DISCOURSE MARKER *WELL* IN DEBATE NIGHT INAMERICA PROGRAM:

A PRAGMATIC ANALYSIS

- SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH -

Dr. Hj. Indrie Harthaty, S.S., M.Hum.
STBA Pertiwi Indonesia
indrie.harthaty@pertiwi.ac.id

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

In English conversation, the words *well, oh, so, you know, I mean,* and *like* are familiar to hear. Linguistically, those words are known as discourse markers. Discourse markers are linguistic expression without semantic meaning but serves pragmatic meaning. In determining discourse markers, recognition of the meaning is truly necessary. For example:

(1) All I wanted to say is that, she plays her part really *well*

(2) *Well* the state who has to buy it

Both of the uses of *well* are different. In (1) *well* is as adverbial use and in (2) *well* as a leading in answering question. *Well* example above has proved that in (1) *well* has semantic meaning. When we omit *well* at the utterance, it will affect the whole meaning. However, in (2) *well* has pragmatic meaning, the presence or absence of *well* does not change the meaning at the utterance. Thus, it can be concluded that example;

 (1) is non discourse marker and (2) is discourse marker. Besides *well,* other markers which Schiffrin (1987) proposed are *you know, like, I mean,* and *so*.

(3) x: Finally, John and Sarah got married

   y: *you know* they have been in love for five years (Schiffrin, 268: 1987)

Here, *you know* maintains discourse markers' function. Y tries to inform x that John and Sarah got married is not surprising news since they are in relationship for five years. Schiffrin proposed it as

meta–knowledge. It conveys meaning that speaker and hearer share about particular piece of information.

Those examples reflect if discourse markers serve pragmatic meaning. The meaning is provided by context. The context itself is surrounded by pauses, intonation breaks and non-verbal gesture. Furthermore, discourse markers relate to the prior discourse and intend its basic message from speaker to hearer. The message then constructs the purpose of the communication. Hearer's response is guided speaker in face to face communication to show if they either accept new information of the talk or need more clarification. In accepting the information through the utterance addressee interprets each new utterance in the context by turn taking system. The shared knowledge, the social relationship among the addressee, hearer's feedback, and relevant information derive from the using of discourse marker.

Since discourse markers serve fabric talk in progress, they can occur as lexical expression or complements of gesture or intonational cues that subtly guide and modulate the addressee's understanding. The lexical at discourse markers are the word like *well, you know, so, I mean, like* and *oh* which link the information that contained. The majority of studies simply assume that discourse markers only occur at casual conversation. The presence of them is, hence, related to speaking situation.

Although discourse markers are more common in casual conversation (Erman and Kotsinas, 1993: 91; Holmes, 1986: 12, 1990: 192; Lalljee and Cook, 1975: 305), the findings of discourse markers in news interviews become questionable. When the discourse markers are used at the formal situation, as in news interviews, the appearance of discourse marker becomes contradictions. Since the proposal of discourse markers indicate to speaking situation, most of discourse markers, in fact, are found with guest rather than in dinner table with family, and frequently used with friend rather than with strangers. Hence, here are some contradictions too about using discourse markers in some situations. Besides, the situation that influences

the using of discourse markers, the relationship between the participants affects the frequency of discourse markers. In conclusion, the closer the relationship, the more discourse markers will be used.

The conversation situation, relative distance, intimacy are the point of research in finding discourse markers in news interviews. News interviews as a genre of public discourse markers are peculiarly suited to study the tension about discourse markers because they have interaction situation which discourse markers can easily be found. On an empirical level there are some indicators of discourse markers in news interview that become available to analyze such as turn-taking system, hesitation, question-answer, hedges, speaking speaker-hearer signal (Alber et al,2002, Koach and Oesterreicher, 1994: 590, Suleiman et al, 2002). Much has already been written about discourse markers; discourse markers in oral narratives, discourse markers in courtroom and other specific meaning about discourse markers. Thus, news interviews provide an excellent opportunity to give some contribution in discourse markers research.

CHAPTER 2

THEORETICAL REVIEW

To examine the discourse marker *well*, the writers use pragmatics. Pragmatic concerns about the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker and interpreted by listener (Yule, 1998: 3). The analysis of pragmatics is about what people mean by their utterance and how the utterance might be mean by themselves. In other words, pragmatic is the study of speaker's meaning. The meaning itself is created by context. It explores the utterance in order to fully understand the intended meaning. Without context, the meaning of utterance is as far as it goes. For example:

(1) *John met Mary yesterday.*

    Amazingly, he already loves her. (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2003: 208)

In order to understand *he* and *her,* we need to know the fully context from the utterance. When *John* and *Mary* are preceded, the interpretation would be clearer. In addition to comprehend *amazingly,* it has been very clear by general knowledge, if it is unordinary to love someone only in a short time and the completion of falling in love is indicated by *already.*

    The meaning is said or unsaid then can be answered by relative distance. Through relative distance, the hearer can assume how much intended meaning can be interpreted. It can normally be found polite and say appropriate things within familiar people. In a new social setting, people often feel unsure about what to say and worry that they might say something wrong (Yule, 1998: 5). Thus, people are followed general patterns of behavior expected within the group.

    Pragmatic is also the study of linguistic form. Sometimes, linguistic form not only can learn through pragmatic but also from a regular pattern by social group. Basic experience and similar sharing a lot of non – linguistic knowledge derive the type of linguistic form. As Yule (1998) proposed an example:

(2) *I found an old bicycle lying on the ground. The chain was rusted and the tires*

    were flat.

People will not ask why a chain and some tires were mentioned. It can be assumed that people infer if the chain and tire are parts of the bicycle. Therefore, what was communicated is more than what was being said.

1. Context

Often what people say is not literally what is meant. For example, when someone asks 'you're standing on my foot' it does not mean 'I am asking you to stand somewhere else' or when someone says 'it is cold in here' it can be meant 'turn up the heat' or 'shut the window' (Fromkin, Rodman and Hyams, 2003: 208) or other things that depend on the situation at the time of speaking. The meaning of utterance is influenced particularly by context. It requires of how speaker organize their utterance in accordance with who they are talking to, where, when, and under what circumstances (Yule, 1998: 3). In addition, context is important part in inferring a meaning or in determining the appropriate utterance. For example, when a husband says *well I'm tired*, if it says at night, it may count as excusing myself and getting off to bed before his wife. Or it can be interpreted by hearer as a hint that her husband wants her to come to bed too. However, if it is said when the alarm clock goes off, it probably means that he does not want to get out of bed and perhaps it can be interpreted as a hint that her wife should get up and make the coffee. In conclusion, we cannot determine the meaning without knowing the contexts.

Meaning itself is conveyed by drawing an inference from the utterance we hear and our knowledge of the world (Grundy, 2006: 196). Understanding the meaning is sometimes important to make up extended talk and the sequential properties in the talk-in-interaction.

Discourse markers do not have any semantic meaning or conceptual meaning, their meaning is built by the context. Discourse markers' function according to Schiffrin (1987) is determined by its markers. Schiffrin (1987: 318) suggested that markers select a meaning relation from whatever potential meanings are provided through content of talk, and then display that relation. She further stated that discourse markers typically provide contextual coordinates: (i) locating the utterance on one or more planes of talk of her discourse model (ii) indexing the utterance to the speaker, the hearer, or both (iii) indexing the utterances

to prior and/or subsequent discourse. The context of discourse markers contribute to discourse coherence which then distinct discourse markers into five planes.

## 2.	Speaker's Meaning

Speaker has important role in meaning cycle. Speaker utters the utterance and then hearer interprets the meaning through the context. The interpretation of meaning is the study of what speaker's meaning. The goal of speaker's meaning is to lead or to adopt the attitude from the hearer. Regarding the meaning is the consequence of inference. It implies sometimes the utterance is unclear. By this, it can be concluded that an utterance can have a lot of possible meaning.

> *An utterance might typically have one of several different possible*
>
> *meanings and that the inferences we draw determine which of the possible*
>
> *meanings is the one the addressee thinks the speaker is intending.* (Grundy, 2000:
>
> 8)

Determining speaker's meaning involves four parts; participant, time, situation, and under what circumstances. When someone says *I've just finished a book,* it can be inferred as he has just finished reading a book. However, if it is uttered by a university lecture, it usually means that they have just finished writing one. Therefore, knowing who is talking will help to determine the meaning. Or another example proposed by Blakemore in her book *Understanding Utterance* (1992) :

(3) *Should I read your book*

Your book becomes ambiguous between the book you own or the book which you are the author.

Speaker sometimes uses utterance to mean one thing at an explicit level or implicit level. It complements of expression meaning in two ways: (a) it provides a linguistic expression to be used meaningfully and connect meaning what people say by means of using language. (b) It helps hearer to understand the actual meaning through expressions uttered.

In conclusion, although people often think that what is said has been clear, determining utterance is indeterminate. Speaker's meaning then is partly trying to account for the ability to determine what speaker's intention even there is some unsaid utterance.

3. Discourse Marker

The term discourse markers are usually used to refer the word. Those words often use in expressing word such *oh, well, so, like, y'know*. The word is often not related with the main idea of the sentence and it relates more to social context: claiming next turn, drawing attention to what one is about to say, or hesitating or continuing some thought. Discourse markers are sequentially dependent elements that group of unit talk (Schiffrin, 31 : 1987). She also stated "an operational definition", Schiffrin (1987: 41) defines discourse markers at a more theoretical level as members of a functional class of verbal and nonverbal devices which provide contextual coordinates for ongoing talk. Discourse marker (Anderson, 2001 : 39) serves pragmatic function because it constrains the relevance of discourse units.

Discourse markers are a class of short, recurrent linguistic items

that generally have little lexical import but serve significant pragmatic function in conversation

Schiffrin (1987) identified how certain terms and/or phrases indicate understanding or coherence in conversation. She further concluded each single marker in communal lexicon has various functions, depending upon the situation of the speaker. Redekker (1992) and Brinton (1996) analyzed discourse markers into two levels, first is textual level or ideational level and interpersonal level. Both levels are monitoring discourse in text and the activity communicating. Textual level or discourse – marking relate to the structuring of discourse as text. It is initiating and ending discourse marking boundaries in the discourse, signaling topic, shifting and repairing discourse. Interpersonal level relates to the expression or speaker attitudes and it expresses response, attitudes and face – saving.

Halliday and Hasan (1976) share view of discourse markers as linguistic expression such as pronouns, conjunction and adverbs that have cohesion function. However, Schiffrin provides detailed analysis of twelve discourse markers: *and, but, or, so, well, then, now, because, like, well, y'know* and *I mean.* Those markers operate on the level : exchange, action, participation framework and information state. Schiffrin

also pointed out that discourse markers help speakers express interactional toward each other and perform conversational moves (Schiffrin, 1987 : 281). Hölker (1991, 78 – 79) lists four basic features that characterize discourse markers. (1) they do not affect the truth condition of an utterance (2) they do not add anything the propositional content of utterance (3) they are related to the speech situation and not the situation they talked about (4) they have an emotive (expressive function rather than a referential, denotative or cognitive function).

Several feature of discourse markers are listed by Schiffrin (1987:31). Regarding syntactic position and grammatically, she stated:

Although markers often precede sentence, [….] they are independent of sentential structure. Removal marker from its sentence initial position, in other words, leaves the sentence structure intact. Furthermore, several markers – y'know, I mean, oh, like – can occur quite freely within sentence at locations which are very difficult to define syntactically.

It is clear that sentence can still has its meaning although we omit discourse markers. As Fraser (1988: 22) stated that the absence of the discourse markers does not render a sentence ungrammatical and or intelligible. So discourse markers are not tied to the sentence structure but remains outside the syntactic structure.

Besides, the position discourse markers at grammatical structure, discourse markers also indexically point to features of the context. The markers index utterance can be referred to as discourse planes; ideational structure, action structure, exchange structure, information state, participant framework, social identity and social act. Since discourse markers lack of semantic meaning, the meaning of it is provided through context. Lack here is not fully lack a complete absence meaning but markers here having no meaning or a vague meaning (Schiffrin, 1987: 328). In addition, discourse markers do not add the informational or propositional content of the utterance which contain the marker.

4. Types of Discourse Markers

The term discourse markers set of wide of words and phrases ranging from coordinate conjunction; *and, or* and *but* to interjection; *oh, well,* verbs; *look, see* and literally phrase; *you know, I mean,* and *overall.*

Hence, the available set of discourse marker can be sliced into different grammar categories. Many researchers have different argument about what type of discourse markers are. Knott, 1995; Rey, 1997; Millis, 1995 do not refer *oh, well, you know* as discourse markers, they consider it as interjection or comment clause. Similarly, Frasser (1990) includes them as interjection. Halliday and Hasan (1973) propose different terms; they call it as cohesive conjunction. They differentiate it in two categories, *grammatical cohesion* and *lexical cohesion.* However, Schiffrin (1987) gives detailed study about types of discourse markers. She proposes twelve discourse markers types in English: *and, but, so, or, well, like, now, because, well, oh, you know,* and *I mean.*

Schiffrin (1987) maintains types of discourse markers based on their position in discourse

Thus, discourse markers do not form syntactic class but are rather linguistic expression drawn from different classes. In other words, they can be considered as discourse markers when the words can be omitted without affecting the meaning of the whole sentence. Schiffrin (1987) also argues that coherence of discourse views through relating different component of talk in the sense the interpretation of any component depends on the interpretation in other.

Discourse Marker *Well*

Since the word *well* seems to be the most popular discourse markers in English. It is expressed as a disagreement toward information stated in discourse. Discourse marker *well* can be seen as interpretation process the concomitant background selection. *Well* is usually used as a response marker when anchor its user in interaction when upcoming contribution is not fully constant with prior coherence options. Below *well* shows the way it is used as a discourse marker

(1)   A : but who has to buy it

       B : *well* the – the state has to buy the

The presence or absence of *well* in B's utterance does not change the truth condition of the propositional content. If B omit *well,* it doesn't add any information. It probably indicates that the answer should have been clear to A and thus it relates to the speech situation rather than to the situation talked about. Moreover,

it does not have any referential function in this utterance, but it reflects the speaker's attitude towards the question. *Well* used at the beginning of a speaking turn and can be used as a marker of insufficiency, as a face – threat mitigator, as a delay device and indicating a request for elaboration and clarification. Lakoff (1973) deals with discourse marker *well* in the context question and answer. It is used in cases in which respondent know that they are not giving directly the information which questioner has requested, Lakoff (1973 : 458) or they sense some of insufficiency (1973 : 463). The replies can be insufficient can lack of some details or the speaker some additional information. For example:

(2)   *A   : did kill your wife?*

        B (1) : yes

        B (2) : well yes (Lakoff 1973 : 459)

There is no difference in the truth – conditional between B (1) and B (2) utterance by replying by *well* or not. B (1) is a direct answer. On the other hand B (2) is not a direct answer. It suggests answer *yes* but it is not complete answer because it believes there are extenuating circumstances. Schiffrin (1987) notes that *well* is often used when an answer is not optimally coherent with preceding question because the respondent cannot supply the requested information. In addition *well* signals a lack of coherence, need renegotiating the relevance background information.

Well also begins the answer with *well* if someone asks a question which assumes something that it is not true. According to Owen (1981, 1983) *well* signals and mitigates some sort of confrontation: for instance an assessment which is followed by disagreement rather than agreement; a request which is refused rather than granted or an offer which is rejected rather than accepted. These situations therefore are called face – threats.

        (3)   *A : they must worry about you though Eddie, don't they, your*

mum and dad, when you're doing all these jumps

            B : well they always come to all the shows

        (4)   *A : can I just see them*

B : well I'm not allowed to do that (Owen 1981 : 109)

In (3) the example above as assessment followed by a disagreement rather than agreement. There is modal 'must' and the tag question *don't they* presents these assumptions as though everybody should agree. The interviewer just wants to elicit an agreement from Eddie. However, Eddie's parents apparently do not worry unduly otherwise they would not come to all the shows. In (4) a request is followed by compliance. The A's utterance implies that the position is in a position to grant it. However, this is again a background assumption which turns out to be assumption which turns out to be ill – founded.

Well typically prefaces a host utterance or it leads as 'leading up' to the formulation of the ensuing utterance. *Well* suggests continuation, the speaker considers what is going to say next and the hearer expects the complete sentence. As Quirk et al classify *well* then as initiator, it represents semantic proposition that "something else has to be said

CHAPTER 3

OBJECTIVES AND BENEFITS OF RESEARCH

The method that is used in analyzing the research the data were collected and the procedure of the collecting is then using approaching technique through the theory as analysis tool and revealing the facts of the data.

A. Research Objectives

The objectives of the research are as the following:

1. To analyze the context or situation of discourse markers *well* use that are found in Debate Night in America Program

2. To analyze the function of discourse markers in Debate Night in America Program

B. Benefits of the Research

The research is expected to give positive impact to:

1. To identify the context or situation that influence the speaker in using discourse marker *well in* Debate Night in America Program

2. To identify the function of discourse markers in Debate Night in America Program

In analyzing, the writer downloads the video of The Debate Night in America program and searching the discourse markers that the anchor used. Furthermore, the writer uses the theory that already mentioned in theoretical objection to classify and analyze the type and also the function of discourse markers.

CHAPTER 4

Research Questions