

Abstract: *This paper is an attempt at discourse analysis of a Kiswahili discourse. It aims at analyzing the discourse from a pragmatic approach and focuses on the study of pragmatic notions such as reference, presupposition, implicature, and inference.*

Key words: *Context, reference, presupposition, implicature, and inference.*

Résumé: *Cet article est un essai de faire l'analyse d'un discours en Kiswahili. Il cherche à analyser le discours dans l'approche pragmatique et met en évidence les notions pragmatiques telles que la référence, la présupposition, l'implicature, et l'inférence.*

Mots clés : *Contexte, référence, présupposition, implicature, et inférence.*

I. INTRODUCTION

This article analyses a piece of discourse made by a journalist for a local radio station in Bukavu. It aims at looking at how journalists use Kiswahili as a media language in Bukavu, set contexts for their discourse, how they use the language in the set context and how a listener would process it for decoding the intended message. Therefore, the article tries to analyse and interpret the discourse from the perspective of context of situation in which it is produced. Analysing a piece of language from the perspective of context of situation has always been the main concern of Pragmatics.

I. Theoretical Background on general pragmatics

1. Pragmatics: Quid?

From the linguistic perspective, pragmatics is defined quite the same ways by many writers but with slight changes.

Kamil Wiśniewski (2007) considers it as the study of meaning of words, phrases and full sentences and contrasts it with Semantics in the sense that the latter deals with the objective meanings of words that can be found in dictionaries whereas pragmatics is more concerned with the meanings that words in fact convey when they are used. This writer hints at the idea of intended speaker meaning but his definition does not sufficiently mean what he wants to say. The definition fails to mention that the pragmatic meanings of utterances are situation or context dependent as Geoffrey Leech (1989: *x*) stresses. A much more elaborate definition is by Indende Florence (2003, 2009) stressing that pragmatics is concerned with the meaning of

utterances, how what is said was meant by the speaker, and the utterance is to be interpreted by the audience. Wikipedia (2009)'s definition is more detailed and mentions that pragmatics is not only a subfield of linguistics which studies the ways in which context contributes to meaning, but also the study of the aspects of meaning and language use that are dependent on the speaker, the addressee and other features of the context of utterance, such as the effect that the context of utterance has on the utterance meaning, the generally observed principles of communication, and the goals of the speaker which also impact his choice of expression and the addressee's interpretation of an utterance. The most recurrent common notion in all the definitions available about pragmatics is context

2. Context

This term refers to the environment in which the language is used and as Paul Werth (1984, 34) mentions, "*most approaches to the question of context will normally make a distinction between linguistic (or verbal) context and extra-linguistic (or situational context* A sentence's meaning in a given situational context may differ from its meaning seen from the semantic view. In other words, its meaning in a context may be different from meaning of the association of its constituents. Kamil Wiśniewski, (2007) stresses this by saying that the interpretation of what meanings the speaker wanted to convey using particular words is often influenced by factors such as the listeners' assumptions or the context. In that sense it is obvious and obligatory for both a listener and a discourse analyst to interpret a text- oral or written- in accordance with the context of its production. Brown and Yule (1983: 27) strengthen this when they say that a discourse analyst has to take a pragmatic approach, which brings into consideration a number of issues which do not generally receive much attention in the formal linguist's description of sentential syntax and semantics. He has to take account of the context in which a piece of discourse is produced.

In pragmatics two types of context can be differentiated: linguistic context and physical context. **Linguistic context**, sometimes called co-text is the set of words that surround the lexical item in question in the same phrase, or sentence. The **physical context** is the location of a given word, the situation in which it is used, as well as timing, all of which aid proper understating of the words (Kamil Wiśniewski 2007)

In Peter Bosch (1983)'s opinion, the listener or receiver has to create mental representations that is, as the speaker, he/she has to interpret the speech or discourse in accordance with context models.

3. Context models

The idea of context model draws much from the dynamic character of context. As Teun A. Van Dijk (1977, 191-192), "*a context is not just one possible world-state, but at least a sequence of world-states. Moreover, these situations do not remain identical in time, but change; hence a context is a course of events*". In a discourse, the receiver, like the sender, has therefore to understand this change and respond positively to the requirements of processing the message accordingly. In Bosch Peter (1983, 65-66)'s words,

"context models are (representations of) mental models speaker and addressee build of their environments. Context models are the basis for the interpretation of utterances, and the interpretation of an utterance with respect to a particular context model consists in the transition from the context model to its successor, with respect to the utterance".

The notion of contexts involves the (co)agents' wants, motives, goals, concerns, intentions, etc. their actions, and the social environment in which the discourse and actions are used or performed. It is assumed that contextual information denotes any information and is (to be) invoked in order to make an appropriate assignment of action meaning possible (Van De Velde 1984).

Pragmatists like Brown and Yule (1983), Kamil Wiśniewski, (2007), and Peter Bosch (1983: 78) agree on a class of expressions whose interpretation is always context dependent. The first say for example, that some of the most obvious linguistic elements which require contextual information for their interpretation are the deictic forms such as **here, now, I, you, this** and **that**. In order to interpret these elements in a piece of discourse, it is necessary to know (at least) who the speaker and hearer are, and the time and place of production of the discourse. The second mention that there are numerous frequently used words which depend on the physical context for their correct understanding, such as: *there, that, it, or tomorrow*. Terms like these are known as **deictic expressions**. Depending on what such words refer to they can be classified as **person deixis**: *him, they, you*; **spatial deixis**: *there, here*; and **temporal deixis**: *then, in an hour, tomorrow*.

The third writer says that most writings on context dependence clearly assume that there is at least one class of context dependent expressions: the class of indexical expressions'. He points that the class is usually defined ostensively: by means of listing the stock -in -trade examples, I, you, now, here, etc. Wikipedia (2009) strengthens the idea by putting that **indexical** meaning is dependent on the context of the utterance and has rules of use. By rules of use, it is meant that indexical expressions can tell you when they are used, but not their actual meaning.

A contextual interpretation of indexical expressions and of the whole discourse will always involve such other things as *reference, presupposition, implicature, inference and relevance*. They prove to be important in the coding and decoding of a communicative message in all forms of communication, literature included. Considering literature as one of the forms of communication, linguists have found interest in gearing the study of these elements to the analysis of literary texts and then the perspective "Literary Pragmatics".

4. Literary Pragmatics

In attempts to make literary pragmatics an approach on its own, many writer have defined it with different views. TU Jing , for example, states,

Literary pragmatics subsumes various theories stemming from linguistic pragmatics such as theories of speech act, conversational implicature, politeness, presupposition and relevance. These theories are the foundation of literary pragmatics and function as new perspectives of literary criticism. Though originally used to study natural language, they can be applied to the study of literary language since their principles and assumptions are based on the general mechanism of language. The applicability of pragmatic theories to literary field lies in the view that the principles of literary communication derive in all the essentials from those applied in everyday language though some deviations and integration are needed sometimes.

In an answer to a Chinese correspondent's letter, who asks about the implications of the views of M. H. Abrams, Mikhail Bakhtin, and Roger Sell from the point of view of the pragmatics of literature, Roger Sell (2000) clarifies that literary pragmatics is of course an interesting field, but we should not lose sight of pragmatics in the general sense. What is meant is that literary pragmatics may be thought of sometimes as addressing only those issues which are specific to literary communication, reading, writing, narrative or poetic fictions, etc.

As the scholar explains, literature is a special communicative context, and therefore it has its own pragmatic specificities but the concepts in literary pragmatics are derived from those of general pragmatics, and many of the issues are related to the issues we find in other neighbouring pragmatic fields (e.g. the pragmatics of language generally, or the pragmatics of film, etc.), yet they have a specificity of their own, special historical traditions (genres, conventions, etc.) and that's why we speak of literary pragmatics as a field in its own right. Florence Indede (2009) stresses the importance of literary pragmatics when she says that a pragmatic account of literature assumes that in literary communication we not only have a text, but that the production (and interpretation) of such a text are social actions. Without this kind of cognitive analysis of literary communication, no serious insight can be gained into the emotive effects of literary interpretation, involving our needs, wishes, desires, likings, and feelings.

This paper discusses deictic expressions, reference, inference, presupposition, and implicature in a piece of discourse in Kiswahili from a local radio station in Bukavu.

I. Methodology

This paper is a discourse analysis and as such required a pragmatic method, which, according to Mulamba, N., G. (2006) investigates into the text types produced in specific contexts and in the light of specific conventions. Considering the nature of the data, (spoken language) and the type of study to be carried out, (discourse analysis) the researcher has had recourse to recording as a research technique. The piece of discourse from Maendeleo radio (89.5 MHz, Frequency Modulation) was recorded from 7:45 to 7:57 am. It has been transcribed down as faithfully as possible and translated it literally for the sake of keeping all the necessary elements of it. In the analysis, the library research method also proved to be useful to sustain the researcher's thinking.

II. Discussion and results

Here below is the text of the discourse recorded in Swahili.

Hii unayo endelela kuisikiliza ni radio Maendeleo iki kutangazia kutoka hapa mjii wa Bukavu. Mpendwa msikilizaji ninajua umekwisha amka na upo uki fwata vipindi vya radio yako kwa makini hapo nyumbani. Na kusihhi ubaki

kando ya radio yako ukisikiliza kipindi chako hiki kipendelevu... Leo tutaendelesha kipindi ulicho kifwata juma lililo pita kuhusu...Katika kipindi kile ulicho kifwata mbele ulisikia kama mada hii ni ya mhimu kwetu sisi sote. Kwa leo hapa nina wa alikwa wa wili. Ngambo ya kuume nina bwa na x na ngambo ya kushoto nina bwana y. na mimi mtangazaji ni wako z. Katika maulizo hata na majibu tulizo zipata kutoka kwa wasikilizaji wa kipindi cha mbele,tuliona kama bado watu hawaja sikia vema vinyume vya kusipotumia uzazi bora

For the sake of keeping every element necessary for the study, this discourse will be translated literally as follows:

This you continue listening to is Maendeleo radio broadcasting from here, Bukavu town. Dear listener I know you have woken up and you are now listening to the shows of your radio carefully there at home. I beg you to stay close to your radio, listening to this dear show of yours... Today we shall continue with the show you listened to last week concerning... in the show you listened to you understood that this matter is very important for all of us. For today I have two guests. In the right hand I have X and in the left hand I have Y. and I, your presenter am Z. In the questions and even answers we got from listeners of last time's show we found that people have not yet understood the consequences of not applying family planning methods

To start with it is worth clearing that the agents of this discourse, i.e., speaker and receiver. The speaker of this discourse is the presenter and the hearer or receiver is any listener who is listening to the show from anywhere.

As the text highlights, the speaker has used several indexical expressions either for focussing on what he has to convey as message, or for sustaining what he has already conveyed. Indeed these are the two mechanisms which bring about pronoun reference: anaphora and deixis. Quoting Ehlich's (1979) formulation, Peter Bosch says that an anaphoric procedure is a linguistic means to make the hearer sustain a previously established focus towards a specific item while a deictic procedure is a linguistic means to achieve the focussing of the hearer's attention towards a specific item.

The following is a list of the different indexical expressions and other referential terms used by the speaker of the above discourse:

Hii means “*this*” and refers to radio in the context of the text.

U- stands for “*you*” in subjective case and refers to the listener.

-ku- stands for “*you*” in objective case and refers to the listener.

-i- is the equivalent of “*it*” when referring to the radio.

hapa means “*here*” but its reference depends on the scope of the locative expression of the context.

hapo stands for “*there*” also with a meaning that varies in scope depending on the locative expression of the context.

ako means “*your*” and in the context of the text is a possessive determiner of radio.

hiki stands for “*this*” and refers to the show.

leo means “*today*” and refers to the day of the show's presentation.

-ki- means “*it*” and refers to the show

- etu is a possessive adjective meaning “*our*”

sisi is a personal pronoun whose meaning may be “*us*”, like in the context of the text, or “*we*”

ni – is the personal pronoun standing for “*I*”

kushoto means “*left hand*” with reference to the speaker's position.

kuume means “*right hand*” with reference to speaker's position.

mimi means “*I*” or “*me*” and refers to the speaker.

As it can be noticed, each of these expressions has been used in reference to a specific referent.

III.1. Reference

According to Lyons (1977, 177) quoted by Brown and Yule (opcit), it is the speaker who refers (by using some appropriate expressions): he invests the expression with reference by the act of referring. And for Kamil (2007 :1), in pragmatics it is assumed that words do not refer to anything by themselves and it is people who in order to grasp the communicated idea perform an act of identifying what the speaker meant. This act is called **reference**.

Strawson (1950) and Searle (1979:155) also support the first two scholars. The former claims that referring is not something an expression does; it is something that someone can use an expression to do. The latter views that the senses in which speakers refer, expressions do not refer any more than they give orders or make promises.

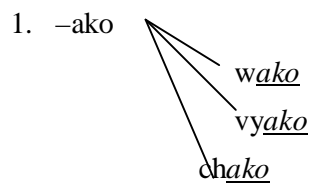
The idea behind the opinion of these writers is that an expression can be used to refer to several and different referents depending on the context of situation. This also may account for the idea that reference is often achieved thanks to some pronouns referred to as referential pronouns and that pronominal reference takes into account grammatical agreement. Thus the interpretation of non-referential pronouns is subject to certain constraints imposed by grammatical agreement. In the above text, for example, pronominal reference is done in accordance with grammatical agreement when the second person singular personal pronoun varies from “u”-to-“ku”-. In fact, when referring to the listener (referent) the speaker uses the second person singular. In the subject case, he uses “u”-and in the objective case he uses-ku-. Also, the second person possessive adjective has-ako as stem but it varies in prefixes depending on the class of the possessed thing (s).

For example,

u-(subject), **ku**-object)

x Unaendelea kusikiliza = you continue listening to

x Na kusihii ubaki...= I beg you to stay...



Radio yako = radio **i**-ako

kipindi chako = kipindi **ki**-ako

mtangazaji wako = mtangazaji **u**-ako

The analysis of these pronouns shows that they have only one referent, that is, any person who is listening to the show. There is no restriction as to whether the listener is male or female, old or young. Any person can be referred to with it.

Another noteworthy point to be made is that the speaker singularizes his listeners though he knows that there are more than one person listening to him. This can be assumed to be but the speaker's choice to make his message straight and make each of his listeners feel particularly addressed.

In his discourse the speaker uses the pronoun I (mimi) to refer to himself. In relation to this, he uses “hapa (here) and hapo (there) to refer respectively to where he is and where the hearer is. In the same way he uses right hand (kuume) and left hand (kushoto) to refer to his right and left hands. It comes out that the place of speech events in reference to the speaker himself is taken as the centre of reference or landmark. Lyons (1977 a: 648) quoted by Levinson (1989: 1079) clarifies this idea when he says that place or space deixis concerns the specification of locations relative to anchorage points in the speech events. Ngoya (1997: 10) furthers the idea by arguing that to describe locative adverbs; the location of figure is in connection with the ways in which the speaker locates the elements with reference to him, considered as the landmark.

Actually the speaker is not supposed to be at the same place as the listener. For example, a listener may be in Uvira or at a further place, but where the radio is listened to, while the speaker is at Bukavu. Also, the listener may be, like the speaker, in Bukavu but not necessarily at the radio station; or he may be at the radio station but not necessarily in the studio. Therefore, the speaker uses “*here*” to describe the place where he is (or place containing him) and “*there*” to describe the place where the listener is, considered as distal.

However, in his speech the speaker may refer to a wider location containing himself as well as the listener. For example, when the speaker says “hapa kwetu Bukavu” a listener who is in Bukavu finds himself contained in the place described. Likewise, when the speaker uses “*hapa*” to refer to south Kivu, DR Congo, Africa, on earth, any listener who is located there is not distant and the speaker cannot use “*hapo*” to refer to where the listener is.

III.2. Presupposition

Lexically, presupposition is something that you believe to be true and use as the beginning of an argument even though it has not been proved (*Oxford Advanced learner’s Dictionary 2006*). The term in Pragmatics is defined as the assumptions the speaker makes about what the hearer is likely to accept without challenge “(Givon, 1979 a: 50). Wikipedia (2012) also mentions that in the branch of linguistics known as pragmatics, a **presupposition** (or **ps**) is an implicit assumption about the world or background belief relating to an utterance whose truth is taken for granted in discourse. Examples of presuppositions include:

- *Do you want to do it again?*

- Presupposition: that you have done it already, at least once.
- *Jane no longer writes fiction.*
 - Presupposition: that Jane once wrote fiction.

A presupposition must be mutually known or assumed by the speaker and addressee for the utterance to be considered appropriate in context. It will generally remain a necessary assumption whether the utterance is placed in the form of an assertion, denial, or question, and can be associated with a specific lexical item or grammatical feature (presupposition trigger) in the utterance. The term also involves the notion of ‘Common ground’ as Stalnaker (1978: 381) says hereafter:

...presuppositions are what is taken by the speaker to be common ground of the participant in the conversation.

For example, the speaker of the text under study uses presupposition in his speech as follows:

1. *Hii unaendelea kusikiliza... (this you continue listening to)*

The speaker presupposes that any listener who is listening to him has been doing this for a long time (probably since the beginning of the broadcast) or implies that the broadcast started earlier than the time of the show’s presentation. The listener on his part accepts this whether he has just started listening or he has been doing it for some time.

2. *Umekwisha amka (= you have already got up)*

Referring to the time of his show 7 AM, the speaker presupposes that his listeners have already got up and every listener accepts this with no challenge. In fact, customarily in Bukavu people get up earlier than 7 AM, and anyone who may be listening to the show in his/her bed might be judged ill, lazy, or abnormal.

3. *Upo ukifwata (= you are listening to)*

The speaker presupposedly knows that anyone who will get his message is certainly listening to the show and must have started, if not since long time ago, at least since a few minutes prior to the time he/she got the message.

4. *Kipindi ulichokifwatata juma lililopita (= the show you listened to last week)*

The speaker presupposes that his listener(s) listened to his previous show. Consequently, he says or assumes that the listener has already some knowledge and interest in the show.

However, this may not be true and in this way break the Maxim of quality which forbids saying what one knows to be not true.

A careful look at what would be taken as common ground for the speaker's presuppositions shows that for some cases there is evidence for the speaker to presuppose but not for others. In fact, it is evident that anyone who has heard or who hears what the speaker has said or is saying has listened to or is listening to the show. But it is not evident that any listener has been listening to the show for some time, has already got up, or listened to the previous show. This is because a given listener might just switch on his radio and get the message. Likewise, a listener might still be in his bed but listening to the show and he might not have listened to the previous show. I then conclude that presupposition can be evident or not.

III.3. Implicature

The term implicature, according to Grice (1975) is used to account for what a speaker can imply, suggest or mean as distinct from what he literally says. Implicature can be either conventional or conversational depending on whether it is determined by the conventional meaning of the words used or it is derived from a general principle of conversation plus a number of maxims which speakers will normally obey. According to Grice (1975: 45) the general principle is called cooperative principle. He presents it as follows:

“Make your conversational contribution such as is required, at the stage at which it occurs, by the accepted purpose or direction of the talk exchange in which you are engaged”.

In the text under analysis for example, the speaker says:

Leo tutaendelesha kipindi (= Today we shall continue with the show...). This implies that the show was started a week ago. Therefore, the listener is not likely to get details of issues already discussed in the previous part. He has to understand the new issues by implying and inferring from what is said in the second part of the show. On the basis of what he/she hears in the discussion he/she has to understand what the message implies as previous discussion and agreement taken by the discourse participants.

III.4. Inference

Inference is a meaning that you can find out indirectly from what you already know. In discourse analysis, the analyst, as well as the hearer, relies on a process of inference because they have no direct access to a speaker's intended meaning in producing an utterance.

Inference also proves useful for cases where the analyst or the hearer has missed previous knowledge or information about something. He/she has to proceed by inferring the meaning and knowledge of previous information thanks to what he has already heard. For example, when the speaker says:

“Katika maulizo hata na majibu tulizo zipata kutoka kwa wasikilizaji wakipindi cha mbele, tuliona kama bado watu hawajasikia vema vinyume vya kusipotumia uzazi bora (= In the questions and even answers we got from listeners of the last week’s show, we found that people have not yet understood the consequences of not applying family planning methods.

A hearer and an analyst of this sentence would infer the meaning as follows:

- a. Questions were asked to guests and the latter answered in last week’s show.
- b. Listeners also asked questions to the presenter and his guests and probably they answered.
- c. The questions and answers were analysed and their analysis showed that people have not yet understood the consequences of not applying family planning methods.

With such a process of inference, the hearer as well as the analyst can get access even to knowledge the speaker did not state obviously but which is part of the meaning of the speech.

III. Conclusion

This paper has attempted to interpret a Kiswahili piece of discourse from a Bukavu local radio station. The analysis has focused on the notions of reference, presupposition, implicatures and inference.

The study of reference has focused on indexical expressions referred to as referential pronouns as well as on other terms used referentially. Their analysis has shown that with the same referent, the speaker can use different but related expressions depending on grammatical agreement. Also, the same expression can vary in meaning in the same speech depending on what the speaker wants to mean.

Presupposition has focused on what the speaker supposes the hearer to know and that the latter is likely to accept without challenge. In other words, it has focused on common ground, common both to the speaker and the hearer as supposed by the speaker. This has shown that during a speech a speaker uses or he passes a message which he does not explicit as the hearer is supposed to know it. The latter also has to interpret the former’s message by assuming as

true, though with no proof, what has been stated or by inferring from the speech from what has been said.

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