



A Corpus Based Study of Discourse Markers in Pakistani Motivational Speeches

Muhammad Aamir¹

Tehseen Zahra²

Naima Shaokat³

ABSTRACT

Motivational speech is a tool that inspires individuals and prompts positive changes in their lives. Previous research has explored discourse markers in various speech genres but limited studies have focused on Pakistani motivational speeches. Therefore, the present study aims to identify and analyze the function of discourse markers used by Pakistani motivational speakers in their speeches. The data for the current study comprise 15 speeches delivered by male speakers, using the theoretical framework proposed by Schiffrin (1987) for the classification of discourse markers. The study employs both qualitative and quantitative methods, utilizing AntConc 3.5.9 (Anthony, 2020) software as an analytical tool. The findings reveal that discourse markers such as *and*, *but*, *or*, *so*, *because*, *now*, *then*, *well*, *I mean*, and *you know* are used in Pakistani motivational speeches. The findings further show that among the 2348 discourse markers, 1654 were discourse connectives, 339 indicated cause and result, 164 were temporal markers, 121 served as markers of information and participation, and 65 indicated response markers. The findings also show that the most dominant discourse marker in Pakistani motivational speeches is a connective marker, which plays an important function in connecting the statements. The study further reveals that information and management markers are used less frequently in these speeches. This research contributes to our comprehension of discourse markers in public speech and provides valuable insights that can be applied by future motivational speakers.

Keywords: Discourse Markers, Motivational speech

¹MPhil scholar, Air University, Islamabad-(aamirkhattak835@gmail.com)

²Assistant Professor, Air University, Islamabad-(tehseen.azhar@yahoo.com)

³MPhil Scholar, Air University, Islamabad-(naima43shoukat@gmail.com)





1. Introduction

Motivational speeches have a meaningful impact on individuals, inspiring them to approach their work with enthusiasm and guiding them towards achieving high goals in life (Tohidi & Jabbari, 2012). These speeches play a significant role in arousing the sentiments of the audience. Motivational speeches aim to inspire the audience by reflecting on their own life which leads to change in behavior and motivates them to take action. Motivational speakers work to provide their listeners with a sense of hope and encouragement. They use different strategies to attract their audience, grab their attention, and keep them engaged. Motivational speeches disseminate novel ideas and instill positive changes in the audience, influencing their lifestyle and everyday choices. This is particularly important for people who seek self-improvement and higher quality of life, as they need motivation to fulfill various roles in their lives. Through the dissemination of ideas, speakers foster self-motivation within the personalities of their audience. Through sharing of ideas, speakers encourage self-motivation in their audience, ultimately inspiring individuals to take proactive steps and bring about substantial improvements in their lives. Sherwani (2020) asserts that motivation can effectively induce changes in the audience's behavior. Furthermore, motivational speeches influence individuals' visual perceptions, as motivation plays a significant role in shaping cognitive processes (Hughes & Zaki, 2015). These speeches are widely employed in various contexts, including personal development, education, and business. The success of motivational speeches relies not only on the content and delivery but also on the strategic use of various linguistic devices, including discourse markers. Discourse markers play a significant role in structuring the speech, facilitating coherence, and conveying the intended message effectively (Schiffrin, 1987).

Discourse markers are essential in communication as they guide conversation, structure ideas, and facilitate effective communication. They perform various functions, including establishing links between ideas, indicating transitions, highlighting key points, expressing attitudes, and managing turn-taking. These linguistic tools contribute to coherence, cohesion, and clarity in discourse. Discourse markers are present in various levels of spoken communication and have been extensively studied in different text types. For example, in speeches and talk shows, discourse





markers are used to connect ideas, present cause and result relationships, show time sequences, manage information, and structure opinions. They play a significant role in ensuring a smooth flow and continuing the conversation while also allowing everyone to express their viewpoints.

This study is significant as it enhances our understanding of the linguistic strategies employed by motivational speakers, thus fostering effective communication and persuasive speaking. Furthermore, it provides practical benefits by assisting aspiring speakers in refining their speech preparation and delivery techniques, thus resulting in impactful messages. Moreover, the analysis of discourse markers contributes to capture and maintain audience engagement, by enhancing the overall effectiveness of motivational speeches. This study also carries pedagogical implications, aiding language learners and educators to develop proficiency in using discourse markers effectively.

2. Literature Review

The concept of discourse markers (DMs), encompassing their forms and functions in spoken and written language, has become a subject of considerable interest among researchers. The reason for the interest in exploring discourse markers is rooted in their pragmatic variability and multifunctionality, as highlighted by Schlee (2005). This broad spectrum of functions has given rise to a diverse array of terminologies within academic discourse. Notable examples include sentence connectives (Fraser, 1999), pragmatic markers (Brinton, 1996), discourse particles (Aijmer, 2002), speech act adverbials (Aijmer, 1997), discourse operators (Gaines, 2011), discourse signals (Lamiroy & Swiggers, 1991), discourse particles (Schourup, 1985), and meta-discourse features (Hyland, 2018). These various terminological choices reflect ongoing scholarly discourse surrounding the intricate nature of discourse markers and their multifaceted roles.

Discourse markers (DMs) encompass a range of linguistic expressions, such as particles, words, or phrases that serve multiple purposes in communication. Culpeper et al. (2018) defines DMs as signals of speaker attitudes, indicators of how hearers might interpret an utterance, and contributors to discourse coherence and flow. Similarly, according to Hyland (2004), DMs are self-reflective linguistic expressions that refer to the evolving text, the writer, and the imagined readers of that





text. Vande-Kopple (2012) further characterizes DMs as elements of texts that convey meanings beyond their primary referential function. According to Adel (2010), discourse markers can be defined as linguistic expressions that refer to the evolving discourse itself or its linguistic aspects. They encompass references to the writer or speaker in their role as the communicator, as well as references to the audience in their capacity as the recipients of the ongoing discourse. Schiffirin (1987) highlights that DMs, as linguistic elements, play a role in indexing the relationships and coherence of various talk units.

2.1. Function of Discourse Markers

Discourse markers contribute to the overall organization and structure of spoken and written discourse. They help in signaling the beginning, development, and conclusion of ideas, allowing speakers to create a coherent and logical flow of information. By providing signposts and transitions, discourse markers assist both the speaker and the audience in navigating through the speech and comprehending its main arguments and messages. Discourse markers are words or phrases that aid readers and listeners in understanding the speaker's or writer's text. Moreover, DMs function as tools for establishing connections between the speaker and the listener, serving phatic purposes (Alami, 2015; Buyukkarci & Genc, 2009). However, discourse markers perform a range of functions within discourse, encompassing both interpersonal and textual levels (Alami, 2015; Dylgjeri, 2014; Liu, 2009). The interpersonal function of DMs convey the speaker's or writer's attitude or standpoint, while textual function indicates connections between spoken or written thoughts, linking discourse units that are more distant from each other (Aijmer, 1996). Discourse markers establish coherence and cohesion, enabling text connections at various levels.

Lenk (1998) conducted a study on the functions of discourse markers. These markers were chosen based on their frequency and the roles they play in discourse. The research compared the usage of these lexical items in the London-Lund Corpus of Spoken English and the Santa Barbara Corpus of Spoken American English, aiming to understand how speakers utilize these markers to create coherence in conversations. Another perspective on discourse markers is their role in classroom interaction, as discussed by Chapetón-Castro (2009). The study focused on the interaction between non-native English teachers and adult students in an English as Foreign Language (EFL) classroom





setting. The study showed language as a form of social interaction that occurs within the classroom community between adult students and a non-native EFL teacher.

2.2. Discourse Markers in Spoken Discourse

Discourse markers play a crucial role in structuring and organizing the flow of information as well as conveying the speaker's intentions and engaging the audience. Rashid (2020) conducted a study examining the discourse markers used in political speeches delivered by former American president Donald Trump, with the aim of uncovering the strategies, frequencies, and functions of these markers in each speech. Employing Hyland and Tse's (2005) functional classification model, which encompasses textual and interpersonal discourse markers, the study aimed to investigate Trump's speeches. The findings revealed that Trump demonstrated a particular inclination towards employing personalization discourse markers during interactions to influence, persuade, and cultivate public confidence and support. Similarly, Ismail (2012) proposed a study focused on discourse markers in the political speeches of former American president Barack Obama. This study aimed to underscore the significance and functions of discourse markers, drawing on Hyland and Tse's (2004) classification of discourse markers which categorizes them as interpersonal and textual markers. The results indicated that these discourse markers served as tools for social interaction with the primary aim of influencing the nation.

Marbun (2017) conducted research on the speeches of Donald Trump applying Schifffrin's theory (1987) to analyze discourse markers. The study aimed to discover discourse markers in Trump's speeches and understand their functions. The findings of the study revealed three categories of discourse markers present in three speeches. These categories included discourse coordinators like 'and' which served as connectors, continuation units used by the speaker, and support for general points. Moreover, causal markers like *because* and *so* were identified, indicating cause and result relationships. Additionally, temporal adverbs like *now* and *then* were utilized to signify specific temporal references. Moreover, Jayantini et al. (2021) investigated the role of discourse markers in Steve Jobs' speech. They focused on analyzing the discourse markers and their functions within the social context of Steve Jobs' speech. The study found that the most frequently used discourse markers in the speech were connective markers followed by cause and result markers, temporal





adverbs, and markers of response. The least used discourse marker was the marker of response. Importantly, all of these discourse markers played an important role in ensuring a coherent delivery of the message in the speech.

Jabeen et al. (2011) conducted a corpus-based research comparing the use of discourse markers in British and Pakistani speech. Their aim was to explore the frequency and functions of eight discourse markers: *I mean, you know, I think, kind of, sort of, well, you see, and so*. By utilizing AntConc software for data analysis, they discovered that native speakers employed discourse markers more frequently than non-native speakers. Additionally, they observed that discourse markers appeared in various positions within Pakistani speech and served multiple functions such as filling gaps, indicating agreement or polite disagreement, functioning anaphorically, concluding statements, expressing surprise, and softening the impact of shocking statements. Similarly, Savolainen (2000) proposed a study investigating the use of discourse markers in the speech of Finnish Americans and non-native English speakers. Her research aimed to compare the use of discourse markers between Finnish Americans and native speakers. She selected four discourse markers, namely *and, well, so, and you know*, for analysis. She collected ten interviews from the Florida Corpus. The results demonstrated that non-native Finnish speakers employed discourse markers with a frequency similar to that of native speakers.

2.3. Corpus-Based Studies on Motivational Speeches

A corpus-based study on the motivational speech of Anthony Robbins was conducted by (Nazim & Yousaf, 2021). They used Neuro-Linguistic Programming (NLP) approach as a framework for the exploration of persuasive strategies in motivational speeches. The study showed cause and effect, universal quantifiers, tag questions, and auditory, kinesthetic, and storytelling techniques in the speaker's speech. It further revealed that through these patterns, the speaker convinces the audience. Moreover, they concluded that these persuasive approaches are not limited to any particular strategies offering logos, pathos, and ethos. Likewise, a corpus-based study on metaphor analysis in Islamic motivational speeches was conducted by (Malik & Mohamad, 2021). This study aims to identify metaphors used in religious motivational speeches between two (male and female) speakers. In order to find linguistic metaphors, a corpus-based technique that includes the





keyword, collocation, and concordance was adopted, and conceptual mapping (Lakoff & Johnson, 1980) was utilized to investigate conceptual metaphors in both corpora. The study showed that male speaker used six metaphors while female speaker used three metaphors. The study concluded that both speakers used metaphors in their speeches, but there appears to be a difference in frequency.

Motivational speakers have gained recognition for their passionate delivery and their ability to evoke profound emotions. They use discourse markers effectively to structure their ideas, create logical connections between concepts, and emphasize key points, thus maximizing the impact of their motivational message. In the context of the literature review, many studies have been conducted on various speech genres to examine discourse markers. However, little work has been done on discourse markers used in Pakistani motivational speeches. Therefore, this study aims to address this gap by conducting a corpus-based analysis of motivational speeches in Pakistan.

2.4. Research Objectives

The present study aims:

1. To identify the discourse markers used in Pakistani motivational speeches.
2. To examine functions of discourse markers within Pakistani motivational speeches.

2.5. Research Questions

The current study answers the following questions:

1. What are the discourse markers used in Pakistani motivational speeches?
2. How do discourse markers function in Pakistani motivational speeches?

3. Methodology

3.1. Corpus Building

This research examines the speeches of highly viewed male Pakistani motivational speakers on YouTube. Specifically, it focuses on 15 speeches delivered by male speakers who have achieved





the highest number of views. The speeches were collected through convenience sampling from 2010 to 2020. For current study, the speeches were collected in spoken form, and then transcribed, following the Jefferson Transcription System. Additionally, the files were passed through the website (<https://www.textfixer.com/>) to remove unnecessary line breaks and paragraph spaces. The corpus utilized in this research comprised 36,295 words, as indicated in table 3.1. After passing it through the online text fixer, the entire corpus was saved as text files. When the files were converted into text files, they were run through AntConc version 3.5.9 software for further analysis. The data for this study was sourced from Pak Gentext (Shehzad & Zahra, 2019), a research project funded by the Higher Education Commission (HEC).

Table: 3.1

Corpus Size

Motivational Speakers	Size	Viewers	Duration of Speech	URL
Ali Abbas	2650	59K	17:15	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ougkzu5oOr0
Haseeb Abbasi	1377	2.4K	13:46	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1O57yp-9iF4
Samad Abbas	4142	03K	24:38	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nlnFz0BW-NA
Sarmad Tariq	3293	22K	22:39	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=o6dHJWfQjw8
Sheikh Atif	1359	72K	7:16	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CV3U0mf4sKc
Sulaiman Dawood	2802	8.2K	20:16	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D8rk3rQozR8
Umair Jaliawala	2816	55K	18:47	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ITS3eHUjpZ4
Amer Ali	1024	370	10:23	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ntTsS3sgEUg





Hisham Sarwar	2425	46K	17:55	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OAI5HVJbixQ
Moezz Khan	2142	667	14:16	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-H-ErYNhISQ
Moin Khan	4052	951	27:49	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eghNuigUHbg
Raja Zia ul Haq	2809	792K	18:14	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jtgJSrSdUcg
Saad Mohamad	1810	1.4K	13:37	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4CKwlqkRkMI
Yousaf Bashir Qureshi	1369	28K	10:47	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LQtQW6PDC88
Hassan Abbas	2225	5.3K	17:33	https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AmZu-kYYByE

3.2. Data Analysis Procedure

In order to determine the frequency of discourse markers, the data was processed using AntConc 3.5.9 (Anthony, 2020). After processing the data through AntConc, Schiffrin’s (1987) classification of discourse markers was used for analysis. The chosen discourse markers for analysis included *and, because, but, I mean, now, oh, or, so, then, well,* and *You know*. Further, non-discourse markers and phrases were excluded. Following Schiffrin’s (1987) theory of discourse markers, a detailed investigation of the identified discourse markers was conducted to gain insights into their functions, utilizing both quantitative and qualitative methods. This involved manual scrutiny of the discourse markers within the file view.

3.3. Theoretical Framework

The current study adopts the framework of Schiffrin (1987) for the analysis of discourse markers. She presents the notion of “discourse markers,” which includes words such as *and, because, but, I mean, now, oh, or, so, then, well,* and *y’know* as they appear in both written and spoken





discourses. These markers shed light on different functions of discourse markers and how they contribute to the organization and coherence of conversations. These markers help speakers structure their thoughts, convey their intentions, and guide the flow of conversation. She puts forth the intriguing notion that non-verbal gestures and paralinguistic features possess the potential to function as discourse markers as well. To gain deeper understanding of when an expression can function as a discourse marker, she identified shared characteristics across a wide range of expressions in English and other diverse languages. The strategic use of discourse markers can greatly enhance the fluidity and authenticity of a spoken language by seamlessly bridging pauses and connecting thoughts. She further states that discourse markers possess various characteristics relating to their usage and purpose. In Schiffrin’s (1987) classification, these markers can be organized into six distinct categories or functions: information and management markers, response markers, connective markers, cause and result markers, temporal adverb markers, and information and participation markers.

4. Results and Discussion

This study aims to identify and analyze the function of DMs by adopting the theoretical framework proposed by Schiffrin (1987). The frequency of DMs and their functions in motivational speeches are presented in table 4.1. They are actually the results of the study which are presented in the below table.

Table: 4.1

Frequency and Function of DMs in Motivational speeches

Discourse Markers	Types	Frequency	Percentage
Markers of Response	Well	65	2.8
Discourse Connectives	And	1291	55.0
	But	250	10.6
	or	113	4.8





Markers of Cause and Results	So	213	9.1
	because	126	5.4
Temporal Adverbs	Now	87	3.7
	then	77	3.3
Information and Participation	You Know	117	4.9
	I mean	04	0.2
		2348	100

4.1. Functions of “Well”

Schiffrin (1987) claims that the word *well* assumes a significant role as an intriguing marker within a sentence. Instead of solely considering its semantic and grammatical aspects, *well* maintains an idealized assumption that is closely tied to pragmatic expression.

What beliefs are you sharing with them? Well, I am moving forward. (Abbasi, 2016)

The use of *well* at the beginning of the response corresponds to Schiffrin’s (1987) discourse markers, indicating that the speaker is acknowledging and preparing to answer the question. It sets the stage for the speaker’s forthcoming explanation or clarification about the beliefs they are sharing. By using *well* as a response marker, the speaker creates a smooth transition from the question to their response. It helps to establish a sense of coherence and engagement with the audience, showing that the speaker is actively listening and ready to provide an informative and motivating answer. The use of *well* as a response marker helps to maintain the flow of the motivational speech, ensuring a clear and structured communication between the speaker and the audience.

They are against progress and they don't care about progress. Well, we might care about birds and bees, and the fish and the frog, but what about these people? (Abbas, 2017)





In the above excerpt, the DM *well* also acts as a response marker, which functions to acknowledge and respond to the preceding statement or situation. It is used to create a connection between what has been said before and what the speaker is about to say. In this case, the speaker is responding to the previous statement about the opposition's lack of concern for progress. By using *well*, the speaker acknowledges that perspective and then proceeds to present his own viewpoint. The use of *well* in this context helps to create a conversational flow and indicates that the speaker is actively participating in the discourse.

4.2. Functions of “And”, “But”, and “Or”

These markers serve to connect different parts of discourse, helping to link ideas and maintain the overall coherence of the speech.

*My walking style changed slightly, **and** my reflexes started slowing down, but it wasn't that noticeable.* (Khan, 2017)

The speaker uses *and* as a connective marker to connect two clauses and indicates a relationship of addition or continuation. By using *and*, the speaker shows that both clauses are related and occurring simultaneously or in succession.

In the above statement, the speaker wants to convey that both of these changes are happening together or as a result of the same situation. By using *and* as a connective marker, the speaker ensures that the listeners understand the connection between the two events and their significance. The use of *and* helps the speaker to present a coherent and flowing narrative by linking related ideas and providing a smooth transition between the clauses. It allows the listener to follow the progression of events and understand the speaker's message effectively.

*It took me more than a thousand trials, even made a video of ten seconds, **but** I kept on working on myself, and finally, you can see I am a speaker here.* (Ali, 2019)

According to Schiffirin (1987), the word *but* functions as a connective marker in the above excerpt of motivational speech. The motivational speaker uses the word *but* in the above statement to create a contrast and emphasize the speaker's journey of perseverance and eventual success. By





using *but*, the speaker highlights the challenges and obstacles he faced, indicating that it was not an easy path. The word *but* serves as a focal point in the sentence, introducing a shift in the narrative from the difficulties faced to the speaker's determination and ultimate achievement.

But is used to capture the audience's attention and create a sense of anticipation. It sets up a contrast between the initial struggles (*more than a thousand trials, making a video of ten seconds*) and the positive outcome (*being a speaker in the present moment*). This contrast can inspire and motivate the audience by demonstrating that in spite of setbacks and hardships, one can still achieve success through perseverance and continuous self-improvement.

I can simply not forget or ever repay that ultimate gesture of kindness, of selflessness, of empathy. So, yes, we survived, and we got down eventually. (Mohamad, 2017)

In the above excerpt, the word *or* functions as a connective marker, as identified by Schiffirin's (1987) discourse marker classification. Its role is to establish a link between the ideas of not forgetting and not being able to ever repay a profound gesture of kindness, selflessness, and empathy. By employing *or*, the speaker emphasizes the interconnected nature of these sentiments, suggesting that the inability to forget is intertwined with the impossibility of repaying the kindness. The use of *or* contributes to the overall coherence of the discourse by clarifying the relationship between the two concepts and reinforcing the emotional weight of the experience.

4.3. Functions of "So" and "Because"

These markers are used in discourse to indicate cause and result relationships between ideas, actions, or events. These markers help speakers clarify why something happened or what consequences can be expected.

That could have been the end of us. So, I think this accident woke me up. (Zia-ul-Haq, 2018)

The expression *so* functions as a cause and result marker. It indicates a cause and result relationship between the two clauses. In this case, the first clause (*That could have been the end of us*) is the





cause, and the second clause (*I think this accident woke me up*) is the result. The speaker implies that the realization of the potentially disastrous outcome prompted them to reassess their situation and make positive changes. Furthermore, the strategic use of *so* as a cause and result marker serves to persuade the audience. Motivational speaker aims to inspire and convince his listeners to take action or adopt a particular mindset. By clearly connecting a cause and result using *so*, speaker strengthens his argument or narrative.

I realized that nothing is impossible because I always dreamt that I would get good things in life because everything was possible for me. (Tariq, 2011)

In the above statement, the word *because* fulfills the function of cause and result marker as proposed by Schiffrin's (1987) discourse marker classification. It serves to explain the reason or cause behind the speaker's realization. By stating, *I realized that nothing is impossible because I always dreamt that I would get good things in life, because everything was possible for me*, the speaker connects his belief in achieving good things with the understanding that nothing is impossible. The use of *because* serves to provide a logical explanation, emphasizing the power of dreams and beliefs in shaping one's perception of what is achievable. He inspires the audience by highlighting the cause and result relationship between their own dreams, beliefs, and the realization of limitless possibilities.

4.4. Functions of “Now” and “Then”

Now and *then* are termed time deictic words because they establish a link between the time at which a proposition is assumed to be true and the time at which it is presented in an utterance. In simple words, *now* and *then* are deictic because their meanings depend on a parameter of the speech situation (Schiffrin, 1987).

This inner soul-searching revealed where my career lay, and now I wanted to move forward with computers. (Sarwar, 2016)

In the above excerpt of motivational speech, the word *now* serves as a temporal adverb marker, reflecting Schiffrin's (1987) concept of discourse markers. As a temporal adverb marker, *now* indicates a specific moment when the speaker had a profound realization about his career path. It





emphasizes the urgency and significance of this moment, motivating the audience to seize the present and act upon their aspirations. Moreover, it marks the speaker's progression through discourse time, displaying attention to an upcoming idea unit. This creates coherence and direction in the speech and encourages the audience to take action and move forward in their lives.

*God was in a really creative mood, and he took all the love that he had, every ounce of it from everywhere, and he put it together and made Mohammed PBUH. And **then** he fell in love with him and made the universe, and that's how art was created.* (Bashir, 2017)

In the above statement, *then* functions as a temporal adverb marker according to Schiffrin's (1987) discourse marker classification. It indicates the chronological sequence of events, conveying the temporal succession between prior and upcoming talk. In this excerpt, it shows that after God created Mohammed PBUH by combining all the love from everywhere, He subsequently fell in love with him and then proceeded to make the universe, thus demonstrating how art was created. The DM *then* helps maintain the coherence of the speech by guiding the audience through the logical progression of events inspiring them with the notion of divine creativity and the interconnectedness of love and creation.

4.5. Functions of "I mean" and "You know"

These markers serve to involve the listener or reader in the discourse. They often seek confirmation, attention, or acknowledgment from the audience. The phrase *you know* is used to catch the listener's attention, initiating an interactive exchange that centers around information offered by the speaker. On the other hand, *I mean* serves to keep the listener engaged with the speaker's point of view.

*Please don't be mad; **I mean**, at least, you know, it becomes official; otherwise, it would be my word against anybody else's.* (Tariq, 2011)

In the motivational speech excerpt, *I mean* aligns with Schiffrin's (1987) discourse marker framework of Information and Participation Marker. The use of this marker marks the speaker's orientation towards his talk. By using *I mean*, the speaker actively modifies his idea and intention





reflecting on and adjusting his previous statement to ensure clarity and understanding. This discourse marker signals the speaker's engagement with his own speech, demonstrating a moment of self-reflection and thoughtful consideration. The speaker utilizes *I mean* to show that he is actively involved in shaping and refining his message illustrating how discourse markers can assist in managing his communication.

So that day, I think it was like my 15 or 16-hour on the motorcycle, I was just constantly thinking about life, and you know, there's silly stuff that I usually think about, and I told myself, this voice in my brain said, Moin, what the hell are you doing? (Khan, 2017)

In the above excerpt, the phrase *you know* functions as an information and participation marker according to Schiffrin's (1987) discourse markers. It invites the audience to participate and engage with the speaker's narrative. Using this marker, the speaker assumes a level of shared knowledge or common understanding between himself and the listeners. It suggests that the audience can relate to the experience being described, creating a connection and empathy. The phrase reflects the speaker's meta-knowledge, as he believes the listeners have similar thoughts or feelings during challenging experiences. Therefore, it acts as a way for the speaker to build a connection with the audience, engaging them in the speech and creating a more interactive and relatable experience.

4.6. Discussion

The analysis of study revealed significant findings regarding discourse markers (DMs) in line with Schiffrin's (1987) discourse marker framework. There were 2348 discourse markers (DMs), of which 1654 were discourse connectives, 339 were cause and result markers, 164 were temporal markers, 121 served as markers of information and participation, and 65 indicated response markers. In table 4.1, the dominant DM identified was the marker *and*, which showed the highest percentage in motivational speeches. This marker plays an important function in connecting supportive statements that contribute to the impactful narratives delivered by motivational speakers. On the other hand, there were no information and management markers in these speeches likely due to the formal context in which they are delivered.





Motivational speeches employ discourse markers (DMs) to fulfill various functions and have implications for effective communication and audience engagement. According to Schiffrin (1987), DMs perform the function of response marker. Similarly, in motivational speeches, the DM *well* functions as a response marker ensuring coherence and continuity in speech flow. By using *well* as a response marker, motivational speakers create a smooth transition and demonstrate active participation in the discourse. Moreover, connective markers such as *and*, *but*, and *or* play a vital role in establishing coherence and connecting related ideas. These markers assist the audience in comprehending the relationships between different clauses and highlighting contrasts or alternatives. They contribute to the overarching narrative structure, emphasizing perseverance and prompting contemplation of choices. Discourse markers play a significant role in the speeches of public figures as they help create structured elaboration and establish a connection with the audience (Banguis-Bantawig, 2019). Additionally, the DMs *so* and *because* serve as cause and result markers in Schiffrin's classification. In these speeches, *so* indicates a cause and result relationship between clauses, providing persuasive arguments that strengthen the speaker's message. The DM *because* explains the reasons behind realizations, highlighting the role of dreams in achieving success. By using *so* and *because*, motivational speakers provide logical explanations and reinforce their arguments, inspiring the audience to take action.

The use of temporal adverb markers *now* and *then* aligns with Schiffrin's (1987) framework, guiding the discourse in motivational speeches. The use of *now* marks a specific moment of realization or decision, emphasizing its significance and urgency. *Then* indicates chronological sequence, providing coherence and direction in the speech. By using these markers, motivational speakers inspire the audience to seize the present moment and embrace positive changes in their lives. *I mean* and *you know* are identified as information and participation markers in Schiffrin's classification. In motivational speeches, *I mean* reflects the speaker's self-reflection and engagement with his speech, ensuring clarity and understanding. *You know* fosters audience engagement, assuming shared knowledge and creating a connection with the listeners. These markers allow motivational speakers to establish rapport and make the discourse interactive and relatable.





5. Conclusion

The main purpose of this study was to identify and analyze the function of discourse markers (DMs) in motivational speeches based on Schiffrin's (1987) theoretical framework. The in-depth analysis of the motivational speeches showed that several discourse markers were prevalent in motivational speeches of male speakers, including *and, but, or, so, because, now, then, well, I mean, and you know*. The findings revealed that DMs serve various functions including connective markers, establishing cause and result relationships, providing response markers, referencing temporal aspects, and facilitating information and participation. The present research successfully concludes that understanding the strategic use of DMs can enhance communication effectiveness and audience engagement in motivational speeches and other domains. This statement is substantiated through an in-depth linguistic analysis of the motivational speeches. Further research can explore DMs in different speech genres as well as their impact on audience perceptions and behavioral outcomes.

References

- Adel, A. (2010). Just to give you kind of a map of where we are going: A taxonomy of metadiscourse in spoken and written academic English. *Nordic Journal of English Studies*, 9(2), 69-97.
- Aijmer, K. (1996). *Conversational routines in English. Convention and creativity*. Addison Wesley Longman Limited.
- Aijmer, K. (1997). "I think" – An English modal particle. In T. Swan & O. J. Westvik (Eds.), *Modality in Germanic Languages. Historical and Comparative Perspectives*(pp. 1-47). Mouton de Gruyter.





- Aijmer, K. (2002). *English discourse particles: Evidence from a corpus*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Alami, M. (2015). Pragmatic functions of discourse markers: A review of related literature. *International Journal on Studies in English Language and Literature*, 3(3), 1-10.
- Anthony, L. (2020). AntConc (Version 3.5.9). Waseda University. <https://www.laurenceanthony.net/software>
- Banguis-Bantawig, R. (2019). The role of discourse markers in the speeches of selected Asian Presidents. *Heliyon*, 5(3), 1-57.
- Bolden, G. B. (2009). Implementing incipient actions: The discourse marker 'so' in English conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 41(5), 974-998.
- Brinton, L. (1996). *Pragmatic markers in English: Grammaticalization and discourse functions*. De Gruyter Mouton.
- Buyukkarci, K., & Genc, B. (2009). Discourse Markers: The case of and in the speech of Turkish speakers of English. *Linguistics Journal*, 4(2), 40-50.
- Castro, C. M. C. (2009). The use and functions of discourse markers in EFL classroom interaction. *Profile Issues in Teachers' Professional Development*, (11), 57-78.
- Culpeper, J., Mackey, A., & Taguchi, N. (2018). *Second language pragmatics: From theory to research*. Routledge.
- Dylgjeri, A. (2014). The function and importance of discourse markers in political discourse. *Beder University Journal of Educational Sciences*, 1(5), 26-35.
- Fraser, B. (1999). What are discourse markers? *Journal of pragmatics*, 31(7), 931-952.
- Gaines, P. (2011). The multifunctionality of discourse operator okay: Evidence from a police interview. *Journal of Pragmatics*, 43(14), 3291-3315.





- Hughes, B. L., & Zaki, J. (2015). The neuroscience of motivated cognition. *Trends in Cognitive Sciences*, 19(2), 62-64.
- Hyland, K. (2004). Disciplinary interactions: Metadiscourse in L2 postgraduate writing. *Journal of Second Language Writing*, 13, 112-132.
- Hyland, K. (2018). *Metadiscourse: Exploring interaction in writing*. Bloomsbury Publishing.
- Ismail, H. M. (2012). Discourse markers in political speeches: Forms and functions. *Journal of the College of Education for Women*, 23(4), 1260-1278.
- Jabeen, F., Rai, M. A., & Arif, S. (2011). A corpus based study of discourse markers in British and Pakistani speech. *International Journal of Language Studies*, 5(4), 69-86.
- Lamiroy, B., & Swiggers, P. (1991). Imperatives as discourse signals. In Suzanne Vande Kopple, W. (1985). Some exploratory discourse on metadiscourse. *College Composition and Communication*, 36, 82-93.
- Lenk, U. (1998). Discourse markers and global coherence in conversation. *Journal of Pragmatics*. 30(2), 245- 257.
- Liu, B. (2009). Chinese discourse markers in oral speech of mainland Mandarin speakers. In Yun Xiao (Ed.), *Proceedings of the 21st North American conference on Chinese linguistics (NACCL-21)*. Vol. 2 (pp. 358-374). Smithfield, Rhode Island: Bryant University.
- Marbun, F. (2017). *An analysis of discourse markers in Donald Trump's speeches*. Universitas Sumatera Utara.
- Mohamad, F., & Abdul Malik, N. (2021). Metaphor, religion, and gender: A case study of metaphor analysis in Islamic motivational speech corpus. *International Journal of Modern Languages and Applied Linguistics (IJMAL)*, 5(3), 95-121.
- Nazim, H., & Yousaf, M. (2021). Neuro-linguistic programming: A corpus-based critical analysis of motivational speeches. *Corporum: Journal of Corpus Linguistics*, 4(1), 45-59.
- Rashid, B. N. (2020). Discourse markers in selected political speeches: A descriptive analysis. *Journal of Current Researches on Social Sciences*, 10(4), 891-920.





- Schiffrin, D. (1987). *Discourse markers*. Cambridge University Press.
- Schleef, E. (2005). *Navigating joint activities in English and German academic discourse: Form, function, and sociolinguistic distribution of discourse markers and question tags*. (Unpublished doctoral dissertation), University of Michigan.
- Schourup, L. (1985). *Common discourse particles in English Conversation*. Garland.
- Shehzad, W and Zahra, T (2019, Ongoing research project). PakistanGender Text (PakGenText). Funded by Higher Education CommissionPakistan.
- Sherwani, K. A. (2020). A cognitive positive discourse analysis of English motivational speeches. *International Journal of Advanced Science and Technology*, 29(9), 4078-4091.
- Sovolainen, P. (2000). *Discourse markers in the English of Finnish Americans*. (Unpublished MA thesis),University of Oulu.
- Sri Rwa Jayantini, G. A., Wayan Juniarta, I., Kadek Arya Aditana, I., Umbas, R., & Arie Suwastini, N. K. (2021). Functioning discourse markers to construct a social situation in speech. *LiNGUA*, 16(2), 225-236.
- Thompson, S. E. (2003). Text-structuring metadiscourse, intonation and the signalling of organisation in academic lectures. *Journal of English for Academic Purposes*, 2(1), 5-20.
- Tohidi, H., & Jabbari, M. M. (2012). The effects of motivation in education. *Procedia Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 31, 820-824.
- Vande Kopple, W. J. (2012). The importance of studying metadiscourse. *Applied Research in English*, 1(2), 37-44.

