Discourse Competence of Teachers in Second Language Classroom

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Abstract

This study primarily aimed to analyze the discourse competence of teachers in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms in the Biliran Division. Employing the mixed-methods research design, this research elicited data from the 20 secondary teachers in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms in Biliran Division during the school year 2021-2022. The findings reveal that the most common cohesive ties used by the English teachers were: reference (rephrasing, restatement); ellipsis (omission of word/s); substitution (the use of one); discourse markers (the use of alright, so, okay); and discourse connectives (the use of so). Moreover, the syntactic errors committed by English teachers in Biliran Division are mostly on subject-verb agreement, use of prepositions, code-switching, pronunciation, and plurality. Based on the overall observation and analysis of the participants' utterances, the researcher concluded that the teachers in English as a Second Language (ESL) Classrooms in Biliran Division used linguistic features as their immediate recourse in times of vocabulary loss and grammar confusion. In line with this, the school administrators may invest and strengthen the language learning development programs for ESL teachers because it is through them that the schools train and develop the minds of the next generation.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Discourse analysis is a method for studying written or spoken language in relation to its social context, with the aim of understanding how language is used in real life situations.

In linguistics, discourse analysis is used to analyze the structure of texts or utterances longer than one sentence, taking into account both their linguistic content and their sociolinguistic context (Oxford English Dictionary, 2019).

The study of Martínez-Cabeza (2002) pointed the importance of discourse analysis, in which it examines stretches of language, both spoken and written, larger than the sentence. It attempts to find regularities in the formation of these stretches, and correlations with grammatical, phonological, lexical, and semantic phenomena. Among the issues that have attracted interest are: how sentences are connected; how texts are made coherent; and how words were used like well, like, and so on.

Cook (2000) made it even more significant when he said that discourse analysis provides insights into the problems and processes of language use and language learning; while Cutting (2003) considers discourse analysis as approaches to studying language's relation to the contextual background features.

Nevertheless, Yu (2001) clearly states that the second language teaching profession has long been involved in a search for methods that would not only be generalizable across widely varying audiences, but could also be successfully used to teach a foreign language to students in the classroom. It cannot be denied that human communication is complicated and its complex nature has made language teaching one of the greatest challenges of education.

In the Philippines, some prevailing opinions about language teaching mark a state of flux and uncertainty. Throughout the years, English has been taught to the young and old Filipinos since the period of the American colonization.

This fact evidently shows that teachers may have mastered the rules in grammar, but have not necessarily applied these rules in constructing and managing their discourse. Hence, Murcia et al. (2006) suggest sub-areas that contribute to discourse competence such as: cohesion, coherence, deixis, generic structure, and the conversational structure inherent to the turn-taking system in conversation.

Thus, Martínez-Cabeza (2002) and Martínez-Espejo (2002) emphasized that the study of discourse competence owes discourse analysis and text linguistics the repertoire of notions, concepts, and terms language teaching theorists may use to understand the role of discourse in language learning and teaching.

In today's increasingly globalized world, the ability to express oneself in a second or foreign language has become a vital skill. Nonetheless, observations revealed that in Biliran Division, some teachers deliver the message in a fluent English classroom discourse, while some cannot. Worst is, some were not even aware of the discourse patterns and have met difficulties in conveying their thoughts to the learners. This is a manifestation that their knowledge about the English is not functional, which is often caused by not using the language in real communication. This phenomenon is very alarming since these learners are expected to communicate well in their societal negotiations to become productive in the future.

Based on the preceding enunciation, it is the concern of language teachers to look behind what causes for real learning. Filipino students and professionals alike still find themselves inadequate in the use of the language. English learners in general met challenges during their studies and professional life, which require them to have a good command of the language. Hence, there is a great need of investigating the problems of language learning, paving the way to achieve the expected discourse competence in English.

In view of the aforementioned observations, this research intends to analyze the discourse competence of the teachers. It is henceforth in this light that the study proposes to bring into focus the cohesive ties that are mostly used by the English teachers in Biliran Division, as well as the syntactic errors they made.

Objectives of the Study

This study primarily aimed to analyze the discourse competence of teachers in English as Second Language (ESL) Classrooms in Biliran Division.

Specifically, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What type of cohesive ties are mostly used by English teachers in Biliran Division?

2. What syntactic errors are committed by English teachers in Biliran Division?

3. What intervention can be proposed to improve the discourses of teachers in an ESL classroom?

Framework of the Study

The concepts and variables of this study derived from the recent and most accepted theories and are applied in the research process.

Theoretical framework. This study is anchored on multi-assumptions postulated by Foucault (1972, 1980); and Hobbs (1978).

Foucault's (1972) Theory on Social Criticism and Analysis states that all relevant text around a message should be considered in order to understand it clearly and universally, instead of viewing it as a stand along sentence.

Coining the phrases power-knowledge, Foucault (1980) stated that knowledge was both the creator of power and creation of power, in that, an object becomes a "node within a network." Foucauldian discourse analysis identifies statements and tracks their changes and challenges historically in the mapping of the creation and maintenance of power-laden discourses.

Another insight considered in this study was Hobbs' (1978) Theory of Coherence Relations in relation to cohesion. There has been some confusion as to the differences between the phenomena of cohesion and coherence. There is a danger of lumping the two together and losing the distinct contributions of each to the understanding of the unity of text.

Ultimately, the difference between cohesion and coherence is that: cohesion is a term for sticking together, where the text all hangs together; while coherence is a term for making sense, where there is sense in the text. Hence the term coherence relations refer to the relations between sentences that contribute to their making sense.

Hobbs (1978) reiterated that since cohesion is well-defined, one might expect that it would be computationally easier to identify, since the identification of ellipsis, reference, substitution, conjunction, and lexical cohesion is a straightforward task for people. There is a body of research, however, showing that lexical cohesion is computationally feasible to identify. In contrast, the identification of a specific coherence relation from a given set is not a straightforward task, even for people.

This theory has received prominence in social sciences, and is related to the present study since it discloses the discourse competence of the teachers. These underlying linguistic rules are the bases in identifying the language learners' performance and determine the areas needing improvement as far as English subject is concerned.

Conceptual framework. The conceptualization of this research basically revolves around analyzing the discourse competence of teachers in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms in Biliran Division.

Specifically, the variables are the cohesive ties mostly used by English teachers in Biliran Division, and the syntactic errors committed by English teachers in Biliran Division, which was the basis in proposing intervention to improve the discourses of teachers in an ESL classroom. Figure 1 illustrates the schema of the conceptual framework of the study.
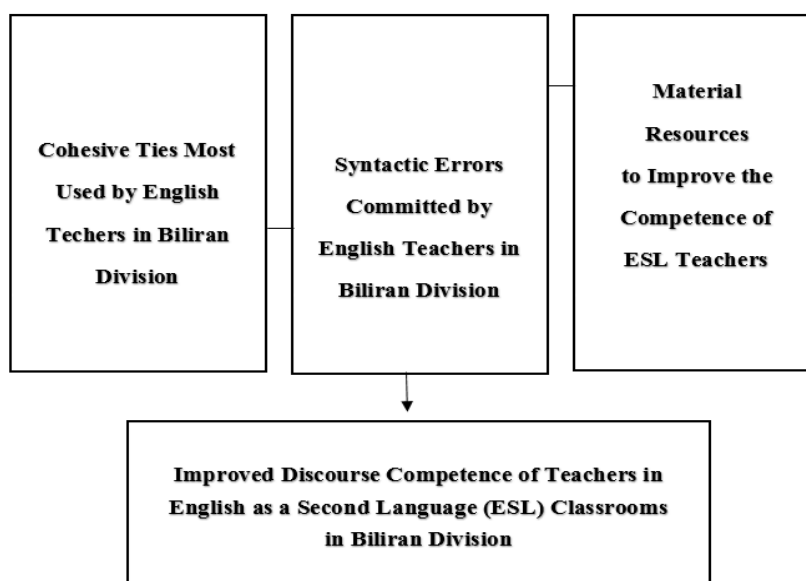
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Importance of the Study

The intention of this study is to contribute to the increasing number of research on discourse competence; hence, it is deemed beneficial and serves as a realization to the following:

School administrators. They will be encouraged to develop real-life, context-based, and interactive activities for teachers to improve their discourse competence. They may also be guided with the findings as to the level and type of teachers' discourse competence.

English as Second Language (ESL) teachers. The results could influence their way of thinking about language and the kinds of texts and examples they use in language teaching. They will also be able to provide the students with a structure-based grammar lessons for an effective language teaching, together with opportunities for real communication. Hence, a speaker of a language can easily distinguish between a text and a collection of sentences.

Learners. They may see language learning not merely as language practice, but as communicative activity that needs to be enhanced in order to be competent. The results could help them become good manipulator of the English language, making the learning process of every language classroom more fun, ideal, and meaningful.

Future researchers. This study may serve as their reference and guide. This will provide ample and profound ideas and concerns to the future researchers in their endeavor for future research should they wish to verify the findings, and further broaden the scope of this research work.

Scope and Delimitation of the Study

The scope of this study was centered in analyzing the discourse competence of English as Second Language classrooms in in Biliran Division. The source of data confines itself to the corpus of whole-class discussions, where adequate support for acquiring discourse competence was expected. Data were limited to the cohesive ties mostly used, and the syntactic errors committed by English teachers in Biliran Division.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are operationally defined to provide a common understanding of important concepts that repeatedly surface all over the text of this research work.

Classroom discourse. The term refers to the language that teachers and students use to communicate with each other in the classroom. Talking or conversation is the medium through which most teaching takes place. In this study, the term was used to refer to the study of the process of face-to-face classroom teaching.

Cohesive ties. These are the ties that show relations among elements in a text that produce cohesion, such as: reference, substitution, ellipsis, discourse markers, discourse connectives, and lexical cohesion.

Corpus. This term refers to the collection of texts, written or spoken, usually stored in a computer database. It may be quite small containing only 50,000 words of text, or very large containing many millions of words. It is simply a collection of texts that can be analyzed using computer software, just as millions of texts can be accessed on the internet. In this study, the recorded classroom discussion was used as the corpus being analyzed.

Discourse analysis. This is sometimes defined as the analysis of language 'beyond the sentence.' Some discourse analysts study larger chunks of language as they flow together, while the others consider the larger discourse context in order to understand how it affects the meaning of the sentence. In this study, it is used in analyzing the discourse competence of teachers in ESL classrooms.

Discourse competence. The term refers to the ability to understand, create, and develop forms of the language that are longer than sentences (stories, conversations, letters) with the appropriate cohesion, coherence, and rhetorical organization to combine ideas. In this study, it refers to the ability of teachers to manipulate their discourses in the ESL classrooms.

Discourse. This refers to any piece of extended language, written or spoken, that has unity, meaning, and purpose. In linguistics, it refers to a unit of language longer than a single sentence. It is the way in which language is used socially to convey broad historical meanings, where language was identified by the social conditions of its use, by who is using it, and under what conditions. In this study, it refers to the face to face discussion of a topic, like a teacher meeting with the students to discuss something.

Text. This is any piece of language, spoken or written, of whatever length, which forms a unified whole. In this study, it refers to the connected sequence of verbal signs and nonverbal signs in terms of which discourse is co-constructed by the participants in the act of communication.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This study utilized the mixed-methods research design. This design incorporates techniques from both the qualitative and quantitative research designs; yet, combine them in unique ways to answer research questions that could not be answered in any other way. In mixed-methods, both qualitative and quantitative designs are mixed at some stage of the research process allowing the researcher to explore and understand a research question more completely.

This design is the most appropriate to use in this study because it neutralizes or cancels out some disadvantages inherent to certain methods. Creswell et al. (2003, 2011) further claims that mixing different methods can strengthen the study.

Research Locale

This study covered the five secondary schools in Biliran Division, particularly in their ESL classrooms.

This medium-sized division currently caters 14 districts, where public school principals, school heads, and secondary teachers are under the direct supervision of Public Schools District Supervisors.

Research Respondents

This study involved the 20 secondary teachers in English as Second Language (ESL) classrooms in Almeria and Kawayan Districts, during the school year 2021-2022.

In choosing the respondents, purposive sampling was used in reference to the criteria: (1) teaching in an ESL classroom; (2) and have been teaching in an ESL classroom for 5 years and above.

Research Instrument

This study utilized the data corpus for the content analysis, comprising the transcripts of whole-class discussion of the ESL teachers as the main instrument in gathering the data.

Each recorded classroom discourse session was analyzed by the researcher based on the criteria of the discourse competence. The objects of discourse analysis were defined in terms of: (1) cohesive ties, and (2) syntactic errors. The analysis of classroom discourses aims to explore and analyze the ESL teachers' discourse competence based on specific criteria provided.

Data Gathering Procedure

Before the formal conduct of the study, the researcher secured permission from the schools' division superintendent, secondary school heads, and ESL teachers who were included in the study. The researcher then proceeded with the actual data gathering through classroom discourse recording.

Classroom conversations were transcribed and deconstructed focusing on the teachers' statements. The researcher attempted to identify categories, themes, ideas, views, and roles within the text itself inorder to identify commonly shared discursive resources, like cohesion and syntax. All data collected were secured, protected, and backed up on a secured external drive, where only the researcher have access to the data.

Data Scoring

Data collected were systematically tabulated, tallied, analyzed, described, and interpreted in order to attain the accurate information needed. These were categorized according to the variables of the study.

Statistical Treatment of Data

Data in this study were analyzed and interpreted using the following:

Descriptive statistics such as relative frequency and percentile rank were used to determine the cohesive ties mostly used, and the syntactic errors committed by English teachers in Biliran Division.

Samples of the cohesive ties and syntactic errors were coded, analyzed, and presented in narratives after the discussion of tables as qualitative data.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of Cohesive Ties Mostly Used by

English Teachers in Biliran Division

The types of cohesive ties mostly used by English teachers in Biliran Division were: reference, ellipsis, substitution, discourse markers, and discourse connectives. These were analyzed, tabulated, and presented in Table 1, followed by corresponding narratives.

Table 1: Types of Cohesive Ties Mostly Used by English Teachers in Biliran Division

Cohesive Ties	f	Rank
1. Reference	5	14
2. Ellipsis	3	15
3. Substitution	39	4
4. Discourse Markers		
so	117	2
alright	22	5
okay	71	3
okay so	8	11
alright so	9	10
now	10	9
example	17	6
now for example	1	16
for example	6	12.5
you are going	13	8
5. Discourse connectives		
because	6	12.5
but	14	7
or	187	1

The table clearly reflects that the most common cohesive tie used by English teachers in Biliran division was the discourse connective 'or,' having a frequency of 187 (rank 1); followed by the discourse marker 'so,' with 117 frequency; and 'okay' with 71, ranked as 2nd and 3rd respectively.

This supports the claim of Varpe (2013) that for a text to have texture, it must include "ties" that bind it together called cohesive ties or devices, given that cohesion is expressed partly through the grammar and partly through the vocabulary.

For a more convincing and detailed description, a narrative presentation follows:

Reference. This refers to the meaning tied to a specific instance (e.g. 'the red house' and the 'house at the end of the block' do not have the same meaning in terms of sense but could refer to the same house).

"Yes, if there is a <u>licensed</u> or if there is a <u>professional</u> firefighter in your place, but if there is…" (P3, L253-254, p59).

"Of course you will be reminded that <u>you are expected</u> ah <u>your expected</u> output rather is to present a panel discussion and the criteria for assessment will be (P3, L291-293, p58).

In the first statement, the speaker changed the word 'licensed' to 'professional.' Although these words have different meanings, they could have the same meaning in terms of sense, and both words could refer to the firefighter.

In the second statement, however, the same speaker used 'you are expected' to 'your expected,' which clearly shows different connotation.

This finding suggests that the speaker has knowledge in semantics, and was therefore quick to respond to the perceived mistake to show the relationship between meanings.

Ellipsis. This is one of the grammatical aspect in a discourse. It is an omission of elements normally required by the grammar which is the speaker/writer assumes are obvious from the context and therefore need not be raised.

Spoken and written discourses according to McCarthy (1991) display grammatical connections between individual clauses and utterances, and one of these grammatical links is ellipsis.

"So in this lesson, this lesson prepares you <u>to internalize</u> and <u>intensify</u> the essence of social responsibility in this diverse society" (P3, L268-270, p60).

In this syntactic item, the speaker intentionally omitted the infinitive "to" before the main verb "intensify." It could have been stated as "to intensify the essence...," but the speaker intentionally left it out to avoid repetition, since there is already the presence of infinitive "to" before the main verb "internalize."

Here, ellipsis is used to show an omission, or leaving out, of a word/s in a quote to avoid repetition, and to shorten the quote without changing the meaning.

In short, ellipsis is omission, while substitution is a replacement to avoid repeating a word.

Substitution. It occurs when an item is replaced by another item in the text to avoid repetition. Many different words and phrases can be used in substitution including: *both*, *either, some, little, each, less, one/s, another, many, other/s, all, enough, much, several, any, few, neither, half, none* (indefinite quantifying pronouns) *do*, and *so*, and expressions such as *the same* and *thus*.

However, in this study, the most common substitution form used was the indefinite pronoun *one*.

"A fire extinguisher okay, that's also <u>one</u>" (P2, L262, p59).

In the first utterance, the speaker uses the indefinite pronoun "one" to refer to the head noun extinguisher inorder to avoid repetition of the word. This could imply that the speaker is aware of the rules of grammar, and therefore was quick to substitute a pronoun (one) to replace the noun (extinguisher) retaining its meaning; thus, avoiding redundancy. It can be noted that the relation between meaning was not changed, but only the relation between words.

Consider also the following:

"What about this <u>one</u>?" (P3P61L296).

"What about this <u>one</u> at the center?" (P3P61L296).

"This <u>one</u>, this is what we called?" (P3P61L298).

In the three preceding questions, the speaker uses the pronoun "one" to refer to an object in the picture or illustration. However, the object was not known since there was no head noun being referred to.

In the succeeding statement; however, two indefinite quantifying pronouns ('another,' and 'one') were used subsequently as substitution items to refer to the object being shown in the illustration.

<u>"Another</u> <u>one</u> is you are going to identify words or expressions with part whole" (P3, L281-282, p60).

"Might? Okay. <u>Another</u> <u>one</u>?" (P4, L331, p62).

The Cambridge Dictionary (2000) pointed out that a speaker or a writer sometimes use substitute forms to avoid repeating words, phrases, or clauses. Substitution can be forward or backward; however, forward substitution is far less common than backward.

Discourse markers. These are linking words or phrases that indicate how one piece of discourse is connected to another piece of discourse. These markers help the writers or speakers structure their ideas by linking them logically with a word or phrase whose function is to organize discourse into segments.

Some of the discourse markers are: *oh, well, I mean, now, then, you know, well, right, alright, anyway, like, fine, so, good, great, okay, mind you, as I say, for a start, to begin with*, etc. These discourse markers organize discourse into segments.

"Okay <u>now</u> for example, <u>okay</u> example" (P1, L4-5 p48).

In this very short sentence, the speaker uses three discourse markers (okay, now, okay).

This is probably caused by not having mastered the subject matter or perhaps the speaker has run out of lexical items.

Another example is the use of "alright," and "so." Here, the same speaker uses two sequential discourse markers (alright and so) in three succeeding sentences.

<u>"Alright</u> S for modals <u>alright</u>. <u>So</u> what do you understand about modals?" (P4, L308, p61).

<u>"Alright</u>, <u>so</u> what do you understand about auxiliary verbs?" (P4, L318, p62).

"May, <u>alright</u>. <u>So</u> what's the past tense of may?" (P4, L329, p62).

"Should, <u>alright</u>. <u>So</u> we are gonna pause on this one for the mean time?" (P4, L333, p63).

This could have been avoided if the speaker was aware of his utterance and have mastered the content of his/her lesson.

In the next utterances, the speaker shows confidence in using the discourse marker "alright" to give him/her time to structure ideas to a more logical one.

"What type of verbs? Because there are actually different types of verbs, <u>alright"</u> (P4, L310-311, p62).

"<u>Alright</u>, sige daw say it, auxiliary" (P4, L316, p62).

"Sige daw, can, <u>alright</u>" (P4, L323, p62).

"Could, <u>alright.</u> What about will? What's the past tense of will?" (P3, L325, p62).

But in the sentence that follows, the speaker uses "alright" two times in the same sentence.

"<u>Alright</u> S for modals <u>alright</u>. So what do you understand about modals?" P4, L308, p61).

It can be noticed in the subsequent statements that the discourse markers 'okay' and 'alright' were used interchangeably by the same speaker.

"Might? <u>okay</u>. Another one? Shall <u>alright</u>." (P4, L331, p62).

More evidence on the use of 'okay' and 'so' are enumerated herein. These syntactic items were also uttered by only one speaker.

"<u>Okay</u> a blanket, a wet blanket" (P3, L264, p59).

"<u>Okay,</u> try to look at the picture, the illustration, what do you see?" (P3, L295, p61).

"<u>Okay,</u> this is what we called balance" (P3, L301-302, p61).

"Would, <u>okay</u>. Another modal?" (P4, L327, p62).

"Different types of people, people coming from the different background, <u>okay"</u> (P3, L271-272, p60).

The preceding utterances indicate that the speaker is very fond of using the discourse marker "okay" in most of his/her utterance, either in the beginning or in the end of the sentence.

In the next lines, the speakers consistently started their discussion with a discourse marker "so."

"<u>So</u>, what's our focus topic today class?" (P4, L303, p61).

"<u>So</u> what do you understand about auxiliary, what do you mean by auxiliary?" P4, L320-321, p62).

"<u>So</u> in your English class in the preceding lessons…" (P3, L266, p59).

"<u>So</u> in this lesson, this lesson prepares you to internalize and intensify the essence of social responsibility in this diverse society (P3, L289-270, p60).

Moreover, the same speaker uses the discourse marker "so" in the two succeeding sentences.

"<u>So</u> in this lesson you will be making a travelogue and you will be doing a panel discussion (P3P60L275-276). <u>So</u> in this lesson also you are expected to? (P3, L276-277, p60).

The discourse markers in this extract have their own uses: '*so'* marks the beginning of a new part of the conversation; while '*okay'* and *'alright'* mark a response, especially in agreeing with someone.

Based on the cited evidence, we can agree with Yule (2014) that discourse markers or linking words indicate how one piece of discourse is connected to another piece of discourse. He said further that the use of discourse markers shows connection between what has already been written or said and what is going to be written or said or to express attitude.

On the one hand, Wiley (2015) considers the discourse markers to be informal and one of the characteristics of spoken language.

On the other hand, Sun (2018) mentions that discourse markers enable speakers to make their presence felt in the text, to give guidance to the audience as to how the text is organized, what processes are being used to produce it, and what the speaker's intentions and attitudes are regarding the subject matter, the readers, and their text.

Further, discourse markers are words or expressions that link, manage, and help organize sentences. They are also often called linking words; and sometimes, fillers. They are important to make a speech or text flow and avoid a series of short unconnected statements (www.theenglishbureau.com, 2019).

Discourse connectives. These are also called conjunctions, which are used to connect similar or contrasting ideas such as: *so, because, and, but*, and *or*.

In the succeeding lines, the speaker subsequently uses the discourse marker "okay," and the discourse connective "so" in the same sentence.

> *"Okay, so, do you think there is a cohesion and coherence in this paragraph?" (P1, L26-27, p49).*

> *"Okay, so when we say diverse society, the society composed of?" (P3, L270-271, p60).*

Meanwhile, another speaker uses the discourse connective 'hence' in one of his/her statement to show relationship and to connect the dependent and independent phrases.

> *"In this lesson also, you will discover how stories are crafted by Filipino authors in line with their own experiences which call for action even today, hence you experience making a travelogue in doing a panel discussion" (P3, L272-275, p60).*

In the next sentence, the same speaker uses the discourse connective 'and' and the discourse marker 'then' simultaneously.

> *"Okay a blanket, a wet blanket. And then?" (P3, L264, p59).*

In like manner, another speaker uses two discourse connectives (and, while) to show contrasting ideas at the same similarities between the terms coherence and cohesion.

> *"...making them easily understood and while cohesion is a connection of ideas as every sentence levels" (P1, L3-4, p48).*

This usage could have been avoided had the speaker focused on the similarities or differences, and not both. The integration of the four skills in relation to texts is one of the basic tenets of modern language teaching, which depends on the development of the discourse competence in the classroom.

As revealed by Sáez (2016), there is a direct relationship among the three concepts as only through the use of texts can we integrate skills, and only through an integrated, holistic approach to text can we develop the discourse competence in the classroom.

Moreover, Praetorius et al. (2014) concluded that analyzing one's lesson gives a sufficient reliable measure for lesson time, length of classroom discourse, and length of teachers' and students' utterances in globally organized parts of the classroom discourse.

Syntactic Errors Committed by English Teachers in Biliran Division

The syntactic errors committed by most English teachers in Biliran Division were: subject-verb agreement, use of preposition, code-switching, pronunciation, and plurality. These were analyzed, tabulated, and presented in Table 2, followed by corresponding narratives.

Table 2: Syntactic Errors Committed by English Teachers in Biliran Division

Syntactic Errors	f	Rank
1. Subject-verb agreement	4	2
2. Verb tense	1	6
3. Use of preposition	2	4
4. Code-switching	27	1
5. Pronunciation	1	6
6. Use of articles (a, an, the)	1	6
7. Plurality	3	3

As indicated in the table, the most common syntactic errors committed by English Teachers in Biliran Division was the use of code switching, having a frequency of 27 (rank 1); followed by the subject-verb agreement with a frequency 4 (rank 2); plurality (rank 3); the use of preposition (rank 4); and verb tense, pronunciation, and use of articles (a, an, the), being the last (rank 6).

This finding validates the claim of Prejoles' (2007), who reported that students were most deficient in linguistic competence, because of interference of the native language through the distortions in the print and broadcast media they are exposed to, fear of criticism or ridicule by peers, non-reinforcement at home of skills taught in school, and the choice in using the language they are so familiar and at ease with the Cebuano language.

For a more convincing and detailed analysis and description, a narrative presentation follows:

Subject-verb Agreement

> ""*Okay as what I have said <u>coherence</u> <u>are</u> the arrangement of sentences in a logical manner*" (P1, L1-2, p45).

Notice in the first statement how the participant uses 'are' instead of 'is' to refer to the noun 'coherence,' which is singular.

> "*The <u>ideas</u> in your paragraph <u>is</u> arranged from least to most or from the most important to the least important*" (P1, L128-129, p50).

In the second statement, however, the participant uses 'is' instead of 'are' to refer to 'ideas,' which is plural.

> "*You are going to write a letter, assuming that I came from another country and then I am just your <u>friend</u> who <u>are</u> telling you about the blog, the blog that you did okay?*" (P5, L416-418, p63).

In the third statement, another participant uses the verb <u>are</u> instead of <u>is</u> to refer to a 'friend.'

"And then you also <u>have</u>, <u>are</u> going to write a letter about the blog that you made" *(P5, L383-384, p62).*

Here, the participant was confused whether to use 'have' or 'are' after the personal pronoun <u>you.</u>

Verb tense

"...then after that kay late naman sya naniguro siya he <u>get</u> up ready, nag ready na siya for school" (P1, L93-95, p49).

Here, the participant used the verb 'get' (present) instead of 'got' (past)

Use of Preposition

"...let's try to find out if there is cohesion and coherence <u>to</u> this example" (P1, L5, p45).

"...making them easily understood <u>and while</u> cohesion is a connection of ideas [Crosstalk 00:00:25] as every sentence levels" (P1, L3-4, p45).

It can be observed that there was a double use of discourse connectives 'and' and 'while,' instead of using either one of the two.

Code-switching

In the several succeeding statements, the participant was consistently switching codes all throughout the discussion.

"Okay here, be assured, hala ui murag wrong spelling sa akong assured" (P1, L8, p45).

"Arrangement of sentences with ideas okay, be assured of this. May idea naba ana nga first statement? Wala pa diba?" (P1, L12-13, p45).

"Okay, tama diba? Second sentence talked about not wanting to fight, diba? Not wanting to fight" (P1, L16-17, p45).

"Okay wait. Dili normal ang tawong makig away lag way hinungdan diba?" (P1, L21, p46).

"And, however class, they will do so, makig away jud sila when provoked" (P1, L22-23, p46).

"There it is. Okay naa ha, gi arrange ang sentence from… ideas to the same ideas" (P1, L30-31, p46).

"Ha no? Kay unsa nalang kaha tog dili ma organize wa na siyay organization pa lang daan so it is no longer a well written texts kay wa na ang organization" (P1, L34-36, p46).

"In the order in which they happened. Kana bitawng nag arrange ka ug events, o nga mag sunod sunod, the first that happened, followed by the second, the third, the last, ah, the fourth and the last event that happened" (P1, L39-42, p46).

"Now if you are going to write, ikaw ang musuwat, which will you choose to arrange chronologically, unahon from the least to the most or from the most to the least?" (P1, L45-47, p47).

"Kay ang uban gud they are going to start from the least going to the most important but there are also writer that they are going to arrange the ideas in chronological order by starting the most important ting down to the last important ting. Naay writer nga ingon ana" (P1, L47-51, p47).

"Oh naay ingon ana, … my reason is if I were to ask asa ang akong unahon from most to least or from least to most important, I will choose to write starting from the most important to the least important" (P1, L55-58, p47).

"Nganu man? Kung magstart ka class sa the most important thing murag ang imuhang reader ana class ma curious kung unsa jud ang sinugdanan nganung ingon ani man ang nahitabo, diba?" (P1, L58-60, p47).

"Now dili jud ka muondang because it will catch your interest and curiosity nganu nga ingon ani ang nahitabo unsay sinugdanan ani, diba kay wa man ka kahibawog unsay sinugdanan, kay wa man sya nag start sa sinugdanan, nag start man siya sa pinaka importante nga panghitabo down to the least important" (P1, L61-65, p47).

"Wherein, kung ang imung starting kadtong from the least pa gyud down to the most important makasabot naka ug unsa ang dagan sa storya, diba? Have you experienced that?" (P1, L66-68, pp47-48).

"…pero kung kadto ganing complex ang ma una ug kahitabo ma trigger ang imung curiosity nga dili jud ka muondang pag tan aw because you're going to find out why, unsay nahitabo nga mao na ni, ingn ani naman nahitabo so mu dig deep paka until you reach diin siya nag sugod, unsa ang hinungdan diba?" (P1, L69-73, p48).

"Here is an example, this is chronological order, the arrangement of details from the least to the most important or the event that happened, ang primero nga panghitabo, second, third, and fourth" (P1, L75-77, p48).

"But when I got there, diin ni nga there? sa school anu?" (P1, L84-85, p48).

"Wa na napansin nga na late sya kay wa man nakaklase because of the commotion" (P1, L88-89, p48).

"Woke up late, okay ning mata siya late na, dugay nakamata, then after that kay late naman sya naniguro siya he get up ready, nag ready na siya for school" (P1, L93-95, p49).

"In spatial order class the sentences of a paragraph are arranged according to geographical location, diba naa tay geographical location sa history kanang location sa lugar mao man na diba?" (P1, L99-102, p49).

"Nganu kaha? On the top shelf, okay on the top shelf ha that is a spatial order, okay was a three-week old carton of milk, tulo na ka semana nga milk" (P1, L105-107, p49).

"Makasabot ka ug diin sya dapit nabutang ang iyang location, that is what we called spatial order. Diba makahinumdom mog sugoon gani mo sa inyong teacher, day, kindly get my lesson plan below my table, meaning to say toa sa ilawom sa table or kindly put my laptop on top of my table" (P1, L115-119, p50).

"Mao na ni ang akong gi ingon ka ganina class. Kanang you are going to arrange in two ways, from the least to the most important or from the most to the least important" (P1, L124-126, p50).

"Try to find out kung unsa ang gigamit sa writer nga order sa imphatic" (P1, L132-133, p50).

"So hingamit ang writer ug? Emphatic order from least to most important" (P1, L147-148, p51).

"O ihipos ang mga cellphone. Hipos ang mga cellphone. Okay so last Friday, last week, what did you do? What'd I tell you?" (P5, L405-406, p63).

"Why are you confused? Nganung karon pa mo naglibog?" (P5, L414, p63).

Pronunciation

"Da lead, da lead is the introductory part or the first paragraph of the news report" (P2, L152-153).

The participant was not mindful of his/her pronunciation that of saying <u>the lead</u>, he/she said <u>da lead.</u>

Articles (a, an, the)

"…what do we mean by emphatic order class happens when <u>information</u> found in a paragraph is arranged to emphasize certain points depending on the writer's purpose? (P1, L122-124, p50).

In this statement, the article <u>the</u> was supposed to be found before the word <u>information</u>, but it was omitted.

Plurality

"…after looking at the brochures and talking to several salesman" (P1, L131-132, p50).

The participant uses 'salesman' instead of 'salesmen' in reference to the indefinite pronoun 'several.'

"The third paragraphs ahh the succeeding paragraphs are called the details of the news" (P2, L170-171).

"Yes of course we have social responsibilities so what are the different social responsibilities that we have. It cannot be called social if a person is only one <u>it will be in a group</u>" (P2, L217-219).

Based on the given texts, a syntax error is a mistake in using a language that involves organizing words and phrases that do not make sense. In short, syntax tells the speaker/writer how a sentence is worded and structured, which can be misconstrued.

This was verified by Dela Peña (2019), who reported that the level of linguistic and discourse competence of her respondents were moderately satisfactory.

Munro (2013) further emphasized that striving to write good English is not a matter of mere pedantry. For in writing an essay, report, examination, etc., the objective must be to convince the reader of the arguments, with the greatest possible clarity. In achieving this objective, one must appeal to the readers' sympathies like eliciting a favorable impression to maintain the readers' attention and interest in what one has to say. Even if he is reasonably clear in his writing, he is unlikely to maintain the readers' attention and sympathy if his writing is clumsy, ugly, or deficient.

Summary of findings

This study primarily aimed to analyze the discourse competence of teachers in English as Second Language (ESL) Classrooms in Biliran Division.

Specifically, the findings are as follows:

What type of cohesive ties are mostly used by English teachers in Biliran Division? The most common cohesive ties used by the English teachers were: reference (rephrasing, restatement); ellipsis (omission of word/s); substitution (the use of one); discourse markers (the use of alright, so, okay); and discourse connectives (the use of so).

What syntactic errors are committed by English teachers in Biliran Division? The syntactic errors committed by English teachers in Biliran Division are mostly on subject-verb agreement, use of preposition, code-switching, pronunciation, and plurality.

CONCLUSION

Based on the overall observation and analysis of the participants' utterances, the most common cohesive ties used were the discourse markers like: okay, so, and alright. Guided by the Common European Framework (2001), the teachers in Biliran Division were basic users of the English language as far as their ability to manage discourse is concerned.

Nevertheless, the researcher came up with a conclusion that the teachers in English as a Second Language (ESL) Classrooms in Biliran Division used linguistic features as their immediate recourse in times of vocabulary loss and grammar confusion.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings drawn from the study, the following recommendations are offered for consideration:

1. The school administrators may invest and strengthen the language learning development programs for ESL teachers because it is through them that the schools train and develop the minds of the next generation.

2. Teachers are encouraged to keep mastery of the subject matter to avoid stuttering and stammering when he/she runs out of words.

3. Although the use of cohesive devices is allowed in filling the gaps caused by lack of vocabulary, it is still advised to minimize the use of these fillers. Instead, teachers need to familiarize terminologies that are important in a particular lesson/topic.

4. Future researchers may also consider other linguistic features as their study's variables such as: phonemes, morphemes, semantics, and even pragmatics to assess the discourse competence of ESL teachers not only in Biliran Division, but in the region as well.

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