

Discourse Markers in Muniba Mazari's "We All are Perfectly Imperfect" Speech (2017)

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Abstract

This article presents the discourse markers used in speech. It applies qualitative research methodology while analyzes the discourse markers using discourse markers approach. Our aims are to analyze the types of discourse markers based on Biber's theory and to analyze the functions of discourse markers based on Schiffrin's theory that found in the speech entitled "We All Are Perfectly Imperfect" (2017). The result shows that there are ten types of discourse markers, five of which are linking adverbials, answer forms, stance adverbials, answer elicitors, and interjections. The linking adverbials dominates the types of discourse markers used by Muniba Mazari in her speech, while interjection is the least-used type. Furthermore, six discourse marker's functions are found in this speech. Three of them are Marker of Connectives, Marker of Information and Management, Marker of Response. The most distribution of discourse markers' function is marker of connectives and the fewest is marker of temporal adverb.

Keywords: *Discourse Analysis, Discourse Markers, Speech, Linking Adverbials, Marker of Connectives.*

Introduction

Nowadays language works as a device to spread and defend someone's or a group's ideologies, not only as a communication tool. Besides that, personal attitude in interaction is also represented in language. In this context, language is used to produce particular discourse, or in the other words, to generate particular purposes.

A discourse is produced in many kinds of verbal communication. One of verbal communication is speech. Speech is formal address or a communication that usually delivers by someone in front of people or audience. Generally, speech is delivered by important people or famous people in formal situation. Furthermore, speech also aims to convey information, to entertain, and to persuade the audiences. So that, different speech has the different purpose because every speeches that deliver by speaker have its purpose on their own.

Motivational speech is the sample from verbal communication. It is used as tools of representation and social action. That is why, the use of language in motivational sphere is never in neutral position. An example of the use of language in motivational context is a speech that delivered by a Pakistan's motivator Muniba Mazari entitled *We All Are Perfectly Imperfect* at TEDx Malaysia in 2017. This speech is interesting to be analyzed because in it she conveyed her support on living a life. She explained that people are perfectly imperfect. Throughout her story, Muniba has employed her influence and public appeal to inspire people.

To analyze a discourse, there are many linguistics theories and/or approaches that can be used, for example Discourse Markers Approach. This approach is used to analyze the discourse markers and the function of a discourse markers. In this approach, Discourse Markers is very useful for learner of English. It enables them get well-understand about the language used by speaker or writer because they will know how the coherence, cohesion and structure of the discourse.

Literary Review

a. Discourse Analysis

Evaluation of the discourse analysis on comprehension of language beyond the verb, clause, sentence, phrase require for effective communication. Discourse analysis is a way to describe and understand how language is used (Eisenhart and Johnstone, 2008: 8). This takes into account the relationship between language and the social and cultural contexts in which it is used and looks at organizational trends across the text. It takes into account what people mean by what they say, how they work out what people mean, and how language presents different world views and different understanding. This includes examining how discourse is shaped by participant relationships, and how discourse affects social identities and relationships (Paltridge, 2006: 2).

According to Schiffrin (1994), utterances are the products of behaviour, and discourse analysis is the terms of the investigation of these objects rather than the investigation of those properties of human cognitive

system. It enables people to understand utterances in discourse. However, the whole point of discourse analysis is to take the study of language beyond the narrow boundaries set by grammar. The domain is perceived to be the study of the sentence.

b. Discourse Markers

Discourse markers (DMs) are linguistic elements that index various talk units relationships and coherence (Schriffin, 1987: 31). There is a growing number of studies and research interest in linguistic things such as “you know”, “all right” and “well” that people use in written and spoken context after Schriffin (1987: 31) highlighted their significance. Discourse markers are words and phrases that help you get your thoughts together. Using discourse markers makes your speech more articulate and natural-and it may help fill in some of your speech's "pauses." For instance, *oh, well, but, and, or, so, because, now, then, I mean, you know, see, look, listen, here, there, why, gosh, boy, this is the point, what I mean is, anyway, whatever* (Schiffirin, 1987).

c. Types of Discourse Markers

There have been several proposals for classifying discourse markers, but different classifications are possible because each analysis focuses on certain aspects of these markers. Classification of Biber (1999: 1095) is followed as it is standard and detailed. There are 10 types of discourse markers according to Biber. Those are Interjection; Greeting and Farewell Expression; Linking Adverbials; Stance Adverbials; Vocatives; Answer Elicitors; Answer Forms; Hesitator; Various Polite Speech-Act Formulate and Expletives.

d. Functions of Discourse Markers

In discourse markers, there are several characteristics related to their use and purpose from the description above. Sciffirin (1987) divided discourse marker into six classes or functions: Marker of Information and Management; Marker of Response; Marker of Connectives; Marker of Cause and Result; Marker of Temporal Adverb and Marker of Information Management.

Research Method

This research applies qualitative research. Qualitative research is designed in a manner that they help reveal the perception and behaviour of a target audience with reference to a particular topic. Qualitative research methods originated in the behavioral and social sciences. (Creswell. 1985: 15)

Nowadays, our world is more complicated. In another hand, it is difficult to understand what people think and what they perceive. And qualitative research methods make it easier to understand that as it is more communicative and descriptive. Thus, the result of qualitative methods are more descriptive and also the inferences can be drawn quite easily from the data that is obtained.

The object of the research was a speech by Muniba Mazari, a Pakistan Motivational Woman, entitled *We All Are Perfectly Imperfect*. The transcript of that speech was published in Official English Speeches Youtube Channel and downloaded at Dec, 19 2020 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fBnAMUkNM2k&t//>.

Discussion and Findings

This research is based on Biber's theory to find out the type of discourse marker and Sciffrin's theory to analyze each function of discourse markers. The researcher found all types of discourse markers. Those are *interjections, greeting and farewell expressions, linking adverbials, stance adverbials, vocatives, answer elicitors, answer, hesitator, various polite speech-act formulate, and expletives*. The researcher found that the most distribution of discourse marker is linking adverbials. It happens because the speaker says the linking adverbials naturally to connect her statement to the other next statement. She believes in the effectiveness of using linking adverbials, that is to provide the means of organizing the words, creating focus and providing overall coherence of her speech. All types of discourse marker functions are found in the speech, those are *marker of information management, marker of response, marker of connectives, marker cause and effect, markers of temporal adverb, and markers of information and participation*. Marker of connective dominates the function of discourse markers used by Muniba Mazari in her speech entitled *We All Are Perfectly*

Imperfect. It happened because the linking adverbials dominates the types of discourse markers in the speech. Marker of connectives has the function to connect one statement to the others.

a. Interjections

Interjection is a set of sound or word used to express feeling as a sudden remark (Leech 1994:152). In this speech, the researcher found discourse marker as interjection was showed below:

DATUM 1
“ Whoa! I’m running short of words right now, but I cannot afford this because I have to speak.” <i>(Mazari, 2017. 00.00.16)</i>

The speaker uses discourse markers interjection as appear in Datum 1 (*Whoa!*), the speaker said *Whoa* to showed how her feeling. The word, *Whoa*, has the function as marker management or in another word the speaker seems amazed with what she saw and what she felt. There are millions audiences who are respectfully pay attention in her. In this context, *Whoa*, used as the interjection and marks of opening the speech. The speaker delivered this discourse marker in the beginning of the speech. This is the first utterance she delivered in her speech.

b. Greeting and Farewell Expressions

Expressions of Greetings and Farewells occur in special situations of discourse and constitute traditional responses to these situations, although they contend that, given their phatic use, these symbols can be used as a medium to establish a connection between people. In general, in formality, greeting can be used in informal situations, *hi* and *hello*. There are less formal than types of *good*: *Good Morning*, *Good Afternoon* and *Good Evening* (Biber, 1999: 1088).

DATUM 3
“Thank you so much for all the love, for all the warm. Thank you all for accepting me. ” <i>(Mazari, 2017. 00.00.27)</i>

These utterance, ‘*Thank you all for accepting me*’, can be used as a medium to establish a connection between people, between the speaker and hearer. In general, in formality, greeting can be used in informal situations, *hi* and *hello*. But here the speaker uses thanksgiving to accost the audience, the word ‘all’ represents the audiences who attend hearing her speech.

c. Linking Adverbials

Levinson (1983:87) indicates that there are words and phrases in English, *and* in most languages, are used to indicate the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse like the initial position of *therefore, lastly, to the contrary, still, however, well, besides* and *in spite of everything*. In this speech the researcher found 6 discourse markers as linking adverbials and those markers are delivered repeatedly.

The first linking adverbial found in the speech is *well* below:

DATUM 5
<p>“Well, it is a story of a woman, who’s perfectly imperfect life, made her who and what she is today.” <i>(Mazari, 2017. 00.00.59-00.01.03)</i></p>

In this context, the speaker said the discourse markers *well* as linking adverbial. It indicates the relationship between an utterance and the prior discourse as initial position. Thus this , *well*, utterances have the functions as markers of temporal adverb. In this situation the speaker talked about important something because her face look serious.

d. Stance Adverbials

This type of discourse markers is defined as a lexical item that, throughout the entire sentence, acts semantically as an operator to express modality, evolutionary force and assessment (Task, 1993: 251).

DATUM 73
<p>“You know what was my biggest fear. Divorce.” <i>(Muniba Mazari Speech, 2017. We All Are Perfectly Imperfect. 00.14.50)</i></p>

The word *you know* has the function as markers of information. It shows the attention from the speaker to hearers/audiences. This discourse marker is used to express other attentiveness. In this case, the speaker showed her idea with discourse markers *you know* rather than just said what was her biggest fear. The speaker said this discourse marker, *you know*, also as an unconscious device that serves as a pause in the middle of a sentence as she gathers her thoughts but wants to maintain the listener’s attention. She delivered this discourse markers repeatedly as a natural spoken words.

e. Vocatives

According to Dunkling (1990) the term of address or person's name is set off in the sentence with *vocative commas*. In speech, the vocative is indicated by intonation, it means that an utterance is usually accented or emphasized. The descriptive linguistics term for a sentence that uses a vocative is named being in the vocative case (or direct address), and therefore the term itself comes from a Latin sense "*call*."

DATUM 80
<p>“My dear friends, in my situation, there was a tunnel that I had to roll on but there was no light.”</p> <p><i>(Mazari, 2017. 00.09.19)</i></p>

The word above is the types of vocatives. The writer concludes that the context of discourse markers in Muniba Mazari’s Speech We All Are Perfectly Imperfect above has the function as expressive function. It covers as signaling emotional involvement of the speaker to the audiences. That discourse markers, ‘*My dear friends*’, shows the signaling emotion with uses give the more stressing in her partners calls to the audiences.

f. Answer Elicitors

These markers are defined as a question tags. The speaker uses this to receive or obtain consent from the hearer.

DATUM 84
<p>“You are smiling, are you OK?”</p> <p><i>(Mazari, 2017. 00.17.59)</i></p>

The word *OK* here has types as answer elicitors. In the speech, the speaker gives more stressing in discourse marker *OK*. Thus, this word is concluded that the discourse marker has the function as marker of information and participation. The discourse markers *OK* here represents the speaker feeling or the speaker desire. The speaker said the discourse marker *OK* to make the hearer gives the response in this question.

g. Answer

Biber (1999: 1089) reflect on the brief and standard answer of these markers to a previous remark.

DATUM 90-96
“ Yes , I do speak” (Datum-90)
“I will say, YES ” (Datum-91)
“Would you like to adopt? And when I said ‘ Yes ’ I could literally feel the labor pain. Yes, Yes , I am going to adopt him.” (Datum-92 and Datum-93)
“I said, Yes .” (Datum-94)
“So, Yes .” (Datum-95)
“But, Yes . It’s hard.” (Datum-96)
(Mazari, 2017. 00.00.49; 00.04.17; 00.16.36; 00.24.28; 00.31.28; 00.37.44)

In this context, the discourse marker *yes* appear. It used by her to indicate gives the response with the asking from her partner and she says ‘*Yes, Yes*’ with signal her agreement. This is one of the response form of discourse markers. Thus this word, *yes*, has the function as markers of response.

h. Hesitator

Hesitator are discourse markers used in speech to fill pauses of hesitation. These are the markers. People who do not understand why they are used tend to be condemned, but they are very important. They give the addressee the opportunity to catch up and help the speaker plan what to say next (Knowles, 1987: 185). In this speech the researcher found only one hesitator, that is the word *well* below:

DATUM 118
<p>“Thank you very much. Well, I always start my talk with some disclaimer..”</p> <p>(Mazari, 2017. 00.00.41)</p>

This discourse marker uses to fill hesitation pauses and it is the signal that she thinks and make a good sentence. The function of this word, *well* is as hesitator, markers of response, or that the discourse marker uses to fill hesitation pauses. This discourse marker seems a tactic to fill pauses when the speaker thinks. It is a manner to make a good sentence by the speaker.

i. Various Polite Speech-Act Formulates

Biber (1999: 1093) refers to discourse markers such as *sorry*, *forgiveness*, *thanks and please*, which are used in respectful language, adding that these markers have speech act function in thanking, apologizing and regretting. In this speech the researcher found 1 discourse marker, that is ‘*Thank you*’ in Datum-121, Datum-122, and Datum-123.

DATUM 121-123
<p>“Thank you so much for all the love, for all the warm. Thank you all for accepting me. Thank you very much.”</p> <p>(Mazari, 2017. 00.00.22-00.00.31)</p>

The word *thank you* is one of the respective language. This is a discourse marker of various polite speech-act formulate. In this context, the speaker has purpose to thanking. Then this discourse marker has function as expressive function which cover as politeness to the audiences. This utterance delivered repeatedly by the speaker in her speech in minutes 00.20.31; 00.28.07; 00.28.08; and 00.38.55.

j. Expletives

DATUM 127
<p>“And in back of my head, I kept thinking that, Oh My God. He is going to say, ‘She is on wheelchair. She</p>

doesn't deserve it. How is she going to take care of
him?"
(Mazari, 2017. 00.16.55)

The discourse marker '*Oh My God*' above is the moderated expletives. This expression has the function as marker of connectives. The speaker used this discourse marker in the condition where she does not believe with a condition that she receives or such a surprised feelings.

Conclusion

It can be concluded based on the analysis that there are ten types of discourse marker used in Muniba Mazari's speech entitled *We All Are Perfectly Imperfect*, those are Interjection, Greeting and Farewell Expression, Linking Adverbials, Stance Adverbials, Vocatives, Answer Elicitors, Answer Forms, Hesitator, Various Polite Speech-Act Formulate and Expletives. The researcher found that linking adverbials dominate the distribution of the types of discourse markers. It happens because the speaker says the linking adverbials naturally to connect her statement to the other next statement. She believes in the effective of using linking adverbials, it uses to provide the means of organizing the words, creating focus and providing overall coherence of her speech.

Related to the types of discourse markers, the function of discourse markers also used in this speech. They are Marker of Information and Management, Marker of Response, Marker of Connectives, Marker of Cause and Result, Marker of Temporal Adverb and Marker of Information Management. The largest distribution of discourse marker's function is as marker of connectives. The marker of connectives become the most distribution of discourse marker's function because the largest distribution of type of discourse markers is linking adverbial. It has the function to connect one statement to the others, or in another words it makes cohesion and coherence in the speech.

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