

AN INTERPRETATIVE ANALYSIS OF MOOD IN CAREER DISCOURSE OF SELECTED NIGERIAN STUDENTS

KALEJAIYE ABIOLA

abiolakalejaiye@gmail.com

07067011470

ABSTRACT

Many recent linguistic researches have studied varieties of spoken discourses such as: teacher-student discourse, buyer- seller discourse, doctor-patient discourse etcetera. Some of these studies have reported that spoken discourse is: ephemeral, fragmentary, takes place in real time, structured and prone to systematic study. However, much attention has not been focused on career discourse as a genre. Also, the influence of mood of interlocutors on discourse patterns has been undermined. Therefore, this paper investigated the influence of on career choices of secondary and that tertiary students

Using corpus of career discourses of selected senior secondary students (Babcock University High School students) and Taiye Solarin University of Education, the study interprets the moods of the interlocutors about studying English or Literary studies. with a view to establishing that the future of English and Literary Studies in Africa Universities can be inferred from the mood and attitudes of the students.

The study reveals among other facts, that the mood of students moods motivate their career discourse patterns and equally motivate the choices of courses they study in the university. On the whole, the study concludes that the future of African education is dependent on the kinds of moods, disposition and attitudes that African students have towards their courses of study. Similarly, the mood of students determines the quality of education they acquire and in turn the future of education in Africa.

On the premise of the findings, the study recommends that since mood expresses an opinion or attitude of mind of the speaker towards a proposition like education, educators and facilitators of education in Africa and in this particular case, teachers of English Language and Literature should stimulate and motivate their students as early as possible by revealing the benefits they stand to gain from studying English Language and Literary Studies. Parents and guardians should not compel their wards to study courses that they do not have keen interest for. Also, school administrators should employ teachers and lecturers who have avid interest for the courses they teach. Lastly, school administrators should motivate lecturers in order to boost their morale and sense of commitment to duty.

Key words: Mood Analysis, Education, Discourse, spoken discourse, English Studies, English Language, Literary Studies.

Word Count: 425.

1.0.Introduction

Introduction

Mood is a human phenomenon which in no small measure affects a wide range of choices and decisions people make. Among several other concepts that mood influences is career discourse and career choices students make. The feelings and dispositions students have towards their career tend to be sensitive to a particular class of inputs such as: parental influence, age, ambition, media, tutor's influence, fear, pain, income etcetera the courses. Hence, this study investigated the influence of some the aforementioned inputs on the mood of selected Nigerian student with the aim of exploring the overall effect on their desire the study of literary and language study in Nigeria.

Definition of Mood

The concept 'mood' has been variously defined in various disciplines. This ranges from art, social and science disciplines. However, for the purpose of this study, three disciplines are considered. They are: literature, psychology and linguistics. The word 'mood' ordinarily denotes 'feelings'. Thus, there is the mood of joy, sorrow, anger, and singing, crying etcetera. According to [Your Dictionary.com](http://YourDictionary.com) the word 'mood' is a Middle English word that emanated from the Old English lexicon 'mod' which denotes 'mind' or 'soul'. Two synonyms that are closely related to the German word 'mut' which means: mental disposition, spirit, and courage. In the same vein, [Free Dictionary.com](http://FreeDictionary.com), defines mood as: 'a particular state of mind or emotion or pervading impression of an observer'.

Literary Perspective of Mood

From a literary standpoint, mood is a literary device and it refers to a definitive stance the author adopts in shaping a specific emotional perspective towards the subject of the literary work ([Literary Devices .Com](http://LiteraryDevices.Com)). Thus, the mood evoked in a literary work could be that of surprise, disappointment, hope, nostalgia etcetera.

Mood: Systemic Grammar Model

A review of Osisanwo (2008:20) Systemic Grammar account of mood reveals that system of mood as one of the choices made by a speaker with regards to the presence or absence of subject. The system of mood accounts for the position of a subject, whether it is positioned before or within the predicator; where it is absent, whether or not the speaker is one of the participants of the action in the speech act.

Expounding the indicative and imperative components of the mood system, Osisanwo indicates that the indicative mood consists of declarative and interrogative mood.

From the above diagram, the declarative mood makes statements. On the other hand, the interrogative mood entails asking questions which may either be in the WH format or otherwise.

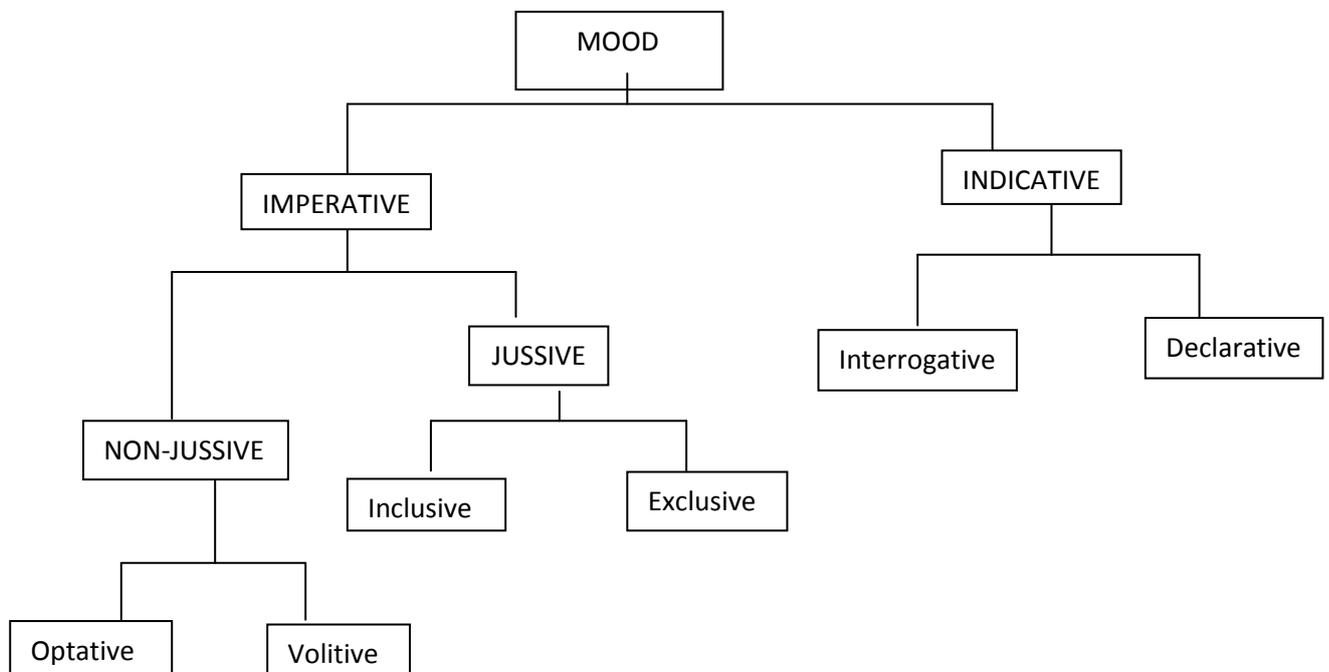
On the other hand, the imperative mood issues out command or order. The imperative mood unlike the indicative mood has 'no subject'. For instance, the imperative utterance 'shut up'. This example has no subject. Nonetheless, the imperative mood requires a performer, that is, someone to carry out the command produced. The performer of the command could be the listener as found in example 'Keep quiet'. Otherwise, the performer could be a third party who might not even be present as at the time the speaker gives out the command.

An example is: She must pay the fees.

The two examples above consists two different types of imperatives. Example 1 is an instance of imperative jussive – because the listener is the performer of the action. On the other hand, example 2 is non jussive imperative – because neither the speaker nor the listener is the performer of the action. From the foregoing, the jussive mood can include the speaker

or exclude the speaker. Hence, the jussive mood divides into two types. This includes: jussive inclusive or jussive exclusive.

The non-jussive mood as noted earlier is one in which neither the speaker nor the listener is involved in the action. This mood type divides into two. The first type is tagged optative one in which the listener and the speaker opt out as in the expression- ‘let them keep quiet.’ However the second type is such a one that involves an unseen performer or power in utterances this is tagged volitive. According to Osisanwo (1999:75), this makes the expression wishful or prayerful. The incorporation of the 4 off shorts of the two major types of mood is given thus:



Adapted from Osisanwo 2003

Studies on Mood

Osisanwo (2006) studied how the ESL users of English perceive the attitudinal use of intonation. The study adopted quantitative analysis: A test on intonation was administered to fifty-one freshmen admitted to study B.A in English degree of the Obafemi Awolowo University Ile-Ife. The candidates were required to listen and respond to a audio record of C.

Gimson's record titled *Practical Course of English Pronunciation*. The study shows that ESL users of English have difficulty in perceiving correctly its use to underscore the speakers' mood. The study strongly recommends that oral English component of the English Language programme at primary and secondary levels should pay adequate attention to both productive and receptive skills of the English Language

Framework of Analysis

The framework of our analysis is Correl and Liard (1962)'s mood classification. This classification is traditional grammar model. It was preferred for the framing of the questionnaire as well as used as the framework of the analysis of the study because of its inclusion and identification of conditional and subjunctive mood which other models did not account for.

Correl and Liard (1962)'s model of mood identifies five mood types in English and these are presented below with examples.

The Indicative Mood

The indicative mood is the mood of actuality, reality, the mood of certainty. In fact, it is perceived as the mood that expresses highest degree of actualization as it is believed to express highest level of definitive accomplishment (Ajiboye, 2006).

The Conditional Mood

This mood unlike the indicative mood expresses 'veiled doubt of mitigated uncertainty' (Ajiboye, 2006:51). This mood states condition under which verb in the main clause can be actualized or find fulfilment .In pragmatic terms the conditional mood gives felicity condition that must be meant by the hearer or performer of an action. Examples include:

- (a) If you pass your exam, I will buy a car for you.
- (b) They will make it if they work hard.

The Interrogative Mood

This mood type asks questions

The imperative mood

The imperative mood issues a command. This means it enables the speaker to issue instructions, offer advice, make supplications and formulate hypotheses.

- (a) Keep quiet (c) You must not go there again
- (b) Kill it. (d) Father forgive them
- (e) The court of appeal has no right to award general damages

The Subjunctive Mood

The subjunctive mood states a situation of uncertainty, desires and supposition. There are three types of these and are illustrated below:

- (a) Long live Africa. (present subjunctive mood)
- (b) I wish I were the president. (past subjunctive mood)
- (c) I wish I had revealed the truth (Past perfect Subjunctive mood)

METHODOLOGY

The main objective of the research being reported here was to find out the mood, or attitude of mind of the selected Nigerian students towards their academic career and to investigate the factors responsible for the choices they make. On the whole, the study seeks to establish how all of these affect their choice of career and the future of English language and Literary Studies in Nigeria.

The research employed quantitative descriptive method, the questionnaire served as the instrument of gathering the data for the study. The sampling population for the questionnaire consists of 100 randomly selected students consisting of fifty S.S.S.2 and S.S.S.3 secondary students and fifty three hundred and four hundred level students of TASUED. The selection of these classes was because in the researcher's opinion, students in these classes are considered to have started getting conscious of their choices of career.

In order to have a defined model for the investigation, the researcher adopted Liard mood classification which includes: indicative mood, suppositive mood, conditional mood, imperative mood and. Two sentences each were designed for each type of the five moods types recommended by Liard. Thus, the questionnaire contained ten sentences reflecting the students' mood types or attitudes to language or literary studies.

Method of Data Analysis.

The data were subjected to SPSS 17.0 analysis for Simple percentile analysis and the results were tabulated and discussed.

Objective:

The main objective of the research being reported here was to find out mood or attitude of mind of the selected Nigerian students towards their academic career and to investigate the factors responsible for the choices they make.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

- 1: To what extent do the selected secondary school students and tertiary students show interest in English language and Literature as school subjects?**
- 2. What percentage of the selected secondary school students intend to study English language and literature in the University and to what extent are they determined to study either English language or literature in the University?**
- 4. What factors affect the moods of the selected secondary students?**

Research Question 1a: To what extent do the selected secondary school students and interest in English language and literature as school subjects?

Table 1: Result on the Interest of the selected secondary school students in English language and literature.

Items/Statement	SA	A	D	SD
English Language and Literature are my best courses	6 (12)	24(48)	16(32)	4(8)

From table 1 above, 6 (12%) of the secondary school students strongly agreed that English Language and Literature are their best courses, while 24(48%) simply agreed, but 16(32%) disagreed with the assertion while 4(8%) strongly disagreed with the indicative mood. This result reveals that 60% of the respondents enjoy English Language and literature as school subjects.

Research Question 2a. What percentage of the selected secondary school students intend to study English language and literature in the University and to what extent are they determined to study either English language or literature in the University?

Table 2: Intention to study English Language and Literature

	SA	A	D	SD
I intend to study English Language or Literary Studies in the university	2(4)	15 ((30)	22 (44)	11 (22)

Table 2 reveals that four percent (4%) strongly agree to study English Language or Literary Studies in the university, thirty percent simply agreed while forty four percent (44%) disagree and twenty (22%) strongly disagreed with the declaration. The result indicates that only thirty four percent (34%) of the respondents intend to study either English language or literature in the University.

Research Question 2b: How determined are the secondary school students to study either English language or literature in the University?

Table 3: Determination to study English language or literature

	SA	A	D	SD
I must not study any other course other than literary studies and English Studies	1 (2)	5 ((10)	26 (52)	18 (36)

From table three above, it is revealed that two percent of the respondents strongly agree to study English language in the University; five percent (5%) simply agreed to the declaration while fifty two percent (52%) disagreed and thirty six percent (36%) strongly disagreed. We may deduce that majority of the respondents are not determined to study either English language or Literature.

Research Question 3: What factors impinge greatly on the moods of the selected secondary students?

Table 4: Factors that affected the respondents' moods

	SA	A	D	SD
I must study the course my parents choose for me		1 (2)	12 (24)	37 (72)
If I do not have my English language or literature at the first sitting I will study another course apart from English or Literary Studies	5 (10)	21 (42)	17 (34)	7 (14)
If I am not offered admission for my desired course i may revert to studying language or literature	3 (6)	20(40)	18 (36)	9 (18)
I wish I were a science or commercial student	1 (2)	2(4)	13 (26)	36 (68)
I wish to become a linguist or literary scholar in the future	5 (10)	12 (24)	23 (46)	10 (20)
Do you think English and literary studies graduates are well placed in the society	7 (14)	21 (42)	15 (30)	7 (14)
Do you admire your language and literature teachers	9 (18)	22(44)	9 (18)	10 (20)

From table 4 above the researcher investigated seven inputs that could have affected the students' mood. The inputs are parental influence, failure, chance of admission, desire, prestige and admiration. Parental influence was the least influence as ninety six percent (96%) of the respondents with 74% who strongly disagreed and twenty four (24%) who simply disagreed with the fact that they must study the courses their parents choose for them. The result obviously reveals that the respondents would on their own volition decide the courses t to study in the university. The second highest disputed influence is the desire to either be a science or a commercial student, sixty eight percent (68%) of the respondents strongly disputed the fact and (38%) simply disagreed while (4%) and (2%) admitted they wish they had registered as science or commercial students . This means majority of the students deliberately chose to be in the Art department. The last highly disputed factor was the desire to become a linguist /literary scholar (66%) of the respondents disagreed while

only 34% agreed to be linguists and literary scholars. This result shows that as far as the students are concerned linguists and literary experts are not highly rated on the social stratum.

However, the other five factors investigated appeared to have great influence on the respondents. The first input of undeniable influence was admiration for subject teacher. (18%) of the respondents strongly agreed they admire their subject teachers and (44%) simply agreed while, (18%) simply disagreed and (10%) strongly disagreed. This means the personality of the subject teacher affects the state of mind of the students on carrier choice. Next to this is prestige accorded English graduates in the society. Fifty six percent (56%) of the respondents agreed with the fact that English graduates are well placed in the society, while forty four percent (44%) disagreed with the proposition. Opportunity to gain admission is another key factor that affects the mood of the respondents-(52%) agreed that if they do not get admission for either of the two courses they will opt for another, while (48%) disagreed with the conditional mood.

This point is closely followed by opportunity of admission, fifty two percent (52%) who agreed to the fact that they would forego studying both English language and Literature if they are not offered quick admission. The implicated meaning here is that the desire to gain quick admission greatly influences students' career choices. On the other hand, (48%) claimed they cannot be distracted by this factor as they would wait until the opportunity to study English Language or Literature becomes feasible. The implicated deduction from the foregoing is that there are more students studying undesired courses than those studying their desired courses

Summary of Findings.

This paper investigated the moods of selected secondary school students of Babcock University High School and the influence of the students' mood on their choices of career. It

discovered that the selected students perceive English language and Literature as interesting subjects nonetheless majority of the students are not determined to study either of the two courses. Among the seven inputs investigated, the findings of the study revealed that the students' impression/perception of their teachers to a large extent affects their moods and then desperation to gain admission into the university.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The moods of students is reflected in their career choices.

The study recommends that since mood expresses an opinion or attitude of mind of the speaker towards a proposition like education, educators and facilitators of education in Africa and in this particular case, teachers of English Language and Literature should stimulate and motivate their students as early as possible by revealing the benefits they stand to gain from studying English Language and Literary Studies. Parents and guardians should not compel their wards to study courses that they do not have keen interest for. Also, school administrators should employ teachers and lecturers who have avid interest for the courses they teach. Lastly, school administrators should motivate lecturers in order to boost their morale and sense of commitment to duty.

References

Correl, R.M & Laird. C (1962) *Modern English Handbook*. Englewood Cliffs: Prince-Hall S Inc.

Lyons, J (Ed) (1983) *New Horizons in Linguistics*. London: Penguin Books

Morris, William N. Kahneman, Daniel (Ed); Diener, Ed (Ed); Schwarz, Norbert (Ed), (1999). The Mood System. *Well-being: The foundations of hedonic psychology*. , (pp. 169-189). New York, NY, US: Russell Sage Foundation, xii, 593 pp.

Osisanwo, W. (2008). *An Introductory Analytical Grammar of English*. Lagos: Femolous –Fetop Publishers.

_____ (2006) The Aural Perception of verbal Expression of Mood in an English As a Second Language Situation in Ajiboye, T & Osisanwo, W (ed) *Mood in Language and Literature* pp1-13. Lagos: Femolous –Fetop Publishers.