

# CHAPTER –ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Human beings differ from all other species on earth since they can communicate through the medium of language. In this sense, it can be said that language is purely human. It is language that enables people to carry out various communicative and social functions. In simple words, people use language for various functions like informing, requesting, ordering, lecturing, warning, and so on. In this regard, it can be said that people sometimes use a single word (e.g., *go* to order) and sometimes a stretch of words or a long sentence (e.g., *Tomorrow our school remains close on the occasion of chhath to inform*) to express their views, attitudes, feelings, emotions, etc. Discourse, in narrow sense, refers to a continuous stretch of language larger than a sentence. However, broadly speaking, a meaningful and contextual linguistic (e.g., word, phrase, clause, etc.) or non-linguistic (e.g., gesture, smile, eye-movement, etc.) sign can be taken as discourse. Discourse analysis is a deep and detailed study of language in terms of the linguistic and/ or non-linguistic features used and the context of use. Critical discourse analysis is an approach to discourse analysis which offers the socio-political interpretation of a discourse and shows clearly the relationship between language and power.

This introductory unit on “Critical Analysis of Classroom Discourse” consists of general background, review of related literature, objectives, and significance of the study.

### **1.1 General Background**

Needless to say, language is the asset that human beings are equipped with. The use of language in appropriate context leads to meaningful and successful communication, which human beings are capable of. Human beings while communicating use both linguistic and non-linguistic signs and symbols keeping their culture, context, social settings, roles and relationships, etc. into

consideration, though without being able to analyse on their own. Humans not only use words, phrases, clauses, sentences but they also use non-linguistic (or extra linguistic) cues, signs and symbols while communicating. Therefore, the study and analysis of language limiting it to the linguistic elements only like phoneme, morpheme, word, phrase, etc. seems to be misleading. Furthermore, analyzing both linguistic and non-linguistic features in hunch without taking the account of societal and cultural factors does not give a clear picture of language. To quote Brown(1994, p.165), “a language is a part of culture and a culture is a part of language; the two are intricately interwoven so that one cannot separate the two without losing the significance of either language or culture.” Thus, there is two-way relationship between language and culture because language reflects culture and culture shapes the language. Therefore, attempting to analyse language without the due consideration of the culture is just like the wild goose chase. Similarly, roles and responsibilities, power and status of interlocutors, social setting and scenes,etc. also determine the use of language. Therefore, we cannot eschew societal and environmental aspects while analyzing language.

### **1.1.1 Discourse and Its Types**

Discourse is often said to be a stretch of language larger than a sentence. In Crystal’s (2005) words:

Discourse is a continuous stretch of language which is larger than a sentence but, within this broad notion, several applications may be found. At its most general sense, a discourse is a behavioral unit which has a pre-theoretical status in linguistics; it is a set of utterances which constitutes any recognizable speech event, e.g., a conversation, a joke, a sermon, an interview, etc. (p.118)

From this definition, it can be inferred that discourse is a suprasentential unit of language that is meaningful. According to Cook (1996, p.156) discourse refers to “the stretches of a language perceived to be meaningful, unified and purposive.” Similarly, Crystal (1992, p.25) says, “Discourse is a continuous stretch of language, larger than a sentence, often consisting of a coherence unit.” Coherence thus is a key term in discourse. Any stretch of language must be cohesive and coherent to be called a discourse. Discourse is said to be cohesive if it follows linguistic rules and regularities such as substitution, ellipsis, transformation, etc. On the other hand, if a discourse is meaningful and purposive in accordance with the culture, context, etc., then it is said to be coherent.

The aforementioned discussion that discourse is the supra-sentential level of language is not always true. A piece of discourse in context can consist of as little as one or two words, as in *stop, well, No smoking* and can convey complete and contextual meaning. Foucault (1992) defines discourse as “ a practice not just of representing the world but signifying the world, consisting and constructing the world in meaning.” (as cited in Locke, 2005,p.5). This definition makes us clear that discourse is not just a sentence, a paragraph, a dialogue, etc. but representation of language in context. Discourse never occurs in isolation. All the models of discourse (e.g., advertisements, dialogue, speeches, etc.) are shaped by the nature of the institutions or social settings in which they are used. Mills (2007) supporting the role of society in discourse points out:

A discourse is not a disembodied collection of statements, but grouping of utterances, sentences or statements which are enacted within a social context, which are determined by that social context ... Institutions and social context therefore play an important role in the development, maintenance and circulation of discourses. (p.10)

Thus, discourse is any piece of text, written or spoken, which can be analysed and interpreted according to the culture, context and the social settings in which the text is used. Of course, discourse has some role to perform like entertaining, educating, informing, warning, threatening, asking, etc. Thus, for the full interpretation and analysis of discourse, its role in society should also be taken into account. Fairclough (1989, p.42) in this regard says discourse is just a particular form of social practice.

Discourse can be classified into various types on the basis of medium, formality, reciprocity, and so on. Nevertheless, there are mainly four types of classification of discourse which are discussion worthy. They are:

### **i) Spoken and Written Discourse**

This classification is made on the basis of form and medium of expression. A spoken discourse is generally less formal and therefore less orderly. There are frequent interventions from the receiver's side. Some examples of spoken discourse are friendly talks, dialogues and conversations. Written discourse, in contrast, is formal and therefore, more orderly in its expression. There is more lexical density in the written text. It means written discourse consists of more content words as compared to spoken discourse. Written texts are more orderly than the spoken ones means that written texts (or, discourses) are more coherent and cohesive in comparison with the spoken texts (or, discourses). Some examples of written discourse are letters, notices, etc.

### **ii) Formal and Informal Discourse**

Generally speaking, informal discourse is in spoken form while formal is in written form. Informal discourse is less orderly as compared to the formal discourse. Whereas interaction between two classmates can be taken as an example of informal discourse, a pupil asking his head teacher for leave is an example of formal discourse.

### **iii) Reciprocal and Non-reciprocal Discourse**

This classification is made on the basis of reciprocity or say, by the degree of interruption and interaction from the recipient side. A discourse is said to be reciprocal when there is possibility of interaction by the other participant. The receiver can influence the course of direction of what is being said. A face-to-face conversation such as dialogue and interviews can be taken as an example of reciprocal discourse. A posthumous book by an author, on the contrary, is an example of non-reciprocal discourse where the sender and receiver have no chance of interaction. Reciprocity, however, is not an absolute matter. For example, an informal interaction between friends has more reciprocity than the speech delivered by a political leader. The speech delivered by a political leader, in the same way, has more reciprocity than a written discourse such as novel, poem, etc.

### **iv) Transactional and Interactional Discourse**

This categorization is made on the basis of goals or functions of discourse in a given context. While transactional discourse refers to the use of language for content expression which is used for the exchange of goods and services, interactional discourse is used for phatic communion to establishing and maintaining social relations and expressing our personal feelings, sentiments, emotions and attitudes. Some discourses, however, serve both of these functions.

#### **1.1.2 Discourse and Context**

Discourse is a communicative event involving language in context, and discourse analysis is the functional analysis of Discourse (Nunan, 1993, p.118). Discourse, therefore, is the amalgamation of linguistic/non-linguistic items and the context. If any spoken or written piece of text is merely analysed in terms of language features being kept aloof from the context and culture, the analysis cannot be termed as discourse analysis; it is merely the linguistic analysis of the text. Discourse analysis, as pragmatics does, “studies the meaning of

utterances in context” (Cutting, 2008, p.2). While talking of discourse, setting and context should be studied as accurately as possible since discourse can only be described, understood and interpreted in its specific context. While analyzing discourse critically, we find that there is great role of context and society in shaping the discourse. On the other hand, discourse contributes to structuring the same society. Therefore, context plays a vital role in the analysis of discourse.

As we know, discourse is “a continuous stretch of language which is larger than a sentence” (Crystal, 2005, p.118). We also know that discourse is “a communicative event involving language in context” (Nunan, 1993, p.118). Now the question is – ‘What is context?’ In the words of Gee (2005):

Context ultimately means the very shape, meaning, and effect of the social world- the various social roles people play, the socially and culturally situated identities they take on, the social activities they engage in, as well as the material, cognitive, social and political effects of these. (p. 1)

All these contextual elements given in Gee (ibid) play a vital role while analyzing and interpreting discourse. Therefore, the relationship between discourse and context can never be questioned.

### **1.1.3 Discourse Analysis (DA)**

Discourse analysis refers to the description of natural spoken or written discourse. It is concerned with the study of what gives a stretch of language unity and meaning. In Cook’s (1996) words:

Discourse is a stretch of language in use, taking on meaning in context for its users, and perceived by them as purposeful, meaningful, and connected. This quality of perceived purpose, meaning and connection

is known as 'coherence'. Discourse analysis is the study and the explanation of this quality of coherence. A discourse is a coherent stretch of language. (p. 25)

Discourse analysis, thus, is the study of how stretches of language give meaning and purpose in context. It serves the purpose of how the formal and functional properties of language help in serving as a means to communicate our thoughts and feelings efficiently and appropriately. It studies the various cohesive devices employed to bring out meaning and purpose of speech acts. It seeks to interpret how the cohesive devices and coherence in the discourse generate meaning, bring about a purpose and provide a unity in the given discourse.

Discourse analysis, in narrow terms, is the study of language in use that extends beyond sentence boundaries. This is not the broader consensual view however, as context and social factors are not subsumed in this view. The wider consensual view of DA is that it studies meaning of words in context, analyzing the parts of meaning that can be explained by knowledge of the physical and social world, and the socio-psychological factors influencing communication, as well as the knowledge of the time and place in which the words are uttered or written (Yule, 1996). For the complete understanding of the text in discourse, we must recognize the sociolinguistic, psycholinguistic, semantic and pragmatic contexts.

DA is a general term for a number of approaches to analyzing written, spoken, signed language use or any significant semiotic event. It covers an extremely wide range of activities, from the narrowly focused investigation of how words such as *oh*, *well* are used in casual talk, to the study of the dominant ideology in a culture as represented, for example, in its educational or political practices. According to Richards et al. (1999), DA deals with:

- i) How the choices of articles, pronouns and tenses affect the structures of the discourse
- ii) The relationship between utterances and sentences in a discourse
- iii) The moves made by speakers to introduce a new topic, change the topic or a higher role relationship to other participants (p. 52).

Thus, DA examines how words relate to each-other within the text and how the participants in the discourse use language in which context. In sum, DA is concerned with the study of the relationship between language and the contexts in which it is used.

#### **1.1.4 Classroom Discourse: An Introduction**

Classroom discourse refers to the type of language use that is found in the classroom situations. This student-teacher discourse is also referred to as pedagogic discourse, and it is different in form and function from language used in other situations due to the distinct social roles of students, teachers and the activities they are engaged in (Richards et al., 1999, p. 52). Also known as classroom interaction, it is not only concerned with the interaction between the teacher and learners but also amongst the learners in the classroom. According to Richards et al. (1999, p. 52), teachers tend to rely on a discourse structure with the pattern:

#### Initiation–Response–Evaluation

Teacher, in this structure, is the initiator of the conversation. The student, then, responds to what teacher has asked and finally the teacher evaluates the student's response.

Classroom discourse is an important area for the study of social relationship and their impact on language learning in classroom.



### **1.1.5 Conversation Analysis (CA): An Introduction**

CA is an approach to DA from the structural and situational point of view. CA examines discourse from the perspective of sequencing utterances within the context of language use. For example, the utterances may be sequenced as adjacency pairs, insertion sequence, side sequence, etc. CA views discourse as a process rather than a product, “it demonstrates that conversation is systematically structured” (Cutting, 2008, p.26). CA is the study of talk in interaction (both verbal and non-verbal in situations of everyday life). CA generally attempts to describe the orderliness, structure and sequential patterns of interaction, whether institutional (in school, a doctor’s surgery, court, etc.) or in a casual conversation. It is an approach to the study of natural conversation, with a view to determining:

( i) participants’ method of-

- turn taking
- constructing sequences of utterances across turns
- identifying and repairing problems, and
- employing gaze and movement

(ii) how conversation works in different conventional settings( e.g., interviews, court hearings, telephone conversations, card games, etc.)

### **1.1.6 Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)**

CDA is a socio-political approach to analysing discourse. In the words of Crystal (2005):

Critical discourse analysis is a perspective which studies the relationship between discourse events and socio-political and cultural factors, especially the way discourse is ideologically influenced by and can itself influence power relations in society. (p. 123)

Discourses are based on power and ideology of the society, and society is changed and influenced by the content and structure of the discourse. The study of how power and ideology of the people or society structure discourses and how discourses change the society is the domain of CDA. For Holmes (2008, p. 389), “CDA is explicitly concerned with investigating how language is used to construct and maintain power relationships in society; the aim is to show up connections between language and power, and between language and ideology. CDA refers to the analysis of how texts work within specific socio-cultural practices.” It deals with the explanation of how discourse is shaped by relations of power, ideology and at the same time, is used to construct social identities, social relations and systems of knowledge and belief. Thus, CDA regards discourse as a form of socio-cultural practice.

Critical discourse analysis is nothing more than a deconstructive reading and interpretation of a text or a problem. It is not so much a direction, a school or a specialization as many believe it. Rather, it is an analytical approach which aims to offer a different mode of theorizing, analyzing and application throughout the whole field. CDA is used as an umbrella term for a number of methodologies that try to uncover how discourse and ideology are intertwined, how social structure and power relations are represented, enacted, constituted, maintained or challenged through language. Its main goal is to “describe and explain how power abuse is enacted, reproduced or legitimized by the text and talk of dominant groups or institutions” (Van Dijk, 1996, p.85). In Gee’s (2004) words, CDA is about how form-function correlations and language-context interactions are associated with social practices in terms of the implications for things like status, solidarity, social goods and power (pp. 297-8). Thus, the purpose of CDA is to analyse opaque as well as transparent structural relationship of dominance, discrimination, power and control as manifested in language (Wodak, 1995, p.204). CDA attempts to find out the relationship between language and society; and the relationship between analysis and the practices analysed. Fairclough (1995) defines CDA as:

By critical discourse analysis, I mean discourse analysis which aims to systematically explore opaque relationships of causality and determination between (a) discursive practices, events and texts, and (b) wider social and cultural structures, relations and processes; to investigate how such practices, events and texts arise out of and are ideologically shaped by relations of power and struggles over power; and to explore how the opacity of these relationships between discourse and society is itself a factor securing power and hegemony. (pp. 132-3)

Similarly, Janks (1997, p. 26) writes “Where analysis seeks to understand how discourse is implicated in relations of power, it is called critical discourse analysis.” Fairclough (2010) lists the following characteristics of CDA:

- i) It is not just analysis of discourse ( or more concretely a text), it is a part of some form of systematic transdisciplinary analysis of relations between discourse and the other elements of the social process.
- ii) It is not just general commentary in discourse; it includes some form of systematic analysis of texts.
- iii) It is not just descriptive, it is also normative. It addresses social wrongs in their discursive aspects of possible ways of righting or mitigating them. (pp. 10-11).

To sum up, CDA states that discourse is socially constitutive as well as socially conditioned. Furthermore, discourse is an instrument of power, of increasing importance in contemporary societies. The way this instrument of power works

is often hard to understand, and CDA aims to make it more visible and transparent. Wodak (1996, pp. 271-280) have summarized the basic tenets of CDA, relating to society as follows:

- i) CDA addresses social problems
- ii) Power relations are discursive
- iii) Discourse constitutes society and culture
- iv) Discourse does ideological work
- v) Discourse is historical
- vi) The link between text and society is mediated
- vii) Discourse analysis is interpretative and explanatory
- viii) Discourse is a form of social action.

#### **1.1.6.1 Language and CDA**

Language is at the heart of critical discourse analysis. Meaning is socially constructed via the mediation of language and other sign systems. Meaning is something that inherits in text and corresponds with something out there, i.e., in the real world. Textual interpretation is psychological since it happens in the reader's mind. Not only do different types of texts require different ways of reading but the same text can also be read in different ways to generate different meaning. Textual meaning is indeterminate and multiple; the view propounded by Derrida through the principle of deconstruction.

#### **1.1.6.2 Power Relation and CDA**

There is a deep connection between the use of language and the exercise of power; CDA helps make clear such connections. It means CDA deals with the study of the use of language in society in relation to the various powers and status exercised by the people in the society.

The concept of CDA is mainly concerned with the idea that language and power are inextricably intertwined. Discourses are not neutral; on the contrary, they amount to effective means of reproducing, maintaining power relations.

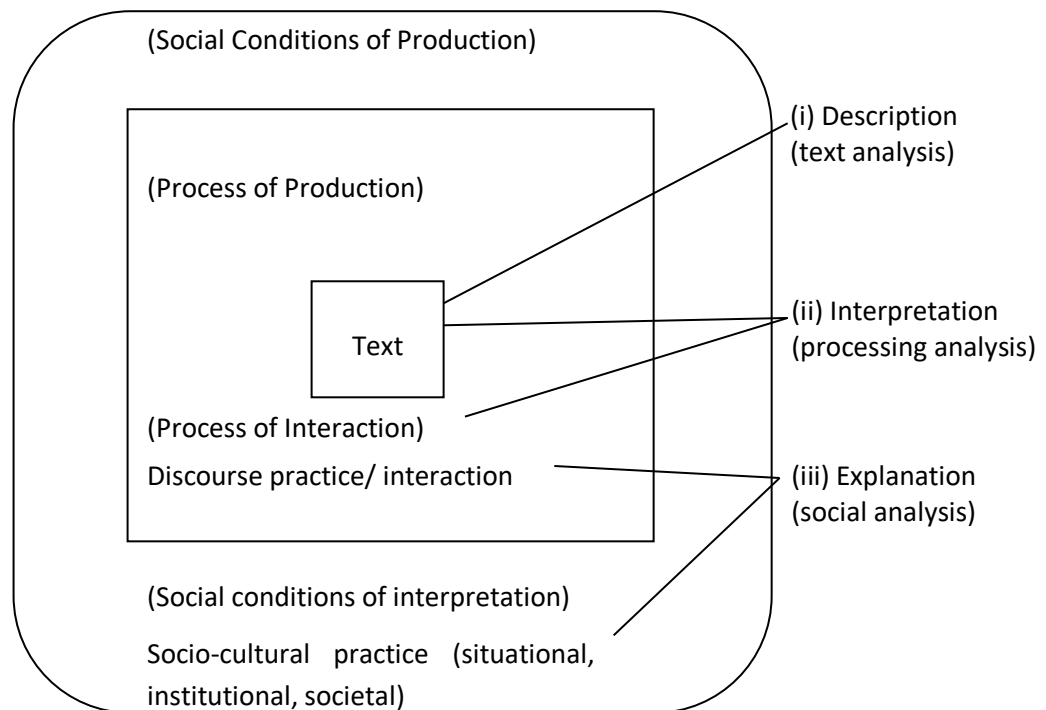
Eagleton (1991, as cited in Faralleli, 2009. p. 14) views that each and every discourse is the outcome of the social and political battles at the level of signs, meaning and. She further exemplifies the power relation as she puts “in western societies, we can say that the dominant discourse is usually heterosexual, male, white and middle class. Women, blacks, homosexuals and the poor are left as outsiders in the periphery.”(p.28). Power is the ubiquitous epithet attached to language. This view holds that language not only represents aseptic system of signs used for communication but also it does something more. Power has the decisive influence on the establishment of certain representation of the world through the use of language. Power is not something someone has and someone else does not. Rather, in discourse people have different kinds of power and exercise it in different ways, and these may change dynamically as a response to the behaviour of others.

#### **1.1.6.3 Ideology and CDA**

French philosopher, Althusser (1971, as cited in Faralleli, 2009, p.21) defined ideology as a “process which takes place behind our backs”. Everything which is underlying in our heads and which helps us to identify and understand the world is called ideology. Ideologies reside in the texts or discourses because texts or discourses contain the form and content that bear the imprint of ideologies. Ideology is the lens through which we perceive, realize, interpret and understand the world. Exploring these hidden and naturalized beliefs requires a lot of work and our estrangements from all these perceptions and dogmatic feelings. Critical understanding and interpretation of reality, however, does not mean that we should drop all our ideologies and belief systems. Rather, it suggests us that we take into account all the differences as well as affinities. CDA deeply analyses and interprets the texts and discourses that are intertwined with the ideologies.

### 1.1.7 Fairclough's Framework for Analyzing Discourse

Fairclough's analysis is based on the three components – description, interpretation and explanation. Linguistic properties of texts are described (text analysis), the relationship between the texts and interactions are interpreted and the relationship between the interaction and social contexts are explained. (Fairclough, 1989, p. 26). The three-dimensional approach to CDA is clearly shown below:



(Fairclough, 2010, p.133)

In all these stages, we are concerned with analysis, but the nature of it is different in each stage. Analysis in the first stage limits its boundaries to labelling the formal properties of the text and regards text as an object. In the second stage, CDA goes through the analysis of the cognitive processes of the participants and their interactions. Finally in the third stage, the aim is to explain the relationship between social events and social structures that affect these events and are also affected by them.

Text analysis can be organized under four main headings: ‘vocabulary’, ‘grammar’, ‘cohesion’, and ‘text structure’. Vocabulary deals mainly with individual words, grammar deals with words combined into clauses and sentences, cohesion deals with how clauses and sentences are linked together, and text structure deals with large-scale organizational properties of the texts. (Fairclough, 1992, p. 75). Text analysis includes the analysis of interactional control (turn-taking, exchange structures, topic control, formulation, etc.), cohesion, politeness, ethos, grammar (transitivity, theme and modality), wording, word meaning and metaphor.

Similarly, interdiscursivity, intertextual chains, coherence, conditions of discourse practice come under the processing analysis of the relationship between discursive process and the text.

In social analysis, however, matrix of discourse, orders of discourse, and ideological and political effects of discourse are to be analysed.

## **1.2 Review of Related Literature**

Sinclair and Coulthard (1978) carried out a dissertation on classroom discourse at University of Birmingham. They analysed the interaction of eight to eleven year old children and their class teachers in different subjects. Their analysis propounded a theoretical model of analysing classroom discourse in terms of five discourse units: lesson, transaction, exchange, move and act from top to bottom respectively. They found a rigid pattern of discourse where teachers and pupils spoke according to very fixed perception of their roles and where the talk could be seen to conform to highly structured sequences.

Edmondson (1981) carried out a study on spoken discourse. His dissertation is concentrated on the use of language in classrooms. He has also investigated the conversational behaviour in relation to its use and effects in terms of linguistic orientation. He came to an important conclusion that teacher’s and student’s social roles and relationships in the classroom play crucial role in classroom interaction. His study also revealed that teacher very often asked question as a

teaching strategy and the turn taking in the classroom was controlled by the teacher.

Brown and Yule (1983) carried out a research on Discourse Analysis. They tried to examine how human beings use language to communicate and in particular, how addressers construct linguistic message for addressees and how addressees work on linguistic messages in order to interpret them. They have found some of the ingredients which would be required to construct an account of how people use language to communicate with each other. They viewed that the speaker is at the process of communication.

Greenleaf and Freedman (1997) studied “Linking Classroom Discourse and Classroom Content: Following the Trail of Intellectual Work in a writing Lesson” in the University of California. The main aim of the study was to suggest an approach to analyzing classroom talk that aims to account for the intellectual work of the classroom that shows what stands to be learned. The focus was on an eleven-minute, teacher-led, whole-class activity that contains Initiation-Response-Evaluation (I-R-E) exchanges, but that does not function to test student’s knowledge. The analysis system extends the theoretical construct of preference organization from conversational analysis to the study of a whole-class, teaching-learning interaction in a ninth-grade English classroom, during which an expert teacher helps his students prepare to write a character sketch. Their analysis revealed the underlying intellectual structure of the interaction, including the teacher’s pedagogical goals, the cognitive skills required for successful student participation in the activity, and the strategies students apply to the task.

Mohtar and Yusoff (1998) carried out a study on “Sustaining Student Engagement in Classroom Discourse” in the University of Malaya. They mainly focused on interaction between teacher and students. They also examined some possible reasons for the lack of participation among students in the classroom. They also discussed possible strategies for engaging students in classroom discourse. In their study, they suggested a number of factors which



favour the sustenance of classroom discourse. The researchers tried to identify possible reasons for a lack of student interaction in the classroom. They mainly focused their attention on the following four areas: student characteristics; teacher characteristics; the teaching process; and lesson content. They drew a conclusion that the classroom lesson can provide a communicative context if, during the course of performing everyday classroom activities, the teacher and the students build on each other's communicative behaviour as they work towards fulfilling curricular objects. To be able to do this, both teacher and students must understand interactional rules. They suggested that student interaction can be limited by student characteristics, teacher characteristics, the teaching process, and the content of the lesson. Finally, they made a conclusion belief that the teacher can encourage student participation and they have outlined a number of strategies to help teachers do so.

Shah (2003) carried out a research on the classroom Discourse of grade nine of the public schools of Kathmandu Valley. The objective of his study was to describe the classroom discourse between the teacher and students. He found twenty six discourse acts, three moves, three exchanges, and five sub-exchanges. His study also revealed that it was teacher who initiated and dominated classroom most of the time.

Phyak (2006) carried out a study on 'how does a teacher interact with students in an English classroom?' He selected a government aided school out of Kathmandu valley using purposive sampling method. The major objective of his study was to find out the discourse strategies used by teachers to interact with their students in the classroom. Out of discourse strategies, his sole focus was on politeness and indirect speech acts. He reached a conclusion that there was only one-way interaction in the classroom. The classroom language used by both the teachers and students was not polite. He found that it was not because of power relationship but because of influence of culture and lack of exposure. Because of influence of their cultural behaviour of their mother tongue, students were found using impolite language. His study revealed that

one of the real problems in teaching of English in the context of Nepal was lack of classroom interaction strategies from both teachers' and students' side.

Aman and Mustaffa (2006) carried out a research on "Classroom Discourse of Malay Language Lesson: A Critical Analysis". For their study they used Fairclough's (1992) CDA framework. They aimed to find out the unseen social processes, i.e., teacher dominance in discourse, for which they based their study on several hours of teaching-learning case study in a secondary school classroom. They found out that teacher not only controlled the discourse but also the students. Their findings showed that teacher dominance was concealed in turn taking systems, types of questions posed by the teacher, discourse control and the overall structure of the discourse. In this research study, as they have found out, teacher played the central role while the role of the students seemed to be relegated.

Neupane (2007) conducted a research entitled "Analysis of Classroom Discourse: A Case of Grade viii" in twelve English classes of grade eight of public and private schools of Morang district. His aim was to find out the features of classroom discourse. From his research it is concluded that classroom discourse was generally dominated by the teacher in both the schools. He also found that the teachers of public schools were more flexible and were found to initiate conversations most of the time. He concludes that private school students initiated the moves very often. But the students of public school responded moves initiated by the teacher.

Tiwari (2008) conducted a research entitled "An analysis of Classroom Discourse" in secondary level. His primary data for his study were the recordings of conversations between pupils and teacher of class ten. His main aim was to analyse the different parts of the classroom conversations viz. opening, pause, overlapping, repair and closing and to find out the frequency of these parts. He found that classroom conversation was initiated with greeting or phatic communions and ended with closing. The truth was that classroom

discourse was found to be deviated and immediate correction without any pause was a common feature of classroom discourse.

Subedi (2011) carried out a research entitled “Critical Analysis of Spoken Discourse: A Case of the Film Twillight”. He purposively selected an English film ‘Twillight’ and critically analysed the spoken discourse in terms of power relations and linguistic features. To carry out his research, he recorded the conversation by using tape recorder and then transcribed in orthographic form. He then minutely observed the conversation and analysed the discourse using Fairclough’s (1992) framework. His study showed that power relations are inevitable features of any functional use of language, and that interaction is mostly controlled by those who are familiar with the situation and most obviously by elders.

This is the review of the research works related to the study. However, the study is different from the ones mentioned above in that most of the studies above analysed the classroom discourse non-critically. This study, therefore, is the first study in the department on critical analysis of classroom discourse.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study were as follows:

- (i) To critically analyse the classroom discourse in terms of interactional control, politeness and power
- (ii) To recommend some pedagogical implications.

### **1.4 Significance of the Study**

This research aims to analyse classroom discourse critically in terms of power relations exercised and linguistic features used. Thus, this research study will be beneficial to both teachers and students in order to strengthen their relationship for the effective teaching and learning. This study will be equally useful for the researchers who want to carry out researches in the field of CDA. Besides, this research will be significant to the policy makers, curriculum

designers, textbook writers, language teachers, trainers, and the students of language and linguistics.

## **CHAPTER – TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

The researcher adopted the following methodology to fulfill the objectives of the study.

#### **2.1 Sources of Data**

The researcher made use of both primary and secondary sources of data for the study.

##### **2.1.1 Primary Sources of Data**

The primary sources of data were the teachers and students teaching and learning in secondary level in three private schools of the valley. More specifically, audio-recordings of the conversations between teachers and students were taken as the primary sources of data.

##### **2.1.2 Secondary Sources of Data**

The researcher utilised the books, articles, journals, etc. related to DA and CDA. Sinclair & Coulthard (1978), Fairclough (1989, 1992, & 2010), Locke (2005), Cutting (2008), and so on were utilized as the secondary sources of data. He also utilised the related materials from different websites like:

<http://www.wikipedia.com>

<http://www.google.com.np>

<http://www.hum.uva.nl/teun/cda.htm>

<http://www.ericdigests.org/2001-1/critical.Html>

## **2.2 Sampling Procedure**

The researcher used purposive non-random sampling method and selected three private schools of the valley to collect the primary data. He recorded nine conversations, three from each school.

## **2.3 Tools for Data Collection**

The tools for data collection were observation and audio-recording. The researcher observed the classroom discourse, and recorded it using audio recorder and laptop.

## **2.4 Process of Data Collection**

For the collection of data, the researcher, first of all, selected three private schools of Kathmandu valley. Then, he went to the schools and asked the head teachers and subject teachers for permission. After getting the permission, he observed and recorded the conversations of class ten taking place between teacher and students and amongst students. He recorded nine classes in total, three from each school. And then, he transcribed the recorded conversation in orthographic form in order that he could minutely study and understand the details. At last, he analysed the discourse using Fairclough's (1992) model.

## **2.5 Limitations of the Study**

The study had the following limitations:

- i) The study was limited to Kathmandu valley only.
- ii) The study was limited to three private schools only.
- iii) The study was limited to class ten only.
- iv) The study was carried on the basis of the conversations of nine classes only.
- v) It was based on the subjective judgments of the researcher.
- vi) The study was based on the framework developed by Fairclough (1992).

## **CHAPTER – THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

This chapter deals with the analysis and interpretation of data. For this, the systematically collected data was transcribed on the basis of Fairclough's (1992) model. In the Fairclough's (1992) model of transcription, a spaced dot indicates a short pause, a dash a longer pause, extended square brackets overlap, and parentheses talk which was not distinguishable enough to transcribe. The main objective of the study was to analyse the classroom discourse qualitatively and descriptively in terms of interactional control (turn-taking, exchange structures and topic control), politeness and power.

#### **3.1 Analysis of the Classroom Discourse**

The classroom discourse has been analysed under the following heads:

##### **3.1.1 Interactional Control (IC)**

IC is one of the basic properties of spoken discourse. It refers to the way people select topic, control the topic and take turns. IC of the classroom discourse has been analysed in the following sub-headings:

##### **a. Turn-taking**

The researcher has found teacher domination in turn-taking. Domination in turn-taking means all the speakers (here, teacher and students) do not have equal rights in turn-taking. As the researcher has found, most interactions were initiated by the teacher and the teacher-initiated utterances received responses from the students, which were again followed by the teachers' acceptance or acknowledgement. Thus, the interactive movement in the classrooms can be structured into three parts: teacher initial-move – student response – teacher acceptance (T–S–T). This structure is reflected in example (1).

(1)

.....  
9) T: now . in this chapter . umm \_\_\_in this drama . what is given . this drama deals with .

10) S: ( ) family

11) T: family discussion . yeah . family conversation . yes

.....  
71) T: ok . Suhila's mother was always asking her to obey her father and not to be so stubborn \_\_\_ yes . what is the cause . Pratigya please .

72) S: because Mrs Ojha got married according to her parents' desire and . she wanted her daughter also to do the same . and sir . she

73) T: yes you're right

.....  
94) T: now I'll ask you one by one . catching the breath in surprise . who'll say \_\_\_from from from last bench . yes you Vivek .

95) S: gasping

96) T: good . gasping means catching the breath in surprise right .

.....  
106) T: let's go to another exercise . tick the best answer . see the alternatives below and find the best answer ok . Sushila's parents are concerned about her

107) S: marriage

108) T: right . they are concerned about her marriage . not about career not about higher studies good



.....  
345) T: *ok . so . first of all let me write some sentence here*

*a. If you heat water, it boils*

*b. If you study hard, you will pass your exam*

*c. If I met her, I would say hello*

*d. If I had participated there, I would have won the contest \_\_\_ so . are these four sentences same or different*

346) S: *different sir*

347) T: *ok they are different . the first sentence is conditional type zero . yes . some people call it zero type ok . similarly b is type one c type two . and d type three*

.....  
699. T: *in the same way . tapestry .*

700) S: *a piece of cloth woven with a design .*

701) T: *a piece of cloth woven with a design . good .*

.....  
The example (1) has six exchanges (each marked with dotted lines). Move in each exchange is initiated by the teacher, followed by response from the student and then acknowledgement/comment from the teacher. For example, in the first exchange, the teacher began move by asking a question and saying incomplete sentence in (9), and this was followed by students' move (10). In (11), the teacher made acknowledgement move by overlapping the student's move to emphasise the answer. A similar pattern was repeated in other exchanges. In the second exchange, the teacher began move by asking wh-question to a particular student in (71). (72) was made by the student as

response to (71) and (73) shows the teacher acceptance. In exchange three, the teacher initiated the move by telling the meaning of a word and pointing a particular student to find out the suitable word that matches with the meaning in (94). (95) shows student response and (96) shows teacher acceptance. Exchange four shows that the teacher initiated the move in (106) by saying an incomplete sentence. The sentence was completed by the student move in (107) and it was followed by the teacher's move (108) where the teacher accepted the student response and emphasised the answer by saying other inappropriate words. In exchange five, the teacher started the move (345) by giving some examples and asking a display question. When the student responded in (346) , the teacher accepted the student's response and elaborated it in (347). Similarly, in exchange six, the teacher initiated the move by eliciting the meaning of a word from the student in (699) , which was followed by students' response (700) and teacher's acceptance (701).

All these interaction structures lead to teacher control of the basic organization of interaction by opening as well as closing every move and accepting student response /answer. This reflects the existence of control or domination in turn-taking , where-by the student seldom has or even has no chance of getting a turn to speak unless given by teacher through wh-question, incomplete sentence , display question, prompting, and so on.

#### **b. Exchange structures**

The structure of exchanges was T-S-T as shown in example (1). The teacher was found to begin the interaction and the students were only asked to provide the answer to the question raised by the teacher, or to fill in the slot left by the teacher. In the exchanges, teacher preferred to ask closed questions like yes/no questions, questions that start with *who*, *which*, etc. that require one-word answer, or just confirmation-seeking questions. The use of open-questions beginning with *why*, *how*, *explain*, *describe*, etc. were rarely used by the teacher. The example (2) shows the use of closed questions in the analysed discourse.

(2)

.....  
7) T: in in in the drama . there was actually the involvement of . protagonist  
and antagonist ok . I mean characters . yeah .

8) S: yeah

.....  
11) T: ... actually . in this drama . how many characters are involved .

12) S: three

13) T: three characters yes . who are they \_\_\_\_

14) S: Mr Ojha Mrs Ojha and Suhila

.....  
45) T: what does Sushila want to become

46) S: nurse

47) T: right

.....  
114) T: last one . according to Sushila who is lucky

115) S: Mrs Ojha

116) T: not Sushila

117) S: no sir

118) T: not Sushila's brother

119) S: no sir

148) T:                    *good good . he gave security to her life also yeah*

149) S: *yes sir*

.....

277) T: *right . that's why . the horse also feels very strange\_\_\_he gives the harness bell a shake . who gives .*

278) S: *the horse .*

279) T: *ok . what is the harness bell . the horse is tied with with leather straps . right\_\_\_and the horse shakes the straps or harness . ok . to ask if there is some mistake . who is asking .*

280) S: *the horse .*

281) T: *horse is asking whom*

282) S: *that poet .*

.....

300) T: *.....was there chirping of birds .*

301) S: *no sir*

302) T: *was there roaring of lions .*

303) S: *no sir*

.....

353) T: *yes \_\_\_ if plus \_\_\_ yes \_\_\_ which tense*

354) S: *simple present*

355) T: *ok . if plus simple present . good . there is comma also . yes*

356) S: *yes sir*

.....  
631) T: *so . the real mother cannot lose her baby yes .*

632) S: *yes sir .*

633) T: *a child is very much loved by every women . that's why we \_\_\_\_ we say that mother's love is supreme yeah .*

634) S: *yes sir .*

635) T: *so is there any problem in this story .*

636) S: *no sir .*  
.....

The exchange structures presented in the above example show that the role of the students was minor to decide on the type of sentences to be used. Teacher decided on the structures and the student's role was just to agree or deny. Students were not given time to express their views freely and creatively. The exchange structures, thus, show that teacher talking time (TTT) was more than the student talking time (STT). In the first exchange, the teacher's move (7) is a confirmation seeking question. Similarly, (11), (13), (45) and (114) were the closed questions used by the teacher to elicit information. In (116) and (118), the teacher uttered words in an interrogative tone to seek confirmation. (148) was used by the teacher to seek confirmation. The moves (277), (279) and (281) used by the teacher are also closed questions. (300) and (302) were the yes/no questions asked by the teacher, which demanded student to answer within a single word: *no*. Similarly, wh-question in (353), confirmation seeking utterances in (355), (631) and (633) show that discourse was centered on the teacher. The yes/ no question posed by the teacher in (635) also shows that TTT was more than STT.

**c. Topic Control**

Topic control means the main participant (teacher, here) usually controls topics in discourse, interaction, or move. In other words, the main participant makes change to a new topic.

In the classroom discourse analysed, this textual feature is identified. Topic control took place when a new topic was proposed as a result of teacher question or statement, teacher disregard for student response/answer and also teacher selection in accepting student response. These phenomena are reflected in example (3).

(3)

.....  
49) T: *does Sushila agree to marry . no . what does she say \_\_\_ she says \_\_\_\_\_*

50) S: *that there is no security after getting married also .*  
.....

79) T: *great . now . was their marriage a love marriage*

89) S: *no sir they got married without knowing each other .*  
.....

122) T: *why don't Sushila's parents want to send her to university \_\_\_ you please . yes girl stand up .*

123) S: *Sushila's parents don't want to send her to university because they want her to get married and their economic status is also low to afford for her higher studies .*  
.....

257) T: *.... now there's again a question . please guess and answer . why do you think the poet says my horse must think it strange to stop in the middle of the woods . Why do you think*

258) S: *because there is no one in the jungle .*

259) T: *ok . ok .*

.....  
289) T: *silent . and there are some noises . what are those . the first noise .*

290) S: *sound's* { *the sweep*

291) T: { *no . the first noise is the noise of the harness bell .*

.....  
440) T: *good . now . you two . please stand up . one . give situation and the other . make a sentences please .*

441) S<sub>1</sub>: *you want to take your friend's bike . but . you know that he doesn't give his bike to others .*

442) S<sub>2</sub>: *excuse me . I'd be grateful if you could lend me your bike for a while.*

443) T: *thank you very much*

.....  
669) T: *.....why do people kill the wild animals . indiscriminately .*

670) S: ( )

671) T: *suppose \_\_\_er\_\_\_suppose it is a reptile . a reptile is killed for its .*

672) S: *skin .*

673) T: *yes skin and . some of the birds\_\_\_I mean birds are killed for*

674) S: { *feathers*

675) T: { *feathers\_\_\_by joining the feathers . they make some kinds of objects  
yeah*

676) S: *yes .*

677) T: *and . rhinos are killed for*

678) S: { *horns*

679) T: { *horns . yes horns . and elephants are killed for*

680) S: *ivory .*

681) T: *for ivory . what is that*

682) S: *tusk .*

.....

In the first exchange, the teacher controlled the topic by asking a what-question followed by an incomplete statement (49). Second exchange shows the teacher control on the topic through yes/no question (79). A why-question (122) posed to a particular student by a teacher in exchange three also reveals the teacher control on the topic. In the fifth exchange, topic control is shown by the teacher's question (289) and teacher denial to student response (291).

Exchange six reveals the teacher control through the teacher's request (440) to practice the structures presented by him. Similarly, exchange seven reflects the teacher control on the topic through the use of incomplete statements in (671), (673), (677), and (679). Overlaps in (675) and (679) also show that the teacher controlled the topics.

### **3.1.2 Politeness**

Politeness, one of the characteristic features of spoken discourse, is concerned with the nature of speech act. Holmes (2008, p.281) makes a distinction between positive politeness and negative politeness. Positive politeness refers to the direct and less formal language. On the other hand, negative politeness is the language that expresses or shows respect to the addressee. The analysed classroom discourse shows that often the teacher used more direct form of language. That is to say, positive politeness was found in the teacher's language. While, on the other hand, learners seldom got chances to speak. Whenever the learners got chances to speak, they used indirect and very polite language. It means, negative politeness was found in their language. Example (4) shows positive and negative politeness:

(4)

.....

41) T :..... *what does Sushila say at that time*

42) S: *sir Sushila takes a long sigh of breath and*



.....  
150) T: *ok question number D \_\_ what is Mrs Ojha's suggestion about money to pay for her studies \_\_ ok raise your hand . I'm not pointing anyone \_\_ raise your hands and answer the question . just try once \_\_*

151) S: (                    ) *sorry sir . which number . please say again*

152) T: *D . nothing will happen if you make a mistake \_\_ yes yes . yes you stand up .*

.....  
543) T: *.....what is the relationship between the king and the monkey*

544) S: (                    )

545) T: *yes what relation .*

546) S: *friends sir .*

.....  
798) T : *ok \_\_ wonderful . that's all for today .*

799) S : *sir . will you please tell what we need to do at home .*

800) T : *ok . do the exercise given in your book*

.....  
First exchange shows the teacher's use of direct language through a wh-question in (41). The student in (42) used the address word 'sir' to soften the utterance. Similarly, the teacher's use of a wh-question and imperative sentences in (150) reveal positive politeness whereas the words like *sorry*, *sir* and *please* used by the student in (151) were used to make the language less direct and polite. Thus, the student's utterance reflects negative politeness. The third and fourth exchanges also reflect positive politeness in the teacher's utterance and negative politeness in the student's utterance.

### 3.1.3 Power

There is a close relationship between language and power. Participants' power relation can be found out from the way they interact. It means, in a spoken discourse, we can dig out a lot of what is unsaid from what is said. In the discourse analysed, teacher had more power than the students. Teacher exercised power by overlapping the students' utterances with his own utterances as shown in example (5):

(5)

.....  
285) T: *how is the horse asking then*

286) S: *by shaking the harness .*

287) T: *by shaking the harness . wonderful idea*

.....  
387) T: *..... now please find the structure of this . as we did above*

388) S: ( ) *if plus \_\_\_ simple past in the if clause* { *. and*

389) T: { *and in the main clause*

.....  
569) T: *the king was killed . ok . and the housefly .*

570) S: { *flew away and the king was killed*

571) T: { *flew away and he he hit the sword on the .*

572) S: { *king's face*

573) T: *king . yes*

.....

Similarly, teacher used commands and questions to get the works done. Students, on the other hand, either remained silent or spoke a few words to show acceptance. This also reflects teacher's power in the classroom. This is shown below in example (6):

(6)

.....

142) T: *..... you . Nilam stand up . why does Sushia say that her mother was lucky . yes why .*

143) S: *Sushila says that her mother was lucky because even though her mother married her father without having seen him before . her mother was happy \_\_\_ her mother was happy and she has got full love and affection . care and security from her father*

144) T: *ok sit down*

.....

411) T: *.... write the full structure yourself \_\_\_ your homework is to write five sentences each . ok . of all the conditionals . understood .*

412) S: *yes sir*

.....

449) T: *so . you all work in pairs . write ten different situations and . the way to make request . ok start*

.....

583) T: *.... again we have another story . Solomon's justice . an interesting story . read this story also*

.....

780) T: now next one . get a professional photographer to take my photo . you two . you question and you answer . ok .

781) S<sub>1</sub>: do you know where I can have a professional photographer take my photo

782) T: yes . now you

783) S<sub>2</sub>: you can get Ram to take your photo

.....

Apart from the above facts, teacher's power in the classroom can also be reflected in the way teacher addressed their students. While the teacher used the first name of the students, the students addressed their teacher with respect saying 'sir' and speaking politely. Example (7) reflects this phenomenon.

(7)

.....

138) T: ok \_\_ question number b . Resham . you stand please \_\_ was her parents' marriage a love marriage . how do you know . yes .

139) S: no her parents' marriage was not love marriage

.....

369) T: when we say . if you heat water, it boils . The meaning is clear . yes .

370) S: yes sir

.....

758) T: Rajani you please . use make\_\_ok .

759) S: sir\_\_I . made . I made a mechanic repair my watch .

.....

## CHAPTER – FOUR

### FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 4.1 Conclusion and Findings

Based on the analysis and discussion made in the preceding chapter, it can be concluded that the classroom discourse analysed in this study is embedded with teacher domination practice. Teacher domination means the teacher controlling not only the discourse but also the students. As a result of this control, the role of the student as the main target of education process seems to be relegated, and instead it is the teacher who plays central role. The findings of this study are as follows:

- a. Students did not speak until and unless they are asked questions or directed to do something.
- b. Students remained passive partners in maintaining a classroom where agency resides with the teacher.
- c. Students willingly seemed to accept a passive role. It was shown by the exchange structures and teacher's control on the topics.
- d. There was inequality between teacher's and students' status. Whereas teacher's status was high, student's status was low.
- e. Power in the classroom was located with teachers.
- f. Teacher talking time (TTT) was more than the student talking time (STT).
- g. There was teacher domination in turn-taking. Students were not given freedom to express their views.

## 4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study, the researcher has made the following recommendations and pedagogical suggestions:

- a. Teachers should give more time to students to speak.
- b. Teachers should use communicative and task-based approaches to increase student involvement.
- c. Students should be given freedom to offer opinions, ask questions, summarise, and discuss in groups.
- d. Teachers should not overlap while students are speaking. Students' English should be carefully listened.
- e. Discourse should not be centered on the teacher.
- f. Rather than using commanding type of language, teachers should use polite and non-threatening language (e.g., *come on, yes you are right, good job, etc.*) so as to overcome the students' fear and hesitation.
- g. Students should be asked to examine the texts on their own rather than being told everything vividly.
- h. Students also have skills and talents. So, teachers must be sensitive to students, and recognise and polish the students' skills and talents.
- i. Teachers should create encouraging and interesting classroom atmosphere so that the initiation of conversation will be done by the students.
- j. Teachers should set classroom discourse in such a way that the students will feel empowered and emancipated.
- k. Students should be asked to make a judgment on their friends' utterance. The teacher should not intervene to correct the language, or to complete the students' utterance.
- l. Rather than providing the students with direct teaching, the students should be provided with stimulus for learning in order that direct teaching will be done by the students themselves through discussion and arguments.

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