

Approaches of om

[Linguistics](#), [Language](#)



Approaches of OM : Within the past fifteen years or so there has been much studies about the theoretical status of discourse markers (DMS) focusing on what they are , what they mean and what functions they manifest. Fraser (1999) maintains that these researchers have agreed that DMS are lexical expressions that relate discourse segments , but they have disagreed on how they are defined and what functions they carry.

Similar to this view, Shourup (1999) argues that there is disagreement on functions on fundamental issues in the study of DMS. researchers are unable to agree on the grammatical category of DMS or how to delimit their class or even what types of meaning these markers express. In order to understand more about DMS in language it is necessary to refer to two approaches of DMS : The reliance theory and coherence based approach/coherence based approach: Within coherence theory it is assumed DMS play a major role in discourse interpretation by using " coherence " relations between discourse units.

As Shourup (1999, p. 240) argues that the interpretation of a text, according to the coherence group. Depends on the identification of coherence relations between the units of that text . this group includes researchers who adopt a coherence-based theory. The main figures of this group are Schiffrin (1987). Fraser (1988-1990) and Redeker (1990-1991). Schiffrin (1987) studies the semantic and grammatical status of DMS and their functions . since she belongs to the coherence group, Schiffrin states that DMS contribute to the coherence of the text by establishing coherence relationships between units of talk Schiffrin (1987, b. 9).

He adds that DMS indicate that the interpretation of one clause is determined by the information derived from the prior clause. Schiffrin proposes that DMS have a coherence role in the sense that they relate informational units in the present discourse with informational units in the prior discourse, this is what Schiffrin calls local coherence in her framework; which means that it is local in the sense that DMS link two adjacent units in the text.

She states that DMS have both cohesive and structural roles; structural because they link two (or more) syntactic units, and also cohesive because the interpretation of the utterance depends on the combination of both conjuncts. It can be summarized that Schiffrin concentrates on the linguistic and structural role that DMS play to achieve discourse coherence by linking discourse units. The second figure of coherence-based theory is Fraser (1999).

Similarly to Schiffrin, Fraser maintains that DMS contribute to the coherence of a text by indicating coherence relationships between units of talk. However, Fraser (1999, 938) indicates that DMS do not have to signal any relationship between segment 2 and segment 1 (adjacent segments of talk). A discourse marker can relate the segment it introduces with any other previous segment in discourse. And this is known as 'global coherence', it is contrasted to Schiffrin's local coherence.

Fraser's (1997-1999) account focuses on pragmatic functions of DMS; he calls them "pragmatic markers". Fraser defines DMS in his proposal as they are linguistic elements that encode clues which signal the speaker's potential communicative intention.

2/ Relevance-based account: Sperber and Wilson

(1986, 1995) have developed the relevance theory. It is a pragmatic model that explain how speakers interpret utterances. It based on cognitive ability of the hearer to interpret the utterance rather the linguistic one.

The relevance theory suggests that the mind's central processor is highly effective in holding the information because it is specifically oriented towards the search for relevance (as cited in the use of discourse markers in E. F. L learners writing by ana cristina laluerta Martinez university of Oviedo). The principle of relevance determines that all utterances are ruled by the level of optimal relevance . that is to say , when a speaker calls a hearer's attention to the utterance .

He is claiming that his utterance is relevant enough to deserve the hearer's attention. To discuss deeply the relation between relevance theory and discourse markers , Blakemore should be present Blakemore (1987) argument is that DMS play a crucial role in the interpretation of utterance by providing the hearer/reader with some guidance in the inferential phase to reach the optimal relevance. According to Blakemore (1987), connectives contribute to the interpretation process.

Usually a speaker/writer has a specific interpretation of his utterance and to guide the hearer/reader to reach the right interpretation DMS are so important . They provide the specification of certain properties of the context and the contextual effects . The level of optimal relevance means that the larger contextual effect the smaller cognitive effort . generally the hearer stores a number of assumption in his memory , and these assumptions can interact with the new information conveyed by the speaker , which come up

with three results ; a new assumption or the contradiction , and even elimination , of an assumption Blakemore (1992; p. 135).

This the speakers/writer can help the hearer by reducing the cognitive effort. As Blakemore (1992; p. 176) " a speaker may use the linguistic form of his utterance to guide the interpretation process". Similar features of discourse markers: Despite the large disagreement about the definition and the classification of discourse markers , There are some basic characteristic and features shared by discourse markers have been identified in DMS studies.

Schourup (1999) argues, " to identify a small set of characteristic most commonly attributes to discourse markers and to items referred to by other closely associated terms". He realizes the most common features in these expressions from some studies in the discourse markers. These features are " multi-categoriality, connectivity, non-truth conditionality, weak clause association, initiality, and optionality" a-multi- categoriality : It is viewed that discourse markers constitute a functional category that is heterogeneous with respect to the syntactic class (as cited in (similar features).

Because items that are usually included in DMS are not structurally unified. They are derived from a variety of grammatical sources. Schourup (1999, p. 134) distinguishes in which DM function has been attributed whether words like: adverbs (eg, now actually, anyway), coordinating and subordinating conjunctions (e. g, and, but, because). Interjections (e. g, oh, gosh, boy) verbs (e. g, say, look, see) or it can include clauses (e. g, you see, I mean, you know). The fact that DMS are drawn from different word classes makes them difficult to define them structurally.

And that means they have identical counterparts that are not used as markers. Kohlani (2010, p39) points out that despite the great dispute regarding "the coexistence of two structurally identical items that function differently in discourse", they do not overlap in discourse: When an expression functions as a discourse marker, it does not express the propositional meaning of, its identical counterparts.

As cited in Janina Buntkiene (2015) b- connectivity: connectivity is a common point shared by many studies concerning the DMS. They agree that DMS connect utterances or other discourse units. However, there is a great disagreement about the nature of the connection discourse markers express and the nature and extent of the element connected, as Schourup (1999, p20) point out. Thus connectivity is conceived differently due to the way discourse is viewed.

In coherence-based studies, like Schiffrin (1987) and Fraser (1999) defined DMS as connectives which relate two textual units by marking the relationships between them; they contribute to inter-utterance coherence. For coherence-based studies DMS have an important role in connecting one segment of text to another. In relevance-based studies, DMS do not connect one segment of text to another but they provide the hearer/reader with the right interpretation of the segment they introduce.

Blakemore (1987) noted that DMS can play the role of connecting the host utterance not only the linguistic co-text but also to the context in a wider sense. For within relevance theory, discourse markers are viewed as expressing "inferential connections" that constrain the "cognitive

processes" underlying the interpretation of the segment they introduce (Blakemore(2002, p. 5). similar to this view, shourup (1999, p. 230-232)states that DMS do not connect one segment of text to another. Rather they connect the " propositional content" expressed by their host sentence " to assumptions that are expressed by context".

He concludes that if connectivity is criterial for DM status, it can be used to distinguish DMS from various other initial element such as illocutionary adverbials (e. g, confidentially), attitudinal adverbials (e. g, sadly) and from primary interjections (e. g, oops). c/ nontruth-conditionality: nontruth-conditionality is also a feature that most researchers attribute to discourse markers. Saying that DMS are nontruth-conditional means that they bring no meaning or condition to the sentence.

As Schourup (1999, p. 232) claims that DMS are generally thought to contribute nothing to the truth-conditions of the proposition expressed by an utterance. Fraser (1996) also claimed that DMS do not influence the truth-conditions of sentences; he approved the idea that truth-conditions pertain to mental representations not to sentences. Accordingly , for many researchers discourse markers are nontruth-conditional means that DMS are part of the pragmatic component of the sentence.

Ostman (1995, p. 98) argues that their " primary task in language is not related to the propositional aspect of sentences, but to the pragmatic functioning of language". Moreover, Blakemore (2002) points out that pragmatic is defined as " meaning minus truth conditions". She argues that

pragmatic information which is not part of the truth conditional content " cannot be obtained through decoding linguistic forms".

As a conclusion, DMS are non-propositional expressions means that they are not part of propositional meaning of the sentence moreover; this does not mean they do not effect this meaning. DMS are not important in the propositional structure, but they do effect the propositional meaning. As Andersen (2001) argues that the meaning of the sentence is " not handled solely by the words contained in the utterance" rather is conveyed by " complex semantic and pragmatic processes", as cited by kohlan (2010). d/ weak clause association: another characteristic of discourse markers that has been identified by Schourup (1999, p. 232-234) is weak clause association.

It is similar to the nontruth-conditionality feature is the sense of the detachment of DMS from their host sentence. As cited in janina buitkiene (2015), Brinton argues (1996, p. 34), DMS usually occur " either outside the syntactic structure or loosely attached to it". DMS are regarded as being outside the propositional content and the syntactic structure of the sentence. Schourup (1999) points out that some of DMS have their syntactic structure such as on the other hand and you know (232).

It is also because of their loose grammatical attachment to the structure of their host sentence, that discourse markers are after separate from the main clause by comma or independent two unit " regard Len whether they occur within the clause or at its initial" (ibid, 233). e/ initiality: IS one of the most noticeable feature of discourse markers. For some researchers. DMS occurs

initially in the sentence. As Hansen (1997, p. 157) points out that " markers must necessarily precede their host unit".

Similarly, Fraser (1990, p389) state " typically occur only in utterance-initial position". The significance of the initial position as a text organizer is what makes it the most appropriate place in which discourse markers can fulfill their role in discourse. As cited in. The place of DMS is related to their function in discourse. Schourup (1999) states. " because they are used to restrict the contextual interpretation of an utterance"; he adds " it makes sense to restrict context early before interpretation can run astray" (233).

Moreover, kohlani (2010. 48) argues that initial position give for DMS wide scope over the whole sentence or paragraph to influence hearer or reader interpretation of everything that follows. f/ Optionality: Being optional rather than obligatory is another feature of discourse markers. Accordingly, DMS can be present or absent in the discourse. As Schiffrin (1987) argues. " are never obligatory".

Moreover, Schourup (1999, p. 231) states that DMS are optional in two distinct senses: " syntactically optional in the sense that removal of a DMS does not alter grammaticality of the sentences and in the further sense that they do not enlarge the possibilities for semantic relationship between the element they associate". However, he adds. " it is never claimed that the optionality of DMS renders them useless as redundant".

This means even if DMS are regarded as syntactically and semantically optional, pragmatically are not. Supporting to this view, Brinton (1996)

argues, " they are not pragmatically optional or superfluous". Instead , they guide the hearer/reader to a particular interpretation. As Brinton (1996, p. 34) argues " they reinforce or clue the interpretation intended by the speaker".