Introduction

The second language classroom is a relatively unexplored area of research. In India, so far as the researcher is aware, the present study is one of the very early attempts to understand the teaching-learning process and with it what really happens in the classroom. Further, the use of ethnography as a research tool in classroom centred research is perhaps quite 'novel' even abroad.

(a) Classroom Interaction and Uptake: Basically this study seeks to understand the relationship between classroom interaction and 'uptake' in ESL teaching classes. 'Uptake' is defined as the language items that learners claim to have learned from a particular language lesson. It is distinguished from 'intake' which is learning/acquisition of language items as reflected in the linguistic development of learners. A classroom lesson is characterised as the product of interaction between the teacher and the learners of different abilities in the particular climate created by them. Learning opportunities are created during the process of interaction and may not be a part of the syllabus or the teacher's lesson plan and what learners learn is influenced by the learning opportunities available to them. This view of classroom language learning broadens the meaning of input itself because input would now include all language learning opportunities.
that arise during the course of classroom interaction. It is envisaged that the wide range of unpredictable learning opportunities which are generated in the classroom would influence the uptake of each learner.

(b) The Nature of Inquiry: The study seeks to investigate

1. the process whereby learning opportunities are created.
2. how uptake relates to the interactive nature of learning opportunities.
3. whether uptake of individual learners differs and whether the characteristics of classroom interaction and the nature of learning opportunities can themselves predict uptake.
4. learners' perceptions of the relative value of different learning opportunity types.

(c) The Data: The data consists of

1. tape transcripts of 10 lessons (six of which are analysed in detail).
2. tape transcripts of interviews with learners.
3. tape transcripts of interviews with the teacher.
4. uptake lists of uptake recorded by each individual learner.
5. observers' notes.
(d) Methodology: First each uptake word is traced back in the tape transcript of the lesson and the treatment it received in terms of specific categories is noted. Later a qualitative analysis is used. Here, an ethnographic approach is used in analyzing the data. The teacher's, the learners' and the observers' views are triangulated.

It is significant that the use of an ethnographic and a triangulatory approach brings to light several aspects of the teaching learning process which were not the focus of investigation in a direct way.

A chapter-wise account of the study follows:-

Chapter I entitled 'Need and Relevance of the Study and Its Pedagogic Scope' first establishes the relevance of the research area, then the relevance of the data and the suitability of the approach used in its analysis. The need for the research is justified and finally the pedagogic scope of the study is clearly spelt out. It is envisaged that the study would offer useful insights into the teaching-learning process to researchers, teachers, teacher-trainers and also to learners.

Chapter II is divided into three parts: Part A attempts to briefly define Classroom Centred Research. It traces its beginnings and development and describes the research tools that have been developed and have proved useful. Several
research topics in Classroom Centred Research are identified and a few investigatory studies, relating to each topic, are very briefly discussed. Part B first considers the probable reasons for the mismatch between 'input' and 'intake', then the change\(\text{\textit{\textsuperscript{1}}}\) which the concept of 'input' has undergone and finally the notions of 'interaction' and 'uptake' which are central to the present study. Part C reviews briefly a few studies in the area of classroom research which kindled the investigator's interest in the present research. These studies were either just completed before 1985 (when the present study was begun) or were in progress and have subsequently been completed.

Chapter III gives an account of the study in terms of a description of the subjects of the investigation and the procedure used for the collection of data. It also presents the purpose of the post-session and the post-investigation tests and explains how they were administered.

Chapter IV first explains how the categories for analyzing treatment were derived. Second, the overall list of categories is presented and each category is defined and illustrated from the classroom data. Third, the questions addressed in the analysis of data are identified and the general approach adopted in analyzing the data is discussed. Fourth, the assumptions about the potentiality of certain categories to facilitate uptake are presented. These
assumptions are to be tested in the course of data analysis in Chapter 5. Fifth, the order in which the lessonwise data is presented is explained and justified. Finally, three charts which give a numerical account of the data covering lessons 1 to 6 are presented. Chart 1 presents an account of uptake and treatment in quantitative terms. Chart 2 gives similar information on uptaken items to which a meaning had been assigned by learners. Chart 3 presents the meaning recall of individual learners for lessons attended by them.

Chapter V which presents the analysis and interpretation of data is divided into six parts. Part (i) is the analysis of Lesson 4 in terms of the relation between classroom interaction (characterized in terms of classroom treatment) and uptake. Part (ii) similarly analyzes Lesson 3; Part (iii) Lesson 1; Part (iv) Lesson 2; Part (v) Lesson 5 and finally Part (vi) presents the analysis of Lesson 6.

Beginning with the quantitative aspects of data analysis, each part of the chapter moves on to a qualitative, ethnographic approach to data analysis which, as will be seen, has offered interesting and valuable insights into the teaching-learning process. Interpretations about factors which facilitated uptake or hindered it are generally made on the basis of tape-transcripts of the classroom lessons and of the interviews with the teacher and the learners. Significant facts about what really happens in the classroom are brought to light.
Chapter VI attempts in the first place to account for learners' performance at the post-session tests. This performance is gauged in relation to uptake. The chapter also discusses the Post Investigation tests in relation to uptake. Next, the results of the Post Investigation tests are discussed in relation to each word to see if words that were uptaken were retained over time. The factors which possibly facilitated long term retention are identified and evidence from the data supporting these factors is presented. Next, the researcher speculates on the likely reasons why some words were not retained.

Chapter VII presents pedagogical implications drawn from the analysis of data. These should be useful to teachers in controlling, modifying and regulating input so that it does not become incoherent and therefore difficult for learners to process. Teaching strategies need to be such as invite learner involvement and management of learning. The data also suggests the need to train learners in study skills, learning strategies, skills to negotiate meaning and skills to process teacher talk and to control it when it tends to get elaborate, misleading or confusing.

Chapter VIII is entitled 'Conclusions'. It discusses the findings of the study. A few of them are presented here.

(1) The categories which were assumed (in Chapter IV) to be conducive to uptake were generally found to be so.
(2) Adequate treatment generally facilitated uptake while inadequate treatment correlated with poor uptake. However, when despite fairly adequate treatment, a word was listed as uptake by only a few learners, qualitative analysis revealed that either the word was familiar to learners or that some drawback in the teaching had interfered with uptake.

(3) Besides quantum, variation and quality of treatment, the source of treatment played a significant role in facilitating uptake. Even if treatment was not adequate enough, a word was likely to be uptaken if a learner introduced it in the discourse.

(4) Words that are inherently easy to spell and pronounce and had easy equivalents in English or and in the mother-tongue of the learner were more easily uptaken and vice-versa.

(5) The interaction of a few learners could facilitate the uptake of several who had been merely listening.

(6) Quite often, those who sought clarifications or asked for meanings did not uptake them.

(7) Learners sometimes faced problems that were unanticipated by the teacher.

(8) Over elaboration and extraneous input tended to mislead or confuse learners and so hindered uptake.
Learners tended to tune out of lengthy teacher-talk. They were willing to interact and negotiate meaning if encouraged and helped by the teacher. Lexical items that had not been satisfactorily treated were less easily retained over time even if these had been uptaken by a large group of learners. Frequency of input is not of much value unless accompanied by interactive work. Reinforcement facilitates uptake and reinforcement in some form is essential for long-term retention.