

DISCOURSE MARKER TEACHING
IN COLLEGE CONVERSATION CLASSROOMS:
FOCUS ON *WELL, YOU KNOW, I MEAN*

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Abstract

This study is intended to highlight the importance of discourse marker (DM) instruction for second language (L2) conversation classes from the perspective of discourse analysis, based on the assumption that adults' conversations are more interaction-based and L2 learners might be pragmatically fossilized if their DM use competence is not appropriately equipped. The researcher reviews related representative literature to support the assumption and to delimit certain fundamental speech functions of *well, you know* and *I mean* to meet the pedagogical need. In addition, potential teaching activity designs are provided to demonstrate the feasibility of teaching DMs in L2 language classrooms.

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I. INTRODUCTION

The present study is intended to investigate the need and the feasibility of teaching discourse markers (DMs) to adult learners in conversation classes. Section 1 illuminates the close relationship among discourse analysis, DM use in spoken language, and second language (L2) teaching. Section 2 reviews studies on the use of DMs in spoken discourse related to L2 learners and L1 speakers. Section 3 underlines the fundamental discourse functions of *well*, *you know* and *I mean*, i.e., the DM items that we intend to highlight in L2 classrooms. Section 4 outlines DM use teaching to prepare adult learners' competence to engage in natural talk as social activity participants.

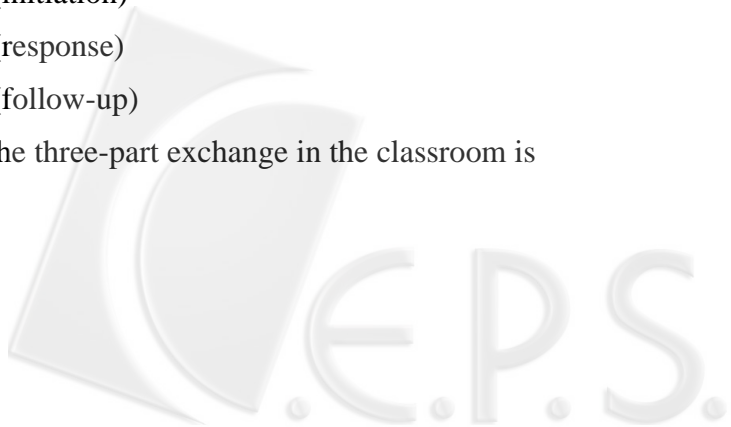
1.1 Discourse Analysis and Spoken Language Teaching

Canale and Swain (1980, as cited in Brown, 2000) suggest a model of communicative competence which incorporates grammatical competence, discourse competence, sociolinguistic competence and strategic competence. Since then, discourse analysis, which focuses more on linguistic forms and sentence levels, has attracted ongoing pedagogical studies concerned with the relationship between the forms and functions in different contexts.

For instance, Sinclair and Coulthard (1975, as cited in McCarthy 1991) study the traditional native-speaker classrooms and find the question-answer sequence between the teacher and pupils have an internal structure consisting of a question, an answer and a comment, or in Sinclair and Brazil's (1982, as cited in McCarthy 1991) words, initiation, response and follow-up. The following extract (adapted from McCarthy 1991) illustrates this:

- (1) Teacher: What time is it? (initiation)
Student: Five past six. (response)
Teacher: Good! Clever girl! (follow-up)

However, according to McCarthy, the three-part exchange in the classroom is



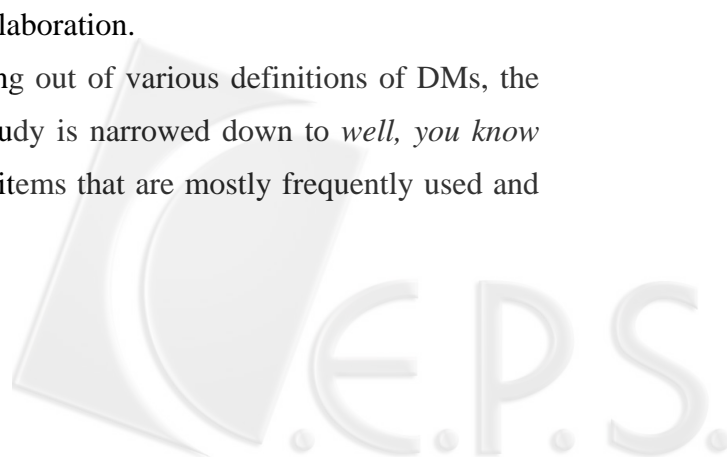
not the “real” world conversation. In natural discourse, the same inquiry and answer about time is realized in a totally different way by other dyads. For example, a simple “Thank you” in some cases is sufficient. In an extreme situation, a short-tempered addressee might shout back to a habitually late arriver “No it isn’t, and you know it isn’t; it’s half past and you’re late again” (adapted from McCarthy 1991).

Examples like these underline the fact that language function is related to the participants, roles and settings in any discourse and linguistic forms are interpreted in light of these. Given that the rigidly defined roles and fixed patterns in most traditional language classrooms do not provide learners with sufficient exposure to acquire the skills to engage in natural discourse communication, McCarthy (1991) advocates educators to examine various manifestations of discourse with a view to potential applications in language teachings. To prepare students to be proficient users of their target language, teachers should keep abreast with developments in discourse analysis to find out how real people use real language.

1.2 Discourse Marker Use in Spoken Language

With the growing interest in discourse analysis, in the past 15 years or so, an extensive body of pragmatic and linguistic research has been devoted to a functionally related group of expressions mostly referred to as discourse markers, which are also known by a variety of other competing names, such as *pragmatic markers*, *discourse particles* or *discourse operators*. In addition to the indeterminacy of terminology, scholars have no consensus in regard to the other fundamental issues of DMs, such as their definitions, classifications and functions. The controversy is still open to further elaboration.

To bypass the thorny task of sorting out of various definitions of DMs, the discussion of DM use of the present study is narrowed down to *well, you know and I mean* in that they are among the items that are mostly frequently used and



identified in speech as DMs. For instance, according to Romero Trillo (2002), in the London-Lund Corpus, *well*, *you know* and *I mean* show the highest percentage in native speakers' speech, except for affirmative or negative elements, i.e., *yeas*, *yeah*, *no* and the hesitation marker *m*.

The status of *well*, *you know* and *I mean* as DMs in speech is disclosed by Schiffrin's (1987) preliminary study on DMs, which defines DMs as "sequentially dependent elements which bracket unit of talk." Based on the conversational coherence-based functional approach, she examined eleven DMs in depth, among which *well*, *you know* and *I mean* are included.

In addition, researchers such as Fox Tree and Schrock (1999) propose that the presence of DMs such as *well* and *I mean* is one of the most salient features of spontaneous talk. Considering that the use of DMs creates a naturalistic conversational effect, many novelists draw on the given trait to distinguish their descriptions of the setting or plot and the characters' dialogue. For instance, Norrick (2001) examines Mark Twain's "The notorious jumping frog of Calaveras county" to illustrate how the use of *well* lends verisimilitude to the oral narrative technique of a traditional storyteller. The fact that the early work on DMs focused predominantly on conversational items also reflects the close relationship between DMs and orality. All in all, DM use manifests one of the important dimensions of natural spoken discourse. Discourse analysts and language teachers can barely afford to ignore its significance in spoken language.

1.3 Discourse Marker Teaching in Spoken Language Classrooms

The traditional English teacher's approach to DMs such as *well*, *you know*, and *I mean* is that they are "verbal garbage" (See discussion in Schiffrin, 1987), which are not worthy of close and serious studies. However, with growing interest in the language production and comprehension in pragmatic and contextual aspects of utterance interpretation, the role of DMs has become increasingly important. DMs now figure prominently not only in discourse analytic research

but also in studies of language acquisition and language pedagogy (Schourup, 1999). A number of researchers attempt to draw teaching practitioners' attention to DM use. For example, McCarthy (1991) specifically notes that the teacher can isolate, present and exemplify a set of useful transaction markers such as *right, now, so, okay* used by teachers themselves to divide up a lesson. Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995), based on other researchers findings, claim that DMs are important because they are used to mark the beginning or end of tone units of conversational lectures. Moreover, Celce-Murcia and Olshtain's (2000) include "ability to use discourse connectors such as *well; oh; I see; okay*" in the list of ten prerequisites for learners who are striving for better oral communication proficiency.

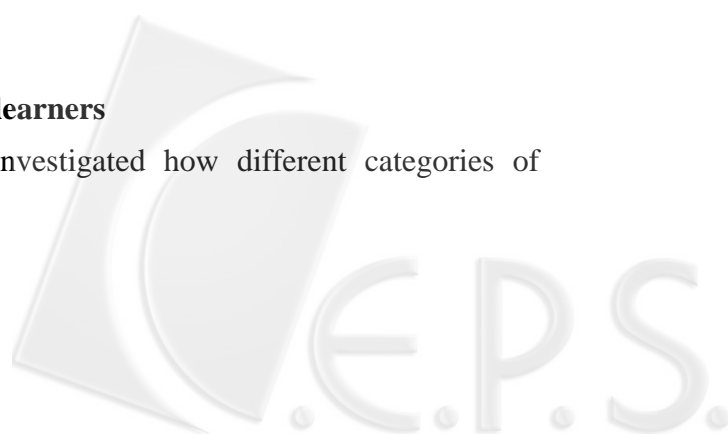
To sum up, as the role of DM use in L2 classrooms receives more and more attention, to respond to the front of the current, L2 teachers should involve DM use in their syllabus. In the following section, a comprehensive literature review will be presented to support this claim.

II. Review of Literature

As there are relatively few studies on DM use related to spoken language teaching in L2 context, to pinpoint the importance of DMs for L2 learners, we will first review three studies exploring the tight link between DMs and listening comprehension of non-native speakers. Secondly, we will examine literature related to DMs use manipulated by native speakers to reflect social variables such as power relationship, speaker role and so on. Thirdly, Romero Trillo's (2002) study will be introduced to demonstrate the urgent need of teaching DM use to L2 adult learners.

2.1 Studies related to DM use and L2 learners

Chaudron and Richards (1986) investigated how different categories of

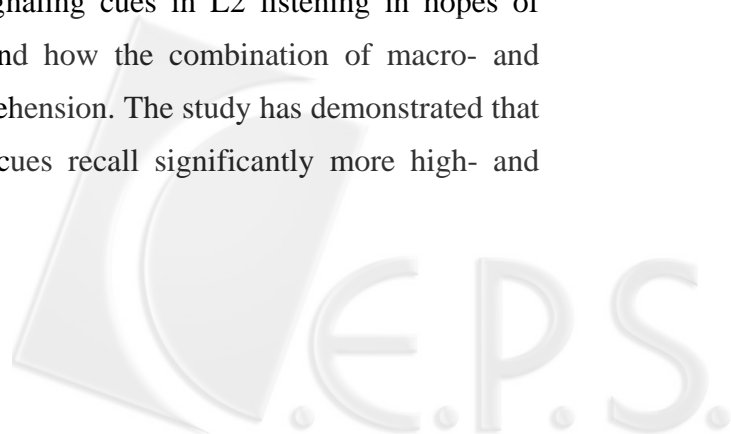


discourse markers affect the degree to which foreign students understand university lectures. They classified cues into macro- and micromarkers. According to them, macromarkers are cues used to signal the relationship among main segments or to mark the major transition points in discourse (e.g. *what I'm going to talk about today...*) while micromarkers are cues employed to indicate intersentential relations or to function as pause fillers (e.g. *and, so and well*). The results showed that macromarkers more significantly helped the learners comprehend the lecture; on the other hand, the beneficial effects for micromarkers in this aspect were not found.

According to Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995), the counterintuitive findings of Chaudron and Richards (1986) basically resulted from methodological drawbacks in the study design. For instance, the researchers used a scripted text instead of authentic lecture materials for the study. As a result, when the spoken micromarkers were inserted into the written text, they appeared artificial and redundant. In addition, the researchers segmented the text into units no longer than 60 to 90 second to allow their subjects time to complete cloze versions of the lecture. The inserted 40-second pauses at such junctures greatly reduced the risk of their subjects suffering information overload and therefore minimized significance of the markers.

Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) replicate the study with certain remedies against the flaws aforementioned. They convincingly demonstrate that micromarkers facilitate comprehension of L2 oral texts and suggest that practitioners have been too quick in deemphasizing the importance of micro-markers for comprehension.

Jung (2003) involves 80 Korean learners of English as a Foreign Language to investigate the role of discourse signaling cues in L2 listening in hopes of answering the questions of whether and how the combination of macro- and micromarkers affect L2 listening comprehension. The study has demonstrated that the group listening to a lecture with cues recall significantly more high- and

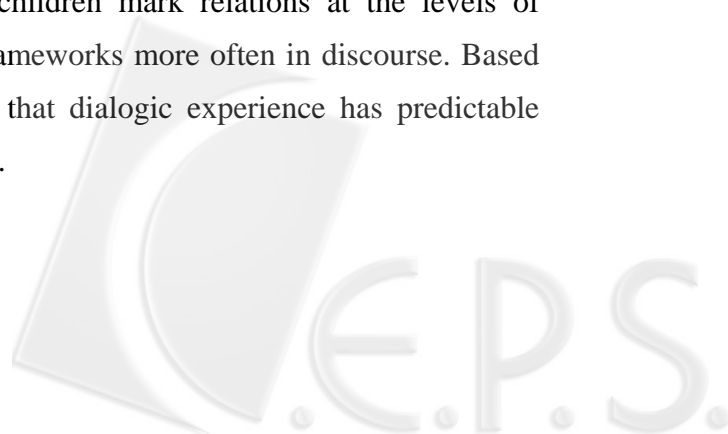


low-level information when performing summary tasks than the group listening to a lecture without such cues from the lecture.

2.2 Studies related to DM use in spoken discourse by L1 learners

Redeker (1990) divides discourse markers into two categories: those that mark ideational structure, such as connectives and temporal adverbials (e.g. *and*, *meanwhile*, or *now*) and those which mark pragmatic structure (e.g. *oh*, *alright* or *well*). By using a film description task to elicit subjects' spoken data, she finds that the frequency of these two types of DMs can be complementary for a given communication task. To be more specific, the number of ideational markers used goes down when speakers use a higher number of pragmatic markers although in all cases ideational markers are used more than the pragmatic ones. This variation corresponds to the relationship between the speakers—in conversations between friends, a higher rate of pragmatic markers is used; between strangers, the average was 41 ideational markers and only 9 pragmatic markers per 100 clauses.

Kyrazis, A. and Evrin-Tripp S. (1999) investigate the extent that young children use DMs to signal relations between units of talk, relations at the exchange, action, ideational structure and participation framework levels of the discourse. Four- and seven-year children are paired into ten same-sex dyads consisting of two close friends. They are observed interacting in two activity contexts: pretend play with a scenario toy and story re-telling, in which an adult reads one child in each dyad a story and asks the child to tell the story to the friend on another day. All uses of the DMs *because*, *so*, *but*, *well*, *okay*, and *now* are identified and coded. The researchers find the DM use vary widely by age and gender. To be more specific, preschoolers, particularly boys, mark relations at the level of action structure while older children mark relations at the levels of ideational structure and participation frameworks more often in discourse. Based on the findings, the researchers claim that dialogic experience has predictable influences on children's uses of markers.

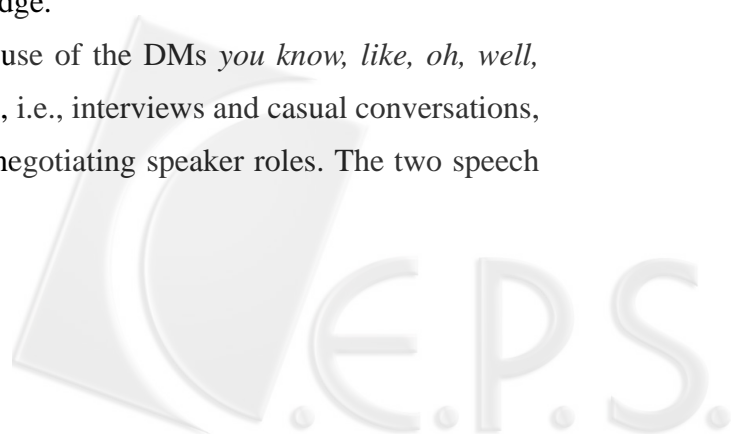


Similarly, Anderson, et al. (1999) compare young children's use of DMs affected by social variables such as age, gender and social class differences in three language communities: 18 middle-class, monolingual English-speaking American children aged 4-7, and the same number of middle-class French monolinguals from Lyon, France and Chicano bilingual children who live in a working class community in Southern California. The researchers find that children across language communities are sensitive to the social meanings conveyed by the use of different DMs even by the time they enter school. The data suggest that English-speaking children have acquired a fair degree of sophistication in how to use a variety of DMs to mark status asymmetry across a variety of situations and roles and to manipulate the social situation where the power relationships are not established.

Macaulay (2002) makes use of machine searches of transcribed speech to count the frequency of the use of DM *you know* in extended samples of speech from a stratified population. Two data-sets are collected: interviews recorded in Ayr and a set of same-sex conversations recorded in Glasgow. The implications suggested by quantitative study include:

- (a) The use of *you know* varies among individuals from similar backgrounds
- (b) Speakers are more likely to use *you know* in conversations with an acquaintance than in interviews with a stranger.
- (c) Women are more likely to use *you know* than men.
- (d) Adolescents have not yet developed the use of *you know* as a characteristic of their discourse style.
- (e) The use of *you know* does not appear to be primarily based on assumptions of shared knowledge.

Fuller, J. M. (2003) examines the use of the DMs *you know*, *like*, *oh*, *well*, *yeah*, and *I mean* in two speech contexts, i.e., interviews and casual conversations, to determine their role in marking and negotiating speaker roles. The two speech



contexts in the study contrast in three main dimensions: speaker roles (asymmetrical vs. symmetrical), relative intimacy of the speakers (relative strangers vs. intimates), and relative formality of the speech event (semi-formal vs. casual). Based on Jucker and Smith's (1998, as cited in Fuller, 2003) study, the researcher classifies *you know, like, well* and *I mean* as presentation markers, which are predicted to appear less frequently in the conversation context than in the interviews; *oh*, and *yeah* are reception markers and are predicted to appear more frequently in the conversation data. However, based on the study findings, Fuller argues that *well* also has some feature of a reception marker.

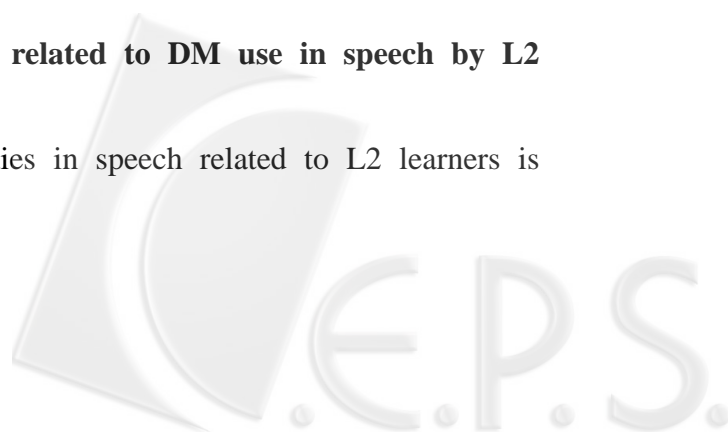
The study has shown that the role of speakers in an interaction plays a role in the use and distribution of certain DMs. Specifically, the DMs *oh* and *well* are used relatively infrequently in the interviews by the interviewees, but at high rates in these same interactions by the interviewers. These DMs are also used more frequently by the research participants in their role as a friend or family member in casual conversations than in their role as interviewee.

Overall, there is evidence that there are quantitative differences for some DMs, which vary with speech context and can be considered markers of speaker role. Thus, DMs can be regarded as particles which are deployed in different speech genres, but show distinctions in frequency and function that correlate with the speaker's role as either an interviewee or an interlocutor in an informal, symmetrical interaction.

Although studies aforementioned do not agree in DM items or foci under investigation, they do reach a consensus by implying that DMs in spoken discourse play a vital role in social interaction. In the following section, Romero Trillo makes the claim even more explicitly.

2.3 The most representative study related to DM use in speech by L2 learners

One of the most important studies in speech related to L2 learners is

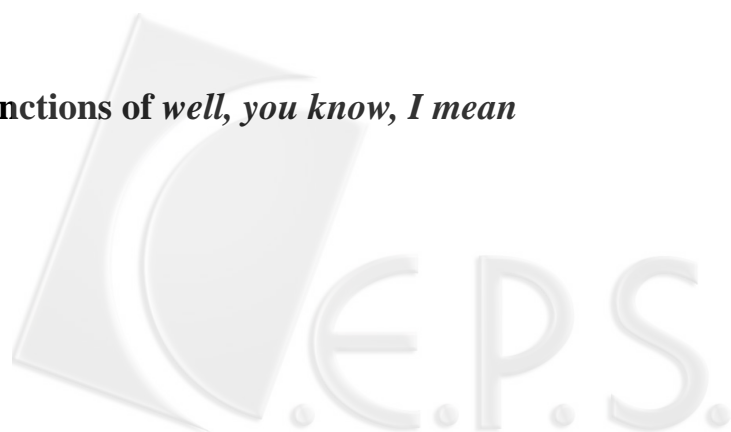


conducted by Romero Trillo (2002), who hypothesizes that foreign language learners follow “binary track”, i.e., the formal and the pragmatic track in their linguistic development. Unlike native speakers, non-native speakers have to develop both tracks through formal instruction since they do not have sufficient exposure to target language use and acculturation. As L2 learners receive language teaching in context-reduced environment, they are likely to have “pragmatic fossilization”, i.e., “the phenomenon by which a non-native speaker systematically uses certain forms inappropriately at the pragmatic level of communication.” (Romero Trillo 2002, 770)

To investigate pragmatic fossilization of foreign language learners, Romero Trillo concentrates his corpus study on the use of DMs since he believes that DMs are elements that play a fundamental role in the pragmatic structure of interactions although they have no apparent meaning or grammatical ascription.

Both adult and children corpora of the native speakers and non-native speakers are collected, analyzed and compared. The DMs under study include *look, listen, you know, you see, I mean, and well*. The results show that there is a different rate of development for the grammatical and the pragmatic aspects of language in L2; the DM use in adults is even more limited than in children corpora. Presumably adults’ conversation is interaction-oriented and demands a competent use of involvement markers. The lack of this competence may lead to pragmatic fossilization, which might in turn result in communication failure. Therefore, Romero Trillo concludes that there is an urgent need to bring the consistent teaching of pragmatic markers to language instruction. His advocacy in some way triggers the motivation of the present researcher to study the issue in question. We therefore attempt to isolate certain functions of DMs appropriate for L2 teaching environment.

III. Fundamental Discourse Functions of *well, you know, I mean*



As mentioned before, while it is widely agreed that DMs play a vital role in utterance interpretation, there is disagreement in regard to issues as to what type of meaning they express and the sense in which such expressions may be said to relate to elements of discourse. Some studies are devoted to isolate an invariant semantic content for individual marker, usually referred to as its “core meaning” or “basic meaning.” Although the working assumption that there is a single core for each DM has privileged status, cores isolated by comparing the various discourse uses of a DM and attempting to determine what these uses have in common often produce even more conflicts. Under this circumstance, we do not plan to exhaust all the possible functions of *well*, *you know*, and *I mean* in this paper. Instead, we determine to single out certain fundamental discourse functions of *well*, *you know* and *I mean* in terms of the plane of participation frameworks with a view to pedagogical application to adult learners.

3.1 Functions of *well*

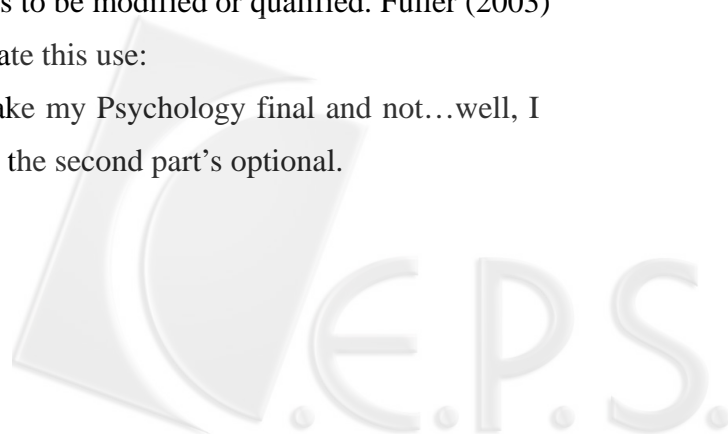
The usual dialogic functions identified for *well* as a DM are to preface utterances which reject, cancel or disagree with the content or tenor of the foregoing discourse (Schiffrin, 1987). *Well* often begins turns, serving as a lefthand discourse bracket.

Sharing similar views with Schiffrin, Jucker (1993, as cited in Fuller, 2003) proposes *well* “signifies that the most immediately accessible context is not the most relevant one for the interpretation of the impending utterances.” He further outlines four specific functions of *well*.

3.1.1 Well for insufficiency

The first specific function of *well* is to use it as a mark of insufficiency to indicate that the previous utterance needs to be modified or qualified. Fuller (2003) draws on her conversation data to illustrate this use:

- (2) I don’t know if I’m gonna take my Psychology final and not...well, I know I hafta take one part of it, but the second part’s optional.



Similarly, Schourup (1985, as cited in Norrick, 2001) claims that speakers use *well* as an “evincive” to indicate that they are consulting their own thoughts and are producing a response insufficient in some way.

3.1.2 Well as a mitigator

The second function of *well* is as a face-threat mitigator. In this use, the problem with the previous utterances is on the personal level, as illustrated by example (3), in which speaker B mitigates a direct command with the DM *well* (Fuller 2003, 28).

(3) B: Her lips are moving way too fast. That’s such a dumb commercial.

A: I’ve never seen this before.

B: Well, look at it.

3.1.3 Well for topic change or reported speech

The third function of *well* is to indicate topic change or introduce direct reported speech as exemplified in (4) (Fuller 2003, 28).

(4) If you’re a dog...you have the same challenges as the rest of us...just on a different scale. (to dog) Isn’t that right, Shamus? You’re a good body. Well, I don’t know...we...I’m about ready to go back to sleep. Almost I’m tired.

3.1.4 Well as a delay device

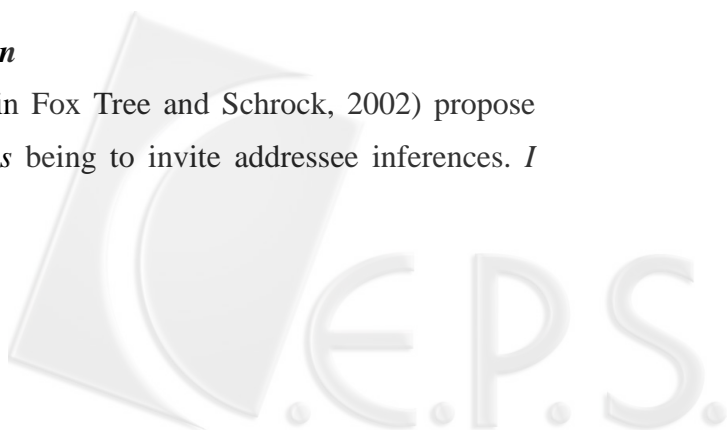
Finally, *well* also functions as a delay device, when a speaker is not sure how to respond or continue. This function can be seen in example (5) (Fuller 2003, 29).

(5) A: Do you want to go, uh where would you like to go to teach? If you had your choice, to pick your favorite spot.

B: Uh, well, I like Japan.

3.2 Functions of *you know* and *I mean*

Jucker and Smith (1998, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002) propose that the basic meaning of *you know* is being to invite addressee inferences. *I*



mean, according to Schiffrin (1987), is being to forewarn upcoming adjustments. Based on the basic meanings of these two markers, Fox Tree and Schrock (2002) attempt to tie together a wide array of disparate claims made by different researchers. They further divided the proposed functions of *you know* and *I mean* into five categories: interpersonal, turn management, repairing, monitoring, and organizing. Based on the study of Fox Tree and Schrock (2002), we single out certain functions which are significant for L2 teachers and learners in terms of conversation teaching as well as social communication.

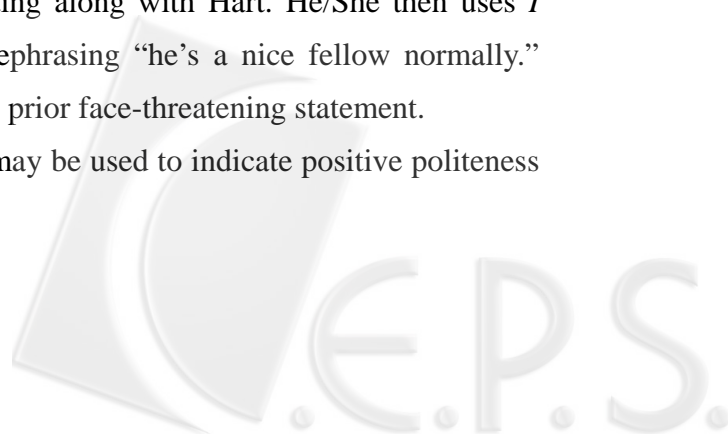
3.2.1 Interpersonal

Using *you know* and *I mean* as mitigators is one of the most important functions in this aspect. The speaker may use the markers for a particular type of person or situation when face-saving is necessary. Face-saving may be achieved by positive politeness, (i.e., to express shared understanding) or negative politeness, (i.e., to show speaker imprecision), allowing addressees more room to express their opinions. (Brown and Levinson 1987, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2000). Speakers might use *I mean* or *you know* to reduce their commitment to or distance themselves from a face-threatening utterance. *I mean* may signal a less-face-threatening rephrasing as a kind of interpersonal repair. *You know* may soften the blow of face-threatening talk that precedes or follows it. The following example demonstrates both functions (adapted from Savartvik and Quirk, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock 2002):

- (6) How do you get on with this fellow Hart? *I mean* he's a nice fellow normally, but he's a hell of a – big head in some ways *you know* Reynard.

As noted “How do you get on with this fellow Hart?” probably is used to imply that the speaker has trouble getting along with Hart. He/She then uses *I mean* to presage the less-threatening rephrasing “he's a nice fellow normally.” Likewise, *you know* is used to soften the prior face-threatening statement.

In addition, *you know* and *I mean* may be used to indicate positive politeness



by making speech more casual or decreasing social distance, which might explain why *you know* and *I mean* are twice as common in conversations than in formal interviews (Stubbe and Holmes 1995, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002).

3.2.2 Turn management

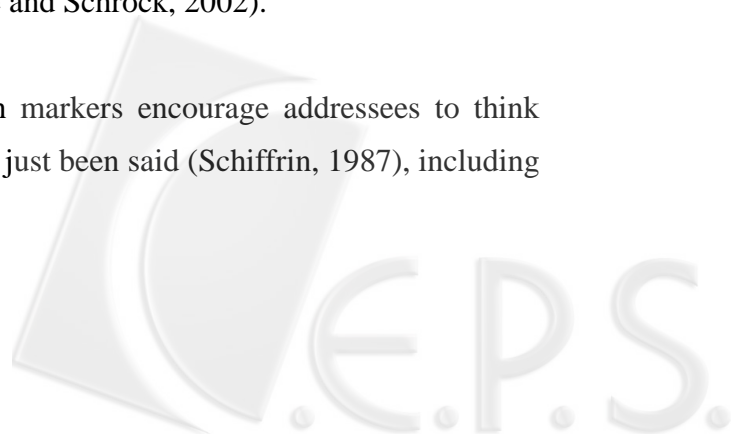
You know and *I mean* can contribute to turn management such as turn-taking, turn-holding and turn-relinquishing. For example, turn-final *you know* with declarative intonation has function as in “I won’t say anything more” In this case, it can be used to close off the prior utterance and turn the floor over to addressees (Osman, 1981, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002). Additionally, *you know* in spontaneous conversations can be viewed as natural result of proposed function of eliciting backchannels from addressees while maintaining the floor (Schourup, 1985, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002)

3.2.3 Repairing

You know and *I mean* can contribute to repair in three ways. One is by substitute for a pause, repairing or avoiding the break in fluency caused by the pause. A second is by stalling for time as speakers try to complete various stages of the speech production process, including planning what to say, selecting right words, or restarting a false-started utterance. A third is to explicitly forewarn upcoming adjustments to what has just been said. In this case, *I mean* is frequently used to forewarn low-level adjustments stemming from speech production problems, such as alternative word choices or syntax. According to Erman (1987, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002), listeners are less likely to complete a speaker’s repair after *you know* and *I mean*, which is consistent with the stalling for time and forewarning proposals. However, the repair function is not confined to linguistic forms; for example, *I mean* may forewarn a change of mind (Erman, 1987, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002).

3.2.4 Monitoring

As for monitoring proposals, both markers encourage addressees to think about the comprehensibility of what has just been said (Schiffrin, 1987), including



word choice, syntax or the relevance to the topic (Schorup, 1985, as cited in as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002) in that speakers use *you know* to invite addressees' inferences; similarly, speakers seek acknowledgement of understanding from the addressee after adjustments forewarned by *I mean*.

3.2.5 Organizing

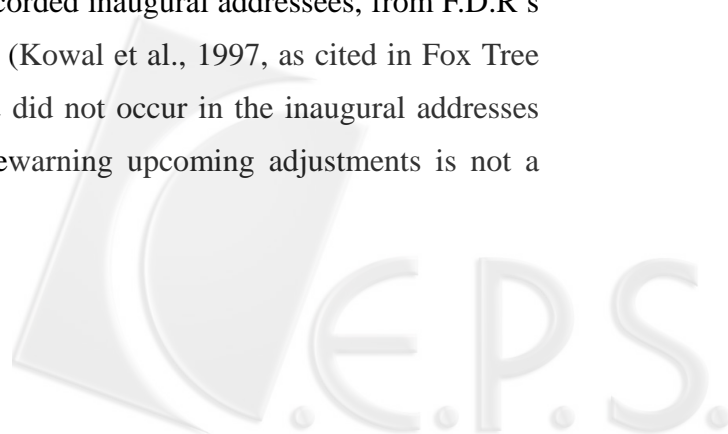
You know and *I mean* can be used to aid in organization by introducing topic shifts since they all have forward-looking functions (Erman, 1987, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002).

3.2.6 Situations inappropriate for *you know* or *I mean*

Since *you know* is an invitation to infer the speaker's intentions, under circumstances where the strategy is not desired, the use of *you know* should be avoided. One such situation is airline flight crew communication, in which incorrect inferences can lead to serious negative consequences. The frequency of using *you know* should be minimized in similar contexts.

Another situation is the speech of high-status conversational participants. Higher status addressees may not desire to invite addressees' inferences. They are likely to distance themselves from what they are imposing on lower-status addressees and are more direct in making face-threatening requests of lower status addressees. Therefore it is inappropriate for a supervisor to use *you know* when talking to a subordinate (Jefferson 1973, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002). Presumably, the use of *you know* should be avoided by a doctor, when explaining to a patient the diagnosis or prognosis of a given disease.

A third situation in which that a speaker should avoid using *you know* is when the addressees form a large group mostly because addressees are less likely to draw similar inferences in this case. A supporting piece of evidence is that *you know* did not occur in any of the 16 recorded inaugural addressees, from F.D.R's first address to Clinton's 1993 address (Kowal et al., 1997, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002). Likewise, *I mean* did not occur in the inaugural addressees aforementioned probably because forewarning upcoming adjustments is not a



desired strategy when speakers are trying to present themselves as having thought an issue in advance.

In addition to the context, the speaker should be careful about the frequency of using *you know* and *I mean*. *You know* and *I mean* may have beneficial functions when they occur in small doses, but when they are overused, they are detrimental to comprehension and might be annoying to the listeners.

IV. Teaching *well, you know* and *I mean*

Teaching *well, you know*, and *I mean* probably is as difficult as understanding their meanings and functions. However, since they are closely tied to the collaborative spontaneous talk, language teachers have to make attempts to raise students' awareness of the fundamental functions of the given DMs lest L2 learners should be pragmatically fossilized.

4.1 Four Is' methodology

Like the case of grammar teaching noted by McCarthy and Carter (1995), traditional and well-established "Three-Ps" of Presentation-Practice-Production" may need to be revised to involve students in greater awareness of the use of DMs in spoken language and of a range of choices of functions that L2 learners may employ. Based on McCarthy and Carter's three Is' model, we propose four Is' methodology, standing for "Illustration-Interaction-Induction-Internalization." Illustration refers to presentation of authentic data of DM use relative to context and use. "Interaction" means introduction to learners discourse-sensitive activities which are designed to raise conscious awareness of the interactive properties of DM use through observation and class discussion. "Induction" is to encourage learners to draw conclusions about the discourse functions of a given DM and the capacity for noticing the differences. "Internalization" refers to the capacity to use *well, you know*, and *I mean* on the right occasion and at the right time.

4.2 Activities for teaching DM

The following activities are designed to facilitate L2 learners' DM use. Depending on the variables of the teaching environment, teachers may choose from the ready-made activities or design their own by following the four Is'.

4.2.1 To arouse curiosity

These activities are used to raise students' awareness about the use of *well*, *you know* and *I mean* and to promote their interest in observing DM use in authentic utterances or revised versions in movie or sit-coms. Educators do not have to inform students of various functions of DMs in great details.

Activity 1: Who are the possible speakers of the following dialogue? In what context does the dialogue occur? (Adapted from Schourup, 1999)

(7) A: Are you happy?

B: *Well*, yes.

Activity 2: What clues are there in the following extract which suggest that you are coming in in the middle of something? (adapted from McCarthy, 1991)

(8) A: *I mean*, I don't like this new emblem at all.

B: the logo.

A: Yeah, the castle on the Trent, it's horrible.

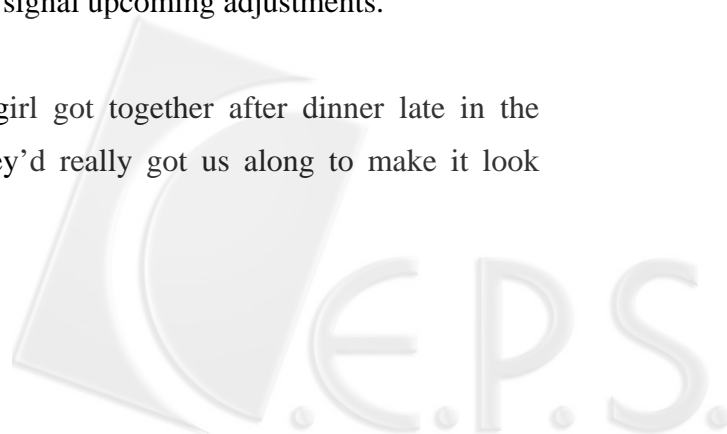
Activity 3: Compare the following originals and alternatives (adapted from Svartvik and Quirk, 1980, as cited in Fox Tree and Schrock, 2002). Is it matter where *I mean* and *you know* fall? Are there any significant distinctions between the originals and the alternatives? Base your discussions on the following guidelines:

(a) *You know* is often used to invite addressees' inferences.

(b) *I mean* is often used to signal upcoming adjustments.

(9) Original:

me and the Edinburgh girl got together after dinner late in the evening and decided they'd really got us along to make it look



right, *you know* they had after all had candidates from other universities.

Alternative:

me and the Edinburgh girl got together after dinner *you know* late in the evening and decided they'd really got us along to make it look right, they had after all had candidates from other universities.

(10) Original:

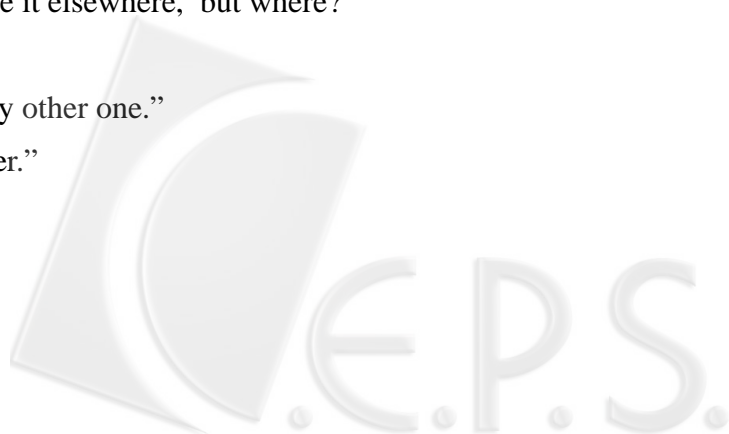
But I don't think it's feasible *I mean* I know this is the first time I've done it, and I'm not in a main line paper, but I'm sure it'll take me all my time to do it in three weeks

Alternative:

But I don't think it's feasible I know *I mean* this is the first time I've done it, and I'm not in main line paper, but I'm sure it'll take me all my time to do it in three weeks

Activity 4: Which utterance is good for the slot? (adapted from Svartvik and Quirk, as cited in Fox Free and Schrock, 2002) Do you think it is Ok to substitute *well*, or *I mean* for *you know* in any case of the following utterances?

- (11) I don't really know why Cambridge turned it down, --I mean it's got to be done by, a university press, because it's not going to be a remunerative—thing, *you know* ____
- (a) "One day I do hope to write a book that appeals to the public at large,"
- (b) "They must not like my style of writing at large."
- (c) "Now I don't know where to turn with this manuscript."
- (d) " 'We're awfully sorry, take it elsewhere,' but where?"
- (e) "Can't I ever get a break?"
- (f) "They also turned down my other one."
- (g) "it, well it's not a best-seller."



4.2.2 To perform specific function

DM functions such as repair, time buying, face-saving are important and beneficial for personal communication and thus worthy of extra devotion from teachers and students as well. For example, the mechanism of mitigating may help maintain rapport of conversation participants. Teacher should give learners more opportunities to make use of appropriate DMs in context to fulfill the function in question. Activities 5 are designed for this function. However, before this, students should be given chances to examine examples such as (6) and have thorough discussion about them.

In addition to a certain function performance, students also need activities such 6 and 7 to integrate use of *well, you know* and *I mean* in a certain context.

Activity 5: Suppose you were the magic mirror. Try to tell the queen in modern English that she is not the most beautiful woman any more. Make use of *well, you know, or I mean* to soften your statement.

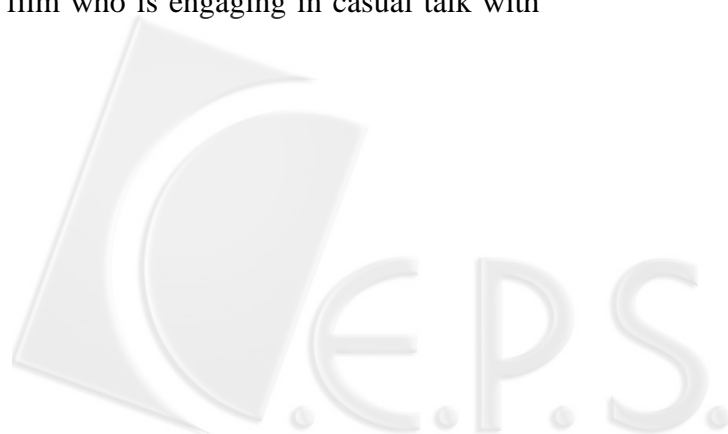
Queen: Mirror, mirror, on the wall

Who in this realm is the fairest of all?

Magic Mirror: _____.

Activity 6: Tell your boyfriend/girlfriend that are in love with some else. Save her face by saying something good about him/her. Use *well, you know, and I mean* appropriately to help you do this job.

Activity 7: People tend to use *well, you know, and I mean* more frequently in informal conversation than in formal speech. Do you think Arnold Schwarzenegger would make use of this feature to distinguish his part as a governor of California from the role of a movie star? Role play Arnold as a governor making the inaugural speech and Arnold as the exterminator in the film who is engaging in casual talk with other movie characters.



V. Conclusion

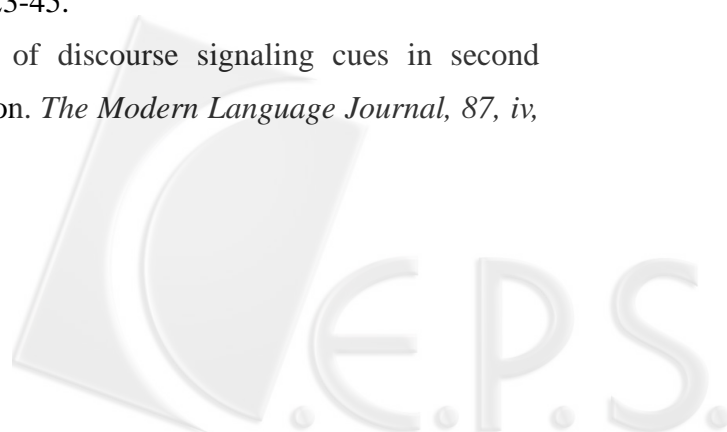
The overall aim of this paper is to highlight the importance of DM instruction for L2 spoken language classes from the perspective of discourse analysis, based on the assumption that adults' conversations are more interaction-based and L2 learners might be pragmatically fossilized if their DM use competence is not appropriately equipped. We review related representative literature to support the assumption and to delimit certain fundamental speech functions of *well*, *you know* and *I mean* to meet the pedagogical need. In addition, we demonstrate the feasibility of teaching DMs in L2 language classrooms by providing potential teaching activity designs.

The paper, however, suffers from a few limitations. First of all, the study concentrates solely on micromarkers for local personal interaction while macromarkers which are equally important in facilitating global planning are not under discussion. In addition, a more comprehensive overview of the pedagogical application of DM use in L2 classrooms is acquired to strike the balance between transactional and interactional talks since current conversation textbooks are mostly function-oriented and can barely fulfill the need of DM teaching. Moreover, we need empirical study to examine the productivity of DM teaching proposed by the present researcher. More involvement and further research are therefore required to resolve the issues in concern.



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大學英語會話之話語標記教學研究： 以 well, you know, I mean 為例

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摘 要

隨著話語分析的興起(discourse analysis)，話語標記(discourse marker)逐漸受到英語教學研究人員與教育者的重視。本文試圖探討成人英語會話課程中話語標記教學的必要性與可行性。作者以 well, you know, I mean 為例，藉文獻佐證，說明話語標記基本之語用功能，並列舉多項教學活動，以顯示在大學英語會話課程中實施話語標記教學之可能方向。

關鍵字：話語分析、話語標記、英語教學、英語會話、第二語言習得

