Discourse Analysis and its Area of Coverage

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Abstract: **Discourse analysis is associated with the use of language in any form of communication, such as spoken, written or signs language. It helps in analyzing how people express themselves using the three systems of communication, its impact on the audience and how it affects the society.**

This paper presents the types of discourse analysis as well as some important areas of its coverage, the meaning of discourse analysis given by different linguists will be clearly stated, the co-operative principles set out by Grice Paul together with maxims would be vividly explained. The point views given by both British and American linguists on Discourse Analysis will be examined by given relevant examples.

Keywords: **Discourse, Analysis, and communication.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The study of discourse analysis employs both the methodology and the kinds of theoretical principles and primitive concepts (e.g, rule, well formed formula) typical of linguistics. It is clear that the field according to discourse analysis theorists are therefore of interest to us are those who have been specially concerned with conversation as a particular type of discourse and we shall know the basic methods and assumptions in the next part of the paper, Discourse analysis is telling us the use of language in any form of communications such as spoken, written or sign language.

However, according to Bavelas (2002), discourse analysis can be defined as a systematic study of naturally occurring communication in the broadest sense at the level of meaning.

Foucault (1972) discourse analysis was an effectively critical approach to view the clear picture of any socio-cultural phenomenon.

However, Breeze (2011) also discourse the effectiveness of discourse analysis for the evaluation of texts in determining the role of language and power in any social, political or other such context.

II. THE CONCEPT OF DISCOURSE ANALYSIS

Discourse analysis is the examination of language use by members of speech community. It involves looking at both language form and language function which includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. It identifies linguistic features that characterize different genres as well as social and cultural factors that aid in our interpretation and understanding of different texts might include a study of topic development and cohesion across the sentences. While an analysis of spoken language might focus on these plus turn-taking practices, opening and closing sequences of social encounters, or narrative structure.

Chilton (2014) defined it as the use of language in any form of communication such as written, spoken or sign language.

The study discourse had developed in a variety of disciplines sociolinguistics, sociology, social psychology etc. thus, discourse analysis takes different theoretical perspectives and analytic approaches. Speech act theory, interaction sociolinguistic, pragmatics, Conversation analysis and variation analysis discourse is both structural and functional in nature and the best approach to discourse is explicate it from both structural and functional perspectives to show how language is used in social context, and what it is used to do. (Schiffrin 1994). Although each approach emphasizes different aspects of language use, they all view language as social interaction.

Discourse analysis in the other hand is a linguistics analysis of naturally occurring connected speech. It refers to attempts to study the organization of language above the sentence or above the clauses and phrases therefore to study larger linguistic units as conversational exchanges of written or oral texts.

It is also concerned with language used in social contexts and in particular with interaction or dialogue between speakers.

According to M. Stubb's textbook (1983:1) defined discourse analysis as:

i. Concerned with the interactive or dialogic properties of everyday communication.
ii. Concerned with language use beyond the boundaries of a sentence/utterance.
iii. Concerned with interaction between language and society.

Discourse analysis does not presuppose a bias towards the study of either spoken or written language. In fact, the character of the categories of speech and writing is increasingly being challenged, especially as the gaze of analysis turn to multi-media texts and practices on the internet. Similarly, the most ultimately object to the reduction of the discursive to the so-called "outer layer" of language use, although such a reduction reveal quite a lot about how particular versions of the discursive have been both enable and bracketed as a discipline. (e.g discourse analysis). As a reaction against and as taking enquiry beyond the clause-

bound "objects" of grammer and semantics to the level of analyzing utterances.

Discourse analysis is a hybrid field of enquiry its lender disciplines are to be found within various corners of the human and social sciences with complex historical affiliations and a lot of cross – fertilization taking place.

Discourse analysis study written texts, conversation, institutionalized forms of talk, communication events in general and aspects of electronic text processing. Early researchers included the structural linguist, Zellig Harris in the United States of America in the 1950s, at a time when linguistics was largely concerned with the analysis of single sentence.

Harris was interested in the distribution of elements in extended texts and the relationship between a text and its social situation. 1960s some linguist in America like DII Hymes. Similarly, British Linguistic philosophers, such as J.L. Austin, J.L Searle, H.P Grice was influenced in the study of language as social action, though speech-act theory, conversational norms and pragmatics.

The American Linguist View

Discourse analysis: Research conducted in America includes forms of talk e.g story-telling, greeting and verbal dues in different cultural and social settings, e.g. work of john Gumperz and Dell Hymes they referred to conversational analysis which include discourse analysis. In this case we focus on the behavious of participants in talk. However, the work of H.Sacks, E.A. Schegloff, G. Jettison etc is important in the study of conversational rules, turn-taking and other features of spoken interaction turn taking is described as how participants manage their turns as speaking; speakers know when they may, without being seen to interrupt.

British Linguistics View On Discourses Analysis

According to M.A.K. Halliday, (1985) in turn influenced by the prague school His systemic linguistics emphasizes the social functions of language and the thematic and informational structure of speech and writing. Halliday relates grammar at the clause and sentence level of situational constrains, referred to as field.

Finally, all the above definition try to focus on how language use beyond the boundaries of sentences, clauses, and phrases.

Types of Discourse Analysis:

(a)   Written discourse (c) Narrative discourse
(b)   Oral discourse (d) persuasive / Argumentative discourse

What Is Written Discourse?

This could be defined as an art of communication which required the acquisition of some basic skills so as to attain excellence and this can be inform of essay. Letter, memoranda, minutes, reports, bulletin and magazine.

Steps for Effective Written Discourse

1. Plan the information or message ready
2. Arrange in proper order, the information to be sent in paragraph sub-heading.
3. Write the require message and b e clear, and do not withhold information be orderly and observed the rules of grammar.
4. Use the punctuation marks correctly.
5. Be logical points should follow sequentially from one to another.

What Is Oral Discourse?

This communication in one way is between sender and receiver this include the use of voice through speech during the meeting, the delivery of report, interview, press conference and briefings. Oral communication is usually accompanied by super linguistic features take facial expression, movement of limbs, head eye contact expression and gestures.

Effective Oral Communication

This involve the successful production

Mass mission and reception of a message

Physical characteristics of the environment in which the act of communication take place.

The participants knowledge being use for communication. And par participant ability to the knowledge.

III. FACTORS THAT AFFECT ORAL COMMUNICATION

a. *Voice Quality:* quality of voice distort the message or even make hearer tire off from message.
b. *Social Background:* Social background of the speaker and hearer in this case the vocabulary of the hearer from a particular social class is different from another hearer.
c. *Physical Appearance:* Whether we are speaking of listening physical appearance matters a great deal at all times. Do not be overdressed or underdressed when communicating.
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Distinction between Oral and Written Discourse.

Oral discourse:

i. The reception of message is message is immediate and distortion is ironed easily
ii. Message can be reported to clear doubt.
iii. It provide feedback

Written Discursion

i. It s reference point that can consult in future.
ii. It is relatively permanent.

IV. SOME IMPORTANT AREAS IN WHICH DISCOURSE ANALYSIS COVERS INCLUDE

1- Tenor of Discourse

This is classification of register according to the purpose language is put to use. In fact language is the chief tool of human thinking and for transforming experience into ideas. Therefore in our daily activities, we use language for several purposes. For each purpose a language serves, there is a basic difference. For example, language of insult differs from language of command, persuasion, advice or passing on information. According to Halliday (1985) to (1986) identified some purpose in which language serves:-

1. Informative: this is use of language of communicate new information to express ideas and to convey a message about the surrounding.
2. Imaginative: This is use of language to create one's own world or environment.
3. Instrumental: Using language as a means to satisfy material needs or requirement.
4. Interaction: Using language to maintain ties with other people in a social setting in order to get along with others.
5. Regulatory: Using language to influence and control the behaviou of others.
6. Heuristic: Using language to explore both oneself as well as the physical environment in order to discover or learn about things.

2- Co-operative Principle

Make your contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

Put in another way it is an underlying assumption in most conversational exchange seems to be that, the participants are, in fact, co-operating with each other. This principle, together with maxims which we expect would be obeyed, set out by Grice (1975). The co-operative principle is stated in the following way: "Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage a which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged.

(1) The Maxim Of Quantity:

i. Make your contribution as informative as is required for the current purpose of the exchange.
ii. Do not make your contribution more informative than is required.

(2) The Maxim Of Quality:

In this case try to make your contribution one that is true specifically.

i. Do not say what you believe to be false
ii. Do not say that for which you lack adequate evidence

(3) The Maxim Of Relevance

Make your contributions relevant

(4) The Maxim Of Manner

In this case be perspicuous, and especially:

i. Avoid ambiguity
ii. Be brief
iii. Be orderly.

In a nutshell the maxims are social convention of communication and they specify what participants (i.e speaker – Hearer) have to do in order to converse in a maximally efficient, rational, co-operative way, they should speak sincerely, relevant and clearly, while providing sufficient information.

The maxims do indeed derive from general consideration of Rationality applicable to all kinds of co-operative exchanges they also have universal application, however this is dependent on culture specific constrains on interaction. Their importance rest on the fact they generate inferences beyond the semantic control of the sentences uttered.

However, we operate with the co-operative principle, it also becomes cleared how certain answers to our question which, on the surface do not seem to be appriate, can actually be interpreted. Consider the conversation below:

John – Are you coming to farm today

Marry: I've got an ex am tomorrow.

In this conversation marry did not clearly answer John question. She does not say yes or no. john will immediately interpret the statement as meaning "No" or probably not. How can we account for this ability to grasp one meaning from a sentence which, is a literal sense, means something else?

Use of language.

The register of a particular subject often distinguishes itself from other subjects by having a number of distinctive lexical items and by using words or phrases in a particular way. Sometimes variation may be observed in special grammatical construction For example, some lexical items use in discussing banking are basically different from that of law. The following register variables have been identified and developed by Halliday (1985)

(5) (I) Mode Of Discourse:

Register may vary according to medium one selects to discuss certain topics. We may decides to speak about a topic, we have chosen spoken medium. If on the other hand we decide to write, we select the written medium. These two are the modes of discourse we have in English Language. When we speak there are same features we observe which we can not find in writing.

(5) (II) Field Of Discourse

Refers to what the text is all about that is the subject matter of the discourse, for Instance if the subject matter is on Law those words within the law disciplines are expected to be used and reflected.

(5) (III) Tenor: Refers to the people taking part and the relationship between them, in other words, it refers to a person or persons one is communicating to, is he a child, an adult, superior officer, teacher-pupil, parent-child, etc. An individual involved in the discourse determines the choice of words to be used.

(6)   Cohesion

We know, for example that texts must have a certain structure which depends on factors quite different from those required in the structure of a single sentence. Some of those factors are described in terms of cohesion or the tries and connections, which exist within texts. A number those cohesive ties can be identified in the following text.

My father once bought a Lincoin Convertible. He did it by saving every penny the could. That car would be worth a fortune nowadays. However, he sold it to help pay for my college education. Sometimes, I think I would rather have the convertible" there are lexical connections such as Lincoin Convertible that car the convertible and the more general connections created by a number of terms which share a common element of meaning for example money bought-saving-penny-worth a fortune-sold-pay. (for example, time) once-nowadays sometimes. However, there is also a connector which marks the relationship of what follows to what went before. The verb tenses in the first four sentences are all in the past, creating a connection between those events, and a different time is indicated by the present tense of the final sentence. Analysis of these cohesive links within a text gives us some insight into how writes structure what they want to say, and may be crucial factors in judgment on whether something is well writing or not it has also been noted that the conventions of cohesive structure differ from one language to the next and may be one of the sources of difficulty encountered in translating texts.

Moreover, cohesion will not be sufficient to enable us to make sense of what we read. It is quite easy to create a highly cohesive text which has a lot of connections between the sentence, but it remains difficult to interpret. It becomes clear from an example like this "Connectedness" which we experience in our interpretation of normal text is not simply based on connections between words.

(7)   Speech Events:

Speech events simply refers to what we know about taking part in conversation or any other event i.e. Debate, interview, various types of discussions, we quickly realize that there is ecormous variations in what people say and do in different circumstances. In order to discuss the sources of that variation, we would have to take account of a number of criteria, for example, specify the roles of speaker and hearer, or hearers and their relationships whether they were friends, strangers, young old, of equal or unequal status, and many other factors.

All of these factors will have an influence on what is said and how it is said. We would have to describe what was the topic of the conversation and in what setting or context if took place. Yet, even when we have described all these factors, we will still not have analyzed the actual structure of conversation itself. As language users in a particular works.

The term speaker events is restricted to aspects of activities, which are directly governed, by rules or norms for the use of speech, with the speech act as the minimal term in the set for example a party speech situation a conversation during the party speech event a joke within the conversation speech.

(8)   Coherence:

The main concept of coherence is not something, which exists in the language, but something, which exists in people. It is people who "make sense" of what they read and hear. They try to arrive at an interpretation, which is in line with their experiences of the way the world is. Indeed, our ability to make sense of what we read is probably only a small part of that general ability we have to make sense of what we perceive or experience in the world. You may have found, when reaching the last example that you kept trying to make the text fit some situation or experience, which would accommodate all the details. If you work at it long, you may indeed find a way to incorporate all those disparate elements into a single coherent interpretation. In doings so you would necessarily be involved in the process of filling in a lot of "gaps" which exist in the text.

You would have to create meaningful connections which are not actually expressed by the words and sentences. This process is not restricted to trying to understand "odd texts". In one way, it seems to be involved in our interpretation of all discourses.

We are continually taking part in conversational interpretations where a great deal of what is meant is not actually present in what is said. Perhaps, it is the ease with which we ordinarily anticipate each other's intentions that makes this whole complex process seem unremarkable.

According to Widdowson (1978) example said:

Her: That's the telephone

Him: I'm in the bath

Her: O.K.

 There are certainly no cohesive ties within this fragment of discourse.

How does each of these people mange to make sense of what the other says?

They do use the information contained in the sentence expressed but there must be something else involve in the interpretation. It has been suggested that exchange of this type are best understood in times of conventional actions performed by the speakers in such interaction.

Example:

Amina makes a financial request to pay her registration fees.

Aliyu states the reason why he cannot comply with the request.

Amina undertakes to pay the fees by herself.

If this is a reasonable analysis of what took place in the conversation, then is clear that language users must have a lot of knowledge.

V. CONCLUSION

From the above work, we can see that discourse analysis is a tool for studying interaction among language learners. Learner can benefit from using discourse analysis to explore what language is and how it is used to achieve communicative goals in different contexts. Thus discourse analysis can help to create a second language-learning. It also help us to know that this concepts is above the sentence, phrases and clauses. It help us to know the interrelationship between language and society.

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