

# DISCOURSE MARKERS IN CONVERSATIONAL STORYTELLING AND ITS TREATMENT IN THE INDONESIAN VERSION OF SELECTED ARTICLES IN KOREANA MAGAZINE

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## ABSTRACT

The paper presents an analysis of discourse markers used in a conversational storytelling in the Interview section in *Koreana* quarterly magazine. There are nine discourse markers found in the English editions of 2020, with and has the highest occurrence, and well and you know have the lowest. The markers appear either on their own or co-occur with other marker in a cluster. Those discourse markers are either fully or partially translated into their Indonesian equivalences or omitted due to various reasons.

**Keywords:** discourse markers, conversational storytelling, Indonesian translation

## I. BACKGROUND

Discourse markers appear by forty-two different terms in English, however, these four, i.e. discourse particle, pragmatic marker, or pragmatic particle, are the most common (Dér, 2021). This elements are dispensable and function as a sign-post in a communication, either in spoken or written form (Aijmer, 2002), however, some markers are used more on spoken discourse and some are particularly used in written text.

These markers are significant in pragmatics studies and functions further beyond their syntactic characteristic (Stubbs, 1983) and they are connected to the cohesion and coherence of the discourse. Understanding the markers contributes to comprehending the message of the texts.

The cohesion and coherence can be found not only in a monologue, but also in a dialogue which is categorized as one of the main objects of pragmatic studies; and one way to locate conversational cohesion is to examine dialogic pairs whose propositional completion depends on contributions from both participants (Schiffrin, 1987). These markers help them to achieve mutual understanding and learn how the stream of talk is organized, for example, in a way to signal the transition to a new topic, activity, argument, stage in a narrative, a new speaker in a debate, the drawing-to-a-close of a telephone conversation, etc. (Aijmer, 2013).

Despite their frequent appearance in the sentence-initial position (Dijk, 1979), discourse markers, referred to as pragmatic connective in his particular work, may also occur at locations which are very difficult to define syntactically. These markers bracket units of talk, which sometimes appear as sentences, but sometimes they are propositions, speech acts, tone units. They have meaning and function which may be dependent upon their context of the occurrence (Schiffrin, 1987).

In a conversational storytelling, i.e. a discourse that concentrates on interactional productions and the reflections of the events that are experienced in past time and told in a sequence in the time of storytelling, discourse marker may sign a transition from a conversation to the narrative level

and vice versa. These discourse markers play important roles as signals of structural points in story, mark the story's return to the plotline after a digression (such as embedded orientation, commentary), signal the result section of the narrative, and they also serve to flag new episode beginnings (Fludemik, 2009). There are four discourse tasks that appear prominently, where the speakers initiate the story, report events within the story, convey the point of the story, and accomplish an action through the story (Schiffrin, 1987).

This research examines the interview report in *Koreana* magazine presenting some prominent figures in Korea as the interviewees. In such conversational storytelling, these people tell the reporter, and reader once the article is published, about their personal and professional story. The study aims to find out how discourse markers are used in the conversational storytelling and how these markers are treated in their Indonesian versions.

There are researches on the discourse markers used in a conversational storytelling or conversational narrative. Norrick's (2000) study on discourse marker reveals that well and but function differently in a conversational storytelling from those in greetings, arguments and other genres of talk. These are elements dependent upon expectations about story structures and they bracket appropriate units in accordance with the organizational conventions of this genre. Sakita's (2017) research shows that well marks two central modes of stance-taking: well manages the changes of local-spectrum stance-taking that occur among the utterances of/about characters or of the speakers who speak in their immediate, locally shared consciousness and typically manages the narrator's broad-spectrum stance-taking with respect to the narrative event as a coherent whole.

## II. RESEARCH METHOD

Data are taken from the Interview section in the English edition of *Koreana* magazine in 2020. The magazine is published quarterly by the Korea Foundation to promote Korean arts and culture around the world. The magazine, first published as an English-language magazine in 1987, is today published in 10 other languages (including Indonesian)

and distributed to universities, libraries, museums, research centers and various other cultural and art institutions in about 150 countries. There is one interview in the Interview section in every edition, so four interview reports published in winter, spring, summer, and autumn in the year of 2020 are examined in this study.

Antconc 3.5.8 tool is used to help locating the discourse markers in four texts, whose word types and tokens are shown in Table 1. Those markers are then compared to those in the Indonesian translated versions.

TABLE 1  
 WORD TYPES AND WORD TOKENS IN FOUR TEXTS

Edition	Title	Word types	Word token
Winter	Outsizing the Ordinary	632	1573
Spring	The World's Saddest and Most Beautiful Arirang	706	1803
Summer	Two Ingenious Vaccines against Pandemics	592	1609
Autumn	Creating New Value from Discards	630	1787

### III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

There are nine discourse markers found in the English texts on the Interview section in Koreana published in 2020, as shown in Table 2. Examples of occurrences for each markers are presented below.

#### 3.1. and

*And* as a discourse marker has the highest frequency in all four texts. This marker is used to show that the speaker adds something to her/his previous utterance (van Dijk, 1979). It is shown in the following excerpt.

(1a). Now, we've all found our own places: Jang Young-gyu, the music director, formed a new band called "Lee Nalchi" to tell his unfinished story of music, and Chu Dahye and Shin Seung-tae are also working on their own music. And the same is true for me. (Spring)

In (1a) the speaker implies that he adds the information about the members of the previous band in which he was one of them. Despite its equivalence in Indonesian, this marker is omitted in its Indonesian translation (in 1b). The reason for such omission is the characteristic that the marker is syntactically independent of its host clause. It occurs outside the syntactic structure and the internal proposition is unchanged when it is left out (Brinton, 2017).

(1b) Hal yang sama terjadi pada saya. [The same thing also happened to me.]

TABLE 2  
 FREQUENCY DISTRIBUTION OF DISCOURSE MARKERS IN THE ENGLISH TEXTS

Discourse markers	Winter	Spring	Summer	Autumn
<i>And</i>	20	25	26	20
<i>But</i>	11	9	9	6
<i>Or</i>	3	5	5	6
<i>so</i>	5	3	3	6
<i>so that</i>				
<i>so much so</i>				
<i>Then</i>	6	3	3	1
<i>because</i>	5	3	2	3
<i>because of</i>				
<i>Now</i>	0	3	2	4
<i>Well</i>	2	0	1	1
<i>you know</i>	4	0	0	0

#### 3.2. well

*Well* as discourse marker appears four times, all of which are omitted in the Indonesian version. Here is one example. Excerpt (2a) is translated into (2b), because there is no equivalence of 'well' marker in Indonesian for these contexts.

(2a) Well, alchemy is literary alchemy - the practice of turning base metal into gold. (Winter)

(2b) Alkimia secara harfiah berarti alkimia – proses perubahan logam dasar menjadi emas. [Alchemy literary means alchemy - a process of turning metal into gold.]

#### 3.3. you know

This marker appears four times, all of them in Winter edition. Again, these are omitted in the Indonesian translation.

(3a) Every market has stacks of them, you know, and every house has at least one basket. (Winter)

Based on the components, i.e. *you* and *know*, the discourse marker *you know* may mean the speaker assumes that (1) the information he/she says is known by other participant(s) and (2) the information is generally available (Schiffrin, 1987). Indonesian has this kind of marker (e.g. *tau kan*), however, it is used in a much more casual setting. This might be the reason why the translator omits the marker, as shown in (3b).

(3b) Setiap pasar punya tumpukan keranjang ini, dan setiap rumah setidaknya punya satu keranjang. [Every market has piles of these baskets, and every house has at least one of them.]

Discourse marker *you know* may also co-occur with connector (House, 2009), as shown in (4a) where it co-occurs with *and*.

(4a) And you know, there's nothing as frightening as having no memory of something. (Winter)

The marker *you know* in this cluster is also omitted, possibly for the same reason, as shown below.

(4b) Dan, tidak ada yang lebih menakutkan daripada tidak punya kenangan mengenai sesuatu. [And there is nothing more frightening than having no memory of something.]

### 3.4. *so*

The discourse marker *so*, *so much so*, and *so that* appear 17 times in total. In general, the discourse implies the cause-effect relation (Schiffrin, 1987).

(5a) We felt we were still lacking in that department. So, we decided our goal was to focus our attention on the discarded material itself, and on the direction of imbuing it with more value. (Autumn)

Excerpt (5a) shows the cause and implies the effect or result. There is an Indonesian equivalence for this marker, which is used in the translated version (5b).

(5b) Jadi, kami memutuskan fokus pada bahan-bahan yang tidak terpakai itu, dan memberinya nilai tambah. [So, we decided to focus on that discarded materials, and gave more value on them.]

The equivalence is also shown in the following excerpts.

(6a) It's also a material that mixes very harmoniously with an original object, so much so that it's impossible to tell when the whole piece was made. (Autumn)

(6b) Bahan ini merupakan campuran yang sangat serasi dengan obyek awal, sehingga sulit dikenali ketika karya sudah selesai. [This material is a perfect mix with the original object, so that it is hard to recognize once it is finished.]

Excerpts (6a) and (6b) show that there are multiple equivalences for 'so' in Indonesian, i.e. *jadi*, and *sehingga*.

### 3.5. *now*

One of the functions of the discourse marker *now* is used to mark comparison, as shown below. It compares the situation before and at the time of the interview.

(7a) Now there seems to be no boundaries. (Autumn)

(7b) Sekarang tampaknya tidak ada lagi batasan. [Now it seems there is no more boundaries.]

Other functions of *now*, i.e. to emphasize progression in the discourse, to preface disagreements, to mark changes in speaker orientation, and to negotiate the right to control the flow of conversation (Schiffrin, 1987), are not found in the texts.

### 3.6. *or*

*Or* as the discourse marker has a clearly different function from that of semantic *or* (van Dijk, 1979). This marker is used as an option marker.

(8a) In an ordinary boutique, I would use some unusual material or just leave the debris in place after demolition. (Winter)

Here, the speaker shows two options of what action he takes regarding an ordinary boutique. This marker is translated into the Indonesian equivalence *atau* (8b).

(8b) Untuk butik biasa, saya memakai beberapa bahan yang tidak biasa atau meninggalkan begitu saja sisa-sisa bahannya setelah pembongkaran. [For ordinary boutique, I use some unusual materials or just leave the debris after the demolition.]

### 3.7. *but*

*But* is used to mark that the following utterance has a contrasting proposition (van Dijk, 1979; Schiffrin, 1987).

(9a) It seems like a bit of a stretch for an ecologist, doesn't it? But, actually that's not the case. (Summer)

In (9a) the clause following *but* shows the contrasting proposition to that of the previous one. It implies that writing a book about discussion is not something unusual for an ecologist. This sentence are translated into (9b) below.

(9b) Sedikit menyimpang untuk seorang ekologis, kan? Sebenarnya tidak begitu. [It's a bit crossing over for an ecologist, isn't it? Actually, it isn't.]

The speaker expects other participants to disagree to what he mentions in the previous utterance. In Indonesian, the tag *kan* sets a negative conducive question, a question which expects negative answer. For so doing, it does not need a contrasting marker.

### 3.8. *then*

There are 14 cases where *then* is used as discourse marker. The sample is shown below.

(10a) The Seongsu location was originally built in the 1970s and housed a mechanic's garage, then a supermarket and a hostel. (Autumn)

This marker has an equivalence in Indonesian and it is translated in all occurrences. Excerpt (10a) is translated into (10b) below.

(10b) Lokasi kafe di Seongsu ini dibangun pada tahun 1970-an dan dulu merupakan bengkel, kemudian supermarket dan hostel.

Discourse marker *then* is also found in clusters, as shown in the following excerpt.

(11a) But then once I got to school, I felt stymied – it was like I couldn't hear or think clearly. (Winter)

Here, *then* co-occurs with *but* to show that the upcoming event is about something unexpected. Both discourse markers in this cluster are translated (see 11b).

(11b) Tapi kemudian ketika saya sampai di sekolah, saya merasa terhalang – seolah tidak bisa mendengar atau

berpikir dengan jelas. [But then when I got to school, I felt blocked - as if I couldn't hear or think clearly.]

It also co-occurs with *and*, as shown in the following excerpt.

(12a) And then the group's cross-dressing singers unleashed a mixture of rock, disco and psychedelic music, all based on traditional Korean folk songs. (Spring)

Unlike *but* and *then* cluster, the cluster *and* and *then* is deleted in its translated version due to the previous context of not implying the time sequence.

(12b) Band itu mengeluarkan lagu perpaduan antara musik rok, disko, dan psikedelik, yang digubah dari lagu rakyat Korea tradisional. [The band released a mixed song of rock, disco, and psychedelic music, which is based on traditional Korean songs.]

## IV. CONCLUSION

There are nine discourse markers found in the English texts of the Interview sections. They are either translated, omitted or in the case of discourse marker clusters, partly translated in the Indonesian version. There are some reasons for the omission to occur: (1) there are no equivalence in the target language, (2) the internal meaning and syntactic structure of the sentences remains intact upon the removal of the markers, and (3) the absence of equivalent context in which the discourse marker appear.

The treatment of the English discourse markers in the Indonesian version is a common and general phenomenon. There is a general correspondence between markers across languages, but not an exact mapping (Fraser, 1999). Some discourse markers in one language have the exact (or near) equivalence in other languages and some do not; and the treatment to these markers are based on the perception that translation is primarily a pragmatic reconstruction of its source text (House, 1977). Pursuing an understandability of a target text should underlines that pragmatic meaning overrides semantic meaning. Translatability can possibly be done only when the meaning can still be adequately delivered in the target language (Kurniati, 2014).

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