

**DISCOURSE ANALYSIS OF CATHOLIC HOMILIES: A CASE  
STUDY OF QUEEN OF APOSTLES SEMINARY CHURCH,  
RUARAKA NAIROBI**

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## DECLARATION

This research project is my original work and has not been submitted for any award of degree in any university.

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This research project has been submitted with our approval as the University Supervisors.

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## **DEDICATION**

To the entire Karanja family and my lovely daughters Eva and Sheila.

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However, I am the only one responsible for any error in this document.

## **ABSTRACT**

The focus of this study is the language employed in Catholic homilies in Queen of Apostles Seminary Ruaraka. The aim is to find out what makes disparate discourse sentences hang together as well as the tools used by homilists to knit together their messages. Further, the study aims at finding out the role of topic as a coherence principle and how the principle organizes the speech into a coherent whole as well as assessing how meaning is conveyed in concrete situations. An eclectic theoretical approach is assumed in the study involving the Halliday and Hasan (1976), Cohesion approach, Brown and Yule (1983); Topic framework theory and Grice (1975), Implicature approach. Data collected was transcribed before being analyzed within the stipulated theoretical frameworks. The study found out that topic is the strongest coherence principle used by homilists to achieve relevance and by the congregation to interpret what is relevant and what is not relevant. The study therefore recommends a further study on the relevance of prosody in homilies.

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background

The present study is concerned with the language employed in homilies in Queen of Apostles Seminary Church Ruaraka. It seeks to find out if sermons are characterized by any linguistic attributes. This is a genre in Stylistics .Stylistics is defined as the study of literally discourse from a linguistic orientation. We do our analysis using the pragmatic approach.

Pragmatics is under the umbrella of stylistics and is defined as the branch of Linguistics dealing with the analysis of language in context. Context on the other hand is defined as the situational environment within which utterances are made .This situational environment includes the knowledge and beliefs of the speaker and listener and the relation between them. We also wish to define the term discourse.

Habwe (1999) defines discourse as an overall communicative activity that subsumes text, context and rules of interpretation. Discourse analysis on the other hand refers to the linguistic approach that studies discourse. This study has been greatly influenced and motivated by studies whose approach is to investigate language beyond sentential confines by considering the contexts of use and rules of interpretation. Thus, it goes beyond studying language at the levels of phonology (study of sounds and sound system) morphology (study of the internal structure of words) syntax (study of how words are



combined together to form sentences) and semantics (the study of meaning) in total disregard of situations of use.

This study therefore, emphasizes the use of language and situations in which it occurs. There has been a resurgence of studies that combine varied approaches and methods to the problem of language use .Some of the disciplines involved are: socio- linguistics, ethnography of speaking, text analysis and discourse analysis. Discourse analysis has had its main thrust from sociology and linguistics. Pragmatics has been influenced by philosophy and linguistics whereas ethnography of speaking has been influenced by anthropology and sociolinguistics by linguistics and sociology.

Discourse looks into large stretches of language. Indeed, in a communicative activity illocutionary acts reflecting on what precedes the conversation, the situations that the interlocutors know concerning communication, the relationship existing between interlocutors, nature of the message being communicated and any other circumstance surrounding the utterance, are all contributory and active role players adding up to encompass the whole field of discourse analysis.

In parlance, 'homily' is distinguished from 'sermon' where sermon names a form of preaching that is not necessarily connected to the biblical and liturgical texts and is heard outside the context of liturgy Waznak (1998).

According to Webster dictionary Sermon is defined as a discourse for the purpose of religious instruction or exhortation, especially one based on a text of scripture delivered by a member of the clergy.

It also defines it as a speech about a moral or religious subject that is usually given by a religious leader or a serious talk about how someone should behave. A homily on the other hand is defined as a short talk on a religious or moral topic. It's also defined as a short sermon. It is also a lecture or discourse on or of a moral theme according to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary.

The terms sermon and homily touch on moral and religious subjects and therefore for the purpose of this study the term homily and sermon will be used interchangeably to mean any speech that is based on a religious teaching commonly delivered by religious leaders, aimed at comprehending a superhuman deity and spiritual matters .The speech concerned goes ahead to show us how the superhuman and spiritual concepts being addressed relate to our everyday life. The speeches are delivered as part of a liturgy .Language varies as its use varies. Consequently it is structured in such a way as to reflect what the communication is all about (the field) the interpersonal relationship between the participants which is determined by the social roles and relationship between the interlocutors (the tenor) and the role the language is playing in the interaction (the mode) Halliday (1973,1994).

For this reason, the homily giver is thus inclined to be quite selective in his choice of language. Therefore, the homilies like any other discourse type have on one hand a language that is similar and on the other hand they stand out as different from other discourses. This allows the homilies stand as a unique genre worth being studied.

A lot of literature on homilies is handled in the field of theology. This is probably because whenever homilies are mentioned, many are inclined to think that this is something worth looking into only as a theological task.

Little on homilies from a linguistic perspective has been done, though speech is a human means of communication and so the words of the Bible were chosen and committed to writing by human beings; the divine contribution is better seen in terms of self-revealing communication, which comes to expression in these words.

### **1.1.1 Background to the Study**

There are different kinds of religious language besides the Liturgical language but these are sufficiently different in form and function to be better considered anywhere: the language of sermons which is key to this study, for example, has more in common stylistically with other varieties of public speaking; the language of theological discourse is also very different. The language of biblical translations is in many important respects different from that used in many public prayers. There are overlaps between all of these areas: obviously they share a great deal of vocabulary; biblical quotation will naturally occur in all religious contexts, either explicitly or implicitly.

David Crystal (1969) points out that a liturgical language needs to strike a balance between ostentatious intellectualism and racy colloquialism. It must be both dignified and intelligible. It has to be formally characterized as God's and not confusable with any other style. He identifies three kinds of distinctiveness that comprise the whole effect, that is:

1. Archaisms
2. Specialized vocabularies
3. Formulaic diction.

He goes on to say that sermons often deliberately echo liturgical language.

It is worthy to note that religious language is characterized by Latin words. This is because Christianity originated in the Roman Empire in AD 33, and Latin was the religious language. Words like 'amen' 'alleluia' 'pastor' etc are all Latin words in the structure of religious English. Religion is from the Latin word *Ligare* (meaning to bind), *Relegere* (meaning to unite or link) and *religion* (meaning relationship). This definition captures the bi-polar nature of religion which involves a relationship between man and a supernatural being Etim (2006) and this proves the language 'sacred' of what is being expressed.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Sermons are not only oral but also written. The language of the scripted sermons has to address a wide range of hearers of various social and educational levels. The kind of language a speech community uses for the expression of its religious beliefs in public occasions is usually one of the most distinctive varieties it possesses. Very often it is so removed from the language of everyday conversation as to be almost unintelligible, save to an initiated minority; and occasionally one finds a completely foreign tongue being

used as the official liturgical language of a community, a language that sermons deliberately echo.

In this study, we seek to find out if sermons are characterized by any linguistic attributes. Homilies like other discourse types and genres have a conventional organization of language unique to them. Therefore the research seeks to answer the following questions:

- i. What makes disparate discourse sentences hang together
- ii. Which linguistic tools do homilists use to knit together the messages of their homilies?
- iii. What is topic and what is its role as a coherence principle?
- iv. Does topic organize a speech into a coherent whole or not? If it does, how does it do it?
- v. How is meaning conveyed in concrete situations?

In this research, we intend to use a descriptive approach aimed at investigating how preachers are able to use linguistic tools to capture human communication. The research intends to look at homilies purely from a linguistic point of view. The homily is thus not only analyzed in terms of grammatical theories, but rather using a pragmatic component in which the rules affecting this unique language of homilies, the conditions and constraints affecting its communicative value, can be formulated based on systematic properties of cohesion, topic framework and communicative contexts.

### **1.3 Objectives of the Study**

The research seeks to:

- i. Give a description of cohesive devices of homilies in Queen of Apostles Catholic Church with a view to finding out the types and how they link homilies.
- ii. Study the topics of homilies in Queen of Apostles Catholic Church to establish how topic applies as a chaining and coherence principle.
- iii. Describe and analyze some aspects of pragmatic meaning.

### **1.4 Hypotheses**

The study tests the following hypotheses:

- i. Cohesion is the surface manifestation of semantic relationship that points to deeper coherence in homilies.
- ii. That Topic is the strongest coherence principle of homilies.
- iii. The organization and pragmatic meaning of homilies in Queen of Apostles Seminary Church Ruaraka can be analyzed using an eclectic approach to discourse analysis.

### **1.5 Rationale**

The study focuses on linguistic attributes in homilies.

The success of any sermon is wholly dependent on the language that the preacher adopts.

It is language that allows the preacher to communicate in his sermon to his congregation and one of the aims of this study is to investigate the connectivity of religious speeches.

This is to establish how the spoken texts of religious speeches are strung together so that the understanding of one textual element is dependent on that of the other. To handle such

textual relationship we find cohesion approach guiding and more revealing because of its capacity for analytic and descriptive adequacy. Cohesion is mentioned and discussed in a number of works such as Brown and Yule (1983), Dijk (1977) Widdowson (1977); but it is Halliday and Hassan (1976) who has popularized it and given it a firm theoretical direction. We employ an eclectic approach; this study provides a means of testing those theoretical claims in cohesion and pragmatics and also regarding the concept of topic. In this way we make our study bear with modern thinking in the area of discourse analysis.

We base our study in Ruaraka Nairobi which is a highly cosmopolitan area where almost all the different Kenyan cultures are represented. For a comprehensive analysis, we dwell on the homilies given by preachers in Queen of Apostles Catholic Church because besides worshipping there and teaching in the neighborhood, the church has proved to be rich in literature for it has a modern library. The priests in the church are also well learned -some up to Doctorate level- and so we feel they are of help when it comes to the topic of discourse analysis of the homilies.

The study is based on homilies given in English language. English is an important medium of oral and written communication in Kenya. It is normally regarded as elitist and a language for the learned and top brass leaders Mutahi (1980) The congregation present is quite broad in numbers, socio-economic and education background compared to the Kiswahili services, this gives an implication that many Christians in Queen of Apostles Seminary tend to be more at ease in the use of English as opposed to Kiswahili and it justifies our choice of English language as being our source of data.

## **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The language of sermons is a vast field and therefore, the scope of study needs to be restricted. This study considers only sermons belonging to the sermon of Romanism and in particular, contemporary sermons. Contemporary sermons that have come into existence since 1971 as this has had a tremendous impact on sermons by determining that sermons should be based mainly on Liturgical and Scriptural sources. Homilies have mainly been looked at in homiletics under theology and this has made it difficult trying to get the relevant literature from the linguistic field. The literature found has had very little mention on the language of homilies.

Our study dwells on the sermons given by priests in Queen of apostles Church, Ruaraka in the month of July 2014. Selected sample needs to represent as much variety as possible. This can be achieved by applying selective criteria in terms of content (sermons based on different scriptural readings) and style (sermons prepared by different preachers). Four main sermons of about thirty minutes are used.

There are diverse groupings of homilies which include:

1. Rebukes which deal with the don'ts.
2. Prophetic that deal with the interpretation of the Bible passage, the wonders of the Bible mysteries and how we need to comprehend them.
3. Apocalyptic which deal with the last days and the final judgment.
4. Hortative that look into behavior change, they require that people change their attitudes, beliefs and actions Kiai (1996)



5. Informatives that deal with the church's teachings and doctrines as well as the elaboration of the papal encyclicals and the pastoral letters.

The study concentrates only on the hortatory and prophetic homilies as they dwell mainly on persuasion which is a major aim of homilies.

### **1.7 Literature Review of General Theoretical Works**

#### **Discourse:**

The term discourse has sometimes been used interchangeably with the term text. According to this view, when one is dealing with matters of texts he can be said to be dealing with matters of discourse as well: Stubbs (1983:9). However, this view has been challenged by scholars who hold what shall be referred to as a complex view of discourse (Fairclough, 1989; Leech, 1983; Leech and Short, 1981). The researchers see text as only an integral part of discourse and therefore the question of attraction does not arise.

Some other ways of looking at discourse have had very little input on theoretical thinking in this area. One of these views is that discourse is spoken and texts is written. Crystal (1987) Discourse analysis focuses on the structure of naturally occurring spoken language as found in such discourse as conversations, interviews, commentaries and speeches. Text analysis focuses on the structure of written languages as found in such texts as essays, notices, road signs and chapters.

Implicit in this quotation is the views that the entities of analysis on which analysis are applied are referred to as discourse and text when they are spoken and written

respectively. However, Crystal concedes that the distinction between text and discourse on the basis of medium is far from being clear cut.

The complex approach to what discourse is could be attributed to Fairclough (1989); Leech (1983) and Leech and Short (1989:209). According to this view discourse is a complex entity constituting a number of aspects.

Discourse according to this view comprises first, the text and this can be either written or spoken. Secondly it includes the circumstances of use or context where there is addresser, addressee with not just the communicative goals but also the rules of interpretation. According to this view of discourse, one cannot talk of discourse without a text. This is because a text is an integral part of discourse without which no discourse can be said to exist Fairclough (1989). Discourse essentially, refers to a communicative activity.

This is where the term differs from text which only refers to a system of visual or auditory Linguistic signs .Discourse denotes an overall organization of a communicative activity with interpretive rule and goals in a specified context impinging on what is said or written .In our view this seems the most tenable definition of the term discourse.

Since the study uses an eclectic approach, we find it necessary in this section to look into other relevant literature review that deals with discourse. Therefore, literature has been reviewed on the three theories that the study employs and looks at how they contribute to the study.

The cohesion approach by Halliday and Hasan (1976) has been used to analyze the data. They assert that cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. That one presupposes the other in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by resources to it. Presupposition is an important aspect in cohesion because it extracts the unrelated sentences by the connected one. Thus relations in meaning of any sentence depending on the surrounding elements.

Levinson (1983) is an important source in the review of the speech act theory as propounded by Austin and Searle. Levinson is also very important in the discussion of Grice's Implicature theory and therefore very important in our study. Stalnaker (1978) discusses the issue of 'common ground' what Grice deals with at length as he talks of Cooperative Principle. Cooperative principle is quite relevant in this study as it is interested in words and what they really mean. We also are interested with words that are accorded meaning that is above the literal. This is where pragmatics comes in, since we have imagery as a major tool in homilies being realized in metaphors, irony, sarcasm and personification.

The simplest cases of meaning are those in which the speaker utters a sentence and means exactly and literally what he says but notoriously, not all cases of meaning are this simple; in hints, insinuations, irony and metaphor the speaker utters a sentence, means what he says, but also means something more. In our view, pragmatics lies where a speaker means 'something more' in Searlean terms. In our analysis of homilies, we looked

at pragmatics from two main concepts, the meaning and communication .We also looked at homilies from the perspective of context and therefore Searle is of great contribution.

Crystal (1969) points out that a liturgical language needs to strike a balance between ostentations intellectualism and racy colloquialism, it must be both dignified and intelligible. It has to be formally characterized as God's and not confusable with any other style.

This contributes heavily to our study as it focusses on the above distinctiveness as sermons often deliberately echo liturgical language.

Burghardts and Walter (1987) highlight on the importance of words. Words as learned from experience can be 'weapons' and words can be 'healing.' Burghardts and Walter recognize the power of words, strongly stating that 'the words form the preacher' and show words as speech acts, the word can be used to bless the Lord and Father but we also use it to curse man and women who are made in God's image. A great recognition that it is indeed the word ( language) that needs to be well manipulated and interpreted to pass on the message in the homily. The study looks at these manipulations of lexical items and how they are interpreted to give meaning to a homily

Brown and Yule (1983) Contributed to our work as they differentiate sentential and discourse topics and introduce a new term called the topic framework. Sentential topics are used in descriptions of sentence structure, and people determine a discourse topic when they report "what a conversation was about." Topic framework is a type of

representation of a topic by a contextual framework consisting of activated features of context within which objects and events talked about are situated, Brown and Yule (1983:75).

### **1.8 Theoretical Approaches**

This study used an eclectic approach. It employed the cohesion approach by Halliday and Hassan which allowed us to see the cohesive devices that unite the homily. The messages communicated were in one block; all concepts revolving around one key concept, the utterances therefore, had to be linked to form a unified text. The study investigated how a preacher connected his utterances to create a text. Cohesion was mentioned and discussed in a number of works e.g. (Brown and Yule, 1983) (Dijk, 1977) (Widdowson 1977); but it was (Halliday and Hasan, 1976) who popularized it and gave it a firm theoretical direction.

#### **Cohesion Approach:**

According to Halliday and Hasan (1976), and Halliday (1985) a cohesion approach can capture the textual ties that enable a text to hold together.

Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. The one presupposes the other, in the sense that it cannot be effectively decoded except by recourse to it. Presupposition is important to the homily giver for he always needs to base his homily on Bible readings that he 'presupposes' have been heard and understood to some degree. From the listener's perspective there is a

presupposition that the homilist will at least base himself on the readings given. Halliday and Hasan (1976:4)

They also discuss the following types of cohesion:

- Reference,
- Substitution,
- Ellipses,
- Lexical cohesion
- Conjunction.

Reference cohesion expresses a semantic relationship existing between the co-reference item and its antecedent for post-precedent. Substitution is one where a pro-form replaces an element whereas there is zero replacement of the elliptical elements.

Lexical cohesion refers to the cohesive effect achieved by the selection of vocabulary Halliday and Hasan (1976:274). In the choice of vocabulary, one moves into the semantic concepts of repetition, antonym, synonymy, hyponymy and collocation.

Conjunction is the type of cohesion that has got to do with propositional (clausal) linkages e.g. adversative, additive and temporal relationships.

### **1.8.1 Grice's Implicature Theory:**

Speakers also mean a lot more than the surface semantic sense. Leech (1983).

The audience on their part use prior-knowledge to infer the most correct implications so the shared knowledge is the basis for those inferences. Gibbs (1987).

In analyzing such context based meanings, we found the Gricean Implicature Theory most useful. The basic ideas of this theory were formulated and articulated by Grice in a lecture in 1967, and later published the views in 1975 in an article 'Logic and Conversation' that appeared in Cole and Morgan (1975).

The main gist of this theory is that there appears to be a conversational constraint which governs people's use of language in a co-operative way. He called this constraint the co-operative principle. The co-operative principle has four maxims namely; quality maxim, quantity maxim, relation maxim and manner maxim. The quality maxim has got to do with truth. It constrains a speaker to speak only that which he considers true or that which he has sufficient evidence. The quantity maxim is about the amount of information to say, that which is sufficient for a certain topic, that is, do not say more or less in a given context of situation.

The relevance maxim has got to do with how related to the situation one's contribution is. Lastly, the manner maxim regulates the way or style of saying something. Something has to be said in a clear and effective way, that is, one should avoid ambiguity, avoid obscurity of expression, be brief and orderly so that the audience may follow and appreciate the message. The most significant contribution of this theory however, is that this regulative system is non-constitutive (Searle, 1969) and hence can be flouted for a number of reasons in varying contexts of situations.

When the maxims are followed in a straightforward way then that is an inclination to semantics and when there is some flout of the maxims and hence indirectness then that becomes the province of pragmatic investigation. Bates (1976). However, Leech (1983) says there cannot exist a clear-cut boundary with these two terms. It is safe to see them as mere tendency towards one rather than the other.

Basing on the culture or prior knowledge and rules of interpretation, listeners can understand when somebody is violating the maxim for truth reasons and so long as other maxims are held, one can still be regarded to be operating within the co-operative principle.

The conversational implicatures form a great part of the homilies and therefore Grice's theory is of great importance in understanding the homilies. This flouting may result in conveying a meaning in addition to the literal meaning of his utterances. It is this additional meaning that Grice calls the Conversational Implicature.

### **1.8.2 Topic Framework**

In our investigation of homilies, we focused on the notion of topic, its management and how it functions as a coherence principle .In doing this, we used the topic framework approach. The topic framework constitutes a rejection of characterizing a discourse topic in terms of a single proposition. Brown and Yule (1983:73).Rather it constitutes seeing topic broadly with reference to the activated elements from the text domain and other elements from the physical context.



According to Brown and Yule (1983), the activated elements constrain a speaker to speaking topically, that is, within the framework.

The topic framework is composed of elements which the speaker and the addressee share and which give the topic of their discussion direction and this may be elements both from physical context such as place and preceding text of discourse.

For example, a topic framework which would have [+ church arena] as a physical attribute cannot allow a speaker to speak about cell biology or rheumatism unless the speaker relates it to the topic framework.

External features include; time, place, addresser, addressee, physical environment etc. On the other hand, text features include; title, questions, noun phrases and sentences in prior or preceding text of a discourse.

According to the topic framework approach, a certain topic is determined by considering the activated features and then working out a set of things the speaker is talking about. The topic is then drawn comprehensively because no single proposition can summarize a topic.

Since most topic titles are assigned beforehand, we referred to a speaker speaking topically when speaking about a topic given beforehand. But we referred to speaker's

own topic for a topic generated by him. Within the topic framework we also have the concept of topic markers.

When a speaker moves from one topic to another, certain linguistic markers e.g. 'and' 'however' 'except' are used. These we referred to as topic shift markers .The markers show that a speaker is leaving the earlier topic and beginning another one.

## **1.9 Methodology**

In this research, we analyzed data from field work. The data was collected from different church liturgies in Queen of Apostles Church where homilies were given.

### **1.9.1 Target Population**

The research was mainly based in Nairobi and was concerned with homilies delivered in Queen of Apostles Church Ruaraka. The diversity in languages used, that is, English and Kiswahili would render the study too wide to be well handled and that is why we narrowed down to English homilies. Nairobi being a highly cosmopolitan urban center and being representational of a wide variety of Kenyan cultures was chosen to represent the data collection area. The congregation seemed to be more representational of age and gender on Sundays than on weekdays so we based our data on the Sunday service to help us get a more natural phenomenon surrounding the homilies.

### **1.9.2 Sample Size**

The study focused on the Sunday English sermon, in this case the second mass in Queen of Apostles Church as this captured people of different socio- economic backgrounds, ages, sex and ethnic groups unlike the first English mass. Data was collected from seven sermons in Queen of Apostles Church.

Four sermons were considered representative because of the practicality of analyzing such micro-elements responsible for cohesion.

### **1.9.3 Data Collection Tools**

A data collection tool was employed. The study thus relied on primary and secondary methods of data collection which were:

Tape recording

Tape recording of the homilies in progress was done.

Secondary data:

The secondary data was obtained from the existing materials containing information on language of homilies.

### **1.9.4 Data Analysis**

The primary data collected was analyzed and described by focusing on pragmatic aspects like metaphors. The aspects of cohesion like substitution, reference, lexical cohesion etc. were studied. Aspects of topics like topic markers were also looked into.

We often used the same material for analysis and for this reason, we commented on some parts of our data more than once from different vantage positions. An excerpt could be discussed for cohesion and yet found crucial in yielding some vital insights of meaning and topic. This helped in showing that a text could be used to demonstrate all these textual and discursal relationships and hence this approach was important for exemplification.

We reproduced the data in print and qualitative approach used in this study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### COHESION IN HOMILIES

#### **2.1 Introduction**

The aim of this chapter is to explain how elements of cohesion are employed using homilies from Queen of Apostles Church, Ruaraka. Cohesion refers to the surface text, that is, grammatical dependencies in the surface text while coherence refers to the textual world, that is, the configuration of concepts and relations which underlie the surface text.

Cohesion is in the level of semantics, which refers to relations of meaning that exist within the text, and that define it as a text. Ruqaiya and Hasan (1976) say that cohesion occurs when the interpretation of some elements in the discourse is dependent on that of another. For this study we use the cohesion approach by Halliday and Hasan (1976). They assert that: Cohesion occurs where the interpretation of some element in the discourse is dependent on that of another. This will help us see the different links that enable the preacher to string the different scripture readings into one entity so that the congregation receives it as one block.

We did consider the cohesive devices expounded upon by Halliday and Hasan (1976).

They include:

- a) Reference
- b) Substitution
- c) Lexical cohesion devices
- d) Conjunctive relations (conjunctions)

We were guided by the following questions:

1. Are there cohesive devices in homilies and do they create cohesion?
2. How successfully have these devices been used by the homilist to ensure that the homily emerges as one whole?

## **2.1 Reference**

Reference occurs when one item in a text points to another element for its interpretation and can be accounted as 'Exophoric' or 'Endophoric' functions.

(M.C Carthy, 1991) "Exophoric reference directs the receiver 'out of' the text and into an assumed shared world". Exophoric involves exercises that require the reader to look out of the text in order to interpret the referent.

Endophoric reference refers to the text itself in its interpretation, that is, their interpretation lies within a text. It has two classes:

- a) Anaphoric relations-all kinds of activities which involve looking back in texts to find the referent.
- b) Cataphoric relations- activities that involve looking forward for their interpretation.

Examples of these referential tools:

- a) Personals-which refers to the pronouns, be they personal or possessive pronouns.
- b) Demonstratives-refer by means of location.
- c) Comparatives-refer by means of identity or similarity (refer to comparative adjectives, quantifiers and adverbs).

In the homilies selected, we shall mainly focus on the full pronoun, the demonstrative and a few instances of the pronoun prefix to avoid an over- marking on reference alone.

In the first homily, the homilist invites the congregation to listen to the word of God and to listen to Him as He speaks .He goes ahead to introduce the subject of analysis 'Types of soils' by asking the congregation to state the different types of soils that they know. He uses the pronoun 'it' to refer to the subject e.g. there are very many types of soils in the world and each has its own characteristics.

This reference is anaphoric in nature because 'it' refers to a name of a thing that has been mentioned earlier .Anaphoric ties give cohesion between the two sentences, so that we interpret them as a whole; the two sentences together constitute a text (Halliday and Hasan, 1976).

The homilist also involves the congregation and himself by the use of the pronouns 'I' 'we' 'you' 'us' and 'our'.

The use of 'you' is deictic in addition to the fact that it is context dependent. For instance:

- ⤴ Listen to Him as he speaks to us.
- ⤴ As He calls us to look at our own lives
- ⤴ How many types of soils do you know?
- ⤴ What type of soil are you?
- ⤴ What type of soil am I?
- ⤴ Thus, in the first reading, we have been told....
- ⤴ How do we receive the word of God when it comes?

In the second homily, the preacher introduces his sermon with a short story

Several people were waiting for the sacrament of confession and one of them was an old woman. This woman started by saying the normal formula but she never said she had sinned.

From the above statement the pronoun 'she' is anaphorically used and points back to the woman who had gone for confession. This woman goes ahead and says, 'you know I have a daughter-in-law and she is disturbing me.' In this case the 'she' in the statement above refers to the daughter-in-law fore mentioned. The homilist has also used the pronouns 'I' 'we' 'you' and 'us' to refer to the congregation and to himself. For instance:

- ✧ We as human beings know for sure that in every step of the way we make one mistake we commit a sin.
- ✧ And you can imagine all those years that we have lived in this world
- ✧ But God has always had mercy on us,
- ✧ God has always been patient with us,

Homily two has an example of cataphoric use in the following utterance:

Some of us have taken it to be (...) you know, very cool, it's okay, it's fine let us do it, everyone else is doing it, everyone has a 'mpango wa kando' (concubine)

In the sentence above, the pronoun 'it' is used before the key word 'mpango wa kando' (concubine) and one only gets to know what it is pointing at after reading the next utterance.



From the above analysis, we may conclude that homilies are quite exophoric because they refer greatly to the context of situation and as (Halliday and Hasan, 1976) explain, the reference is non-cohesive since it depends on the context. The lack of cohesiveness may be brought about by the fact that the homilist and his congregation share a lot in common. The analysis thus helps us draw the conclusion that in sermons, the main word or main item that carries the key concept is mentioned at the initial stages and followed by frequent references to it which the congregation then keeps linking what is said afterwards. The references serve as a constant reminder to the words carrying the key message. Anaphoric reference helps to give the speaker and the audience common ground and shared knowledge which homilists strive to offer in order to establish a working relationship with the audience.

### **2.3 Substitution**

(Halliday and Hasan, 1976) say that substitution takes place when one feature replaces a previous word or expression. It is concerned with relations related to wording and it is a way to avoid repetition in the text itself. There are different kinds of substitution namely:

- ⤴ Nominal substitution which is the replacement of nouns with 'one' 'ones' or 'same'
- ⤴ Verbal substitution which is the replacement process of verbs with 'do' 'did' or auxiliaries
- ⤴ Clausal substitution which is the replacement process of a clause by 'so' or 'not'

In the first homily, the homilist says:

- ⤴ Some of these different types of soils absorb the water, but others don't
- ⤴ The word 'don't' replaces the words -absorb the water.

The above is an example of verbal substitution which is the replacement process of verbs with 'do' 'did' or auxiliaries.

We can therefore conclude that substitution is aimed at avoiding the similar words to be repeated exactly at the next sentences or clauses.

Substitution is used to seek clarity .Sometimes the homilist wants the response from the congregation and the congregation is led into answering.

In homily one the homilist asks the congregation

How many types of soils do you know?

The congregation then responds three, four, and five

This serves to confirm whether the congregation is following whatever is going on in the message. It not only gives the homilist a sense of confidence that he is communicating but also a chance of correcting and restructuring his format or repeating his message if it's not clear.

## **2.4 Ellipsis**

(Harmer, 2004) defines ellipsis (...) as “words are deliberately left out of a sentence when the meaning is still clear”. In ellipsis some elements are omitted from the surface text, but they are still understood. Thus omission of these elements can be recovered by referring to an element in the preceding text.

### **2.4.1 Categories of Ellipses**

**Yes Answer:-**

Ellipsis is present after the response 'yes'

In homily three the homilist uses this yes answer ellipsis

When you brought your husband or wife to the church, was it not a risk when you were asked if you would take him/her to be your lawfully wedded husband or wife and said 'yes, I do'?

The 'yes' ellipsis the clause that follows. In the example above the words ellipsed are ' I take him/her to be my lawfully wedded husband or wife. The remaining sentence is deleted out of response. This is because one can get the information from the sentence preceding the question. This is a clear example of economy.

#### **No Answer:-**

In homily three again the homilist uses the no answer ellipsis a lot. For the thirty years that you allowed yourself to be married to that man or woman, did you know that he or she would live with you for all that long? Did you know that your husband /wife would may be live with you for two years and then leave you? The congregation responds by saying 'no'

In the above examples the 'no' ellipsis the clause 'I did not know that he or she would live with me for this long' and 'I did not know that he or she would live with me for two years then leave me' respectively.

The answer 'No' suffices and thus the remaining part of the sentence is ellipsed without losing any of the sentence value. It's used for the same reason as the 'Yes answer'.

### **Clausal Ellipses:-**

(Halliday and Hassan, 1976) Place the 'Yes ' and 'No' answer ellipses under clausal ellipses.

In homily two the homilist says:

He said that he no longer watches news in Kenya because they are full of violence. First article, second article, third article full of violence, so bad news, how the devil has pitched a tent among us.

In the above example the words full of violence are omitted in the following lines

First article

Second article

In third full of violence

In the line above the word article is omitted.

### **Verbal Ellipses:-**

(Halliday and Hassan, 1976) Call this ' Ellipses within the verbal Group'. In English language it encompasses finiteness, polarity, and tense.

In homily one, we are told:

Very many words have been said to us and a lot of advice has been given to all of us, some adhere to them but others don't.

The words omitted are-some do not adhere to the many words and piece of advice given to us.

Ellipses give a high degree of economy and also ensure that the answers from the congregation do not take too much of homily time thus derailing the discourse. The context is also very important in the comprehension of the clauses and phrases affected by the ellipses. Above all, they help in creating cohesion because as we look back into the preceding statements, we see the link between the ellipsed clause and the one earlier mentioned. Therefore, chaining is well done and the discourse emerges as a text.

## **2.5 Conjunction**

(Halliday and Hasan, 1976) say that in describing conjunction as a cohesive device, we focus our attention on their function of relating to other linguistic elements that occur in succession but are not related by other structural means.

### **2.5.1 Additives**

The additives include words that denote addition. They include:

- ⤴ and,
- ⤴ in addition
- ⤴ Exemplification like: in other words, else, or, alternatively, for example, such as and similarly.

And-links a clause to the earlier information where the homilist finds it adequate to add further information on what he has said e.g.

- ⤴ There are many types of soils and each has its own characteristics.
- ⤴ And in all these types of soils, you can plant different seeds

This is when he uses the conjunctive as a signal that the information is merely additive to the foregone information.

In homily two there are several instances where the additives are used For instance,

- ✧ We as human beings we know for real and for sure that every step of the way we make one mistake.
- ✧ What has become of our continent? killings here and there
- ✧ Political wrangles here and there

Like in homily one the additives are used to give additional information. Additive information helps to build ideas. The homilist is able to build information from one idea to another using this type of cohesion so long as the ideas are related.

### **2.5.2 Adversatives**

Adversatives denote contrast and like additives are also very important in homilies .It seems they, unlike the additives which are used to add information from the same point of view, show a logical relationship and mark a point of divergence .In the homilies, they play a crucial role of showing topic shift.eg

- ✧ They are not going to be productive but others will be productive.
- ✧ Some of these different types of soils absorb the water but others don't.
- ✧ You come to church, the word is preached but the moment you leave that door, the word is gone and you can't remember it anymore.
- ✧ You get into the world, yet, you....

Adversatives are important in piecing together the contradicting views of a speaker. When the conjunction is used to introduce a clause, listeners expect information that is not compatible with the earlier information. Remember complete incompatibility of information cannot hold together in one speech.

- ⤴ In homily two the conjunction 'but' is greatly used, for instance,
- ⤴ We sin against God...but God has always had mercy on us
- ⤴ We want instant justice for somebody who has wronged us but that is not God as He is always patient with us.

In the above statements 'but' is used to contrast human beings with God.

We find a case where adversatives because of their role of point of view, are used to begin new topics e.g.

- ⤴ But God has always had mercy on us, God has always been patient with us.
- ⤴ But what is happening nowadays?

### **2.5.3 Causative**

Apart from additives and adversatives the other type of cohesion that is significant in homilies is the causative. This type of cohesion unlike the additive shows logical relationship between clauses. E.g.

- ⤴ So, the word of God when it comes into the world, when it comes to us, does it do what it is supposed to do?

The homilist uses the causative element to tie this clause to his earlier remarks.... for that reason; he refers to the earlier clauses and ties them with the present one by using the element 'so'. The logical relationship is such that there are seeds that fall on poor soils and fail to germinate.

In homily two the causative element 'because' is widely used to denote the cause and effect of various things, for example,

- ⤴ If you want to call somebody far away from here, in Africa, outside Africa, you do that in a minute because the world is so fast.
- ⤴ God for sure is always waiting for us because He knows that without His mercy, without His patience that is informed by love then we would not survive in this world.

#### **2.5.4 Temporal Conjunction**

Here we have the conjunction 'then' 'next' 'last' and any others that show time concept .Like the adversative, this conjunction is also minimally employed by homilists.

In homily one the homilist says:

In all these types of soils you can plant different seeds then at the end of the day some will surprise you because nothing is going to grow.

God sends rain and it falls on the ground among the different types of soils and then there is germination.

In homily two the homilist says:



If God was to count all the sins we have committed and mete out a punishment then we would never survive.

In homily three the homilist also uses the temporal conjunction though minimally too.

Last Sunday we were reading about Jesus Christ talking about the kingdom of God. When business people spotted something shiny they would want to go there then they would find out if it was something of value.

The temporal conjunction is minimally used because the metaphysical is on many occasions not dependent on time. A lot of the spiritual concepts are not controlled by time. This helps to explain why this conjunctive element is not common.

In conclusion, conjunction is a very crucial type of cohesion especially for tying clauses together into one whole. (Halliday and Hasan, 1976) have argued thus conjunction is not cohesion per se the way reference is. This is because reference is more direct in copying semantic attributes of a certain item, However, conjunction only indirectly, signals that something has gone before or is being expected and it is a central type of cohesion in creating a cohesive textual world. If a homily lacks appropriate cohesive devices, it means that it will remain a collection of stories and of messages. (Reuter 1997) says; “it is a collage, with the preacher zigzagging to get from one story to the next. Such a homily lacks unity and so the relevance of the message becomes difficult .It is therefore the duty of homilists who wish to communicate well and efficiently to look into this concept continuously.

## 2.6 Lexical Cohesion

This section deals with the lexicon-grammatical relationships that obtain in a text. In these relationships words relate to one another as antonyms, synonyms, hyponyms, collocatively or by way of repetition that is partial or total. Each homily will be looked at in turn.

### 2.6.1 Repetition in Homily

In the first homily the words;

- ⤴ Listen to the word of God
- ⤴ Listen to Him as He speaks to us

The words 'listen to' are repeated for emphasis

- ⤴ How many types of soils do you know?
- ⤴ There are very many types of soils in the world, and in all these types of soils you can plant different seeds.

The word 'soil' has been repeated twenty-one times in homily one. This is in order to emphasize the subject matter.

- ⤴ Listen to the word of God
- ⤴ Every now and then you listen to the word of God
- ⤴ All these years you have been listening to the word of God

The phrase 'the word of God' is repeated nineteen times in homily one, this is because it is likened to the 'seed' which is grown in different types of soils.

- ⤴ You can grow seeds in different types of soils

⤴ Some seeds fell on the rocky ground...

⤴ Then the same, same seed on the same, same soil give different yields

The word 'seed' is symbolic for the word of God that reaches different people and has been repeated eight times.

Repetition of the word 'seed' and 'soil' is appropriate since this is the subject matter.

In homily four, the homilist repeats the following words:

Children, children always seek the greatest good always

Children always seek the greatest gift

Repetition is a favored style for clarity. Although it may sound cumbersome having to repeat some lexical elements, however, it helps the speakers to be clearer than the case would be when using reference or any other type of cohesion device.

Repetition helps in not only making a point clear but also in impressing the point deeply in the minds of the people.

### **2.6.2 Antonyms**

The term antonym refers to a word that means the opposite of another word.

In homily one we have no case of antonym. In homily two the homilist says:

Even among us Christians we have the good seeds and the bad seeds but we should not let the bad ones overcome the good ones.

Another example in homily two is:

Solomon asked for an understanding mind to govern the people. That he will learn between good and evil.

Homily three also has some examples of antonyms used.

Jesus Christ was talking about the kingdom of God where we saw God being patient and allowing the good and the evil ones to exist until the end of time.

At that time of the harvest, the good will be separated and put in to the kingdom of heaven and those that did not warrant will then be taken into hell.

Here we have the antonyms heaven and hell, and good and evil.

Though scarcely used, antonym is employed in homilies. The role that it plays is mainly that of contrast; showing extremes of some characteristic with the involvement of good, it appears that when the congregation is introduced to the bad, then the antonym becomes more valid. It is not used as a cohesive device since it is sentential. It is a tool used to enhance their message and create vividness.

### **2.6.3 Synonymy**

This is a word or expression that has the same or nearly the same meaning as another in the same language (Oxford Learners Dictionary). In homily three we get an instance of near synonymy in the following.

Business people venturing and going about their way would sometimes as they moved from one place to another see something good.

Therefore, these two ideas about business is what Christ did and wants us not just like those merchants. The terms business people and merchants are near synonyms as used in the homily.

In homily two we get the following:

You had to wait for so long and know, get so tired in a line

In a queue waiting to withdraw or get your own money

The words line and queue are synonymous.

In homily one:

A sower went sowing

Jesus Christ encountered a farmer who was working in a farm

Are you working in the vineyard of the Lord?

The farmer without looking at him because he was busy sowing his seeds told him, 'No, can't you see this are the seeds I am planting?'

In the above sentences the words 'farmer and sower ' and 'planting' and 'sowing' are synonymous

It is hard to come up with exact synonyms and even if one does, on many occasions, the said synonyms may be context dependent .This renders the concept of synonyms quite complex and as it appears, this complexity leads to homilists avoiding its constant usage.

It is used to show the connectivity between two sentences.

Synonymous lexical items can be used effectively to reduce the problem of monotony.

To avoid loss of meaning, the homilist may opt to use a common synonym or even use the term in translation form, in a different language more comprehensible to the congregation.

## CHAPTER THREE

### TOPIC AS A COHERENCE PRINCIPLE IN HOMILIES

#### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on what the speaker is talking about. We use the comprehensive approach of characterizing topic not as a mere title or proposition but rather as a broad entity constituting elements that relate in a specific way. In this case, the elements cohere to relate to what we refer to in this study as topic framework. This is some kind of pool that helps define some elements as relevant or not relevant during a speech. It is assumed in this approach that topics belong to individual speakers since they are the ones who build them from stage to another.

We have concentrated more on aspects like topic assignment, topic shift markers, what topics are and the means of analyzing a discourse in terms of topics.

#### 3.2 Topic Assignment

One of the features of topic distinguishing casual talk and many other discourse types is that in casual conversation no single topic is fixed or assigned beforehand (Brown, 1983, Crystal, 1969). Topics are negotiated by the participants according to the principle of relevance. The most important guide is, what is relevant here, to me, to him, and now (1981).

There are topics where title or key entities are assigned beforehand and the audience knows about them. They may not, of course, know the elements that may finally

constitute the composition discourse entity of topic. It is important to note that although speakers generate speaker topics they normally relate those speaker topics to the topic framework. The topics need to relate to the purpose, aims and intentions of the day.

If we look at sermon one, how does the issue of soil, seed, the story of the farmer and the world cup relate to the speech event and the context? The priest introduces his speech by the topic types of soils and the topic serves as a unifier. Since the priest is speaking to an audience which is exclusively Christians it helps him achieve common ground with his audience. The topic of the seeds relates immediately to the different types of soils in which they are sown. On the other hand, the topic of the farmer and the priest has great bearing on how we receive the word of God which is the 'seed' in this case and 'we' the different types of soils. It relates to our actions as Christians. The farmer is not ready to receive God's word immediately like most people do.

In a way, all the speaker topics need to relate to one another and have a relationship to the day, people and main message in the day's readings. No topic should be seen as completely irrelevant. Looking at the second sermon, we can draw similar conclusions. The homilist talks of God's patience with human being, he also talks of technology which helps us achieve things almost instantly, and he goes on to talk of a father committing incest with his own daughter and then the many evils in the world. He concludes by talking of soldiers in a battle field and finally about seeking forgiveness from God.



Although he generates his own topics as mentioned above, they are all relevant to the context of the speech event and therefore, topic framework.

In the third sermon, the preacher talks about finding a treasure (which is the word of God).

He also talks about harvest time where the good and the evil will be separated and sent to heaven and hell respectively.

He looks at Christians of early days and what they did to acquire the treasure and calls us to do the same.

He talks of risks involved in getting the treasure and gives the story of King David then later looks at King Solomon's prayer and concludes by appealing to Christians to love God's law.

All these topics that the preacher generates are relevant to the context of the speech.

In conclusion, one can say that different issues can constitute a topic of a Homily. However, it has to be made relevant to the context.

### **3.3 Topic and Coherence**

There are many ways in which a fragment may be tied together. One way is by cohesion. Cohesion refers to the means by which elements of a text tie together so that the

interpretation of some text elements is dependent on elements in the same text. Cohesion is only present when there is an explicit surface element in a text. In cases where there is no such element then we have argued for the presence of coherence.

Coherence can be global or local. Global coherence tends to be broader, requiring larger structures, whereas local coherence is contiguous and may not require such larger structures.

Part of a discourse may also cohere by means of the speech acts present (Widdowson, 1977, 1979). Other researchers like (Crombie, 1995; Huey, 1983) argue that a discourse may also cohere because of the relationship holding between sentential predicates and arguments. This type of coherence they have called intra-clausal coherence.

Most important to this study is topic coherence where elements hold together because of their relatedness to some topic.

This chapter was guided by the following questions:-

1. How does the notion of topic help to understand coherence of an utterance?
2. How can the topic framework explain such a relationship?
3. How does topic ensure coherence at both local and global levels?
4. What coheres together a whole speech?

Most researchers find the notion of topic important because it helps to explain how sentences tie together into chunks (Brown and Yule 1983:70), so that it is possible to discern that a piece of fragment is about 'Money' and the other about 'Dance'

Let us examine some examples from the data. In sermon One, the first fragments begins this way:-

1. It is another Sunday we are gathered  
To listen to the word of God  
To listen to Him as He speaks to us....

And ends with:

2. And he even calls us to look at our very own lives  
And how we relate

In Homily 2, One fragment begins this way:

Several people were waiting for confession

The sacrament of confession

And ends with:

3. I have my daughter-in-law and she is there and she is disturbing, she went on and on about her son and daughter-in-law. She was very convinced that she is not a sinner but she wasn't convincing at all.

What holds together this long fragment about the women in homily two, is cohesive devices and besides these cohesion devices, one can find coherence if the notion of topic is appealed to. There is a sense in which the fragment is about one thing and not the other

thing. In this case, the chunk seems to be about the woman confessing as a key entity. The following are some of the elements that constitute the topic framework.

- i. Several people waiting for confession
- ii. The speaker is a woman
- iii. The woman has a married son who is mentioned and she therefore has a daughter-in-law
- iv. The woman says she doesn't look like a sinner and that she hasn't sinned
- v. She says her daughter-in-law is the sinner as she is disturbing her.
- vi. The priest then tells us that we are all sinners
- vii. That God always has mercy and forgives us
- viii. If God did not forgive us we would have been eliminated from this world.

The preacher as the speaker ensures that whatever he speaks is well tailored to meet demand of relevance (Grace 1975; Coulthard 1981). Each sentence falls within the topic framework and that every sentence helps in broadening the scope of topic framework pool so that whatever follows that sentence relates to it in a special way. The preacher can be said to be speaking topically because he is relevant to the context. He is speaking topically because all the stories he is giving are pointing back to the merciful and forgiving nature of God. For example, he gives the story of a father who impregnates his own daughter to depict evil overcoming the good because people love sin yet God always

forgives man whenever we ask for forgiveness. This falls within the topic framework because we learn of God's forgiving nature.

The other sermon we analyze is Sermon three:

One of the fragments centered on one topic starts like this:

4. We are given three parables.
5. These are very important for us today because it is finding the treasure.

The fragment ends with the following utterance:

That whatever hidden treasure there is, there is no hidden venture that has no risk

Although this chunk of discourse is tied by cohesion elements, it can still be argued that its elements relate to one central issue. Let us see how the following topic elements relate to one another.

6. While finding the treasure what do you do?
7. During the cold season, the treasure makes you wake up even when it is cold.
8. It needs to be given the best care.
9. In the olden days, people would hide their treasure in their land in a particular corner, they would go and after some time come back and dig out their treasure and go home very happy.
10. If they found pearl, they would sell everything they had and buy the pearl because it was the most treasured piece of worthy good.

These elements (6, 7, 8, 9, and 10) hold together because they are related to finding and taking care of the treasure.

The first element (6) is seeking to know what one would do to get the treasure. The second utterance (7) shows the sacrifice one may make to get the treasure. The third one (8) urges one to give the treasure the best care. The fourth (9) shows how people in the early days hid their treasure safely and the fifth (10) the risk they took by selling everything to acquire the treasure.

Each element has a specific function in the topic complex. The elements relate not only to the prior elements but even to the following elements in the discourse domain. It is this complex relationship that makes it possible to say that the discourse elements are thematised and staged so that their order is significant. Like in the fragment cited above, its last utterance serves as an ending because its goals are conclusive.

12. Jesus Christ is around, there is a treasure, a treasure that those who follow Him have found and just like that person who goes and sells everything to buy that pearl, me and you are called this morning, this day, and begin this very moment to ask ourselves – Have we discovered the pearl that is Christ? Are we ready to sacrifice everything else and have Him as our possession?

This utterance serves to close up the topic complex because of its conclusive nature. When one sees it, it indicates something has gone before it.

One other fragment from the second sermon is the one about soldiers.

It begins with the following elements:

13. We should realize that we are like soldiers in a battle field and soldiers in a battlefield can only be toughened when he is frightened.
14. Sometimes back, the president of Uganda said that Kenyan soldiers, Kenyan army is a career army, we go there to enjoy ourselves.
15. A year or so later, our soldiers went to Somalia, they did wonders
16. We live among the bad, we face temptations and when we face it, we realize how sinful we are and ask for forgiveness from God and fight as Christians and we become even tougher, we become better in this life.

These fragments seem to focus on courage to fight evil as Christians. It has a number of elements that constitute 'WHAT THE SPEAKER IS TALKING ABOUT.' For example,

17. Let us pray that we may be tough as Christians and we may follow Christ's teachings, in everything that we do, say and think about.
18. That Christ will triumph, God's Commandments may be a theory here on earth.

The first element is about prayer to follow Christ's teachings. It contributes to the topic framework on God's forgiving and merciful nature.

The second element is a plea that people do good, and make God's commandments known and obeyed throughout the world.

The two elements above and the rest of the elements in the fragment tie together functionally to make the topic whole.

In a way, all the speaker topics need to relate to one another and to the day's sermon. No topic should be seen as completely irrelevant.

Look at the stories in sermon one although, the homilist generates his own topics, like that of football and the farmer, they are all relevant to the speech event and Topic framework .When one reads those various topic elements there is a feeling they are about one general topic. This is because of their topic coherence .They are developing the same topic. Each element therefore, contributes in some way to the building of the topic.

In conclusion, we can say that any issue can constitute a topic or a homily. However, it has to be made relevant to the context.

### **3.4 Topic Shift Markers**

In homilies, there are certain linguistic markers that show that a speaker is introducing a new topic or he is concluding a topic. These formal markers appear in other discourse type like stories where we have markers like:

'Once upon a time. 'Do you know what?' etc (Linde 1985: Stubbs 1983)

Each topic is clearly and conspicuously marked by certain linguistic tools. The first topic which is about listening to the word of God begins thus:



It is another Sunday we are gathered to listen to the word of God.

To listen to Him as He speaks to us.

This is a beginning remark after the normal salutations. The homilist does not just move to the new topic, he has to signal when he is starting it.

He goes ahead to introduce the subject matter-the different types of soils.

How many types of soils do we know?

This signals a new topic. Were it not for this Linguistic marker it would be possible to argue that the first topic is continuing .However, two things indicate the beginning of a new topic.

One when the homilist says,

'We are called to listen to the word of God' and two when he asks the different types of soils that they know of. This is important in that it leads the congregation to the next idea.

The third topic is signaled by the following utterances:

In all these types of soils, you can plant different seeds, and then at the end of the day some will surprise you because nothing is going to grow. They are not going to be productive but others will be productive.

The first utterance signals what has gone before.

The utterance that signals a new or fresh topic is:

They are not going to be productive but others will be productive.

This shows that the preacher clearly prepares the congregation for the next topic. He does not start haphazardly. He systematically indicates that he wishes to speak about one more thing. Then he moves on to announce what may be considered as the title when he says:

When I look at you, all of you ,when I look at you human beings with respect to the word of God, I compare them to the different types of soils that there are in the world.

The utterance serves as a clear announcement of what follows. The congregation uses it as an element of the topic framework and a basis for interpreting the rest of the topic representations.

It may be necessary to ask why the preacher announces what he wants to speak about to the congregation. Perhaps he finds it necessary to announce what he wants to speak about because the sermon is drawn from the four readings read to them. That being the reason, the preacher makes sure he clearly signals to the audience when he is moving to a new topic. In this way, the common title becomes part of the shared information of the topic framework which the audience uses to respond and interpret whatever follows.

The utterances below are also topic markers in homily:-

1. What type of soil are you?
2. What type of soil am I?

The first utterance signals what has gone before-the different types of soil and the second utterance provokes one to judge him or herself which is part of the topic framework of this genre.

The utterance that signals a new or fresh topic is thus,

In the first reading, you have been told God sends rain to come into the world, it falls into the ground among all these different types of soils.

In sermon two, the preacher displays more or less similar linguistic markers for topic shift.

In the first instance, the preacher is talking about confession and begins by telling a short story;

Several people were waiting for confession, the sacrament of confession and one of them, one of those who came was an old woman

The utterance, several people were waiting for confession, is meant to be a topic marker. The preacher does not just start talking about people who were present for confession, he affectively signals it.

The second topic is marked in a somewhat complex way.

We as human beings know for real and for sure that every step of the way we make one mistake and we commit a sin.

This introduces the topic that he dwells on at length; the many times that we fall into sin yet God keeps forgiving us.

The preacher well aware that he is moving onto some other topic to which the attention of the congregation needs to be drawn says:

And our world nowadays is so fast and everything we want to do, we want to get results at once.

This utterance 'and our world nowadays is so fast' serves as an introducer. It signals a new topic on the past and current technology where everything is almost instant.

Another topic in sermon two is introduced thus:

We want instant justice for somebody who has wronged us but that is not God

This is an explicit marker as the element that follows partly introduces the topic that announces the issue of instant justice and God. The issue of God not punishing us if we repent.

Another topic shift marker used by the preacher is:

The latest I will tell you that caught my attention was the day before yesterday

The element 'the latest' is an explicit topic marker introducing the most recent happening.

The preacher successfully marks topic shift and even announces the next topic so that he can add that information of 'introducing' to the topic framework. Without this marker, it can be hard for the audience to treat what he will have said as relevant and coherent.

Conclusions:

One important question we have been attempting to answer is how the whole speech holds together? The speech holds together first, because of the relatedness of the topic complex and secondly of the topic shift markers which helps link one chunk of speech to another. With the topic shift markers, a homily is seen as a continuous discourse. Without the topic markers the speech will be segments of fragments each dealing with its own topic.

The sermon has clear finishing codas thus agreeing with (Stubbs 1983, and Linde 1985) that discourses do not just come to abrupt ending without traditionally acceptable means of ending them.

There are statements that lead the listeners, the congregation, and the participants in a discourse into the that a discourse is coming to an end. Closings in homilies may take various formats such as summary closing where the homilist gives a summary or key point in the homily.

Another one is motivational closing also called the congregation to go and act or the challenge given to the participants. Having heard the message, can you now go and act and put what you have heard into practice

Example in homily two:

Let us pray that we may follow Christ's teachings.

### **3.5 Topics in Homilies**

In this section, we have analyzed a sample of topics.

We have pointed out that a topic cannot be paraphrased in one proposition or cannot be effectively captured in a title. However, different elements may express the complex entity the topic is. (Brown and Yule, 1983) Have emphasized that there is no single way in which a topic title can characterize topics.

In homily one there are seven topic fragments:-

The first fragment can be characterized as follows in terms of what the homilist is talking about;

It is another Sunday that we are gathered

To listen to the word of God

To listen to him as he speaks to us

And he challenges us in different way

And even calls us to look at our very own lives

In this topic fragment, the Homilist starts by calling people to listen to the word of God then moves to the key elements of his speech, that of examining our own lives

The second topic has the following fragments:

- How many types of soils do you know?

- There are very many types of soils in the world and each has its own characteristics
- And in all these types of soils, you can plant different seeds.
- Some will be productive while others will not what types of soil are you in relation to the word of God?
- God sends rain into the world and it falls on these types of soils and there is germination
- When the word of God falls, where does it fall?
- Some of the soils absorb water, others do not
- So the word of God when it comes into the world, when it comes to us, does it do what it is supposed to do?
- And how do we receive it when it comes/
- If you are the sand, then you remain as before, but if you are clay or silt or alluvial soil then it leaves you a better person than you were
- It empowers you, energizes you, gives you more power and more hope
- If there was anything that was growing in you and was about to wither it is gives life

When we consider this fragment, we may think, of a number of titles, i.e., 'soils' 'seed' 'rain' word of God. The various elements cited above can characterize what the Homilist is talking.

In the first element the Homilist talks of different types of soils (different Christians). The second talks of each soil having different characteristics, and in the soils seeds can be

planted and some will be productive and others not. This he likens to the word of God when is preached to different people who perceive it differently.

The third fragment talks of the effect the word of God has in people's lives, some change and others don't.

The fourth talks of the new energy and hope that they experience when they receive the word of God.

The fifth element is about whatever good was about to wither after one receives the word of God.

We see a fragment that is well knit and fitting within the topic framework.

In Homily 2. The second topic which is actually the speaker's topic is about confession and forgiveness.

-We as human beings make mistakes and commit sins

-But God has always had mercy on us

-God has always been patient with us

-If God was to count all the sins we have committed and mete a punishment, then we would never survive we would have been eliminated

-He is not like us human beings who want results at once.



This is a fragment with different elements each contributing significantly in its own way in building up the topic entity.

We look at homily three. In this homily we see nine topic fragments well marked linguistically.

We look at the sixth topic fragment.

- We see now in our first reading.
- King David is chosen by God when he is still a young lad
- And his son Solomon has been given an opportunity to take up the role
- King Solomon seeing the risk that was ahead of him takes that risk of leading such a great nation.
- He knows the only way to overcome this fear is to have God on his side
- He did not have a great army, he did not have great wealth but had God on his side
- He goes to God and prays that he will be able to manage the risk ahead of him

When we look at this fragment, we see the Homilist telling us of King David who was called to serve God while very young.

In the second utterance king Solomon has the opportunity to take up the risk of leading the great nation.

In the third utterance, King Solomon sees the risk ahead and prays to God.

In the fourth utterance, King Solomon knows that the only way to succeed is by having God on his side.

In the fifth utterance, we learn that he did not have money or wealth but had God by his side.

We can see how the elements fit together with the prior elements. It fits well in the topic the prior elements. It fits well in the topic framework set by an utterance like the third utterance above which says that Solomon had an opportunity to take up the risk and in the last utterance Solomon goes to pray to god that he will be able to manage the risk ahead of him.

This element contributes to as a means of involving God in leadership. Solomon prays to have God by his side. This is emphasized by the contributive element 'but'

He did not have a great army, he did not have great wealth but had God on his side.

This contributive element helps to emphasize the need to seek the 'treasure' God

## CHAPTER FOUR

### GRICE'S IMPLICATURE AND STYLE IN HOMILIES:

#### 4.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, we looked at the notion of topic framework which was successfully used in homilies. This chapter is concerned with pragmatic meaning. We are using Grice's implicature theory (1975) as well as some styles employed by homilists who include: metaphors, rhetorical questions, narratives and scripture quotes.

As Schiffrin (1994:227) says, Grice helps us provide a set of principles that constrain speakers sequential choices in a text and one that allows hearers in a text to recognize speaker's intentions by helping to relate to what speakers 'say' in an utterance to its text and contexts; it offers a view of how participant assumptions about what comprises a cooperative context for communication, a context that includes knowledge, text and situation. The theory shows how all the above contribute to the meaning and how those assumptions help to create sequential patterns in talk.

We focus on two major aspects i.e. persuasion and explanation, showing:

1. How these aspects are seen as basic for implicature and are used to create pragmatic comprehension
2. How metaphysical concepts are explained to allow them be seen pragmatically
3. How the two help communicate meaning based on the Gricean maxims

## 4.2 Persuasion

(Hart 2000:70) says that persuasion is an attempt to move hearers to an opinion or conviction. It connotes the power to change attitudes, arouse emotions and stimulate action.

In the giving of Homilies, the speaker takes on a concept that he is convinced of its value, presents it to his congregation in a comprehensive manner and attractively emphasizes on the areas that he intends the listener to focus on, in an attempt to lure him into accepting a change.

Persuasion is accounted for by the four maxims but mainly those of quality and quantity. This is because in persuading someone, one may find it necessary to over-dwell on a concept thus making it more informative than is required which may flout the quantity maxim. On the other hand, if one says what he is not convinced to be true and tries to persuade people about it, then the second maxim, which of quality is flouted.

In Homily 1, repetition that is a concept of style flouts the maxim of quantity in addition to that of manner in order to achieve persuasion. The homilist urges his congregation that they should listen to the word of God.

Listen to the word of God

Listen to him as He speaks to us

So, the word of God when it comes in to the world,

When it comes to us, does it do what it is supposed to do?

And how do we receive it when it comes?

How do you receive it when it comes?

Repetition is vital for acquisition of persuasion. The Homilist intends to persuade people to not only listen to the word of God but to also receive it and do what they are called to do. In so doing, he finds that he needs to flout the quantity maxim; he makes his contribution more informative than is required.

Still in the concept of persuasion, one is led into wondering how the Homilist is able to persuade his congregation to pursue metaphysical invisible. In other words, how is the Homilist able to convince his congregation to act on something that he lacks adequate empirical evidence

In Homily 2, the concept of forgiveness is brought forth by means of confession.

Several people were waiting for confession

The sacrament of confession

And among those who came for confession was an old woman,

To persuade the congregation in relation to forgiveness he says:

We as human beings know for real and for sure

That every step of the way we make one mistake and we commit a sin

We go against the commandments of God

But God has always had mercy on us

God has always been patient with us

If God was to count all the sins that we have committed and mete out punishment

Then we would never survive

We would have been eliminated from the world.

The implicature here is that God forgives our sins if we confess them for He is merciful and will punish us if we do not confess our sins. If the maxim of quantity is not flouted, this becomes hard and almost impossible to achieve.

Also the maxim of quality is left untouched. This is because the homilist in the above example does not talk of himself as a different entity. He talks of 'we' and 'us' so it is a concept affecting an entire community:

We go against the commandments of God

But God has always had mercy on us

God has always been patient with us

The homilists rely heavily on the faith of the Christians as background knowledge that whatever is said, though it may not have empirical proof, will be taken to be true.

As per the relation maxim, homilists use more of metaphors and other figurative devices to relate to whatever is read to the people. This we shall discuss later in the same chapter.

In homily one, we hear:

When I look at you all with respect to the word of God

I compare you to the different types of soils that there are in the world

Greet the person next to you and ask him/her

What type of a soil are you?

Then ask yourself

What type of a soil am I?

The implication here is that the congregation is 'soil'

This style in language violates the maxim-be relevant. Though the connections may not be biologically relevant, they help link the metaphysical to the empirical world.

It is in so doing that the preacher connects the two worlds. It is through flouting, that the homilist is able to persuade his congregation into believing that what he is saying is relevant to them and that it is true.

Therefore, though we have a lot of meaning that is communicated literally through the use of semantically chosen lexical items, we also have the flouting of the Gricean maxims in order to capture the additional and implied meaning. The conversational implicatures are so context dependent and this depends heavily on the situation and the background information that is shared by both the homilist and his congregation.

### **4.3 Interpretation**

In the oxford learners' dictionary, interpretation is defined as a particular way in which something is understood or explained. The word explanation is defined as a statement, fact or situation that tells you why something happened; a reason given for something.

In the study of homilies, we deal with interpretation and not explanation. In homilies we are interested not in the explanation of the words or stories in the scripture but in a connection of how these concepts fit in our day-to-day living. This notion helps remove the temporal and historical constraints. It helps pave way for easy metaphorical parallelism between the metaphysical and the empirical.

The quality maxim may be flouted without the homilist being seen as a liar. This is because whatever is said or read, is a story detached from the listener, it is the lesson that is relevant. Thus the maxim of relation overrides that of quality.

Homily one introduces two themes:-

God sends rain to come into the world,

It falls onto the ground among all these different types of soils,

And the seeds germinate, and then we are being told,

When this word of God falls, where does it fall?

It must fall and react with the soil

Some of the soils absorb the water but others don't



The theme of the 'rain as the word of God' is introduced then after this the theme of 'soils as the Christians' brought forward.

The homilist flouts the maxim of quality by talking about soils and rain while in the actual sense is referring to the word of God and Christians.

#### **4.4 Styles in Homilies**

We have majorly focused on four major concepts of style that homilists mainly employ, namely metaphor that is aimed at assisting the homilist capture the metaphysical and relate it to the known empirical world, the rhetorical questions that are a special breach of the quantity maxim as they carry information intended by the speaker, narratives which also relate the metaphysical and empirical world by using everyday life experiences and Scripture quotes also a common style used by homilists to imply that his preaching is based on the word of God.

In this study we are mainly interested in the verbal style. (Doob 1961) in his discussion of style groups the tenets of style into figures of speech such as metaphors, similes, proverbs etc, the central characteristic of which is that they are symbols further removed from the referents for which they stand than the usual symbol of language.

#### **4.5 Metaphors**

As a representation of symbols of speech, we take the metaphor which is a very strong tool employed by the homilist to grasp the metaphysical and link it to our empirical world

A great deal has been written on the concept of metaphor both in literature and linguistics (Myers and Simms 1989, Longman dictionary of contemporary English 1992; Leech 1969)

Most of the researchers agree on the basic view that metaphor has got to do with meaning transfer.

From a pragmatic point of view, we seek to view metaphor as a falsity. We shall argue that cases of metaphor are breaches of the quality maxim of the co-operative principle (Levinson 1983; Grice, 1975)

#### **4.5.1 Ontological Metaphor**

(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) talk of ontological metaphors. This is where experiences are viewed in terms of the empirical.

In homily two we come across one such metaphor. This is when the homilist says:

We should realize that we are soldiers in a battle field and a soldier in a battle field can only be toughened when he is frightened.

The homilist uses the expression metaphorically and the congregation proceeds to infer the implied meaning .The truth maxim has been flouted because we are not literally soldiers but he chooses to refer to the Christians as soldiers.

In the Kenyan context, soldiers are known to be loyal to the government of the day. They also take command when it is issued yet they are also swift and quick in action. In the obtaining context, the metaphorical expression of a soldier serves a vivid and effective function of showing that Christians should be loyal to God's word, they should obey His command and should be swift and quick to accept God's way.

#### **4.5.2 Structural Metaphors**

(Lakoff and Johnson, 1980) describe structural metaphors as those metaphors that contain a concept that is metaphorically structured in terms of another. An idea as an object is communicated through a Linguistic expression, such that a concept is understood in terms of another.

In homily one for example, the homilist says:

Greet the person next to you and ask him or her, 'what type of a soil are you with respect to the word of God?'

Then ask yourself, 'what type of a soil am I?'

This utterance is made after the homilist asks about the different types of soils there are and he goes on to talk about how the seeds are sown on different soils and germinate after it has rained only for it to be choked by thorns or dry up if the soil doesn't absorb water.

The idea is borrowed from the wet fertile soil and planted in us.

The soil is equated to 'us'. This makes the metaphor structural in nature. Nevertheless it is easier to visualize oneself as dry barren soil than as a dry spiritually barren person.

It is probably with this in mind that the style of metaphors is of great importance to the homilist.

In homily three the homilist says:

Jesus Christ is around; He is the treasure, a treasure that those who follow Him have found.

Are we ready to sacrifice everything else and have He as our possession?

This statement is pronounced after the homilist has discussed the things people did in earlier days to possess pearls and how best they took care of them. This idea is borrowed from the valuable minerals like pearls and planted in us.

The treasure is equated to Jesus Christ. It helps us see the worth of this treasure and the need to acquire it as well as the risk involved in acquiring it.

If the homilist in homily one tells people that they are dry soil, thorny or rocky soil that yields nothing, the congregation may become irritated. This may hinder further reception of the message. The metaphor then, plays the risk of euphemizing unpleasant language.

It is evident that metaphors are preferred by homilists. A major reason for this being that, they are good tools to relate the metaphysical and the empirical. Metaphors can be used to elicit feelings and emotions. We mentioned earlier that the homilist has a role to persuade his listeners to change and to adopt new spiritual styles. Metaphors also enhance implicature. There is a lot of unsaid information which when contextually related passes much more information than what is actually being said. Thus, not only do metaphors use economy of words but also act as major information carriers.

## 4.6 Rhetorical Questions

The term rhetorical question has been defined by various researchers (Leech 1969; Richards et al., 1985) nearly all of them agree that rhetoric questions are like forceful statements that are in question form and require no answer.

Unlike metaphors which flout the quality maxim of the co-operative principle, the rhetorical questions are a special breach of the quantity maxim. This maxim states, 'say enough information as it is necessary in a given place' Although at face value some information is carried by a rhetorical question, at a deeper level the information intended by the speaker is supplied.

The pragmatic inference of a rhetoric question is done on the basis of the understanding that there exist two major questions in language. First is the normal question with an information gap. The second is the rhetorical question with a seeming information gap on the surface but with information at a deeper level. Information can only be retrieved with the understanding of the co-operation principle and the inference rules in a context of situation.

In homily one, the homilist after discussing about different types of soils asks the congregation:

What type of a soil are you?

He then asks them to ask themselves,

What type of a soil am I?

The homilist is delivering this sermon to teach the congregation on different types of people and how differently they perceive the word of God.

To respond to that situation he finds the rhetorical questions ideal. In real term, it looks blank but as an underlying strategy it looks loaded since the audience can make correct inference of what the homilist means.

Other rhetorical questions are found in homily two where the homilist says:

How come that we as Christians who know what is supposed to be done, what is right do not want to stand firm?

How come we do not want to be witnesses of Christ and especially at this particular time when the world is going upside down?

The homilist emphatically demonstrates that most Christians today are being overcome by evil things happening in the world and are therefore not ready to stand firm. This questions serve as a challenge to Christians to stand firm and overcome evil.

In homily three, the homilist asks:

Have we discovered the pearl that is Jesus Christ?

Are we ready to sacrifice everything else and have He as our possession?

The rhetorical question serves to minimize distance between the preacher and the congregation.

He uses 'we' in both questions and it shows that he includes himself too and emphasis the need to sacrifice everything to receive Jesus Christ.

In homily four, the homilist asks:

Do you trust your God like an infant?

Do you trust your God like that little child?

Do you trust God?

In conclusion it is worth noting that rhetorical questions seeking information. On the contrary, they are giving the information they seem to be seeking. The audience finds the homilist's questions as breaching the quantity maxim which though is upheld at a deeper level with the availability of filler information. Rhetorical questions which satisfy all the conditions of semantic meaning are less informative in the obtaining context. They only become informative when they are thought about in terms of the extra-linguistic knowledge.

#### **4.7 Narratives**

Narratives are generally regarded as stories, chronologically told (Wales 1985; Holman 1980)

In this study, we have used the notion narrative to mean a story told about an event which is normally in the past tense (Linde, 1985).

When one looks at the sermons we are using as our data, they reveal a wide use of narratives as a pragmatic technique. The question is:

1. Do these narratives serve any pragmatic functions?
2. Can implicature be generated from them or not?

In homily two for instance, the homilist gives a short story:

Several people were waiting for confession

The sacrament of confession

And one of them, one of those who came was an old woman.

This woman started by saying, you know, the woman formula

But she never said that, I have sinned, these are my sins she said; well you know, father as you look at me and as you see me, I don't look like a sinner. I haven't sinned. I was wondering why would you or why would she want to say that?

Then she went ahead and started saying, 'you know, I have my daughter in law who she is there and she is disturbing, and she went on and on telling me about the daughter in law and her son and she was very convinced that she is not a sinner but she wasn't convincing at all.

The implication here is that Christians tend to find fault in others and they assume that they are righteous.

Why does the homilist use this narrative at this point in time? The homilist flouts the maxim of quality. He is certainly saying more than he is supposed to. This is because a sermon can be delivered without necessarily telling a story.

However in homilies, stories seem to be a favored style. The homilist uses the narrative to relate the metaphysical and empirical world by using everyday life experiences.



Another example of the narrative technique is in homily four where the homilist says:

He gives the story of a mother, walking in the streets of Nairobi, holding a child (her son) as they walk and here they meet a very big man, very big, he looks like a mountain to the young boy and he looked and looked and looked, comparing his height to the man's size, he was shocked and he asked the mother, 'mum what happened to this man?'

He is so big, and the mother wanted to finish the story because the boy used to suck his thumb, so the mother decided, this is the time to stop and the mother said, " he is that big because he sucks the thumb" and the boy was happy, the boy got an answer from the mother.

Two weeks later, again, walking on the same streets, they met a couple, a husband and wife, and this time it was the woman who was big. She was pregnant, the ninth month, the kid looked at the woman, this woman is so big and the kid shouted

'Yes! I know what you do, that is why your stomach is that big, I know, I know, and the couple became irritated at first and wondered, What lesson is this mother teaching this child, that it knows why I am so big?'

The narrative above flouts the maxim of quality as the boy in question is saying that which he has not enough truth about. The couple mistake what the boy means by saying 'I know what you did to be this big,' this is because they do not have the previous information the mother had given the young boy.

This style also creates humour as the congregation laughs at the couple because it is not aware of what the young boy meant by so saying; in this case the boy meant the sucking of the thumb.

In homily one the homilist gives the following narrative:

There was a young priest who went to preach, so as he went preaching, he encountered a farmer who was working in a farm. And then he approached the farmer and asked the farmer “Are you working in the vineyard of the lord?” The farmer without looking at him because he was busy sowing his seeds told him “No, can’t you see this are seeds I am planting?”

The young preacher responded to him “No you don’t ask that” are you a Christian? The farmer again without looking at him responded, “No I am John” I know you are looking for Christian and he lives a kilometer away from where you are.

After that, the man looked at him and again he had not given up and asked him; do you believe? “Do you believe in his resurrection?” How? Now the farmer was attracted by that question, then he looked at the man and asked, “When is it going to happen?” Then the young preacher said, it can be today, it can be tomorrow, it can be next day. The farmer removed a handkerchief, wiped his face and then told the man, “Please don’t mention this to my wife because rarely doe she go out and if you mention it to her the she will be out for three days and I don’t want.”

The implication from the above narrative is that salvation or resurrection can happen anytime we receive God in our lives but not all people are ready to receive God's word and they may do ahead to hinder others from receiving it just as the farmer intends to do to his wife.

Remember if did not have the capacity to interpret and appreciate the narrative, it can only be a story well told.

#### **4.8 Scripture Quotes**

The homilies that we are looking into are given immediately after some Bible readings.

In homily one the homilist says:

We now want to go to the gospel.

There are different types of soils

The rocky soil.

The seeds were spread there; they sprouted and died because there was only little soil to absorb water.

The sandy soil which holds no water and so the seeds die.

This choice of reading is stylistic. This is because the homilist uses it to refer to a key paragraph, a paragraph on the major point. The point on how different Christians perceive the word of God when it is preached to them is the background of this message.

In homily three the homilist refers back to a certain reading

We see now in our first reading, king David after being chosen by God when he was still a young lad dying old and his son Solomon was given an opportunity to take up the risk,

king Solomon knew the risk that was ahead of him, he takes that risk of leading such a great nation but a lot of fear.

But in this fear, he knows the ways to have God on his side. He did not have a great army, he did not have great wealth but had God on his side.

What does he do? He goes to the Lord and he prays and Solomon said “Oh lord my God, you have made your servant king in place of David by birth.

The above Bible quote is important as the homilist uses it to remind the congregation about the main message in case it gets mixed up with many of the other supportive sentences. It helps to allow the listeners to focus on the message of the homily. A topic being used to cohere the homily by being a constant point of reference and that’s why we look at the reading as stylistic as it is a style used to help the homilist communicate better. There is also implicature in this reading style. The homilist implies that whatever he is saying is not his own making but is based on the word of God. This implication elicits authority on the words of the homilist. He talks with power from the supernatural deity. The authority emanating from this gives ground for persuasion among the listeners. The reading style is therefore important to homily givers.

In conclusion, we can say that the pause in homilies is stylistic and plays a variety of roles in enhancing emphasis, thus qualifying as a device under rhetoric. Therefore, in acquiring persuasion and passing the message, the pause is important.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

#### 5.1 Introduction

This study aimed at testing the following hypotheses:

1. That cohesion is the surface manifestation of semantic relationship that points to deeper coherence in homilies.
2. That topic is the strongest coherence principle in homilies
3. That the organization and pragmatic meaning of homilies in Queen of Apostles Seminary can be analyzed using an eclectic approach to discourse analysis.

We collected seven Sunday homilies in Queen of Apostles Seminary Church. We chose the Sunday English homilies for the congregation that attended the services was more than weekdays. We narrowed to four homilies, which had the features that our study was addressing.

Our focus was on three problems of discourse .We looked at

1. The problem of connectivity by using cohesive devices
2. Implicature and styles in homilies
3. The problem of topic coherence.

In our analysis of discourse there was a problem of a suitable theory. We realized that what we had set out to analyze would not be achieved through the use of a single theory.

That is why we decided to use an eclectic approach to account for the diverse aspects of discourse .Through these theories we were able to capture links in homilies, pragmatic meaning and styles used in homilies.

In chapter two we focused on cohesion in homilies. Homilies were seen to rely heavily on reference, but because the reference is exophoric and on many occasions dependent on the context of situation, there is little cohesion. Demonstratives were used deictically as they refer a lot more to the context of situation rather than to the linguistic context. Homilies analyzed exhibited endophoric reference that was mainly anaphoric and through this, strong cohesion is realized.

Homilies made use of lexical cohesion for emphasis and cohesion .They mainly employ repetition. The conjunctive devices were not quite frequently used. Substitution and ellipsis were present though ellipsis was more preferred because it enhanced economy of lexical items and helped reduce monotony. Therefore, lexical cohesion was seen to be important in connecting homilies.

Chapter three looked at the notion of topic framework which was used successfully to analyze the homilies. The idea of speaker topic and speaking topically applies differently. In conversation, speaking topically means contributing on the same topic like speaking on a Saturday wedding each speaker has to speak on Saturday wedding. Speaker topic means one speaker may speak on the Saturday wedding and another on the Friday wedding.

However, the two topics have to be relevant to the topic framework, among other things speaking on a wedding and not an accident, for instance. In religious discourse, speaker topic refers to a speaker's own topic while speaking topically means contributing to the topic whose title or heading was assigned beforehand. In most cases, homilies like generating topics of their own.

Chapter four looked at Grice's implicature and styles used in homilies. We saw that though meaning is communicated literally through the use of semantically chosen lexical items, we also have the flouting of the Gricean maxims in order to capture additional meaning. In the same chapter we looked at the style as exhibited through metaphor. We analyzed structural and ontological metaphors. We saw that the metaphor is an important tool to the homilist. This is because one of the main reasons of the homily was persuasion and the metaphor did this very well through flouting the quality maxim to persuade the congregation. Rhetoric questions are also commonly used in homilies. They serve to carry information at a deeper level the information intended by the speaker.

Narratives as an aspect of religious speeches pose a problem since they seem like a serious infringement on the quantity maxim. However narratives are used as a base for implicatures. Implicature was seen as important in enhancing persuasion that is a main goal of the homilist. We saw the Gricean maxims being flouted in order to capture persuasion. Interpretation was seen to rely on background information that both the homilist and his congregation shared. At times, the homilist had to flout the maxim of

quantity in order to dwell on a topic and thus elicit the required interpretation. It was evident that homilists put considerable effort, to enhance persuasion and interpretation.

This study had three hypotheses. The first hypotheses has been positively tested by showing that discorsal organization can be analyzed by an eclectic approach .We had the eclectic approach constituting of cohesion approach, topic framework and implicature theory. Cohesion is the surface manifestation of semantic relationship that points to deeper coherence in homilies.

The study has also tested the hypotheses regarding cohesion as a surface feature pointing to underlying organization.

This study has also revealed that meaning is largely implied .A number of strategies like narratives, metaphors etc are responsible for implicature. Finally, the study has demonstrated that topic is by and large the strongest coherence principle being used by the homilist to achieve relevance and by the congregation to interpret what is relevant and what is not relevant.

## **5.2 Suggestions and Recommendations for Further Research**

This is a study on the analysis of homilies as a discourse. In this study we mainly looked at the verbal linguistic concepts that homilists use to tie together his message to form a unified text. For future research, we suggest a future study on the nature of prosodic elements like:



- Intonations,
- Stress,
- Tempo
- Duration.

It is possible that in oral media these elements play a key role in modulating meaning. Also noted was that code-mixing was evident in some homilies, since we did not dwell on it, we recommend that further study looks into it to establish reasons it is used and its effects in homilies.

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