

An Analysis of Discourse Markers in Football commentaries

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Abstract: The importance of discourse markers lies in the theoretical questions they raise about the nature of discourse and the relationship between linguistic meaning and context. Schiffrin described discourse markers as sequentially dependent elements which bracket units of talk and Blakemore as signals of procedural meaning. This paper examined these positions as regards the use of discourse markers in football commentaries. Drawing from a corpus data of televised football commentaries comprising of African and English football commentaries, it was discovered that the discourse markers go beyond the provision of cohesive relations and possess a core meaning which aids in utterance interpretation. This paper ultimately emphasizes the necessity of inference in understanding any discourse and concludes that pragmatic inferred meaning is essential for communication.

Keywords: Discourse markers, football commentaries, cohesive relations, core meaning, inference, procedural meaning.

INTRODUCTION

Language can be described as a system of sounds or symbols by which human beings share experiences, knowledge, and beliefs. This sharing is based on systematic, conventionally used signs, sounds, gestures or marks that convey understandable meanings within a group or community. Hence, human language is often described as a remote system, because, it entails the use of certain agreed upon symbols or signals to convey meaning from one person to another within a given speech community.

Language is very diverse in terms of what human beings do with it. This is what Akmajian *et al.* [1] say, while distinguishing between using language in doing something and saying something (244). While the former, according to them, could be used in abstract thinking, the latter has to do with what a person is doing with words in particular situations (i.e.) the intentions, purposes, beliefs and desires that a person has in speaking. Language as a means of communication, therefore, is recognized in terms of human interaction. This according to Akamijian *et al.* [1] takes place within the context of a fairly well defined social situation where the speakers share common knowledge. In this situation, rather than spell everything out, the speaker relies on shared understandings to facilitate communication.

These instances of communicative actions carried out by language are known as discourse. Discourse as a term has been defined as acted instances of communication in the medium of language [2]. A discourse is a set of meanings through which a group of

people communicate about a particular topic. Therefore, discourse is primarily a form of language use. There are many instances of discourse among which are football commentary, a specialized form of language use. Football commentary is an instantaneous language event which is pre-planned and publicized. It holds the audience's attention acting as a channel for communal emotion. It is a two-way process which is shaped by the nature of the game, while it simultaneously defines the game for the viewing public. Just like other instances of language use, there is exchange of information, where the speaker tends to find ways of signaling the beginning and the ending of the matches. Football talk is, therefore, situated somewhere between everyday communication and professional analysis. It is unscripted, spontaneous, and, instantly responding to events as they happen aiming to capture their on-going existence.

Football commentary derives its structure from its context of use. These accords with Levinson, who asserts that there is a connection between what the speaker says with the assumptions he holds or shares with his perceived hearer. The speaker, to be meaningful, must satisfy the context in which the event takes place. Language is, therefore, subjected to variant uses to best encode the desired meaning. In any given discourse, linguistic clues exist that enable information as well as enhance the interpretation of the discourse where they exist. Discourse markers fall within this category of linguistic items.

This paper is concerned with the issue of discourse markers as text forming devices in football

discourse, how it affects the interpretation of football commentaries and the understanding of the game at large. With this problem at the background, the researcher aims at identifying and explaining the multi-functionality of discourse markers in football commentaries. To achieve this, the specific objectives include: to establish how and to what extent discourse markers are used in football commentaries, to find out if same discourse markers are used in European and African football commentaries to perform same function and to establish if the discourse markers show the presence of other interlocutors and the extent to which the participants are interactive.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Topical Review

Discourse Analysis

The study of discourse is necessarily the analysis of language in use. Linguists over the years have sought to understand and interpret this language in use known as “text and talk”. Thus phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics as branches of language study developed. While phonology, morphology and syntax emerged in a bid to characterize sound structures, word formation and the formal structure of sentences respectively, the latter developed to provide an account of the meaning of such expressions by the means of interpretation. Pragmatics soon followed in order to describe the role of utterances in context. However, most of these earlier works were restricted to single isolated sentences. It was not until the late 1960s, that linguists tried to extend the framework of analysis to include real forms of language use that is discourse. Thus, began researches into what is today known as discourse analysis.

Discourse Analysis is a term used to describe a range of research approaches which focuses on the use of language. However, it cannot be restricted to description of linguistic forms dependent of the purpose or the function which those linguistic forms are designed to serve in human affairs. This approach to the study of discourse can be seen as a procedure of sociolinguistic enterprise which incorporates as a piece of language use in and out by members of a speech community. Newmeyer [3] affirms that “discourse analysis involves a consideration of both language form and language function”. This postulation goes in line with Teun Van Dijk’s [4] argument that discourse analysis appears to be the explicit account of the fact that discourse structures, at several levels may have multiple links with the context of communication and interaction and as such there is an explication of the abstract structures of text conversations. We witness a concerted interest for the cognitive and especially the social processes, strategies and contextualization of discourse taken as a mode of interaction in a highly complex socio-cultural situation. He further states that

discourse analysis is the study of the actual language use in its social context.

The crux of the matter in the field of discourse analysis has always been the attempt to find out how a particular language user understands and interprets (inference) what another language user intends to communicate. It is certain that every language user that unites to participate communicatively in discourse supplies the resources through which the learner can understand and process the utterance(s) that he or she hears or produces.

Discourse Markers

Research into discourse markers started in the 1970s and with the growing interest in production and comprehension of discourse, pragmatic and contextual interpretations. The study of discourse markers has been on the increase. Linguists have busied themselves with inquiry into other types of relations that need to be encoded in a discourse. This broadening interest brought about increased attention to those elements of linguistic structure that appear to be most directly involved in the relation of separate utterances. Traditionally, some words or phrases are considered as sentence connectors, fillers and expletives that had no function at all. Discourse markers falls into such a category, however, interest in its study expanded from the 1980s when it was found that discourse markers have a prominent role, not only in pragmatic and discourse research but also in language learning and acquisition. The research into discourse markers, therefore, seeks to ascertain what they are, what they mean and what functions they perform.

A discourse marker is a word or phrase that is relatively syntax - independent and does not change the meaning of the sentence and has a somewhat empty meaning. Michael Swan [5] sees a discourse marker as a word or expression which shows the connection between what is being said and the wider context. Discourse markers are words, or phrases that function within the linguistic system to establish relationship between topics or grammatical units in a discourse. They also serve pragmatic functions, used by a speaker to comment on the state of information about to be expressed. They may also be used to express a change of state or for subtle commentary by the speaker, suggesting that “what seems to be the most relevant context is not appropriate” [6]. These lexical items according to Ostman [7], Schiffrin [8] are devoid of semantic context in and on themselves and are dependent on the local context and sequence of talk for their interpretation.

According to Schiffrin [8] discourse markers are linguistic items that contribute to the coherence of the text by establishing coherent relationships between units of talk. She argues that linguistic expressions

indicate that the interpretation of one clause is determined by the information derived from the prior clause and as such it is the discourse markers that perform this function as well as link adjacent units of talk to make the whole discourse coherent.

Example:

Aisha did not fancy Abdul as a husband but had to oblige her parents.

Speaker A: Where is my child

Speaker B: Oh! gosh she is with your sister –in-law.

In the sentence A: Schiffrin argues that the presence of *but* provides the much needed information why Aisha is Abdul's wife while in sentence B: the speaker's use of the marker *oh*, provides the hearer with the speaker's attitude and information recognition to the discourse at hand.

Schiffrin [8] further argues that discourse markers are also deictic and suggests that they have indexical functions and that they indexically point to features of the context. According to Schiffrin [8] there are six types of discourse markers and

They are

Markers of information management.

Markers of response.

Markers of connectives.

Markers of cause and result.

Markers of temporal adverbs.

Markers of information and participation.

Discourse markers are commonly referred to as linking words and are characterized by their structural (continuation or elaboration) and thematic (revision, cause, equality, context) meanings and they are also associated to a morpho-syntactic class (parts of speech). A discourse marker is underspecified with respect to meaning. Therefore, to understand a discourse, the reader needs to recover the relations between the discourse elements as intended by the writer. Writers help the reader along by providing explicit lexical signals of the intended discourse relations through the use of discourse markers. Discourse markers have both syntactic and rhetorical properties. Some words and expressions are used to show how discourse is constructed. They can show the connection between what has already been written or said and what is going to be written or said. They can indicate what a speaker thinks about what they are saying. Discourse markers can influence or determine the emergent meaning of the text to maximize, emphasize, intensify, minimize, or refute.

Fraser [9] in his own approach saw discourse markers as grammatical-pragmatic. He terms them pragmatic markers and argues that they are lexical expressions that do not contribute to the propositional

content of the sentence but signal different types of messages. He, however, disagrees with Schiffrin's permission of non-verbal discourse markers. He insists that they are linguistic expressions only with a core meaning that can be enriched by the context and signals the relationship that the speaker intends between the utterance the discourse marker introduces and the foregoing utterance.

FEATURES OF DISCOURSE MARKERS

The most common features attributed to discourse markers from numerous studies include:

MULTI-CATEGORIALITY

It is often said that discourse markers constitute a heterogeneous set with respect to the syntactic class of its forms. This is because, items that are usually included in this linguistic set are not structurally unified, rather, they derive from a variety of traditional grammatical word classes that range from single words like adverbs, verbs, coordinating or subordinating conjunctions, interjections and extend to include entire phrases and clauses which are typically viewed as formulaic or fixed. Examples: However, although, because, after all, anyway, frankly, firstly etc.

CONNECTIVITY

Studies like Hansen [10], Schiffrin [8], and Briton [11] carried out on discourse markers agree that discourse markers play a role in connecting units of a text. However, there is a dispute about the nature of the connection which discourse markers express. From Lenk, Schiffrin, Blakemore, Fraser and other notable linguists' one thing is certain, that discourse markers show connectivity whether at the global, local or procedural level and this connectivity distinguishes discourse markers as a group.

Example

- I played tennis with Mary yesterday.
- Oh yes. Talking about Mary, do you know she is going to get married?

In the above example, the use of **oh** in the second sentence ensures continuity of idea as it connects what speaker A had said with the new information that speaker B is giving in her sentence.

NON-TRUTH CONDITIONALITY

One common feature of discourse markers is that they do not contribute anything to the propositional content in the context where they appear. Halliday, explains this as those items outside the propositional content of the sentence and have no status as participants, circumstance or process [12]. These items contribute nothing to the propositional content of the sentences but function as instructions to the addressee on how to process the sentences that contain them within a given context [10]. Blakemore sees discourse

markers as items that have pragmatic meaning minus truth conditions. This pragmatic meaning is not part of the truth conditional content and cannot be obtained through the linguistic items rather the non-truth conditionality refers to meaning inferred from what is said.

Though not part of the propositional structure, discourse markers do affect the propositional meaning by guiding and construing the interpretation of the propositional meaning of an utterance.

Example:

Regrettably, I couldn't help you.

The marker **regrettably** does not contribute to the truth conditions of the sentence, but it does contribute to its higher level explicature.

WEAK CLAUSE ASSOCIATION

Discourse markers are outside the syntactic structure of their host sentences. Discourse markers according to Fraser are grammatically peripheral; they do not enter into constructions with the sentence content [9]. Yet some of the items have shown to 'impose limits on the structure and content of the following sentence.'

Example

- **Although**, she is hungry, she is not going to eat.

E-INITIALITY

Discourse markers occur sentence initially. Hansen [10] points out that those discourse markers must necessarily precede their host unit. Fraser [13] in his own view states that discourse markers typically occur in utterances initial position. However, this is not necessarily always the case because some of these expressions occasionally appear sentence medially and finally as well as function fundamentally identical to those they serve initially.

Example

- **Frankly**, he does not smoke.(initial position)
- Adamu drives a Mercedes_ **but** his wives drive a Kia each.(medial position)

OPTIONALITY

Discourse markers are seen as optional and not obligatory elements of a discourse. Schiffrin agrees that they are never obligatory elements, meaning that any utterance preceded by a marker may also have occurred without that marker. He points out that their absence, though it may make interpretation process difficult does not render a sentence or utterance ungrammatical and /or unintelligible [8].

Example

(**Frankly**), he does not smoke. If, **frankly**, is deleted in the preceding sentence, it still makes sense.

Adamu drives a Mercedes, (**but**) his wives drive a Kia each. The absence of **but** though makes interpretation awkward and difficult does not render the sentence ungrammatical.

The above features point to the fact that discourse markers are not just a random group of expressions but rather members of a coherent group.

EMPIRICAL STUDIES

Fatemeh Zaei [14] examined discourse markers and their characteristics in English. The study describes the range of uses of English discourse markers in conversations included in interchange books. The data for this study was collected from interchange, third education and books. She argued that this became necessary since discourse markers appear in natural conversations and there was no access to English native speakers, the best way has to be an authentic material. Sixty-three (63) conversations were selected from the two books of these interchange series. The study implied that there was a need to make learners aware of these markers and their pragmatic functions.

Luka Barnabas *et al.* [15] in their study investigated the use of discourse markers in NTA network and TV Gotel, Yola. They agreed that discourse markers are sign-post lexemes that help in the appropriate use of information in a text. The study examined the characteristic discourse markers used in NTA, Yola and TV Gotel, Yola, in order to identify the extent to which they serve as text creating linguistic features in Nigeria news report. The study was carried out through a descriptive approach in the analysis of data. Data was drawn from six texts from two reputable TV stations. The articles were chosen by purposive sampling technique and using Schiffrin's [8], Halliday [16] and Fraser [17] models of analysis, the data were analyzed to ascertain if reporters used discourse markers to convey information about the connection between utterances and that the use of discourse markers functions in the corpus to enhance the connective links between units of talk in the text analyzed.

Akande [18] conducted a corpus based study for the identification of discourse markers and analyzed their function and frequency in the speech of Nigerian-University undergraduates. He drew his data from a written text administered on selected students across the selected Nigerian universities. Akande's study argued that discourse markers also help to understand and explain regional differences. He concluded that there are significant regional differences in the use of discourse markers between speakers from the northern and southern part of Nigeria. He also identified that Nigerian students use discourse markers to perform various socio-pragmatic functions such as reparation, classification and gap-filling.

Schiffrin [19] reported the result of the study which investigated the problem of discourse markers, their functions and distribution across four discourse registers: dialogue in drama (which can be ascribed to spoken discourse), academic prose, legal documents and newspaper articles in the English language. The article drew upon the theoretical assumptions of text linguistics on discourse, cohesive devices and its components. The investigation also examined the functional complexity of discourse markers in cohesive texts. As a result, it was proved that discourse markers played a significant role in the above mentioned four registers and the choice of the linguistic elements depended on the specificity of register.

Ajimer [20] investigated the core meanings that discourse particles as markers denoted. Ajimer chose five discourse markers (**but, well, so, oh and now**) for analysis. She summarized her findings by saying that discourse markers are different from ordinary words in the language because of the large number of pragmatic values that they can be associated with. Nevertheless, speakers are not troubled by this multi-functionality but they seem to know what a particle means and be able to use it appropriately in different contexts.

The focus and context of all the above mentioned researches in different discourse markers have been analyzed in the context of interview, male/female speech, classroom interactions, TV programmes and newspaper writings. However, the present study focuses on football commentaries. It aims to find out the different kinds of discourse markers used, differences that exist in their usage as well as the functions they perform. To understand this notion, placements of discourse markers in football commentaries is investigated too.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theory used in this study is eclectic, drawing from Schiffrin and Blakemore's models of analysis.

Schiffrin's Model of English Discourse Markers

Schiffrin [8] introduces 'discourse markers' as expressions such as "**and, because, but, I mean, now, oh, or, so, then, well, and y**" "**know**" that occur in unstructured conversations. She suggests that DMs do not easily fit into a linguistic class. In fact, she goes so far as to suggest that paralinguistic features and non-verbal gestures are possible DMs. She writes that we should "... try to find common characteristics of these items to delimit what linguistic conditions allow an expression to be used as a marker. But such an approach would require not only discovery of the shared characteristics of an extremely diversified set of expressions, in English: it would require analysis across

a wide body of typologically diverse language to discover what other linguistic resources are drawn upon for use as markers." [8] Nevertheless, she sets forth some tentative suggestions similar to those suggested by Zwicky as to what constitutes a marker:

"It has to be syntactically detachable from a sentence. It has to be commonly used in initial position of an utterance.

It has to have a range of prosodic contours.

It has to be able to operate at both local and global levels of discourse.

It has to be able to operate on different planes of discourse."

She sees DMs as serving an integrative function in discourse and thus contributing to discourse coherence. Schiffrin points out that some discourse markers relate only the semantic reality (the 'facts') of two sentences while others, including "**so**", may relate sentences on a logical (epistemic) level and/or a speech act (pragmatic) level. She further asserts [8]: "a fact-based causal relation between cause and result holds between idea units, more precisely, between the event, state, and so on, which they encode. A knowledge-based causal relation holds when a speaker uses some piece(s) of information as a warrant for an inference (a hearer- inference). An action-based causal relation holds when a speaker presents a motive for an action being performed through talk - either his/her own action or an interlocutor's action."

She proposes a multi-planed model of discourse coherence containing five separate planes of analysis. DMs locate utterances on one or more planes of her discourse model.

Briefly, the definitions of the planes are as follows:

Exchange Structure, which reflects the mechanics of the conversational interchange and shows the result of the participant turn-taking and how these alternations are related to each other.

Action Structure, which reflects the sequence of speech acts which occur within the discourse.

Ideational Structure, which reflects certain relationships between the ideas (propositions) found within the discourse, including cohesive relations, topic relations, and functional relations.

Participation Framework, which reflects the ways in which the speakers and hearers can relate to one another, as well as orientation toward utterances.

Information State, which reflects the on-going organization and management of knowledge and meta

knowledge as it evolves over the course of the discourse.

Schiffrin also identifies six categories of discourse markers and they are:

- Markers of information management.
- Markers of response.
- Markers of connectives.
- Markers of cause and effect.
- Markers of temporal adverbs
- Markers of information and participation.

BLAKEMORE’S MODEL OF ANALYSIS

Blakemore [21] sees discourse markers as important in the process of utterance interpretation. She argues that they provide hearers/readers with guidance on the inferential phase of the interpretation of the said utterance. She argues that the linguistically encoded meaning can either be conceptual or procedural. She asserts that the linguistically encoded conceptual information is the truth-conditional information which plays a role in establishing the explicit level of utterance meaning and the linguistically encoded procedural information which is the non-truth conditional information works at the implicit level of utterance interpretation. Therefore, for Blakemore what is conceptual should only act at the explicit level of utterance interpretation and what is procedural at the implicit level. Thus, she sees discourse markers as procedural, because the use of such expressions help the readers/hearers to work out the implicit side of the utterance interpretation where linguistic decoding would not be of much help in reaching the final interpretation of the utterance [21].

Blakemore’s notion of procedural meaning is likened to Grice ‘s conversational implicature. This is because Grice argues that some linguistic expressions encode conventional implicatures that do not contribute to the truth-conditional value of the utterances in which they occur.

In this research, the discourse markers were identified and analyzed using Schiffrin’s discourse planes as a model of ascertaining the planes on which the discourse markers locate the utterances .However, Schiffrin categories of DMs were modified into four categories namely: contrastive, elaborative, inferential markers and discourse particles. Each discourse marker would be tested against Blakemore’s procedural meaning, if the discourse marker contributes to the implicit meaning of the utterance or cohesive content of the utterance.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This section discusses the method used for this research. It focuses on how the data were collected and analyzed. The corpus consist of 20 televised football commentaries .These football matches were watched at various times by the researcher and the commentaries recorded with the aid of tape recorder and audio-visual recorder. After recording the football commentaries, the researcher proceeded to transcribe the recorded commentaries. The transcribed commentaries were grouped into two, European and African football commentaries. This was followed by a purposive sampling procedure aimed at identifying the different discourse markers used. At the end of the sampling, ten (10) commentaries comprising five European and five African football commentaries were selected as those consisting of discourse markers.

The identified discourse markers were analyzed using models from Schiffrin and Blakemore. The identified discourse markers were classified into their frequency of occurrence and category. Finally, the functions they perform in the commentaries were identified and interpreted.

STATISTIC ANALYSIS

Table 1: Frequency Of Occurrence Of The Discourse Markers In European Football Commentaries (No Of Frequency Of Discourse Markers)

	Oh	Well	And	So	But	Now	I Think	I Mean	although	because
MATCH A: ENGLAND VS BELGIUM	3	1	4	-	2	2	3	2	-	
MATCH B: ENGLAND VS GERMANY	8	3	11	6	5	9	-	-	-	
MATCH C: CHELSEA FC VSMANCHESTER UNITED	1	-	1	1	2	-	3	1	1	1
MATCH D: SPAIN VS ENGLAND	0	4	4	3	2	2	2	-	-	
MATCH E: BRAZIL VS GERMANY	-	1	6	1	2	1	2	-	-	

In the above table, the overall presence of discourse markers and the number of times they

occurred in the commentaries are shown. The results indicate that the degree of use in football commentaries

differs, The analysis of the commentaries reveals that the DMs were used 63 times .The table shows the frequency of occurrence revealing that “oh, and, well,

and eh” are the most frequently used markers in the five commentaries.

Table 2: Frequency of Occurrence of Discourse Markers in African Football Commentaries (No Of Frequency Of Discourse Markers)

	Oh	Well	And	So	But	Now	I think	I mean	Although	Because
Match A: GHANA VS BURKINA FASO	8	-	10	-	14	2	-	-	2	1
Match B:NIGERIA VS BURKINA FASO	3		10	3	12	6	-	4	-	-
Match C:NIGERIA VS MALI	2	2	8	2	8		2	-	-	-
Match D:NIGERIA VS NAMIBIA	6	2	10	4	9	-	-	-	-	2
Match E:TOGO VS TUNISIA	3	2	7		8	2	-	-	-	-

In the above table, there is preponderant use of discourse markers in the football commentaries. The results show that DMs occurred 153 instances in the five matches in contrast to European commentaries in which DMs occur only 63 times.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

From the tables above, it is established that DMs are used at various times in African and European football commentaries. The DMs used are similar and in some contexts perform varying function as in the excerpt below. However, it was noticed that African football commentaries contained high use of DMs than the European commentaries.

LINGUISTIC ANALYSIS

Classification of The Discourse Markers According To Function

Drawing from Schiffrin’s model of analysis, the discourse markers used in the football commentaries are classified into the following:

CONTRASTIVE MARKERS

Contrastive markers signal contrast between textual elements which they link. “**BUT**” and “**ALTHOUGH** “ belong to this group.

Example

- Wakaso takes another chance, a chance **but** Diakite manages to gather it.
- Burkina Faso looks to catch Derek Boateng **but** his teammates fill in well.

ELABORATIVE MARKERS: This group of markers signals an elaboration or continuation of the first textual element by the second. **NOW** and **AND** belong to this category.

Example

...**and** then er Seaman just tees the ball up then slides it to his right. **and now** its with Martin Keown his Arsenal colleague.

In the sentence, the presence of **and** signals a continuation of the discourse, new information yet to be given. **Now** also signals this continuation as well as serving as a deictic marker of time.

INFERENCEAL MARKERS

These markers signal a contextual implication in the second textual element by the first one, “**SO**” and “**BECAUSE**” belong to this category of DMs.

Example

Ghana seems to be trying to keep possession, **so**, Ghana head in to the tunnel with a one-goal lead after the first half.

In the sentence above, the use of discourse markers is to indicate relation of cause and effect and premise and conclusion,

DISCOURSE PARTICLES

Discourse particles signal the speakers attitude in communication and they structure the relationship between a speaker and a listener..**WELL, I THINK, I MEAN, and OH**, belongs to this category.

Examples

Oh! what a relief for Burkina faso, and Nigerians will truly worry about that, where else can they run **oh!** getting a little untidy now **oh!**

In the above example, the presence of **oh** indicates old information recognition on the part of the speaker.

Well good spell of play by Belgium, they really do knock the ball around **well**.

...the referee **I think** spotted it but the Belgians have possession so play is allowed to continue.

I mean it is a chance for Burkina faso, forward Aristide Bance, a star performer in the semi-final

against Ghana turns and thunders in a strike from 20 yards.

Table 3: Functions of the Discourse Markers in the Football Commentaries

DISCOURSE MARKER	DISCOURSE PLANE ACTED ON	FUNCTION	COMMENTARIES EXCERPTS
And	IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE	It signals continuation of the discourse at hand.	a ..Star johns ,grabs the ball ,puts it to Bale ,Bale gets it and..... b. Osas Eghe making a run down the left flank .oh and the goalkeeper woefully c. Peters and the keeper,they got a little close and Philip
But	IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE	It indicates adversative relation, contrasting two ideas. It also indicates n implied meaning in some contexts of useNigeria should get a corner there but the referee and lines man don't see it that way. ...Burkina faso looks to catch Derek Boteang but his teammates fill in well and play the ball back down. ...it falls to Asante, but the substitute gets a poor contact on the ball.
Now	IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE	Shows progression of talk indicating upcoming shift in talk. It also serves as a dietic marker of time showing the present.	He's been fouled there by Nigerians and its Brazil nownow tremendous football played hereand a penalty has been awarded to Nigeria and Dida now will have to face the wrath of Nigerians with seventeen minutes of the second half gone ...And now it's taken up by Tangheand now it's with Martin Keown his Arsenal colleague...
SO	IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE	It explains issues of premise and conclusion in the commentaries It acts on the implicit meaning of the utterance thereby giving a procedural encoding.	...the referee I think spotted it but the Belgian's has possession so play is allowed to continue ...Rabiu mohammed has taken a knock to the head so the refree has stopped the game while he receives some treatment but he looks to be alright. ...the scoreline seems harsh on Burkinafaso,they have definitely created the better chances so far ,have looked more comfortable with the pitch condition...
Well	INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE(PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK)	It serves as a response marker to request for elaboration and clarification.It signals how interactive the interlocutors are.	Puldoski is hanging his head in shame and Rooney has gone over to him ...well the final score is 2 to 1Lampard in the air well this has been there out ball all half,left side ...and the goalkeeper woefully out there ,oh that's gonna be the fourth goal, well, there is the linesman's flag up, well this is a great move there...
Because	IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE	It expresses the cause and effect situation in the football matches. It acts on the implicit meaning of the text thereby encoding procedural meaning.	...muzzy izzet has scored his sixth goal of the season Leicester one Spurs nil ,its er if you like come against run of play because the opening exchanges Spurs very much dominated.....
Although	IDEATIONAL STRUCTURE	It shows adversative relation between two textual elements. It encodes procedural information in the textSpurs very much dominated although Leicester did get the ball in the net through Heskey. ...it's a corner kabore takes it, although the delivery is deep and falls to Nakolouma....
I think	INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE(PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK)	It shows the commentator's orientation to aspects of ideas and intentions raised in the footballyeah I think your right,I think there was a good play, good inter-passing between Deschamps and him.

		talk.	
I MEAN	INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE(PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK)	It shows the commentator's ideas to issues raised in the discussion of the football talk. I mean he was responsible for fumbling a lot of those balls, he is not a good passer...
Oh	INTERACTIONAL STRUCTURE(PARTICIPATION FRAMEWORK)	It indicates changes in the state of knowledge, information and orientation awareness.it also serves as a marker of information recognition of old ideas and receipt of new ones.	...and over to Ashley cole oh! Unto him comes Lpramov ...now tremendous football played here and oh!that was in the side netthis could be a goal for Nigeria oh!saved....Nigerians will truly worry about that,where else can they run,oh!getting untidy now oh!

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

There are eleven discourse markers used at various times in the five football commentaries analysed and they are:” **oh, well, and, so, but, now, I think, I mean, although, because, however and meanwhile**” These markers performed different functions as follows:

“**And:** As a discourse marker in the commentaries operated on the ideational structure of the utterances in which it occurred by reflecting cohesive relations and structural roles. This it does by signaling continuation of ideas as in ‘Star john grabs the ball and puts it to Bale, Bale gets it and’ the presence and repetition of **and** tells of a continuation thereby eliciting the hearer’s attention to find out what is to follow next. However, in signaling the continuation it does not provide information about what is being continued which can only be deduced from the utterance itself.

But: As a discourse markers in the football commentaries operate on the ideational structure as well,but serve as markers of adversative relation bringing to fore a contrast of two ideas and topical relations as in “Nigeria should get a corner there **but** the referee and lines man don’t see it that way” and “Spurs However, the use of **but** brings forth an encoded meaning. If Nigeria should get a corner then it means that a foul must have been committed against Nigeria though the degree might be responsible for the referee’s decision. This means that **but** encodes procedural meaning though it signals the concept of contrast however in producing this signal of contrast it automatically guides the hearer through the inferential route of comprehending the utterance. Thus, in the excerpt above the use of **but** by the speaker takes the hearer on the inferential process of decoding the elements of contrast or elimination as the case maybe.

Although : As a discourse marker in the football commentaries operate on the ideational structure as well ,but serve as markers of adversative relation bringing to fore a contrast of two ideas and topical relations as in “.... and “Spurs very much dominated **although** Leicester did get the ball in the net through Heskey. It also aids in the inferential process which leads to the elimination of an existing assumption of **Spurs domination**.

So: As a discourse marker in the commentaries operate on the ideational structure of the utterance. However, **so** is multi-functional, they do not just show elements of cause and effect, premise and conclusion; they also operate on the implicit meaning of the utterance thereby encoding procedural meaning. In the excerpt “the referee I think spotted it but the Belgian’s have possession **so** play is allowed to continue, the presence of **so** implies an implicit meaning that a foul was committed against the Belgians .Thus **so** in the football commentaries yields a contextual implication that is an assumption which is the result of a deduction.

Because: Because as a discourse marker operates on the ideational structure of the utterance. However,” **because**” show elements of cause and effect, premise and conclusion and aids in the inferential process of interpretation. In the excerpt **because** strengthens an existing assumption thereby creating an effect derived from a set of premises.

Now: As a discourse marker operates on the interactional structure of the utterance showing the ways in which the speakers and hearers relate to one another as well as orientation towards utterances. However, **Now** serves as a deictic marker of time showing that the information is of the present and the progression of talk.

Well: **Well**, operates on the interactional structure of the utterance showing the ways in which the speakers and hearers relate to one another as well as orientation towards utterances. **Well** also serve as a response marker by one of the commentators to another thereby showing how interactive the participants /interlocutors are as in ‘...**well** the final score is 2-1’, the use of **well** indicates a response to a question. **Well** also in the commentaries serve as a means of decoding a procedural meaning as inand the goalkeeper woefully out there, oh that’s gonna be the fourth goal, well there is the linesman flag up, well this is a great move there. Here, the speaker diverged from coherence and well encodes the information that the utterance introduces. Thus well encodes a constituent of a conceptual representation thereby encoding a procedure. It introduces an utterance which is not a continuation of the preceding discourse.

I’tthink and I’mean operate on the interactional to reflect the speakers orientation towards utterances as in: **I mean** he was responsible for fumbling a lot of those balls,he is not a good passer....here we see the speakers opinion on the player. Also in **I’tthink** your right, **I’tthink** there was a good play, good inter-passing between Deschamps and him, the presence of the marker **I’tthink** signals not just the speakers view but points to the existence of two participants .

CONCLUSION

So far, we have been able to establish the existence of discourse markers in European and African football commentaries. These markers are not evenly distributed in terms of their frequency of use which is determined by the communicative need of the user. It is also evident that the African football commentators in their commentaries made preponderant use of discourse markers. This situation could be attributed to the influence of their first language on the use of English language. The commentators are Africans by origin and most African languages are more emotive, and dramatic. Thus there is influence of the commentator’s cultural and societal background on their use of DMs.

However, some of the discourse markers exhibit multi-functionality thereby contrasting Schiffrin’s argument of being only cohesive in function. They also point to the presence of other participants in the discourse, thereby establishing the dialogic nature of football commentary as against the general belief of its monologic structure.

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