Classroom Discourse of English Language Classes in the Terai of Sudurpaschim Province

-Mana Bahadur Jora

Abstract

This article focuses on the classroom discourse of English language class in the Terai region of Sudurpaschim Province. It analyses the classroom discourse of secondary level English language classes. Classroom discourse in the English language class in the Terai region of Sudurpaschim Province has not been studied yet. Similarly, it aims to explore how classroom discourse is practiced in the English language classes and find out ways using English language from the linguistic perspective. Classroom discourse reciprocates the cultural development. Simultaneously, this article tries to show that classroom discourse is means of motivation and the study contends to show that classroom discourse is a means of interaction. Students and teachers can reflect their conceptualization in the class. Additionally, classroom discourse maintains cognitive aspect of teachers and learners. In the English language classroom, classroom discourse works as source of interaction and motivation. Furthermore, it provides opportunities to students. Thus, classroom interaction is the use of language in the class that we term as classroom discourse.

Keywords: classroom discourse, cultural development, emerged discourse, interaction, turn taking

Introduction

The term classroom discourse is related to the classroom teaching and learning activities. Classroom discourse, in a broad sense, refers to "all of those forms of talk that one may find within a classroom or other educational setting" (Jocuns, 2012, p. 1). It is the interaction between teacher and students. Cultural matters, social demands, curricular norms and objectives play pivotal role in classroom discourse. As noted

by Suherdi (2004) and Rymes (2008), knowledge is always constructed and negotiated through language. We get such negotiation through the dialogic and contextual use of language in the English language class.

Discourse refers to the language in use. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) suggested that an interest in classroom language studies dated from the 1940s. Christie (2002) says since the 1960s and early 1970s on, a great deal of research into many areas of discourse including classroom discourse, has been undertaken in English speaking world. Rhymes (2008) and Cutting (2010) say that discourse is language in use. It is the mediation between teacher's language and students' language. Classroom discourse is the combination of Interaction, Response and Feedback (IRF). In the classroom, fitted language has to be used along with communicative aspect. Undoubtedly, Gee (1999) states:

> Language has a magical property: when we speak or write we craft what we have to fit the situation or context in which we are communicating. But, at the same time, how speak or write creates that very situation or the context. It seems, then, that we fit our language to a situation or context that our language, in turn, helped to create in the first place. (p.11)

Discourses are always embedded in a medley of social institutions, and often involve various props like books and magazines of various sorts, various technologies and a myriad of other objects from sewing needles through birds to basketball courts and basketballs. Discourse analysis is the study of how language in use is affected by the context of itsuse (Rymes, 2008). Discourses construct the use of language in the sense of spoken and written language. They are the stretch of linguistic construction in the sense of application, are designed in the corollary of linguistic mechanism, and are formed in the periphery of social mechanisms of uses of language.

Discourse can be devised into many streams of language. One of them is discourse used in the classroom. Classroom discourse is used in the periphery of classroom, which is interactive in nature. It includes many features like representing, thinking, interpreting, expressing, reflecting, agreeing and disagreeing, and even debating and arguing in the classroom setting. It offers students a way to express their ideas, reasoning, and thinking. The discourse used by teachers in the class play important roles in the research and it is crucial in the learning pace of students. Learning of students can be motivated in the language class. Questioning, interactive aspects and other elements come within classroom discourse.

The classroom language mediates teacher and students in the process of language teaching and learning. The methods, ways of teaching and classroom discourse play significant role for the fruitful learning of the learner. Contrastingly, the use of target language is used in the non-native situations. Students' beliefs on teachers' discourse is the need to be studied in the language class. This study is unique because it dealt the classroom discourse purposively. Till now this type of study has not been carried out in Sudurpaschim Nepal. It has tried to explore the classroom discourse of the English language class in Sudurpaschim, Nepal. This study aimed toexplore classroom discoursepractised in the English language classes, and to find out the ways using English in Kailali and Kanchanpur of Far Western Terai region from the linguistic perspective.

Methodology

This research was carried out by making base to qualitative research, i.e. "an intricate fabric composed of minute thread, many colors, different textures, and various blends of material" (Creswell, 2002, p. 35). The qualitative research is the research having five components, such as purposes, conceptual context, research questions, methods and validity (Maxwell, 1996). I went to the schoolsselected purposively for my study. I consulted to the administration and talked about my purpose to visit the school. As researcher, I recorded the data, analyzed and interpreted conditions which are prevalent (Best &Kahn, 2006). I used discourse analysis for exploring classroom discourse within the natural setting, and my research will be the inductive form of study, and its results are the combination of research skill and particular perspective (Denzin& Lincoln, 2005). This research was conducted to observe the classroom activities between teacher and students, students and students in the classroom by recording and writing the activities. I used open ended questions in the classroom and interviewed the teacher by asking the questions.

In this study, I studied the classroom discourse of four classes of four schools' English language classes in Terai of Sudurpaschim Province for exploring the classroom discourse of the English language class. The English language classes of those four schools were primary sources of information for my qualitative study. To get first hand data, I observed the classes of teachers and participated in the classrooms during teachers' teaching English in the class. Along with this, I consulted different books and materials such as Barry (2002), Biber (1995), Bruner (1996), Christie (2002), Cutting (2010), Dhakal (2013), Gee (1999), Jocuns (2012), Rymes (2008), Suherdi, (2004), Ur (2005), and Walsh (2006), to bring this study in this format. As a qualitative researcher, I visited the field and collected the first hand data. I madesome interview guidelines for eliciting data required for the study. Similarly, I observed the English language classes of four schools. I used questionnaire with open ended questions to students. The Nepali mediumclasses of the community schools were observed in the Terai of Sudurpaschim Province. This research is based oninterpretative approach because the study was qualitative. I tookinterview and participated in observation and engaged students in focus group discussion. I had written the diary notes. Diary writing can be useful for representing realities. Therefore, diaries are psychological tools referred to as artifacts. For the validity of this study, I checked the diary writings and video recordings and related to them for finding whether they are in the track or not.

For the study, I visited four schools with their pseudonyms such as Sahara Secondary School, A One Secondary School, Marmik Secondary School, and Nirman Secondary School to collect data. Out of these Sahara Secondary School and A One Secondary were from Dhangadhi, Kailali and Nirman Secodary School and Marmik Secondary School were from Punarbas, Kanchanpur. This studyis qualitative in nature, andhas tried to elicit the views of participants. I consulted to four English language teachers teaching English language at secondary level for the observation of their classes and interviewed teachers after their classes. Class 9 and 10 students' classes were observedand interviewed andI tried to understand views of students on their teachers' performance. There was also focused group discussion. I facilitated their focused group discussion in the class by dividing them into 5 to 6 students. I recorded students' voices on my mobile and I prepared diary writings in the class.

Results and Discussion

This section deals with analysis and interpretation of data. I mean to say that I have analyzed and interpreted the data on the basis of collected data. First the data were analyzed and they were interpreted secondly. The thematic values were drawn as the interpretation of the data.

More than that, this study deals with the classroom discourse of English language classes of Sudurpaschim Province. Teachers' perceptions about students learning styles and contents to be taught are discussed in the English classroom. Students' learning capacity with the help of interactive class talked by teachers are presented here. Similarly, the emerged discourse in the English language class is discussed. There are typical features of classroom discourse in English language class. Raising hands, turn talking, following questions and answering the questions asked by teachers were found as the features of classroom discourse. I have also seen classroom discourse of English language teachers is interactive process between teachers and students in accordance with the set curriculum regarding the teaching and learning.

Data Analysis

I analyzed the data I collected as the primary source of information. The vignettes and verbatim that I recorded on the diary and video recordings were analyzed as per the need of the study. I elicited the information from focused group discussion of the students as the informants. I analyzed the classroom discourse used in the English language classrooms. I made the analysis of the data rigorously. The themes that I presented below were extracted on the basis of data collected along with their transcription.

Classroom Discourse as a Means of Interaction

Classroom discourse is the use of classroom activities that happen between teacher and students and students to students in the language class. In the classroom, classroom discourse is the means of interaction. Students can get the chance of interaction through the use of classroom discourse. Teachers' level of proficiency is very important for the development of communicative competence of students. To quote the TB sir, the English language teacher:

> Though our students are not good in communication, they can communicate with us and among each other if we teachers make our class interactive. Teachers have to give chances of speaking each other. Teachers have to give chances of interaction with their students. They become interested in communication when they get chance for talking. So we teachers have to create the situation of interaction.

The communicative habit of students depends on classroom discourse of teachers. This is meant to say that effective classroom activities of teachers encourage students to be interactive in the class. The above vignette shows that students' interaction gets cultivated through classroom discourse of the English language teachers. In the beginning, they become ready to talk each other. Students are able to work in the class, and they can work in the team through the good discourse of the teacher. Teachers can provide incentive to students to solve the problems.

On the other hand, students interact with teachers if their teachers create situations for them. Students say that teachers' language is the tool of interaction in learning process. They argue that effective

classroom discourse provides the boon of communication. The shyness of them can be reduced and they get the chances to remove their weaknesses of weakness. I have put the idea of Sony Tamang, a student of class 9 believed that students are motivated from the classroom discourse of the teachers in the English language. She stated that:

> I understand better if teachers use the classroom discourse effectively. The language of teachers has to be student friendly in the class. I can catch more when teachers teach in the language of my language. I think my teacher has asked me questions when my teacher says something clearly. I and my friends view that our teachers' discourse has to go in our flow. Teachers have to make the class interactive way. Their teaching has to be based on interaction.

The relation between teacher and students in the classroom was significantly a hierarchical connection as that of father and son or parents and children, and it was also found in school and classrooms. The teacher was taken as a person having more knowledge, information and experience in the arena in which the teacher was instructing the students. Students were given education to respect their teacher because he was considered an important personality to share and provide knowledge. Children regard teachers more than their parents forever to learn language. Students learn automatically to respect their teacher. Respecting teachers as parents is the cultural entity in the English language classes. However, teachers in schools are called by their first names. This signifies that this is one way of language learning as interactive practice. Suresh Tamang, a student of class 10 of A One Secondary School forwards his ideas as:

> TA sir is very good. He teaches nicely. Last time I was taught by another sir. He was also good in teaching. I found teachers like TA sir and another sir. I admitted to this school because it is a good school even though it is a government of the Sudurpaschim Province. This school has so many other teachers and it gets good results in the SEE of the nation.

Teachers call their students with the given names, and students also do the same in the class. The above vignette shows such interactive nature of students. Students know teachers with their names. Mr. Tamang answers in the same way as I said. I mean to say that students' nature of calling their teachers' names is a sort of interaction in the class. Though say they are not good in English, but they reflect their notion of interaction. Students answer their teachers' questions in the class. Teachers know names of some students in the class. I aim to say that they remember talent students' names in the class. Students do not say the full names of teachers in the class.

Classroom Discourse as a Source of Motivation

Effective teachers are those who inspire students for better and successful learning in the journey of learning. Teachers fill caliber students to reach to the destination of learning. From their teaching behavior in the class, students become engaged in the learning activities in the class. In the same way, they participate in the activities assigned by teachers. They have incentive to move for getting the knot of success in the classroom learning even the shy and passive students engaged in the learning assignments of the pedagogic schedule. In one side, teachers cultivate the learning habit of students, and students become responsible for their own goal based learning in another side. I have consideration that good language use of teachers is

established as a motif on the court of students.

Teachers' good use of classroom language can motivate students to perform the goals of learning. Teachers are the facilitators in the English language class. They communicate each other in the class. Discourse is the key aspect that deals with desires of participants. Classroom discourse is the language of teachers that goes to the side of students. Whenever teachers start communication, they provide chances of turn taking in terms of language learning. To the connection of this theme, students say that they learn better if their teachers use good strategies to teach language in the class. To quote the ideas of Dipak, a student of class 10 from Sahara Secondary school, Dhangadhi is as follows:

> I learn effectively when my teacher uses my language to give some concept while teaching English language in the class. I mean to say (..) that I feel to learn more when teachers use classroom discourse. [Itching the knee] my teacher uses some gestures to teach English. She asks us questions in the class for checking our understanding level.

Classroom discourse of teachers promotes learning of learners in the class. Similarly, it inspires students to their language learning part. Language of teachers in the class can motivate learners to learn effectively needed to their learning. Teachers are those persons who pave the learning side of students. Students are motivated to check their learning side in the class. They check with the eyelet of learning perspectives in the learning process.

Classroom Discourse and Opportunities in the Class

Classroom discourse is the heart of the classroom language. In the present time, classroom discourse includes students in the classroom activities. Most of the activities are student centered from the lens of classroom discourse. Participatory activities are put in the configuration of classroom discourse. The English language classes in Kailali and Kanchanpur are teacher fronted. Teacher initiates classroom activities in the class. Students are given opportunities to answer the questions in the class. Pair work, group work, brainstorming and other class works are provided to students as performing opportunities. The teachers whom I interviewed said that they provide chances to students in the class.

I interviewed four teachers of four different schools in the Kailali and Kanchanpur believed that they had given different opportunities to students. TA sir believed that:

> I ask questions to say whatever I have taught in the class. I check their understanding. I ask questions voluntarily in the class. I ask to all students though they are not interested to answer in the class. I ask questions as opportunities for the personal development of students. Students do not say anything in the class, if I ask again they say something even though they are not able to utter the correct answer.

In the English language classes in Kailali and Kanchanpur, English teachers participate students in different activities as learning incentives. They assign activities students to be frank and present their decoding in the class. The above vignette reveals that teachers' activities offer students chances to involve in them and to do other tasks provided. As TA sir says, questions asked by teachers support students to develop personally. Along with this, students learn language as part of opportunities.

Teachers think that students get chances to perform or to learn if we teachers coordinate good

classroom discourse along with the participation of students in the class. Students get opportunities for language learning if there is interactive nature's classroom discourse. In the sense, TD sir (pseudo-name) believes that:

> I give group work, pair work in the class. Students have to be encouraged in the class even if they are not fully able to answer correctly of the asked questions. If chances are given, students slowly involve in the classroom activities. They perform better if regular type of interactive type classroom discourse is applied.

Teachers involve students in different activities in the classroom. They facilitate students with group work, pair work and other types of activities. As TA sir says in the above verbatim, students get encouraged and they become motivated in the class. Similarly, they get encouraged to participate in classroom activities.

Classroom Discourse as Means of Culture Development

In the class, classroom discourse includes culture of language teaching and students. The aim of this mini research was not only get the elements of cultural matters, but also to help the total activities of students within the classroom discourse. In language teaching, teachers can share culture of interaction. Students get culture sharing whenever they interact with teachers and their own friends. Cultural matters are important for the learning of students in the class. The classroom discourse has to engage students in the interactive activities. Classroom discourse provides cultural knowledge and information to students in the class. Teachers and students can share range of feelings in the English language class.

When cultural values and norms are considered in the language class, students get opportunity and are able to cultivate mobility. Through that, students grasp mutual obligation, relationship and interdependency in the space of learning. In doing so, teachers develop learning environment along with control. Class culture can be irrigated through the use of classroom discourse. It creates a common connection and classroom discourse was taken as a part of culture development in the society. University classroom talk can be considered at the interface of an oral-literate continuum where 'oral' refers to prototypical speaking such as conversation, and 'literate' refers to stereotypical writing as in academic prose (Biber, 1995).

Teachers as Cognitive Sources in the Classroom Discourse

Teachers are not only persons to teach, but they are the means to develop cognitive side in the students. They can empower learners to burst out the inner thought of students cognitively in the class. In the words of Linda and Rolf (2000), teachers have to exemplify what they explicate in learning. Bloom (1956; as cited in Bruner, 1996) says that cognitive system recognizes a serial development for categorizing lower to higher order levels of cognitive processing. Bloom's taxonomy consists of six levels as knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis and evaluation. Such levels are important for understanding, remembering, applying, analyzing, evaluating with analytical and synthetic quality. Classroom discourse is the teachers' knowledge imparting style and students perceptive behaviors in terms of interactive alignment.

Students believe that classroom discourse manages the mental aspect of learning and effective language practice empowers the ability to get the content through the medium of instruction used in the

class (Jora, 2020). They say that the language of teachers can help the cognitive power of students in the journey of learning. Surely, the teachers' language can guide the learning scenario of students in the class. The paired type learning can be cultivated for the mental creativity of children. Students whom I interviewed in the class claim that teachers are the primary parts in the learning sector of students. They clearly say that teachers' discourse can function as cognition in the classroom learning. Consequently, students learn with the help of better type encoding of the linguistic structures and phenomena. Suraj, a class 10 student said:

> Our teachers are our learning role models in the classroom. Whatever they do in the classroom are the materials of learning in the learning. I learn more and grasp fruitfully from my teachers. Teachers bring the learning items with plan and impart us fruitfully in the class. For classroom discourse, teachers are the milieus for creating situations to provide the learning efficacy. When I read myself, I understand some, but when my teachers teach, I grasp all the things comfortably in the class.

Teachers assign the learning items to students, and they ease learning of students. They develop the cognitive aspect of learners in the class. The above verbatim reflects the views of students' towards the classroom discourse of teachers. Teachers can manage the learning point into the repertoire of students. They decorate the learning items into the mental recording of students. I think that students' reading ability increased from classroom teaching and students comprehending ability goes to the positive side of the learning goals in the classroom setting. Learning situations are created students friendly in the language learning dealings. Nevertheless, teachers just teach, but they encourage students to be creative mentally. I aim to say that teachers calculate students' cognition in the beliefs of students. In this respect, Mohan said:

> We are students, and we come to school for study. [Keeping the hand on knee] I do not understand anything when my teachers do not teach. If I understand myself, I will not come to school. I understand when my teachers provide idea to learn and they keep something in my mind.

The above vignette reflects that teachers are key persons for the cognitive developments of students. Though students can study themselves, they get lots of measures of support to mental development from their teachers. Students become creative with the scaffolding of teachers in the class. Good teachers behave instructionally according to the learning wave of students. They fill up the learning incentives in the minds of learners. What's more, they can make their students learnable and interested in the items of learning as facilitators.

Conclusion and Implications

This study talks about classroom discourse of teachers of English language in the class in Kailali and Kanchanpur. Classroom discourse of English language class is the use of activities for the better learning of students. It can also be used for effective learning of students in the class. Mainly, teachers come in the class, greet to students and students also greet their teachers in the class is the classroom discourse. Teachers ask questions to students in the class as in the form of discourse is the main point of classroom discourse. Teachers are the key initiators of classroom discourse in the class. Mostly, students follow them in the intervals of communication. This study shows that teacher fronted discourse is prevalent in the class,

and lecture method as the form of classroom discourse.

In the English language class, classroom discourse depends on the teacher. Use of materials, textbooks, group work, pair work and classroom interactions are major points of classroom discourse. Asking questions, students' raising hands for asking and saying the answers, communication are the emerged discourse in the classroom discourse in the English language class. Students talk each other as in the form of classroom discourse in the English language class. Classroom discourse is a source of motivation. The classroom discourse cultivates communicative competence by focusing on linguistic aspect. Deductive way of teaching and correcting mistakes are elements of emerged classroom discourse.

Educationally, it can pinpoint the challenges and opportunities of the academia. While student-centered teaching mode requires teachers to moderate their control of the class and offer more opportunities to the students, so as to increase their target language output and improve their communicative competence. Unlike the traditional mode of teaching which teachers are always busy preaching throughout the class, student-centered mode calls on teachers to keep their students busy with talking in class. Rather than that, teachers should have the awareness of changing the role of the "dominating boss" to the "considerate organizer and coordinator" by organizing more classroom activities, such as role play, debate, and other activities. As a researcher, I found that teacher is key initiator of classroom discourse in the class.

Pedagogically, classroom discourse helps us draw out the classroom activities used in the class. The language used in the classroom is message oriented, shares the aim of learning, and maintains the goals to be achieved with the presence of teachers. This study can be educationally beneficial for the further betterment of schooling. Teachers can use classroom discourse as the basic form of language learning which supports the teaching learning environment fruitfully. Classroom discourse is the classroom language that connects teachers and students in the language learning in the class through curricularlenses designs. Students can reflect the good styles of teachers in their learning journeys for effective learning. They can sight their learning in the interactive ways, and such action makes class participatory.

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Man Bahadur Jora is a Lecturer of English at Kailali Multiple Campus, Nepal. He is pursuing his PhD from Graduate School of Education, Tribhuvan University. To his credit, about two dozens of articles have been published in different national and international journals. He has also edited journals and presented papers in various conferences and facilitated different training sessions in English Language teaching. His areas of interests include applied linguistics, classroom discourse, classroom management, classroom psychology, discourse analysis, English as Medium of Education (EMI), perceptional studies, research on SLA and English Language curricula, teaching materials, learner differences, translation studies, Teacher professional development and ICTs in language education.