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The Use of ICT as a Pedagogy in Analysing ESL Classroom Conversation Discourse

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Abstract

This paper discusses how ICT could be used as a pedagogy in the analysis of conversation in a classroom discourse. The paper employs speech acts theory as a model for its analysis, using data from classroom conversation. The main thrust of speech act theory is that utterances do not only express a state of being, but also perform an action. We do not merely say something with words, but we do something with them. What we should note is that statements by speakers are both expressions of meaning and attitude. Some items related to the paper are extensively explained, which include: ICT; pedagogy; discourse; discourse analysis (DA); conversation and conversation analysis. Consequently, the paper delves into the benefits of ICT in a classroom conversational discourse (CD), and discourse structure in ESL classroom.

Keywords: ICT; pedagogy; discourse; discourse analysis; (DA); conversation discourse (CD)

INTRODUCTION

Discourse analysis is the analysis of connected speech and writing and their relations in which they are used (Uhunmwangho and Oghiator 2022). Van Dijk states that discourse analysis is the study of language to the explication of the structure and meaning of text.

The paper provides the analyses of discourse in the ESL classroom conversational discourse, using data from the classroom for the analyses. ESL means, English as a second language. Since ICT is an effective method English language discourse in the ESL class, this paper explicates the use of ICT in a ESL classroom discourse. Consequently, the analysis is done using speech act theory as the linguistic model. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) learning process helps teachers to interact with students and further helps them in preparing their teaching materials and providing feedback. With the use of ICT software and hardware, teaching and learning becomes more interesting both for the teacher and the learner. ICT enhances the quality of education by increasing learners motivation and engagement in general and in discourse analysis in particular, especially in the ESL classroom discourse. ICT is a transformational tool which when used appropriately can promote the shift of classroom discourse to a learner-centred environment.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of the study are:

    a.   to investigate conversation discourse in and ELS classroom;

    b.   to know the use of ICT in ELS classroom conversation;

    c.   to understand the analysis of discourse through ICT in ELS class and

    d.   to encourage pedagogical teaching in ELS classroom discourse.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ICT- Information and Communication Technology. ICT simply means any technology that has to do with information and communication. Today, ICT has further expanded to encompass computers and computer related devices, emails mms, zoom, WhatsApp, telegram and other forms of communication. ICT is generally accepted to mean all devices, networking components, applications and systems that allow people and organisations to interact in the digital world.

Pedagogy

Pedagogy is a type of study which involves students – teacher activity**.** In a pedagogical class, teacher and students do it together, the teacher gets some good knowledge and information from the students through, questions, term paper, seminar and research. In an ICT pedagogical discourse class, the students and the teacher participate in the conversation, using the devices for learning collectively. The teacher teaches the students how to use their devices. We should also note that some students are more acquainted with such devices as nowadays, children are more exposed to ICT. In this case the teacher could also learn some ideas from the students.

Discourse

Discourse originated from Latin word, "discourses", which means conversation or speech (Wisniewski, 2013). Discourse refers to a wide area of human life. But our discussion on discourse here is based only on the vantage point of linguistic; which include the linguistic analysis of the levels of language. Linguists notion about discourse differ. Some linguists claim that discourse is used in reference to texts, while others claim that discourse denotes speech.

Within linguistics, discourse is often described as "language in use or socially situated text and talk". Other disciplines such as history, sociology, philosophy, anthropology and political science have their own interpretation of discourse. To the foregoing disciplines, discourse could be speech or thought in a topic.

Foucault (1994) views discourse as practices that systematically form the objects with which they deal. Discourse is seen with its relation with language as follows, discourse as any form of language above the sentence level (Stubbs 1995), discourse as any form of language in use (Brown and Yule 1995). The term discourse applies to both spoken and written language used for any purpose especially for communication (Uhunmwangho, 2000). To Coulthard, what is structurally important is the linguistic function and that it is the evidence of this kind that points to the existence of discourse (Uhunmwangho, 2000).

Crystal (2008) states that discourse is "a continuous stretch of (especially spoken) language larger than a sentence, often constituting argument, joke or narrative". Discourse is seen by Schifrin, (1998) as "any unit of language beyond the sentence which includes both dialogue and non dialogue forms in their spoken or written forms". To Widdowson (1979) discourse "is not simply patchwork of preordained sentential meanings, but as a dynamic process of meaning creation". From all the definitions of discourse by linguists and other language specialists, we may summit that discourse refers to both spoken and written language used especially for the purpose of communication.

Discourse Analysis

The linguistic analysis of discourse is discourse analysis. Discourse Analysis (D.A) is a general term for approaches used to analyse written, oral or sign language use, or any significant semiotic event. Semiotics is a branch of discipline that is concerned with the investigation of symbolic and communicative behaviour. In modern linguistics, discourse analysts not only study language used beyond the sentence boundary, but also prefer to analyse 'naturally occurring' language use. A natural language in either in its spoken and written form, is a language that has a finite number of letters in it (and a finite number of letters in its alphabet – on the assumption that it has an alphabetical writing system); although there may be infinitely many distinct sentences in the language, each sentence can be represented as a finite sequence of those sounds (or letters) (Lyons, 1968).

Discourse analysis is defined as the analyses of 1connected speech and writing, and their relations in which they are used. It is the examination of language use by language form and language function and includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. To Van Dijk, (1994) discourse analysis is the study of language to the explication of the structure and meaning of texts.

Discourse analysis identifies linguistic features that characterise different genres as well as social and cultural factors that help in the interpretation and understanding of different texts and types of talk. Uhunmwangho (2000) states that "discourse analysis is the study of functional use of language, can perform for us the useful role of interpreting not only spoken but written texts". To Osisanwo (2005) the study of organizational structure of discourse is known as discourse analysis.

In analysing discourse behaviour, two methods usually occur, one method is to analyse how people manage their discourse behaviour with respect to their cultural background, and their interactive goals at the time of talk. While the second method involves how to discover explicit rules for management of conversational problems, such as turn taking Schiffrin, (1998); Grimshaw, (1982); Labov (1972); Omo-Ojugo (2012); Obodeh, (2018). The two methods can be used in an approach in discourse analysis, and this depends on the linguistic – discourse involved in the analysis. These two methods can be applied to religious language discourse. Brown and Yule (1983) state that "the analysis of discourse is necessarily the analysis of language in use. As such, it cannot be restricted to the service in human affair" (2005).

Consequently, Osisanwo (2005) in the opinion of Stubbs posits that discourse analysis refers mainly to the linguistic analysis as an attempt to study "the organisation of language above the sentence or above the clause, and therefore to study larger linguistic units, such as conversational exchanges or written texts".

Conversation

Conversation is a discussion or talk between two or more persons. For it to be a conversation, each person must talk one after the other. There should be a string of at least two turns. Even when the second person does not talk, there should be an evidence of at least having heard the utterance, by carrying out an action such as: nodding with the head; gaping or staring at the person. Conversation is an instance in that it brings together the world of objects and the human interlocutors.

Conversation Analysis

Conversation analysis (CA) studies social order in speech. There are different types of conversation. But our concern in this paper is the classroom conversational discourse analysis using ICT. The classroom Conversation is the interactions between student and student, and interactions between teacher and students in the classroom. It could be an argument, a debate, a seminar presentation, or an ordinary class discussion. The components of conversation discourse include: discourse participants; discourse opening and closing; turn taking.

Discourse participants are two or more people taking part in a conversation. They are also known as speakers and addressees, or interlocutors or co-interactants. Discourse opening is the preliminary exchange that begins a conversation. It is that prelude in exchange, no matter how brief, it is designed to begin a conversation. Whether formal or informal, a conversation must have an opening exchange, which could come in form of summing, or greeting. Moreso, conversation could be terminated with a closing exchange, which involves paired utterances, such as a question and an answer. Conversation closing, simply means the end of conversation. Turn taking is the time an interlocutor takes to participate in a conversation (in speaking). Therefore, the process by which a speaker talk when the floor is opened is termed turn-taking. Turn- taking in conversation discourse begins from childhood, and it is also influenced by some factors, which include; culture, personality, age, sex and professional variables.

Benefits of ICT in ESL Class discourse

There are several benefits of ICT to different disciplines and most importantly in an ESL class discourse. But first and foremost, teachers should explore their attitudes to pride and embrace pedagogy learning. This will actually benefit their professional practices as well as improve their students' learning.

The benefits of using ICT as a pedagogy in an ESL classroom discourse are stipulated below:

1. ICT encourages teachers to analyse difficult areas or new trends in the classroom, since the teacher and students are working as a team. Thus, will encourage them go for different teaching alternatives, such as language drills, and other classroom conversational discourse.

2. ICT in pedagogy teaching promote teachers' competence. As teachers work on difficult areas, or providing a way for new trends in using ICT in language discourse, they are invariably improving on themselves which create competence in them.

3. New methods are discovered in the different levels of language teaching. As different devices are used in course of conversational discourse. Teachers and students discover different methods and strategies for the use of ICT devices in various levels of language, such as; phonology, syntax, morphology and semantics. These levels facilitate the use of ICT in Discourse Analysis in the ESL class.

4. Students acquire adequate knowledge. As teachers are improving on their areas of using ICT in teaching, students are acquainted with new and broad knowledge. Gaining sufficient knowledge by students enhance the overall teaching method in education in general, English language and discourse analysis in ESL class discourse in particular.

How to use ICT in ESL Classroom

ICT in ESL can cover the major areas in the cover learning of English Language. Such areas include: Syntax; Phonology and Phonetics; Grammar; Morphology, Discourse Analysis (DA)

pragmatics and Stylistics. ICT plays a very vital role in the learning of English Language. The modern teaching and learning process depends largely on information and communication technology (ICT). This process improves on the quality of education. There are many tools in the teaching of ICT, the one to be used depends on the instructor/teacher concerned. Therefore the use of a particular ICT tool in the ESL classroom also depends on the teacher and the students involved in the learning.

In the case of the teaching of Discourse Analysis (DA) the Overhead Projector (OHP) is for ESL Discourse Analysis class. Language laboratory can also be used in teaching DA in the class. In this model trends, a part from audios, videos, flash based games, internet are also included in the laboratory materials and language laboratory creates an easy atmosphere for learning, then the traditional classroom. This ICT tools are used together with the teacher and learners in the interaction in the class as the class deeply involves interaction between students and interaction between students and teacher. The interactions are recorded for analysis.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this research is the speech acts theory by John Austin.

Speech acts theory was propounded by John Austin (1962), in his search for ways to cope with language as a form of action which could not accept meaning outside the domain of truth or falsity. First, he made a distinction between constative and performative utterances. In this distinction, such as "The faculty Dean is a very young lady", is an utterance which is close to truth. A performative utterance is an utterance such as" I promise to buy you a phone". In this case, something is done, which could not be determined to be true or false, but which could be elevated towards the aspect of felicity. Austin further extended constative and performative utterances to locutionary, illocutionary, and perlocutionary acts.

According to Austin, a locutionary act is the act of saying, and producing meaningful utterances with certain reference. An illocutionary act is said to be a non – linguistic act performed through a linguistic or locutionary act. This act could be affected by performative sentences. The speaker might be asserting, denying or apologising to the hearer. A perlocutionary act is when an utterance is made by a speaker X, to hearer Y, this produces a consequential effect upon the feelings, thought and actions of the speaker. Perlocutionary act is achieved through verbal and non- verbal means. All these acts are conversational discourse in Discourse Analysis, which are applicable in the ESL classroom discourse.

METHODOLOGY

The library is our primary sources of information in this research. This is where books, periodicals, journals and other reference material are sought for. Another method employed is a theoretical framework. The theoretical framework used is the Austin speech acts.

The method of this research also include the use of the data from the conversation in the class. The data from the classroom is a primary source of information collected for the research. This involves the participation of the students and the teacher, consequently, the other

conversation between students used for analysis in this work is a primary source, and the data was also carefully analysed. The two samples of data collected are primary source of information used for this research.

DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Discourse analysis has attracted the attention of schools in modern times and several researches have emerged from this interest. As mentioned earlier, Discourse Analysis covers a wide range of other disciplines, such as Sociology, Psychology, Philosophy and Linguistics. The relevance of Discourse Analysis to language has also been given attention (Sinclair and Coulthard) in M.A. Olateju ix).

Analysing discourse structure in ESL classroom examines how teachers interact with their students and how students also interact with one another in ESL class using ICT. Although, works have been done on the English Language (for example in Nigeria), there is still need for more efforts to examine the English Language use in the classroom. This paper uses Nigerian teachers teaching English as a second language (ESL) as a case study. This will improve ICT pedagogy classroom discourse in ESL class. Here are samples of students – student interaction and teacher – student discourse collected from a class discourse.

Text 1

> Student – student conversation.
>
> A: Are you going to campus 1?
>
> B: Not yet. Are you going there too? Or is there anything you would want …… to do for you?
>
> C: It's good I met two of you in the class. I'm going to campus 1 to buy a textbook for an English course, ELS 211.
>
> A: How much is the book sold?
>
> B and C: I think it's₦800.
>
> A: Okay, maybe you could get me a copy too.
>
> B: I'm not buying that now.
>
> A: But what I wanted you to do is to check the exam time table, please.
>
> B: Ah! Is the time table out?
>
> A: So I heard.
>
> A: Please, you will assist me to get the date for ELS 102 which I couldn't write last session.
>
> C: What happened?
>
> A: It's a long story.
>
> C: Eeh!
>
> A: Take the money for the book. Thanks.

The above conversation is a discourse between three students of the same level in an institution. The participants changed the topic without anyone of them getting angry or

offended. In the above text, speaker A' asked a question to speaker B', may be wanting a favour from him (speaker B). The response from speaker B portrays that the interlocutors are school mates and are of the same level. Speaker C, intrudes by announcing his arrival to the class and his going to campus 1, which facilitated the request of speaker A made earlier to speaker B. The discourse comprises different subjects made by the interlocutors. Consequently, the random speech made displays closeness and agreement among the three speakers also suggests randomness of speech in conversational discourse. We have to note that these conversations are positive to ICT connectivity in the classroom, and the students are very much aware of the internet facilities in the classroom.

Text II

Teacher – student conversation

The text below is a discourse between a teacher and her students in ESL class.

T: Joy

S: Yes ma.

T: What do you understand by the word discourse?

SI: (stares at the teacher).

T: What is discourse? Joy.

SI: (afraid) Aah! It is eeh…..

T: Please who can define 'discourse'?

SII: Raises her right hand up.

T: (Teacher calls the student's name). Onah.

SII: (answers). Discourse means conversation.

T: Does anyone have another explanation to give on 'Discourse'?

Class: (No one answered).

T: The teacher explains 'Discourse' in details as it relates to 'Discourse   Analysis' as a discipline in language study, using the screen to connect the discussion.

SIII: Ah! What is discourse?

T: (angrily) Where were you?

Are you sure you've been in this class?

SIII: I'm sorry ma.

SIV: (in a low voice to him)

She was busy discussing in the phone. (the teacher heard him).

T: What! In my class! When l'm teaching, you're busy discussing, making phone call?

SIII: I'm sorry ma.

T: Leave my class now.

SIII: I'm really sorry ma.

Class: (pleads with the teacher). Please pardon her, forgive her ma.

T: Do you know that you all have actually engaged in the discussion? Despite the fact that Julie disrupted the class? You have contributed in giving a different interpretation to the discourse today. Like I said before, Discourse Analysis is the analysis of connected speech and writing. The teacher continues …

In the discourse in an ESL class above, the conversation shows different levels of interlocutors (speakers). At the beginning of the discourse, the teacher did not go angry, the class was calm. But as soon as the student who was on phone when the teacher was teaching asked a question, in the process the teacher discovered that the student was making a call while she was teaching. Thus, the teacher grew angry but the other students in the class pleaded for forgiveness on behalf of the student.

The graphological features in the text, such as the punctuation marks which include the full stop (.), ellipses (…), commas (,) and parentheses (c ɔ) are all attribute of conversational discourse. In conclusion, the contractions used in the two texts such as 'it's', 'l'm', are indication of the language used in informal conversational discourse. Although, the second text is a discourse between the teacher and the students, it is also an interaction which is a conversational discourse. The conversational discourse in the two texts enhances ICT and pedagogy in ESL class discourse. They are structures taken in an ESL classroom using ICT as a learning facility.

CONCLUSION

ICT has been defined to mean all devices, networking, components, applications, and systems that allow people and organisations to interact in the digital world. This paper has discussed some areas that are directly connected to teaching in the ESL classroom, using ICT. In so doing, the paper delved into explaining related topics, giving the benefits in ESL class and analysing discourse structure in the classroom, by using two samples (texts). One of the sample is student – student conversation in the class and the other, is the teacher – student conversation in the classroom.

Furthermore, ICT in the class room discourse will go a long way to improve the learning process in the classroom discourse analysis in the ESL class. This is made possible through the teaching of morphology, syntax, phonology and semantics – the four major levels of language. Consequently, this method of discourse, enhances not just the teachers' competence but also improves the knowledge acquisition of the students.

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