Dear editor:

We wish to thank you and both reviewers for the important and constructive remarks. They helped us to make corrections, additions, and improvements to the article, by which, we hope, the article will be suitable for publication in your journal. Below we relate to each reviewer’s remarks.

Sincerely,   
Ester Aflalo

**Response to Reviewer 1**

1. *Introduction*—

We revised the Introduction and emphasized the state of classroom discourse in science classes. We deleted the first paragraph of the Introduction and elaborated on recent and developments in the field of classroom discourse. Farther on, in the Literatrue Review, we inserted some of the sources that the reviewer suggested, omitting them from the Introduction in order to avoid redundancy.

1. *Literature Review-*

*Characteristics of Classroom Discourse-*

1. We have added clarification regarding the question why researching classroom discourse can help us to understand better the nature of classroom discourse in the classroom, that leads to better ways of science learning (See p.\_ second paragraph.).
2. Distinguish between "classroom interaction” and "classroom discourse":

Class interaction is a broader concept that includes physical activities in addition to verbal ones. Examples are student–teacher relations that find expression in body language, gestures or behavior, or interaction between students and teacher and between classroom technological devices that assist teaching. Classroom discourse focuses on verbal activity between teachers and students and among students themselves.

1. We have added a reference to the Mortimer and Scott classification See p.\_ second paragraph.

*Structure of classroom discourse*-

We included the structure of classroom discourse in science classrooms as described by Lo and Macaro, 2012. See pp. 6-7

*Questions asked in classroom discourse-*

1. We have included the questions categories of Yip (2004) and Chin (2007). See..
2. Our explanation for choosing the classification of conformation and transformation questions appears in the data analysis section, p. …

*3. Methods*-

1. Pilot study –

As we described in an added remark in the Methods section, about a year before we began the current study, one of the authors served as an advisor to undergraduate students who performed research as part of their degree requirements. Their study included recordings of physics lessons and all the parameters analyzed were checked for reliability. The data that the students gathered were not included in our study for various reasons. Their work, however, served our study as a pilot that helped to fine-tune our information-collection methods, the analysis, and the validation of our measurement tools.

1. The information on the number of teachers and students as well as various background data is described in the Participants and Setting chapter and is summarized in Table 1 and Table 2. It is important to emphasize that the lessons were conducted in Hebrew which is the first language of the teachers and the students and therefore no information on the level of English proficiency is given. The science level of all students is considered good. As shown in Table 2, the students of three classes study for extended matriculation in physics and in the other two classes they are outstanding students in the sciences.
2. Inter-rater reliability- The internal reliability was described in the section on the data analysis. The reliability is about 85%.
3. The definition of one discourse episode- One discourse episode was defined using two parameters: the subject and the time, as described in the article p. – "An episode was identified and counted when the dialogic or multi-participant discourse ended and the teacher continued to teach the topic at hand. The next episode related to a different topic or appeared after a lengthy spell of at least 5 minutes in which only the teacher spoke".
4. *Analysis-*
5. No interviews were conducted in this study*.*
6. The coding- Transcripts were coded independently by two coders and the level of agreement measured to ensure reliability (see p.).
7. All the discourse in classrooms was conducted in Hebrew which is the first language of teachers and students.
8. We rephrase the title “characteristics of question in class” to. ***Teachers' and students' questions*** ***during classroom discourse***.
9. *Discussion-*
10. Limitations of the study—We expanded and added more limitations of the study on page \_\_ and also suggested ways to overcome these challenges in future research.
11. Pedagogical implications- We have added pedagogical implications with reference to Mortimer & Scott (2003)’s framework. See p.\_\_

We would like to thank the first reviewer for his thorough comments and the list of references he offered. Some of the references were incorporated into the article: Mercer (2010), Mortimer and Scott (2003), Chin (2007), Yip (2004), Lo and Macaro (2012). Several articles dealing with classroom discourse in the context of English as a second language were not directly related to the present study.

**Response to Reviewer 2**

*Results and Discussion-*

Subheadings -The findings section has a subtitle that separates the findings from Table 3 and Table 4. The subtitle of findings discribing Table 4 is reformulated:

In the discussion section, we synthesized the findings of the two interrelated tables and preferred not to separate the discussion using subtitles.

*Recommended comments for attention-*

1. We have added two more examples of classroom discourse one for closed discourse and the other for open discourse that are attached as supplementary online materials.
2. Points for the best practice of teaching physics—In the Discussion section, we added a reference to the pedagogical implications of the study along with recommendations for better teaching physics through productive classroom discourse. See page ... paragraph..
3. We have made corrections in the reference list to be consistent with the journal’s requirements.
4. Theoretical aspects of analyzing classroom discourse—In the Discussion section, we noted that our findings strengthen the theoretical frame that addresses the complexity of the classroom discourse. We did emphasize, however, the need for an evaluation of the quality of teachers’ and students’ involvement in this discourse. The picture of ample student participation in the investigated classes may create misunderstandings among the teachers of these students, giving them the impression that the discourse is productive and dialogue even though it is not. This misunderstanding may impede the assimilation of requisite changes in the classroom discourse (p. \_\_\_).
5. We did not find a relevant paper in *Research in Science & Technological Education*.
6. We changed the word 'In edition' to  'In addition'.