

INTEGRATING DIALOGIC PEDAGOGY IN TEACHING ESP

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Abstract. *Drawing on educational research and developments in dialogic pedagogical approaches, this paper points to the role and value of dialogue as a teaching method. With the growing belief that meaningful learning better takes place through engaging in dialogic interactions with students more and more authors suggest moving from traditional 'monologic' to dialogic teaching at all levels of education. Dialogic pedagogical approaches are communicative, student-centered approaches which centers on the ways of asking questions and responding to students' contributions. Dialogic teaching is about taking teaching further through numerous possibilities that skillful management of questions and feedback offers, so as to benefit both understanding of content and language proficiency. In teaching English for Specific Purposes (ESP), structured oral activities such as discussion and dialogue are indispensable methods for enabling students to develop their professional communicative competence in the target language. Dialogic teaching/instruction brings a number of benefits in terms of cognitive learning, as well as social and emotional benefits. In this paper, the preconditions for effective dialogic teaching in an ESP context are discussed.*

Key words: *dialogic teaching, monologic teaching, questioning, communicative approach, ESP*

1. INTRODUCTION

As considerable body of literature points to the importance of classroom talk in achieving more efficient and meaningful learning, this paper explores current approaches and thoughts on dialogic teaching and learning. There is also a growing recognition of the benefits of using dialogue as structured learning talk in learning specific content and skills, but also in developing higher-order thinking and student engagement and autonomy (Renshaw, 2004; Alexander, 2006) at all levels of education. As reported by Nystrand and Gamoran (1997) the quality of instructional discourse in the classroom is positively related to a measure of students' in-depth understanding. According to Alexander (2008, p.185) dialogic teaching is "teaching that harnesses the power of talk to stimulate and extend pupils' thinking and advance their learning and understanding".

Within language learning context, dialogic perspectives and practices have been supported by different authors who emphasize the benefits of dialogic teaching (Haneda and Wells, 2008; P Chappell, 2014; Chick, 2016; Wong and Grant, 2007; Juzwik, 2013). Nevertheless, many authors researching classroom interaction confirm that traditional teaching methods such the interaction pattern of Initiation/Response/Follow-Up (IRF) are still the most common methods of instruction (Ur, 2012; Elis, 2012) at all levels of education. The three-part IRF sequence is a typical classroom interaction pattern which

comprises teacher initiation (I), learner response (R) and teacher follow-up or feedback (F) (sometimes referred to as teacher evaluation (E)). IRF is characterized by teacher-led sets of questions that are often unrelated and require students to respond with factual answers and known information. An identifying feature of recitation is that it often ends at the teacher's second turn (Chappel, 2014). Dialogic teaching is reciprocal teaching (Alexander, 2005) in a sense that all participants, both teachers and students contribute to knowledge construction. Their contributions are equally valued as they share power and responsibility in learning.

Even though dialogic teaching is "an artful performance rather than a prescribed technique" (Renshaw, 2004, p.10) some pre-conditions and criteria for establishing a dialogic discourse pattern have been identified and discussed in the paper. They involve the use of different types of questions such as: open, authentic questions, uptake and higher cognitive questions. Managing questions, feedback and creating dialogic environment are some most important preconditions that are discussed further in the paper. Also, the educative potential is emphasized.

2. WHAT IS DIALOGIC TEACHING?

Different studies have highlighted the importance of classroom discourse and in particular ways of using questions and feedback in the learning process. Dialogic talk is not just any talk. It is as distinct from the question-answer and listen-tell routines of traditional teaching as it is from the casual conversation of informal discussion (Alexander, 2010, p.1). In traditional 'monologic' approaches the teacher and the written materials are the main sources of knowledge and students are just receivers in the process of transfer of knowledge. Dialogic pedagogy encourages students to develop self-awareness of their language learning strategies and meta-cognitive processes, rather than simply memorizing any particular set of material (e.g. vocabulary, grammar rules, etc.)" (Wong, and Grant, 2007, p.686). Dialogic approach to teaching is a type of communicative approach. In language teaching communicative teaching practices are commonly applied and consequently, English classroom is a place where dialogic teaching can be well utilized.

Dialogic approaches to teaching represent an alternative to traditional authoritative teaching patterns and methods so teachers can replace or minimize unnecessary rote, recitation, and elicitation (Chappel, P. 2014) with more dialogic strategies. According to Alexander (2010) dialogic teaching is not a single set method of teaching, but "an approach and a professional outlook rather than a specific method. It requires us to rethink about not just the techniques we use but also the classroom relationships we foster, the balance of power between teacher and taught and the way we conceive of knowledge" (Alexander, 2010, p.1). According to Chappel (2012) inquiry dialogue offers the potential to open up opportunities for language learning, where learners are engaged and therefore open to new and relevant linguistic features that emerge during interaction. It stimulates spontaneous spoken texts for teaching and learning, requiring teachers to be skilled at setting clear aims, modelling the functions and forms of inquiry acts, 'idealizing' the process and the possible outcome, and providing a model for creative imitation (or appropriation) by learners.

Many authors support the relevance of dialogic approach and the positive impact that using dialogue as a pedagogic tool has on learning. Dialogic approaches to teaching see learning as an interactive cooperative meaning-making process during which knowledge is co-constructed between all participants, learners and teachers, through engaging in dialogues.

It “nurtures the student’s engagement, confidence, independence and responsibility” (Alexander, 2006, p.35).

Dialogic approaches encourage a variety of different techniques and structured oral activities to maximize students’ intellectual and creative potential. Dialogic teaching is an approach to classroom instruction that focuses on meaningful communication and is consistent with the communicative approach to language teaching that has become an international standard in language pedagogy.

2.1. Conversation and dialogue

Conversation and dialogue are forms of talk and even though they are usually considered as synonyms in dictionaries in the matter of dialogic teaching, there is a need to make a distinction. Dialogue as inquiry is different than dialogue as conversation in that each inquirer continues to contribute their views but those views are actively interrogated and questioned by other inquirers, with the intention of clarification as well as the achievement of a “working consensus or tentative agreement” (Renshaw, 2004, p. 9). According to Bakhtin “If an answer does not give rise to a new question from itself, then it falls out of the dialogue” (Bakhtin, 1986, p 168).

Dialogue can be approached as a relationship and not only a form of instruction. It is a way of coming to an understanding between people whether they agree with each other or not. “A central feature of dialogic pedagogy is a teacher-student relationship that stresses mutual respect, sharing and learning in community.” (Wong, S., Grant, R., 2007, p.686). In a dialogue, participants bring their own experiences and subjectivities to share and also consider different views and opinions. It is not important to win the argument but to explore and reflect on ideas and experiences so as to focus student attention on the meaning and the creation of new utterances and understandings.

2.2. Learning as dialogue

To get a clearer view on dialogic pedagogy the contributions of several authors need to be considered. According to Alexander (2006) dialogic teaching helps teachers to more precisely diagnose students’ needs, frame their learning tasks and assess their progress. It empowers the student for lifelong learning and active citizenship. Alexander views dialogic teaching as a whole pedagogic approach with “accompanying ideas, values and principles” (2008:49). He also emphasizes the connection between learning talk, higher-order thinking and student engagement. “High-quality classroom talk improves the quality of classroom interaction and raises educational standards; both those that can be tested and those for which more sophisticated kinds of assessment are required” (Alexander, 2014, p.413).

Alexander contrasts dialogic teaching with traditional transmissive ‘monologic’ teaching and identifies five criteria for establishing dialogic teaching. Such teaching is: collective (teachers and students address the learning task together), reciprocal (teachers and students listen to each other to share ideas and consider alternative viewpoints), supportive (students articulate their ideas freely without fear of embarrassment over ‘wrong’ answers and support each other to reach common understandings), cumulative (teachers and students build on their own and each others’ ideas to chain them into coherent lines of thinking and enquiry), and purposeful (teachers plan and facilitate dialogic teaching with educational goals in mind). Furthermore, it can take place in whole class, group based and individual interactions between teacher and students.

Mortimer and Scott investigated different types of talk demonstrated in science classrooms and like Alexander emphasize the importance of the way how and the reason why a teacher organizes oral instruction in a lesson. They also see dialogic instruction as an alternative to traditional 'monologic' instruction that still dominates the classrooms. They use dialogic teaching as the integral part of their communicative approach that focuses on "how the teacher works with students to develop ideas in the classroom" (Mortimer and Scott, 2003, p.33). Mortimer and Scott's perspective on dialogic education stresses the meaning-making process as a dialogic process. They state that "talk is central to meaning making process and thus central to learning" (Mortimer and Scott, 2003, p. 3) and they argue that "meaning making can be seen to be a fundamental dialogic process, where different ideas are brought together and worked upon" (Mortimer and Scott, 2003, p. 3). The four classes of the communicative approach as they appear in the classroom are (Mortimer and Scott, 2003, p. 39):

- Interactive/dialogic: the teacher and students explore ideas, generating new meanings, posing genuine questions and offering, listening to and working on different points of view.
- Non-interactive/dialogic: the teacher considers various points of view, setting out, exploring and working on the different perspectives.
- Interactive/authoritative: the teacher leads students through a sequence of questions and answers with the aim of reaching one specific point of view.
- Non-interactive/authoritative: the teacher presents one specific point of view.

Nystrand M. (1997) also reports on the benefits of dialogic instruction and gives key features of monologically and dialogically organized instruction (Nystrand, 1997, p.19) (see table 1). According to Nystrand dialogic discourse habits increase students' substantive engagement with course content (Nystrand and Gamoran, 1997), and benefit students' writing and reading performance (Nystrand, Gamoran, and Carbonaro, 1998).

Table 1 Monologically and dialogically organised instruction

Features	Monologically organised instruction	Dialogically organised instruction
Paradigm	Recitation	Discussion
Communication model	Transmission of knowledge	Transformation of understanding
Epistemology	Objectivism: knowledge is a given	Dialogism: Knowledge emerges from interactions of voices
Source of valued Knowledge	Teacher, textbook authorities: Excludes students	Includes students' interpretations and personal experience
Texture	Choppy	Coherent

Source: Nystrand (1997, p.19)

In the context of language learning Chappel (2014) gives the following taxonomy (Table 2) of classroom talk based on language lessons analyzed in his study. He suggests that the kinds of talk presented should be skillfully managed and balanced.

Table 2. Types of institutional classroom talk

Type of talk	Description
Rote	The drilling of language items through sustained repetition.
Recitation and elicitation	The accumulation of knowledge and understanding through questions designed to test or stimulate recall of what has been previously encountered, or to cue students to work out the answer from clues in the question.
Instruction/exposition	Telling the students what to do, and/ or imparting information, often about target language items, and/ or explaining facts or principles about language, and/or explaining the procedure of an activity, and/or modelling the talk and behaviours of an activity.
Discussion	The exchange of ideas with a view to sharing information and solving problems.
Inquiry dialogue	Achieving common understanding through structured inquiry, wondering (playing with possibilities, reflecting, considering, exploring) and discussion that guides and prompts; build on each other's contributions (cumulative talk), reduce choices, and expedite the 'handover' of concepts and principles.

Source: Chappel, 2014

Teachers use different types of talk for different teaching purposes. As the quality of classroom interaction is crucial to any learning process, and especially to language learning, it depends to great extent on the pedagogical practices of teachers. Researchers worldwide report that the majority of teacher's questions used in classroom discourse call for specific factual answers, or lower cognitive thinking (Nystrand et al 1997, Alexander, 2008). However, higher cognitive questions, which cause pupils to go beyond memory and use other thought processes in forming an answer, have an important role (Gregson et al, 2015). Consequently, by changing common question and answer routines and implementing innovative practices teachers empower the learning process and make it more student-centered.

2.3. Dialogic vs monologic interaction

In language teaching IRE/IRF pattern of classroom interaction or triadic sequence has been regarded as a formal language of the classroom for a long time. (Ellis, 2012; Ur, 2012). The teacher initiates, the learner responds and the teacher gives feedback or evaluates on students response. Wells (1999) contributed by stressing that the third part should be the follow-up or 'f', rather than 'evaluation' and that it can serve different functions. In dialogic pedagogy IRF pattern is viewed as 'monologic' but changes in how it is managed can make it more dialogic. Namely, not every utterance needs to be immediately evaluated but the teacher can use it as an opportunity to „clarify, exemplify, expand, or justify student's response or to request the student to do any of these things“ (Skidmore et al, 2016). The quality of classroom talk is realized through teacher's choice and management of the well-known structures. The third turn of IRFs can carry out different tasks and the teacher may launch a range of teaching activities (Lee, 2007).

According to Wells (2006), classrooms can indeed be places in which knowledge is dialogically co-constructed. Even though 'monologic', direct instruction may sometimes be necessary, it is not sufficient (Wells et al, 2006). In addition, educational goals that center on students' agency, higher order thinking and character building require changes of the traditional instruction pattern. Such complex goals require a wider set of teaching strategies, techniques, activities and principles which build teacher's pedagogical repertoire. In dialogic teaching, the idea of pedagogical repertoire is paramount and questions are an essential part of any teaching repertoire. The varied objectives of teaching cannot be achieved through a single approach or technique (Alexander 2008).

In the context of language teaching, ESP aims to meet specified needs of a learner determined by their profession or a field of study. Some authors argue for discipline-specific approach to teaching ESP and believe its methodology is also very specific (Robinson, 1980; Hyland, 2002) while others do not (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987). In teaching ESP the use of subject-specific materials is generally regarded as important but there's much more to ESP than teaching specific vocabulary and grammatical structures and translating written texts. According to Hutchinson et al (1987), language in use should look not just at syntax, but also at the other ingredients of communication, such as non-verbal communication (gesture, posture, eye contact etc.), the medium and channel of communication, role relationships between the participants, the topic and purpose of communication. Students need the target language for professional purposes as means of effective communication and cooperation within their expert field. Furthermore, students themselves often express that they need help with putting technical vocabulary together so they can communicate it. In order to develop professional communicative competence, creativity but also critical skills traditional delivery of information is not enough. Teachers need to integrate new approaches into their teaching and gain experience in using various strategies and methods. They also need to be able to easily change activities according to different objectives and provide students with adequate opportunities for authentic communication.

Dialogic approaches provide students with various opportunities to use the language in meaningful authentic contexts and structured communicative situations through creative student-centered learning. Consequently, students develop social skills, share their learning and get a chance to demonstrate their knowledge that helps create a highly motivating and encouraging classroom. In dialogic teaching interactive/dialogic communicative interaction is often realized "through extended chains, I-R-P-R-P-R-P- (initiation-response-prompt-) of discourse where the teacher acts to prompt further thoughtful contributions from students rather than to evaluate responses."(Mercer, 2007, p.15). Student's feedback and extended interactions are used to maximize learning in a way that is open and supportive and prompts creative thinking.

3. DIALOGIC TEACHING IN PRACTICE

Drawing on the contemporary research regarding benefits of dialogic classroom practices it is important to further discuss the structure of classroom interaction and the preconditions for its effectiveness. The question is how to organize and maintain dialogic interaction in a classroom and re-organize and modify conventional models of instruction. Different related approaches (Alexander, 2006; Mortimer and Scott, 2003; Mercer, 2007; Nystrand, 1997) view dialogic teaching somewhat differently, but there are some

principles and pre-conditions that consistently appear, such as multi-disciplinarity, learner-centeredness, equal power relationships and the adoption of a dialogic communicative approach that includes a skillful use of questions and feedback.

Today, communicative approaches are widely accepted among language teachers. As communicative approaches to teaching focus on the communicative competence, context and purpose, they are closely related to English for Specific Purposes (ESP) as a field of language teaching. Furthermore, in teaching ESP learner-centredness (Hutchinson and Waters, 1987; Dudley-Evans and St. John, 1998) and multi-disciplinarity (Dudley-Evans and St John, 1998) are emphasized. In dialogic teaching the connection between teaching instruction and learning is emphasized, especially the ways in which teachers ask questions and respond to students' contributions.

3.1. Dialogue in the language learning context

In the language learning context, dialogues play an important role in the development of linguistic and cultural understanding. Dialogues are commonly used by language teachers to show students how basic vocabulary, new phrases and grammatical structures are used in practice. However, the use of dialogue is often used for limited purposes and in ways that are not authentic enough. Activities that involve basic and situational dialogues that are commonly used by language teachers are not natural and stimulating enough and do not include language production. Therefore, such practices are not really "dialogic". Those techniques can be a valuable teaching tool when aimed at specific goals but dialogues can be used in more creative and spontaneous ways to benefit both understanding of content and language production. As reported by Ellis (1999) "giving learners a chance to control the discourse makes the classroom acquisition rich." (Ellis, 1999, p. 211). However, although many approaches and teachers focus on improving students' communication there is not enough authentic communication in the classroom (Meddings and Thornbury, 2009).

Natural language needs to be used as much as possible and in situations in which the target structure occurs naturally. Teachers need to provide students with opportunities to engage in "real" communication rather than only invented examples. According to Chappell (2012), inquiry dialogue offers the potential to open up opportunities for language learning, where learners are engaged and therefore open to new and relevant linguistic features that emerge during interaction. It stimulates spontaneous spoken texts for teaching and learning, requiring teachers to be skilled at setting clear aims, modelling the functions and forms of inquiry acts, 'idealizing' the process and the possible outcome, and providing a model for creative imitation (or appropriation) by learners. In dialogic teaching, the focus is on the spontaneous language use and real-time authentic communication.

Meddings and Thornbury (2009) promote conversation-driven approach to language learning and suggest three key principles: the incorporation of a conversation-driven approach, a materials-light focus and scaffolding emergent language. When talking about the four features of communicative classroom talk, Thornbury (1996) points to the use of referential questions, content feedback, wait time, and student-initiated talk. Such practices are consistent with the principles suggested by the contemporary pioneers in dialogic approaches to teaching. However, due to lack of time, but also professional support teachers too often rely on textbooks and other written teaching materials (Meddings et al, 2009), as means of accessing knowledge rather than on authentic open discussion. According to Thornbury and his Dogme/Teaching Unplugged movement (Meddings et al, 2009) language learning is both socially motivated and socially constructed. "We are seeking alternatives

to models of instruction that are mediated primarily through materials and whose objective is the delivery of 'grammar mc nuggets'. We are looking for ways of exploiting the learning opportunities offered by the raw material of the classroom, that is the language that emerges from the needs, interests, concerns and desires of the people in the room." (Thorbury, 2000b). Juzvik et al invite teachers both new and veteran to "go dialogic" and make dialogic teaching part of their ongoing process of learning to teach and offer support in cultivating a flexible pedagogical repertoire, guided by the idea that "what I say responds to what you said." (Juzwik, 2013, p.4).

Dialogic teaching is about taking teaching further and being aware of numerous possibilities that skillful management of various repertoires of learning talks offers, depending on goals set by the teacher, to benefit both understanding of content and language proficiency. In teaching which is dialogic rather than transmissive the traditional IRF pattern is replaced with dialogic interaction structures in which participants freely exchange ideas and ask questions, challenge each other, and justify ideas and opinions. There has been a paradigm shift in the educational methods and approaches to classroom interaction, a change from 'monologic' way of thinking to dialogic, and it is reflected in efforts to better understand and respond to the changing needs of students. For the dialogic quality of classroom interaction, the following three elements are of crucial importance: questioning strategies, teacher agency and dialogic environment.

3.2. Dialogic interaction - questioning

Questioning, as one of the most common and important forms of interaction and instruction (Alexander, 2008) can be used to improve students' communication, prompt authentic conversation and make learning more student-centered. Teacher's use of questions and feedback strategies should encourage mutual respect and students' contribution in order to create meaning through talk. Wlodkowski (1999) stresses the importance of gaining understanding of the participants in the learning process. The role of feedback should be to encourage and praise rather than to inform, otherwise cognitive potential of exchanges is lost (Alexander, 2005, p. 9).

In an authoritative 'monologic' classroom a teacher as the ultimate authority mostly uses factual and evaluative questions with predetermined answers and calls on students to 'respond'. Students give brief, unelaborated answers and a teacher evaluates the response. In contrast, in a dialogic student-centered classroom the questions are authentic, productive and have multiple answers as opposed to factual and 'test' questions. Teachers are constructing their questions more carefully. According to Alexander (2008) questions starting with 'What?', 'Who?' and 'How many?' are giving way to those starting with 'Why?' and 'How?'. Teachers, then, are balancing factual recall or test questions with those that probe thinking and encourage analysis and speculation.

What teachers should do to make interaction more dialogic is the following:

1. Use referential questions rather than display questions because they require the learner to provide more information and encourage learners' oral language production (Chaudron 1988, p.173; Nunan 1991, p.194). Long and Sato (1983) classified questions as display and referential questions and found that the use of referential questions stimulated much longer and syntactically more complex student responses than the use of display questions. The majority of higher cognitive questions tend to be referential because there is a general tendency that a teacher does not know what kinds of answers the students try to create in response to most higher cognitive questions. Richards and

Lockhart (1996) classified questions into: procedural that deal with classroom procedures and routines, convergent (closed) used to elicit a specific response and open (divergent) questions that do not have a correct answer but elicit a wide range of responses and are used to stimulate dialogue. Cognitively challenging questions such as divergent or referential, involve analysis, synthesis, evaluation, interpretation, expressing opinions, evaluation, problem solving, analyzing and creating. Lower cognitive questions require students to recognize or simply recall factual information. Language learning should be much more than learning transactional language for relatively brief encounters. Learners' linguistic systems develop as they are cognitively engaged in these pursuits while at the same time developing the intellectual skills for lifelong learning. (Chappell, 2014).

2. Create dialogue as a chain of questions. The Bakhtinian metaphor of dialogue is a notion that includes concrete language use but extends it to refer to the uninterrupted chain of "questions and answers" that characterize human existence (Bakhtin 1984, p. 293). Uptake questions involve follow-up questions or building a student's answer into a subsequent question (Nystrand et al 1997).

3. Provide enough wait-time or pause time in a discourse is crucial (Nystrand, 1997) as it gives all students more time to process the question and to formulate a response (Chaudron, 1988, p.128). Increasing the wait-time before calling a student to answer leads to longer student responses and more students attempting to respond (Richards and Lockhart, 1996, p.188). In addition, increased wait-time tends to lead teachers to ask fewer but more cognitively complex questions (Gibbons, 2007).

4. It is also important that teachers are good and patient listeners to encourage extended students' responses and increase classroom talk.

3.3. Teacher agency

In a dialogic classroom, where teachers and learners "think together" (Mercer, 2002, P.43), teachers facilitate an inquiry in a more democratic manner rather than play the role of 'expert'. Dialogic instruction can occur in a form of a whole-class, group or one-to-one instruction. In order to structure and maintain dialogic meaning making process within the classroom teacher's responsibility is to:

- clarify the objective of the activity,
- organize teaching activities and choose form the repertoire on the basis of fitness for purpose,
- set the context and provide background information,
- present the content and orient students to it,
- facilitate and sustain conversation with prompts and questions,
- encourage students to share and justify their views, come up with ideas, listen and give support with respect but avoid becoming overly permissive,
- maintain integrity and structure so as to prevent non-constructive peer communication to take place,
- give students a clear purpose for discussion by explaining educational goals,
- create an atmosphere of cooperation in which diversity is appreciated and students' voices are equally valued.

3.4. Dialogic environment

Answering student's needs is what usually motivates teachers to use innovative teaching methods. However, another important issue is motivating and engaging passive learners. Some students show reluctance to participate in classroom discourses. Namely, lack of self-confidence and motivation are often the main reasons and barriers to participation in speaking activities. As opposed to 'monologic' hierarchical environment in which students are often under pressure and fear being scrutinized, dialogic environment is a decentralized, participative and supportive learning environment where reflective inquiry is valued.

Through such an approach and in such pedagogically appropriate environment students are encouraged to use the knowledge, experience, already formed opinions, thoughts and ideas which makes them more involved in the learning process and makes a great basis for dialogue. Giving students a prominent voice in learning activities and inviting them to self-express increases the motivation builds self-confidence and makes learning more powerful. Even though teaching adult students is often rewarding, sometimes, lack of self-confidence in learners or feeling of awkwardness, embarrassment and overtiredness due to their other responsibilities can work against the educator. Therefore, in an ESP classroom in general creating a positive climate of respect and empathy has always been crucial. A safe atmosphere of trust and relevant topics will spark up learner's interest and encourage dialogue. Wlodkowski (1999, p.28) points out that learners are in a better position for learning when they are on their learning edge, the edge of their comfort zones, but also stresses the importance of empathy which he defines as having a realistic understanding of what learners' goals, perspectives and expectations are. According to Gravett and Petersen "educators need to maintain a careful balance between challenge and comfort in their interactions with learners" (2009, p.107).

If we want students to engage in dialog, they need to feel their talk is appreciated and equally important as teacher talk. Sometimes it is not easy to encourage and make students, especially passive students, understand how important it is that they talk in class. For that reason, teachers should make educational goals clear and explain that during dialog there are no wrong answers, there are no expectations and that risk-taking is encouraged, even rewarded.

4. CONCLUSION

With respect to cognitive, social and pedagogic benefits of dialogic teaching, the purpose of this paper is to make useful conclusions about the effect of dialogic classroom interaction on language learning and how to improve the overall quality of the language learning process. As dialogues are commonly used in language teaching, they can, as a form of learning talk, help students meet learning goals. The quality of communication is central to both language learning and dialogic teaching. In addition, dialogic teaching has proven to be a good way of enhancing the classroom communication and our perspective on language learning. Through well prepared dialogue on a relevant topic, and in a decentralized environment, teachers do not only teach in a traditional sense, but foster and prompt the development of a range of skills; oral production, communication, thinking and critical skills. Teachers do not only teach content, but also teach the means. Students are encouraged and instructed to discuss, question, justify, negotiate, reflect,

empathize and evaluate. Teacher's role is not to direct conversation toward required answers or conclusions but to extend thinking and speaking so as to collectively inquire into specific topics and critically analyze ideas. Students are encouraged and required to investigate and explore to make meaning but also to take responsibility for their learning. As dialogic environment is characterized by reciprocal relationships, it is an organizational structure that is less hierarchical and more of a network structure in which all participants understand their roles and responsibilities. In a language classroom, instruction can be organized as more or less dialogic and more or less structured depending on the goals set by the teacher, students' language proficiency but also on the classroom climate.

It is clear that dialogic teaching requires time, for both preparation and application and certain language knowledge. Dialogic teaching also requires practice as sometimes students lack the skills to engage in a reflective dialogue with each other. Students in the beginning apply skills they have acquired in prior learning situations, and the research shows that there is a lack of structured oral activities in schools and that traditional 'monologic' instruction is still predominant. Consequently, it takes time and effort to build dialogic environment that is decentralized, participative and supportive and in which reflective inquiry is appreciated by all participants.

Specific characteristics of dialogic approaches to teaching as opposed to authoritative 'monologic' teaching are as follows (Table 3):

Table 3 Characteristics of dialogic teaching as opposed to authoritative 'monologic' teaching.

Monologic teaching	Dialogic teaching
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ hierarchy ▪ authoritarian teachers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ network structure ▪ democratic teachers, ▪ fostering strong teacher-student and student-student relationships
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ domination of teacher talk 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ student-initiated ideas, topics and questions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ IRF pattern and invented examples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ a range of discourse types and genres, ▪ concrete application and authentic communication
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ individual achievement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ individual and collective achievement and mutual respect
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ transfer of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ teachers and students contribute, explore and reflect upon ideas, ▪ maximizing student's intellectual and creative potential, ▪ character building, ▪ emotional benefits - student's self-confidence improves
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ directed communication, ▪ teacher-pupil interaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ authentic communication ▪ teacher-pupil interaction and pupil-pupil interaction
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ brief answers and contributions ▪ conventional and narrow approach 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ sustained language use ▪ multi-disciplinary approach

In a changing world, the time for change and improvement and for teachers to enrich their pedagogical repertoire is now. Language teaching should be open, diverse and flexible, not restricted to one narrow approach. It should be based on a number of principles one of which is dialogism. The uniting pedagogical goals of dialogic teaching are the development of higher order thinking and of student autonomy and agency. In that regard, dialogic teaching provides language learners with an important foundation for the application of language knowledge in the real world.

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