

## COGNITIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF CLASSROOM DISCOURSE IN SECOND LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

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*Abstract:*

This article explores the importance of the cognitive aspects of discourse in learning and teaching the second foreign language. It provides necessary information regarding the term of discourse, what it is, types of it, discourse analysis and classroom discourse. Additionally, this research paper aims to explain the cognitive characteristics of classroom and communication procedure between teacher and student in details as these topics are related to each other.

*Key words:* Discourse, discourse types, discourse parameters, cognitive characteristics, communication, interaction.

*doi:* <https://doi.org/10.2024/5m8ma86>

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1. Introduction. Before moving to cognitive aspects of discourse and applying it in classroom and language acquisition, we need to know what is discourse itself? Discourse comes from the Medieval Latin word “discursus” meaning “argument”, the evidence and knowledge created through discussion. “Discourse” refers to a way of speaking, writing or communicating about a particular topic and is considered an active speech act. In modern linguistics, the concept of discourse was started using in the middle of the last century by American linguist Z. Harris. In 1952, he had used the term of discourse in his article “Analysis of discourse” for the first time and gave his opinions about discourse. Another great conception of discourse was explained by Halliday and Hasan, they distinguish three situational parameters of discourse: field, tenor and mode. Field of discourse is defined as the subject or area of discussion in a conversation or text. Tenor of discourse refers to who is taking part in a conversation, what kinds of relationship are involved between discourse participants. Lastly, mode of discourse is used for the way information is presented or communicated. Although many linguists put forward their own opinions and bias about what is discourse, still they agree with the idea that discourse should be analyzed in a combination of social, psychological, cultural conditions of communication. Discourse can be categorized into four types: descriptive, narrative, expository and argumentative. The first type, descriptive discourse relies on the five senses and aims to create a sensory experience for reader or listener namely, a vivid picture by describing people, place, objects, or events in detail. The second type, narrative discourse involves storytelling and recounting events in a chronological order. Its aim is to engage the audience

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emotionally and intellectually, fostering the sense of understanding and connection with the story being told. The third expository discourse is about providing information in an easy and factual manner. It describes concepts, clarifies ideas and often uses logical reasoning and examples to present a clear explanation. Last one, argumentative discourse involves presenting a viewpoint or opinion and defending it by providing evidence and reasoning. In this type of discourse, the aim is to persuade or convince the audience to a particular opinion by claiming the audience's opinion is not true.

2. Main body. Classroom discourse is defined as the language (both oral and written) used by teacher and student in the classroom in order to communicate. In the past teachers tend to dominate the conversation, talking all the time without students' participation, however, today, concept of classroom discourse took the different approach and teachers recognized the benefits of purposeful talk and discussion-based lessons. Now, in classes, teachers try to interact with students more and involve them in the learning process. It is very crucial to have a balance in teacher talk and student talk. Students who were active during classes tend to acquire more knowledge than who stayed calm and did not talk at all. This is because when you communicate more, ask questions and give your own opinion about a particular subject, you are more likely to strengthen your knowledge and experience on it.

Before discussing cognitive characteristics of classroom, let's look at what cognition is. Cognition refers to the mental process of gaining and understanding the knowledge. So cognitive characteristics refer to the mental (brain-based) processes and abilities involved in learning. These are attention, memory, problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and information processing. These cognitive processes can be supported by classroom, factors like teacher-student interaction, creating suitable learning environment. Teachers should create learning environment for students, students have natural tendency to explore new things and if teachers lead them further, push them to learn hard and more, it will help improve students' cognitive function. Besides, asking students to reflect on their experience, helping them to find solutions to problems and asking students explain their thinking are also cognitive aspects of the classroom.

In learning process, it is very significant to communicate with students, including group discussion or speaking to a student one-to-one and so teacher should attract all students in a classroom to discussion. The first thing that the teacher should do is to create a supportive learning environment for learner. This can be praising a student for his/her achievements, or helping students to answer questions. When students feel the teacher's support, they will not afraid of speaking in front of the class, participating in group works, or expressing their ideas. Another way of improving communication among students and their teacher is making more teamwork, such as dividing the class into small groups and making peer work. By this way collaboration among students increases and they will be able to exchange ideas and foster their communication skills. Thus, academic performance of students is mostly developed by teachers.

The cognitive aspects of classroom discourse play a vital role in Second Language Acquisition (SLA). Effective discourse encourages learners to interact with the language cognitively, improving their language acquisition. Teachers, by urging students to actively participate, can foster cognitive engagement, aiding the internalization of language structures and vocabulary. Regular interaction in the target language also helps develop essential cognitive skills for acquisition. Moreover, engaging in cognitive discourse allows learners to connect

new language elements with their existing knowledge, facilitating the organization of linguistic information. When learning a new language, participating in thoughtful conversations, such as discussing a favorite hobby, helps learners connect new language elements to what they already know. Therefore, this connection strengthens vocabulary and enhances language retention.

3. Conclusion. In general, this paper aims to provide knowledge on discourse, classroom discourse and cognitive aspects of classroom discussion in learning the second language. Not only in learning the language but in other subjects also teacher is one who helps improve a student's performance. In order to make it easy students to acquire second language, teachers should use classroom discourse effectively in their lessons. This can be a group work or peer learning. When students communicate with each other about a specific topic and exchange ideas in the classroom, then they will learn and memorize things more easily. Besides, we need to take into account of cognitive elements, brain-related process like thinking, memorizing and so on. A teacher can make students learning more productive, if she or he uses cognitive characteristics in classroom.

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