



Corpus Based Study of Discourse Markers in the Pakistani English Newspaper Opinions “The News” Newspaper

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Abstract

Discourse markers are defined as a “glue” that binds pieces of knowledge together to bring reader’s attention. The aim of this research is to find out the functions of metadiscourse markers in “The News” newspaper. This is a corpus based study consisting of 20000 words of data. The data is collected from the Pakistani English newspaper opinions (PENO) “The News” (TN) newspaper of one month Sep, 2019. This paper uses a mixed method approach, both qualitative and quantitative. This study is based on Hyland’s model of DCs. The results of this study have been shown that DMs are used for coherence, as cohesive devices. This paper answers the questions of “what”, “why”, and “which”. The quantitative results of this study revealed that textual markers were used more frequently in PENO. The study is limited to sufficient amount of data. The study can prove helpful for researchers for further studies about functions of MMs.

Keywords: Coherence; Cohesive devices; Connective; Corpus based study; Discourse markers.

1. Introduction

The fundamental purpose of this paper is to analyze the functions of Discourse Markers in Newspaper. Discourse Connectives are very important in any writing. The basic purpose of Discourse Connectives is to connect two sentences or phrases; to create relationships between them. Discourse markers are divided into two types such: textual metadiscourse markers and interpersonal markers and further divided into sub- types such as endophoric, code glosses and interpersonal markers. Interpersonal markers show commands of writers. Interpersonal markers helpful for authors to highlight their knowledge about society (Rahimivanda, 2014).

Discourse connectives describes as “Glue” that binds pieces of writing together to bring attention of readers. Discourse analysis is helpful in every field of life. Discourse connectives also helpful in discursive formations, not just in grammatical aspects of a sentence (Fairclough, 1992). DMs are also affected by the gender difference. It is observed that male and females use discourse markers differently (Hyland, 2000). Interactional markers effects and helpful in understanding the author’s intentions. It is defined as the writer’s ability to provide knowledge in details to readers that is helpful in effective writing.

All these mentioned studies have some issues and limitations such as insufficient size of data, issues in model implication etc. The current study is a corpus based study base on Hyland’s model. The methodology, theoretical framework or data analyze data through “AntConc” by Lawrence Anthony.

2. Literature Review

Discourse Markers are useful in writing as well as speaking to “Signpost” of discourse. Discourse Connectives plays an important role in making communication successful. Discourse Markers are necessary and important to create coherence or join one part of information with others. Metadiscourse markers are used as a source to make writing more effective and successful. Discourse Connectives are very helpful in conveying and understanding the message of someone. The Primary goal of this research is to identify the functions of Discourse Markers in Newspaper. Fraser (2013), conducts a study. According to Fraser DMs are the bridges that join or create relationship between two sentences “S1-DM-S2”. (“We started late. Yet, somehow, we arrived on time.”) Fraser verifies the class of “English Contrastive Discourse Markers” (CDM) to determine what pairs of them occur acceptably in a sentence.

Al-Khawaldeh *et al.* (2014), did a study. Data was collected from two major Arab news websites: Aljazeera.net and Alarabia.net. This is a descriptive research based on Fraser (2005). The study used both Quantitative and Qualitative method for the description of four main issues: Identification, Classification, Frequency and Syntactic Classes position. The study find out that total 73 DMs used most frequently and classify them into four classes: elaborative (e.g. moreover, also), contrastive (e.g. but, however), inferential (e.g. therefore, because), and temporal (e.g. then, when). The study concludes that, DMs play a vital role in the understanding and analysis of data as DMs relate text unit with each other. The study describes the functions of DMs taken from various grammatical forms

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such as conjunction, adverbs, and preposition. The study showed that, DMs used mostly at the beginning of sentences.

Jauro *et al.* (2014), took a research. The study is descriptive based on the investigation of discourse markers in Nigerian Newspapers with the help of Purposive sampling technique in the collection of data. "The analysis revealed that additive, adversative, causal and temporal discourse markers are used in Nigeria Newspaper". The Discourse Markers were analyzed while using the adoption of Schiffrin (1987) discourse markers of connectives such as conjuncts: and, but, and, or; temporal: while, etc., Fraser (1990), Fraser (1993) words such as: since, because, and although and Halliday and Hasan (1976) conjunction cohesive device such as: additive, adversative, causal and temporal, typified by the words: and, yet, so and then respectively".

Maryam and Seyedeh (2014), conduct a research. The study made a comparative to investigate the difference between the usage of Discourse Markers in the two sections Abstract and Discussion whether Male use more Boosters or Hedges or Female. Hyland (2005), meta-discourse taxonomy was used to identify the list of hedges and boosters. The paper is written in English language by a Native speaker of Persian. The result of this study through Qualitative and Quantitative revealed that, Iranian Males were liable to use more boosters in their Academic writing, whereas Iranian Females use more Hedges in their writing. It was found that male writers were leaning to present stronger commitments to the propositional information than female writers.

Habibollah Mashhady (2015) demeanor a study. The purpose of this study to define the contrast between the metadiscourse markers in English and Persian Newspaper Editorials as persuasive text types. These markers were Linguistic constituents in the text which did not improve the propositional content of text. On the other hand these markers were helpful to fulfill (Halliday, 1985) textual and interpersonal functions of language. The main research question was based on the difference between English and Persian newspaper editorials in their use of metadiscourse markers. Corpus was collected from randomly selected 44 news editorials, most frequent markers used in this corpus: consist "five subcategories of Text Connectives, Illocution Markers, Hedges, Emphatics, and Attitude Markers" were found in both English and Persian newspapers. This study used two ways "chi square analysis, the overall χ^2 obs was proved to be highly significant. Chi square analyses were applied to the subcategories to reveal the contribution of both subcategories; overall χ^2 value. The result shown that, only two of the markers' subcategories were statistically noteworthy. The study also shown that culture plays an important part in the usage of DCs, and in the difference of language (Fraser, 2005). The Corpus of this study based on these variables. The study concluded that, the textual markers were used more frequently in the Persian newspaper editorials. The major difference that were found that, Hedges were used more habitually in the English Corpus, alternatively emphatics were used almost double than , the frequency number of the English newspaper editorials in Persian. This showed that language and DCs were interlinked with each other. Persian newspapers editorials used more frequently text connectives in their writing to connect various sections of writing. Iranian newspaper editorials were more propositional-oriented and reader-responsible in their writings. On the other hand a subcategory of textual metadiscourse, illocution markers, the statistical analyses shown that, languages are not different on the bases of writing newspaper editorials.

Mina and Biria (2017), accomplished a study on to find out the interactional and interactive Metadiscourse markers in English Research Articles written by Iranian with the help of Hyland's taxonomy. This study discovered that, Interactive metadiscourse category (the use of transitions, frame markers, and evidential) were used frequently in Social Sciences Articles than Medical Science writing. The results also exposed that the use of endophoric markers and code glosses were almost the same. In interactional metadiscourse corpora, the findings verified that writers of Medical Science used hedges, boosters, and self-mentions more frequently in articles, in contrast with Social Sciences.

"The Social Science Authors ostensibly preferred to use more interactive metadiscourse markers; on the other hand, the Medical Science Authors used interactional metadiscourse markers more frequently in their research articles". The study based on Hyland's classification of interpersonal metadiscourse markers. Ali *et al.* (2018) conduct a study. The study is based on 10000 editorials taken from four different newspapers such as The Tribunes (TT), The News (TN), The Dawn (TD), and The Frontier (TF). The data taken from each newspaper is based on 250 editorials. This study used both qualitative and quantitative method. The research paper analyzed the data in two ways: firstly, frequency is checked and then on the basis of interpersonal model of propositional and non-propositional, and interpersonal model further divided into two types: interactive, and interactional. The results of this study indicates that the Newspapers consist of more interactive MetaDiscourse Markers (MMs) than interpersonal and the frequency of interactive MMs such as Transitive markers and Sequencing markers also analyzed in The Frontier newspaper. On the other hand the sub- categories interactional markers such as engagement markers and hedges are frequently used in TF, due to this it is right that "The Frontier" TF is more reader-friendly for their extreme use of interactive markers. This study also follows the Hyland's book and text inspector as a model.

Hassan *et al.* (2019), conduct a research on the interactional markers used in Pakistani's newspapers in the section of column to investigate whether female writers or male writers used more interactional markers. This Research Paper used the Hyland (2005) as theoretical framework. The data was analyzed by using both qualitative and quantitative ways, mixed methodology used for this purpose. This research paper used AntConc software as research tool. The result revealed that, female writers used more boosters, hedges, and self-mention engagement markers. On the other hand Male writers used more directives and shared knowledge and also shown that female's writing was well-mannered and rational than males. The current study aims to identify the functions of Discourse connectives in "The News" newspaper in the section of opinion. This research paper uses the Quantitative as well as Qualitative method in this regard. The results are declared while using the "AntConc" software.

2.1. Statement of Problem

Many research authors worked on DMs. Some previous studies were based on the use of DMs in the perspective of Gender Difference. Many educational researchers approach to the use of Metadiscourse markers from different perspectives and investigated the role of individual characteristics on academic writing. Some studies based on the editorial section of newspapers. Such gaps force the researchers to explore the role, functions of DMs in Newspaper in the section of Opinions.

2.2. Research Question

With regard to what has already been stated in the previous sections and based on the objectives of the present research, the following research question is investigated:

- 1) What are the functions of Discourse Makers in Newspaper in the section of Opinions?
OR
- 2) Why, we use DMs in Newspapers in the section of Opinions?
- 3) Which category of DMs used more pervasive/ frequently in PENO?

3. Theoretical Framework and Research Methodology

3.1. Research Tool

AntConc 3.5.8(windows) 2019 by Lawrence Anthony is used as research tool for this study. This software consists of many functions such as concordance, clusters, keywords and word lists etc. This paper uses the feature of “Concordance” for quantitative analysis.

3.2. Sampling and Population

The Sample for this Corpus-based study is taken from “The NEWS” newspaper from the section of “Opinions”. This Corpus consists of 48 opinions of one month Sep, 2019. The basic purpose of this study is to analyze the functions of discourse connectives in newspaper.

3.3. Data Collection

The Corpus selected for this study from the “The NEWS” newspaper is added in “Antconc” software first. Then after checking the concordance of Metadiscourse markers, data saved in the Notepad file. Then analyze the functions of Discourse markers in “The NEWS” newspaper.

4. Results and Findings

In order to find out the functions of Discourse Markers in this corpus selected from “The News” Newspaper, in the selection of opinion from 1st Sep 2019 to 31th Sep 2019. This process is based on two main steps, first to find out the frequency of Discourse Markers and then analysis their functions in the concern corpus. According to Hyland there are two types of Discourse Markers: Textual Metadiscourse Markers and Interpersonal Metadiscourse Markers and further divided these types in other types, these markers also used in this study. The frequency tables of each type are given in details as, first “Textual Metadiscourse Markers”

Table-1.1.

Logical Connectives	
In contrast	01
Since	07
However	10
Thus	12
Because	15
But	84
And	692

The function of all logical markers is to connect two or more sentences together logically. The function of first logical markers in this corpus “But” is: to support two approaches, thoughts at a time. The writer is in favor of both approaches, not just in one approach, thought or not neglecting the second approach.

The function of second marker “Thus” shows that, the writer use “Thus” in against of first sentence, happening. This marker describes the cause of something happening, why someone doing things.

The third marker “And” is used for describing the two things, joining the two parts of one sentence. This marker used for explaining the relation of two parts of one sentence. This marker gives a complete sense of one’s writing.

The “Contrast” is used for describing two things that are opposite to each other. One sentence gives a sense about anything, and the second sentence gives another sense. This marker shows “cause and effect” relationship between both sentence and parts of one sentence.

The next marker “Since” is used for describing, when something happened, from which year, date something started. The function of this marker is to describe the starting time of anything. This marker answer the question “WHEN”.

The “Because” marker also describe the cause and effect relationship that exists between two parts of the sentences or between two different sentences. This marker answer the question “WHY” and “THEN”.

The next logical marker “However” describes the things or details about anything in sequence. This marker answers the question of “What happened firstly, secondly, and so forth”.

Table-1.2.

Frame Markers	
To repeat	01
Finally	05
Here	13

The second marker name is “Frame Marker” used in this corpus. Frame means a structure of anything that encloses something. The first frame marker “Finally” used to describe anything that final stage. What is the final step of any procedure?

The next marker “To repeat” is used for repetition of anything. Why something happen? What is purpose of anything? For repetition or any other purpose?

The next marker is belongs to Deixis, the topic of Pragmatics. The marker shows the closeness of anything, the things happen near us.

Table-1.2.1.

Sequencing FMs	
Subsequently	01
Finally	05
Last	15
First	18

Frame Markers further divided into many types. Sequencing Frame Markers shows the sequence of anything that is used in a text or in spoken form. The first Sequencing FM is “Last”, the function of this marker is used to explain all things but major focus is on the last step of anything.

The purpose/ function of the next MetaDiscourse Marker “Finally” is to express the things at final stage, not just at the last stage but explain the things at final stage, means that there is no need of further discussion about this topic.

The function of “Subsequently” is to explain the things that occur or happen in reaction of other things. The “First” marker is used when it is necessary to explain the things in steps.

Table-1.3.

Code Glosses	
Called	13
That is	15
Such as	19

The Code Glosses markers are used to explain the ideational meanings or thoughts and suggestions in details. The marker “Such as” is used for clarity, “Called” is used for two purposes, first for calling something and second for naming something. “That is” is also used for clarity.

Table-1.4.

Endophoric Markers	
Above	05
Example	07
See	11

The “Endophoric Markers” are used to inform about the information given in all parts of sentence. “Above” marker is used to give information that is given already, and in this way tells us about all matter. The “See” marker is used to give information that is under-experience. The last marker “Example” is also used for clarity, give examples about matters, which are under-discussions.

The second type of MetaDiscourse Markers is: “Interpersonal Markers” that are used for explaining the Relationships between speakers and listeners. There are different types of Interpersonal Markers such as Hedges, Booster and Attitude Markers.

Table-2.1.

Hedges	
Might	01
Possible	10
About	44

The “Hedges” are used for explaining writer’s commitment to statement or about any matter. The “Might” is used for things, that writer guess, vagueness about things. Second Marker “Possible” is used for explaining the possibility of something, tells us whether a thing would be happen or not? Things are within access, rich or not? The

third Marker “About” is used to indicate moments within an area, place. This Marker answer the question How many? And Whenever? But not sure, it is also concerns with people’s perception.

Table-2.2.

Person Markers	
My	2
I	23
Our	64
We	74

The “Person Markers” are used for giving reference. “I” used for giving preference to own self. On the other hand “We” used for things that are consider equal or showing ownership for things equal, second used for to hide the main agent. “My” also used for giving importance of things that belongs to oneself, in contrast, “Our” used for explaining things as general not point out one person. All these DMs are used for explaining relationships between two phrases or sentences for the purpose of better understanding to create links between sentences.

5. Discussions and Conclusions

According to Hyland, there are two categories of MMs. The study sought to analyze the functions of DCs in PENO. The results of this paper show that MMs serves as cohesive devices in any text. The MMs are used for coherence.

What are the functions of Discourse Makers in Newspaper in the section of Opinion? OR, why, we use DMs in Newspapers in the section of Opinions?

5.1. Textual Markers

1) **Logical Markers.** *According to the number of general seats won by a political party in the merged districts, two of the four women reserved seats were allotted to PTI and one each to Jamiat Ulema e Islam Fazl JUI F and BAP.*

However, as the PTI had earlier given the name of Aneeta Mehsud only and BAP had not submitted any priority list, two seats had remained vacant for which the schedule for the fresh election was issued by the ECP.

Logical markers, **however** is used to relate the one part of information with the previous. Describe that there is a relationship between these parts of information; introduce a statement that is contrast with the previous part of information.

2) **Frame Markers.** *Finally, it seems that the urgency of the climate crisis has become impossible for decision makers especially in the global North to ignore. In the past few months, hundreds of local governments as well as a handful of national governments in the global North have declared a climate emergency.*

Frame markers are used to enclose a piece of information. **Finally** frame marker is used an information that is in a final stage. There is further no need for discussion relating to that topic. All given information is based on frame markers that are used within information; they set the frame, logic of something.

3) **Sequencing FMs.** *First, Following the Shehla Zia case, parliament passed the Pakistan Environmental Protection Act 1997. This act and other provincial environmental protection laws envisage a mechanism of filing a complaint about environment protection. The complainant can first approach the provincial environmental protection agency and then the environmental protection tribunal in appeal. However, this mechanism failed to provide substantial relief.*

Sequencing frame markers are used to describe anything, any piece of information in sequence from start to last. These markers give information in details through steps or stages such as firstly, secondly etc in a sequence.

4) **Code Glosses.** *Such as. Notwithstanding the absence of fundamental rights provision about the environment, our courts have attempted to protect the environment while interpreting Article 9 right to life of the constitution. In the Shehla Zia case 1994, for example, the court expanded the meaning of word 'life' through an activist interpretation. The court stated that the word 'life' has not been defined in the constitution but it does not mean nor can it be restricted only to vegetative or animal life. The court held that a person is entitled to the protection of the law from being exposed to hazards of the environment such as an electromagnetic field.*

Such as marker is to clear something, shown additional information. Give guidness to a type previously mentioned.

5) **Endophoric Markers.** *There is that example of a fruit vendor setting himself on fire in Tunisia to become the trigger for what is known as the Arab Spring. It was a mass awakening in a number of Arab countries and dictatorships were overthrown. What happened after that is another matter.*

Endophoric markers are used to give justifications, why something is like this. To answer this question, we have to give examples for clarifications.

5.2. Interpersonal Markers

1) **Hedges.** *Netanyahu’s only hope of political survival and possible avoidance of jail time depends on his working the political magic he is famed for. That may prove a tall order. To pass the 61 seat threshold, he must persuade Avigdor Lieberman and his ultra nationalist Yisrael Beiteinu party to support him.*

Hedges are used to give information about something but not clear, assure about that thing and also shows the vagueness about the topic that is under discussion.

2) *Personal Markers*. **We** also like the court mannerism of some versus **We** also remember that Zainab's murder she was we also share the global emergency regarding climate **We** are an exceptionally intolerant society. The extewe are being threatened by another epidemic. Why sho

We are comfortable with the knowledge that torture **I** we are demanding real solutions. The climate crisis we are experiencing today, and as they have grown **We** are familiar with the drill that is promptly

Personal Markers are used to depict persons in the discussion. **We**, person marker is used when reader talk about as a whole. When describe the things in general, hide the main agent of the given topic. When reader do not want to point out the main character or things belong to all.

I A Rehman, joined the PPL. Kutty informs us **I** also stopped briefly in Turkey. **I** have visited, **I** am sure it has stayed in the minds **I** feel compelled to repeat a question that Salahudd **I** found the Turks to be blatant racists not **I** have raised is too complex and too extensive **I** have returned home after a two month sojourn **I** have travelled to the US often and have...

This person marker is used when reader point out a single person and also talk about own self. The basic focus is to prefer own self instead of others. Describe all things that belong to own self.

All these MMs are used to links all part of information together. If the reader do not used all these markers, the converse is meaningless. Also these markers give us information in details as person markers give information about person that is under discussion or discussion based on them. Endophoric markers are used to give examples about topic to justify the topic.

Similarly all DMs are used to relate the previous part of information with coming or next part shows that there are relationships between these parts of information. There are two categories of DMs: textual and interpersonal.

Some DCs are used for shows assurance and some are used for assumptions. The results reveal that we use booster for emphasis, and Hedges are used to show the ambiguity.

Which category of DMs used more pervasive/frequently in PENO?

The paper also shown that PENO use more "**logical markers**" of textual category is more pervasive than hedges, frame markers, Person markers, emphatic markers, endophoric, code glosses, and sequencing markers as described earlier in results and findings shown that there must always some logical connections between parts of information.

Many progressive intellectuals such as Faiz Ahmed Faiz, Zaheer Babur, Hameed Hashmi, Mazhar Ali Khan, Hameed Akhtar, Ahmed Ali Khan, I A Rehman, joined the PPL. Kutty informs us that Mian Iftikharuddin had to quit the Muslim League because his progressive ideas were not acceptable to Liaquat Ali Khan and others.

For example, Mirza Ibrahim who was one of the most well respected trade union leaders in the Subcontinent was clearly winning his seat and unofficially he was declared a winner.

But unfortunately, the Ministry of Climate Change got approved hypocritical regulations from the cabinet that bans the single use polyethylene PE bags while allow the use of polypropylene bags with a thin layer of PE.

Also these markers shown cause and effect relationships between parts of information.

But according to Ali *et al.* (2018) major markers were interactive markers, found in PENE. On the other hand, Maryam and Seyedeh (2014), revealed that Iranian Male writers were used more boosters and the sub-category of interpersonal MMs, in academic writings. On the other hand, Female writers used more hedges for the purpose of expressing information.

It is realized that DMs are used to connect phrases or sentences together to create a logical relationships between these phrases and sentences. This paper also shown that, if we do not use DCs in our texts the purpose of communication will not be achieved.

It is acknowledged in the light of this paper that, DCs makes communication meaningful. There is always a basic purpose of communication, if we do not use these cohesive devices meaning or purpose of communication would not be achieved.

6. Limitations and Further Research

This Corpus based study consists of only 20000 words, taken from only one Newspaper "The NEWS" in the section of "OPINIONS" from 1st Sep 2019 to 31th Sep 2019. Other limitations of this study that all DCs and their sub-types are not present /found in this study. The researchers can use this study for taking help for conducting further researches.

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