ORIGINAL ARTICLE

Dialogic Teaching: Transformative Impacts on EFL Learners' Spoken Discourse at Gondar College of Teacher Education

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Abstract

This study explores how Dialogic Teaching (DT) changed the way students spoke in an Ethiopian EFL classroom. Dialogic teaching has worked well in many countries, encouraging students to speak up and think more critically. But in Ethiopia, it is still not widely used, mainly because of strict curricula and teaching practices where the teacher does most of the talking. The research focused on 20 second-year students studying Linear English at Gondar College of Teacher Education. It followed their classroom talk before and after a DT-based lesson series, using an Interrupted Time-Series Design. The analysis combined numbers and a close look at what the students actually said, using Sociocultural Discourse Analysis (SCDA). After the DT lessons, students discourse transformed from brief, repetitive utterances to more complex, exploratory talk characterized by open-ended questioning and extended contributions. This suggests that DT can make classroom talk more meaningful. The study recommends better teacher training and more research into how DT might work in different places.

Keywords: Dialogic Teaching, Spoken Discourse, Student Contributions, Sociocultural Discourse Analysis, Teacher Education

Introduction

In recent years, the role of classroom dialogue has shifted from a tool for delivering knowledge to a means of co-constructing understanding, especially in language education (Resnick et al., 2018). Even though ESL/EFL curricula place a lot of emphasis on reading and writing, students typically develop their language skills primarily through spoken interaction (Alexander, 2008; MoE, 2021). Speaking lessons in EFL contexts give students the chance to discuss topics, share opinions, and engage in debates that advance their

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language proficiency and social skills (Alexander, 2020).

In classroom settings, spoken discourse refers to the everyday conversations between teachers and students that shape how learning happens. Rather than simply passing on facts, dialogue allows students and teachers to build knowledge together. This idea is drawn from the work of Vygotsky (1978), who believed that learning happens through social interaction, and Bakhtin (1984), who emphasized the importance of real dialogue in communication. Studies like Alexander (2018) and Soter et al. (2008) show that when classroom talk is more open and becomes student-centered, learners tend to give longer answers, ask more thoughtful questions, and work together to solve problems. For example, in one major study, Alexander (2018) found that dialogic teaching helped students take part in more meaningful exchanges and respond in deeper, more reflective ways.

Talking in class should not just mean answering set questions. Real learning happens when students get to ask their own, share their views, and respond to what others say. This kind of back-and-forth supports deeper thinking and encourages teamwork and reflection (Nystrand et al., 1997; Alexander, 2008, 2020). But in many Ethiopian EFL classrooms, speaking often takes a back seat. Teachers tend to stick to traditional methods, where reading and exam prep get most of the focus. That leaves little room for actual conversation. Often, lessons follow a teacher-led pattern, especially the Initiation–Response–Evaluation (IRE) format, where the teacher asks, students answer, and that's it (Kathard et al., 2015; Ravitch, 2013; Worku & Alemu, 2021). Local studies show a similar picture. Esubalew (2021), for instance, found out that many EFL teachers mostly ask display questions—those that only need short, set answers. Because of this, students rarely get the chance to explore their thoughts or speak freely.

Although Dialogic Teaching (DT), informed by sociocultural theory and dialogism, presents an alternative by centering purposeful, shared talk that promotes reasoning, cooperation, and student involvement (Alexander, 2020), it remains underused in Ethiopia. Language lessons often center on grammar drills and scripted answers, offering little chance for open discussion or reflective thinking. Research and personal classroom experience both show that many lessons still follow a teacher-centered style. For example, Worku and Alemu (2021) observed that even teacher colleges tend to rely on traditional teaching methods where the teacher talks and students mostly listen. Student participation also remains low in many cases. Berhanu (2000) pointed out that students often stay silent or contribute very little during group discussions. From what we observed at Gondar College of Teacher Education and the University of Gondar, most lessons focus on grammar drills and memorized answers. Students rarely speak at length

or ask their own questions. This reminds us of Freire's (2000) idea of "banking" education, where learners are treated as empty containers instead of active thinkers.

Despite the challenges, there is growing recognition that change is possible with the right support. When teachers are given training that focuses on how to encourage real dialogue, they start to feel more confident. Working together in teacher groups also helps build new strategies. Studies by Michaels and O'Connor (2015) and Resnick et al. (2018) show that these kinds of support systems really make a difference. Also, having practical tools like discussion guidelines or talk prompts makes it easier for teachers and students to get started with dialogic methods.

In classrooms where English is taught as a foreign language, students often have limited chances to practice real communication. Dialogic Teaching (DT) can help address this issue by promoting conversations that support fluency, vocabulary growth, and clearer expression (Halloush et al., 2021; Barekat & Mohammadi, 2014). Still, many teachers rely on traditional, teacher-led methods and stick to patterns like IRE, which do not encourage much student interaction (Hardman, 2021; Worku & Alemu, 2021).

This study aims to fill this gap by exploring whether DT can strengthen the quality and depth of student talk in Ethiopian EFL settings. The focus is on how DT changes classroom interaction patterns and encourages more active, engaged participation from learners. Therefore, this study explores the impact of Dialogic Teaching (DT) on the spoken interaction of second-year Linear English students at Gondar College of Teacher Education (GCTE). More specifically, the study seeks to:

1. Measure the effect of DT on students' use of open-ended questions during classroom interactions.
2. Analyze changes in the length and depth of students' spoken contributions throughout the intervention.
3. Explore how DT shapes the overall quality of classroom discourse and interaction.

Methods and Techniques

This study used an Interrupted Time-Series Design (ITSD), a quasi-experimental method that tracks repeated observations within the same group across several points in time. The aim was to understand existing patterns before and after a targeted intervention was introduced (Marczyk et al., 2005). ITSD was selected for its strength in capturing gradual or immediate changes and for its ability to

reduce certain internal validity threats, such as those arising from participants' awareness of being studied (Mellow et al., 1996). The design was especially useful in the context of this study. The study focused on second-year Linear English students at Gondar College of Teacher Education (GCTE), where limited participation in classroom talk had been observed. Rather than relying on a single pre-test and post-test, this approach made it possible to track developments in spoken discourse across multiple sessions. Although the method does not completely eliminate maturational influences, it does minimize other risks like external disruptions or inconsistencies in tools used to measure outcomes (Creswell, 2015; Mackey & Gass, 2015).

Research Site and Participants

This research was carried out at Gondar College of Teacher Education (GCTE) in Gondar City, Ethiopia. The site was selected since it matched the practical needs of the study. GCTE offered a flexible schedule and a supportive environment, making it suitable place to try out Dialogic Teaching strategies in a real classroom setting.

Twenty second-year students took part in the study. They were part of the Linear English stream, majoring in English and taking Amharic (an Ethiopian language) as a minor subject. All of them had finished a course called "Spoken English I" in 2015 and were enrolled in for "Spoken English II" during the first semester of 2016. Their regular classroom teacher, who had more than 15 years of experience, led the intervention. Before starting, his lesson, the teacher was trained in the use of Dialogic Teaching approaches. Keeping the regular teacher in charge helped make the classroom experience more natural and true to typical teaching condition

Data Collection Instruments

In this study, the primary data came from observing real-time classroom interactions. To ensure accuracy and depth, both audio and video recordings were used. These recordings allowed for a thorough transcription of every spoken exchange, offering a solid foundation for analyzing how students communicated. Particular attention was paid to the nature of questions being asked, the length of students' replies, and the overall richness of classroom talk—drawing inspiration from frameworks such as those outlined by Hardman (2019) and Alexander (2020).

Care was taken to make the recording process as unobtrusive as possible. Devices were set up discreetly in the classroom, and occasionally, teachers or students

helped operate them. Before starting the official observations, the researcher spent time informally attending lessons. This helped students get used to their presence, reducing the likelihood that their behavior would change due to being watched.

Once the recordings were transcribed, the data were examined using basic quantitative tools. The researchers looked at how often different types of questions were used—open or closed—how much students said, and whether their responses were brief or developed. Word counts were also averaged across student turns to explore how much students were contributing overall. Together, these methods helped track any noticeable shifts in classroom interaction during the intervention.

Procedures of Data Collection

The data for this study were gathered through a mixed-methods approach carried out over two month's period, between April and May 2016. Prior to collecting any information, ethical approval was secured from GCTE, and all necessary steps were taken to ensure participants' informed consent and protect their privacy. Most of the data came from audio and video recordings of classroom sessions, which were supplemented with both qualitative insights and basic quantitative measures.

The researchers attended three classes informally during the preparation phase (March 2–6, 2016) of the collection process: Introduction to Spoken English II (ENLA 204), Functions and Language Structures/Expressions, and Opening and Closing Conversations. The researchers were able to observe how students interacted during regular classes and gain a better understanding of the classroom dynamic thanks to these early visits. At this point, only quick notes were made, which were more background information than official data.

The baseline phase (March 9–20, 2016) followed, during which three more lessons were observed and recorded: Asking for and Giving Suggestions, Asking for Repetition and Clarification, and Praising and Complimenting. These sessions followed the college's standard teaching approach as described in the official Language Department module. The goal here was to capture a snapshot of how students typically communicated before any changes were introduced.

Before the main intervention, a training and preparation phase (March 23–27, 2016) was conducted. The teacher participated in a focused training session—approximately three hours long, on the core ideas behind Dialogic Teaching (DT) and how it could be applied in real classrooms. Simultaneously, students joined a

two-hour introductory class on DT principles, watched short video clips showing dialogic practices in action, and received handouts, including a guide outlining what to expect during the upcoming lessons.

The final phase, the intervention, ran from April to May 2016 and lasted for eight weeks, covering roughly 24 instructional hours. Two units, Asking for and Offering Help and Group Discussion, were taught using dialogic strategies. Since Group Discussion was more complex, it was divided into two parts, resulting in three post-intervention observation points: Time Four, Time Five, and Time Six. These final sessions helped assess whether and how students' talk had shifted following the DT-based instruction.

The Experiment

The intervention phase of this study maintained consistency in lesson content by using the same Spoken English II course materials employed during the baseline sessions. However, using Alexander's (2020) framework, Dialogic Teaching (DT) principles were incorporated into the instruction during the intervention. Underpinned by pedagogical concepts like collectivity, reciprocity, and cumulation, this framework highlights the significance of meaningful classroom discussion. Teacher-focused professional development, which included advice on lesson planning, setting specific goals, and practicing reflection, also aided the intervention. The goal of these initiatives was to make the classroom more engaging and interactive.

In order to foster dialogic interaction and student engagement, the instructor implemented a number of fundamental strategies during this phase. Creating ground rules for polite listening, candid discussion, and cooperative engagement was one way to promote a dialogic classroom culture. The classroom environment was also physically altered, with more flexible seating arrangements and a practice of starting lessons with warm-up exercises to foster student comfort and camaraderie. Students were encouraged to participate in a variety of talk formats, such as task-based communication (e.g., asking and answering questions) and learning-oriented talk (e.g., explaining concepts or recounting experiences). These techniques encouraged more in-depth reasoning and group meaning-making. The lessons also included reflective debriefing exercises like Think-Pair-Share and Fishbowl Discussions, which gave students organised chances to go over and polish their dialogic contributions.

The researchers and the teacher worked closely together to design and improve the intervention. The contextualisation and responsiveness of the dialogic strategies to the needs of the students were guaranteed by this cooperative effort. Together, they went over the fundamental literature and modified their strategy

in light of continuing introspection and observations from the classroom. Key resources included materials from Michaels and O'Connor (2012, 2018), such as The Talk Science Primer and Supporting Teachers in Taking up Productive Talk Moves, which offered strategies for improving classroom dialogue, as well as a few chapters from A Dialogic Teaching Companion (Alexander, 2020), which offered helpful advice for putting dialogic pedagogy into practice.

Two instructional cycles were used to deliver the intervention. The first cycle, which focused on the subject of "Asking for and Offering Help," was held on April 7, 2016. After employing dialogic teaching techniques to teach this lesson, the audio and video recordings were examined to pinpoint areas that needed improvement. The second cycle, which focused on "Group Discussion," took place on May 12, 2016. Building on the knowledge gathered from the first cycle, this session implemented additional changes meant to improve student interaction and strengthen dialogic engagement. As the intervention progressed, the application of a reflective, cyclical process strengthened it and increased its overall efficacy in influencing students' classroom discourse.

The classroom used a more conventional, teacher-centered instructional model before the intervention. With few opportunities for students to participate in collaborative meaning-making or ask questions, instruction was typically centred on rote recitation and scripted dialogues. There was little opportunity for lengthy contributions or group idea exploration because student responses were typically brief and controlled. This baseline model served as the contrast for evaluating the impact of the dialogic teaching approach introduced during the intervention.

Methods of Data Analysis

This study used a mixed-methods approach to analyze the effect of Dialogic Teaching on students' spoken discourse. Both quantitative and qualitative data were collected and examined to gain a complete understanding of how student interactions advanced over time.

On the quantitative side, the analysis focused on observable patterns in classroom talk. Audio and video recordings of lessons were transcribed in full, capturing every student and teacher turn. From these transcripts, the researcher tracked specific features, such as how many open versus closed questions were asked, the frequency and length of student contributions, and the average number of words per turn. These metrics were then calculated across six selected segments of classroom talk: three before the intervention (Time 1–3) and three after (Time 4–6). This comparison allowed the researcher to identify measurable shifts in student participation and response length.

For the qualitative component, a sociocultural discourse analysis (SCDA) was carried out, guided by the frameworks of Mercer (2008) and Johnson and Mercer (2019). This approach involved a closer look at how students engaged with each other and with their teacher through language. A total of 18 extracts were selected from the transcribed data—six from each observation period. These extracts were analyzed across five key themes: content, time, joint intellectual activity, impact, and power relations. The aim was to uncover deeper changes in how students expressed themselves, built on each other's ideas, and co-constructed meaning through talk.

By integrating both forms of analysis, the study was able to capture not only what changed in student talk, but also how and why these changes occurred during the course of the intervention.

Ethical Considerations

Several important steps were followed to maintain ethical standards. Permission to conduct the research was first obtained from the Language Department at Gondar College of Teacher Education. After that, the teacher and students involved were fully informed about the purpose of the study and how data would be collected, including the use of audio and video recordings during class. It was made clear that these recordings would be used for research purposes only and could be accessed by participants if they wished. All participants were informed that their involvement was voluntary and that they had the right to withdraw from the study at any time, without any negative consequences. To ensure anonymity, no actual names were used during transcription or analysis; instead, pseudonyms or letter codes were given. Throughout the process, every effort was made to maintain confidentiality and protect participants' privacy. It was also made clear that students would not be evaluated or graded based on their spoken performance during either the baseline or the intervention periods.

Results

The main objective of this study was to investigate the impact of Dialogic Teaching on students' spoken discourse among 2nd year Linear English students at Gondar College of Teacher Education (GCTE). Therefore, this section presents the results of the study based on the research objectives.

Results on Students' Questioning Behaviour

Analysis of the students' questioning behaviour over the six time points showed clear patterns, especially before and after the DT intervention, as shown in table 2 below. Students asked a total of 24 questions during the baseline period (Time 1–Time 3). In contrast to Time 3, when closed-ended questions predominated (87.5%), a slight majority of these were open-ended, especially in Time 1 (62.5%). Both the number and quality of questions significantly increased after the intervention (Time 4 to Time 6). There was a noticeable shift towards open-ended questions as the total number of questions increased to 36. With 82.35% of the questions being open-ended, Time 6 demonstrated the biggest shift. This change is consistent with the objectives of dialogic teaching and shows that, after the intervention, students were asking more thoughtful and exploratory questions.

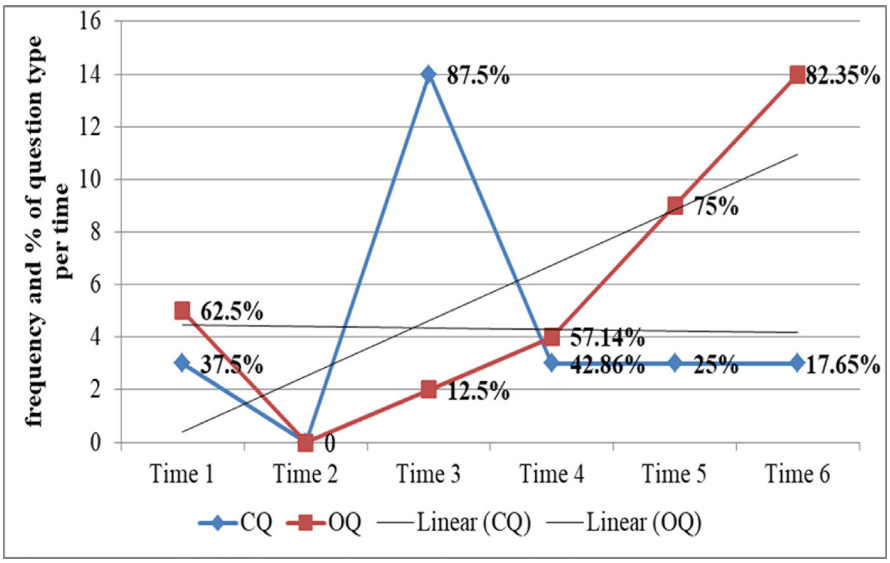
Table 1: Students' Questions across the time points

S Questions	Time 1 (1hour)	Time 2 (1 hour)	Time 3 (1 hour)	Time 4 (1 hour)	Time 5 (1 hour)	Time 6 (1 hour)	Total
CQ	3 (37.5%)	0	14 (87.5%)	3 (42.86%)	3 (25%)	3 (17.65%)	26
OQ	5 (62.5%)	0	2 (12.5%)	4 (57.14%)	9 (75%)	14 (82.35%)	34
Total	8 (100%)	0	16 (100%)	7 (100%)	12 (100%)	17	60

*Percentage of CQ or OQ in each time= (Number of questions of a type / Total questions at that time point) **

To provide a visual representation of the data, the line graph, figure 1, illustrates the trends in students' question types across the time points. The line graph visually complements the table summary by highlighting trends in students' questioning behaviour across the six time points, distinguishing between closed questions (CQ) and open questions (OQ)

Figure 1: Percentage of students' close and open-ended questions per time point
Results on Students' Contributions



Students' contributions were categorized as either brief or extended to evaluate the depth and complexity of their participation. During the baseline period, brief contributions overwhelmingly prevailed, with 94.44% of contributions at Time 1 being brief. This trend continued through Time 3, where 97% of contributions were brief, as depicted in table 3.

Table 3: Students' Contributions across the time points

S contribution	Time 1 (1hr)	Time 2 (1hr)	Time 3 (1hr)	Time 4 (1hr)	Time 5 (1hr)	Time 6 (1hr)	Total
Brief	17 (94.44%)	16 (89%)	36 (97%)	11 (41%)	7 (47%)	4 (20%)	93
Extended	1 (6%)	2 (11%)	1 (3%)	16 (59%)	8 (53%)	16 (80%)	43
Total	18	18	37	27	15	20	136

Percentage of contributions (brief/extended) in each time= (Number of contribution type / Total contribution at that time point) * 100

Following the intervention, a significant shift occurred. By Time 6, only 20% of contributions were brief, with 80% being extended. The bar graph, figure 2, also illustrates the trend in students' contributions from Time 1 to Time 6, segmented

into brief and extended contributions. This progression indicates that the dialogic teaching intervention effectively encouraged students to engage in a more elaborate and thoughtful discourse, moving beyond surface-level responses.

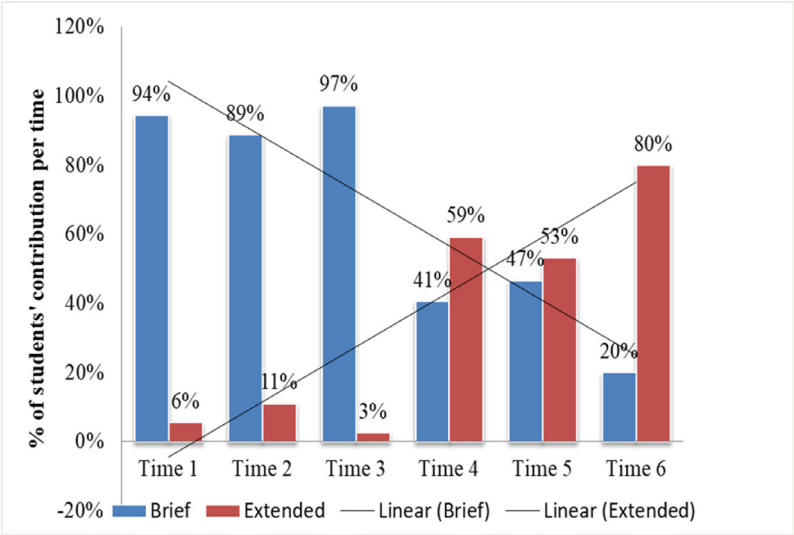


Figure 2: Percentage of students' brief and extended contributions per time point

Results on Students' Ratio of Words Spoken and Longest Turn

The analysis also explored the Ratio of Words across Time (RWT) and the Longest Turn (LT) to gauge the quantity and length of students' spoken contributions. The RWT and LT remained relatively low during the baseline period, with the RWT peaking at 10.67 at Time 3 and the LT at 16 words.

Table 4: Summary of RWT and LT spoken by students across the times

Time	Total T & S Turns	No. of S intelligible utterances	No. of S intelligible words	RWT	LT
1	38	21	123	5.59	13
2	40	12	60	2.72	15
3	72	56	235	10.67	16
4	46	26	461	20.94	58
5	46	26	596	27.07	135
6	44	24	727	33.02	97
Total	286	165	2,202		

T=Teacher; S=Student; RWT= Total Ratio of intelligible Words per Time Spoken by Students LT=Longest Turn, i.e., counting the Longest intelligible word from Time 1 to 6

However, in post-intervention, these metrics increased substantially. By Time 6, the RWT had risen to 33.02, and the LT peaked at 135 words. The results from Table 4.3, supported by the bar graph, illustrate a notable increase in the Ratio of Words across Time (RWT) and the Longest Turn (LT) by students from Time 1 to Time 6. This trend underscores the impact of the intervention in fostering more extensive and meaningful student contributions over time.

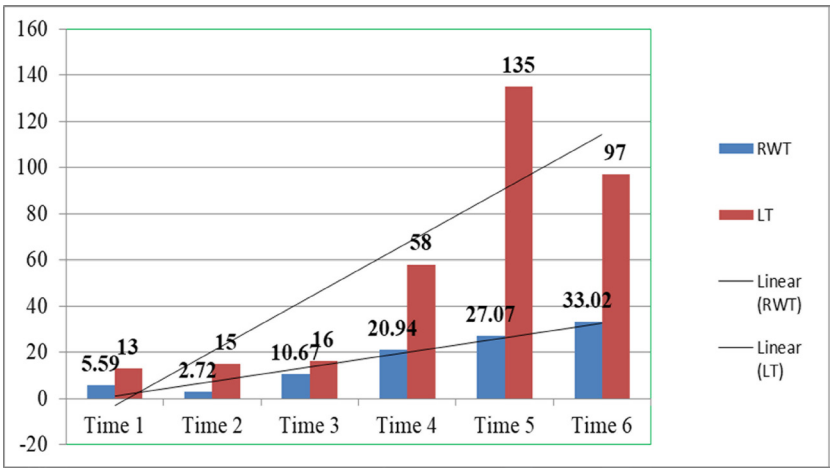


Figure 3: Percentage of students' RWT and LT

Results of the Qualitative Data

Analysis and Findings of the Baselines (Time 1 to 3)

Content

In the baseline phase, most student talk in class was shaped by tasks that were already planned out in advance. In Time 1, students participated in role-plays by reading written dialogues to each other. These activities did not give them much chance to use their own words or experiment with new vocabulary. In Time 2, the lessons became even more teacher-led, and students typically gave short, fact-based answers without elaboration. As table 5 illustrates, there was hardly any extended talk or reflection. Even though Time 3 brought back interactive role-plays, students still stuck closely to rehearsed lines instead of expressing their own ideas. Because of this, there was little variety in word choice, and students had few opportunities to engage in more natural or expressive speech.

Table 5 'Content'- illustrative extracts of the baseline (Time 1 to 3)

Time 1:	***Time 2***:	***Time 3***:
001 T: Now swap your exercise book, and read out your friend's conversation or dialogue. ….who can start?…ok the others listen and 002 S1 (pair): what do you suggest me to improve my spoken English skill? 003 S2: you should..eh..practice and I think … eh…think in English. 004 S1: ok thank you …	016 T: recognize? 017 S3: recognize sound 018 T: recognize sounds. Or simply it is natural and hearing is physical. Any healthy person hears any sound. May be the sound of wind, a sound of rain, it may be any noise, a sound of cars, taxi, etc…	001 T: Hands up and start. Ok, make your voice loud. 002 Spair1: As teacher and student. What is the past form of cut? 003 Spair2: The past form of um…cut is as it is. 004 Sp1: That is the exact use of point (answer) yes you have got it.

Time

Throughout this period, the teacher's voice dominated most of the lesson time. In Times 1 and 3, because of the focus on scripted dialogue, students had limited chances to share original ideas or engage in real conversations. Time 2 was even more teacher-centered, with long periods of explanation that left little room for student participation. The few student responses that occurred were generally brief and focused on recalling facts. There was not much sign that the talk in class helped build shared understanding across sessions, since the discussions did not carry ideas forward or promote deeper reflection.

Joint Intellectual Action

There were few opportunities for students to build ideas together during the baseline lessons. The scripted activities in Times 1 and 3 did not allow students to respond to or develop each other's thoughts. In Time 2, the interaction dropped even more, as the teacher mainly explained content while students listened or answered in isolation. Students did not often engage with what their peers said or try to add to it. The class tended to move quickly from one task to another, with little time given to collective discussion or shared exploration of ideas.

Time 3

030 T: Ok, good job. The next presenters. eh? you are the next. Make your voice loud, and start your dialogues.
031 S pair 3: Can you tell (me) the main praising words?
032 S pair 4: Yes, I can. For example, thank you, nice, very good

Impact

The teaching methods used during the baseline phase did not strongly encourage student participation. While some tasks like role-plays were meant to be interactive, the reliance on pre-written dialogue made it difficult for students to shape what they said. Engagement was generally low, and many students did not seem personally invested in what they were saying. The focus was more on performing the task correctly than on exchanging ideas or exploring the topic. This likely reduced students' motivation to speak meaningfully during lessons

Power Relations

From Time 1 to 3, classroom interactions followed a more traditional pattern, with the teacher leading most of the talk and students following directions. For instance, in Time 1, students read each other's dialogues because the teacher instructed them to. In Time 2, the teacher explained terms and students repeated the definitions. And in Time 3, students presented memorized scripts without making changes. These examples show that control over classroom talk remained mostly with the teacher, and students had little say in how conversations unfolded or what ideas were explored.

Analysis and Findings of the Post-observation (Time 4 to 6)

Content

After the intervention, there was a noticeable improvement in how students talked in class. In Time 4, they began using more specific vocabulary, especially when asking questions or describing their learning routines. By Times 5 and 6, their responses grew more detailed and better connected, often using linking words like "because," "important," or "advantage." This shift showed that students were not just learning new words but also beginning to organize their thoughts more clearly. They moved away from rehearsed exchanges and started speaking more freely and meaningfully (see table 6).

Table 6 Content-illustrative extracts of the post-observation

Time 4	***Time 5***	***Time 6***
Turn 002: G2 (S1): I have studied spoken English for the upcoming exam, but I could not cover the material. Can you help me?"	Turns 006, G1 S1: um… in my opinion, life without social media is bitter because social media is an important part of human life. Without social media, we cannot get our importance, so social media has many advantages for us.	Turn 049: Zewditu: Life without social media is bitter because social media gives us different information, other experiences, and also connects with friends and family.

Time 4

Turn 002: G2 (S1): I have studied spoken English for the upcoming exam, but I could not cover the material. Can you help me?" Time 5

Time

As the intervention progressed, students started talking more and in greater depth. Early post-observation discussions still had some short answers, but by Time 5, students were explaining their thinking and responding thoughtfully to what others said. In Time 6, they went further, bringing together different viewpoints and expanding on their own ideas. This gradual development pointed to a growing sense of shared understanding and learning over time.

Joint Intellectual Action

During this stage, students began working together more to build and share meaning. In Time 4, peer-to-peer exchanges increased, especially during problem-solving tasks. By Times 5 and 6, students like G2 S1, Tejie, Almaz, and Eritibu took part in meaningful back-and-forth dialogue. They listened carefully to each other and responded in ways that kept the conversation going. These interactions showed a shift from individual answers to more collaborative, connected thinking, as shown in table 7.

Table 7, Joint Intellectual Action -illustrative extracts of the post-observation

Time 5	***Time 6***
028 G2 S1: ok, is life without social media better or bitter? Without social media, life (is) bitter because from social media, um... we have got different information by small costs..... What do you say, Tejie? 029 Tejie: Without social media, bitter. 030 S1: why? 031 Tejie: Social media is the best because of its fundamental necessity for human beings. Social media is [able to] in a short time translate a lot of information and [allows us] to get a lot of knowledge. 034 G2 S1: can you add, Almaz? 035 Almaz: Yeah. Social media is better because there are many types of giving information. So, [it is] necessary and fundamental [for] social media. Sometimes social media is bitter. Why? There is unnecessary information.	Eritibu: "For example, some politicians use social media to engage people in civil wars and attacks." This critical evaluation contributes to a deeper dialogue, reflecting the collaborative intellectual effort of the group.

Impact

Students appeared more confident and engaged in discussions after the intervention. Without the limits of scripted tasks, they had more freedom to shape what they would say and how they would say it. This led to longer exchanges and deeper involvement in the conversation. Students not only replied to questions but also initiated new ideas, asked their own questions, and helped steer the direction of talk. These changes suggested that students were more motivated and invested in what they were discussing.

Power Relations

The teacher-student relationship became more balanced in the later sessions.

The teacher took on a more supportive role, stepping back to allow students to lead parts of the discussion. Students had more room to explore their ideas, respond to each other, and take ownership of their learning. Rather than directing every part of the lesson, the teacher encouraged students to contribute and build on each other's input. This shift helped create a more open, dialogic classroom where authority was shared more evenly (see table 8).

Table 8 Power Relations illustrative extracts of post-observations

Teacher's Authority:	Student Autonomy:
Time 4, Turn 034: The teacher maintains control over the activity with statements like, "Ok, look at the Think-Pair-Share, debriefing activity. What was successful? and what was not successful in the previous group lesson?." ***Time 6***: The teacher directs the final reflective activity, stating, "Give your conclusion about social media, is life without social media better or bitter? Give your conclusion."	***Time 4***, Turn 043: A student reflects independently on the group activity, "Um... in the past discussion, positively, there was participation. Every individual participated, really." ***Time 6***, Zewditu: "Life without social media is bitter because social media gives us different information..." This independent articulation of a conclusion demonstrates the student's autonomy in thought.

Comparison of Descriptive Quantitative Results with SCDA Qualitative Analysis

Content and Students' Contributions (Brief/Extended)

Quantitative analysis shows a significant increase in extended contributions, from 6% at Time 1 to 80% at Time 6. SCDA supports this with a shift from repetitive language in the baseline period to more complex, varied discourse post-intervention, reflecting greater lexical diversity and content depth.

Time and Students' Contributions (Brief/Extended)

Quantitative data indicate a shift from brief to extended contributions over time, suggesting enhanced student engagement. SCDA aligns with this, revealing a progression from structured exchanges to dynamic discussions, reinforcing the impact of the intervention.

Joint Intellectual Action and Students' Contributions (Sub-type Talks)

The rise in extended contributions, particularly in explaining and suggesting, reflects increased collaborative engagement. SCDA echoes this with a shift from teacher-driven to more collaborative interactions, highlighting the development of joint intellectual action.

Power Relations and Students' Contributions

Quantitative data suggest a shift towards more varied and student-driven contributions, indicating changes in classroom dynamics. SCDA confirms this by documenting a move from teacher-dominated interactions to more balanced power relations post-intervention. Overall, both quantitative and qualitative analyses reveal that the intervention fostered more elaborate, interactive, and critical discourse among students, enhancing engagement and learning outcomes.

Discussion

This study set out to explore how dialogic teaching might influence students' spoken language in an Ethiopian EFL classroom. Drawing on both numbers and deeper discourse patterns, the findings point to clear changes over time.

From a quantitative angle, student talk became noticeably more developed. For example, longer contributions rose from just 6% at the start to 80% by the end. Students were using far more words per turn — the average jumped from 5.59 to 33.02 — and their longest turns grew from 13 to 135 words. These are not just numbers; they reflect a shift in how students were thinking and expressing themselves.

The qualitative data tell a similar story. In the early sessions (Time 1–3), talk felt rehearsed short, predictable, and mostly driven by the teacher. But later (Times 4–6), something changed. Students started asking questions of their own, building on each other's ideas, and reflecting more critically. It was not just more talk: it was better talk, more meaningful, more collaborative.

These two strands, numbers and narratives, came together to show that dialogic teaching had a real impact. It did not just help students speak more often; it helped them speak with more substance. Their comments became fuller, more

responsive, and more connected to what others were saying. This is not surprising when compared to other studies. Hardman (2020) and Alexander (2018) also observed gains in student participation and quality of dialogue when dialogic methods were used. In fact, this study's findings about longer responses and deeper engagement are closely aligned with those results. Other researchers, like Caughlan et al. (2013) and Davies et al. (2017), have also noted how dialogic practices encourage critical thinking and richer contributions.

In Ethiopia, though, this stands in contrast with much of the existing literature. For instance, Esubalew (2021) pointed out how common closed questions still are in EFL classrooms. This study suggests that open-ended questioning, something often missing can be encouraged with the right support. It also resonates with Jeylan's (2007) ideas about mentoring through dialogue, especially in how students started to take ownership of the conversation.

Of course, there are always barriers. Past studies by Shea (2019) and Sedova et al. (2014) remind us that dialogic teaching does not thrive automatically. Teachers need time, training, and space to shift their approach — and students, too, need encouragement to move beyond the safety of short, "correct" answers. Still, when the shift happens, it's powerful. The changes observed here reflect key principles from Alexander's (2020) framework — like reciprocity, deliberation, and collectivity. The classroom slowly became a space where ideas were shared and shaped together, not just delivered from the front.

All in all, the findings show how dialogic teaching helped create a richer, more student-centered classroom. It allowed students to speak more, and speak better — and in doing so, it opened the door to deeper learning and more meaningful participation.

Conclusions

In conclusion, this study discovered that students' interactions in the classroom were significantly impacted by dialogic teaching. Students not only spoke more frequently after the intervention, but they also participated more fully. Instead of merely answering the teacher's questions, they began to pose open-ended questions, provide more thorough responses, and expand on one another's ideas. Talk in the classroom was usually brief and predictable in the previous sessions. However, students gradually started having more meaningful conversations after dialogic strategies were introduced. They demonstrated that they were considering the concepts themselves by responding in a less prepared and more creative manner. Roles in the classroom also underwent a significant change. The instructor started to take a backseat and let the students lead the conversation and take control of their learning.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, there are a few key steps that could help bring dialogic teaching into more classrooms. First, English teachers should have access to practical training that focuses on how to ask better questions and create room for real conversation. These skills take time and practice to build but make a big difference in student talk. In conclusion, this study discovered that students' interactions in the classroom were significantly impacted by dialogic teaching. Students not only spoke more frequently after the intervention, but they also participated more fully. Instead of merely answering the teacher's questions, they began to pose open-ended questions, provide more thorough responses, and expand on one another's ideas. Talk in the classroom was usually brief and predictable in the previous sessions. However, students gradually started having more meaningful conversations after dialogic strategies were introduced. They demonstrated that they were considering the concepts themselves by responding in a less prepared and more creative manner. Roles in the classroom also underwent a significant change. The instructor started to take a backseat and let the students lead the conversation and take control of their education. This was beneficial. Second, schools might consider using reflective activities like Fishbowl discussions or structured peer feedback. These kinds of methods encourage students to think more deeply and respond to each other, not just the teacher. They also help students get used to sharing ideas in a group, which strengthens both language skills and confidence. Lastly, ongoing support is important. Professional development programs should go beyond theory and give teachers tools they can use right away, especially for managing group talk, handling uneven participation, and making sure all students have a voice. When teachers feel equipped and supported, it's easier to keep dialogic practices going, even in challenging settings.

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