

English Teachers' Practice of Classroom Discourse in Light of Zone of Proximal Development Theory and Scaffolding Techniques

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Abstract—This research examines English teachers' use of classroom discourse in the light of Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) theory and scaffolding techniques. English teachers play an essential role in increasing dialogic interaction in their English language learners (ELLs). The participants were 18 English teachers from government secondary school in Makkah city, Saudi Arabia. The observation sheet used to collect data concentrated on major points of classroom discourse in the lesson stages of teaching English including lesson planning, explanation, and evaluation. The results highlight high-level practice of some strategies that support authoritative discourse in some strategies in the three lesson stages. However, the findings reveal lower levels of teachers' use of strategies that support teaching in the ZPD. The findings also reveal an increase in the use of some strategies such as concentration on correcting errors in the planning stage before implementing the lesson. Furthermore, the findings reveal an increase in teachers' use of some strategies such as encouraging continuous classroom discourse without providing correct responses for learners before discussions in the teaching stage. Also, it indicates a high-level increase in the use of some strategies such as evaluation of previously memorized concepts, and asking questions to evaluate students' performance levels in the evaluation stage.

Index Terms—English teachers, authoritative discourse, dialogue discourse, Zone of Proximal Development, scaffolding techniques

I. INTRODUCTION

The Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) refers to a behavioral science or principle established by Vygotsky (1978) to describe a child's cognitive growth (Yildiz & Celik, 2020). A learner's ZPD is the region between what they can perform independently and what they are capable of under adult supervision or in collaboration with peers who have more experience. A huge potential that English language learners (ELLs) offer to classrooms is made up of their cognitive, verbal, and artistic abilities which are already present and just waiting to be developed. To assist pupils in fulfilling their complete development, educators must give them proper learning opportunities and support. The purpose of instruction is to develop ELLs' autonomy and capacity for participation in activities that allow them to adapt and apply what they have learned to various contexts.

It is worth noting that a learner's ZPD does not correspond to their current level of knowledge. Two students might perform equally well on a knowledge test, yet perform differently on a test demonstrating their ability to solve problems. Only a minimal amount of assistance will be needed if learning is occurring in the ZPD (Pahlevansadegh & Mirzaei, 2020). If a youngster receives too much help, they might just pick up the teacher's teaching methods rather than developing their own understanding of the subject.

Research has shown that dialogic discourse strategies, which promote a state of cognitive conflict and encourage verbal interaction between the teacher and students, are important for effective problem solving (Alexander, 2005). In the context of teaching English as a foreign language (EFL), recent curriculum changes have emphasized the importance of using investigative methods that are centered on the learner and their participation in classroom interaction. The teacher's role in this approach is to guide and facilitate the learning process, helping students build knowledge and understanding of concepts, and explain various phenomena. To support the learner's role in classroom discourse, this approach calls for providing opportunities for them to share their previous experiences and perceptions about concepts, and reducing traditional, authoritarian forms of discourse.

Given the importance of the learner's role in classroom discourse in EFL teaching theory, I believe it is important to conduct a study to examine the extent to which EFL teachers are using strategies that align with these principles in their classroom discourse. Language scaffolding, which involves providing support and guidance to learners as they acquire new skills, has been shown to be an effective strategy for helping students learn foreign languages more efficiently, as long as there is sufficient input and positive reinforcement. Therefore, the importance of scaffolding in the ZPD for the development of foreign language skills should be acknowledged. The current study aims to fill a gap in the literature by investigating how teachers can use different communicative approaches during classroom discourse to promote student engagement and learning. The study's research questions were:

1. To what extent do English teachers use classroom discourse in the lesson planning stage?
2. To what extent do English teachers use classroom discourse in the implementation and teaching stage?
3. To what extent do English teachers use classroom discourse in the evaluation stage?

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

There are two main types of classroom discourse: authoritative and dialogic. Authoritative discourse, which is characterized by a traditional teaching style, is prevalent in English classes (Chin, 2007). This type of discourse involves the teacher initiating a concept and receiving responses from students, which are then evaluated. The use of specific strategies to increase the effectiveness of interactive dialogue can vary depending on the nature of the dialogue between the teacher and the learner.

In classrooms that follow an authoritative discourse style, the pattern of verbal communication typically involves the teacher initiating a concept, receiving responses from students, and then evaluating those responses. According to a study by Chin (2007), this pattern is prevalent in such classrooms and often involves the teacher posing questions or lecturing on a concept and receiving responses from students without engaging in a discussion about the reasoning behind those responses. The teacher may move from student to student until finding an answer that meets their expectations and may provide the correct response themselves if students are unable to respond. This type of classroom discourse has received criticism for being authoritarian, with the teacher acting as the master of the educational situation and seeking to transfer knowledge without considering students' alternative perspectives.

Dialogic discourse is the second main type of classroom discourse. Westsch (1991) discussed the differences between authoritarian and dialogic approaches in an analysis of classroom discourse based on research by Bakhtin (1981). Previous research has highlighted that dialogue teaching is characterized by the combination of discovery and development of the learner's ideas and concepts through interactive classroom activities and discourse. This approach involves activating the learner's role in the discourse and is largely dependent on the teacher's guidance, with the goal of supporting teaching in the ZPD and maintaining a sense of challenge and curiosity to facilitate knowledge building (Chin, 2007).

Vygotsky (1978) introduced the ZPD as part of general child development analysis. He indicated that children's learning does not necessarily take place when the children are taken to school and begin studying. However, in a real sense, their learning starts in preschool, the time when they are still at home with their parents, guardians, or caregivers. Therefore, it is essential for parents to correctly nurture their children's learning before they reach school age. For example, children at home begin learning arithmetic in their daily lives as they determine the sizes of different objects and divide things among themselves. Furthermore, it is at this age that children learn from older family members how to name most objects they interact with in their daily lives, thus starting to assimilate such input after receiving answers to their questions, and ultimately acquiring the information. It is a clear indication that children develop their learning and internalize their speech mostly by interacting with others, be they adults or other children.

The ZPD may be defined as the gap between what a given learner has already gained, his true development level, and something worth achieving by being provided with the support of education, known as potential development. Most people believe that the ZPD points out the differences between the capacity of various children to solve problems independently and children's capacity to solve them alone with some assistance (Schutz et al., 2006). The tasks children do alone are mostly referred to as developmental levels.

Contrarily, the ZPD comprises a process called scaffolding which involves performing activities with the help of different teachers, parents, caretakers, language instructors, or other peers who have mastered particular functions. The notion of ZPD reflects the view of Vygotsky (1978) on the nature of human development and the interrelation between development and learning. Learning, distinct from development, leads to development, and the ZPD is the abstraction describing the potential and mechanism effect of learning on development. Therefore, in the scaffolding process, the help of the teachers or peers is necessary for children's development within the ZPD.

Other types of teaching and ways to help teachers and peers in the teaching-learning process have emerged in the human sciences during the last half-century. Stone (1998) believed that in the past few years, teaching has been galvanized by some seminal concepts from Vygotsky's recently translated works. These thoughts affect people's understanding of teaching and learning. Vygotsky's insights have also affected most learners' and teachers' understanding of teaching. The theory holds that what learners learn without the help of peers and teachers is considered to be at the developmental level. Unassisted and assisted learners' performance is specific, such that teaching has been redefined as assisted performance. Teaching only takes place when children achieve criterion performance with assistance through ZPD scaffolding, which is a teaching technique.

Gillies (2020) found that students were able to engage in constructive discussions with their peers and use appropriate language to discuss, compare, and explain phenomena when participating in group tasks. This led to an improvement in their ability to express opinions and provide explanations and justifications. Yusuk (2018) also found that using scaffolding techniques based on the ZPD had a positive effect on reading comprehension. The results of a study by Mirzaei and Pahlevansadegh (2020) showed that scaffolding was particularly effective in improving learning. Almuntaheri (2019) observed that preservice science teachers used a high percentage of strategies that supported authoritative discourse in the classroom and Gillies (2020) emphasized the importance of using both authoritative and

dialogic discourse to challenge and support students' thinking, leading to enhanced understanding and reasoned argumentation during learning.

A. *Scaffolding as a Teaching Technique in the Classroom*

The strategy of scaffolding instruction originated from Vygotsky's (1978) sociocultural and ZPD concepts. "the distance between the actual developmental level as determined by independent problem solving and the level of potential development as determined through problem-solving under adult guidance, or in collaboration with more capable peers" (Vygotsky, 1978, p. 86).

The scaffolding strategy promotes individual assistance based on the ZPD of the learner/s. The strategy, therefore, facilitates the student's potentiality of building on their prior knowledge, creating new information. Scaffolding instructional activities are always designed to support the levels at which learners can perform independently.

The term *scaffolding* describes a teaching strategy in which instructors provide students with a specific form of assistance while they acquire and master brand-new ideas or, for example the ability to use EFL. A teacher could give fresh information or show students how to address an issue while using the instructional scaffolding methodology (Ahmadi & Motaghi, 2021). The instructor then gradually fades assistance and allows students to practice independently. Additionally, this may involve teamwork. The expression, "I do. We do. You do" is also used to describe the instructional scaffolding concept. In other words, the teacher demonstrates something, the students practice, and then the students work alone.

Scaffolding basically involves two procedures (Chang, 2021). First, the instructor develops a plan or list of activities designed to teach the learner. Second is the execution phase where the teacher executes plans to achieve predetermined goals. In the first phase, the teacher takes the student from basic knowledge of what the learner already knows to form a basis for more complex ideas. The scaffolding technique has the following unique attributes. To begin with, there is some aspect of intentionality where each individual activity that could contribute to the work has a defined overarching goal that guides it (Gonulal & Loewen, 2018). Secondly, appropriateness where instructional projects provide issues that, without assistance, students could not resolve satisfactorily on their own. Thirdly, scaffolding is a framework in which designing and questioning exercises adhere to a smooth movement of thoughts and language and are centered on a sample of a suitable response to the problem. Moreover, there should be collaboration whereby the teacher's comments on students' work reformulate and build on the work the students have already completed, without discounting their independent work. Instead of being evaluative, the teacher's primary job is collaborative (Eun, 2019). Finally, the outward scaffolding for the activity is progressively taken away as the students comprehend the principles.

B. *Scaffolding and ZPD*

The ZPD is the line that separates what a pupil can accomplish independently from what they can't accomplish by themselves but requires a professional's assistance (Azir, 2019). Scaffolding is a technique for guiding a learner through an activity until they are able to finish it independently. Teachers can employ scaffolding to guide pupils through their ZPDs. This might be accomplished by giving learners directions or by offering those exercises that will enable them to do the task they are attempting to master (Xi & Lantolf, 2021).

Research shows that most people believe that the sociocultural theory of mind and the idea of the ZPD automatically form the notion's basis of scaffolding (Daniels, 2001). The view indicates that the concept of scaffolding only partly relates to most of Vygotsky's ZPD theory (Daniels, 2001). Furthermore, research has revealed the disadvantages of scaffolding in explaining the ZPD (Verenikina, 2003).

Wells (1999) contended that the concept of ZPD highlights teacher-learner negotiation and collaboration as a process known as bilateral contractual scaffolding, which in turn captures teaching performance as one facet of the communication process. In scaffolding, the scaffolder alone is expected to construct the scaffold and later present it for novice use (Daniels, 2002). Stone (1998), in his work, expressed various concerns that the scaffolding metaphor can lead to an indication that the teacher-learner interaction in today's different classrooms is predominantly one-sided and adult-driven. Thus, when this view is used in classroom teaching, it may take learners back to the pre-Piagetian stage, which is a traditional way of teaching through direct instruction (Verenikina, 2008).

C. *ZPD Teaching Methods*

Three types of teaching techniques can be applied in EFL, depending on the complexity of the concepts, objectives, and targets set to be achieved: (a) the use of manipulatives, (b) the use of visual aids, and (c) the application of physical and visual aspects together for sensory learning (Nfor, 2020). Since visuals and gestures aid in painting a complete picture of the lecture content, sensory ZPD also includes presenting in front of the class. Visual aids include mind maps, graphic organizers, and anchor charts which are commonplace in classrooms, but they can also assist students in connecting disparate ideas. Sana et al. (2019) insisted that learning sessions should be interactive, and that teamwork is an essential element whether it's between instructors and students or among students in the classroom. Jigsaw groups together with "think-pair-share" techniques are tried-and-true techniques for encouraging productive cooperation.

The ZPD phases frequently transition from professional to personal (Stages 1 and 2), from absorption as principles are computerized to recurrence through previous stages (Stages 3 and 4) as learners de-automatize what they have learned. Due to the importance of prior learning experiences that candidates bring to their teacher education programs,

Vygotsky’s theory (ZPD) requires a change in direction of the first two stages (i.e., instructional, then personality), starting with the learner's contemplation of past encounters and assertions. According to existing research, the gap between independent learning and instructor-guided learning is not an either/or occurrence, but rather a point of attention from the standpoint of teacher development. There are unquestionably few contemplations provided by the instructor still at this level of self-assistance; however, the emphasis is on laying the groundwork by promoting introspection on someone else's interactions as well as underlying ideologies with due consideration to the teaching process; lesson designing and perhaps teaching method should not be the deciding factors here. This focus on the candidates' real degrees of development departs from the ZPD's original plan.

The ZPD advances in internalizing and applying the instructional concepts they have acquired repeatedly (Stages 3 and 4). As candidates’ internalization increases, they demonstrate their capacity to apply the educational information and skills encouraged by their context. Assignments used at this point frequently involve micro-teaching demonstrations that have been video recorded. In order to promote absorption and greater integration of various life lessons into the larger genetically programmed structure of career growth, writing assumes a growing importance as a tool for stitching around each other’s individual, corporate, and conceptual stories. Instead of depending on the instructor's assessments of how well they carried out the instructional session, evaluations ought to give more weight to how far a learner can think back on the strengths and needs indicated therein.

This literature review explains language scaffolding in the ZPD as a potential means of fostering speech development in foreign languages such as EFL. According to Vygotsky (1978), children are subjected to demands from important adults that force them to encode, to process, and recall knowledge (Lavin, 2019). As a result, in the study, the adult's language input gives the adult a cognitive framework and organizational model for language.

The idea that the ZPD is a future-focused strategy that starts with the concept that students are naturally capable is crucial to this discussion (Esteban-Guitart, 2018). As educators teach EFL, a future-focused approach is extremely critical. EFL is frequently seen from a deficit viewpoint, which can lead to the perception that students fundamentally lack the abilities and understanding required to carry out tasks or read texts. Instead, a future-focused strategy sees ELLs' potential and provides an optimistic viewpoint that positions them for success in the future. Every EFL student's potential can be realized thanks to a teacher's skill, knowledge, and corresponding pedagogical action. The ZPD is shown in Figure 1.

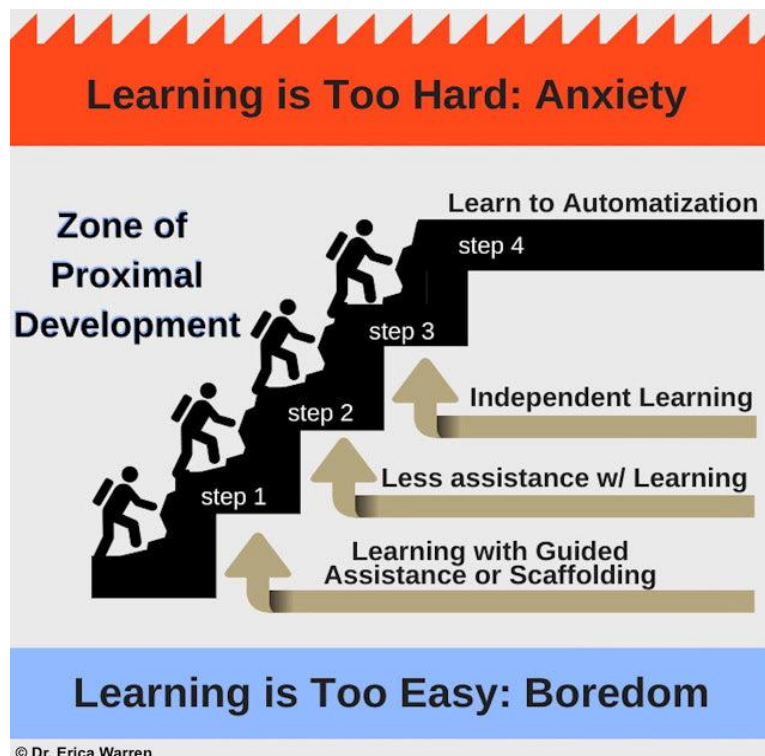


Figure 1. Zone of Proximal Development (Warren, 2021)

III. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study involved the collection of quantitative data only by means of a classroom observation sheet focused on how English teachers practiced classroom discourse during their discussions with students.

A. Participants

A total of 18 English teachers from secondary government schools participated in the study, in Semester 1 of 2022, in Makkah, Saudi Arabia. I observed the English teachers randomly to gather information using the observation form.

B. Instruments

I modified the observation sheet developed by Almutasheri (2019) to achieve the purpose of this study. It focuses on the degree to which English teachers practiced classroom discourse while teaching in the ZPD and scaffolding their instruction. The observation form highlights major points of classroom discourse in the stages of teaching English lessons: planning and preparation, explanation and interpretation, and evaluation). The form also concentrates on the English teachers' types of discourse, either authoritative or dialogue teaching. An academic staff member who specialized in English teaching methods reviewed the observation sheet. Two research assistants coded all the video clips after they were trained to code the English classroom discourse. Interrater trustworthiness on the learners' discourse was greater than 87%, which is regarded as a satisfactory level of interrater agreement. I used a 5-point Likert scale (*very low–low–medium–high–very high*) to determine the degree to which teachers used the classroom discourse strategies they followed, either authoritative or dialogue teaching.

TABLE 1
RANGE OF MEANS TO DETERMINE THE ENGLISH TEACHERS' LEVELS OF PRACTICING CLASSROOM DISCOURSE

N	Mean	Score
1	Less than 1.81	Very low
2	1.81-2.60	Low
3	2.61-3.40	Medium
4	3.41-4.20	High
5	4.21-5	Very high

IV. RESULTS

The repetitions and means of English teachers' use of classroom discourse in the lesson planning stage are clarified in Table 2.

TABLE 2
ENGLISH TEACHERS' USE OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE IN THE LESSON PLANNING STAGE

Number	Strategy	Repetition	Mean	Practice strength	Order
1	Planning for classroom speaking activities (discussions, argue)	35	2.83	medium	2
2	Concentration on explaining the topic and delaying the discussion until after the explanation	49	4.08	high	3
3	Concentration on correcting errors before moving to lesson implementation	52	4.33	very high	1
4	Using strategies that evoke students' discussions	34	2.80	medium	5
5	Planning for recall of important concepts	23	1.91	low	6
6	Giving enough time for thinking	32	2.66	medium	7
7	Using classroom discourse to evaluate the learners' levels	32	2.66	medium	4

Table 2 highlights the English teachers' practice of classroom discourse in the lesson planning and preparation stage. The table indicates an increase in the use of some strategies such as concentration on correcting errors before moving to lesson implementation. The teachers' practice of this strategy was the highest (4.33). Concentration on explaining the topic and delaying discussion until after the explanation was the second most used strategy in the English teachers' observed practices (4.08).

Table 2 shows that these English teachers demonstrated medium-strength levels of practicing some classroom discourse strategies such as using strategies that evoke students' discussions (2.80) and using classroom discourse to evaluate learners' levels and giving enough time for thinking (2.66 and 2.66, respectively). Furthermore, Table 2 indicates low levels of English teachers' practice of some classroom discourse strategies such as planning for recall of important concepts (1.91).

The repetitions and means of English teachers' use of classroom discourse in the implementation or teaching stage are clarified in Table 3.

TABLE 3
ENGLISH TEACHERS' USE OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OR TEACHING STAGE

Number	Strategy	Repetition	Mean	Practice strength	Order
1	Encouraging continuous classroom discourse for classroom discourse without giving answers	40	3.33	medium	1
2	Providing correct answers for learners without discussion	53	4.41	very high	3
3	Provoke verbal interaction during group comparisons results	34	2.80	medium	4
4	Ending the classroom discourse with concentration on answers (Yes, No)	43	3.50	high	2
5	Linking new experience with previous experience	17	1.41	very low	7
6	Encouraging using formal concepts instead of using informal ones	32	2.66	medium	5
7	Asking the learners to provide evidence for their answers	25	2.08	low	6

Table 3 shows levels of the English teachers' classroom discourse practice in the lesson teaching stage. It reveals a very high level of the use of some strategies such as providing correct answers for learners without discussions and ending the classroom discourse with concentration on Yes–No answers (4.41 and 3.50, respectively). Moreover, Table 3 shows medium levels of English teachers' classroom discourse practice of some strategies such as encouraging continuous classroom discourse without giving answers, evoking verbal interaction during group comparisons of results and encouraging using formal concepts instead of using informal ones (3.33, 2.80, 2.66, respectively). Table 3 also shows low levels of English teachers' classroom discourse practice of some strategies such as linking new experience with previous experience and asking learners to provide evidence for their answers (1.41, 2.80, respectively).

The repetitions and means of English teachers' use of classroom discourse in the evaluation stage are clarified in Table 4. It indicates a high-level increase in the use of some strategies such as evaluation of previous concepts memorization, (4.50). Furthermore, Table 4 reflects medium levels of English teachers' classroom discourse practice of some strategies such asking varied questions to evaluate students' thinking levels (2.66). Table 4 also reflects low levels of the English teachers' classroom discourse practice of some strategies such as evaluation of learners' ability to express their ideas and evaluation of communication skills within group work (1.41 and 1.91, respectively).

TABLE 4
ENGLISH TEACHERS' USE OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE IN THE EVALUATION STAGE

Number	Strategy	Repetition	Mean	Practice strength	Order
1	Evaluation of previous concepts memorization	54	4.50	very high	1
2	Evaluation of communication skills within group work	23	1.91	low	4
3	Asking questions to evaluate students' levels	44	4.00	high	2
4	Asking varied questions to evaluate students' thinking levels	32	2.66	medium	3
5	Evaluation of learners' ability to express their ideas	17	1.41	very low	5

V. DISCUSSION

The findings show that there was an increase in the use of certain strategies by English teachers during the planning and preparation stage, such as a focus on correcting errors before implementing the lesson and concentration on explaining the topic and delaying discussions until after the explanation. However, this increase in the use of these strategies also revealed a focus on transferring knowledge, which led to a reduction in classroom discourse during teaching. This is in line with Vygotsky's (1978) theory of teaching opportunities in the ZPD, which suggests that teachers have a responsibility to provide information to learners while allowing for the learners' own role in the investigation of knowledge.

Yusuk (2018) found that using scaffolding techniques based on the ZPD had a positive effect on learning, and indicated the potential for supporting the incorporation of these techniques in teaching. This result is consistent with the study by Burns and Myhil (2004) that found that teachers often struggle to move away from authoritarian discourse, resulting in their control of dialogue and directing it toward the transfer of knowledge. This also aligns with the study by Rohring and Luft (2004) that found that teachers' belief in their responsibility for transferring content can reduce opportunities for student participation in classroom dialogue.

Furthermore, the results show that English teachers had a very high level of usage for certain strategies during the teaching stage of the lesson, such as providing correct answers for learners without discussion and ending the discourse by focusing on answers like "yes" or "no." The increase in the use of these strategies indicates that strategies that prioritize the teacher's own discourse and their central role in managing class discussions, such as providing answers to questions without discussion and ending the class dialogue with a focus on answers were the most frequently practiced

strategies.

The use of these strategies, such as providing answers to questions without discussion and ending the class dialogue with a focus on answers, helps the teacher transfer concepts and explain them to the learners, but it also reduces the involvement of the learners in the classroom dialogue process. These strategies, which prioritize the teacher's role and aim to draw the students' attention to the covered concepts rather than revealing their own abilities to interpret, were the least frequently practiced. These results align with previous studies that found high usage of these strategies, which encourage correct answers while the teacher corrects incorrect answers without examining misconceptions (Wolfe & Alexander, 2008).

Additionally, the results reveal the degree to which English teachers practiced classroom discourse in the evaluation stage. The results show that assessing the learners' memorization of previously covered concepts was the most frequently practiced strategy. This aligns with the study by Almutasheri (2019) that found that teachers' questions during the evaluation stage often focus on recalling presented information to ensure that learners have memorized the covered concepts.

Bosser and Lindahl (2020) contended that in managing classroom discussions, teachers should use a combination of both authoritative and dialogic approaches, as well as interactive and noninteractive communicative approaches. This is important in order to provide students with the opportunity to investigate complex issues using a guided authoritative approach, as well as being responsive to different perspectives presented during a discussion. Reznitskaya and Gregory (2013) also asserted that dialogic discourse is characterized by a shared authority among group members over the content and form of the discussion, open-ended questions that promote meaningful inquiries, constructive feedback from teachers, and student responsibility for the flow of the discussion. This includes managing turns, asking questions, critiquing others' answers, introducing new topics, and suggesting changes to the discussion process. Additionally, students are encouraged to explain their thinking while working collaboratively with others to co-construct new knowledge and mutual understanding.

According to Gillies (2020), using both authoritative and dialogic discourse is crucial for supporting students' learning and helping them develop reasoned arguments. Almutasheri (2019) found that preservice science teachers frequently employed strategies that involved authoritative discourse in their classrooms. Aguiar et al. (2010) argued that both types of discourse are necessary, with authoritative discourse allowing teachers to establish a "canonical view" or way of reasoning in the classroom, while dialogic discourse encourages students to explore and investigate the ideas being presented. Garcia-Carrion and colleagues (2020) conducted a review of the social impact of dialogic teaching and found that there is evidence from various studies that this approach leads to academic achievement and social cohesion. They also noted that dialogic teaching provides children from different backgrounds with equal opportunities to participate in discussions that support their learning and development.

Scott and Mortimer (2005) conducted research on the various forms and functions of discursive interactions in high school classrooms. They identified two main types of interaction: an interactive and dialogic approach in which the teacher actively listens to students' ideas and prompts further discussion through questions, and an authoritative and interactive approach in which the teacher presents a scientific viewpoint and leads students through a series of questions and answers to clarify that perspective. According to Scott et al. (2006), shifting between these two styles of interaction is a natural part of teaching science, as the authoritative approach is often used to introduce new concepts while the dialogic approach allows for further exploration of those ideas.

VI. STUDY LIMITATIONS

One essential limitation of this study is that the research was applied in the context of only one city. Moreover, the sample size was small (i.e., 18 English teachers). A larger sample size of more than 50 English teachers from different cities would enhance the generalizability of the results.

VII. CONCLUSION

This research investigates how English teachers use classroom discourse in relation to the ZPD theory and scaffolding techniques. The results show very strong use of many strategies that support authoritative discourse in the three teaching stages. In contrast, the findings show lower levels of using strategies that support teaching in the ZPD. In the planning stage, the results indicate an increase in the use of certain strategies such as focusing on correcting errors before implementing the lesson and concentration on correcting errors before implementing the lesson.

Additionally, the findings reveal an increase in the use of certain strategies during the teaching stage, such as encouraging continuous classroom discourse without providing answers and providing correct answers for learners without discussion. Finally, in the evaluation stage, this research found a high level of increase in the use of strategies such as evaluating students' memorization of previous concepts, and asking questions to evaluate students' thinking levels in the evaluation stage.

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