Discourse Analysis (DA) in the Context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL): A Chronological Review

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ABSTRACT

This current study is interested in assessing the trending studies discourse analysis during the last five years in the specific context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Using the library research method, this study collected 131,000 results of relevant articles from Google Scholar open-access database. This study then analysed 40 selected articles as its main data with NVivo 12 software to ensure its qualitative. Chronologically, this study described how discourse analysis studies have evolved. At first, solely focusing on using discourse analysis to identify students' problems in reading comprehension, researchers began to use discourse analysis to examine how teachers authentically perform and propose ways to improve the classroom discourse. Moreover, discourse analysis not only revealed issues that exist between teacher-student and student-student interactive discourses, but also the discourse of critical issues contained in the textbooks that are mandated for EFL programmes.

1. Introduction

Historically, Zellig Harris was the first to use the term 'discourse analysis' in 1952 (Stalpers, 1988). A rather ambiguous term, but referring to Alba-Juez (2009) and Sari et al. (2018), discourse analysis seems to attempt to study the organisation of language—anything—above the sentence and the language used in social, political, and cultural contexts. The context in particular is heavily emphasised in discourse analysis because people in majority produce speech that is not necessarily syntactic, but usually has semantic and intonational closure.

Essentially multidisciplinary, this research method crosses the borders of linguistics to different kinds of disciplinary areas. To conduct a discourse analysis study, Schiffrin (2001) described at least five different approaches, namely speech act, interactional sociolinguistics, ethnology of communication, pragmatic, and conversational analysis approaches. This current study aims to review what has already been contributed by researchers who have conducted discourse analysis studies in the context of EFL.

As it was known, in every part of society must be completed by a language in experiencing their daily routines, as seen in, sign symbols or the oral speech (Fikri, Padmadewi, & Suanarjaya, 2014; Harianja et al., 2019). A study of discourse since its birth plays a helpful role in helping academia to understand the role of many discourse events within the community (Hamuddin 2015). Discourse analysis presents in the midst to analyse messages' content in the communication that is happening. Some of this communication can take the form of conversations, texts such as books, speech scripts, and transcripts in forums, articles contained in newspapers, and advertisements, or even in different languages (Marwa, 2014) and technology mediums (Andriani, 2019). Not only that, discourse analysis is conducted by researchers to examine the message used and understood. It is also possible to examine the methods used by communicators such as writers and speakers in conveying goals and messages through the discourse they are making.

Even when in the school environment, the interaction between teacher and student, student and student is an important part of class activities (Andriani, 2019). Elizabeth el al. (2012) stated that to gain a better understanding of the building blocks of academics discussion, to define important conversation elements and to examine how dialogue can be shaped to maximize learning, researchers have built frameworks specifically designed to analyse aspects of student and teacher speech experience in the classroom.

Seeing as discourse analysis refines critical thinking skills, it provides language learners useful, practical, and, in indirect ways, even marketable skills. Moreover, the discourse analysis includes a suitable subject, particularly in a multicultural setting for advanced English learners (Norton, 2008). In the context of the EFL, the success of language learning depends on communication and

interaction between students or between the teacher and students in the class, where foreign languages are considered as a necessity in learning (Derin & Hamuddin, 2019). This is largely due to the nature of the subject being reliant to consistent use and practice of the language as a media to communicate.

As previously stated, discourse analysis gives students new skills and strengthen their skills in language interpretation within their specific context, be it at the social or cultural level (Alsoraihi, 2019). Additionally, discourse analysis is also useful in the teaching process, where the teacher's role as a facilitator for the students while in the class can develop their teaching process by looking further at the language used inside and outside the classroom, such as students' online and informal interactions (Hamuddin et al., 2019). By seeing this, the writer would like to analyse the discourse analysis and understand how and what the role of discourse analysis which relates to the students is.

2. Method

This study aims to assess the discourse analysis studies in the context of English learning and teaching, specifically English as a Foreign Language (EFL). To reach this aim, this study used the library research method as it can cover a wide range of subjects at various levels of comprehensiveness (Hart, 2018). This method is also chosen to include the relevant studies that have been published in different years.

The data of this study is primarily obtained from Google Scholar, which is chosen due to its open access policy of allowing researchers to view and download the published materials indexed in the database. Martin-Martin et al. (2017) who had empirically tested Google Scholar's ability to the identification of highly-cited documents by conducting a longitudinal analysis of over 60 years of data, vouched for Google Scholar's efficiency to identify highly-cited documents, which in turn reflect authors and topics with strong influence.

To narrow the data retrieval, this study uses specific keywords to find the relevant documents, namely 'discourse analysis+EFL.' This study further selects and downloads only documents in the form of journal articles, as books may be generic enough to be out of the scope of this study's aim. Moreover, this study specifically searchers articles that have been published; thus, preprints are excluded from the analysis.

The analysis of this literature review is carried out with the aid of the computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software (CAQDAS) known as NVivo, which enables researchers to easily manage data analysis and synthesis, "from screening to synthesising" (Houghton, Murphy, Meehan, Thomas, Brooker, & Casey, 2017). Its strength is its capacity to let researchers organize through a plethora of data, facilitating researchers with multiple textual and audio-visual-related functions (Edhlund & McDougall, 2019). With NVivo's analytical tools, this present study narrowed down the data for analysis to exclude discourse analysis studies that were found to be outside of the context of EFL.

3. Results

Conducted on 6 February 2020, the keyword-based search of 'discourse analysis+EFL' on Google Scholar revealed about 131,000 results. Within 24 hours, researchers managed to extract 40 complete files of the most relevant studies focused on discourse analysis in the EFL context. The studies collected ranged from 1979 to 2020, and all 40 data were imported to the NVivo 12 software to run various types of analysis.

Table 3.1 Ten Most Frequently Used Words

Word	Count
Language	1958
Discourse	1495
English	1363
Students	1312
Analysis	1110
Critical	1032
Study	776
EFL	750
Classroom	714
Social	623

Utilising NVivo's word frequency query tool, this study was able to find the most frequent words that are contained in the data selected. This is done to glimpse into the contents of the data collection (Mortelmans, 2019). Limiting the number of words to be identified to ten, the query tool produced **Table 1**. As can be seen, 'Language' is used the most, followed by 'Discourse' and 'English.'

Then, this study used NVivo's cluster analysis tool to determine the relevancy of these frequent words contained in the 40 studies. Clustering groups similar objects, so this tool allows researchers to see the relationships of each word contained in the data collection (Macia, 2015). The result of cluster analysis is shown in **Figure 3.1**.
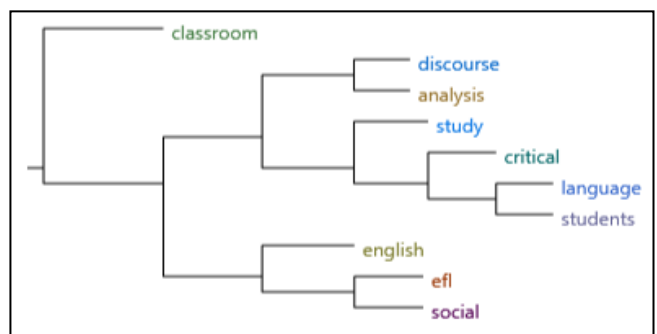

Figure 3.1 Cluster Analysis of the Ten Most Frequently Used Words

Cluster analysis on the 40 studies revealed that the ten most frequent words each were associated with one another in ways that are relevant with the aim of this study. 'Language', which is the most frequently used word, is most often used in association with 'students.' The figure showed that they are often associated with 'critical', meaning that in discourse analysis studies in EFL context, critical thinking ability is a prominent focus.

The word frequency and cluster analyses confirmed that the studies collected are relevant to the research aim of this study. Thus, researchers felt confident that the data collection of 40 studies is true 'discourse analysis' studies that were carried out with the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). To review the data collection in thorough detail, this study used NVivo 12 software coding tool to comb the entirety of the data collection for specific elements that are most relevant for literature reviews.

Referring to Rowley & Slack's (2004) guide on conducting a literature review, this study made the coding scheme aim for the year, title, purpose, novelty, method, sample, location, duration, and results of the 40 discourse analysis studies on EFL context. These codes were created based on researchers' observations as the some of the terms may not be explicitly used in the studies, e.g. 'the novelty of this study' might be written as 'while previous studies […], this study […].' Some codewords may also be stated with different words in the data, e.g. 'the aim' rather than 'the purpose.' Due to these linguistic conditions, the coding is carried out with the researchers' qualitative understanding of both textual contexts and referents. The researchers independently coded the data collection, then resolved any coding conflict to come to a consensus. Therefore, the finalised coding scheme is year, title, purpose, novelty, method, sample, location, duration, and results. This method is based on Ranney et al. (2020) which had successfully carried out qualitative coding with NVivo 12 software in developing accurate coding schemes.

4. Discussion

To conduct a comprehensive discussion of discourse analysis studies in the EFL context, the literature review will be done chronologically. In this way, this study may identify the trends of the research literature over time, from the first study in 1979 to the latest study published in 2020. Starting from the studies before the twentieth century, the discussion will move to the studies published during the first decades of the twentieth century to the latest ones.

Table 4.1 Forty Discourse Analysis Studies in EFL Context

Year	Author(s)	Title
1979	Marsha Bensoussan & Judith Rosenhouse	Discourse analysis in diagnosing difficulty in EFL reading comprehension
1987	Andrew Cohen, Hilary Glasman, Phyllis R. Rosenbaum-Cohen, Jonathan Ferrara, & Jonathan Fine	Reading English for Specialized Purposes: Discourse Analysis and the Use of Student Informants
1990	Marsha Bensoussan	EFL Reading as Seen Through Translation and Discourse Analysis: Narrative vs. Expository Texts
2004	Teresa Morell	Interactive Lecture Discourse for University EFL Students
2006	Josep M. Cots	Teaching 'with an attitude': Critical Discourse Analysis in EFL teaching
2006	Bilal Genc	Oral Narrative Discourse of Anaphoric References of Turkish EFL Learners
2006	Jennifer Yusun Kang	Producing culturally appropriate narratives in English as a foreign language: A discourse analysis of Korean EFL learners' written narratives
2007	Teresa Morell	What Enhances EFL Students' Participation in Lecture Discourse? Student, Lecturer and Discourse Perspectives
2008	Sue Norton	Discourse Analysis As an Approach to Intercultural Competence Discourse Analysis As an Approach to Intercultural Competence in the Advanced EFL Classroom in the Advanced EFL Classroom
2008	Hiroko Yoshida	An Analysis of Discourse in the EFL Classroom
2009	Biook Behnam & Yassamin Pouriran	Classroom Discourse: Analyzing Teacher/ Learner Interactions in Iranian EFL TaskBased Classrooms
2010	Zeinab Koupaee Dar, Ali Rahimi, & Mohammad Reza Shams	Teaching Reading with a Critical Attitude: Using Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to Raise EFL University Students' Critical Language Awareness (CLA)
2010	Carmen Helena Guerrero	The Portrayal of EFL Teachers in Official Discourse: The Perpetuation of Disdain
2011	Laleh Fakhraee Faruji	Discourse Analysis of Questions in Teacher Talk
2011	Liu Xin, Lou Luzheng, Shi Biru	EFL (English as a Foreign Language) Classroom Discourse Analysis of a Vocational College and Some Reflections
2011	July Carolina Gómez Lobatón	Language learners' identities in EFL settings: resistance and power through discourse

Year	Author(s)	Title
2012	Mohammad Reza Hashemi & Afsaneh Ghanizadeh	Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Thinking: An Experimental Study in an EFL Context
2012	Dolores Fernández Martníez	Critical Learning: Critical Discourse Analysis in EFL Teaching
2012	Nasser Rashidi & Roghayeh Asgarzadeh	The Effect of Teaching Critical Reading through Critical Discourse Analysis on High School EFL Learner's Reading Comprehension
2012	Sima Sadeghi, Saeed Ketabi, Mansoor Tavakoli, & Moslem Sadeghi	Application of Critical Classroom Discourse Analysis (CCDA) in Analyzing Classroom Interaction
2012	Tao Xiong & Yamin Qian	Ideologies of English in a Chinese high school EFL textbook: a critical discourse analysis
2013	Pei-Ling Yang	Discourse Analysis of EFL College Learners' Online Social Interaction and Attitudes towards FACEBOOK
2014	Tao Xiong	Shallow Environmentalism: A Preliminary Eco-Critical Discourse Analysis of Secondary School English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Texts in China
2015	Fatma Zohra Amari	The Role of Critical Discourse Analysis in EFL Teaching/Learning
2015	Maedeh Dohaei & Saeed Ketabi	A Discourse Analysis of Coffee and Chocolate Print Advertisements: Persian EFL Learner's Problems in Focus
2015	Dorota Domalewska	Classroom Discourse Analysis in EFL Elementary Lessons
2016	Mehdi Azimi Haradasht & Nader Assadi Aidinlou	A Case Study on EFL Classroom Discourse
2017	Theodore Bonnah, Mark Donnellan	Daily Tweet Structure And Discourse: Mixed-Method Analysis Of Twitter Writing Assignments In The Efl Classroom
2017	Umar Fauzan	Inducing Critical Discourse Analysis in Speaking Syllabus for EFL Students of Indonesian Islamic Universities
2017	Shabnam Kurosh Khanshan	The Contribution of Critical Discourse Analysis and Critical Thinking in an EFL Context: A Case Study of Economic Texts
2017	Warren Lilley & Joanne Hardman	"You focus, I'm talking": A CHAT analysis of mobile dictionary use in an advanced EFL class
2017	Hamid Marashi & Azam Chizari	Using Critical Discourse Analysis Based Instruction to Improve EFL Learners' Writing Complexity, Accuracy and Fluency
2017	Amjjad Sulaimani & Tariq Elyas	A Glocalized or Globalized Edition? Contextualizing Gender Representation in EFL Textbooks in Saudi Arabia: A Critical Discourse Analysis Perspective
2018	Ridwan Hanafiah, Muhammad Yusuf, & Aprilza Aswani	Theme Markedness in EFL Students' Recount Texts: A Systemic Functional Analysis
2018	Sahar Najarzadegan, Azizollah Dabaghi, & Abbass Eslami-Rasekh	The Impact of Practicing van Dijk's Model of Critical Discourse Analysis on the Improvement of Iranian EFL Undergraduates' Critical Thinking across Different Proficiency Levels
2018	Wafa Aljuaythin	Gender Representation in EFL Textbooks in Saudi Arabia: A Critical Discourse Analysis Approach
2018	Sunardi, M. Sri Samiati Tarjana, Soepomo Poedjosoedarmo, Riyadi Santosa	Interpersonal Realizations of Pedagogic Discourse in Indonesian EFL Classrooms
2018	Budi Setyono	The Portrayal of Women in Nationally-Endorsed English as a Foreign Language (EFL) Textbooks for Senior High School Students in Indonesia
2019	Budi Setyono & Handoyo Puji Widodo	The representation of multicultural values in the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture-Endorsed EFL textbook: a critical discourse analysis
2020	Abduljalil Nasr Hazaea	Fostering Critical Intercultural Awareness Among efl Students Through Critical Discourse Analysis

For the studies published before the twentieth century, three studies were found, and two of them belonged or published under the same author. Bensoussan & Rosenhouse (1979) and Bensoussan (1990) examined student translations from English to Hebrew or Arabic. Both studies focused on identifying the kinds of translation errors that students make frequently and how they reflect students' reading comprehension. Bensoussan & Rosenhouse (1979) proved that mistranslations in vocabulary, expression, and utterance are decent indicators of the students' lack of comprehension. Later on, Bensoussan (1990) found students find it difficult to communicate narratively, but not in an expository manner. In contrast, the case is vice versa when it comes to grammatical cohesion.

Both studies were focused on the English discourse of English major students. Meanwhile, the third study, Cohen et al. (1987), compared the English discourse of Israeli students from different majors, e.g. biochemistry, biology, economics-international relations, and history students. Interestingly, the study found that despite different majors having different approaches, they share the same problems when it comes to reading English texts, particularly when it comes to non-technical vocabulary and noun phrases.

Three studies may not be enough to conclude a theme, but this low number indicates that discourse analysis was still in its early stages as a discipline, particularly in the context of foreigners learning English language. Solely focused on the reading ability of students, the studies during this time seemed to be still touching on the surface problems of reading EFL texts, as these studies stopped short of identifying and examining the students' problems. Moreover, all the studies on discourse analysis in EFL contexts before 2000 were concerned with EFL of students' whose native languages are Arabic.

Entering the twentieth century, accompanying the popularity of information and communication technology (ICT) is the idea that the monologue lecture discourse should be shifted to reciprocal lecture discourse that increases student activity. Morell (2004) compared textual and interactive discourse of lecturers and found that the latter has a much greater use of linguistic aspects. The use of elicitation markers, referential questions and the likes were also found to be the product of the interaction rather than the cause of the interactive discourse. Further analysis of interactive discourse in a later study by using surveys for students and questionnaires for lecturers revealed that participation depends on two things, i.e. participants' awareness and an educational system that rewards the participants (Morell, 2007). Despite the increasingly global awareness of student-centred education style, many teachers still dominantly control and manipulate many interactional sequences, according to a 45-minute authentic classroom conversation spoken discourse analysis by Yoshida (2008).

Student activity is also popular in tandem with the rising awareness on the value of a critical approach to language study, as it reflects the educational system's goal to develop learners' judgment ability. Cots (2006) found that this idea is still "too often absent from foreign language programmes," so the study tried to introduce the main principles and notions of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) to propose its implementation into foreign language programmes. Echoing this study, Norton (2008) tried to outline a way in which discourse analysis can sharpen EFL students' critical thinking and hone their cultural assumptions at the same time. To prove this notion, Dar, Rahimi, & Shams (2010) detected the changes in sixty EFL students' ability to "reveal the hidden layers of meaning implied in texts." An increase was indeed detected after students were taught in using discourse analysis, amazingly a 90% increase.

Other studies around this time were used discourse analysis to study more specific aspects in EFL teaching. For one, Genc (2006) compared the similarities and differences of how Turkish EFL learners and native English speakers speak with the definite article 'the'. The focus of this study is highly specific, but the study did drive the significance of its findings by emphasising the fact that the article 'the" actually does not exist in Turkish native language.

Meanwhile, Kang (2006) explored cross-cultural differences in the written discourse Korean EFL learners and native American-English speakers. Guererro (2010) interpreted certain images of English teachers in official discourse.

In exploring the recurring patterns of questioning behaviour in six EFL classes, Behnam & Pouriran (2009) found that display questions were dominantly used compared to referential questions, and the latter was also found that it could not create enough interactive discourse. Another study on Chinese EFL teacher talks revealed that display questions are prioritised over referential questions, thus discouraging students from providing longer and more complex responses (Xin, Luzheng, & Biru, 2011). Verbal interaction around questions in teacher talk also interested Faruji (2011), who analysed eight transcriptions of recorded Iranian EFL classroom sessions. It is interesting to note the study's identification of four categories of teacher questions, i.e. factual, evaluative, productive, and empirical questions. These studies make it clear that there is a high interest among scholars in applying classroom discourse analysis to reveal how teachers perform.

So far, discourse analysis studies have branched into critical discourse analysis and classroom discourse analysis. This study found that during the second decade of the twentieth century, these two branches seem to have merged into what some scholars have termed critical classroom discourse analysis (CCDA). Lobatón (2011) was concerned with how students' identities as learners of a foreign language may affect their language learning process. While previous studies found that there existed a power dynamic where teachers controlled the conversation, this study found that there is now a silent fight for power between teacher and students in conducting their identities as learners. Moreover, while it is known that discourse analysis improves students' critical thinking skills, Hashemi & Ghanizadeh (2012) was the first to identify exactly what aspects of critical thinking ability that improve the most with the implementation of critical discourse analysis, which is interpretation and recognition of unstated assumption. More and more studies tried to demonstrate how critical discourse analysis can be implemented in foreign language teaching. Some examples include Martníez (2012) who incorporated the main principles of critical discourse analysis to a song, slogan, and email and **R**ashidi & Asgarzadeh (2012) who improved Iranian girls' reading comprehension by teaching them to approach the texts critically.

This study also found many previous studies using critical discourse analysis to uncover aspects of the EFL classroom discourse that may need to be readdressed. Sadeghi, Ketabi, Tavakoli, & Moslem (2012) critically reflect the differences in Iranian males and females classroom discourse in EFL classroom, finding that discourse control, the types of questions that are used, and turn-taking that occur in the classroom conceal the

significant male dominance over female discourse, as males tend to use more direct language, more negative face, and fewer politeness. Xiong & Qian (2012) critically analysed EFL textbooks that were used in China and found evidence of how the books selectively represent English history and give shallow sociolinguistic explanations. Looking at environmental aspects that should be contained in the textbooks, Xiong (2014) found that Chinese EFL textbooks also give shallow environmentalism values by obscuring human agency in events of environmental destruction while simultaneously portraying the government's role in environmental protection in a positive light. The study concluded that the textbooks addressed environmental topics solely to increase awareness rather than encourage real participation to heal the environment. As similar studies continue to extend the effort of critically examining classroom actors and instruments, discourse analysis cemented how substantial the things EFL learners must learn, "not only new vocabulary, syntactic patterns and phonology but also discourse and socio-cultural dimensions of the target language" (Amari, 2015).

In the last five years, some studies continue to investigate the effect of discourse analysis on EFL learners' abilities (Khanshan, 2017), and other studies replicated the methods on objects that have not been extensively analysed critically. Fauzan (2017) assessed the weaknesses of Indonesian EFL Speaking syllabus with critical discourse analysis, combining a triangulation of data from course lecturers, students, and head of the study program. Lilley & Hardman (2017) focused on African EFL students' discourse on chat and advocated for the use of mobile technology to support communicative language teaching (CLT).

5. Conclusion

From 131,000 results, this study selected and analysed 40 discourse analysis studies that were carried out in the context of English as a Foreign Language (EFL). Chronologically, this study described how discourse analysis studies have evolved. At first, solely focusing on using discourse analysis to identify students' problems in reading comprehension, researchers began to use discourse analysis to examine how teachers authentically perform and propose ways to improve the classroom discourse. Moreover, discourse analysis not only revealed issues that exist between teacher-student and student-student interactive discourses, but also the discourse in the textbooks issued for EFL programmes to raise critical issues.

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