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CATEGORIES OF DISCOURSE MARKERS USED IN GICHUKA SPEECH

Dr. Christine Atieno Peter
Chuka University
P.O BOX 109-60400, Chuka –Kenya

Ms. Elsie Njeri Kirimo
P.O BOX 84-60400, Chuka-Kenya

ABSTRACT

Discourse markers are linguistic items that are frequently used in the course of daily communication. These are not only connecting words that contribute to cohesion of discourse but are also crucial tools for achieving intended communicative purposes in the course of discourse. Studies have been carried out on discourse markers as used in other languages of the world but since every linguistic variety is unique and culture dependent, it is not obvious that these linguistic items are similar in all languages. The goal of this article is to provide an analysis of Gichuka discourse markers. The objective is to categorize discourse markers in Gichuka speeches. The article is guided by the Relevance Theory by Sperber and Wilson. It utilizes qualitative research technique and it was carried out in Chuka, Meru South Sub County, Tharaka-Nithi County, Kenya. The population includes all discourse markers captured in social events conducted in Gichuka. Five real life events conducted in Gichuka were purposively sampled. Data was collected using an observation schedule that was used to record the contextual information, and a guiding card was used to record the types of discourse markers realized. The transcribed discourse markers were ninety-two. Guided by the principles of relevance, ninety-two discourse markers used in Gichuka speeches were identified and classified. It was established that Gichuka has a number of discourse markers and the most commonly used types of these discourse markers are topic markers and message related markers. The findings enhances the analysis of Gichuka discourse markers and adds to the existing knowledge on the analysis of discourse markers in various languages. It specifically enriches knowledge on the application of the tenets of the Relevance Theory.

Key Words: *Discourse markers, topic and message related markers, categories, pragmatics. Gichuka and principles of relevance.*

1. Introduction

A discourse marker (DM) is defined as an expression, which signals the relationship of the basic message to the foregoing discourse. According to Fraser (1988), discourse markers belong to a class of pragmatic markers incorporating elements, which are outside the propositional content, implying that they are non-truth conditional. They do not express a structural relationship between elements of discourse but they express relations between discourse elements, which can be understood in terms of cognitive principles. DMs contribute to procedural meaning rather than conceptual meaning they provide instructions to the addressee on how the utterance to which the discourse marker is attached is to be interpreted (Fraser, 1996). These are linguistically encoded clues that signal the speaker's potential in every communicative act.

Crystal (1988) argues that discourse markers have an important role in the interpretation of utterances and encode information about the inferential processes needed to interpret the relations between the utterances. Particularly, they have a significant role in spontaneous speech. When used appropriately, DMs act as a lubricant to refine the interaction between speakers though should not be associated with an undesirable or overused style of speaking. This is because absence of DMs renders the discourse neither ungrammatical nor unintelligible, but has great impact on communicative force and naturalness of its flow.

Akande (2009) studied discourse markers in the spontaneous speech of Nigerian university graduates. The study examined the distribution and the use of discourse markers in the conversation of thirty Nigerian university graduates (NUGs) selected from three university towns namely; Ife, Kano and Nsukka. Evidence from a thirty hour recorded interview showed that discourse markers in the spontaneous speech of NUGs had different socio-pragmatic functions such as reparation, clarification and gap filling. It was noted that there was regional variation in the use of discourse markers depending on where they came from. This therefore, guided the researcher into treating Gichuka distinctively with unique linguistic features hence the study of Gichuka DMs.

DMs occur more often in spoken than in written language. They are more likely to be used in situations where more than one speaker is involved. The occurrences of DMs are more than ten times as frequent in dialogues as in monologues. In conversations, lack of DMs makes a speech dull and in monologues, it makes it unappealing to listeners. Discourse markers, as a matter of fact, serve as more than attention catchers, and should not be taken as optional extras in speech. This means they function more than decorations in every interaction (Stenstrom, 1990). The interest of this study is spoken and not written discourse. The interest that prompted the scholars to carry out studies on DMs in different areas, similarly, prompted the current researcher to investigate whether DMs exist in Gichuka along with their functions in speech.

2. Theoretical Framework

This article was guided by Sperber & Wilson's (2002) Relevance Theory. This is a theory in pragmatics, which posits that most utterances are potentially ambiguous in more than one way. Thus, Sperber & Wilson (2002) state that an utterance makes manifest a variety of assumptions the hearer attends to as many of these seem as relevant to him. They further claim that the hearer mostly infers (deduces) the speakers meaning by considering what is and what is not relevant to the current conversation.

Sperber & Wilson (2002) advance that in an ongoing discourse; any new information that is added has contextual effect. They suggest that when the hearer perceives the contextual effect of new information in an utterance he or she will not only strive to interpret its 'relevance' but also to find out in which way it can be used to clarify the speakers' meaning. During this communicative information exchange, any contribution by the speaker either 'increases' or 'weakens the strength of the hearers' assumption, deletes them altogether, or adds new beliefs. However, information that merely duplicates available information is perceived as being irrelevant to the already existing information. The most important type of cognitive effect achieved by

processing an input in a context is a contextual implication, a conclusion deducible from the input and the context together, but from neither input nor context alone.

Sperber & Wilson's (2002) Relevance Theory is based on relevance and two principles of relevance: a Cognitive Principle (that human cognition is geared to the maximization of relevance), and a Communicative Principle (that utterances create expectations of optimal relevance). The central claim is that the expectations of relevance raised by an utterance are precise enough, and predictable enough, to guide the hearer towards the speaker's meaning.

This theory is utilised to determine the Gichuka discourse markers that are used in Gichuka speech. This is by the expectation that speakers are able to use DMs in speech with the aim of guiding their targets towards the appropriate interpretation of their utterances. The speakers are able to do this because they expect the hearers to pick the most relevant meaning from their expressions informed by the input and the context of utterance. This study adopts communicative principle because it is concerned with utterances and their meanings in reference to DMs.

Guided by the principles of relevance, that a speaker may be able to produce a stimulus which is likely to attract the audience's attention, to prompt the retrieval of certain contextual assumptions and to point them towards an intended conclusion, and that the search for relevance is a basic feature of human cognition which communicators may exploit, the researcher was able to categorize the linguistic items that Gichuka speakers use in speech as discourse markers under similar or different contexts. This is because a speaker is able to predict and manipulate their audience's mental states assured that the audience tends to pick out the most relevant stimuli in their environment and processes them to maximize their relevance with little effort. Here the speaker does not leave the listener with any other option other than what the speaker expects. In this paper therefore, DMs are treated as stimuli that attract the hearers' attention hence guidance towards the speaker's intention. The theory enables the researcher to categorize DMs.

3. Methodology

A research design is a plan, structure and strategy of investigation. This study utilizes qualitative research approach. The types of discourse markers identified in Gichuka speech are discussed in details and the summaries are presented in tables where they are tabulated in percentages. The population includes all Gichuka discourse markers in social events.

The study adopted the purposive sampling technique to arrive at real social events conducted in Gichuka that are used in this analysis. Mugenda & Mugenda (2003) observe that this is a sampling technique that allows the researcher to get cases that have the required information.

The study was limited to five real life social events and recorded the entire speeches. These included family meetings, chief's barazas, church meetings, wedding functions and burial meetings. The events generated enough data for the study. Though the researcher had collected data from more social events, analysis beyond this would have been repetitive. Kothari (2004) posits that under non-probability sampling, the researcher purposively chooses particular units for constituting a sample on the basis that the sample will be a representative of the whole. This study uses the same data to analyze the objectives. A similar sample size was used in Ireri's (2011) study on Misinterpretations of English-Kimuthambi Church Sermons.

Data was collected using a guiding card and an observation schedule. The guiding card captured the Gichuka DMs in the selected social events. The observation schedule was used to record the contextual information, which was used to determine the types of DMs and the functions they served in various, or similar context.

4. Categories of Discourse Markers used in Gichuka Speech

Discourse markers are important linguistic tools that are useful in every verbal interaction, especially in speeches as was noted in Gichuka speeches. This paper adopted Fraser's (1999) model of classification of DMs using Relevance Theory by Sperber & Wilson (2002) to identify and categorize DMs as they appear in various contexts. Throughout this discussion the subsequent abbreviations are used to refer to the following; topic marker (TM), -discourse activity marker (DAM), -message related markers under; -message related contrastive marker (MRC), - message related inferential (MRI), -message related elaborative (MRE) and finally - message related parallel markers (MRP) respectively Table 1 presents a summary of Gichuka discourse markers.

Social Event 1 (SE 1)

Social event one (SE 1) (See in appendix i), is a family thanks giving function where members of a given family whose daughter had returned home unhurt from Garissa terror attack, had invited members of the community and also the clergy for a thanks giving ceremony. The speaker is a retired chief. The following are examples of Gichuka discourse markers that were noted in the speech that was recorded from SE.1. Let us focus on SE.1: to SE.1:4.

SE.1: 1 Ninkwenda kumukethia mwinthe (TM)

May I greet you all

SE.1: 2 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.1:3 Nkiambiriria (DAM)

As I begin

SE.1:4 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.1:1 is a topic marker (TM) in that the speaker uses to call for the attention of the hearer (the audience) to the context. A speaker may be able to produce a stimulus, which is likely to attract the audience's attention (Sperber & Wilson, 1995). In this case, the DM works to introduce the speech by this speaker. According to Fraser (1999), some topic markers signal a discourse topic that is an initial topic, a previous topic, while others signal the re- emphasis on the current topic. In this case, therefore, the speaker uses the marker to introduce his topic within the context of a thanks-giving function. SE 1:2 is a message related inferential marker (MRI) that the speaker uses to give reason for his joy that day because it was a joyous occasion. SE1:3 is discourse activity marker which could have been a topic marker but here it is a discourse activity marker (DAM) used to bring out the sequence that the speaker was beginning to talk about whatever had brought them together. SE 1:4 is an inferential message related marker that also refocuses on the subject or topic of the meeting that the speaker has already introduced. Consider SE.1:5 to SE.1:10.

SE.1:5 Mmm.....(TM)

Mmm.....

SE.1:6 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE.1:7 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE.1:8 Kwogu (TM)

So

SE.1:9 Indi (MRC)

But

SE.1:10 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.1:5 is a filler word that serves as a topic marker for it allows the speaker to reorganize his speech now that he was talking to a group that was already affected by whatever had happened in the Garrisa attack, though was happy that their own was not affected. SE.1:6 is a message related marker (MRI) for while the researcher studying the context the parents of this student did not want her to go to Garrisa University but to another university nearer home for reasons of insecurity. SE.1:7 is an MRI because it gives the reason behind having taken their student to Garrisa as their last option. SE.1:8 is a topic marker that introduces the point that this parent had in fact consulted with the said university for assistance. SE.1:9 is a message related contrastive marker (MRC) because it is used to cancel the assumption in the previous proposition where the speaker and these parents had initially thought it was easy and very possible to take their daughter to a university of their choice. This makes the argument by the speaker relevant in this context, as the speaker tries to convince the audience that a lot had been done on their part, but it had not been possible for their daughter to be admitted to another university other than Garrisa.

SE.1:10 is a MRI that the speaker uses to allow the audience to understand that even though the attack took place in the said university, it was unfortunate, but still there are Kenyans who live and study there and this makes it clear to the audience that their case was not special. According to Sperber & Wilson (2002), the universal cognitive tendency to maximize relevance makes it possible, at least to some extent, to predict and manipulate the mental states of others. Knowing of one's tendency to pick out the most relevant stimuli in their environment and process them to maximize their relevance, a speaker is able to produce a stimulus, which is likely to attract the audience's attention, to prompt the retrieval of certain contextual assumptions and to point them towards an intended conclusion. This DM is meant to make to bring to light that Garrisa was one part of our country like just any other. This helped to clear the feeling in the audience that it was not out of negligence that anyone had taken the said student to this university. Let us now look at SE.1:11 to SE.1:14.

SE.1:11 Eee... Kwogu (TM)

Eee... So

SE.1:12 Kwogu (TM)

So

SE.1:13 Kana tibu? (TM)

it so?

SE.1:14 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.1:11 is a topic marker because it relevantly gives the reason to meet and give thanks to God, because as noted, their daughter had gone through real torture and at the same time alludes to what had already been noted earlier. SE.1:12 is a topic marker because it emphasizes on the importance and reason of giving thanks, since topic markers, according to Fraser (1999), are at times used for re-emphasis to what has already been mentioned. SE.1:13 is a topic marker (TM) that is emphatic because it makes great emphasis on thanking God for his deeds are great. This alludes to whatever the speaker had indicated earlier in the speech. SE.1:14 is a message related inferential marker (MRI) for it also gives reason to continue praying not only for this family but also for other families whose children died in the attack. Considering the context, this helps the family to understand that there were others who had been worse victims. This also convinces the audience about the power of prayer and emphasizes on the need of prayer in all situations.

SE.1:15 Nkirikiriria ri (DAM)

As I finish

SE.1:16 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.1:15 is a discourse activity marker (DAM) that the speaker uses to alert the audience that he was approaching the end of his session but before then the speaker notes that their student would be joining another university, and wishes her well. The speaker also reminds the learner in SE.1:16 that she was a sure witness of the deeds of God, so that, even when she goes to another institution she does not forget the deeds of God, this is an inferential marker.

Social Event 2 (SE 2)

This is a Chief's Baraza meant to sensitize members of the public from his location about the assistance that the County Government is giving the elderly and the sick. The chiefs pleaded with the members of his location to avail themselves to be able to submit the names of the very needy people to receive the said assistance. The chief also noted that many people from his area did not take information seriously and he emphasized on the importance of information. Let us now focus on SE.2:1 to SE.2:3.

SE.2:1 Nkiambiriria (TM)

As I start

SE.2:2 Nkiongerera (TM)

To add to that

SE.2:3 Ngiciokereria (DAM)

To repeat

SE 2:1 is a topic marker, which the speaker, who is a chief, uses to introduce his topic about the assistance the County Government is giving to specific people. While, SE 2:2 is a topic marker that still gives more emphasis about the same assistance, a topic that the speaker has already introduced, although semantically it should have been a message related parallel marker (MRP) but in this context, it functions as a topic marker. Then, SE 2:3 works as discourse activity marker that still attempts to place emphasis on the same point. Consider DMs in SE.24 to SE.26.

SE.2:4 Riu (TM)

Now

SE.2:5 Niuntu (MRC)

Because

SE.2:6 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

Within the same social event, SE 2:4 works as a topic marker in this context although generally it functions as a deictic term or as an adverb. It functions as a topic marker (TM) because it introduces the topic that the speaker addresses; that is, on the selection of the people to be supported by the County Government. SE.2:5 is a message related contrastive marker (MRC) that shows doubt. The chief argues that from experience, people from this location, do not attend meetings and so they fail to grab important opportunities. SE.2:6 justifies the earlier argument that the organizers have to fill all the chances even if the community fails to produce a list of beneficiaries. Let us now look at SE.2:7 to SE.2:10.

SE.2:7 Bwakairi (DAM)

Secondly

SE.2:8 Naa... (MRE)

And...

SE.2:9 Tathikiririani baba wega (TM)

Just listen carefully to this

SE.2:10 Niuntu (TM)

Because

SE.2:7 is a discourse activity marker in this context although it could have worked as a topic marker but here it shows that the speaker is now addressing a different point from the first one. SE.2:8 is an MRE that strengthens the first proposition hence pleads for the commitment of the hearer to what is being said. SE.2:9 is also a TM that alludes to the topic already mentioned while putting emphasis on those who would get the said chances and also the NHIF cards. SE.2:10 still puts emphasis on the topic hence a topic marker. In the same social event consider SE.2:11 to SE.2:13.

SE.2:11 Riu niuntu (MRC)

Now that

SE.2:12 Ngiciokereria tathikiririani (MRE)

As I repeat, listen

SE.2:13 Nkirikiriria ri (DAM)

As I finish

SE.2:11 is semantically an inferential marker, but in this context, it is a Message related contrastive marker (MRC) because the speaker doubts whether the hearers would avail themselves for the meeting. He brings out the inconsistency in the expectations while cautioning the hearer that failure to attend would affect them dearly. SE.2:12 is a message related elaborative marker (MRE) that emphasizes on the same topic that the hearer should attend the said meeting because it was important. Finally, SE.2:13 is used as a discourse activity marker (DAM) since it's meant by the speaker to alert the hearer that he was concluding on what he had been saying. This discourse marker signals the current discourse activity relative to some part of the foregoing discourse as brought out in Fraser's (1999) model of categorizing discourse markers.

Social Event 3 (SE 3)

SE 3 is a church meeting where the first speaker is a Sunday school teacher who took a quick note to remind the members of an idea that had been sold to them the previous Sunday with a view to persuading them to accept the idea. She also requested the parents to be releasing their children in good time for Sunday school sessions. The second speaker was the preacher who presented the sermon for spiritual nourishment that day. The speakers use a number of DMs in their speeches to aid delivery and interpretation of their messages. Let us now look at the DMs in SE.3:1 to SE.3:3.

SE.3:1 Niwega (TM)

It is well

SE.3:2 Indi (MRI)

But

SE.3:3 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.3:4 Kanitha mugwitikiriria kana mutikwenda?(TM)

Brethren have you agreed or you do not want?

SE.3:1 is a topic marker that the speaker uses to introduce the topic, while SE.3:2 is a message related marker inferential contextually and not a contrastive one for it gives the reason behind choosing porridge and not tea with bread, without going by what others might have chosen. SE.3:3 'niuntu' is an inferential marker still talking about choice. SE.3:4 is a topic marker that is emphatic on the topic that also persuades the audience into accepting the teacher's take. Let us consider SE.3:5 to SE.3:7.

SE.3:5 Niuntu bwogu (MRE)

Because of that

SE.3:6 Eee...(TM)

Eee...

SE.3:7 Niuntu (TM)

Because

SE.3:5 is a message related elaborative marker (MRE) '*niuntu bwogu*' but not an inferential marker since it is used to expound on the initial topic. SE.3:6 though a filler, the word '*ee...*' is emphatically used in support of the previous segment and so it's a topic marker. Relevantly, the DM '*niuntu*' in SE.3:7 was used as topic marker (TM) but not as an inferential marker because it does not give a reason but is emphatic on the previous topic that the Sunday school teachers had the children at heart because they had a major role to play on the same. Contextually, the speaker used this DM in a way to convince the congregants into accepting the decision the teachers had made. Consider SE.3:8 to SE.3:11.

SE.3:8 Baubangi... (DAM)

Something else...

SE.3:9 Kwogu (MRI)

So

SE.3:10 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE.3:11 Tibu? (TM)

Isn't it?

SE.3:8 is a discourse activity marker (DAM) '*baubangi...*' that is used in this context to imply that the speaker was moving on to another topic - that the Sunday school kids should arrive in time for the sessions. SE.3:9 '*kwogu*' is an inferential DM requesting the parents to always prepare their children in good time and not a conclusion as would be expected from a semantic point of view. SE.3:10 '*nikenda*' is another inferential marker that brings about persuasion in this context hence reason. '*Kana tibu*' is a topic marker DM that seeks to persuade the hearer to agree with the speaker. Let us look at the DMs in SE.3:12 to SE.3:15.

SE.3:12 Niuntu (TM)

Because

SE.3:13 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.3:14 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.3:15 Niuntu (MRC)

Because

SE.3:12 is a topic marker as used in this context and not an inferential marker. This is because this DM introduces a different topic and by a different speaker (the preacher). SE.3:13 '*niuntu*' is a message related inferential marker for it gives the reason behind Nabal's wealth. The other DM, '*niuntu*' in SE.3:14 has also been used in this context as an inferential marker to explain the reason that made Nabal fail to assist the people that David had sent. SE.3:15 is a contrastive marker that the speaker uses to bring out the inconsistency in David's expectations for having earlier assisted Nabal. Consider SE.3:16 and SE.3:17.

SE.3:16 Niuntu (TM)

Because

SE.3:17 Indi (MRC)

But

SE.3:16 is a topic marker DM that the speaker uses in this context to emphasize on the point that Nabal was mean in a way to remind the audience that it was a vice and should be discouraged. This comes out after the

DM 'indi' SE.3:17 that the speaker uses to remind the audience about the same vice. Consider SE.3:18 to SE.3:20.

SE.3:18 Oooo.... (TM)

SE.3:19 Atumia Oyi.... (TM)

SE.3:20 Athuri Oyi... (TM)

The three DMs in SE.3:18, SE.3:19, SE.3:20 are all topic markers that are used in this context as a wakeup call to the congregation to shun selfish behavior amongst the people for proper co existence.

Social Event 4 (SE.4)

Speaker A is a political leader-addressing mourners during a burial ceremony. This speaker was quick to note that people were dying of ailments like cancer possibly because the county had not invested enough in medical care. Speaker B is also a political leader, who had also attended the same burial to condole with the bereaved family from his county where he also emphasized the urgent need to make the general hospital a model medical facility. He promised to work hand in hand with those that had this idea at heart. Let us examine SE.4:1, SE.4:2, SE.4:3.

SE.4:1 Nkiambiriria kambuge (TM)

As I begin may I say

SE.4:2 Niuntu (MRI)

Because.

SE.4:3 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE 4:1 '*Nkiambiriria kambuge*' is a topic marker that the speaker uses to open up discussion and to call for the attention of the mourners. SE 4:2 is a message related inferential marker that is relevant depending on the context (burial). SE 4:3 '*Nikenda*' justifies the reason friends had given a lot of assistance in support of the medical care of the deceased, which was good because it enhances social unity. The speaker here emphasized on prioritized investment on medical care. Let us now focus on SE.4:4 to SE.4:7.

SE.4:4 Indi (TM)

But

SE.4:5 Nikenda (MRI)

Because

SE.4:6 Indi nikumenya (TM)

But I know

SE.4:7 Ngiciokereria tathikiririani (MRE)

As I repeat, listen

SE.4:4 is a topic marker, contextually, because it talks about the same topic (the health of the people) but semantically it is a contrastive marker. Speaker A, who is interested in vying for the gubernatorial position, manipulates the thinking of his audience by using the DM 'indi' to change their attitude towards the County government by alluding to the fact that the government had not done enough as far as the health of the people is concerned. This is relevant for the part of the audience that hails from the County to understand his interest in 2017 (gubernatorial seat). Relevantly, the speaker is first able to contrast the lives of the well up and the disadvantaged in the society in SE.4:6 and SE.4:7 which also laid emphasis on the above. Consider DMs in SE.4:8 to SE.4:11.

SE.4:8 Niuntu bwogu (TM)

Because of that

SE.4:9 Umunthi (TM)

Today

SE.4:10 Rekeni mbuge ati (TM)

Let me say that

SE.4:11 Niuntu (TM)

Because

SE.4:8 is a topic marker that is emphatic on the already introduced topic. Considering the context of use, SE.4:9 is a topic marker and not an adverb of time. This is because it is used by speaker A to contextually bring in a different point about the medical scheme that the public had been complaining about because it was too expensive. In SE.4 10 the speaker first agrees with the people that the medical scheme was expensive but because he was in the government, he initially supports the importance of the scheme because if people have to get proper medical services of course money has to be availed. According to the information carried in the proposition introduced by SE.4:11. 'niuntu' Speaker A understands that the public is against this scheme, so, he first identifies with the people by admitting that the right procedure was not followed. According to Fraser (1999), this DM should be a contrastive marker but it suits the function of a topic marker in this context because it puts emphasis on the topic already at hand. Let's now consider SE.4:12 and SE.4:13.

SE.4:12 Kwogu (MRI)

So

SE.4:13 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE.4:12 is a message related inferential marker for it draws the conclusion that even if the government was justified to charge for good medical care, the people should first have been consulted before the actual implementation of the scheme. In SE.4:13 the speaker remained relevant but still in agreement that such increment should have been gradually done. By so doing his people felt as if their leader had not betrayed them by failing to represent them appropriately. Consider SE.4:14 to SE.4:16.

SE.4:14 Kambuge (TM)

May Isay

SE.4:15 Niuntu (MRI)

Since

SE.4:16 Na kwogu (MRI)

And so

The speaker here is another political leader, labeled speaker B who attends the burial late and after giving his apology, he thanks the reverend for giving him a chance. Using the DM in SE.4:14, which is a topic marker that opened up his speech because, according to Fraser (1999), a topic marker is used to introduce a new topic, can be used to build on what has already been introduced and can be used to put emphasis on what has already been presented. The speaker continued using SE.4:15 reasonably, to show that he understood the procedures of that church and so, he was grateful and did not take that consideration lightly. SE.4:16 is a message related inferential marker that emphasized the fact that he really appreciated the chance to address the mourners although he had appeared late. Let us now focus on SE.4:17 to SE.4:25.

SE.4:17 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.4:18 Nakwogu kambuge (TM)

May I say

SE.4:19 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.4:20 Na kwogu (DAM)

And so

SE.4:21 Kiongerera (DAM)

As I add

SE.4:22 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.4:23 Iii (TM)

Indeed

SE.4:24 Kana tibu (TM)

Isn't it so

SE.4:25 Niuntu (TM)

Because

The speaker uses SE.4:17 to explain and give emphasis on the extent of loss to the bereaved family. SE.4:18 is a topic marker for the speaker used it to further the topic on the achievements of the deceased. Contextually, speaker B also agreed that the county had lost several people because of diseases that could have been well managed if the county had been able to invest more on the health sector. SE.4:19 was used by the speaker to indeed identify with the bereaved family and the mourners at large while highlighting the achievements by the deceased, hence a message related inferential marker. He uses the DM 'na kwogu' in SE.4:20 as a topic marker to imply that the situation could have possibly been different if proper measures had been put in place and in good time. The speaker also justified his stand using the DM 'kiongerera' in SE.4:21 by attributing everything to the will of God. This is again justified by SE.4:22 that is a message related marker and further justification is given through the DMs in SE.4:23, 24 and 25, which are topic markers since they still emphasize on the topic. Let us look at the DMs in SE.4:26 to SE.4:29.

SE.4:26 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.4:27 Ninkwenda gwitikania na (TM)

I want to agree with

SE.4:28 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE.4:29 Iii (TM)

Yes

Speaker B uses SE.4:27 relevantly, 'ninkwenda gwitikania na' because speaker A had earlier talked about investing in medical health of the people. This makes speaker B's point relevant and he indeed scores on the part of the audience by agreeing with the previous speaker that the County should properly invest in the medical care of its people. SE.4:28 is a message related inferential marker for it relevantly supports better medical care, which is the choice of the people. SE.4:29 is a topic marker 'Iii' that emphasizes the seriousness of what the speaker has already said. Let us consider the DMs in SE.4:30 to SE.4:34.

SE.4:30 Iguru ria (TM)

Concerning.

SE.4:31 Nikenda(MRI)

So that

SE.4:32 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.4:33 Indi turi (TM)

But as

SE.4:34 Nikenda (MRI)

So that

SE.4:30 is a topic marker that brings in a different topic that the opponent to the current speaker (speaker A) had also talked about '*iguru ria*' This is when he uses it to allude to the point about NHIF. SE.4:31 is a message related inferential marker because it gives the reason behind revising the scheme, in order to be fair to all classes of people in the society. SE.4:32 is a message related marker that relevantly gives reason that the members of parliament present should speak on behalf of the common *mwananchi*, when they get back to parliament. Conventionally, '*indi turi*' in SE.4:33 is a contrastive marker but pragmatically it is a topic marker because it takes the hearer back to the topic about the hospital. Speaker B summarizes his speech using the DMs in SE.4:35 and SE.4:36 as follows.

SE.4:35 Nkithiria (DAM)

As I finish

SE.4:36 Kairi (MRE)

Again

Speaker B used the DM in SE.4:35 '*nkithiria*', which is a discourse activity marker to remind the audience that, although he had come late, he did not intend to take a lot of time and that he, was summarizing his speech. He takes a quick note to remind the audience that everyone was a candidate for death and uses the DM '*kairi*' in SE.4:36 to emphatically persuade people to realize that God exists.

Social event 5 (SE 5)

SE.5 is a family meeting where one member of a family (daktari) had brought a friend (fiancée) home to meet the members of his extended family. The speaker was the master of ceremonies (MC). The people present were members of that family, members of the community, and close friends. It is important to look at the following DMs that were realized in this context. Consider the following DMs in SE.5:1 to SE.5:3.

SE.5:1 Niwega, niuntu (TM)

It's well because

SE.5:2 Kambuge (TM)

May I say

SE.5:3 Niuntu (MRI)

Because

SE.5:1 is a topic marker (TM) because the master of ceremonies used this DM '*niwega niuntu*' to begin his speech in this context where he appreciates the fact that members of their extended family and the community had attended the function. The DM used in this context allows the speaker to have the whole audience on board. The DM further serves to appreciate everyone's presence. SE.5:2 is also a topic marker DM that the speaker used to remind the hearer about the actual topic of the function. '*Niuntu*' in SE.5:3 is a message related inferential marker because it is used to give the explanation that made the occasion a joyous one. Consider SE.5:4 to SE.5:7.

SE.5:4 Kamongereree (DAM)

May I add

SE.5:5 Indi niuntu (TM)

But because

SE.5:6 Again (TM)

Kairi

SE.5:7 Niuntu (TM)

SE.5:4 is a discourse activity marker (DAM) '*kamongereree*' used in this context to imply that the friendship was meant to last. The same hope of a lasting friendship is extended in SE.5:5 by the DM '*indi niuntu*' with the expectations that the guest would have time to even meet others that were not able to attend that meeting for various reasons. Finally, the DM '*kairi*' is a topic marker that is used to emphasize the appreciation because of their guest. SE.5:7 is a topic marker for it advances emphasis on the prior topic, as brought out by Fraser (1999). Table 1 presents a summary of Gichuka discourse markers while table 2 presents a summary of the categories of Gichuka DMs.

Table 1: Summary of the Gichuka Discourse Markers

SN	Gichuka DMs	English Translation	No. of Occurrences
1	Nkiambiriria	As I start	2
2	Nkiongerera	To add to that	2
3	Ngiciokereria	To repeat	2
4	Ninkwenda kumukethia mwinthe	May I greet you all	1
5	Niuntu	Because	25
6	Mmm	Mmm	1
7	Nikenda	So that	11
8	Kwogu	So	4
9	Indi	But	4
10	Eee... Kwogu	Eee... So	1
11	Kana tibu?	Isn't so	2
12	Nkirikiriria ri	As I finish	1
13	Riu	Now	1
14	Bwakairi	Secondly	1
15	Naa...	And....	1
16	Tathikiririani baba wega	Just listen carefully to this	1
17	Riu niuntu	Now that	1
18	Niwega	It is well	1
19	Kanitha mugwitikiriria kana mutikwenda?	Brethren have you agreed or you do not want?	1
20	Niuntu bwogu	Because of that	2
21	Eee...	Eee...	1
22	Baubangi...	Something else...	1
23	Tibu?	Isn't it?	1
24	Oooo....	Oooo....	1
25	Atumia Oyi....	Ladies oyi...	1
26	Athuri Oyi...	Gentlemen oyi	1
27	Nkiambiriria kambuge	As I begin may I say	1
28	Indi nikumenya	But I know	1
29	Ngiciokereria tathikiririani	As I repeat listen	1
30	Umunthi	Today	1
31	Rekeni mbuge ati	Let me say that	1
32	Kambuge	May Isay	2
33	Na kwogu	And so	1
34	Iii	Indeed	2
35	gwitikanian na	I want to agree	1

36	Iguru ria	Concerning	1
37	Indi turi	But as	1
38	Nkithiria	As I finish	1
39	Kairi	Again	2
40	Niwega, niuntu	It's well because	1
41	Kamongereree	May I add	1
42	Indi niuntu	But because	1

Table 2: Summary of the categories of Gichuka Discourse Markers

Types of discourse Markers	Tally	%
Topic markers	41	44.6
Message related markers	41	44.6
Discourse activity markers	10	10.9
Total	92	100

5. Conclusion

This study found out that there are topic markers, discourse activity markers and message related markers in Gichuka speech. As illustrated in table 2, most Gichuka discourse markers analyzed in this study are topic markers and Message related markers. Each stood at forty-one (41) of the total ninety-two (92) DMs identified. This represents 44.6% for each category. The least tally is that of the DAMs which stand at 10.9%.

The reason behind topic markers being used more frequently than is that most of the meetings are goal oriented. Therefore, the speakers had no option but to use discourse markers that introduce those topics, to support the topics already introduced and at times put emphasis on these topics. The MRMs recorded a high tally too because the speakers had to justify what they were saying (the topics they were advancing). DAMs recorded the lowest tally because they are mainly meant to signal the current discourse activity relative to some part of the foregoing discourse and may not necessarily advance the content. They make it easier to follow.

The findings fits in Fraser (1999) model of classification of discourse makers as discussed in the literature review. The article also agrees with what Andersen (2001) classifies as discourse markers, although he gives different names to his classes of DMs. The types of DMs realized in Gichuka speech are also similar to the ones Saez (2003) came up with. He studied on a functional-communicative perspective in both English and Spanish student writing but he only had two categories. Looking at what Trujillo considers such linguistic items then there is a lot of similarity in the items found in both languages and Gichuka, a confirmation that Gichuka has discourse markers.

The study identifies forty-one (41) out of the total ninety-two (92) discourse markers that are used as topic markers. This accounts for (44.6%) of all the realized DMs. The message related markers are equal in tally with the topic markers. These were also forty-one (41) out of the ninety-two discourse (92) markers, which accounts for (44.6%). The lowest tally is that of the discourse activity markers that were only ten (10) which stand at 10.9%.

From the above findings, it can be concluded that there are various categories of Gichuka DMs that may be similar or different in the same or different context. The highest were mostly the topic markers and the message related markers as realized in speech contexts.

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