DISCOURSE ANALYSIS IN AN ESL CLASSROOM: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO GENDER AND SES OF LEARNERS

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ABSTRACT

Discourse analysis can be characterized as the study of relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used. The focus of discourse is on context and on the behavioral patterns that structure the social functions of a language, above and beyond the construction of structural models. For discourse analysts, context is of primary importance. Michel Foucault described discourse as a whole field or domain within which language is used in particular ways. This field or domain is produced in and through social practices, institutions, and actions. Language learning cannot be divorces from social context and the environment in which the learning takes place. The present study seeks to understand the various discourses at play in English as second language classroom teaching. For this purpose, students of Class IX of a government school and their teacher have been selected to evaluate and unravel the interaction in the classroom and the dialogue of individual discourses with the larger social discourse of the classroom. The main focus of the study was to explore if and how gender and socio-economic status of the students impacts the learning in an ESL classroom.

KEYWORDS: Discourse Analysis, English as Second Language, Gender, Socio-Economic Status, Language Learning