



DIALOGIC TEACHING: EMPOWERING FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT IN THE CLASSROOM

Journal Website:
<https://theusajournals.com/index.php/ijmef>

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Submission Date: January 01, 2024, Accepted Date: January 06, 2024,

Published Date: January 11, 2024

Crossref doi: <https://doi.org/10.37547/ijmef/Volume04Issue01-06>

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ABSTRACT

Dialogic teaching has become one of the most effective teaching techniques and also influential instrument for improving formative assessment in the classroom. Dialogic teaching is a strategy which has its roots in the concept of meaningful student-teacher discourse, promotes critical thinking, active engagement, and in-depth learning. The principles of dialogic teaching are perfectly aligned with basic concepts of formative assessment, which give educators opportunity to check and clarify students' comprehension in the moment. In this article some of the accurate methods of implementation of dialogic teaching for constant monitoring of learners' progress are provided.

KEYWORDS

Dialogic teaching, assessment conversation, formative assessment, instructional approach, dialogic interactions.

INTRODUCTION

In the realm of effective teaching practices, dialogic teaching has emerged as a powerful tool for enhancing formative assessment in the classroom. Moreover, this “dialogic shift” caused progress of not only dialogic teaching and learning approaches, but the science and

pedagogy in general. (Racionero and Padrós, 2010) Rooted in the idea of meaningful student-teacher discourse, dialogic teaching encourages active participation, critical thinking, and deep learning. By fostering dialogue and interaction, this approach

allows educators to gather real-time feedback, assess student understanding, and guide their learning effectively. In this article, we will explore the concept of dialogic teaching and delve into how it can be leveraged as an invaluable tool for formative assessment.

Understanding Dialogic Teaching

Dialogic teaching can be defined as an instructional approach that places a strong emphasis on dialogue and interaction between teachers and students, as well as among students themselves. It goes beyond the conventional one-way transmission of knowledge, encouraging active engagement and collaboration. As Bakhtin noted: 'If an answer does not give rise to a new question from itself, it falls out of the dialogue' (Bakhtin 1986, 168). Through open-ended questions, probing discussions, and thoughtful debates, dialogic teaching creates a dynamic learning environment that promotes deeper understanding and critical thinking. To be more precise, classroom talks and instructions make students think, not to recite someone's thinking (Nystrand et al 1997, 72).

Key Features of Dialogic Teaching

Collaborative Learning: Being a primary step towards potentially effective collaboration, dialogical teaching boosted instructors' interest and receipt of how crucial interaction in classroom is. (Mercer and Dawes, 2014) Classroom talk fosters collaboration among students, enabling them to learn from each other's perspectives and build upon their collective knowledge. This

collaborative approach encourages peer-to-peer interaction, cooperative problem-solving, and the sharing of diverse ideas and experiences (van der Veen et al., 2017; Teo, 2019); promotes critical thinking and reasoning (Mercer et al., 1999; Teo, 2019) In comparison to non-dialogic collaboration, dialogic interactions have great effect on language development and discourse. (Snow, 2014). On the other hand, non-interactive dialogue does not provide a space for turn-taking with students and the teachers assess students' responses according to their own reviews and ideas (Mortimer & Scott, 2003).

Scaffolding: Mercer and Howe (2012) propose specific concept of dialogue. They suggest to avoid random conversation in classroom and "form of conversation in which the ideas of the various participants are heard, taken up and jointly considered" (p. 14). In this case, teachers play a pivotal role in dialogic teaching by providing scaffolding, which involves guiding and supporting students' learning through targeted questioning, clarifications, and explanations. By scaffolding students' thinking, teachers can uncover misconceptions, address knowledge gaps, and facilitate deeper comprehension.

Active Listening: Dialogic teaching emphasizes active listening on the part of both teachers and students. By carefully listening to students' responses, teachers can gain valuable insights into their understanding, identify misconceptions, and tailor their instruction accordingly. Students, in turn, learn to actively listen to

their peers, fostering respect, empathy, and a deeper appreciation for diverse perspectives.

Dialogic Teaching as a Formative Assessment Tool

Formative assessment is an ongoing, interactive process that involves gathering evidence of student learning to inform instruction. Dialogic teaching aligns seamlessly with formative assessment principles, providing valuable opportunities for teachers to verify and clarify students' understanding in real time. (Bellack et al., 1966, Edwards and Westgate, 1994, Jordan and Putz, 2004). Here's how dialogic teaching serves as an effective formative assessment tool:

Immediate Feedback: Through dialogue and questioning, teachers can gauge students' understanding and provide immediate, targeted feedback. This timely feedback helps students identify their strengths and areas needing improvement, enabling them to make necessary adjustments and deepen their learning.

Uncovering Misconceptions: Dialogic teaching encourages students to articulate their ideas and thought processes. This allows teachers to uncover and address misconceptions, ensuring that students develop accurate understanding and correct any misunderstandings early on.

Assessing Higher-Order Thinking: Dialogic teaching promotes critical thinking, reasoning, and problem-solving skills. By engaging students in meaningful dialogue, teachers can assess their ability to apply

knowledge, analyze information, evaluate arguments, and make connections between different concepts.

Informing Instructional Decisions: By continuously assessing student understanding through dialogic teaching, educators can make informed decisions about adjusting instruction, adapting teaching strategies, and providing additional support to meet individual student needs.

Implementing Dialogic Teaching for Formative **Assessment**

To effectively implement dialogic teaching as a tool for formative assessment, educators can consider the following strategies:

Creating a Supportive Learning Environment: Establishing a classroom culture that values respectful, inclusive dialogue and encourages active participation.

Also, it is necessary to create a safe space where students feel comfortable expressing their thoughts and ideas openly. For this reason, educator can allow learners to comment or ask a question to initiate an assessment dialogue (Chin, 2002, Chin, 2004, Chin and Osborne, 2008, Louca et al., 2008).

While assessment conversations students should have opportunity to argue, express their ideas, consider each other's points of view, encourage the use of evidence and determining whether or not their assertions are suitable. (Chin, 2006, Chin, 2007, Duschl and Gitomer, 1997, Duschl and Osborne, 2002, Hogan and Pressley, 1997, Scott et al., 2006).

Plan Purposeful Questions: Prepare open-ended questions that promote critical thinking, reasoning, and reflection. These questions should encourage students to explain their reasoning, provide evidence, and engage in thoughtful discussions.

Active Listening and Probing: Actively listen to student responses, ask clarifying questions, and probe further to elicit deeper thinking. Encourage students to justify their answers, consider alternative viewpoints, and engage in constructive dialogue with their peers.

Provide Timely Feedback: Offer immediate feedback that is specific, constructive, and actionable. Focus on highlighting strengths, addressing misconceptions, and providing guidance on how to improve.

Dialogic teaching serves as a powerful tool for formative assessment, enabling educators to gather real-time feedback, assess student understanding, and guide their learning effectively. By fostering meaningful dialogue, active listening, and collaborative learning, this instructional approach promotes critical thinking, deep comprehension, and the development of essential skills. When implemented thoughtfully, dialogic teaching empowers educators to tailor their instruction, address individual student needs, and create a dynamic learning environment that nurtures growth and academic success. Furthermore, numerous authors have compiled reliable data demonstrating how dialogic education helps students achieve curricular objectives like intellect and reasoning. (Resnick et al., 2015).

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