DIALOGIC TEACHING'S IMPACT ON ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS' SPEAKING SKILL

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Abstract. *The purpose of this paper is to examine how dialogic teaching affects the development of English language learners' speaking and critical thinking abilities. The study addresses the problem that many pupils experience difficulty expressing themselves effectively and confidently in classroom communication, both in academic and everyday contexts. Three instruments were used to collect data for the study: an observational checklist, an interview, and a questionnaire. The questionnaire was administered to pupils whose language proficiency level was A2. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were used to analyze the collected data. The findings indicate that dialogic teaching helps students develop discussion, questioning, reasoning, and argumentation skills, all of which support the improvement of speaking and critical thinking abilities. The results also show that authentic elements of dialogic teaching are effective when students are given sufficient time and opportunities to practice communication. Therefore, the study suggests introducing learners to various communication techniques, including dialogue, discussion, reasoning, and questioning, in order to help teachers apply the dialogic teaching approach more effectively.*

Keywords: critical thinking abilities, English language learners, dialogic teaching, speaking skill, classroom communication.

Introduction

Pupils at school often have difficulty expressing themselves effectively and confidently in class, whether they are discussing academic topics or everyday matters. According to previous studies, the dialogic teaching approach is one of the most effective strategies for improving classroom interaction because it creates educational opportunities through teacher-student communication and allows students to participate actively in classroom discussion [12;98].

In order to foster mutually responsive learning in the zone of proximal development, dialogic teaching emphasizes collective, reciprocal, supportive, cumulative, and purposeful interaction. It also highlights the importance of cooperative group work and peer support. Over the past three decades, empirical classroom research has shown that classroom discourse is often monologue-based, teacher-controlled, and teacher-shaped. Therefore, a significant change in classroom practice is needed in order to promote active engagement and improve learners' proficiency.

Dialogic teaching has emerged as an important approach in this context. Alexander defines dialogic education as a process of understanding students' thoughts, interacting with their developing ideas, and facilitating communication through creative classroom activities [1;62]. Dialogic teaching can be understood as an identifiable approach to instruction that uses speech effectively in teaching and learning. It involves continuous communication between teachers and learners and differs from casual informal talk, traditional question-answer patterns, and listen-tell forms of instruction. It should not be confused with the official use of the term "speaking and

listening" in England, because that term usually focuses only on learners' speech as part of English teaching, whereas dialogic teaching is connected with interactive instruction across the curriculum.

Dialogic teaching is based on the principles of collectivism, reciprocity, support, cumulation, and purposefulness. It draws on a long tradition of observational and process-product research on teaching, as well as psychological and neuroscientific studies of children's development and cognition. The approach is connected with the works of Cazden [8;120], Bakhtin [6;78], Barnes, Mercer, Bruner [7;34], and later developments in activity theory and cultural psychology. Dialogic teaching has been widely practiced in Yorkshire, London, and other parts of Britain.

According to Alexander [2;6], dialogic teaching is founded on several pedagogical values connected with the aims of education, the nature of knowledge, and the relationship between teachers and students. Teaching as transmission views education as the process of helping children receive, reproduce, and apply basic knowledge and skills. Teaching as initiation sees education as the transfer of high-status cultural knowledge in areas such as the humanities, sciences, literature, and the arts. Teaching as negotiation reflects Deweyan theory, according to which teachers and students collaborate to create knowledge and understanding rather than relating to each other only as authority and passive recipient.

Teaching as facilitation is guided by developmental principles and emphasizes the learner's readiness and individuality. Teaching as acceleration is related to the Vygotskian idea that education should lead development rather than merely follow it. Teaching as method focuses mainly on structure, economical use of time and space, carefully organized tasks, regular assessment, and clear feedback. In this case, teaching effectiveness is considered important regardless of broader social or cultural values.

Dialogic teaching is not a single technique but a professional strategy and outlook. It requires teachers to reconsider both the methods they use and the dynamics of classroom interaction. Like all effective instruction, dialogic teaching is based on facts and ideas. It uses a wide range of methods and approaches, and the teacher applies this repertoire according to educational contexts, learning goals, student needs, and the nature of the subject matter. In short, dialogic teaching consists of repertoires for everyday talk, learning talk, teaching talk, academic talk, and classroom organization.

Alexander identified several important components of dialogic teaching, including talk about daily life, the acquisition of communication skills, educational discourse, and classroom organization [3;112–113]. The concept of repertoire is central because no single method can achieve all teaching goals. Dialogic teaching combines different repertoires and uses them flexibly according to the situation and purpose. Sociolinguists define everyday talk as discourse that supports normal human interaction. According to Mercer and Littleton, the teacher plays a crucial role in establishing classroom culture and creating opportunities for students to build on each other's ideas [10;65].

Mercer and Hodgkinson distinguish between presentational talk and exploratory talk. Presentational talk usually assesses comprehension and emphasizes correct answers, whereas exploratory talk allows learners to share, test, and develop ideas without fear of being mocked or strongly rejected [11;98–100]. In dialogic education, students do not merely identify the answers they think the teacher wants to hear. Instead, they learn to narrate, explain, analyze, speculate, imagine, explore, evaluate, discuss, argue, justify, and ask their own questions.

The word dialogue comes from the Greek roots *dia* and *logos*, which refer to meaning moving through interaction. Dialogue is generally understood as conversation between two or more people for the purpose of exchanging ideas. Many thinkers from both Eastern and Western traditions have interpreted dialogue in different ways. Socrates used dialogue as a means of developing social consciousness. Martin Buber connected dialogue with education and spirituality. David Bohm proposed dialogue as a way to develop mental wholeness. Paulo Freire also used the idea of dialogue in his "pedagogy of the oppressed."

Alexander distinguishes dialogue from mainstream oral or "interactive" teaching as it is often understood by teachers [4;27]. He describes several types of teacher discourse: rote, recitation, instruction or exposition, discussion, and dialogue. Rote involves the repetition of information, concepts, and procedures. Recitation builds knowledge and comprehension through questions that assess or encourage recall. Instruction or exposition involves giving instructions, explaining procedures, and presenting facts or principles. Discussion allows the sharing of ideas for problem-solving and information exchange. Dialogue uses systematic and cumulative inquiry to reach shared understanding.

According to Bakhtinian theory, dialogue is not simply a form of speech but a phenomenon that exists in the very structure of words themselves [5;34]. Wegerif argues that spoken or written expressions are filled with the voices of others and do not always result in simple synthesis or final agreement [13;350]. Alexander's concept of an emerging pedagogy of talk is similar to the view that attention should be given not only to the questions teachers ask but also to how teachers respond to students' answers [3;112–113].

Dialogic approaches to teaching and learning have strong potential beyond whole-class instruction. Small-group learning may be one of the best settings for exploring cognitively stimulating discourse. However, such approaches are not always widely recognized by educators as effective tools for developing understanding and critical thinking [9;19–25]. Creating effective group-working tasks and conditions is often more difficult and time-consuming than using traditional independent or didactic approaches. This may also result from teachers' limited knowledge of how to scaffold conversation and what role they should play in supporting student talk.

Language learners often struggle to communicate effectively and confidently when discussing both academic and everyday topics. Therefore, this study aims to determine how dialogic teaching affects English language learners' speaking skills and critical thinking abilities. The study is based on the idea that communicative talk is one of the most effective ways to support teaching and learning. Dialogic teaching is more than teacher presentation; it involves continuous communication between the teacher and students. At the same time, dialogic instruction may face challenges related to pupils' motivation and insufficient fluency.

Materials and Methods

This study investigated the impact of dialogic teaching on English language learners' speaking skills and critical thinking abilities. The research focused on pupils whose English language proficiency level was A2. The study used three main data collection instruments: an observational checklist, an interview, and a questionnaire.

The observational checklist was used to examine how pupils participated in classroom communication during dialogic teaching activities. It helped identify learners' involvement in discussion, questioning, reasoning, argumentation, and interaction with peers and the teacher. The interview was used to collect qualitative information about learners' attitudes toward dialogic

teaching and their difficulties in classroom communication. The questionnaire was administered to A2-level pupils in order to gather data about their speaking confidence, participation, and perception of dialogic activities.

Both quantitative and qualitative approaches were used to analyze the collected data. Quantitative analysis was applied to the questionnaire results, while qualitative analysis was used to interpret the interview responses and classroom observation data. This mixed approach made it possible to examine not only measurable changes in learners' participation but also their experiences, attitudes, and difficulties during dialogic teaching.

Results

The analysis of the collected data showed that dialogic teaching had a positive influence on English language learners' speaking skills and critical thinking abilities. The findings demonstrated that pupils became more active in classroom communication when they were given opportunities to participate in dialogue, discussion, reasoning, and questioning activities.

The observational checklist showed that dialogic teaching encouraged learners to take part in classroom interaction more frequently. Pupils were able to express their opinions, respond to questions, ask their own questions, and participate in discussions. These activities supported the development of speaking fluency and confidence.

The questionnaire results indicated that A2-level pupils benefited from dialogic teaching because it gave them more opportunities to practice speaking in meaningful contexts. Learners showed improvement in their ability to discuss ideas, provide reasons, and participate in communication with classmates and the teacher. The interview responses also showed that pupils found dialogic activities useful because they helped them overcome hesitation and become more confident in expressing their thoughts.

The results suggest that dialogic teaching supports the development of discussion, questioning, reasoning, and argumentation skills. These skills are important not only for speaking development but also for the growth of critical thinking abilities. In general, the findings show that authentic dialogic teaching elements work effectively when students have enough time and practice.

Discussion

The findings of this study confirm that dialogic teaching can be an effective approach for improving English language learners' speaking skills. One of the main reasons for this effectiveness is that dialogic teaching creates a communicative classroom environment where learners are encouraged to speak, ask questions, explain their ideas, and respond to others. Unlike traditional teacher-centered instruction, dialogic teaching gives students a more active role in the learning process.

The results also show that dialogic teaching supports critical thinking. When learners participate in dialogue, they do not simply repeat information or provide short answers. Instead, they analyze ideas, compare opinions, justify their responses, and engage in reasoning. These processes help students develop higher-level thinking skills together with speaking skills.

Another important point is that dialogic teaching allows learners to practice language in meaningful situations. Speaking skill cannot be developed only through memorization or mechanical exercises. Learners need opportunities to use language for real communication. Dialogue, discussion, questioning, and argumentation provide such opportunities and help learners become more confident speakers.

However, the study also indicates that dialogic teaching may face some challenges. Some pupils may lack motivation, while others may have insufficient fluency to participate actively in discussion. Teachers may also need more preparation and methodological knowledge to organize effective dialogic activities. Group work, exploratory talk, and classroom discussion require careful planning, clear instructions, and supportive teacher guidance.

Therefore, dialogic teaching should be introduced gradually and systematically. Teachers should create a safe classroom atmosphere where pupils are not afraid of making mistakes. They should also use tasks that encourage learners to express opinions, ask questions, give reasons, and respond to classmates. In this way, dialogic teaching can become a practical tool for developing both speaking competence and critical thinking.

Conclusion

Dialogic teaching has a positive impact on English language learners' speaking skills and critical thinking abilities. The study showed that learners benefit from classroom activities based on dialogue, discussion, reasoning, questioning, and argumentation. These activities help pupils become more active, confident, and reflective participants in classroom communication.

The findings suggest that dialogic teaching is more effective when students are given enough time and opportunities to practice communication. It also requires teachers to use appropriate methods, organize meaningful interaction, and support learners during classroom talk. Although challenges such as low motivation and inadequate fluency may occur, dialogic teaching remains a valuable approach for improving speaking skills among English language learners.

It is recommended that teachers introduce a wider range of communicative techniques, including dialogues, discussions, reasoning tasks, and questioning activities. These techniques can help learners improve their speaking abilities and develop critical thinking skills. Future studies may examine the long-term effects of dialogic teaching on learners of different proficiency levels and in different educational contexts.

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