Relationship between English Discourse Patterns and Students’ Performance: An Explorative Study of Selective Vocational Centres in Lagos State

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ABSTRACT

Students’ good performance in vocational centres is a function of appropriate English discourse patterns. Where English discourse patterns are inappropriate, improvement in teaching and learning in vocational centres remains a big challenge. Despite the efforts by discourse analysts to suggest ways to tackle the present inappropriate English discourse patterns that always result in poor output in vocational centres, the situation still remains almost the same. Inefficient English discourse patterns characterize the classroom discourse in vocational centres in Lagos State. This study investigated the relationship between English discourse patterns and students’ performance in vocational centres in Lagos State. The study examined the existence of elliptic representatives, directive and representatives as predominant discourse patterns and as continuous delivery mechanisms that make lessons result-oriented, cooperative, interactive and student-focused rather than teacher-based. The study, through the qualitative approach, utilized empirical data from ten selected vocational centres. The sample population was taken from students and instructors from ten selected vocational centres. The total number of students from the selected centres was one thousand, one hundred and fifteen students. The researcher tape-recorded lessons from twelve subjects in the selected vocational centres AS FOLLOWS. The subjects recorded were Cake Making, Hair Dressing, Refrigeration, Fashion and Textile, Cooking, English, Mathematics, Basic Electricity, Information and Communication Technology, Computer Studies, Food and Nutrition and Short Hand. The study confirmed that elliptical representatives, explanatives, representatives, directives and elicitation are the English discourse patterns capable of eliciting good performance. Having ascertained the potency of these patterns in improving the academic performance of students, the study recommends that these English discourse patterns be employed in order to improve teaching and learning in vocational centres.
BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

English discourse pattern is a determinant force in the performance of students in vocational centres in Lagos State and by extension, Nigeria. Students perform well where the instructors apply appropriate English discourse patterns and woefully where inappropriate English discourse pattern is employed. An appropriate English discourse pattern is therefore needed in order to improve teaching and learning and acquisition of skills and occupations in vocational centres.


Some English discourse patterns are additives, causatives, elicitations, evaluation, contrastives, directives, prompts and adversatives. Additives are statements that give additional information to the main discourse. They start with words such as “in addition to”, “also”, “and” and “besides this”. Causatives are statements that state the cause of an action. The examples of causatives are “as a result of this”, “so”, “therefore” and “consequently”. Elicitations are questions that demand responses from the students. They can be verbal or non-verbal (verbal being the spoken discourse while non-verbal is the acted or dramatized discourse). Evaluatives are statements and tag questions. They include words such as “yes”, “no”, “fair” and “good”. Contrastives are statements that show the opposite of what one says. They are marked by words such as “contrary”, “in contrast” and “the opposite of this is”.

...
In classroom contexts, directives are commands uttered mainly by teachers to their students. Senior students can do that to the junior ones mainly outside the classroom. Prompts are phrases such as “hurry up,” “be serious”, “go on” and “come on”. They reinforce directives or elicitations. Adversatives are statements that bring contrary ideas to the main discourse. They normally start with conjunctions such as “nonetheless”, “contrarily”, “despite this” and “the opposite of this is”. These acts perform different functions. An act can be a question, a request or a response. However, some analysts (e.g. Olateju (2004) and Osisanwo (2003) believe that there are basically three types of acts, namely: informative acts, elicitation acts and directive acts. An informative acts as a statement and its main function is to give information. Examples are: (i) I’ll go to Ibadan today. (ii) The world is evil. (iii) Thank God in all situations. The elicitation acts ask questions which require answers and are common in interrogatives. Examples of elicitations are: (i) Did you do the job? (ii) Who destroyed the pictures I kept on this chair? (iii) Where did you go? A directive act issues a command or makes a request. Examples: (i) Shut the door please. (ii) Do the job urgently. (iii) Stay here and wait for me.

English discourse patterns can be consciously (naturally) or unconsciously (artificially) applied. In classrooms, the teacher presents his lessons consciously using discourse patterns that make the lessons either teacher-based or student-focused. The pattern the teacher adopts has either a direct or an indirect impact on the lesson he teaches.

Teachers may use both free exchange patterns and bound exchange patterns. A free exchange pattern is made up of informatives, directives and elicitations. An informative exchange contains information; for instance, the initiating slot provides information while the responding slot
provides contributions. A direct exchange could be interrogative, declarative and moodless; and elicit exchange is one whose initiating move requires verbal or non-verbal responses and it is realized by questions. A bound exchange is embedded in a free exchange structure and its examples are interruptions and overlaps.

Although many discourse analysts have indicated many discourse patterns especially in conventional educational institutions, these patterns are not efficient and appropriate (Smith 2013); hence, the need to investigate the English discourse pattern that is capable of enhancing good performance in vocational centres in Lagos State.

Vocational centres are necessary in improving individual lifestyles and these can culminate in the overall promotion and development of a nation. Ikwuegbu (2006) observes that vocational education is one of the potent instruments in the development of individuals and nations. Ikwuegbu further maintains that for a country to be developed, her citizenry must have undergone certain fundamental social and technological transformations and that there must be meaningful development in the areas of skill acquisition, entrepreneurship, agriculture, mineral, manufacturing, self-reliance and the service sector.

In many vocational centres in Lagos State the instructors do not employ the English discourse patterns that will enhance easy teaching and learning of these skills and occupations. This is probably because many discourse analysts concentrate on conventional educational institutions at the expense of vocational centres. Osisanwo (2003), Olateju (2004) and, Dairo and Onadeko (2008), in their texts, suggest discourse patterns of informatives, elicitations and representatives and these have done little or nothing to the improvement of English discourse patterns in vocational centres in Lagos State.
STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

In spite of the proliferation of schools and the upsurge in the number of teachers using various English discourse patterns, the effective English discourse pattern that is capable of helping students to easily comprehend lessons taught is lacking (Alexander, 2006). English discourse patterns applied by these teachers are highly restricted and teacher-centred. It is otherwise termed the unilateral English discourse pattern. The unilateral English discourse pattern applied by these teachers has a lasting negative impact in the sense that it places students at disadvantaged positions where they are left at the mercies of their teachers to decide for them what to do. Students are unable to express themselves freely in their classes and after the classes. They do not understand what is communicated to them let alone ask questions based on what they are taught.

The result of the inappropriate English discourse pattern is that students may fail both internal and external examinations. In addition, they may not be fulfilled in their prospective career choices; and the learning objectives of teachers’ desire to turn out self-reliant, skillful and result-oriented graduates may be defeated.

The central concern of this study is: would the use of appropriate English discourse pattern actually help in improving student’s performance in the future?

AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this study is to investigate English discourse patterns in vocational centres in Lagos State.

The specific research objectives are to:

i. Investigate the patterns of English discourse in classroom interaction in vocational centres in Lagos State
ii. Identify the predominant English discourse patterns in vocational centres.
iii. Establish the relationship between the predominant English discourse patterns and students’ performance.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions further highlight the focus of this research:

i. What are the patterns of English discourse in classroom interaction in selected vocational centres in Lagos State?
ii. What are the predominant English discourse patterns in vocational centres?
iii. What is the relationship between the predominant English discourse patterns and the students’ performance?

ENGLISH DISCOURSE PATTERNS

English discourse pattern, the arrangement of ideas in oral or written forms, has been a subject of interest to many discourse analysts. Discourse analysts either investigate text (written) patterns or oral (spoken) patterns. Their investigations so far have not been able to produce an appropriate English discourse pattern (Smith 2013), hence the need to investigate the English discourse pattern that is capable of assisting discourse participants to teach and learn effectively.

Past studies on English discourse in written and oral patterns presented below have not been efficient and Alexander (2006) observes that there is need to change the model structure put forward by some discourse analysts. Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) formulate a three-turn pattern of English discourse known as the IRF (Initiation, Response and Feedback). This discourse pattern is similar to Mehan’s (1979) IRE (Initiation, Response and Evaluation) pattern; IRF pattern of Coulthard (1975) and the triadic dialogue of Lemke (1990).

Smith (2013) observes that when the triadic dialogue dominates classroom discourse, the possibility of sustained conversation is shut down and that the opportunity for students to talk through their ideas is lost. He also maintains that teachers are unable to gauge students’
understanding or misunderstanding since they are not listening to the students’ expressions on the topic they discuss. He therefore proposes the utilization of a sequence of several question-answer exchanges.

Dahal (2010) analyzes the spoken discourse pattern in Nepali ELT classes and observes that discourse analysis emerged as a fast growing discipline because studying language in natural settings (as opposed to making analyses of artificially created sentence) demands it. This study further investigates naturally occurring classroom discourse based on Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1975) model. The study finds that there is the use of a simple discourse pattern in Nepali higher secondary classes of English. Alexander (2006) observes that Sinclair and Coulthard’s (1975) model has limited relevance outside language classes and that certain changes need to be made to this model. He therefore investigates the system of analysis for the structure of an informal EFL lesson. He identifies the two layers of discourse communication. These layers are the “outer layer” and the “inner layer”. The outer layer is where language is used interactively for genuine communication and the inner layer is made up of the target language forms which constitute the subject matter of the lesson. Alexander’s investigation has not fully provided an appropriate pattern for English discourse.

Although Alexander has suggested certain changes to be done on Sinclair and Coulthard’s model, discourse analysts (such as Yu 2009, Fakoya 1998, Olateju 2004, Blanton 2001 and many others) still used it in their investigations. Yu (2009) observes that classroom discourse is very important; using a detailed descriptive and analysis of the collected data, Yu explicates Sinclair and Coulthard’s model and clarifies the problem inherent in the said model. Yu further puts forward a few strategies for college English teachers on how College English teaching and learning can be improved.
Olateju (2004) in her study, “Analyzing Discourse in the ESL Classroom”, uses the descriptive method proposed by Sinclair and Coulthard (1975) and Montgomery (1981) to analyze the functions of utterances and the structure of discourse in the ESL classroom. She highlights the strategies for managing science and humanities lessons at the senior secondary school. She also examines the exchange structures that occur in Science and Humanity departments at senior secondary school level. Her analyses centre on teacher/pupils and pupil/teachers interactions in the ESL classroom; she further examines the strategies used by teachers to control and manage classroom lessons effectively and finds that it is the teacher that controls the classroom discourse. She discovers that in science and humanities classrooms, interactions are managed by the teachers only (and not the students).

Although past studies reviewed above are quite relevant to this investigation (because they are based on classroom discourse), Nystrand (1997) observes that these patterns are the question-answer recitation scripts that are found to be teacher-centred. He also states that the question-answer recitation pattern of English discourse is highly teacher-centred. Teachers follow a tightly scripted lesson to ensure that topics are covered.

Although past studies have attempted to provide English discourse patterns in classrooms (Sinclair and Coulthard 1975, Nystrand 1997, Olateju 2004, Osisanwo 2003, Yu 2009) there is no in-depth study on English discourse patterns (to the best of the researcher’s knowledge) that has been able to provide an appropriate English pattern that is capable of assisting the teachers to effectively and the students to learn easily so as to improve in their performance. This study attempts to fill this gap.

**THE CONCEPT OF VOCATIONAL EDUCATION**
Enahoro (2008) defines vocational education as education designed to help the learners to acquire and develop skills, knowledge and attributes for effective employment or profession in specific occupation. In the same vein, Batagarawa (2005) states that vocational education is a form of specialized education that is directed primarily towards developing competence for employment in a particular occupation. Batagarawa further said that vocational education equips people with basic skills and competencies to enable them enter and progress in the world of works.

The benefits of vocational centres in Nigeria cannot be overemphasized. Anumunu,( 2001, cited in Ikwuegbo, 2006) observes that a predominantly literate society without acquisition of entrepreneurial skill is a predominantly mis-educated society. Anumunu further adds that such a society cannot be expected to achieve any significant development. Osayomwanbor and Edokpayi (2005) observe that vocational education is a very useful aspect of the educational system because of the occupational content it offers the trainees. They state that it gives the trainees the opportunity to acquire skills, attitudes, interests and knowledge to perform socially and economically, work that is beneficial, not only to them, but to the society in general.

With the present global economic meltdown, many institutions of higher learning and vocational centres study should study vocational related courses such as Tailoring, Soap Making, Home Economics, Cake Making, Bead Making, Carpentry, etc. This should be done because vocational education forms the bedrock of economic advancement of any developing country.

**THE SPEECH ART THEORY**

In this paper, the researcher adopted The Speech Act Theory as a theoretical framework because of its relevance to the analysis of classroom discourse in English.

A series of lectures compiled by Austin in *How to Do Things with Words* (1962) is acknowledged
as the first presentation of what has come to be known as the Speech Act Theory. Austin propounded two major types of speech act: the performatives and the constatives. He started by explaining that some utterances seem to lack what it takes to be the property of statements (i.e. what he called a truth-value). He observed that such statements that lack truth-value can neither “describe nor report” anything; nor the uttering of such be described as saying something. These types of utterances, he called performatives. He distinguished performatives from constatives (declarative statements) whose truth or falsity can be judged. Performatives are utterances that are said to be felicitous or non-felicitous (i.e. happy or unhappy) whereas constatives are utterances known to be true or false.

Following the criticisms that trailed his demarcation of performatives and constatives, Austin shifted emphasis from both performatives and constatives to utterances. The emphasis on utterances is the “issuing of the utterances and not on utterances per se”. All utterances, he maintained, perform speech acts and these comprise a locutionary act, an illocutionary act and a perlocutionary act.

Austin further observed that a locutionary act is the act of uttering words with meaning; it is the production of the sounds and words that are meaningful. The mere fact that one says something that is meaningful is the locutionary act. The illocutionary act is the conventional communicative force, the action achieved by “saying a word”; it is the action performed through the words. The illocutionary act can be imperative, an interrogation, a request, a declarative or a warning. An illocutionary act is the action performed as the speaker utters words. Perlocutionary act is the particular or the actual effect achieved by saying the words; it is the effect achieved through the speaker’s utterance on the listeners.
Locutionary, illocutionary and perlocutionary acts produce a total speech act that is studied in the total speech situation. The words used in some instances are to be explained by the context in which they are designed to be or have been actually spoken in a linguistic interchange (Schriffin).

Searle built his Speech Acts upon Austin’s work. He introduced ideas that provide basic ideas for the application of speech act theory to discourse; although he insisted on the claim that conversation is governed by constitutive rules (Searle 1989).

Searle maintains, “The Speech Act is the basic unit of communication”. This notion places speech acts at the crux of the study of language, meaning and communication. Searle’s principle of expressibility: what can be meant can be said allows the integration of speech act theory into linguistic theory.

Searle’s distinction of utterances into speech acts is very similar to those proposed by Austin. The uttering of words (Searle calls morphemes and sentence) is an utterance act. Prepositional acts are referring and predicating while illocutionary acts are acts like stating, commanding and promising.

Illocutionary acts, according to Searle, constitute the rules that are responsible for speech acts. Searle called this special type of rule, constitutive rule. Searle believes that constitutive rules create and define new forms of behaviours. He also observed that apart from illocutionary acts being rule-governed, they are intentional; they have names and are what the speaker (S) is doing with words in relation to the hearer (H).

The perlocutionary acts are the consequences of illocutionary acts (i.e. the effects of actions, thought, beliefs of hearer. The illocutionary act that is subject to conditions and rules is central to Searle’s framework. Searle classifies illocutionary acts into five basic types namely; representative, directive, commissive, expressive and declaration.
DATA ANALYSIS
Data on English discourse patterns collected through observation method from selected vocational centres in Lagos State were analyzed using frequency count recording and simple percentage. Data were analyzed in consonance with the three research questions of the work. These are shown as follows:

RESEARCH QUESTION 1: What are the patterns of English discourse in classroom interactions?
Table 5.1: Frequency Count Distribution on Data in Vocational Centres

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EDP</th>
<th>CM</th>
<th>HD</th>
<th>Refr.</th>
<th>FT</th>
<th>CK</th>
<th>ENG</th>
<th>Math</th>
<th>BE</th>
<th>ICT</th>
<th>CS</th>
<th>F&amp;N</th>
<th>SH</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infor.</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>282</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eli.</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>174</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dir.</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>250</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elip.Eli</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expl.</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>290</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S. Eli.</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eli Rep</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>374</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SF</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nom.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expr.</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cau.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncl.</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>–</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>151</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>201</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>116</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>1657</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: EDP means English Discourse Patterns
Infor. (informatives) Expl. (Explanative) Cau. (Causative)
Rep. (Representative) S. Eli. (Self Elicitation) uncl. (Unclear)
Dir.(Directive) SF (Slot Filler)
Elip. Eli.(elliptical Elicitation) Nom. (Nominative)

Subjects abbreviated in the table as: CM (Cake Making), HD (Hair Dressing), Refr. (Refrigeration), FT (Fashion and Textile), CK (Cooking), ENG. (English), Math (Mathematics), BE (Basic Electricity), ICT (Information Technology), CS. (Computer Studies), F&N (Food and Nutrition) and SH (Short Hand).

Figure 5.1: A bar chart showing the identified English discourse Patterns and their percentage of occurrence.

The researcher was able to identify thirteen English discourse elements as they occurred in the classroom discourse. Table 5.1 above shows the thirteen elements of English discourse patterns identified through frequency counts. The elements are informatives, explanatives, causatives, representatives, self-elicitations, unclear acts, elicitations, directives, elliptical representatives, slot fillers, elliptical elicitations, and nominatives. Twelve elements represent the free discourse pattern while the last element represents the bound discourse pattern.
A total number of 1,657 English discourse patterns were established of which CM accounts for 151; HD, 120; Refr, 201; FT, 70; CK, 208; ENG, 200; Math, 140; BE, 116; ICT, 80; CS, 128; F&N, 121 and SH, 142. Again, in all classes, a total of 34 informatives were obtained, Representatives occurred 282 times, other discourse patterns were obtained as follows; Elicitation, 174 times, Directives, 250 times; Elliptical elicitations, 42 times; Explanatives, 374 times, Slot Fillers, 10 times; nominatives, 21 times; Expressives, 92 times; causatives, 13 times and unclear acts, 45 times.

![Chart Title](image)

Figure 5.2: A pie chart indicating the identified English discourse patterns in subjects

**RESEARCH QUESTION 2:** What are the prominent English discourse patterns in vocational centres?

**Table 5.2:** The average and percentage of patterns of English discourse in vocational centres.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Discourse Patterns</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Informatives</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representatives</td>
<td>282</td>
<td>17.02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elicitations</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>10.50%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Directives</td>
<td>250</td>
<td>15.09%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elliptical elicitations</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>2.53%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Figure 5.3: A pie chart showing the average and percentages of English discourse patterns.

Table 5.2 above shows English discourse patterns in vocational centres in Lagos State. It indicates that elliptical representatives recorded the highest percentage of 22.57%. This is followed by explanatives with a percentage of 17.50%, representatives with a percentage of 17.02%, directives with a percentage of 15.09% and elicitation with a percentage of 10.50%. Five English discourse elements of elliptical representatives, explanatives, representatives, directives and elicitations are the predominant English discourse patterns mostly used in vocational educational centres. Discourse elements such as expressives with a percentage of 5.55%, unclear acts with a
percentage of 2.72%, elliptical elicitations with 2.53%, informatives with 2.05%, self-elicitations with 1.81 %, nominatives with 1.27%, causatives with 0.78% and slot fillers with 0.6% were not predominant, especially slot fillers which recorded a very low percentage.

**RESEARCH QUESTION 3: What is the relationship between the predominant English discourse patterns and the students’ performance?**

**Table 5.3: The relationship between the predominant English discourse patterns and students’ performance**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Subjects</th>
<th>PEDP</th>
<th>Average Scores</th>
<th>Remarks</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Elip. Rep.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FT</td>
<td>Elip. Rep.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CK</td>
<td>Elip. Rep.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Math.</td>
<td>Elip. Rep.</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CS</td>
<td>Elip. Rep</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/N</td>
<td>Elip. Rep.</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HD</td>
<td>Expl.</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BE</td>
<td>Rep.</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Refr.</td>
<td>Dir.</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENG.</td>
<td>Dir.</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ICT</td>
<td>Dir.</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SH</td>
<td>Eli.</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>Fair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5.3 represents the predominant English discourse patterns (PEDP), average scores of students’ performance in the twelve classes and remark.

From table 5.3 above, elliptical representative appears six times. In other words, it dominates the classroom discourse in Cake-Making (CM), Fashion and Textile (FT), Cooking (CK), Mathematics (Math), Computer Studies (CS) and Food and Nutrition (FN). It has a dominant ratio of 6. The students’ performance in each class predominated by elliptical representatives is good as shown in the table. In CM the average score is 85%, FT, 75%, DB, 80%, Math, 70 %, Comp, 80% and FN, 85%. Directive predominates Refr., ENG and ICT discourse. It has the dominant ratio of 3. Although this is the case, the directive has not been able to enhance good performance as seen
in the average scores of the students in Refrigeration (Refr.) where the students scored 46%, English (ENG), 48% and Information and Communication Techniques (ICT), 43%. Explanatives and representatives both have a dominant ratio of one each. The use of these English discourse patterns enhances good performance as seen in Hair Dressing (HD), with the average score of 75% and Basic Electricity (BE), with the average score of 74%. Elicitation is predominantly used in Short Hand (SH) but it records a poor performance of 45%.

Table 5.3 shows that elliptical representatives, explanatives and representatives are the three predominant English discourse patterns in vocational centres that enhance good performance.

FINDINGS

The summary of the research findings are presented in consonance with the three objectives of this research.

FINDING 1: In line with objective (1), thirteen discourse types, namely informatives, representatives, elicitations, directives, elliptical elicitations, explanatives, self-elicitations, elliptical representatives, slot fillers, nominatives, expressives, causatives and unclear acts were identified.

FINDING 2: In line with objective (2), the researcher discovered that elliptical representatives, explanatives, representatives, directives and elicitations were predominant English discourse patterns used in vocational centres.
FINDING 3: With reference to objective (3), the study revealed that although elliptical representatives, explanatives, representatives, directives and elicitations were highly applied, the first three English discourse patterns were able to enhance good performance.

Conclusion

The researcher examined “The Relationship between English Discourse Patterns and Students’ Performance in Selected Vocational Centres in Lagos State” using the observation method of data collection. The data were sourced from lessons taught in different departments in 10 vocational centres in Lagos State. These lessons constituted the primary data. The secondary data for this study consisted of data collected from the libraries, journals, internet, textbooks, articles periodicals and government sponsored studies and projects. These lessons were tape-recorded, transcribed and analyzed using frequency count and simple percentage. The researcher chose the Speech Act Theory and Pragmatics as her theoretical frameworks. The outcomes of her investigation showed that the predominant English discourse patterns are elliptical representatives, explanatives, representatives, directives and elicitations.

The study has established that the English discourse patterns of elliptical representatives, explanatives and representatives have enhanced students’ good performance. The study has also established that direct speech acts employed in vocational centres have equally encouraged students to perform well in their lessons.

The study has provided appropriate English discourse patterns for teaching in vocational centres. It has also provided a reference for discourse analysts, teachers and students. The study has been
able to establish the potency of elliptical representatives, explanatives and representatives and
direct speech acts as capable of producing positive results. It is also considered as a step further
from the previous attempts towards the study of English discourse patterns in classrooms.

This research is on the relationship between English discourse patterns and students’ performance
in selected vocational centres (TVC) in Lagos State. To the best of the researcher’s knowledge,
there is no work that has fully concentrated on English discourse patterns in vocational centres
before now. The need to identify the appropriate English discourse pattern had been the major
problem in classroom discourse before now, but this work has filled the gap by looking at the
appropriate English discourse patterns

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