3   Discourse Markers: Language, Meaning, and Context

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0   Introduction

The production of coherent discourse is an interactive process that requires speakers to draw upon several different types of communicative knowledge that complement more code-based grammatical knowledge of sound, form, and meaning per se. Two aspects of communicative knowledge closely related to one another are *expressive* and *social*: the ability to use language to display personal and social identities, to convey attitudes and perform actions, and to negotiate relationships between self and other. Others include a *cognitive* ability to represent concepts and ideas through language and a *textual* ability to organize forms, and convey meanings, within units of language longer than a single sentence.

Discourse markers – expressions like *well*, *but*, *oh* and *y'know* – are one set of linguistic items that function in cognitive, expressive, social, and textual domains.[1] Although there were scattered studies of discourse markers in the 1980s, their study since then has abounded in various branches of linguistics and allied fields, leading Fraser (1998: 301) to call discourse marker analysis "a growth market in linguistics." Markers have been studied in a variety of languages, including Chinese (Biq 1990; Kwong 1989; Or 1997), Danish (Davidsen-Nielsen 1993), Finnish (Hakulinen and Seppanen 1992; Hakulinen 1998), French (Cadiot et al. 1985; Hansen 1998; Vincent 1993), German (W. Abraham 1991), Hebrew (Ariel 1998; Maschler 1997, 1998; Ziv 1998), Hungarian (Vasko 2000), Indonesian (Wouk 2000), Italian (Bazzanella 1990; Bruti 1999), Japanese (Cook 1990, 1992; Fuji 2000; Matsumoto 1988; Onodera 1992, 1995), Korean (Park 1998), Latin (Kroon 1998), Mayan (Brody 1989; Zavala in press), Portuguese (Silva and de Macedo 1992), and Spanish (Koike 1996; Schwenter 1996; see also section 3 below). They have been examined in a variety of genres and interactive contexts, for example, narratives (Norrick forthcoming; Koike 1996; Segal et al. 1991), political interviews (Wilson 1993), health care consultations (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994), games (Greaseley 1994; Hoyle 1994), computer-generated tutorial sessions (Moser and Moore 1995), newspapers (Cotter 1996a), radio talk (Cotter 1996b), classrooms (de Fina 1997; Chaudron and Richards 1986; Tyler et al. 1988), and service encounters (Merritt 1984), as well as in a number of different language contact situations (Cotter

1996b; de Fina 2000; Gupta 1992; Heisler 1996; Maschler 1994; Sankoff et al. 1997). Synchronic studies have been supplemented by diachronic analyses of first (Andersen 1996; Andersen et al. 1995; Gallagher and Craig 1987; Jisa 1987; Kyratzis et al. 1990; Kryatzis and Ervin-Tripp 1999; Sprott 1992, 1994) and second language acquisition (Flowerdew and Tauroza 1995), as well as language change (Brinton 1996, ch. 7 this volume; Finell 1989; Fleischman 1999; Fludernik 1995; Jucker 1997; Stein 1985; Taavitsainen 1994; Traugott 1995).

The studies just mentioned have approached discourse markers from a number of different perspectives. After reviewing three influential perspectives (section 1) and presenting a sample analysis (section 2), I summarize a subset of recent studies that have provided a rich and varied empirical base that reveals a great deal about how discourse markers work and what they do (section 3). My conclusion revisits one of the central dilemmas still facing discourse marker research (section 4).

1   Discourse Markers: Three Perspectives

Perspectives on markers differ in terms of their basic starting points, their definition of discourse markers, and their method of analysis. Here I describe Halliday and Hasan's (1976) semantic perspective on cohesion (section 1.1); next is my own discourse perspective (Schiffrin 1987a (section 1.2)); third is Fraser's (1990, 1998) pragmatic approach (section 1.3). I have chosen these approaches not only because they have been influential, but because their differences (section 1.4) continue to resonate in current research.

1.1   *Markers and cohesion*

Halliday and Hasan's (1976) seminal work on cohesion in English provided an important framework for analyzing text by addressing a basic question stemming from the very inception of discourse analysis: what makes a text different from a random collection of unrelated sentences? Although Halliday and Hasan did not speak directly of discourse markers, their analysis of cohesion (based primarily on written texts) included words (e.g. *and*, *but*, *because*, *I mean*, *by the way*, *to sum up*) that have since been called markers and suggested functions for those words partially paralleling those of markers.

Halliday and Hasan propose that a set of cohesive devices (reference, repetition, substitution, ellipsis, and conjunction) help create a text by indicating semantic relations in an underlying structure of ideas (see Martin, this volume). A range of expressions (including, but not limited to, conjunctions) conveys conjunctive relations. Whereas most cohesive features establish cohesion through anaphoric or cataphoric ties to the text, conjunctive items "express certain meanings which presuppose the presence of other components in the discourse" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 236).

The meanings conveyed by conjunctive items are relatively straightforward: additive, adversative, causal, and temporal. Within these general meanings, however, are specific subtypes: a causal relation, for example, includes general causal (with

simple and emphatic subtypes), and specific causal (with reason, result, and purpose subtypes). Each (sub)type of cohesive meaning can be conveyed through a variety of words: a general causal simple conjunctive relation, for example, can be conveyed through *so*, *then*, *hence*, and *therefore*. Multiplicity is found not just in a FUNCTION (e.g. causal relation) → FORM (e.g. *so*, *hence*) direction, but also in a FORM → FUNCTION direction. Thus a single word [FORM] can convey more than one conjunctive relation [FUNCTION]: *then*, for example, can convey temporal, causal, and conditional relations, between clauses (cf. Biq 1990; Hansen 1997; Schiffrin 1992).

Whereas many analyses of conjunctions argue for either a simple semantic inter-pretation or a set of polysemous meanings (e.g. Posner 1980), Halliday and Hasan allow variation in the degree to which meaning results from the semantics of a word itself or from the propositions in a text. For example, although *and* is a texture-creating device that can contribute an additive meaning, its meaning can also reflect the semantic content of a text: thus, if *and* prefaces an upcoming proposition whose meaning contrasts with that of a prior proposition, *and* would then convey an adversative relation (comparable to *but* and *on the other hand*).

Just as contributions to meaning can vary in source – word meaning and/or pro-positions – so too, meanings can fluctuate between "external" and "internal" sources. External meaning is "inherent in the phenomena that language is used to talk about" (Halliday and Hasan 1976: 241); it is roughly analogous to referential meaning and the domain of semantics. Internal meaning is nonreferential pragmatic meaning: it is "inherent in the communicative process" (1976: 241), e.g. the speaker's choice of speech role, rhetorical channel, attitude (1976: 240). Rather than separate external and internal meanings, however, Halliday and Hasan posit a continuity. The additive meaning of *and*, for example, may be viewed "as an extension of the underlying patterns of conjunction into the communication situation itself, treating it, and thereby also the text . . . as having by analogy the same structure as 'reality'" (1976: 267).

Although *meaning* can be reshuffled – between word and propositions, between internal and external sources – the boundary between sentence and text is less per-meable. The systemic-functional grammar in which Halliday and Hasan's analysis is located draws a sharp distinction between sentence and text: thus, the structural role of words like *and* (to coordinate clauses at a sentential level) is qualitatively different from its cohesive role (to mark interpretive dependencies between propositions, and thus create texture).

1.2   Markers and discourse

My analysis of discourse markers (Schiffrin 1987a) was motivated by several concerns. From a sociolinguistic perspective, I was interested in using methods for analyzing language that had been developed by variation theory to account for the use and distribution of forms in discourse. This interest, however, was embedded within my view of discourse not only as a unit of language, but as a process of social inter-action (see Heller, Schegloff, both this volume). My analysis thus tried to reconcile both methodology (using both quantitative and qualitative methods) and underlying models (combining those inherited from both linguistics and sociology). Unifying the analysis was the desire to account for the distribution of markers (which markers

occurred where? why?) in spoken discourse in a way that attended to both the importance of language (what was the form? its meaning?) and interaction (what was going on – at the moment of use – in the social interaction?).

My initial work (Schiffrin 1987a) defined discourse markers as sequentially dependent elements that bracket units of talk (1987a: 31), i.e. nonobligatory utterance-initial items that function in relation to ongoing talk and text. I proposed that discourse markers could be considered as a set of linguistic expressions comprised of members of word classes as varied as conjunctions (e.g. *and*, *but, or*), interjections (*oh*), adverbs (*now*, *then*), and lexicalized phrases (*y'know*, *I mean*). Also proposed was a discourse model with different planes: a participation framework, information state, ideational structure, action structure, exchange structure. My specific analyses showed that markers could work at different levels of discourse to connect utterances on either a single plane (1) or across different planes (2). In (1a) and (1b), for example, *because* connects actions and ideas respectively. In (1a), *because* connects a request (to complete a task) and the justification for the request:

(1)   a.   Yeh, let's get back, because she'll never get home.

In (1b), *because* connects two idea units or representations of events:

(1)   b.   And they holler Henry!!! Cause they really don't know!²

In (2), however, *but* connects an utterance defined on several different planes simultaneously, and hence relates the different planes to one another:

(2)   *Jack*:   [The rabbis preach, ["Don't intermarry"
      Freda: [But I did-   [But I *did* say   those intermarriages
                  that we have in this country are healthy.

Freda's *but* prefaces an idea unit ("intermarriages are healthy"), displays a participation framework (nonaligned with Jack), realizes an action (a rebuttal during an argument), and seeks to establish Freda as a current speaker in an exchange (open a turn at talk). *But* in (2) thus has four functions that locate an utterance at the intersection of four planes of talk.

Another aspect of my analysis showed that markers display relationships that are local (between adjacent utterances) and/or global (across wider spans and/or structures of discourse; cf. Lenk 1998). In (3), for example, *because* (in (d)) has both local and global functions (example from Schiffrin 1994b: 34, discussed also in Schiffrin 1997):

(3)   *Debby*:   a.   Well some people before they go to the doctor, they talk to a friend, or a neighbor.
                b.   Is there anybody that uh . . .
      Henry: c.   Sometimes it works!
                d.   Because there's this guy Louie Gelman.
                e.   he went to a big specialist,
                f.   and the guy . . . analyzed it wrong.
                      [narrative not included]
                o.   So doctors are – well they're not God either!

In (3), *because* has a local function: it opens a justification (that takes the form of a brief (three-clause) narrative about a friend's experience) through which Henry supports his claim to a general truth (going to someone other than a doctor *works*, i.e. can help a medical problem). But notice that Henry then follows this justification with a longer (eight-clause) narrative detailing his friend's experience. Thus, *because* also has a global function: *because* links *Sometimes it works* (defined retrospectively as an abstract) with a narrative (whose coda is initiated with the complementary discourse marker *so* also functioning at a global level).

Also considered in my analysis was the degree to which markers themselves add a meaning to discourse (i.e. as when *oh* displays information as "new" or "unexpected" to a recipient) or reflect a meaning that is already semantically accessible (e.g. as when *but* reflects a semantically transparent contrastive meaning). Markers can also occupy intermediate positions between these two extremes: *because* and *so*, for example, partially maintain their core meanings as cause/result conjunctions even when they establish metaphorical relationships on nonpropositional planes of discourse (cf. Schwenter 1996; Sweetser 1990).

Although I had initiated my analysis with what I called an "operational definition" of markers (quoted above), I concluded with more theoretical definitions of markers. First, I tried to specify the conditions that would allow a word to be used as a discourse marker: syntactically detachable, initial position, range of prosodic contours, operate at both local and global levels, operate on different planes of discourse (Schiffrin 1987a: 328). Second, I suggested that discourse markers were comparable to indexicals (Schiffrin 1987a: 322–5; cf. Levinson's 1983: ch. 2 notion of discourse deictics), or, in a broader sociolinguistic framework, contextualization cues (Schiffrin 1987b). Finally, I proposed that although markers have primary functions (e.g. the primary function of *and* is on an ideational plane, the primary function of *well* in the participation framework), their use is multifunctional. It is this multifunctionality on different planes of discourse that helps to integrate the many different simultaneous processes underlying the construction of discourse, and thus helps to create coherence.

1.3   Markers and pragmatics

Like the work reviewed thus far, Fraser's (1990, 1998) perspective on discourse markers is embedded within a larger framework that impacts upon the analysis of markers. In contrast to Halliday and Hasan – whose main interest was the cohesion of text – Fraser's theoretical framework concerns the meaning of sentences, specifically how one type of pragmatic marker in a sentence may relate the message conveyed by that sentence to the message of a prior sentence. And in contrast to my approach in Schiffrin (1987a) – whose starting point was to account for the use and distribution of markers in everyday discourse – Fraser's starting point is the classification of types of pragmatic meaning, and within that classification, the description of how some pragmatic commentary markers (discourse markers) dictate an interpretation of "the message conveyed by S2 [S = segment] vis-a-vis the interpretation of S1" (Fraser 1998: 302).

Fraser's framework depends upon a differentiation between content and pragmatic meaning. Content meaning is referential meaning: "a more or less explicit representation of some state of the world that the speaker intends to bring to the hearer's

attention by means of the literal interpretation of the sentence" (1990: 385). Pragmatic meaning concerns the speaker's communicative intention, the direct (not implied) "message the speaker intends to convey in uttering the sentence" (1990: 386). It is conveyed by three different sets of pragmatic markers: basic pragmatic markers (signals of illocutionary force, e.g. *please*), commentary pragmatic markers (encoding of another message that comments on the basic message, e.g. *frankly*), and parallel pragmatic markers (encoding of another message separate from the basic and/or commentary message, e.g. *damn*, vocatives). Discourse markers are one type of commentary pragmatic marker: they are "a class of expressions, each of which signals how the speaker intends the basic message that follows to relate to the prior discourse" (1990: 387). Fraser's more recent work (1998) builds upon the sequential function of discourse markers, such that discourse markers necessarily specify (i.e. provide commentary on) a relationship between two segments of discourse: this specification is not conceptual, but procedural (it provides information on the interpretation of messages; see also Ariel 1998).

As suggested earlier, Fraser's framework presumes a strict separation between semantics (his content meaning) and pragmatics (his pragmatic meaning): speakers' use of commentary pragmatic markers – including, critically, discourse markers – has nothing to do with the content meaning of the words (cf. Halliday and Hasan 1976; Schiffrin 1987a; see also Norrick, this volume). Similarly, although discourse markers may be homophonous with, as well as historically related to, other forms, they do not function in sentential and textual roles simultaneously: "when an expression functions as a discourse marker, that is its exclusive function in the sentence" (1990: 189).

One consequence of these disjunctive relationships is that multiple functions of markers – including, critically, social interactional functions – are downplayed (if noted at all) and not open to linguistic explanation. What some scholars (e.g. Ariel 1998; Halliday and Hasan 1976; Schiffrin 1987a, 1992; Maschler 1998; Schwenter 1996) suggest is an interdependence (sometimes clear, sometimes subtle) between content and pragmatic meaning – explained by well-known processes such as semantic bleaching (Bolinger 1977) or metaphorical extensions from a "source domain" (Sweetser 1990) – becomes, instead, a matter of chance (e.g. homophony). Likewise, what scholars working on grammaticalization (Brinton, this volume; Traugott 1995) and particularly pragmaticization (e.g. Fleischman 1999; Onodera 1992, 1995) have found to be gradual changes in form/function relationships would have to be viewed, instead, as a series of categorical and functional leaps across mutually exclusive classes of form and meaning.

Fraser's classification of types of pragmatic meaning also has the important effect of redefining the set of expressions often considered as markers. Different markers are excluded for different reasons: whereas *oh*, for example, is considered akin to a separate sentence, *because* is viewed as a content formative or an interjection, and *y'know* is identified as a parallel pragmatic marker. These classifications create sets that end up containing tremendous internal variation. The large and varied group of interjections (Fraser 1990: 391), for example, includes not only *oh*, but also *ah, aha, ouch, yuk* (what Goffman 1978 has called response cries), *uh-huh, yeah* (what Yngve 1970 calls back channels and Schegloff 1981 calls turn-continuers), *hey* (a summons, see DuBois 1989), and *because* (which is an interjection when it stands alone as an answer (Fraser 1990: 392), and elsewhere a content formative (but see Schlepegrell 1991; Stenstrom 1998)).

1.4   Comparison of approaches

Along with the specific differences among approaches noted in interim comparisons above, we can also compare the approaches in relation to three recurrent themes. First, the source of discourse markers: although the three perspectives agree that markers have various sources, they differ on the contribution of word meaning and grammatical class to discourse marker meaning and function (Fraser positing the least contribution). Second, the relationship between discourse markers and contexts: although all agree that markers can gain their function through discourse, different conceptualizations of discourse produce different kinds of discourse functions. Fraser's focus is primarily how markers indicate relationships between messages (propositions); although Halliday and Hasan focus primarily on the propositional content of tests too, their overall theory also allows conjunctive relations to index facets of the communicative situation; Schiffrin explicitly includes various aspects of the communicative situation within her discourse model, such that indexing propositional relations is only one possible function of discourse markers. Third, the integration of discourse marker analysis into the study of language: whereas Halliday and Hasan embed the study of conjunctive relations in their study of cohesion, which in turn, is part of the larger theory of systemic-functional linguistics, Fraser's approach rests upon a pragmatic theory of meaning applied both within and across sentences, and Schiffrin's approach combines interactional and variationist approaches to discourse to analyze the role of markers in co-constructed discourse.

2   Theory, Method, Analysis: The Importance of the Data

Differences in the perspectives reviewed above stem from theoretical assumptions and goals, methodological practices, and choice of data (written texts, sociolinguistic interviews, hypothetical sentences). In this section, I present a brief (and partial) analysis of one marker (*and*) in one discourse (a list), primarily from my own approach (section 1.2). Although space prohibits explicit discussion of how every point of the analysis would be treated by different approaches, or how they would be relevant to the different themes discussed above (but see pp. 63, 65–6), I alert the reader to several key issues: what unit to consider (e.g. sentence, clause, intonation unit, turn), the relationship between sentence grammar and text, how to conceptualize and operationalize context, how to analyze multiple functions, and the difference between data-driven and theory-driven analyses.

   The discourse in (4) is a list, i.e. a hierarchical description of members of a set (Schiffrin 1994a; see DuBois and Sankoff, this volume). All lists display a speaker's identification and organization of a set of items that are clearly the same in some ways (e.g. "my chores today," "members of my family") but different in others (e.g. "phone calls" vs. "post office," "siblings" vs. "cousins"). Thus, the central coherence relation (Knott and Sanders 1998) of lists is membership in a set; the central structure is coordination of subunits as equal level branches of a larger overarching unit (see Polanyi, this volume).

In (4), Kay is listing the race tracks near her house in response to a tag question from Anne (a sociolinguistic interviewer) about the popularity of racing. The list thus answers Anne's question by providing empirical justification for Anne's implicit claim that race tracks are locally popular (*big around here*). The Roman numerals and letters on the left of Kay's list indicate the organization of items in the list:[3]

(4)	X LOCAL RACE TRACKS	*Anne*:	a.	Racing's big around here, isn't it?
		Kay:	b.	Yeh.
		Anne:	c.	Yeh.
	X1 RACE TRACKS IN NJ	*Kay*:	d.	Well, you got uh, Jersey.
	X1a		e.	You got . . . Monmouth
	X1b		f.	and you got Garden State.
	X1c		g.	Y'got Atlantic City.
		Anne:	h.	Mhm.
	X2/X2a RACE TRACKS IN PA	*Kay*:	i.	And then uh here you got Liberty Bell.
	X2b		j.	And they're building a new one up in Neshaminy.
		Anne:	k.	That's right. [I've never seen that, =
	X3/X3a RACE TRACK IN DE	*Kay*:	l.	[And uh . . . you got =
		Anne:		= [though.
		Kay:		= [Delaware.
	X4 RACE TRACKS IN NY		m.	And of course, if you want to re- be- really go at it you can go up to New York.
		Anne:	n.	Mhm.
	X4a	*Kay*:	o.	= You got Aqueduct
	X4b		p.	and you got Saratoga
	X4c		q.	and you have that Belmont, y'know.

And occurs frequently in the list: it prefaces seven list items; those not *and*-prefaced are X1a (e), X1c (g), X4a (o). Why does *and* occur with some list-items, but not with others?

Since lists represent set membership, one obvious suggestion is that *and* reflects the organization of set members being enumerated, and thus, the speaker's cognitive/conceptual organization (Knotts and Sanders 1998) of the set LOCAL RACE TRACKS. Notice, then, that *and* connects list-items at the *same* level: both lower level list-items (in (f), (j), (p), and (q)) and higher level list-items (linked in (i), (l), and (m)). But *and* does not connect list-items from different levels: *and* does not link X1 to X1a (e) or X4 to X4a (o).[4] This distribution suggests that the textual organization of the list-items parallels the grammatical role of *and* as a coordinating conjunction (Schiffrin 1986, 1987a: 182–90).

The ideational structure of the list is, of course, not the only discourse plane to consider. Since the list is presented as a relatively continuous turn at talk, we might be tempted to overlook any relationship between *and* and turn-taking. Notice in the data above, however, that Anne uses standard back-channel tokens ((h), (k), (n)) that not only show her attentiveness, but also function as turn-continuers (Schegloff 1981): *mhm* and *that's right* allow Kay to continue her turn despite a syntactically, intonationally

and semantically marked (Ford and Thompson 1998) turn-transition space. In two of these exchanges ((g)–(i), (j)–(l)), Kay uses *and* to continue her turn after Anne's turn-continuers. Why does Kay not use *and* as a third turn-continuer (in (m)–(o))?

Recall our earlier observation that *and* connects equal level list-items on a list. The *and*-prefaced list-items within Kay's turn-continuation both have coordinate links ([X1] *and* [X2], [X2] *and* [X3]) at a global level. But the list item without *and* – *You got Aqueduct* (o) [X4a] – does not: because it is the first subcategory of [X4], there is not yet a coordinate level list-item with which it can be anaphorically linked. Thus, although the turn-taking environment of *You got Aqueduct* is consistent with the use of *and* (Schiffrin 1987a: 143–6), the ideational structure is not.

In this sample analysis, I have tried to explain both the presence and absence of *and* in a list by exploring two different aspects of context: ideational (conceptual) structure, exchange (turn-taking) structure. This has raised an important issue – the effect of multiple constraints on discourse options (Schiffrin 1985) – that is actually the flip side of the fact that markers are multifunctional.[5] We have already noted that discourse markers function in cognitive, expressive, social, and textual domains, i.e. simultaneously on different planes of discourse. If language served primarily one or another function at different times (and of course, it may, in certain registers; see Biber and Conrad, this volume), it would be relatively easy to decide on which plane to focus and to discover which aspect of discourse is indexed through a marker. But when language is multifunctional – as is certainly the case with discourse markers – it must be the data themselves that guide the selection of constraints to examine.

The approach to the multifunctionality of discourse markers illustrated here has clearly been data-driven. I asked why *and* occurred in some places, but not in others. I proposed explanations that I then explored in relation to the data: my goal throughout was to find the pattern of use for *and* and to explain that pattern. Although my brief analysis was certainly embedded within a general analytical interest in markers' functions and a set of theoretical principles about discourse (Schiffrin 1994b: 416), I did not take these as my starting points (cf. the theory-driven approaches of Andersen 1998; Rouchota 1998; Shloush 1998). Rather, it was the data themselves that suggested the constraints and the analytical frameworks that would be most pertinent to understanding the use of *and*.

3   Markers Across Contexts, Across Languages, and Over Time

Discourse marker research utilizes a variety of data sources that allow analysts to focus on markers across contexts, across languages, and/or over time. These three focal areas address many different specific issues that are part of several general themes of discourse marker research: what lexical items are used as discourse markers? Are words with comparable meanings used for comparable functions? What is the influence of syntactic structure, and semantic meaning, on the use of markers? How do cultural, social, situational, and textual norms have an effect on the distribution and function of markers? Since we have just discussed *and*, I begin with a review of some other studies of *and* that also provide a good entry point to several of these issues.

A conversation-analytic study of *and* (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994) studied its use as a preface to questions in clinical consultations. The primary use of *and* was to preface agenda-based questions either locally between adjacent turns, or globally across turns, and thus to orient participants to the main phases of the activity. An additional, more strategic, use of *and* was to normalize contingent questions or problematic issues (1994: 19–22). Whereas the former use of *and* was coordinating in both a metaphorical and structural sense (i.e. the questions were the "same" level in the question agenda), the latter use amplifies Halliday and Hasan's idea of external meaning: the additive meaning of *and* normalizes the problematic content and/or placement of a question.[6]

The coordinating function of *and* at both grammatical and discourse levels over a range of contexts has also been noted in studies of language development and child discourse (see also Meng and Sromqvist 1999; Kyratzis and Ervin-Tripp 1999; Cook-Gumperz and Kyratzis, this volume). Peterson and McCabe (1991) show that *and* has a textual use in childrens' (3 years 6 months to 9 years 6 months) narratives: *and* links similar units (i.e. narrative events) more frequently than information tangential to narrative plot (cf. Segal et al. 1991 for adults). Gallagher and Craig (1987) show how *and* connects speech acts during the dramatic role play of 4-year-olds. Sprott (1992) shows that the earliest appearance of *and* (as well as *but*, *because* and *well*) during children's (2 years 7 months to 3 years 6 months) disputes marks exchange structures; this function continues as action, and ideational (first local, then global) functions are added on at later ages.

Studies of bilingual discourse – those in which speakers either borrow or code-switch across two different languages (e.g. Heisler 1996) – also add to our understanding of the linguistic and contextual junctures at which markers work. A series of studies by Maschler (1994, 1997, 1998) on the use of Hebrew discourse markers in Hebrew/English conversations of bilingual women, for example, reveals a range of distributions across the two languages: some markers were roughly equivalent, others had no equivalents, still others were semantically, but not functionally, comparable. The last distribution has also been observed by Cotter (1996b: 140–216), who finds, despite a semantic equivalent in Irish, that English *well* is used during Irish radio call-in shows to fill in a perceived functional gap.

Other studies focus on the linguistic consequences of markers being borrowed across – and then coexisting within – different languages. Brody (1989) suggests that the general lexical meanings and structuring effects of Spanish conjunctions (including *bueno*; see below) reappear in Mayan use, but are sometimes used togther with native particles that have comparable uses. Zavala's (in press) analysis of the restructuring of the standard Spanish (causal or consecutive) conjunction *pues* by Quechua-Andean Spanish bilinguals shows that *pues* has lost its meaning at the sentence level and acquired meaning at the discourse level: *pues* is used to mark changes in information status, as well as commitment to the truth of information, in ways that reflect some of the functions of Quechua evidentials.[7]

Comparative studies of markers in monolingual speech situations also add to our understanding of the different junctures at which markers work. For example, studies of Spanish markers that are in some, but not all, contexts roughly comparable to English *well* suggest the importance of both context and lexical/semantic source. De Fina's (1997) analysis of *bien* (an adverb, glossed semantically as "well") in classroom talk

shows that teachers use *bien* for both organizational functions (to redefine a situation, to move to another activity) and evaluative functions (as the feedback "move" in the three-part classroom exchange of question/answer/feedback). The organizational function of *bien* is most comparable to English *okay* (Beach 1993; Condon 1986; Merritt 1984). Like *okay*, the positive connotation (i.e. "I accept this") of *bien* has been semantically bleached (Bolinger 1977) in transitional (but not evaluative) environments. Travis's (1998) analysis of *bueno* (an adjective, glossed semantically as "good") in conversation in Colombian Spanish differentiates two functions. Although the first (mark acceptance) is comparable to the evaluative function of *bien* and English *okay*, the second (mark a partial response) is more comparable to uses of English *well*. Chodorowska-Pilch's (1999) research on Penisular Spanish suggests still another lexical source (*vamos*, literally "we go") for yet another function (mitigation) partially comparable to that of *well*. An analysis of *vamos* during service encounters in a travel agency suggests that *vamos* mitigates face-threatening speech acts by metaphorically moving the speaker away from the content of an utterance, and thus metonymically creating interpersonal distance.

The studies on *bien*, *bueno*, and *vamos* suggest that discourse functions can be divided very differently across languages. English *well*, for example, is used very generally with responses that are not fully consonant with prior expectations (Greaseley 1994; Lakoff 1973; Schiffrin 1987a: ch. 5; Svartvik 1980): hence its use in indirect and/or lengthy answers (as illustrated in line (d) of the list in (4)) and self-repairs. But in Spanish, it is only *bueno* that is used this way (Travis 1998): *bien* has the transitional function associated with *well* as a frame shift (Jucker 1993), and *vamos* the mitigating function associated with *well* in dispreferred responses (e.g. turning down a request). Thus, the functions of a marker in one language can be distributed among a variety of lexically based discourse markers in other languages.[8]

The importance of comparative studies for our understanding of grammaticalization is highlighted by Fleischman's (1999) analysis of markers comparable to English *like*. Fleischman finds that a variety of discourse/pragmatic functions associated with English *like* (e.g. focus, hedge) is replicated in languages as varied as Finnish, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Lahu, Portuguese, Russian, and Swedish. Although the words share neither etymologies nor a single lexical/semantic source, the processes that they undergo as they move toward their similar functions are strikingly similar.[9]

Studies of grammaticalization (both completed and in progress) within a single language also provide valuable insights into both the sources and developmental paths of markers (Onodera 1992, 1995; see also Brinton, this volume). Jucker (1997), for example, suggests that *well* underwent a process of continuous diversification, whereby new functions were added to old ones (cf. Finnell 1989). Warvik's (1995) analysis of two Middle English (ME) adverbial/conjunctions (glossed as "when" and "then") shows that when these words were supplanted by ME *then*, what was altered was not only a formal distinction (two forms shifted to one), but also a genre-based (narrative vs. non-narrative) distribution.

Research on a variety of words and expressions in contemporary English that have gained – or are gaining – pragmatic roles as discourse markers suggest a range of formal and functional relationships not just with their historical sources, but with their contemporary lexical sources. Whereas syntactic position, pronunciation, and meaning all differentiate the adverbial and discourse marker uses of *anyway* (Ferrera

1997), for example, it is pronunciation and meaning that differentiate the marker *cos* from its source *because* (Stenstrom 1998), and meaning and sequential distribution that differentiate the use of *yeh* as a "reaction" marker from its use as either agreement or turn-continuer (Jucker and Smith 1998; see also DuBois 1989 on *hey*, Sebba and Tate 1986 on *y'know what I mean*, and Tsui 1991 on *I don't know*). Finally, Swerts's (1998) analysis of filled pauses in Dutch monologues suggests that even vocalizations that are themselves semantically empty can provide an option within a set of paradigmatic choices that includes semantically meaningful markers (i.e. Dutch *nou* (cf. "now," "well") or *effe kijken* (cf. "let's see")). Thus, vocalizations that have no inherent meaning at all, and that occur elsewhere for very different reasons (see, e.g., Fromkin 1973 on the role of filled pauses, and other "speech errors" in language production), can also provide markers through which to structure discourse (for a parallel argument about gestures, see Kendon 1995).

In sum, research on discourse markers has spread into many areas of linguistic inquiry, drawing scholars from many different theoretical and empirical orientations.[10] Although this welcome diversity has led to an abundance of information about discourse markers, it has also led to knowledge that is not always either linear or cumulative. The result is that it is difficult to synthesize the results of past research into a set of coherent and consistent findings and, thus, to integrate scholarly findings into an empirically grounded theory. My conclusion in the next section thus returns to a very basic issue still confronting discourse marker analysis: what are discourse markers?

4   Conclusion: Markers and Discourse Analysis

Discourse markers are parts of language that scholars want to study, even if they do not always agree on what particular parts they are studying or what to call the object of their interest. Not only have discourse markers been called by various names (Fraser 1998: 301 lists 15 different names), but, like the definition of discourse itself (see Introduction, this volume), what often opens books (e.g. Brinton 1996; Jucker and Ziv 1998; Schiffrin 1987a: ch. 2) and articles (e.g. Holker 1991: 78–9; Sankoff et al. 1997: 195) about markers is a discussion of definitional issues. Rather than try to resolve these issues, I here take a more modest approach that addresses the definitional problem from the outside in: I suggest that the way we identify markers is an outgrowth of how we approach the study of discourse. I do so by considering the status of two words that are often, but not always, viewed as markers: *and*, *y'know*. Although the two markers present different definitional questions, resolving the status of both touches on broader discourse analytic issues of data, method, and theory.

Questions about the status of *and* revolve around the difference between sentences and texts, grammar and meaning. *And* has a grammatical role as a coordinating conjunction that seems to be (at least partially) paralleled in its discourse role. But can all tokens of *and* – even those that are intersentential and thus might seem to have a purely grammatical role – work as discourse markers?

In my sample analysis of *and* in a list (section 2), I began by including all occurrences of *and* regardless of linguistic environment: I included *and* between syntactically

parallel clauses within one intonation unit (*You got . . . Monmouth and you got Garden State.*) and between syntactically different sentences in two intonation units (*And then uh here you got Liberty Bell. And they're building a new one up in Neshaminy.*).[11] My analysis suggested that all the tokens of *and* had both structural and additive roles. Because of their comparable function, I would argue that all the tokens of *and* in the list are all discourse markers.

My decision about the marker status of *and* was based not on an a priori theory, but on an analysis of the function of *and* in the data. Basing decisions about marker status on data analysis has an important consequence: there may very well be different decisions about the marker status of an expression depending upon the data. This should be neither surprising nor problematic. If discourse markers are, indeed, indices of the underlying cognitive, expressive, textual, and social organization of a discourse, then it is ultimately properties of the discourse itself (that stem, of course, from factors as various as the speaker's goals, the social situation, and so on) that provide the need for (and hence the slots in which) markers appear.

Of course data never exists in a vacuum. We all come to our data, and begin its analysis, with assumptions about what is important and principles that help us organize our thinking (theory), as well as sets of tools through which to first discover, and then explain, what we have perceived as a "problem" in the data (methodology). Although data and methodology both bear on the status of *y'know* as a marker, it is the role of underlying assumptions and principles about discourse that I want to stress in relation to decisions about *y'know*.

Disagreement about the status of *y'know* centers on the relationship between meaning and discourse. *Y'know* presents a set of distributional and functional puzzles: it is not always utterance-initial, it has variant degrees of semantic meaning. Despite general agreement that *y'know* is a marker of some kind, it is not always considered a *discourse* marker per se. Fraser (1990: 390), for example, excludes *y'know* from his discourse marker group because he claims that rather than signal a discourse relationship, it signals a speaker attitude of solidarity (cf. Holmes 1986).

To try to resolve disagreement about *y'know*, let us take a closer look, first, at where *y'know* occurs and, next, at the different views of discourse that underlie different analyses of markers. *Y'know* is often found in specific discourse environments: concluding an argument, introducing a story preface, evoking a new referent (Schiffrin 1987a: 267–95). These environments all mark transitions from one phase of discourse to another, and thus, they all relate (possibly large) discourse segments: the first connects a conclusion with prior evidence, the second connects a prior conversational topic with an upcoming story about that topic, and the third introduces a referent that will then be treated as familiar information. These connections certainly involve relationships between discourse segments. In fact, one might argue that it is precisely in transitional locations such as these – where interlocutors are jointly engaged in productive and interpretive tasks centered on establishing the relationship between somewhat abstract and complex discourse segments – that speakers may want to create, or reinforce, solidarity with their hearers.

What underlies decisions about expressions such as *y'know* are different conceptions of discourse itself. Sociolinguistic, interactional, and conversation-analytic analyses of markers begin with a view that language reflects (and realizes) rich and multifaceted contexts. This view leads such analysts to search for the varied functions of markers

– and thus to incorporate into their analyses and theories the multifunctionality that is one of the central defining features of discourse markers. But many current analysts who begin from semantic and pragmatic perspectives privilege the "message" level of discourse, thus restricting analysis of markers to the signaling of message-based relationships across sentences.[12] Also differently conceived is the notion of communicative meaning. Sociolinguistic approaches to discourse (Schiffrin 1994b: ch. 11) assume that communicative meaning is co-constructed by speaker/hearer interaction and emergent from jointly recognized sequential expectations and contingencies of talk-in-interaction. But many semantic and pragmatic analyses of markers are wed to a Gricean view of communicative meaning as speaker intention (and subsequent hearer recognition of intention). If the assignment of meaning is completely divorced from the study of the sequential and interactional contingencies of actual language use, however, then so are decisions about the functions of markers, and even more basically, decisions about the status of expressions as markers.

To conclude: I noted initially that the production of coherent discourse is an interactive process that requires speakers to draw upon several different types of communicative knowledge – cognitive, expressive, social, textual – that complement more code-based grammatical knowledge of sound, form, and meaning. Discourse markers tell us not only about the linguistic properties (e.g. semantic and pragmatic meanings, source, functions) of a set of frequently used expressions, and the organization of social interactions and situations in which they are used, but also about the cognitive, expressive, social, and textual competence of those who use them. Because the functions of markers are so broad, any and all analyses of markers – even those focusing on only a relatively narrow aspect of their meaning or a small portion of their uses – can teach us something about their role in discourse. If interest in discourse markers continues over the next 10 years, then, perhaps we will see an even broader empirical base from which to build an integrative theory. And perhaps this base will be built not only through analyses that continue to focus on specific markers, their uses, and/or their contexts, but also through analyses of other topics in discourse analysis that can be illuminated by incorporating discourse markers into the set of basic tools through which we (as speaker/hearers *and* linguists) understand discourse.

NOTES

1   The names given to words such as *and*, *oh*, and *y'know* vary: for example, pragmatic particles (Ostman 1981), discourse particles (Schourup 1985), cue phrases (Moser and Moore 1995); some labels are used by other scholars to include words not typically considered as markers (e.g. Meyerhoff's (1994) use of "pragmatic particles" to refer to the tag *eh?*). More crucial than the range of labels, however, is the variety of definitions (see review in Jucker and Ziv 1998), for this has an impact on the items included within theories and analyses of discourse markers. I discuss this issue at the end of the chapter.

2   Compare Stenstrom (1998), who argues that *cos* (the phonologically reduced *because*, transcribed in (1b) as *cause*) is not used ideationally. For a range of research on *because*,

see E. Abraham (1991); Degand (1999); Ford (1994); Schlepegrell (1991).

3   Previous discussion of lists in general (Schiffrin 1994a) and this list in particular (Schiffrin 1994b: 294–6) points out the interdependence between the use of markers in lists and other list-making devices that reveal set membership and core vs. peripheral categories (e.g. intonation, repetition, presentational sentences, syntactic parallels, ellipsis). Note, also, that since it is the set membership of the list-item that underlies my assignment of levels in the list, I have assigned a dual status to the list-items in lines (i) and (l) because they are presented in one syntactic unit.

4   Explaining the lack of *and* in the coordinate level list-item [X1c] *Y'got Atlantic City* (g) requires using analytical tools beyond the space limitations of this chapter (but see Schiffrin forthcoming).

5   The term "constraints" itself is inherited more from variationist than from interactional approaches to discourse. Although it conveys more of a cause-and-effect relationship (i.e. aspects of context influence/constrain text) than is often assumed in most qualitative discourse analyses (i.e. that context is realized/constituted through text), it is useful to retain because it allows us to conceptualize and differentiate potentially discrete features of context that may either lead to (or be reflected through) features of text, such as markers.

6   See also Matsumoto (1999), whose linguistic analysis of questions in institutional discourse suggests that *and*-prefaced questions are also used when the questioner expects a positive answer, my discussion (Schiffrin 1998) of *well* and *okay*-prefaced questions during interviews, and various analyses of *and* in different texts and contexts

(Cotter 1996a; Schiffrin forthcoming; Skories 1998; Wilson 1993).

7   Compare studies on temporal, causal, and conditional connectives in English (Schiffrin 1992), Chinese (Biq 1990), and French (Hansen 1997).

8   These analyses also show that the use of markers is sensitive to social situation (e.g. classroom, service encounters) and to cultural norms of politeness. Compare, for example, the absence of a *well*-like marker in Hebrew among Israelis (Maschler 1994), speakers whose culture is said to value direct requests, direct statements of opinion, and open disagreement (Katriel 1986). See also studies on contrastive markers (noted in Fraser 1998; also Foolen 1991), as well as Takahara (1998) on Japanese markers comparable to *anyway*.

9   For comparisons of both forms and discourse functions across languages, see Park (1998); Takahara (1998).

10   Markers have been studied by scholars interested in relevance theory (see Andersen 1998; Blakemore 1988, this volume; Rouchota 1998; Shloush 1998; Watts 1986; Ziv 1998), computational linguistics (Hirschberg and Litman 1993; Elhadad and McKeown 1990; Miller 1998; Moser and Moore 1995), applied linguistics (Chaudron and Richards 1986; Schlepegrell 1996), variation analysis (Sankoff et al. 1997; Vincent 1993; Vincent and Sankoff 1993) formal linguistics (Unger 1996), language attitudes (Dailey-O'Cain 2000 on *like*; Watts 1989 on *well*), cognitive linguistics (Bell 1998), cognitive processing (Sanders 1997) and conversation analysis (Heritage 1984, 1998; Heritage and Sorjonen 1994).

11   The inclusion of all the tokens of *and* in the data differs from both conversation-analytic studies (Heritage and Sorjonen 1994; see also Matsumoto 1999) that considered

only turn-initial uses, and analyses of *and* as a formal connective (e.g. Unger 1996) that ignore not only turns at talk, but all interactionally emergent units.

12 Although discourse *is* often defined by linguists as "language beyond the sentence," the analysis of discourse as a set of connected sentences per se has evolved to become only a relatively small part of discourse analysis. Some scholars have argued that the sentence is not necessarily the unit to which speakers orient in constructing talk-in-interaction, suggesting, instead, a variety of alternatives (e.g. intonation/idea units, see Chafe 1994, this volume) and pointing out ways in which sentences are contingent outcomes of speaker/hearer interaction (Ochs et al. 1996). This is not to suggest, however, that analyses of different coherence relations, even within one particular semantic/pragmatic domain (e.g. Fraser's 1998 analysis of contrastive markers, and references within to comparative studies of contrast), cannot teach us a great deal about the complex network of meanings indexed (and perhaps realized) through markers.

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