

On Teacher Talk From the Perspective of Dialogue Theory

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Abstract

In English teaching classrooms, the English language is not only the language for teaching and communication but the teaching contents and objectives. In addition, teacher talk is also the important source of learners' English input. This is especially true in the case of China where teacher-oriented teaching still dominates the classroom; besides, students can hardly gain an access to other forms of comprehensible in put outside of the classroom since English is a foreign language.

This essay tries to analyze college English teachers' talk from the perspective of Bakhtin's dialogue theory. It aims to open out the use of TT in the present classrooms and meanwhile explore the ways to improve the quality of it. The research is conducted in Henan Polytechnic University, and two research methods are adopted: case study and survey study. In the case study, six college English teachers' classes were recorded, and the recordings were transcribed. In the survey study, the author designed one questionnaire, in which more than 150 students took part in the research. Through close analysis of the transcription, the essay elaborated such questions as feature and amount of TT, teacher's questioning, teacher's feedback, etc. According to the results of the analysis, the author put forward suggestions to improve the quality of TT and students' talking skills.

Key words: English; Teacher talk; Dialogue theory

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INTRUDUCTION

College English reform has been carried out more than 30 years in China. However, an obvious question appeared, from elementary school to middle school to universities, most English learners have been learning English continuously, but it is still very difficult for them to read original materials and it is also very hard for them to communicate with native speakers in English.

Language teaching and learning is a very important aspect in second language teaching and learning. All the things that happen in the language classroom will exert great influence on the students to acquire and master the language. However, for Chinese students, there are not enough opportunities to learn and to practice the foreign language that they are learning outside the class. The only thing they can do to be to put most of their energy and time on classroom learning, and rely more on their teachers. As a result, the teaching effect will make a greater impact on learners with learning. That is to say, teachers play a contributing factor in teaching and learning.

Some researchers use classroom-centered researches to investigate what actually goes on in the language classroom. Such as Lapkin, Long and Vygotsky, they all have regarded the language lesson as a socially constructed event, which all the people present produce through their interactive work, so they have stressed the importance of social interaction. The other language-oriented researchers, for example, Corder and Krashen preferred to look at the classroom as a setting to study how language might be acquired from the input which is provided by the teacher talk. In fact, no matter which perspectives the researchers approach in their studies, all the pedagogical process in the classroom involves teacher talk: Giving explanations and instructions, monitoring the students, providing the feedback. Researches on teacher talk became one of the most important parts of CR.

In recent years, teacher talk in L2 teaching and learning has attracted a lot of researchers' attention from both at home and abroad because when there is teaching, there is teacher talk in class. Especially second language teaching, is a very complex process, many observers even consider it as an art. For in second language teaching classroom, teacher talk functions not only as a tool by which the target language is taught, but also as a major source of language input. It is not only the medium of teaching, but also the teaching language of the learners. Teachers must arouse the student's interest and motivation to understand and use it. This activity is so complex that some teachers can't fulfill it very well. Of course, there are born teachers who intuitively do the right thing at the right moment, but these kinds of teachers are few at all. So the effects of students' learning are discounted greatly. Therefore, in order to improve the situation, teachers need to understand the teaching process and several theories of teaching, as well as theories of students' learning and understanding.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW OF TEACHER TALK

For human beings, the final goal of language teaching is to make language learners to communicate effectively for language is a communicative tool. As a language, English must be taught in the way of talk. To investigate an English class is to investigate teacher talk, student talk and talk-turn. What to say, how to say, how much time to be spent on teachers' talk and how much for students, and how to feedback become the hot issues for researchers to seek for the answers.

1.1 Definitions of Teacher Talk

What is teacher talk? The followings are some views about it.

According to Ellis (1984), teacher talk means the language teachers address language learners that are different from the way they address other kinds of classroom learners. They make adjustments to both language form and language function in order to facilitate communication. These adjustments are referred to as "teacher talk".

Ferguson puts his own viewpoint about teacher talk: teacher talk is itself a special register of language. It has many characteristics in common with foreigner talk, which refers to the speech variety used by native speakers when addressing nonnative speakers, since teachers find themselves confronted to the problems of conveying information with a code that is explicit, lucid and accessible to the learners.

For this term, Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching & Applied Linguistics (Richards et al., 1985) defines it as: That variety of language sometimes used by teachers, when they are in the process of teaching.

In trying to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of FOREIGN TALK and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners.

According to Cook (2003), teacher talk refers to the amount of speech supplied by the teacher rather than the students in L2/FL classrooms.

1.2 Characteristics of Teacher Talk

Recent years, teacher talk aroused more and more scholars' interests because it has many characteristics.

Generally speaking, teacher talk owns three features: rich information, large thinking space expansion, concise and attractive. However, language teaching process is greatly different from other subjects teaching. Chaudron (1988) investigated and researched TT and summarized the following conclusions:

a) Speed: Compared to the other classrooms, the spoken speed of the language teacher seems to be little slower. Teachers often slowed down their spoken speed, made a lot of pause according to different needs of students.

b) Pronunciation: The pronunciation is sonorous, articulate and a bit exaggerated. The teachers used a more accurate, standard pronunciation with low-level students.

c) Vocabulary: Teacher often chooses many basic words of neutral color to use. There are few modifiers to the vocabulary, abbreviations or colloquial expressions.

d) Syntax: To the less advanced students, narrative sentences or declarative sentences are used more often than interrogative sentences and simple sentences are used as many as possible in stead of the subordinate clause Use more present tense with fewer complicated tense. Generally, ungrammatical speech modifications do not occur.

e) Use of we: The first person "we" is mostly used to mark knowledge as shared by all.

f) Repetition: Teachers repeat information already talked about to ensure it is heard by all, or to alert students to its significance. (Chaudron, 1988, p.85, quoted from Nunan, 1991, p.191)

1.3 Classification of Teacher Talk

Traditionally, TT can be primarily divided into two types: content language and medium language. Content language refers to the language which directly related to the content of teaching tasks, including reading aloud in the order of sentences or paragraph in textbooks, explaining the new words and grammar, offering further information relating to texts or further exercises, and teacher's feedback. The second type, medium language refers to the language the teacher uses to perform such teaching tasks as paragraphing words or sentences or illustrating grammar rules. It used by teacher for greetings, comments, task switching, discipline regulation, etc.. According to Zhao (2001), teacher talk can be classified into five types: a) Teacher talk of classroom management. It

equals to medium language. b) Teacher talk as feedback. Feedback includes two types: One is positive feedback, words such as: “Excellent”, “Wonderful”, “Very good”, “Right” and “Ok”, are all positive feedbacks, which give students’ praise and encouragement. Another is negative feedback, which is characterized by “No”, “You are wrong”, “Nonsense”, “You make me so disappointed at what you said.” c) Asking questions. There are two types of questions: display questions and referential questions. Display question is a question to which the questioner already knows the answer. Display questions are often used for instructional purposes to determine if students are able to “display” their knowledge of factual content. Referential questions are questions questioners ask someone because he doesn’t know the answer. In an ELT classroom, this can mean questions teachers ask learners and learners ask each other. d) The wait-time after asking a question. Code-switching between the first and target language. Code-switching is influenced by two factors: features of class activities and teachers’ second language acquisition concept.

Of course, there are many other classifications according to different aspects. Such as Thornbury (1996) separated teacher talk into communicative and non-communicative factors.

1.4 Studies About Teacher Talk Abroad And at Home

In the West, the importance of teacher talks in L2 teaching and learning has already attracted lots of researchers’ attention. From the early 1970s, scholars have begun to concentrate on the researches of teacher talk, and quite a lot of empirical works have been done and great progress has been made in this field. But, most of the work has only focused on the linguistic modifications of teacher talk. Such as Chaudron (1988), Ellis (1994), Legaretta (1977), Bialystok et al. (1978) and Ramirez et al. (1986) etc.. They found that generally, teacher talk in L2 classroom occupied about two-thirds of the total talking time.

Bialystok et al. (1978), Shapiro (1979) and Ramirez et al. (1986) observed the functional distribution in L2 classroom. They found that there was considerable evidence of variability among teachers and programs, but the general picture was again one of teacher dominance, in which teachers were likely to explain, question and command and learners to respond.

Henzl (1973), Dahl (1981), Wesche and Ready (1985) and Griffiths (1990, 1991) found that teachers slowed down their rate of speech like native speakers in general when talking to learners in comparison to other native speakers and also did so to a great extent with less proficient learners. Downes (1981), Hakansson (1986), Wesche and Ready (1985) studied the pauses of teachers. Henzl (1973, 1979), Downes (1981) and Mannon (1986) stated that few studies had attempted to quantify some aspects of teacher talk, such as phonology, intonation,

articulation and stress, but teachers seemed to speak more loudly and to make their speech more distinct when addressing L2 learners.

Henzl (1979) and Mizon (1981) researched the modifications in vocabulary. Pica and Long (1986), Gaies (1983), Kleifgen (1985), Wesche and Ready (1985) studied the modifications in syntax. Hamayan and Tucker (1980) researched the modifications in discourse.

Recently a great number of studies have been carried out concerning the teaching and learning processes in English classrooms in China. However, only a few Chinese researchers have done some comprehensive and systematic researches on teacher talk. During the past 15 years, a total number of 36 articles about teacher talk have been published in 10 key linguistic journals (*Foreign Language Teaching and Research, Foreign Language Education, Foreign Languages Research, Foreign Language World, Journal of Foreign Languages, Foreign Languages and Their Teaching, Modern Foreign Languages, Journal of PLA University of Foreign Languages, Foreign Language Research, Journal of Sichuan International Studies University*), indicating that relevant researches on teacher talk and classroom interaction haven’t caught the many researchers’ attention. And a majority of these articles only simply introduce or review the studies carried out abroad. For instance, Wang (1999) reported on the papers presented at the 33rd IATEFL Annual Conference. He stated that teacher talk would produce positive or negative impacts on learner’s output. Zhou (2001) focused on what kind of questions should be asked in English extensive reading class and discussed how to do questioning effectively. Zhang (2002) compared the two different styles of spoken English and explored the indications for EFL professionals in judicious use of teacher talk based on a comparative study in spontaneous speech and teacher talk. Yang (2003) reviewed the studies made in the West in the processes of classroom language teaching and learning. Li (2007) introduced studies abroad on classroom teaching and teacher talk. Zhao (1998) spent more than 20 days in observing the English reading classes. X. Zhou and Y. Zhou (2002) made an observation of college English classes which were conducted under learner-centered mode in Zhejiang University. Hu and Chen (2004) conducted a survey, which involved four College English teachers in Guangdong University of Foreign Studies and focused on types of questions, wait-time, distribution of questions, teachers’ feedback, ways of answering questions and modification techniques. Zhou (2006) analyzed two extracts from College English classroom teaching. Gao and Dai (2007) did a research on teacher code-switching in classroom. Li (2007) compared the interaction patterns of two types of College English classes, one instructed by native speakers of English and the other instructed by Chinese teachers of English.

2. DIALOGUE THEORY

It's a long history to apply dialogue into teaching practice. In the West, the notion of dialogue teaching can be traced back to Socrates who deployed a dialectic method of his teaching. He employed a dialogic process, typically beginning by posing questions than through dialogue exchange, the dialogue may come to enlighten understanding. Socrates himself likened his skill as a teacher to the qualities of a good midwife (Haroutunian-Gordon, 1989). In the East, the most influential figure, Confucius, his central concern in his teaching was the attainment of *ren*, to learn to be an ethical human, or to attain "co-humanity". According to Confucian philosophy, the implication of the character *ren* is not an individual pursuit or private matter, but social involving dialogic relationship with others. Confucius instructed, disciplined, enlightened his students, but in the end, he encouraged their own self-effort and inner strength. Of course, self strength can't develop in isolation, but in the dialectic interplay with others. Although Socrates and Confucian contributed a lot to the dialogic approach to teaching, its popularity among educators and researchers should mainly owe to Vygotsky and Bakhtin, two key influences in promoting our understanding of the social foundations of learning and thinking.

2.1 The Content of Bakhtin's Dialogue Theory

The theory of dialogue, developed by the Russian linguist Mikhail Bakhtin (1895-1975) with regard to literature and everyday communication, can be used to improve the teaching of language. In fact, Bakhtin, his friends Valentin Voloshinov and Pavel Medvedev are called 'Bakhtin circle' because the other two produced some of the circle's most relevant texts and their names later became closely intertwined with Bakhtin's. At the beginning of *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language*, which was first published in 1929 under Voloshinov's name, Bakhtin defines consciousness as a social network, since it is based on the exchange of ideas with others. The author states that, for him, "the only possible objective definition of consciousness is a sociological one" and that "consciousness takes shape and being in the material of signs created by an organized group in the process of its social intercourse." (Voloshinov, 1986) Bakhtin and his friends place more emphasis on the analysis of the social dimension of consciousness than many other representatives of social constructivism. For them, the consciousness of any human being is socially constructed. However, human consciousness is not only mediated by socially means but also characterized by the interconnectedness between self and other. The term inter subjectivity was used by Kant, who attempted to capture the relationship between the individual and his or her social world and this notion plays a crucial role in the dialogic understanding of human existence. It's Bakhtin who makes an important contribution to the understanding

of human existence and language as inter subjective. He thinks dialogue is the very essence of human existence. He advocated inter subjective aspect of language, that is, though the self and other are always different from one another in terms of time and space, the self cannot exist without the other; the other is what gives meaning to the self (Iddings, Haught, & Devlin, 2005, p.36). Bakhtin (1981) explained, "I cannot do without the other, I cannot become myself without the other; I must find myself in the other, finding the other in me" (p.185). That is, the constructs of self and other must be viewed as shared existence. According to Bakhtin's theorizing of voice. Words or ideas are "double-directed". "Like the word, the idea wants to be heard, understood and answered by other voices from other positions." (Bakhtin, 1990). The interconnectedness of voice becomes prerequisite for any form of existence. "One voice alone concludes nothing and decides nothing. Two voices in the minimum for life, the minimum for existence" (Bakhtin, 1984). The self-other relation is very important for an understanding of human communication.

Both Vygotsky and Bakhtin view human consciousness as inner speech based on social interactions and inter psychological. Bakhtin's concept of utterance defines it as always occurring within a larger discourse, and it must always be an answer to a previous utterance. In other words, it is always addressed to a concrete listener and will be thus framed in a particular way because of this and also because of the addresser's view of him or herself when addressing that listener. As Bakhtin (1981, p.276) suggests, "Every word is directed toward an answer." Even the printed word can be viewed as participating in a dialogue, "a book, i.e. a verbal performance in print, is ... an element of verbal communication... it responds to something, objects to something, affirms something, anticipates possible responses and objections, seeks support and so on" (Voloshinov, 1973). Bakhtin is also the important theorist who contributed a dialogic approach concerning the nature of language. He proposed a new approach to the study of language, different from that of traditional linguists. That is, examining language at a discourse level as chained utterances, his theory of dialogism focuses on cultural, interpersonal and ideological dimensions of language. Bakhtin's concept of utterance defines it as always occurring within a larger discourse and it must always be an answer to a previous utterance. As Bakhtin (1981) puts it, "Every word is directed toward an answer." Even the printed word can be viewed as participating in a dialogue, "a book, i.e. a verbal performance in print, is ... an element of verbal communication... it responds to something, objects to something, affirms something, anticipates possible responses and objections, seeks support and so on" (Voloshinov, 1973). As "the real unit of speech communication" (Bakhtin, 1986), an utterance is represented by its dialogic and social nature. Bakhtin

thinks, no utterances stand alone in a vacuum. Everything anybody ever says always exists in response to things, which have been said before and in anticipation of things that will be said in response. Each single utterance exists in a chain of utterances. Indeed, any utterance is chained and contingent, its beginning “preceded by the utterance of others” and its end “followed by the responsive utterances of others” (Bakhtin, 1986). Bakhtin believe that dialogue transcends language.

2.2 The Characteristics of the Theory

Here, we mainly focus on two characteristics of Bakhtin’s Dialogue Theory. The first one is equality. “One voice alone concludes nothing and decides nothing. Two voices in the minimum for life, the minimum for existence” (Bakhtin, 1984). According to Bakhtin, dialogue is consent and opposed relation; affirmation and complementary relation; ask and answer relation. In a dialogue, the speaker and listener are equal and independent. After the speaker sent out his information, he must accept the partner’s feedback and become a listener. The listener also becomes a speaker after sent out his feedback information. Only when the two persons subjectivity and activity are taken seriously, can the dialogue be successful. Bakhtin stats that people are equal. So we must respect each other, everyone has his value.

The second is the difference. The real dialogue is between two persons or groups who hold different views. That is to say, it’s necessary for them to have a dialogue. The so-called dialogue without difference is the replication of the voice. Bakhtin defines two concepts, one is apperception background, which means the speaker should consider the listener’s knowledge level and the understanding of the concrete context. Another is outsidersness, which means one can’t observe himself from every angle for his special position. Bakhtin’s theory emphasizes that the speaker must consider the listener’s apperception background and then make adjustments to ensure the successful dialogue. Using the difference of dialogue, Bakhtin reveals the open which people present in the continuous self-improvement.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Participants

The subjects of this study are 150 non-English majors and 6 English teachers from Henan Polytechnic University. The students’ are from the different majors, such as mathematics, law, civil engineering, etc.. Their average age is 19.5 and male students take 2/3 of the total. All of them have learned English for 10 years, and they have the similar education background. They used English materials which are all the same. Sophomore students are chosen because the university they have formed their own attitudes, habits and strategies of learning English. Also

they were going to take part in the CET4 exam, which kept them learning English all the time.

3.2 Instruments

3.2.1 Audio-Recording

In this case study, classroom observation and digital recording are the two instruments. In order to reveal a real classroom situation, the author hadn’t told the teachers about the research, so none of them made a preparation. And because these six teachers are all experienced and often listen to each other’s classes, thus, the author’s presence in the classroom was not much of a disturbance or a frustration either the teacher or the students. Six classes (50 minutes per class) instructed by the teachers mentioned above were audio-recorded. The teachers were told that their teaching processes were going to observe and audio-recorded just for research on TT in the normal class activities and this study was not in any way a criticism of any individual teacher. These promises that the teaching process and the interaction between teacher and students were the same as usual.

The author personally went to the classroom where the teacher taught and observed the teaching process. Except for the teacher’s talk, the author also observed the non-verbal behaviors such as facial expressions, body language, interactions and so on. It’s a pity that the author only got the audio-recording, actually, video-recording is the ideal instrument which can record what was going on in the classroom, including teachers’ speech, behavior and students’ behavior vividly.

3.2.2 Questionnaire

It is not possible to study all the teachers talk randomly in one class because the classroom is a special and restricted context. As the questionnaire is reliable and generate information wanted and the economy to carry out the research on a big scale, it surely is one of the most frequently used methods. So questionnaire is often used as a complement to the case study.

The questionnaires were written in Chinese in order to make students understand better. The questionnaires were delivered to students in January, 2016. The researcher told the students this is only a survey for writing paper beforehand and there were no true or false answers to each question and it was answered autonomously. According to Wen (2001), a good questionnaire should at least meet the following two criteria: a) having high internal validity; and b) taking a professional outlook. My questionnaire is designed based on some related theories and ready-made questionnaires. In this study, there is one questionnaire which was designed to enable students to finish it in less than 20 minutes without special effort. And the questionnaire for students consists of 16 questions in order to get the responding information from students is carried out among some second-year students randomly from Henan Polytechnic University. 150 students were asked to take

part in questionnaires and 146 students' data were proved to be valid and used for the statistical analysis at last.

3.3 Data Collection

Totally, 6 teachers were involved in the survey, 270 minutes teaching process was collected which lasted from early December 2015 to early January, 2016. Among this 4.5-hour long recording, half was transcribed aiming for intensive analysis. The author randomly chose 20 minutes from two teachers' class transcription respectively and put them in the appendix as the sample. Besides collecting data through audio-recording, the current investigation also conducted a questionnaire survey to collect students' expectation on TT in January 2016.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

After the thorough observation of six period's classes and conducted the questionnaires, the author will make analysis of teacher talk in this chapter.

4.1 Results and Discussion of the Case Study

4.1.1 The Ratio of Teacher Discourse Structure

From Table 1, We can see that the frequency of using the IRF structure is very high. There are three cases in the

real classroom. The first one is that teachers' questions and students' answers take place by turns. That is to say, the teacher asks a question, one of the students answers it and then the teacher asks another question, other students answer it. The second case is the teacher asks question and many students answer this question. The question attracts many students' attention. But the students' answers are not directly related to each other. The answers only aim at the questions and the teacher controls the answers. The last case is the teacher asks a question and all the students answer it together. Teacher and students cooperate tacitly. However, no matters what kind of cases, all of the questions have been raised by teachers. More importantly, most of the questions are close-ended questions, which can't enlighten the students. In IRF structure, after the students respond to the initiation move, teachers usually end the conversation only with a simple praise word. The students' further chance to communicate is terminated and they have no time to ask questions. Van Lier argued that at times the IRF structure made it unattractive and unmotivated for students to participate in classroom interaction, since their response may be evaluated or examined publicly, rather than accepted and appreciated as part of a joint conversation (Van Lier, 1996).

Table 1
The Ratio of Teacher Talk Model

Teachers	IRF model	Percentage	Other model	Percentage	Total number
T1	16	53.33	14	46.67	30
T2	17	85.00	3	15.00	20
T3	14	53.85	12	46.50	26
T4	17	73.91	6	26.00	23
T5	25	78.12	7	21.87	32
T6	19	82.61	4	17.39	23

Dialogic teaching requires that teachers not only develop the traditional techniques of eliciting recall and recitation, imparting information and explaining, but also more importantly the ability to elicit discussions that encourage students to think and the ability to lead scaffolded dialogue. According to Walsh's, they need to develop "classroom interactional competence" in the give and take of classroom talk.

4.1.2 Question Types

The author also presents the frequency of display questions and referential questions in Table 2.

From Table 2, we can see that there is priority of display questions over referential questions by the teachers. This finding supports Long (1983) study, they found that ESL teachers asked significantly more display questions, which request information already known by the questioner than referential questions in the classroom

which means there was less genuine communication going on in the classroom.

Table 2
Frequency of Display Questions and Referential Questions

Teachers	Frequency of display questions	Percentage	Frequency of referential questions	Percentage
T1	5	83.3	1	16.7
T2	9	60	6	40
T3	11	84.6	2	15.4
T4	6	75	2	25
T5	16	80	4	20
T6	6	85.7	12	14.3
Total	53		27	
Means	8.8	77.19	2.6	22.81

4.1.3 The Amount of Time About the Teacher Talk and Student Talk

Table 3 demonstrates the amount of class time occupied by TT and ST in each 50 minutes class of the 6 classes under investigation. This study shows that the Teacher Talk time varies from 55% to 93%. From the data above we can see the teacher’s talk, not the students’, took up most of the 50-minute class time. Jeremy Harmer (1991) puts it clear enough that getting students to speak—to use the language they are learning—is a vital part of a teacher’s job. According to some researchers in China, such as Zhao Xiaohong, 1998: Zhou Xing, Zhou Yun, the amount of Teacher Talk Time occupied 70%-90% of the total class hour. This is obviously too much and it implies the students are not provided with many opportunities to practice speaking English in the classroom. From the above table, we can see students talk time varied from 2% to 33%, although the ratios are

still too low, they are slightly higher than the previous research conducted by Chinese scholars. We also can see the teachers all adopt the communicative teaching, but they still use lots of time to make some reading or listening exercises. And although teachers make activities to increase the time of students’ talk, the effect is not very good, a large part of students just sit silently. The statistical significance of this result suggests that the classes observed here are still following a traditional way of teaching: The teacher dominates the class and talks too more. The author noticed, when observing the class that the T4 kept talking from the beginning of the class till the end, almost without a pause. The teacher only plays a role of a knower or an instructor, who emphasizes the importance of passing knowledge to the students and pays more attention to the vocabulary, grammar and the passage, yet neglecting the students’ needs to communicate in the target language.

Table 3
The Time of Teacher Talk and Student Talk

Teachers	TTT(m)	Ratio (%)	STT(m)	Ratio (%)	Other activities	Ratio (%)
T1	30	66%	6	13%	9	21%
T2	25	55%	3	7%	17	38%
T3	27	60%	10	22%	8	18%
T4	42	93%	1	2%	2	4%
T5	25	56%	15	33%	5	11%
T6	32	72%	7	15%	6	13%

Note. T=teacher TTT=teacher talk time STT=student talk time M=minute TT=talk time; “other activities” refers to the classroom activities in which neither teacher nor students need to speak, such as silent reading, writing in classroom, time of thinking, etc..

Now teacher talk is still in a dominant position in College English classroom. Teachers are presumed to have more knowledge about the subject they are teaching and have a superior status, thus the relationship between teachers and students is not equal. So the teacher and students can’t carry out the real dialogue. According to Nystrand and Gamoran (1997), this is the very profile of monologic classroom discourse. The term “monologic” characterizes the type of classroom talk or instruction that treats the texts and the teachers as the sole source of knowledge while positioning students as receptacles to be filled with linguistic knowledge and factual information from the reading passages. The monologic instruction seeks to “fill students up” with the right answers and “essential” linguistic points. The problem of monologism excludes students’ “voice”, which has been found prevalent in foreign language classrooms where students are very often not the authors of their own language (Morgan, 1996).

4.2 Results and Discussion of the Survey Study

In this section, two questions will be answered:

- a) What’s the students’ attitude toward discussion and group discussion?
- b) What’s the student’s expectation of English course?

4.2.1 The Student’s Attitude Toward Discussion

According to Question two in the questionnaire “What’s the students’ attitude toward discussion and group discussion?” the result can be shown in the following table:

Table 4
The Student’s Attitude Toward Discussion

	Strongly agree	Agree	Undecided	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Student’s No.	129	15	0	0	0
Ratio	89.6%	10.4%	0	0	0

In Table 4, the majority of the students preferred the teachers giving them more discussion chances; this result was in accord with the other researches concerning this topic.

4.2.2 The Students’ Expectations of English Course

During the observation, the author found a mount of students performed listlessly in the English classroom.

Obviously, they were not interested in what the teacher taught. But how can teachers generate students' satisfaction with their classroom learning experiences?

Of course, they should meet the students' needs. The following chart is about the students' expectations of learning emphasis.

Table 5
Percentages of Students' Expectations of Learning Emphasis (Unit: %)

Oral expression	Listening skills	Vocabulary and grammar	Background information/culture	Reading comprehension skills	Others
25	21	8	31	11	4

We can see from this chart, the percentage of background information is the highest, next is oral expression and listening skills. Out of our expectation, the students' need for vocabulary and grammar is the lowest. This means students are not satisfied with single language teaching, such as vocabulary and grammar, instead, they hope teachers can permeate some cultures and develop their oral and listening abilities indeed.

Cultural teaching is very important in EFL classroom, during the past two decades, the objective of ELT in China has shifted its focus from linguistic competence to communicative competence. And now the focus is heading toward "intercultural communication competence". In fact, scholars and educators have widely advocated "cultural" component in the language classroom. According to Bakhtin, teaching language is teaching culture. Kramsch (1993) argues that before students can understand the viewpoint of a person of another culture, they must understand that their own attitudes, motivations, and behavior are culture-bound. In other words, they must first recognize that they see the world through their own cultural lens.

CONCLUSION

As a cognitive activity, language teaching is integrated by all kinds of dialogues. In forms, the dialogue is between teaching and learning; in content, the dialogue is between two languages as well as two cultures. During the teaching practice, models of dialogue include teacher and students, students and students, students and himself etc.. Equality and openness are two basic factors to dialogue. However, according to our research, teachers neglect the two factors and thus lead to the dialogue of asymmetry. Performance is as follows:

Firstly, in the language classroom, teacher and students are the most active and positive factors, but in fact, most of the current English teaching practices are characterized by a monolithic discourse. That is to say, the students' subject position has been neglected for a long time and the teacher is only one-man show. The teacher emphasizes the importance of passing knowledge to the students and pays more attention to the vocabulary, grammar and the books, yet neglecting the students' needs to communicate in the target language. Teacher Talk time dominates the class

time. Some teachers even consider their viewpoints as the only correct one. They force students to abandon their own ideas and agree with theirs. A few of teachers even use negative feedback in the classroom. These teachers think, students know a few and lack of experiences, so they can't have a dialogue with them. As a result, aphasia is formed. The students are not willing to tell the teacher about their ideas.

Secondly, the dialogue between students and students is an important part of the English teaching process. According to Bakhtin, any individual can only see several aspects of something instead of full range of observation because of his position; only when you enter into other's world and blend in others visual angle, you can fully understand the world with the help of others observation. In a dialogue, each person should interact with others, try to understand others, persuade others to accept his idea and at the same time, he is persuaded by others. However, in the real classroom, students are offered a few of such chances. So students lack of self awareness and learning abilities.

Thirdly, on the face of language teaching, the target of teacher talk in English class is to impart knowledge to students, but essentially it is the preparation and practice for people to understand the different cultures. So teachers need to take cultural factors into consideration. Also, in actual teaching practices, teachers need to be sensitive to the various limitations so as to make their teaching more relevant and meaningful to the learners' need while at the same time striving for the shaping of classroom culture that is dialogue and supportive.

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