



A Corpus Based Analysis of Discourse Markers in Pakistani and American English: New Digital Mass Media Era

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The goal of this study is to find out frequency of eight discourse markers, such as "so," "well", "anyways," "right," "I mean," "well," "great," and "actually," in a discourse, held in American and Pakistani English new. The study will also examine the function of discourse markers in the context of Pakistani Speech in the era of new digital mass media. As media frame the mind and thinking of people with its repetitive announcements. Both the COCA and the Pakistani Spoken English (PSE) corpus were used for this purpose. The *AntConc software* was used to evaluate the data. The results of research show native speakers employ more discourse markers than those who are non-native speakers. Furthermore, it was observed that Pakistani speech employs discourse markers in every part (i.e., initial, medial and final). Depending on the situation, these discourse markers in PSE serve various purposes. Such small units of discourse markers serve as gap fillers and sentence terminators. They may also be used to demonstrate agreement/consent, express polite disagreement, perform anaphoric action and may impart surprise or lessen shocking effect. Pedagogical implementation might also be made of this research, as it shows that there are major differences between native and non-native speech patterns. In order to communicate effectively, it is not necessary for Pakistani speakers to attain a native like linguistic competence. Pakistani and American English are different. The idea may help teachers and students in teaching and learning English as L2.

Keywords: *Discourse markers, American English, Pakistani English, Nonnative speech, Mass media*



Introduction

Many scholars and philosophers use the term "discourse" in a number of ways and for a variety of reasons, and their definitions vary widely. The term is widely used in linguistics to describe an utterance, which offers greater meaning than a simple sentence. It refers to a conversation in a logical and unified way. Discourse doesn't mean the arrangement of sentences in a random order that doesn't make any sense. Some people somehow manage to communicate with random ordered sentences. Completion and coherence are the basic elements of discourse and they shape it. For achieving coherence in discourse, different devices are used. Discourse marker is one of such device and may be used to enhance the meaning of a discourse by offering cohesion.

Discourse markers, according to Schiffrin (1987), help the text make sense by connecting distinct parts of discourse in a coherent manner. Discourse markers play a critical role in how people communicate with one another. Discourse markers have been extensively studied over the last few decades, resulting in a wide range of conceptualizations of what they are and many approaches were developed to study them. Other names for the lexical expression of discourse markers include "discourse connectives," and "discourse operators." There is a common denominator throughout all of these terms: linking of speech. Researchers agree that discourse markers connect different parts of a discourse, although they disagree on the functions of discourse markers in a discourse. In their own way, each researcher has a unique idea of its function in a sentence. Mostly people believe that a discourse marker is a term that is used to show a shift in the direction a conversation or to show how someone is responding to another person's words.

It's common to hear words like "well," "oh," "I get it," and "okay" in the flow of conversation. Conjunctions, adverbs, and prepositional phrases make up the bulk of discourse markers (Fraser (1999)). Some significant exceptions aside, they establish a connection between the meanings of the segment they introduce (S1) and the meanings that precede it. (S2). Discourse markers can be understood in terms of short phrases that serve a variety of purposes when you are speaking. They typically transfer the unavailable information or fill the gaps in discourse. When a speaker uses exclamation points, he or she is elaborating on, concluding, or clarifying anything that has already been spoken. A preposition can be used at any point in a discourse; therefore, it doesn't matter where you put it. There are a wide range of discourse markers that have been identified by researchers and academics such as Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999). (i.e., so, well, however, I mean, but, after all, I think, you know and kind of).

There are many factors that influence the way discourse markers are utilized as linguistic devices, including the context in which they are used. For example, Using "I mean" as a bridge between concepts and as a way of conveyance. Discourse is a branch of linguistics that examines how a language actually works. Discourse markers, an important part of communication, are used to connect different parts of discourse or to decipher what someone else has said. Discourse markers show the speaker's intended meaning in a clear and concise manner. They may seek to contradict anything, establish a boundary for the subject or start something fresh or new in order to change



the focus of the existing discussion. Because corpus linguistics is based on the analysis of real discourse, there is a clear connection between discourse markers and corpus methods. A corpus has been used by numerous people since the beginning to study discourse markers. Corpus-based research methodologies have been employed by renowned scholars including Schiffrin (1987), Muller (2005), and Aijmer (2002) in their studies of discourse markers.

When it comes to studying language, Baker (2006) explains in his artCOCA why he thinks a corpus should be used and the various methods in which it might be used. His claim that "complex calculations can be done on a massive number of texts, uncovering patterns and frequency of information that would take days or months to identify by hand and may go against intuition" is accurate. (See p. 2) Learning how to educate and undertaking actual scientific research can both benefit from corpus linguistics. Professionals and new researchers have an interest in learning more about this particular area of linguistics, regardless of their level of experience. Corpora play a critical role in the study of discourse markers, and this will be addressed in the following section of this art COCA.

Background

Since the revival of linguistics in the 1950s, corpus linguistics has emerged as one of the most intriguing and advanced method for studying language. Corpus studies can aid us in creating theories about different features of a language (Hunston, 2002). He claims that corpora are like natural language and lack intuition, so the researches made on them can be used in everyday life.” This method is currently the most often used because of its dependability in investigating linguistic variance. Several corpus-based discourse studies have yielded different interpretations about how language and discourse work. When people from various regions but with similar views and points of view speak with one another, they use the term "discourse" to describe it. Discourse analysis is the study of how language is used in our conversation, based on social context and how various theories of linguistics are implied on it. Individuals communicate with one another through the medium of language. The present study will examine the structure and function of languages including the themes. During the last few decades, a large amount of research has been conducted on discourse markers. It is a common practice to conduct a research on discourse markers using corpus linguistics techniques (Fox Tree & Schrock, 1999).

There are a number of factors to consider while conducting a research on discourse markers. But at present, it includes the following:

- Identification and Location of discourse marker
- Function of discourse markers
- Frequency of discourse markers

In order to help and keep the debate on track, discourse markers are essential. People can benefit from the use of discourse markers because they would help them to better comprehend what is being said. Politeness, dissent, and filling in the blanks are only few of the many connotations

conveyed through the usage of discourse markers by public speakers everywhere (Brennan & Williams, 1995). Discourse markers have been extensively studied in English, which is a well-researched language. Because English has become a lingua franca in many parts of the world, it is impossible to communicate without it (Crystal, 2003). For the first time, scientists are looking into the ways which would help non-native English speakers to communicate in English. Many diverse avenues of investigation are possible in the years to come. The majority of this research focuses on how to understand what others are saying and how discourse markers function and play a role in making sentences comprehensible. Because they are significant, the following studies on discourse markers may be included in this discussion. Discourse markers can now be researched using two different methodologies.



McArthur's circle of World English

As opposed to coherence, relevancy is more important in this case. Using both the semantic and pragmatic schools of thinking, Hussein (2007) performed research and examined the meanings and uses of discourse markers. "According to the pattern of Coherence, Cohesive linkages between discourse units, encoded by discourse markers help to make well-formed and more coherent discourse" (Hussein, 2007, p. 19). Discourse markers can also be considered "pragmatic instruments" when it comes to determining relevance (Ibid., p. 24). These so-called "pragmatic gadgets" aid communication by storing instructions on how to do a task. Lastly, the relevance theory is availed by Hussein, which focuses more on the link between "thoughts and propositions" than it does on "articulated linguistic feature." A discourse's acceptability isn't based on its grammatical or semantic connections; rather, it is based on how well the discourse follows its relevant criteria (Ibid, p. 23). Despite the fact that discourse markers have been extensively studied



in terms of their many properties, the semantic implications of these markers have gotten far less attention.

Due to the belief that they largely add to pragmatics and not much to semantics, this is the reason for the lack of attention they have received. It has been shown by Travis (2005) that the meaning of four Colombian Spanish discourse markers affects how they are used. According to her findings, these markers have deeper connotations than only their grammatical or pragmatic functions. Discourse markers make it easier to understand and explain the differences between regions. In his study of Nigerian college graduates' speech, Akande (2009) used a corpus to seek for discourse markers, determine what they are and how frequently they appear, and then present his findings. Because of his investigation, he has discovered that people in different parts of Nigeria employ distinct discourse markers. He further asserts that Nigerian children use discourse markers to execute "different socio-pragmatic functions," such as repairing, clarifying, and filling in holes (p. 10). Further study on discourse markers and their grammatical importance was done by Fraser (1999). They all have one thing in common: they force an association between what we'll call S2 (the section they're in) and what came before it (S1), the section that came before it, which is what we'll name S1. Using the term "S1," he's referring to the initial position of discourse. To put it another way, they act as a bidirectional link, presenting one argument in the part they begin and the opposing argument in the one that precedes it (p. 938). Afterwards, it was talked about where the markers should go and said that they don't have to be at the start of the sentence; they can also go mid-sentence or at the end. Then there's the matter of how to understand discourse segments and how to determine whether words or phrases are ineffectual when employed as discourse markers. The researcher thinks that discourse markers belong to the class of pragmatics since they have more to do with the meaning of a phrase than with the grammatical substance of the sentence. An important step forward in discourse marker research was made in 1987 by Schiffrin's study. Twelve "discourse indicators" have been identified and determined to demonstrate that the participants understand each other in a range of topics. Schiffrin looked into the role discourse markers play in grammar as well as how they appear, what they mean, and where they fit in.

Using a discourse marker indicates how the meaning of a phrase is dependent on the preceding clause's meaning. This type of connection is called "local coherence." A linguistic unit that includes both structural and conceptual components is what she sees as discourse. Discourse markers serve a critical role in ensuring that a discourse is comprehensible, according to her research. A lot of time and effort has been put into it. In the research, Lenk (1998) also addressed the topic of discourse markers. The six terms that were chosen for analysis was, 'yet', 'still', 'however', and 'what else'. This choice was chosen because of the frequency with which these markers are used and the functions they play in exchange. These two corpora of spoken English are compared in this study: the London-Lund Corpus and the Santa Barbara Corpus. These "lexical items" are the focus of the investigation. She used the Oxford Concordance Program to investigate the function of discourse markers. As the fundamental goal of her research, she wants to know how speakers make sense of these things in order to ensure that their discourse or discussion is



coherent. The role of discourse markers in classroom engagement has been studied and analysed from a variety of angles.

Adult students and non-native teachers were studied by Castro (2009) to see how they communicate with each other. An investigation into how students interact with one another when English is their second language forms the basis of her research study. EFL teachers who do not speak the target language as a first language work with adult students in a social context. Even if the teacher is instructing in their native tongue, this holds true. Discourse markers are often utilized in the classroom by both teachers and students, and this study aims to identify the many types of discourse markers in use. According to the findings of this study, pupils' interactions with one another in the classroom are examined. Using this data, we can see how frequently discourse markers appear and where they appear, such as at the beginning, middle, or end of a phrase. Qualitative and quantitative methodologies are used for analyzing discourse markers. A study found that utilizing discourse markers in the classroom improves the effectiveness of classroom discussions. Another typical practice in discourse analysis is to look at how language transmits gender.

In order to establish if there are any differences in the way men and women use discourse markers when they are speaking, the researchers conducted their inquiry in this manner. When it comes to spontaneous speech, Croucher conducted an investigation into the usage of discourse markers (2004). After recording multiple examples of speech and keeping track of how many times specific discourse markers were used, he was able to achieve this goal. Some discourse markers, such as "like, you know," were found to be used differently by men and women in his study; however, other markers were shown to be used equally by both sexes. His logic goes like this: The usage of discourse markers by speakers indicates their "credibility and success in competition," as he puts it. (See p. 1) In this area, Muller (2005) made a substantial contribution through his work. "so, well, like, and you know" has been analyzed in great detail by her, looking at each line individually. These four discourse markers are used by non-native German English learners and contrasted to those of non-native Native American English learners in her research. A group of students from various colleges have compiled the Giessen-Long Beach Chaplin Corpus (GLBCC) to discuss various Charlie Chaplin films. She has chosen the film "The Immigrant" as the subject of her speech. Non-native speakers, according to her studies, do not use nearly as many discourse markers as native speakers do.

Savolainen's research from 2000, on the other hand, shows a very different picture. Studying how non-native English speakers of Finnish heritage utilise discourse markers every day in the United States is the primary goal of this study. For the purposes of the analysis, she chose these particular markers of speech. She was able to pick from a total of eight interviews offered by the Florida Corpus. This study focuses on the use of discourse markers by native speakers and Finnish-speaking Americans. In addition, it looks into the manner in which Finnish influences these speech indicators among Finns in the United States of America. Using discourse markers is just as common for those whose first language is not Finnish as it is for those whose first language is



Finnish. Discourse markers, according to Aijmer's 2002 study, "English discourse partCOCA: evidence from a corpus," serve numerous pragmatic purposes in speech. The goal of this research is to discover the significance of the so-called "discourse indicators." The London-Lund Corpus has five "discourse indicators" that Aijmer has chosen for his study. The word's frequency in the corpus is taken into consideration when making a selection. Another topic that has been brought up is the location of discourse markers in a sentence and whether or not they should be placed at the beginning or end. Her conclusions are summarized as follows: Discourse partCOCA's differ from other words in the language because they can take on many different meanings depending on the context in which they are employed. The speakers appear unconcerned by the idea that partCOCA's can be used in a variety of ways.

Each partCOCA has a distinct meaning to them, and they seem to know how to use this understanding in different situations. PAGE THREE Inquiry into these topics has been influenced by different contexts and goals. An investigation into the usage of discourse markers in interviews, dialogues between men and women, classroom discussions, and television shows has been conducted. The current research, on the other hand, focuses on the use of discourse markers in contexts where they aren't naturally occurring. It is the goal of this study to examine how English speakers, both native and non-native, utilize discourse markers in their interactions. It examines the frequency with which these speakers use discourse markers, as well as the likelihood that they use them in different ways. Following research questions will somehow be answered by the end of this research:

- What is the frequency of usage of discourse markers in Pakistani and American English?
- What is the function and position of discourse markers in Pakistani English?

Methods

Sampling

The initial step in the research was to gather information on the different English dialects that people in Pakistan speak. To do this, a Pakistani-English dictionary with 42755 entries (PSE) was built. Much of the data was drawn through computers and cell phones and especially newspapers. Focus of research got more concentrated by restricting it to Pakistani English-language channels. English was the only language spoken by the actors or characters on those shows that were selected for broadcast. All of the videos were retrieved from the YouTube website. In addition to being broadcast on television, these shows were also available online. Between 2007 and 2009, every single show was videotaped. All of the audio from these shows has been fully transcribed. The American component of the International Corpus of English for American English contained the same number of words; 42755. The corpus for the present study was drawn from the COCA (Corpus of American English).

The discourse markers were chosen when the corpus was complete. Since the corpus contained many instances of discourse markers, only those that had been used frequently were chosen as the

criterion for selection such as "so," "well", "anyways," "right," "I mean," "well," "great," and "actually," were selected as discourse markers based on our research findings. Several words and phrases were excluded from the final pool because of their ineffectiveness as discourse markers. As a result, exact discourse markers were discovered. The document was edited to eliminate these kinds of terms and phrases. Position was examined manually inside the Pakistani Corpus. This was done only in PSE, where discourse markers' roles were also examined. The same procedures were applied to the COCA (drawn segment) which was being evaluated for its grammar. Discourse markers in both PSE and COCA were studied to evaluate whether or not there were any significant differences in frequency and position. Eventually, after all of this, the investigation was concluded.

Instrumentation

As it was a spoken text, so tagging was mandatory to exhibit the linguistic and paralinguistic features. Tagging scheme was not borrowed as it was particularly developed for the research purpose. Data after transcription was passed through the corpus tool for the calculation of frequency of discourse markers. Using "Antconc 3.2.1," discourse markers were located in the given data. Additionally, it identified the position of discourse markers in a text i.e. start, middle or end.

Results

This study examined a variety of discourse markers, such as "so," "well", "anyways," "right," "I mean," "well," "great," and "actually," The frequency of use of discourse markers has been observed in both speeches i.e. Pakistani and American English. It is referred that 'so' discourse marker appears 117 times in American English sentences, but just 18 times in Pakistani sentences. In the middle place, it appears 71 times in American English, whereas only 39 times in Pakistani English. In American English, this discourse marker also appears at the end of a sentence. This marker is overused in American English, according to the data.

Table 1

Frequency of discourse marker 'so' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	117	71	21
PSE	18	39	0

Table 2

Frequency of discourse marker 'well' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	30	0	0
PSE	25	0	0

Table 3

Frequency of discourse marker 'anyways' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	30	5	0
PSE	22	1	0

Table 4

Frequency of discourse marker 'right' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	104	46	5
PSE	70	56	1

Table 5

Frequency of discourse marker 'I mean' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	80	1	1
PSE	50	0	0

Table 6

Frequency of discourse marker 'well' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	117	21	15
PSE	18	19	11

Table 7

Frequency of discourse marker 'great' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	215	26	0
PSE	39	13	0

Table 8

Frequency of discourse marker 'actually' in American and Pakistani Corpus

	Initial	Medial	Final
COCA	90	20	1
PSE	80	17	0



Discussion

Discourse markers have been the subject of numerous researches, yet the various uses of discourse markers are often extremely different from one another. Every research project has a different scope; thus, each researcher must create their own custom set of tools to do their work. Schiffrin (1987) examined the phrase-level function of a slew of "discourse indicators." The research was based on the idea of coherence, which entails connecting discrete discourse units with the aid of discourse markers in order to give the impression of cohesion and logic. With the use of discourse markers, a speaker can clarify their point of view or connect a new piece of information to information that came before it.

Use of eight discourse markers i.e. "so," "well", "anyways," "right," "I mean," "well," "great," and "actually," have been analyzed under different situations. They show different effects according to the situation of use.

AGREEMENT:

H: Well I agree with your point of view.

Here the speaker shows agreement with the confronting person that he/she agrees with their point of view by using a discourse marker of "Well". The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

ANAPHORIC USE

Are you going to help me in my project I mean You have become proficient in your work now.

Here in this statement I mean is used to show the anaphoric effect. The discourse marker is present at the middle position.

CONCLUSION

I could not understand literature so I left M.A English.

In the above mentioned statement, the speaker came to conclusion with the discourse marker "so". The speaker was not comfortable in his/her subject so he/she left it. So is most commonly use discourse marker used to show the result or conclusion. The discourse marker is present at the middle position.

CONSENT

Actually I want you to work with me in my new project.

Here the speaker is asking for consent by showing his/her true intentions by using the discourse marker of "actually" The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

DISAGREEMENT

Anyways I cannot understand you presented logic.

Anyways is also commonly used discourse marker, giving a bit rude effect. It shows a sudden shift in a discourse, when someone wants to change or end the discussion. It also shows disagreement



as it has been demonstrated in the above example. The speaker is not agreeing with the presented logic of the other person and shows disagreement. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

GAP FILLERS

Right.....I can understand your situation.

During a discourse, when someone wants to take a gap or show a silence. At that time, gap fillers like right, you know are used. In the above statement, the Speaker takes a pause by using right as discourse marker and fills the gap with the help of it. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

HESITATION

Well I didn't want to disturb you.

When a speaker is hesitant to talk then he/she may use 'Well' to show their level of formality. As it has been shown in the statement that the speaker was hesitant before talking. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

SUBJECTIVE OPINION

Actually, this is not my way of life.

When a speaker wants to show his/her actual self-opinion then actually is used as a discourse marker. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

POLITENESS

I mean I shall go with Khadija if you don't wanna join.

When a speaker doesn't want to sound less rude then I mean can be used. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

SATIRE

So this was your performance.

Here so is showing a satirical effect that the performance was not good enough. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

SHOCKING STATEMENT

I mean I couldn't grab the situation.

I mean can also be used to lower the shocking effect. In the above-mentioned statement, the speaker could not understand that what was going on around him/her as he/she was in shock. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

SUPPORT

Well I shall not leave you alone.

The speaker is showing support to others by using a discourse marker of well. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.



Great! I am with you in this charity work

Great is also used to show support as it has been demonstrated in the above statement. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

UNCERTAINTY

Actually I have no idea where my life is leading towards.

When a speaker is showing his/her true intentions that he/she is not sure about his/her life goals and have a lot of confusions. The discourse marker is present at the initial position.

Conclusion

On the basis of the conducted research, it was found that native speakers use more discourse marker as compared to non-native speakers. These findings will also be lucrative for ESL learners and teachers in improving their teaching and learning techniques. It will also help the non-native speakers to acquire a native like competence. The non-native speakers can hold a successful communication by maintaining politeness as well. A topic can never be deemed fully researched because there is always a space for more work to be done. The outcomes of this study, however, can unquestionably help individuals who are teaching and learning English as a second language. This will help ESL learners to improve their fluency in English language. Due to the extensive discussion of marker placement, students should be able to speak with the same fluency as native speakers if they concentrate on this aspect of their studies. For the sake of this research, it has only been conducted in private places. Because of the study's narrow scope, the conclusion obtained may not be sufficient on its own. A broader scope of research can be done on the same issue.



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