CHAPTER III
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TEACHERS’ ROLE IN CLASSROOM INTERACTION

3.1 Social and Cultural factors

Sociolinguistic and sociocultural factors are closely associated with language use and learning. The sociocultural differences manifest themselves in different ways through language in general. The integration of language with sociocultural context is not an easy matter. The descriptions of language on which language pedagogy is based are generally neutral in social and cultural terms.

3.2 Social interaction and language use

Few of us are aware of the range and variety of uses of language made during even one typical day. Language is predominant almost wherever we come into contact with people and will be different according to the nature of the contact. Language also assails us even in situations in which no other people are present or when other people are present but are not producing language for our manipulation. Register and Dialect are the important social aspects which have a role to play in language use. The individuals’ geographical and class origin, educational experience etc. make individuals differ in the use of grammar, pronunciation and vocabulary.

In our day to day life we go through a series of activities requiring the use of language. The diverse activities with the dialect we use have specific features of
language associated with them. Several activities are connected with our vocation. We may be a teacher teaching the students, a lawyer advising a client, an engineer giving instructions to a draughtsman, a trade-union official discussing about benefits, a scientist analysing a scientific report, a bus conductor collecting fares, a doctor treating patients or a system analyst producing a software report. Other activities are part of our leisure. We may be playing basket ball, chess or playing tennis. Or relating to our home affairs, we may be portraying as mother, father, wife, husband, daughter or son. When we analyse the life of any individual we will find that everyday every individual is involved in a set of activities and assume a set of social roles and in each he will produce or comprehend features of language that are typical of the activity and the role involved.

3.3 Classroom interaction

Language use in social dimensions brings forth social interaction. During social interaction, speech acts were performed, utterances were produced, topics were negotiated. Within the social interaction, one could come across a special kind of interaction called classroom interaction that occurs only in classroom situations where teaching and learning take place. In the classrooms students are expected to acquire knowledge through the teaching and learning interaction. The major source of information in the classroom is the text book. Through interaction students are expected to master productive and receptive, spoken and written skills. Classroom interaction is an inter-individual communication and this process is controlled by teachers/students/text book, etc. The primary goal of education is to bring about an intra-individual change and interaction is an aspect of educational activity.
The studies on teacher interaction in the classroom deal with the actual status of curriculum implementation at the classroom level. Interaction should deal with teaching objects and teaching. Learning strategies adopted in the classroom. Classroom interaction is varied and is an on-going process and the choice of strategies for interpreting and expressing content is determined by the participants cultural, social and cognitive factors. An interaction between the teacher and students may consist of a single utterance or a sequence of utterances. An utterance is either elicited or volunteered. If an elicited utterance is followed by a question or a directive, it is considered as a response.

Communication and interaction within a classroom, between a teacher and students play a vital role in determining the students achievement of oral communication. In classroom atmosphere verbal interaction takes place between the teacher and students. Through this process the teaching-learning task is efficiently carried on. The most effective teaching is said to occur when the teacher and the students interact among themselves. The following factors are categorised on the basis of classroom interaction: 1. Systematic observations 2. Students' various activities 3. Teachers' effectiveness. The teacher should interact with the students to develop their knowledge. If there is more interaction, the teacher may be able to find out the special and underlying talents of the students.

The teachers' effective teaching and the knowledge imparted to the students are gauged through the utterances, acts and themes that are focused in the teaching situations. The priority of the teachers are identified as imparting knowledge and skills and the sub-goals are presenting information, giving exercises
and drills, etc. For the description of 'acts', Shirly Lim's methods are used and acts are identified in the real classroom situations. Evaluation and testing the ability and knowledge of the students are made taking into account their responses, i.e. their reaction upon the actions of the teacher educator. The teacher also uses certain management techniques to manoeuvre the whole class; directly facing the students is one technique. Classroom seating arrangements are made in such a way that the teacher can see every student face to face. Pitch and intonation also become the main factor during teaching. To avoid boredom monotonous way of teaching or rather the stereo-type way of teaching must be avoided. Many non-verbal gestures are noticed from the teachers which are part of their act of added elicitation. Teachers identify students with problems in learning and offer them off-class activities to enhance their learning capabilities.

Sometimes we modify our language for effective communication. To get others approve of what we say we adjust our language in our practical, day to day life. In the same way the teachers may adopt and shift their style of language use so as to gradually enhance the skill of interaction among students without threatening them. If the students lose confidence then interaction becomes impossible. So teachers are expected not to punish or criticize students who make mistakes. Hence teacher's simplified language use is an important factor while teaching students. This simplification technique is found to be in operation in learning situations in general and in communication situations involving language contact. Pidgin and Creoles, foreigner talk, motherese etc. are some of the varieties of languages reflecting the simplified language use. With reference to language contact, the simplification process and language use are explained through a
theory called accommodation theory developed by sociolinguists and applied linguists.

3.4 Teachers’ activity

The roles and goals of teachers in the classroom interaction are identified as 1. Teaching or imparting knowledge and language, 2. Managing or effectively controlling the activities of students, 3. Teaching the curriculum material within the given time, 4. Testing the students in order to evaluate their understanding of the language and the skill of using language, 5. Giving exercises to carry out further tasks related to the lessons taught and to create more involvement and 6. Managing students problems in learning through several methods of remedy etc. Some of the methods and procedures used during the teaching phase are: Multiple-eliciting, Clarifying, Summing up, Acknowledging and Explaining. Eleven such acts are identified for the analysis. All the eleven acts are teacher initiated and are largely typical. They are:

1. Introducing act
2. Informing act
3. Reading aloud act
4. Commenting act
5. Acknowledging act
6. Clarifying act

7. Summing up act

8. Extended Informing act

9. Multiple eliciting act

10. Non-Verbal act

11. Checking on audience act

All the acts reflect teachers' curricular and instructional goals. The contexts identified in the recorded data are described with reference to the sequential ordering of the speech acts. For the purpose of analysis of the data recorded, Shirly Lim's (1987) methods have been followed. Malcolm's (1987) speech act functions also are described and identified. Malcolm's main categories of speech acts are used as a foundation for creating a taxonomy of sub-categories of speech acts. Three main categories have been employed here and they are: 1. Introducing 2. Informing 3. Eliciting. All the eleven acts identified as part of the teachers' activity are teacher initiated acts. Teacher initiated and teacher eliciting acts govern the interaction episodes, which are often closed by the teacher. The goals, stages, acts, actions, utterances, themes, language use in terms of quality and quantity are described here taking the recorded interaction data.
3.5 Teachers’ role

This section constitutes analytical description of a series of Teacher talks/utterances/acts which occur in the classroom while teaching English Literature at the under graduate level. The syllabus/curriculum are designed specially for students of English Literature and the teachers were involved in teaching English Literature. The teaching of Poetry and Prose involves a sophisticated response to minute details of Literature learning and on culture, background knowledge and literary structure. The teachers have frequently retreated into teaching about literature by giving students biographical facts about authors, description of literary movements, previous works of the authors, criticism of the work as well as the authors, briefing of Poetry and Prose taught, rendering meaning of vocabulary, etc. Most of the time, it is noticed that the teaching of literature becomes minimal but not always.

3.6 Teaching Literature

In the teaching of literature it is worth teaching qua literature, then it seems axiomatic that it is the response to literature itself which is important. Abundant critical debates were made in the twentieth century about how much knowledge of the author, if anyone needs in order to understand a literary text. But whatever stand one takes on the minutiae of this debate, it is clear that one can proceed certain distance with no knowledge of the author at all. Some texts have no known authors. For example, ballads were developed from the oral tradition and are produced without author identity. But others [for instance, the cannon of George
Eliot are read by people who do not know the true identity of the writer. Most of the times knowledge of the author is helpful, however it can be dispensed with. One would also wish to argue that the role of background culture of necessity depend on statements of general, large-scale facts about a culture. They are prone to trite judgements and sweeping remarks and judgements. But the background knowledge needed to interpret particular linguistic event is often much more specific.

Teaching of Literature began to diminish from the language classroom because of the assumption that if the students were continually exposed to the best uses of the English Language, it would in some sense reflect on their own performance in the language. Many students enjoy reading literature, since enjoyment plays an important factor in any learning process. Literature is a potentially useful aid to language teaching. Literature and language may appear to be distinct for the teacher, but may not necessarily, appear to be distinct to the learner. Literary texts quite often contain within them a number of different varieties of English. They can thus be extremely useful in sensitizing varieties of English Literature.

If a teacher teaches Prose as well as Poetry, it is possible for the lessons to be mutually reinforcing. Literary texts, or extracts from them can be used to break up literature classes. It can be used to identify difficulties that students experience in reading in general and reading imaginative texts in particular. Literature is the mirror of the life of people. It reflects in word images of people's creative consciousness.
The nature and purpose of literature teaching is to impart literary knowledge to the students and to enhance their communicative ability. According to G.D. Pickett (1978) English Literature must be taught in two streams, one being intensive or Analytic and Extensive or Cumulative.

Intensive or Analytic - for which linguistic interests and ability will be a prerequisite;

Extensive or Cumulative - for which fast reading ability will be a prerequisite.

The intention of intensive study is to provide students with a detailed knowledge of a small part of English Literature; most of them will never again study a book with same thoroughness, but it should provide them with the knowledge that books of value are not to be completely comprehended in a single casual reading and that close and careful reading can give a pleasure of its own. For this purpose, the ability to quote freely and refer closely, is essential; it is on this knowledge that understanding of character, form and structure is based.

Teaching literature is entirely different from teaching other subjects. That is to say teaching of literature is an art because teaching and learning are, by and large skill-oriented rather than content-oriented. Consequently, the English Literature teachers have to play a major role in order to inculcate communicative skills among the learners in addition to content. In order to achieve this, the teaching methodology should be more interactive. The content of the textbook agree in
principle with the syllabus implemented. The grading and arrangement of the content in the text book is taken from its Prose and Poetry lessons. The Prose lessons are often put up with complex structures and lengthy passages, the most simple structures of content finds its accommodation either in the middle or at the end of the text.

The Poems appear to be very simple on the surface level but their underlying meanings were deep and thought provoking. The teacher’s trend in teaching literature in both Prose and Poetry classes indicate an emphasis on interaction aspect with the help of discussions and dialogues. Previously creative interpretation, skillful learning and imparting knowledge were given utmost importance. Of late, in literature teaching methods, interactive learning procedures have gained an upperhand.

3.7 Teachers’ task

In any didactic situation the teachers’ task is goal-directed, in the sense of bringing about changes in the behaviour and knowledge. Level of students within any teaching activity, there may be a lot of tasks to perform, keeping in mind the purposeful goal. For example, if reading a text lesson is assumed as an activity, the teacher has to perform a number of tasks such as, organizing the layout of classroom, presenting the text appropriately, making students do exercises on the texts and so on.
3.8 Teacher style

Motivation and control are some of the styles of teaching observed in teachers’ core activities which come under ‘motivation’ in general. Some such activities are:

1. Developing positive attitude towards the students. For example, students may require more time to understand a certain literary point.

2. Teachers’ encouragement and applause towards students’ positive effort will help in enhancing their interest on the topic.

3. Giving students meaningful, relevant and interesting tasks to do.

4. Motivating students for interpreting Poems on their own, explaining passages after self-reading, free discussion, teacher-led discussion, project work, answering questions, making students to take part in simulation, summarizing the text, etc.

5. Involving students in the classroom process and in the activities of teaching. This demands inter-student communication and cooperative efforts of students. Simulation and group activity are the two examples of such activities, that are designed to achieve this effect.

6. Introducing students to the concept of self-evaluation and self-appraisal through reports and discussions, giving positive feedback on students' written assignments, appreciating students’ achievement by allowing them to portray their work on the classroom boards and notice board are also considered as motivational activities.
3.9 Teacher Control

According to Tony Wright (1987) there are two types of control employed by teachers:

1. Control of the social behaviour of the students in the class.

2. Control over the class through the learning activity.

Teachers exercise control in several ways:

1. Socializing the learners by prescribing them certain roles to perform.

2. Dominating the learners who break the roles.

3. Reducing the social distance between himself and the learners by fraternizing with the students.

4. Trying negotiation through diplomacy, appeals, apologies, cajolery and flattery. Alternatively he can make promises or threats.

5. Setting tasks which involve routine and control. The apparent threat of indiscipline often can lead to such solutions.

Research by Barnes (1969, 1976) has identified two types of teachers:

1. Transmission teacher

2. Interpretation teacher
A transmission teacher will maintain a high degree of control over his learners in order to create the conditions under which discipline can be taught ... The subject matter is the central theme and the teacher embodies the subject, almost as a protector of the body of knowledge that he is teaching. Results in examinations are the criterion of the teachers' success.

An interpretation teacher would prefer to disperse responsibility for learning to the learners. Control is maintained by persuasion and appeal to the learners for better judgement. This teachers' position is, in terms of the amount of control he exerts over the learners, weaker than that of the transmission teacher. Learners develop their knowledge of the subject and also refine their personalities. Understanding is the criterion of the teachers' success.

3.10 Teaching style

The characteristics of teaching style is a complex amalgam of personality, belief, attitude, strategy, technique, motivation, manoeuvrability, personality and, control. Normally it is worked out in response to the language/literature learning situations in which teachers find themselves fully engaged. Further it is more related to classroom management than to discipline or seating arrangements. Teaching style lies at the heart of the interpersonal relationship, in the classroom between teacher and learner. However a basic set of factors lie behind the teaching style. Teaching style is related to the following aspects: Total attitude towards knowledge and learning; acknowledged means of maintaining control over learners; preferred ways of orienting class activities; positive or negative attitudes
about teaching; knowledge about the purpose of education in general; influences from within the teachers' role set; tendencies towards behaviour which favours the taking of risks or towards conformist behaviour; beliefs about the best ways of learning a language; attitude towards learners.

3.11 Ways of teaching

According to Donn Byrne (1992), the ways of teaching the whole class are:

1. Working with students individually [T:S or S:T]

2. Getting the students to work with one another [S:S]

3. Doing chorus work

4. Doing team work

3.12 Communication

The English teachers should always be mindful of phenomenon of change and adapt an experimental way of teaching to make their teaching suited to the challenging needs of the new situations. Teachers must have a specific plan of actions. It means that the teacher is capable of analysing what he or she is required to do in the classroom. Teacher has something to communicate to the students. Having something to communicate is not the same thing as actually communicating it. Systematic plan of action must be carried out in a context of interaction, in order to achieve this. The teacher must engage in the sort of
interaction with the students which will enable communication to occur. When interaction does not exist, but only action and reaction prevails, there can be no communication. Where there is conflict in the interaction, communication breaks down. Only where there is co-operation between both sides involved in the interaction, can communication effectively take place and learning occur. Knowing what the teacher want to do, what teacher want to communicate to their students, in the classroom gives a healthy start. However achieving communication, requires a lot more effort and expertise.

3.13 Communication in the classroom

General communication always differs from the classroom communication. Teachers communicate in the classroom with a purpose. There is always a reason for transmitting a message to the students. The classroom situation, like many other social situations, involves gathering people together for a specific purpose, namely the purpose of learning. The primary purpose of classroom communication is a pedagogic one. The teacher follows some strategies and procedures to teach the syllabus prescribed. The items for teaching is the subject matter which involves knowledge, skill in literature teaching. To develop the skill, a teacher adopts the interactive teaching technique. The teacher is in command of knowledge and skills, required to transmit to the students. The teachers' pedagogic reasons for undertaking communication in the classroom are: mainly to present a new structure, to provide the students with practice in using that structure, to explain new words, to provide interpretations, to develop understanding of the text, to correct an error, to test and evaluate, to elicit and so on. In order to obtain this the teacher makes
use of a number of utterances, speech acts, themes which may be syllabus-oriented or non-syllabus oriented. Hence communication in the classroom interaction is primarily a pedagogic one.

3.14 Classroom action plan

In the classroom the actions are normally based on the textbook. Most classroom lessons that teachers take up are based on a plan. The plan may have been drawn up by the teacher, or found in lessons of a textbook which are syllabus oriented. Some teachers being new to their professions, may tend to prepare and execute highly detailed lesson plans, noting down every example and every exercise item to be used. Experienced teachers, perhaps due to their experience use a more general plan, scribble down in a few captions which were memorized over years of practice in the classroom. When the teacher fails to have clear idea of the aim of lesson, either in Poetry or Prose, and if the students fail to accentuate the line of action, subsequently nothing meaningful or useful may be achieved. However teachers’ success at any point of teaching is partly dependent on the kind of planning that has gone into it. A good plan for classroom action is a first step to success. A good plan is always expected to be followed for successful learning.

3.15 Aspects of interactions: Flanders

According to Flanders [1970], classroom interaction involves mainly of ‘teacher talk’ and ‘pupil talk’.
Teacher talk

Teacher talk is an important aspect of classroom interaction and it includes various sub talks represented by various utterances. Teacher talk is an aspect of the teacher activity within the classroom.

Accepting the feeling: In this activity the teacher accepts and clarifies an attitude or the feeling of a pupil in a non-threatening manner. Feelings may be positive or negative. Predicting and recalling feelings are included. Praising or encouraging: Here the teacher praises or encourages pupils' action or behaviour. He cracks jokes that release tension, but not at the expense of another individual. Nodding head or saying 'Umhm?' or 'Go on' are also included within Teachers' praise. Accepting or using ideas of pupils: This involves clarifying, building, or developing ideas suggested by students. Teacher extensions of pupils ideas are included in this activity. But as the teacher brings more of his or her own ideas into play, he will shift to the activity of enduring. Asking questions: Asking questions on content or procedure is an act performed by a teacher with due intention that students may answer his questions. Lecturing: This act involves giving facts or opinions about contents or procedures. Expressing own ideas, giving own explanation, or citing an authority, etc. are included in this activity. Giving directions: This involves acts of giving directions, commands, or orders to students with the expectation that students will follow appropriately. Criticizing or justifying authority: This involves producing statements intended to change pupil behaviour from non-acceptable to acceptable pattern.
Pupil talk

Pupil talk, an aspect of the pupil activity within the classroom includes within it different acts and utterances. Response and initiation and silence are the three major acts falling under pupil talk.

Responding: Responding is the act made by pupils in response to teachers' questions. Teachers' initiate the contact, or solicit pupil statement, or structure the situation. In the responding act of students, freedom to express their own ideas is limited. Initiating: It includes expressing of ones' own ideas: initiating a new topic; developing opinions and a line of thought, like asking thoughtful questions and going beyond the curricular activities. Silence: Silence is also an important feature associated with the students' in the classroom interaction situation, silence includes, pauses, short periods of silence and periods of confusion.

Teachers' talk

In this section some examples drawn from the classroom interaction representing teachers' talk are presented. The classroom interaction is mainly related to the teaching of two Poems and two Prose forms.

They are 1. The Karma 2. The Road not Taken (Poetry)

3. The Lonely Swan 4. Good Manners (Prose)

All the examples presented here are related to the teaching of the above four lessons.
I Praising or encouraging

1. Using student’s ideas.

2. Repeating student’s response.

1. T - ‘Karma’ - Does it not sound Indian? Do you know what it means?

S - One’s wrong doings in the past, reflection of it in the present.

T - Yes, that’s almost correct (praising), karma in sanskrit means action.

The conception of the quality of action including both merit and demerit; determining the future condition of all human beings; the theory of inevitable consequences, generally, the result of the actions of life.

2. T - Why the bird reconciled itself to a solitary life?

T - Kannan, why?

S - Since Miss. Guinness went away, the Swan made a companion of a man and spent the whole day in his company. The man left oneday because his work was finished. The Swan felt miserable and lonely and avoided watching for visitors to the lake side confining to a solitary life.

T - Fine, and that’s what has happened exactly. (encouraging)
II Accepting student’s ideas and repeating

1. T - What is Hudson's full name?

S - William Henry Hudson.

T - *Yes, that's right.* (accepting) Any other details that you may have read or come across?

S - British author

S - Ornithologist

S - 'The purple land' was written by him

S - And 'Far away and long ago', Ma'am.

T - *Good! pre-reading session really helps.* (accepting) Anyway first take, I'll read. Before I forget take down a brief note.

2. T - Finally what happened?

S - Swan is sent to another part of the country

T - *Yes, to join another lonely, solitary Swan in need of company.*

(accepting + repeating)

3. T - Socialism. Socialism means?
S - Socialism means equal rights.

T - Yes, **fair amount of rights to everyone.** (accepting + repeating)

4. T - Do you understand? Yes,

S - Whenever a person argues with someone about a point there is a good chance that he may be wrong, however confident he feels about it.

T - **Good! that's the message.** (accepting)

5. T - Also the author, who...

S - J.C. Hill.

T - **J.C. Hill** (accepting) observes that no man really understand this, a lot of arguement and anger can be saved.

**III Asking questions [cultural, personal questions]**

During classroom interaction the teacher may ask certain questions pertaining to culture and themes and the characters figuring in the text that is being taught. The act of asking questions is reflected through the utterances in question form. The question forms employed by the teacher may be the **wh - questions** (example4), **do type questions** (example-2), **statement with interrogative intonation** (example-3) and **tag questions** (example-8). For instance,
1. T - What do you guess from the last stanza?

"I shall be telling this with a sigh
Somewhere ages and ages hence:
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -
I took the one less travelled by,
And that has made all the difference?"

2. T - ‘Karma’ - Does it not sound Indian? Do you know what it means?

3. T - Here the freezing time refers to?

4. T - Why Winter?

5. T - Juliana, can you tell me about Santa Claus?

6. T - Is it not a very simple Poem, reflecting more of traditional form? The speciality lies in the naturalness of it, isn't it? Have you all understood the Poem?

7. T - It is a detailed Poem isn't it? now any doubt?

8. T - You all know what is good manners, don't you?

9. T - nalla panpukal valara enna ceyya veintum?

10. T - Good manners, that thing you look in a character. You understand, don't you?

11. T - Do you understand?
IV. Lecturing [giving information, correcting students without rejection, discussion - cultural points, modalling, orientation, routine talk].

Lecturing is one aspect of one kind of speech act performed by the teacher in the classroom interaction situation. During this macro act the teacher involves in various micro speech acts like giving information about the text, correcting the students without rejecting while the students give responses and discussing cultural points and orienting students routine talk etc.

1. T - The flavour of New England life, as I told you earlier he belonged to ancestry of New England. (giving information)

2. T - Yes, the poet is confused and thinks about the consequences of taking up each road, as I told you the spiritual way and the worldly way. (giving information)

3. T - It is quite usual for human beings to be unsure of what is to be decided. Especially people who wish to attain spiritual wisdom will have many confusions thronging their mind whether to remain firm with the chosen decision or move on to the worldly, material way, which only may seem more befitting. Spiritual life needs a lot of sacrifice, there should be no looking back, hence the confusion of choosing the path. However the poet is sure he will not regret his decision in the later stages of his life. (giving information)

4. T - Today let me talk about E.A. Robinson’s “Karma”. I hope you are well
aware of the poet's background? Anyway let me briefly introduce him to you. (introducing)

5. T - So you have a handful of them to name, good. (accepting without rejection)

6. T - Now having said about the author's background let me move on to his work. (introducing)

7. T - In India as well as in Western Countries it's winter during Christmas, right? When you talk of Christmas what comes to one's mind is Santa Claus. (giving information)

8. T - Hudson died on August 18, 1922 and is commemorated by bird sanctuary and Epstein's figure of Rima in Hyde Park. (giving information)

9. T - Experiments are sometimes made by experts to find out how many errors people do make in their statements. Some university students were shown on a screen a picture of a bull-fight. They were then asked to write a brief account of what they had seen. (giving information)

V Giving directions

Giving direction is another important speech act performed by the teacher during classroom interaction. Giving direction involves making the students read or open the book, spell the word correctly, marking appropriate passages in the text, directing the students to carry out the exercises, making students to form group works, etc. From the following example it is evident that teacher gives
different directions to students during interaction.

1. T - Now let us go on to the Poem. Can one of you read the verse?

2. T - Sit down!

3. T - Read the next para

4. T - Take page No.83.

5. T - Lady Pennefather,

   Little Chelmsford Hall

   Miss. Guinness

   be sure about the spelling

6. T - Write a summary of ‘The Lonely Swan’ and submit before this week-end.

7. T - See and mark those vocabulary in the text itself.

8. T - That reminds me, do the exercises and submit the notebooks before the next class.

   S - Sir, you said you will give the topic for seminar

   T - That we’ll see in the next class. We won't take the whole lesson to do a seminar, we'll do part by part and combine it.

   S - Sir, we'll do it in groups sir.

   T - O.K. make two groups and combine.
VI Criticizing or justifying [criticize students’ behaviour, responses]

1. T - What is Ornithology?
   
   S - Study of plants.
   
   T - No, you don’t know ornithology? (criticizing)

2. T - ...shows how desperate Swan was to find a friend, a companion. Just like humans.
   
   S - Yes ma’am, A friend in need is a friend indeed.
   
   T - Exactly but don’t you think it is very unusual of Swan to have trout as its friend.
   
   S - Ma’am even we have dogs and cats as our friends.
   
   T - What a presence of mind. Also we can use the word pets. (justifying)

VII Accepting feeling

Based on Flanders’ categorization of the acts representing Teachers’ talk, a sample data was collected to identify the percentage of the seven types of acts figuring in teachers’ talk.
The percentage of the acts in the classroom interaction based on Flanders' categorization which evolved through the present analysis may be tabulated as follows:

Table 3.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Teacher talk: acts</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Category1</td>
<td>Accepting feeling</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category2</td>
<td>Praising or encouraging</td>
<td>4.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category3</td>
<td>Accepting or using ideas of pupils</td>
<td>10.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category4</td>
<td>Asking questions</td>
<td>23.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category5</td>
<td>Lecturing</td>
<td>25.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category6</td>
<td>Giving directions</td>
<td>27.66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Category7</td>
<td>Criticizing or justifying</td>
<td>8.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Classroom language was used as the raw data for linguistic research. Whether it tells us what we want to know or not, the aim of observing classroom language use is to identify factors about the teaching and learning that exist in the classroom. As such it is to be differentiated from observing classroom language in order to find out more about how language gets manipulated. This aim is highly
pedagogical. This observation of classroom utterances gave the researcher a relatively simple and more structured type of discourse than normal everyday conversation with all its unpredictabilities and ambiguities. The result of this work is a descriptive system which can be used to analyse the verbal interaction in a classroom, and also to show some patterns of teaching and learning interaction as such.

Flanders' classroom acts are tabulated as follows:

**Table 3.2**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech Acts</th>
<th>Teacher talk</th>
<th>Pupil talk</th>
<th>Silence</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Accepting feeling</td>
<td>1. Pupil talk: response</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Praising or encouraging</td>
<td>2. Pupil talk: initiation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Accepting or using ideas of pupils</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>4. Asking questions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Lecturing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Giving directions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Criticizing or justifying</td>
<td></td>
<td>1. Silence or confusion</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.16 Interaction analysis in the language classroom

FLINT (Foreign Language interaction) records information about both the pedagogical and the social aspects of classroom interaction. This has a better effect even more clearly in the ‘teacher talk’ sections, where the categories cover both methodological uses of language, and social, personal and organizational uses of language, which serve to facilitate the teaching and learning process.

FLINT identifies the following as the factors behind teaching-learning process.

a. Communication for a pedagogic purpose is focal to teaching and learning.

b. Communication for a social purpose facilitates teaching and learning.

c. Possibly both of the above are required for efficient learning.

Various categories in the ‘teacher-talk’ identified in FLINT are listed below:

According to FLINT, teachers are involved in a variety of acts which are termed as direct or indirect acts. Indirect acts include the following:

1. **Dealing with feelings**: This macro act incorporates other acts like the following: accepting, reflecting, discussing, referring to, identifying with or communicating and understanding of past, present, or future feelings of students.

2. **Praising or encouraging**: Praising and complimenting, telling students why what they have said or done is valued, encouraging students to continue,
trying to give them confidence and confirming that answers given by the students are correct.

2a. **Joking:** This act involves intentional joking, kidding, making puns and attempting to be humorous; provided the joking is not humiliating anyone.

3. **Using ideas of students:** This involves clarifying and using, interpreting and summarizing the ideas of students. The ideas go rephrased by the teacher but still recognized as being students' contributions.

3a. **Repeating student response verbatim:** This involves repeating the utterances of students by the teachers immediately after students' participation. This act may be considered as an reinforcing act.

4. **Asking questions:** This involves asking questions to which an answer is expected from the students. Rhetorical questions are not included in this category.

4c. **Asking cultural questions:** This involves asking questions related to the culture and civilization of the target people or country.

4p. **Personalizing:** This involves asking questions which relate to the students' personal lives, particularly relating the content being learned to the students' personal lives, and personal qualities.
The direct acts which come under Teacher talk in FLINTS’ classification are the following:

5. **Giving information:** This involves giving information and facts, own opinions or ideas, lecturing, or asking rhetorical questions.

5a. **Correcting without rejection:** This involves telling students who have made mistakes the correct response without using criticism provoking words and intonation.

5c. **Discussing culture and civilization:** This act is pertaining to the culture and civilization of the target people or country. Presenting facts and anecdotes and points of interest related to the cultural aspect are included.

5m. **Modelling:** This involves giving model examples for students. Giving the lines of a dialogue, a sample for a pattern drill, illustrating the pronunciation of words or sounds, etc. come under modelling act.

5o. **Orienting:** This involves telling students the procedures they will have to follow for comprehending the lesson. Giving an overview or preview of what is to come, setting standards, regulations, or expectations, etc. come under the act of orienting.

5p. **Personalizing about self:** Personalizing means talking about oneself or, telling a personal story or anecdote about ones’ life.
5r. **Carrying out routine tasks:** Attending to routine matters, for example taking attendance, passing out books and test papers, making routine announcements, etc. come under this act.

6. **Giving directions:** This act involves giving directions, requests, or commands which the students are expected to follow:

6a. **Directing the pattern drill:** This sub act involves giving structural patterns which the students are expected to repeat exactly to make substitutions leading to substitution drills or to change one form into another leading to transformation drills. Here the teacher functions as a facilitator and observer of student activity.

7. **Criticizing student behaviour:** Criticizing involves rejecting some form of behaviour of students and trying to change the students non-acceptable behaviour. It involves communicating anger and displeasure, annoyance and dissatisfaction with what the students are doing.

7a. **Criticizing student response:** This involves telling the student that his response is not correct or acceptable and communicating through words or intonation features like criticism, displeasure, annoyance and rejection.
FLINTS' teacher classroom acts are tabulated as follows:

Table 3.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Speech acts</th>
<th>Teacher talk</th>
<th>Teacher talk</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Indirect influence</td>
<td>Direct influence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. Dealing with feelings</td>
<td>1. Giving information</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Praising or encourages</td>
<td>1a. Correcting without rejection</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2a. Joking</td>
<td>1c. Discussing culture and civilization</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Using ideas of students</td>
<td>1m. Modelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3a. Repeating students response</td>
<td>1o. Orienting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbatim</td>
<td>1p. Personalizing about self</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Asking questions</td>
<td>1r. Carrying out routine tasks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4c. Asking cultural questions</td>
<td>2. Giving directions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4p. Personalizing</td>
<td>2a. Directing pattern drills</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. Criticizing student behaviour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3a. Criticizing student response</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.17 Classroom interaction in literature class

In this section we are concerned with the teachers’ role in the classroom atmosphere. The activities and strategies adopted to develop student-teacher interaction while teaching English Prose and Poetry, are given due attention. The tools that govern the classroom interaction, the different kinds of approaches, activities and teaching elements adopted in the pre-reading, reading, post-reading phases along with different speech acts, the use of other languages in translation, testing and evaluation etc. are discussed. On receiving the feedback from the students the teachers inculcate several techniques to bring about efficient interaction pattern while teaching Prose and Poetry.

3.18 Poetry and Prose: their appeal to readers:

“One cardinal fact about great Poetry, as about great philosophy the very secret, perhaps of what is called their immortality, is that their main value lies in a process, not in a result .... we do not understand a great Poem till we have felt it through, and as far as, possible, recreated in ourselves, the emotion which it originally carried.” - MURRAY (1980) Quoted in K.R. Sharma (1980).

K.R. Sharma (1980) is of the view that, Prose is read by everybody but not Poetry. Upon differentiating Prose and Poetry, Coleridge has remarked: ‘Prose is words in their best form and Poetry is the best words in the best form’. Prose makes an appeal to the head while Poetry makes an appeal to the hearts. Brutus’ funeral speech is in Prose form; it appeals to the head and to reason, while that of
Anthony is in verse, appealing to the heart. It is possible for anyone to understand the effect of both the speeches. Poetry is a powerful form of expression. It affects the whole person, his senses, intellect and emotions. Prose appeals to intellect and Poetry to emotions. Poetry is the spontaneous overflow of powerful feelings and the expression of some emotional influence. The poet drag along and immerse us into his own experiences. Poetry is more ‘sound than sight’. Poetry is more a matter for ear than for eye. It is for sheer delight and enjoyment. It is a thing of beauty, beauty of form, language, thought, mood or feeling.

3.19 Aesthetic value

English is an enriched foreign language. It provides good source of enjoyment during leisure time. The marvellous and fascinating expressions found in English Poetry and Prose, never fail to enrich everyone's knowledge. By developing adequate vocabulary acquisition in English, the beauty in its rhyme, rhythm, thought, emotions, imagination, style, content and matter are appreciated. Delightful feeling of pleasure is got by reciting beautiful stanzas from English Poetry and quotable quotes from English Prose and one could feel the emotions engulfed there.

3.20 Difference in the aims of teaching Prose and Poetry

The Prose lesson aims at enlarging the vocabulary, explains the structure of sentences, explains the grammatical constructions and captures the ideas and arguments of the author. But in teaching Poetry, the main aim is to enable the
students to experience the aesthetic pleasure. The students are made acquainted with the beauty of expression, the music of words, the aptness of figures of speech, the surface and underlying meaning. They are made to realize that rhythm is the soul of Poetry. In Poetry the poet does not select words to produce effects alone but also to produce rhythmic qualities. Rhythm and metre are very important from the point of view of meaning. Appreciation of Prose involves comprehending the central experience, beauty, propriety of the phraseology, the allusions and the images in the presentation of experience and the vocabulary items. All this has to be done in appreciating Poetry, but in addition, it will be necessary to note and enjoy the music, rhythm and rhyme of the verse.

3.21 Method of Teaching a Poem

Tomkinson (1997) remarks, “Literature is a powerful stimulus to the aesthetic consciousness and that it should be organised and taught to this end. The creative impulse in man urges him to convert the useful into the beautiful”.

Hudson (1972) says, “The worlds’ great poets have always recognised that Poetry is made out of life, belongs to life, exists for life. Poetry by its nature, is a communicative art and, therefore, there must be some universal qualities of the experience to be commonly felt, though at different levels by us all and consequently the world of Poetry cannot be entirely different from the world in which we live. In Poetry, words have emotional and suggestive value, apart from the meaning; in the hands of a poet, even the most common place among them are turned into the strangely and enchantingly new. That is why Megroz (1938) in
his "Modern English Poetry", describes Poetry as the art of Conveying through words more than what words have ever expressed before".

Man has got sense of beauty inherent in him. The growth of this sense of beauty depends on training or teaching. Therefore it is teachers' duty to create aesthetic consciousness in the individuals. Education should open up the right channels for the hearts' over flowing. Though the instinct of the beautiful is inherent in man, good taste is acquired and cannot be acquired without practice. It is essential in literature. Appreciation is an act of judgement of a piece by the acquired standards. Students are taught to know what is beautiful literature and also to know why it is beautiful.

The aim of teaching Poetry must differ materially from that of teaching Prose. Poetry should not be taught like Prose to increase vocabulary or to enlarge the stock of knowledge or to develop expressional ability. The aim of teaching Poetry is to give students an opportunity for valuable experiences and to help them to appreciate Poetry. It is aimed at enlarging their powers of sympathetic imagination, because Poetry should stir their hearts, quicken their emotions and bring their awareness of beauty. The appreciation of Poem should be threefold, according to Sharma (1980):

1. Appreciation of the subject matter [the emotional experience of the poet].
2. Appreciation of the images that present the experience.
3. Appreciation of the music of the rhyme and rhythm.
There is no definite method of teaching a Poem which can be applied to all Poems. Each individual Poem will require an individual treatment. Teachers' own reactions to the Poem will affect the method.

3.22 Methods adopted by the teacher in teaching Poetry and Prose.

Our classroom observation and classroom interaction transcripts reveal that the literature teacher follows certain methods while teaching literature. The teacher reads the Poem aloud to the class and gives an introduction of the poet and the Poem. He arouses the necessary atmosphere and prepares the ground by reading the Poem, which involves explaining the background of the Poem, the historical events connected with the Poem and the poet or any other things which help the students to understand the settings. Then the teacher reads the Poem aloud. This model reading becomes a model indeed. The voice, the tone, the rise and fall of it i.e. the intonation all go together to express the essential quality of the Poem. Then the teacher discusses the effect, exactness, preciseness, richness of suggestion and the meaning along with the explanation of a few vocabulary items.

Then the teacher asks carefully prepared and judicious questions. Through the questions he tests the comprehension of students. Before finding out whether the class has grasped the general and detailed outline of the thought and experience of the subject matter of the Poem, the teacher recapitulates and checks the level of understanding quite a few times. The teacher thus checks upon students the subject matter of the Poem. The details of the study of Poem tends to produce
a keen response. Ultimately rather than teaching being important, the response of the students becomes primarily important, then the teacher after eliciting required response upon students vivid understanding, evaluates and criticises their understanding. This is how finally the teacher tests the level of comprehension of the students.

In the Prose teaching, there did not exist any vivid description or word by word or stanza by stanza explanation by the teacher. It is found that the teacher either reads the Prose lesson or requests the students to read the lesson. After reading, explanation is given. The reading experience give the students, an experience to read clearly with correct pronunciation. The explanation begins almost concurrently with the teaching of Prose. Explanations of vocabularies are well assimilated by the students. Translation of the text, and few of its expressions are explained in the first language [mother tongue]. With reference to teaching of "detailed text", after teaching, marking of important annotative passages are made. While teaching, the teacher checks students' understanding through questioning and checking. Upon students response, their understanding is evaluated and tested. Finally instructions to off-class activities like summary preparation, seminar topics are discussed and due instructions are given.
3.23 Teacher Initiated Acts

The interaction patterns were created largely by teachers. In the teacher-student discussions, the act of informing was predominant along with eliciting and acknowledging acts of the teacher. The strategies adopted by the teacher reflect teachers' curricular and instructional goals. All the contexts identified in the data had been described with reference to the sequential ordering of the utterances and speech acts. Teacher-initiated and teacher-eliciting acts guide the interaction pattern and the interaction is concluded by the teacher. The following are different acts subsumed under teacher initiated acts and these acts are explained here in detail with suitable examples.

3.24 Introducing Act

Through this act the teacher introduces the poets and the authors, the major works of the poets and authors, major events of the work, etc. The teacher begins with a greeting and introduces the work to the students at the very outset in the 'Introducing Act'.

In both Poetry and Prose classes after giving the page number and title of the work, the teacher started to ask the students questions about the author's previous works, background, meaning of title and then they started the teaching
of Poetry in Poetry class, Prose in Prose classes. Checking on poet’s works, his contemporary peers, and about the poet himself were observed more in Poetry class. Prose classes were taught directly. However considerable amount of information was given by the teacher in both Poetry and Prose class. Though the medium of instruction was English, in Prose class. In Prose class the teacher used Tamil language for introducing the lesson. There was no introduction about the characters before starting the Prose lessons. However, spellings of the names of characters were pointed out and students were instructed to follow it up fully. The teacher also clarifies from the students if they had read previous works of the author and whether they have understood the work at the surface level.

The time taken for introducing the Prose and Poetry varied in each undergraduate class. Teachers’ pattern of introducing varied. In Poetry classes the teachers used only English for teaching; detailed explanation without overlapping were given only by the Poetry teaching teacher. In Prose teaching language mix and language shift were identified. Also no line by line explanation was found. Lot of overlappings were identified. In some classes teachers were involved in socialization process before beginning the class.
The aspects of teaching performed by the teacher during the Introducing act are tabulated below:

**INTRODUCING ACT**

**Table 3.4**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act</th>
<th>S.No.</th>
<th>Prose Class</th>
<th>Poetry class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introducing Act</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Greeting</td>
<td>Greeting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Introducing the title of the work</td>
<td>Introducing the poet</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Rendering the page number</td>
<td>Rendering the page number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Questioning authors' previous works</td>
<td>Explaining major events of the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Questioning authors' background</td>
<td>Introduction to the work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>6.</td>
<td>Questioning the meaning of the title</td>
<td>Questioning the poets' previous works</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td>---</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>Teaching Prose</td>
<td>Questioning the poets' background</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Language mix and shift: Tamil Language usage</td>
<td>Questioning the meaning of title</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>Rendering spellings to character names</td>
<td>Checking on other contemporaries</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>Checking the knowledge about authors' previous works</td>
<td>Checking knowledge about the previous works</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Checking the level of understanding</td>
<td>Checking the level of understanding</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>Providing overlapped explanation</td>
<td>Usage of only English Language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Socializing aspect</td>
<td>Explanation without overlapping</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

On carefully examining the transcription of the recorded data, the examples of Introducing act carry several sub acts and utterances. Through the present study the sequential pattern found in the sub acts are also taken care of. The sequential pattern for example can be traced in the following form. The teacher
2. T: Dear Students

T: Today let me talk about E.A. Robinsons' 'Karma' I hope you are well aware of the poets' background. Anyway, let me briefly introduce him to you. **He is a highly religious poet of the nineteenth century born in Maine in 1869. He was greatly influenced by Puritan tradition and the transcendental romanticism. Being the third son of his family left Harvard without a degree.**

T: Can you name some of his contemporaries?

T: So you have a handful of them to name, good!

T: Can you imagine the style of his writing?

T: Before I forget, did you all read the Poem and about the poet, as I usually instruct all of you to do so

T: What about others? O.K. Those of you who agreed to have prepared earlier, name some of E.A. Robinsons' Poems?

3. T: Take page no. 83. **This Prose lesson is in a essay form.**

T: **The title of the Prose is ‘The Lonely Swan’ by Hudson**

T: What is Hudson's full name?

T: Yes, that's right. Any other details that you may have read or come across?
4. T: Good Morning, Sit down!

T: Page No.42, let us do ‘Good Manners’ by J.C. Hill. It's about what J.C. Hill to say on Good Manners. You all know what is good manners, don't you? Sleeping in the classroom is not good manners.

T: In Tamil we say, nalla panpuka1 ‘Good Manners’ Good manners must be practised and adopted, patiently and skillfully, one does not get it at the time of birth itself.


Table 3.5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>No.of Sub Acts</th>
<th>No.of utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3.25 Informing Act

In all the Prose classes, it was found that paragraph-teaching was the most common way of information rendering. Meaning for some vocabulary were given by the teacher. The lessons of the Prose text were rather conventional in style, and not very complex. The teacher read the Prose lessons and also made the students to read paragraph by paragraph. Not all but few students got the opportunity to read the text to enhance their reading ability. Before giving meanings for the new words, students were asked to give the same. The teacher also deviated from the text and indulged in generalized exposition. In Poetry classes also, meanings were given to some words. The teaching style was not very complex. On several occasions, answers were not upto the expectation of the teacher in both Prose and Poetry class, and it was observed that the teachers read and explained the text and then asked questions. In Prose class word by word or sentence by sentence explanation was not rendered, whereas in Poetry class each stanza was given appropriate explanation. The teaching was not diverted from the subject matter. The teacher took the trouble of explaining the Poems line by line.

The informing act was used for giving information, about the text or Poem to be taught. The utterances used in informing act are declarative in form. Information about the work itself was given, so that the students could understand the text without much difficulty. Very rarely switch over to Tamil or in general code mixing took place in the teaching of Prose. In Prose lesson without verifying the difficulty of students upon their understanding of meanings, the teacher explained it in
Tamil. However Poetry classes did not have relevance to the usage of Tamil language. Questioning by the teacher was prevalent, and parallel constructions were used often. This has become one of the techniques of the teacher.

The activities coming under the informing act are tabulated below:

**Table 3.6**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Act</th>
<th>S.No</th>
<th>Prose Class</th>
<th>Poetry Class</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informing</td>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Paragraph teaching</td>
<td>Meaning giving</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Act</td>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Meaning giving</td>
<td>Line by line explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Paragraph reading</td>
<td>Stanza by stanza explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td></td>
<td>No word by word explanation</td>
<td>Information about the Poem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Reading and explaining</td>
<td>Information about the poet and his work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Questioning</td>
<td>Questioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td></td>
<td>Information about Prose</td>
<td>Usage of parallel construction</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. Language shift; Tamil language usage  Only English language usage

9. Conventional teaching style  Simple teaching style

10. Deviation from and exposition of generalized statements  Teaching restricted to only to the Poem or work

The recorded data which shows the functions of the Informing act suggests certain sub acts and utterances with the main act itself. The teacher while informing about the work and its writer, praises the poet by denoting his achievement awards and the number of times the award being conferred upon the poet. After applauding, he gives information about the background details about the poet. The narration continues till a detailed description of the poet is sought. The information continues until full details are extended about the poet. In the first example about six sub acts and seven utterances are identified. However other remaining examples exemplify certain pattern of involvement with sub acts and utterances within the main act frame. The identified sub acts in example 1. are *praising, applauding, informing, narrating, describing and extended informing*.

1. Teachers’ information about the work and writer.

T: *Frost has been the most honoured of the American poets, receiving the pulitzer prize four times [1924,1931,1937,1943],*
honorary degree more than a score i.e. twenty years, including degrees from both Cambridge and Oxford.

T: Robert Frost was born on March 26, 1874, in San Francisco, California though his ancestry was of New England. Lost his father at the age of ten, his financial support was occasionally supplied by his grand father. He took up various jobs at a mill, shoe factory, reporter of a newspaper, farmer and country school teacher. Married is 1895, to meet the necessities of family demands, he began writing Poems. At the age of forty with the publication of North of Boston, 1914, he launched upon his poetic career.

2. T: Robinson witnessed that his two older brothers faced failures, dereliction and death, through drink and dope addiction. His family was a wheel of misfortune. This feeling of failure conflicted his sense of psychological depths and lived with dignity in the presence of failure.

T: 'Karma' in Sanskrit means Action. The conception of the quality of action including both merit and demerit, determining the future condition of all human beings, the theory of inevitable consequences generally the result of the actions of life.
Table 3.7

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>No.of Sub Acts</th>
<th>No.of Utterances</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.26 Reading the lesson by the Teacher

Reading by the teacher was followed by the follow up act. Listing of character names from the text is elicited by the teacher. He directs them to be sure about the spelling while writing. In order to create awareness about right spelling the teacher deviates from the topic and comments upon an incident which occurred earlier while correcting an examination paper. Then goes on commenting as to how blunderous and inexcusable it would be to write down wrong spellings. About five sub acts and twelve utterances were identified in the following data. The other examples also carry several other sub acts.

Reading the lesson by the Teacher

1. T: Another even stranger case must be told in conclusion. The sad case of a Loney swan in search of a friend, and as it is a story of the incredible sort, I am glad to have permission to give the names of the persons who witnessed the affair. The place is Little Chelmsford Hall,
near Chelmsford, and the witnesses are Lady Pennefather and her friend Miss. Guinness who resides with her. Near the house there is an artificial lake of considerable length, fed by a stream which flows into the grounds on one side and out at the other. Lake and stream are stocked with trout. A pair of swan is kept on the lake and three or four years ago they reared a single one. Which after some months, when it was fully grown, they began to persecute.

T: Lady Pennefather,

Little Chelmsford Hall

Miss. Guinness

T: Be sure about the spelling. Once when I was correcting an University main examination paper the student had written, 'The Lake Ile of Insfree' for that W.B. Yeats', 'The Lake Isle of Innisfree'.

T: It was such a blunder. These kinds of mistakes are inexcusable.

2. Reading the lesson by the teacher

T: You cannot speak the truth by saying what you think is the truth. You have to express it differently for different people. To some people 'socialism' means taking money from those who have money and giving it to those who have none. To other people 'socialism' means state control of industry and commerce. To others we cannot tell a man the
truth about socialism until you believe in socialism. If you say, I believe in socialism, and he understands that you mean you believe in robbery, you must not be surprised if he takes a dislike to you, and if that is not what you mean, you did not speak the truth.

T: Socialism: *Socialism* means?

Explanation by the teacher

Yes. Fair amount of rights to everyone, "camatarmam." To some people the word "Socialism" means taking money from those who have money and giving it to those who have none. To other people Socialism means state of control of industry and commerce. If we say, I believe in socialism a man understands that we believe in robbery, he may dislike us. If that is not what we mean, we did not speak the truth.

3. Reading the Poem by the Teacher

The teacher while teaching Poetry was found to be reading the Poem stanza by stanza. After reading one whole stanza, she goes on to explain the word by word, line by line meaning. The rendering of meaning was mixed with explaining and describing the work itself. Again the teacher reads few lines from the last stanza and found to be questioning the students about what they understood by those lines. This pattern of teaching was found in one Poetry teaching class, whereas other teachers adopted several other techniques. The example cited below has about five sub acts and five utterances. The sub acts are identified as: reading, explaining, describing, reading aloud and questioning.
Reading the Poem by the teacher

T:  "Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,
   And sorry I could not travel both
   And be one traveller, long I stood
   And looked down one as far as I could
   To where it bent in the undergrowth".

Explanation by the teacher as recorded

4.  T:  The poet was unable to decide as to which road he should be choosing to go since he finds two diverged roads on a yellow wood. Yellow wood means a scanty wood not a very thick forest. It is obvious he could choose only one at a time. A single person cannot travel two roads at one time, isn't it?

   "To where it bent in the undergrowth", "And looked down one as far as I could", What does this mean?

T  "A friend of his would neither buy or sell,
   was he to answer for the axe that fell?"

T:  It denotes the friend was poor, not successful in life, 'for the axe' means 'killing'. Since his friend could not afford his living he killed himself and the poet feels guilty, because he thinks he is responsible for it.
Table 3.8

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<tr>
<th>Example</th>
<th>No. of Sub Acts</th>
<th>No. of Utterances</th>
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3.27 Commenting Act

The teacher generally commented on the performance of the students on any one of the following: 1. the overall performance of the students, 2. meaning of words 3. answering the related questions 4. answering non-related questions. When the student failed to answer a question, the comment made by teacher varied accordingly. Correct answers were always appreciated, and the correct response of the students were pointed out and commented by the teacher.

In example one, the teacher is found to be reading two lines from the Poem and questions the students instantly about the meaning of it, even without the teacher explaining it first. Upon eliciting two different, but correct answers from two different students, the teacher passes on her comments to them by saying 'yes'. After commenting explains the inner meaning of the lines questioned. Here the commenting acts' style proceeds with an explanation after commenting. In
example one given below, seven utterances were noted and the five sub acts identified are, *questioning, answering, commenting, reading and explaining.*

1. **T:** “To where it bent in the undergrowth”, “And looked down one as far as I could”, What does this mean?

   **S:** See where one road leads to ......

   **S:** Where the road originates.........

   **T:** *Yes!,* the poet is confused and thinks about the consequences of taking up each road, as I told you the spiritual way and the worldly way.

2. **T:** What do you guess from the last stanza?

   **S:** The poet confidently says that many years from now, he would never have a spark of regret for having chosen the less treaded path which made a total difference in his life.

   **T:** *Good, that's what exactly he says,* and [repeats what the student said].

3. **T:** Can you name some of his contemporaries?

   **S:** Emily Dickinson, Tennessee Williams
S: William Faulkner, John Updike, Allen Tate. Earnest Hemigway, Robert Frost

T: *So you have a handful of them to name, good!*

4. T: Juliana, [calls out to a student] can you tell me about Santa Claus?

S: Silent

T: *I'm surprised, you are not able to answer.* Well, Santa Claus is supposed to be a Bishop called George.

5. T: Any details that you may have read or come across Hudson?

S: British author

S: Ornithologist

S: ‘The purple land’ was written by him

S: Also ‘Far away and long ago’, ma’am

T: *Good! Pre-reading session really helps.* Anyway first take, I’ll read.

Before I forget take down a brief note.
### Table 3.9

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<th>Example</th>
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### 3.28 Acknowledging Act

The teachers of both Poetry and Prose classes took some time to acknowledge to themselves, that the students followed what they taught. Repeatedly they were found making inquiries as to whether they understood the lesson. The acknowledgement seemed to give confidence to the teachers to proceed further with their teaching processes.

In the first example cited below the teacher first reads one full stanza from the Poem and questions about the title and checks if they are aware of its origin. The student gives an apt answer, to which the teacher appreciates and acknowledges the answer given by the student. The teacher continues to give the meaning of the title herself again and proceeds explaining further about what the
title ‘Karma’ suggests in Sanskrit. In this act the first example alone carry about eight utterances and six sub acts, they are: reading, questioning, acknowledging, applauding, explaining and meaning rendering. However other examples have many other sub acts prevalent in them.

1 T: “Acknowledging an improvident surprise,
he magnified a fancy that he wished
The friend whom he had wrecked were here again
Not sure of that, he found a compromise;
And from the fulness of his heart he fished
A dime for Jesus who had died for men”.

T: “Karma” - Does it not sound Indian? Do you know what it means?

S: One’s wrong doings in the past, reflection of it in the present.

T: Yes, that’s almost correct, "Karma" in Sanskrit means “Action”. The conception of the quality of action including both merit and demerit, determining the future condition of all human beings, the theory of inevitable consequences generally the result of the actions of life.

2. T: El Ombu, E,L,O,M,B,U [spells out]


T: Clear?
3. T: He was an author as well as an Ornithologist

T: What is Ornithology?

S: Study of plants

T: No, you don't know ornithology?

S: Study of birds

T: Good!

Table 3.10

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<th>Example</th>
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3.29 Clarifying Act

The teachers were able to elicit the answers of students both in chorus and individual pattern. Some teachers took the trouble of clarifying difficult words by giving their meanings, forming sentences elicitig different related meanings and
ensured that the students understood them. Both in Poetry classes and Prose classes, equal participation of group answers and individual answers were noted. However, individual answering was more prevalent upon the questions asked by the teacher.

On examining the recorded data the clarification act was found to involve five sub acts and seven utterances in it. Example one furnished below has a series of sub acts in it. While studying it, it was found that the teacher first read the text. Without explaining the passage read by her, she explains only a certain line and gives meaning to it. She questions the students, upon eliciting answer from a student, evaluates the students’ answer. Further, she explains about the elicited answer. The sub acts involved are: reading, explaining, rendering meaning, questioning and evaluating. The remaining examples also represent some pattern of sub acts.

1. T: “A little later the reason of this change appeared when the extraordinary discovery was made that the Swan was not alone after all, that he had a friend who was constantly with him - a big trout! the fish had its place by the side of the bird, just below the surface. And together they would rest and together move like one being. Those who first saw it could hardly credit the evidence of their own senses, but in a short time they became convinced that this amazing thing had come to pass; that those two ill-assorted beings had actually become companions”.

T: A constant friend - a big trout!
T: What is a trout?

S: Fish ma'am

T: Yes, a fresh water fish esteemed as food and game

2. T: Can you imagine the style of his writing?

S: _____________

S: Puritanic

T: Well, you cannot call it puritanic. It is traditional in form and he uses more of naturalness.

3. T: See and mark those vocabulary in the text itself

S: O.K., Yes sir.

T: Fragile - Something that breaks easily is fragile. For example glass, mirror, porcelain, etc.

T: Commerce - Trading, buying and selling

T: Tiresome - Not very exciting or interesting.

T: Oblige - If you oblige someone, you give him or her help.

S: abide by.
T: Limitations - Things that limit our character and make weaker.

T: defer - If you defer something you put it off till later.

T: Sympathy - If you feel sympathy for someone, you do not feel friendly towards him.

T: Influenza - A disease like a very bad cold.

S: Cold and fever.

T: artificial - Not real.

4. T: Also the author, who........?

S: J.C. Hill.

T: J.C. Hill observes that no man really understands himself. If we understand this, a lot of argument and anger can be saved.

Table 3.11

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3.30 Summing up act

In this act, the teachers summarises the whole explanation of the Poems and the Prose. The teacher summarises the interpretations, events, poet's background, authors' background, suggestion of the title etc. to make the students understand the theme, surface meaning, deep-rooted explanation of the Poetry as well as Prose. Students get ample chance to study and understand the text well when it is summed up together. Students are encouraged to express their intentions, and clear their doubts. This summing up act was found in both Prose and Poetry classes. In the first example the poet's Karma and the reason for it, the poets' opinion about his deed and others opinion are found. Three utterances and three sub acts are identified as: reading, reasoning and explaining. The sub acts varied from example to example.

1. T: "He magnified a fancy that he wished
The friend whom he had wrecked were here again
Not sure of that, he found a compromise;
And from the fulness of his heart he fished
A dime for Jesus who had died for men".

Summing up

Though in heart he wanted to help him a great deal, in action he is rather stingy like. The poet feels that having not helped his friend and having not saved him from the self-killing, is his karma. Because he feels now, he could have helped his poor friend to live his livelihood. As we have seen
earlier in the introduction, Robinson Saw man as beset by his own character, that is by fate, whereas, most of his contemporaries were seeing man beset by society.

2. “And both the morning equally lay
   In leaves no step had trodden black
   Oh, I kept the first for another day!
   Yet knowing how way leads on to way,
   I doubted if I should ever come back.”

Summing up

“And both the morning equally lay
In leaves no step had trodden black”.

The next day the poet found both the roads lay unused by the people. The leaves withered from the trees that had covered the roads remained as it is. These leaves were not blackened by footsteps of the passerby. Robert Frost decided to use the second road and spared the first road for another day. Yet he was confused, rather unsure and doubted if he should ever come back, knowing how one way leads on to another way. The way, the path he had chosen was the spiritual path which we go on to see in the next stanza as a much sought after path of his, with which he becomes contended.

3. “It is not always easy in company to speak frankly, and if you.............however confident you feel about it........”
Experiments are sometimes made by experts to find out how many errors people do make in their statements. Some University students were shown on a screen a picture of a bull-fight. They were then asked to write a brief account of what they had seen. When this was finished, they were told to put a number on every statement they made. 1. if they thought so 2. if they were fairly sure about it 3. if they were quite sure and 4. if they were prepared to swear the statement on oath. Every student had atleast ten percent errors in the statements he had prepared to swear on oath. A student saw the bull having its tongue out. He was quite sure about it. Yet when he was shown the picture again, he saw that the bull's mouth was closed. Since the bull's head was turned to the side, the ear looked like the tongue.

Table 3.12

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<th>Example</th>
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3.31 Extended Informing act

The extended informing act was found very minimum in both Prose and Poetry classes. Teachers attributed to this due to the reason, that the students appeared confident of what was being taught.

In the following example the teacher refers to a word or season and explains about what the season is specialised about, in her words - about exchanging gifts. Again she reads the lines which carry the explained term for extended information. Once again she gives meaning for another phrase and continues to explain further about the lines of the Poem which was already taught. This extended information is found to be given to important verses or lines. Five utterances and three sub acts are identified in the following example. They are: reading, explaining and meaning rendering.

1 T: Christmas—here it refers to Christmas as a season of exchanging gifts.

T: “Christmas was in the air and all was well
with him but for a few confusing flaws”.

T: Confusing flaws— not certain mistakes.

T: In divers of God’s image—because divers means multi-forms of God’s image, according to Old Testament, Genesis, Chronicle 1:26 - 27. God said, let us make man in our own image, after our likeness... so God created man in his own image.
3.32 Multiple Eliciting Act

Teachers adopted this mechanism by asking more than one question, after completing their teaching. Elicitation act was an effective method to verify student's understanding of the lesson. It also created interest among students, when useful elicitation of personal experiences were involved. Multiple elicitations were text-based and covered important points of the lesson. Teachers solicited collective responses, partial responses and gave clue for further questions. Compared to other acts, this was found to be of lesser percentage in both Prose and Poetry classes.

The recorded data showed that in the multiple eliciting act, reading was done by the teacher followed by explaining the verse read. Meaning for words were rendered. Questioning took place, and upon receiving the right answer by the student, the teacher elicits further, conform why the student adhered to that answer. Once again on getting the clarification rightly answered by the student, the teacher indirectly acknowledges the response, elicits further answering and
questions. When this time student failed to give an elicitation, the teacher passes a comment and explains herself. Thirteen utterances and seven sub acts were identified with the example given below; they are: **reading, explaining, Indirect acknowledgement, questioning, responding, eliciting and commenting.**

1. **T:** He pondered - he thought and the reason for it was partly, a slowly freezing Santa Claus upon the corner, with his beard and bell.

   **T:** Here the freezing time refers to?

   **S:** Winter.

   **T:** Why winter?

   **S:** Because it is Christmas season.

   **T:** In India as well as in Western Countries it is winter during Christmas, right? When you talk of Christmas what comes to your mind is Santa Claus.

   **S:** Santa Claus.

   **T:** Juliana, can you tell me about Santa Claus.

   **S:** _________

   **T:** I am surprised, you are not able to answer. Well! Santa Claus is supposed to be a Bishop Called George.
Table 3.14

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<th>MULTIPLE ELICITING ACT</th>
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3.33 Non-Verbal Act

Gestures were used by the teachers in the classroom to denote the text sometimes. Nodding the heads for approval was also considered as a non-verbal act. It was found to be used by some teachers while teaching and also while getting approval for certain things. Three utterances and two sub acts were identified in the following data. They are reading and non-verbal acts.

1 T: He wanted man to be specially crafted above all, above fish of the sea, over the birds of the air and over the cattle and over all the earth and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth.

[Teacher makes expressions to denote creeping things, although the teacher has reference in her hand paper, she explains without seeing it.]
### Table 3.15

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<th>Example</th>
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#### 3.34 Checking on Audience Act

Here the teachers check the students' level of understanding. The teacher asks them whether or not they understood what the teacher taught, either at the end of the lesson or in between wherever necessary. The teachers also provide right information on students' level of non-understanding.

The data on checking on audience act revealed several sub acts and utterances. The example show, the teacher questioning and checking with the students about the style of the Poem. Upon students' agreeing with the style in which the work was done, the teacher checks with them about the doubts they may face. The teacher gives information about the off-class activity, i.e. reading the work carefully at home to prepare for the test session. He checks again on their level of understanding. Also the teacher is seen correcting the utterances representing students' clarification. The five sub acts involved and the ten utterances found in the following example are: *questioning, checking, clarifying, informing and correcting.*
1. T: Is it not a very simple Poem, reflecting more of traditional form? The speciality lies in the naturalness of it, isn't it? Have you all understood the Poem?

S: Yes ma'am.

T: Any doubt? It is a detailed Poem isn't it? So read it carefully line by line, for the next session of test on Monday, we'll include this Poem also, O.K. Now any doubt?

S: Santa Claus was a Bishop called George or a man called George, Ma'am?

T: Bishop

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3.35 Summary

This chapter is mainly concerned with the role of teacher and the activity of the teacher during classroom interaction. The earlier section deal with language use in classroom, the teachers' activity, his style of teaching, communication and classroom management, etc. Then taking Flanders' categorization of classroom activity as basis, the seven acts coming under teachers' talk inside the classroom were explained with suitable examples drawn from the data. The percentage-wise description is also given to identify the ranking predominance of acts coming under teachers' talk. Then Shirly Lims' categorization of the different acts coming under teachers' talk were taken and illustrated with due examples, drawn from the data. It was found that acts like initiation, multiple-elicitation and checking are found to receive higher number of acts and utterances. Acts like summing up, extended informing and non-verbal acts receive lower number of acts and utterances.