
THE FUNCTIONS OF DISCOURSE MARKERS “OH” AND “WELL” USED IN (500) DAYS OF SUMMER MOVIE

Arvelia Tirsa¹, Yulius Kurniawan², Yohanes Kurniawan³

^{1,2,3} Universitas Widya Kartika

Email: ¹arveliatirsa@gmail.com, ³yohaneswin@widyakartika.ac.id

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research is to avoid miscommunication and misunderstanding in communication between couple in a relationship. With discourse markers, it helps to minimize those from happening. This research especially investigates the functions of “Oh” as marker of information management and “Well” as marker of response in discourse markers. This research based on the theory of Discourse Markers by Deborah Schiffrin in 1987. Descriptive qualitative method applied in revealing the data by analyzing (500) Days of Summer movie. After collecting the data, the analysis began with classifying the data based on the functions, then categorizing the data by putting them in form of table, continue with identifying the role of “Oh” and “Well” as functions in discourse markers, to finish the research is by making conclusion from the findings. The findings indicate that there are ten functions of “Well” which are as delay marker, as ideational structure of answer, as ideational options, as contingent answer, as answer, as question, as repair initiation, as request, as compliance, and as turn initiator. There are also seven functions of “Oh” which are repairs initiation, as answer, acknowledgement of answer, as information receipt, as recognition display, and as question.

Keywords: Miscommunication, Misunderstanding, Relationship, Discourse Marker.

1. INTRODUCTION

Communication is an essential thing in relationship. It is the foundation in the relationship. Through communication, partners can know each other deeper. It allows them to share their opinions, thoughts, and feelings intimately. From intense communication, it forms emotional connection between intimate partners that lead to interpersonal relation called relationship. A positive emotional connection includes “having a partner who really talks to you, is a good listener, is a good friend, likes and appreciates you as a person, and does his or her share to make the relationship work” (Barnett and Rivers 1996, 190).

Pinjungwati (2022) in “4 Masalah Umum Yang Kerap Muncul Dalam Hubungan Jarak Jauh” states that getting into relationship is never easy, despite of the fact that problems in relationship are quite common. Couples in relationship need to solve their problem properly so it will not cause new problem in the future. Pinjungwati (2022) further explained that there are four main problems in relationship regarding communication, one of them is miscommunication. As a couple we have to balance our communication with our activity and our social life with family and friends. When couples are not together, they keep communication in check to reassure each other. If they do not do that, they will increase the risk of miscommunication between them.

Good communication can be defined when couples talk to each other properly. For example, couples do not have to talk to each other every minute of every day because the most important thing is when they talk, they have to be open in order to convey each other feelings and problems. Pinjungwati (2022) stated “Good relationship is talk about it openly instead of keeping it to ourselves”. Without that, relationship will be ruined.

From the perspective of good communication, Yule (2006:112) pointed that misunderstanding could happen because there is a different understanding about the meaning captured between the speaker and hearer. Successful communication is when the person you are speaking to can understand what you are talking about. Yule (2006) stated that

“Communication clearly depends not only on recognizing the meaning of words in utterance, but also on recognizing what speakers mean by their utterances”.

To reduce the miscommunication, couples need to understand each other. It means understanding the meaning from the utterances is important to avoid the ambiguity that can lead to miscommunication. According to Mey (1993:6) “Pragmatics concerns with the study of meaning as communicated by a speaker (or writer) and interpreted by a listener (or reader).” Khartin (2013) also stated “Pragmatic is a systematic way of explaining language use in context.” From the statement, pragmatics is a study of speaker’s meaning based on the language use in the context. Every context can derive different meaning and the meaning is determined by the quality of language used.

There is a way to make it easier for others to understand the meaning of your language use in each utterances. By using discourse markers in daily conversation significantly will help your conversation to be easily understood by others. Discourse markers will improve the speech ability to make the spoken English sounds natural and more fluent, also it helps to fill in some of the “pauses” in your speaking. Discourse markers have an important role in the interpretation of utterances and encode information about the inferential processes needed to interpret the relations between the utterances, Crystal, D. (1988).

Fraser (1999) has characterized discourse markers as one of the discourse branch that is well known as ‘a growth industry in linguistics’. According to Redeker (1991), Discourse markers are linguistic expressions that is used to signal the relation of an utterance to the immediate context with the primary function of bringing to listener’s attention a particular kind of the upcoming utterance with the immediate discourse context. To be precise, discourse markers work as linking words and fillers to manage and organize what we are saying using words and phrases in our speech to connect ideas and to express our feelings in order to produce a meaning.

This research will use a theory of discourse markers from Deborah Schiffrin in 1987. According to Schiffrin (1987) there are six functions of discourse markers. “Oh” as marker of information management. It shifts the orientation between speakers and hearers to manage produced and received information. “Well” as marker of response. It becomes the anchor of coherence when the response are not clearly followed in the conversational exchange. “And, but, or” as marker of connectives. They have ideational and pragmatic functions in talk. “And” has two roles, it coordinates idea and continues a speaker’s action. “But” marks an upcoming unit as a contrasting action. “Or” is an option marker. It marks speaker’s intention which offers inclusive options to the hearer. “So” and “because” as marker of cause and result. “Because” marks a subordinate idea. “So” marks a complementary of main idea. “Now” and “then” as temporal adverbs. “Now” marks a speaker's progression through discourse time by displaying attention to an upcoming idea unit, orientation, and/or participation framework. “Then” indicates temporal sequence between prior and upcoming talk. “Y’know” and “I mean” as information and participation. “Y’know” marks transition in information. It gains attention from the hearer to focus on the information. “I mean” marks speaker’s talk orientation. It maintains attention on the speaker.

This research uses movie as the object of the research because movie is a type of visual communication of moving pictures, graphics, complete with sound. Movie contains conversation that represents daily interaction dealing with the term of language used in social context. Society is reflected in movies and in turn movies influence society by changes in representations, challenging the audience's morals and transforming viewers' opinions (Mines & Lamb, 2010). Movie is also considered as authentic text. It is because movie is made by script that contains authentic materials that provide real-life examples of language used like spontaneous talk in daily conversation. Literacy expert Morrow (1977) defines

authentic texts as a stretch of real language produced by a real speaker or writer for a real audience and designed to convey a real message of some sort.

The data from this research is taken from 500 Days of Summer movie. This movie is a form of how miscommunication and idealism captured between intimate partners. The movie is worth to be analysed because this movie consists a lot of “Oh” and “Well” as discourse markers.

There are few previous studies about discourse markers. Hasniar (2017) in her thesis Discourse Markers Used in Brad Bird’s Movie “Tomorrow-land”. This research is focused on the types and function of discourse markers. The findings showed that the dominant types on Tomorrow-land movie is markers of linking adverbials and the dominant function is marker of response. Based on the function of discourse markers, this research has found the two most used discourse markers. There are 14 data of “Well” and 5 data of “Oh”.

Second study that researcher found is from Windy, Sudarsono, Clarry Sada (2016) in their research Discourse Markers Used in Short Series Movie ‘FRIENDS’ and Its Relation With English Language Teaching. This research was aimed to discuss discourse markers used for various purposes to smoothen the conversation flow and to make the interlocutors easily understand. The findings showed that there are seventeen discourse markers in the sitcom. Windy, Sudarsono, Clarry Sada (2016, p.14) stated that discourse markers “Well” is the most usually found in the form of conversation in Year-12 English textbook.

Based on the findings from both previous studies, there is a correlation between two previous studies and this research which is to find out the discourse markers used in a movie. The similarity of both studies in findings data showing that “Well” and “Oh” are the most used discourse markers in conversation. This research is inspired by those studies and make it as an opportunity to fill the gap in this study, because in both studies, there are no further explanation about the functions of “Oh” and “Well”. From researcher point of view, researcher initiatives to explore deeper in analysing only the function of Discourse Markers “Oh” and “Well”.

2. RESEARCH METHOD

This research uses qualitative descriptive method. Qualitative descriptive is theory-based research. It doesn’t involve measurement or statistics data (Sugiyono, 2010). From other perspective (Aspers, 2019) stated that, Qualitative research is about questioning the pre-given variables. At the same time making a new distinction of any kind phenomenon. The process of qualitative is like coining new concepts and identification new variables. This process carried out in relation to theory, relation to previous research, and relation to empirical material. The purpose of this method is to identify and analyse the role of “Oh” and “Well” as function of Discourse Markers in (500) Days of Summer movie.

Procedure of collecting the data is taken from movie by streaming service. The primary data source for this research is the (500) Days of Summer movie accessed from the application of Disney Hotstar (accessed in January-February 2023). The movie duration is 1 hour and 35 minutes. The secondary data is the movie script with the same title taken from Script.Com (accessed in January 2023). The script has been checked to be in line with the movie by the writer.

To collect the data, the researcher use the following steps: (1)The researcher watches (500) Days of Summer movie. (2) The researcher searches the script of (500) Days of Summer movie from the website https://www.scripts.com/script/me_before_you_13548. (3) The researcher collects the utterances of “Oh” and “Well” as function of discourse markers from the characters in (500) Days of Summer movie script.

After collecting the data, reseacher continue to analyse the data in the following steps: (1) Analysing the data using “Oh” and “Well” as function of Discourse Markers from the

characters in (500) Days of Summer movie script. (2) Classifying the data based on the role of “Oh” and “Well” as function of Discourse Markers from Deborah Schrifin (1987) theory. (3) Categorizing the data based on its role from each “Oh” and “Well” markers and put the data in the form of table. (4) After categorizing the data, the writer identify the role of “Oh” and “Well” as function of discourse markers. (5) Making a conclusion from this research.

3. FINDING AND DISCUSSION

After collecting the data, the researcher had categorized each “Oh” and “Well” complete with its functions based on Deborah Schiffirin (1987) theory. The table below is showing the findings.

Table 1.
Findings of “Oh”

No	Datum	Discourse Marker
1	Oh, So i'm nancy?	“Oh” in repairs
2	Oh, Thank you	“Oh” as answer
3	Oh, Please dont drop me	“Oh” as acknowledgement of answer
4	Oh, yeah	“Oh” as answer
5	Oh wow	“Oh” as answer
6	Oh boy	“Oh” as information receipt
7	Oh	“Oh” as acknowledgement answer
8	Oh Yeah!	“Oh” as acknowledgement of answer
9	Oh, wait! Tom, Tom, Tom, Tom. Um, if any jobs come up-	“Oh” as recognition display
10	Ooh! Idol's on.	“Oh” as recognition display
11	Oh	“Oh” as answer
12	Oh, honey, that's because it is delicious.	“Oh” as answer
13	Oh, this is it! This it!	“Oh” as recognition display
14	Ooh, this looks good.	“Oh” as recognition display
15	Oh!	“Oh” as answer
16	Oh.	“Oh” as answer
17	Oh, really? Was that for me? Was that for my benefit?	“Oh” as question
18	Oh? Why not?	“Oh” as question
19	Oh, Thats it?	“Oh” as question
20	Oh, we rarely left the room	“Oh” as acknowledgement of answer
21	Oh.	“Oh” with answer
22	Oh, Fine! Go!	“Oh” as information receipt
23	Oh, I definitely do	“Oh” as acknowledgement of answer
24	Oh! Oh! Oh!	“Oh” as subjective orientation
25	Oh, Yeah	“Oh” as recognition display
26	Oh, Yeah, Why? Are You?	“Oh” as answer
27	Oh, I'm Sorry	“Oh” as information receipt

Table 2.
Findings of “Well”

NO	Datum	Discourse marker
1.	Okay. Well, then I'll just, uh- I'll wait for you-	“Well” as delay marker
2.	Well, they're lying.	“Well” as ideational structure of answer
3.	Well, that could only be explained by one thing	“Well” as ideational options
4.	Well, clearly you've come to the right place.	“Well” as ideational structure of answer
5.	Well, you should do something else then	“Well” as answer
6.	Well, um, I wrote this one.	“Well” as answer
7.	Well	“Well” as compliance
8.	Well, I should get back, so-	“Well” as request
9.	She's- Well, she's not like I thought at all.	“Well” as contingent answer
10.	Yeah, Well, that's not really where we live.	“Well” as answer
11.	Might as well have fun while we can and...	“Well” as ideational structure of answers
12.	Well, you don't believe that, do you?	“Well” as question
13.	Well, what does that word even mean?	“Well” as question
14.	Well, maybe that's-	“Well” as repair initiation
15.	Well, I think you're wrong.	“Well” as answer
16.	Okay. Well,	“Well” as ideational structure of answer
17.	Well, i'm that way, so-	“Well” as answer
18.	Okay. Well, good night.	“Well” as request
19.	Well, I gotta go.	“Well” as answer
20.	Well, I'm famished.	“Well” as answer
21.	Well, that's okay, because...	“Well” as request

22.	Well, you know, Henry Miller said the best way to get over a woman...	"Well" as ideational structure of answer.
23.	Well, that guy had a lot more sex than me.	"Well" as answer
24.	Well, try...	"Well" as answer
25.	Um- Well, okay.	"Well" as compliance
26.	Well, use my arm.	"Well" as request
27.	Well, let's see your arm.	"Well" as turn initiator
28.	Well, the buildings need to be integrated better, so-	"Well" as ideational structure of answer
29.	Well, why rock the boat, is what I'm thinking.	"Well" as question
30.	and, Well, she's in bed with Lars from Norway.	"Well" as answer
31.	Okay, Well, next time don't, 'cause I don't need your help.	"Well" as request
32.	Well, you're not the only one that gets a say in this!	"Well" as answer
33.	Shh. Well, what about you?	"Well" as question
34.	Well, of course.	"Well" as answer
35.	Well, tell me about them.	"Well" as answer
36.	Well, in high school there was Markus.	"Well" as an ideational structure of answer
37.	Well, um, what are you doing? Are you going to Millie's?	"Well" as question pair with question
38.	Well, I was gonna go get a coffee if you wanna-	"Well" as question or answer pairs.
39.	Well, I don't want to bother you.	"Well" as request
40.	Well?	"Well" as question
41.	Well, you snore.	"Well" as compliance
42.	Well, you do too.	"Well" as ideational structure of answer
43.	Okay. Well, come on. Let's go	"Well" as compliance
44.	Well, okay.	"Well" as answer
45.	Yeah, Well, just doodling.	"Well" as answer
46.	Ah. "Well", in that case-	"Well" as answer
47.	Well, he hadn't asked me yet.	"Well" as answer
48.	Well, you know,	"Well" as ideational structure of answer
49.	Well, I hope you, um, don't get the job	"Well" as request
50.	Okay. Well, then I'll just, uh-	"Well" as compliance

Researcher found that "Oh" was used 27 times in this movie. All the characters were using "Oh" mostly for answer, to ask question or confirmation, and to respond statement from a speaker. It can be used for any daily conversation. Mostly, the characters used it to show how Tom and Summer like in their relationship. Another use of "Oh" was as an information receipt and "Oh" as acknowledgement. The researcher thought that the use of

“Oh” was to shift the conversation’s topic, so the character in this movie try to make a signal for their next move in the conversation by using a simple response.

Meanwhile, “Well” was used 50 times in this movie. Many characters used “Well” as an agreement to respond and to start the conversation. It can be understood because they had many information to speak. This situation make the characters was reacting naturally and making a right reaction regarding the situation. Most of the characters used it when they were talking about their feelings or when they try to make statement to another. The reason characters used “Well” as an answer was because they could be more familiar than “Oh”. “Well” usually used to explain their statement more often than “Oh” in this movie. Researcher found discourse marker “Oh” was used as answer or to give opinion by most of the characters, while “Well” was used to explain and asking request. Another function of “Well” was used as a question. There were so many scenes that started with “Well” to make conversation because the hearer or the respondent to introduce a new topic in a question form after they had answered in a short reply.

4. CONCLUSION

After the data was analyzed, the findings is “Well” was used 50 times. Researcher found ten functions of “Well”. (1) “Well” as delay marker, (2) “Well” as ideational structure of answer”, (3) “Well” as ideational options, (4) “Well” as contingent answer, (5) “Well” as answer, (6) “Well” as question, (7) “Well” as repair initiation, (8) “Well” as request, (9) “Well” as compliance, and (10) “Well” as turn initiator.

Meanwhile, “Oh” was used 27 times. Researcher found seven functions of “Oh” in the movie (500) Days of Summer movie: (1) “Oh” in repairs initiation and (2) “Oh” as answer, (3) “Oh” as acknowledgement of answer, (4) “Oh” as information receipt, (5) “Oh” as recognition display, (6) “Oh” as question, (7) “Oh” as subjective orientation. “Oh” was used to show character’s reaction or response like pure suprise in the conversation.

Another result, it is shown that the most used functions of discourse markers “Oh” and “Well” are as answer. “Oh” was used nine times and “Well” was used seventeen times. It is because this movie is about two person who are in the talking phase, which is to know each other deeper before committing to a relationship, so there was a lot of question and answer scene.

REFERENCES

- Aspers, P., & Corte, U. (2019). What is Qualitative in Qualitative Research. *Qualitative sociology*, 42(2), 139–160. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11133-019-9413-7>
- Esfandiari-Baiat, G. C. (2013). Multimodal analysis of "Well" as a discourse marker in conversation: A pilot study.
- Furko, Peter. (2017). Manipulative Uses of Pragmatic Markers in Political Discourse. Department of English Linguistics: Karoli Gaspar University of the Reformed Church in Hungary, Palgrave Communications, 3, 1 – 3
- Hasniar. (2017). Discourse Markers Used In Brad Bird's Movie. 114.
- Jucker, A. H. (1993). The discourse marker “Well”: A relevance-theoretical account. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 435-452.
- Marbun, F. H. (2017). An Analysis Of Discourse Markkers In Donald Trump's Speeches. 155.
- Owen, M. (1989). Deborah Schiffrin, Discourse markers. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1987. Pp. x 364. *Journal of Linguistics*, 25(1), 255-257. doi:10.1017/S0022226700012251

- Pinjungwati, G. T. (2022, June). fimela.com. Dipetik January Saturday, 2023, dari fimela.com: <https://www.fimela.com/relationship/read/4997168/4-masalah-umum-yang-kerap-muncul-dalam-hubungan-jarak-jauh>
- Pradana, M. G. (2015). An Analysis Of The Discourse Markers In Movie Expendable 3. 65.
- Rahim, N. A. (2018). Discourse Analysis Theory: A New Perspective In Analysis. Infrastructure University Kuala Lumpur Research Journal, 46-53.
- Sugiyono. (2010). Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif Kualitatif Dan R & D. Bandung: Alfabeta.
- Takamura, R. (2020/03/01). Discourse Marker “Well”: A linguistic key to thr “Well”-being of human interaction.
- Trihartanti, R. (2020). The Use of “Oh” and “Well” as Discourse Markers in Conversation of Bandung State Polytechnic Students.
- Wang, H., & Wu, Y. (2019). Laurel J. Brinton, The evolution of pragmatic markers in English. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2017. Pp. xiv 331. Journal of Linguistics, 55(2), 449-453. doi:10.1017/S0022226718000580.