Can Teaching Through Dialogue Increase the Engagement of International Students in Business Studies?

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Abstract: This study aimed to change the behaviour of adult international students in a business studies class through the use of dialogic teaching to reduce the level of reticence and improve their engagement. Dialogic teaching is the ability to harness the power of talk. Based on qualitative traditions the case study method with a constructionist epistemology was used to examine the roles of identity and culture. Among others, the empirical study noted that some students were not very comfortable with some aspects of dialogic teaching, for example its free-flowing nature. Analysis showed that there was good evidence of certain elements of dialogic teaching, such as extended contribution, encouragement of free expression of views, cued elicitation, and provision of authoritative explanation in the lesson sessions. Being a case study, this report offers a basis for future studies only.

Résumé : Cette étude visait à changer le comportement des étudiants internationaux adultes dans un programme d'administration grâce à l'utilisation d'un enseignement dialogique pour réduire le niveau de réticence et améliorer leur engagement. L'enseignement dialogique est la capacité d'exploiter le pouvoir de la parole. Basé sur des traditions qualitatives et une épistémologie constructionniste, une étude de cas a été employée pour examiner les rôles de l'identité et de la culture. Entre autres, l'étude empirique a noté que certains étudiants n'étaient pas très à l'aise avec certains aspects de l'enseignement dialogique, par exemple sa nature fluide. L'analyse a montré certains éléments de l'enseignement dialogique

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ont eu de bons résultats, tels que la contribution accrue, l'encouragement de la libre expression des opinions, l'obtention d'incitation et l'apport d'explications faisant autorité dans les cours. N'étant qu'une étude de cas, cet examen offre une base pour de futures études seulement.

1. Introduction

Scholars have identified passivity in class when students work in foreign language (Le & Ng, 2010; Chalak & Baktash, 2015). This is understood principally as a way of avoiding embarrassment (Keaton & Kelly, 2000). Factors such as the lack of experience in group discussion as well as cultural beliefs have been observed to contribute to classroom reticence (Allwright & Bailey, 1991). We examined what impact dialogic teaching may have in managing the issues of students' reticence and engagement. In addition, we explored how dialogic teaching could influence students' behaviour. Consequently, our study seeks to contribute to the existing body of literature around our findings on the impact of dialogic teaching in a business management class. It also seeks to contribute to existing literature on the issues of reticence and engagement of international students in a business management class.

Dialogic teaching is a tool for facilitating learning by way of clarifying ideas (Lefstein, 2006). It seeks to build open and trusting relationships between teachers and students, whereby new understandings emerge from the elicitation and comparison of different perspectives (Wegerif, 2007; Simpson, 2016). Thus, it aims to enhance both pedagogy and students' engagement (Howe & Abedin, 2013). Prior to the research there was the impression that there were dialogic elements in most teaching practices (Muhonen, Pakarinen, Lerkkanen, Barza, & Suchodoletz, 2018; Sedova, Salamanounova, & Svariceck, 2014). However, on perusing the relevant literature, it became clear that many practitioners use Initiation-Response-Evaluation (IRE) (Cazden, 2001; Burbules & Bruce, 2001). Consequently, we set out a 10-week intervention period during the course of which we used the last two weeks for the empirical aspect of this research.

2. Understanding Dialogic Teaching

Dialogic teaching has no agreed definition (Alexander, 2018). However, aggregating various perspectives, it is the ability to harness the power of talk. It stimulates and extends the pupils' thinking as well as advances their ability to learn and understand

(Alexander, 2008; Muhonen, Rasku-Puttonen, Pakarinen, Poikkeus, & Lerkkanen, 2016). It could be "used stipulatively to connote a pedagogy of the spoken word that is manifestly distinctive while being grounded in widely accepted evidence and in discourse and assumptions that have much in common" (Alexander, 2018, p. 562).

In terms of the classroom it is recognised that activities are dominated by verbal communication primarily led by the teacher. In the Western context there is the perception that dialogue enables effective pedagogy through the ways in which classroom dialogue is organised (Howe & Abedin, 2013; Jones & Hammond, 2016). Dialogue entails a "back-and-forth movement, between my own and the other's horizon" (Lefstein, 2006, p.4); this facilitates learning by clarifying ideas and developing understanding. It can serve as a thinking laboratory, enabling conjectures and refutations to be voiced, a means of testing a hypothesis in the view of Lefstein. It is a participatory process the outcome of which is higher cognitive function resulting from interactions between individuals participating in interpersonal dialogue, along with the internalisation of such dialogue (Vygotsky, 1978).

In the course of dialogue, in the back-and-forth movement between one participant's horizon and that of the other participant, a 'dialogic space' emerges. The dialoguers become distanced from their prejudices, which are suspended so one participant may engage with the other (Wegerif, 2007). This raises a critical question: Would the suspended prejudices not add value to the process by way of either constructive criticism or questioning? Discussants, therefore, may not be truly engaged but are involved in 'polite listening' as long as these prejudices remain suspended. Engagement entails the discussants returning to those prejudices as well as leveraging on each other's perspective to develop an understanding of oneself, and to revise one's own horizon. Maintaining the tension between two forms of openness, therefore, becomes an integral part of dialogue (Lefstein, 2006). Interestingly, research documents how teachers and students acted upon dialogic and democratic imperatives, which created space for student participation (Segal et al., 2016; Muhonen et al., 2018). They note the resultant exuberant interactional pattern in which students enthusiastically contributed to discussion and dialogically aided the development of each other's ideas.

Empirical studies relate dialogic teaching to various aspects of classroom interaction and management. In her report, Gillies (2014) notes that dialogic practices include students' perception of teachers' modelling of dialogue. In their study, Twiner et al. (2014) analysed the processes of meaning-making in a dialogic classroom. They highlighted the interplay between the meaning-making trajectory of a teacher and those meaning-making trajectories instantiated in the course of interactions with students. From another perspective, Resnick et al. (2015) have demonstrated a positive correlation between dialogic teaching and student achievement. To aid research into dialogic, Hennessy et al. (2016) have developed the Scheme for Educational Dialogue Analysis (SEDA), which consists of 33 codes distinguished according to each act's function, which help identify dialogic moves and sequences. These codes were used in this study to analyse the nature and extent of dialogicality in classroom discourse.

3. Issues of Student Reticence and Engagement

Reticence occurs when students avoid communication because they believe that silence is better than the risk of appearing foolish (Maley, 2015; Keaton & Kelly, 2000). It makes it difficult for students to express themselves and share ideas (Chalak & Baktash, 2015). Its significance is highlighted by Sivan et al. (2000) who point out that learners develop ability to utilise newly gained knowledge during in-class activities. Furthermore, Swain & Lapkin (1995, p. 376) argue that the verbal contribution of learners is evidence that they "move from semantic processing prevalent in comprehension, to the syntactic processing needed for production".

Factors that contribute to reticence in an adult classroom that is ethnically mixed include students' lack of experience of group discussion (Allwright & Bailey, 1991; Chaudron, 1988); low proficiency in English (Allwright & Bailey, 1991); a student's cultural belief in relation to communication (Tsui, 1996); hierarchical perceptions of the teacher's and learner's roles (Tsui, 1996); students' educational background; learners' anxiety and concern about not being understood; the instructor's expectations; and students' inability to comprehend the instructor's input (Zhang et al., 2018; van Worde, 2003). Furthermore, van Worde (2003) notes that there is a strong likelihood that these factors will be interconnected, as they are unlikely to exist in isolation.

Furlong and Christenson (2008) argue that there are four key dimensions of student engagement: academic, affective, behavioural and cognitive. Academic engagement is a function of the amount of time a student spends in doing the actual schoolwork. Behavioural engagement entails activities such as an individual's attendance and active participation, or the extent to which they ask questions. Cognitive engagement is a function of the student's perception of the extent of the relevance of studying to aspirations for the future. Affective engagement relates to a student's sense of belonging, which is linked to the support offered by teachers, parents and peers (Appleton et al., 2006). This will be used as a framework for the analysis of student engagement. The indicators of cognitive, as well as affective engagement are dependent on motivation, positive learning outcomes and increased response to specific teaching strategies (Fredericks et al., 2004; Reeve et al., 2004). Interestingly, dialogic teaching embodies such approaches as encouraging students to express their views freely, eliciting students' response through suggestions, questioning or pointing out omissions. It also involves building on the contributions of others (Wegerif, 2007; Clarke et al., 2016). These embodiments of dialogic teaching enhance engagement.

Some variables cannot be changed by school personnel. The variables that schools can alter are therefore critical. These include personal goal setting and development of the perceived areas of a student's competence, as well as interpersonal relationships, which contribute to the student feeling optimistic about an outcome that is positive (Worrell & Hale, 2001). Being able to link experience of schooling to the students' future endeavours, together with provision of opportunities for success in schoolwork, are necessary when it comes to helping students attain their academic goals. Though students become engaged as a result of what they do in class, there is always a context which influences such engagement and is related to the teacher's instructional support, as well as academic and home support for the learning, all of which motivate the student (Christenson & Thurlow, 2004). Therefore, we argue that if these factors are carefully nurtured, the teacher's delivery will be enhanced, thereby improving student engagement. However, we note that while peer influence could be managed by an adult college to a certain degree, home support cannot.

4. The Context of This Research

This study was carried out in a business school based in London in autumn 2019, where the lead researcher formerly taught business management courses. The average class was composed of 15 – 25 internationally diverse students (See Figure. 1). The focus of this study was to seek ways to effectively utilise dialogue to enhance the quality of teaching and to engage a passive audience, using those behavioural, cognitive and affective elements of the students' engagement which a teacher can influence directly (Furlong & Christenson, 2008). We argue that if these three factors are effectively nurtured, they will positively impact on the students' academic engagement. We considered that business studies would offer at least as much potential for rich dialogue as most other subjects, particularly given the wide range of theories and positions within economic discourse.

The ethnic diversity of a class is important because what a teacher says in the course of teaching and communicating could sometimes be misunderstood due to cultural differences. From a dialogic perspective, the differences between students also potentially represent a strength and source of learning. During formative sessions with the students it was clear that they had previously been taught in their countries of origin using a transmission approach. For them to make meaningful progress in the UK system that emphasises depth and criticality, therefore, the pedagogic approach needed to be different. In view of the background of this research the teacher designed creative materials for students to use in preparing for the subsequent session. These differed between students to present and elicit distinct perspectives on the same topic, which promoted debate across differences.

5. Methodology

The constructionist epistemology of this research assumes that researchers can better understand participants' perceptions of their activities through the study of their context (Kelliher, 2005). Consequently, the classroom setting offered a social context comprising students with varying levels of engagement, as well as an opportunity to investigate the impact of dialogic teaching on the students' levels of engagement. This study is a wholly qualitative inquiry. However, we employed mixed data collection methods in order to gain additional insight to the phenomenon being examined

(Yin, 2018). Due to word limitations in developing this report we found the data we are presenting to be more relevant.

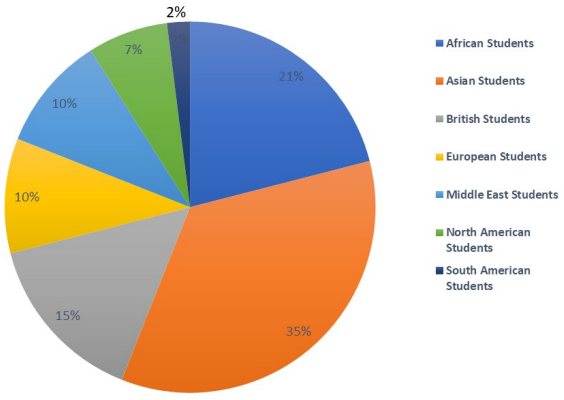

Figure 1. Composition of the researcher's group of student participants by ethnicity at commencement

5.1 Research Method, Ethics and Data Collection

The Case Study methodology which according to Collis and Hussey (2014), is an "extensive examination of a single instance of a phenomenon of interest" was used in carrying out this research. This approach helps to enhance understanding of the case and links to the wider context but offers no ground for generalisation (Collis & Hussey, 2014, p.68; Yin, 2018). It may, however, act as an instructive example for other teachers and researchers in the field. There was a single phenomenon being investigated in a single institution and cohort, within a limited timeframe. Within this context therefore, the research question we explored sought to understand; *'What effect, if any, did dialogic teaching have on a three-week business management course?'*

Data collection took a multifaceted but orchestrated approach. This was however underpinned by ethical considerations for both the institution and the participants on the course. Firstly,

permission to engage the case study subjects in question was sought from the faculty ethical committee, and by extension, the institution, concerning the study. A brief proposal highlighting the aims, objectives and research design was submitted for their approval. Secondly, so as not to exploit unfavourably, the position of authority bestowed upon the lead researcher as a tutor/lecturer, informed consent was obtained from the students before being included in the study. This of course, was supported by other ethical considerations such as anonymity, consent withdrawal and access to whatever final results were generated. These assurances were given to the subjects both verbally (before administering the questionnaire), as well as in writing (consent form and on the questionnaire).

Firstly therefore, primary data was collected during lessons via observation methods. Three lecture sessions during a three-week period were observed and recorded through audio and visual means. Though there were observer effects, namely, the tendency for people to behave differently when being observed (Easterby-Smith et al., 2012), this was acceptable as one of the objectives of the study was to influence the behaviour of the students. During these sessions, the researcher took down brief notes concerning active and/or passive participants, frequencies of participation, willingness to discuss extensively and their general abilities to actively engage in logical banter using both real-life and theoretical knowledge. To ensure a level of thoroughness in this approach sessions were recorded and analysed following the classes.

Secondly, some further primary data was collected through questionnaires which were open-ended and focused on the four dimensions of student engagement based on the work of Furlong & Christenson (2008). 300 copies were circulated, and 264 copies were completed, giving a response rate of 88%. While Fowler (2002, p.42) suggests that "there is no agreed-upon standard for a minimum acceptable response rate", other researchers such as Saldivar (2012) emphasize that a response rate of 80 – 85% is good for in-person survey modes.

5.2 Data Analysis

On completion of the recording of the sessions the level of student engagement was analysed using the SEDA coding system for dialogic teaching developed by Hennessy et al., (2016). We ensured that the six codes which were eventually selected from the 33 codes of the system represented a range of dialogic features and

behaviours by relating them to the dialogic principles highlighted in the literature review. These features are free expression of views, short and extended contributions, building on the contribution of others, cued elicitation and authoritative explanation. The scheme is divided into 'local' and 'global' codes. The 'local' codes which focus on verbal exchanges between individuals as well as details in the transcript, and global codes which focus on the wider issues such as topic, strategy and ground rules (Hennessy et al., 2016).

The questionnaires served as a qualitative tool for supplementary data collection: the design structure did not allow for a statistical analysis due to the qualitative nature of the inquiry. Rather, they provide further insight into the phenomenon being investigated (Howell, 2013).

6. Research Findings and Analysis

Data on cognitive, academic, affective and behavioural were analysed (Furlong & Christenson, 2008). We analysed the cognitive dimension of students' engagement as well as issues relating to dialogue. Analysis of affective and behavioural engagement have been omitted due to limitations of space and structure.

6.1 Cognitive Engagement

Overall, the respondents indicated a noticeable level of cognitive engagement. As reflected in Table 1.0 below, which reflect the percentage of students' responses, there was no clear decline or improvement in the level of cognitive engagement. In some cases, some variables showed positive pre-research engagement and post-research decline, while in other cases pre-research decline and post-research improvement were revealed. Tables 2a and 2b contain the pre- and post-research cognitive development analysis data.

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I make up my own examples to help me understand the important concepts I learn at school	36.5%	68.7%	5.8%	2.7%	0.0%
When learning things at school, I try to see how they fit together with other things I already know	23%	71.3%	1.3%	3.1%	1.3%
When learning things for school, I don't often associate them with what I have learnt in other classes about the same thing or similar things	6.6%	35.8%	10.6%	36.5%	9.3%
I try to see the similarities and differences between the things I am learning at school and the things I know already	14.6%	74%	4.5%	4.5%	1.3%
I don't see the need to understand how the things I learn in school fit together with each other	2.7%	31.4%	6.2%	43.6%	15.9%
I try to match what I already know with things I am trying to learn for school	19.8%	75.3%	3.1%	0.0%	0.0%
I study topics by just reading about them instead of trying to think through topics and decide what I am supposed to learn from them.	0.0%	35.9%	7.1%	36.3%	19.5%

Table 1. Average of percentage scores from dialogic sessions' pre- and post-research findings

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I make up my own examples to make me understand the important concepts I learn from school	14.3%	82.1%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%
when learning things from school I try to see how they fit together with other things I already know	14.3%	82.1%	0.0%	3.6%	0.0%
When learning things for school I don't often associate them with what I learnt in other classes about the same thing or similar things	0.0%	32.1%	10.7%	46.4%	10.7%
I try to see the similarities and differences between the things I am learning from school and the things I know already	10.7%	82.1%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%
I don't see the need to understand how the things I learn in school fit together with each other	0.0%	28.6%	7.1%	53.6%	10.7%
I try to match what I already know with things I am trying to learn for School	10.7%	82.1%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%
I study topics by just reading them instead of trying to think through topics and decide what I am supposed to learn from them.	0.0%	42.9%	3.6%	35.7%	17.8%

Table 2a. Summary of pre-research cognitive engagement

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I make up my own examples to make me understand the important concepts I learn from school	28.9%	55.3%	7.9%	5.3%	0.0%
when learning things from school I try to see how they fit together with other things I already know	31.6%	60.5%	2.6%	2.6%	2.6%
When learning things for school I don't often associate them with what I learnt in other classes about the same thing or similar things	13.2%	39.5%	10.55	26.3%	7.9%
I try to see the similarities and differences between the things I am learning from school and the things I know already	18.4%	65.8%	5.3%	5.3%	2.6%
I don't see the need to understand how the things I learn in school fit together with each other	5.3%	34.2%	5.3%	34.2%	21.1%
I try to match what I already know with things I am trying to learn for School	28.9%	68.4%	2.6%	0.0%	0.0%
I study topics by just reading them instead of trying to think through topics and decide what I am supposed to learn from them.	0.0%	28.9%	10.5%	36.8%	21.1%

Table 2b. Summary of post-research cognitive engagement

The following statement were presented to students: 'When learning things for school, I don't often associate them with what I have learnt in other classes about the same thing or similar things' and 'I don't see the need to understand how the things I learn in school fit together with each other'. The responses indicated that the students focused on these statements as they recorded lower levels of agreement and strong agreement, which was inconsistent with the general pattern of response. Responses to these two statements revealed noticeable decline in the level of student engagement when 'disagree' and 'strongly disagree' responses are weighed together. The statement 'I study topics by just reading them instead of trying to think through topics and decide what I am supposed to learn from them' was negatively worded. The student responses showed that they were focused on the question and made sense of it. There was a marginal increase in the post-research response.

6.2 Impact of Dialogic Teaching on Students' Cognitive Engagement

Based on the analysis of the pre-research and post-research survey data, there was no clear indication of whether dialogic teaching impacted on students' cognitive engagement. The students strongly affirmed their perception of a relationship between what they were being taught and things they already knew. This was in addition to their strong affirmation of their ability to see the similarities in, and differences between, things they were learning and what they already knew. However, there seemed to be a contradiction when considering the responses given in relation to their ability to associate what they had learnt in business studies class with what they had learnt in other classes. Table 3.0 below reflects the mean scores of the outcome of the impact of dialogic teaching on cognitive development. Table 4a and 4b below reflects the pre- and post-survey results of the impact of dialogic teaching on cognitive development.

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The teacher plans and steers classroom talk with specific educational goals in view	23.5%	64.2%	4.0%	5.3%	1.3%
Learning tasks are addressed together by the students and the teacher in groups or as a class	21.7%	64.6%	6.2%	4.5%	1.3%
Students and the teacher listen to each other, share ideas, and consider alternative viewpoints	31%	60.1%	1.8%	1.3%	1.3%
Students articulate their ideas freely without fear of embarrassment about answers that may be wrong. They help each other to reach a common understanding	36.8%	52.7%	3.1%	4.5%	1.3%
The teacher and the students build on their own, as well as each other's ideas and develop coherent lines of thinking and enquiry	19.9%	66.4%	6.7%	4.0%	1.3%

Table 3. Average of percentage scores from dialogic sessions' pre- and post-research findings

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The teacher plans and steers classroom talk with specific educational goals in view	28.6%	67.9%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%
Learning tasks are addressed together by the students and the teacher in groups or as a class	25.0%	60.7%	7.1%	3.6%	0.0%
Students and the teacher listen to each other, share ideas, and consider alternative viewpoints	35.7%	57.1%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%
Students articulate their ideas freely without fear of embarrassment over answers that may be wrong. They help each other to reach common understandings	39.3%	50.0%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%
The teacher and the students build on their own, as well as each other's ideas and make them coherent lines of thinking and enquiry	21.4%	64.3%	10.7%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 4a. Summary of pre-research cognitive engagement

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
The teacher plans and steers classroom talk with specific educational goals in view	18.4%	60.5%	7.9%	10.5%	2.6%
Learning tasks are addressed together by the students and the teacher in groups or as a class	18.4%	68.4%	5.3%	5.3%	2.6%
Students and the teacher listen to each other, share ideas, and consider alternative viewpoints	26.3%	68.4%	0.0%	2.6%	2.6%
Students articulate their ideas freely without fear of embarrassment over answers that may be wrong. They help each other to reach common understandings	34.2%	55.3%	2.6%	5.3%	2.6%
The teacher and the students build on their own, as well as each other's ideas and make them coherent lines of thinking and enquiry	18.4%	68.4%	2.6%	7.9%	2.6%

Table 4b. Summary of post-research cognitive engagement

Overall, there appeared to be a high level of perception of the quality of the dialogic sessions on the part of the students. However, while the pre- and post-research responses were similar in four areas, there was a noticeable decline in the 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses of about 17.6 per cent of students in relation to 'The teacher plans and steers classroom talk with specific educational goals in view.' This may be the clearest reflection of the students' disagreement with the arrangement of the classroom in a U-shape during the research. Before the commencement of the teaching sessions for the research, the lead researcher informed the class that the study was part of his effort to determine the impact of the dialogic approach. Also, they were informed that ascertaining their impression of the seating arrangement and classroom dynamics was part of his objectives. Prior to the research they expressed a strong preference for the 'traditional' classroom seating plan. This entailed everyone facing the board while the teacher stood in front of the classroom delivering the lecture. However, they were not resistant to his approach, but cautious. This situation appeared to align with the findings of previous studies that suggest that it may take up to one year to develop a dialogic culture that is productive within a class (Author et al., 2014).

An extension of the students' concerns about the seating arrangement may be a perception on their part that increased peer dialogue meant that the teacher was not firmly in control of events in the classroom. See table 4 above containing the relevant data. The students were asked in the pre- and post-research questionnaire whether 'The teacher plans and steers classroom talk with specific educational goals in view'. There was a marked decrease of 10.2 per cent and 7.4 per cent respectively for 'Strongly agree' and 'Agree'. The fluid situation in the class sessions was intentional in order to achieve certain objectives, such as offering every member of the class an opportunity to participate and articulate their ideas freely. The data eventually showed a marginal improvement of 1.1 per cent, 1.9 per cent, 0.2 per cent and 1.1 per cent in the aggregated 'agree' and 'strongly agree' responses to the other variable.

6.3 Features of Dialogic Teaching that Helped to Enhance the Students' Cognitive Engagement

The remaining research questions dealt with the features of dialogic teaching that helped to enhance the business students' cognitive engagement. Six key elements of dialogic teaching that were found to have a high incidence in the analysis are shown in the following table:

S/No.	Dialogic features
01.	Extended contributions by participants during teaching sessions.
02.	Short contributions that were not elaborate but simply offered ideas or suggestions.
03.	Encouragement offered to students to freely express their views.
04.	Cued elicitation by way of questioning, suggestions or highlighting of omissions.
05.	Building on contributions made by others.
06.	Provision of authoritative explanation in the course of dialogic interactions.

Table 5. Cognitive engagement enhancing features in a business studies class

We found that in the business studies class where dialogic teaching was employed there was a positive impact that resulted in the improvement of the students' cognitive engagement. Consequently, we believe that there was a transition towards greater engagement. The lead researcher often encouraged the students to contribute ideas to the teaching session. He explained to them that it was not necessary for perfect solutions to be provided, but that contributions would enable the contributor to develop the idea further. The lead researcher also applied cued elicitations to guide the students in their discussions which they found helpful. These served as pointers to possible solutions in situations in which there were gaps in the students' knowledge. In other situations that would have left the students feeling embarrassed due to their inability to discern the right answers or address an issue properly, it provided the students with the necessary support. In some instances, the lead researcher built on the contributions of the students. This approach provided the students with additional perspectives, and students modelled the approach in building their own argument.

6.4 A Summary of the Analysis of Recorded Teaching Sessions

Three dialogic teaching sessions were audio-recorded for analysis. They were video recorded in case there was the need to identify a speaker. Prior to that the lead researcher explained the purpose of the research to the students. He informed them of their right to withdraw or to have their data removed from the research at any time that they wished (BERA, 2018).

S/No.	Code	Session 1	Session 2	Session 3	Journal entries
	Local codes				
01.	Extended contribution	**27**	**32**	**20**	0
02.	Short contribution	**18**	**24**	**14**	0
03.	Encourage free expression of views	4	**9**	4	0
04.	Cued elicitation	4	**8**	2	0
05.	Build on others' contributions	6	**8**	4	0
06.	Provide authoritative explanation	6	**9**	4	0

[1]Table 6. Summary of the Atlas analysis of the three dialogic teaching sessions

The decision to focus only on the codes that produced noticeable results was based on the challenge which the entire 33 codes in the SEDA coding system would have presented if used, as they would have been too large to handle simultaneously within the constraints of this study, namely, time, resources and the report limitations. The 33 codes were applied in the analysis, however, at the stage of writing this report. Having realised that the codes produced varying levels of impact, we decided to focus on those that were more

[1] 01. A member of the class making an extended contribution to the collective activity, including solutions to a problem.
02. Making a non-elaborate contribution to the collective activity. One word up to one sentence in length.

noticeable. While some of them yielded zero results, others yielded results that could be considered very noticeable, for example, when they were only one or two instances.

6.5 The Effect of Dialogic Teaching on a Three-week Business Management Course: Difference Between my Pre-research Management of Classroom Interchanges and the Interchanges Taking Place During the Research:

From the results of data analysis discussed above, it was clear that there was a high level of behavioural engagement on the part of the students, during classroom interchanges (see Tables 7a and 7b below). Comparing the pre- and post-research data, there was a marginal improvement revealed in the post-research analysis. What was apparent from the data was that there was room for these elements of dialogic teaching to be improved further. However, the data did not indicate how this could be achieved. Also, subsequent data analysis attempted to discern the prevalence of elements of dialogic teaching during the sessions. The student responses showed higher support for 'agree' compared to 'strongly agree', another indication that there was still room for improvement in the researcher's dialogic sessions.

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I try hard to do well in school	39.9%	46.4%	0.0%	14.3%	0.0%
In class I work as hard as I can	32.1%	57.1%	0.0%	7.1%	0.0%
When I am in class, I participate in class activities	32.1%	60.7%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%
I pay attention in class	50.0%	42.9%	3.6%	3.6%	0.0%
When I am in class, I just act like I am working	3.6%	39.3%	10.7%	35.7%	10.7%
In school I do just enough to get by	7.1%	46.4%	14.3%	17.9%	14.3%
When I am in class my mind wanders	3.6%	25.0%	14.3%	39.3%	14.3%
If I have problem understanding a problem, I go over it again until I understand it	21.4%	60.7%	7.1%	7.1%	3.6%
when I run into a difficult homework problem, I keep working at it until I think I have solved it	17.9%	64.3%	3.6%	14.3%	0.0%

Table 7a. Summary of pre-research behavioural engagement

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I try hard to do well in school	36.8%	50.0%	2.6%	7.9%	0.0%
In class I work as hard as I can	39.5%	55.3%	2.6%	2.6%	0.0%
When I am in class, I participate in class activities	28.9%	68.4%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
I pay attention in class	39.5%	52.6%	5.3%	0.0%	0.0%
When I am in class, I just act like I am working	13.2%	15.8%	18.4%	31.6%	18.4%
In school I do just enough to get by	13.2%	42.1%	5.3%	23.7%	7.9%
When I am in class my mind wanders	7.9%	15.8%	15.8%	47.4%	10.5%
If I have problem understanding a problem, I go over it again until I understand it	28.9%	63.2%	0.0%	2.6%	5.3%
when I run into a difficult homework problem, I keep working at it until I think I have solved it	31.6%	50.0%	7.9%	7.9%	2.6%

Table 7b. Summary of post-research behavioural engagement

7. Discussion

As the study aimed to influence the behaviour of the students, the dialogic approach as well as the research objectives were explained to them. Interestingly, our study identified a decline of 17.6 per cent in the respondents' answers in relation to the planning and steering of classroom talk between the pre- and post-research questionnaires period (see Table 4.0 above). The limitations of our research approach mean that we are unable to explain this outcome, but it may be due to suspicion and unease on the part of the students in the face of a new and different teaching approach (Lefstein, 2010; Author et al., 2014). This highlights the need for interviews in subsequent studies (Collis & Hussey, 2014).

Taking into consideration the noted passivity of international students (Chalak & Baktash, 2015), the dialogic approach enabled the lead researcher to engage with the students, facilitate learning, clarify ideas and develop understanding in the areas of the subject being taught. Instructively, this research is designed to focus on, and aid the understanding of the collective culture of the class rather than individual culture of its constituents. The culture of the students might have contributed to their passivity (Tsui, 1996); however, dialogue enabled us to frankly

discuss issues relating to the lesson topic as well as the dialogic session itself in a respectful and trusting manner (Wegerif, 2011; Wolfe & Alexander, 2008). We are of the view, however, that the noted decline may be linked to the reported perception by students of the classroom seating arrangement coupled with issues that may relate to the culture of the students.

The data collected shows a high level of affective engagement on the part of the students, which constituted over 80 per cent in the overall analysis (see Tables 8a and 8b below). This highlights the need to examine equally all the other forms of engagement. As Appleton et al., (2006) point out, this could be considered a demonstration of the students' sense of belonging. Interestingly, there was a marginal post-research decline in some elements of affective engagement regarding students' expectations of the module being met. This might have been an indication of the decline in some other elements of students' engagement during the research. At the time of the study we were focused on determining the level of engagement, hence the absence of an explanation of the reasons for the decline. This also highlights the need to use interviews. However, Sinclair et al., (2003) point out other factors which are external to the classroom, such as parents' involvement, which may also impact on students' engagement. This is reinforced by Wentzel (1998) who highlights the fact that an individual's home may be an influential factor in relation to affective engagement. This reinforces the need for further studies as well as the use of a broader range of tools of data collection in order to understand why.

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I like the Collective Strategic Development module	25.0%	60.7%	10.7%	3.6%	0.0%
It is a lively class but not as interesting as I expect	10.7%	46.4%	0.0%	39.3%	3.6%
Most mornings I am not sure I look forward to going to the lesson	14.3%	57.1%	0.0%	25.0%	3.6%
I am happy to be at this lesson	17.9%	78.6%	3.6%	0.0%	0.0%

Table 8a. Summary of pre-research affective engagement: Liking for module

Item	Strongly agree	Agree	None	Disagree	Strongly disagree
I like the Collective Strategic Development module	34.2%	60.5%	0.0%	2.6%	0.0%
It is a lively class but not as interesting as I expect	21.1%	47.4%	7.9%	21.1%	2.6%
Most mornings I am not sure I look forward to going to the lesson	13.2%	31.6%	13.2%	28.9%	10.5%
I am happy to be at this lesson	18.4%	55.3%	5.3%	13.2%	5.3%

Table 8b. Summary of post-research affective engagement: Liking for module

We found that the students were reasonably engaged in terms of their behaviour (see Table 8 above). They attended the sessions, participated fairly actively and asked questions (Furlong & Christenson, 2008). Also, our statistics showed that both their cognitive and affective engagement were high despite the fluctuation between the results of the pre- and post-research questionnaire. These were indications that the students' found their studies relevant to their aspirations and also that they had a sense of belonging in terms of the support that they received (Appleton et al., 2006). This outcome is consistent with the view of Swain and Lapkin (1995). Consequently, we argue that the students appeared to have transitioned from semantic processing of information to syntactic processing, which may further explain the high ratings received.

The tutor made the main presentation for the sessions while the students joined in during the discussions. In the research design no plan was made for presentation by students while teaching was going on, as well as for the collection of related data due to time constraints. Ground rules, such as taking turns, contributing ideas freely during discussions, criticising others' contributions in a respectful way, among others, were noted in the research journal. The aim, which was to ensure that the sessions were dialogic and less argumentative, was achieved except in limited instances when there were simultaneous multiple contributions. This brought to the fore the issue of tension in the dialogic space, even within a largely orderly classroom. Consequently, questions arose about whether dialogue posed a problem instead of a solution to the students' passivity in these circumstances (Lefstein, 2006, p. 8). The model

below, Figure 2, reflects a dialogic incident in the sessions and shows where two students were engaged in dialogue.

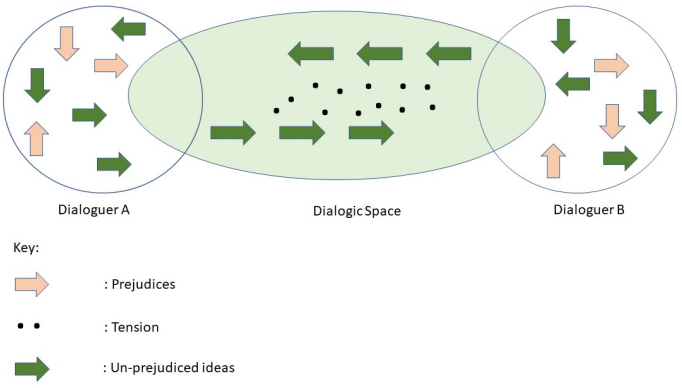

Figure 2. A model reflecting a dialogic situation with inherent tension resulting from suspended prejudices

Each interlocutor had certain ideas regarding the subject of the session, some of which might have been formed without sufficient knowledge or evidence. As noted in the journal entry, there were instances when the participants either took some moments to reflect as a group or the students took some time to respond to an idea. These were different from the courteous way of speaking one after another, typical of dialogic spaces. For a range of reasons prejudices must have been withheld. This could have been based on other students raising ideas that questioned such prejudices, or an attempt not to appear controversial. In the course of these dialogues the interchanges, coupled with the withheld prejudices, resulted in tension.

8. Conclusion

The responses to the questionnaires indicate that there was a high effort through dialogic means to encourage the students to discuss ideas freely, consequently reducing passivity. Such a situation can ingrain the habit of critical inquiry in students (Wolfe & Alexander, 2008; Kazepides, 2012) and will also result in effective learning, as well as higher intellectual attainment (Mercer & Littleton, 2007).

Both were noted in the practitioner journal as the students demonstrated greater curiosity, found solutions to issues within their groups and made good quality presentations. Evidence obtained during observations also showed that the sessions were steered with specific educational objectives in view. This corroborates the view of the role of the teacher as that of a facilitator of students' discovery of insights as well as that of partner in inquiry in dialogic education (Burbules & Bruce, 2001). The responses to the questionnaire, as well as other evidence, supported the proposition that 'students and teacher listened to each other, shared ideas, and considered alternative viewpoints'. These have been noted as elements which are critical to the bond which sustains dialogic relations over time (Freire, 1970; Wolfe & Alexander, 2008; Bauman, 2001; Lefstein, 2006; Burbules, 1993).

The experience of engaging in dialogic teaching in this research was very informative. Nothing clearly indicates that the choice of a business management course impacted on the outcome of the study. The literature reviewed prior to the classroom research offered a good basis to deal with issues in the classroom in relation to considering differing perspectives. The outcomes of the pre- and post-research activities showed positive responses of participants. Comparatively, the observation outcomes were perceived as largely positive with respect to one variable: 'the teacher plans and steers classroom talk with specific educational goals in view', although the questionnaire response turned out to be negative. Overall, the range of data from the students' responses regarding the quality of the dialogic session indicated that it was well received by students. However, it appeared that they were uncomfortable with the 'free flow' of the sessions, which we link to the mature status as well as the international background of the students. We concluded with the view that dialogic teaching is helpful in managing reticence and engagement in a business studies class with a large number of international students. However, the specific issues that have been identified as being of concern to the respondents, such as the classroom dynamics that arise from a free-flowing session, as well as the seating arrangement, may require further investigation. Alteration of these may help determine their significance in a dialogic environment.

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