

Chapter 2

Review of Literature and Arriving at a Theoretical Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter aims at presenting a review of literature in the relevant areas and it also describes the proposed framework to reflect upon classroom discourse. It traces the development of classroom research in general and then discusses more specifically studies in classroom interaction. Research in the area of Second Language Acquisition (SLA) which highlights the role of input and interaction in language learning is also discussed in detail. Further later sections of the chapter also look into teacher's discourse and how it may facilitate classroom interaction. The role of the teacher cannot be undermined even though one may intend to promote learner centered classrooms. Walsh (2006) puts forward a strong argument in favour of teacher's role in classroom interaction and hence in SLA. Furthermore, a section of this chapter exclusively discusses issues related to reflection.

The proposed Reflective Framework for Classroom Discourse (RFCDD) is also presented towards the end of the chapter. This framework is designed to help teachers to understand and reflect on their own classroom discourse at their own pace and strengthen the links between their pedagogic goals and language use in the classroom. The chapter ends by outlining the theoretical framework for this study.

2.2 Development of classroom research

Researchers have often defined classroom as 'the learning environment' (Legutke in Hinkel 2005). The aim of a majority of research studies has been to explore ways in which learners are exposed to a more acquisition rich environment and the findings of

most of the studies have implications for better classroom practices. A language classroom is different from other classrooms because the target language is the means as well as the end. Therefore, any second language lesson can be viewed as a dynamic and complex series of interrelated contexts, in which interaction is central to teaching and learning. The quality of interaction in the class determines the degree of learning that takes place. Apart from materials, the teacher's speech is an important part of the classroom interaction. Therefore, teacher talk is considered to play a crucial role in shaping classroom interaction and hence language learning. Before discussing classroom interaction, it is important to briefly mention the background of classroom research in general.

2. 2. 1 Defining classroom research

One may begin discussing about classroom research by attempting to define these two terms- 'classroom' and 'research'. On the surface, these terms seem simple because of the familiarity with these terms. A simple description would be that a classroom is a space where teachers and learners come together for instructional purposes. Thus, Allwright (1983:191) writes:

'Classroom-centered research is just that---research centered on the classroom, as distinct from, for example, research that concentrates on the inputs to the classroom (the syllabus, the teaching materials,) or the outputs from the classroom (learner achievement scores). It does not ignore in any way or try to devalue the importance of such inputs and outputs. It simply tries to investigate what happens inside the classroom when learners and teachers come together. At its most narrow, it is in fact research which treats classroom interaction as virtually the only object worthy of investigation.'

Many writers do not restrict their understanding of classroom research to this narrow conception. Instead they consider ‘classroom-centered research’ (or classroom research) as an umbrella term for a whole range of research studies on classroom language learning and teaching. Some issues that have been investigated in this area include how teachers respond to learner’s errors, how interaction occurs in classrooms, the type of linguistic input provided in classroom settings, the feelings of teachers and learners at various points during or after lessons etc.

Van Lier (1988:47) broadened the characterization and suggested that ‘The L2 (second language) classroom can be defined as the gathering, for a given periods of time, of two or more persons (one of whom generally assumes the role of instructor) for the purposes of language learning.’

Nunan (1992:3) defines research as a ‘systematic process of inquiry consisting of three elements or components: (1) a question, problem or hypothesis, (2) data, and (3) analysis and interpretation’.

The difference between classroom research and classroom-oriented research is that classroom research includes empirical investigations carried out inside the language classrooms. Classroom-oriented research is carried out outside the classroom for instance, in the laboratory, simulated or naturalistic settings. However, it makes claims for the application of its outcomes to the classrooms.

2.2.2 Research tools for classroom research

A number of different approaches exist in classroom research. Classroom research involves data collection and analysis. The researcher is required to record what happened in a particular classroom or classrooms so that he/she is able to analyse the

recorded data and describe the classroom processes using relevant terms which fits his/her research concerns. There are two ways of recording data. First of all, one can develop data through direct observation. This comprises observation of classroom processes by being present inside the classroom and taking notes. For a more detailed compilation of data one can audio- record or video-record the classroom events and go back to it later for detailed observation.

Experts have noted that in some cases direct observation may not be the best way to collect data. The argument that is cited is that being observed can change people's behaviour. When the teacher is being observed or her classes are being audio or video taped she might not be able to be her usual self. Moreover, certain aspects of classroom processes are not actually observable.

The second way to collect data is to give people an opportunity to talk for themselves and share what has happened and what they think about it. Some traditional ways are surveys, interviews or written questionnaires. However, these are considered to be more guided and closed ways of collecting data. One also needs to consider ways which are relatively more flexible and allow participants to express their insights into certain issues. For instance, allowing them to engage in self-reporting or asking them to record their own experiences and perceptions without prompting on specific issues can be more empowering.

Some researchers have considered the procedures and philosophical underpinnings of ethnography to collect and interpret classroom data in order to avoid prejudgements (Van Lier, 1988; Watson-Gegeo 1988).

Therefore, the main tools for classroom research are observations including recordings, surveys, and other forms of self-report. Another tool that may be used is

test results. However, results of test may not be always important for classroom research and in various situations researchers may need to take into consideration the effectiveness of learning by analysing test results.

2.2.3 Phases of development of classroom research

Teacher education provided the basic tool for classroom observation. Flanders (1970) studied teaching inside a classroom with the help of direct observation. He created observation schedules in the form of lists of categories relating to teacher and learner behaviour. These categories were considered to be closely related to successful teaching (commonly known as 'FIAC', 'Flanders' Interaction Analysis Categories'). These observation sheets aimed to help teacher trainees to understand how effective their teaching was. These categories allowed them to check the extent to which their teaching behaviour matched the given patterns (suggested by research findings as most effective). FIAC will be discussed in detail in section 2.3.1.2.

However, soon it was found that Flander's categories were not as helpful as they were thought to be. A number of researchers observed that classroom behaviour was too complex to be put down into categories. Therefore, it was concluded that other ways need to be devised to explore the complexities of classroom behaviour.

Research in the area of teaching methodology and other areas of language teaching revealed the need to move from 'method' to 'technique' and then to 'processes'. This marked the paradigm shift from being prescriptive to descriptive. It had direct implication on classroom research. It meant finding new ways to describe classroom processes to explore what actually happens in language classes. The assumption that a specific method or a set of techniques, which is considered to be effective, needs to be implemented was now strongly questioned. In fact, researchers now felt that

something below the level of technique (something more interactive) takes place, and that this interaction (i.e. what actually happens in the classroom) is likely to open up new areas for investigation.

Therefore, the shift from prescription to description and then the description of classroom processes gave rise to two dominant viewpoints. Some researchers with a more sociological inclination on education looked at the language lesson as a 'socially-constructed event', which is produced by all the participants through their interactive work. In other words, researchers of this type started to look at teaching not just from what the teacher contributes but also what the learners bring into the classroom and how they create the learning opportunities together in a classroom. For example, questions surrounding how teachers correct errors, how teachers and learners together determine each learner's level of participation in classroom activities, how learners' contribution to classroom interaction affect the syllabus etc. came to be investigated.

The other viewpoint has been developed by researchers who are language-oriented. They have looked into the input in a classroom setting in terms of teacher's talk and how language might be acquired. Such researchers have also examined the language of the learners in classrooms.

The shift from prescriptive to descriptive research and from techniques to processes demanded other kinds of tools for data collection; tools which could handle the complexities of language teaching, where language is the content as well as the medium of instruction, where more than one language may be used etc.

Moskowitz (1971) proposed a tool which was a modified version of Flander's Interaction Analysis categories. She called it 'Flint' (Foreign Language Interaction).

She expanded and refined Flanders' categories and further used it both as a research tool as well as a feedback tool in teacher training.

Fanselow (1977) made a major contribution in this area. He made changes to Bellack's pioneering analytical system to produce 'FOCUS' (Foci for Observing Communications Used in Settings). This was an observation schedule made for training language teachers but it could also be applied to interaction in general. As a result, this system does not have separate categories for teachers and learners.

The existing instruments especially those developed for teacher training purposes were not necessarily appropriate tools for certain types of classroom research.

An important development in classroom research on language teaching and learning resulted in the birth of discourse analysis as a field of linguistic enquiry. In fact, the analysis of classroom discourse transcripts seems to work better at times than using category systems in 'real time'.

Transcription is a time-consuming process but it provides a detailed account of the linguistic interaction in classrooms. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) analysed the transcripts of British classrooms and drew up a hierarchy of units of interaction which might be identifiable in classroom settings anywhere in the world. Their largest unit was the lesson, made up of 'exchanges', which in turn consisted of 'moves' and the smallest unit was 'acts'. 'Acts' could be further broken down for analysis into linguistic units like words and phrases.

Changes were made to the basic tools of classroom research as pedagogic theories changed over time. Consequently data collection procedures were refined to provide appropriate data to the researchers.

2.2.4 Methodological Issues

If qualitative and quantitative approaches to research are distinguished then it is relevant to discuss Chaudron's (1988) 'four way distinction'.

Tradition	Typical issues	Methods
Psychometric	Language gain from different materials and methods	Experimental method- pre- and post- treatment tests with experimental and control groups.
Interaction Analysis	Extent to which learner behaviour is a function of teacher-determined interaction	Coding of classroom interactions in terms of various observation systems and schedules.
Discourse Analysis	Analysis of classroom discourse in linguistic terms	Study classroom transcripts and assign utterances to predetermined categories
Ethnographic	Obtain insights into the classroom as a "cultural" system	Naturalistic "uncontrolled" observation and description

Table 2: Chaudron's (1988) four-way distinction

This four-way distinction presented above treats interaction analysis and discourse analysis as traditions. However, in research literature they have been defined as techniques. These techniques in turn can be used in psychometric and ethnographic traditions.

Grotjahn (1987) has criticized the distinction between quantitative and qualitative traditions as being too crude. He highlights that the qualitative/quantitative distinction

can refer to three different aspects of data collection and analysis process. These are the overall design (whether data is collected through an experiment or non-experimentally), the type of data (whether the data is qualitative or quantitative) and the type of analysis (whether the data is analysed statistically or interpretively). Combinations of these variables result in 'pure' research paradigms—the exploratory-interpretive, based on a non-experimental design, giving rise to qualitative data that is analysed interpretively and the analytical-nomological based on an experimental design giving rise to quantitative data that is analysed statistically.

Bailey (1999) supports the idea that there are two dominant traditions, the experimental and the naturalistic and adds a third-action research. The main feature of action research is that it is carried out by classroom practitioners rather than outside researchers.

A major methodological concern in classroom research has been to answer the following question: how can one capture differences that take place at the level of the classroom? Research work of Swaffar *et al.* (1982) revealed that if learner output had to be explained then the importance of documenting and quantifying classroom processes needed to be acknowledged. Formal experimental studies which measures input-output (the 'black box' research; Long 1980) failed in this regard.

The need for ways to document and quantify classroom interaction gave rise to the development of observation instruments of different kinds. One of the comprehensive descriptions and its analysis was provided by Chaudron (1988). He analysed 23 different systems according to a number of criteria. These include whether the observer codes a particular behaviour each time it occurs or whether it takes place in a specific time period or if the items that are coded are of high or low occurrence etc.

Another comprehensive system of analysis is COLT. Apart from being comprehensive COLT (Spada & Frohlich,1995) is both theoretically and empirically motivated. It is based on an explicit theory of language teaching (Communicative Language Teaching) and a psycholinguistic theory of acquisition. The advantage of COLT is that it allows the researcher to quantify classroom interaction and to make comparisons across classes.

To conclude this section, an attempt was made to trace the origin of classroom research on language teaching and learning and its development was discussed. As mentioned earlier there has been a movement from traditional pedagogical methods to techniques to the exploration of classroom interaction processes. Classroom research has also witnessed a shift in its priorities. Its focus is now on what happens inside the classroom and it encourages researchers to come nearer to classroom teachers rather than testing experts' giving prescriptions for what they think should happen.

2.3 Classroom interaction

In a classroom the teachers and learners come together and language learning is expected to happen. However, this language learning happens as a result of the reactions amongst the teachers and the learners. Interestingly they do not come 'empty-handed' into the classroom. The learners bring their whole experience of learning and of life in classrooms along with their own reasons for learning the language. They have their own needs that have to be addressed. The teacher also brings in her experience of life and learning and, of course, that of teaching. She also gets the syllabus in the form of materials. Therefore, how these participants react to each other when they are together in the classroom is of utmost importance. 'React'

has been used in the research literature to refer to the constant interaction that takes place between the learners and the teacher and among the learners themselves.

The degree of success of this constant interaction, however, cannot be taken for granted. The interaction cannot be completely planned. It will be too artificial. Therefore, interaction in the classroom needs to be managed rather than planned. Moreover, the interaction cannot be managed by the teacher alone, even the learners play an important role in the management of interaction. As a social event these contributions on the part of the teacher as well as learners are crucial for interaction to be successful.

From this viewpoint interaction is a type of ‘co-production’ and it involves a few complications. Allwright & Bailey (1991:19) suggest that to facilitate successful interaction in the classroom, it requires the management of at least five different things all at the same time. These five factors are:

‘Who gets to speak? (participants’ turn distribution)

What do they talk about? (topic)

What does each participant do with the various opportunities to speak? (task)

What sort of atmosphere is created? (tone)

What accent, dialect or language is used? (code)’

Allwright & Bailey (1991:19)

Another problem is that these five aspects of interaction are means as well as ends. Thus, language teachers need to recognise that using a language also involves the ability to handle interaction in that language. Thus, the classroom environment also provides opportunities to learners and teachers to involve in interaction management.

Here it becomes important to understand interaction in the context of learning. In a classroom the teacher and the learners manage interaction for language learning to take place. However, in most cases it is considered to be completely the teacher's responsibility to plan a lesson and execute it efficiently in the classroom. The teacher may get the best plan to class but finally what each learner learns depends on what happens in the course of classroom interaction and whether or not the learner is able to make use of the language learning opportunities made available to him/her.

Walsh (2006) writes, '...any second language lesson can be viewed as a dynamic and complex series of interrelated contexts, in which interaction is central to teaching and learning.' He also highlights that in most studies the classroom is viewed as a single social context'. However, latest studies in classroom interaction indicate the need to consider the idea that teachers and learners together co-construct (plural) classroom contexts.

Van Lier (1988) identifies four types of L2 classroom interaction. The first or Type 1, he calls 'less topic- orientation, less activity- orientation', is typical of everyday conversation. Thus, it is not structured and allows maximum freedom for self-expression. The second type or Type 2 is called 'more topic- orientation, less activity- orientation.' This type of interaction can be found in abundance when information is given to the learners in the form of instructions or a lecture. One can deduce that this type of interaction is very restrictive as it is one- way. It leaves almost no space for any exchange of thoughts, opinions or ideas. Type 3 is called 'more topic- orientation, more activity orientation,' which takes place in an interview. Typically in an interview information is exchanged following specific and pre-determined lines. In a joke or a story also one can find this type of interaction directed by specific guidelines. The last category or Type 4 is called 'less topic- orientation, more activity-

orientation.’ This is characterised by activities which follow specific procedures such as substitution drills, pair work etc.

Van Lier’s classification is in no way exhaustive and may not be able to account for all types of interaction. Nevertheless, it undoubtedly represents certain typical patterns that can be found in language classrooms. The above types try to connect language use and activity. It doesn’t propose a functional framework. It links classroom activity to type of language used.

2.3.1 Approaches to investigate L2 classroom interaction

In this section, some of the approaches available for investigating L2 classroom interaction will be discussed. In the previous section, a few of the tools that were developed for investigating classroom interaction have been mentioned. Here, those tools will be discussed in greater detail in order to understand the classification of approaches indicated in the research literature.

Kumaravadivelu (1999:454) states that, ‘What actually happens there [in the classroom] largely determines the degree to which desired learning outcomes are realized. The task of systematically observing, analysing and understanding classroom aims and events therefore becomes central to any serious educational enterprise.’

At this point, various approaches that can be adopted for analysing classroom discourse needs to be presented. Moreover, a review needs to be done to understand their relative advantages and disadvantages. In order to understand the ‘interactional architecture’ (Seedhouse, 2004) of the second language classroom one needs to select particular tools as discussed in the previous section. Three approaches to investigating L2 classroom interaction will be discussed: interaction analysis, discourse analysis

and conversation analysis. A variable and dynamic approach to classroom interaction is suggested in the literature which will also be discussed in order to arrive at the approach adopted for this study.

2.3.1.1 Interaction analysis approaches

Researchers who are in favour of the 'scientific method' (Cohen *et al.*, 2000) propound that the most reliable, quantitative approaches to analyse interaction includes a series of observation instruments or coding systems. These are used by the observer to record what is happening in the L2 classroom. Such recordings are analysed using statistical tools and then one arrives at classroom profiles which seem to provide an objective and 'scientific' analysis of classroom discourse.

This school of thought draws its ideas from behavioural psychology. As a result, a large number of observation instruments have come to the forefront since the 1960s and 1970s.

Chaudron (1988) calculated that there were approximately 26 systems available for analysing interaction in the L2 classroom.

Literature available in this area suggests that the main features of observation instruments are as follows:

- Use of boxes which need to be ticked, marks need to be given, recording are used, all at regular time intervals
- Presence of reliability which allows comparison between observers and ensures generalisability of results

- Behaviourist in nature and they believe in a stimulus/response progression of classroom discourse
- Extensive use in teacher training programs, especially for developing competencies and raising awareness

In fact, Edwards and Westgate (1994) suggest that observation instruments may work better in teacher education than in class-based research.

Wallace (1998) provides a brief summary of the observation instruments that are divided according to whether they are system- based or ad hoc.

2.3.1.2 System- based approaches

The word ‘system’ refers to an instrument which consists of a number of predetermined categories which are fixed. These predetermined categories are created based on their large scale implementation in different classroom contexts. There are a few merits of using a fixed system. First of all, as it is already created hence there is no need to design a new one. Secondly, it doesn’t require validation. In real- time or for a recorded version of the lesson any system can be used and also comparisons between one system and another can be made.

Some of the well-known system based instruments devised for the study of L2 classrooms are Bellack *et al.* (1966), Flanders(1970), Moskowitz (1971), Fröhlich *et al.* (1985), Spada and Fröhlich (1995).

Bellack *et al.* (1966) designed one of the earliest system- based, structured observation instruments

based on the interaction of 15 teachers and 345 students. It reported a number of pedagogical moves that could be classified into common teaching cycles. The moves that were identified as occurring together were structure, solicit, respond and react.

Bowers (in Walsh, 2006) added three more moves to the original four to arrive at a seven move scheme which allowed the interaction to be presented graphically.

Even today many practitioners consider Bellack's three- part exchange: solicit, respond, react which is now commonly known as: initiation, response, feedback (IR(F)) –to be the starting point for investigating classroom interaction.

It definitely contributes to our understanding of the processes of classroom interaction.

The IRF structure has been criticised as being extremely teacher centric. Kasper (2001) justifies it by stating that learners can be more actively involved in teacher-directed classroom interaction especially when teachers allow learners to participate more in the interaction. She discusses ways in which teachers can increase involvement of learners in classroom interaction.

Flanders (1970) devised the instrument Flanders Interaction Analysis Categories (FIAC).

It is a system- based observation tool in which real time teaching can be analysed with the help of observation and description. FIAC allows the observer to assign numeric values against the fixed categories.

Originally this tool was meant for content classrooms but it focused on language used in the classroom. The categories were as follows (Flanders 1970:34):

‘Teacher talk

1 Accepts feelings

2 Praises or encourages

3 Accepts or uses ideas of pupils

4 Asks questions

5 Lectures

6 Gives direction

7 Criticizes or uses authority

Pupil talk

8 Pupil talk: response

9 Pupil talk: initiation

Silence

10 Period of silence or confusion’

It is evident that the FIAC system pays more attention to teacher talk and seems to undermine learner talk. Authors have felt that these categories are too broad. Critics have expressed doubts about its ability to capture the complex interactional fabric of today’s classroom. In contemporary language classrooms roles of teacher and learner operate on a more egalitarian principle where student–student interaction is considered to be as important as student-teacher interaction. Although the system contains affective categories it seems to be difficult to label with accuracy as subjectivity is bound to influence it.

Moskowitz (1971) proposed Foreign Language Interaction (FLINT) tool which was an expansion of Flanders FIAC. FLINT consisted of 22 categories designed specifically for foreign language classrooms. It took into account the use of choral drills and tape- recorders as essential methodological requirements. Although this was more sophisticated than the original Flanders system, it was also more complex to use.

Allen, Fröhlich and Spada (1984) designed an instrument called *Communicative Orientation of Language Teaching (COLT)*. This instrument is different from the previous ones because it aimed to ‘capture differences in the communicative orientation of classroom instruction [...] and to examine their effects on learning outcomes’ (Kumaravadivelu, 1999:456). This instrument consisted of 73 categories and tried to enable the user to make a connection between teaching methodology and language use. COLT as the name suggests directly linked Communicative Language Teaching to learning outcomes. It has two parts in which Part A consisted of classroom tasks, materials and degrees of learner involvement. Part B on the other hand provides opportunity to analyse verbal interaction between learner and teacher. This is done by considering factors such as presence of information gap, the existence of sustained speech, the quantity of different question types. This instrument is considered to be one of the most sophisticated instruments for analysing L2 classrooms. Moreover, it uses a wide range of both qualitative and quantitative modes of analysis. In 1995 its revised version was published.

Spada and Fröhlich (1995) presented the *revised COLT* which is in the form of a manual which consists of coding elements. The manual reflects the ability to point out interactional features which have positive learning outcomes. Spada and Fröhlich have also recognized that the instrument has limitations: ‘if one is interested in

undertaking a detailed discourse analysis of the conversational interactions between teachers and students, another method of coding and analysing classroom data would be more appropriate' (Spada and Fröhlich,1995).

Critiques have recognized that system- based interactional approaches to L2 classroom discourse are based on what one can observe and measure. Therefore, they can give only a partial picture of reality (Nunan, 1989; Wallace, 1998; Kumaravadivelu,1999).

Limitations of System-based interactional approaches

The first weakness of these tools is that any pattern of interaction that may take place in the classroom has to be matched to the predetermined categories. Moreover, the results are also known and one cannot record events which do not match with the descriptive categories (Van Lier, 1988a). The role of the observer is that of an outsider. As a result, these instruments have their thrust on the observer rather than the participants and automatically the observer's interpretation of events doesn't include the perspective of the participants being observed.

Secondly, they do not allow any overlap. The discreteness of the categories is another limitation. These instruments were designed with the assumption that classroom discourse moves forward in a sequential manner. However, in reality interaction often overlaps and one finds that 'interruptions, back- channelling, false starts, repetitions, hesitations are part and parcel of classroom interaction' (Edwards and Westgate, 1994 in Walsh, 2006:43).

Another problematic assumption of the system- based instruments is that at a time only one speaker turn occurs. This puts a pressure on the observer to take on spot

decisions to categorise utterances. Consecutively, this will lead to inaccuracies and simplification which will not be able to account for the complexities of classroom interaction. Chaudron (1988) has pointed out that while using these instruments observers may fail to agree on how they want to record what they see. Thus, issues of validity and reliability can render them unfit for carrying out research. Seedhouse (1996:42) has pointed out that coding systems fail to address context and ‘evaluate all varieties of L2 classroom interaction from a single perspective and according to a single set of criteria’. The language classroom context is extremely complex, dynamic and consists of multiple layers. Thus, the inability to account for the context is definitely a strong limitation and a valid reason to select alternative means to record and analyse the complex interaction patterns of L2 classrooms.

These observation instruments which are strictly structured are able to produce numerical data of considerable amount in a short span of time. However, Cohen *et al.*(2000) highlights the importance of ‘fitness for purpose’ of an instrument. Thus, in order to be able to capture the dynamic L2 classroom context, a less structured but ‘tailor- made’ instrument is expected to work better. The next type of instruments for discussion is the *ad hoc instruments*, a term used by Wallace (1998).

2.3.1.3 Ad hoc approaches

As opposed to system-based interaction analysis, *ad hoc* approaches facilitate the creation of more flexible instruments. These can be devised keeping in mind a specific classroom problem. Wallace (1991:78) uses the term ‘guided discovery’ for the construction of *ad hoc* instruments because a specific context can be addressed. Thus, participants can include practitioners, outside researcher or colleagues who can

collaboratively design an instrument which can adequately address a particular pedagogic issue.

Classroom observations carried out following *ad hoc* approaches have certain advantages. They allow participants to take up ownership of the research process. As a result, they are able to gain better insights into the issues that are being investigated. These approaches allow the participants to focus on detailed interaction. Thus, practitioners can understand complex processes which are at work with relative ease rather than waiting for years of class experience to reveal such phenomena. System based tools provide broad categories but under *ad hoc* interaction analysis attention can be paid to the minute details of interactions.

2.3.1.4 Discourse analysis approaches

Seedhouse (2004:27) points out that ‘the overwhelming majority of previous approaches to L2 classroom interaction have implicitly or explicitly adopted what is fundamentally a discourse analysis approach’.

Discourse analysis (DA) is defined as ‘the study of spoken, naturally occurring speech or communication’ while discourse is ‘a way a particular group of people interact with one another’. One can also ‘think of discourse as socially communicative practices’ (Rex & Schiller, 2009). The DA approaches draw their principles from structural-functional linguistics.

The early supporters of the DA approach (Sinclair and Coulthard, 1975) created a list of twenty two speech acts representing the verbal behaviours of both teachers and students participating in primary classroom communication. This kind of studies

resulted in the development of a descriptive system consisting of a discourse hierarchy. For example:

1. Lesson
2. Transaction
3. Exchange
4. Move
5. Act

In the above example an act is the smallest discourse unit, while lesson is the largest.

Discourse analysts including Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) (who had also based their study on data collected from ‘traditional’ primary school classrooms of the 1960s) often began their search for structure in educational contexts where roles were relatively clearly marked. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) succeeded in getting new insights into the organisation of educational discourse by highlighting dominance of teachers in typical instructional encounters. It is representative of conventional school settings where a lesson can be treated as a convenient (if non-linguistic) unit where speech events have clear boundaries. It also presents further sub-division into a hierarchy of transactions, exchanges, moves and acts as discussed earlier. Edwards and Westgate (1987) provides a comparison of this hierarchy to the ‘division of a written text into paragraphs, sentences, clauses, words’ where each ‘rank’ in the hierarchy is realised by elements from the one below. Teacher centered classrooms in traditional settings seem to be ideal for such analysis. However, modifications have also been suggested which can extend its scope to less formal settings (Burton, 1980, Brazil,1981).

Strong critics of DA have provided evidence that the more formal, ritualized interactions between teacher and learners are not prevalent today as they were in the 1960s. This approach while analysing classroom data applies some simplification and reduction. Classroom data is analysed according to their structural patterning and function which can be problematic. There is not always a one to one correspondence between form and function. A form can have multiple functions depending on contextual cues. More implicit elements like contextual cues, role relations and sociolinguistic cues cannot be accounted for within DA approaches. DA approaches thus fail to adequately account for the dynamic nature of classroom interaction and the fact that it is socially constructed by its participants. DA approaches also do not adequately account for the range of contexts in operation in a lesson and for the link between pedagogic purpose and language use.

2.3.1.5 Conversation Analysis (CA) approaches

CA approaches have their roots in the school of thought where language is viewed in terms of function and as a means for social interaction (Sacks *et al*,1974). These approaches are quite different from the previously mentioned quantitative ones. CA approaches are concerned with the complex organization of discourse and its implicit elements and hence conversation analysis draws much less on linguistics and more on anthropology and especially ethnomethodology. Before moving on to CA approaches to classroom interaction, a brief discussion on conversation analysis seems relevant.

As the term conversation analysis suggests it is concerned with every day talk and conversation in which all the participants enjoy equal rights to manage the talk as it operates on egalitarian principles. Its scope has been extended to talk in power-marked settings like courtrooms and classrooms. In these settings the power

differences can be clearly identified by observing how that talk is organised (Atkinson and Drew, 1979; McHoul, 1978; Hustler and Payne, 1982). For instance, while analysing classroom talk there is an expectation that learners' answers will be followed by the teacher's evaluation of them. The frequency with which this structure is repeated is a basic characteristic of a 'speech exchange system with particular local characteristics' (Atkinson, 1981:112).

Local characteristics refer to the context in which the participants interact. Edward and Westgate (1987) argue that context is often used to refer to whatever social knowledge the participants perceive as relevant to organising words and meanings in that setting. It includes knowledge of the respective social identities of the speakers (for example, their ages, gender, race, occupation or other status) where this is seen as being relevant to what can be said and how it can be said. They point out that the teacher-learner relationship appears normally to be high in power and low in solidarity. Thus, classroom talk in such settings represents the working-out of a power relationship.

One can argue that even in authentic real life conversations, one does not always find perfect conditions of equality between participants. For example, conversations between adults and young children are most often controlled by adults. They take most of the decisions while interacting with children and also enjoy the right to initiate, sustain or end the conversation at any point (Speier, 1976; Wooton, 1981). Even in conversations between mothers and children recorded by Tizard and Hughes (1984), the child is found to depend on getting his or her meanings interpreted correctly and appropriately by an authoritative adult.

Thus, in settings where power hierarchies are marked clearly, the interaction is bound to reveal the imbalance of rights that prevail amongst the participants. Superiority and subordination can be easily identified as one group claims special rights over the other.

Conversation analysts acknowledge the presence of such hierarchies and inequalities and do not believe in ignoring them. They find ways to make it evident so that they can be included in the analysis of how the talk was organised and understood (Hustler and Payne, 1982). Their main interest, however, has been in talk where the transitions from one turn and topic to another is more of a collective responsibility rather than something which is considered to solely belong to one participant.

CA approaches have been used to understand classroom talk more so because experts have found that classroom talk resembles conversation (Heritage, 1984). Institutionalised talk (which refers to talk for instructional purposes) shares certain features with every day, ordinary conversation.

CA approaches are based on the assumption that social contexts are dynamic and are formed by the participants involved in interaction with the help of their use of language. They recognise the complex nature of interaction wherein its dynamics are locally determined. Under these approaches interaction is studied within the local context and meanings. The sequencing of actions is of vital importance. According to this view, interaction is 'context-shaped and context-renewing' (Walsh, 2006). Context is 'both a project and a product of the participants' actions' (Heritage, 1997).

2.3.1.6 Analysing conversations in the Second Language classroom context

A number of authors have argued that L2 classroom discourse does not necessarily have to resemble an ordinary conversation. However, research literature also suggests a few good reasons for using a CA methodology. Walsh (2006:52) writes, ‘...what takes place in an L2 classroom between teachers and learners and learners and their peers can be described as “conversation”. It is, for the most part, two-way. It comprises turn-taking, turn-passing, turn ceding and turn-seizing. It makes use of topic switches and contains many of the features of “ordinary” conversation such as false starts, hesitations, errors, silence, back-channelling and so on.’ Thus, CA approaches allow the researcher to interpret from the data and does not restrict the analysis to predetermined structural or functional categories which are highly limited.

Allwright (1980) was one of the earliest researchers to provide an interpretive description of the L2 classroom. CA approach was used to analyse turns, topics and tasks. Attempts were made to explain the verbal behaviour of participants. Patterns of participation could be identified from the data based on this interpretive framework.

The main characteristics of this approach are as follows:

In IA and DA approaches there were categories which were predetermined. However, in CA there are no such fixed categories. Instead it tries to analyse interaction within its local context and acknowledges the dynamic nature of interaction. The participants manage it and CA attempts to account for its ever changing organisation. Thus, the data does not have to fit into previously determined categories. CA does not deny the presence of such categories. However, these emerge from the data and are supported by examples from it.

CA allows researchers to focus on the interaction patterns emerging from the data. This can ensure to certain extent that researchers are not influenced by any preconceived notions (Levinson, 1983; Seedhouse, 2004). Moreover, the observer is able to experience the L2 classroom discourse from the perspective of the participants.

As already mentioned, a salient feature of CA is that context is seen as ever-changing and dynamic. DA approaches view context as static and hence fixed categories are used to analyse talk. However, within CA approaches context is viewed as an entity which is determined by the participants who co-construct it. Thus, CA approaches can take into consideration linguistic and pedagogic purposes which guide classroom interaction and keep changing during the course of a lesson.

CA allows a multi-layered analysis of data as it focuses on context and the sequence of utterances.

However, CA approaches also have certain limitations. The lack of categories can make it difficult to understand the ever changing features of classroom interaction in an orderly manner. Excerpts taken from the data may seem random and its position in the entire discourse may be difficult to understand.

Generalisability of results is a major concern in CA approaches. As they emphasise the importance of context, it can be quite challenging to apply their findings to other situations.

However, this criticism can be countered on the basis that context-specific data cannot be termed as invalid, not important or not useful. Many experts have stated that classroom-specific research does not worry about generalizations. Instead what is

important is to understand the context and find similar contexts where it can be replicated with modifications. Van Lier (1996) comments ‘studies of classroom interaction will clearly be extremely complex and tentative, and one must take care not to draw hasty conclusions from superficially identifiable interactional tokens.’ Thus, research studies based on ethnomethodological considerations are classroom specific and such studies try to report patterns and trends. It is impossible to claim anything in absolute terms.

In this section some of the popularly known approaches to analysing classroom discourse have been discussed. However, there are other alternative approaches such as Corpus Linguistics (CL) which is used to study the use of language statistically. CL is able to count frequencies of key words and other structural patterns but it fails to explain the dynamic nature of classroom interaction and its rich context. CL uses a range of techniques like concordancing (that is using corpus software to find the occurrence of a specific word or phrase), word frequency counts or word lists, key word analysis and cluster analysis.

2.4 A variable approach to study L2 classroom interaction

A lot of research that has been carried out in the area of L2 classroom interaction has viewed context as singular, static and fixed (Drew and Heritage,1992). Wu (1998) observes that most of the studies have either tried to explain the nature of verbal exchanges or understand the links between classroom interaction and SLA.

Most interpretations of L2 classroom discourse have labelled them as ‘communicative’ or ‘uncommunicative’. Thus, the connection between language use and pedagogic purpose has not been explained (Van Lier, 1988a; Seedhouse, 2004). Walsh(2006) rightly points out that ‘...when language use and pedagogic purpose are

considered at the same time, different contexts emerge, making it possible to analyse the resulting discourse more fairly and more objectively. Under this variable view of contexts (plural), learner and teacher patterns of verbal behaviour can be seen as more or less appropriate, depending on a particular pedagogic aim.’

Many writers have highlighted the need to study classroom interaction from a perspective which is multi-layered. In other words, a multi-layered perspective views participants as managers of interaction and therefore within a lesson various kinds of communication take place in accordance to specific pedagogic goals. (Tsui,1994; Hasan, 1988; Van Lier, 1988a, 1996; Seedhouse, 2004; Heritage, 1996; Johnson, 1995; Lantolf, 2000).

Within the variable approach to study classroom interaction, context is viewed as a variable. Some of its underlying assumptions are as follows:

1. L2 classroom discourse is considered to be ‘goal- oriented’
2. Teacher is considered to be primarily responsible for shaping and establishing interaction (Johnson,1995)
3. There is a link between language use and pedagogic purpose/goal (Cullen, 1998).
4. Analysis of L2 classroom interaction is done by looking at the ‘relationship between pedagogic actions and the language used to achieve those actions.’ (Walsh, 2011)

The variable approach opens up a space for an interpretation of classroom discourse which is more realistic. Different relationships of the participants in the social sphere

have an impact on interaction and patterns of interaction change depending on the pedagogic goals and linguistic purposes.

The linear IRF explanation fails to account for fine variations that occur within the multiple contexts which exist in a classroom.

Some of the recent studies which used a variable approach to study classroom interaction have been briefly presented:

Van Lier (1988) reported four types of classroom interactions prevalent in L2 classrooms. These have been discussed in section 2.3. These observations were based on a variable approach to classroom interaction.

Johnson (1995) showed the links between pedagogic purpose and patterns of interaction in her data by identifying academic as well as social task structures. Johnson (1995:145) reported that ‘the patterns of classroom communication depend largely on how teachers use language to control the structure and content of classroom events’.

Jarvis and Robinson (1997: 212) present ‘a framework for the analysis of verbal interaction between teacher and pupils in primary- level EFL lessons’. Vygotskian perspective on language and learning was the basis of this study. They proposed a three term structure to account for classroom interaction at the primary level. It was called focus- build- summarize. This structure was based on the six pedagogic functions of language use that were identified in the classroom:

(1) show acceptance of pupils’ utterances, (2) model language, (3) give clues, (4) elaborate and build up the discourse, (5) clarify understandings, (6) disconfirm or reject.

It also analysed strategies used by teachers to manage learner responses. A major claim of this study was that teacher's use of language when aligned with desired pedagogic goals can increase learning opportunities in the classroom, failing to do so would hinder learning.

Kumaravadivelu (1999) proposes a framework which he calls Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA). This framework is meant for 'understanding what actually transpires in the L2 classroom' (Kumaravadivelu,1999: 453). CCDA takes into account various dimensions of classroom discourse which are 'socially constructed, politically motivated and historically determined'. Within this framework the L2 classroom is seen as part of a larger society where different forms of power and domination exist. CCDA demands attention to acknowledge the apprehensions, voices, anxieties and cultural backgrounds of the participants which leads to a potential mismatch between 'intentions and interpretations of classroom aims and events' (Kumaravadivelu,1999: 473).

Seedhouse (2004) reports four classroom contexts in his study of classroom interaction:

(a) Form and accuracy contexts: The emphasis is on form (linguistic) and accuracy. The teacher's pedagogic purpose is to elicit from learners language structures so that she can evaluate them. In this context teacher closely controls the sequence of contributions and turn-taking

(b) Meaning and fluency contexts: There is maximization of learning opportunities.

Accuracy is no longer the focus. Fluency is encouraged and learners are given opportunities to express their views, opinions and feelings. As a result, interactional space increases as turn-taking and topic management are less controlled.

(c) Task-oriented contexts: learner-learner interaction is the main feature of this context. They use transactional language to accomplish a particular task.

(d) Procedural context: as the name suggests teachers give instructions for setting up a particular procedure. Here, learners are silent and teachers enjoy long turns.

Another study conducted by Seedhouse (1997) explored the role of repair and analysed the relationship between pedagogy and interaction. He identified different ways in which repair is organised and strategies that are used by teachers to correct verbal errors.

Seedhouse (1997:563) writes ‘that teachers perform a great deal of interactional work to avoid performing direct and overt negative evaluation of learner linguistic errors’.

Walsh (2006:59) evaluates this statement and comments that this, ‘indicates not only that teachers tend to avoid overt error correction, but, perhaps more significantly, that their choice of language and pedagogic purpose are in opposition. That is, although the teacher’s intention is to correct errors (pedagogic purpose), their choice of language seems to militate against this.’

Walsh (2006) goes on to discuss issues surrounding error correction. He explains that although ‘learners accept that error correction is an essential part of the language learning process, teachers seem to shy away from overt correction because they believe it is in some way “face-threatening” (Brown and Levinson, 1987)’. Teachers seem to justify this belief by stating that overt error correction in natural settings is

often unacceptable and embarrassing. Hence, overt error correction needs to be avoided inside the classroom as well. However, studies have reported that language learners, especially adults, want to be corrected inside the classroom. Therefore, if a teacher uses language very carefully in a situation where direct repair is required then her language will hinder repair.

The studies discussed above have all adopted a variable perspective of classroom discourse wherein the classroom is seen as a dynamic space. This space is made up of a number of contexts (plural) which are created, sustained and managed by the participants (teachers and learners). These studies have laid a lot of emphasis on the relationship that exists between:

1. pedagogic purposes and language use and
2. language used in interaction and learning.

Pavlenko and Lantolf (2000: 156) suggest that a variable approach adopted for studying classroom discourse helps in understanding 'language socialization' better.

Walsh (2006) argues that in the area of classroom interaction there is an absence of a common meta-language which can be used by researchers and practitioners alike. Each of these studies, for instance, has proposed different terminologies to talk about classroom discourse and interactional patterns. This issue has been addressed by Walsh (2006; 2011) in his proposed Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) framework which attempts to provide an agreed meta-language to talk about classroom interaction.

To summarise this section, in the beginning some of the well-known approaches to investigating L2 classroom interaction were discussed. Initially, the more traditional, quantitative instruments along with discourse analysis traditions were presented and

then qualitative and ethnographic methods like conversation analysis and variable approaches were discussed.

The Interaction Analysis (IA) which involved the use of observation or coding instruments was found suitable for teacher education (a few decades back) when ideas like teacher 'training' prevailed. It was also discussed that *ad hoc* approaches (Wallace, 1998) allows the participants to address their local contexts and meanings unlike IA.

Discourse analysis approaches are useful in identifying patterns of discourse and help in organizing them hierarchically but they are unable to present the collaborative nature of classroom discourse.

Conversation analysis is considered to be suitable to account for the interaction patterns of a specific institutional setting (such as an L2 classroom) where goals are predetermined and the interaction is multi-layered. Finally, a variable approach to study classroom interaction was discussed from the ethnomethodological tradition. It is regarded as more flexible as it takes into account the different contexts and considers the important relationship between language use and pedagogic purpose.

For the purpose of this study a combination of CA and a variable approach to investigate classroom interaction was adopted for the obvious strengths that they offer.

2.5 Second Language Acquisition Research

In this section ideas related to Second Language Acquisition (SLA) will be discussed in order to arrive at a holistic theoretical framework for this study. Studies in the area

of SLA have implications on classroom interaction and discourse. This section begins with the notions of input and interaction in SLA.

2.5.1 Input and interaction in SLA

The nature of the linguistic environment available to second language learners and its role in the learning process have been important issues for SLA researchers and language educators over the past few decades.

Research findings in first language acquisition inspired SLA researchers to explore the role of input in SLA. First language acquisition studies indicated that input given in the form of oral language which matches the language development level of learners may play a causal role in language acquisition. Moreover, early second language research on ‘foreigner talk’ (Clyne in Ritchie, W. and Bhatia, T.K., 1996; Ferguson, 1971) motivated a few SLA researchers to investigate these issues in classroom situations (Henzl, 1979; Hatch in Gallaway and Richards, 1994), and in natural communicative settings (Meisel, 1975 in Gallaway and Richards, 1994). Language modifications and modifications made to conversational interaction patterns by native speakers (NS) when addressing less proficient non-native speakers (NNS)—both in and outside classrooms have been of particular interest. Several studies have recorded the nature of these modifications, the conditions under which they occur, and their possible purposes. Recent research studies have also linked learning contexts and input/interaction features with SLA outcomes.

At this point it is relevant to discuss Ferguson’s ideas of baby talk and foreigner talk. Ferguson (1971) studied the issues of linguistic simplicity and noted that language which is directed to linguistically deficient individuals (for example, young children or non-native speakers of a language); native speakers (NS) make adjustments to their

speech in the areas of pronunciation, grammar and lexicon. Speech directed to young children was called baby talk (also known as motherese, caretaker speech) and speech used to talk to linguistically deficient non-native speakers (NNS) was called foreigner talk (FT). He tried to explore the similarities between these two types of speech.

Research literature in SLA suggest that language acquisition requires not just linguistic input but comprehensible linguistic input. Many studies have tried to understand the importance of input comprehensibility and how it can be achieved. The principal research concerns in these works have been the ways in which NS modify their speech to NNS (foreigner talk), the conditions which govern it, and the role of NNS in negotiating meaning.

1970s witnessed the beginning of research which investigated input in SLA. Almost a decade back initial works in the area of baby talk or ‘motherese’ in L1 acquisition had begun. The initial studies in SLA were socio-linguistically oriented and attempted to describe what Ferguson (1971) termed as one of the ‘conventionalized varieties of ‘simplified’ speech available to a speech community’ (i.e., the way native speakers addressed non-native speakers, or foreigner talk, FT). Other research was driven by the search for characteristics of ‘simple codes’ of different types, including foreigner talk, child language, pidgins, early L2 telegraphese, and lecture notes.

Ferguson (1971,1975) identified three main “simplifying” processes in the production of FT: omission, expansion, and replacement or rearrangement, as well as some “non-simplifying” techniques: elaboration, regularization, and attitude expression. Omission refers to dropping of articles, copulas, conjunctions, subject pronouns, and inflectional morphology. Expansion involves addition of such features as unanalysed tags to questions and the insertion of subject pronoun you in imperatives.

Replacement and rearrangement is found in NS speech in the form of uninverted questions, formation of negatives with no, conversion of possessive adjective-plus-noun to noun-plus-object pronoun constructions, and replacement of subject with object pronouns.

Majority of speech adjustments directed at non-native speakers are quantitative and result in grammatical input. Although there is considerable individual variation and certain inconsistencies exist across studies, FT in and out of classrooms tends to be well formed (Henzl,1979). It is also delivered more slowly than speech to native speakers. Grammatical FT exhibits variability and often uses shorter, syntactically or propositionally less complex utterances (Scarcella and Higa, 1981; Shortreed, 1993).

Ritchie and Bhatia (1996) explain that, 'FT is not always linguistically simpler (Long, 1980) and can occasionally even be more complex (Pica, Young and Doughty, 1987), and in such cases, comprehensibility is maintained by accompanying interactional adjustments and by the tendency for FT to be a more 'regular' and more redundant version of the target language than that intended for native speakers (Long, Ghambiar 1982).'

2.5.2 Input and interaction in second language classroom

Research studies and experiences of practitioners suggest that input is a very important factor in language learning. 'Input' refers to the language which the learners hear or read. In other words, input is the language that they are exposed to.

Before discussing the theoretical standpoints on input and interaction it would be relevant to bring in Halliday's three macrofunctions of language. Halliday (1985) proposes three ways of understanding interaction. He discusses interaction as a textual

activity, as an interpersonal activity and as an ideational activity. These three views on interaction are closely intertwined with the theories that will be discussed in this section.

Interaction as a textual activity refers to the use of linguistic and metalinguistic features to understand language input. The early studies in interaction considered it to be a textual activity. Hence, learners and their interlocutors modified the input at the level of phonology, syntax and vocabulary in order to maximise comprehension.

A well-known hypothesis that highlights the significance of simplified teacher talk and hence relates to the textual dimension of interaction is Krashen's Input hypothesis.

2.5.2.1 Comprehensible input

This is a term given by Krashen (1985). Comprehensible input claims that not all the target language to which second language learners are exposed to is understood by them. Only a portion of what the learners hear in the classroom is comprehensible to them. Krashen's (1985) hypothesis was that target language data which was understandable, with effort, and which was slightly more advanced than the second language learner's current level of understanding would promote learning. He termed this kind of input 'i+1', where the 'i' can represent the learner's current stage of interlanguage development and the 'i+1' indicates that the input is challenging but not impossible for the learner to cope with. Therefore with i+1 the learner has to make an effort for comprehension.

Corder (1967) provided a distinction between *input* and *intake*. Input refers to what is available to the learner, whereas intake refers to what is actually internalized (in

Corder's terms, 'taken in') by the learner. In other words, input is the language (in both spoken and written forms) to which the learner is exposed.

White (1987) noted empirical problems with the Input Hypothesis. Gregg (1984) questioned the testability of Krashen's claims. Researchers have pointed out a number of difficulties with the concept of comprehensible input 'i+1'. In the first place, the hypothesis does not specify as to how one should define levels of knowledge. Second, is the issue of quantity of input. Krashen states that there needs to be a sufficient quantity of appropriate input but what is sufficient quantity is difficult to arrive at. However, others continue to explore Krashen's initial ideas in order to arrive at a more precise claim.

Returning to Halliday's idea of interaction as a textual activity it is important to note the limitations of this view which considers interaction as a textual activity. As this view looks at the simplified nature of language use by teachers it tends to ignore the information that is shared in an interactional activity. Gass (1997) has questioned Krashen's claim that linguistic input can be made comprehensible without active participation of the learner. Research suggests that learner comprehension can be aided by input as well as interactional alterations. This idea is reflected in Halliday's second view of interaction as an interpersonal activity which is further contained in the Interaction hypothesis.

2.5.2.2 Interaction

In this section, Halliday's view of interaction as an interpersonal activity is reviewed. As the limitations of viewing interaction as textual activity (i.e. which primarily focussed on the linguistic input) came to the foreground, conversation and its role in language learning gained importance. In connection to this view of interaction as an

interpersonal activity two important theoretical positions need to be reviewed which came in the form of Interaction hypothesis and Output hypothesis.

In a series of studies which focused on the relationship between input, interaction and second language development and were conducted over a span of fifteen years, Long (1981) proposed Interaction hypothesis which he later revised in Long (1996).

2.5.2.3 Long's Interaction Hypothesis

Long's Interaction Hypothesis proposes that different resources made available for language learning come together most effectively when negotiation for meaning takes place. It suggests that negative feedback received by the learner during negotiation work or in other situations may positively contribute to L2 development, especially for vocabulary, morphology, and language-specific syntax, and is essential for learning certain L1-L2 contrasts.

Long (1996) suggests that 'negotiation for meaning and especially negotiation work that triggers interactional adjustments by the native speaker or a more competent interlocutor, facilitates acquisition because it connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways'.

Negotiation for meaning involves more of such utterances by the more competent speaker which is rich in repetitions, extensions, reformulations, rephrasings, expansions, and recasts. Interestingly, during the process of negotiation for meaning these above utterances are immediately followed by learner utterances which maintain reference to their meanings. Long (1996) concluded that 'increased comprehensibility that negotiation brings helps to reveal the meaning of new forms and so makes the forms themselves acquirable'.

In the context of negotiation of meaning, Long distinguishes between modified input and modified interaction. Modified input as the term suggests involves modifications of input like short utterances, fewer embedded clauses, repetition of nouns and verbs. Modified interaction on the other hand involves comprehension checks, confirmation checks and clarification requests as pointed out earlier. At this point, a brief discussion on negotiated interaction is desirable where these terms will also be discussed.

Negotiated interaction involves modifications that take place in conversations between native and second language learners or advanced non-native speakers and less proficient second language learners (for example, between a teacher and a student). These interactional adjustments are made to facilitate communication by employing a number of processes. Three of the most important processes are comprehension checks, confirmation checks and clarification checks.

Long (1983) and Chaudron (1988) explain these processes as follows:

‘A comprehension check is a teacher’s (or a more competent speaker’s) query to the learners to see if they have understood what was said. For example: ‘Do you understand?’, ‘Did you get what I am saying?’

A confirmation check allows a teacher to check if he/she has understood the learner correctly. For example, ‘Oh, so are you saying you did live in London?’

A clarification check is a request for further information or help to understand something that the second language learner has previously said. For example, ‘I don’t understand. What do you mean?’

These strategies help learners to focus on contextualised input which is aimed to match their level of understanding. In the process of interacting, learners have opportunities to negotiate meaning by getting further input.

Long(1983) proposed a model to show the relationship between negotiated interactions, comprehensible input and language acquisition. This can be presented diagrammatically:

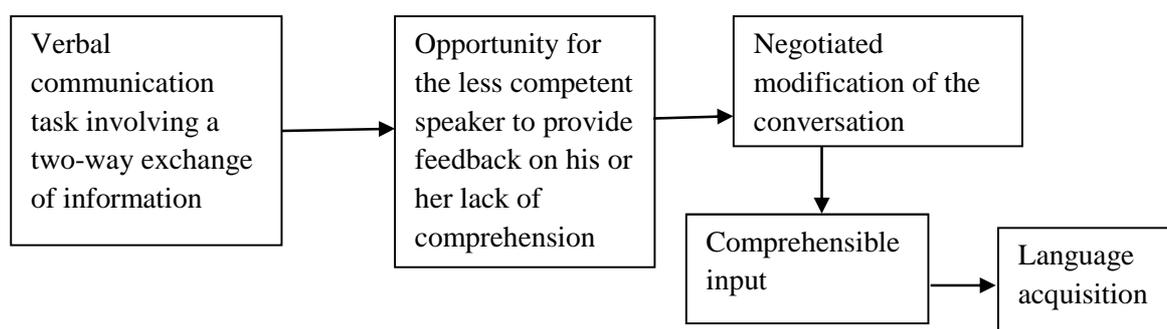


Figure 1: Long's model of relationship between type of conversational task and language acquisition (Long, 1983)

This model emphasises the importance of conversation (interaction) unlike Krashen for whom input was the focus.

In negotiation of meaning learners have to put in communicative and cognitive efforts. This in turn can bring out linguistic difficulties that the learner's may face. As mentioned earlier, negative feedback that learners receive through interactional modifications allow them to pay attention to some of their problem areas as far as linguistic features are concerned. Thus, negotiated interaction 'connects input, internal learner capacities, particularly selective attention, and output in productive ways' (Long, 1996:452).

2.5.2.4 Comprehensible output hypothesis

Initially output was not researched adequately because it was considered to be the final product. However, it was later found relevant to understand SLA. Swain (1985) proposed the output hypothesis which was based on her research with French immersion programmes in Canada.

Swain pointed out that the failure of French immersion students to reach native like levels might be due to the lack of enough genuine opportunity for them to participate in classroom conversation other than the typical response mode. She argued that production can push learners to analyse input grammatically and accuracy can be increased with the help of negative feedback. As suggested by Schachter (1983, 1984, 1986), confirmation checks, comprehension checks, clarification requests, and other modifications done as part of negotiation can make the learners realise the need for greater comprehensibility on their part. This can ensure that learners are pushed to have more control over internalised forms and this can facilitate acquisition (Nobuyoshi & Ellis, 1993).

Swain therefore proposes that language learners need to struggle with producing output which is comprehensible to their interlocutors if they have to learn to use the grammatical markers correctly in the target language. This would happen as a result of negotiations in the process of interacting as seen in Long's Model.

Swain (1995) provided three possible functions of output. The first is called the noticing function in which learners while trying to produce an output may realise that they have a linguistic problem and thus become aware of the gaps in their knowledge. This is similar to Long's argument of the positive effect of negative feedback received by learners through modified interaction.

The hypothesis-testing function of output refers to a situation where learners struggling to communicate get to experiment with forms and find out which is acceptable and which is not. At this stage the learner may fail to produce a correct output but shows efforts to test his/her hypothesis of a structure.

The metalinguistic function of output allows the learners to think consciously about the language system (rules at the level of phonology, grammar, syntax). This is expected to facilitate their production of utterances that are linguistically correct and acceptable communicatively.

Thus, Long's Interaction hypothesis and Swain's Output hypothesis relate to Halliday's second view of interaction as an interpersonal activity. Before moving on to the final view of interaction as an ideational activity it is significant to discuss the limitations of this view. Interaction as an inter-personal activity focuses on the relation between modified input, modified interaction and output. Surely, conversational modifications promote communication but negotiated interaction needs to be seen with a wider perspective than limiting it to just a linguistic concept. Negotiated interaction involves the individual, social, cultural and political factors which constitute the context of language interaction. This is in line with the view of interaction as an ideational activity which deals with this complex interplay of varied factors involved in second language development.

Interaction as an Ideational activity emphasises on the relationship that exists between the individual and the social. It also tries to understand how the social affects the individual. It recognises that ideas and emotions based on one's own experiences that participants bring into the learning process are also of great importance. Vygotskian approach to language acquisition captures the sociocognitive aspect of interaction.

According to him, social interaction plays an important role in language development. Vygotsky (1963) claims that meaning is constructed through social interaction. Thus, in case of language learners when they interact with other speakers of the target language and with themselves then social interaction occurs. This means that the learner needs to take active part in the process of learning through social interaction. For language development to occur their participation needs to be guided by competent speakers whose utterances should belong to the learners' Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD). The distance between the actual level of language development and the level of potential development is called ZPD. Ellis (1999:20) comments that in Vygotsky's sociocultural theory 'interaction is not just a device that facilitates learners' movement along the interlanguage continuum but a social event which helps learners participate in their own development, including shaping the path it follows.'

Having discussed the different aspects of interaction and how negotiated interaction is an important factor in promoting language learning it is important to note that for successful facilitation of negotiated interaction there needs to be a balanced application of interaction as textual, inter-personal and ideational activity. Thus, when interaction is seen holistically through these aspects, the teacher can then create a conducive learning environment in which learners are challenged enough to exploit their linguistic competence, fine tune their conversational resources and share their personal, individual experiences.

2.6 Classroom interaction and SLA

In this section evidence from research literature in support of the strong relationship between classroom interaction and SLA will be discussed.

Conversation is not considered to be an unimportant factor in language acquisition but it is considered to be an important device that sets the stage for acquisition to take place (Gass, 1997). Many researchers have suggested that the second language learning environment should include opportunities for learners to engage in meaningful interaction with competent speakers of the target language. An argument which one finds repeatedly in the literature is that meaningful interaction increases the possibility of a greater amount of input that becomes available to the learner. This results in an increase in learning opportunities which is required to initiate certain basic processes that are crucial for L2 development.

Interaction is considered to be at the heart of language acquisition, particularly the interaction that takes place between teachers and learners (Ellis, 1990, 1998). Effective teaching involves ‘successful management of the interaction’ (Allwright, 1984: 159). Moreover, the quality of interaction is largely determined by teachers during their face-to-face communication with the learners. As quality of interaction contributes to learning, it is important to optimise it rather than maximise it. To improve language learning in the classroom, appropriate interaction matching the desired learning outcomes has to be encouraged.

Walsh (2006) argues that an awareness of interactional processes is important for teachers and learners to understand how language is learnt in formal settings. Johnson (1995: 90) writes, ‘the teacher plays a crucial role in understanding, establishing and maintaining patterns of communication that will foster, to the greatest extent, both classroom learning and second language acquisition’.

Van Lier (1996) claims that ‘interaction is the most important element in the curriculum’. Ellis (2000) states that ‘learning arises not *through* interaction but *in*

interaction'. Broadly speaking, interaction needs to be understood to promote learning. Moreover, the lack of empirical evidence for the contribution of learner-learner interaction to SLA (Foster 1998), there is an increasing awareness that the teacher has an important role to play in shaping learner contributions (Jarvis and Robinson, 1997).

Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996) and Swain's Output Hypothesis (1995, 2005) have been modified in recent years to acknowledge and redefine the role of the teacher in constructing knowledge and understanding. Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996) has been adjusted to take into account the importance of negotiation for meaning in the feedback that the learners receive on their contributions from the teacher. Swain in her latest version of Output hypothesis takes up a socio-cultural dimension in order to highlight the importance of teacher-learner dialogues in promoting acquisition. Smith *et al.* (2004), while looking at the primary L1 context emphasises the importance of 'interactive whole-class teaching'.

Thus, even in the most learner-centered class, the teacher is instrumental in managing the interaction (Johnson, 1995). Therefore, there is a need to enable teachers to gather 'microscopic understanding' (Van Lier, 2000) of the interactional organisation of the L2 classroom.

Walsh (2006) states that managing interaction entails far more than modifying input for learners. Simplified input (Krashen, 1986), like peer interaction, will not in itself result in SLA; comprehensible input is an 'insufficient condition for second language acquisition to occur' (Glew,1998). Long (in Ritchie & Bhatia,1996) states that 'environmental support in the form of comprehensible input is necessary for language learning, but insufficient for learning certain specifiable aspects of a L2'. He argues

that in some cases comprehensible input may actually hinder learning, because it is often possible to understand a message without understanding all the structures and lexical items of the target language. 'Linguistic redundancy, contextual information and knowledge of the world can compensate for the unknown elements. Learners may not notice new forms because at the global level the message is comprehensible. As a result, their attention may be directed elsewhere' (ibid).

Ellis (1998) discusses that quality interaction which is 'acquisition rich' has to be initiated, managed and sustained by teachers through careful and informed management of turn-taking sequences that occur in face to face communication.

Based on the studies which highlight the importance of interactive processes in acquisition one may claim that teachers as well as learners need to gain a comprehensive understanding of the interactive processes that facilitate learning. Walsh (2006) states that effective interaction does not take place on its own. It is not even the function of the teaching methodology. In fact, interaction in an acquisition rich classroom is initiated and sustained by the teacher.

He further argues that interaction facilitates SLA. Understanding the ways in which classroom talk is carried out is crucial to an understanding of the role of interaction in SLA. In the formal context, learners interact in a number of ways: with each other, with the teacher, with the materials being used, with their level of interlanguage and with their own thought processes (Hatch,1983). SLA occurs through interaction that takes place 'between the learner's mental abilities and the linguistic environment' (Glew,1998).

While interacting with others, learners are forced to modify their speech in order to ensure that understanding takes place. According to Long (1996), SLA is promoted

when, through communication breakdown, learners have to negotiate for meaning. By asking for clarification and confirming comprehension (key features of Long's interaction hypothesis) it is argued that acquisition occurs.

Researchers have often been interested in the 'social process of negotiation of meaning' (Pica, 1997). Negotiation encourages learners to provide each other with comprehensible input, to give and receive feedback on contributions and to modify and restructure utterances so that meanings are made clear. Moreover, negotiation of meaning has been found to be helpful in the acquisition of new vocabulary, in encouraging learners to reformulate their contributions and in bringing learners' interlanguage in line with the target language (Long, 1996, Gass and Varonis, 1985, 1994; Pica, 1996).

As mentioned earlier in the more recent version of Interaction Hypothesis Long highlights the importance of a more competent interlocutor in making input comprehensible, enhancing learner attention and in encouraging learner output. This will be discussed in greater detail in the next section which deals with the teacher's role in classroom interaction.

Negotiated interaction has been discussed briefly in section 2.5.2.3. However a detailed discussion on negotiation of meaning is important to understand the different devices which are employed in the negotiation process. This section will end with a brief discussion on feedback and how it facilitates language learning.

2.6.1 Negotiation of meaning

Long (1996:418) states that, 'Negotiation of meaning is the process in which, in an effort to communicate, learners and competent speakers provide and interpret signals

of their own and their interlocutor's perceived comprehension, thus provoking adjustments to linguistic form, conversational structure, message content, or all the three, until an accepted level of understanding is achieved.'

Among many of the devices employed in the negotiation process some are repetitions, confirmations, reformulations, comprehension checks, confirmation checks, clarification requests. Long (1981) describes 'decomposition' as a strategy used by native speakers to avoid or to deal with conversation breakdown. These need to be used strategically in order to avoid problems during conversations and to repair communication breakdowns when they occur (Long, 1983; Gass and Varonis,1985). All of these processes have been identified more in native speaker and non-native speaker conversation than native speaker and native speaker conversation (Ellis,1985, Pica & Doughty,1985), in two-way tasks rather than one-way tasks (Pica,1987), on unfamiliar tasks or unfamiliar interlocutors (Gass and Varonis,1985), with mixed rather than same proficiency interlocutors (Porter,1983 in Ritchie,W. & Bhatia,T.K., 1996).

Various other interactional modifications have been commonly observed. In FT conversational topics are dealt with simplicity and brevity. Even the kinds of topics may vary owing to cultural reasons. In FT topic sequences are less predictable and topic shifts may happen more abruptly (Scarcella, 1983).

Negotiation acts like a catalyst which hastens the learning process as it focuses on incorrect forms. It also allows learners to look for additional confirmatory or non-confirmatory evidence.

Class-based studies of negotiation of meaning have revealed that learners' ability to negotiate meaning is related to their proficiency level in the target language.

According to Ellis (1998), teacher's control over the discourse blocks negotiation. This is prevalent in settings where traditional teacher and learner roles prevail.

Musumeci (1996) reported the lack of sustained negotiations in language classrooms. If learners are unable to formulate, reformulate, clarify and seek clarification then it is highly questionable as to whether language acquisition is taking place at all. Teachers are often in the habit of 'filling in gaps'. This may present a coherent and flowing discourse, but it takes away opportunities for learning. Musumeci (1996: 321) states that, 'negotiation must be regarded as an important component of the learning experience [and] cannot be interpreted as repair of imperfect or failed communication'.

Thus, there is a need to encourage negotiated interaction in L2 classroom in order to facilitate language development. Thus, teachers as well as learners need to deploy more and more devices for interactional modifications while negotiating meanings.

Studies (Long, 1981; Pica, Young and Doughty, 1987) have reported that learners who are exposed to linguistically unmodified input but get opportunities to negotiate meaning exhibit better comprehension than learners who are exposed to modified, simplified input but are not allowed negotiation of meaning.

2.6.2 Feedback and SLA

Research literature in SLA suggests that feedback given during negotiated interaction acts as a source of learning. Feedback can be explicit or implicit. Classroom interaction tries to get learner's attention to particular aspects of language which can then get integrated into the learner's developing language system.

A few studies of feedback have suggested that feedback received through negotiation acts as a corrective function (Gass and Varonis, 1985; Pica, Holliday, Lewis and Morgenthaler, 1989). In the latter study the authors reported the first systematic evidence that learners respond differently to different types of feedback. In their study the focus was on the signals from NS to NNS for their errors. They found that the greatest amount of modification came in response to clarification requests as opposed to seeking clarification through modelling. This suggests that NNS is obliged to make the actual correction, which in itself is a facilitator for acquisition.

Lightbrown (1992) compared corrective feedback provided by teachers immediately after the occurrence of an error in a communicative activity versus feedback on audio-lingual drills or pure practice activities. She found that in both cases learners were able to self-correct. However, only in the first case the self-correction was incorporated into their second language systems as they found that the targeted form was also used outside the classroom.

Recast is an implicit form of feedback. Philip (1999 in Gass and Selinker, 1994) defines recast as ‘a reformulation of an incorrect utterance that maintains the original meaning of the utterance.’

There have been various studies on recast in second language literature which focus on both experimental as well as theoretical concerns (Nicholas, Lightbrown, and Spada, 2001; R. Ellis and Sheen, 2006; Long, 2007; Mackey and Goo, 2007). However, some claim that as recasts are an indirect form of correction, it is not clear to what extent they have a facilitative effect on acquisition.

A number of studies have suggested that there is a positive effect of recasts on later learning. Han (2002) reported that recasts can be beneficial if the following four

conditions are met: ‘individualized attention, consistent focus, developmental readiness and intensity’. McDonough (2007) in a study that looked at acquisition of past tense in an interactive context, compared clarification requests and recasts and found both to have a positive influence on the acquisition of past tense form.

Some researchers are convinced that comprehensible input and negotiation of meaning do not ensure SLA. Learners should also get opportunities to speak. Comprehensible output (Swain, 1985) in the form of practice opportunities is as important as comprehensible input. Bygate (1988) reinforces this point. He suggests that speaking may be more important to the process of SLA than comprehensible input.

In this section the nature of input in SLA was discussed. This was done in order to understand teacher’s input in the classroom which is supposed to enhance acquisition. The discussion on FT is useful in setting the background for teacher talk. In a formal ESL context the teacher takes the role of a NS or a more competent interlocutor. Krashen’s input hypothesis, Long’s interaction hypothesis and Swain’s output hypothesis all contribute to one’s understanding of interaction in SLA. The importance of negotiation of meaning was highlighted. While attempting to communicate, learners and speakers need to ‘negotiate’ the form of the messages until they are ‘comprehensible’. Krashen and Long argued that ‘comprehensibility’ is crucial in determining whether the spoken language acts as input for the learners. Swain contends that comprehensible input is necessary but not sufficient for language learning. She argues that along with input there must also be ‘comprehensible output’ for SLA to occur. Research suggests that negotiation for meaning which is at the heart of classroom interaction accelerates language acquisition. Feedback and recasts can also have a positive effect on acquisition. Therefore, there is a need for learners as

well as teachers to be aware of the interactional processes of the classroom in order to make the classroom environment 'acquisition rich' and improve the teaching learning process.

2.7 Teacher's role in classroom interaction

In this section evidence available in the literature in support of a teacher's significant role in enhancing classroom interaction will be presented. The nature of teacher talk will also be discussed along with the importance of making teachers aware of the language that they use in the classroom.

Classroom interaction is now considered to be an integral part of the language curriculum (Van Lier, 1996). There is also an increasing awareness that the teacher has an important role to play in shaping learner contributions. To account for the teachers' role in classroom interaction, theories in SLA are now being modified. For example, Long's Interaction Hypothesis (1996) was modified to take into consideration the importance of negotiation for meaning in the feedback learners got for their contributions from the teacher. A socio-cultural perspective was adopted by Swain to modify her Output Hypothesis (Swain 1995, 2005) which places a lot of importance on teacher-learner dialogues in promoting acquisition. Smith *et al.* (2004) underline the importance of dialogue in creating 'interactive whole class teaching'. Johnson(1995) argues that even in the most student-centered class, the teacher plays the most important role in managing the interaction. It is therefore important to facilitate teacher's understanding of the interactional organization of the L2 classroom.

Dornyei and Malderes (1997) and Foster (1998) question the effectiveness of peer interaction and its role in contributing to acquisition. Rampton (1999) has expressed doubts about the positive impact of learner-learner interaction on SLA.

Selinker, Swain, and Dumans(1975) have shown that even in immersion classes that were structured in ways that apparently worked well for second language learning, learners developed many permanent interlanguage features which were erroneous due to their exposure to the “junk input data” in peer interactions.

Walsh (2006) puts forward a strong argument in favour of teacher’s role in classroom interaction. He points out that interactive classrooms where learners are engaged in task-based learning surely promotes learner independence. However, often there are problems with tasks which have little or no supervision on the part of the teacher. For example, learners may not take the task seriously, make extensive use of L1, withdraw from the task, dominate the discussion or under perform. Therefore, he argues that the interaction in the classroom needs to be supervised or monitored in some way. The teacher’s role to listen carefully and to feed in language becomes necessary. Writers have observed that it is not necessary that classrooms where teacher plays a ‘scaffolding role’ (which includes monitoring, supervising and feeding in language as it is needed) is inferior to those in which learners work independently. Ellis (1999:228) comments that, ‘viewing classroom in terms of how much opportunity there is for learners to take charge of interactions constitutes a powerful way of evaluating how acquisition-rich a classroom is.’

Breen (1998:119) writes that even in classrooms which are democratic in nature, it is the teacher who ‘orchestrates the interaction’.

Kumaravadivelu (2003) suggests that the implications of negotiated interaction impacts language teaching through talk management and topic management. Both of these cannot happen without the teacher. He writes, ‘...moving beyond the narrow confines of conversational adjustments such as comprehension checks, confirmation checks and clarification requests, the concept of negotiated interaction has to be extended to include propositional content as well as the procedural conduct of participatory discourse.’ He, therefore, suggests that classroom interaction has to result in creation of opportunities for the learners to share their own individual viewpoints on issues that they can relate with.

He further explains that the above argument suggests, ‘...that teachers should seek to promote negotiated interaction by yielding to the learners reasonable degree of control over what Allwright (1981) has called the management of learning.’

According to him, management of learning mainly constitutes of talk management which means management of how the learners talk and topic management which is the management of what they talk about. These concepts will now be discussed in greater detail in order to emphasise the importance of teacher’s role in facilitating meaningful interaction.

2.7.1 Talk management

Van Lier (1988) defines talk management as the ‘activity’ of classroom discourse. It refers to the ways in which the participants conduct their classroom conversation in order to achieve their immediate learning goals. The structure of information exchange determines the way in which the talk is managed. In other words, the types of questions asked and the kinds of responses determine how it is controlled.

The IRF sequence is considered to be the most commonly found structure of information exchange where I stands for teacher initiation, R for learner response and F is the feedback provided by the teacher. This structure doesn't allow learners to interact freely or to genuinely communicate and express their ideas. In classrooms where the teacher tightly controls the talk it gives rise to an IRF sequence dominated interaction which is extremely limited.

Negotiated interaction helps teachers to break the IRF pattern as teachers engage in jointly generating meaningful classroom talk. For example, the teacher's questions may try to elicit learner responses which are based on their own opinions and interpretations and not facts directly taken from textbook. The teacher encourages the learner to struggle to express by providing linguistic and paralinguistic cues. In classrooms where negotiated interaction is missing the teachers end up answering their own questions or they stop with the first 'correct' response. This does not allow opportunities for other learners to stretch their linguistic repertoire and take part in classroom discourse. Asking more referential questions that seek information and allow open-ended answers facilitate meaningful interaction as compared to asking display questions that restrict teachers and learners to exhibit their linguistic competence only. Kumaravadivelu (2003) points out that asking referential questions alone need not break the IRF chain. Teachers need to pay attention to the meanings of the responses rather than treat questions and responses in a routinized and ritualized manner. Thornbury (1996) states that, ritualised responses even within a referential question-answer framework, 'anchors the classroom discourse firmly in the traditional IRF camp' and suggest that 'it doesn't matter what you say so long as you pronounce it properly.' Real negotiated interaction can take place only if teachers focus on the meaning contained in the learners' responses rather than evaluate it linguistically and

move on. Teachers need to connect their talk management with effective topic management.

2.7.2 Topic management

In early phases of research in the area of interactional studies Hatch (1978) suggested that when learners were given freedom to nominate topics it provided an effective basis for interactional opportunities. Later Van Lier (1988) highlighted the significance of ‘topicalization’ a process by which ‘learners take up something the teacher or another learner says and (attempt to) make it into the next topic’ (Kumaravadivelu,2006: 119). Ellis (1992) discusses several advantages of letting learners have control over the topic. Linguistic complexity of the input can be tailored to the learner’s own level. It can also create better opportunities for negotiating meaning when a communicative problem occurs and it can also facilitate the production of more complex and extensive output on the part of the learner. Slimani (1989) reported that learners benefitted more from self-and peer-nominated topics than from teacher-nominated topics. While investigating ‘uptake’ which is defined as what learners claim to have learned from a lesson, she found that even in classes where mostly the teacher initiated the discourse ‘the topicalizations which provoked more attention and attracted more claims from more people were initiated by learners themselves’ (Slimani, 1989:228). This study shows that self- and peer- nominated topics are likely to create and sustain motivation among the learners and give them a sense of freedom and achievement in taking some control of the classroom discourse. She also found that even those learners who did not directly participate in the interaction by initiating a response even they benefitted unknowingly from their peers’ contributions. Thus, it not only results in increased opportunity for practice but also enables acquisition.

In topic as well as turn management the teacher plays a crucial role. It cannot be denied that the structure of information exchanged (whether it will be IRF or not) to a large extent depends on the teacher, his/her questions, ways to manage turns and the degree of freedom he/she allows to let learners take over topic nomination.

Research conducted in the area of social interaction in the formal L2 context indicates a need among language teachers to develop a less prominent, yet an influential position (Walsh, 2003). From this point of view, rather than taking a back seat or handing over to learners, teachers need to be empowered to facilitate, monitor and evaluate student contributions, while paying closer attention to the ways in which teacher's language contributes to the language learning process. This suggests that constant refinements can be made to the quantity, quality and function of teacher input in relation to desired learning outcomes.

Research in the area of corrective feedback in the recent years has focused on studying 'recasts' (as discussed earlier) or the ways in which learners' contributions are reshaped, reformulated or refined by a teacher (Lyster, 1998, Long, 1998, Markee, 2000). According to Long (1998):

'Corrective recasts are responses which, although communicatively oriented and focussed on meaning rather than form, incidentally reformulate all or part of a learner's utterance, thus providing relevant morphosyntactic information that was obligatory but was either missing or wrongly supplied, in the learner's rendition, while retaining its central meaning'.

The teacher's ability to recast a learner's utterance is, then, something that is highly likely to influence the process of SLA. Therefore, raising teachers' awareness of the

use of 'recasts' and how they can be exploited optimally for language learning becomes an essential aspect of any study on classroom interaction.

This section will be closed by discussing turn distribution and turn taking which also form an important part of classroom interaction. When the teacher calls upon a particular learner to talk it is called 'a direct nomination' or 'personal solicit'. Sometimes teacher may not specify any one person's name instead she may decide to keep it open for learners to volunteer. This is termed as 'general solicit'. Teachers may call upon some learners more frequently than others and some learners may choose to talk more often without being nominated. As a result, some learners may not get a chance to talk at all. Thus, turn taking and distribution can also effect learner participation to a great degree and hence may have an impact on classroom interaction. Undoubtedly teachers play an important role in turn distribution.

As mentioned earlier research studies have suggested that increasing student-student interaction is not in itself sufficient for SLA opportunities to be maximised. Indeed, there is now some evidence that supports the view that opportunities for SLA are increased when learners are engaged in direct interaction and negotiation of meaning with the teacher (Jarvis and Robinson, 1997; Foster, 1998).

2.7.3 Teacher talk

Whether it is content classes or language classes, general observation reveals that teacher talk typically amounts to one half to three quarters of the talking in classrooms. Talk is one of the most important ways by which the teacher conveys information to the learner and also a major way to control classroom behaviour. Therefore, it becomes extremely important to be aware of what constitutes teacher talk and what its role is in facilitating language learning in the classroom.

Studies in the area of L2 learning and teaching have pointed out the significance of talk in the learners' comprehension of linguistic input to which they are exposed. Swain and Lapkin (1998) concluded on the basis of an experimental study that dialogue 'provides both the occasion for language learning and evidence for it.'

In Second Language Acquisition literature, the speech which is typically addressed to the learners is often called 'foreigner talk' (as discussed earlier) it has been found to be modified in systematic ways. It is generally slower paced, more clearly said, syntactically less complex as compared to speech addressed to native speakers or proficient L2 users. The teacher also modifies her speech to the learners to facilitate comprehension and interaction in the classroom. In this section, how speech is modified by the teacher will be discussed which is also known as teacher talk.

Interestingly, just like foreigner talk, a teacher dealing with a group of second language learners knows how to judge the learners' level of language proficiency and pitches the complexity of her own speech in such a way that it suits the learners. Gaies (1977) reported that in classroom speech with learners the teachers modified their speech considerably. He observed that the syntactic complexity was low in the teachers' speech in beginning level classes and increased in a regular way with each subsequent level of instruction.

Gaies' observation of the increasing complexity of the teachers' speech relative to their learners' proficiency levels can be linked to Krashen's idea of $i+1$; the idea that the optimal input is just slightly higher than the learners' present level of interlanguage development.

A number of studies have reported that the language to which second language learners are exposed to in the classroom is often different from the language they will

encounter in talking to native speakers outside the classroom. Long and Sato (1983) in their study focussed on teachers' use of display and referential questions. The study also compared teachers' and native speakers' use of comprehension checks, clarification checks and confirmation checks.

Some of the important findings of the study are as follows:

ESL teachers used more display than referential questions in their classrooms. Also when this was compared to the native speakers' speech it was found that the teachers used more display questions than the native speakers did.

The teachers used more command forms or imperative, statements and fewer questions than the native speakers.

The teachers' speech was more oriented to the actual classroom context ('here and now'). They used more number of comprehension checks as compared to the native speakers. Interestingly, there were fewer clarification requests and confirmation checks when compared to the native speakers.

This study concluded that there was a need to provide more opportunities for genuine communication inside the classroom and that classroom interaction must allow learners to negotiate meaning.

2.7.4 Characteristics of teacher talk

Wong-Fillmore in Gass & Madden(1985) points out that how classes are organised and how interactional events are structured determine to a large extent the nature of language that students hear and use in the classroom. She talks about two types of classrooms: teacher-directed and open (or students-centered) classrooms.

Wong-Fillmore (ibid) discusses the characteristics of teacher talk that works as input for learners in classroom. In her study the students were limited English speaking (LEP) students. She reports that language learning seemed to occur when students tried to figure out what their teachers and peers were saying and also when teachers provided them with enough extralinguistic cues to make sense of the conversations. Modifications were made in order to give learners more access to the meanings of messages that speakers wanted to communicate to them. She also found out that teacher talk emphasised more on communication and comprehension. She also reported that in the lessons observed ungrammatical or reduced FT forms were never used. The language used by the teachers was entirely grammatical and appropriate. The teacher talk in the successful classrooms also showed the use of appropriate register in accordance to the activity. The register that was used in these lessons was instructional language. It was precise, expository and the purpose was to convey information. Another feature of teacher talk was repetitiveness. Repetitions were not always identical and slight modifications were also made while repeating a sentence. Paraphrases were also frequently used in teacher talk.

Teacher talk was also directed to increase learner participation. Another important aspect of interaction is managing turn-allocation procedures during lessons. Researchers have reported that teacher's ability to ask questions also influences the interactional patterns of a language class. Thus, questions which elicit yes/no responses are not considered to be as effective as open-ended ones. The latter calls for higher level of control over structures, forms, and language. Teachers often tailor their questions to fit the levels of proficiency of individual learners.

Another feature of teacher talk reported in successful classrooms was that of richness of language. Teachers often tended to use language in ways that called attention to the language itself.

As mentioned in the previous section, teachers modify their speech to the learners to facilitate interaction. Chaudron(1988) found that language teachers typically modify four aspects of their speech. Vocabulary is simplified and idiomatic phrases are avoided. Second, grammar is simplified through the use of shorter, simpler utterances and increased use of present tense. Third, pronunciation is modified by the use of slower, clearer speech and by more widespread use of standard forms. Finally, Chaudron also found that teachers make increased use of gestures and facial expressions. It is worthy to mention that speech modifications identified by Chaudron in an L2 context can be compared very closely with the ones made by parents when talking to young children acquiring their first language. Typically, simpler vocabulary, shorter sentences and fewer idiomatic expressions are used along with exaggerated facial expressions and gestures.

Another important study on teacher's discourse is that of Tardif (1994). He talks about five modification strategies. These are self-repetition, linguistic modelling, providing information, expanding an utterance and using extensive elicitation. Each of these plays a unique role in the discourse and needs to be used strategically according to desired outcomes. Findings of this work match with that of Long and Sato (1983). They concluded that when the teacher modifies her speech, she frequently uses expansion and question strategies.

Scaffolding is now considered to be an important part of teacher's discourse. In scaffolding teacher provides appropriate linguistic help to the learners so that they can express themselves.

Teachers modify their interaction in various ways. Lynch (1996) outlines the following modification strategies which are similar to the modifications found in FT. These include confirmation checks which help teachers to make sure that they have understood the learner; comprehension checks help teachers to ensure that learners have understood the teacher; repetition; clarification requests involves asking for clarification; reformation is nothing but rephrasing what the learner has said; completion, which is completing a learner's contribution; and backtracking which refers to going back to an earlier part of a dialogue.

Walsh (2006:13) notes that 'the interactional features identified by Lynch are essentially descriptors of teacher talk given by an outside observer/researcher. Their real value to learning can be appreciated when they become interactional strategies, used consciously and

deliberately to bring about intended learning outcomes. Sensitizing teachers to the purposeful use of interactional strategies to facilitate learning opportunities in relation to intended pedagogic goals is, arguably, central to the process of SLA'.

Van Lier(1996) is of the opinion that teachers have to be in control of their teaching methodology and language use. This can ensure, to a certain degree, optimal learning in the classroom.

This awareness about the relationship between teacher talk, interaction and learning opportunity is crucial to facilitating learning opportunities (Walsh, 2002). This will also help learners not to ‘get lost in the discourse’ (Breen, 1998).

2.7.5 Interaction and teaching

Walsh (2011) discusses a few strategies which can help teachers to create opportunities for learning by conscious use of language in the classroom.

Direct error correction

Walsh (2011) suggests that in fluency practice activities the teacher needs to keep error correction to minimum and encourage learners to express themselves. Where error correction is most desirable it is recommended that it is done openly and directly without consuming much time and allowing the learner to spontaneously express the meaning and not get too worried about grammatical explanations. Some teachers tend to be too ‘sensitive’ while correcting errors. This can be time consuming and can break the thought that the learner is trying to express. Walsh (2011) writes, ‘Maximum economy is used when correcting errors and the teacher opts for a very open and direct approach to error correction, as preferred by learners (Seedhouse, 1997)’.

Content feedback

Another strategy that Walsh (2011) encourages teachers to use is to focus on content feedback than form focussed feedback. Genuine and spontaneous communication can be encouraged in the classroom by providing feedback on the message rather than the form. He mentions that while evaluating learners’ contributions teachers often forget to react appropriately to the content and are more preoccupied with the form or

grammatical structure. Thus, expressing personal reactions, appropriate facial expressions and even use of humour to react to a learner's contribution can facilitate interaction in the classroom. For instance, if a teacher's pedagogic purpose is 'to provide oral fluency practice' then her use of conversational language is appropriate and thus her pedagogic goal and language use are in concordance.

Checking for confirmation

Musumeci (1996) reported that teachers who accepted the first learner contribution, who did not seek clarification and failed to check for confirmation were unable to maximise opportunities for learning than those who did. Such efforts made on the part of the teacher ensure that the interaction is genuine and learners are motivated to communicate.

Extended wait-time

This term refers to the time that the teachers give to the learners to respond to a question. Research has shown that extending wait time increases both the quality and quantity of learner responses.

Scaffolding

This strategy involves more than error correction. It helps the teacher to deal with communication breakdown which is part of L2 classroom discourse. Scaffolding is a way in which the teacher provides the required linguistic support to the learner at the most opportune moment. Intervening too often and too early can have a negative effect on learner contribution. Thus, teachers need to pre-empt breakdown and provide the missing language to the learner when he/she is struggling to find the appropriate phrase, word or communication strategy.

Research literature in the area of classroom discourse highlights the importance of quality teacher talk than reducing teacher talk time quantitatively. Teacher's pedagogic goals need to be in tune with her language use to maximise meaningful interaction. Appropriate use of language needs to be encouraged than reducing teacher talk time using quantitative means.

2.8 Reflection and reflective practice

This section discusses ideas related to the concept of reflection and reflective practice. These will further feed into the theoretical framework for this study.

Being reflective enhances teachers' lifelong professional development, enabling them to critique teaching and make better-informed teaching decisions. This is a widely accepted view in language teacher education contexts. However, few critics argue that when it comes to practice it is not all that clear. They claim that this is partly because the term reflective practice is used in connection with a variety of teacher-learning activities and also because the actual nature of reflection, like other cognitive skills, seems to remain elusive. According to Noffke and Brennan (2005), 'Reflective practice has become something of a slogan term'.

Broadly speaking, reflective practice is often described as a learning process where experience is at its core which further helps in gaining insights into self and professional practice (Boud *et al* 1985; Boud and Fales, 1983; Mezirow, 1981, Jarvis, 1992). Reflective practice demands a critical examination of assumptions surrounding everyday practice. The main aim of reflective practice is to encourage practitioners to go back to their experiences and critically think about them to acquire new understandings, fresh perspectives and hence use them for future practice. This is seen as contributing to the process of life-long learning. For engaging in a discussion

surrounding these concepts it is essential to first define the terms 'reflection' and 'reflective practice'.

2.8.1 Scope and definition of reflection

The concept of reflection is presented with the help of a number of words that are in practice. Some of the terms used commonly and interchangeably are 'reflection', 'reflective learning', 'reflective writing' and 'reflective practice'. Moon(2004) comments that reflection as a process seems to lie around the notion of learning and thinking. She discusses the other terms as well. Reflective learning as a term emphasizes the intention to learn as a result of reflection. 'Reflective writing' does not directly refer to what goes on inside one's head during reflection but it represents the process within a chosen medium which is writing.

Ideas regarding the importance of reflection in learning especially workplace learning became prominent in the professional education literature in the 1980s. 'Reflective practice' is a phrase that came into active use as a result of Schon's works (1983,1987).Others who contributed to use this were Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985),Brookfield (1987),Kemmis (1985), Merizow(1981). Although these writers were writing from different perspectives they all suggested that practitioners could develop their work by thinking critically about their actions 'Reflective practice' highlights the use of reflection in professional or other complex activities as a means of coping with situations that are ill-structured and/or unpredictable. The concept of reflective practice was first developed in nursing and teacher education and now it is being extended to other professions. Essentially it is a professionalized form of 'reflective learning', but as Lyons, (in Moon, 2004) points out any kind of definition has remained problematic.

Reflection is an activity that is often applied to complex issues. The content of reflection is largely what one already knows. It is often a process of re-organizing knowledge and emotional orientations in order to achieve further insights.

Moon (2004:82) provides a definition of reflection as follows:

‘Reflection is a form of mental processing---like a form of thinking—that we may use to fulfil a purpose or to achieve some anticipated outcome or we may simply ‘be reflective’ and then an outcome can be unexpected. Reflection is applied to relatively complicated, ill-structured ideas for which there is not an obvious solution and is largely based on the further processing of knowledge and understanding that we already process.’

Moon (2004:84) suggests the following outcomes as the result of reflective processes:

- ‘Learning, knowledge and understanding;
- Some form of action;
- A process of critical review;
- Personal and continuing professional development
- Reflection on the process of learning or personal functioning (metacognition);
- The building of theory from observations in practice situations;
- The making of decisions/resolution of uncertainty, the solving of problems; empowerment and emancipation;
- Unexpected outcomes (e.g., images, ideas that could be solutions to dilemmas or seen as creative activity);

- Emotion (that could be outcome or can be part of the process)
- Clarification and the recognition that there is a need for further reflection
- These factors link reflection with the process of learning.’

Moon (2004:84)

Smyth (1992:285) writes, ‘The term “reflective practice” carries multiple meanings that range from the idea of professionals engaging in solitary introspection to that of engaging in critical dialogue with others. Practitioners may embrace it occasionally in formal, explicit ways or use it more fluidly in ongoing, tacit ways’.

Some thinkers have defined reflective practice as something that helps individuals to adopt a thinking approach to practice. Few others consider it to involve meticulously structured and crafted approaches which enable an individual to become reflective about one’s own experiences in practice. In the context of teacher education, Larrivee (2000:293) states that, ‘Unless teachers develop the practice of critical reflection, they stay trapped in unexamined judgments, interpretations, assumptions, and expectations. Approaching teaching as a reflective practitioner involves fusing personal beliefs and values into a professional identity’.

Many researchers have identified reflection as being the base of professional identity. Being reflective is considered by some as being professionally motivated.

2.8.2 Research findings and different views on reflection

Dewey (1933, 1938) was one of the first to highlight the importance of reflection and term it as a ‘specialised form of thinking’. According to him, reflection has its root in doubt, confusion and perplexity which is connected to a real experience. Sinclair

(1998) comments that for him, it is this state of doubt and perplexity which prompts a focused enquiry and resolve to find a solution. Dewey (1933:1938) distinguished between routine action and reflective action in teaching which highlighted the importance of teachers reflecting systematically upon their working contexts, resources, and actions and applying what they learned from reflection in their everyday and long-term decision making. He proposed that reflective teaching involved being constantly on the alert to the circumstances of teaching and the implications of issues arising during teaching. He argued that teachers were responsible for all aspects of their teaching and their consequences. He identified three essential teaching qualities, ‘teachers should listen to all points of view (open-mindedness), be alert to all the consequences of their actions (responsibility), and have these qualities at the core of their being and actions (wholeheartedness)’ (ibid).

He conceptualised reflection as something that encouraged individuals to move from routine action or thinking to reflective action which has the ability to challenge given knowledge structures. His conception of reflection is rooted in experience and practice. Dewey suggested that reflection allows individuals to hypothesise and then through trial and error test one’s ideas and evolve a set of action plans.

These ideas provided by Dewey formed the base for ‘reflective practice’ which became extremely influential due to Schon’s (1983) work called *The reflective practitioner: how professionals think in action*.

In his work Schon suggested ways which would allow practitioners to raise their awareness of implicit knowledge and use their experiences for learning.

As discussed in section 1.6, Schon (1983,1987) provided a distinction between reflection-in-action and reflection-on-action. Reflection-in-action refers to reflective

thinking while doing an action and reflection-on-action involves thinking after the event is over. This suggests that teachers make judgments and decisions in the classroom all the time. He argued that teachers' decisions while teaching must draw on knowledge and previous experience of some kind and considered the division between theory and practice to be false.

For Schon, reflection-in-action was at the heart of 'professional artistry', a concept that he described as being contrastive to the idea of 'technical-rationality'. Schon is of the view that technical-rationality cannot find answers to the dilemma of 'rigour versus relevance' which professionals face. Finlay (2008:4) provides a precise summary of Schon's argument, 'Professional practice is complex, unpredictable and messy. In order to cope, professionals have to be able to do more than follow set procedures. They draw on both practical experience and theory as they think on their feet and improvise. They act both intuitively and creatively. Both reflection-in and on-actions allows them to revise, modify and refine their expertise.'

Schon suggested that all professionals (expert or novice) need to reflect on their practice. These influential ideas have been applied widely to professional training and education.

2.8.3 Reflective practice and theory building

Schon (1983) argued that effective reflection allows practitioners to theorise actively.

He proposed two ways in which teachers theorise:

- (i) drawing upon theories in use when reflecting in action,
- (ii) drawing upon teaching experience espoused theories when reflecting on/in action.

Argyris and Schon (1974) defined theories-in-use as the patterns and behaviours that teachers accumulate in their daily work whereas espoused theories are models for behaviour that teacher-learners are generally taught. Schon views reflective practice as operating via feedback loops. A single feedback loop operates in the classroom when teachers reflect and act immediately on the consequences of a teaching action. For example, reflection-in-action might result in an immediate change in teaching strategy. A double loop operates outside the classroom when a teacher reflects on actions that she took in the classroom and as a result she is able to draw upon factors outside the immediate teaching event. The double-loop can generate consequences which can go beyond an immediate event and be far reaching. Studies have reported that when teachers are provided ways in which they can explain their spontaneous actions after an event allows them to make informed, better decisions in the future (Zeicher and Liston,1996).

Thus, reflecting *on* action enables the teacher to express and reframe a familiar action, appreciate its typical and special characteristics and create more systematic, personal evaluative structures. Schon described this ability of appreciation as building a repertoire; by means of which teachers continually compare new experience with previous experience in order to find useful examples, ideas and increase the range and influence of their actions. Experts in this field have commented that reflective practice can make the difference between the expert teacher, who actively seeks to become a better teacher, and the teacher who is merely more experienced than the novice teacher.

The strong point of Schon's distinction and his two-loop model is that these concepts foreground a process that is only one stage in models such as that of Kolb(1984). Kolb's model of experiential learning incorporated reflective observation as the third

stage in a four-stage cycle of experimenting, experiencing, observing reflectively and conceptualizing. Moon (1999) analysed the cyclical models like that of Kolb's and showed that it is very difficult to separate reflection from other stages of experiential learning.

Critics on Schon's work

Undoubtedly Schon's ideas have influenced many thinkers and a number of models of reflection have emerged. However, it is important to look at some criticism that his work has drawn over time. Eraut (2004) observes that Schon's work at times lacks precision and clarity. Boud and Walker (1998) point out that his analysis downplays some important features of the context in which reflection is expected to take place. Usher *et al* (1997) argue that the methodology can be termed 'unreflexive'. Smyth (1989) complains that his conceptions are 'atheoretical' and 'apolitical'. Greenwood (1993), highlights that his work ignores the significance of reflection-before-action. Moon (1999) claims that Schon's main idea of reflection-in-action is 'unachievable'. Ekebergh (2007) sites phenomenological philosophy to claim that 'it is not possible to distance oneself from the lived situation to reflect in the moment.' Van Manen(1990) is of the view that to achieve real self-reflection one has to get out of the situation and reflect retrospectively.

Usher *et al* (1997) comment that application of Schon's work in various situations of education and professional training needs to be reviewed in order to evolve a more 'critical, reflexive exploration of the nature of reflective practice.'

2.8.4 A brief note on models of teacher education

Teachers have often failed to take up broader responsibilities because of the separation of theory and practice in education. Traditionally, research on teaching and learning have been conducted only by university researchers and disseminated via pre- and in-service training programmes. This limits the potential of the teacher for wider professional action. Wallace (1991) named this approach to teacher education as the applied science model.

Apart from the above mentioned model, Wallace (1991) also discusses the craft model and the reflective model of professional education. The craft model is based on the traditional view that expertise in a craft is passed on from generation to generation through sincere imitation and practice.

The reflective model consists of two stages: the pre-training stage and the professional development stage. This model highlights the role of the trainees and does not consider them to be people with blank minds and neutral attitudes. The second stage of professional development focuses on ‘received knowledge’ (scientific theories, research findings, concepts and skills which are considered to be the part of the intellectual content of teaching) and ‘experiential knowledge’ (practical experience or knowledge-in-action through practice of the profession). It is considered that this model gives a holistic account of professional education involved in teacher development.

Writers are of the view that whichever labels one may use to describe the teaching-learning processes, in reality reflection is something that all people do to greater or lesser extents. When reflection is combined with practice, ‘being reflective’ links active theorizing and action in ways that other teaching-learning processes do not.

2.8.5 Qualitative dimension of reflection

There has been some concern regarding the continuation of relating reflection to learning and the comprehension of the relation between reflection and effective behaviour (Ferry and Ross-gordon,1998; McAlpine and Weston,2002). Related to this is an increasing awareness that a ‘depth dimension’ of reflection and the recognition that superficial reflection may not be an effective means of learning (Mezirow, 1998).

Three important investigative questions that have been suggested by experts to underpin how reflective action is theorized are:

What do I do? How do I do it? What does it mean for me and those I work with and for?

Implicit in these questions is a shift from technical to practical to critical reflection. Research on being reflective has attempted to suggest how teachers can be supported to get to deeper, critical levels of concern.

Zeichner and Liston (1996 in Waring and Evans, 2015:168) identified five different levels at which reflection can take place during teaching.

1. ‘Rapid reflection - immediate, on-going and automatic action by the teacher.
2. Repair – in which a thoughtful teacher makes decisions to alter their behaviour in response to students’ cues.
3. Review – when a teacher thinks about, discusses or writes about some element of their teaching.
4. Research – when a teacher engages in more systematic and sustained thinking over time, perhaps by collecting data or reading research.

5. Rethorizing and reformulating – the process by which a teacher critically examines their own practice and theories in the light of academic theories.’

Jill Burton (in Burns and Richards 2009) provides a list of things that seem to be involved in reflection in the following sequence:

- ‘Noticing a concern
- Clarification or expression of the concern in some form
- Response to the concern
- (Explicit relation of the expressed concern to other experience or input)
- (Collecting other responses or information)
- Processing the response as a whole
- Acting on the insights gained

The bracketed stages are the additional stages that may occur in reflection-on-action.’

This sequence is similar to the one Moon (2000) outlines for learning. Such reflective sequences offer potentially useful strategies for teachers to learn from their teaching experience. Moon (2000) notes that where and when reflection occurs and when it leads to learning are still largely unanswered yet important questions.

A lot of recent research on second language teacher education has been conducted to investigate how teachers go about making sense of what they do in order to help them in practical ways to become lifelong learners. Moreover, in the recent times efforts are being made to involve teachers in research in an active way in order to bridge the gap

between theory (as the domain of academic researchers) and practice (as the province of teachers).

2.8.5.1 Critical aspect of reflection

Boud (2010) writes that some criticise the notion of reflection as being unclear and ask if it is any different from thinking. He also discusses questions like: ‘whether reflection and reflective practice are in and of themselves, “good things” unless the reflection questions taken-for-granted assumptions and is critical (Fook 2010)’. The idea of individual professional, working as a separate being and engaging in individual reflection has also been critiqued.

Fook, White and Gardner (2006:9) state that reflection on its own tends to ‘remain at the level of relatively undisruptive changes in techniques or superficial thinking.’ They discuss at great length the concept of critical reflection.

The theory of critical reflection

The reflective process in professional learning involves an examination of the assumptions implicit in practices. All writers do not distinguish between reflection and critical reflection but those who do there seem to be two main understandings of what makes reflection critical. According to Fook (2010) reflection is considered critical because it focuses on unearthing deeper assumptions or ‘presuppositions’ (Mezirow, 1991). She further adds that it is critical in the sense that it has the ability to be transformative, ‘to involve and lead to some fundamental change in perspective’ (Cranton, 1996). It is critical also because its focus is on power (Brookfield, 1995). Therefore, it is transformative because it focuses on dominant or hegemonic assumptions (Brookfield, 2000) which may influence one’s practice.

Fook (2006) states that critical reflection 'enables an understanding of the way (socially dominant) assumptions may be socially restrictive, and thus enables new, more empowering ideas and practices. Critical reflection thus enables social change beginning at individual levels. Once individuals become aware of the hidden power of ideas they have absorbed unwittingly from their social contexts, they are then freed to make choices on their own terms'. Fook and Askeland (2006) suggest that critical reflection needs to connect individual identity and social context.

According to this theory of critical reflection, individual experience is seen as a microcosm of the social experience. This is based on the understanding of how individuals participate in constructing knowledge (and hence power) and how individuals act reflexively in their social worlds as agents while they respond as well as construct it within their environments. The critical reflection process provides a new awareness of the operation of the social in personal experience and hence enables an individual to make choices afresh. In a situation where learning about professional practice is involved, critical reflection is theorized as something that focuses on how an individual changes his/her professional/personal identity which in turn translates into new and reaffirmed professional practices.

Reynolds (1998 in Finlay, 2008:6) identifies four characteristics to distinguish critical reflection from other types of reflection.

- '(1) its concern to question assumptions;
- (2) its social rather than individual focus;
- (3) the particular attention it pays to the analysis of power relations; and
- (4) its pursuit of emancipation'

Reynolds (1998 in Finlay, 2008:6)

Reflexivity is another concept which broadened the idea of reflective practice. Finlay (2008:6) writes, 'Reflexive practitioners engage in critical self-reflection: reflecting critically on the impact of their own background, assumptions, positioning, feelings, behaviour while also attending to the impact of the wider organisational, discursive, ideological and political context.'

Finlay and Gough (2003) see the three concepts of reflection, critical reflection and reflexivity as different points on a continuum. Reflection which is just thinking about something after an action is placed on one end of the continuum and reflexivity is located on the other end of the continuum. Reflexivity is defined as 'a more immediate and dynamic process which involves continuing self-awareness.'(Finlay, 2008:6). Critical reflection is seen as something which is mid-way between the other two concepts.

Finlay (2002, 2003) suggests different 'variants of reflexivity' in which she mentions critical self-reflection to be at the core. The variants are 'introspection; intersubjective reflection; mutual collaboration; social critique and ironic deconstruction'.

2.8.5.2 Professional Lifelong Learning and Critical Reflection

A professional's learning is centrally placed within the exercise of practice. Recent research cautions that it is not sufficient to rely alone upon individual epistemological acts (e.g. personal reflection). Schon's (1983,1987) two main concepts reflection-on-action and reflection-in-action fail to account for how individuals reflect and contemplate future possibilities, and how those possibilities might be achieved. Thus, this projective dimension is held to reduce the potential for learning and improvement (Wilson, 2008). When teachers' engage in critical reflection the projective aspect of reflection can be understood by studying the 'teacher's theory building processes'.

2.8.5.3 Other models on different dimensions of reflection

A number of models in reflection have acknowledged the presence of different dimensions/levels of reflection.

Jay and Johnson (2002) proposed a typology of reflection which consists of three interconnected dimensions: descriptive (the individual describes the event for reflection) comparative (the individual reframes the matter for reflection by considering alternative views, perspectives and research) and critical reflection (a completely new perspective is formulated keeping in view the broader socio-political context). This is similar to the reflective conversation framework (Ghaye and Ghaye, 1998) which is discussed in detail in chapter 3.

Another model which highlights the different dimensions of reflection is that of Boud, Keogh and Walker (1985). This is a three-stage model which has been described precisely by Finlay (2008). She writes, ‘they recommend that learners first reflect on an experience by mentally replaying the experience and describing it in a descriptive, non-judgemental way. The second stage involves attending to feelings – both positive and negative – triggered by the experience, “discharging” any negative feelings which may obstruct the reflection. The learner is then ready to re-evaluate the experience by progressing through four substages: association (relating new data to what is already known); integration (seeking new relationships between the data); validation (determining the authenticity of the new ideas and looking for inconsistencies or contradictions); appropriation (making the new knowledge/attitudes one’s own)’.

This model however has been criticised for focusing only on the reflection-on-action and not on reflection-in-action. It also restricts itself to an individual’s mental introspection and does not talk about dialogic nature of reflection.

Another model which is widely used in the health care field is that of Johns' Model of Structured Reflection (1994). It has been criticised for being too prescriptive and for imposing an external framework on practitioners. This model has been revised multiple times to make it more flexible, holistic and to allow practitioners to bring in their own intuitions and values so that it can facilitate deeper reflection. Johns (2007) writes reflection is a 'developmental process of paying attention to and learning through every day experiences, with the goal of realizing a vision of practice as a lived reality'.

Thus, constant efforts have been made to broaden the concept of reflection so that it can address the concerns of the critics who question its value.

2.8.6 Dialogic nature of reflection

Grushka *et al* (2005) studied the formal processes of teacher education and investigated how they supported teaching. Curtis and Szestay (2005) proposed the building of 'collaborative inquiry groups for practicing teachers for which distance from the immediate experience and collaborative reflection in an atmosphere of mutual trust enable teachers to step back, look at their teaching from refreshed perspectives, and be more open to change'. For the success of such processes it is important that the discussion leads to reflective conversations about the concern and finally leads to increased awareness of the nature of concern and professional renewal.

A lot of research considers dialogic feedback on practice to play an important role in professional development. Rodgers(2006) based on Dewey's (1933) four phases of reflection (experience, description, analysis and intelligent action) suggested that 'teacher-learners need to describe an incident in structured, reflective conversations in

an atmosphere of trust and community in order to enable them to see and analyse teaching action'. It is indicated that describing and listening are important factors in reflection and analysis.

Investigations on the nature and processes of reflection tend to point out that reflection-in-action may not be taking place very often but that techniques and processes such as description and dialogue can be used to get close to the occurrence of a teaching incident in ways that allow teachers to reflect effectively on action.

2.8.7 Critical review of reflection for professional development

Critics are of the opinion that term like 'reflection' and 'reflective practice' have become commonplace in professional courses. Reflective practice is regarded as good practice and unreflective practice is bad. These have become largely unquestionable assumptions. Teacher education courses are therefore supposed to promote the desired features associated with reflection. This is generally done with the help of activities which need to stimulate reflection. However, some writers point out that these activities may be either not effective in promoting reflection or reflection itself might not be effective.

Boud (2010) argues that although reflection is considered to be good in professional practice, what it really consists of and how it can be learned are not the subject of critical attention and empirical investigation. Although such criticisms have been raised in the literature (Boud and Walker 1998; Brookfield 2000) but there has been relatively little follow up in terms of teaching and learning practices and there exists an ambiguity about what constitutes good reflective practice. He points out that in many cases reflection turns out to be synonymous with writing about practical situations and it seems as if recording and thinking about what happened has come to

mean reflection. He argues that the variant of reflection which is significant is that of critical reflection which questions fundamental taken-for-granted assumptions. He identifies problems including 'reflection as recipe following, reflection without learning, over intellectualizing reflection' and uncritical acceptance of one's experiences.

Writers have also criticized reflection as being too individualistic a concept and that in a world that is characterized by team working and cross professional collaboration insufficient attention has been given to groups reflecting on common concerns as different from individual reflection in groups (Reynolds 1999; Reynolds and Vince 2004).

Cressey and Boud (2006) proposes the idea of productive reflection which addresses the need for new ways of considering reflection in workplaces that are not focused on the individual independent learner. However, it also engages with the context and purpose of work and most importantly with the imperative that reflection in such settings cannot be an individual act if it is to influence work that takes place with others. The key features of productive reflection as discussed by Cressey and Boud (2006) are:

1. 'An organizational rather than an individual intent and a collective rather than individual orientation.
2. Reflection is necessarily contextualized within work: it connects learning and work.
3. It involves multiple stakeholders and connects players.
4. It has a generative rather than instrumental focus.
5. It has a developmental character.

6. Reflection is an open, unpredictable process; it is dynamic and changes over time.'

Having discussed the criticism of reflection it is important to note that whether it be the individualistic or the collaborative form of reflection, both these positions have their own merits. Depending on the teacher's situation she needs to engage in either type or both to maximize the benefits of the process. Regarding the effectiveness of reflection, different levels of reflection suggested by various writers have been discussed to warn practitioners from engaging in a superficial form of reflection which focusses only on description. Adopting a critical form of reflection may result in unearthing deeper assumptions, beliefs and other factors which may lead to better classroom practice.

In this section an attempt was made to define the concept of reflection as a tool for professional development. In the course of the discussion it was highlighted that reflection is both an individual as well as a collaborative process and can be highly productive when carried out keeping in mind the suggestions indicated in the literature. It can help individuals to evolve as agents bringing change in their contexts. The dialogic nature of reflection allows an individual to unearth deeper assumptions, beliefs, experiences and perspectives which can all contribute to a better understanding of the teaching and learning situation.

2.9 Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk Tool (SETT)

In the previous sections research in the area of classroom interaction and SLA has been discussed which provide strong evidence to claim that teacher's discourse plays an important role in classroom interaction and hence in SLA. Therefore, teachers need to become aware of their classroom interactional processes by analysing their own discourse in the classroom. For this purpose Walsh (2006) has proposed a framework

called the Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk (SETT) which he suggests can be used for teacher development.

A description and characterization of the SETT framework is required at this point. This framework has been designed to help teachers to describe the classroom interaction of their lessons, reflect on their interactional patterns and foster an understanding of the same. The position adopted by Walsh is that the 'single, L2 classroom context does not exist; contexts are locally constructed by participants through and in their interaction in the light of overall institutional goals and immediate pedagogic objectives'. Walsh (2006) argues that 'Contexts should be seen as the *interface* between pedagogy and interaction and thus as the environments through which the institutional business is accomplished (Seedhouse ,1996)'. In other words, pedagogy and interaction come together through talk: pedagogic goals are manifested in the talk- in- interaction. He used the term *mode* in order 'to capture the interrelatedness of language use and teaching purpose.' In his study he defined distinctive interactional features determined largely by a teacher's use of language. His notion of mode reflects the idea that interaction and classroom activity are inextricably linked, and to acknowledge that as the focus of a lesson changes, interaction patterns and pedagogic goals change too. According to him analysing the modes assumes that understanding and meanings are jointly constructed, but that the prime responsibility for their construction lies with the teacher.

2.9.1 The SETT framework

Walsh (2006) designed the SETT framework based on his analysis of classroom interaction which adopted a variable approach to analysing classroom interaction. His study is based on a

corpus of 14 lessons, totalling approximately 12 hours or 100,000 words, which is considered to be a reasonable sample size on which one can make generalizations and draw conclusions in the light of evidence from previous studies. The data was analysed using a conversation analysis methodology that centred on turn-taking mechanisms in relation to the perceived goal of the moment and the stated (written) lesson aims given by the teacher. Interaction patterns were found to vary according to instructional activity. The different patterns manifested themselves in the turn-taking, sequence of turns and topic management. Once a pattern had been identified, the data were analysed for further examples of the same pattern as is the 'norm' under conversation analysis (Psathas, 1995).

He identified four patterns, four microcontexts, characterized by specific patterns of turn-taking called modes: managerial mode, classroom context mode, skills and systems mode,

materials mode. Each mode is made up of specific interactional features related to instructional goals. He adds that the modes that he has identified are not comprehensive and other modes may be incorporated depending on the microcontexts of a classroom.

Subsequent analysis of the data revealed that certain interactional features facilitated learning opportunity, while others appeared to hinder opportunities for learning. That is, depending on a teacher's pedagogic goal, choice of language could either construct or obstruct learning opportunity.

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Pedagogic goals</i>	<i>Interactional features</i>
Managerial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To transmit information ▪ To organize the physical learning environment ▪ To refer learners to materials ▪ To introduce or conclude an activity ▪ To change from one mode of learning to another 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A single, extended teacher turn which uses explanations and/or instructions ▪ The use of transitional markers ▪ The use of confirmation checks ▪ An absence of learner contributions
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide input or language practice around a piece of material ▪ To elicit responses in relation to the material ▪ To check and display answers ▪ To clarify when necessary ▪ To evaluate contributions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Predominance of IRF pattern ▪ Extensive use of display questions ▪ Form- focused feedback ▪ Corrective repair ▪ The use of scaffolding
Skills and systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To enable learners to produce correct forms ▪ To enable learners to manipulate the target language ▪ To provide corrective feedback ▪ To provide learners with practice in sub- skills ▪ To display correct answers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The use of direct repair ▪ The use of scaffolding ▪ Extended teacher turns ▪ Display questions ▪ Teacher echo ▪ Clarification requests ▪ Form- focused feedback
Classroom context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To enable learners to express themselves clearly ▪ To establish a context ▪ To promote oral fluency 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extended learner turns. ▪ Short teacher turns ▪ Minimal repair ▪ Content feedback ▪ Referential questions ▪ Scaffolding ▪ Clarification requests

Table 3: The SETT framework (Walsh 2006:66)

Walsh(2006:168) provides detailed description of the Interactional features:

(A) Scaffolding	(1) Reformulation (rephrasing a learner's contribution). (2) Extension (extending a learner's contribution). (3) Modelling (correcting a learner's contribution).
(B) Direct repair	Correcting an error quickly and directly.
(C) Content feedback	Giving feedback to the message rather than the words used.
(D) Extended wait- time	Allowing sufficient time (several seconds) for students to respond or formulate a response.
(E) Referential questions	Genuine questions to which the teacher does not know the answer.
(F) Seeking clarification	(1) Teacher asks a student to clarify something the student has said. (2) Student asks teacher to clarify something the teacher has said.
(G) Confirmation checks	Making sure that the teacher has correctly understood the learner's contribution.
(H) Extended learner turn	Learner turn of more than one clause.
(I) Teacher echo	(1) Teacher repeats a previous utterance. (2) Teacher repeats a learner's contribution.
(J) Teacher interruptions	Interrupting a learner's contribution.
(K) Extended teacher turn	Teacher turn of more than one clause.
(L) Turn completion	Completing a learner's contribution for the learner.
(M) Display questions	Asking questions to which the teacher knows the answer.
(N) Form- focused feedback	Giving feedback on the words used, not the message.

2.9.2 SETT and critical reflective practice

The SETT framework engages teachers in a process of critical reflective practice, in which they are encouraged to notice, describe and explain the interactional organization of their L2 classes. Through a process of ‘guided self- discovery’ involving dialogue and enquiry (supports the dialogic nature of reflection discussed in the previous section), the aim is to help practitioners to see their classroom worlds differently, to ‘read’ their environment (Van Lier, 2000) by studying the relationship between institutional goals (as teaching objectives) and the language used to realize those goals. This process of increasing teacher’s ‘awareness’ of her classroom discourse is suggested so that teachers’ attention can move away from materials or methodology based decisions and they are motivated to make decisions based on interactional choice.

Walsh (2006:125) explains what is meant by ‘awareness’. He states, ‘By “awareness” is meant a more conscious use of language; noticing the effects of interactional features on learning opportunity; understanding that teachers and learners jointly create learning opportunities but that the key responsibility lies with the teacher (Johnson, 1995); a realization of the importance of using appropriate teacher talk, adjusted not only according to level but also to pedagogic goals.’

Understanding changes in awareness can be difficult. Nunan (1996:55) recognizes, ‘understanding changes in awareness has to begin with the teachers themselves, considering the ways in which the processes of instruction [are] illuminated by the voices of the teachers’. The ‘collaborative enterprise’ (ibid.) of classroom research is significant for assessing change along with gaining insights.

Walsh (2006) argues that the framework also equips teachers with appropriate *tools* to analyse the interactional processes taking place. If teachers have to be encouraged to become researchers of their professional worlds, it is extremely important that they have the right ‘tools for the job’.

Moreover, the SETT framework offers teacher- participants an appropriate metalanguage to describe those interactional processes. Making quantitative statements about one’s discourse doesn’t help much. Instead understanding the quality of discourse and making finely tuned observations using appropriate metalanguage can help teachers to understand the complex relationship between pedagogic goals and language use and hence increase learning opportunities. Thus, SETT encourages teachers to focus on the quality of the talk and not on the quantity. It allows teachers to view their lessons as consisting multiple microcontexts or modes and as each moment unfolds in a lesson their language use needs to be evaluated according to the pedagogic goals and learning outcomes.

2.9.3 Classroom discourse as reflective practice

In this section the main argument is that classroom discourse can enhance reflective practice if it is placed at the core of reflection. Interaction is the most important component of classroom teaching because materials, methodology, curriculum everything gets realised through interaction. The quality of classroom interaction determines the quality of language learning—a point that has been supported by research findings and experts.

Reflective practice can be enhanced with the help of a framework like SETT because it equips teachers with the required metalanguage and suggests ways to reflect on their discourse. The use of this framework encourages recording of classroom data.

Thus, reflection can be strengthened if teachers are able to go back to their classroom discourse with the help of their recordings. Walsh (2011:137) presents a strong case for using SETT for reflective practice. He writes, ‘By identifying a problem, collecting data and then beginning the process of reflection and change, I am very confident that reflective practice will not only occur on a much larger scale, it will also have a greater impact on performance.’

Walsh (2011) provides a SETT Reflective Practice Cycle (RP Cycle) as follows:

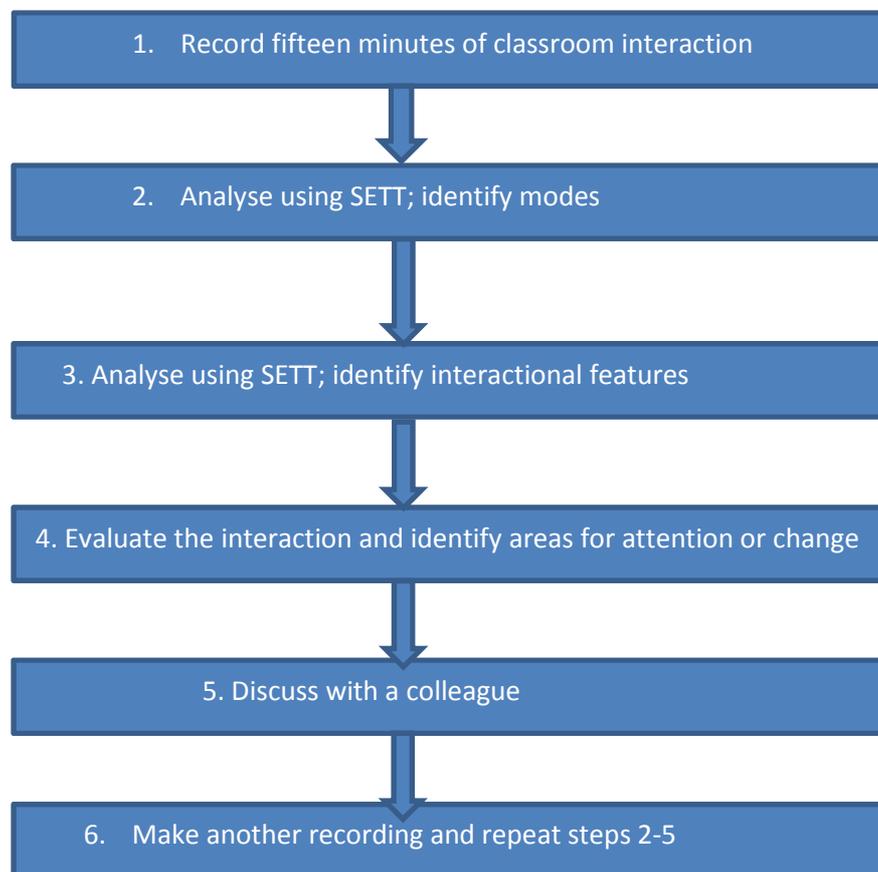


Figure 2: Walsh (2011) The SETT Reflective Practice cycle

2.9.4 Classroom Interactional Competence (CIC)

Classroom interactional competence (CIC) is a construct which is based on the assumption that interaction is a product of a number of factors that combine appropriately to create a conducive environment for learning. CIC takes into its folds a wide range of features of classroom interaction. These features have an implication on the quality of the teaching and learning process.

Classroom interactional competence (CIC) is defined as, ‘Teachers’ and learners’ ability to use interaction as a tool for mediating and assisting learning’ (Walsh 2006:132).

Walsh (2006:130) discusses this concept at length and suggests, ‘CIC is concerned to account for learning- oriented interaction by considering the interplay between complex phenomena that include roles of teachers and learners, their expectations and goals; the relationship between language use and teaching methodology; and the interplay between teacher and *learner* language’.

CIC is not just determined by the teacher’s use of language but learners also need to develop CIC. Interactional competence is determined by what is going on between participants (of an interaction) and the management of that communication. Walsh (2011:160) writes, ‘rather than fluency, we are concerned with what McCarthy (2005) terms *confluence*: the act of making spoken language fluent together with another speaker’. In other words, it refers to ways used by speakers to manage each other’s responses and together make meaning.

Classroom is a space where participants need to exhibit maximum confluence as they are constantly engaged in a process where meanings are negotiated, clarifications are

asked, communication is supported etc. . CIC is therefore expected to enhance learning as it allows participants to together create a discourse.

An enhanced CIC has an impact on teacher's classroom discourse. It allows her to adequately use language which matches her teaching goals. CIC is also expected to increase the interactional space within the language classroom. A teacher who possesses adequate CIC can maximise learner contribution by adopting a number of strategies like extending wait-time, reducing teacher echo, extending learner turns and so on. Moreover, a teacher with a developed CIC will also exhibit scaffolding, paraphrasing, repairing etc. to modify learner responses. These strategies are important as they help teachers to support learners in various ways so that they can contribute to the classroom discourse in a meaningful manner. Finally, CIC makes use of effective elicitation strategies. The ability to ask questions which demand genuine answers (referential questions, and also allowing learners to ask questions is an indication of enhanced CIC.

2.9.5 Studies conducted in the area of classroom interaction in the Indian Context

A few studies have been carried out in the Indian context which looked at classroom interaction from various perspectives. They have been briefly reviewed in this section.

Patterns of classroom interaction in ESL classes at the intermediate level: An exploratory study

Mateen (1994) explored the nature and patterns of classroom interaction in ESL classes at the intermediate level to understand to what extent teachers facilitate or hinder learner participation. Quantitative method was used to measure the amount of

teacher talk and its impact on learner contributions. The main findings of the investigation revealed that the amount and nature of teacher talk and the manner in which teachers manage their classroom interaction leads to teacher-dominated patterns of interaction and restricts opportunities for genuine communication and active learner participation in these classes. These conclusions led to suggestions for an interactive approach to language teaching.

Facilitating second language learning through the use of the mother tongue in the teacher talk

Kumari (2003) examined the importance of teacher talk with special focus on learners' L1 in the Indian context. She argues that teacher talk performs a facilitative function on SLA. The findings of this study suggested that there is a large scope for using the L1 of the learner in a systematic manner in the ESL classroom. The study concluded that teacher talk was used to carry out a number of functions in the classroom and therefore it could act as a rich input for language learning. It also highlighted that L1 could be used for scaffolding to support L2 language learning.

Emotional intelligence as reflected in teacher talk: An exploratory study

Bhavani (2008) states that, 'Emotional intelligence is the primary element which every teacher should possess.' The main argument of this study is that teacher talk when coupled with emotional intelligence can improve student-teacher relation and can also have a positive impact on the quality of input received by the learners. It puts forward a need to train teachers to be emotionally intelligent and also promote language competence.

Developing classroom interaction through communicative activities: An experiment

This study aims at improving classroom interaction with the use of communicative activities. Macha (2012) states that the assumption of the project is that communicative activities can enhance effective communicative skills in learners. The study was conducted in government schools located in Miryalguda, Nalgonda district. Questionnaires, classroom observation checklist were used to collect data. A review of the existing teaching material was done followed by the implementation of a few communicative activities to see its impact on classroom interaction.

Allaying learner fear through teacher talk: An investigation

Kezo (2013) proposes to investigate the impact of fear on language learning in schools of Nagaland. She states that teacher talk plays an important role in addressing the emotional aspect as the tone and language determines the nature of classroom transaction and communication. She makes a strong case for ensuring a positive emotional atmosphere in the classroom to facilitate learning. The study reports certain factors operating within the classroom which trigger fear in learners. This study analyses teachers' emotional competence and argues that creating a strong orientation towards emotional intelligence can solve the problem of fear operating in the given classrooms.

Critical reflection and teacher beliefs: A study in classroom communication

Sasmal (2014) proposes a framework called Reflection on Choices (RC) to study teacher beliefs about classroom communication. The study calls for a collective approach to understand teacher's knowledge and belief systems. The main claim of

the study is that there is a strong link between choices and beliefs. It adopts a case study method to study teacher beliefs about classroom interaction where the L2 classroom context is viewed as consisting of many contexts linked to the social, political, cultural and historical beliefs of the participants. The RC framework is seen to operate in three stages, awareness building, theory building and sustained growth for professional development. The findings of this study have implications on teacher development.

2.10 Towards a theoretical framework

In this chapter, research in the area of classroom interaction, SLA and reflective practice were discussed. In the light of the above theories and research findings, the following sections will move towards presenting the theoretical framework of the study.

2.10.1 Critical evaluation of the existing SETT framework

Walsh (2011) highlights the challenges involved in using his framework. He acknowledges the fact that there could be more modes in different L2 contexts. He also mentions about delineated cases in the data which do not fit into any of the four modes and there are points where it becomes impossible to identify the exact interactional features. He writes, 'The framework, as already stated, is intended to be representative rather than comprehensive. The four modes depicted are quite clearly delineated by pedagogic goals and interactional features; while there are some similarities, there are also differences that make description possible. Yet the modes do not claim to account for all the features of classroom discourse, nor are they sufficiently comprehensive to specify each and every pedagogic goal. The first

difficulty, then, is that the framework is incapable of describing all aspects of classroom interaction.’

Walsh (2011) discusses the following difficult areas while analysing classroom discourse using the SETT framework:

Mode switching refers to moving from one mode to another. Many a times there are very rapid changes in modes during a lesson. These changes may make it difficult to analyse the data but if swift mode changing is part of the given discourse it needs to be analysed.

Mode side sequences involve brief shifts from the main mode to a side (secondary) mode and back to the main mode. During negotiation of meaning the learner contribution can lead to mode side sequences. For instance, while expressing one’s personal opinion about a topic the learner may get confused about a word and hence seek language help. Thus, the main mode would be Classroom-context mode and side mode would be Skills and System mode to clarify vocabulary items. However, one needs to note in the above case the main mode is still Classroom-context. Walsh (2011) notes that teachers as well as learners may cause mode side sequence but it is the teacher who needs to ensure that the discourse comes back to the main mode (matching her pedagogic goals).

While applying the SETT framework to the Indian ESL context of this study (discussed in section 3.3) the most important observation was that the English lessons in the selected schools revolved around the literature reader. Teaching English as a skill is completely ignored and it is treated as a content subject.

The workshops conducted tried to create awareness among the teachers about viewing language as a skill and ways to use materials to develop their language skills. It was felt that the dominant practice of solely using literature readers (for language teaching) had to be addressed. Teachers expressed their interest in exploring ways in which literature texts can facilitate language teaching and increase the interactional space in their classrooms. Therefore, the existing SETT framework was expanded to include new pedagogic goals and interactional features to capture the events of such lessons.

Theorists and researchers have claimed that literature has the potential to generate a kind of quality talk that is characterised by reflection and exploring intertextual links (Gambrell & Almasi, 1996; Langer, 1995; McGinley *et al.*, 1997; Wells, 1990). Boyd and Maloof (2000:166) suggest that , ‘By introducing substantive issues through literature, and encouraging students to relate them to their experiences and perspectives, teachers can facilitate opportunities for students to compare and contrast, to make connections with other literary texts and other experiences of their lives.’

Researchers have reported that literature can be used to engage learners appropriately to facilitate creative interfaces for exchange. Research in the area of first language instruction which has focused on literature-based instruction has suggested small group discussion for promoting learner contributions (Eeds and Wells, 1989; Gambrell, 1996; McMhon & Raphael, 1997; Smagorinsky & Fly, 1993). Almasi (1996:2) defines discussion as, ‘cognitive engagement to the extent that the participants are actively involved in a conversation with one another rather than passively reciting answers to questions that may not be personally meaningful’. It has also been pointed out that just forming small groups does not guarantee meaningful

discourse. Similarly, the presence of IRE/F sequences does not always inhibit meaningful exchanges. Along with the teacher, the learners also need to take up multiple roles in the classroom to maximise learning. Boyd and Maloof (2000:167) mention a few learner roles, ‘They need to act as, for example, questioners, reflectors, and responders as opposed to the static role of mainly responding to teacher recall and display questions and offering what they perceive as acceptable to the teacher (Almasi, 1996; Britton, 1990; Ernst, 1994; Guiterrez, 1994; Johnson, 1995; Rubin, 1990).’

The six teachers selected for the study were found to have stark differences in terms of their educational background, exposure to English and ELT training. Although these teachers were teaching in the same institution their engagement with the SETT tool was quite different in terms of their ability to use it for reflection. More than ability one can argue that each teacher-participant explored the tool at their own pace. Thus, three different stages were identified during its application. Each of these stages exhibited certain reflective outcomes which coincided with a particular level of reflection.

Keeping in mind the nature of ESL teaching and learning context in the selected schools the following issues were identified with regard to the existing SETT framework:

1. The ESL situation which was under study was a clear bilingual situation (if not multilingual). Thus, in the classrooms teachers’ use of another language (Hindi in this case) needed to be considered.
2. Two new modes were identified in the data and thus the revised SETT framework had to make space for these modes. They were called bilingual mode and read

aloud/lecture mode and within material mode a number of changes were made to address the use of literature texts.

3. In some of the existing modes, a few pedagogic goals and interactional features were added in view of the classroom data collected.
4. Skills and systems mode had to be revisited as 'Skills' were missing in all lessons. System mode was operational quite often. Therefore, it was felt that System mode could be seen as a separate mode.
5. In the lessons the teachers tend to ignore materials centred on language skills and planned all their lessons around the literature reader (as discussed earlier). Thus, within Materials mode new pedagogic goals were identified. Ways to enable teacher to use literature text for effective classroom discourse had to be addressed.
6. Intertextual links had to be strengthened for effective use of literary texts (Literature reader) for meaningful exchanges in the classroom. Therefore, the revised SETT framework was supposed to address these links.
7. The existing SETT framework does not mention teacher roles and learner roles. Each of the modes triggers certain teacher and learner roles in the classroom in line with the interactional features and pedagogic goals. The argument is that teachers' self-evaluation of classroom discourse also needs to analyse learner contributions and roles. The present framework does not have such a space. Therefore, a need was felt to include teacher and learner roles within the framework.

8. This framework has been recommended for collaborative reflection. However, it was found that for every teacher the quality or depth of reflection was different. Thus, the revised framework was connected to different levels of reflection to propose the Reflective Framework for Classroom Discourse (RFCD).

Walsh (2006) mentions the following procedure for the application of his tool (Appendix 3):

- Audio recording of 10-15 minutes of one's lesson
- First listening (of the audio tape) - mode identification
- Second listening- using SETT instrument to keep a tally of the different features of one's teacher talk along with giving examples of each from the data (taking the help of the SETT key if required)
- Evaluate teacher talk in the light of overall aim and modes used
- Feedback interview

This procedure was found to be problematic. Especially segregating mode identification and the different features of teacher talk meant that the teacher was analysing the two as separate components. However, the modes and the interactional features are intrinsically linked. This is to say that the teachers are identifying modes without identifying the features. This clearly cannot be the case. Therefore, it was important to link mode identification with feature description. Keeping a tally of different features of teacher talk was also found to be less useful. Quantitative count of the use of interactional features failed to feed into the overall analysis.

The application of the framework revealed that it needs to be implemented at different stages. This is because teachers initially felt overwhelmed by the number of interactional features and modes involved in the tool. Each of these stages in turn coincided with a particular level of reflection.

Walsh's framework distinguishes only between two types of questions: display and referential questions. It was felt that other question types (open-ended vs close ended, factual, knowledge, analysis, application, synthesis, comprehension questions) were needed while using the revised framework because it was observed that these two categories were too broad and there was a need to fine-tune them. Although these finer distinctions were not included within the framework, in the teacher's analysis of discourse various other types of questions were identified and discussed during workshops and interviews.

2.10.2 The revised SETT framework

The revised SETT framework is now presented. The elements which have been indicated in bold are the additions made to the revised framework keeping in view the Indian ESL context explored in this study.

<i>Mode</i>	<i>Pedagogic goals</i>	<i>Interactional features</i>	<i>Dominant teacher and learner roles</i>
Managerial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To transmit information ▪ To organize the physical learning environment ▪ To refer learners to materials ▪ To introduce or conclude an activity ▪ To change from one mode of learning to another ▪ To get learner's attention and help them focus on the material 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A single, extended teacher turn which uses explanations and/or instructions ▪ The use of transitional markers ▪ The use of confirmation checks ▪ An absence of learner contributions ▪ Use of comprehension checks 	<p>Learner roles: Listener Follower of instructions</p> <p>Teacher roles: Organiser Manager</p>
Materials (mostly literature texts)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide input or language practice around a piece of material ▪ To elicit responses in relation to the material ▪ (Fact, quote or question about the literary work) ▪ To check and display answers ▪ To clarify when necessary ▪ To evaluate contributions ▪ To strengthen intertextual links ▪ To discuss perceptions regarding author's perspective or intent closely relating to the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Predominance of IRF pattern ▪ Extensive use of display questions ▪ Form- focused feedback ▪ Corrective repair ▪ The use of scaffolding ▪ Direct nomination ▪ General solicit ▪ Teacher echo ▪ Paraphrasing ▪ Summarising 	<p>Learner roles: Responder/answerer Analyser</p> <p>Teacher roles: Affirmer Questioner Evaluator Summarizer Clarifier</p>
Systems Mode (Skills Mode wherever applicable)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To enable learners to produce correct forms ▪ To enable learners to manipulate the target language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The use of direct repair ▪ The use of scaffolding ▪ Extended teacher turns 	<p>Learner roles: Responder Analyser Questioner</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To provide corrective feedback ▪ To display correct answers ▪ To provide metalinguistic knowledge ▪ To provide practice in grammatical structures and vocabulary ▪ To provide learners with practice in sub-skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Display questions ▪ Teacher echo ▪ Clarification requests ▪ Form- focused feedback 	Teacher roles: Explanation giver Affirmer Evaluator
Classroom context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ To enable learners to express themselves clearly ▪ To establish a context ▪ To promote oral fluency ▪ To get opinions about the literary work ▪ To enable learners to relate the literary text to self-experience and self-identity ▪ To enable learners to relate to universal qualities and concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Extended learner turns. ▪ Short teacher turns ▪ Minimal repair ▪ Content feedback ▪ Referential questions ▪ Scaffolding ▪ Clarification requests 	Learner roles: Reflector Sharer of experience Opinion- giver Analyser Teacher roles: Opinion seeker/giver Reflector Sharer of experience Questioner/Clarifier Summariser
Bilingual Mode	To encourage learners to establish cultural links (relate to experiences in Indian culture) To encourage learners to relate to native language (Hindi in this case) To facilitate understanding of concepts, ideas and enable learners to access their	Short or extended teacher/learner turn Display and referential questions Clarification requests Confirmation checks Backtracking	Learner role: Responder Analyser Questioner Sharer of experience

	<p>understanding of those already available to them in their native/other language</p> <p>To clarify whenever necessary</p> <p>To check if learners have understood</p>	<p>Comprehension check</p> <p>Form and content focussed feedback</p>	<p>Translator</p> <p>Teacher roles:</p> <p>Translator</p> <p>Questioner</p> <p>Reflector</p> <p>Sharer of experience</p> <p>Clarifier</p>
<p>Read aloud Mode/Lecture Mode</p>	<p>Learners read the given text</p> <p>To explain the content of the text</p>	<p>A learner reads aloud the text (or portions) loudly</p> <p>The teacher reads aloud the text (or portions) loudly</p> <p>Long teacher turns</p> <p>Explaining the material</p> <p>Paraphrasing and summarising of the material</p> <p>Personal solicit</p> <p>Repetition</p> <p>Absence of learner turn or participation</p>	<p>Learner role(s):</p> <p>Reader</p> <p>Listener</p> <p>Teacher role(s): Summarizer</p> <p>Explanation giver</p> <p>Reader</p>

Table 4: The revised SETT framework

Detailed description of the new modes, teacher and learner roles and features will be presented in chapter four (Section 4.3.2). The implementation of the framework at different stages will also be discussed in detail.

2.10.3 Different levels of reflection

The different levels of reflection identified while implementing the revised tool is now discussed. Revisiting the three important investigative questions that have been suggested by experts to underpin how reflective action is theorized that is: What do I do? How do I do it? What does it mean for me and those I work with and for? One can claim that different individuals may be at a different stage or level of reflection.

Implicit in these questions is a shift from **technical/ descriptive to practical to critical reflection**. Research on being reflective has attempted to suggest how teachers can be supported to get to deeper, critical levels of concern.

Teachers may engage in varying levels of reflection based on their present stage of professional development. The present study suggests that an individual may move from one level to another in their path of lifelong professional development. The various stages involved in the implementation of the revised SETT tool aims at facilitating this process of moving from descriptive to practical to critical reflection.

Drawing from Burton's (in Burns and Richards 2009) list of things that seem to be involved in reflection (discussed in section 2.8.6) and Moon's (2004) outcomes as the result of reflective processes (discussed in section 2.8.1) and ideas revolving different teacher roles (teacher as a passive technician, reflective practitioner and transformative intellectuals) the following framework for reflection emerged from the study. This framework connects various teacher roles (discussed in 4.3.3) with different levels of reflection. It integrates the

three stages of implementing the revised Self Evaluation of Teacher Talk tool to present a comprehensive understanding of how teachers may be encouraged to reflect on their classroom discourse and engage in meaningful reflection at their own pace.

The following levels of reflection were identified based on the study:

Level 1: Descriptive or technical reflection

- Individual describes his/her actions and may be able to notice/identify a concern.
- Adherence to routine actions and acceptance of authority (inability to question set norms)
- Clarification or expression of the concern in some form
- May be able to respond to the concern vaguely
- Inability to articulate a coherent response to the concern or to theorise independently
- More specifically the teacher fails to understand the deeper motivations behind the concern
- Theorizing takes place which is centered around short-term classroom specific instructional goals based on inputs from textbook and outside experts

At this level the teacher is more of a passive technician than a reflective practitioner. Here theorising happens at the technical level where teacher theorizing is concerned with the effective achievement of short-term, classroom-centered instructional goals. In order to accomplish that, teachers are satisfied with using ideas generated by outside experts and tasks designed by textbook writers.

Level 2: Practical reflection

- Identifying the concern through keen observation and description
- Identifying explicit relation of the expressed concern to other experience or input
- Collecting other related responses or information to engage in critical review and reflection
- Identifying some action plans based on the insights gained; however the primary focus here is on what the teacher does inside the classroom
- Attempts are made to engage in collective reflection to be able to compare one's own strategies with that of others and identify alternative choices
- Attempts made to question the goals and the values that guide his or her work, the context in which he or she teaches and examines his or her assumptions
- Attempts made to question existing structures and norms and to exploring self-initiated and context sensitive innovative strategies
- Ability to create new knowledge in some form and attempts made towards personal theory building (about the nature of their subjects, their students, and learning/teaching processes)
- Leads to certain degree of teacher empowerment
- Clarification and the recognition that there is a need for further reflection

At this level of reflection the teacher is more of a reflective practitioner. He or she makes an attempt to analyse, understand and address the problems of classroom practice. He or she is also aware of the need to question the assumptions and values she brings to teaching and

keeps the local context of teaching in mind (relating to institution and culture. She may also take part in curriculum development and is involved in efforts directed at bringing change at the school level. One can find the individual is keen to take on responsibility for his or her own professional development.

Level 3: Critical reflection

- Processing the response as a whole in relation to social structures, institutional goals and one's social context and engaging in critical review
- Unearthing deeper assumptions and questioning existing structures, theories etc
- Acting on the insights gained collectively based on lived experiences of various participants rather than individual observations
- Challenge the social and historical forces in pedagogy in order to seek empowerment for teachers and learners
- Ability to connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues and work together to share ideas
- Develop both logical and emotional sides of students and themselves
- Ability to inquire and improvise; develop and expand research skills to address the uniqueness of their local contexts and take part in knowledge creation (theory building which is concerned with wider ethical, social, historical, and political issues, including the institutional and societal forces which may constrain the teacher's freedom of action to design an effective theory of practice)
- Encourages students to connect learning with their personal experiences, concerns and contexts and eagerness to work on techniques to encourage self-reflection and

introspection in students; develop multiple perspective to issues; nurture independent thinking and help students to gain a sense of ownership of their learning

- Play the role of transformative intellectuals who are committed to action and thereby develop counterhegemonic pedagogies that not only empower students by giving them the knowledge and social skills they will need to be able to function in the larger society as critical agents, but also educate them for transformative action

In this level the teachers act as transformative intellectuals and make attempt to bring transformations at both professional and personal level.

2.10.4 The Reflective Framework for classroom Discourse (RFCD)

The Reflective Framework for classroom Discourse (RFCD) is now presented:

SETT stage	Reflective level	Qualitative dimension of reflection
<p>Stage 1</p> <p>Familiarising oneself with the tool</p> <p>Describing one's classroom actions and noticing concerns</p> <p>Identifying one's pedagogic goals (overall goal of the lesson and other intentions)</p> <p>Identifying teacher and learner roles</p> <p>Giving examples of interactional features from one's discourse</p> <p>Working more at the individualistic level</p> <p>Engaging in descriptive reflective conversations (Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998)</p>	<p>Technical or descriptive reflection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Individual describes his/her actions and may be able to notice/identify a concern. ▪ Adherence to routine actions and acceptance of authority (inability to question set norms) ▪ Clarification or expression of the concern in some form ▪ May be able to respond to the concern vaguely ▪ Inability to articulate a coherent response to the concern ▪ More specifically the teacher fails to understand the deeper motivations behind the concern ▪ Theorizing centered around short-term classroom specific instructional goals based on inputs from textbook and outside experts

<p>Stage 2</p> <p>Finding alternative ways to address the concern(s)</p> <p>Revisiting pedagogic goals and identifying goals related to microcontexts of one's discourse and identifying connected interactional features and modes</p> <p>Comments on learner roles and teacher roles</p> <p>Coming up with one's own strategies to deal with the concerns and compare them with others</p> <p>Working in a more collaborative manner</p> <p>Engaging in comparative reflective conversations</p> <p>(Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998)</p>	<p>Practical reflection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Identifying the concern through keen observation and description ▪ Identifying explicit relation of the expressed concern to other experience or input ▪ Collecting other related responses or information to engage in critical review and reflection ▪ Identifying some action plans based on the insights gained; however here the primary focus is on what the teacher does inside the classroom ▪ Attempts are made to engage in collective reflection to be able to compare one's own strategies with that of others ▪ Attempts made to question the goals and the values that guide his or her work, the context in which he or she teaches and examines his or her assumptions ▪ Attempts made to question existing structures and norms and to explore self-initiated and context sensitive innovative strategies ▪ Ability to create new knowledge in some form and attempts made towards personal theory building (about the nature of their subjects, their students, and learning/teaching processes) ▪ Leads to certain degree of teacher empowerment ▪ Clarification and the recognition that there is a need for further reflection
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<p>Stage 3</p> <p>Questioning one's own assumptions and beliefs about one's practice (as a whole)</p> <p>Analysing concern(s) at the level of curriculum, its implementation, assessment, materials, methodology</p> <p>Using (creating if required) feedback channels to understand the issue(s)/concern(s) at the institutional and social level</p> <p>Observing and analysing lessons of colleagues to gain insights collectively</p> <p>Readiness to take risk and be creative in class to bring about radical changes in one's classroom practices</p> <p>Using the revised SETT tool independently for action research</p> <p>Questioning the theories and concepts made available in teacher training programmes/workshops and suggesting alternatives (based on one's own personal theories)</p> <p>Readiness to share one's own personal theories and learning with the bigger community of educators</p> <p>Engaging in critical reflective conversations(Ghaye & Ghaye, 1998)</p>	<p>Critical reflection</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Processing the response (to the concern) as a whole in relation to social structures, institutional goals and one's social context and engaging in critical review ▪ Unearthing deeper assumptions and questioning existing structures, theories etc. ▪ Acting on the insights gained collectively based on lived experiences of various participants rather than individual observations ▪ Challenge the social and historical forces in pedagogy in order to seek empowerment for teachers and learners ▪ Ability to connect pedagogical theory and practice to wider social issues and work together to share ideas ▪ Develop both logical and emotional sides of students and themselves ▪ Ability to inquire and improvise; develop and expand research skills to address the uniqueness of their local contexts and take part in knowledge creation (theory building) ▪ Encourages students to connect learning with their personal experiences, concerns and contexts and eagerness to work on techniques to encourage self-reflection and introspection in students; develop multiple perspective to issues; nurture independent thinking and help students to gain a sense of ownership of their learning ▪ Play the role of transformative intellectuals who are committed to action and thereby develop counterhegemonic pedagogies.
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Table 5: Reflective Framework for Classroom Discourse (RFCD)

2.11 Conclusion

In this chapter various aspects of classroom interaction were discussed. However, to begin with, it first looked at classroom research. As any study on classroom interaction draws its tools, methods and observations from classroom research it was crucial to locate classroom interaction in the broader framework of classroom research. Within the research literature in a very narrow sense of the term classroom research is often considered to be synonymous to investigating classroom interaction. Although this work does not subscribe to this narrow definition of classroom research yet it does view classroom interaction as an important area of research within classroom research. The initial sections traced the development of classroom research and discussed the various tools and methodological issues mentioned in the literature. Further sections focussed on classroom interaction. Apart from defining the term interaction various approaches to investigating classroom interaction were also reviewed. The strengths and weaknesses of these approaches were highlighted. Broadly speaking, interaction analysis, discourse analysis and conversation analysis were discussed. The variable approach (from the ethnomethodological tradition) was considered as it is more flexible. It takes into account the different contexts and considers the important relationship between language use and pedagogic purpose. The discussion then turned towards research findings in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Role of input and interaction was discussed because these are considered to be an important element for language learning. Having looked at the prevalent views on input, a few key concepts like modified speech and negotiated interaction was discussed. The role of interaction in promoting second language acquisition was also considered. A lot of evidence exists to argue for a strong role of interaction in language acquisition. A few aspects of classroom interaction like negotiation of

meaning, feedback and recasts were discussed in order to later understand the role of a teacher in promoting classroom interaction. The main aim of this section was to put forward a strong argument about teacher's crucial role in managing learning in the classroom. Even in the most learner-centered classroom for quality interaction to take place the teacher needs to monitor and have a scaffolding effect on overall classroom activities. Learner participation, negotiation of meaning, recasts, providing feedback and questioning in the classroom are all important aspects of interaction that the teacher has to manage. All these aspects are reflected on teacher's speech which is an important means by which she communicates and conveys information to the learners. As part of input the teacher's speech has been found to have certain characteristic features similar to foreigner talk. Thus, teacher talk has an impact on making the classroom environment acquisition rich. The reviewed literature indicated a few implications on classroom interaction research. First of all, while investigating classroom interaction it is important to adopt a multi-layered perspective which does not view interaction as a fixed entity with a single context. Instead interaction needs to be seen as a dynamic entity with a number of contexts evolving as the lesson unravels. It also highlighted the importance of the teacher's role in shaping learner's contribution and facilitating quality interaction in the classroom. It is important to empower teachers with the awareness that there exists a strong relationship between teacher talk, interaction and learning opportunity. This will enable them to facilitate learning opportunities. This will also help learners not to 'get lost in the discourse' (Breen, 1998). Walsh (2011) suggests a few strategies for teachers to increase the interactional space in their classrooms; such as direct error correction, content feedback, checking for confirmation, extended wait-time and scaffolding. The concept of reflection and reflective practice was explored in detail. An attempt was made to

define the terms and review research findings in the area. Qualitative dimension of reflection was highlighted which views reflection to take place at different levels. A few models were discussed highlighting this aspect. The theory of critical reflection was considered and how it is different from other forms of reflection. The dialogic nature of reflection was discussed followed by a critical review of reflection.

Having discussed theories and concepts in these areas, the discussion then took a turn towards arriving at the theoretical framework for this study. For this purpose, the Self-Evaluation of Teacher Talk tool was discussed in great detail. A note on developing Classroom Interactional Competence of teachers was included. A critical review of the above tool was presented followed by the revised tool (which draws from the various theories and concepts reviewed in the literature and the ESL context explored in this study). Ideas discussed around reflection were integrated to arrive at different levels of reflection and finally the Reflective Framework for Classroom Discourse (RFCD) was presented which integrates the revised SETT tool, qualitative dimension of reflection and different levels of reflection.