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

NAIMA UROOJ

Department of Educational Studies, Jamia Millia Islamia, New Delhi, India

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

INTRODUCTION

Classroom is a place where several elements brought by the teacher as well as the learners mix together to create an environment that can either create learning opportunities or disrupt them. "Discourse *constitutes* the social", Furlough said (1992). Discourse is language use relative to social, political and cultural formations — it is language reflecting social order but also language shaping social order, and shaping individuals' interaction with society. Discourse analysis can be understood as the study of relationship between language use and its social context. It includes spoken interaction, written texts, grammatical structures, phonology and semiotic systems.

The main aim of the present study was to understand various discourses at play in an ESL classroom. It is important to note it is not just the social order that shapes language, but the language too shapes the social order and how an individual interacts with the society. Knowledge is constructed and re-constructed in a classroom through constant interaction of various micro and macro discourses and the knowledge thus created defines the power relations that exist inside the classroom and outside of it.

Social context is of primary importance in understanding the use of language in any given situation. In a second language situation, classroom comprises students with different backgrounds, who come to the classroom with their own exclusive experiences. Their understanding and interpretation of things is also based on these experiences. Through interaction, the learners as well as the teacher with their differing experiences construct a shared social reality. Discourse analysis will help in unraveling these differences and it will show how different discourses of the learners as

well as of the teachers cross path, diverge and converge at various stances of language learning.

For Michel Foucault (1972), discourse is not merely the suprasentential (pertaining to sentences in combination) aspect of language; rather, language itself is one aspect of discourse. Through Discourse Analysis, the researcher tried to understand whether factors like gender and socio-economic status of the learners supports or hinders the process of second language learning.

A part from learner differences, interaction and role of the teacher in an ESL classroom, the discourse surrounding the learning of English as a matter of social status is an equally important factor. Proficiency in English language is often associated with elitism and is understood to be something superior. It is seen as a language of 'the classes' and not 'the masses'. English speaking in India is a matter of prestige and English symbolizes in the minds of the Indians, better education, better culture and higher intellect. There are colonial overtones in the teaching and learning of English language in India. There is always certain urgency amongst parents for their children to acquire proficiency in English language. There is a need to explore the existence of such discourses in an ESL classroom.

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Research Questions

- What is the significance of discourse in second language learning?

- In what respect does classroom discourse play a role in encouraging/discouraging learners with reference to their gender and SES?

- Do teachers judiciously use the text during its transaction and does their discourse benefit/ not benefit some in terms of learning English as Second language?

Objectives

- To identify and analyze the sampled content from the textbook.

- To study the socio-economic status of the learners.

- To observe the discourse used by the teachers with reference to gender and socio-economic status of the learners in transacting the content asking questions and taking feedback.

- To observe the interaction between peers.

METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the aforementioned objectives, the investigator selected a Co-educational Government School of Delhi. The study was conducted on Class IX students of English language and their teachers.

Sample

The primary purpose of a research is to discover principles that have universal application. However, given the constraints of time and space, it is impractical to investigate the whole population. Therefore, a sample is selected. In the present study, purposive sampling was done. A section of Class IX of a Co-ed Government School was selected keeping in mind the factors such as exposure to English language, teacher support and identity formation amongst students.

The students of Class IX have had eight years of exposure to the English language; hence they have a fair understanding of the language. Second language learning is a highly interactive process; thus, teacher support becomes crucial in the process. The students are in their adolescent years and undergoing physical as well as mental development. The process of identity formation is maximized at this stage.

The study was conducted on the students as well as teachers of English language of that section.

Sample Size

There is usually a debate between the desirability of a large sample and the feasibility of a small one. The ideal sample is large enough to serve as an adequate representation of the population about which the researcher wishes to generalize and small enough to be selected economically – in terms of subject availability, expense in both time and money, and complexity of data analysis.

The sample of the present study comprises a section Class IX of a Co-ed Government School. The number of students in that class was 35. The school was selected through purposive sampling. The school selected had to be co-ed where students would be from all strands of life. The selection of school was also based on the grant of permission by the Principal of the respective school. The researcher was denied permission in several schools as their heads felt research work would upset the school schedule and waste the time of the teachers.

Tools

For the purpose of the present investigation, three tools were used:

- A format for the analysis of the sampled content from the textbook.

- SES Scale for the purpose of knowing student belonging to High SES, Middle SES and Low SES.

- A semi-structured Observation Schedule that was prepared by the investigator keeping in mind the following dimensions:

- Teacher's interaction with students.

- Students' interaction amongst themselves.

- SES and Gender in the Discourse of the teacher and the students.

Non-participant observation method was used by the investigator to achieve the objectives of the study. All right (1980) says that "classroom observation is central to our data collection procedures." This method has been adopted for two reasons. Firstly, being disengaged from the process allowed the researcher to be more objective than being a participant. Secondly, as the researcher did not interact with the subjects of the observation, it gave him/her sufficient time to take field notes and add his/her reflections on the events being observed.

Description of the Tools Used

Format for content analysis: The content to be taught in the classes was analyzed by the investigator beforehand in order to understand any biases that may exist with regard to gender and socio-economic status of the learners. The content analyzed was from the two books prescribed to the school for teaching of English language; these were

Beehive and *Moments.*

The format developed by the investigator covers points like the theme of the chapter, context and gendered use (both in written and in visual form), the kind of vocabulary that has been used, grammar, intonation etc. The aim was to look for instances of biased use and to see if gender and socio-economic status of a character had been portrayed in a way that leads to prejudices in the minds of the reader.

SES Scale: A Scale was administered to learn about the socio-economic background of the students. The scale used is a standardized scale developed by R. P. Verma, P. C. Saxena and Usha Mishra (2008), containing income, occupation and education as the main components used for determining SES of people. Scoring was done as per the guidelines given in the manual of the scale.

Observation Schedule: A semi structured observation schedule was prepared by the investigator with questions broadly covering dimensions like teacher-student interaction in class, verbal and non-verbal communication by teacher, frequency of participation by students, language use with reference to gender and SES of learners and interaction of students amongst themselves and so on.

Procedure of Data Collection

Data was collected in the form of the SES scale which was mainly administered to learn about the socio-economic background of the students, which in turn helped establish the composition of the classroom. Form was given out to the students on the first day of observation and item-wise instruction was given to them; they were also asked to fill the form truthfully and in all honesty. A day's time was given to the students for filling the form and they were allowed to carry it back home for a day, in case they required assistance from the parents.

Data was also collected through observation of classes for which the investigator had sought permission from the Principal in advance. English language classes of a section of Class IX of the co-ed government school were observed by the investigator for 8 weeks. The Principal as well as the teachers extended full cooperation for the study. Observation was restricted to classroom procedures. The investigator observed and recorded these procedures mainly in the form of field notes. Attempt was made to record exchanges taking place in the class line-by-line. The focus was not only on verbal but also on non-verbal communication between the teacher and the students.

Analysis of the Data

The data thus collected has been analysed qualitatively. The first step in analyzing data qualitatively is to organize the data. Once the data is organized, the researcher can move on to the next stage of description. The process of analysis involves examining and re-examining the data to discover the emergence of recurrent pattern of discourse. For this purpose, the categorization of the data was also done.

DISCUSSIONS

In the present study, a format for content analysis, a standardized SES scale and an observation schedule was used by the investigator for data collection.

Table 1: To Identify and Analyze the Sampled Content from the Textbook.

A format for content analysis was developed by the investigator, a sample of which is below:

No	Chapter Being Taught	Content	Literary Items		Linguistic Items		
			Theme	Gendered Use (Written and Visual)	Vocabulary	Grammar	Stress and Intonation
.	The Fun They Had by Asimov	"Margie even wrote about it in her diary that night…………… ………………… …………when they had read it the first time."	Sci-fi, Imaginative	The main protagonist of the story is a girl who is 11 years old. The very first line tells us that she keeps a diary. She is thoughtful and introspective as she is recording the events of her day, when she found something unique; that is "a real book." The knowledge about the olden times comes through the voice of the grandfather of her grandfather. Knowledge is passed on from one generation to another by the male members of the family. Men remain the carriers of knowledge though generations.	Crinkly	Active/passive voice in the lines. Use of suffixes like –ly.	Intonation in sentences ending with exclamation marks. Eg., Today Tommy found a real book! Stress in the word crinkle and crinkly.

Content analysis of the sampled text was done in order to know any kind of prejudices that existed in the text that may contribute in tainting the opinion of the learners in the process of teaching-learning. Content analysis revealed that the stories that were a part of the textbook being taught were not 100% prejudice free. The stories stereotyped the role of the two genders in the society.

In the story 'The Fun They Had,' the voice of authority and carriers of knowledge were male members of the society, be it grandfather, the male teacher described in the book or Tommy (a 13-year-old boy). The main character in the story is a girl who is 11 years old. She has been projected as a receiver of knowledge that the male members around her have to offer. The mother in the story is a mere care-taker whose primary duty is to look after her child.

In the second story 'The Lost Child,' the central character is a boy who is curious to own and explore the world around him. The voice of authority is in the form of the parents. The mother, in this story too, is responsible for the child. She has been described as stern yet "tender" and cautious and the father has been described as a "tyrant" who is not to be opposed. The fair (market place/ outside world) is full of male vendors and hawkers. Finally, it is a male figure in the story who rescues the child when he is lost.

In the third and final story 'The Adventures of Toto,' the stereotypes attached to the two genders are not challenged; in fact, the story reiterates and re-establishes them. The rightful place of a man is in the outside world while home is the place of abode of the woman. Movement of the male characters is not restricted as they move from one city to another for their work, while the women are described only in the domestic settings of the household. Grandfather in the story is adventurous while the Grandmother is cautious and less imaginative. Male members have an occupation and a place in the world outside home. Women are domesticated while men deal with the worldly affairs.

In classroom teaching, the teacher did not pay attention to the stereotypes in the stories. She did not try to break these stereotypes or point them out. The stories were simply read and summarized. The teacher did not discuss the question of stereotyping of gender roles. There was a clear segregation of the two sexes in the classroom. Boys and girls were made to sit separately as it was the policy of the school. There was hardly any interaction between boys and girls in the class. The teacher also did not make any deliberate attempts to increase the interaction between the two sexes.

Objective 2: To Study the Socio-Economic Status of the Learners.

For this purpose, SES scale developed by Verma, Saxena and Mishra (2008) was used and the scoring was done on the lines of Socio-Economic Status Index (SESI) as provided in the manual of the scale. (Refer to Table 3.1) The SESI measures "the socio-economic status of the subjects in terms of family status, parents' education, occupation, income, caste, dwelling area, possession of few prestigious commodities, membership of famous clubs, political affiliations etc. It also gives weight age to income tax as well as wealth tax payers (Verma, Saxena & Mishra 2008)."

**Table 2: Interpretation of Scores of SES Scale**

S. No.	Raw Score	Interpretation
1	92 and Above	Very High SES
2	68-91	High SES
3	44-67	Average or Middle SES
4	32-43	Low SES
5	20-31	Very Low SES

The above table indicates that on the measure of 'Socio-Economic Status Index', students whose raw scores fall between the range of 20 and 31 belong to very low socio-economic status. In the same way, if the raw scores of the students fall between 32 and 43, they belong to low SES; if between 44 and 67, average or middle SES; if between 68 and 91 then high SES; and if the scores are 92 and above, they belong to very high socio-economic status.

In the present study, this scale was used to measure the socio-economic status of a section of co-ed government school consisting of 35 students. Each student was given out this form and instructions were given as to how to fill it. Out of these 35 students, zero belonged to Very High SES, seven were from High SES category, 14 belonged to Average or Middle SES, 10 were from Low SES and four belonged to Very Low SES. (Refer to Table 3.2 and Figure 3.1)

Table 3: SES of the Sampled Students

S No	Category of SES	Number of Students	Percentage of Frequency
11	High SES	7	20%
22	Average or Middle SES	14	40%
33	Low SES	10	29%
44	Very Low SES	4	11%

Figure 4.1: Percentage of Frequencies of SES
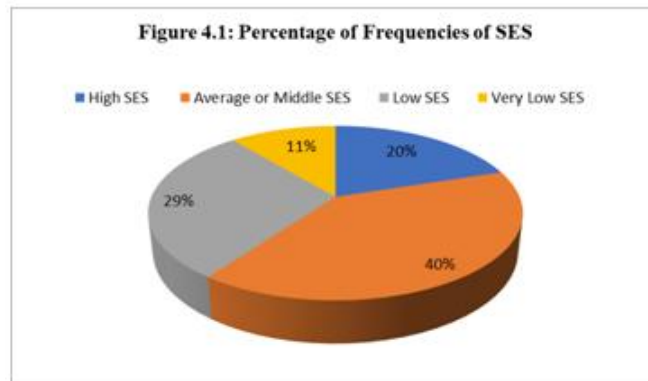
The above figure indicates that out of 35 students, 20% belonged to High SES, 40% to Average or Middle SES, 29% to Low SES and merely 11% to Very Low SES. The majority of the students were from Average or Middle SES while very few were from Very Low SES; also, comparatively more students were from Low SES than from High SES.

Students who participated more in the class were from the Low and Middle SES. These students also scored well in the English unit test that took place in the school during the time the researcher was conducting the research.

In case of both boys and girls, High SES of the learners had no impact on their performance in the subject. The students belonging to High SES among the boys and girls did not fare well in the test and were not seen participating in the class too.

There was no visible bias observed in the attitude of the teacher with regard to the socio-economic background of the students. The bias existed with regard to the good performers in the class. Students who spoke fairly fluently in the target language were encouraged more to speak in class, while no strategies were adopted to encourage non-performers.

Objective 3: To Observe the Discourse Used by the Teachers With Reference to Gender and Socio-Economic Status of the Learners in Transacting the Content Asking Questions and Taking Feedback.

Before the beginning of every English class, a brimming enthusiasm to learn the language could be observed in the learners. Most of the class was in awe of their English teacher; they admired her and in the first class itself, the researcher observed an enthusiasm in the classroom among the students to please their teacher. The teacher was appreciative of students and encouraged the students to participate, yet somehow the same students would end up speaking the most in class. She would open a question to the whole class and when there was lack of response from the class, she would direct the question to a particular student she was sure would answer correctly. The classroom discussion, in this sense, got restricted to a few. We will see an example of this from the observation notes of one such class.

Chapter covered - 'The Fun They Had' - Activity

The teacher entered the class and made a table on the board which looked like this:

Things I like about my school	Why	Things I want to change	How

She gave a brief summary of the chapter 'The fun they had' and asked students to look at the table on the blackboard and write about three things they like about their school and why and three things that they would want to change and how they would do that. Students were told to work in pairs of two and 15 minutes were given to them to complete the task.

Students sitting next to one another were asked to work together, therefore, by default girls were working with girls and boys with boys in pairs. At the end of 15 minutes, the teacher asked the first pair of girls, who always sat in front, to walk up to the center of the class and give their points in turns. The tone of the teacher while speaking to the two girls was soft, appreciative and encouraging. She smiled at them time and again and gave appreciative grunts to both while they spoke.

The girls put forth their points confidently. Their pronunciation and fluency in the language was fairly good. Wherever they would stammer, the teacher would make small appreciative noises like 'yes' 'very good' 'go ahead, try again'. The teacher, after this, asked one boy in the class about how he felt the two girls fared.

He compared the two and said that one was more nervous and less fluent than the other. Taking feedback on the performance of students by fellow classmates can have its adverse effects and can hamper the teaching-learning process.

The teacher did not ask any other pair to share their points with the class and participate in the activity. In this sense, the activity was restricted only to a select few. The participation by the rest of the class was only in the form of listening to the teacher and the three students. Since no other student was asked to speak, the extent of success of this activity cannot be known. It can only be seen as a half-measure on the part of the teacher to conduct an activity related to the development of speaking skills in class.

In other classes also, the teacher usually directed questions to a select few in her class. The top participants in her class were always the same students, majority of which were girls. She encouraged them and appreciated them to speak in class and gave them opportunities to take the center stage in her class. Her classes began and ended rather abruptly. Consistency and continuity was missing in her classes. She would initiate an activity in class, invite participation from a few students and before the whole class can participate in it, the activity would abruptly end. The teacher made efforts to engage the students and she would conduct interesting activities in class but the inconsistency, chaos and lack of opportunity of participation by all the students turned all her measures into half-measures. All the activities taken up by her would only go halfway and touch just the surface of the stirred water brimming with enthusiasm to know.

Another important point to note about the lessons is that she knew names of only a few students of her class. She was not familiar with names of all the students of her class; neither did she make an effort to know her students by their names. Instead of asking for the name of the student whilst talking to him/her, she satisfied herself with their correct answers in class. This shows lack of sense of belonging and ownership in the teacher; it alienates and distances the teacher from her students.

SUMMARY

Key features of the methodology adopted by the teacher were – summarization of the story, invitation for participation of the students in the class by asking them to read the text or by asking comprehension questions based on the

text. The teacher initiated interaction with the class by asking questions based on the text. The students responded to the question and received feedback from the teacher on it in the form of either further explanation of the point or verbal/non-verbal appreciation by the teacher for their participation.

With regard to gender, the girls participated more in the class as compared to boys. They were more active during discussions and spoke freely and fluently. The teacher gave them more opportunity to speak in class by directing questions at them. Amongst boys, there were at least three who participated more in class, asked a lot of questions and were actively engaged during activities. In a class of 35 students, there were only 8 girls and the rest were boys. Out of these 8, four were among the top participants in the class. The girls were more active in the English classes and were seen leading and taking charge in discussions.

With regard to SES of the learners, students who participated more in the class were from the Low and Middle SES. The researcher also collected copies of English unit test papers from the teacher in order to know more about the performance of learners belonging to different SES. These tests took place in the school during the time the researcher was conducting the study. Majority of the girls belonging to Middle SES had performed well.

Among the boys, the results were very interesting. One boy, who belonged to Very Low SES and not once participated in class, got the highest marks. The boys who participated a lot in class, performed average in the test. The students from High SES background did not fare well in the test with the score of less than 40%.

It can therefore be said that in case of both boys and girls, High SES of the learners had no impact on their performance in the subject. Among the girls, the students who participated more in class fared well in the tests as well. However, among boys this pattern was not seen. The top participants amongst the boys gave an average performance in the test.

Overall, students from the Middle and Low SES participated more and performed better in English classes. Out of these too, girls fared better than boys. Students who spoke fairly fluently in the target language were encouraged more to speak in class, while no strategies were adopted to encourage non-performers.

Objective 4: To Observe the Interaction between Peers

There was one particular group activity where the interaction between the learners was maximum The teacher had prepared three sets of question papers based on a lesson from the textbook, the aim of which was to test the reading/comprehension skills of the learners. She divided the class into six groups and handed them the question papers that consisted of 10 questions with multiple choice answers. The students were instructed to refer to their textbooks and seek answers. A leader was elected in all the groups by the teacher, who was to represent the group at the end of the activity. Interestingly, the leaders of each group were also the students who participated the most in the class. 15 minutes' time was given to complete the task. Of the six groups, three groups comprised three boys and one girl; this one girl was also its leader. It was observed that in these groups, the girls were not only helping and instructing the three boys in order to find answers, but were also explaining the text to them in Hindi. The girls lead the task and were the most active in the group.

Before moving ahead, let us look at the seating arrangement of these three groups. (The following figures represent the seating arrangement of Group 1, 2 and 3 in class during the activity, G represents girl and B represents boy.)

| Group 1 | B B B | G | | Group 2 | B B B | G | | Group 3 | B B | B G |
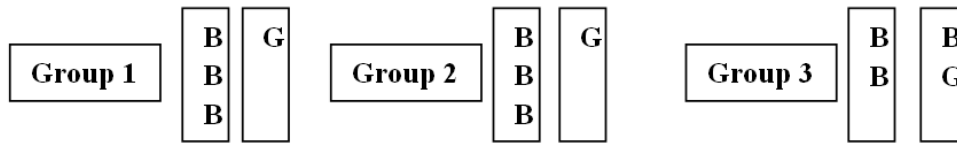
The boys and girls in the class sat separately and this activity was an exception when they were in close proximity to one another and interacted with each other.

The fourth group consisted of four boys and two girls. This group sat in a perfect circle.

Seating arrangement of the Group 4:
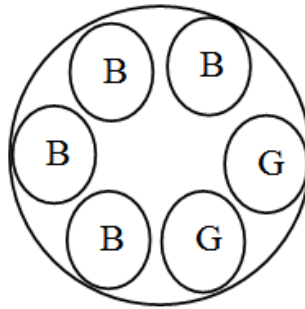
A boy lead this group and came up with a strategy to divide the group further into sub-groups of three. These two sub-groups would find answers to 5 questions each. In one sub-group were three boys, in the other one boy and two girls. The girls restricted their discussion between themselves and the single boy in the sub-group struggled to open a discussion with them. The all-boys' sub-group worked well with one another collaboratively. The girls mostly talked to each other and a sort of camaraderie could be seen between them. The boys, though, at first were interacting comparatively freely at first despite the gender of the person, quickly followed the example of the two girls and their interaction too got restricted to their gender. There was a clear disassociation between the two genders in this group.

The fifth group had three girls and two boys, with a girl as its leader. The leader read the questions and the rest of the group got busy with referring to the text for finding the answer for it. They discussed paragraphs from the textbook and pointed at possible answers. There was healthy interaction between the two genders. It must be noted that the girls were in majority in this group and a girl was leading it; there was a spirit of collaboration and competition between boys and girls.

Seating arrangement of Group 5 (G stand for girls and letter B for boys.)

| G G G | B B |
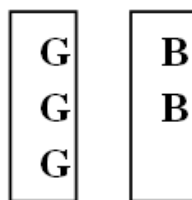
The sixth and the last group was an all boys' group. The leader dominated the discussion throughout the activity. He read aloud the questions, pointed to related paragraphs in the textbook and helped his fellow group members in understanding the text.

There was free speech and sense of competition between the members of this group to outdo one another.

Seating arrangement of the Group 6 (all boys, letter B for boys.)

B B B B B B

Summary

This was the only activity where interaction among the two sexes was maximum; otherwise nearly no interaction existed between the two. There was a clear segregation of the two sexes in the classroom. Boys and girls were made to sit separately as it was the policy of the school. As was told to the researcher, the two sexes were kept apart from one another owing to an incident that took place in the school a year or two back. The teacher also did not make any deliberate attempts to increase the interaction between the opposite genders.

Apart from this activity, the interaction between the students happened in fragments. In almost all the classes, the teacher did the most talk and controlled the topic. Interaction between the opposite genders was limited but same sex interaction happened freely during the classes. Nevertheless, most of the interaction in the classroom took place between the teacher and the students rather than between the students.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

In view of the findings of the research, it can easily be inferred that classroom discourses have greater educational implications especially while teaching English as second language. The process of learning a second language is highly interactive and the burden of encouraging interaction and participation of students in class falls on the teacher. The teacher triggers the process of learning by involving all the students in the lesson. In this sense, the discourse of the teacher that assists her in enabling interaction in class gains significance. The research findings show that girls were more active in class; this is an outcome of the teacher's discourse related to gender. Discourses in class, in fact may be a strategy or a barrier to learning a second language. If discourses help the learners to overcome the inhibitions arising out of their interface with a language alien to them, it can be considered as a strategy for helping them learn second language. On the other hand, if it promotes biases and discriminations on the basis of their socio-economic background, it may be detrimental to learning the same. The prejudices formed on the basis of learners' background may be done away with by the virtue of healthy discourses or else the learners will keep on finding it difficult to interact freely in class and do away with the colonial and feudal overtones, gender biases and regional disparities with reference to their exposure to the language.

Discourse analysis helps in unraveling the differences that exist between the learners. These differences can be related to their sex, culture, socio-economic background and so on. An understanding of such differences can help in planning the lessons better and in doing away with such prejudices that hamper learning and treat the learners unequally.

Foucault's work provides a framework for describing how educational texts construct children, teachers, students and human subjects in different relations of power and knowledge. Henrique's et al. (1984) describes the hegemonic power of educational discourses in the construction of gender, cultural identity and child development. Discourses, in this sense, shape identities of the learners. Hence, if discourse analysis is used as a strategy, it can greatly contribute to improving the teaching-learning environment and making the process more fruitful and bias-free. It can make classroom interaction more conducive to learning.

CONCLUSIONS

A classroom is a place where the prime elements of education - ideas and ideologies, policies and plans, materials and methods, teachers and the taught- all mix together to produce exclusive and at times explosive environments that might help or hinder the creation and utilization of learning opportunities (Kumaravadivelu, 2008). What actually happens there largely determines the degree to which desired learning outcomes are realized. The task of systematically observing, analyzing, and understanding classroom aims and events therefore becomes central to any serious educational enterprise.

Discourse constitutes the social and for discourse analysts, context is of primary importance. The present study aimed at understanding the teaching-learning processes and classroom activities in an ESL classroom through the lens of discourse. "Second language learning is a highly interactive process" (Richards and Lockhart, 1996) and "the quality of this interaction is thought to have a considerable influence on learning" (Ellis, 1985). A teacher's primary role is not only to enable the students to understand what he is intending to say or teach. Teaching-learning process is just like making sound by clapping. Without two hands, we cannot clap. Similarly, without the right teacher and the students, the teaching learning process is meaningless. Therefore, the role of teacher also becomes extremely crucial in learning.

The teacher, in the present study, was not able to mobilize her resources and reach to the needs of all the students in her class. The participation of only a few students in her class is a proof of that. She did not adopt any strategy in her classes to motivate and encourage the non-performers in her class. Most of her attention went to the students who performed well in the class. The biggest drawback of her classes was lack of participation by the whole class.

Even though the teacher encouraged the students to speak in the target language, the students were not able to converse in it. This was also owing to the fact that the teachers before the present one, taught the target language through the mother tongue, which meant limited exposure of the students in the target language. Another reason for the lack of proficiency in English could be attributed to skip gradient or the gap in the process of teaching learning. Sometimes a teacher may miss or skip steps that go in the process of teaching learning. There are four basic language skills, which every learner must master. These are (a) Listening, (b) Speaking (c) Reading and (d) Writing. Listening and Reading are passive skills whereas Speaking and Writing are active skills. A language learner starts with listening to the sounds of different words, then moves on to attempting to speak them. After speaking, comes reading. A good amount of practice in all the three skills leads to good writing, which comes last of all skills. Unless the learners are not proficient in the first three skills, they cannot attain expertise in the skill of writing.

To conclude, it is important to understand that classroom discourse is a cooperative event in which the teacher and the students cooperate and negotiate with each other in achieving certain instructional goals in the classroom. The discourse in the language classroom should be encouraged by motivating more equal participation in the negotiation of

meaning through various tasks and thus promoting students' language proficiency.

REFERENCES

1. Allwright, D. 1980. '*Turns, Topics and Tasks: Patterns of Participation in Language Learning and Teaching'*. In D.Larsen-Freeman & M. Long (eds.) (1991), An Introduction to Second Language Acquisition Research. London: Longman.

2. Ellis, Rod. 1985. *Understanding second language acquisition.* Oxford: Oxford University Press.

3. Fairclough, N. 1992. *Discourse and Social Change*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

4. Foucault, M. 1972. *The Archaeology of Knowledge*. London: Tavistock Publications.

5. Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C., Walkerdine, V. 1984. *Changing the Subject: Psychology, Social Regulation and Subjectivity.* Methuen, London

6. Kumaravadivelu, R. *Cultural Globalization and Language Education*. New Haven, CT.

7. Richards, C. and Lockhart, C. 1996. *Reflective Teaching in Second Language Classrooms*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

8. Verma, R., Saxena P., and Mishra, U. Socio Economic Status Index.

9. http://117.239.28.178:8081/books-2014/9 PDF/NCERT/Beehives PDF/beehives.pdf

10. http://ncertbooks.prashanthellina.com/class_9.English.MomentsSupplimentaryReader/index.html