A Pragmatic Study of English Discourse Markers in Spoken Conversation

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1. Discourse Markers

Discourse markers are studied widely by a variety of scholars from different theoretical and practical perspectives. Most studies view DMs as participating to the coherence of discourse by linking utterances and clarifying ideas and intentions (*cf*. Dijk, 1977; Schiffrin, 1987, 1994 and 2006 and Redeker, 1990, 1991 and 2006). Others view DMs as a functional-interactional group of expressions giving the context its importance for DMs to take this role (*cf*. Stubbs, 1983 and Frank-Job, 2006). Yet others are concerned only with finding theories for the development of DMs from lexical items to pragmatic expressions (*cf*. Brinton, 1990 and 1996 and Traugott, 1982 and 1995).

2. Definitions of Discourse Markers

Stubbs (1983: 69-70) maintains that DMs are mainly interactional devices because they are largely restricted to spoken language and that they are the boundaries of units of discourse larger than clauses or sentences; therefore they are found in spoken conversations to conjoin ideas between

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speakers. This definition indicates that DMs appear to create coherence in discourse and this accords with Schiffrin's (1987: 31) definition: "sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk". Schiffrin does not determine what the unit is because she finds that there are many units of talk which influence the use of DMs; this is evident in her statement: "basing our definition on a more precise unit would place a tremendous limit on our analysis by restricting our attention to just that unit". However, Schiffrin (2006: 321-2) defines DMs as "non-obligatory utterance initial items that function in relation to ongoing talk and text", arguing that this definition comprises a set of linguistic expressions from different word classes such as "conjunctions" (e.g., and, but, or), "interjections" (e.g., oh, yeah), "adverbs" (e.g., now, then), "lexicalized phrases" (e.g., y'know, I mean), etc.

Redeker (1990: 372) emphasizes that DMs are used to relate utterances to the immediate context. The context here can be thought of as the current common ground between speakers; that is, it refers to the knowledge that speakers have about each other and about the present situation in which they are involved.

Heeman (1997: 13-14) suggests that DMs are devices which are conjectured to give the hearer information about the discourse structure; they aid the hearer to understand the relationship between the present or new speech and what was previously said, and they also aid the hearer in solving anaphoric references. These DMs, according to Heeman, are used in different functions in discourse, such as signal an acknowledgement or acceptance, hold a turn, stall for time,

signal a speech repair, or to signal an interruption in the discourse structure.

3. Linguistic Aspects of Discourse Markers

The following are the most important linguistic aspects that describe DMs as a class of its own.

3.1 Phonological Aspects

The most important phonological property of DMs is that they are often phonologically reduced. The frequent use of any expression in spoken conversation is noticed to be phonologically shortened; that is, any expression which is used for many times by speakers in order to fulfil certain personal functions in discourse (DM) is no more transcribed in its full form, but rather it is noticed that this expression is transcribed with the omission of some of its main sounds (as it is uttered in speech), then this expression is functioning as a DM (Östman, 1982: 149; Schiffrin, 1987: 329; Erman & Kotsinas, 1993: 77-8; Stenström, 1998: 127 and Frank-Job, 2006: 364).

Brinton (1990: 46) attributes this phonological aspect to grammaticalization process, and in this regard Fischer (1999: 19) describes DMs as being "phonologically ill-formed".

For example, Erman & Kotsinas (1993: 77-8) clarify such a phonological reduction or ill-formedness when they speak of the DM <u>you know</u>, they argue that the pronoun has been reduced to <u>y</u> and the marker is best transcribed as <u>y'know</u> /jnəʊ /, and then it took its function as a DM (<u>y'know</u> is the representation that Schiffrin (1987) uses in her study, *see p.* 267).

Similarly, Stenström (1998: 127) speaks of <u>because</u>, she asserts that it is reduced phonologically to be transcribed as <u>cos</u> /kɒ z/ in spoken conversations. Stenström provides the following example where <u>cos</u> is used as a take-off DM which introduces extra information:

(1) Beth: Go and tell Black.

   Marie: Just go.

   Celta: I was gonna but I, I thought, I thought if Black sees
   me when I come in, <u>cos</u> I had make up all down my
   face, I got so angry with the whole thing.

(ibid.: 128)

Schiffrin (1987: ix) asserts that the meaning of a given DM may differ according to the way it is uttered. Giving an example about <u>oh</u>, Schiffrin admits that uttering this DM with a rising intonation may give the interpretation of a request for confirmation:

(2) A: I think the party's called for six o'clock.

   B: <u>oh</u>?

But Schiffrin emphasizes that the same DM (note that both <u>oh</u> in *2* and <u>oh</u> in *3* are DMs) with a falling intonation may give the interpretation of acknowledgement:

(3) A: I think the party's called for six o'clock.

   B: <u>oh</u>.

Fraser (2006: 192) realizes that DMs are stressed especially when the DM is monosyllabic, such as <u>but</u>, <u>so</u>, and <u>and</u>, where the sequence consists of one sentence: first segment + DM + second segment, the DM then is stressed, example:

*(4) Water freezes at 32 degrees <u>**BUT**</u> boils at 212 degrees.*

Fraser also claims that DMs are stressed when they are in initial position, example:

(5) You will have to take the chairs. <u>HOWEVER</u> – don't touch those chairs over by the wall.

(6) A: Sharif is at home.

    B: <u>BUT</u> – I just saw him at the office.

Fraser further argues that DMs are often followed by a pause, but he asserts that the pause may be before the DMs when the messages conveyed by the first and second segments involve other than propositional meaning, example:

(7) Ramzy was tired – <u>so</u> he might have been taking the job seriously.

This example reflects a pragmatic meaning, that Ramzy has been working hardly in his job, is not reflected by the propositions of the sentence.

3.2 Syntactic Properties

Discourse markers form a large number of items from different grammatical categories. These items are originally occupying their place in grammar, but due to their personal functions in discourse they, depart their grammatical functions and come to serve other interpersonal purposes which have no relation with grammar, nor to affect the grammaticality of the utterances in which they occur. This is, actually, described in the grammaticalization theory and concluded by Schiffrin (1987: 328). Here Stubbs (1983: 68) writes that DMs have only a "sequencing function of relating syntactic units and fitting them into a textual or discourse context", and Stein

(1985: 299) admits that DMs are "what happens to be left over by the grammar of a language".

Quirk et al (1985: 631-6) also notice this fact when they declare that DMs ('conjuncts') are said to stand in a "detached and superordinate" relation to the rest of the clause, and therefore cannot be made the focus of a cleft sentence, cannot be the basis of contrast in alternative interrogation or negation, and cannot be focused by subjuncts:

*(8) *It is <u>nonetheless</u> that you should send her the agenda.*

*(9) *Should you send her the agenda <u>nonetheless</u> or <u>therefore</u>?*

*(10) *You should only <<u>nonetheLESS</u>> send her the agenda.*

(ibid.:631)

Fraser (1990: 388-9) observes that DMs are grouped from different grammatical categories because of their several (personal) functions in discourse. Therefore, he asserts that DMs cannot be analyzed in the same way as any traditional grammatical category such as sentence, noun, or preposition. For Fraser, many expressions which function as DMs are ambiguous, and function as "a different syntactic type on other occasions"; that is, other occasions when a single DM functions not in relation to the other grammatical categories which occur with it, but in relation to the context which involves the appearance of that DM. Consider the functions of <u>now</u> in the following examples:

(11) The window is broken. <u>Now</u>, we may get cold.

(12) The window is broken. <u>Now</u> we are really getting cold.

<u>Now</u> in *(11)* functions as a focusing device (DM), while <u>now</u> in *(12)* has its real grammatical status which is a time adverbial.

Fraser also points to the fact that when an expression functions as a DM, this will be its exclusive function in the utterance, despite the fact that this DM may have a homophonous form which is analyzable differently (e.g., <u>now</u> as a time adverbial, or as a focusing device DM). He, then, emphasizes the fact that DMs have no effect on the content meaning of a sentence (ibid.: 391).

Similarly, Brinton (1996: 34-5) agrees that DMs have no clear grammatical function because they occur either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it. But she asserts that some items which have clear grammatical functions can be included in the category of DMs only if they serve communicative functions, such as aspectual or model particles, verbs, coordinate and subordinate conjunctions, phrases, idioms, sentence fragments, and clauses. She, then, admits that DMs have functional similarities and partially overlapping distributions despite the fact that they belong to different categories.

3.3 Semantic Properties

Discourse markers do not contribute to the propositional content of the utterances in which they occur; that is, they have no relation with the basic meaning of the utterances which contain them (*cf*. Schiffrin,1987, 1994, 2006, *and see* Fraser, 1987: 180-1 and 1990: 391). This is described in grammaticalization theory as "semantic bleaching", and here Brinton (1996: 35) describes DMs as "semantically empty".

Traugott (1982: 251-2 and 55) recognizes the semantic change of DMs in the process of grammaticalization from

propositional to textual to expressive (pragmatic) meaning. Traugott cites the "conversational routines" (DMs) <u>well</u> and <u>right</u> as an example of the shift from propositional to expressive, and <u>why</u> as an example of the shift from propositional to textual to interpersonal meaning, in that it changes from a mark of interrogation to a complementizer to a hearer engaging DM.

Stubbs (1983: 68) states that semantics has little to say about such items that are included in the class of DMs "since when they are not used in their literal meanings, they have no property of thesis: that is, they have no propositional content".

Fraser (1990: 390) emphasizes that DMs occurrence does not alter the potential relationship between the message which follows and the foregoing discourse; that is, DMs do not create meanings, but only orient the hearer. Consider the following example:

(13) A: Mary left.
    B: (i) John stayed.
        (ii) <u>And</u> John stayed.
        (iii) <u>So</u> John stayed.
        (iv) <u>Well</u> John stayed.

Fraser leaves *(13-B-i)* without a DM because he believes that it is the context which aids the hearer in selecting the right DM to relate it to the previous utterance. But, he admits that as soon as the DM is determined, as in *(13-B-ii,iii,iv)*, the hearer will be provided with an explicit lexical orientation which refers to discourse relationship. DMs in Fraser's examples are only devices that are used to clarify the speaker's communicative intention without affecting the

semantics of the sentences which contain them, the speaker's intention may be interpreted as a <u>parallel</u> message as signaled by <u>and</u> in *(13-B-ii)*; a <u>resultant</u> message as signaled by <u>so</u> in *(13-B-iii)*; or as a <u>dissonant</u> message as signaled by <u>well</u> in *(13-B-iv)*.

4. Features of Discourse Markers

Discourse markers possess certain linguistic features that are interrelated with the properties just mentioned, these features also describe DMs as a class and shed light on the pragmatic nature of DMs.

4.1 Orality

The previous discussion shows that DMs constitute a feature of oral language since they are: <u>phonologically reduced</u>, <u>constituted by intonation</u>, <u>grammatically isolated</u>, and <u>semantically empty</u>. The meaning of a given DM can be determined through the way it is heard (*cf*. Schiffrin, 1987). Stubbs (1983: 68), and Lenk (1998: 249) admit that DMs appear to be restricted to spoken language because of their several pragmatic functions, and that they are essentially interactive devices serving different interpersonal purposes in spoken conversations.

For Brinton (1996: 33) DMs are "predominantly a feature of oral rather than of written discourse". DMs in her view, appeared as "a result of the informality of oral discourse and the grammatical fragmentation caused by the lack of planning time" which makes the use of DMs "expedient". She goes further to suggest that the occurrence of DMs in a

discourse is a fine condition for regarding that discourse as "oral", and that DMs appear in oral discourse because of their frequency in use.

Chinghwa (2004: 180) poses that "the presence of DMs such as <u>well</u> and <u>I mean</u> is one of the most salient features of spontaneous talk", stating that the use of DMs in a spoken conversation "creates a naturalistic conversational effect". He claims that the early work on DMs which focused predominantly on conversational items reflects the close relation-ship between DMs and orality.

4.2 Optionality

Discourse markers are optional devices in the sense that if they are omitted they make neither syntactic, nor semantic effect on the utterances which contain them. Rather, DMs are considered to be pragmatically obligatory in the sense that they are used to reinforce the interpretation intended by a speaker, and so aid the hearer to understand what is meant by an utterance in a specific situation (Stubbs, 1983: 68; Quirk et al, 1985: 632-6; Fuller, 2003: 186-7; and Rossary, 2006: 301).

Brinton (1996: 35-6) argues that the discourse remains grammatically acceptable if the DMs are removed, but the discourse then would be considered "unnatural, awkward, disjoint, impolite, unfriendly, or dogmatic" within the communicative meaning between the participants, and that the functions of DMs are determined in relation to the communicative context not in relation to the utterances which contain them.

Vivien (2006: 153) and Gupta (2006: 243) point to the fact that DMs are only "peripheral" and "marginal" to the syntax of the sentences or clauses to which they relate, their omission does not change the truth value of the utterances; that is, DMs can be omitted without affecting the truth-conditions of the utterances.

4.2 Initiality

Initiality as a feature appears to be bounded with DMs from the early stages of investigating the subject (*see* Levinson, 1983: 87 and Stubbs, 1983: 69). Schiffrin (1987: 31-2 and 328) asserts that <u>initiality</u> is one condition which allows an expression to be used as a DM. Schiffrin views DMs as devices which introduce the discourse segments that they mark. It is clear then that the prototypical place of DMs is in initial position of an utterance (*see also* Brown & Yule, 1983: 97-8).

Quirk et al (1985: 632-4) clarify that DMs are used utterance-initially to implicate information by convention:

They view DMs like <u>well</u>, <u>oh</u>, <u>ah</u>, etc. as having conventional values in discourse, if these DMs are used initially they will "introduce a difference of some sort"; that is, discourse-initial DMs implicate something which is not part of the semantic content of the discourse in which they occur:

(14) A: That man speaks extremely good English.

$$B: \begin{Bmatrix} \text{[1] } \underline{well,} \\ \\ \text{[2] } \underline{yet,} \end{Bmatrix} \text{ } he \text{ } comes \text{ } from \text{ } a \text{ } village \text{ } in \text{ } Mongolia.$$

(Quirk et al, 1985: 1469)

Both DMs <u>well</u> and <u>yet</u> are used initially in B's utterance to present additional facts about the man, without these DMs B's utterance would have only a thematic link with A's statement. For Quirk et al, B is not making any comment about the man, but on the propensity of villages in Mongolia to speak good English. If B starts with <u>well</u>, he/she implies that Mongolia is a good place for learning English. If B starts with <u>yet</u> he/she implies that Mongolia is not a good place for learning English, and despite that the man can speak it very well (English language) (ibid.: 1469-70).

Blakemore (1995: 3-5), who works within the framework of Relevance Theory, has another view of the initiality of DMs. Blakemore argues that DMs are used to introduce an utterance which does not have a linguistic antecedent. That utterance is to be interpreted as a reaction to a previously existing propositional attitude. DMs here can only be understood within the (non-linguistic) context in which they occur:

(15) <u>But</u>, I have just turned it on!

The DM <u>but</u> is used initially to imply that the utterance it introduces is an inference which refers to a previously non-linguistic discourse context, the utterance in *(15)* may be uttered by a person who realizes that the machine he/she has just turned on, is stopped, or he/she could have received a signal to stop the machine he/she has just turned on. For more clarification, Blakemore presents the following examples in which utterances are interpreted in the contexts described in parenthesis:

(16) (speaker sees a blackbird perch on a tree)

    <u>So</u>, it's spring.

(17) (speaker takes an enormous slice of cake)

    <u>After all</u>, it is my birthday.

(18) (the hearer is found wiping up split coffee)

    <u>AND</u> you've burnt the toast.

<div align="right">(Blakemore, 1995: 4)</div>

5. Data Analysis

5.1 The Pragmaticalization of Discourse Markers: Frank-Job's (2006) Model

In her model, Frank-Job (2006: 360-1) stresses the fact that the pragmaticalization of DMs evolves out of the great relationship between DMs and real communicative contexts. Within these real communicative contexts, the meanings of DMs are not ambiguous for the hearers; on the contrary, if there is a lack in the context information the hearer will not be able to determine the exact meaning of a given DM depending on the propositions it reflects. Therefore, DMs are pragmatic in nature and reveal different meanings tied with the direct context of its use. This is why Frank-Job emphasizes that the analysis of DMs should be based on examples taken from real verbal interactions.

The main aim of Frank-Job in her model is to prove that DMs are pragmatic devices serving interactional functions in discourse. For her, DMs are originally lexical items comprised from different word classes. Through meta-communicative use, variants of the original lexical items are created in order to

fulfil personal attitudes that have no relation with the grammar or the semantics of the language.

This model is simply implied within certain formal (phonological, morphological, syntactic and textual) features that lead to the PR of a lexical item or an expression into a DM. At the same time, these formal features point to the fact that pragmaticalization process has occurred. These features are the following:

1. Frequency.
2. Syntactic isolation.
3. Phonetic reduction.
4. Co-occurrence in contiguity, and
5. Deletion test.

5.2 Frequency

According to Frank-Job (2006: 363), the frequency is the most important feature that leads to the PR of DMs. It reflects the regular repetition and use of the same expression in everyday conversations. At first, this expression seems to occupy its typical place in the language (whether grammatically or semantically); but for that frequency in use, this expression begins to lose its propositional content and comes to have two separated meanings: one meaning is lexical that undergoes with the other lexical items, and the other is pragmatic that undergoes with the personal attitudes of the speaker. The latter is considered as a DM while the former is having its category in grammar. This is proved in our data and can be applied to many expressions which appear to lose their

propositional meanings. The expression you see is used two times by the same person (Harry) in two different ways:

(19) Harry: ... you see mine goes up in a second when I just press the button. The other takes quite a long time.

(Appendix: Conversation No.37)

Harry is an interviewer. He is explaining how light his umbrella is, and the other interviewers are 'really seeing' how he presses the button and the umbrella goes up lightly, so that, Harry uses the pronoun you and the verb see typically. But Harry uses the same pronoun and verb differently in the following conversation:

(20)Barbara: But that's fantastic! In spite of hitting the interviewer!

Harry: But that's the whole point. It was because I hit him–

Barbara: No! How?

Harry: Well, you see,it didn't hurt him at all. It gave him a slight shock of course. But as my umbrella's made of rubber–

(Appendix: Conversation No.38)

Concentration on the lexical meaning of you see will not be suitable for its occurrence in this conversation. Harry uses it as a request for attention that his umbrella is made of rubber and that's why it didn't hurt the interviewer when he hit him. You see is used as a DM here because the semantic meaning of this expression does not accord with the context of its occurrence because there is 'nothing to see'.

Brinton (1996: 53) observes that the frequency of use makes many English items appear in contexts in which they

are "incompatible"; the result is an "analogy" of use on which one item can be replaced by another with the same function. You see (as a DM) in *(20)* can be substituted by many expressions conveying the same pragmatic meaning:

(21) Harry: Well, you know/ nevertheless/ it doesn't matter, it didn't hurt him at all…

While in *(19)* it is impossible to do so, because you see correlates with the syntax and semantics of its occurrence, therefore cannot be substituted:

*(22) *Harry: … you know/ nevertheless/ it doesn't matter mine goes up in a second when I just press the button…*

Frank-Job (2006: 361) writes that the frequency is also caused by repeating words and expressions that are already mentioned. Those repeated items reflect a pragmatic meaning on the part of the speaker. The result is a frequent expression that carries an implication towards something in the mind of the speaker who utters it for the sake of creating coherence. The repeated expressions are considered to be DMs especially when they are uttered with different intonation contours, notice the following conversation:

(23) Harry: Oh, all right. I'll go and see the cliffs. But look at the crowed on the boat deck! Why on earth are they standing there?
Barbara: They're queuing.
Harry: Queuing? What for?
Barbara: To get of the ship.

(Appendix: Conversation No.1)

Barbara utters the word queuing in a form of a statement, but Harry repeats the same word in a form of a

question implying that it is repeated as a request for explanation. It is realized here that Harry utters it with a rising intonation unlike Barbara who utters it with a falling intonation. Such matters (changing a word from a statement to a question, or others) may be the main cause of frequency that leads an expression to be pragmaticalized. The repeated expressions may exceed a single word to a whole phrase or sometimes complete sentences and are still functioning as DMs, as in the following conversation:

(24) Customs Officer: But it's just an envelope.

Barbara: That's right. But look what's inside the envelope. It's an inflatable umbrella!

Customs Officer: An INFLATable umbrella?

(Appendix: Conversation No.3)

The one who reads this conversation cannot realize that the phrase an inflatable umbrella is a form of a question, only if it is heard with the rising intonation it becomes a DM and a question that needs an answer and this is the case with the Customs Officer in *(24)*.

5.3 Phonetic Reduction

Frank-Job (2006: 364) maintains that DMs appear to be shortened phonetically when they are used frequently in verbal conversations.

Consequently, in our data we find many phonetically reduced DMs which differ in that they are used in their complete form when they are used lexically or grammatically. The DM you know is noticed to be pronounced in its short form as y'know /jnəʊ/ by Peter in the following conversation:

(25) Peter: In England, y'know, people are much fonder of old cars than in other countries. Of course there's a road test now for old cars over seven years old. But this car passed the road test.

(Appendix: Conversation No.19)

You know is used here as a DM where it has no lexical meaning. The lexical meaning of this expression appears in the following conversation by Harry where it is noticed to be pronounced in its full form:

(26) Harry: Oh, I don't think we can stay more than three or four days.

Mrs. Hardcastle: Is that all?

Harry: Well, you know the old Spanish proverb: a fish and a guest both smell after three days.

(Appendix: Conversation No.23)

5.4 Syntactic Isolation

Frank-Job (2006:364-5) (and many others) admits that DMs appear to be separated from the syntactic structure of the utterances in which they occur. Well which is not a DM is accompanied by a complement in *(27)*, while in *(28)* it is not:

(27) Harry: I'd like to speak to Mr. MacAndrew–

Peter: Well done.

(Appendix: Conversation No.10)

(28) Barbara:Oh, dear, what are we going to do?

Receptionist: Well, if we can help in any other way. The Gloucester Hotel is always–

(Appendix: Conversation No.6)

'Done' cannot be mentioned without the occurrence of <u>well</u> in *(27)*, while it is possible for the utterance of the Receptionist in *(28)* to occur without it; that is, the absence of the DM <u>well</u> in *(28)* does not alter the utterance of the Receptionist ungrammatical, but it does in *(27)*.

Other examples show that the word <u>now</u> is used as a time adverbial in *(29)*, while in *(30)* it is used as a DM:

(29) Harry: Well, what are we going to do <u>now</u>?

(Appendix: Conversation No.5)

(30) Fortune Teller: Ah, but your hand not your speech told
me that. I think you speak English perfectly.
Harry:(Flattered) Well, thank you–
Fortune Teller: <u>Now</u>, let me see. Your hand shows that
your child-hood was not always happy.

(Appendix: Conversation No.26)

It is clear that <u>now</u> in *(30)* is presented only to take the turn of Harry who doesn't complete his speech. And because they are talking about something at the moment of speaking (for Harry being an English man), the word <u>now</u> is chosen to introduce the utterance of the Fortune Teller; so that it became a DM which has no relation with the syntactic structure of the utterance. This accords with Fraser (1990: 388-9) who admits that DMs have no relation with the grammatical structure in which they occur, but are tied with the context which, in turn, constrains the use of the right DM.

These examples also accord with Quirk et al (1985: 631-2) who assert that DMs stand in a "detached and superordinate" relation to the rest of the clause or sentence,

and that of Traugott (1995: 5) when she states that DMs occur as "disjunct in initial position".

In *(25)* you know is realized as one expression where the pronoun you and the verb know become one expression, while in *(26)* the pronoun you appears to be independent from the verb know. The main point which can be noticed here is that those expressions which are reduced tend to be amalgamated into fixed units. This amalgamation is the result of the reduction of the phonetic material as it can be observed in the case of you know forming a unit in which no other word can be inserted (e.g.,*he knows), hence y'know /jnəʊ/ can be regarded as a single DM.

5.5 Co-Occurrence in Contiguity

Co-occurrence in contiguity, as imposed by Frank-Job (2006: 365), refers to the occurrence of multiple DMs one after another in the same utterance and in the same context: "As DMs lose their original lexical meaning, it becomes possible for other items in the direct linguistic context to express that original lexical meaning".

Here, different DMs are being used until the one which originally expresses the lexical meaning occurs. Such co-occurrence is proved in the following conversation:

(31) Harry: By the way, have you any idea where we are?

Peter: Well – actually – no. I know we passed some traffic lights but–   (Appendix: Conversation No.33)

The DMs well and actually represent different meanings (lexically), but here both represent the lexical meaning of the answer no. This is a good indication that DMs (such as well

and <u>actually</u> above) have lost their original lexical meaning to have another pragmatic one which is to initiate the utterance before answering the question directly, for something in the mind of Peter nobody knows except Harry above.

It is also noticed here that DMs co-occur most in cases where the speaker is astonished or is being surprised of something such as in the case of the Fortune Teller bellow:

(32) Fortune Teller: <u>Let me see</u> – <u>Ah</u> – <u>yes</u>, <u>it's clear</u>. You'll have an amazing success connected with umbrellas, properly. You will become very rich. Very rich indeed!

(Appendix: Conversation No.26)

The underlined expressions are all used to inform the hearer that the lines on his/her hands indicate that he/she will be rich in the future.

5.6 Deletion Test

Frank-Job (2006: 366) points out that the content meaning of an utterance does not change if the DM is removed (only if it is a DM). This point can be applied to all DMs examined in this study. Notice the occurrence of the DM <u>anyway</u> bellow:

(33) Harry: I expect the fog will prevent us from seeing anything.

Barbara: Oh, don't be silly! Fog doesn't cover England the whole times as some people think.

Harry: <u>Anyway</u>, I feel like a drink. I'm going to the bar.

(Appendix: Conversation No.1)

<u>Anyway</u> does not match Harry's feeling that he is a drink; but as he changes the subject (away from the fog), this DM becomes important; that is, removing <u>anyway</u> does not alter

the semantic meaning/syntactic structure of Harry's utterance, but it will affect the pragmatic meaning if it is deleted. Here it becomes clear that DMs are non-truth-conditional devices but are used to imply something other than the expected.

6. Conclusions

The following conclusions are arrived at in the light of the data analysis mentioned previously:

1. DMs have their major role in marking the main points of communication rather than connecting utterances through the facts presented by the propositions of the utterances in which they occur. They can mark words, sentences, paragraphs, or even larger units. Therefore, discourse markers as a label for the class seems to be appropriate.

2. They are grouped from different categories but no grammatical property appears to be joined with them when they have the discourse marking function.

3. DMs are confined to the spoken media where they can clearly express the speakers' attitudes at the moment of speaking.

4. DMs are used to relate sequential structures where the linguistic representation of utterances is not important, what is important is the basic intentions used to be negotiated between the participants. Therefore, DMs appear to relate discourses which have no clear linguistic antecedents but are tied with the context of their occurrence, only then the meaning of a given DM is not ambiguous.

5. The typical place for DMs occurrence is in the initial position of an utterance and sometimes they occur in mid-utterance position having the same function as DMs, but they never do occur in final position.

6. Discourse markers with a pragmatic function is the main conclusion arrived at in this study.

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APPENDIX

Getting on in English

This is to mention the main conversations analyzed in this study, the BBC Teaching Program Getting on in English, *12* conversations are chosen from this program. The bold type is to indicate the direct applicated examples in our analysis. These conversations are recorded on two cassettes, and transcribed as follows:

Conversation No. 1

Barbara: Oh, darling. Life isn't just business and organizing things. This is our first visit to England! We must see every thing we can!

Harry: I expect the fog will prevent us from seeing anything.

Barbara: Oh, don't be silly! Fog doesn't cover England the whole time as some people think.

Harry: Anyway, I feel like a drink. I am going to the bar.

Barbara: But you can have a drink at anytime. Have one before dinner when we get to London.

Harry: But I feel like one now. When do we arrive?

Barbara: In about half an hour.

Harry: Oh, alright. I'll go and see the cliffs. But look at the crowd on the boat deck! Why on earth are they standing there?

Barbara: They're queuing.

Harry: Queuing? What for?

Barbara: To get off the ship.

Harry: But you said there was still half an hour.

Barbara: Yes, but the England love forming queues. Apparently it's one of their national characteristics.

Harry: Extraordinary! Well, I can't get through all those people! So I shan't be able to see the white cliffs. We'll have a drink in the bar and then I'll go down and fetch the suitcase.

Conversation No. 3

Customs Officer: What is it? May I have a look at it please?

Harry: Here it is, in this box.(he opens it) There you are!

Customs Officer:But it's just an envelope.

Barbara: That's right. But look what's inside the envelope. It's an inflatable umbrella!

Customs Officer: An inflatable umbrella?

Harry: That's right!You just press this button and it opens over your head.

Customs Officer: It looks like a great rubber mushroom.

Harry: That's right; isn't it wonderful! And it all fits into one small envelope.

Customs Officer: I see. Well, I am afraid I must ask you to leave the umbrella with us for the moment, sir.

Harry: But why? When can I have it back?

Customs Officer: I'm sorry, but I can't tell you that now, sir.

Harry: Really this is most inconvenient.

Conversation No. 5

Barbara: Peter! How wonderful to see you! Oh, what a journey we've had! But being with you for a few days will compensate for everything.

Peter: Thank goodness I arrived in time to meet you. I was delayed in the tube. I said to myself: "I will get there on time! I must get there!" And somehow I did!

Harry: Well, what are we going to do now?

Peter: First, I must introduce a great friend of mine to you. Pamela– My parents. Pamela will help to show you round London.

Pamela: How do you do?

Conversation No. 6

Receptionist: No. No. 260's taken. I'm afraid we're full at this time of the year, sir. You could fill a couple of trains with all the tourists and baggage that have arrived only today!

Barbara: Oh, dear, what are we going to do?

Receptionist: Well, if we can help in any other way. The Gloucester Hotel is always–

Barbara: Gloucester? Did you say Gloucester?

Harry: What's the matter?

Barbara: I've suddenly remembered.

Harry: What? What is it?

Barbara: There was the Gloucester Hotel and - the Leicester Hotel, on the other side of the square.

Harry: Which did you write to?

Barbara: Well- I must confess- I think it was the Leicester.

Harry: Oh, darling, you really are hopeless.

Conversation No. 10

Peter: Try once more. I said I would help you and I will, but–

Harry: Yes, all right. I should learn how to do it. I remember my grand-mother was so nervous. She would never use a telephone; she was frightened of it. I don't want to think I feel the same about English telephones. Ah, I'm through!

Girl: Hello! Hallo! Can I help you?

Harry: I'd like to speak to Mr. MacAndrew-

Peter: Well done!

Harry: He's there. The girl told me to hold on a minute. Oh, what's happened? There's that purring noise. We seem to be cut off again.

Peter: Yes, Father, of course you are! You put your arm down on the receiver rest. I'll get through for you. Like most successful men, Father, you're hopeless without a secretary!

Conversation No. 19

Pamela: This car's over twenty years old. It's a 1938 model. But it goes all right. We'll be in Salisbury before midday.

Peter: Then we should reach your parents house by five o'clock.

Barbara: That means we'll have been traveling for about seven hours.

Harry: I think it's amazing that we can make such a long journey in such an old car.

Pamela: Last Saturday I drove eight miles in three hours- an average speed of just under thirty miles an hour.

Peter: In England, you know, people are much fonder of old cars than in other countries. Of course there's a road test now for old cars over seven years old. But this car passed the road test.

Conversation No. 23

Mr. Hardcastle: Well, now. I wonder if there's anything special you'd like to do.

Barbara: No. It's bliss just relaxing like this, and the sun's actually shining.

Mr. Hardcastle: Tomorrow we'll be going to the village fair. I hope you'll come. Later on I thought we might drive down to the sea. But this morning we can laze around if you like.

Harry: Yes - this time next week we'll probably be rushing round London again trying to interest people in inflate-able umbrellas, so we'd better get all the leisure we can.

Mr. Hardcastle: How long will you actually be staying?

Harry: Oh, I don't think we can stay more than three or four days.

Mr. Hardcastle: Is that all?

Harry: Well, you know the old Spanish proverb: a fish and a guest both smell after three days.

Mr. Hardcastle: Oh, nonsense! I do hope you'll stay a little longer. Before you go I want to put you in touch with a friend who can certainly help you with your inflatable umbrella.

Harry: He is away at present isn't he, darling?

Mr. Hardcastle: Yes, but as soon as he comes back I'll give him a ring.

Conversation No. 26

Fortune Teller: I can see that you come from a distant country.

Harry: Well, I've never pretended to speak English like an Englishman.

Fortune Teller: Ah, but your hand not your speech told me that. I think you speak English perfectly.

Harry: (Flattered) Well, thank you–

Fortune Teller: Now, let me see. You hand shows that your child-hood was not always happy.

Fortune Teller: Let me see–Ah, yes, it's clear. You will have an amazing success connected with umbrellas, probably. You will become very rich. Very rich indeed! I was not sure of the exact meaning of this small line. But now I see clearly: the way it moves upwards leaves no doubt.

Harry: (Delighted) Well, that's wonderful!

Fortune Teller: Yes, your hand shows, clearly that you are connected with umbrella business.

Harry: Does it? It's amazing what the hand can show. You real-ly are very clever.

Conversation No. 33

Harry: By the way, have you any idea where we are?

Peter: Well–actually–no. I know we passed some traffic lights but–

Harry: Oh, I thought you knew where you were going.

Peter: And I thought you did. (they laugh).

Conversation No. 37

Peter: If Father keeps on talking like this I'm sure he'll win a prize. But it's a pity he waves his hands about so much.

Barbara: If you want to talk, turn up the sound. Otherwise I can't hear. Oh, listen now. Harry's on again.

Harry: Could someone please pass over the umbrellas? Thank you. Now this one in a small envelope is mine and the others, as you can see, is an old-fashioned umbrella. Now let's see which can be put up more quickly–

(Pause)

You see mine goes up in a second when I just press the button. The other takes quite a long time. Again, feel how light mine is compared with the other ones.

Conversation No. 38

Barbara: Well, we shan't have to wait long now. It's almost time to go. Two more days and we'll be flying fast, through clear, blue skies – I hope – on the direct rout home!

Peter: Yes, I'm sure you'll enjoy getting back. Father's certainly had a hard time with these continual difficulties.

Barbara: Well, what can you expect in England?The people here are like plum-puddings – solid and unimaginative.

Peter: Well, that's a hard judgment. I don't think you're being quite fair.

Harry: Isn't it wonderful! They telephoned.

Barbara: But that's fantastic! In spite of hitting the interviewer!

Harry: But that's the whole point. It was because I hit him –

Barbara: No! how?

Harry: Well, you see, it didn't hurt him at all. It gave a slight shock of course. But as my umbrella's made of rubber –

Peter: You mean an old-fashioned umbrella might have blinded him –

Harry: That's right. It showed that my umbrella was superior in yet another way.

Pamela: Congratulations! It's wonderful! We were so worried but now you've really made us feel good.

Peter: Well, what do you think of the English now, Mother?

Barbara: (Rhapsodically) Oh, this is a wonderful country!

Peter: You mean they're not just like plum-puddings after all!

Barbara: Oh, no!

Peter: (Ironically) Amazing, isn't it, how quickly the English seem to change!

دراسة تداولية لواسمات الخطاب الإنكليزي

في المحادثة المحكية

أ.م.د. نوفل سعيد مجيد* و زياد احمد دحام**

الملخـــص

واسمات الخطاب هي كلمات وعبارات تعمل كمؤشرات للتركيبة التسلسلية للخطاب. وتبين هذه الواسمات العلاقات الخطابية وترشد المشاركين في الخطاب (أي المتلقي والمرسل) إلى كيفية فهم الكلمات المنطوقة من المتكلم مما تؤدي إلى خلق مسار باتجاه تكامل المكونات المتنوعة لاستخدام اللغة في خطاب موحد مترابط.

في النقاط الانتقالية في التخاطب تبدو أن واسمات الخطاب تنتقل من معناها المفرداتي القاموسي في اللغة إلى معانٍ أخرى مختلفة لا يمكن تفسيرها بالاعتماد على المعنى القاموسي لواسمات الخطاب. لذا فإن قواعد ودلالات وسمات الخطاب منفصلة عن الألفاظ التي ترد فيها، إذن أن الهدف من هذه الدراسة هو إثبات أن واسمات الخطاب هي أدوات براغماطيقية تؤدي وظائف تفاعلية متنوعة في الخطاب لذلك نركز العناية على وظيفة واسمة الخطاب في سياقها الخطابي بغض النظر عن فحواها المفرداتي.

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