



ROLE OF DISCOURSES: TEACHING ENGLISH SUBJECT AT SECONDARY SCHOOL

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ABSTRACT

The present study is an attempt to throw a light on the role of Discourses in teaching English subject at secondary school. Sample for the study includes 30 English teachers of secondary school in Hyderabad, Telangana, India. The data for finding opinions of English teachers on discourses collected by using the opinionnaire consisting of statements on different areas of language. The findings of the study shown that there was a positive opinion on the use of discourses in teaching English language. It will be a good way to combine the discourse approach with other methods to facilitate learning process and ensure a learning success.

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this article is to argue in favour of adopting the point of view of discourse analysis in order to describe and explain how language is actually used. After pointing out that discourse should not be considered as one more level in the description of language but rather as a change of perspective, the author proposes three premises which must be assumed in order to bring discourse analysis into the classroom. In the central part of the article the author suggests and exemplifies a series of concepts from discourse analysis which can be easily introduced in order to enable learners to reflect upon discourse and communication. This study's tries to provide evidence on the role of discourses in teaching English in classroom settings, based on the below mentioned theoretical basis.

Language learning and discourse have been studied in a range of ways that continue to offer exciting insight into how communication is and can be studied in classrooms. When we speak or write, we adjust or design what we want to say to fit the context. At the same time, the context is shaped by the very words we use.

Work around language and discourse in action and across modes is significant to language arts. Children use gestural, visual, sound, written, and spoken language that shapes how we as teachers respond. Our responses then shape how they will interact in our classrooms and with us. Awareness of discourse patterns and how language works within and across modes and across time enables us to more thoughtfully construct spaces in which language in use is not always routine and expected, but affords children space to build and rebuild their worlds with an understanding of how language works. Alongside actions, movements, images, objects, and digital technologies, language is routinely used to create and recreate the very spaces we inhabit (e.g., home, classrooms, faculty meetings). In essence, discourse is language in use, and reflects the social reality in which we live (Gee, 2005).



It is fascinating to see how in recent years educational experts around the globe have started to focus on the language dimension when it comes for schools to meet the demands of modern knowledge societies. In order to be proficient and productive students, English-language learners (ELLs) need many opportunities to interact in social and academic situations. While classroom discourse events vary, research has indicated that teacher talk dominates classroom communication. Ramirez, Yuen, Ramey, and Merino (1986) categorized teacher talk as consisting of explanations, questions, commands, modeling, and feedback. Other studies of teacher discourse in primary grades indicated that teacher talk is often managerial rather than conversational in nature (e.g., Cummins, 1994).

Effective teachers encourage their students' participation in classroom discussions, welcome their contributions, and motivate them by such practices (Cazden, 2001; Stipek, 2002). Therefore, the preponderance of teacher talk and the teacher's use of questions continue as factors in how much classroom talk time is shared with students; both the quantity and quality of such interactions deserve scrutiny. For example, there are differences between direct and indirect instruction; the nature of large-group discussion requires more guidance from the teacher than do small-group interactions (Johnston, 2004), and English-language learners may need different support in their communication efforts than do fluent English speakers. Thus, aspects of teacher-led discussions and discourse patterns warrant our continued attention.

Human communication skills are acquired in an early age along with the native language. However, when acquiring or learning a new foreign language, these communication skills are ought to be adjusted to fit the new language contexts and culture. Therefore, incorporating a discourse approach in the pedagogy and the teaching of grammar, vocabulary and other language skills is vital in providing discourse in context. Consequently, learners of foreign languages will be able to use a number of language and communication skills simultaneously in any given discourse. In fact, applying appropriate language to express different and various speech acts will result in a successful achievement of language in communication and fluency (Celce-Murcia and Olshtain, 2005).

From the literature review, it can be hypothesized that "The teacher can provide opportunities for different situations such as seeking information, comparing, problem solving, and evaluating, and then use classroom interactions to guide students'. The opportunity to speak academic language before using it in written work is important for English language learners. It should not be assumed that being able to understand academic language as input is equal to being able to produce it. Teachers can provide the support that students need to acquire this more formal register via their own modeling or think-aloud and then foster the use of similar structures via Discourses through interactive discussions, allowing students to use academic language in context.



Discourse: One of the focuses of this project is utilizing the discourse approach (language in use) without overlooking the linguistic component in EFL classrooms. Therefore, the pedagogy is enhanced through working on students' pragmatic and linguistic competences.

Language teaching: Teaching people to speak and understand a foreign language. In principle, instruction in any language, under any conditions, formal or informal; in practice, as the term is commonly used among language teachers and applied linguists, instruction in a second or foreign language within a system of education.

Teacher talk: The kind of language used by the teacher for instruction in the classroom is known as teacher talk (TT). For this term, Longman Dictionary of Language Teaching and Applied Linguistics defines it as "that variety of language sometimes used by teachers when they are in the process of teaching. In trying to communicate with learners, teachers often simplify their speech, giving it many of the characteristics of foreigner talk and other simplified styles of speech addressed to language learners" (Richards, 1992: 471).

Classroom interaction: Classroom interaction has become of paramount importance in the teaching and learning process. The term "interaction" is made up of two morphemes, namely inter and action. It is a mutual or reciprocal action or influence. In English language teaching, interaction is used to indicate the language (or action) used to maintain conversation, teach or interact with participants involved in teaching and learning in the classroom. Taking the different main participants in classroom interactions, namely students and teachers, one can think of the following possible patterns: Teacher-students and Students-students.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The present paper aims to understand the impact of discourses on the language skills of students'. The research paper is stated as, "Role of Discourses in Teaching English subject at Secondary School level".

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

To find the opinions of the secondary school English subject teachers on the use of Discourses in teaching English subject.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

There is no significant impact on students' language skills through discourses in secondary schools.

POPULATION FOR THE STUDY

The population for this study is that of 30 Secondary school English teachers in government and private schools at secondary level which includes 8th to 10th classes in the Greater Hyderabad Municipal Corporation limits.

SAMPLE FOR THE STUDY

The sample selected for this study is the secondary school English teachers in Hyderabad. Simple random sampling technique is used by the investigator while selecting a sample of 30 Secondary school English teachers from Hyderabad.

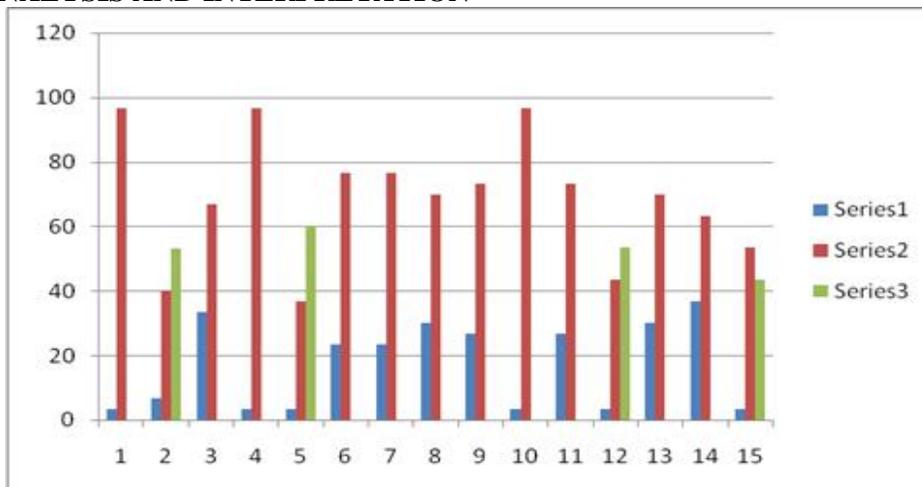
TOOLS USED IN THE STUDY

The researcher in the present study used opinionnaire which comprises 15 short statements, with alternatives viz, Agree, Neutral and Disagree; to find the opinions of the English teachers on the use of discourses in teaching English subject. The tool was successfully administered on secondary school English teachers.

DATA COLLECTION

Formal permission was sought by the researcher to administer the opinionnaire for opinions of English teachers of secondary school for one consecutive day. The permission was granted by the Principal of the school.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION



It was found that there was a positive opinion on the use of discourses in teaching English language. Spoken and written discourse can be an effective tool for teaching the four language skills. Students find difficult to listen to news broadcasts or read a letter from their bank without becoming, to use their words. On the other hand discourse provides interesting data for comparative study and the analysis of texts constructed at different periods in time. Students can be led to an understanding of how human beings engage in discourse which shapes the way they construct themselves and their relationships with others. Reading discourses enhance the critical reading, reflective reading and analytical thinking.



In this study, the researcher found out that there is significant impact on students' language skills through discourses in secondary schools. Hence the Alternative hypothesis is accepted and the Null hypothesis is rejected.

CONCLUSION

The results from the research also support this opinion; discourses do occupy a position in English learning and teaching. However, on the other hand, the research also reveals some problems concerning the use of discourses: in spite of the students' realization of the importance of discourses in language leaning, the students cannot use them well in everyday reading and wring, which indicates that more help, guidance and instruction from teachers are needed and in terms of the students, more attention and exercises are necessary in order to obtain the automatic application of these discourses. Therefore, based on this result, the researcher has provided some suggestions for both teachers and learners of English. To sum up, it will be a good way to combine the discourse approach with other methods to facilitate learning process and to ensure a learning success. At the same time another thing which is worth emphasizing is that since over emphasis on discourses may distract students from the very subject matter, and lead to a failure in understanding, thus any over emphasis on the learning and teaching of discourses should avoided in order to bring out a most efficient and effective result.

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