimising their own autonomy and power to afford students with the autonomy to learn English in line with the aim of the curriculum as well as to motivate students' engagement and participation.

Dialogic teaching increased student participation and engagement. It also initiated diverse students' participation and further supported learning of the "less competent" students, and this was also evident in the findings. It appears that all the students from the different groups had participated in one way or another during the whole class or small group discussions. This participation encompassed students from the low, average, and high proficiency level. Although many of the students were struggling to respond in accurate language form, they managed to provide a variety of responses in the form of words or phrases. Clearly, these attempts encouraged equitable participation amongst students. As perceived by T1 who was observed in her class, the less competent students were able to participate through the discourse structures provided, and this is consistent with what Waring (2009) advocated, the 'less competent' participant is the center and source of all operations. This implies that learning is more likely to happen when the learners are accountable for their learning. Through dialogic teaching, the students were granted ownership towards their learning and became active learners by engaging in the learning process. Through the classroom talk, the weaker students constructed knowledge from the peers who were better.

The findings also revealed that class size may be an impending factor in dialogic teaching. For instance, the large class size had influenced the equal opportunity for students to interact in the discussions. Although the teachers involved offered equal participation rights to all the students through the questioning techniques used, not all the students were able to participate in the whole class discussion. It was clear that the teachers were unable to provide time for all students to interact. Adopting a discursive

structure, the teachers then elicited responses from a certain number of students. Following this, the teachers would then move on by posing another open-ended question. Thus, a big class size could be a challenge for the teachers adopting dialogic teaching in the language classroom (Lefstein and Snell, 2013). In comparison, there was a more wholesome participation in the small group discussions initiated. Here, each member of the group was given turns to speak. The findings of this study concurred with the findings of Bungum et al. (2018), Gordon (2018), and Hardman (2019) who noted that small group discussions facilitate better engagement and participation. In this context, the teachers leveraged on the cooperative learning strategies which were not exactly dialogic discussions and encouraged group members to participate in the small group discussions consistently. This was noted in the majority of the lessons observed. Like the above, this revelation implied that a new classroom culture is emerging, unlike before where group work focused more on writing skills.

The implementation of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse involved the awareness of knowing how sociocultural meanings were linked to sociocultural identities (Musa, Lie & Azman (2012). For instance, encouraging students to raise a question during class discussions was an effort because students were not accustomed to question teachers especially in certain cultures that have strong beliefs on the role of a teacher as an authoritative figure in which students are expected to only provide responses (Alexander, 2010; Cui & Teo, 2021). The findings obtained from this study showed that the majority of the students responded to the questions posed by the teachers. Only a few of the students attempted to pose questions during the small group discussions. This occurrence could be attributed to the students' sociocultural background which may consider it rude to question the teacher. In the context of Malaysia, the sociocultural norms of the students also depicted that they were more accustomed to obedience towards teacher, compliance of instructions, and supporting one another (Tee et al., 2018). This

norm was also reflected in the talk types displayed in the group discussions noted by the current study (see 5.3.1.2). Analysis of data showed that the responses were cumulative, consisting of repetitions, confirmations, and elaborations provided by students in response to their peers' contributions. There was an absence of critiques and argumentative responses, but more collective and supportive responses. This outcome can hinder the true sense of a dialogic classroom talk or discourse.

As noted, the participation of the students involved was also largely affected by their differences in socioeconomic and cultural background. As the schools were situated in the rural area, majority of the students were from the lower socioeconomic status, hence their lack of exposure to the English language. In their context, English was considered a foreign language since their daily lives revolved around their L1 which is either Bahasa Malaysia, Tamil, or Hokkien. Therefore, many of these students had a deficiency in the use of English. This made them more anxious when required to speak in the language, thereby hampering their spontaneous interactions expected in dialogic classroom discourses. Nonetheless, they managed with short responses in the form of phrases and simple sentences which consisted of talk types that resembled the principle of collectiveness and supportive rather than reciprocal (Alexander, 2018). In this regard, the phenomenon served as a challenge for the teachers to engage them fully whether by linking the topic or content to their background knowledge or otherwise. But the good thing gathered from this phenomenon is that the teachers' perception and practices of dialogic teaching as an interactive discourse structure was evident and they were aware of the need to provide these students with more opportunities for second language use. They needed to persevere with their efforts to develop a conducive language environment for their students to use the language through classroom interactions. Another challenge faced by the teachers involved was their need to integrate the curricular content into the interactions even though the topics stimulated were familiar. Sedova, Salamounova, and

Svaricek (2014), found that teachers had difficulty in integrating subject content knowledge through dialogic teaching but in the context of this study, this was not a challenge. However, the challenge lay in the students' uptake due to language. The reason is because their students had difficulties with expressing their thoughts in English.

In this study, what became clear when analysing the teachers' perceptions and classroom practices during dialogic teaching was that the entire class and group discussions were perceived as a tool that can be used in getting students to participate collectively, to address the task at hand, to collaborate, and to verbalise their thoughts. The dialogic classroom discourses showed that student motivation and engagement was evident. The whole class and group discussions stimulated student engagement more than previous monologic discourse pattern in which the teacher calls upon individual students to respond. The open-ended questions also contributed to students' engagement because they were not compelled to provide a definite or correct answer. The topics of discussion were contextualised which made the dialogues and discussions authentic for students to be engaged. Most importantly, the teachers' engagement in facilitating the discourse supported and improved students' engagement. The teachers have made efforts to cultivate a conducive environment for talk. The teacher–student relationship developed through dialogic teaching influenced the classroom discourses that took place in the study. Hence, dialogic teaching encourages students to actively engage in talk about what they are learning. This concurs with the findings of Böheim et al., (2021) and Alexander (2018) that dialogic teaching enhances the motivation and engagement of students.

The findings show that through dialogic teaching, both teachers' and students' awareness on the role of power and autonomy was also raised which had influenced the talk that took place in the class. The teachers and students were aware of the symmetrical relationships developed through dialogic teaching where the students were given the

rights to speak or given voice. Hence, they felt confident to share their thoughts without the fear of embarrassment over wrong answers. The students' choice of vocabulary as well as sentences reflected their role as an equal partner in the discussions. The manner these students spoke, and their choice of vocabulary revealed their socioeconomic background and race. The code switching that took place during the discussions indicated their language variation.

6.4 Sociolinguistic Perspective

From a sociolinguistic perspective, dialogic teaching plays a vital role in language teaching functioning as linguistic exchanges amongst the students and between teachers and students. This enables both the speakers and listeners to use the target language purposefully which indicates that the dialogic interactions served as one of the main means for students to acquire the target language competencies and enhance their use of it such as grammar, vocabulary and phonological awareness (Gonzalez et al., 2014, 2016; Spencer et al., 2015).

For the purpose of second language learning and acquisition, in particular oral communication skills, dialogic teaching was emphasised by the teachers in the study. The findings showed that the implementation of dialogic teaching in the English lessons provided more opportunities for students to enhance their oral communication skills and second language learning. This is in line with the Ministry of Education's aspirations (Malaysia Education Blueprint Malaysia, 2013). Here, students were empowered to articulate their ideas and thoughts through dialogic teaching. The notion that language and knowledge is socially constructed emphasises the importance of dialogic classroom discourses in students' learning process. The conversational mode of the discourse which consist of classroom dialogues and discussions initiate a socio linguistic environment for students to interact with their teachers and peers using English. As this exchange occurs,

the students become more competent in using the medium in their interactions. This process would indirectly enhance their oral communication skills. Nevertheless, the process of learning and acquisition would take a longer time in the context of this study because the students' proficiency was low. Here, the teachers need to provide more support through their scaffolding strategies.

The findings of this study also showed that dialogic teaching indirectly enabled students to learn about the form and function of English. In facilitating talk, opportunities were created for the students to learn and acquire vocabulary and grammar. The teachers' specific discourse moves, as in revoicing through open-ended questions, enabled the students to imitate the language features hence, their improvement in using correct grammatical structures, vocabulary, and pronunciation. Students' comprehensible input was further attained through the interactions since they were now able to structure sentences using correct grammatical forms. This finding concurs with the findings of McNeil (2012) and Boyd (2016) that dialogic teaching enables students improve their L2 through referential questions. The more their interactions in English, the better their ability to notice the form and function, and so better language structures as suggested by Jocuns (2021) where the Thai students were able to acquire English through dialogic teaching. The repeated structures used by the teachers, as is evident in Section (5.3.3.2), showed that the students were able to acquire the correct forms. This is further illustrated by the pictures as well as key words provided in the bubble map used by the teachers in scaffolding the students' learning of the vocabulary. Based on Alexander's dialogic teaching framework, opportunities for teachers and students to talk about linguistic and grammatical concepts can be facilitated. Students learn to understand and construct grammatical knowledge based on their experience (Jones & Chen, 2016).

Vocabulary acquisition among young children is said to be enhanced through dialogic teaching (Chow et.al 2021; Wasik et al., 2016). The findings obtained from the current study showed that the students (aged 13-14) age were in the adolescent stage (Wasik et al., 2016), hence they were capable of attaining vocabulary knowledge from the discourse. Vocabulary acquisition was the emphasis in the module during the teachers' professional training because the aim was to help students to use words meaningfully. Hence, vocabulary was the main language aspect acquired by the students.

Apart from learning about the language form, the students also learnt about the language functions through the interactions. Their awareness about these different structures expands. Moreover, the teachers' use of questions during the discourse also had a crucial role in enhancing students' language acquisition. This is because the students' language use was largely influenced by the question types. Thus, open-ended questions have the potential to facilitate second language learning and acquisition (Boyd, 2016; Chow et al., 2021). Evidence can be traced to some of the classroom episodes. Teachers can fully utilise the discourse approach to create more opportunities for language acquisition. However, the teachers need to be equipped with adequate knowledge and skills to do so. The teachers also need to strategically adjust their questions so that the flow of the discourse can support students' construction of knowledge and skills with regards to L2 learning and acquisition.

The overall findings of this study indicate that language learning and acquisition opportunities can be and were afforded to an extent through the social interactions that took place in the English language classroom. (See Section 5.3.3.2.). The findings illustrated that dialogic teaching offered the necessary scaffolding to facilitate L2 learning and acquisition (Hammond & Gibbons, 2005; Jones, 2010; Jones & Chen, 2016). However, it is also emphasised that the teachers need to be equipped with rich

metalinguage strategies so that they can raise the students' linguistic awareness. The teachers could have explicitly discussed the language form and function through the use of dialogic strategies such as open-ended questions, group discussions and whole class discussions. For instance, the group discussions could have focused on specific language forms such as sentence connectors, articles or the use of collective nouns as evident in the analysis of the classroom transcripts. Thus far, the extent of the language learning that took place among the students with varied levels of language skills, is still unclear. The talk initiated in the classroom should relate to not only language skills and aspects but also to raise students' awareness about issues of dialect variation, identity and power.

The findings had shown that the students' second language learning was incidental. With more training, this aspect can be better developed by the teachers. As the teachers embraced dialogic teaching as a new classroom discourse structure or pedagogical approach, they had also moved away from their role as the sole input provider. It is possible that such a view may have affected their understanding of the need to focus on language teaching.

6.5 Pedagogical Perspective

The findings from the study revealed that dialogic teaching is possible in L2 classrooms provided teachers pay attention to some underlying instructional stance. The emphasis of dialogic teaching is on the discourse functions rather than the discourse structure which implies that classroom dialogues serve as a functional construct instead of a structural construct. In this manner, the whole class and small group discussions contributed to the learning and acquisition of oral communication skills.

From a pedagogical stance, the interviews and classroom observations derived showed that there was a pedagogical shift towards dialogic teaching indicating a change in

teachers' discourse pattern, teachers' turn management, and teachers' questioning behaviour. The teachers had moved away from their monologic discourse, also known as the Initiation-Response-Feedback (IRF) prevalent in many of the Malaysian ESL classrooms (Tan, Tee & Samuel, 2017). By opening up the F-moves of the IRF structure, through their probing skills, the teachers' act of probing had paved the way for the students to articulate their views, clarify and justify their opinions, to comment on their peers' responses and to construct knowledge collectively from the responses shared. Apart from this, the probing had allowed teachers to get students to elaborate on their thinking.

The opening of the F move of the IRF structure had also allowed the teachers to follow-up on the students' contributions, thereby extending the dialogues. In this study, Alexander's dialogic model was adopted and all five of its principles were reflected although only the collective and supportive principle was clearly manifested. Some of the talk repertoires, in particular Repertoire 3- learning talk and Repertoire 4- teaching talk and indicators were also utilised as evident in the observations. These were used by the teachers in their interactions with the students, for example, they asked authentic questions or rather open-ended questions; they probed students' answers for further responses, and they invited other students to comment and ask more questions about the topics being discussed. This activity led to more varied responses and extended students' contributions.

The findings also demonstrated that the teachers adopted two communicative strategies to facilitate talk; this included discussions and open-ended questions. The analysis of the classroom observations showed that as the teachers facilitated the interactions, they also applied dialogic principles to ensure that the discourse was discursive. The collective principle was illustrated through the whole class and small

group discussions where students were seen addressing the learning task together. The students contributed to the discussion as they shared their views on the topic being discussed. The principle of reciprocal was also evident where the students listened to one another throughout the discussion and shared their views. Nevertheless, in addressing the reciprocal principle, students lack providing alternative viewpoints. There were very minimal instances of refuting and negation seen during the whole class and group discussions. Many of the students were reluctant to share their opinions openly in the class. To mitigate the reluctance and shyness, the teachers nominated a few students to respond.

The classroom observations depicted the whole class and small group discussions facilitated the process of meaning-making and knowledge-construction collectively. (Please see excerpts in Section 5.3.2.1). The supportive principle was also evident during the discussions as students gained the confidence to share their responses or views without the fear of providing the ‘correct’ answer as expected in the previous discourse. Although the majority of students in this study were not articulate enough to provide their responses due to their low proficiency in English, they did support one another to build a common understanding about the topics being discussed through the scaffolding of questions by the teacher. The construction of knowledge was further supported by the teachers’ waiting time as the teachers prompted the class for more positive evaluations. In comparison, the cumulative principle was a challenge because this would require a certain degree of fluency from the students to express their reasoning in building on their responses towards coherent lines of thinking. Nevertheless, the application of the principles had gradually developed their spoken English language proficiency. Further, the aspect of ‘persuasive discourse’ as expected of dialogic teaching was not evident in this study because many of the students did not question or challenge the ideas and views of the others. Only one class, which discussed the topic of online video games projected

the scenario of students challenging the common perceptions of the others. (See Chapter 5.3.2). This was the only evidence detected showing the student voice was valued.

The findings of this study also showed the teachers' appreciation of dialogic teaching as they noted that their students were able to speak in English besides assuming more active roles as learners during the implementation of the dialogic teaching. In this regard, the teachers became more aware and clearer of the importance of providing opportunities for talk amongst students, both for the purpose of second language use and in the co-construction of knowledge. As had been noted previously, the teachers employed discourse strategies, such as open-ended questions and discussions. Through these strategies, they provided space and time for student talk. This supported the claim made by Alexander (2018) who said that dialogic teaching has the capacity to mediate potential development and push students beyond their actual ability.

In this study, the teachers were able to organise educational exchanges of ideas among learners through the whole class discussion and the group discussions. Dialogic teaching entails purposeful classroom dialogue whereby the teachers and students share the interpretive authority while discussing the topics. This concurs with the findings of Mercer and Dawes, 2014; Resnick et al., 2018) on the impact of dialogic teaching in students' learning process which is facilitated through whole-class discussions. The infusion of cooperative learning strategies (5.3.1.2) which resembled the concept of group discussions was a well thought effort to mitigate the issue of competency. Though the tasks were very structured, they created an avenue for interactions to take place. In the case of the cooperative learning tasks, the students leveraged on the ideas shared and gained during the discussions; either 'recycling' the ideas or elaborating on the ideas. In this regard, there was evidence to suggest that the teachers made the effort to change their

own pedagogical approach by adopting the learner-centred approach whilst implementing dialogic teaching.

In the implementation, teachers became more open to new ideas; they were also critically more constructive, allowing for the negotiation of perspectives. Prior to dialogic teaching, they had not allowed negotiation of topics for discussion as the syllabus was focused on specific topics and objectives. In other words, the teachers were towards preparing students for exams. The teachers acknowledged that they too learnt from the conversations and discussions that occurred in their classrooms. Through this discourse structure, the teachers also began to listen more attentively to each student, making minimal interventions only where necessary. This outcome affirmed the findings of Sulzer (2015), and Alexander (2018) who noted that teachers assume the role of learner, listener, contributor, and collaborator in their effort to listen to and to understand the voices of their students before responding to them. The teachers were found to have framed and facilitated the discourse by probing other students to participate. This allowed the students to elaborate on the topics being discussed. Indirectly, it also showed that the teachers had markedly reduced their talk in class. These strategic teacher discourse moves, and turn management, stimulated more participation, hence increased students' talk within the L2 context. This behavioural change noted in the teachers implied that their students were being empowered in their learning process.

Dialogic teaching emphasises open-ended questions as the main form of interaction. Here, the teachers adopted open-ended questions as their prime discourse strategy, with the intention of generating talk among the students. The teachers periodically used open-ended questions to demonstrate their genuine interest in the students' view and experiences, thus students' valued knowledge. The teachers did not stop their probing at the low-level evaluation ('Good') when responding to the students' contributions.

Instead, they followed (5.3.2.1) this with the high-level evaluation where the teachers used the response and then incorporated this into a subsequent question. In this regard, there is a pattern being employed through dialogic teaching, such that open-ended questions were posed so as to initiate, and to extend the whole class discussion, as well as to shape the flow of the discussion.

The teachers' follow-up questions to the students' responses were crucial in extending the talk. Through the teacher questioning, students were driven towards interaction with others which enhanced learning (Nystrand, 1997; Teo, 2016). The kind of dialogues evident in this study were conversation dialogues (Teo, 2016) which extended talk through the sharing of information, experiences and opinions by students. The building and sharing of knowledge through follow up questions posed by teachers contributed to the extended talk and the co-construction of knowledge. Through the follow up questions, the teachers had modelled to the students the manner questions can be posed and used to extend talk or engage in meaningful exchanges.

The findings of this study showed that the open-ended questions posed by the teachers (See the findings presented in Chapter 4) functioned as a scaffolding tool to extend the whole class discussion. The follow up questions were then utilised, such as those proposed by Hardman (2019) - *Teacher add-on question*, *Teacher agree/disagree question*, *Teacher expand question*, *Teacher rephrase question*, *Teacher revoice question*, and *Teacher why question*. All of these were applied to extend the whole class discussion in the attempt to get students to use English. In response to these types of questions, the students extended talk and constructed knowledge collectively on the topic as well as the language (Alexander, 2018).

The teachers' ability to pose open-ended questions also encouraged the construction of knowledge collectively. This is in line with the aspirations of the CEFR aligned lower

secondary (Form 1 and Form 2) curriculum that focuses on higher order thinking skills which subsume critical thinking and problem-solving skills. The incorporation of these skills requires the teachers to train students to make well-reasoned decisions. The teachers were observed to have changed their questioning behaviour in their effort to promote critical thinking and problem-solving skills, besides the purpose of generating talk, encouraging spoken language, reasoning and thinking, all of which would lead to the collective construction of knowledge. The teachers provided constructive feedback, and also clarified mistakes when using these follow up questions.

Focussing on the classroom observations, this study found that there were some variations in teacher questioning where close-ended questions were used by the teachers intentionally to initiate some form of response from the students. This finding appears to be similar to the case study performed by Lefstein, Snell, and Israeli (2015) where a teacher had used closed-ended questions to stimulate discussions. Although responses to close ended questions would definitely be one or two words, it was said to start a conversation which would later be expanded through the use of open-ended questions.

The current study showed that utterances play a significant role in classroom interactions. The questions and responses were contextually influenced, and this determined its effectiveness (Boyd & Markarian, 2015). In analyzing the dialogic classroom discourses that occurred in this study, it can be said that the students' responses to the teachers' questions, and the follow-up questions of the others indicate that there were different interactional forms being used for their respective purposes. This outcome thus, adds to the body of literature, such that dialogic teaching when purposeful planned in terms of content and delivery, would encourage students to articulate what they know. This would ensure that they have interpretive authority. When classroom discourse is

purposeful, learning takes place, hence, the teachers' wisdom is a key factor in bridging theory and experience (Resnitskaya & Gregory, 2013).

The findings from the study also indicate that the utterances of the teachers demand spontaneity in terms of responses and action. The ability to respond and pose questions to shape the discussion that is taking place demands teachers' language fluency and accuracy as well as in-the-moment purposeful responsiveness to student ideas and contributions demands spontaneity. Teachers would also need to make careful and informed decisions on the delivery aspect of the content, the mediated tools involved and the readiness of students to facilitate the on-going discussions, which is rather demanding for a L2 teachers. It involves metacognitive skills of the teacher as well as language proficiency (Boyd & Markarian, 2015; Hiver et al., 2021).

The main objective of implementing dialogic teaching is to involve students as important and meaningful interlocutors in classroom discourses. Thus, students' participation is significant as dialogic teaching supports the thinking and learning of students (Alexander, 2008, 2018a). In the context of this study, the teachers had garnered the participation of students who functioned as interlocutors developing their thinking and their knowledge of both contents and language. Therefore, it is hereby acknowledged that dialogue plays a central role in the construction of experience and knowledge whilst dialogic communication enables students to support their own positions with justifications, and to actively listen to others' positions. The goal is of course, to harness mutual understanding and to collectively construct knowledge. This means that even the students who had initially refrained from interacting, as was noted in the classroom observations, also benefitted from the discussions because they too were able to construct knowledge based on their peers' responses which were more knowledgeable. In this regard, they had their peers and teachers within their zone of proximal development.

Although research (Teo, 2016, Jocuns, 2021) points to the fact that the diversity of contexts and cultures can be an influencing factor especially in the context where the instructional language is not the students' L1, this study showed that dialogic teaching was implemented successfully. Alexander's dialogic model was implemented but it was contextualized based on some specific interventions. As stated by Haneda (2017), the dialogic teaching that took place in the Malaysian L2 classrooms varied due to cultural and contextual factors. Nevertheless, the discourse function proposed in the model was applied so as to enhance the students' use of English.

6.6 Conclusion

The findings as discussed above demonstrates that dialogic teaching was to an extent a successful attempt in facilitating second language oral communication skills and language acquisition in the context of the Malaysian Lower Secondary classrooms that provides implications for the potentiality of implementing the discourse in the Malaysian classrooms and for future research. The implications of these findings will be discussed in the following chapter.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

This chapter concludes the study with the implications derived from the findings followed by the overall contributions made towards academia. Subsequent to this are the recommendations for future research. The findings from this study provide implications for both second language classroom discourse and ELT teaching and research. First, the teacher professionalism and pedagogical implications of this research are considered as they relate to the findings for each of the key research questions. This is followed by the theoretical implications and finally the implications for research methodology.

7.2 Implications for Teacher Professional Development

7.2.1 Teachers' Future Professional Development

The Teacher Professional Development (TPD) on dialogic teaching was aimed at improving student students' oral proficiency and second language learning. It was an important element of the teacher professionalism that indicated the capacity of teachers to respond to resolve problematic situations and in this context, the gap in which students are unable to speak in English after 11 years of formal schooling. Hence, specific training on the infusion of dialogic teaching was given to teachers prior to the implementation. The theoretical aspects were covered during the training and a few hands-on sessions were held. Based on this knowledge, dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse was conducted in the English language classrooms. This implies dialogic teaching is evident in the Malaysian Lower secondary English language classrooms of the teachers involved. This also implies that the teachers' perception and practices of dialogic teaching was largely influenced by the teacher professional development programme.

This study differs from previous studies in that it attempts to make explicit the connections between teachers' understanding of dialogic teaching in particular as a classroom discourse pattern and the application of the discourse structure into the classroom practices by utilising a specific framework which was Alexander's Dialogic Teaching framework. The framework is considered the most comprehensive in its delineation of talks type that are productive for student learning (Kim & Wilkinson, 2019).

Nevertheless, the findings from the study imply that teachers' practices revealed that their understanding was limited to the knowledge attained from the professional development on dialogic teaching based on one model and perhaps insufficient understanding of the other dialogic models and principles involved for effective implementation which has implications for further training. This study corresponds with the study on Czech teachers that dialogic teaching did take place and teachers are interested in implementation of dialogic approach but they required explicit pedagogical content knowledge (PCK) and skills to do so to facilitate the teaching of teaching of oral communication skills (Sedova et al., 2014).

The study differed from previous research in the field in that it was a specific intervention programme involving lower secondary-school English language teachers and students. This study contributes to research that dialogic teaching interventions enhances students' engagement (Hennessy et al., 2016; Sedova et al., 2016) and that low ability students managed to be engaged in the learning process (Snell & Lefstein, 2018). Thus, this research describes the key features of dialogic teaching given through an in-service professional development (PD) programme on promoting students' engagement and learning of L2 and the impact of the programme on teachers' use of dialogic practices.

First, this study showed that the OPS_ English Programme in which dialogic teaching was employed for L2 classrooms, utilised Alexander's Dialogic Teaching Model (2010) as well as Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction (1997) which is encapsulated in Alexander's model. The programme embraced the five principles of the model (2010). This is good practice. However, the principles were not expressed with clarity to the teachers. They were only given training on how to structure the model without the knowledge on how to map the structure to the teaching model. Teachers adopting dialogic teaching would be concerned with the set-up, and the need to expand on student talk, besides facilitating talk for stimulating language use. This is even more crucial acknowledging that their students are from an L2 or EFL background. From the operational stage, the findings of this study indicated that teachers knew how to structure a dialogic lesson; they were also able to set up a dialogic classroom setting, but they lacked the knowledge on the functions of each dialogic principle and on how to apply these principles according to the context to facilitate and extend talk. Thus, the findings imply that teachers require a specific professional development programme which would provide an in-depth understanding of the dialogic model to develop competence to frame classroom discourse or classroom talk amongst L2 learners and to facilitate L2 oral communication skills and second language.

The reciprocal principle, for instance, was not clearly demonstrated in the observations. Analysis of the transcripts showed that the responses were in the form of students sharing their points or ideas on the questions posed but students were seldom providing alternative viewpoints. This occurrence may be attributed to lack of skills amongst the teachers in particular their questioning skills which require a professional development programme emphasising on these principles. This skill needs to be demonstrated to the teachers. The teachers were challenged with L2 students who have low proficiency in English and would require support or skills to cater to these students.

The notion of challenge questions needs to be explained so that the teachers involved have an idea of how to present these questions to the L2 students. It is possible that the teachers' skill of posing challenge questions had not been reinforced (Hardman, 2019) since such questions are likely to encourage students to listen, think critically and provide alternative viewpoints. Another observation was that the cumulative principle was also rarely used. This principle which touches on the teachers' ability to expand on students' responses so that they can be chained together to form a coherent line of thoughts was also scarce. All of these are the inadequacies noted. There is a need to deepen the teachers' understanding of all the issues mentioned. These dialogic principles must be explained to the teachers more explicitly, and future training should be given about the application of these principles in the context of L2 learners. It is recommended that the five principles be explained and demonstrated to the teachers so that they can acquire and apply the skill more competently. It is proposed that future professional development on dialogic teaching focus on the demonstration of each principle in the model, focusing on talk types, the function of each talk type and productive talk moves by both teachers and students, as suggested by Hardman (2019). This should help ESL teachers to encourage talk among their L2 students, hence, focus on some aspects of second language acquisition.

The teachers involved had focused on using their exploratory sessions to improve their classroom interactions, and to engage their students. They expected their students to make contributions to the learning through a discourse approach, and this is central to their learning, thus their responses would be listened to, valued, and then taken up by other members in the learning community. By adopting a dialogic instructional stance, the teachers are treating dialogues as a functional construct rather than a structural construct, so that classroom oral communication skills practices can thrive. From this perspective, it can be seen that dialogic classrooms can be created in the Malaysian context if the teachers had a clear understanding of the fundamentals of dialogues in shaping students'

thinking, reasoning and language learning. Teachers need the competence to frame and facilitate cognitive expansion and language learning through classroom dialogues. Specific professional development sessions to be developed to focus on dialogues as an instructional approach for second language learning.

Teacher Professional Development (TPD) should be designed by leveraging on teachers' experience and cumulative knowledge gained from the reflection of students' learning ability to enable teachers to recognise their needs and develop their capacities. Having implemented dialogic teaching, teachers' future professional development should engage teachers in constructing knowledge collectively about their experiences and reflect on the areas that they want to improve for better student outcomes. Teachers would be able to draw from their experiences and classroom practices through reflection and discussions. These forms of reflective dialogues link their inquiries with their current practices. From a Teacher Professional Development (TPD) perspective, the findings imply for a consideration of a new design for teacher professional development. Teachers should establish professional learning communities (PLC) that support the dialogic teaching teacher community in Malaysia. This study then addresses the need for continuous reflective dialogues amongst practitioners as a way forward in professional development programmes designed by teachers and for teachers.

7.3 Pedagogical Implications

A few pedagogical implications can be drawn from this study. With the implementation of dialogic teaching as classroom discourse, the study had applied a given model which was also used to develop the students cognitive and language ability. It is deduced that this study offers a remedy which can be used to correct the prevailing recitative discourse that plagues so many classrooms in the Malaysian context, today and

in the past (Noor, 2014, Tan, Tee & Samuel, 2017). The implications are further discussed.

7.3.1 Teachers' Pedagogical Shift

It can be argued that the training and the implementation of dialogic teaching did create a shift in the teachers' pedagogical practices. This shift was influenced by the need to address the issues of students' oral communication skills and L2 learning. The findings demonstrate that teachers' use of the dialogic strategies had created opportunities for language use which led to oral proficiency in the English language. The ability of teachers to adopt dialogic teaching demonstrates that their pedagogic intentions have shifted which influences the changes in curricula, in teacher role and the underpinning theories of education. The findings reveal that teachers found dialogic teaching to be an alternative approach to the teaching of English. This study adds to the literature on dialogic teaching that the pedagogic discourse practice of the L2 teachers underwent distinct changes as the effect of the approach.

7.3.2 Teachers' Application of Higher Order Questions

In the Malaysian context, teachers have been very accustomed to monologic discourse or the transmissive form of teaching. The use of open-ended questions to elicit information and construct knowledge was not practice. Nevertheless, the current CEFR aligned curriculum emphasises higher order thinking skills which are achieved through open-ended questions. The introduction of dialogic teaching supports this skill as dialogic teaching leverages on open-ended questions as a discourse feature which enables students construct knowledge collectively. Thus, through dialogic teaching, teachers have learnt to use open-ended questions to facilitate explicit reasoning. Nevertheless, teachers require more knowledge and skills in the use of open-ended questions. The findings indicate that

the teachers knew the significance of questions in facilitating talk and were able to pose open-ended questions to initiate talk but require more knowledge and skills on how to pose open-ended questions that facilitates critical thinking. The ability of the teachers to pose higher order open-ended questions would ensure that all five dialogic principles of Alexander which leverages on open-ended questions are effectively applied in facilitating talk (Alexander, 2018; Hardman 2019). In other words, the teachers' ability to use various questions that can enhance L2 acquisition requires competence. In this regard, the education ministry could provide workshops on the use of questioning strategies in dialogic teaching to provide teachers with an in depth understanding of its application and equip them with the skills and strategies to use open-ended questions effectively for talk.

Second, the findings from this study imply that visible thinking is made possible through dialogic teaching. As the teachers facilitated talk through the questioning behaviour, they were able to capture the thinking that was taking place amongst the students. The responses or the interactions reflect the thinking and reasoning of the students or a particular student.

7.3.3 Introduction of Other Dialogic Models

The teachers involved in this study were only introduced to Alexander's Dialogic teaching model and Nystrand's Dialogically Organised Instruction Model although there are other models available (R. Cui & Teo, 2021). It is fair that these models be exposed or integrated for the teachers to develop a comprehensive understanding of dialogic pedagogy and to infuse the features from these models accordingly to the context of talk. This would further facilitate the teachers' implementation of dialogic teaching more effectively. More exposure to the various dialogic models would enable teachers to have a clearer understanding of how learning is considered a social activity, how learning is culturally influenced so that the discourse can become more interactive. The teachers also

need to be made aware of the consequences of dialogic teaching on students' improvement. This can help teachers to visualise the benefits of dialogic education which can be enacted in their classrooms. The findings from this study showed that the teachers had integrated features from the Thinking Together model (refer to section 2.3) in particular, the cumulative talk features where repetitions, confirmations, and elaborations appeared and instances where students could enhance others' contributions without any critique (Cui & Teo, 2021, Mercer et al., 2019). The analysis also detected accountable talk features which showed the teachers revoicing their talk so as to clarify the students' contribution, and also to encourage reasoning among the students. The teachers were also providing appropriate wait time for the students to respond. However, the teachers were unaware of these features nor models, hence they were unable to effectively utilise these features in the implementation process in their classrooms. In this regard, it can be noted that if the teachers had been exposed to more than one model, they would be better equipped to implement dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse.

7.3.4 Teachers' Integration of Dialogic Features into Curriculum

The teachers were able to enact dialogic teaching through the stipulated curriculum. The implementation of dialogic teaching was based on the aligned CEFR English language curriculum and syllabus for lower secondary (Form 1 and Form 2), thus it was guided by the syllabus. This implies teachers were able to adopt a new pedagogical approach that supports the curriculum which made the study unique as the introduction of dialogic teaching was closely aligned to the curriculum. The demands of 21st century learning was met through the infusion of dialogic teaching in the lower secondary ESL classrooms. Utilising the 3P stage of lesson planning framework, dialogic teaching was integrated by modifying the presentation stage towards the students, practice and

production stage by the students in the form of dialogues. The roles the teacher played was in accordance with the role of a facilitator in a dialogic classroom (Alexander, 2019).

The scheme of work played a crucial part in the lesson delivery because the topics for the whole class and group discussions were based on the stipulated contents and learning standard for the day. The content standard and learning standard were then integrated into the lesson through dialogic teaching in which dialogues were the focus. This implied that dialogic teaching was prevalent in the classrooms.

The teachers were aware that the skill given emphasis was speaking and listening, according to the curriculum document. Therefore, for each lesson, the teachers focused on the subskills involved so as to equip students with the aspired skills stipulated in the curriculum. As an example, for listening skills, the students were expected to understand meanings of words in a variety of familiar contexts. In this regard, the teachers used audio-visual aid to get students to understand the topic first. This was then followed by a whole class discussion. In terms of the content standard which stressed on speaking, the students were expected to communicate meanings, so they need to use registers appropriately, use appropriate communication strategies, and be able to communicate appropriately when speaking alone to groups. All of these factors were important to the teachers; hence they were taken into consideration by the teachers before dialogic teaching was implemented in the classrooms to facilitate the development of spoken language skills. Thus, it is reiterated that the purposeful principle was implemented by the teachers as an effort to streamline dialogic teaching with the curriculum and scheme of work. In this instance, dialogic teaching was not defined by the discourse structure, but instead by the discourse function. This made the discourse approach more meaningful since it was aligned to the CEFR English Language curriculum.

Being purposeful, the teachers in the study had adapted Alexander's dialogic model by integrating the writing component of the curriculum into the approach. In this manner, this study addresses the call for future research by (Chow et al., 2021) which suggest that dialogic teaching be infused in the teaching of writing skills. They attempted to consolidate the learners' understanding of the dialogic classroom discourse through a writing task. This practice indicates that the teachers were able to integrate talk into another language skill. In other words, they had adapted Alexander's Dialogic Model. Although it may be argued that the dialogic approach was built on free exchanges and opened for discussions, it appears that within the educational context, teachers were obliged to adhere to the curriculum set for the schooling year. Doing so would ensure that the students had achieved the expected outcomes. Taking this into consideration, it can be said that the teachers reinforced the ideas shared and discussed through a writing task. This is a skill in preparation for the students. -This case study fills a gap in the literature on how teachers can utilise a particular pedagogical approach to promote student engagement and learning.

Since the aim of using the dialogic approach was to enhance the oral communications skills of English, the language forms and functions cannot be overlooked. Nevertheless, throughout the implementation of dialogic teaching within the ESL classrooms, the teachers had not focused on the language form and function and did not explore this opportunity. The teachers could have done this inductively through the interactions. Evidence can be traced to the observations which revealed that the teachers had not used the opportunity to make students aware of the correct form of speaking. In retrospect, the teachers could have induced the teaching of grammar implicitly. Similarly, teachers could have discussed language variation in terms of L1 and L2 or the choice vocabulary of L1 and L2 to demonstrate the variations in an effort to raise students' awareness on these aspects. The teachers could have also established students' understanding on community

of practice where emphasis is on each one's valued contributions. These gaps can be addressed in future research on acquiring L2 form and function through dialogic teaching.

7.3.5 Teacher Engagement and Agency

The pedagogical implication from this study is that teacher engagement was a crucial factor in the implementation of dialogic teaching. The teacher engagement demonstrated by the teachers in the study was largely influenced by teacher agency (Charteris & Smardon, 2015). This study shows that teacher engagement was evident as the teachers made a change in their pedagogical approach and implemented dialogic teaching in their classes which created student learning opportunities. The findings from RQ1 and RQ 2 showed that teachers were keen to adopt the approach as they saw students able to use English. This reflects their personal interest in the adoption of the discourse which influenced their engagement. They displayed their engagement with the students by acknowledging and responding to students' thoughts and knowledge, listening to students' ideas and involving themselves in students' personal as well as school lives. The teacher's focused questioning also demonstrated their engagement. The teacher and student relationship as discussed in earlier chapter reflected a sense of community which promoted teacher engagement. This study adds to the literature that dialogic pedagogy is attributed to teacher agency.

7.3.6 Overcoming Populated Classroom Challenges

As the study demonstrated, the teachers' challenge in dialogic teaching was the large class population consisting of 28 to 30 students on average. Moreover, prior to the implementation of dialogic teaching, no ground rules were established. In this regard, the teachers concerned need to have the knowledge on how ground rules can be established so as to ensure that classroom discourse is effectively conducted. Exposure to the dialogic

model of Accountable talk by Resnick (2006) could be beneficial as it would update teachers on the necessity for ground rules. The small group discussions which was evident in the study needs further planning and aligning to ensure students better articulate their thoughts and are more critical in their thinking and responses which would result in better student engagement and outcomes. These small group discussions (Lefstein & Snell, 2011) eliminate the issue of passive and silent by students. Teachers' organisation of group tasks such as debate by suggesting roles for each member of the group would promote active student engagement in the discussion. Future professional development for teachers may need to draw on the idea of how learning is a social process and the importance of interactive dialogues which encompasses elements of critical reflection, peer learning, observation and feedback and concrete experiential tasks for teachers to develop their competency on conducting classroom discourses that are dialogic.

7.4 Theoretical Implications

7.4.1 Sociocultural Theory in Second Language Acquisition

Theoretically, the study demonstrates the teachers' move from a behaviourist theory of second language acquisition which is teacher-centred towards student-centered and constructivist learning. Dialogic teaching is underpinned by the sociocultural theory which supports the need for teachers to scaffold language learning. The findings of the study imply that the introduction of dialogic teaching indicates teachers' acceptance of a new pedagogical approach which initiated the move towards second language learning and acquisition from a socio constructivist paradigm. Second language learning and acquisition was now seen as a social process. This study adds to the literature in that dialogic teaching is a 'reformed approach' in the context of Secondary Malaysian ESL classrooms with aim of changing teachers' current pedagogical practices.

7.4.2 Transformation Towards Sociocultural Theory

This study emphasises the sociocultural stance of pedagogical practices which provide opportunities to develop active learning and student agency. This implies language rich discourses are vital for L2 classrooms to enhance the students' learning and language acquisition. Dialogic teaching could have and to an extent had facilitated second language acquisition. The sociocultural theory articulates that learning is a mediated process. Dialogic teaching was implemented to enable both the teachers and students to use language as a mediational tool in which language is embedded in the language learning process (Doley, 2019). Apart from language being used as a mediated tool, the audio-visual aids that were used to present the topic, and to initiate talk, as noted in the curriculum, also functioned as a mediated tool.

The transformation towards a sociocultural approach in L2 learning implies that a conducive ecosystem in the classroom was created for students to be actively engaged in the learning. The difference in the classroom environment that was seen in this study sets the conditions for L2 oral communication and acquisition (Ismail & Yusof, 2016). L2 oral communication and acquisition were evident consequences of this transformation. This would have implications for students' success rate. The enactment of dialogic teaching is supported or mediated by other tools in creating a conducive classroom environment for L2 learning. The findings from the study imply that for dialogic classroom discourses to be effective, the mediated tools such audio visuals, and technological applications such as interactive white board (IWB) would support the effective implementation. The whole class and small group discussions could be much meaningful with the mediation of these tools. For instance, rather than seeing the IWB as a presentation tool in the classes observed, the use of IWB as a mediated tool in dialogic teaching would perhaps be considered for future implementation of dialogic teaching as

research has proved (Hennessy et al., 2018) that IWB promotes collaborative meaning-making.

This study contributes to theoretical understanding of the sociocultural stance of learning which grants equitable rights to all students. The findings of this study show that even “low ability” students gained participative rights and were afforded learning opportunities through dialogic teaching. Through the dialogic classroom discourses, the lower middle-class students (who were the main group of students) gained participative rights that highlights the notion of inclusivity. The open discussions, which was in the form of conversational dialogues set the premise for equitable participation in which all voices were acknowledged and valued.

This study adds to the literature that dialogic teaching promotes students’ sociolinguistic content learning. As the students from different backgrounds discussed and conversed, they indirectly learnt about identity and power. The manner they responded, the choice of words they use to respond reflected their language variation and identity. The discourse structure that leverages on discussions and open-ended questions allowed for diverse responses and during the responses, students displayed their variation in language and identity and constructed knowledge collectively on these aspects. The study implies, that language variation supports learning and, in this context, the learning of English.

Dialogic teaching advocates learner autonomy and it is proposed that future framework on dialogic teaching could have principles of dialogic combined with the principles of learner autonomy. Alexander’s five dialogic principles can take into account the six principles of autonomous learning (Benson, 2016)

The outcome of this study offers insight into what transpires in the classroom during the interactions. This study which focussed on classroom talk offers a new dimension to look into L2 learning through dialogic patterns. As mentioned in Chapter 3, this study adopted Alexander's and Nystrand's dialogic model which draws on the work of Mikhail Bakhtin's notion of dialogue (Nystrand, 2013). The model emphasises on language, thought, and learning. The role of the spoken dialogue was introduced as an approach which creates opportunities for second language use (L2), and for shaping students' cognitive development. Both the aims served as the guidance for stimulating a type of education that not only enriches the curriculum, but also makes a major contribution to the learners' global education in the 21st century. Based on the analysis of the interviews and the observation, it can be concluded that the teachers involved have the ability to implement a full dialogic classroom discourse approach in their classrooms, given time and more training.

7.5 Methodological Implications

This study is qualitative in nature as it attempts to uncover what transpires within an L2 classroom interaction. The methods used to gather data encompassed interviews and observations as the focus was to explore teachers' perspectives and practices of dialogic teaching within an L2 learning context. The interpretivist and social constructivist stance as well as a case study methodology were employed to explore and investigate teachers' perceptions on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills and acquisition as well as their practices. Having employed the interpretivist stance, the perceptions and practices of dialogic teaching in facilitating L2 oral communication skills were clearly understood from the teachers' perspectives. One of the limitations of this study was the perceptions were only gained from the teachers and not the students who are the 'direct receivers' of this approach. The current study

investigated the implementation of a new pedagogical approach or discourse; hence, the students' perceptions would be important as they are the benefactors of the teaching process. The interpretation of the study's findings would have been strengthened by including the perspectives of learners. Future research may investigate the perceptions of students towards dialogic teaching in the learning of English.

This study employed semi-structured interviews which provided in depth and rich data on the perspectives of teachers on dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse in facilitating L2 oral communication skills. This was followed by classroom observations which provided data on the practices of dialogic teaching. However, between these two phases of research, to fill in the gaps that arose, stimulated recall procedures would have served as a better way to understand teachers' decision making in their incorporation of dialogic teaching. This was the second limitation of the research methodology that were employed.

Having conducted a qualitative methodology, this study is unable to generalise the findings that dialogic teaching can be implemented in L2 language classrooms. Thus, a mixed method approach adopting a larger sample involving more teachers and variables could increase the generalisability of the results which is suggested by other researchers (Chow et al., 2021). The implementation of dialogic teaching across the L2 classrooms in Malaysia would need a wider group of sampling that have policy implications.

7.6 Recommendations for Future Studies

The outcome of this study suggests that more research be done on dialogic teaching in facilitating second language acquisition. The study focused on teachers' enactment of dialogic teaching and thus the findings are limited to teacher ability and pedagogical competence. The findings imply that future research on the enactment of dialogic teaching

focuses on specific professional development programmes which develop competence to frame classroom discourse or classroom talk amongst L2 learners and to facilitate L2 oral communication skills and second language. Future research should emphasise on students' outcome and performance in second language. The infusion of technology in dialogic teaching and the impact of it on student engagement and learning outcomes could be an area of investigation.

7.7 Conclusion

This study shows that dialogic teaching as a form of classroom discourse can be a and should be adopted in the L2 classrooms to enhance second language learning and acquisition among L2 learners. To conclude, despite the inadequacies pertaining to teachers' pedagogical content knowledge and procedural knowledge on dialogic pedagogy in employment of dialogic teaching as a classroom discourse to facilitate talk, the findings show that both the teacher and students have gained from this approach. As for the teachers, they found that dialogic teaching as an interactive structure supported the teaching of L2 oral communication skills. The teachers were able to demonstrate changes in their discourse practices as well as their pedagogical practices following the implementation of the professional development programme. The students have also displayed changes in their learning style that has contributed to better learning outcomes. These findings suggest that comprehensive professional development programs (Hennessy et al., 2021; Seashore Louis, 2020) Sedova et al., 2016; be designed for teachers involving aspects of the theoretical, epistemological, and procedural knowledge aimed at supporting teachers in the adoption of dialogic pedagogy.

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