

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

This unit deals with the general background of the study of ‘Teaching Communicative Functions through Participatory Approach.’ It is an attempt to explain and elaborate possible facets related to participatory approach, a brief account of language functions and short details of action research; a methodology through which this research is being carried out. Besides this, it covers the reviewed literature and also specifies the objectives and significance of the current research being carried out.

### **1.1 General Background**

Modernization has largely voided the validity of overtly structured approaches to language teaching. As time progresses and technology advances, the gaps between generations become shorter and drastic changes occur more quickly. The result of the changes brought about in second language teaching over the years is the emergence of communicative language teaching. The common belief among teachers is that the best way of learning second language is communicating in that language. Many researches done by practitioners and course designers have also shown that the opportunities to use language in meaningful situation increase the pace of acquiring second language. There are many methods and approaches advocated which focus on creating environment in which there is increased opportunities to use language. Harmer (1998) says, “Group activities have become one of the key tools in communicative language teachers’ toolboxes because groups provide so many opportunities for students to communicate and it provide a means of integrating all skills of language learning.”

Collaborative learning provides opportunity for real interpersonal interaction, highly increase the amount of talking for individual participants, and encourages broader skills of interaction and negotiation. The important asset is that it

promotes learners' autonomy to make their own decision in the group. Promoting self autonomy through interaction and negotiation in group means what Wallerstein (1983) says, "Empowering students to take action and to make decision in order to gain control over their lives" (as cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000, p. 150).

Despite these advantages there are many problems in group learning that includes members not participating, groups not getting along or learners unable to do the task. Sometimes teacher may be the reason for arising weakness, as he concerns only the knowledge of powerful group as a means of further subjugation.

In the context of Nepal, most of the EFL classes at secondary levels are made up of mixed ability group. Their communicative competence in English varies significantly. This heterogeneity creates a situation that challenges teachers, teaching materials and techniques consequently teachers as well as students are confronted by various problems associated with the promotion of active learning across all language levels.

Though the communicative methods are in practice widely in the latest decades, school level students' proficiency in the English language is not satisfactory. Despite new techniques and methods of teaching in practice, students are not adequately motivated in learning English the language in the classroom. What is the reason behind? Are the methods, approaches and techniques addressing the learners' needs?

One of the solutions of these problems may be addressing students' problems that they are encountered in their real life experiences; what Freire believed is that "education is meaningful to the extent that it engages learners in reflecting on their relationship to the world they live in and provides them with a means to shape their world" (Freire, 1987).

Our school curriculum reflects an experience that is unfamiliar/unrealistic structure. A formulated approach to teaching does not match the known realities that many students encountered each day. It can not account parental neglect, drug abuse, poverty, violence, racism, sexism or physical and emotional abuses. ESL textbooks have tendency to teach a language of survival and rarely “teach language that goes beyond identifying or accepting a situation - language that leads towards empowerment” (Wallerstein, 1983, p. 17).

An educator must make decision that accommodate the needs of his her own students. Existing thought in SLT methodology which operates the assumption that all people learn identically, has become one of the problems in language teaching. A method working well in one context can merely be transported to another and achieve similar results, undermining the facts that are multiple intelligences and individual variations.

“Participatory Approach addresses most of the problems of oppressed group, advocates the developments of students’ own social consciousness and intellectual freedom” (Greene, 1983, p. 169).

Hence, participatory approach can be a new possibility in improving the ongoing practices in Nepal.

### **1.1.1 Participatory Approach (PA)**

Although it originated in the early 1960s with the work of Paulo Freire, it was not started being widely discussed in the language teaching literature until the 1980s. Participatory approach in some way is similar to the content based approach in which meaningful content to the students is used in the beginning. Though what is strikingly different is the nature of content. It is not the content of subject matter texts, but content that is based on issues on concern to students (Larsen - Freeman, 2000, p. 150).

In the early 1960s, Freire developed a native language literacy programme for slum dwellers and peasants in Brazil. Freire engaged learners in dialogues about problems in their lives. These dialogues not only became the basis for literacy development, but also for reflection and action to improve students' lives (as cited in Larsen - Freeman, 2000). Freire believed that "education is meaningful to the extent that it engages learners in reflecting on their relationship to the world they live in and provides them with a means to shape their world" (as cited in Auernbache 1992).

Participatory approach is based on solving the learner's problems in real life using the target language as a tool for this purpose. Learners bring their outside problems into the class. Their problems are discussed among the students and teachers. There occurs an interaction between them. The teacher is not the authority but is a guide on this approach. She/he helps them to solve their problems and she /he shows some ways to them. She/he uses visuals to help them to understand the situation. Only the target language is used during the course.

The participatory approach offers the target language as a tool for survival skills and coping with the difficulties which the learners have encountered in their life experiences. The learners can make a change with their problems by communicating in the target language. According to Wallerstein (1983)

The goal of participatory approach is to help students to understand the social, historical, or cultural forces that affects their lives and then to help empower students to take action and make decision in order to gain control over their lives (as cited in Larsen-Freeman,2000, p. 150).

### **1.1.2 Basic Principles of Participatory Approach (PA)**

Larsen-Freeman (2000, p. 153), analyzing the experience and observations practiced under the students who are immigrant to the United States from Central Europe, points out following key principles of participatory approach:-

**Contextualization of the problem:** What happen in the classroom should be connected with what happens outside that has relevance to the students. The teacher listen for themes in what students say that will provide the content for future lessons.

**The curriculum is ongoing process:** The curriculum is not pre-determined product, but the result of an ongoing context-specific problem-posing process.

**Experience –Centered learning:** Education is most effective when it is experience centered, when it relates to students’ real needs. Students are motivated by their personal involvement.

**Learning through Collaborative Process:** When knowledge is jointly constructed, it becomes a tools to help students find voice and by finding their voices, students can act in the world.

**Focus on Linguistic forms and their corresponding functions occurs within a focus on content :** Language skills are taught in service of action for change, rather than in isolation. According to Auerbach (1992, p. 14) “Real communication, accompanied by appropriate feedback that subordinates form to the elaboration of meaning is key for language learning” (cited in Larsen-Freeman, 2000).

**Creative/Productive Learning:** Students can create their own materials, which in terns can become texts for other students.

**Self-pacing and Self-evaluation in learning:** A goal of the participatory approach is for students to be evaluating their own learning and to increasingly direct it themselves. In each lesson, students discuss what they have learnt in the class.

Thus, the language focus in the participatory approach is not established in advance. Rather it follows from content, which itself emerges from ongoing, collaborative investigations of critical themes in students lives (Larson -Freeman 2000, p. 154).

### **1.1.3 Classroom Procedure and Techniques in Participatory Approach**

There is no self formula, step-by-step method nor correct way to do participatory research. Rather, participatory methodology is best described as a set of principles and process of engagement in the inquiry. A good participatory research helps to develop relationship of solidarity by bringing people together to collectively research, study and then act.

Berlin (2005) suggests that teachers carry out his participatory approach in the ESL classroom through problem posing in three cyclical stages; (1) Naming, (2) Reflection and (3) Action. According to him, 'naming' materializes "thorough observation and recognition of a problem through discussions with students." 'Reflection,' on the other hand, "requires the situating of the problem in space and time and in relation to the individual and the larger society", and lastly, "action provide a means to redressing the problem" (p. 8).

Participatory approach is based on solving the learner's problems in real life using the target language as a tool. Learner's problems are discussed by involving all the participants and teacher. During the interactions teacher tries to relate the issue outside the world that may encountered in the learners' life experiences. Teacher practicing PA can use pictures, newspapers, magazines and television shows, movie etc for effective interaction and critical analysis of the posed problems. Giroux (1998) states that an instructor adopting a PA should not fear electronic media but embrace it. He further argues,

One should not only use nontraditional media to analyze, study and engage the dynamics of power within local, national and global cultural formation but combine media and developing intertextual genres that speak to new audiences while simultaneously creating new public strategies of engagement (p. 52).

In participatory approach (PA) the teacher aims at exposing target language to the learner through vast interaction about issues of concerns to the students. The content of the lesson is determined by learners' social, cultural and historical background. All types of interaction; teacher students, or student-student interaction is observed and students are highly motivated by their personal involvement. Teacher and participants try to connect language function that occurs inside classroom to their outside world. They emphasize all skills of language learning equally discouraging their native language and using only target language as a medium of communication and instruction. Often, self-evaluation takes place in PA, though, sometimes teacher evaluate students progress in ongoing process in the classroom without any formal tests. Errors are not corrected by teachers, rather self-correction is preferred. PA embraces discussion, debates and problem posed by the teacher as primary techniques in language teaching. The whole process aims at critical reflection of the problem and learning critical thinking in target language for making change (<http://www.iolpquerisi.com>, by Mustafa Barun; methods and techniques of PA to language teaching).

#### **1.1.4 Roles of Teacher and Students in Participatory Approach.**

A 'Participatory Approach' goes against the traditionally narrative classroom setting. Where a teacher spouts facts to be memorized turning students into 'containers' or 'receptacles' to be 'filled' (Freire, 1970, p. 58) students are not

inanimate objects that can simply be placed packed with things. Further he adds, traditional teachers are oppressive. The oppressive education is not concerned with the salvation of his/her students, nor their 'freedom'. His/her concerns is using the knowledge of powerful groups as a means of further subjugations.

According to Freire (1970) oppressive instructor tends to dislike the curious and stubborn students, since his or her frequent questioning disrupts the predicted structured lesson plan that was created, the lesson plan that merely assumed everyone would blindly swallow the days serving of facts. But the 'Participatory Approach' believes that teachers are no longer viewed as oppressor but a companion in the learning process (p.59).

In participatory approach to teaching and learning atmosphere become more relaxed and students feel as if they are not working to be graded by the abstract standards developed in the mind of teachers, but the standards developed through the brain storming of their own needs and objective. In a classroom utilizing a 'Participatory Approach' students are not motivated by whether or not they pleased or angered their teacher, but by whether they have made an effect to reach their intended goals. (Retrieved from: <http://www.homepage.mac.com/alqahtani.dot.mac/rethinking.html>.)

As Giroux (1998) states, the instructor is not merely a commander that ask questions, gives directions and assigns the homework, but an equal partner in learning. Some important roles of teachers in PA can be listed out as follows:

- a. Teacher just facilitates the learning process. Teacher is not an expert who is assumed to have all the knowledge and gives it to the pupils who are assumed not to have any knowledge.
- b. Teacher is an environment setter who sets up situations that allow people to discover for themselves what they already know along with gaining for themselves new knowledge.



- c. Teacher himself is participant in research process: he/she not only facilitates the learners but also engages in dialogue by posing problems, participate himself/herself in learning process.
- d. Teacher is a companion to the students in learning process: teacher should attempt to bridge cultural gap between students and teachers. It means they should take into account variables such as age, economic status, nationality, race place of residents and any other factors that may lead to misunderstanding or miscalculations on the instructors part. In other word teachers should stay in touch with their world as well as his own to facilitates a mutual exchange of information.

Role of students in participatory approach is that the students are active participants in learning process. In participatory approach the content of the lesson is determined by the learners social cultural and historical background. Therefore, students are motivated by their personal involvement. Students are involved in dialogue in group. Through dialogue, they come together and participate in all crucial aspects of investigation, education and collective action, hence, students are not only a participant but an active and creative social creature. According to Freire (1970),

The goal of PA to education is not simply to transfer facts in a one-way manner, but aid students in the development of critical thinking, teaching them not to simply accept, but to question the validity of any statement or argument (p.59).

Dialogue encourage people to voice their perspectives and experiences, helping them to look at the "whys" of their lives, inviting them to critically examine the sources and implications of their own knowledge that lead critical changes in them.

So, the students are active, creative participants and active social agents of changes.

### **1.1.5 Second Language Acquisition and Participatory Approach**

Krashen (1982) argues that simply language or language input is not enough for acquiring second language. What the learners need is 'Comprehensible input which is necessary condition for language acquisition. Comprehensible input means understandable importation of language by learners. Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in the target language, during which the acquires is focused on meaning rather than form. Perhaps some of the discussions amongst the students are not within comprehensible input at the "I + 1" level if their speaking/listening levels are not equal to their groups, this could raise their affective filters.

According to Krashen's affective filter hypothesis, learners' motivation, their attitude towards the language, self-confidence and anxiety play vital role of filter in the process of language input, which determines the amount of language input taken up by the learners. If the learners are highly motivated to learn language, having positive attitude towards the language that they are learning with high self confidence and low anxiety then the filter is low that allows more language input to the intake resulting good output or acquiring language. On the contrary, the role of the filter is high and the less input is received. These requirement for language acquisition is fulfilled in greater extent in participatory approach to language learning.

Participatory approach stresses the importance of creating participatory and democratic learning environment in which open, critical and democratic dialogue is fostered to develop greater self-confidence along with greater knowledge (Friere, 1978). The atmosphere in participatory approach to teaching language becomes more relaxed and students feel as if they are working to be graded by the abstract

standard developed through the brainstorming of their own needs and objectives. They are highly motivated in learning since they are involved in dialogue about their daily life experience issues.

Most of the supporters of PA advocate the development of students' own social consciousness and intellectual freedom. Language cannot truly be comprehended if it is simply memorized. Comprehension of information requires the learners to recreate it in terms of his/her consciousness in order to penetrate it, to experience it existentially and empathetically (Greene 1983, p. 169). PA highly relates it to learners' own experience and his/her own reality. It is through his/her personal recreation that one can discover deeper and more complex levels than the level of significant form.

Acquisition requires meaningful interaction in natural setting. PA generates negotiation contextualizing the classroom discussion and their real experience in external world. PA enable students learning how to think critically in target language that will give him/her the skill to be able to advocate himself/herself within the target language community, (Auerbach et al. 1992). It is significant for teachers to create a harmonious and relaxed classroom environment and reduce affective disorder by recreating learners and relating their experiences to their external world.

### **1.1.6 Language Functions**

Language function can be broadly classified as grammatical and communicative. Grammatical functions deals with the relationship that a constituent in a sentence has with another constituent. For example, in the sentence, 'Peter threw the ball', 'Peter' is the subject of the verb 'threw' and the 'ball' has the function of being the object of the verb. The scope of the present study does not cover grammatical functions. It mainly concerns with communicative functions. Communicative function of a language refers to the communicative goal for which a language is

used in community. Thus, communicative functions are what specific communicative need the language is used for in a community. The detail of communicative function is given below.

### **1.1.6.1 Communicative Functions**

Communicative function, in a social context, refers to the role that language plays in communication. For example, language is used to communicate ideas, to express attitude, to seek information, to ask something, to warn or threaten and so on.

Richards et al. (1999) define communicative functions of language as the “purpose for which an utterance or unit of language is used. In language teaching, language functions are often described as categories of behaviors, e.g. request apologies, complaints, offers, complements etc. (p.148). According to Ur.(2001, p. 149) "a function is some kind of communicative act: it is use of language to achieve a purpose usually involving interaction between at least two people, e.g. suggesting promising, apologizing, greeting etc.

Thus, communicative function refers to the way in which a language is used in a community. For example, “Good morning” is used for ‘greeting’: “I am very sorry” is used for apologizing; “Its going to rain” is used for predicting; “Have a good time” is used for expressing good wishes and so on. The functions such as ‘greeting’ ‘apologizing’, ‘predicting’ and expressing good wishes are communicative functions.

The functional use of language cannot be determined simply by grammatical structure of sentences but also the purpose for which they are used. Malinowsky (1923) believes that language is dependent on the society in which it is used, therefore it is not a self contained system but entirely context dependent. We use language to exchange our ideas, feelings, information etc among people in a

community. Social context and degree of formality in relation to speaker and listener determines the selection of code in communication. (cited in Bhandari, 2010, p.8).

Thus satisfying communicative needs among people is the communicative function of language. This concept is also reflected in the definition of language as “system of communication.” And “a vehicle for the sake of communication.”

There are various categories of communicative functions. Several applied linguists have classified it differently which have comforted teacher and syllabus designers in the field of language teaching and learning.

According to Wilkins (1983), “Language learning has concentrated much more on the use of language of report and describe than on doing things through language” (p.42). He has mentioned eight functions of language under the categories of communicative functions.

a. Judgment and evaluation

It is used for valuation, verdiction, approval and disapproval of something.

b. Suasion

This category of functions is used to affect other’s behavior. Persuading, commanding, predicting and allowing are a number of functions which fall in our daily life.

c. Argument

It is related to the exchange of information and views. Asking for information, agreeing, disagreeing, seeking conformation are some of the functions under this category.

d. Rational enquiry and exposition

It is concerned with the rational organization of the thought and speech. “Drawing conclusion, making conditions, comparing and contrasting, defining, explaining

reasons and purposes, conjecturing and verifying, inferring and implying are the very matter of communication...” (ibid 1983, p.52) .

e. Personal emotions

Expressing speaker’s emotional reaction to event and people comes under this category of function. Positive or Negative reaction of the speaker’s emotion is expressed here.

f. Emotional relations

It is expressing socializing functions; greeting, sympathy, gratitude, flattery and hostility

g. Interpersonal relation: politeness and status, degree of formality and informality.

In the same way, Van EK (1976, p. 37) distinguishes six functions of communication. They are:

a. Imparting and seeking factual information

Here comes identifying, reporting, correcting, asking as functions of communication. Corder’s (1973) ‘Referential’ and Halliday’s (1973) ‘Informative function’ are related to this.

b. Expressing and finding out intellectual attitudes

Expressing and inquiring about agreement and disagreement, accepting or invitation, expressing capability, expressing certainty of something, seeking permission are some of the functions. Wilkin’s (1983) ‘Argument function’ is related to this as both of them play similar role.

c. Expressing and finding out emotional attitudes

Expressing pleasure, displeasure, surprise, hope, intention, fear, sympathy are a number of functions used to find out and enquire somebody’s emotional states. ‘Emotional relation’ of Wilkin’s function matches much here.

d. Expressing and finding out moral attitudes

Apologizing, granting forgiving, inquiring about approval, expressing regret are some of the functions used to ask and tell about morality.

e. Getting things done

Suggesting, advising, warning, requesting, offering are the tools used to get things done by controlling somebody's behavior. Corder's 'Directive', Halliday's, 'Regulatory', Wilkins', 'Suasion are related to this one.

f. Socializing

Greeting, attracting, attention, introducing, proposing a toast, taking leave are the means used in society as survival tool. It is most essential function in our life. Corder's 'Phatic', Halliday's 'Interactional Function' are related to this function.

Likewise, Halliday (1973, as cited in Richards et al. 2002, p. 160) describes seven basic function that language performs for children learning their first language:

a. Instrumental functions (I want): Satisfy material needs.

It is the basic function used by children in course of their development.

b. Regulatory function (do as tell you): Controlling the behavior of others.

Speakers get somebody do something through this function. 'Directive function' of Corder (1973) matches here.

c. Interactional function ( me and you): getting along with other people.

it refers to the social interaction among people resembling with Corders (1973) 'phatic function.'

d. Personal function (here come I): Identifying and expressing the self.

It is used for ownself. It is related to Corder's (1973) 'personal function.'

e. Heuristic function (tell me why): exploring the world around and inside one.

Here, Enquiry about world is seeking with other and own self.

f. Imaginative function (let's pretend) : Creating a world of one's own.

When the language goes beyond physical existence, there comes imaginative function of language.

g. Informational function ( I have got something to tell you communicating new information.

Informing somebody about something falls under this function.

Corder (1973, p. 44) classifies communicative functions on the basis of the factors of a speech event, which are as follow:

- i. Personal: if the orientation is towards the speaker we have the personal function of language. It is through this function that the speaker reveals his attitude towards what he is speaking about.
- ii. Directive: if the orientation is toward the hearer we have the directive functions of language. It is the function of controlling the behavior of the participant.
- iii. Phatic: if the focus is on the contact between the participants we have the phatic function of language which establishes relations, maintains them, and promotes feeling of goodwill and feeling of social.
- iv. Referential: if the focus is on topic we have referential function of language.
- v. Metalinguistic: this function is associated with the code. When language is used to talk about language itself, it is metalinguistic function of language.
- vi. Imaginative: when the focus is on the message, we have the imaginative function of language.

The purpose of classifying the language function is to group the similar ones in a category. The same thing can be seen from different perspective and can be placed



in several groups depending to the way it is looked upon. Hence, it is all but natural for different linguists to have different systems of classification. Even though the terminologies given by several linguists are different, the classifications are more or less the same.

#### **1.1.6.2 Activities for Teaching Communicative Functions**

When we communicate, we use the language to accomplish some functions, such as arguing, persuading or promising. Moreover, we carry out these functions within a social context. A speaker will choose a particular way to express her/his level of emotion, but also to whom she/he is addressing and what her/his relationship with that person is. Since communication is a process, it is insufficient to simply have knowledge of target language forms, meaning and functions. Students must be able to apply his knowledge in negotiating meaning. It is possible through the interaction between speaker and listener. Participatory approach, since let the students be engaged in interaction using second language and highly motivated towards their daily life issue, can be appropriate in present scenario.

Some of the common activities that can be used for teaching communicative functions are as follows.

- Discussion: It is an effective activities for teaching communicative functions. It's goal focuses conversation involving either groups of students or the whole class and which usually involves interaction.
- Role play: It is a classroom activity which gives the students an opportunity to practice the language, the aspect of role behavior and actual roles they may need outside the classroom. It is simple and brief activity to organize in the classroom. It is highly flexible, iniative and imaginative. It helps students to bring outside classroom into classroom.

- Pair work: It is one of the important activities for teaching communicative functions. It is a management task for developing communicative ability. Pair work makes the students engage in interaction with each other.
- Group work: It is useful for teaching students in an interactive way. It is one of the important techniques to develop communicative aspect of language in students. It increase the amount of speaking of the students in the social milue.
- Describing pictures/maps: As the name itself suggests, it is the activities in which the students are encouraged to describe picture/map. It is helpful to develop communicative skills in the students.
- Dramatization: It encourages genuine communication and involves real emotions and use of body language. It stars with listening/speaking and can be specified to practice specific language aspects, e.g. grammar, lexical items, functions etc. It help to acquire meaningful fluent interaction in the target language.
- Guessing games: Guessing games are the games in which the students are encouraged to guess something/somebody by speaking. Therefore, it certainly enhances the communicative ability of the students.
- Telling a story: In this activity, the students tell the stories that they have heard or read. So it is an effective activity to develop communicative skills in students.
- Find the differences: It is an activity in which the students compare two or more things and tell the differences between or among them to their friends.
- Information gap: An information gap exists when one participant in an exchange knows something that the other participant does not. If both the participants know the information the exchange is not really communicative. So it is characteristic of any communicative activity.
- Project work: It is one of the important activities for teaching communicative functions communicatively. Since it emphasizes on group-

centered experiences, the students become cooperative with each other. Project work helps the students to gain practical knowledge of what they have learnt theoretically in the classroom.

- Interaction: Interaction is at core of communicative language teaching. It is very essential for teaching communicative functions. The more students interact with each other the more they learn. It helps the students to develop their communicative ability.
- Prepared talks: The ability to speak fluently is final outcome expected from the students. Speech can be fully communicative without any preparation but at the initial stage, the students can prepare it in advance and share it with others in the classroom. So, it helps to teach communicative functions effectively.
- Strip story: Strip story is a modified version of scrambled sentence technique. In it, a whole story is cut into different parts (small pieces), sometimes represented through pictures (picture strip story). Then the students are asked to unscramble the strips (pieces of sentences) to make a whole story. This technique makes students communicate a lot to complete a story. It involves a lot of discussion and interaction among students.

### **1.1.7 Research Design**

My research is based on action research procedure. Despite of many practices under ELT methods and techniques in teaching English classroom, I observed that students' achievement are not satisfactory. Students felt tough learning English and they felt English class less amusing. After long explanations and exercises students could speak a little much in an unusual way. I was worried with low progress of the students in the English class. Then, I tried to identify what the real problems was. I hypothesized that 'they were lacking proper exposures', they were not participated in interaction', they have not been participated in group work', and 'their real problems/issues have not been addressed by the teaching content' etc.

Among many approaches, methods and techniques of ELT, I thought participatory approach would maximally address these issues to solve the problems; 'how students could be able to communicate in the day to day life situations?' Then, I began to practice teaching through participatory learning approach following the action research procedure to carry out this research.

#### **1.1.7.1 Action Research**

Research is carried out at various levels of complexity. It may be a simple descriptive study to a complex and more generalizable investigation.

Action research is a new innovation in the field of research. It is propounded by Kurt Lewin (1946) in his seminal paper "Action research and minority problems" for the First time. It emerged to fulfill the gap between theoretical research and applied research. It is conducted by the practitioners to find out and solve the problems in the classroom as well as for the feedback of their actions. The essential impetus for carrying out an action research is to change the system. It is carried out in a cyclical process. The main aim of action research is to improve the current state of affairs within the educational context in which research is being carried out.

Corey (1953), a teacher at Columbia University was among the first to use action research in the field of education. He argues that "action research is a process in which practitioners study problem scientifically so that they can evaluate, improve and steer decision making and practice" (p.6, cited in Cohen et al. 2010). Corey believes that the value of action research is in the change that occurs in everyday practice rather than the generalization to a broader audience. He saw the need for teachers and researchers to work together.

In the same way, Nunan (1992) writes, "Especially action research is small scale intervention in the functioning of real world and a close examination of the effects

of such intervention." (p.9). It is carried out to improve or solve the immediate problems; it is collaborative in nature and always aims at changing themes or the existing situations.

Burns (1999) defines action research as the approach is only action research when it is collaborative, through it is important to realize that the action research of the group is achieved though the critically examined action of individual group member (p.13).

According to Best & Kahn (2008), Action research is focused on immediate application, not on the development of theory or an generalization of applications. It has placed it emphasis on a problem here and now at local setting. Its findings are to be evaluated in terms of local applicability, not universal validity (p.21).He further argues that the purpose of Action Research is to improve school practices and at the same time to improve those who try to improve the practices; to combine the research processes, habit of thinking, ability to work harmoniously with others, and professional spirit (ibid.).

Similarly, Norton (2009) believes, "the fundamental purposes of action research is to systematically investigate one's teaching learning facilitation practice, with the dual aim of improving that practice and contributing to theoretical knowledge in order to benefit students learning" (p.59).

Action research in the educational context is considered as rewarding process the addresses the ability of teachers to carefully examine their own feelings and thoughts that underlie their action. It also aims to empower all participants by developing their awareness of all obstructive elements within a particular context as well as personal constraints that present real change (Kumar, 1999).

On the basis of above definitions, we can say that action research is emerged to fulfill gap between theory and practice. It is practical and carried out by the

practitioners. It is concerned with the identification and solution of the problems in a specific context and the aim of action research is to improve the current state of affairs specially at school's classroom setting.

### **1.1.7.1 Process of Action Research**

Action research is characterized as a cyclical process. Susman (1983) has distinguished five phases to be conducted within each research cycle. According to him, initially; a problem is identified and data is collected for a more detail diagnosis This is fallowed by a collective postulation of several possible solutions, from which a single plan of action emerges and is implemented. Data on the result of the intervention are collected and analyzed and findings are interpreted in the light of how successful the action has been. At this point, the process continues until the problem is resolved. This process can be shown as follows:

Steps of action research

(Retrived from: An overview of methodological approach of Actioon Research.  
<http://ww.web.ca/~robrien/papers/arfinal.htm/>(Accessed 20/1/2002).

Norton (2009) has proposed simple five-step process of action research as follows:

Step 1: Identifying a problem

Step 2: Thinking of ways to tackle the problem

Step 3: Doing it

Step 4: Evaluating it (actual research findings)

Step 5: Modifying future practices ( p. 70)

As suggested by Nunan (1992, p. 19), the stages of action research are:

Step 1: Initiation

In the first step, the researcher or practitioner outline a problem of classroom teaching. S/he observes the problems of the students in brief. It is a starting point of action research. Here, researcher gains knowledge by reading books and article.

Step 2: Preliminary investigation

In this step, data is collected through the closer inspection of situation. So the researcher collect the concrete information about the problem which is going on in the classroom. S/he collects the data through detailed observation. For example, actual classroom setting is taken to collect data.

Step 3: Hypothesis

In the third step, assumptions are forms based on the data collection from observation. In other words, the researcher forms hypothesis of the research.

Step 4: Intervention

Now, the teacher comes up with a new strategy in teaching by intervening current system. The researcher interrupts regular ongoing classroom activities and introduces a new treatment to bring change in the current state of affairs.

Step 5: Evaluation

In this step, the researcher evaluates whether the students behaviour is improved before and after the treatment and intervention.

### Step 6: Dissemination

After evaluating the students' behaviour the researcher presents his/her findings of research in a workshop or at conference. The researcher shares the ideas about the findings of the study by presenting paper at the language conference.

### Step 7: Follow up

The teacher goes on finding out other strategies. The findings of the research are followed up by practitioners. They adopt new ideas to change their teaching learning activities.

In the same way, Richards (2010) has stated the following procedures of action research:

- Planning
- Action
- Observation
- Reflection

The teacher (or a group of teachers):

Selects an issue or concern to examine in more detail (e.g. the teacher's use of question)

- Selects a suitable procedure for collecting information about the issue ( e.g., recording classroom lessons)
- Collects the information, analyzes it, and decides what change might be necessary in his or her teaching.
- Develops an action plan to help bring about the desired change in classroom behavior (e.g., a plan to reduce the frequency with which the teacher answers questions)



- Observes the effects of the plan on teaching behavior (e.g., by recording a lesson and analyzing the teacher's questioning behavior) and reflects on its significance.

Initiates a second action cycle, if necessary. (p.175)

On the basis of the above mentioned steps of action research, we conclude initiation, preliminary investigation, hypothesis, intervention, evaluation, dissemination and follow up are some defining processes of action research.

### **1.1.7.2 Characteristics of Action Research**

Action research is carried out to bring changes in the existing situation. It is mostly carried out by the practitioners to improve their current practices and to find out the solution for their immediate classroom problems. Many scholars have defined action research in different ways. They have no any uniform definition of action research and thus the characteristics, to some extent, vary from one to another definition. Although action research is becoming very significant in language education, it has been defined in a number of ways.

Kember (2002) has listed seven major characteristics of action research. They are as follow:

- Social practice
- Aimed towards improvement
- Cyclical
- Systematic enquiry
- Reflective
- Participative
- Determined by the practitioners (as cited in Norton, 2009, p.54-56)

In the same way, according to Mckernan (1991), characteristics of action research are:

- It is collaborative
- Seeks to understand particular complex social situations.
- Seeks to understand the process of change with in social systems.
- Makes for practical problem solving action as work as expanding scientific knowledge.
- Focuses on those problems that are of immediate concern to practitioners.
- It is participatory.
- Uses feedback from data in an ongoing cyclical process.
- It includes evaluation and reflection. (as cited in Cohen et al, 2007, p.299)

According to Richards (2010) , Action research has the following characteristics:

- Its primary goal is to improve teaching and learning in schools and classrooms and it is conducted during the process of regular classroom teaching.
- It is usually small-scale and is intended to help resolve problems rather than simply be research for its own sake.
- It can be carried out by an individual teacher or in collaboration with other teacher. (p.171)

On the basis of the above mentioned characteristics, we can state some characteristics of action research as follows:

- It is carried out by the practitioners.
- It is collaborative.
- It aims at bringing change.
- It is practical.
- It has a participatory nature.
- It is a cyclical process.

## **1.2 Review of Related Literature**

A number of research studies directly or indirectly related to teaching communicative functions have been carried out in the department of English education. Some of them are as follows:

Pokhrel (1999) carried out a research entitled 'Teaching Communicative functions, inductively and deductively: A practical study' to find out which strategy inductive or deductive is better to teach language functions. The findings showed that inductive strategy remained more effective in teaching, communicative functions. But the whole findings revealed that it was not satisfactory enough.

Dahal (2003) researched on "Students' proficiency in expressing communicative functions, aiming to find out students proficiency in expressing communicative functions. The study resulted that the students proficiency was not satisfactory.

Sharma (2000) carried out a research to find out the 'effectiveness of role play technique in teaching communicative function. The study showed that students assigned to play roles inside the classroom could do better in communicative functions than those who were not assigned to. Similarly Sapkota (2004) carried out a research entitled 'A study on the proficiency in the communicative functions and their exponents; A comparative study. He wanted to find out the proficiency of the SLC level students in the use of communicative functions and to make a comparison of the achievement of the students belonging to different schools. The study found out the students' proficiency in English language communicative functions not to be satisfactory.

Bhandari (2005) conducted a research on 'The effectiveness of pair work and group work techniques by comparing each other in teaching communicative functions.' It was found that pair work was more effective than group work in teaching communicative functions of English language.

Ghimire (2007) Carried out a research entitled 'A study on PCL English second year students' proficiency in communicative functions in English.' The objective of the study was to find out students communicative functions ability. The researcher selected 120 students from four different campuses of Kathmandu valley by using stratified sampling. The finding was that students were better in producing appropriate expression of language functions on their own than that of the text.

Timsina (2009) carried out a research on 'Communicative functions used by the instructors' to find out whether they used different communicative functions in verities of situations or frequent use of some particular exponents. The finding showed that they don't use all exponents of communicative functions but functions such as; 'socializing' and 'imparting factual information' were frequently used. He found insufficient knowledge of language and linguistics and their use in diversified context.

Kafle (2010) carried out a research on 'Developing functional Competence in learners in ELT classes.' The objectives of the study was to find out student's development in the ability to use English language functions. The result showed that students performance was marginally increased through the use of, discussion, pair-work and group work techniques while teaching English language function.

Paudel (2008) carried out a practical research on the title of 'teaching of communicative functions; an analysis of classroom activities.' The objectives of the study were to find out the classroom activities conducted by the teacher in teaching communicative functions and problems encountered by them while teaching communicative functions. The findings was that discussing, pair work, role play and group work were the commonly used activities and the hesitation of the students to speak, lack of adequate exposer to the students, teacher as an authority in the classroom, use of mother tongue in the classroom and lack of

required physical facilities were the major problem encountered by the teacher in the teaching communicative functions.

The present research is different from the researches that have been carried out till the date in the field of second language teaching in the sense that it tries to develop students' and teachers' abilities to solve the problem arisen in language classes for enhancing teaching learning communicative functions after the implementations of participatory learning approach, i.e. 'learn to act and act for change.'

### **1.3 Objective of the Study**

- i. To find out effectiveness of participatory approach in teaching communicative functions.
- i. To point out some pedagogical implications.

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

As this study aims at establishing the degree of effectiveness of the PA, it will certainly arise a new interest among experts, curriculum developers, practitioners, teachers and even the university students who are going to pursue their career in teaching. It will offer another option for dealing with the challenges created by heterogeneous class of students in teaching communicative functions. This approach, since employs the discussion, debates and problems posed techniques, is a student centered communicative approach to teaching language. Therefore, it is supposed to benefit both the teacher and the students by providing them opportunity to take advantages of each other's expertise and strength.

As the study provides information on implementing PA in teaching communicative function in the classroom, it will indeed encourage the English language teachers to implement PA in teaching communicative functions. It will encourage syllabus designers to design English language syllabus including PA as one of the instructional techniques. Similarly textbooks writers will equally be benefited while devising activities for communicative function teaching and learning.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This chapter briefly describes the methods and procedures adopted to carry out this study. The population, sampling procedures, research tools and their preparation, administration and other procedures are described below:

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

I used both primary and secondary sources of data. The primary sources were used for collecting the data and secondary sources were used to facilitate the study.

##### **2.1.1 Primary Sources**

The primary data were elicited from the students of grade nine of Shree Jana Jalpa Secondary School, Basaha; Udayapur by administering pre-test, three progress tests and post-test.

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

For the necessary theoretical backup, I consulted books, journals, theses and materials available in the internet. The detailed list is given on the reference section. Some of them are, Larsen-Freeman (2007), Cohen et al. (2010), Richards, (2010), Kumar (1999), Bhandari (2010), Norton (2009), Nunan (1993), Richards and Rodgers (2001), and English text book of grade nine.

#### **2.2 Population of the Study**

The population of my study comprised of the students of grade IX of a school of Udayapur district. Forty students of Jana Jalpa Secondary School were selected for sample of the study.

### **2.3 Sampling Procedure**

To meet the needs and purpose of the study Shree Jana Jalpa Secondary School was selected through judgmental, non-random sampling procedure. All the students of grade nine of section 'A' were taken as the sample of the study. So the students were purposively selected.

### **2.4 Tools for Data Collection**

The tools I used to elicit the data include a pre-test, three progress tests and a post-test. The pre-test and post test consisted of the same items where as progress tests consisted of the test items related to how lessons were in progress. Regarding the structure and marking scheme pre-test and post-test were designed with seven categories of items which altogether consisted of 50 full marks in written mode and 30 full marks in spoken mode of test. Likewise, each of progress tests carries twenty full marks.

### **2.5 Process of Data Collection**

I followed the steps below for the collection of data.

- a. First of all, I visited the school's head teacher and established rapport with him. I explained the purpose of my study and asked for this permission to carry out my research on grade nine students for a month.
- b. With the permission from the head, I talked to the subject teacher for necessary assistance.
- c. Then I went to the class for preliminary investigation. I introduced and interacted with the students and realized that they could very hardly take part in the conversation.

- d. After that, I sorted out communicative functions from their English text book and prepared pre-test to determine their current level of proficiency in using communicative functions pre-test consisted of both written and spoken mode of test.
- e. I administered pre-test and analyzed the data collected from their individual scores. It showed that students proficiency level was very poor.
- f. The, I selected participatory approach for teaching communicative functions and planned some lessons and taught them accordingly for a week.
- g. After that, I prepared the first progress test from the taught topics and administered it to observe if the students were making progress through the intervention. I analyzed the data collected from their individual scores. It was found that students made remarkable progress this time.
- h. Then, again I studied the areas to be improved from the reflection of these tests and continued further teaching through improved lesson plans. In this way, the second and third progress tests were administered during the teaching, and finally post-test was administered to assess their improvements.
- i. Finally, I analyzed and compared individual scores on the pre-test, progress tests and post-test.

## **2.6 Limitation of the study**

It was obviously impossible to include a large area in this kind of small research because of limit time and resources. So, I was bounded to limit the study with in a selected area. This study consisted of the following limitations:

- a. The study was limited to teaching communicative functions of English



- b. It was limited to participatory approach to learning language only.
- c. It was limited to a school called Shree Jana Jalpa Secondary School, Basaha (public) of Undayapur district
- d. The population of this study included only IX grade students.
- e. The findings were based on the result of the experiment forty-sample size only.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION**

This section deals with the analysis and interpretation of the data collected from the primary sources. The primary sources of data were obtained through pre-test, three progress tests and a post-test. The primary sources were the students of grade nine. Shree Jana Jalpa Secondary school, Basaha, Udayapur district. At first pre-test was administered through both written and spoken mode and score were recorded. Then twenty classes were practiced through participatory approach using its various techniques (i.e. discussion, problem-posing, debate, group works and pair works). The First progress test, second and third progress tests were administered after each five teaching classes. At last, a post-test was conducted and individual scores were recorded. The recorded performance of students is analyzed from different perspectives to find out the effectiveness of participatory approach in teaching language functions.

In this chapter, I have tabulated, analyzed and interpreted the data in the following way:

- i. Analysis and interpretation of the data based on different test results.
- ii. Comparative analysis of those data.

#### **3.1 Analysis and Interpretation of the Data Obtained through different Test Result**

This section consists of the analysis of the scores of the students on the pre-test, first, second and third progress tests and post-test.

### **3.1.1 Analysis and Interpretation of Pre-Test Score**

Before I started teaching, I administered a set of oral test and another set of written test to determine the students' proficiency in communicative functions of English at present. The written test carried 50 full mark and spoken test carried 30 full mark. Tests items consisted of multiple choice, fill in the blank, matching, completing broken dialogue and creating short dialogues. Oral test consisted of various situations in which they had to response. Most of the students hesitated to response. About 30 per cent age students did not response. Some of them seemed not understanding the situations. Even getting the situations, they seemed not having ideas what to say in these situations, e.g. they responded; "Sorry sir", "aaena sir", "Feri Sir" (asking to repeat even using Nepali terms) Only few students respond some of the questions (not all) very difficultly with frequent pauses and repetitions, and even with an unusual pronunciation.

In a situation, in which they had to make suggestion to their friend who is suffering from toothache, they responded as; "take medicine", "go hospital", take rest", "say to sir" directly in command form. It seemed that they lack ideas as to how to make suggestions'. Among the respondents, most of them responded 'please give me money' and 'may I come in sir?' almost appropriately. It may be because these exponents they have been using commonly in their daily life, though students responded these, very nervously and haltingly. The scores of the students on pre-test were obtained as follows:

**Table No. 1**

**Individual Scores on the Pre-Test (Written mode)**

S.N.	FM	Score (X)	Per cent age	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	50	28	56	1	2.5
2.	50	25	50	1	2.5
3.	50	23	46	2	5
4.	50	20	40	1	2.5
5.	50	19	38	2	5
6.	50	18	36	2	5
7.	50	15	30	1	2.5
8.	50	12	24	1	2.5
9.	50	11	22	3	7.5
10.	50	10	20	3	7.5
11.	50	9	18	7	17.5
12.	50	8	16	4	10
13.	50	7	14	3	7.5
14.	50	6	12	3	7.5
15.	50	5	10	5	12.5
16.	50	2	4	1	2.5
Total	800	$\Sigma fx=444$	22.2	40	100
Average score 11.1(23%)					

As the table shows, the students score is highly distributed in between 4 per cent to 56 per cent . Fifty-six per cent mark is the highest score which is obtained by 2.5 per cent students and 4 per cent is the lowest score obtained by 2.5 per cent students. The average score is 11.1 out of 50 which is about 23 per cent of the full mark. Around 27.5 per cent students are above the average and the large number of students i.e. around 72.5 per cent are under the average.

It clearly shows that the class consists of mixed ability group. Some of them are very poor in using language function and some of them are medium. Their

average score is very low (i.e. 23 per cent ) and again a large number of students (i.e. 72.5 per cent ) are under average ability. It is very low level of proficiency in language functions.

**Table No. 2**  
**Individual Scores on Pre-Test (Oral-mode)**

S.N.	F.M	Score (x)	Per cent age	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	30	15	50	3	7.5
2.	30	12.5	41.6	3	7.5
3.	30	10	33.3	1	2.5
4.	30	7.5	25	5	12.5
5.	30	5	16.6	6	15
6.	30	2.5	8.3	10	25
7.	30	no response	-	12	30
Total	210	$\Sigma fx=185$	15.41	40	100
Average score: 4.6 (16%)					

The above table presents that the students' score in spoken mode of pre-test is distributed from 8.5 per cent to 50 per cent which is the response of only 70 per cent students whereas 30 per cent students did not response. Seven and a half per cent students scored 50 per cent which is the highest score and 25 per cent students scored 8.3 per cent which is the lowest score obtained by the students.

The average score is 4.6 out of 30 around 16 per cent of the full mark. Around 45 per cent students scored above the average and 25 per cent students have scored below the average. 30 per cent students did not response.

From the above analysis of the students' score, I found that students were very poor in using communicative functions of English. They seemed as if they did not know how to make suggestion, requests, apologize ... and so on. They were

lacking with the ideas of using exponents in appropriate situations. Besides these, they were lacking of practice in speaking, and they were not properly exposed to English in their classes, too. To minimize these short-comings I planned some lessons and taught for a week. In my lesson plan, I attempted to engage them in interactions, problem posing and group discussions, exposed them dialogue in various situations, got them to study and discuss these dialogues, and again get them to practice similar dialogues in other similar situations in pairs, and small groups. Finally, I got them to review themselves the whole classroom activities and their learning achievements.

### 3.1.2 First Progress Test Scores

After the interval of the first five classes, I administered the first progress test to get an insight into the effectiveness of the intervention i.e. teaching through participatory approach. The aim was to find out how the classes were in progress and what further improvement in teaching strategy was necessary. The score obtained from the first progress test is presented below:

**Table No. 3**

**Individual Scores on the First Pre-Test (Written)**

S.N	F.M.	Score (x)	Per cent	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	20	18	90	5	12.5
2.	20	17	85	7	17.5
3.	20	16	80	13	30
4.	20	15	75	6	15
5.	20	14	70	6	15
6.	20	13	65	3	7.5
Total	140	$\Sigma fx=634$	79.25	40	100
Average score: 15.85 (80%)					

As the above table shows, 12.5 per cent students have scored 90 per cent and 7.5 per cent have scored 65 per cent of 20 full mark. The average score is 15.8 out of

20 which is 80 per cent of the full mark. Around 62.5 per cent students have scored above the average and 37.5 per cent have scored below the average.

The presented data clearly shows that students are still heterogeneously developing their learning ability since the score is distributed 65 per cent to 90 per cent. But the role of intervention seems more effective. The progress that students have made is satisfactory.

**Table No. 4**  
**Individual Score on the First Per-Test (Spoken mode)**

S.N	F.M.	Score (x)	Per cent	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	20	17.5	87.5	3	7.5
2.	20	15	75	5	12.5
3.	20	12.5	62.5	10	25
4.	20	10	50	20	50
5.	20	7.5	37.5	2	5
Total	100	$\Sigma fx=467.5$	85.43	40	100
Average score: 11.6 (60%)					

The table shows that the scores in spoken test of first progress test vary from 37.5 per cent the 87.5 per cent of 20 full mark. Seven and a half per cent students scored 87.5 per cent which is highest score and 5 per cent students have scored 37.5 per cent of full mark. The average score is 11.6 out of 20 which is 60 per cent score. Forty-five per cent students have scored above the average and 55 per cent students have scored below the average score.

It clearly shows that the intervention is effective satisfactorily. All the students have attempted to response. This active participation of the students shows that they are now encouraged. The score that they obtained in this test is remarkably in the way to progression. But some students are still poor and hesitating to speak.

Though the average score is good (i.e. 60 per cent ) larger no. of students (i.e. 55 per cent ) are still below the average level of proficiency.

Comparing the first progressive test with pre-test, students have made progress. All the students participated in the spoken mode of the first progress test but 30 per cent students had not responded to the pre-test. The highest score in pre-test was 56 per cent and 50 per cent in written and spoken respectively whereas 90 per cent and 87.5 per cent in the first progress test. The average score in pre-test was 23 per cent and 16 per cent respectively in written and spoken whereas 80 per cent and 60 per cent in the first progress test. Therefore, average score in the first progress test is 67 per cent and 54 per cent greater than pre-test, i.e. almost more than 3.5 times greater than that of pre-test.

### 3.1.3 Second Progress Test Score

After teaching 10 class days, again another progress test was administered. The scores of the students on second progress test were recorded and tabulated as follows:

**Table No. 5**

**Individual score on Second Progress Test (Written mode)**

S.N	F.M.	Score (x)	Per cent	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	20	19	95	2	5
2.	20	18	90	11	27.5
3.	20	17	85	12	30
4.	20	16	80	4	10
5.	20	15	75	10	25
6.	20	14	70	1	2.5
Total	120	$\Sigma fx=668$	83.5	40	100
Average score: 16.7 (82%)					



As the table shows, the score in this test is distributed from 70 per cent to 95 per cent of 20 full mark. Ninety-five per cent is the highest score which is obtained by 5 per cent of the students and 70 per cent is the lowest score that is obtained by 2.5 per cent students. The average score is 16.2 out of 20 which is 82 per cent of the full mark. Sixty-two point five per cent students have scored above the average score.

In this test, the existing heterogeneity in learning ability seems to be lessened. In comparison to the first progress test average score is increased by 2 per cent. The highest mark in this test and the lowest mark have been increased by 5 per cent (i.e. 95 per cent). Therefore, the intervention is in the way to further progress.

**Table No. 6**

**Individual Score on Second Progress Test (Spoken mode)**

S.N	F.M.	Score (x)	Per cent	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	20	20	100	1	2.5
2.	20	17.5	87.5	6	15
3.	20	15	75	15	37.5
4.	20	12.5	62.5	12	30
5.	20	10	50	6	15
Total	100	$\Sigma fx=560$	70	40	100
Average score: 14 (70%)					

The above table shows that the highest score is 100 per cent of 20 full mark, and scored by 2.5 per cent of the students. Similarly, 50 per cent is the lowest score, and scored by 15 per cent of the students. The average score is 14 out of 20 which is 70 per cent of the full mark. Around 55 per cent of the students have scored above the average score.

In comparison to the first progress test this test has presented satisfactory effectiveness of the intervention. The average score is increased by 10 per cent

(i.e. 70 per cent ) and the lowest score has also been increased from 37.5 per cent to 50 per cent . Similarly, in the first progress test only 45 per cent of the students had scored above the average whereas it is increased by 10 per cent (i.e. 55 per cent ) in the second progress test. This fact shows the effectiveness of teaching through participatory approach.

### 3.1.4 Third Progress Test Scores

The third progress test was administrated after the completion of 15 periods and almost all the selected language functions were discussed and practiced in the classes. the scores on the third progress test were recorded and tabulated as follows:

**Table No. 7**

**Individual Score on Third Progress Test (Written mode)**

S.N.	F.M	Score (x)	Per cent age	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	20	20	100	1	2.5
2.	20	19	95	7	17.5
3.	20	18	90	6	15
4.	20	17	85	7	17.5
5.	20	16	80	10	25
6.	20	15	75	6	15
7.	20	14	70	2	5
8.	20	13	65	1	2.5
Total	160	$\Sigma fx=671$	83.87	40	100
Average score: 16.7 (84%)					

As the table shows, 80 per cent marks is obtained by 25 per cent of the students. The highest score is 20 out of 20 i.e. 100 per cent marks is obtained by 2.5 per cent of the students and the lowest marks is 13 out of 20 which is 65 per cent of

the full mark obtained by 2.5 per cent of the students. The average score is 16.78 i.e. almost 84 per cent of the full marks. Only 35 per cent of the students scored above the average score.

In comparison to the first and second tests, this time scores were distributed more heterogeneously (i.e. 65 per cent to 100 per cent ) but the average score has been increasing continuously. The overall performance exhibited in the students, score have again shown the significant evidence supporting the effectiveness of participatory approach.

**Table No. 8**

**Individual Score on Third Progress Test (Spoken Mode)**

S.N	F.M.	Score (x)	Per cent	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	20	20	100	7	17.5
2.	20	17.5	87.5	12	30
3.	20	15	75	14	35
4.	20	12.5	62.5	6	15
5.	20	10	50	1	2.5
Total	100	$\Sigma fx=645$	80.62	40	100
Average score: 16 (80%)					

The above table shows, the largest number of students, i.e. 35 per cent have scored 75 per cent score of 20 full mark in spoken mode of the test. The marks were distributed again in between 50 per cent to 100 per cent . Seventeen per cent of the students scored 100 per cent and only 2.5 per cent of the students scored the lowest score i.e. 50 per cent. The average score is 16 out of 20 which is 80 per cent of the full mark. Forty-seven point five per cent of the students scored above the average in the test.

This fact shows that students are progressing very satisfactorily. In comparison to the former progress test the average score in this time increased by 10 per cent (i.e. 60 per cent -70 per cent - 80 per cent ) each time. This shows students progress in speaking is more systematically developing.

### 3.1.5 Post-Test

After the completion of 20 lessons and three progress tests, I administered the very same test items, of pre-test as post-test. Individual scores on the post-test is presented as follows:

**Table No. 9**  
**Individual Score on Post-Test (Written mode)**

S.N.	F.M	Score (x)	Per cent age	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	50	48	96	2	5
2.	50	45	90	5	12.5
3.	50	43	86	1	2.5
4.	50	41	82	2	5
5.	50	40	80	4	10
6.	50	39	78	3	7.5
7.	50	37	74	2	5
8.	50	36	72	6	17.5
9.	50	35	70	7	15
10.	50	34	68	3	7.5
11.	50	32	64	2	5
12.	50	30	60	3	7.5
Total	600	$\Sigma fx=1514$	75.7	40	100
Average score: 37.85 (75%)					

Close observation of the above table reveals the fact that 96 per cent of full mark is the highest score obtained by 5 per cent of the students. Sixty per cent of full mark is the lowest score obtained by 7.5 per cent of the students. As the table shows, 75 per cent is the average score and 42.5 per cent of the students are above the average score.

In comparison to the marks in pre-test, the post test-marks show the remarkable development of communicative proficiency in the students. In the pre-test, the scores were distributed around the average score 11.1 (i.e. 23 per cent ) out of 50 full mark with 56 per cent as the highest score and 4 per cent as the lowest score. However, in the post test the scores were distributed around the average score 37.85 (i.e. 75 per cent age) out of full mark 96 per cent as the highest score and 60 per cent as the lowest score. The average score in post-test in written mode was above 3 times greater than that of pre-test.

**Table No. 10**

**Individual Score on Post-Test (Spoken mode)**

S.N.	F.M	Score (x)	Per cent age	No. of students (f)	Per cent age
1.	30	30	100	1	2.5
2.	30	27.5	91.6	6	15
3.	30	25	83.3	11	27.5
4.	30	22.5	75	7	17.5
5.	30	20	66.6	11	27.5
6.	30	17.5	58.3	4	10
Total	180	$\Sigma fx=917$	76.41	40	100
Average score: 23 (75.5%)					

The above table shows that the scores were distributed around the average score of 23 out of 30 full mark (i.e. 75.5 per cent ) with 100 per cent as highest score and 58.3 per cent as the lowest score. Two point and five per cent of the students scored 100 per cent and 10 per cent of the students scored 58.3 per cent score. 62.5 per cent of the students score above the average.

In comparison to the pre-test of spoken mode, the post-test marks shows dramatically satisfactory result. In the pre-test the scores were distributed around

the average score 16 per cent of the full mark with 50 per cent as the highest score and 8.3 per cent as the lowest score, and again 30 per cent of the students had not responded. Whereas the post-test the scores were distributed around the average score 75.5 per cent with 100 per cent highest and 58.3 per cent lowest score. All the students respond to functions this time. The average score in this test in spoken mode is 4.75 times greater than that of the pre-test.

This remarkable progress in developing level of proficiency in the English language functions is the result of participatory approach in teaching language functions. In comparison to written tests and spoken tests, students have scored more systematically in spoken mode of tests than that of the written test. The students scores distribution have been lessened in the post-test which claims that students' heterogeneity in speaking ability is lessened. Therefore, it can be claimed that participatory approach is effective to teaching communicative functions.

### **3.2 Comparative Analysis of the Data Obtained through Test Results**

This section comprises the holistic comparison and analysis of different tests scores.

#### **3.2.1 Comparative analysis of the Pre-Test and the first Progress Test**

The comparison between the pre-test score and first progress test score is presented as follows:

**Table No. 11**  
**Comparison of the Pre-Test and First Progress Test Score**

Mode	Pretest			First progress test			D	D%
	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age		
Written	40	444	22.2	40	634	79.25	190	42.7
Spoken	40	185	15.41	40	467.5	58.43	282.5	23.54

(Note: The above table, 'D' refers to the difference between pre-test and first progress test and , D% refers to the difference in per cent age of two tests to calculate 'D%' 'D' is divided by pre-test score and multiplied by 100)

The above table shows that the total score of the pre-test under written mode of exam is 444 i.e. 22.2 per cent , It is increased by 190 i.e. 42.7 per cent in the first progress test in comparison to the pre-test. Similarly, the total score of the pre-test under spoken mode is 185 i.e. 15.41 per cent and it is increased by 282.5 i.e. 23.54 per cent age in first progressive test. From this fact we can claim that the role of intervention is effective.

### **3.2.2 Comparative Analysis of First Progress Test and the Second Progress Test**

The scores of the first progress and second progress test are compared and analyzed as follows:

**Table No. 12**  
**Comparison of First Progress Test and Second Progress Test**

Mode	First progress test			Second progress test			D	D%
	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age		
Written	40	634	79.25	40	668	83.5	34	5.36
Spoken	40	467.5	58.43	40	560	70	92.3	19.78

As the above table shows, the total scores of first test in written mode is 634, i.e. 79.25 per cent and it is increased in the second progress test by 34 i.e. 5.36 per cent . Similarly, 467.5 i.e. 58.43 per cent of score is obtained in total in the spoken mode of the first progress test and it is increased by 92.3 i.e. 19.78 per cent reaching 560 i.e. 70 per cent in the second progress test. The students progress is

increasing further. It shows the effectiveness of using participatory approach to teaching language functions.

### **3.2.3 Comparative Analysis of second Progress test and the Third Progress Test**

The score of the second progress test and the third progress test are compared and analyzed as follows:

**Table No. 13**

**Comparison of the Second Progress Test and Third Progress Test**

Mode	Second progress test			Third progress test			D	D%
	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age		
Written	40	668	83.5	40	671	83.87	3	0.44
Spoken	40	560	70	40	645	80.62	85	15.17

As the table shows, the total score of the second progress test in written mode is 668 i.e. 83.5 per cent and it increased by 3 i.e. 0.44 per cent reaching 671 i.e. 83.87 per cent in the third progress test. Similarly, 560 i.e. 70 per cent of score is obtained in total in the spoken mode of second progress test and it increased by 85 i.e. 15.17 per cent reaching 645 i.e. 80.62 per cent in the third progress test.

Again the progress is continuously being made by the students. The progress is satisfactory. In comparison to written mode of test, spoken mode of test score increased in greater rate.

### **3.2.4 Comparative Analysis of Third Progress Test and First Progress test**

The score of second progress test and third progress test are compared and analyzed as follows:



**Table No 14**

**Comparison of the First Progress Test and Third Progress Test**

Mode	First progress test			Third progress test			D	D%
	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age		
Written	40	634	79.25	40	671	83.87	37	5.83
Spoken	40	467.5	85.43	40	645	80.62	177.5	37.96

The above table clearly shows that the total score of the first progress test in written mode of exam is 634 i.e. 79.25 per cent and it is increased by 37 i.e. 5.83 per cent reaching 671 i.e. 83.87 per cent in the third progress test similarly, under spoken mode, the total score of the first progress test is 467.5 i.e. 312.5 per cent and it increased by 177.5 i.e. 37.96 per cent reaching 645. i.e. 80.62 per cent in the third progress test . In comparison to written test score, students' scores under spoken test is again remarkably increased in higher rate. This remarkable progress is obviously because of the practiced techniques and methods of participatory approach in teaching English language functions.

**3.2.5 Comparative Analysis of Third Progress test and the Post-test**

The score of the third progress test and post-test are compared and analyzed as follows:

**Table No. 15**

**Comparison of Third Progress test and the Post-test**

Mode	Third Progress test			Post-test			D	D%
	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age		
Written	40	671	83.87	40	1514	75.7	843	42.15
Spoken	40	645	80.62	40	9175	76.41	272.5	22.7

According to the above table, the total score under written mode in third progress test is 671 i.e. 83.87 per cent, and it increased by 843 i.e. 42.15 per cent in the post test similarly, 645 i.e. 80.62 per cent is the total scores under spoken mode in third progress test and, it increased by 272.5 i.e. 22.7 per cent reaching 917.5 i.e. 76.41 per cent in the post-test. Though the post-test carries higher full mark i.e. 50 and 30 in written and spoken respectively, the increased rate clearly presents the effective progress in between third progress and post-test.

### 3.2.6 Comparative Analysis of Pre-Test and Post-Test

The scores of pre-test is compared and analyzed with the score of post-test which is presented below:

**Table No. 16**  
**Comparison Between Pre and Post-test Score**

Mode	Pretest			Post-test			D	D%
	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age	No. of students	Marks obtained	Per cent age		
Written	40	444	22.2	40	1514	75.7	1070	53.5
Spoken	40	185	15.41	40	917.5	76.41	732.5	61.04

As it is illustrated in the table, 444 i.e. 22.2 per cent is the 1070 i.e. 53.5 per cent reaching 1514 i.e. 75.7 per cent in the post test. Similarly, the total scores under spoken mode is 185 i.e. 15.41 per cent is increased by 732.5 i.e. 61.04 per cent reaching 917.5 i.e. 76.41 per cent in the post-test.

From the close observation and study of the above table, it is clearly shown that there is vast difference between the scores on pre and post-test. Almost 4 times and above of the pre-test scores is obtained in the post-test. It is remarkably high rate of progress that the students have made.

This fact indicates the students' proficiency in language function is developed through participatory approach in teaching language functions in the classroom.

Thus, observing all the analysis and comparison what can be easily deduced is that the students have achieved remarkable progress in the ability to use the English language functions. The progress has been achieved by teaching language functions through participatory approach.

I observed many problem during the classroom teaching periods. Some of them are as follows:

- i. Mixed ability of the students
- ii. Frequent use of mother tongue
- iii. Hesitation while speaking
- iv. Less participation in group discussion
- v. Low base in English language; weak vocabulary, weak grammar awareness and appropriacy

I tried to overcome these problems by the following means and could get little success:

- i. Grouped them in medium and low ability group (mixing)
- ii. Encourage them to use English using simple terms (simplified too)
- iii. Get them to work everything in different groups and pairs too.
- iv. Focused the weak students in presenting works of group.

## **CHAPTER -FOUR**

### **FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

This study aimed at finding out the participatory approach as an effective means for teaching communicative functions in English. Before introducing participatory approach to teaching language functions what I realized was their the students were habituated to listen to their teacher passively without participating in any activities except listening and copying the teacher's notes. Students' issues were beyond the teacher's plan.

Before I started the experimental teaching, I administered a pre-test to determine the level of students. Then, altogether three different progress tests and at last I administered them a post-test. Each and every test was analyzed, compared and interpreted through which following findings were derived.

#### **4.1 Findings**

The findings of the study have been listed as follows:

- a. Analyzing the scores of pre-test, progress tests and post-test, it is found that participatory approach is effective to teach communicative language functions. Students obtained 80 per cent , 82 per cent and 84 per cent average score in the written part of first, second and third progress tests respectively and, 60, 70 and 80 per cent in spoken test. Similarly, students obtained 23 per cent average score in the pre-test and 75 per cent in post-test in written test and 16 per cent and 75.5 per cent in spoken test which is almost four times higher than that of the pre-test. Hence, students have made progress continuously in all progress tests. This fact supports the effectiveness of using participatory approach in teaching communicative language functions.
- b. The studnets' perfomance in spoken mode in all progress test and, pre and post-test were impressive. The average scores were distributed around 60

per cent , 70 per cent and 80 per cent in the first, second and third progress tests respectively. The average scores were increased by 10 per cent each times at the same ratio. Similarly, the scores were distributed around 16 per cent and 75.5 per cent in the pre and post-tests respectively. The students scored almost 4.5 time higher marks in average in post-test than that of the pre-test. Thirty per cent of students did not response in pre-test where as all students responded in post-test. This remarkable progress in spoken mode of test clearly shows the effectiveness of using participatory approach to teaching communicative functions.

- c. After the analysis of scores distribution in all tests, it is found that the students scored more heterogeneously which clearly reveals the heterogeneous ability/level of proficiency in using communicative language functions. In the pre-test the scores were distributed among 16 frequencies between 4 per cent to 56 per cent and it is less in the post-test by 4 frequencies reaching only 12 frequencies of scores in which scores were distributed between 60 per cent to 96 per cent under written mode. Similarly, the scores were distributed between 8.3 per cent to 50 per cent with 7 frequencies in the pre-test under spoken mode, but it is less to only 6 frequencies distributing between 58.3 per cent to 100 per cent in the post-test. Hence, heterogeneity among the students ability to use communicative language functions is lessened after the intervention. It can be claimed that participatory approach contributed to lessening the heterogeneity among students' ability by upgrading the bottom liners in language class.
- d. The average increment per cent age of spoken mode of exam is found to be higher than that of the written mode in all tests. In comparison to written test, students' score distributions were lessened more in the spoken mode. Therefore, It can be said that speaking ability is found to be developed more effectively through participatory approach.

## 4.2 Recommendations

On the basis of the findings of the study the following recommendations are made.

- a. From the intensive analysis and interpretation of data, it has been drawn that participatory approach is effective in teaching communicative language functions. Therefore, I recommend participatory approach along with other communicative approaches in teaching English.
- b. Teachers can use participatory approach to avoid students' hesitation.
- c. Problem posing to the students and addressing their issues encourages them to participate in dialogue, discussion and group work more actively in language teaching class. Therefore, the teachers can use problem posing technique, and they should try to emphasize students problems/issues to get them highly motivated in learning.
- d. Experts, syllabus designers and methodologists are suggested to introduce participatory approach in school level education too, and its techniques and methodologies should be prescribed.
- e. This study is limited only to teaching some communicative functions. Its effectiveness in other aspects and skills of language can not be granted. Therefore, further researches are recommended to verify its findings and generalizations.

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