



## Classroom Talk Shapes Thinking

Summary of Thompson et al. (2025)

Excellent Educator, 3(5), 7, 2026

### Academic Insights

This summary highlights the influence of classroom talk patterns on student thinking and participation. According to the researchers many lessons are dominated by teacher instructions and closed questions, leading to brief, low-level student responses. In contrast, when teachers use open-ended questions and dialogic interaction, students provide longer explanations and demonstrate deeper understanding. Dialogic talk encourages reasoning, idea development, and collaborative learning, helping students become active participants rather than passive responders. The findings show that the quality of classroom dialogue directly affects the depth of learning. Teachers therefore need to plan purposeful questioning and structured discussion as core elements of effective instruction.

### Apply This Now

Teachers should increase the use of open-ended questions that require explanation and reasoning.

### Add This in Your Lesson

Plan structured discussions where students build on ideas and justify their responses.

### Avoid This Mistake

Avoid relying mainly on closed questions that produce one-word or yes–no answers.

### Keywords

classroom talk, dialogic teaching, questioning, student thinking, active learning

### Reference

Thompson, P., Paatsch, L., & Nolan, A. (2025). Understanding talk patterns in secondary classrooms. *Language and Education*, 39(2), 489–511.

### Suggested Citation

Excellent Educator. (2026). *Classroom Talk Shapes Thinking*. Excellent Educator, 3(5), p. 7.