

CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Language is the only unique endowment from God to humans, which makes us totally different from other creatures. Though, these other creatures have a language, yet they do not communicate exactly the same way as humans do.

Discourse, an aspect of language, to the discourse analysts, means actual instances of communicative action, using language. Discourse is not absolutely focused on language as an abstract system. It is seen as linguistic communication involving transaction between a speaker and hearer in an interpersonal activity in which its form is determined by its social purpose.

Discourse can be in the form of conversation, it may also be in written or spoken form. Discourse for instance, deals with spoken language, which occurs naturally, such as interviews, conversations, speeches and commentaries. Examples of written discourse include essays, chapters in a book, road signs and notices, etc. Discourse analysis on the other hand is a systematic examination of discourse focusing on the constituent units and structures of sentences of specific texts that is, grammatical relations such as subject-verb-object, up to the level of text.

Conversation, another type of discourse, as has been mentioned in this section is an example of discourse. Conversation generally involves an exchange between two or more people in which each participant may produce more than one utterance and each contribution builds upon previous contributions either directly or indirectly.

Dramatic texts are made up of conversations, more technically referred to as dialogues. This research will study some of the conversations in *Midnight Hotel* by Femi Osofisan to show its relevance to culture, and religion. In achieving this, discourse tools like role-sharing, adjacency pairs, discourse markers, presupposition, implicature and most importantly, context will be used to achieve a coherent discourse analysis of the dramatic text.

1.2 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

This research primarily aims to investigate the discourse features in Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*. Its objectives are:

- To give a clear picture of how discourse analyses can be used in the interpretation of texts.
- To show that conversations need to conform to the context of the interaction.
- To bring to the awareness of the keen observer, the pattern of conversations.
- To give a sound knowledge of such techniques on which effective conversation can be built.

1.3 JUSTIFICATION

To the best knowledge of the researcher Discourse Analysis as a theoretical construct has not been used in analyzing *Midnight Hotel* by Femi Osofisan. The researcher came across only two researches carried out on the proposed play. They are "Satire as a Social Art

The Comparative Study of Ola Rotimi's *Our Husband Has Gone Mad Again* and Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*" Obuh, S. (2007) and "The Moral, Social, and Political Decadence in the Nigerian Society: A Case Study of Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*" (Rufus, G. (2013). Neither of these two deals with the specific focus of this research work. This study is therefore justifiable as it seeks to investigate the social, political, cultural issues that are inherent in the text. It is also believed that the study will be an additional work in the study of

Discourse Analysis, especially at the undergraduate level.

1.4 SCOPE AND DELIMITATION OF STUDY

This research is centered with analysing the discourse features in Femi Osofisan's *Midnight Hotel*. The analysis will be limited to the Elements of Discourse Analysis such as discourse topic, participants, turn-taking, adjacency pairs, discourse interruption, and role-sharing. There are several approaches to discourse analysis but the researcher will employ the use of some Pragmatic concepts of Discourse Analysis such as Context (linguistic, socio-cultural, physical, psychological), presupposition, inference, implicature.

1.5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study is a discourse analysis of *Midnight Hotel* by Femi Osofisan; it belongs to the genre of drama. The text has a total of 331 exchanges. A random sampling was conducted and every 22nd exchange was chosen, starting from the 2nd exchange to the 24th, and it went on till the 331st exchange. This makes a total of fifteen (15) exchanges. This selection is appropriate as it is unbiased, and it is considered effective for the purpose of accessibility, thematic coverage, and for comprehensive data analysis.

The data analysis will be presented in an exchange structure format. An analysis will be carried out on each of the fifteen (15) data to allow for easy readability and comprehension.

INVESTIGATION INTO THE DISCOURSE FEATURES IN FEMI OSOFISAN'S MIDNIGHT HOTEL

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