

ENGAGING STUDENTS ATTENTION BY USING DISCOURSE MAKERS: STUDY OF LECTURER-STUDENTS INTERACTION IN ENGLISH CLASS DISCUSSION

Radius Setiyawan¹, Sri Lestari²

English Education, Fakultas Keguruan dan Ilmu Pendidikan (FKIP),
Universitas Muhammadiyah Surabaya
(radius.setiyawan@gmail.com¹), (spiritsrilestari@gmail.com²)

Abstract

Discourse markers were important part within the scope of the study of classroom interaction. The theme of this research was the use of discourse markers. Research on discourse markers was a small component in the basic research discusses about the various habits of a teacher's question, the function of teachers talk, and teacher's talk structure. This study took a sample of English learning activities at the University of Indonesia. Learning was attended by 29 students from various departments at the Science Faculty and one lecturer with experience more than three years. This study would browse the variety and functions of discourse markers that appear in the lecturer-students interaction conducted by discussion activities. The collection of information was done through observation of the lecturer-students interaction during the learning process. Observations carried out electronically by using an audio recorder via laptops and mobile phones. Then, I did the coding and transcription of the data. The analysis described that there were several types and classifications of discourse markers with diverse pragmatic functions. Discourse markers that had a high frequency in use by lecturers was "okay" that often has different pragmatic function. The variety of discourse markers used by lecturers in this discussion activity observation were often used to show understanding, to confirm understanding and ask students to do turn argued.

Keywords: classroom interaction, discourse makers, english language learning

Introduction

Discourse markers are important part in a study of class interaction. This study took theme the use of discourse markers. The study of discourse markers is just a little component in a research which discussed about various custom of teacher questions, teacher talk and language acquisition, function of teacher talk and its structure. Research related to discourse markers had been conducted in various language. It could also show teacher's power and active participation from learners (Moreno et.al, 2006). I found three research related discourse markers; two of those researches took setting in outside Indonesia whereas the rest were in Indonesia. Fung and Carter (2007) examined the discourse markers in spoken English of native speakers and learners in a pedagogical context. Their research was conducted based on the sub pedagogical corpus from CANCODE, a corpus of English-English spoken, and discourse interactive corpus of secondary students in Hong Kong. Their results indicated that both groups used discourse markers as part of the interaction

process to regulate and organize interpersonal relationships, referential, structural and cognitive. Meanwhile, Castro and Claudia (2009) conducted a study the use of discourse markers on the setting of non-native speakers in a language institute in Spain, which were teachers and adult learners of English in the classroom interaction. This study also used corpus analysis toolkit. The results showed that the discourse markers appeared 398 times and used by teachers for about 61% and students of 39%. The study of discourse markers also suggested its function to support structural objectives, pragmatic and interactional. The study of discourse markers carried out by Karlina, Suparno, and Setyaningsih (2015) which was undertaken in the context of learning in Indonesia in one of high school in Surakarta. The study described the textual function of discourse markers that were used by teachers, there were 19 discourse markers used by teachers both in Indonesian, Javanese and English. Thus, the study of discourse markers remains limited in a global context, especially in Indonesia.

This study will be examined the use of discourse markers on talk lecturers. This study is important since discourse markers are cohesive signpost in discourse and its functions closely to find if it meets the lecturers talk coherence and consistency in guiding the class so that the explanation can easily be understood by students. This study was expected to be useful to provide insight to the lecturers about the discourse markers because it can lead them to speak effectively in the classroom discourse.

Finding and Discussion

Learning activities were starting at 10:30 to 12:30 pm. There are 29 students and 1 lecturer. Learning topic was a discussion, including how to discuss things properly. At the beginning of the learning activities, lecturer asked the students to mention the latest news. The lecturer gave the piece of an article about the plan "End the Sugar import 2020" and asked students to give his opinion about the article. Those activities were conducted for 20 minutes. Then, they played games to relax themselves and then the proceedings in the second activity is to do debates. Of that game earned four groups with each group member are 7-8. Two groups did practice debate over the last 15 minutes. English is used by lecturers to give instructions for the activity takes place, the lecturers almost rare use Indonesian as instruction so that this study were just found one discourse markers in Indonesian. It had two functions, such as to joke and to clarify instructions.

Schiffirin (in Castro and Claudia, 2009) stated that discourse markers are elements that relay to fill conversation units. It means that discourse markers are elements in spoken or in written discourse which is depending on the context. In spoken discourse, it is important in building local coherence between the speaker and the listener in determining the structure of discourse, meaning, action, and context for interaction. Through discourse markers, connectedness between what will be said and what has been said can be demonstrated. Schiffirin (ibid.) do his own research on eleven discourse markers, they are *oh well (particles), and, but, or, so, because (conjunctions), now, then, you know, I mean.*

The experts or researchers still have not found an agreement in determining the classification and types of discourse markers. However, they agreed that the discourse markers had a high frequency occurrence in spoken discourse and could be found at the beginning, middle, or end of spoken discourse. Classification and types of discourse markers used by lecturer in this study referred to the relevant studies. Discourse markers that were found in this research were not only in English but also in Indonesian since the lecturer tended to use both languages in the learning

activities. Margana (2013) stated that code switching could have the function as discourse markers so that discourse markers in Indonesian found in this study both have function to mark code switching used by lecturer and as local coherence building. Nonetheless, the discourse markers in Indonesian which were found only slightly for the lecturer almost exclusively use English.

Table 1. Discourse Markers Classification used by lecturer

Discourse Markers in English	Discourse Markers in Indonesian
Okay	
So	
er dan em	
Yeah	
Yes	
Well	
Now	Iya
Next	
I mean	
You mean	
I think	
And	
Now	

Discourse markers have variety of classification, types, in addition to a pragmatic function diverse. Brinton (Ibid.) elaborated pragmatic function of discourse markers into two, for instance:

1. Tekstual function

- For opening discourse, such as asking listener: opening marker composition
- For closing discourse: closing marker composition
- For helping speaker to take or let turn-taking: turn-taker (turn-giver)
- As fillers or delaying tactics used to pass or defend discourse: filler-turn or guards-turn
- To determine the new topic of the change of subject: change of subject
- To mark the order of discourse: order or relevance markers
- To correct discourse own or others: marker correction

2. Interpersonal Function

- Subjective, to express a response or reaction to the previous discourse includes also shows references to the previous topic (back-channel signals) of the understanding and continue attention when other speakers were turn taking. Response or reaction markers, back-channel signals.
- Interpersonal, affect the cooperation or sharing including confirm the assumptions that have been distributed, checking or express understanding, confirm, express differences or to save face (politeness)

Activity 1

Ekstract 1

S1 : apa to import the sugar from other countries because we can make the sugar our

self so we can less the budget

- L : less the budget
 S1 : move the sector that needs more than import from our government
 L : **Okay**, less the budget produce by ourself the other please

Conversations in activity 1 extract 1 above showed that discourse markers were found at the beginning of the speech. When the lecturer and students were holding in discussion about the article which had been brought by lecturer about the plan ended the sugar imports in 2020. Lecturer asked students to express their opinions about agree or not on the plan. The first student said that he/she agreed with the plan and gave his/her reasons. The function of the discourse markers were more on interpersonal function because here lecturers was expressing their understanding of student opinion. The interpretation of the discourse markers function could not be separated from the current context of the word "okay" when it was spoken and could not be removed the words that had been spoken, the lecturer recited the opinion of students.

Activity 1

Ekstract 6

L : **Yes** Lina

S6 : I think we need to appreciate more to the farmer because more farmer like young people from village move to Jakarta make the city more crowded

L hm hm..sssstt

S6 : =ee I heard some stories from my neighbour farmer in the village in west Java They even don't ee ee like well irrigation in their ee farmland they even don't know how to speak in Bahasa I think we need to support farmer

L : **Iyaes**..your focus is still more like **ehmm** more improving or increasing the farmer themselves **I mean** we already pay attention to them it will be possible it will be done, **okay** next please, other opinion I want all of you to speak

Activity 1 Extract 6 shows four discourse markers used by lecturer. Discourse marker "yes" that was the beginning discourse of lecturer spoken showed textually pragmatic function. Its function was to help students get their turn to speak. In the second discourse marker "iyaes" despite similarities in the type of discourse but the discourse markers had different pragmatic functions. Pragmatic functions of it showed more interpersonal i.e. lecturer was pointing an expression of the understanding and confirming her understanding of student opinion. Other discourse marker that had textually pragmatic functions was "um" that function as filler or tactic to continue and extend the discourse. Discourse marker "I mean" have the same functionality as "Iyaes". Meanwhile, the discourse marker "okay" showed the same function of pragmatic discourse marker "yes". From this extract showed that it was indeed a discourse markers could appear at the beginning, middle, and end of the speech.

Activity 2

Ekstract 2

L : **Oke so** now on the motion is this house believe that, this house believe that is kind of statements in debate itu adalah pernyataan yang ada dalam debate artinya kamu (inaudible) This house believe that Indonesia should not extend freeport

company contract and nationalize the company extend so this house believe that Indonesia should not extend freeport company contract but nationalize the company extend.

S : (inaudible) menjelaskan dengan bahasa Indonesia

T : yes

S : (inaudible) masih menjelaskan dengan bahasa Indonesia

L : **oke, so** now do you have comment or topic? Please Tania and Bagas this two **Yes I mean** from minutes from now you have time to discussion with your friend

In the second activity of the extract 2, it could be seen lecturers use two types of discourse markers in the same time, which were so and okay. Both the discourse markers also had the same pragmatic function such as textual functions. The lecturer used discourse markers was to call students' attention. Meanwhile, the two of other discourse markers "yes" and "I mean" showed the interpersonal function to express understanding. Spoken discourse allowed to use two markers simultaneously and sequentially in one utterance as well as the lecturer did in these extracts.

Some other discourse markers also found in classroom observations with different functions. Discourse markers that had a high frequency in use by lecturer were "okay" but this type often had different discourse marker functions in its appearance. Various markers of discourse that emerged in activities 1 and 2 examined in this research indicated that discourse markers were an important part of the lecturer talk to arrange class, especially in the activity of the discussion as seen in this study shown that discourse markers were often used to show understanding, to confirm the understanding, and to ask students to do turn-talking to utter their opinion in discussion.

Conclusions

In this research were found many types and classification of pragmatic discourse markers with diverse functions. Discourse markers that had a high frequency in use by lecturers were "okay" but that often had different pragmatic function. Various discourse markers used by the lecturer in this research was often used to show understanding, to confirm understanding, and to ask students to practice turn-taking in discussion.

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