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Author	Sulyman, Abdulganiy
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## RESEARCH REPORT

# Using the T-SEDA dialogic approach in 'Introduction to Teaching Profession' classes in Nigerian Higher Education

SULYMAN, Abdulganiy Aremu

*Federal University Lokoja, Lokoja, Kogi State, Nigeria*

### Abstract

**Background and purpose:** This study investigated the use of Toolkit for Systematic Educational Dialogue Analysis (T-SEDA) in the Nigerian higher education. The researcher observed in his class of adult learners that dialogue was poor and usually between the teacher and the learners, not among learners. The implication of this dialogic structure was that there was very little sharing of ideas and experiences among the learners.

**Aims:** The aim of this study was to promote higher levels of dialogue among learners and enhance their reasoning and learning using the Toolkit for Systematic Educational Dialogue Analysis (T-SEDA).

**Design or methodology:** The participants were the students of higher education in Nigeria. The inquiry context was the classroom in an 'Introduction to Teaching Profession' course. Self-audit and live coding observation were used to collect data. Analysis of baseline data and post-intervention data was done using Toolkit for Systematic Educational Dialogue Analysis (T-SEDA) coding scheme. At the intervention stage, the researcher exposed the learners to the concepts of educational dialogue including meaning, importance, dialogic moves, importance of learner-learner dialogue, and ground rules.

**Findings:** The results gathered after the intervention demonstrated that students engaged more with one another and made more use of dialogic talk moves.

**Conclusions, originality, value and implications:** It was concluded that students need to be exposed to T-SEDA dialogic approach or educational dialogue in order to improve their exchange of knowledge and ideas. This study suggests the value of encouraging educational dialogue and dialogic approaches in pedagogy in Nigerian education; the use of T-SEDA as a guide, and adoption of dialogic approach in research.

**Keywords:** T-SEDA; educational dialogue; dialogic moves; introduction to teaching profession; ground rules; higher education; initial teacher education

## Context

This study was conducted in a Nigerian university located in Lokoja, Kogi state, the North-Central geopolitical zone of Nigeria. The students aged between 23 and 25 years participated under the guidance of a lecturer with two research assistants who helped in recording and live coding observations. The lecturer or the researcher has been teaching since 2005. He started his teaching career in elementary schools, then secondary school, and at present he is a lecturer at the University level.

## Motivation, focus and questions

In many educational contexts, educational dialogue has proven useful and indispensable to the success and improvement of teaching and learning process (T-SEDA Collective, 2021). Dialogue occupies a central place in education. The quality of dialogue determines the quality of education. This important fact has made the researcher reflect on the quality of dialogue in his classroom and he found that there is the need to improve it for better exchange of ideas and experiences among learners, and between the teacher and the learners.

Having been exposed to Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) titled “The Fundamentals of Educational Dialogue” (facilitated by Dr Farah Ahmed and Meaghan Brugha) and “Dialogue in Islamic Classrooms: Using Halaqah to Develop Shakhsiyyah” (facilitated by Dr Farah Ahmed) from the Islamic Educator Learning Community (<https://ielc.learnworlds.com/>), the researcher had a basic understanding of educational dialogue. Particularly, the first course exposed him to Toolkit for Systematic Educational Dialogue Analysis (T-SEDA). Reading this learning resource, the researcher realised the importance of dialogue in education and how its inadequate presence can hinder learning and the utmost relevance of T-SEDA for the improvement of dialogue in his context.

The researcher then conducted a self-audit to re-ascertain himself of the dialogical deficiency he observed in his classroom. After this, he proceeded to the intervention stage and to other parts of the research. The gap the researcher filled in this study is the use of T-SEDA to improve learner-learner dialogue in Nigerian higher education, which none of the previous researchers had done. Based on the interests and aims, the following research questions guided this study:

1. How was classroom talk in the teaching and learning of the ‘Introduction to Teaching Profession’ course before application of dialogic moves?
2. How were the positive changes in classroom reasoning and learning in ‘Introduction to Teaching Profession’ with application of dialogic moves?
3. How often do dialogic moves feature in the teaching and learning of the ‘Introduction to Teaching Profession’ course?

The study was informed by a review of educational dialogue in different contexts and the positive changes it has brought; the difference between talk and dialogue; T-SEDA; dialogic moves; and importance of talk rules in dialogue.

## Educational Dialogue

Educational dialogue is a dialogue in educational contexts such as school classrooms, university seminars and informal education settings such as children’s learning clubs. But what is dialogue? What are the characteristics of dialogue? Dialogue is a form of communication in which participants listen to each other’s messages and ideas, contribute their ideas, justify their ideas, invite others to reason about the ideas contributed, and also reason about others’ ideas. The participants may be in agreement or disagreement depending on their lines of reasoning.

Is every classroom talk a dialogue? Dialogue is a form of classroom talk but not all classroom talk is a dialogue. In other words, not every classroom talk possesses characteristics of dialogue. During the non-dialogical classroom talk, participants talk to each other but without reasoning through each other’s talk, listening to each other, challenging own and each other’s ideas, inviting others to build their reasoning on own ideas, or relating reasoning to learning. Dialogue also involves non-verbal communication (T-SEDA Collective, 2021). Table 1 shows differences between non-dialogical talk and a dialogue.

Table 1: Differences between dialogue and non-dialogic classroom talk

Non-dialogic classroom talk	Classroom dialogue
Absence of listening to each other’s talk	Attentive listening to details
Lack of reasoning about each other’s ideas and claims	Logical reasoning about each other’s talk
Avoidance of challenging, questioning and opposing each other’s ideas	Challenging, questioning and opposing each other’s ideas
Talk not related to lessons	Focus on the contents of the lessons
Participants do not invite each or one another to contribute reasoning	Invitation to reason logically about certain ideas or topics

Previous studies in diverse contexts have shown that educational dialogue, classroom dialogue, teacher-student dialogue or dialogic pedagogy enhances learning, reasoning and other aspects of learners’ development. Alexander (2018) reported that dialogic teaching improved academic achievement of United Kingdom (UK) primary school learners. Kiemer et al (2015) found that teacher’s constructive (dialogic) feedback to learners had increased learning motivation, autonomy and interest in STEM subjects among secondary school students in Germany. In Czech Republic, Sedova (2021) gathered that students who spoke more using high quality dialogic moves in language arts performed better. Also, T-SEDA Collective (2021) indicates that the University of Cambridge research team produced substantial evidence about the effectiveness of teacher-learner dialogue from analyses of 144 lessons by 72 teachers in 48 English primary schools. They found that dialogic

teaching enhanced active student participation in the classroom dialogue, and obvious use of ground rules. They also found that dialogic moves that improved learning included building on other's ideas, inviting others to build on own ideas, and challenging and questioning others' ideas.

In higher education context, a law lecturer carried out dialogic research using T-SEDA resources. He realised that educational dialogue helped students gain self-directed learning skills. He also reported that varied higher education settings can determine different types of dialogue. For example, in a large lecture room, asking open questions can help learners participate in dialogue. He concluded that T-SEDA dialogic practices should be used with higher education subject matter to assist the students discuss different topics in greater depth in a highly critical manner.

Also, a teacher taught adult learners using dialogic practices in T-SEDA and found that her questioning style improved and facilitated dialogue. The teacher also noted that the adult learners became more critical of one another's ideas and elaborate on what others said.

### **Researcher's Reflective Point 1**

The University of Cambridge researchers focused on three dialogic moves which are very important. In addition, the outcomes of dialogic inquiries carried out by the researchers implied that there is the need for other teachers across the globe to apply dialogic approach in their teaching and research. This is to improve the quality of learners' reasoning and learning. When the quality of reasoning and learning improves, the consequence is further development of human resources in the world. In a bid to actualise this, dialogic researchers and teachers need to give their ideas and findings highest possible accessibility and visibility so that other educators who are yet to make their educational setting dialogical can start doing so. All sources of awareness creation, both online and physical, should be used to make dialogic pedagogy and its importance known to the world. The researcher hopes that dialogic approach relevant to each subject is made a topic in every subject from elementary level to tertiary level so that learners can reason better, and do not only memorise information.

In Nigeria, Oduoyo and Yusuf (2020) conducted research in order to expose the effect of critical dialogue on the academic performance of secondary school students in economics. In this study, the study featured quasi-experimental design in which a total of 73 students were used as participants. The students were classified into control and experimental groups. 35 students that made up experimental group received teaching using Critical Dialogue instructional strategy while 38 students in the control group were taught using Conventional approach. The researchers established that there was significant difference in the academic performance of the learners who were taught using Critical Dialogue approach. The researchers also found that the gender of the students did not influence the level of effectiveness of critical dialogue in their learning. The researchers maintained that critical dialogue is a problem-posing discussion to promote equal participation and diverse viewpoints among learners.

Additionally, Orimsan and Augusta (2022) carried out a philosophical study in which they argued that dialogue gives room for teacher-learner relationship and allows quick sharing of knowledge. They added that the causes of poor use of dialogue in the classroom include inadequate training of teachers, lack of resources for proper training of educators, poor curriculum design and absence of adequate parental guidance.

Furthermore, beyond the classroom, there is literature on the use of dialogue to support Nigerian education. For instance, Unya and Ekumaoko (2022) suggested that dialogue is a powerful tool that should be applied to end the conflict, for example, between government and striking lecturers in Nigeria. This is to discourage conflict-oriented approach which has not led to meaningful transformation in the Nigerian educational system. Also, Olusakin (2020) opined that social dialogue can be used to create culture of peace in Nigerian learning space.

The T-SEDA Collective (2021) asserts that in order to promote a positive classroom culture for educational dialogue, there is need for rules that will guide the dialogue. These rules are known as 'ground rules' or 'talk rules'. The ground rules in a typical classroom dialogue may include the following:

- Members should not interrupt others' speaking.
- Members should justify their ideas logically.
- Members should listen to the submission of others so that the former can understand the submission.
- Participatory membership means thinking and listening, not mere talking.
- Contrary opinions are welcome.
- Members can ask questions.

## T-SEDA

T-SEDA is an acronym for Toolkit for Systematic Educational Dialogue Analysis. T-SEDA pack is a learning material on educational dialogue and dialogic inquiry. It is a collection of tools and resources carefully developed based on systematic reasoning and scholarly research on educational dialogue. It helps promote high quality dialogue in elementary, secondary and tertiary education settings using either face-to-face or virtual mode of learning. It supports educators to understand the kind and level of dialogue in their settings, challenges in the dialogue, and ways of overcoming the challenges to create positive changes and better dialogic reasoning and learning. It can be used to enhance dialogue in the formal settings such as school classrooms, university seminars, or informal gatherings such as children's clubs. The contents of T-SEDA include introduction to T-SEDA; educational dialogue in diverse contexts; how productive is educational dialogue in my classroom (a self-audit for teachers); reflective cycle of classroom inquiry; choosing an inquiry focus; research ethics; analysing classroom talk: systematic observation and coding; and possible uses of the T-SEDA pack. The team authors and contributors of T-SEDA pack are called 'The T-SEDA Collective'. These people include academic staff of Faculty of Education, the University of Cambridge. There were other contributors from National Autonomous University of Mexico. Also there are others who assisted with the translation of the T-SEDA pack into Chinese, Spanish, Hebrew and French (T-SEDA Collective, 2021).

### Researcher's Reflective Point 2

T-SEDA is a comprehensive tool to guide researchers and teachers on how they should proceed from pre-dialogue, sub-dialogue and anti-dialogue stages of classroom pedagogy to dialogue and super-dialogue stages. Pre-dialogue means before the application of dialogic principles and moves, sub-dialogue refers to substandard or little application of dialogic moves, anti-dialogue involves modes of talk and practices that can undermine, disrupt or prevent dialogue, while super-dialogue means high-quality dialogue which adequately captures T-SEDA dialogic moves and principles to enhance learning and reasoning. Collective efforts of high-class authors, and translation of the pack into multiple languages which opens path to more people to read and understand T-SEDA research resources, are also strengths of the T-SEDA pack. However, other researchers from Universities in the other regions of the world such as Africa should have been made researchers in this project in order to incorporate their cultural perspectives of dialogue. More translation of the pack into more languages used in other parts of the world can help more to read and understand the T-SEDA.

### Dialogic moves

T-SEDA Collective (2021) discusses some techniques to facilitate dialogue. These techniques are statements that initiate, continue and conclude dialogue in various dimensions. These techniques are referred to as dialogic moves, and are contained in the T-SEDA dialogue coding scheme. The moves include Invite to Build on, Build on and Challenge. See Appendix 1 for more information on dialogic moves.

### Researcher's Reflective Point 3

Without dialogic moves, there cannot be quality dialogue. From the table in Appendix 1, it can be inferred that the participants in a dialogue can be grouped into starters, movers and overseers. The starters are the participants that initiate a dialogue in different categories such as 'IB - invite to build', 'IRE - invite reasoning' and 'E – invite ideas'. Movers are the participants that continue the dialogue after initiation or invitation by the starters. Starters also become movers when they facilitate continuation of the dialogue. Movers participate in the categories like B – Build on ideas, CH – Challenge, R – Make reasoning explicit, and C- Connect. While overseers are the participants that coordinate, evaluate and guide the dialogue. They are usually group leaders, facilitators, teachers, presenters or counsellors. Their roles show in the dialogic categories like CA – Coordination of ideas and agreement, RD – Reflect on dialogue or activity, and G – Guide direction of dialogue or activity. At times, overseers also play the role of starters. This reflective point can be termed SMO which stands for Starter-Mover-Overseer.

### 'Introduction to Teaching Profession'

'Introduction to Teaching Profession' is a general core education course that 100-level students of the Faculties of Education in Nigerian universities offer in the first semester. It is a 2-credit unit course. It is designed to expose the teacher trainees to basic issues and ideas in teaching as a

profession. The course contents of Introduction to Teaching Profession include Concept of Teaching; Concept of Profession; Characteristics of Profession; Teaching as a Profession; Preparatory Records in Teaching – Curriculum, Syllabus, Scheme of Work, Lesson Plan; Ethics of Teaching Profession; Quality of Good Teachers; and Unionism. The inclusion of Introduction to Teaching Profession in the curriculum of Faculties of Education in Nigerian universities is based on the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standard (BMAS), a national curriculum document, which is now replaced by Core Curriculum and Minimum Academic Standard (CCMAS) (See National Universities Commission, 2022).

Having reviewed the related literature, the next is to discuss dialogical empirical research carried out in this study.

## **Inquiry plan and activities**

### **Dialogical Research Methodology (DRM)**

In this section, T-SEDA dialogical research methodology and its application in this study will be discussed in a modified way. The discussion follows the cycle of inquiry in the T-SEDA as presented below.

#### **Self-audit**

This is a process or a tool for assessing teacher-learner interaction in the classroom considering variables important to the teacher in his teaching and research in order to establish baseline information. This assessment is called self-audit because it is carried out by the teacher on themselves. Though T-SEDA Collective (2021) used self-audit in the context of dialogical teaching, learning and researching, but it can be adapted to other uses. Parents can use self-audit to assess their parental effectiveness on the children focusing on many variables important to them. Couples can use self-audit to assess characteristics of their dialogue and their impacts on their marital and family lives. However, it is worth stating that self-audit may not be considered the first step in the cycle of dialogic enquiry because it is preceded by knowledge or awareness of dialogue. It is after the teacher has clear understanding of what dialogue is that they will be able to audit themselves to see which aspect of dialogue exists in their classroom, and the one which needs to be improved.

In this study, having had knowledge of educational dialogue, the researcher/teacher used self-audit to find out if dialogic moves take place in the classroom talk in his context specifically in the teaching and learning of Introduction to Teaching Profession. He found that the dialogic moves – Invite to Build on, Build on and Challenge – were very rare in the learner-learner classroom talk but common in the teacher-learner talk. This did not allow adequate exchange of ideas, experiences and learning gains among learners. This is the baseline data obtained from the self-audit.

The researcher's self-audit is presented in Appendix 2.

#### **Baseline Data**

Baseline data is what used to happen in the classroom dialogue before the intervention of exposure to and application of dialogic moves. This data represents activities of one class which are

similar to what happened in other classes before the intervention. There were only six contributors though the class size is 40 students.

Table 2: Baseline Data

SN	CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTIONS	CODES
1	Teacher	Based on the characteristics of profession you have learnt, do you think teaching is a profession?	IB – Invite to Build on
2	B	I don't think so, Teacher. But I will like you to explain further.	IB – Invite to Build on
3	C	Sir, I can answer the question better. Teaching is a profession because it takes care of its clients' needs.	R – Reasoning
4	Teacher	Oh. This is interesting. Do you think teaching really takes care of your needs?	IRE – Invite reasoning
5	C	Yes, I gain knowledge through teaching.	B – Build on
6	D	Sir, I have a question. When we consider adequate remuneration as a characteristic of profession, can teaching still be considered a profession in Nigeria?	IB – Invite to Build
7	Teacher	O you 'E', how will you respond to the question asked by D?	IB - Invite to Build on
8	E	I don't think teaching is a profession in Nigeria because most teachers complain that their salaries are too low. They do not enjoy good things.	R – Reasoning
9	F	To buttress E's point, my father is a teacher and has been a teacher for 15 years but till now he is unable to build a house or buy a car.	B – Build on
10	Teacher	I agree with you that the teacher's remuneration is poor in Nigeria.	B – Build on
11	C	Teacher, please lead us into discussing another point that teaching is a profession.	IB - Invite to Build on
12	Teacher	Teaching is a profession because it involves mastery of complex knowledge and skills which all your teachers have demonstrated. Do you agree with this?	IB – Invite to Build on
13	E	I disagree with you that all teachers have demonstrated mastery of complex knowledge and skills.	Ch – Challenge
14	Teacher	What do you mean? Can you elaborate and justify your point?	IB – Invite to Build on
15	E	My secondary school teacher was asked to explain some concepts in economics which he explained wrongly. I found out that the answer was wrong after I read a textbook on economics.	B – Build on

The baseline classroom dialogue reveals that teacher–learner interaction dominated classroom discourse, with the teacher initiating nearly all exchanges through invitations to build on ideas. Although a few students (B, C, D, E, and F) participated, the majority of learners (35 out of 40 students) remained silent throughout the lesson, indicating low overall participation. Learner contributions were largely responses to teacher prompts, rather than spontaneous learner-learner engagement. The only clear instance of learner-learner dialogue occurred when Student F built on Student E’s contribution, demonstrating minimal peer interaction. Additionally, while students were able to build on ideas (B) and occasionally challenge the teacher’s position (Ch), these dialogic moves were limited to a small number of outspoken students. This suggests that classroom dialogue before the intervention was not inclusive and did not sufficiently encourage broad participation.

The baseline data reflects a traditional classroom discourse pattern, where authority and control of discussion rested largely with the teacher. The limited number of contributors suggests that many learners may have lacked confidence, motivation, or opportunity to participate meaningfully in dialogue. Although some dialogic moves such as building on, reasoning, invite reasoning and challenging were present, they were rare and unevenly distributed among students. This pattern highlights the need for intentional instructional strategies that promote equitable participation, sustained learner-learner interaction, and deeper dialogic engagement.

Overall, the baseline findings justify the introduction of the intervention aimed at exposing students to and supporting the application of dialogic moves to enhance classroom dialogue and active learning.

## **The intervention**

The first step taken was teaching of educational dialogue in one class in terms of its meaning, its importance of improving the quality learning as proven in the previous studies, and the nature, types and use of dialogic moves. Ground rules – nature, steps and importance – were also discussed. This class was to familiarise the students with educational dialogue and get them ready to transform the classroom talk to high quality dialogue. Strong emphasis was laid on the importance of learner-learner dialogue which was not common in the classroom. The researcher thought that students’ mindfulness of dialogic moves in their talk was crucial and would make them master dialogical practices in the classroom better and faster. This is the intervention stage.

Then, in the next Introduction to Teaching Profession class, application of educational dialogue was done. Firstly, the ground rules were made by both the teacher and the students. The ground rules can be found in Appendix 3.

There were two classes in which ‘Teaching as a Profession’ was discussed. The class size was 40 students. In both classes, there were 15 contributors. Two research assistants were used in recording and live coding the observations using tallies while the researcher engaged in coordinating the

learning and dialogic activities. The analysis contains the serial numbers, the letters representing the contributors (teacher and learners), turns of dialogical contributions, and dialogic moves or codes.

### Ethical considerations and relationships

The researcher ensured that there was no harm in the location of research against other participants. The University environment was safe and the classroom was comfortable and well ventilated. The students and the research assistants were not under pressure. They were well informed about the research process and the importance of the research. The research was conducted after gaining their informed consent for participation, data usage and anonymisation of the presented data. These ethical issues were discussed at the beginning of research and the participants agreed with the researcher.

### Results, interpretation and reflection

In this section, data gathered after the intervention are presented. Then, interpretation of the results and reflection on the results were also presented.

Table 3: Data gathered after intervention in two classes

SN	CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTIONS	CODES
1	Teacher	Can any student tell the class what a profession is?	IB – Invite to build on
2	A	I think the best way to answer this question is to talk about characteristics of profession.  Or what do you think, class?	B – Build on; IB – Invite to Build on
3	B	I disagree with A that the only way to talk about profession is to discuss its characteristics. What about defining it?	CH – Challenge; IB – Invite to Build on;
4	C	B, how will you define a profession without talking about its characteristics? I do not think that is possible. Even when you define other concepts, you may need to talk about their characteristics.	CH - Challenge
5	D	I agree with C that talking about characteristics will help us understand what the profession is. But can E contribute to this?	B – Build on; IB – Invite to build on
6	E	Of course, I have something to say. Profession, as we were taught in the last class, I think, can be seen as a group of services aimed at carrying out certain tasks and achieve a goal or a set of goals.	R - Reasoning
7	F	Thank you E. I like your definition of profession but I would like to add something you did not mention. Oh... I cannot remember now. I will continue later.	B – Build on (but not complete because he did not recall what he wanted to say)
8	D	I agree that profession is better discussed in terms of its characteristics. One of the	B – Build on

SN	CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTIONS	CODES
		characteristics of profession is long-term training.	
9	Teacher	Thank you D. You are right. But long-term training in which area?	IB – Invite to build on
10	G	It could be any area, Teacher.	B - Build on.
11	C	I will like to disagree because armed robbery is not a profession but its training can still take a long time.	CH - Challenge
12	G	I believe that I am right.	
13	H	I think a profession is not a type of work that deliberately puts the society into danger. Therefore I think I disagree with G.	B – Build on; CH- Challenge
14	Teacher	You have all tried. Truly, a profession serves the interest of the society, does not harm it. Any type of work that harms its society is not a profession. Which other characteristic of profession will you use to define it?	B – Build on. IB – Invite to Build on
15	G	If my memory serves me correctly, I think expertise is another feature of a profession.	B – Build on
16	I	But G or another member of the class, what is expertise?	IB - Invite to Build on
17	Teacher	This is a nice question. Who can tell us what expertise is?	
18	A	Teacher, let me try. Expertise is a combination of knowledge, skills and competence that a person has gained through training. Am I right?	B – Build on; IB – Invite to Build on
19	J	I agree with you.	
20	Teacher	Thank you. Let me add that other characteristics of a profession include social acceptability, adequate remuneration, strong association or union, code of practice, entry minimum qualification, and legal operations. Then, can we say that teaching is a profession in Nigeria?	B - Build on IB – Invite to Build on
21	K	Oh... I am still thinking.	
22	D	Yes, Teacher. Teaching is a profession because it has remuneration.	R - Reasoning
23	L	Really? I will like to differ a little from the D's response. Teaching has remuneration but the remuneration is not adequate. So teaching is not a profession by remuneration.	CH - Challenge
24	Teacher	Thank you L. Yes. I think it is hard to say that teaching is a profession in Nigeria when it comes to remuneration. But I can say that teaching is a profession because it has entry minimum qualification which is Nigeria Certificate in Education (NCE).	R - Reasoning
25	Teacher	Also, teaching is a profession because it enjoys social acceptability.	B - Build on

SN	CONTRIBUTOR	CONTRIBUTIONS	CODES
26	M	Social acceptability? You mean people accept teaching, Sir?	CH - Challenge
27	Teacher	Yes, you are right.	
28	M	With due respect, I disagree with you, sir.	CH - Challenge
29	Teacher	But why, M?	IRE – Invite Reasoning
30	M	I have reasons to back my claim. Firstly, most of us do not want to become teachers even though we are Education students. We do not like teaching because the remuneration is poor. Secondly, students of other faculties do not want to be teachers and share our reason. Many parents do not want their children to study Education because they believe that their children will end up becoming teachers or lecturers whose salaries cannot take good care of their families. My last point is that many ladies including our female students in this University do not want to get married to teachers because they believe their marriage will be financially poor. These are my reasons why I believe that teaching lacks social acceptability.	R – Make reasoning explicit
31	Teacher	Hmm... N, what do you think about M's opinion?	IRE – Invite Reasoning
32	N	I think she is right but social acceptability is still present in teaching despite poor remuneration. I know of many people who still admire teachers especially the brilliant and upright among them.	B - Build on
33	Teacher	I think N has a balanced perspective compared to M's.	RD – Reflect on dialogue or activity

After the intervention, students did not merely respond to teacher questions; rather, they initiated ideas (IB), built on peers' contributions (B), challenged viewpoints (CH), and explicitly justified their reasoning (R). For instance, Students A, B, C, D, and E engaged in a sustained exchange on whether a profession should be discussed through definition or characteristics, demonstrating cumulative dialogue rather than isolated responses. This indicates that learners were not only cognitively engaged but were also aware of dialogue as a collective meaning-making process.

Secondly, the post-intervention data show substantial learner-learner dialogue, which was almost absent in the baseline phase. Students frequently addressed one another directly (e.g., C challenging B; H challenging G; L challenging D), suggesting that authority over knowledge construction was no longer monopolised by the teacher. The classroom discourse thus shifted towards a shared epistemic space, where students felt confident to critique, extend, and refine ideas collaboratively.

Thirdly, the emergence of reasoned argumentation is particularly significant. Student M's extended explanation concerning the social acceptability of teaching represents a high-level dialogic

move, where reasoning was made explicit and supported with multiple real-life examples. The teacher's use of Invite Reasoning further scaffolded deeper thinking, allowing learners to articulate not just *what* they believed, but *why* they held such beliefs. This demonstrates development in learners' critical thinking and argumentative skills, which are central goals of dialogic pedagogy.

Furthermore, the teacher's role evolved from a transmitter of knowledge to a dialogic facilitator. The teacher frequently acknowledged students' contributions, invited alternative viewpoints, and reflected on the quality of responses (RD), as seen in the comparison between Students M and N's arguments. This reflective stance encouraged balanced reasoning rather than the acceptance of single, dominant viewpoints.

Finally, participation was more evenly distributed among students. Although not all learners contributed, the number of active participants increased considerably, and contributions came from a wider range of students than in the baseline data. This suggests that the intervention helped reduce participation inequality and created a more inclusive dialogic space.

Reflecting on the post-intervention data, it is evident that explicit exposure to dialogic moves had a positive impact on classroom interaction and learning culture. Students demonstrated greater confidence in expressing ideas, questioning assumptions, and engaging respectfully with opposing viewpoints. This reflects a shift from passive learning to active intellectual engagement, where learners see themselves as legitimate contributors to knowledge construction.

One notable reflection is that disagreement and challenge were no longer viewed as disrespectful but as productive academic practices. Students challenged both peers and the teacher without fear, indicating that the classroom environment had become psychologically safe for dialogue. This is particularly evident in Student M's challenge of the teacher's claim about social acceptability, which was not suppressed but instead encouraged through reasoning prompts.

Another important reflection concerns the depth of learning achieved. Discussions moved beyond surface-level definitions to complex socio-economic realities affecting the teaching profession in Nigeria. This suggests that dialogic teaching not only enhances participation but also connects academic concepts to learners' lived experiences, thereby promoting meaningful learning. However, reflection on the data also reveals some limitations. While participation increased, it was still not universal. Some students remained silent, indicating that sustained support and time may be required for all learners to fully internalise dialogic practices. Additionally, some contributions, such as Student F's incomplete response, suggest that learners are still developing the ability to organise and articulate ideas fluently within dialogic exchanges.

Overall, the post-intervention dialogue illustrates that dialogic teaching is a powerful tool for enhancing interaction, reasoning, and critical thinking in the classroom. The findings affirm that when learners are deliberately taught how to engage in dialogue—by building on ideas, challenging constructively, and providing reasons—classroom discourse can become richer, more inclusive, and more intellectually demanding. The post-intervention results provide evidence that dialogic pedagogy can change traditional classroom discourse into a collaborative learning community. This shift in focus

underscores the importance of sustained teacher facilitation, explicit modelling of dialogic moves, and continuous reflection on classroom talk. The success observed in this stage justifies the intervention and supports its integration into regular classroom practice.

At this juncture, it is important to check whether the inquiry questions have been answered. An attempt will now be made to answer each question in the light of the baseline data and post-intervention data.

**1. How was classroom talk in the teaching and learning of Introduction to Teaching Profession before application of dialogic moves?**

The baseline data reveals that there was dialogue but it was predominantly teacher-learner dialogue. There was very little learner-learner dialogue. The implication of this was that the students did not learn from one another. Additionally, there were fewer dialogical contributors among the learners. For instance, baseline data shows that only five out of 40 students contributed to teacher-learner dialogue.

**2. How are the positive changes in classroom reasoning and learning in Introduction to Teaching Profession with application of dialogic moves?**

The post-intervention data shows that learner-learner dialogue improved greatly. Out of 40 students, 14 were active in dialogic reasoning and learning. They were able to share ideas and experiences. In addition, the learners responded to each other, not just the teacher; they challenged each other's ideas in ways that were not threatening; and they explored ideas in more depth than previously.

**3. How often do dialogic moves feature in the teaching and learning of Introduction to Teaching Profession?**

In the baseline data and post-intervention data, dialogic moves such as Build on, Invite to Build on, Challenge, Invite to Reasoning, Coordinate Ideas, Make Reasoning Explicit were found in the classroom communication. However, Build on, Invite to Build on and Challenge dialogic moves were more often than others. In the baseline data, six contributors – including the teacher – participated in the dialogue 15 times. While the post-intervention data reveals that 15 contributors – including the teacher – engaged in different dialogic moves 27 times but 33 contributions.

The results of this study are consistent with the findings of the lecturer who reported that the intervention of educational dialogue at the higher education level improved reasoning and self-directed learning (T-SEDA Collective, 2021). The results are also consistent with Kethren who reported that the intervention of educational dialogue improved her questioning style and dialogical practices (Challenge and Build on) of her adult learners (T-SEDA Collective, 2021).

Also consistent with the outcome of this study are the studies conducted in Nigeria. For instance, Oduyayo and Yusuf (2020) reported that Critical Dialogue instructional strategy enhanced critical

thinking and better learning in the classroom than Conventional method of teaching. However, the study carried out by Odutayo and Yusuf (2020) focused on the academic performance of students in economics while this study focused on Introduction to Teaching Profession. Moreover, the level of education examined in their study is secondary school while this study examined higher education context.

Additionally, Orimsan and Augusta's (2022) argument that the use of dialogue can enhance classroom teaching has a connection with the outcome of this study. However, Orimsan and Augusta (2022) employed only philosophical argument as a method of research while this study employs philosophical argument (reflection points) as well as empirical approach. Also, Audu's (2020) research which found that visual learning style had significant relationship with classroom dialogue, is indirectly consistent with the outcome of this study. This is because the participants in this study engaged in dialogue seeing one other. This might have aided the dialogic interaction among them. On the contrary, this study did not hold a position that there was no significant relationship between auditory learning style and classroom dialogue. Another difference between this study and Audu's (2020) research is that the former focused on higher education while the latter on a basic school level.

Despite the fact that this study contributes additional knowledge to educational dialogue and specifically featured successful application of dialogic moves, it only focused on the limited number of students in a Nigerian university.

Apart from the research questions addressed, the content of dialogue among the participants shows and implies the following:

- a) The concept of profession can be difficult to define.
- b) The concept of profession and other concepts can be analysed and defined considering their characteristics.
- c) Teaching has challenges in Nigeria and these challenges make attaining a professional status difficult and debatable for teaching.
- d) There is the need for educational stakeholders including teachers and researchers to give their best in tackling the challenges facing teaching in Nigeria and other places. When the challenges of teaching are successfully tackled, learning can be maximised and society positively transformed.

## Limitations

The study has limitations which include the following:

- a) It is a small study which involved a class of first-year students of Education.
- b) The pre-intervention and post-intervention lessons only lasted for 2 hours each. The time difference between baseline and post-intervention extract was a week.

- c) The discussions in both lessons had both dialogical and non-dialogical aspects.
- d) The extracts were chosen because they were particularly dialogical.

As this study focuses on making a difference within a particular higher education context in Nigeria at a particular point in time, the findings lack generalisability and broader applicability. Thus, there is need for further and more comprehensive studies in Nigeria and other contexts.

## Conclusions

Having observed dialogic learning problems in the classroom, the teacher decided to conduct research on dialogic practices in his classroom using T-SEDA as a guide. His baseline data revealed that his observation - that there was the need for dialogic intervention to improve learning and reasoning of the students through dialogue - was true. At the end of the intervention, the students engaged more in dialogue with one another.

The topics of the dialogue in this research indicated that teaching has challenges in maintaining its professional status in Nigeria. And this calls for serious intervention among the educational stakeholders.

## Implications of the findings

Based on the comparison of pre-intervention and post-intervention classroom dialogue, the study suggests the following context-specific implications:

- a) Dialogic moves can enhance classroom interaction within short instructional periods  
The post-intervention data demonstrate that even limited exposure to dialogic strategies can increase learner participation, learner–learner interaction, and reasoned contributions. This implies that dialogic pedagogy is feasible within regular classroom practice, even without long-term or large-scale reform.
- b) Teacher facilitation plays a central role in dialogic engagement  
The shift from teacher-dominated talk in the baseline data to shared dialogue in the post-intervention stage highlights the importance of teacher awareness and intentional use of dialogic prompts. This implies that teacher practice, rather than curriculum change alone, is a key driver of dialogic interaction.
- c) Students are capable of higher-order reasoning when dialogic space is created  
The emergence of challenges, justifications, and extended reasoning in the post-intervention dialogue suggests that students can engage critically with subject matter when encouraged. This implies that dialogic teaching can support critical thinking and argumentation at the classroom level.
- d) Dialogic engagement remains uneven across learners. Although participation increased after the intervention, not all students contributed equally. This implies that dialogic competence

develops gradually and requires sustained practice, scaffolding, and time beyond a short intervention period.

## Recommendations

In line with the scope and findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a) Teachers should be encouraged to integrate dialogic moves into regular classroom teaching. Based on observed improvements in participation and reasoning, teachers may incorporate simple dialogic strategies such as inviting students to build on peers' ideas, justify claims, and challenge respectfully.
- b) Teacher education programmes may introduce dialogic pedagogy within existing courses. Rather than proposing a new compulsory subject, the findings support the inclusion of dialogic teaching principles within existing pedagogy or methods courses, particularly during microteaching and practicum experiences.
- c) Professional development workshops can focus on classroom dialogue. Short-term training sessions or workshops for in-service teachers could emphasise practical dialogic techniques, reflecting the short-term intervention used in this study.
- d) Further research should examine dialogic teaching over longer periods and broader contexts. Given the limited duration and sample size of this study, future research may explore dialogic pedagogy across multiple topics, institutions, and longer time frames to determine sustainability and generalisability.
- e) Classroom-based qualitative methods should continue to be used to study dialogue. The study demonstrates the value of direct classroom dialogue data in understanding interaction patterns. Researchers may combine dialogue analysis with interviews or observations to deepen insights.

## Next steps

The researcher would like to continue dialogical research and make more students active in classroom dialogue. He would also explore other aspects of teacher education. In addition, he would like to look into the issues related to Education, Globalization and International Development. Specifically, he is interested in studying issues related to the education of school girls with disabilities.

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## Appendix 1: T-SEDA dialogue coding scheme

Dialogue Categories	Contributions and Strategies	What do we hear? (Key Words)
IB – Invite to Build on Ideas	Invite others to build on, elaborate, clarify, comment on, or improve own or others’ ideas/contributions	Can you express this in your own words? What do you have to add? What is your opinion? etc
B – Build on ideas	Build on, elaborate, clarify, comment on, or improve own or others’ ideas/contributions	It can be seen in another way..., my thinking is based on, etc
CH – Challenge	Questioning, disagreeing with views, challenging an ideas,...	I would like to differ in my opinion. What is your proof?
IRE – Invite reasoning	Invite others to explain, justify, use possibility thinking relating to own or another’s ideas, etc	Why do you think so? How, do you think this might be? Can you elaborate?
R – Make reasoning explicit	Explain, justify, use possibility thinking relating to own or another’s ideas, etc	I am of the view that... I am convinced that... My argument is that... I hold this view because...
CA – Coordination of ideas and agreement	Contrast and synthesise ideas, confirm agreement and consensus, invite coordination/synthesis...	Looking at the issue from various points of view... The key points in my analysis are that...
C – Connect	Make pathway of learning explicit by linking ideas, knowledge, experiences, etc beyond the immediate dialogue.	In connection with the first position..., There is a relationship between the two topics... etc
RD – Reflect on dialogue or activity	Evaluate or reflect metacognitively on dialogue or learning activity, invite others to do so.	Thinking about you’re your opinions..., I think you have a good point..., I can see that you both have been using dialogic moves in your communication, etc
G – Guide direction of dialogue or activity	Take responsibility for shaping activity or focusing the dialogue in a desired direction	Be mindful of dialogic moves in your debate..., you have to respect others’ opinions... etc
E – Express or invite ideas	Offer or invite ideas to start or further a dialogue beyond the previous categories.	Will you mind sharing your view? How will you respond to this question?

## Appendix 2: Self-Audit

Statements/Questions	Responses
I encourage learners to comment on other learners' or own ideas.	No
I encourage learners to challenge other learners' views in the classroom talk.	Rarely
I encourage other learners to build on others' thoughts.	No
Do I encourage learners to respect others' opinions if any?	Yes
Do I encourage learners to be attentive in the class to my talk?	Yes
I encourage learners to build on my position.	Yes
I encourage learners to challenge my views.	Yes
Does my teaching promote exchange of ideas, experience and learning gains among the learners in the classroom?	No

## Appendix 3: Ground Rules

- Know that the purpose of the rules is to enhance learning.
- Respect other students' opinions.
- If you have a question, signify by raising up your hand.
- Do not just go out without taking permission.
- Invite other learners to build on your ideas.
- Challenge others' views only if you really have your own views to share.
- When you are invited to add to another student's ideas, kindly share your views on the topic of discussion.
- Listen attentively to both the teacher and learners' opinions.
- Ensure that when you invite to build on, challenge or build on others' ideas, you must focus on the topic of our discussion in Introduction to Teaching Profession.
- Rationality and objectivity should be your guide in everything you say.