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**Pre-service teachers' conceptions of effective teacher talk: their critical reflections on a sample teacher-student dialogue.**

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Summary: This study aimed to explore pre-service elementary teachers' (PSTs') conceptions of effective teacher talk in mathematics instruction, which were interpreted primarily based on the concept of communicative approach. This was accomplished through a task that involves analyzing and evaluating a sample teacher-student dialogue. This study specifically investigated: (a) aspects of the sample dialogue that PSTs attended to in critiquing the teacher talk, (b) PSTs' espoused conceptions of effective teacher talk in an authoritative-dialogic approach framework, and (c) comparison between PSTs' interpretations and the researchers' interpretation. Forty-six elementary PSTs engaged in the task and their responses were analyzed using the inductive content analysis approach. Findings showed that PSTs attended to various features of effective teacher-student dialogue; however, they paid more attention to the form of teacher talk than the function of it in context. PSTs' justifications used in evaluating the sample teacher-student dialogue showed some glaring differences from researchers' evaluations in regards to how the presented teacher talk would function in terms of the dialogic-authoritative spectrum. PSTs underscored affective support and clarity of teacher talk at its surface level, while showing strong resistance to the intentional vagueness within teacher talk, which might accommodate more dialogic engagement. This study suggests that initial teacher training programs should include more specific investment in PSTs' insights into effective use of classroom dialogue for learning.

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*Keywords:* pre-service teacher education; communicative approach; classroom talk; teacher conceptions  
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