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Put your discourse into some frame, and start not so wildly from my affair.
W.Shakespeare, Hamlet

MEETING MINUTES DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF AN ENGLISH PREPARATORY DEPARTMENT

Abstract

This study aimed at examining the discourse of the meeting minutes of a university preparatory department as the verbal record of a social institution. The focus is on the interaction of the academic staff members and understanding their relations as well as the general communicative characteristics of the academic community. Apart from the content of the written text, the linguistic formulations of the writer, patterns, phrases, repeated speech acts, and the way the author introduces the piece of written work are considered during the analysis process. To gather qualitative data, the weekly reports of the meetings of a preparatory department were used as research instruments. This article deals with teachers' ability to read coherent texts about their subject, comprehend them, and respond accordingly to the mentioned decisions, actions, and announcements provided for them in written form. In regard to their ability to understand the meeting minutes, the goal is to describe the effects of linguistic patterns. In brief, the structure of the communication system and communication components for the appropriate social interaction will be analyzed.

Keywords: discourse, discourse analysis, meeting minutes

BİR İNGİLİZCE HAZIRLIK BÖLÜMÜNÜN TOPLANTI TUTNAKLARININ SÖYLEM ANALİZİ

Öz

Bu çalışma, bir üniversitenin hazırlık bölümündeki toplantı tutanaklarının sosyal bir kurumun sözlü kaydı olarak incelenmesini amaçlamaktadır. Çalışma, akademik personelin etkileşimi ve ilişkileri ile bu akademik topluluğun genel iletişimsel özelliklerini anlama üzerine odaklanmıştır. Yazılı metnin içeriğinin yanı sıra, metnin dilbilimsel formülasyonları, kullanılan kalıplar, cümleler, tekrarlanan söz edimleri ve yazarın eseri takdim şekli analiz sürecinde ele alınır. Bu makalenin amacı, yazılı metinlerde dilin iletişim için nasıl kullanıldığını keşfetmektir. Nitel verileri toplamak için araştırma aracı olarak bir hazırlık bölümünün toplantı tutanakları kullanılmıştır. Bu makale, öğretmenlerin konularıyla ilgili metinleri okuma, anlama ve kendileri için yazılı olarak verilen kararlara, eylemlere ve duyurulara göre davranma becerileriyle ilgilenir. Öğretmenlerin toplantı tutanaklarını anlamlandırma becerileri doğrultusunda amaç, dil kalıplarının etkilerini tanımlamaktır. Özetle iletişim sisteminin yapısı ve uygun bir sosyal etkileşim için gerekli olan iletişim bileşenleri analiz edilecektir.

Anahtar kelimeler: söylem, söylem analizi, toplantı tutanağı

1. INTRODUCTION

Language is an intrinsic part of daily life and it is used to express thoughts for different purposes of communication. In communication, by an immediate context, which is already in our knowledge, people sense the meaning. People who have the common knowledge construct their own context in their communities. The ones who are not included in these groups will just follow the linguistic elements of a discourse, but they cannot get the meaning as the first group of people do (Widdowson, 2007). To enact a particular kind of socially recognized identity, discourse is used as the combination of language and actions, with the way of thinking, believing, and valuing together (Gee, 2001). Halliday's framework of context of situation is the basis of this study as it reflects the structure of a text with its features such as the field, the tenor, and the mode of discourse. In his framework, the field of discourse is referring to what is happening during the social activities that are taking place. The tenor of discourse is about the participants and their relationships, roles, and status. The mode of discourse focuses on the language and its function, organization, and what is being achieved by the text (Halliday&Hasan, 1989:12). In addition, two categories of the Grice's Cooperative Principle provide a background while recording the meeting minutes. The first category Quantity suggests the maxims of quantity information which needs to be 'as informative as is required'. The second one is the category of Manner which deals with how something is said rather than what is said. This category suggests the written document to be 'orderly' and 'brief' to 'avoid ambiguity' and 'obscurity of expression' (Grice, 1975:45-46). The texts which will be examined through Michael Halliday's framework in this paper are the meeting minutes. Since using language means performing actions, and so speech acts are used to display requests, comments, questions, and to inform (Yule, 2006:118). Meeting minutes are performative in this regard and will provide the necessary data for the analysis. The analyst investigates the use of the language in the context like how the discourse

is organized, what the syntactic structures are, and what is emphasized. Rather than looking at what has been said, the way their presentation is the focus.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Majority of people think that communicating information is the main purpose of language, but for James Paul Gee, language supports the performance of social activities, social identities, and human affiliation within a culture, a social group, or in an institution. All institutions enact activities and make them meaningful. Social interactions create the nature and existences of the groups that belong to institutions (Gee, 2001). Linguistic forms can be understood within their context (Duranti&Goodwin, 1992). The groups have their own discourse styles which are formed naturally through their common interactions and activities as they share the same place, time, and knowledge. Discourse analysis explains the use of affective, cognitive, situational, and cultural contexts.

“Discourse” as a word defined as “language beyond the sentences (Yule, 2006:124). Discourse is the language that is produced as the result of an act of communication (Richards&Smith,2002). Discourse analysis extends beyond the sentences and examines the language patterns for the relationship between language and the social contexts it is used in (Celce-Murcin&Olshtain,2000). For Norman Fairclough (2013), discourse is the use of a language and a kind of social practice. It is the analysis of how a text works within sociocultural practices. It is not easy to define but it is a kind of relational research about entities or individuals on social relations. Discourse analysis includes the relations of people who communicate in both oral and written forms. Critical discourse analysis is not only about the discourse, written texts are also included. It also includes textual analysis of discursive elements of social institutions. Apart from being descriptive, it is also normative. It analyzes the social ‘wrongs’ of an institution and contributes how might it be ‘righted’ (Fairclough, 2013: p.7). The linguistic elements cannot be considered without the purposes of the discourse since it is designed to serve for human interactions. In a situation, language is ‘message oriented’ and it provides the details of the information and the text becomes the ‘verbal record of a communicative act’. The analysts need to examine the function of the language in a community because language provides the cultural development as well (Brown&Yule, 1983:1-6).

People use texts to construct actions and relations at the social level, and texts in return construct people by making sense of the meanings and ideas (Lucke 1996:12). According to Fulcher (2010:7), through discourse analysis, social interactions can be understood. For Okot (2007:4) interpreting a text is possible if it is placed within a context of a particular community and situation. For Fairclough, texts have ‘experimental, relational, expressive or connective value’ and the discourse including these features become ‘socially operative’ (Fairclough, 1989:140).

Figure 1. Fairclough's Interpretation model

According to interpretation model of Fairclough, there are six major domains to interpret a text. Four of them deal with the context and the other two deal with the text. 'Surface of utterance' interprets the 'recognizable words, phrases, and sentences which refer to language knowledge of grammar, vocabulary on the left-side column. 'Means of utterance' and 'Local coherence' focus on the meaning of words and their combination to form speech acts. 'Text structure and point' shows the 'repertoire of schemata' that the organization shares. 'Situational context' shows the 'physical situation, properties of participants and the intertextual context which connects the participants to the previously used discourse and the new one in terms of their common experience (Fairclough, 1989:143-145).

For Widdowson (2007) a text is the actual use of language produced for a communicative purpose. As a means of communication, a text is produced by P1 (speaker or writer) that keys the P2 (listener-reader) into a context that is shared. Readers interpret the text that makes sense to them by relating the language to the perceptual context of their knowledge. A text establishes a context and activates it in the reader's mind. The contexts and texts are constructs of reality conceived by a particular group of people that share the same knowledge. They are psychological constructs and represent the state of affairs (Widdowson, 2007:22). According to linguist Henry Widdowson,

The meanings that people make are not only constrained by the language they know but also by the social group or community they belong to. Meanings are socio-cultural constructs of reality (Widdowson, 2007:xv).

When participants communicate in common physical context, they can relate the language and its meaning naturally and make references accordingly because they have the shared knowledge. (Widdowson, 2007:19-21). Assumptions are made according to the cultural context. That is why institutional discourses allow readers to comprehend the social construction of the reality in which it is created.

McGregor suggests some techniques to be used during discourse analysis. One of them is 'topicalisation' that makes the discourse easier because it provides a choice of the sentences and helps the analyst decide where to put them. This affects the reader's understanding and the

se sentences also give information about the power relations. For example, connotations with even a word can have strong meanings. The tone of the text, which means using specific words to convey the degree of authority and certainty, is the ‘modality’ of the text. McGregor (2010:5) Participants’ previous conversations form the common knowledge that is the context. Using the common terms at the workplace is practical. The schemata of the participants provides a convenient framework of understanding among the participants and this is a familiar representation of reality (Widdowson, 2007). Topicalisation and modality can be seen in the written documents of this study. It is easier for the teachers to follow the information that the meeting minutes provide them. The way the information, announcements, and decisions are presented is relevant and appropriate for the target cultural group. The structure of the meeting minutes has its own parts, titles and subtitles.

3.DATA

In this paper, discourse is examined through the meeting minutes of a university preparatory department level meetings which are held on weekly basis by the team leader. They are designed for a particular audience who are the beginner level lecturers of the preparatory school. Participants vary in age, gender, and nationality and they regularly communicate and interact with each other as they share the common work place. After a dialogic process which is mostly about sharing the departmental announcements, reminders, and the issues, these written documents are sent via e-mail to the academic staff including the head, the head deputies, the other team leaders, the testing unit members, and the teaching staff. E-mail is a common form of communication within the department since it is direct, easy, and fast. An e-mail is effective and remains in the inbox until it is purposefully deleted, and so it serves for the discourse purpose of the department effectively.

4.ANALYSIS

The framework of this analysis includes analysis of texts and interactions of an institution. The results gathered from the data collection instruments (meeting minutes) are discussed and the overall view of the study is proposed. The analysis of the discourse starts with looking at the structure of the written document. The meeting minutes that are recorded after each level meetings have a standard template which consists of a logo of the educational institution, its name, and the name of the department. The level of the social group which is the beginner level, number of meeting, time, date, attendees, and absentees are presented at the top of the page. The content of the meeting minutes has headings and sub-headings which are clearly chunked to indicate the argument to the reader. For example, new information is presented in the Announcement part. This is the information that the addressor believes is not known to the addressee. The parts of the written meeting minutes vary according to the needs of that week and are presented as ‘Proceedings’, ‘Announcements’, ‘Actions’, ‘Pacing’, ‘Regulations’, and ‘Others’. Some of these parts may be omitted in some reports since the order and the format is formed in line with the announcements, requirements or decisions of both the department and the staff. The format of the reports is designed according to the topics that are discussed during the staff meeting as McGregor (2010) suggests.

Since it is a business communication document, all meeting minutes follow a formal standard format and a lot of information is provided about the meeting like where, when, and with whom it takes place. There is not a clearly stated opening such as ‘hello’ or ‘good morning’ in the beginning of the report because there is an additional opening in the e-mail which

has the attachment of the meeting minutes. On the contrary, there are two declarative statements to indicate a clear formal closing, 'The meeting adjourned at 14.00.', 'Thank you for your cooperation', followed by the name of the team leader. As a result, all the meeting minutes have conventionalized and recognizable openings and closings as Hatch (1992) believes that in any kind of communication, there has to be ways to begin and to end.

In each discourse context, there are linguistic markers that work together to form meaning. In this discourse, firstly, readers come across with deictic expressions. Hatch says that social deixis is an important part of specific social relations. These expressions linguistically mean 'identification by 'pointing' and indicate social relations and social location of individuals to the others. Pronouns, demonstratives, time and place adverbs, and sometimes tenses are among the deictic terms. (Hatch, 1992, pp.210-221) In almost all meeting minutes, it is very common to come across with deixis, the words or expressions whose reference totally relies on the same situational context. (Fromkin, Rodman, 1974) In a university context, the writer and the readers are all teachers and they share the same circumstances and context. In the following sentences 'Friday', 'next Wednesday', 'Thursday', '15:15', are temporal or time deixis. The recipients know these specific times. Pronoun 'we' used as person deixis. Teachers know the people or the group who will have the party. The demonstrative 'this' as a spatial deixis refer to the location of participants. Lastly, meeting minutes include social deixis which code social relations between speakers and addressees. Lexical items such as 'teacher' are relational deictic terms and they code specific social relations. 'Main Course teachers' and 'team leader' are the deictics that present the social roles in the sentences. Deictic terms require common knowledge and they make communication easier and practical for the people who work together. Here are the example sentences from the meeting minutes which exemplify the deixis.

- a) Friday is the last day of the book sale at school.
- b) We will have a New Year's party next Wednesday.
- c) There will be a procedure meeting on Thursday, at 15:15.
- d) For the parking lot in this campus, the forms are delivered.
- e) Prepare a short CV and send it to your team leader.
- f) Main Course teachers need to write the grades for the Reader quiz.

According to Levinson (1983), the substitutions are used as deictic markers as well. Substitutions refer to 'a class of items'. (Hatch, 1992, p.224) In the sentence, '*You can find the note-taking materials in the files-the blue ones,*' the substitute 'ones' is used not for the files but for the blue files class only. Another cohesive tie Hatch (1992) states is conjunctions which help to understand the relation of the two clauses.

a) Ss are hanging some advertisements, announcements or notices around the school. However, they need to get approval first.

b) Inform students that they can only smoke in the garden otherwise disciplinary actions will be taken.

In the sentences above, 'however', and 'otherwise' conjunctions are used to connect the clause and make the relation meaningful. Deictic terms and cohesive devices provide coherent piece of work for a better understanding.

According to Widdowson (2007), common knowledge is the context that is established in the participants' previous conversations. That is why the terminology of ELT as being part of their profession is frequently used since it is familiar for the recipients. The place where the

written document is produced is the same with where it is read and interpreted. Rather than being vague and meaningless, it is practical to use these terms at the workplace because of the schematic knowledge that operates among the P1 and P2. To illustrate, 'speaking pacing', 'listening pacing', 'remedials', 'peer observations', 'skill-based', 'refer to', 'PE', 'Ts', are some of the words used in the following sentences to function as scheme activators. They are familiar and customary to a certain group of people who are teaching English at a preparatory school.

- a) Speaking pacing should follow the Listening pacing.
- b) For the new students, you can start remedials.
- c) Peer observations will start and they will be skill-based.
- d) Do not forget to do 'refer to' exercises please.
- e) Students are being called by the PE teachers frequently. Ts want to receive a note from them.

This frame of reference enables teachers to interact with each other, interprets the situations better and responds accordingly. For example, in the following sentences, although it is not clearly stated, all teachers know what to assign on week 13, in the first sentence. It is the Stage 1 level books. Likewise, in the second sentence, the teachers again know where to get their materials in the B block.

- a) Reader's presentations are on week 13. Please start to assign in the following week.
- b) To get board markers and papers, you can go to B block.

Furthermore, some discourse is telegraphic in which verb clauses, direct objects, or pronouns are left out. Yet understanding still occurs since contextual knowledge fills in the missing parts and makes the discourse cohere. Therefore, in the following structures the writer prefers short forms for emphasis. For instance, exam or quiz schedules are announced as without repeating the words 'exam' or 'quiz'.

- a) Midterm II: 28 Jan.2015 Wed.
Week 5: Writing
Week 6: Main Course
Week 7: Reading
Week 8: off

Other reminders are also written without verbs or pronouns. There is no standard English sentences in this reminders part because they are short and to the point. For the busy teachers, it is easier to follow these kind of structures in a work place.

- a) No block class hours
- b) Workshop: 8th April 2015.
- c) Thr-Fri: no classes

In the Pacing part of the report, the last unit studied is stated briefly to inform the testing unit as well as the colleagues. From the following statements, it can be understood that, all teachers have their course schedules and plans. When the word 'behind' is used, it means that some teachers have not kept up with their pacing. They need to be more organized and speed up. The Pacing part is mainly used for warning or taking measures for pacing of the following week.

MC: Unit 3 (distribution is from 3B to 3C)

R&W: Few classes are a bit behind.

L&S: Classes are on track.

In the Pacing part, other details are provided as the following. So writer did not need to over-textualize the language because the short structures are very clear to P2 as they are already the common knowledge for the whole staff.

MC: Culture page is omitted.

L&S: Few presentations are left.

R&W: Portfolio deadline: 8th May 2015

In most sentences in a language, writer's expressions are not just referring to the state of affairs but also can be considered as a warning. By using such expressions, the writer also acts on the readers and tries to reassure or persuade them to act in a certain way which is provided by using the directives. Imperatives which are one of the types of directives for Ervin-Tripp (1972) stated in Hatch (1992) and are used among 'familiar equals'. Imperatives as directives are 'speech act labels' for requests that the addressee will or will not do the thing that is requested. (Hatch, 1992, p.122) Writer attempts to get the reader to do something or stop doing something. In the following examples, the writer uses imperatives to make teachers do or quit something doing.

- a) Do not let students leave the class early.
- b) Do not forget to give the codes of the skill books to students.
- c) Use the updated lists for grading.
- d) Hand in your remedial sheets.

In the first sentence, the writer instructs teachers to stop letting students leave class early since the noise causes a disturbance for other classes. The second sentence is an instruction to give book codes to students since there are still students without codes and this situation has an adverse effect on learning. In the third sentence, the writer wants teachers to use the newly given lists since they are still using the old versions which cause problems. In the last sentence, writer wants the remedial sheets that teachers are supposed to bring but have not done yet. By using the ELT terminology, telegraphic phrases, sentences without verbs or pronouns, imperatives and short structures, Quantity and Manner maxims of Grice's Cooperative Principle which were previously mentioned in the Introduction part of this paper, are applied in the meeting minutes. All these statements are brief but informative enough.

In the Announcement part, there are lots of sentences with different intentions. There are syntactic features that change the literal meaning and make the readers realize the pragmatic meanings. Much of the data presented in this paper provides the background information about the prep school as Grice (1975, p.44) points out '*what is said*' and '*what is implied*' are the two implicatures of an utterance. By the indirect requests of the writer, the readers interpret the intended messages.

- a) Check your office phones to see the missed calls, please.
- b) Please, check your e-mails frequently.

As readers, we can understand that there is a tele-communication problem within the staff. The head of department warns all teachers to be more tune into.

Another example is an official warning is done just for the specific group of teachers. If they do not follow the regulations about their passports, they may run into problems with officialdom within the country.

- c) Dear foreign teachers, validity of your passport need to be at least 60 days.

In the sentence below, this time teachers seem to have misused the shared materials. Teachers are warned to be more careful.

d) After using the revision materials, please put each material and the answer key in their original sheet protector. Otherwise, it is confusing for the other teachers.

The next sentence reveals another problem in the teaching process. Teachers are not teaching what they are supposed to teach.

e) In Reading classes do not teach grammar, please.

Giving information is another purpose of the Announcement part. Teachers are informed about the details of the schedule and exams as well as the weekly events.

a) Week 5 is the preparation week for the L&S classes. First Graded Presentations are on week 6.

b) Unit 4 will not be in the Main Course exam.

c) There will be grammar and vocabulary sections in the Main Course exam.

d) Foreign teachers do not need to attend the Academic Meeting.

Lastly, school rules are clearly stated in the Announcement part.

a) There won't be any explanations during the exams about the instructions either in English or Turkish.

b) After the quizzes, teachers have a week for correction.

c) Ss will not be informed about the day or the class hour of the quizzes.

d) Ts announce their office rooms and office hours to students.

Adding more verbs has a central role both in the meaning and structure of most sentences in all languages. In written English especially, verbs are necessary to form a complete sentence. (Fromkin, Rodman, 1974) In the meeting minutes, the writer chooses strong verbs with strong connotations to enhance the meaning of sentences. It is observed that modal verbs 'have to', 'must', 'need to', 'should' are frequently used to reveal the intended meanings beyond. Other grammatical aspects such as 'are to', or imperatives as already mentioned such as 'remind', 'make', create strong structures. To exemplify, here are some of the sentences with strong verbs from the written document.

a) MC Ts have to remind the students of the remedials. It is a must to follow them. Ts need to force the Ss to attend the remedials.

b) Speaking teachers should definitely start doing speaking practices like speaking exam during the revision weeks.

c) 3 drafts should be finished before the 4th midterm.

d) Remedial Ts are to come together to plan their schedule for the remedials each week.

e) Remind the activities to students. Make them check the notice boards frequently.

In the first sentence, students seem not to follow the additional course that was designed for them. The department warns teachers to take responsibility and to follow this issue from now on strictly. In the second sentence, it is clear that the teachers have not started practicing the target activity yet and they are running out of time. In the third sentence, draft studies are already being late and exams dates are too close. In the forth sentence, it is urgent for teachers to come together for the preparations. In the last sentence, students are not following the activities and do not participate which cause disturbance in school. The sentences are formed by modals which are formal usages and sense of warning is felt directly in each case. The intended messa-

ge is expressed or denoted syntactically in many different ways. Likewise, the passive constructions are frequently and noticeable used in these formal reports.

- a) Students Information System is activated.
- b) Online passwords have arrived.
- c) Video observation forms are sent.

A lot of language styles and varieties are used for different purposes in different parts of the written document. Since written forms do not have intonation, writers assign intonation structures by nominal expressions. So the text will be reproduced by the typographical varieties such as the usage of punctuation, lineation and capitalizing because the structures with the stress always convey the new information. (Brown&Yule, 1983) These variations have additional meanings on the original text and reveals the intention of the writer. In the meeting minutes, to emphasize the important words, dates, or information, the writer underlines that part or use the bold size and bigger font. The words or phrases are capitalized or underlined for particular purposes. They also show the stress pattern of the discourse organization.

- a) Please give the individual remedial attendance sheet to your team leaders this week.
- b) Week 9: Midterm (date has changed)
- c) **11 Nov.2013** is our first workshop date.
- d) Do NOT forget to skip the units that are not in the programme.

Another point is, the word 'department' is mostly used as a metonym that is the word used for another one. In this context 'department' refers to the management of the prep school, namely the head and the head deputies. From the examples below, all the staff members know that they can get the passwords and the forms from these people who are in charge of delivering them.

- a) Teachers without password can get one from the department.
- b) There will be a form provided by the department.

The other distinctive aspect of the meeting reports is repetitively used statements. For instance, 'Thank you for the substitutions', implies appreciation. All teachers are familiar with this sentence because for various reasons such as attending conferences or mainly sickness, they are replaced to teach for others. The team leader is aware that the teachers are very busy and additional work can be demotivating for them. Therefore, the team leader thanks to them in spoken language at first and in written form afterward. 'Thank you for the substitutions', and 'Thank you for your cooperation', are reflecting the social function of complimenting. The writer expresses thanks to strengthen and encourage good performance as well as to motivate participants. Another repetitively used sentence is, 'At the break times, please try to check the fire exits since Ss have attempted to smoke in those areas.' It seems to be a complicated issue for the school as the warning was written in most of the meeting minutes. It is obvious that smoking problem could not be overcome in the first week after the first announcement was made. It is observed that, as long as the rule is not applied efficiently, the writer will repeat the same reminding in each meeting and in each meeting minutes. In the Action or Announcements parts that are used as reminders, the writer uses the word 'please' as a felicity condition regarding the appropriateness of the request, either in the beginning or at the end of the sentence to avoid any possible misunderstandings. The staff members might think that the team leader is ordering them if 'please' is not used. So usage of a word changes the whole understanding and enhances the group communication. The word 'please' softens the statements and has a positive effect on

the readers. They do not feel pressured by the team leader. The team leader tries to make the requests without being an authoritative figure and this will enhance the relationship of the teaching staff. These kind of word choices that convey pragmatic meanings of a request also implies acceptance of polite manners at all times. Polite utterances are important to form meaningful and trustworthy environments and make people feel valued. The function of complimenting is to reinforce the acceptable performance of the teachers.

Lastly, prep department makes its announcements at first and then teachers' concerns or suggestions are asked and these are written in the 'Others' part of the report. The meeting minutes allow teachers to reflect and share their ideas with the prep department. They comment on the exam results, student profile and their success. 'Although grammar mistakes were ignored, the average is still low.', 'Ts agreed that it was their first exam so the results are satisfactory enough.', 'Ss' interest is getting lower in MC.' In addition, they may have suggestions for the following actions. 'A/B grouping system was suggested for the tests.', 'Using erasable pens while numbering is suggested.' They may also want to be informed about some regulations of school such as its system or holidays. 'Ts want to get information about the vacation days.', 'After the Advisory reports, teachers would like to have a report back about the subjects mentioned by the students. 'Speaking teachers would like to get some information about the grammar topics that are presented in classes before the midterm.'. In the 'Action' part of the meeting minutes teachers make new decisions about the educational issues. 'Some online websites and books were recommended.', 'Ts decided to do more listening practices.', 'Ts agreed that first portfolios will be written in the class with 100 words.' As a result, the language is being used to build communication in the whole school. This analysis required attention to textual organization, grammatical, and lexical structures. As a result, discourses are produced within specific contexts that belong to a specific group of people and cannot be understood apart from them.

5. CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to explore the discourse of a written language that is used within a specific social group. The present study aims to show the useful aspects of discourse analysis and create awareness for analysing different discourse types in various social contexts. The goal of this study was to define language attitudes of English teachers as well. The participants have the same profession. They all teach English in a higher education institution. Their schema which is a construct of familiar knowledge does not differ. In the written document, keying the language into a suitable frame of reference in order to make sense of the text comes so naturally to the members of a group that they take it for granted, and it is easy to deduce the meaning from text itself by the schematic inference. Therefore, it is observed that the communication does not come unexpectedly. The participants engage themselves easily and the written reports become customary or familiar to the staff. Teachers construct meaning on the basis of their previous experiences with the texts.

This study has lexical and pragmatic analysis. The meeting minutes projects the background information about the university and its academicians. They serve as a dynamic means of communication expressing the intended message of the writer and the department. The reports are pragmatic and their language is grammatically and lexically well formed. All the discourse resources often have recurrent statements and wordings. The wording of the written reports is appropriate to the recipients and to their environment. Texts with their consistent common structures are well-remembered and easy to recognized for the readers and well-formed as the writer uses familiar schemata of the cultural group she is addressing to. In addition, the structu-

ral analysis shows the texts conform the schematic expectations of the cultural group that organizes and integrates the purposes of the educational department.

To conclude, according to findings of contextual analysis, the writer uses linguistic signals carefully to promote cohesion. The writing style of the meeting minutes shows what the writer wants to say directly because there are prosodic features such as intonation, stressed words or verbs, and pitch both in the sentences and in the phrases which are also essential in the spoken language for communication. The planned format and the features of the writing make the written text more comprehensible to the reader. The written documents successfully introduce the topics, provide the necessary information, point the focus, and overall convey the message to the recipients. From the written documents of the institution, it is clear to understand the way how the staff creates and produces its identity. The documents are the institutional memory records. The findings of this study indicate that observing the discourse analysis of the departmental meetings would be beneficial both for the ELT teachers and the department. The analysis enhance the communication of the teachers and their relation to the department.

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