

Iranian EFL Learners' Perception of Applying Dialogic Inquiry Approach to Enhance Dialogic Classroom Talk: A Case Study on a Social-constructivist Teachers' Professional Development Course

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Classroom Talk, Dialogic Inquiry Approach, Learner's Perception, Social-constructivism, Teachers' Professional Development

ABSTRACT

This mixed-methods study has set its goal on evaluating the effectiveness of an in-service teachers' development course on the dialogic inquiry approach to language teaching to make EFL teachers ready to practice the approach in order to enhance learners' dialogic classroom talk. To reach this aim, the researchers held an in-service teachers' development course by considering social-constructivist principles for teachers' professional development. The course was held by the participation of 3 EFL teachers teaching at Mehr Language Institute, Eghlid, Fars, Iran. Then, the teachers practiced the approach for a whole term. The sessions were video-recorded and analyzed, and interpreted by Wells's (2001) Discourse Analysis Coding Protocol. The researchers also scrutinized the learners' perception on the application of the approach to foster their dialogic classroom talk. To do this, the learners were surveyed by a researcher-modified questionnaire developed by Lee (2014) after finishing the term. To triangulate the results of the questionnaire, the researchers selected 9 students by a random sampling method to participate in in-depth interview sessions. The results of analyzing the qualitative and quantitative data revealed that the teachers' development course was positively effective in the accurate application of the dialogic inquiry approach by the teachers to enhance learners' classroom talk dialogically.

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Introduction

Social-constructivist approaches to teacher development trace their intellectual lineage to Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and its emphasis on learning as a socially mediated, contextually situated process (Vygotsky, 1978; Jones & Brader-Araje, 2002). From this perspective, knowledge is not a static commodity to be transmitted but is actively constructed through participation in culturally organized practices (McLeod, 2019). As Johnson (2006, p. 236) observes, contemporary social-constructivist accounts of language-teacher development foreground "teachers' prior experiences, their interpretations of the activities they engage in, and, most important, the contexts within which they work" as central determinants of what and how teachers do what they do. Consequently, teacher professional development (PD) framed by social-constructivist principles

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reconceptualizes teachers as agentic learners who co-construct pedagogical knowledge rather than as passive recipients of prescriptions (Beck & Kosnik, 2006).

Recent empirical work confirms this orientation: constructivist and social-constructivist PD designs that emphasize collaborative inquiry, reflection, and situated practice foster sustained uptake of new pedagogies (Koellner et al., 2024) and enhance teachers' capacity to enact learner-centred, critical pedagogies in language classrooms (Le & Nguyen, 2024). Moreover, contextually responsive PD, programmes that embed needs analysis, collegial dialogue, and opportunities for reflective sense-making, better support teachers to adapt innovations to their local conditions (Ngema, 2024). In practice, then, social-constructivist PD intentionally builds extended time for reflection, collegial discussion, and the expression and negotiation of alternative perspectives so that teachers can interpret, internalize, and transform new practices in relation to their prior experience and workplace context (Beck & Kosnik, 2006; Koellner et al., 2024; Apkan et al., 2020).

The dialogic inquiry approach, as a social-constructivist approach to language teaching, is an effective approach to improve the dialogic stance of classroom talk (Skidmore & Murakami, 2016). However, because the dialogic inquiry approach is social-constructivist in nature, utilizing a social-constructivist teacher's development helps the teachers more with applying the approach by equipping them with theoretical foundations and practical application (Hennessy, 2011; Skidmore, 2016; Wells, 2001). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of each teacher's development course must be evaluated (Ammasi, 2024). The researchers can put the learners' behavior into consideration to evaluate the impact of the course on the teachers' practice as a way of appraisal (Bates & Morgan, 2018). Another way to investigate the influence of an approach on classroom practices is to identify the learners' feedback as a customer-based evaluation (Ajmal et al., 2024; Richardson, 2005).

In Iran, as an EFL context, the claim is that language settings contemplate dialogic classroom talk to develop the learners' collaborative abilities (Khansir & Mahammadifard, 2015). However, studies show a lack of knowledge and interest among EFL teachers in Iran about the dialogic approaches to teaching (Tavakoli, 2016; Yaqubi & Rashidi, 2019). In light of this, there is a need to change the teachers' practices to a dialogic by the help of teachers' professional development courses (Syer et al., 2013). Furthermore, we see that research on learners' feedback, as an evaluative tool, on the effectiveness of the approach is scarce (Namy Soghady et al., 2022; Gillies, 2023). Seeing these problems, the researchers of the present study mainly aimed to investigate the effectiveness of an in-service teachers' development course for fostering the teachers' knowledge about the dialogic inquiry approach in order to enhance learners' dialogic classroom talk. To do this, they scrutinized learners' dialogic classroom talks and their feedback on applying the approach in their classes. To achieve this goal, the researchers generated the following questions:

1. Is a social-constructivist teachers' development course positively effective in applying the dialogic inquiry approach to improve dialogic classroom talk?
2. What is the perception of the learners on applying the dialogic inquiry approach to language teaching in their classes?

Literature Review

Theoretical and Empirical Foundations

This study is framed by social-constructivism, whose sociocultural orientation (Vygotsky, 1978/1987) views learning as a socially mediated, contextually situated process in which learners co-construct meaning through interaction. From this perspective, teacher professional development is most effective when it treats teachers as agentic participants who integrate theory and practice through collaborative inquiry, reflection, and situated practice (Pritchard & Woollard, 2010; Beck & Kosnik, 2006). Beck and Kosnik's (2006) account of social-constructivist teacher development is particularly useful here: they emphasise (a) integration of theory and action, (b) sustained inquiry and critique of practice, and (c) a learning community that supports dialogic exchange, principles that directly inform the design of social-constructivist PD for dialogic inquiry. In the dialogic inquiry tradition, teachers function as facilitators who initiate and sustain inquiry-rich classroom talk rather than as sole transmitters of knowledge (Wells, 1999/2001; Hennessy et al., 2011; Skidmore, 2016).

Empirical work on professional development for dialogic teaching and its classroom effects. A growing number of empirical studies have evaluated professional development or coaching aimed at increasing dialogic classroom talk. Several investigations focus primarily on changes in teacher and classroom behavior. For example, Gillies (2020) documents shifts in teacher practice during cooperative, inquiry-based science lessons; Northcutt (2014) reports that coaching teachers in dialogic inquiry fostered more sustained student talk about texts; Gul (2016) provides a constructivist-oriented account of teacher change in an ELT context; Shabani (2016) discusses Vygotskian applications for teacher professional learning; Youcef Beghou and Chelghoum (2020) report improvements in oral-skill teaching following a social-constructivist approach; and Musa (2023) links dialogic inquiry to gains in oral communicative competence. By contrast, other studies have foregrounded learners' voices and affective responses. For instance, Lee (2014) developed and validated a learners' feedback questionnaire for inquiry-based instruction; Kremer (2016) analyses the dialogic quality of teacher-learner episodes; and Namy Soghady et al. (2022) investigate how dialogic tasks affect learner anxiety, noting moderating effects of proficiency and gender. Together these studies indicate that professional development can promote more dialogic classroom interaction and that learners often report increased engagement and participation; however, they also identify early-implementation difficulties (e.g., initial confusion, greater nervousness among shy learners) and variable methodological choices across studies.

Gap in the Literature

Two important limitations emerge from the existing literature. First, many studies concentrate either on teacher practice (observations/coaching) or on learners' self-reports, but relatively few combine a fine-grained discourse analysis of enacted classroom interaction with systematic learner feedback and interviews to triangulate effects. Second, in Iranian EFL contexts there is evidence of limited familiarity with dialogic approaches among teachers (Tavakoli, 2016; Yaqubi & Rashidi, 2019), and studies that explicitly evaluate the effectiveness of a social-constructivist professional development course designed to prepare teachers to implement dialogic inquiry, using both a validated learners' questionnaire and a discourse-analytic protocol such as Wells (2001), are scarce. The present study responds to these gaps by delivering a social-constructivist in-service professional development course, assessing teacher implementation with Wells's (2001) Discourse Analysis Coding Protocol, and triangulating those observational data with a researcher-modified

version of Lee's (2014) learners' questionnaire and in-depth student interviews. This mixed-methods triangulation enables a tighter claim about whether and how professional development transfers into dialogic classroom talk and how learners perceive that change.

Method

Design of the Study

This instrumental case study is a mixed-methods research. Data were obtained in both qualitative and quantitative ways. In order to make the qualitative data more interpretable and reportable, the researchers quantified them (Maxwell, 2010).

Participants and Sampling Method

Three participant teachers were selected by the convenience sampling method from Mehr Language Institute in Eghlid. This institute is one of the Mehr Educational Group branches in Fars, Iran. All the teachers were male. The researchers used pseudonyms for teachers to keep their anonymity. Their students also participated in the study, with a number of 31 (N= 31). They were learning English at a pre-intermediate level of proficiency.

Instruments

The researchers applied four instruments to carry out the research: 1) Wells's (2001) Discourse Analysis Coding Protocol, 2) a modified version of Lee's (2014) Learners' Feedback on Dialogic Inquiry Approach Questionnaire, 3) video-recordings, and 4) in-depth interview sessions.

Wells's (2001) protocol includes several attributes that are critical to understanding how meaning is created and co-created through dialogic conversations in the classroom: a) moves, exchanges, and sequences; b) prospectiveness of moves; c) function of moves; d) length of students' responses; and e) hypothetical mode in students' responses.

Lee (2014), for her study on inquiry-based teaching and learning in EFL and ESL pedagogy, developed an 18-item questionnaire with 5 Likert Scale from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree). It contains 18 statements in regard to aspects such as class attentiveness, learning motivation, classroom anxiety, class interaction and participation, the use of visuals, preparation of the lesson, and general thoughts on a dialogic inquiry-based teaching approach. The researchers of the present study modified some items of this questionnaire to be more applicable in the research.

Data Collection Procedure

The participant teachers received an intensive in-service course. The course lasted one week, during which they were trained in theoretical backgrounds and practical implementation of the dialogic inquiry approach. They gained their theoretical and practical knowledge about the techniques to enhance classroom talk dialogically. Following the course, the teachers applied the approach in their classes for a term of 20 sessions.

Five sessions of the term were vide-recorded for overt non-participant observations: two sessions at the start, one in the middle, and two at the end of the term. The researchers preferred video-recordings and non-participant observation to decrease bias and increase reflexivity and trustworthiness of the results (Denzin, 2010). The video-recordings were used to complete Wells' (2001) coding protocol sheet for the participant teachers after each recorded session.

After finishing the term, Lee's (2014) questionnaire was distributed to the learners who took part in the study at the end of the course, immediately. The objective of this instrument was to take the participants' feedback on the application of the approach in their classes. Also, in order to triangulate and enrich the data, nine learners were selected randomly to be interviewed, three from each teacher's class.

Results

Answering the first research question

In this section, the amount of dialogic classroom talk is reported using Wells's (2001) Discourse Analysis Coding Protocol for each teacher's class separately. Because the study aims to compare the amount of classroom talk across observation sessions with a focus on learners' dialogic inquiry stance, we concentrate on the following units of analysis from Wells (2001): (a) prospectiveness of moves (Demand, Give, Acknowledgment), (b) function of moves (Initiation, Response, Follow-up), (c) length of students' responses, and (d) hypothetical mode in students' responses. Other units from Wells's instrument (move, exchange, sequence) were also applied to derive these measures. Data for each teacher is summarized in Tables 1–3 below.

Table 1
Percentage of Units of Analysis — Teacher A

Unit (subcategory)	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
Prospectiveness of moves					
Demand	63%	54%	51%	47%	44%
Give	31%	41%	46%	49%	50%
Acknowledgment	6%	5%	3%	4%	6%
Function of moves					
Initiation	49%	31%	28%	29%	28%
Response	34%	38%	40%	37%	35%
Follow-up	17%	31%	32%	32%	37%
Length of students' responses	53%	58%	69%	76%	77%
Hypothetical mode (students' responses)	23%	27%	36%	36%	37%

Note. Values are percentages of coded units within each session.

The data for Teacher A show a clear shift toward more dialogic features across the five observations. "Give" moves increased steadily (31% to 50%), while "Demand" moves decreased (63% to 44%), indicating a change in prospectiveness that favors learner contribution. Follow-up moves and students' response length rose markedly (follow-up: 17% to 37%; response length: 53% to 77%), and hypothetical mode increased (23% to 37%), which together suggest that students engaged in longer, more exploratory, and more reflective talk over time.

Table 2

Percentage of Units of Analysis — Teacher B

Unit (subcategory)	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
Prospectiveness of moves					
Demand	71%	67%	53%	51%	50%
Give	20%	26%	42%	45%	47%
Acknowledgment	9%	7%	5%	4%	3%
Function of moves					
Initiation	52%	50%	34%	30%	30%
Response	36%	35%	31%	36%	34%
Follow-up	12%	15%	35%	34%	36%
Length of students' responses	51%	54%	61%	72%	74%
Hypothetical mode (students' responses)	18%	19%	28%	32%	33%

Note. Values are percentages of coded units within each session.

Teacher B exhibits a pronounced reduction in teacher-led “Demand” moves (71% to 50%) alongside a substantial increase in “Give” moves (20% to 47%), indicating a transition toward student-centered prospectiveness. Follow-up moves rose sharply between early and later sessions (12% to 36%), and the average length of student responses increased markedly (51% to 74%). Hypothetical mode also rose (18% to 33%). Collectively, these changes indicate greater student elaboration and exploratory talk as the term progressed.

Table 3

Percentage of Units of Analysis — Teacher C

Unit (subcategory)	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Session 4	Session 5
Prospectiveness of moves					
Demand	59%	52%	48%	46%	46%
Give	35%	44%	47%	51%	50%
Acknowledgment	6%	4%	5%	3%	4%
Function of moves					
Initiation	50%	40%	32%	28%	28%
Response	38%	42%	34%	37%	35%
Follow-up	12%	18%	34%	35%	37%
Length of students' responses	57%	59%	69%	76%	77%
Hypothetical mode (students' responses)	22%	26%	36%	37%	37%

Note. Values are percentages of coded units within each session.

Teacher C's classes show a similar trajectory toward dialogic talk: “Give” moves rose (35% to 50%) while “Demand” moves declined (59% to 46%). Follow-up moves increased substantially (12% to 37%), and the length of students' responses increased from 57% to 77%. Hypothetical mode also increased (22% to 37%). These shifts indicate enlarged opportunities for students to elaborate, hypothesize, and sustain dialogic exchanges.

Answering the second research question

To answer this question, the investigators used quantitative data obtained from a researcher-modified 18-item questionnaire with 5 Likert Scale developed by Lee (2014), and qualitative data from in-depth interview sessions with 9 students (N=9) who were selected randomly from the students who participated in the study (N=31). Tables 4-6 will show the descriptive statistics for the questionnaire.

Table 4

Reliability Statistics of Learners' Feedback on Dialogic Inquiry Approach Questionnaire

Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.933	0.941	18

The above table shows the high reliability of the instrument ($\alpha=0.933$).

Table 5

The Summary of Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Feedback on Dialogic Inquiry Approach Questionnaire

	Mean	Minimum	Maximum	Range	Maximum / Minimum	Variance	N of Items
Item Means	4.351	3.571	4.893	1.321	1.370	.163	18
Item Variances	.414	.099	.698	.599	7.040	.042	18

The overall Mean and the Variance of the questionnaire were (M=4.351, and V=0.163). Because the value of the items of the questionnaire was 5, the mentioned Mean with that low Variance coefficient was a high Mean. The following tables will show the descriptive statistics of the questionnaire in terms of Mean, Standard Deviation, and Variance.

Table 6

The Descriptive Statistics of Learners' Feedback on Dialogic Inquiry Approach Questionnaire

N.	Items	Mean	SD	V
1	I think the dialogic inquiry teaching method is an effective way to teach foreign languages.	4.18	.729	.538
2	Dialogic inquiry teaching enhances my learning motivation in language learning.	4.32	.772	.597
3	Dialogic inquiry teaching doesn't increase my anxiety level in the language classroom.	4.11	.737	.544
4	Dialogic inquiry teaching doesn't make me nervous in the language classroom.	3.57	.836	.698

5	Dialogic inquiry teaching makes me more alert or attentive in the language classroom.	4.15	.726	.534
6	Compared with other teaching techniques, the dialogic inquiry teaching method functions better in drawing my attention.	4.82	.390	.152
7	I think the dialogic inquiry teaching approach reinforces my learning and understanding.	4.29	.713	.508
8	Dialogic inquiry teaching increases the interaction in class.	4.82	.390	.152
9	Inquiry teaching encourages students' participation in class.	4.68	.476	.226
10	Dialogic inquiry teaching is a good method to initiate interaction in class.	4.39	.832	.692
11	Dialogic inquiry teaching is a good method to maintain interaction in class.	4.57	.634	.402
12	The use of visual aids (such as realia, pictures, PowerPoint) helps a lot in the Dialogic inquiry teaching mode.	3.82	.723	.522
13	Previewing course material is important when the dialogic inquiry teaching method is adopted.	4.00	.720	.519
14	The dialogic inquiry teaching method makes foreign language teaching and learning more meaningful.	4.79	.418	.175
15	I like the teacher using the dialogic inquiry teaching method in the language class.	3.93	.716	.513
16	I want EFL teachers to use the dialogic inquiry approach in their English classes.	4.21	.738	.545
17	Dialogic inquiry approach makes me talk more in the classroom.	4.89	.315	.099
18	Dialogic inquiry approach makes the students more active in the classroom.	4.89	.315	.099

Table 7 will illustrate sixteen finalized core themes emphasized and articulated by the 9 learners who participated in the interview sessions. The following table will show the themes that the interviewers found after transcribing and coding data, and the Frequency (f) of the themes in terms of learners' responses.

Table 7
The Frequency of Learners' Interview Themes

N.	Items	Frequency
1	More classroom talk	21
2	Learning through interaction	18
3	Learning through discovery by talk	18
4	Asking mind-teasing questions	17
5	Asking and answering questions in a chain	18
6	Paucity of direct teaching	16
7	New teacher's teaching techniques	19
8	More interactions	20

9	Being more active	18
10	More participating learners	17
11	Group study	18
12	More nervousness	17
13	More confusing in the first sessions	17
14	Difficult for learners with a lack of speaking ability	16
15	Difficult for learners for were shy and introverted	17
16	Wrong conclusions for making meaning	15

Discussion

The interpretation of Wells’s (2001) discourse analysis tool revealed that the amount of classroom talk increased, because the ‘length of students’ responses’ as a unit of analysis in Wells’s (2001) tool increased. This unit of analysis increased from 53% to 77% in Teacher A’s classes, 51% to 74% in Teacher B’s classes, and 57% to 77% in Teacher C’s classes.

Wells (2001) argues that given moves in prospectiveness, the follow-up function of the moves, and the hypothetical mode in students’ responses are the units of analysis that are related to the dialogic stance of the talk. According to the findings reported in a quantified mode, the learners’ classroom talks in terms of give moves in prospectiveness increased session by session for each teacher’s classes. In terms of percentage, the results showed that the percentages of Teacher A’s classes were 31%, 41%, 46%, 49%, and 50%. These percentages were 20%, 26%, 42%, 45%, 47% for Teacher B’s classes. And 35%, 44%, 47%, 51%, 50% were the percentages for Teacher C’s classes.

In terms of follow-up moves, again, the findings revealed an increase in the learners’ classroom talk. The findings of Teacher A’s classes revealed the following percentages: 17%, 31%, 32%, 32%, 37%, respectively, for the five observations. For Teacher B’s classes, the researchers found that the percentages of follow-up moves as: 12%, 15%, 35%, 34%, 36%. Finally, Teacher C’s learners’ classroom talk indicated that their talk encompassed 12% for the first session, 28% for the second session, 34% for the third session, 35% for the fourth session, and 37% for the last session. In light of the findings, the percentage of the use of the follow-up moves by the participant learners increased when we compare the first sessions with the final sessions. In fostering classroom talk with a dialogic stance, follow-up moves have an influential role (Wells, 2001). When the teacher changes the prospectiveness and function of conversational follow-up moves, the learners’ classroom talk becomes more dialogic. In the dialogic inquiry approach, the teacher initiates the initial discussions by asking mind-teasing questions, which make discussions in which the learners ask other questions to make meaning (Alexander, 2017).

The last unit of analysis, hypothetical mode in students’ responses, revealed the following percentages: 23%, 27%, 36%, 36%, 37% for Teacher A’s classes, 18%, 19%, 28%, 32%, 33%, and 22%, 26%, 36%, 37%, 37% for Teacher C’s classes. These findings pointed out that the amount of hypothetical mode in learners’ responses increased for all the case study teachers’ classes. These findings correspond with the results of Musa (2023) and Northcutt’s (2014) studies.

Because the questionnaire was modified by the researchers, it was necessary to calculate its reliability by means of Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient (Dörnyei, 2010). The result indicated that the modified version of the questionnaire had a high reliability ($\alpha=0.933$), as Dörnyei (2010) recommends that if the Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient is between 0.80-0.90, the questionnaire will

be a good tool to measure what the researcher wanted to measure. Because the questionnaire was a 5 Likert Scale, the maximum of the Mean was 5, and all the items were in positive statements, it can be concluded that the Mean of (M=4.351) out of 5 revealed that the learners' feedback on dialogic inquiry approach was positive, as Oxford (1990) asserts that the Mean between 3.5 and 5.0 shows 'high' influence. The result of the learners' feedback on dialogic inquiry obtained in the present study confirmed the result of Lee's (2014) study.

Shown by Table 6, Items #18, and #17 'Dialogic inquiry approach makes the students more active in the classroom', and 'Dialogic inquiry approach makes me more talk in the classroom', respectively, with the Mean of (M=4.89), and Item #4 'Dialogic inquiry teaching doesn't make me nervous in the language classroom', with the Mean of (M=3.57) had the most and the least Means of Learners' Feedback on Dialogic Inquiry Approach Questionnaire. As Lee (2014) asserts, the dialogic inquiry approach will enhance learners' activity and talk in the classroom. Also, Alexander (2017) mentions that applying dialogic teaching will have the following results: "children listen carefully to each other; they encourage each other to participate and share ideas; they build on their own and each other's contributions; they strive to reach common understanding and agreed conclusions, yet they respect minority viewpoints" (p.41). The learners who participated in the present study reported that they had more classroom talk and interaction, and they were more active than the time they were taught English using traditional approaches by the teachers. It means that since the participant learners of the study were the case study teachers' learners in previous terms before conducting the investigation, they were able to make a comparison between their English classes before and after the research. According to Bakhtin's (1990) theory, the learners should be able to use language in a purposeful way to engage and to convey the essence of what they want to tell. It is the process of learning language meaningfully. The participant learners gave positive feedback on this part of the dialogic inquiry approach as they reported Item #14 with a Mean of 4.79, which was a high mean for that item. This indicates that in the present study, the teachers really applied the dialogic inquiry approach, because the learners, without knowing the underlying assumptions of the approach, confirmed that the learning was meaningful, which is an underlying assumption of the dialogic inquiry approach. Musa's (2023) research also reached the same conclusion.

As Table 7 showed, the most frequent themes of the interview were 'More classroom talk' (f=21), 'More interactions' (f=20), 'New teacher's teaching techniques' (f=19), 'Learning through interaction' (f=18), 'Learning through discovery by talk' (f=18), 'Asking and answering questions in chain' (f=18), 'Being more active' (f=18), and 'Group study' (f=18).

The results of the learners' feedback questionnaire and the in-depth interview session showed that the dialogic inquiry approach makes the learners more active and causes more classroom talk from the learners. However, the progress in enhancing dialogic classroom talk was problematic for some learners. The interviewees told the researchers that they had encountered some issues, like increased nervousness for the learners who were introverted or had with lack of speaking ability. They reported that, in some cases, making meanings led to wrong conclusions, especially in the first sessions of the term. Name Soghdy et al. (2022) and Kremer's (2016) study corresponded with the present study in the aforementioned problems.

Conclusion

Social-constructivist approach to teachers' professional development paves the way to improve teachers' knowledge, skills, and effectiveness to make a relationship between their existing competencies and the demands of real-world teaching (Nugroho et al., 2024; Njenga, 2023). This study was set out to investigate the effectiveness of an in-service teachers' development course, which was social-constructivist in nature, on applying the dialogic inquiry approach to enhance learners' dialogic classroom talk. Adding to examining the progress in dialogic classroom talks, the researchers inquired about the learners' feedback on applying the dialogic inquiry approach. The observations found that the teachers' knowledge about the dialogic inquiry approach, as a result of the development course, and its application in their classes, caused an increase in the learners' dialogic classroom talk.

The learners reported that changing their teachers' practice in the term to a dialogic inquiry approach made them more active and caused more classroom talk. Regarding the results of the interview with the learners, the researchers realized that because in the initial sessions of the term the learners' perception was less than what they had in the last sessions, their dialogic classroom talk level varied, meaning that they progressed in the flow of the investigation. This perception was not something like their teachers', meaning that the teachers' perception was the result of the development course, but the learners were not taught the theoretical foundations of the approach. The learners only saw their teachers' practice, which was changed by applying the dialogic inquiry approach. Thus, session by session, the learners' perception of the approach increased. Although they gained their dialogic classroom talk, they reported some problems. They reported that the approach was confusing in the first sessions of the term and problematic for shy students or the ones with a lack of oral abilities. To sum up, the results of the study confirmed that the teachers' development course was positively effective in increasing dialogic classroom talk by implementing the dialogic inquiry approach. Hence, as the present study revealed, we can administer teachers' development courses to improve their knowledge and skills about language teaching, but not like traditional teacher training courses, however, looking at the teachers as active agents who participated in a course which transforms teaching by an emphasis on situated teacher cognition and practice, and the improvement of concrete, relevant linkages between theory and practice (Deen, 2023).

Because of the focus of the study and its limitations, it investigated learners' dialogic classroom talk and their feedback on applying the dialogic inquiry approach. A main assumption of the social-constructivist teachers' development model is that teachers should have time and motivation to reflect on what they are learning. Because of the limited length of development programs, there is a desire to assume that we have to give them the idea, and we have the ability to let them figure out the consequences as they teach (Alexander, 2017; Wideen & Lemma, 1999). Consequently, future studies can delve into longer-term courses to study some other aspects of the social-constructivist teachers' development, like reflective practice and teacher research. On the learners' side, because they were trained for some years with a traditional monologic approach, the effect of their attitudes towards EFL classes had an impact on the results of the present study, as they said in the interviews that direct teaching is easier than dialogic, and the new approach was confusing in the beginning sessions. Thereupon, much extended time studies should be done to investigate this issue that was indicated by the present research.

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