

# Group Work and Classroom Interaction in Communication and Study Skills Classes (CSS) of the University of Botswana

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**Abstract**—This study addresses the role of group work and how it assists the students to interact in the University of Botswana classrooms. The purpose of the study was to establish whether or not the students display quality classroom interaction when working in groups. Four (4) CSS lecturers teaching a total of 162 students were observed. The four lecturers observed did not only teach CSS but they also used group work in their teaching. The same number of lecturers and twelve students were from the various faculties that are offered CSS. Looking at the observation data, it was found out that students interact better when they are working in groups as compared to when they work individually. The main contributing factor was that when the students are asked to individually participate in classroom talk, they seem to be reluctant. On the other hand, when they are asked to work in smaller groups and later report their findings, they are eager to participate. The aforementioned participation makes the students' classroom interaction to be at a 'higher level'. The main conclusion drawn from this study was that the CSS lecturers should engage the students more in group work in an endeavour to develop and maintain dialogic classrooms. The dialogic classrooms provide the students with the motivation to help them interact within the classrooms, university, the world of work and socially.

**Index Terms**—dialogic classrooms, pattern of interaction, collaborative group work, classroom interaction

## I. INTRODUCTION

Group work emerged in the nineteenth century and it has long been introduced in the classrooms (Long., & Porter, 1985). The above authors further state the need of prior knowledge on group work and indicate that there are some pedagogical arguments on the foregoing. Prior knowledge is said to have an impact in the learning process (Gibbons, 2002). Thus, the students' prior knowledge has a strong effect on the students as they learn in their groups. On the issue of pedagogical arguments and group work, there has been an emphasis of the pedagogical classroom practices such as group work (Mishra & Koehler, 2006). This implies that group work is used in the classrooms as a teaching method that can be viewed differently by the lecturers.

In addition to the concern raised above, some scholars of group work state that there are practical and theoretical implications of group work (Stierlin, 1973). During the process, the students demonstrate self-awareness and an ability to reflect on their practice in group facilitation. According to Bourdieu (1987), the practical implications exert the theoretical ones. When the students come and work together on a certain class task, they will at the end of the interaction come up with an idea. It is worth pointing out that the idea brought to the fore is the theoretical implication. The above two implications, therefore, help the students to come up with quality classroom interaction.

Another notable point regarding classroom interaction is that the literature often investigates the individual and group work participation (Pica & Doughty, 1985; Panitz, 1999). According to Panitz above, the individual participation is used by lecturers to help advise students. This takes place when the students are asked to respond individually. This could be in responding to questions either during class discussions or tests. On the other-hand, (Panitz, 1999) emphasizes that the group work participation is where the students are divided or they divide themselves in small groups. In these small groups the students work on a task for a certain time. Therefore, it can be deduced that if the students are in a group, they share ideas within a stipulated time that they would have agreed upon with their lecturer. For Pica & Doughty (1985) the students are reluctant to talk in class when they are asked to work individually. Thus, it is very common that the students do not actively participate in class when asked to do so individually. Still basing on Pica & Doughty's observation, group work activates more dialogic output. This suggests that when the students work in groups, there is more classroom interaction.

It is interesting to note that the points raised above by (Panitz, 1999) and Pica & Doughty (1985) are like 'building blocks'. This is because what Panitz raises regarding individual and group work participation is developed by Pica & Doughty (1985). While the former asserts that, during classroom interaction, the individual participation focuses on the individual oral responses. Conclusively, Pica & Doughty (1985) provide the result of classroom interaction in the classrooms. The authors point out that the oral responses are normally characterised by either silence or reluctance to

talk by the students. Relating to group work in the classrooms, (Panitz, 1999) considers group work participation as an educational mode where the students have to work on the assigned task within a specific time. On the other hand Pica & Doughty (1985) indicate that classroom interaction in group work participation is positive. This is because the students provide rich, dialogic output.

This study is carried out because there seem to be a problem in the CSS classrooms. As illustrated by (Long., & Porter, 1985), there appear to be some pedagogical arguments in relation to group work. The University of Botswana (UB) classrooms are characterised by different approaches to teaching and learning. Some are lecture methods, others are presentations and group work. From the mentioned three methods, this study will focus on how group work is used to interact in the UB classrooms. The study, therefore, seeks to answer the following research question: what is the observed pattern of classroom interaction during the use of group work?

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### A. *Group Work and Interaction*

Group work is one of the valuable ways of demonstrating classroom interaction. This is because, when the foregoing is employed in the classroom, there seem to be an in-depth talk among students. In examining group work and classroom interaction, Blatchford., Kutnick., Baines., & Galton (2003) argue that, “Perhaps the most well established conclusion concerning effective group work is that group work skills have to be developed: we cannot just put children into groups and expect them to work well together” p. 166). This suggests that the lecturers should maximise more interaction among the students when working in groups. The said idea was also supported by Vuzo, 2018 when the scholar asserted that “there is need to develop critical consciousness through student dialogue” (p.3). It can be claimed that critical thinking helps the student(s) to come up with detailed information during the lecture sessions. In demonstrating classroom interaction and group work, the following categories will be reviewed: the definition of group work, the approaches of group work in the classroom and the advantages and disadvantages of group work.

### B. *The Meaning of Group Work*

Studies on group work indicate what the concept means from a specific point of view and further depict its purpose. Forsyth (2018) states that a group is, “two or more individuals who are connected by and within social relationships” (p. 3). In further defining group work, Prince (2004) argue that it is where students pursue a common goal. Thus, the two authors above imply that, when a number of students work together in the classroom that is group work. Further, the two definitions suggest that when the students team up as a group, they also develop both the academic and social ties. This is because they relate in academic affairs and the same team spirit can be used even outside the classrooms, in social affairs.

### C. *Approaches of Group Work*

The different ways of approaching group work has been divided into four dimensions. Below are the foregoing dimensions as outlined by Blatchford et al (2003):

1. The classroom context: Preparing the classroom and the groups
2. Interactions between children: Preparing and developing pupil skills
3. The teacher’s role: Preparing adults for working with groups
4. Tasks: Preparing the lessons and group work activities

(Adapted from Blatchford et al; 2003, p. 163)

The previous approaches are meant to indicate the way in which group work is used in CSS classes of the University of Botswana. The first dimension, which is classroom context, can be used to indicate classroom context. It can be claimed that this involves a situation whereby the classroom is always organised in a way that shows that the students always sit in their groups. During the step by step development of the lesson, the students will be asked to work in their groups. Further, examining the second dimension above, this is the type of group that can be used with young children at pre-primary or primary schools. The teacher will in the process give the pupils the instructions on how to go about the group work, sit the pupils in their groups and let them discuss the task given.

To further elaborate on the above dimensions, it can be deduced that the third point refers to an educational setting which consists of adult learners. Such settings are educational establishments such as the universities. The adult learners will be given the instruction of what to do in the groups and the lecturer(s) will go around the groups to check if they are on track. The final dimension is about the tasks. It can be claimed that this is one of the pedagogical practices where the teacher prepares the lesson to be taught and in the process, includes working in groups as part of the instructional approach. As the lesson progresses, when it is time for the group work, the students will be asked to work in their groups.

Conclusively, from the above list of approaches to group work, the CSS classes use the following approaches; 1, 3 and 4. This is because the classrooms are used as the contexts and the lecturers assist the students to work in groups. Thereafter, the students will be given some time to work in their groups before they present to the whole class. The second approach above falls off because the University students are adults and not pupils.

#### D. Advantages and Disadvantages of Group Work

There are a number of advantages of group work in the classroom. One of these is that the students interact better than when they have to individually contribute to classroom talk. This is supported by Ahn, & Class (2011) when they pointed out that, “working in groups to construct knowledge improves student participation and can change their approach to learning” (p. 277). This suggests that group work is very important and if the students work amicably together, it can bring fruitful results that relate to classroom interaction.

Another advantage of group work is based on the quality of classroom interaction as argued by Panitz, (1999). The said quality was based on collaboration and cooperation of the students while working together in the classroom. In defining the two concepts, Panitz above stated that in collaboration, the individual students are responsible for their actions. The students learn together and respect the contributions made by their peers. This implies that when the students learn in their groups, the students are more independent and portray the good attributes of learning together and respecting the responses from other members of the group. Another concept from Panitz’s observation is cooperation. According to the foregoing author, cooperation facilitates the accomplishment of a specific end product. Thus, when the students work in their groups, they work very hard, with all the concentration which goes together with critical thinking because they have a goal to achieve.

It is interesting to note that the above two advantages relate to the Sociocultural Theory discussed in the section that follows. This is shown in a situation whereby when the students work together, there is mediation because the lecturer guides the students. The guidance will be done by giving the students clues to check that they are on the right track. Additionally, the SCT is advantageous because there is scaffolding in the teaching and learning activities. The lecturer helps the students to effectively come up with quality classroom talk. The final advantage that correlates with the SCT is that of co-construction of knowledge. This suggests that when the students work in groups, there is negotiation of meaning between the group members.

Studies on group work also indicate the disadvantages of group work. In making reference to group work, Forsyth (2014) argues that, “they are often the arena of profound interpersonal conflicts that end in violence or aggression” (p. 26). This first point illustrates that the students can sometimes have a heated debate over the point of discussion. This can even lead to disunity within the group. For Zhang (2004), “Some students think their classmates sometimes talk nonsense and that it is a waste of time” (p. 342). From Zhang’s exploratory study, students have different levels of understanding and this might result in individual students perceiving the contributions from a negative point of view.

### III. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Galegane (2015) cited Lantolf & Thorne, 2006; Vygotsky, 1978) who defined the Sociocultural Theory (SCT) as a theory of cognitive development that emphasises the importance of socially shared activities. In this research paper, the socially shared activities are classroom interaction because the lecturer and the students exchange information by using language. Additionally, how group work is used in the classroom is also a socially shared activity that will be considered herein. Considerable research has examined various components of the SCT but, this research paper will focus on only three components; namely, mediation, scaffolding and co-construction of knowledge. Language can be used in mediation (when the child is helped by a more knowledgeable person during the teaching and learning process), scaffolding (the temporary assistance that teachers provide for their students in the completion of a task) and co-construction of knowledge (the assistance provided by the lecturer to the students). If the three components of the SCT are used in the classroom, there will be quality interaction.

### IV. SPECIFIC ANALYTICAL STRUCTURE

In analysing group work and classroom interaction, there is an analytical structure by Sinclair & Coulthard (1975, 1992). The said structure is the Initiation, Response, Feedback (IRF). The above two authors further referred to the IRF rank scales as “moves”. Further to the “moves”, a lower rank scale named the “acts” was also coined by the aforementioned scholars. From another perspective, Mehan (1979) argues that, the Initiation move requires a reply and it also forms an adjacency pair. This is because, as stated earlier, the initiation move is always followed by the response move. The three part structure introduced above will be individually discussed in the subsections that follow.

#### A. The Initiation Move (I-move)

The initial stage of the analytical structure is the I-move. In describing the I-move, Smith., Hardman & Tooley (2005) argue that it, “is usually in the form of a teacher question” (p. 608). Thus when the teacher asks questions, it is an indicator that an I-move is being used. From another angle, Coulthard (1985) states that during the I-move the teacher, informs, directs and elicits information. The latter explanation of the I-move is broader than the former. The teacher engages in a variety of factors in order to get responses from the students.

The Initiation move is very important in the classroom because the students are guided through a number of activities. The example of the activities are; what to do, how to do it, what not to do (Oxford, 1997). The above three ways that are part of the guidance given the students by the lecturer are an indicator that the students are guided in a

number of ways. These leads to them being able to get the instructions very well and as result there will be quality classroom interaction by the various groups.

*B. The Response Move (R-move)*

The response move is where, during the classroom interaction, the students provide a reply to the lecturer’s initiation (e.g., Harahap & Emzir, 2015). This suggests that there are some questions which are part of the I-move discussed above. These are asked by the lecturers and the students then replies to the questions. This continuum then leads to the development of the R-move. This is the step whereby the students have to dominate the classroom interaction. This is because at this stage of classroom talk, they have all the opportunity to think of the posed question and express themselves before the lecturer can move on to the next step.

*C. The Feedback Move (F-move)*

Chin (2006) explains how the Feedback Move works by stating, “the “F” part of the three-part exchange could comprise a “comment– question” (C–Q) or “statement–question” (S–Q) couplet where the question component of the couplet may be regarded as overlapping with the initiation or “I” move of the next IRF sequence” (p. 1322). Thus, there are a number of Feedback options such as accepting, evaluating and commenting on the points that are meant to contribute to the analytical structure. The F-move plays a very important role in the classroom (Cullen, 2002; Reinke, Herman & Newcomer, 2016) because as an analytical structure, it determines whether there should be a follow up or the end to the interaction (Hellermann (2003). This suggests that the quality and pattern of classroom interaction is determined by how the F-moves unfolds.

V. METHODOLOGY

*A. Sample and Sampling Procedures*

The participants of this particular study were chosen from a population of Communication and Study Skills first year students for academic year 2011/12. From the above population, a sample of 162 students and 4 lecturers was chosen. These were chosen from the following four faculties within the seven faculties: Science, Social Sciences, Health Sciences, Education and Business) of the University of Botswana. However, it is worth mentioning that one of the observed lecturers mentioned above, was observed twice because she had agreed to be observed in the two faculties that she taught.

The procedure followed in identifying the above sample was to approach all the CSS lecturers. Office visits were done by the researcher and the aim of the study was discussed by the two parties (the researcher and the lecturer). If the lecturer agreed then the class taught by the lecturer was visited. The above sampling procedure then led to the following sample: Lecturer Star teaching the Faculty of Science, Lecturer Masterpiece teaching the Faculty of Social Sciences and Lecturer Glorious teaching (at different time slots) both the Faculty of Education and Health Sciences.

*B. Data Collection Instruments*

The data was collected by the use of classroom observations in the year 2011 between the months of August and November. At the University of Botswana, there are two academic semesters, the data for this research paper was collected during the first semester. The main method of data collection was classroom observations and will be discussed below:

**Classroom Observations**

The Classroom Observations were used to collect data for this research paper. The Classroom Observations are advantageous because the researcher is able to capture all the aspects of classroom talk. These are later useful in coming up with a deeper and rich analysis of data. According to (O’callaghan., Neumann., Jones & Creed, 2017; van Dijk, 2015), the capturing of rich information is possible because of the instrument’s clarity. The time for each of the four lessons was approximately fifty minutes. The classroom observations were done by the research assistant who video recorded the lessons. Thereafter, the researcher transcribed the recorded information. For all the four classes, the recording was done under the following sub-headings:

(TABLE 1)

Exchanges	Participant	Classroom talk	Moves	Acts
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From the above sub-headings (refer to figure 2), there are two types of exchanges. According to Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), there is a boundary exchange and a teaching exchange. The boundary exchange is the step used at “the beginning or end of what the teacher considers to be a stage in the lesson” (p. 49). This suggests that the boundary exchange acts like a ‘block’ that separates the teaching exchanges. On the other-hand, the teaching exchanges are (according to the same scholars above), “the individual steps by which the lesson progresses (p.49). Thus the lessons are presented in steps and the lecturer and the students have to accomplish a step before moving on to the other one. The said continuum will be carried out until the lesson comes to an end.

Having defined what the exchanges are from the above lesson observation categories, this section will define the other four categories; participants, classroom talk, Moves and Acts (refer to table 1). The participants in the lesson are

either the lecturer or the student(s). The participant column indicates who contributed to the classroom interaction; whether it was the student(s) or the lecturer. Further to the participant, the classroom talk portrays the interaction as it unfolds during the lesson. The next category that was observed was the Moves. According to Sinclair & Coulthard (1975), "Moves are made up of acts, and moves themselves occupy places in the structure of exchanges." (p. 44). From the above point on Moves, they are the yard stick when it comes to the IRF analytical structure (refer to section 4). Finally, the acts are smaller discrete units that make up the moves (Coulthard, 1975). This means that from the moves, there are a number of acts and these depend on how the classroom interaction unfolds.

In summing up the data collection, it can be noted that, using the classroom observations helps the students to develop their interaction skills. This is because the students use language to talk in the classroom and in the process, the above data collection instruments are used to measure the pattern of classroom interaction during the use of group work.

### C. Data Analysis

#### Classroom Observations:

After carrying out the observation in the four classes (4), the researcher transcribed the data. This was done by the researcher listening to the recorded videos. The researcher listened to the videos several times to ensure that no point regarding classroom interaction was missed. These were analysed by using the Initiation, Response, Feedback (IRF) analytical structure of classroom talk (refer to section 4). The data were later coded to come up with the emerging themes for the study. The information was then analysed basing on the themes that emerged from the observations.

## VI. RESULTS

### A. Analysis of Classroom Observations

The interesting factor about the classroom observations is that, in all the observed classes, the students sat in their groups. They were then asked by their lecturer to discuss one of the topics from their course outline. The specific topics for discussion were prepared by the lecturer prior to the commencement of the lecture. The above class preparation aimed at investigating the pattern of classroom interaction where group work was used. The group interaction results from the individual students were immediately evaluated by the lecturers. Examples of these were discovered in lecturer Star (Faculty of Science), Masterpiece (Faculty of Social Sciences) and two lessons belonging to Glorious (Faculty of Science and Education). From all the four lessons observed, a transaction of the lesson was analysed. This helps in that the results will be more manageable and specific in relation to the context being studied. The transcripts presented in this research paper are only a fraction of the whole lesson that was taught for about fifty minutes each.

Transcript 1 below was taught by lecturer Star and the lesson was on Communication Barriers.

#### Lesson transcript One

Lecturer Star

Faculty of Science

Topic: Communication Barriers

Exchanges	Participant	Classroom talk	Moves	Acts
Boundary	L	Okay class, we have come to the end of the discussion. Now I want you to go back to your original seats and let's have class presentations.	Fo	ms
1	S	<b>Presenter 1:</b> Our first barrier was language. There are those people who are literate and those who are illiterate; those who know English and those who do not; that is a big language barrier. Our second communication barrier was culture because we come from different social backgrounds. An example of social background, the way people dress is different.	R	rep
	L	Very good. Can I give you an example; Last night, I had visitors who came over to my house and they are going to be married soon. Clearly, I could see the difference between these two people's backgrounds because the guy talked with food in the mouth. And the lady kept on saying (lecturer uses non-verbal communication). When I went for dessert, the woman showed him that it was not good to speak with food in the mouth. So, clearly background plays an important role.	F	e com
Boundary	L	Can I negotiate? Can I request for six minutes of your time. Do you have a class? Over to you. Thank you	Fo	ms

END OF LECTURER STAR'S LESSON (Adapted from Galegane, G. (2015). A study of student-lecturer interaction in communication and study skills classes at the University of Botswana).

The results of the study from lecturer Star's lesson indicate that each student represented a particular group. One student was chosen by the group members to represent the group in their presentation of the Communication Barriers. The results indicate that when the students work in their small groups, the interaction in the classroom is very good. This is because in presenting their discussed point of views, the students willingly shared rich information with the rest of the class. This suggests that as observed by Kanuka & Anderson (1998) in their study of the SCT, the faculty of

Science students negotiate meaning. After deriving meaning from their discussion, they confidently share their findings with the rest of the class.

Another point worth mentioning is that when the students work in their groups the classroom interaction is more detailed. This was indicated in teaching exchange 1 alone, where the group representative pointed out four communication barriers of language and social background. Thus, it can be claimed that when the students work in groups, the information is rich. The aforementioned point of view is supported by other scholars (e.g., Allwright, 1985; Ulleberg & Solem, 2018) when stating that when the students talk to each other through a group, it automatically multiplied the talking time hence, expanding their repertoire. The above claim implies that there is more talk from the students when they work in their small groups. It is also interesting to note that the multiplied talking time from the students is accompanied by quality classroom talk. The issue of quality classroom talk among the students is also emphasised by (Hardman; 2016).

On the other hand, Transcript 2 below was taught by lecturer Masterpiece in the Faculty of Social Sciences and the lesson was on Reading.

**Lesson transcript Two**  
**Lecturer Masterpiece**  
**Faculty of Social Sciences**  
**Topic: Reading**

Exchanges	Participant	Classroom talk	Moves	Acts
Boundary	Ss	STUDENTS WORK IN GROUPS	Fo	ms
1	S	<b>Group One:</b> The student reads to the whole class one of the articles they chose.	R	rep
	L	Can you take us through. I like that story. I don't like the Voice newspaper as there is a lot of untruth but when I saw that article I bought the newspaper because she was a former classmate.	I	d cue
	S	What we picked from this story is that mostly people are corrupt. Keletso says that her mother has power to corruption and that is why things do not favour her (Keletso). There is a lot of untruth from Keletso because (a) I tend to wonder why she did not sign the affidavit. (b) I don't think there is a reason why someone of high power can lose a job like that just because of her son. I personally believe that there must be reasons why she lost her job (c) her son cannot just be taken from her " <b>go sena mathata hela</b> " (when there are no problems). The story shows that justice is not served.	R	rep
2	L	What if the points raised in the article are not true?	I	el
	S	If it is not true? " <b>Ema pele</b> " (Wait a minute) " <b>Ke gore nkareng?</b> " (What can I say?) A lot of investigations still need to be done so as to clarify some issues.	R	rep
3	L	What else can you pick from the story?	I	el
	S	My look from one point; maybe say Keletso is trying to be manipulative and she does not want to take responsibility of her life based on the fact she is the eldest child and has to provide for the family. And on the other hand, maybe the other members of the family are taking advantage of Keletso because they do not want to equally share what the father left for all of them when he died; so it's a bit unfair to her.	R	rep
	L	Thank you for that. Also on the issue of language, she uses abusive language that does not portray unity and respect in the family. There is a lot of untruth and biasness in the story.	F	e com
Boundary	L	The other groups will present in the next lesson.	Fo	ms

**END OF LECTURER MASTERPIECE'S LESSON (Adapted from Galegane, G. (2015). A study of student-lecturer interaction in communication and study skills classes at the University of Botswana).**

In this lesson, the students were asked to choose a newspaper article and thereafter analyse it. After the analysis, one student represented the other group members and shared their results with the rest of the class. It is interesting to point out that the lesson indicated one of the advantages of group work. Reisigi (2017) refers to the foregoing advantage as "application-oriented" outcome. This is because it shows that when the students read, they are also capable of analysing the newspaper articles. It can be claimed that this is because when the students work in their groups, they exchange a number of opinions. These opinions are from both the positive and negative perspectives. The above point is supported by the literature on group work as it is stated that working in groups to construct knowledge improves student participation (Ahn, & Class, 2011). It can be claimed that when the students work in groups during the CSS lessons, the groups help them to be critical thinkers. This is because, as reflected in teaching exchange 4, they analysed the story they read from the newspaper and interpreted information from two sides. The two sides are that they considered both the negative outcome of the story (Keletso trying to be manipulative) and the positive one (family members being unfair to Keletso).

Further to the two transcripts above, there is transcript 3 which was taught by lecturer Glorious in the Faculty of Education and the lesson was on Writing.

**Lesson transcript Three****Lecturer Glorious****Faculty of Education****Topic: Writing**

Exchanges	Participant	Classroom talk	Moves	Acts
Boundary	L	I asked you last time to go and research on some topics regarding 'Writing'. The funny thing is that I am talking and the people are also talking.	Fo	ms
Teaching 1	L	So, we will have the opportunity for people to share with us what they researched on. So, I do not think we should have this in any particular order; any people, any group should start; I don't have to call people by name. Let us not waste time please.	I	i el
Boundary	L	Excuse me, I think we have run out of time, so you will continue next time because it is already time up. Please write your comments and questions so that you draw them in the next lesson.	Fo	ms

**END OF LECTURER GLORIOUS'S LESSON (FACULTY OF EDUCATION) (Adapted from Galegane, G. (2015). A study of student-lecturer interaction in communication and study skills classes at the University of Botswana).**

There was one group representative sharing with the class one of the types of academic writing. Each group representative addressed a different topic such as, Narrative, Argumentative and Descriptive. But for this research paper, the interaction was on Expository writing. The results from this particular class illustrate that the students' presentations were very elaborate. This is because the students' classroom interaction for each group presenter ranged between three and ten sentences (refer to teaching exchange 1). These lengthy presentations can be a symbol of the collective efforts that the students orally portrayed during the group discussions. Some scholars (e.g. Blatchford., et al, 2003) argue that in effective group work, the relevant skills have to be developed. It can thus be claimed that when the students work in their respective groups, they develop skills such as confidence, initiating and responding to the classroom talk.

As indicated earlier in this research paper, the last lesson was taught by the same lecturer at lesson 3. Lecturer Glorious taught the lesson on Presentation Skills at the faculty of Health Sciences as indicated below.

**Lesson transcript Four****Lecturer Glorious****Faculty of Health Sciences****Topic: Presentation Skills**

Exchanges	Participant	Classroom talk	Moves	Acts
Boundary	L	<b>We are now going to listen to group 2 as they take us through their group presentation</b>	Fo	ms
1	S	<b>GROUP 2:</b> <b>Presenter 1:</b> We will be presenting traditional uses of 'Mokgwapha' which is (Aloe Vera) and how it contributes to modern medicine. Aloe Vera is a plant common in hot semi-arid temperatures. It looks like a hot plant and a cactus. Aloe Vera is jacket looking and is the medicinal plant that has stood the test of time. It is very much used in the medical field. It has been used all over the world in those hot-semi arid temperatures, like I said. If some of you read the Bible, Jesus was crucified in the mixtures of aloes and they call them aloes of good will; they talking of Aloe Vera. Now, Aloe Vera heals skin wounds, burns, scalp, burns, rashes, sores and also for allergic reactions and dry skin.	R	rep
Boundary	L	Well done presenter and let us applaud him. Thank you.	Fo	ms

**END OF LECTURER GLORIOUS'S LESSON (FACULTY OF HEALTH SCIENCES) (Adapted from Galegane, G. (2015). A study of student-lecturer interaction in communication and study skills classes at the University of Botswana).**

It can be noted that from the foregoing lesson transcript, the whole lesson transaction captured information on the same topic (Aloe Vera). Each of the eight student presenters had a subtopic to present on regarding Aloe Vera. The results from this lesson indicate that the students, in their presentation, strived to inform and persuade the audience about the importance of Aloe Vera. It is worth mentioning that during the said presentations, the students described the particular topics. This point of view is supported by scholars of group work and classroom interaction when they pointed out that during group work, the students engage in a prolonged discussion (Miller & Brownell, 1975). This demonstrates that group work helps the students to talk more, for example, there are four sentences (eg., teaching exchange 8) to 9 sentences (e.g., teaching exchange 2). Another interesting point relates to the Vygotsky's theory where he also asserts that group work results in prolonged classroom talk. It can be argued that, when the students are requested to work in groups, best classroom talk results are achieved. From a theoretical position, the findings support studies (e.g., Vygotsky, 1978, Wertsch, 1985) that emphasises the importance of socially shared activities such as group work. In a group, the students talk amongst themselves before sharing the information with the whole class.

## VII. DISCUSSION

This research paper focused on whether or not students display quality classroom interaction when working in groups. The following research question drove this particular research paper: what is the observed pattern of classroom

interaction during the use of group work? This was done in order to share with educators the effectiveness of group work at the University of Botswana CSS classrooms.

In most instances where students were asked by their lecturers to work in their smaller groups, classroom interaction was of high quality. This is because the students were able to come up with detailed classroom talk during the lesson presentations (refer to lecturer Star; teaching exchange 1, lecturer Glorious-Health Science; teaching exchange 5, lecturer Glorious-Education; teaching exchange 6, lecturer Masterpiece; teaching exchange 4). From the SCT's theoretical point of view, if there is mediation, co-construction of knowledge and scaffolding during group work activity in the classroom, there will be good co-construction of knowledge which results in quality classroom interaction. For mediation, the CSS lecturers will help the students to carry out the tasks effectively. This can be done by giving the students the clues on how to go about the task. Secondly, scaffolding provides quality classroom interaction because the CSS students will be guided by their lecturers to ensure that they work on the tasks as per the intended outcome. Further to the guidance, the lecturer sees to it that language is used very well. It can be inferred that as the students are being guided to use the appropriate language, they also think critically. Finally, co-construction of knowledge also plays a big role in quality classroom interaction. This is shown by educational parties working together; the lecturers and the students work together by sharing ideas. On the other hand, co-construction of knowledge in the classroom can be indicated by the students working together by discussing the various ideas that lead to classroom talk.

Another notable feature is that in all the four lesson transcripts, the lecturers used the same group teaching method. This was evidenced by students discussing the topic in their small groups for about ten minutes. This was immediately followed by the individual students presenting their findings. According to Poehner (2009) this type of group assessment is also referred to as "group-as-context" perspective. It can be deduced that the aforementioned perspective is where the students work with one another to share the tasks assigned by the lecturer. The above author further reveals that in this perspective, every effort is made to explain the individual student's performance in order to infer his/her abilities as they are observed in a group setting. In Poehner's exploratory analysis of group work and classroom interaction, he was able to show a similar case that was reflected in the CSS classes at the University of Botswana. The CSS group work context in all the studied classrooms is similar to Poehner's observation. This is because individual students made oral presentations in an endeavour to show their abilities regarding classroom interaction.

Another point worth mentioning, that relates to the group teaching method, is three of the Blatchford et al (2003) perspectives. Out of the four perspectives discussed under the literature review in this paper (refer to section 2), it can be claimed that three of the perspectives are used in CSS classes of the University of Botswana. The relevant group work perspectives are (a) The teacher's role: Preparing adults for working with groups. This is where the adult learners will be given the instruction of what to do in the groups and the lecturer(s) will go around the groups to check if they are on track. The second and final dimension is about the (b) Tasks: Preparing the lessons and group work activities. This is a pedagogical situation where the teacher prepares the lesson to be taught and in the process, includes working in groups as part of the instructional approach. As the lesson progresses, when it is time for group work, the students will be asked to work in their groups.

Even though the four CSS classes seem to produce the same results as revealed in the three paragraphs above, there are some conflicting ideas from some authors. Wilson (2017) state that, "Such codified research knowledge is not easily translated into practical knowledge because each classroom context is different" (p.2). This suggests that after coding data from the classroom observations, there is that likelihood that the results may differ. This is based on the fact that the observed classrooms differ in terms of the students taught and the lecturers. It can thus be implied that how the students respond to classroom interaction depends on some factors such as previous schooling, language, and context of the study.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

This research paper aimed to find out whether or not students display quality classroom interaction when working in groups. One of the main findings is that, in the observed CSS classes, classroom interaction was elaborate during the use of group work. Two reasons are brought to the fore regarding the quality interaction. One of the reasons is that the students are guided by the lecturers on how to effectively go about the task. The participating lecturers encouraged their students to talk more on the topics provided. As a result this ended up in very detailed responses from the students as they were presenting their work to the students in their individual classes. This was also supported by Poehner (2009) when stating that, "Correctly organised group work does not reject, but necessarily stipulates the leading role of the teacher" (p. 476). Thus, the more organised the group work, the more quality classroom interaction would be. Another reason is that the students critically think of the points under discussion. It can be claimed that during group work, the students become more confident hence the elaborate classroom talk.

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