

The Needs for Using Discourse Markers in The Speech Process

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Abstract: This article analyzes the needs for the use of discourse markers in the speech process from a linguopragmatic perspective. Discourse markers are studied as linguistic units that ensure the logical coherence of speech, clarify communicative intentions, and regulate interaction between interlocutors. The research examines the role of discourse markers in forming textual cohesion and coherence, as well as their pragmatic functions and speech strategies, illustrated with examples. Furthermore, the necessity of using discourse markers in both spoken and written discourse and their significance in enhancing communicative effectiveness are revealed. The findings of the study have important theoretical and practical value for discourse theory and contemporary linguistic research.

Keywords: Discourse, discourse markers, speech process, pragmatics, communicative competence, connective units, communication strategy, textual cohesion, functional linguistics, speech acts.

Introduction: Discourse markers (DMs) are important pragmatic units in the speech process; they serve to shape the structure of communication, ensure the logical connection of sentences, manage the flow of thought, and establish a spiritual-psychological connection between interlocutors. The needs for their use emerge at cognitive, functional, emotional, and communicative levels. For example, units such as “ya’ni,” “demak,” “axir,” “qani endi,” “xullas” have a specific semantic-pragmatic load at each stage of communication.

1. Cognitive needs: understanding communication and forming coherent thought. The first necessity for using discourse markers is cognitive need, that is, facilitating the listener’s and reader’s understanding of speech and expressing thought coherently in the speaker’s mind. In any speech, information must be orderly and logically connected so that it is easily understood. DMs serve precisely as means that ensure this coherence (connection). For example, when the word “demak” functions as a conclusion connector between sentences, it directs the

listener’s attention to the fact that the next idea is a result. Likewise, the word “ya’ni” indicates the need to provide an explanation, and “ammo” signals that contrasting content is coming. In this way, DMs guide the listener’s attention to the necessary point, strengthen the chain of ideas in the text, and ensure semantic continuity. As linguist N. Jo’raeva emphasizes, “discourse units strengthen inter-sentential relations, form a chain of thoughts, and establish a connection between speech structure and the psyche.” This scholarly view clearly demonstrates the cognitive function of DMs: with the help of DMs, the speaker organizes the flow of thought logically in the mind and transmits it to the listener’s mind in a coherent manner. Especially in complex argumentative texts, DMs function as a cognitive “bridge” by facilitating the transition from one idea to another and managing the process of inference (drawing a conclusion). For example, let us consider the following sentences in scientific style: “These analyses are based on phonetic changes. That is, the stress position causes the phoneme to alternate.” In this example, the connective

word “ya’ni” serves to provide a scientific explanation and to justify the conclusion. As a result, the reader immediately understands the logical connection between the first and the second sentence: “ya’ni” shows that the second sentence is an explanation of the first, thereby speeding up the process of comprehension. Also, units such as “nima bo’lganda ham” (meaning “in any case”) are used in the text to maintain the general direction of meaning, not to let the thought deviate from the main topic, and thus reduce cognitive load. From a cognitive perspective, DMs help manage the attention of the listener and reader, keep information in memory, and carry out the necessary inference. For example, the word “xullas” signals the highlighting of a general conclusion after several details; at that moment, the listener focuses attention and prepares to draw a conclusion from the previous information. Therefore, DMs are a cognitive bridge that divides the complex speech process into convenient segments for the brain and makes it easier to digest new information. The following view expressed by linguist X. Kenjaboev also confirms the cognitive-psychological significance of DMs: “Discourse markers always indicate the psychological state with which the author approaches speech. They influence the reader’s or listener’s manner of understanding.” That is, through the DM used by the speaker, it is possible to understand the speaker’s attitude toward the thought (for example, whether it is confident or doubtful, excited or calm). The DM, in turn, also provides a sign in the listener’s mind about how this thought should be interpreted. From the perspective of relevance theory, DMs are contextual signals through which the speaker indicates the most appropriate relevance, that is, the importance of each sentence in the overall communication. Another cognitive need is to maintain continuity of speech by filling pauses and breaks.

2. Emotional needs: expressing attitude and experiences. In any live communication, the speaker’s emotional state and attitude play an important role. One of the important functions of discourse markers is to satisfy emotional needs, that is, to serve the expression of the speaker’s and writer’s subjective feelings and attitude. Often, subtle emotions and modal states that cannot be expressed through purely grammatical or basic meaning-bearing words are

conveyed through DMs. For example, the word “axir,” unlike ordinary “chunki” or “sababi,” gives a tone of objection and dissatisfaction: in the sentence “Axir you said this yesterday!” the use of “axir” conveys that the speaker is disappointed or uses a reproachful tone. In such cases, “axir” is not only a causal connector, but also a unit that provides emotional-expressive force. Discourse markers are also valuable as means that color speech intonation. A. Abduazizov called DMs “a sign that determines the stylistic coloring of the text, a stylistic indicator.” That is, through DMs, the tone of the sentence, emotional coloring, and stylistic register (formal or informal, sincere or cold) are manifested. Literary works and dialogues make effective use of DMs to increase stylistic richness. For example, in the sentence “Axir, in his childhood he could not remember such cold springs” (X. Sulton), “axir” shows the character’s inner surprise and disappointment, and increases the emotional effect on the reader. If we remove this DM, the sentence would remain only an objective message; “axir” gives it a specific mood and makes the character’s psychological state perceptible to the reader. Some DMs in Uzbek speech directly express emotional attitude: “nahotki” – disbelief and surprise; “voy” – fear or surprise (incipient tone); “qani endi” – regret and longing; “iltimoski” – imploring hope; “bechora” – a feeling of pity. Through such markers, the speaker reveals feelings and thereby influences the listener. In particular, by saying “qani endi,” the speaker expresses an unfulfilled wish and adds emotional depth to the dialogue. As M. Aliqulov notes, with the help of DMs the dialogic nature of speech, psychological tone, and stylistic diversity are expressed, that is, each person can give their words a unique intonational and expressive character. In Uzbek, some morphological markers also perform a discourse-emotional function: the suffixes -ku, -chi, -da, -mi fundamentally change the tone of the sentence and load it with a psychological-emotional meaning. For example: “I told you, but you did not listen.” – here the suffix -da adds a slight irony and offended tone to the sentence; “Is that so?” (surprise and disbelief); “But I had warned him!” (self-justification, disappointed tone). In these examples, although the suffixes do not give an independent lexical meaning, they serve as intonational-emotional signals. According to linguist R. Qodirova, such affixes are “intonational signal means

between semantics and pragmatics” and serve to express the speaker’s intentional (psychological) intention. Thus, not only separate words but also morphological elements participate in the role of discourse markers, and they add a very rich emotional palette to speech. In different genres and styles, the emotional load of DMs also differs. Official-scientific style is usually free of emotion; here words like “afsuski” are rarely used, while neutral connectors such as “ya’ni,” “asosan” dominate. In literary style, emotional impact is strong: units such as “nahotki,” “qani endi,” mentioned above, serve to create a dramatic effect. In journalistic and publicistic style, the author may also use words like “aslida,” “darhaqiqat” to express an attitude, thereby creating a tone that emphasizes their position. In oral conversations, DMs ensure sincerity and psychological closeness between people: for example, by saying “Qara” or “bilasizmi” we attract the interlocutor’s attention, with “to’g’risi” we show the desire to speak openly, with “axir” we express dissatisfaction or surprise and reveal our emotions. In dialectal variants and youth speech, the emotional range of DMs becomes even wider. For example, while “qani endi” in the literary language expresses wish-regret, in the Qashqadaryo dialect the form “opa endi” is used and gives the same feeling. These regional variants also show rich emotional coloring. In the oral speech of young people, sometimes the Russian “короч” (in the meaning of “xullas”) or the English word “like” are added in speech—these are also a type of discursive interpolation and give speech an informal, free tone. In social networks, emoji signs such as “😊” can also function in place of DMs to express emotional state, because there is a need to convey emotion in written chat. It should be emphasized that conveying emotion through discourse markers controls not only the speaker’s mood but also the emotional impact produced in the listener. That is, when the speaker uses units such as “axir,” “voy,” “albatta,” “baribir,” they display their mood and at the same time draw the listener into a certain emotional field. For example, if your interlocutor says “voy, I am very tired,” through “voy” they also evoke pity or sympathy in you; in the expression “baribir, I will come,” “baribir” conveys determination with a tone mixed with a bit of resentment to the listener. In conclusion, discourse markers establish an emotional bridge between

speaker and listener. This need is so strong that in translation it becomes a major problem to preserve DMs or replace them with a functional equivalent: for example, the Uzbek units “axir” and “-ku” cannot be translated directly into English, but their emotional tone must be conveyed in some way. In the studies of international translation scholar A. House (2015) and local scholar N. Komilov (2020), the issue of emotional loss of DMs in translation is specifically emphasized—they stress that DMs must be deeply analyzed in intercultural communication. Thus, discourse markers satisfy psychological and emotional needs in speech: through them we add a tone of laughter, pity, confidence, or doubt to our words, and we convey our position not only with content but also with mood. In this regard, it would not be an exaggeration to say that DMs are the heart of speech, because speech without emotion is like an unanimated picture.

3. Communicative needs: managing and adapting communication. The fourth major factor related to the use of discourse markers is communicative needs, which directly refer to managing conversation, organizing dialogue, and adapting to interlocutors. In interaction, people not only transmit information, but also interact: they confirm each other’s words, wait for what will be said, express attitudes, and engage in questions and answers. To carry out these processes smoothly, naturally, and effectively, DMs are necessary. DMs manage turn-taking in conversation, indicate topic shifts or restarts, and give signals to interlocutors. As noted in linguistics, DMs play an important role in the process of turn-taking. For example, the English “you know” or the Uzbek “bilasizmi” sometimes adds no new information, but it attracts the interlocutor’s attention and invites them to listen to the speaker’s thought, as if giving the signal “pay attention, I will continue my speech.” Similarly, the words “xo’p” and “mayli” also perform the function of confirming that you have heard the interlocutor’s speech and that the turn to respond has passed to you (often as feedback markers). If these small words did not exist, dialogue could break off or cases of interrupting each other’s speech could increase. DMs are also an integral part of communication strategies. For example, in a debate, to gain time we may begin with “to’g’ri-ya..., lekin” and gain time while grasping the thought; to start a conversation we may enter with

“xo’sh” or “agar shunday bo’lsa”; to respond to a controversial idea we use objection-marking DMs such as “yo’g’-e” and “aslo.” This makes it possible to manage the dynamics of communication: a person who uses DMs can, to some extent, determine where the conversation will go. Another communicative need is sociolinguistic adaptation. The speaker must adapt speech depending on the audience, interlocutor, or social context. For example, in front of an official audience, using formal and polished connectors such as “demak” and “shunday qilib” is appropriate logically and culturally; but in an informal setting, for example among friends, words such as “xullas” and “darvoqe” make communication lively and sincere. Linguist X. Kenjaboev links DMs to the “social organization of style,” that is, which DMs are used in which style and social environment is one of the internal regularities of that communication. This can also be seen in terms of social groups. For example, the inventory of DMs used in youth speech may differ from that in the speech of the older generation. Young people often express ideas with soft introductory words such as “ha, endi” and “aslida,” or use “xa-xa” (an onomatopoeia expressing laughter) as a signal indicating humor, and in some cases even insert the word “like,” creating an English-style effect—this shows their need for connection with global culture. The older generation, in turn, often speaks using more traditional DMs: old-style words such as “bundanam” (in addition), “zero,” and “tag’in” still occur in their speech, which, although it does not make mutual understanding difficult, indicates stylistic difference.

Thus, being able to use DMs appropriately is an integral part of communicative competence. Many sources in linguistics also emphasize that DMs are important for conducting dialogue and implementing speech strategy. In particular, in J. Schiffrin’s studies, DMs are viewed as interactive tools: they signal the relationship between interlocutors, for example showing the degree of respect or closeness, and determining the mood of equality or formality. In Uzbek, this can also be seen in examples such as “janob,” “aka,” and “iltimos” (although these are traditionally politeness markers, in discourse their function regulates interactive communication). The needs for using discourse markers manifest differently in spoken and written speech. Spoken speech is an interactive process in real

time, in which the demand for DMs is very high. Written speech, since it can be planned and edited in advance, uses DMs less often, or more precisely, their function takes on a somewhat different character.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, it can be said that studying discourse markers more deeply is important not only for linguistics but also for linguodidactics and translation theory. The results of this knowledge are useful in forming communicative competence in foreign language teaching: by teaching correct use of DMs, students acquire the skill of speaking freely and fluently and expressing their thoughts coherently. For example, in exercises intended for the B2 level, the following are recommended: continuing a sentence (finishing a given beginning with “axir..., shunday qilib..., xullas...”), filling sentences from which extra words have been removed with DMs, finding DMs in dialogues and determining their function, and expressing critical opinion (for example, with sentences begun with “To’g’risi,... Axir,... Bo’lmasa...”). Through these exercises, learners acquire real competencies such as starting and continuing a dialogue, expressing intonation, and indicating attitude toward an interlocutor. In conclusion, the use of discourse markers in the Uzbek speech process is a broad and necessary phenomenon. Their presence and correct use make speech logically coherent, emotionally rich, and communicatively effective. The examples and analyses given regarding DMs show that speakers and writers use discourse markers in order to satisfy the needs for cognitive fluency, functional completeness, emotional impact, and communicative effectiveness. Therefore, in modern Uzbek linguistics, the study of discourse markers from linguopragmatic, sociolinguistic, and cognitive perspectives continues, and research in this area serves to understand more deeply the subtle regularities of language in live communication.

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